Handicapping Analysis
Sat May 2nd, 2026

Emily's Analysis

Churchill Downs Race 12

Post Time 8:57 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#19 GOLDEN TEMPO came on my radar when not looking for a "Derby horse" just passively looking at recent workouts leading up to the big race. He caught my eye training at Keeneland working in front and side by side with the workmate, a work that is not often shown with closers - often working with a target in front of them. He looked solid in the moves outworking mates and galloping out past other joggers on the course - visuals to suggest he is in condition, fit and race ready.

Looking through his races to date another positive showing a horse who is getting faster and more progressive with each start and another move forward is not at all out of the question. That progression has comes with added ground and experience racing. That also can be noted from the two graded stakes at the FG over a course which can be very tough for closers and still to his credit making a late, competitive move.

In terms of race shape, it is my assessment that this years pace does not flatter one runstyle over another - if a front runner is good enough they can win and same with a stalker and a closer. GOLDEN TEMPO has been a closer in his races, even with the recent series of works closer to the mate jockey J. Ortiz says he wants to establish position off the pace (hopefully not last were his exact words) then make his late run. With a closer, price compensation is required and certainly should be there for GOLDEN TEMPO.

Trainer C. Devaux said in a recent interview this pattern has been the plan for the colt, to race at FG with the four week spacing between races and then stable at KEE with six weeks to really get him race ready and in peak condition. It is has been reported he has some minor cracked heels though trainer stating nothing of significance, more transparency, as they showed up to jog in the recent days at CD.

Oaklawn Race 3

Post Time 3:16 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

#3 SWIFT BLADE showed run going back to their debut last November at CD, two turns MSW. The challenges before the race with the distance, a far outside post compromised further with the rider TACTIC-, a Slow early/late pace showing run making a WIDE MOVE. Upgraded from the trip they returned in their next start breaking their maiden at FG over the turf setting a solid pace, Fast late, to stay on as the BOS. The connections coming back to the main track at Oaklawn on 2/28 a competitive B- OptixGRADE in the fourth place outcome with an X_WIDE trip.