Handicapping Analysis
Tue April 8th, 2025

Emily's Analysis

Keeneland Race 1

Post Time 12:00 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#8 INVICTUS looks strong working back around and making their return to the races for this belated second start. They landed in a KEY+ maiden race last summer at SAR and key with the extended sprint distance that day, a similar placement here to suggest further intent for live connections.

#10 SHEPHERD takes a cutback in distance and rider change following back-to-back TACTIC- trips. They have shown run (no red Keywords) since the debut and showed they can compete at this level keying off the B on 2/23.

ML favorite #2 CAMP HALE returns to the one turn distance following NO_LINE last out at TAM and from the first three starts tough to knock from consistent speed figures and B OptixGRADE to fit in that assigned role.

Keeneland Race 2

Post Time 12:32 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#2 MERITORIOUS brings in a longshot look following a similar pattern of runner to last October with Zealous Moon (49.95-1) breaking their maiden over the KEE turf. MERITORIOUS appears surface versatile off the visuals putting in a late move while catching a strong group on debut at GP on 3/1 (FOY Day) with open length winner, Disruptor and place finisher Shangrala Road running later on the card.

The other Mott, #12 EXCITE is logical with improving figures into this third start competitive in each.

The step up in circuit comes into play for the TP runners though #11 BERMUDA TRIANGLE should not get lost on the TURF a positive surface switch and #6 NO MO MOOLAH with a strong GALLOP+ on debut in what should be a solid PREP as they stretch out here though will note prior to the debut last month they were entered MTO in a mile MSW race at ELP last July.

Keeneland Race 3

Post Time 1:04 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The connections scratched #9 GUNMETAL from the Lafayette Stakes yesterday to run here instead. The change while not as confident in stakes company could provide the confidence going forward for this lightly raced 3yo with a near full season still ahead. They presented talent breaking their maiden on debut and despite coming up short as the favorite in the Swale for their second start, they can be given a flow upgrade for the effort.

Keeneland Race 4

Post Time 1:36 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Keeneland Race 5

Post Time 2:08 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

This is a bold statement but would not be surprised if there is as much talent and ability in this race as the feature stakes for this age division later on the card. It appears there are many runners in this field and a race to follow going forward.

As noted in Race 2, #2 SHANGRALA ROAD with an honest effort finishing behind a massive effort from Disruptor on 3/1. Training to the debut, SHANGRALA ROAD was working in company and best over older stakes stablemate, Catching Freedom. SHANGRALA ROAD looks just as well coming back from the debut with the experience going back to work straight away holding gameness and conditioning while showing up on this circuit for a two turn debut.

#5 CHILLAX also showing up from that 3/1 MSW GP race and one that also had been tested in the morning working (arguably best) with older stakes stablemate Parchment Party and most recently Sovereignty holding their own in that company while making a positive appearance to suggest they have plenty more to show.

Keeneland Race 6

Post Time 2:40 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

APPALACHIAN STAKES (G2):

Tough to deny trainer M. Casse holds the class of the field with #1 NITROGEN and #2 VIXEN proven graded stakes takes and both competitive in the BC Juvenile Turf (G1) last November validating those efforts with the pair of wins this year.

#9 FOXTASTIC will be tested to step up with the grades stakes and speed figure department though going back to the visuals last year she presented all TURF and will have that surface switch for the first time today.

Keeneland Race 7

Post Time 3:14 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

COMMONWEALTH STAKES (G3):

While some more logical than others, there is a reasoned case for every horse in this field and no result would be too surprising. That makes it tough to take the favorite, whoever that is and especially in the case of #2 MONTALCINO one that has been flattered with the recent races and outcomes and a big change/step up here to hold reservations at a shorter number.

The ML should hold on #10 EXTRA ANEJO as they return from the layoff and at KEE - not always the "live circuit" for S. Asmussen. In this case, it could be the right move for this horse with the 7f distance, something of a specialty and for this individual and lacking that distance option at OP or FG where they had been training. EXTRA ANEJO broke their maiden over this KEE course and distance back in October 2022 with a dominant (B+ NO_PUSH) on the day and has shown they can fire fresh with the distance not just from that race but also the 7f return last May in the CD allowance.

Keeneland Race 11

Post Time 5:26 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#3 PENTATHALON fits on speed figures and class returning in this allowance condition. their form and figures have been progressive coming back as a 3yo and can continue as a older horse. This spot looks favorable returning this year at the 7f distance - the pattern used in 2024. Their runstyle inside with tactical speed though also suit today's race shape and the tactics for L. Saez taking over.