Handicapping Analysis
Sat March 8th, 2025

Emily's Analysis

Oaklawn Race 1

Post Time 12:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

With recent recorded efforts and figures #9 AMAZING SUCCESS is the clear horse to beat. Their tactical speed also should secure a favorable trip in this field, though does have a question as far as timing wheeling back in just one week for this race and for a horse this season that has had more time between starts and must show they can repeat a top effort under today's changing conditions.

#10 ATTA PARTY could be right there in terms of numbers keying off prior seasons and progressive efforts this year. They return from a WIDE trip first off the claim and with 34 days since the effort last month. They are more than capable in this field and on value an alternative.

Former stablemate #8 PEACE DOG will make a belated second star this season returning under similar conditions to the race back in January finishing behind AMAZING SUCCESS the PERFECT trip winner on the day. Going back to that race PEACE DOG the favorite – perhaps not ideal in that role off the bench – though today should see the odds flip-flop on the pair. N. Juarez taking over could suggest further intent as a live rider for this barn.

#3 HOPPIN JOHN is also a contender as an individual however closer to a closer trip must be considered especially on the win end at shorter odds and the complexion of this field that could allow rivals #6 YOU VEE CEE and #11 CHOCTAW ZIP a first run and even longer shot #12 BLAME J D one that has not run some of their faster races yet this season though could have been a function of timing and more specifically class running in higher allowance races protected against statebred company with some adversity in the trip last week and even open company last month.

Oaklawn Race 2

Post Time 1:03 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#11 STUDENY presents value to take a swing with in this race with the changes coming back today – changes that should suit this individual. They will return in MCL company the noted class relief as well as the distance change stretching out, a runner with a longer frame that should not have any issues with the route today.

#12 SPEECHLESS has recorded some of the higher figures in this field, numbers that appeared to translate when they dropped in to MCL company last month and supported by the public with those factors in play. While a little more could have been expected, there were some question with the distance change cutting back to a sprint (especially at shorter odds) and could be dismissed here and rebound at the same time.

#10 STONINGTON has been consistent at this $30k MCL level keying off the trip back on 12/14 projecting to IMPROVE and did just that with the place finish last month making first run and getting run down as the race slowing late by Tango Mike Mike. They will be tested with others taking the class drop though has that consistency form and the ability to pass horses, something that could be key with established runners that have shown the tendency to race on or near the lead or stretching out in the case of #9 MAGIC MOVER taking both the drop and stretch out here. On the noted when it comes to pace if there is that early contention #7 AUDAX MINOR is a longshot to win though a solid late kick to pick up horses late and a chance to work into the number.

Oaklawn Race 3

Post Time 1:36 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#4 WIND OF CHANGE fits as the favorite given their current form and figures along with the class drop to move them up naturally with a runstyle to fit today's race shape. Further intent should follow with C. Torres taking back over. Some intent could also follow #10 MID DAY IMAGE taking the drop for this race and Santana aboard. The connections had entered at Oaklawn a couple of times this season with intent to run here and make the belated return to the dirt.

#11 KNICKS STORY will pick up C J McMahon a live rider for these connections and also could be live coming back in this spot second off the claim. They were claimed under similar conditions back on Jan 4 – favored on the day despite coming off a layoff and broke SLOG and making a MOVE despite coming up short to the public expectations. These connections wheeled right back and protected three weeks late and not given time, 41-days returns to claiming company and a top effort has them back in contender territory.

The Jan 4th race has held form with horses returning from that event in the races this season something to carry for #7 AXTON one that could be under the radar out of that race - competitive with a WIDE trip. They are another with some intent on timing wheeling right back second off this cycle and subtle flow upgrade making a WIDE RUSH into a Fast early pace from the race last Friday – a race that could serve as useful conditioning to compete today.

Oaklawn Race 4

Post Time 2:08 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 ETERNALLY GRATEFUL also fits these eligibility conditions though still questionable at the route distance. While secured the route win back in December those circumstances allowed for them to establish a "LONE" front end trip with a Very Slow early and late pace, a less likely dynamic with this group.

#6 ANTIGRAVITY had some question marks with the longer route distance coming off the layoff last month though should provide fitness coming back for today's distance and intent all around for this circuit and with Torres remaining with the call. #7 ICARUS follows a similar second off pattern to move up despite 2/14 outcome, the distance might have had the best of them despite holding place was starting to lose ground late on PERFECT trip winner #10 CASHMEUP one that had the recency edge on the day to see the tables turn this afternoon.

Oaklawn Race 5

Post Time 2:39 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#8 KING ANTHONY appears race ready and lands here unable to draw into a clear N3 event last Friday. The class change is paired with current form, a competitive B- effort off the bench on 1/18 and wheeling back in two week after racing the rain and poor WEATHER impacted track conditions (likely the reason for the front wraps) that saw then lunge out of the gate and chased WIDE after.

A case can be made for both of the D. Jacobson runners as #1 SYNTHESIS brings in current form moving up steadily into this third start of the cycle whereas #10 FORT WARREN find the change in class for this belated second start of the season and where Santana lands opening up a live call for apprentice A. Poston

#4 GO WEST wheels back to make their second start off the layoff and will need to show more than the 1/31 start, however on the day might not have had intent with the time off and the race won by their stablemate Bourbon Heist as the legitimate favorite. GO WEST had projected to show speed based on that race shape and the SLOG and passive TACTIC- along with the WIDE position kept them from that and could see the change here.

Oaklawn Race 6

Post Time 3:10 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#6 COPPER ECHO has back number and back Oaklawn sprint number that fit on par and overall fit at this N2 claiming level. The connection for those races from their days in the Asmussen barn and today will pick up jockey K. Asmussen a rider already with a win for Mason. While it would have been encouraging COPPER ECHO on a quicker return than the two months since the January race they present some upside from that event with the WIDE trip and could have been the case inside runners had the positive portion of the track profile.

The other Asmussen connection start #9 SWEET AS SIN one that looks to require the class DROP from their recent series of races, whether this is enough is another question their lone win back in October earned a figure on par, though with a lower race par.

#8 PARKWAY moves to an outer post for this race and appeared racing SAVED with KICKBACK was not their ideal last month still showing overall interest despite the adversity and appears no worse for the wear back in three weeks and with Santana. That leaves Bejarano to take over aboard #2 CEEPEEGEE coming back from the place finish at this level last month. #7 ORE MINE also from that 2/16 common race and should be peaked as their third start of the cycle and fitness from the WIDE DUEL last out. With that said at top effort is required and does not, based on the ML, appear to offer much when it comes down to price compensation.

Oaklawn Race 7

Post Time 3:41 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

This race should present value and alternatives to both #1 EASTSIDE COOL and #4 THE THUNDERER two horses coming off favorable trips in their most recent starts. #5 ETHEREAL ROAD makes their return and has been compromised with the pattern of layoff lines since last summer and more recently with the race shapes in the two starts this season. The change in dynamic should allow for them to run their race and the change in class to further assist placing them where they can compete.

The change in dynamic, tactics and trip could assist #7 BACKGROUND as they return here in a second start of the season. Certainly more appeared expected from the prior efforts including local starts and in the opinion of the public as the third wagering choice. The intent could also be gathered coming back in less than 30-days and while they take a drop to run here from 50 to 40 it is not a severe drop and a similar purse structure especially considering these are connections that will drop if necessary to win while noting this one was claimed back in November for $32k.

A case can be made for both #8 SITTIN ON GO and #10 AMERICAN BLAZE in this spot as two different horses. SITTIN ON GO returns from the long layoff and a legitimate EX – EXCUSE closing out 2024 at MTH with the connections opting to scratch from a conditional $20k event on 2/24 to run here for the higher $40k tag and can utilize Santana today, a change from that prior start. #10 AMERICAN BLAZE has the edge on recency from the two and fits on their best day with an adaptable runstyle to suit today’s conditions. They will give up local experience – SITTIN ON GO with the three races from prior seasons – though like others some intent given the placement and shipping in at the same time.

Oaklawn Race 8

Post Time 4:12 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

This is a race with many that have shown run in spots and for the experience to carry at the same time the door is open for a new face and would include both of the FTS with #1 TITANIUM MAN one of two S. Asmussen runners and #7 MONEY GAME for B. Cox, both barns capable with this type of runner on debut this time of year. (The other S. Asmussen runner #10 TAP INTO THIS makes a very belated return and from an EX closing out at SAR might need a race and at the least needed to see more from them in the return works with a short projected number)

In terms of the runners with experience #2 SHEPHERD wheels right back from a solid/B place finish behind a live returning runner Clever Again. SHEPHERD has shown run and improved with each race this season and enough to support again. Class could still be a question on the win end for #3 BROTHER TONY perhaps more of one for underneath, though a ROUTER with the foundation and does find a change from the recent starts while in against older rivals, a change to straight 3yo company for the first time this year.

Santana looked to have some options in this field and lands here one of those being second time starter #9 KAVANAUGH training well enough in the morning to put forward a top effort though still a class question, likely others in this field.

#4 FANATICAL earned a solid figure on debut chasing behind a solid maiden winner in Gunmetal for their debut on 12/26 and caught a STRONG group last month at AQU. Prior to the 2/7 race the connections had the intent to run at Oaklawn entered back on 1/25 the race #8 ZAT'S THE ONE returns from to stretch out here from favorable trips this far and similar figures/class from that pair.

Oaklawn Race 9

Post Time 4:48 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#7 SHE CALLED appears well intended and live returning from the layoff and back to Oaklawn Park. She debuted was initially scheduled to debut at SAR in the summer of the juvenile season before showing up with a game effort taking a tough beat as the BOS in March and validated that effort with improved number and win in her second start. That race a potentially taxing effort especially when including a big effort first out played a role in the May allowance outcome and the regrouping that followed the series of allowances after.

#10 NUIT MAGIQUE also took some setbacks to a debut though made it count with the win first out. She was well-prepared off the works though still had to show run and class to overcome a less than ideal break (TROUBLE_S RUSH) making a WIDE MOVE to take the lead and clear to the wire. A repeat effort has her on par with this level and group and still lightly raced for a move forward if possible.

#8 ROMAN GRACE could have been a little short with the layoff returning at this level back in January though overall visuals still question the class level for her abilities. With that not a definite and the prior efforts and speed figures from last spring to lean on this would be the time and place for her to show up and show where she fits and the double digit ML is fair in this case.

Oaklawn Race 10

Post Time 5:25 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 THORPEDO ANNA returns from the layoff to make her seasonal debut and a favorable spot returning to Oaklawn, a similar pattern and timing form 2024 to build off going into the rest of the racing season. She has enough foundation from the return works to come in race ready and the class edge where even if she is not ready to run her best race, she is still within herself to contend here.

#3 JODY'S PRIDE could present the biggest threat with the intent shipping in and one that has held her own in graded stakes company including some G1 events going back to the juvenile season. This makes her second start of the cycle from a gam effort to finish in a blanket sprinting at GP, a notable effort as that was her 7th different track and surface in as many starts as she ships in her looking to transfer her game once again.

#2 ALPINE PRINCESS was stick chasing behind a Very Slow early pace and eventual flow-aided winner longshot #5 RECHARGE in the Houston Ladies Classic (G3) last out. The race dynamic should change here and suit ALPINE PRINCESS with other front running types including #4 WILD BOUT HILARY another flow-aided winner taking the Bayakoa (G3) last month.

Oaklawn Race 11

Post Time 5:57 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#11 TOP GUN TOMMY leads off the Jacobson par and with current form and figures along with the draw to suit today’s race shape. They will return for a second start of the season with three works since the 2/8 return to keep up fitness and local rider Santana taking over. Their stablemate #1 PRESSURE should present value and a another look back at the level where they landed on 1/19 some upside from that trip racing X_FLOW and track conditions that did not suit all horses with colder temperatures and heavy kickback and eventual winner, #7 RUSSIAN TO WIN was able to avoid racing forward and outside horses.

#10 EL DIABLO ROJO has been consistent this season and returning from a slight freshening, the 41 days since the 1/26 starter allowance, a race that saw a change in runstyle to contest the pace and that impacting more than the slight brush of contact late. They should return to a tracking runstyle and in good hands with Torres taking over for that trip, a tracking trip similar to #5 SUMMER SPLASH taking a step up in class without much price compensation, though in form to make that move reasonable to the connections; #3 LIGHTNING STRUCK also in top form and recording consistent figures that sit in line with #9 RAYMOND one that returned in January pairing top figures and will likely need to continue that pattern in this contentious group.

Santa Anita Race 1

Post Time 2:00 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#4 SIX MAGPIES fits today's race shape with their off the pace (Q4 Square) runstyle - a similar position to ML favorites #7 DEALERS SPECIAL and #5 ANDREADYTORUBLE with the added value attached. SIX MAGPIES comes in fresh and key class drop with the change from the OC$50k events showing run with trips going back to DMR and TROUBLE in the 1/5 start.

Santa Anita Race 5

Post Time 4:02 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 GIRLANTHELPIT when it comes to breaking SLOG and might be one of the worst gate horses on the circuit. While that does not project to change until proven otherwise, she has run and fits with this race. The early pace should be contentious to set up that run, though still requires a trip and "racing luck" something that requires price compensation.