Handicapping Analysis
Sat February 8th, 2025

Emily's Analysis

Oaklawn Race 1

Post Time 12:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

A competitive race top to bottom where a can be made for the entire field and perhaps less value when it comes to ML favorite #8 AMERICAN LAW one that is in form this season though again has found some favorable trips as they rise in class, a knock primarily on value. Some upside could land with common rival #7 TRIDENT HIT also taking a rise in class from the 1/24 start though a WIDE trip to project improvement from and Gaffalione in town to ride the stakes later on the card reunites with this runner to get some local experience on the under card. They also have raced in front wraps coming back off the layoff last summer and could look for a change here.

#1 DENINGTON is not overly exciting at the ML though logical with the change in class and upside from the two starts this season – raced X_FLOW back on 12/21 and against the course profile on 1/17.

In terms of the S. Asmussen pair #6 BACKGROUND hold Oaklawn form that fits on par and back on this circuit while returning from the layoff without a class drop could suggest intent. The barn also wheels back with #3 COINAGE first off the claim and slight rise for this race. They bring in early speed and should keep things honest up front, a trip that #2 WILLY D'S could be looking for today and unable to sit on 1/5 fractious in the GATE and now given time in this second start of the meet to return to a top effort they would need to compete.

Oaklawn Race 2

Post Time 1:00 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The #1/1A entry both fit this race and complement each other in this field. #1A K CROWN with early speed and stretching out in this third start of the season along with the class drop should be looking to take this field as far as they can on the front end. #1 CONTRABANDISTA prefers to stalk and pounce though with the race flow back on 12/27 was able to sit closer to the pace in the place finish, a near 30-1 upset.

#2 CAWKAB and #4 HEY BOSS can be upgraded with the change in class and returning from the 1/24 common race both with less than ideal trips over a tricky race track that day from the outside post positions. #2 CAWKAB brought in upside with the races on the circuit and stumbled at the start (TROUBLE_S) making an early advance into a Fast early pace before losing ground. HEY BOSS was giving up recency off a near two month break and showed run (TACTIC-) making a late MOVE not asked for their best late.

#7 FIGHT'N READY also from that common race not showing their best of the day though not asked to with the SLOG and NO_PUSH one that if there is a Fast Contentious early pace can get involved late and noted rider change with Bejarano aboard, a rider that has only picked up a pair of mounts for these connections in the past five years.

Oaklawn Race 3

Post Time 1:28 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#8 NUIT MAGIQUE makes their belated here and should be as ready as ever given the steady recent works for this 4yo filly. They appeared on track to debut at Oaklawn last year with the local works though had the setbacks in training and noted longer gap in the published works from April to December.

Keying off the other 4yo and the group returning from the 1/19 common race, a cold day with kickback impacting many on the card and suited runners towards the outside: #2 BANG BANG FURY was in TRAFFIC SHUFFLE and made a MOVE and upgraded with a BTL show finish back on 12/22 might have to show more to win though has those races with established for all around. #3 GUN TWIRL could hold class questions and must step though would be the time and place for her to step up with a top effort as she shipped in from the FG giving up local experience last month, now has a race over the course and a recorded work since, something of a positive to pair up races given the previous layoff lines.

#9 RACQUEL BLUE position forward and part of the Fast early pace though lacked stick and still must show where she fits on class and could find company on the lead with some of the sophomores in this field including FTS #4 RIDE THE BROOM one that based on the works could project early speed and RACQUEL BLUE with the experience and maturity on her side would need all the advantages to come together on trip from the outside.

Oaklawn Race 4

Post Time 1:56 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#7 PERSONAL JET showed a ton of run in their debut, a BTL effort last month at DED. They were well out of the picture after a SLOG though made a WIDE MOVE a strong late CLOSE and continued to GALLOP+ out strong after the wire. They will give up local experience though still earned a follow.

#1 FOUR O NINE was in a tough spot making their debut two weeks ago against older and catching a dominant winner with Paramount Paycheck from off the pace making their run to win by open lengths. It could be seen as encouraging with that race under their belt to wheel back here for a second start, find 3yo company (if the two 4yos on the AE are unable to draw in) and a noted rider change to C. Torres as well as the gate move from Jan 4 a snappy move that might be required here with the rail draw.

FTS: #9 WHITLEY should be live here on debut, they have a steady series of local works and plenty of foundation. While they did earn a bullet for the move from the gate on 12/30 they have shown a tendency to break SLOG – they were also second best of that move though second best to a horse called STOMP one that will be running later on the card – to be continued on that one. #10 STORMBENDER is not one I have seen though holds plenty of local works and could be intent with I. Castillo aboard, a rider that has been live in limited starts for the barn this season and often assertive with those runners showing early speed.

Oaklawn Race 5

Post Time 2:26 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#6 ON A SPREE can be considered the horse to beat in this race and arguably the most likely winner. The change in class should move them up naturally and can be given some forgiveness on 12/28 with the long DELAY to the start of the race due to poor WEATHER conditions and then the card cancelled though in that case would have preferred to have seen them back quicker than the 42-day break from that start to this and if they are to not show up this race has a chaos factor.

#4 CANADIAN PHAROAH has the right runstyle for today’s race shape and some upside off the two starts this season. They appeared to be given the race off the bench opening day, a longer distance starter allowance and projecting to move up on 12/27 raced WIDE against the profile of a drying out race track.

#9 LUCKY BOSS is given a mention with the price compensation coming back in the third start of the meet and key changes. The race off the layoff appeared a PREP and the class level required a DROP something they did not find at the longer distance starter allowance last month and compromised further with the rail draw and race dynamic. The current form takes some forgiveness making the case here as it would be the time and place to turn things around.

#2 BEEALEA needs their best and the race shape to unfold the right way for their runstyle to compete. With that said, there is a potential for that dynamic and one that has some upside form the races this season making a WIDE RUSH back in December and a WIDE MOVE last month, that race just 16-days ago has the fitness on their side and rider change as well to perhaps further intent.

Oaklawn Race 6

Post Time 2:56 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The three inside runners all carry tactical speed, and that group is likely joined by runners towards the outside of the field that bring in early foot as well and bringing in #8 CALIFORNIA TIGER stretching out from the sprint races could set up for a runner with finishing ability.

#4 SONNEMAN fits that bill and with a rider change as Leparoux takes over, a good fit for this type of off the pace runner. They showed intent for this meet coming back off the layoff and should have some fitness chasing closer to a Fast early pace on the off track last month, a race they might have required from a three month break.

#5 LOGICAL MYTH is not a closer closer though has some finishing ability and all around upside in this second start of the meet and cycle from the 1/24 event – they ran from well off the pace put in a late MOVE X_FLOW noting they broke in a tangle (TROUBLES+) something of a pattern for horses on the day, tough to hold against the individuals and also noted for their former stablemate #7 HELLO HOT ROD given an EX stumbling/TROUBLES+ on the day and from a different race. The placement could be a bit of a tell with HELLO HOT ROD running in the open $20k and LOGICAL MYTH in for $40k.

#10 FIFTY CENT DOLLARS was very game on 1/5 making a MOVE through TRAFFIC TROUBLE with the place finish and perhaps that race off the bench played a role with the less than ideal outcome showing up two weeks later for the connections first off the claim. With that race for conditioning and should hold fitness with that WIDE trip the connections return to claiming company and a peak third off effort has them right back in the mix here.

Oaklawn Race 7

Post Time 3:26 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 AMERICAN OUTLAW returns with some changes notably the drop to claiming company and first time in their career racing for a claiming tag. The move comes looking to get back on track after an EX back in December at Zia when both horse and rider caught air jumping out of the gate and racing X_FLOW after. The break was not as severe on 1/5 though not ideal and not ideal handling/TACTIC- held up off the pace (NO_PUSH) behind horses in TRAFFIC and going back to their more competitive race as well as the rail draw could be out in front early and looking to take this field gate to wire, a something hat has been used by Eramia when aboard in the past. The longer odds are appealing in this case to make the case and the contrast to rival #11 TOP GUN TOMMY giving up recency and one that must work a trip from the outside and with their runstyle, though certainly capable.

Garcia returns with an uncoupled pair of runners in this race with a case to be made for both: #4 CIRCLE BACK JACK turned in a career top with the opening day 17-1 upset win and returns with the 43-days to recover, back to claiming company and with Esquivel back aboard. Vazquez jumps aboard #9 HOLIDAY HOUSE one that brings in a similar form cycle pattern, third off and recording a top back on 12/20 at TP, a higher OC N1 event with a higher $82 purse. That suggests some class relief and fitness from those races returning to convention dirt and first time back in for the tag since their were claimed at KEE last April.

#2 WIND OF CHANGE has the back numbers that would make them competitive and perhaps the question to get back to those efforts as a 10yo though carries with them plenty of projected price compensation with the ML and ML noted for the other 10yo #10 PAYNE one coming off a win, a ground saving, flow-aided BLANKET finish win on Jan 4.

Oaklawn Race 8

Post Time 3:55 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#3 STOMP looks to be a runner and live in this race on debut. They have shown speed and class and the works on paper not quite tipping their hand even with the bullet move on 1/29. They will race against older here and giving up experience though as noted the to be continued could look to make up for it with talent.

As far as the runners with experience #5 VELOCIRAPTOR projects to get a lot of attention and the barn send out live would not be any shock though has had the layoff lines already splitting the two starts to date and some gaps in the published works since that create reservations at a projected shorter number.

#11 GUN RUNNER CHARLIE showed run training out in California and appeared intent with the connections shipping to Oaklawn for the debut early in the meet. They caught less than ideal WEATHER conditions and WARM and subtle trip with KICKBACK in the debut and flattered with the winner, Brodeur returning to win and allowance, and appears to have intent working steadily since and noted changes with the barn, Lasix, blinkers Vazquez aboard and move to an outer post.

#6 BON TEMPS also finds quite a few changes for this race making the move back to maiden company as well as the sprint distance and will race on Lasix with the first eligibility to do so. While those factors could present the right combination to move up keying back on the 12/21 race, a common race with #2 SECRET LEGEND one that had a TROUBLE trip and showed ability first out with a BTL effort over the CBY turf and tough to knock this season with the speed figure improvement race-to-race.

Oaklawn Race 10

Post Time 4:55 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 FROSTED MIRACLE wheels right back for this second start and one that had a look despite giving up experience two weeks ago. She made a positive appearance training out in FL and physically suited to the route distance. The break was not ideal for her on the day, though a subtle part of the course profile and following showed run making an inside/SAVED MOVE showing more interest than perhaps the running line and finishing position suggests.

#3 LA FANTASTICA has recorded some of the higher figures in this field and done so consistently making her tough to ignore in this field. A move forward could be required though has the benefit of fitness and experience over the course and distance flattered with the McPeek trained Take Charge Milady returned from the 1/5 race to win the Martha Washington Stakes last weekend.

#5 GOOD GAME had a look with the added ground for the second start going back to the first part of the meet and closing out 2024 and upside off that race and trip. The adversity began at the break, stumbling and taking contact (TROUBLE_S) and from there held up behind horses making a WIDE MOVE that is tougher to see on the running line and finishing position on paper and with the race result as the top two set the pace finishing together at the wire and not much change in running order outside of the fourth place runner, Necessity closed from off the pace and one that came back with a professional MSW win last weekend validating some form from that December event.

Santa Anita Race 1

Post Time 2:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#3 NELL'S LEGACY fits though does not present much value coming back in this spot and in terms of value finds a shift towards #4 PETITE TREAT those two from the 1/3 common race. On class, #7 PAVEL IS APPEALING has the edge and following an every other pattern while returning to the sprint distance and flow upgrade from the Cal Cup Oaks. They meet a common rival with #9 MUSICAL NUMBER returning from that event and upgraded with the trip all around from the outside post (TACTIC- TROUBLE) to step up here as well.

Santa Anita Race 3

Post Time 3:34 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#3 GRAND ASPEN makes a belated return to the TURF and positive distance change (SHORTER, ONE_TURN) in the process. Those factors played a role in addition to class closing out 2023-24 in graded stakes company.

#4 COVEY must improve in their second start off the bench though another with a positive surface switch to the TURF and based on the 12/21 TP physicality making a WIDE MOVE presents a ONE_TURN type.

Santa Anita Race 10

Post Time 7:04 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#4 SIX MAGPIES has a longshot look with races on their best day that fits on par and overall and evenly matched group. They come into this race with form this season, subtle trips and while today's par is similar, the change to run in claiming company suggests intent. That could also carry to a rider change after the recent trips, looking to change things up all around.