Handicapping Analysis
Sun May 18th, 2025

Jim's Picks

Hawthorne Race 1

Post Time 2:40 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

3 Gunny Sack - 7/2 | 5 Lone Return - 3/1 | 2 Jakes Channel - 10/1

Open things up on the grass as there's no standout in here. Went to the first timer 3-GUNNY SACK for Kirby as he has a consistent work pattern toward his debut. I expect some early speed from him in a race lacking pack. 5-LONE RETURN has knocked on the door a few times while sprinting on the turf. He ran a good race against open company in his last and should close well in the lane. 2-JAKES CHANNEL makes his first start of the year as he is worth a look at a price. He figures to rate mid-pack early in here but should run on in the lane.

Hawthorne Race 2

Post Time 3:05 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

4 Chaos Reigns - 8/5 | 3 Double Thunder - 9/2 | 6 Category Ten - 5/2

Starter company in the second in a very competitive spot. A horse that was a good winner in his last returns as 4-CHAOS REIGNS should get a very similar trip to his last. He has tactical speed and can go but if Lavender Earl sends to his outside, then look for him to stalk and pounce in the lane. 3-DOUBLE THUNDER has never missed the board in eight Hawthorne starts. He should be sitting a few lengths off the early lead as he figures to take some action once again. 6-CATEGORY TEN is another that has been great at Hawthorne, hitting the board in 10 of 11 starts over the track. The distance suits as he drops in for the $15,000 tag in here.

Hawthorne Race 3

Post Time 3:30 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

2 Dixie Penny - 6/1 | 5 Echo Dreamer - 5/1 | 6 Lady Helena - 5/2

Shooting for a price in here as there's a few with some early pace. Hoping 2-DIXIE PENNY can rate and rally as she steps up off a good win in her last for a barn that always has theirs well spotted. She was a good claim for $5k two back and now gets to race protected. 5-ECHO DREAMER has been good in both races this year as she is another that figures to rally in the lane. She is 3 for 3 at Hawthorne and could continue that trend in here, while at a decent price. 6-LADY HELENA is another that has been fantastic on this track as she was a near miss against allowance runners in her last. With others in here with speed, look for her to sit back early and run on in the lane.

Hawthorne Race 4

Post Time 3:55 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

5 Commissioner Oscar - 4/1 | 3 Brit Blitz - 5/2 | 7 Professor Higgins - 9/2

Joel Berndt had a turf winner on Thursday and has a pair in here, both with a shot. The longer price of the two should be 5-COMMISSIONER OSCAR as he gets back to the turf, making his second start of the meet. He's going to need a little pace to chase, which is the only concern, but he finds a field where he should be competitive. 3-BRIT BLITZ has had some past turf success as he makes his first start of the year. In a race lacking pace, he could possibly rate a bit closer early as things may be slow upfront. 7-PROFESSOR HIGGINS has been at his best on the turf as he comes off a pair of races where he put forth a solid effort on dirt in his last couple. He's the other that could potentially rate close early as Loveberry should have him in a good spot.

Hawthorne Race 5

Post Time 4:21 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

4 Gray Lightning - 6/1 | 3 Oeuvre - 2/1 | 2 Purr Sea - 7/2

A solid stakes field as the pace should be honest. The key in here could be that horses won't be able to race on Lasix which leaves some unknowns for a few in here. One that has been solid while coming off Lasix is 4-GRAY LIGHTNING as she was competitive in stakes at Will Rogers and Oaklawn in her last could. She has speed and I think can outkick the others in here to the front. 3-OEUVRE has been tremendous here at Hawthorne and is a horse that can run on any surface. This is the race that will push her past the $1 million mark in earnings on her career which is a great accomplishment for a horse that hasn't been scared off by anyone. She should be able to settle back early but I expect she is charging late in the lane. 2-PURR SEA has tactical speed as I expect she is sitting back early and running on in the lane. She likes this track and has run well with Santos in the saddle.

Hawthorne Race 6

Post Time 4:47 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

6 Atmidnight - 3/1 | 5 Journeyist - 8/5 | 8 Excelerina (IRE) - 9/2

A really evenly matched bunch as we will see how these handle the 7 1/2 furlongs on the grass. 6-ATMIDNIGHT comes in from Florida as she was a solid second while going longer against starter company in her last. She will need some pace to chase but should get it here with the inside two likely to go. Let's see if she can run these down in the lane. 5-JOURNEYIST has some tactical speed as she figures to stalk and get the jump on the closers. She has been great on the dirt here at Hawthorne but isn't as proven on grass. That could be the equalizer in here. 8-EXCELERINA also has some speed as she has raced from coast to coast. The turf is where she's best and the price should be right. Let's see if she tries to beat the inside speed to the top or looks to rate and rally.

Hawthorne Race 7

Post Time 5:13 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

2 Rocket Hotshot - 4/1 | 6 Izeondec - 5/1 | 4 Land Mark Deal - 9/2

Conditioned claimers in here as we go 1 1/16 miles in this spot. With the pace likely to be honest, 2-ROCKET HOTSHOT likes this track, has won at the distance and has put forth a pair of good efforts on the meet. If he can save ground early, he should be picking off horses in the lane. 6-IZEONDEC has also run well here as he makes his first start of the year. He has just two works toward the return as fitness is the only question. 4-LAND MARK DEAL was a good winner here in his last as he was able to rate close behind a slow pace and run on late. He's run this distance numerous times and has shown the ability to close even when the pace ahead of him is slow.

Hawthorne Race 8

Post Time 5:39 PM CST

Analysis by Jim Miller

6 Not Falling Back - 3/1 | 8 Uptown Tom - 5/1 | 10 Sand Cast - 6/1

Looking to those who could show some speed in here as I'll give the nod to 6-NOT FALLING BACK. He makes his first start of the year as he has worked consistently toward his return. Last year he put forth a good effort in his only turf start. Let's see if he needs a race or is ready to roll. 8-UPTOWN TOM has speed and has run well on the grass in both turf tries. He's the other that should be able to rate close early as he comes in with a brief break between starts. 10-SAND CAST draws outside as he ships in for Leonard. He has some versatility and may just wait to see how things unfold ahead of him.