Handicapping Analysis
Mon February 3rd, 2025

Emily's Analysis

Oaklawn Race 1

Post Time 12:35 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#7 ROYAL LAUGHTER following a progressive pattern that has seen success second off in prior season to present live with that similar timing here. She broke her maiden in the second career start and last season turned in a game effort with a less than ideal start (SLOG, TROUBLE_S) and with TROUBLE just missed in a tight photo for the win. The Rosin barn started off cold though picked up the win on Sunday with Boogie Bode – a second start of the Oaklawn meet pattern as well.

The figure going back to the place finish last March for ROYAL LAUGHTER sits in line with #4 EVOCATION returning from the common race on 1/3 – a good effort all things considered might have been shorter and finds a notable rider change with R. Santana taking over. Pace and trip will be key and #2 GRACE GIVEN should show early speed though joined by #3 BLUE EMBER another live runner stretching back out second off with upside from those changes though one that requires a top effort in this group.

Distance still remains a question for #1 CRYSTAL SYMPHONY though upgraded from the BTL effort back on 12/15 and from the 1/3 event put forth an honest effort with the WIDE trip and perhaps some intent and even show a little more early speed wheeling right back and with a rider change along with the rail draw as M. Garcia takes over.

Oaklawn Race 2

Post Time 1:03 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The ML is the main knock on #2 ROYAL COURT one that has throughout their career recorded the highest figures in the field and has that edge in this race. With that said they have come up short in the 15 starts to date often at shorter numbers, a tougher to trust on the win end and can create opportunities outside the box while more than capable of remaining true to form and picking up a minor share.

By contrast, a longshot case can be made for #3 C J'S BOOMBA one that has been patiently waiting as they have been entered twice this meet under similar maiden conditions. This is the second start of the season, finding class relief from the competitive event for the level on 12/29 and return to the route distance, the distance intent from the first two starts. (Some intent could also have been in play going back to their second career start sent off co-favored in October at HS Indy a race with a rough break, subtle trip and the two month break that followed with intent for this meet.)

#9 GOLDEN LIGHT takes on some older rivals for this second start. They caught a solid group for the level making their debut last month, - a tough spot going the two turn distance first out and the only FTS starter in the field on the day. #10 LOVE IN LIGHTS debuted on the same day, 12/14 though in a sprint against older as now a 4yo and going to get the attention of the two while on numbers does not hold the edge and there should be plenty of price compensation for GOLDEN LIGHT.

If looking for a horse from 12/14 #1 I GOT A GUY like ROYAL COURT a long time maiden though has recorded numbers right in line with that rival and has the local experience and should be sitting on a peak effort third off (12/14 race was caught WIDE coming off the layoff sneaky close on 1/18).

Oaklawn Race 3

Post Time 1:32 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 DR. STORM looks to hold intent claimed back in September while on a progressive pattern and from the BTL place finish on the day. The connections likely forced to be more patient than they wanted to be returning three months later for the December race though a race where they have the fitness, ran for the higher tag and met some of today's rivals #4 COWBOY CODE and #5 BOLT'S TRESURE on that day noting DR. STORM was bet down to 9-2 from a 15-1 ML.

The winner (and show finisher) of that 12/21 race trained by S. Asmussen, a barn that shows up here with #6 TIS CHARMING first off the claim. TIS CHARMING does not hold a class edge compared to COWBOY CODE and BOLT'S TREASURE though shares similar speed figures and in terms of stamina TIS CHARMING could have that edge and notable claim with two other Asmussen trainees in the race and they dipped in for this runner.

Common rival from opening day #3 AWOL takes a slight rise claimed from the 12/22 race, a race with a similar par to today's event and no reason why they should not hold their form here, a best with some racing luck is needed to get the win though if there is the contested pace and lack of stamina from the others AWOL working their way into the number.

#2 FULL VICTORY is the lone sophomore in the field though holds some upside especially with the races under their belt and class drop. The debut in November appeared a prep showing early speed at CD at the 7f distance and mentally unprepared on 12/7 the first start at Oaklawn in opening week, reluctant to load and less than ideal trip playing a role in the outcome and still presents upside and a better placement for their abilities.

Oaklawn Race 4

Post Time 2:06 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Tough to get too creative with runners like #3 PATTERN BET that have recorded higher figures consistently throughout their career and returning to statebred company and similar conditions as far as claiming tag from the win last April.

#7 LADY ASTRID was recording similar figures at CBY from the summer and closing out the year. She is capable on her best day though does return from the layoff – a top effort required and shorter numbers for colder connections bring value reservations. #10 SUMMORYA also projects to be shorter though a consistent type at the claiming level and has the benefit of a start this season, tough to leave out of the mix.

#4 SHE'S STORMING must return to her races from back in 2023 to be on the level, though if ever a time and place this should be it. This marks the third start from the layoff and bringing in progressive effort and figures from the PREP on opening day along with the WIDE trip for fitness and showing a late MOVE from off the pace in a race where the pacesetters dueled throughout to finish in a photo with the top three clear at the wire.

#9 SHE BE SHEEHAN has been effective on the lead though still must show she is as effective with sprint speed as route speed and there are some others in here to keep the early pace honest including longshot #11 NAVAGATIONALBEACON with the weight break off the layoff and perhaps more logical though with buried form mixing in #8 PETULA as they make their second start of the meet and holds competitive efforts at the sprint distance and statebred claiming level from the races last year.

Oaklawn Race 5

Post Time 2:36 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

This is a tough race with the projected race shape and route distance those change for #4 FEATHERS ROAD one that can IMPROVE off the 1/18 trip and perhaps the class and speed will just be enough to carry with the distance change. They will stretch out around two turns for the first time in their career – 29 races to date for this 7yo.

Number wise #5 RUNWAY MAGIC is right there with FEATHERS ROAD and has the two turn experience including races over this course and distance from prior seasons and perhaps intent with that change and return to this circuit and notable the connections had been working at OP though shipped to HOU to work on 1/19 during a time where the track and training was precarious with the weather conditions.

#10 STAND PROUD is logical with recency and overall career consistency at the route distance – the distance change that upgraded them two weeks ago. A place finish running against the course profile behind the pacesetting winner, Good Like Magic.

It is a bit of a stab though going to make a longshot case for #6 VANISKY. Coming back off the layoff in September at HAW he was not quite race ready though this year at Oaklawn he has shown improvement race-to-race and that form and fitness might just be the right combination for this group. They find a sneaky change in class from the 1/3 open claiming race, a much higher race par and for today's par they have plenty of races in range to compete. An even bigger stab with #9 GOLD BARON though for similar reasons as this one has raced into shape this year and has form and fitness and back numbers from 2024 on their best day that fits on par.

Oaklawn Race 6

Post Time 3:14 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

John Ortiz has a solid pair in this race: the likely more fancied #5 FLY LIKE THE WIND makes their second start of the season and second time in for the claiming tag though a class change from 12/20 when in against older company and should move up and show early speed with that race under their belt in today's group. The early speed it noted as they are likely to be tested in that trip given the complexion of this field with rival #7 TIMBAVATI also making the move from open company to statebred and fit from that tougher condition along with fitness recording two works since.

#2 SUNNYANDSEVENTY is softer number wise than their stablemate though still upside returns to the claiming level, the right level for their abilities to step up in this spot. The race back in December was likely a PREP and not much intent closing out 2024 taking a swing in stakes company off a maiden win. Overall form cycle is noted with those races – an every other type that should be sitting on a peak effort.

They return from the 12/15 common race with #4 STHENIC one that has a contender look and value that could see them drift up from the assigned 6-1 ML. Going back to December they appeared to need the race and tough to see as it was just off camera though encountered some late TROUBLE in the stretch and overall not asked for their best to see step forward from them here.

Oaklawn Race 7

Post Time 3:44 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#10 AMERICAN BAND is logical as the horse to beat coming back under similar conditions getting the job done as the favorite earlier this month against many of today's rivals. The outside draw and overall race shape should allow for a similar trip in this group.

From that 1/3 common race #1 SEQUIN LADY was compromised with their trip overall state to finish unable to show their best on the day. That race with the running line and finishing position should be overlooked and cycling back to a top effort and subtle change in race shape could see her return to competitive ways. Will also note the EX for #7 FEARLESS KRISTIE from that common race perhaps one that is tougher to make the case for though one that with that note should be showing more early speed with a clean break to play a role in a contentious pace.

A contentious pace with the inclusion of #6 AUSTRIAN NAVY one that perhaps needed the start off the layoff though lacking stick late and a line drifting into a rival while tiring in the stretch. #4 MAZOKU scratched out of that 1/3 race and another that has some tactical speed while not a need the lead type and perhaps intent waiting for this spot and reuniting with Bealmear, the rider aboard last season including a pair of wins.

Oaklawn Race 8

Post Time 4:14 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 BEDARD should be sitting on go with early speed from the rail. He has been entered a couple of times this season and perhaps finds favorable timing now as the B. Cox has started to find their groove this meet. Overall they will be tested stepping up against winners and from the front running score back in October at KEE – a race where the top three ran 1-2-3 around the track with minimal change in running order and softer as far as race strength to consider as the projected favorite.

#6 KING RUSSELL looks have their best chance here second off the layoff and fitness as a subtle trip and flow upgrade from 1/4 moving off the inside and in today's race shape where they do not need the lead though tactical speed to fit today's race dynamic.

#8 DAILY GRIND caught the eye with a BTL effort running X_FLOW on opening day and showed improving making a WIDE MOVE in the common race last month. The pattern of SLOG for those races created some hurdles though fitness, progression and one that has shape tactical speed in the past could also find that in this group and rider change back to R. Bejarano.

#3 MONEYSHOT also caught the eye back at Hastings in the BC Derby a BTL effort with a massive middle burst and from that race and organic change in runstyle might have found this one wants to settle and make one run as prior to that race had often been forced to the lead. This is a step up in class from the recent claiming event, though in terms of par not a huge rise and going back to the March maiden race locally last year found a similar par and place finish that day.

Oaklawn Race 9

Post Time 4:46 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#4 SPIN THE BREEZE follows a favorable second off pattern for the connections. The connections used a similar pattern last year with the route for fitness and the ship from the FG turning in an honest place finish and career high figures with the place finish in March with Vazquez aboard. Class might have got the best of her on the day and reasonable with the change here and lower par from the OP events last season.

SPIN THE BREEZE can sit and rate and should have pace to chase with the complexion of this field that includes her quick stablemate #10 VALHALLA VIXEN one that could move forward as well in the second start of the cycle bring in that early speed from the outside and with the weight break given a rider change. VALHALLA VIXEN should be sitting on a peak effort though could find a hurdle with race shape as others could contest the lead.

A contested pace should assist #9 MUSICAL PRAYER though overall runstyle, form, class and figures are in line with #1 UP ON THE EDGE and #3 UP THE CREEK runners that also share UP-side in the second start of the season changes in class and race from their first start this season to step up in this group and potential dynamic – all three playable UP ON THE EDGE the least obvious higher odds of the trio.