Handicapping Analysis
Mon February 17th, 2025

Emily's Analysis

Oaklawn Race 1

Post Time 12:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#6 OPEN FLAME presents as the horse to beat, they have consistently recorded the higher figures in the field and hold the route experience that many lack. That should create every advantage here to clear the maiden condition.

#7 ACTIN' UP finds class relief making their seasonal return and the key change to step forward here. Like many in this field they will also stretch out in distance for the first time though going back to the visuals from November at RP both the drop and added ground could suit this individual.

#1 CHAPTER AND VERSE could find today's conditions favorable and with the sprint speed show in the first few starts paired with the rail draw and stretch out in distance, they should be looking to control the pace up front and from there a threat to go gate-to-wire. This could be the time and place for a top effort noting the claim from the November debut, a race with a similar par to today's event and since that claim has run at this higher MCL level and much higher par than today's event.

Oaklawn Race 2

Post Time 1:06 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

A couple of barns here with a couple of horses and keying off the Sweezy pair: #2 HAYES STRIKE and #3 UNSTABLE PRINCE. The class drop comes into play for HAYES STRIKE in this second start of the cycle and off the claim. They can be upgraded from the 1/5 allowance not only with the higher class though not the ideal TACTIC- and course as they NO_HANDLE and took KICKBACK impacting their ability to compete on the day. Typically a deeper closing type, though the change in class should allow to show more tactical speed, the type of trip that was key with the 11/24 win. UNSTABLE PRINCE does not hold as much of a class edge in comparison though comes into this race in-form and overall played at the right level for their abilities on this circuit.

Ingrid Mason also shows up with a pair and while #4 LIONS NOT SHEEP is overall lighter they have shown they can pop with a big race from time to time though more consistent with #9 J P RACE first off the claim and off a win under a similar par with the slightly higher claiming level last month with the connections waiting out their time before running here for $20k.

Oaklawn Race 3

Post Time 1:39 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#10 WOWSERS had a longshot look despite the step up in class last month coming off a TROUBLE trip back in November at CD, though that was cut short right from the start stumbling/TROUBLES+ out of the gate. To their credit they showed interest making a MOVE over a course with a lot of kickback on a colder day. They will return here in MCL company, a level they have been competitive at in the past and appear intent with that change today.

#5 H M LEGACY also returns with the change in class and first time in for a claiming tag. With that said, they ran under a similar par/purse for the debut last June at DEL a very credible showing on the day making a WIDE MOVE and continued to GALLOP+ after the wire, a sneaky BTL effort as the only horse in the field to make up ground.

#9 AIR FORCE THUNDER is the wild card here one hat has back numbers and class to fit on par and some upside from the recent trips though must step back up all around. This could be the time and place second off as that appeared the intent back on 12/11 and while the outcome far from ideal they were a massive X_FLOW upgrade as part of the Very Fast early pace. With the fitness three weeks ago and showing up on this circuit back on the dirt and shorter without a significant drop could be the right changes and off the recent finishing positions should present longer odds here.

Oaklawn Race 4

Post Time 2:11 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

If #4 CEEPEEGEE shows up with a top effort this is the horse to beat in this race. Class wise they will find a big change, though the right change for their abilities as one that has shown run though racing in tougher spots since the maiden win the second start of the juvenile season.

#7 LEND IT TEWMEY looks well intended claimed back last November under similar N2 claiming conditions and given time and the race last month protected in allowance company at Sam Houston showing interest while racing in a massive downpour. The bring in tactical speed that should fit today's race shape and at the least complement their stablemate #1 AIR IT OUT one that finds a similar level from the race just 10-days ago though a step up in race par and returns a step up number wise with that in play.

#2 QUARRYMEN had a look coming off the two month freshening last month and turned in a competitive race, one that could be upgraded from the running line and finishing position as they had TROUBLE_S and made a CLOSE through TRAFFIC. #8 IT'LL DO can also be upgraded from that 1/26 common race though a different trip a X_FLOW upgrade as part of the early pace and a bigger flow upgrade (X_FLOW) from the 1/5 event starting off the form cycle and should be on a peak third off effort.

Oaklawn Race 5

Post Time 2:43 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#7 MARTINI BLU brings in current form for the third start of the season and back to claiming company. They appeared to need the race off the layoff on 1/4 though gained fitness part of the early pace that carried on 1/26 – a trip that was less than ideal from the poor start and in running TROUBLE playing a role in the outcome. The outcome noted as #1 ESPIONAGE was DQ for the incident and from place, a call that was controversial and also fits right back following a similar race-to-race pattern in this third start of the season. Both horses along with form this year have tactical speed without sitting as need the lead types to work out a trip in today's race shape.

The race shape should assist the former ESPIONAGE stablemate #13 DUEL MONARCHY currently on the outside looking in from the AE though would just need one to run. #9 WESTERN COMMAND also with a tracking runstyle and class relief as they make their belated return for a second start this season. #8 ALGEBRA could also sit a similar trip and one to keep in the mix at double digit odds.

Oaklawn Race 6

Post Time 3:15 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#9 ENSORCELL showed run on debut in September in what appeared to be a prep and off that race stepped forward number wise with the WIDE trip in November and appeared pointed to this meet and route distance on opening day. That was cut short with the trip and in running TROUBLE while taking KICKBACK and upgraded when returning on 1/5 was out of luck there as well as a case could have been made for a GATE scratch as their nextdoor neighbor acted up and missed the break making a X_WIDE MOVE and based on the two recent EX _ EXCUSES and the visuals from the first two races while coming back today with a rider change and blinkers on we could see the best from them here.

#6 CALAMITY turned in a winning race for the level making a WIDE MOVE on 12/29 presenting a look on this circuit on 1/26 however found a subtle trip and against the race shape with the top three all forwardly placed to play a role in the outcome and upside here.

Keying off the common races at WO for both #2 RUSH TO GLORY and #4 PLAISIR D'AMOUR both showing interest and off the trips perhaps some upside to PLAISIR D'AMOUR of the pair especially on 10/26 a less than ideal trip (TACTIC-) with ground loss/WIDE and race shape Very Slow early and late and still turned in a strong GALLOP+

Fellow 4yo #3 SONGMAKER could pop up as well the debut back last April was a solid field and figure that fits on par though since has had the layoff lines and a scratch from a higher $100k MCL event last May that might suggest some class weakness still unproven on that front.

Oaklawn Race 7

Post Time 3:47 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The early pace could be more contentious than it appears on paper and noted for ML favorite #4 GEWURZTRAMINER a confirmed front runner. Part of that early pace could include #5 JUILIARD stretching out from the recent sprints and belated return to the route distance. A distance that was assigned for them starting out their career and brings in buried form in this third start of the season with a competitive 4th place run under similar conditions off the layoff followed up by a complete EX – EXCUSE last month with adversity start (SLOG, TROUBLE_S) to finish (TROUBLE WIDE) and NO_PUSH late.

#11 SILVER HEIST could also find the right race shape for their needs to compete for the top spot. They have benefit from favorable setups in the winning races as well as a favorable ground SAVED trip coming off the layoff to start the year on 1/4 followed up by a less than ideal trip from the rail three weeks later playing a role in the outcome on 1/25.

Oaklawn Race 8

Post Time 4:19 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 FRIAR LAURENCE finds the class relief for this race and one that has held their form and figures since the claim in November and should move back up with today's group though lacking any overall edge as the assigned ML favorite. The number could be a little short on #8 HIGHER STANDARD though of the two presents upside coming back from the BOS BLANKET finish returning from the layoff last month and finds themselves under similar conditions here and with the front wraps added for the January race, a change to look for on the track.

#4 LUNDBERG was claimed during this meet last year and going back to last season was competitive under similar claiming conditions and even for trainer A. Hernandez. They needed time and following a pair of layoffs found the right place to remain protected and compete with the connections trying similar on 1/4 though not quite on the allowance level and compromised with the race shape and outside post thy come back today to the claiming condition though not a severe drop that would hold reservations.

#10 CHIPOFFTHEOLDBLOCK has back numbers and class with Oaklawn form to compete here. Their return last month showed run with a less than ideal trip could benefit from the race all around and move to an outside post. Eramia has been on the colder side this meet though has had success with this horse in the past and could be the one to get on track and if nothing else should as the ML and prior off odds suggest the price compensation should be there.

Oaklawn Race 9

Post Time 4:51 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#6 WILDNCRAZYNIGHT turned in a BTL effort in the Renaissance Stakes coming off the layoff last month earning a follow right back into this stakes event. They had adversity giving up recency as well as in running and to their credit they finished as part of the top four together at the wire and right off the heels of the 1-5 favorite winner, Kale's Angel.

Common rivals #7 I GOT GAME and #9 INNOVA show up in this spot after running 1-2 in the 1/12 FG allowance last out. There was minimal change in running order noted with the BOS winner INNOVA and perhaps against I GOT GAME making a WIDE MOVE for place. Both runners worth the try at this level though lack any edge as the projected top two betting choices.

The class test comes into play for others in this field including #3 HOLA JOEY one that showed ability on debut with a BTL winning type effort and from there paired up wins and improving speed figures. While this is a class rise the class rise for many of the others is also noted and a lateral change in that case.

Oaklawn Race 10

Post Time 5:23 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 PLINKO CHIP earned a follow off the debut and from the WIDE trip place finish returning from the layoff for the second start and place BTL effort on the day. With another outside post coming back two weeks ago they stalked WIDE behind the eventual winner She's A Dreamer. PLINKO CHIP finished behind common rival #6 CALL SADIE, the longer odds of the two on the day though going back to the analysis had some upside form the debut, a debut where she was heavily supported by the public to the tune of 5-1 from the 15-1 ML.

Going back to the common race from 12/22 like PLINKO CHIP #12 AUNT DIXIE with the outside post was compromised at the draw and from the TROUBLE_S forced to make a RUSH into a Fast early pace and played a role in losing ground late and a role in the winner, Caliente Star making their run from off the pace to win by open lengths and one worth a follow as she is scheduled to run earlier this race weekend.

#5 ALOHA BABY is the most established in this field and reasonable as the is the only mare in the group and just one of a few older runners in a field of mostly sophomore fillies. ALOHA BACK takes a step up from the recent higher MCL event though upside form that trip/TACTIC- and TROUBLE from the rail and while tougher to endorse with confidence on the win end, the longer odds are appealing enough to keep in the mix.

#9 DOUBLEDADDY ISSUES also one of the older runners, the 4yo filly making their debut here. She had had some setbacks clearly making this belated debut and the works this year noting a gap in the published series from late December until late January though recorded a bullet from the gate on 2/8 and sometimes the times look better on paper than visually though not the case here that was a crisp move she showed natural gate speed and recorded the time within herself and still running past the wire.