Handicapping Analysis
Sun February 16th, 2025

Emily's Analysis

Oaklawn Race 1

Post Time 12:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#10 GRIZMO presented some upside off the debut last year and similar upside returning for the second start of the season. They will find the class drop while given a sneaky flow upgrade moving up early (RUSH) into a solid early pace, taking a short lead before backing up noted the race shape on 1/31 starting to slow late.

#1 QUEEN WILHELMINA should have no excuses today something that could be given in the past with the outside draw, higher conditioned maiden race and taking KICKBACK on 1/19. She moved up two weeks ago with the change in class and overall consistent numbers that fit on par and despite similar numbers the slight edge over common rival #8 CHUCK WILLIS WIDOW.

The highest recorded figure in this field was recorded by #4 WHO LU last February, a number that could be an outlier and recorded on an off-track though if not that effort makes her a player here and could be the time second off the layoff and fitness from the WIDE trip last month.

Oaklawn Race 2

Post Time 1:06 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#8 ENJOY IT STRAIT has been pointed to Oaklawn since the claim last November at DMR and steady works and reasonable placement with C. Torres aboard looks to be intent for this race. In the past, they have recorded plenty of races that fit as a contender including the few dirt sprints.

#9 DUTCH MILLS should be sitting on a peak effort as they make their second start off the layoff and with the class drop -- granted it was for different connections a similar pattern was used last season keying the maiden win. They held their form since and improved with racing and maturity with the figures and class from the summer series of races stacking up on par for this level. That edge in recency is key along with a top effort to put them in line with #3 SUMMER SPLASH coming back off the layoff, the prime knock when combined with the class drop and projected shorter odds. Keith Asmussen picks up the call on SUMMER SPLASH shifting Erik Asmussen to #4 PRINCIPE CARLO a reclaim for D. Jacobson stepping back up off the win last move.

#6 RAM returns here to run for a claiming tag and holds overall form into this race and no real concern with the drop as this change has been used by the connections in the past and encouraging with Santana sticking aboard. They have some tactical speed that could be a further positive in today’s race shape to work out a first run tracking trip.

Oaklawn Race 3

Post Time 1:39 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 I GOT A GUY was given a complete excuse two weeks ago with trip and trouble that turned the first turn of the race into a mosh pit for many in the field including #7 ROYAL COURT and noted outcome with the winner Reveille Valley able to stay clear on the front end and win by open lengths. I GOT A GUY looked well intended on the day with the third start of the cycle and sprint foundation returning to their preferred two turn distance along with the class relief for this season.

The early pace is a tougher read though should be contentious given proven runstyles for #2 SIR EXTON and #12 CHOU CHOU D’AVEN – a flow upgrade from the 1/23 event, a race with a higher race par though could find company as many in this field stretching out in distance for the first time. That includes #11 DEVILS FORD one that going back to the visuals from last season required class relief and while unproven at the distance has shown figure progression and should move up naturally with the class DROP.

#8 AUDAX MINOR could be the beneficiary of a contentious early pace - they showed a CLOSE in the WO races and find class relief from the WIDE trip in their local debut last month to suggest some intent here.

Oaklawn Race 4

Post Time 2:11 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#10 SEQUIN LADY should move up with the class drop and returning to the claiming level for the first time since 11/9, a winning effort for the level though on the wrong side of the photo finish. She has held her form and figures since racing in the higher starter allowance condition and the connections dropping in could be looking for that first win since the claim and likely also expecting a claim.

#7 CHANDANA also finding class relief and should move up naturally at this level though given the recent races since returning from the November layoff her recorded figures does not hold as much of an edge in the speed figure department, numbers in line with others in this field.

#8 FLOATING fits on the timing eligibility coming back off the layoff holding three career wins. One of those over this course and similar race par from last April and overall form that fits back under claiming conditions where they have been more effective.

#3 DREAM PRINCESS could be given a slight excuse coming back off the layoff last month. They broke SLOG and caught WIDE racing NO_PUSH not asked for their best late racing over a course that was tough to make up ground. That is noted given the public attention on the day, the claim out of that race and showing up here finds a lateral change in class fitting on eligibility holding four career wins, though a key distance change back to a sprint.

Oaklawn Race 5

Post Time 2:43 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

While #11 SHE'SINTHEARMYNOW can pop with a big race from time to time and showed that back on 12/27 with the open length dominant win and new top speed figure. That effort and number sitting on top of the past performances will get a lot of attention and clearly running back to that effort it could be good game for the others, though removing that race from the past performances is a runner that fits though does not have any edge and at the least would not be an overwhelming favorite.

#10 BACKED BY GOLD holds similar back numbers and level of consistency along with recency and course experience finding class relief in this third start of the cycle from the higher par starter allowances. A bigger stab to #6 DONYA KNOW IT keying off similar higher figures recoded prior to the layoff and while there are concerns given the recent efforts and figures not close to what she was running prior (though one with projected price compensation) the class change comes into play here second off the claim and not asked for run start to finish three weeks ago was not going to run their race on the day.

#1 COLLECTED GLORY could be flying under the radar given the most recent finishing positions including the layoff return last month. That race could have been a prep and tough to hold the outcome against the 60-1 longshot especially with the trip chasing COVER on colder day with significant kickback and was NO_PUSH after losing ground behind the eventual pacesetting winner, Gloriette. The change in class and picking up C. Torres could be a further sign of intent.

The entrymate #1A H. T. XENA also can be given an upgrade returning off the layoff last month at the higher claiming level and broke SLOG from the rail moving outside to show late interest in the lane and move forward all around where prior efforts and figures stack up on par.

Oaklawn Race 6

Post Time 3:15 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

A lot of attention should land with #4 MAGNUM FORCE for the connections and reasonable in that assignment with positive class DROP and catching a strong group in the 11/30 debut, a race that featured Burham Square the Holy Bull (G3) winner. Will note #11 CUTLASS KING also brings in the change in class for their seasonal debut though closer to a lateral change noting the conditions for the MSW event back on 10/27.

#8 PRIMO CANARY brings in upside off their first two starts along with the change in class here. Physically suited to the route, two turn distance they have that surface/distance experience and change in class to move up today along with addition of blinkers and moving to an outer post following the rail draw last out never looking comfortable behind horses over a course profile that was tougher to make up ground and the race outcome showed minimal change in running order.

#1 MALACHI was given a longshot look last month returning from the layoff and overall changes along with the buried form from the first two starts. They showed some run on debut in a tougher spot at KYD in MSW and followed up with a WIDE trip around two turns at KEE in October, a race that held form going forward and carried to MALACHI last month one that was hard sent for the lead and should hold fitness returning here under similar conditions and positive timing with the 30day turnaround and the route intent keying off the 2024 pattern.

The form from the October KEE race carries to #3 SURFIN’ M one that moved up with the class drop and upgraded with the WIDE trip last month and should hold form returning under similar conditions today.

The change in distance comes into play creating an unknown factor for #5 WE NEED A FAVOR one that otherwise brings in progressive form, subtle trips and showed on 12/29 prior to the claim the placement here the right level for their abilities.

Oaklawn Race 7

Post Time 3:47 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

This is a highly competitive race with many that fit as contenders and pointed toward this event. That starts at the rail with #1 NORTHERN CHILL looking to get out and control from the jump as that has been an effective strategy in the past and if allowed to get clear they can be a front end threat.

The other challenge is the race shape as it becomes a riders race deciding to get involved early and to work the necessary trip. #3 MIRACLE WORKER being one of those one that can race on or near the lead without a need the lead type finds themselves back at the claiming level, the N2 level of their highest recorded figure to date with the place finish last September.

#4 PARKWAY has a tricky task as well cutting back to a sprint though one that does seem to prefer the one turn distance that noted for their most recent in the money finishes and higher figures. With that said this circuit course and distance has been the plan for them not only with the start back on 12/13 though has been entered a few times since most recently scratched from a $30k N2 on 1/26 and could be a sign of confidence running here instead for the higher tag.

The change in class appears key for #8 PLAUSIBLE DENILE one that has been a consistent type throughout their career and not always in the right place to compete for the top spot with the series of higher allowance races, they still earned their keep picking up checks and the drop at this point looks key to regain some confidence.

Oaklawn Race 8

Post Time 4:19 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#6 ARCHIE THE GIZA should be sitting on a peak effort in this second start off the layoff and fitness wheeling right back in this event. In the General MacArther stakes they were not only giving up recency but taken out of their runstyle asked contest the pace, typically and off the pace tracking type – another sign with those tactics used they were looking for fitness and should have it here. ARCHIE THE GIZA presents upside today over common rival #10 SIR GREYLIND the Gen MacArther place finisher one that with their runstyle must work out a trip and finding a different group and race shape then back on Jan 4 when they had the outside draw.

#9 CALL ME FAST could be clever making a belated return to Oaklawn Park. They turned in two wins in three starts back in the first part of 2023 and tough to fault the off the board in the other race noting that was the Essex (G3) stakes event with a higher race par. Since then and the barn change CALL ME FAST has held their form for J. Sharp and scratched from a pair of recent conditional allowance events at the FG could suggest intent showing up in this circuit at a similar level and higher purse structure.

#4 MACKMAN brings in current form and figures that fit on par keying off the allowance form closing out 2024. Those race and leading into this meet on 12/13 could have had them “over the top” with three big new top efforts in short duration – something that could be noted with #8 ONTHESTAGE today. That brought out the 43 day freshening for MACKMAN into the 1/25 race and now a second off could return to those better races.

Arrieta takes over on MACKMAN as Torres sticks with #5 GOLDEN GLIDER up in class off the recent win. As an individual they held back class from graded stakes effort though not quite up to the winning task finding their confidence and the way back to the winners circle with the class relief during the summer series of races at GP as well as the starter allowance in December.

Norm Casse returns with #3 AWESOME AARON one that is still questionable around two turn though had a complete EX – EXCUSE with the trip trying the two turns three weeks and part of that adversity at the break where they expect to be on the lead here and likely with the rail draw to keep #1 WOODCOURT with pace pressure.

Oaklawn Race 9

Post Time 4:51 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 ROCKET SANDERS could be sitting on a peak effort and flying under the radar as they make their second start of the meet. The race last month should assist on fitness not asked for their best (NO_PUSH) last after chasing a Fast early pace. They moved up with the much needed class drop last season and find a similar par from those races here.

#12 CLEAR ECHO earned a follow from the effort at this level two weeks ago with the WIDE CLOSE following a SLOG and wheels right back in this spot. The used the racing and a rider change last season ultimately pulling off the 51-1 upset maiden win in April.

#3 SWEET FANTASY also second off and a lot of changes for this race making their statebred and claiming class debut. While those changes should move them up and some fitness they lacked stick and drifted out last month while racing in the rain last month and granted its only been three weeks still lack a published work since.

The change in class and a potential for a Fast early pace should all around assist #8 WHERE’S RANDY one that is a deeper closing type and in form out of the higher level, par and purse allowance races holding their own – still require a more assertive hand with the right trip and a fair race track with that potential belated run. A similar type trip is noted for #11 CHEZ WHIZ upgraded at this level two weeks ago and responded with a place finish though had a different race shape than the projected dynamic here.