Handicapping Analysis
Sun May 11th, 2025

Emily's Analysis

Hawthorne Race 1

Post Time 2:40 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

On class, #6 DESSERT FIRST has the edge making her first start this season at the $5k N3 level compared to the others in this field. The drop is less concerning as she has run for $5k in the past and appears placed where she can compete and with the change noted in form cycle, third off paired with the cutback in distance from the route last month with additional timing between starts.

Looking at the Surface/Distance Plot, she can work a trip tracking behind the first (Q1/3) flight and a strong finish in today's group with the large Q2 Square.

With that said there are things to support others such as #2 FAST N HAPPY with some of the highest recorded figures in the field. She took the drop to this level on 4/20 and moved up with some subtle adversity earning B-OptixGRADE on the day. When looking at Standard Plot (current form) FAST N HAPPY with a tactical first run position on DESSERT FIRST.

Tactically both #1 LITTLE SASS and #5 HONOR HIS HALF with the Q1 position should be setting the pace. The added ground along with the rail while LITTLE SASS lightly raced could still present a move forward and especially in this timing second off the layoff.

Alexander Bendezu back aboard LITTLE SASS today topped off all riders around the country picking up 3 wins (Lucy's Looking Left, Star of Kodiak and Midnight Mary) on Thursday.

#3 LUNARCHY and JOCELYN fit the longshot role in this race certainly on the win end, though bring in current form with LUNARCHY showing improving OptixGRADES with each start this season while JOCELYN third off the layoff returns to a sprint and keying off the PREP back on 3/30 from the layoff should be sitting on her peak effort.

Hawthorne Race 2

Post Time 3:05 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

With both #2 KIND KISMET and #3 MARY'S BOON returning from extended layoffs and overall lacking a strong edge on class, speed and pace while projected to take the majority of the wagering result could look toward others in this field.

The pace is a tougher read with the layoff lines and even with some change in distances from others in this field. The Simonovich pair fit complementary as #5 NADJAMEANSBUSINESS brings in early speed and should be on display once again while #6 CATHOLIC SUE can rate and finish (Standard Q4 Square) a trip from off the pace that is entirely possible. She steps up from the recent $5k N2 races though catching a higher par and route distance at TP and the route here 10-days ago first off the 62-day break should give her all the fitness and from that Fast early and Very Fast late race shape.

#4 JOYZELLA also with a solid late kick and form on her side as well. She find class relief with the change in claiming race and par from the higher $25k N2 event last week. The change in post could be a further positive moving off the rail from the most recent two starts and forcing their hand to contest the pace last week, a change in her runstyle.

Hawthorne Race 3

Post Time 3:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Starting the analysis with projected favorite #3 ANOTHER MYSTERY a horse that fits with all the credentials on class, speed - even their form from this year on par and especially back in the hands of O. Mojica, a rider that fits this horse perfectly. In fact if there were an award for best fitting jockey and horse they are in the nominations; their first time together was the Black Tie Affair stakes win in 2022 and from there six other times no worse than place with four wins over this course last year. The one “mystery” is the distance shortening up to the 7.5f for this race, something they have yet to do and notable if for nothing else to include when assessing value.

With ANOTHER MYSTERY as a solid closer, the opportunity (when looking at Standard) for #1 STREET WARRIOR to try and scamper clear from the rail and first turf as they show up off the layoff. While they are making that surface switch, they have shown “surface versatility” from the physical action standpoint.

There are others that can contest the pace and push the pace, though might try and track for first run. #5 LAMPLIGHTER JACK showed a different dimension in their most recent start though for this race they might not be effective with that tactic here and using their early speed as shown for today’s Plot position in Q1, try to maintain position, save ground and look for first run. #4 BAL A KAZOO can find a similar trip, while also lacking recency returning from the 190-day break, the prime hurdle.

That includes #6 TOWERING STORM one that must improve in the speed figure department and while they are lightly raced, still a 5yo older horse with positives showing back up on this circuit and the turf and from a lateral change in terms of par from the races on the year at FG.

Hawthorne Race 4

Post Time 3:55 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Looking at the Plot the first thing that jumps out is the Sun Contention paired with the high SpeedRate and shown visually with more than half of the field above the ParLine. From a race shape standpoint #7 WHISKEY OR WINE stands out with that dynamic looking for an off-the-pace trip as a Q4 Square. In terms of form, speed and class they fit on par and clever claim for the connections back in March for $8k at TAM. That B- effort was recorded under a same par as today and should hold fitness with the connections racing first off the claim for $25k and higher par last month with the WIDE trip as well.

In terms of pace, #5 VALIANT WEST also can find the right trip though coming out of the sprints and above the ParLine is another that will be keeping the pace honest without needing the lead. Their form over this course and distance stacks up on par noting they were running in a higher allowance class last season, though should get attention with the two recent speed figures. #4 T LAW falls into a similar Plot position and shape while brining in buried form and positive second off form cycle. Going back to last season they consistently held their form at this $25k N2 claiming level. While coming up shorter on the win end there was a B OptixGRADE effort recorded at the level and slightly higher par back on 6/23.

Hawthorne Race 5

Post Time 4:21 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

This race is one of the most competitive races on the card and a contender for most competitive on the day as there is not a horse in this group where a strong case can be made against.

#3 CHANNEL WON has their age and recent patterns of layoff lines as some concern while tough to know given their overall record competitive races over this course and distance and pairing up with J. Loveberry the two holding success under similar conditions over the FG turf sprinting early last year. The layoff return also noted for #8 GRAND HIDEAWAY one that otherwise fits and holds a win at this level course and distance from a common race with CHANNEL WON last year on 9/19, those two finishing 1-2 on the day.

#4 MAHONEY ROAD also with solid form over this course and distance going back to last year with consistent effort B/B- while at the higher N1 allowance company, par and purse. Intent should be in play coming back in this spot, second off the claim and clever timing with the WIDE trip and appeared PREP on 4/27 – a similar “second off” for cycle pattern assisted Temper Tantrum with the win on the turf on the Thursday card. They bring in tactical speed without being a need the lead type as the early speed should present from the inside (#2 WHATDOYOUTHINKMARK) and outside (#10 DINO’S DIXIE) where tracking close and looking for first run could be the key.

Looking outside that group to get creative: #9 YO DAWG comes into this race with the edge on form and recorded with competitive efforts this season at a higher par and fitness in this third start of the cycle. They are versatile to handle the shift back to the turf, the surface where they started out their career and in solid hands with Mojica sticking aboard. #1 JET FLIGHT is a bigger reach as they must improve while making jump up in class and just a second start, a belated second start on the turf, the surface of their debut – 8f MSW here in the summer of 2023. Number wise they have efforts that fit and in terms of current form also third off, progressive in this form cycle and a front wrap removal could present a sign of intent to look for here.

Hawthorne Race 6

Post Time 4:47 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The conditions of this race, a N2 in 2025 open up the condition where some could fit a N1 on the year with the layoffs and in that case could be taken as racing above conditions though exiting higher par events that is not necessarily the case here. That is noted for #6 CODE RUNNER with the efforts this season, looking at the Past 3 Runlines, a horse that has consistently recorded figures on par for today’s race while lacking “red” at the same time to support on current form. In terms of race shape, they should have an honest pace with the Sun Contention and 38 SpeedRate with their off the pace runstyle and Plot position as a Q4 Square.

#5 FAMILY TRADITION also looking for the first win on the year and making the change returning to the two turn distance for this race. They had some adversity on 5/1 with the SLOG, TROUBLE_S from the break and KICKBACK behind horses while showing some interest making a WIDE MOVE to note outside of the outcome. They could look to show more early speed in today’s race to avoid kickback again and based on the Plot position well above the ParLine sitting in a Q2 island.

#1 TWO COOKIE RULE brings in progressive form this season with the improving numbers and pair of place finishes under similar conditions and slightly higher par. The rail draw with the other Q1/Q3 runners must be considered on pace and trip with fair odds required on the win end. The longer odds should be in play once again for #8 FLYING SAMURAI and a legitimate longshot though brings in upside as trainer C. Ryan has allowed them to race into shape and while the Grades and speed figures are coded in “red” they lack any “red” in the OptixNOTES Keywords and in fact present an upgrade the STRETCH/PREP from 4/3 and X_FLOW in both the 4/13 and 4/24 races.

Hawthorne Race 7

Post Time 5:13 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

In terms of the FTS, #8 SEMPER PRIMUS makes a belated debut noting a scratch from back on 1/25 in a MSW event at OP at the time training holding their own with a stablemate called Oy Gevald one that picked up a pair of minor finishes including a show result behind, Cornucopian. That is noted as they reset and regroup on this circuit and with just two recorded works coming into this race though capable connections and the jockey trainer combination 2-for-2 this season both wins with Vegas Condo for today's ownership group, Doubledown Stables.

In terms of the jockey trainer combination, H. Robertson and J. Loveberry also with the 2-for-2 record (Miss Mikos and Pasta Salad Rhonda) as they return here with #10 THREE AFLEET for a belated second start. Going back to the debut last year, late in the season with the 10/10 debut a potential excuse with the TROUBLES+ as part of a chain reaction of contact at the break and the layoff that follow. They bring in a steady series of works with a combination of speed and stamina to get race ready. MSW returning from a 100+ day layoff at Hawthorne since 2020, 4 wins in 7 starts (575 win, 71 % ITM) with a $2.23 positive ROI.

The debut rider of THREE AFLEET, I. Hernandez shifts to stablemate #7 GABE'S CHOICE for their debut today. The work tab shows drills from last year to support the foundation for this initial start and also have a similar steady pattern with the spacing of the published works along with a mix of speed and stamina. I. Hernandez is also a live rider for this barn with prior success and noted on the Thursday card with a live runner in Shamen Sez nearly with the 41-1 upset over Purple Octopus as the race favorite.

As far as the runners with experience and from the 4/20 common race #1 TAUNTING making their layoff return that day might have been "given" the race with their stablemate Mondogetsbuckets the open length winner on the day. TAUNTING giving an honest B- effort to build off of finishing in a blanket for the minors along with #3 MELLIFLUOUS and #6 BRODY also might have required the race on both physical (TROUBLE-) and mental (GATE) fitness with that start under their belt.

Hawthorne Race 8

Post Time 5:39 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#3 ALADANTE is a longshot to make that type of case for here. They debuted on the turf late last year, a tough spot overall given the level of competition, the lack of experience first out and going the two turn distance while given no favors with the outside draw. That draw played a role in the trip breaking SLOG and racing X_WIDE with some subtle TROUBLE- and showing interest with a MOVE and number wise their highest recorded figure to date. That alone could suggest the turf their ideal surface while bringing in current form for this third start and intent with the form cycle improvements as shown on speed figures and in the OptixNOTES Keywords while also making a key rider change with journeyman A. Santos taking over today.

#2 LONE RETURN could be overlooked off the recent running line, finishing position and overall race record in this spot. They had a legitimate EX – EXCUSE between the stumble out of the gate (TROUBLES+) along with the layoff return timing. The surface also a noted change returning to the turf where they recorded some of their higher figures many of those races in MSW company and at the route distance.

While #4 BERKUS should appreciate the move back to the turf, they will get attention off the connections alone and still must step up while runners like #6 RED RIZZLER and #8 DYNO WAR should also look to step up with the TURF surface switch from the visuals in their races this season and slightly higher projected odds.

With Hi-5 wagering in the finale the M. Perez duo are longer shots to win with both holding figures on the grass from prior seasons to get in for a minor share and the change in class a clear step up keeping those odds on the higher side while numbers in line with both #7 DOUBLE BURN and #10 TEAM TROY.

Handicapping Analysis
Sun May 11th, 2025

Jim's Picks

Hawthorne Race 1

Post Time 2:40 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

6 Dessert First - 2/1 | 5 Honor His Half - 3/1 | 2 Fast N Happy - 5/2

A competitive bunch opens a solid Sunday card as any of my top three I feel can win. With the class drop and turn back in distance I'll look to 6-DESSERT FIRST as she runs for trainer Elias Lopez. The barn is having a good meet and the distance suits. Let's see if the class relief makes the difference today. 5-HONOR HIS HALF is the one with speed who has the potential to steal a race. She got a little breather after racing through the summer and starting here on opening weekend. If she can back things down on the lead she may be able to steal this one. 2-FAST N HAPPY chased in her last, running a good second in that spot. With the inside draw today, there's potential she shows speed once again and hangs around the entire way.

Hawthorne Race 2

Post Time 3:05 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

2 Kind Kismet - 8/5 | 4 Joyzella - 6/1 | 3 Mary's Boon - 5/2

This race in intriguing as the morning line favorite could be tough to figure out. 2-KIND KISMET seems deserving of the favoritism as she was good in her last three starts of 2024, breaking her maiden in a state restricted race at Canterbury last September. The drop seems steep based on price, but with the move to open company, and an impending purse reduction in Minnesota this summer, I think she is well spotted to win, and not be claimed. 4-JOYZELLA ran a good third in her last, showing speed and hanging around late. There's wasn't a ton of pace in that spot though and this is a quick turnaround. She fits and does race for the Illinois bonus. 3-MARY'S BOON broke her maiden on the grass but remains on dirt here as she returns off the layoff. She has worked consistently toward her return, with recent snappy drills over this Hawthorne dirt surface.

Hawthorne Race 3

Post Time 3:30 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

3 Another Mystery - 9/5 | 5 Lamplighter Jack - 6/1 | 4 Bal a Kazoo - 5/2

A quality grass bunch here as we will see if there's enough pace to close into. Looking on top to 3-ANOTHER MYSTERY as the nine-year-old graded stakes winner is still going strong. He loves this Hawthorne course and has been a great fit with Mojica in the saddle. Expect a solid effort once again. 5-LAMPLIGHTER JACK has speed and could potentially sneak away on the front end and never look back. The key to his race could be the presence of Street Warrior on the rail as he's the other potential speed threat. If loose, Lamplighter Jack may never look back. 4-BAL A KAZOO makes his first start of 2025 as he has had turf success over this course. He was a close second to Another Mystery here last summer and should be in a prime stalking spot today.

Hawthorne Race 4

Post Time 3:55 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

4 T Law - 10/1 5 Valiant West - 8/5 1 Bigfoot Sighting - 5/1

The distance is the key in here as we go two turns with a couple who could potentially show speed. Taking a price shot with 4-T LAW as he makes his second start of the meet and held his own while sprinting in his return last out. If the pace is contested early he should be able to wait until the lane and look to make his move. 5-VALIANT WEST will take action as he has been knocking on the door in recent starts. He's likely going to sit back a bit as well around two turns but should be running on in the lane. 1-BIGFOOT SIGHTING was a fine winner around two turn two back and ran well in the same race as Valiant West and T Law in his last. With the presence of rabbit-like Byword in here, I'm just not sure what the trip will be like for Bigfoot Sighting today.

Hawthorne Race 5

Post Time 4:21 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

3 Channel Won - 9/2 8 Grand Hideaway - 6/1 4 Mahoney Road - 3/1

A really good field of turf sprinters for the fifth. There's some pace in here to keep things honest as I'll look to the proven old man. 11-year-old 3-CHANNEL WON still seems to be going strong as he's a 15 time winner on turf. He will likely sit back early but should come charging in the lane. 8-GRAND HIDEAWAY has won seven times on turf, including a win at this level over this course here last fall. He has tactical speed and may sit a bit closer than Channel Won early. 4-MAHONEY ROAD is winless on turf, but has found the board in four of six grass starts. He's another with tactical speed as he may have to look to weave his way through traffic in the lane.

Hawthorne Race 6

Post Time 4:47 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

1 Two Cookie Rule - 4/1 5 Family Tradition - 7/2 6 Code Runner - 9/5

Can't knock either effort this meet from 1-TWO COOKIE RULE as he ran second to a solid racehorse in Danville in both starts. He figures to rate a bit closer early here as there's not much pace and the rail draw should benefit him as well. 5-FAMILY TRADITION will need pace to chase as he's likely to settle back early and rally in the stretch. He's found the board in half of his Hawthorne starts but is still looking for his first win over the track. 6-CODE RUNNER figures off his two starts but there's a little concern as he was a recent scratch from a race where he figured against better. He will take action in here as his barn has been hot this meet.

Hawthorne Race 7

Post Time 5:13 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

8 Semper Primus - 5/1 6 Brody - 7/2 1 Taunting - 9/2

This is a very challenging race as there are really no horses that can be tossed. Debuting for a barn that has been good in 2025 is 8-SEMPER PRIMUS as he gets Lasix for trainer Jimmy DiVito. He had a little gap in his works as he came over from Oaklawn to Hawthorne but his last two drills are solid and the price should be right. 6-BRODY was a good second in his last, stalking and running on late. He should get some pace to chase in here as he could benefit from the added sixteenth. 1-TAUNTING draws the rail as he had a tough break in his last but did show some run in the stretch. If he can get away better early, he figures to save ground and close in the lane.

Hawthorne Race 8 - PLAY OF THE DAY

Post Time 5:39 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

7 Double Burn - 9/2 **6** Red Rizzler - 4/1 **4** Berkus (FR) - 5/2

A large field closes the day in a turf sprint that appears to be lacking pace. If he takes to the turf, 7-DOUBLE BURN could be very tough as he showed speed in both starts and now comes over to Hawthorne. He as a good speed rider in Santiago aboard and may make the top and never look back. 6-RED RIZZLER has run some good grass races as he figures to settle early and close late. His last two on the dirt were solid as he figures to rate mid-pack early in here. 4-BERKUS is another that tries turf as he sprinted in his debut on the grass. He doesn't see to have a ton of early speed but looks like he can close with a rush.

Handicapping Analysis
Sun May 11th, 2025

Ron's Picks

Hawthorne Race 1

Post Time 2:40 PM CST

Analysis by Ron Uchman

5 Honor His Half - 3/1 | 6 Dessert First - 2/1 | 1 Little Sass - 5/1

5-HONOR HIS HALF looks like the only real speed in the race. She fought for the lead in her last start, her local debut, and still held on for second, beaten only a length. Can’t see anyone challenging her for the lead. She might take it all the way. 6-DESSERT FIRST turns back in distance while dropping many levels. Not sure why they ran her in allowance company in that last start but she’s a $5k claimer all day and she’s at that level in this spot. 1-LITTLE SASS finished third in her local debut. That was her first race since October. Runners from her barn often improve greatly in their second start after layoffs and they win 39% of the time. Would expect her to make her best move late.

Hawthorne Race 2

Post Time 3:05 PM CST

Analysis by Ron Uchman

3 Mary's Boon - 5/2 | 6 Catholic Sue - 9/2 | 1 Lions Law - 6/1

This race is filled with speed but think 3-MARY’S BOON might hold a slight advantage in that department, although she hasn’t shown a lot of it lately. But she is dropping in claiming price and into a non-winners of two. Seems likely to wake up. 6-CATHOLIC SUE might be the only one in the field that won’t display early speed. She’s turning back in distance after a third-place finish in her first start of the meet. She’s capable of displaying a good closing move which could be enhanced with a possible heated pace ahead of her. Love the tenacity that 1-LION’S LAW displayed in last when breaking her maiden. She truly vied for the lead every step of the way and still managed to eke out a nose victory. Have to appreciate that her barn in bringing her back at the right level. Know she won’t give up without a fight.

Hawthorne Race 3

Post Time 3:30 PM CST

Analysis by Ron Uchman

3 Another Mystery - 9/5 | 5 Lamplighter Jack - 6/1 | 2 From the Heart - 6/1

Multiple stakes winner 3-ANOTHER MYSTERY looks awfully tough in this spot. With nearly $900,000 in earnings this 9-year-old reeled off four straight wins here in 2024, including a couple stakes. Altogether, he won five of his seven local trips while finishing second in the other two. He’s had six drills since his last start in March. Rested and ready. Like top choice, 5-LAMPLIGHTER JACK has scored 12 lifetime victories, though most of his have been against lesser, though they liked him enough a couple years ago to try him in Grade 1 company. He came from off the pace to finish second in last but he has shown speed in most of his races and it’s that turn of early foot that makes him a possible threat in this spot. 2-FROM THE HEART might possess the biggest closing move. He has raced mostly in Texas and Oklahoma but he does find himself in the late mix more often than not. Makes his first start for this barn and they usually improve runners racing for them.

Hawthorne Race 4

Post Time 3:55 PM CST

Analysis by Ron Uchman

7 Whiskey Or Wine - 8/1 5 Valiant West - 8/5 8 Journey - 9/2

Not in love with any here so I'll take a flyer with 7-WHISKEY OR WINE. It's possible that he's racing over his head at this level. However, he's stretching back to a better distance to make his local debut after that one-race experiment sprinting at Tampa. 5-VALIANT WEST, the logical favorite, could easily win this. He's been in great form anyway and he's getting blinkers back on. However, he's always been more of a sprinter and hasn't fared too well in previous routes. Could be vulnerable. 8-JOURNEY could be sent right to the lead. He tired in his first race of the year but came back with an outstanding four-furlong drill. There is a chance that he could be leading throughout.

Hawthorne Race 5

Post Time 4:21 PM CST

Analysis by Ron Uchman

3 Channel Won - 9/2 10 Dinos Dixie - 4/1 8 Grand Hideaway - 6/1

Eleven-year-old 3-CHANNEL ONE just might hold the edge. He tired late in his first start since September back in March but he's been training well since. He's been a turf sprint specialist. Good tactical speed will keep him close early but it's his ability to finish well that makes him the selection today. 10-DINO'S DIXIE could be the best of the speed. He tired late in his first two races of the year but both were against tougher. He wired the field the last time he raced here last year. Might be able to do the same thing today. 8-GRAND HIDEAWAY, like top choice, owns decent speed but will probably wait until the stretch before unleashing his best effort. He outfinished Channel Won to score in a similar race last year. Wouldn't be too surprised if he did it again.

Hawthorne Race 6

Post Time 4:47 PM CST

Analysis by Ron Uchman

6 Code Runner - 9/5 1 Two Cookie Rule - 4/1 4 Wildwood's Warrior - 6/1

6-CODE RUNNER seems most likely. He split better fields in his first two starts of the year and now he's dropping to the lowest level of his career. There should be plenty of early pace which should help to set things up for his late run. 1-TWO COOKIE RULE has always run well here despite a case of seconditis locally. But he's dropping once more and escaping the shadow of hard-knocking Danville. Like that he's capable of running well on or off the pace. Could be a major player either way. 4-WILDWOOD'S WARRIOR was never involved in his last start but, if he fires today, he's likely to be among the early leaders. He was narrowly defeated two races back when taking on similar company.

Hawthorne Race 7

Post Time 5:13 PM CST

Analysis by Ron Uchman

8 Semper Primus - 5/1 1 Taunting - 9/2 2 Crecencio - 12/1

8-SEMPER PRIMUS might not sport fast drills but you know his barn will have him ready to rock. It is a bit surprising to see a $475k auction purchase make his debut here but this barn places their runners where they can win. 1-TAUNTING had a couple good races here last year. He was expected to improve in last, his first start of 2025, but he got into a ton of traffic trouble at the start and never really recovered. Runners from his barn often improve in their second start after layoffs. Guessing he'll bounce back with a strong effort in he can get a clean trip. 2-CRECENCIO is another first timer. His long series of drills, some of them quite fast, would seem to imply that he's ready for a top effort at first asking.

Hawthorne Race 8

Post Time 5:39 PM CST

Analysis by Ron Uchman

7 Double Burn - 9/2 **6** Red Rizzler - 4/1 **4** Berkus [FR] - 5/2

Obviously, you never really know how a race will play out until it does. 7-DOUBLE BURN has a decent turf pedigree but his barn, as great as they are in other categories, just hasn't had a lot of recent success on the lawn. But this gelding looks like the only legitimate speed in this race and he utilizes a rider that is always good on the front end. Has been racing at Oaklawn so this group could be a bit softer than those he's been facing. Has to be caught. 6-RED RIZZLER is in good form and he has raced well on grass. He has enough speed to stay within range of top choice. He might be the first to move if Double Burn runs out of gas. 4-BERKUS hasn't shown a lot since getting claimed by this barn but his recent races have been on dirt. He debuted on turf in Louisiana and, as a longshot, finished fifth of 11 in that maiden special, beaten only three lengths. His pedigree does say turf. He could be though for the teal of Rivelli and Loveberry.