Handicapping Analysis
Thu August 7th, 2025

Emily's Analysis

Hawthorne Race 1

Post Time 2:43 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#4 DISGUISED DEVIL showed ability on debut and carried up through their dominant maiden win back on 5/15. Following that race they held their own (B-) against winners at FP putting in a strong CLOSE after a SLOG TROUBLE_S and GALLOP+ after the wire following that Fast early/late pace. They stepped up while trying the trip last month forced to RUSH from the rail into a DUEL. That was also their first start in a Cornell Collar and finds a change in post here moving off the inside to further assist their runstyle.

DISGUISED DEVIL has shown tactical speed (Standard Q2 only runner above ParLine) and finishing ability (Square both Plot) to work out a trip in today's compact field. The early pace should be set with #5 LALY drawn outside kept honest with the inside runners #1 CLOEY ATTACK, #2 KELLY'S GIRL and #3 WEDNESDAY ADDAMS moving up to take on winners with the surface switch and substitute jockey with hustling rider in W. Rodriguez jumping aboard.

Hawthorne Race 2

Post Time 3:11 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 SOUL COAXING brings in buried form while also a fit at this level and race shape. They find class relief with the change in par from the races this season and keying off the DROP Projection from back on 5/11. Their "every other" form cycle pattern projects and upswing here and backed up with the WIDE trip last month at HS Indy while also heavily washed out (WARM) on the day and the race outcome behind open length winner, Pike Place. Looking at OptixPLOT, the inside draw paired with the Standard Q1 Square could secure inside tracking trip with first run.

That first run will be key as their main rivals tracking Squares from Q2/4; including ML favorite #3 EVEN THE WIND and #6 SILVER QUARTERS. While those two fit and logical, looking at the Plot they lac a strong edge over their rivals #2 WOODCOCK FLIGHT and #4 BOURBON LIFE.

In addition to BOURBON LIFE looking to pair up wins (and capable of doing so) their stablemate #5 BETWITHBOTHHANDS could be controlling speed and a threat to take this field gate-to-wire if allowed to get clear. They project to move up following the long, long layoff return back on 5/25 with the WIDE trip and STRETCH in distance. Given the long layoff it could be taken as a knock with the 74-days since that May event, though that was not the plan noting a pair of scratches in May.

#7 HARD TO FATHOM is not a "need the lead" type though has some tactical speed and to have their best chance in today's race they should be forward, again the key with the prime "Square" rivals. The same tactics could be used for #8 GOLD SMOKE one that makes a belated return to the turf and looking to improve off their prior two efforts both back in MSW company.

Hawthorne Race 3

Post Time 3:43 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Looking at the Plot there is a scenario with #6 FLYING SAMURAI as the "lone speed" sitting in Q1. Looking at the Fire Contention paired with the honest 45 SpeedRate they could be "clear" however tested with faster fractions to maintain that separation with rivals #1 ALVIN, #3 BREAKOUT STAR and #4 JET FLIGHT runners that should no be too far back and even closer should FLYING SAMURAI try and rate on the lead.

Under that scenario, the "bunch" creates an opportunity for #5 ROCKET HOTSHOT to track and CLOSE. While deeper on the Plot as a Q4 Square, they need to get that pace and trip (and price compensation to play) things that could be there. They also can project a move forward (Form Cycle) while given time following the win back on 5/18 and now in this second-off returning from the TACTIC- trip where they did not appear to have intent on 7/20. They wheel right back (18-days) and slight change in distance to further suggest intent here.

Hawthorne Race 4

Post Time 4:08 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 MISS RIVER RAT moved up with the class drop going back to last season and suggests intent with the connections looking to find the right spot where she can win. The change in class should also assist with regaining confidence following an EX – EXCUSE trip last month at HS Indy with significant TROUBLE+ impacting her trip and outcome on the day.

Fellow IL-Bred racing for the higher $20k claiming tag eligibility #6 FREEDOM LASS should also move up in this spot. Not only with the change in class from statebred allowance company on 7/13 but also from the WIDE trip and what appeared a PREP going the shorter distance with most of her career racing two-turns the configuration of today's race.

With the Sun Contention paired with the higher 78 SpeedRate the Q4 Squares can be given a look. The public will likely be giving a lot of that look to #7 MIDNIGHT BELLA while showing up without much of a edge over #4 PASTA SALAD RHONDA and even #3 LOTTA ROSES those two projecting much higher odds.

Hawthorne Race 5

Post Time 4:40 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#1 TAUNTING will be tested to improve once again in the speed figures department though to their credit they have done just that with each race to date. They presented upside returning this year and to the turf picking up a softer pace front running win to break their maiden and given real race experience with the trip on 7/13 taking on winners. They recoded the same B- OptixGRADE to common rival #2 CANYON STREAK also logical right back under similar conditions and in this third start of the current form cycle.

With complementary runstyles a case can be made for both of the J. Berndt runners: #3 TIME MUSE brings in tactical speed and some confidence stepping up in class off a win and looking at the Plot shares a runstyle similar to TAUNTING and CANYON SHADOWS here; #7 BRIT BLITZ also tested with the rise in class after returning from the layoff with the win back on 5/18. They have been asked and responded in the two starts since and lateral change in par from a B-/TROUBLE trip show finish last month at CBY.

#8 PROFESSION HIGGINS could be a longer shot to win though another that has had their share of adversity this season going back to the 6/15 allowance following up with a sneaky CLOSE on 6/29 and freshened here since the TRAFFIC TROUBLE trip on 7/6.

Hawthorne Race 6

Post Time 5:13 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Looking at the Plot and respecting the Fire contention the majority of the field is "bunched" up suggesting more than half of the field capable of contesting the pace. Of that group #3 FIINDAWAY could hold the edge something they might require while giving up recency returning for a belated second start of the season from a 105-day layoff. Even with that layoff in play, would make the case for them over #5 STRANGE ARRANGE in this spot as they project to be a heavy favorite.

The pace analysis is just to tee up the value case for #1 ANCIENT MAN in this race. They require some price compensation with their off-the-pace runstyle (Q4 Square) though this type of dynamic is ideal for closers and should have their best chance today – perhaps the connections thinking similar while sending out #6 DEMAND RANSON (Q1 Circle) one of the other Q1 types.

Hawthorne Race 7

Post Time 5:45 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#5 GRAY LIGHTNING with the class drop moves to ABOVE+ in this group on Speed. Class, Plot/Pace to fit as a contender. In terms of current form when looking at the Past 3 Runlines and arguably follows a similar form cycle pattern when heading into the Third Chance stakes, a race they finished second to Oeuvre still recording a B OptixGRADE (winning effort for the level) as those two together at the wire.

The 5.5f distance makes this race a bit trickier and could present upside for #7 SAMARITA from the outside post and value over others in here with similar Speed/Class. SAMARITA also could also present a move forward second off wheeling back from the 7/19 FP event and flow upgrade making a RUSH into a Fast early pace staying on as the BOS through a Fast late pace.

Hawthorne Race 8

Post Time 6:18 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#10 STAR BLESSING recorded the highest figure in this field from their debut back on 6/14 over the CD turf course. Arguably the combination of the first out effort, the 19-day turnaround and the outside post they were unable to overcome with a WIDE trip played a role in the 7/3 effort and outcome.

#4 HALFIN is right there on numbers and class with the change in circuit. That could suggest intent showing up here at the MSW level where they were considering running for the $40k tag at CNL on 7/30 and scratching presumably for this spot instead.

Reason to give an "intent" look to #2 POVERTY WITH AVIEW shipping in for the connections and lone mount on the card for both trainer/jockey. In terms of class, they find closer to a lateral change from the layoff return on 7/8 at HS Indy. They ran a big effort given the TROUBLE_S and WIDE trip adversity still holding for place. They were entered on 7/20 in MSW at ELP and there were concerns both with class and timing should they have taken that race though given more time and the class here; this is a more reasoned fit.

#1 TRIPLE MOON races as the lone FTS in this field and some hurdles giving up experience at the same time, they race for capable connections and if looking for a new face they are it.