Handicapping Analysis
Sun May 18th, 2025

Emily's Analysis

Hawthorne Race 1

Post Time 2:40 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#3 GUNNY SACK patient for this spot to debut in statebred company on the turf and from an open MSW race last Sunday. S. Gonzales/F. Kirby are a perfect 1-for-1 pairing up (since 2020) with Rainy Mountain this season coming off the layoff earlier this meet and overall with FTS the barn 2/16 (25% ITM) though the sample overall recording speed figures on par for today's level and field. That stat noted as it carries to #6 DRIPPING SPRINGS one that does have a gap in the published series from mid-April to early May whereas GUNNY SACK has a more consistent pattern. F. Reyes has had some live mounts for this barn and in MSW company last year primarily with a runner called Laly, showing early speed with that runner and similar could be projected here.

The lack of early speed is noted for many of the established runners including #1 MISSED OPTION one that fits with current form and figures and should handle the turf while holding fitness cutting back from the route and extended sprint distances. #5 LONE RETURN has shown route speed though also with current form wheeling right back and a rider change with S. Gonzalez elsewhere; which also carries to #4 GOOD YEGG and #7 HOLDEN MICHAEL making a belated return to the TURF though a step up in class for this surface switch. #2 JAKES CHANNEL also has shown more route speed and while some of their higher figures have been recorded on the turf those number still sit on the lower end of today's par.

Hawthorne Race 2

Post Time 3:05 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 GLOBAL EMPIRE brings in current form and conditioning for this third start off the layoff to move up from the recent finishing positions. They find some further changes in terms of race shape, the shift to a Fire, higher SpeedRate should assist their runstyle. Trip could also be assisted with the rider change to A. Santos, the rider aboard for the two wins in as many starts last year.

That race shape is noted for #4 CHAOS REIGNS in this spot and as the projected favorite. They are valid in that role as an individual though expect to find pace pressure with others in this field including #2 EUCLID AVENUE expecting to be more forward today, a change from two weeks ago when not asked for early speed. While #3 DOUBLE THUNDER and #5 LAVENDER EARL also can show early speed, the outside draw could also move #6 CATEGORY TEN into the first flight. They are not a need the lead type and hold runstyle versatility (something shown on the Plot and Grid) though often effective when on or near the lead.

Hawthorne Race 3

Post Time 3:30 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Like in the opener, S. Gonzalez might have had some options and sticking with #2 DIXIE PENNY in this race. While coming off a win, this is a step up in class though could be a confident move with progressive form this season, racing in a spot where they can run protected and even though this is a rise in par from the recent starts going back to last year she has been able to compete under similar par with the starter races last spring at Oaklawn.

DIXIE PENNY has tactical speed though not a need the lead type, something key for today's race shape with four of the seven runners sharing the EP runstyle and showing a "bunched" up Q1/3 where trip appears key to outcome and finds the in-form #6 LADY HELENA looking for that same tracking trip with finishing ability. With a clean break #4 DIAMONDS JOY one that can be not as winning to pass horses pushing the pacesetters #1 SHE'S INTHEARMYNOW and #3 DELIZIOSA.

The bunched up scenario could assist #7 RAINY MOUNTAIN to pick up horses late, something of a tougher task looking at the Plot position further away from the others deep in Q4 though running on late. #5 ECHO DREAMER not a need the lead type as positioned in Q2 though above the ParLine should play a role in keeping the early pace honest.

Hawthorne Race 4

Post Time 3:55 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#3 BRIT BLITZ will give up recency though a look back under similar conditions picking up where they left off last year with the BTL effort over those course and distance in October. The trip (TATIC_ SAVED ROOM) played a role in the outcome to their credit still picking up the show award and B- OptixGRADE. As far as the lack of recency, the barn has had overall success with layoff runners with I. Hernandez aboard ($26% win, 68% ITM with positive $.16 ROI - numbers that are almost identical off 100+ day layoff on the turf) and this season two of those wins albeit on the main track sprinting with Shake Up and Papa's Nico Boy.

Their stablemate #5 COMMISSIONER OSCAR can be upgraded in this second start of the season in what appeared a PREP in the 4/13 return given a WIDE trip and NO_PUSH handling playing a role in the outcome and figure where they might not have had intent on the day with their stablemate, Caught Off Guard finishing show at slightly shorter 10-1 odds of the two and flattered with Runaway Charlie coming back from their place finish to win an allowance (5/1) next out.

#2 REMEMBER THE FEAR will make a TURF debut in this spot, a surface they should handle based on their physicality. They will also make the class drop and circuit switch while still on a quicker turnaround once again, though number wise the races this season all consistent figure to fit with the others in this field. That includes the overall body of work for #7 PROFESSOR HIGGINGS bringing in current form stretching back out on the turf, their preferred surface/distance.

#8 SHTARKER unlike the other two on shorter rest returns for a seasonal debut and off the 224-day layoff. They bring in upside from the sophomore season, surface/distance local experience. They also showed improvement race to race to support upside coming back in the first start of the 4yo season.

Hawthorne Race 5

Post Time 4:21 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

The Third Chance Stakes is open beyond IL-bred fillies and mares though does not discount those statebred runners. #3 OEUVRE still holds status as the one to beat holding the title in this race the last two seasons with dominant B+ efforts in each. Today's par is higher in part to the open eligibility though that is not a "new" for her holding her own in open company stakes outside of this circuit and under a par and purse in line with today as well.

Fellow IL-Bred #5 BEEHIVE draws well for today's race and race shape with her ability to track the pace without needing the lead (trip that could be required for others) and has confidence under regular rider A. Centeno. Number wise she is lighter than others and must she can stack up on that front, though class is there and same with maturity where a new top effort is not out of the question with today's race just the second start of the cycle and of the 4yo season.

One only has to look as far as stablemate #2 PURR SEA to see how the M. Boyce runners can hold form and progress in the speed figure department. She also has the runstyle versatility, class and confidence with A. Santos the two a near perfect record with the three open length wins together in 2024 and photo outcome in the allowance last month at FP – that finish together with #6 SHARP HERO making her layoff return on the day and should appreciate the race and slight addition of ground while looking to hold her form back at Hawthorne.

The early pace should be contested with #1 MANAGING MISCHIEF along the inside and #4 GRAY LIGHTNING bringing in early speed where she is her best (and dangerous) on the lead with field high speed figures recorded last year as a sophomore at PRX that make her a threat on repeat. #7 YAMILE'S comes into this race lighter on speed figures where a contender case is tough to make on that front, though could come running late and pick up horses, she has ability in her own right though a tougher spot for her on the win end.

Hawthorne Race 6

Post Time 4:47 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 JOURNEYIST must run for the tag today to compete in this spot though does opt to run for the higher $30k as allowed. She fits on class and speed figures going back to the races from 2023 and even 2024 when looking for the turf and despite picking up the win held her form in tougher spot. She lands here where she fits and back with L. Colon, a rider that had success aboard in the past to suggest intent here.

Class is a lateral move for ***#6 ATMIDNIGHT*** coming back to Hawthorne for the first time since last summer when also looking for the grass and still a competitive effort on the day noting the SLOG/TROUBLE_S and strong CLOSE for show. Today's par is slightly lighter for *#3 WHAT'S TO DO* from the 4/25 OP event though a rise from the prior starts including the race par from the two turf races over this course last year.

Class is noted for that pair as the edge where as others in this field take the rise in class while other positives in the case of *#2 LOTTA ROSES* and *#4 APRIL'S GEM* with a positive STRETCH in distance while returning to the turf for this event. Class is subtle relief from prior turf starts for #8 EXCELERINA however current form is a bigger question mark based on the recent races.

Hawthorne Race 7

Post Time 5:13 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Looking at Standard (and projected value) **#8 ALYANAABI** has a pace scenario as a potential advantage on the front end to take this group gate-to-wire. They will make a very belated return to the route distance though going back to those route races from 2023 speed figures and class stack up on par. This could further be the time and place to pop with a top effort third off the layoff and lacking "red" the Past 3 Runlines.

As far as the speed (Circles) coming back to the field, that scenario assists the Squares: ***#2 ROCKET HOTSHOT*** moved up back on this circuit and in at today's claiming level. They should continue to hold form, and recency presents the edge over #6 IZEONDEC returning from the layoff, the first time in their career off a long break. They have the two longer works and a capable barn with the visuals in the paddock and clues on the board to add in this case

#4 LAND MARK DEAL had some tough luck last year though already put that behind them with the two wins this season. The win last month under a different claiming condition though a similar par and pace shape that that does hot have them too far out of it once again. The timing with 35-days off the win could be a subtle form cycle change though did find similar going back to February and win at MVR, a race with F. Reyes aboard, a rider that appears to have confidence with this horse.

Hawthorne Race 8

Post Time 5:39 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#6 NOT FALLING BACK appears to hold a class edge coming back as a 4yo with the change in class from the two MSW events last year to run first time for the claiming tag. They were intended for the turf on debut acing GREEN and TROUBLES+ making a RUSH while RANK into a Fast early pace. The experience presented an overall move forward closing out in June the second start with the noted WEATHER (light rain) and PRESSED on the lead through an honest pace, a pace that set up for stablemate, Even The Wind from off the pace.

The change in class also comes into play for ***#7 CRECENCIO*** for this second start and one that three weeks ago appeared to need the race day experience – GREEN while noisy in the paddock and played out similar on the track with the SLOG and appears no worse for the wear back in one week.

Class is closer to a lateral change as **#4 RAGNOW** returns from the pair of tight place finishes, B OptixGRADE efforts while still present in this maiden conditions. They will switch to the TURF, a surface that should not be an issue for them at all based on physicality and to hold their form and even in terms of trip as many others have show early speed to rate and finish with the fitness on their side.

#5 CASH APP MIKE should hold longer odds while necessary for them to step up on the level of their rivals while this would be the time and place for them to do so. They showed run last week shifting to this circuit and the turf with the key change in distance allowed to STRETCH out today. *#3 BEARS' D* also second off in what appeared a PREP earlier this month. They made a PRERACE+ appearance in the paddock though in running looked to need the start and not asked for their best – a new best that will be required here lighter than others so far while still capable of improvement.