

BARN NOTES

OCT. 2-24 | NO RACING Mondays & Tuesdays | First Post 1 p.m. | Gates Open 11 a.m.

Counting Stars Leads Strong Casse Contingent

Mark Casse brought a strong group to Keeneland for the 25th Fall Stars Weekend.

The Hall of Fame trainer will send out runners in six of the 11 stakes, including leading 3-year-old filly Counting Stars in Sunday's \$650,000 Juddmonte Spinster (G1) and the solid 1-2 punch of And One More Time and Classic Q in Saturday's \$800,000 First Lady (G1).

Team Casse will be busy on multiple fronts, with 20 stakes runners across North America. Casse will saddle 10 runners at Keeneland, but said he isn't overly stressed.

"Most of the races, I'm going in with no pressure," Casse said. "I'm going to observe. I've always said, training racehorses is putting a puzzle together. You try the pieces until you figure out how they fit. We'll be trying some pieces."

Casse hopes the weekend stakes runners can use Fall Stars Weekend as steppingstones to the Breeders' Cup World Championships Oct. 30-31 at Keeneland.

"This weekend... I'm trying to figure out where we fit in," he said. "Who is what. This is an exploratory thing. For one, if you're sitting on

something special you don't want to miss the Breeders' Cup. I'm looking for a lot of direction this weekend. We have a lot of young horses; they're only making their second or third start. You just don't know where you are."

The first two stakes runners Friday – Pros and Cons in the Jessamine (G2) Presented by Keeneland Sales and High Speed Reed in the Darley Alcibiades (G1) – fit that bill.

D J Stable's Pros and Cons looks to rebound from a third behind fellow Jessamine entrants Glycogen and Mel Went Home in the P. G. Johnson (L) at Saratoga.

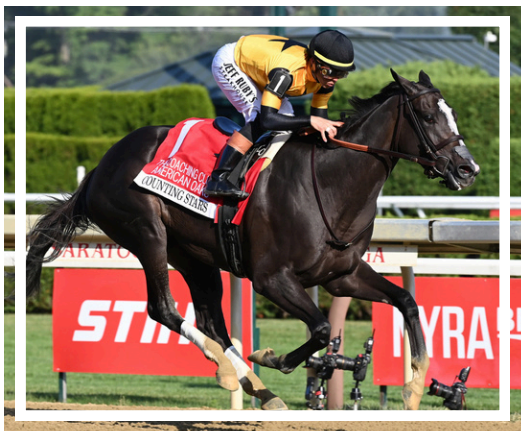
"I was disappointed in her last performance," Casse said. "In fairness, there was no speed in the race. They sprinted home. She's going to have to step up her game to have any chance."

The Estate of Brereton Jones' High Speed Reed makes her third start in the 1 1/16-mile Darley Alcibiades, less than three weeks after winning a 1-mile maiden race at Churchill Downs.

"We've always put her pretty high up on our list of fillies," Casse said. "Even though she didn't run very fast last time, she was very impressive. Not a lot of pace, she got stopped two or three times and won easy. I'm cautiously optimistic. I think she's going to run a big race. She's going to like the mile and a sixteenth."

Casse hopes My Boy Prince's fondness for Keeneland's turf course sets the tone for the stable Saturday. The 5-year-old Cairo Prince gelding bids for his second Keeneland stakes win this year when he takes on nine others in the Woodford (G3) Presented by FanDuel. My Boy Prince, an earner of \$1,602,875, won the Valvoline Global Shakertown (G2) at the Spring Meet.

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Counting Stars wins the CCA Oaks

Race Day Essentials



How to Watch

Friday, Oct. 2

4-6 p.m.

NBCSN/Peacock
FanDuel TV

Saturday, Oct. 3

3-6 p.m.

NBC, FanDuel TV

Sunday, Oct. 4

5-6:30 p.m.

NBCSN/Peacock
FanDuel TV

Keeneland

YouTube

WATCH HERE

Complimentary Digital Program



FREE DOWNLOAD

Upcoming Events

Friday, Oct. 2–

Sunday, Oct. 4

Tailgating on The Hill

Saturday, Oct. 3

Sunrise Trackside



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"He's a little off form, but he runs well here," Casse said, watching the gray gelding school in the paddock Thursday morning.

And One More Time and Classic Q add depth to a strong renewal of the 1-mile First Lady. Live Oak Plantation's homebred And One More Time comes off back-to-back wins at Saratoga, including the Ballston Spa (G2) Presented by STIHL. Classic Q played a key role as one of three Grade 1 winners over Belmont Stakes (G1) weekend for Team Casse with a score in the Just a Game Presented by Resolute Racing.

"It's a tough race but they're tough themselves," Casse said. "Classic Q, she struggled a little this summer. She won early on and then I just wasn't 100% happy. I scratched her out of the Fourstardave (G1). Her race at Kentucky Downs last time was OK. She's a better horse today than she was this summer.

"The same with And One More Time. She's at the top of her game. She is a tough son of a gun. She's tough training, and gritty."

West Point Thoroughbreds' Counting Stars showed grit in back-to-back victories over Kentucky Oaks (G1) winner Always a Runner in Grade 1 stakes at Saratoga. She meets four older fillies and mares in the 9-furlong Juddmonte Spinster with eyes on a potential Eclipse Award for champion 3-year-old filly.

"Now it's time to figure out if we have a Breeders' Cup horse this year, or a Breeders' Cup horse for next year," Casse said of the potential candidate for the Breeders' Cup Distaff (G1) Oct. 31. "We did the same thing with Nitrogen. We brought her, ran her against older horses knowing if she ran well we would go to the Breeders' Cup, if she didn't, we wouldn't.

"We'll see. She's accomplished more than any 3-year-old filly in North America right now. She leads as far as being the Eclipse Award winner. Unless somebody pulls a rabbit out of the hat in the Breeders' Cup."

D J Stable's Jaded makes his second start – and first on dirt – in the \$650,000 Claiborne Breeders' Futurity (G1). The son of Olympiad, a \$250,000 buy at last year's Keeneland September Yearling Sale, rallied to win a 6 1/2-furlong turf maiden Aug. 30 at Kentucky Downs.

"He always trained really well on the dirt and we always felt his preferred surface was dirt," Casse said. "I thought let's give him a try and he won. Of course the Breeders' Futurity came up with some really good horses in there. I don't know what to think, but we'll find out." —*Tom Law*

Mad House Brings VanWinkle to Keeneland for First Time

Racing fans following the action every spring and fall at Keeneland might have spotted an unfamiliar name when they scanned Friday's entries to analyze the action.

Unfamiliar name maybe, but definitely not unproven.

Trainer David VanWinkle makes his Keeneland debut Friday when he sends out James Thares' Mad House in the \$400,000 Stoll Keenon Ogden Phoenix (G2), the first of 11 stakes of the 25th Fall Stars Weekend.

VanWinkle has sent out more than 8,200 starters since beginning his career in 1989, has 1,192 wins and two graded stakes wins — both with Mad House in the 2025 Gallant Bob (G2) at Parx Racing and the Count Fleet Sprint (G3) this spring at Oaklawn Park.



Trainer David VanWinkle

"It's real exciting to have a horse at Keeneland," said VanWinkle. "Hopefully my horse likes it."

VanWinkle, a member of Canterbury Park's Hall of Fame, also trained for many years during the winter at Turf Paradise while competing throughout the Southwest and Midwest. He moved his operation to Florida a few years ago, first to Tampa Bay Downs and ultimately to his current base at Palm Meadows Training Center in Boynton Beach.

Mad House prepped for the Stoll Keenon Ogden Phoenix at Palm Meadows after he finished fifth in the Aristides (G3) May 30 at Churchill Downs and fourth in the Bing Crosby (G1) July 25 at Del Mar. The 4-year-old Vekoma gelding worked a half-mile in :46 — fastest of 39 — last Friday before shipping to Keeneland Tuesday.

VanWinkle hopes the stay in Lexington extends into later this month for the Oct. 31 \$2 million Cygames Breeders' Cup Sprint (G1).

"He's doing real well," VanWinkle said about Mad House. "We were thinking that if he did run well in this race, we're going to leave him here for the Breeders' Cup. It all made sense. It ended up being a pretty good field for Friday."

Mad House drew the rail in the field of 11, with Sonny Leon taking the return call on the 10-1 sixth choice on the morning line.

"He ran pretty well in his last race at Del Mar," VanWinkle said about Mad House. "Well but not quite good enough (to win). Hopefully he can run a little better this time and we'll see what happens." —*Tom Law*

Echo Sound Set for 'Homecoming' in Thoroughbred Club of America

Well-traveled multiple graded stakes winner Echo Sound returns — sort of — to Keeneland for the \$400,000 Thoroughbred Club of America (G2) on Fall Stars Saturday.

"She won here," trainer Rusty Arnold said of the 4-year-old daughter of Echo Town. "She won her only start here as a 2-year-old."

Echo Sound won the \$200,000 Myrtlewood late in the 2024 Fall Meet to improve to 3-for-3. She's made seven starts since, winning three times and placing once heading into the 6-furlong Thoroughbred Club of America. Echo Sound drew the outside post in the field of seven fillies and mares.

Echo Sound will make her third start in 2026 in the Thoroughbred Club of America. She won the Regret in mid-July at Monmouth Park in her first start in almost 10 months before a fourth behind Ways and Means, stablemate Kilwin and Beauty Reigns in the Resorts World Casino Ballerina (G1) in late August at Saratoga Race Course.

"Her race at Saratoga was good," Arnold said of the 7-length defeat. "She was the only one of the frontrunners that hung on for any part of it. She'd only had one race this year, and she fought it out all the way to about the sixteenth pole. She only got beat for second the last 20 or 30 yards. I'm very happy with her actually and I'm happy with the draw on the outside, which went our way for a change. Last time she had the 1-hole."

Owned by Gabriel Duignan, Echo Sound won the Miss Preakness (G3) at Pimlico Race Course and the Victory Ride (G3) at Saratoga as a 3-year-old before going off form in back-to-back graded stakes tries to earn a freshening.

Echo Sound breezed twice since the 7-furlong Ballerina heading into Saturday's Keeneland homecoming, including an easy half in :50 last Friday. Arnold also isn't concerned about shortening up to the 6 1/2-furlong distance Saturday.

"I don't think it was the seven-eighths last time," Arnold said. "I think it was the pace. Shortening up is not going to hurt her by any means. She's proven at that distance and she's proven here, too." — *Tom Law*



Echo Sound wins the Myrtlewood

FROM KEENELAND LIBRARY
ARCHIVES

OCT. 4, 2013

Bugler George "Bucky" Sallee retires as Keeneland's bugler after some 50 years, and Steve Buttleman becomes the new track bugler.



keeneland.com/keeneland-library

"Shortening up is not going to hurt her by any means. She's proven at that distance and she's proven here, too."

—TRAINER RUSTY ARNOLD

PERSONAL

PICK 5 LUAN MACHADO

Jockey

Birth Date: June 21, 1994

Birthplace: Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil



Q: What is your favorite Keeneland memory?

A: I have a few good memories here. I would say my first Grade 1 with Percy's Bar (in the Central Bank Ashland in April) — that was a very nice one. Also, winning my first graded stakes here with Next.

Q: Who is your favorite music artist? Do you have a favorite song?

A: Frank Sinatra. I love him. Yes, I do: 'That's Life.'

Q: What are you looking forward to most about the Fall Meet?

A: Finding some fast horses.

Q: What does it mean to be here with your brothers, Dylan, a jockey, and Muriel, a valet?

A: It does mean a lot. I was here for a long time alone, and now with the family, it makes it all easier. We love to live here in the U.S., so it's great for us.

Q: What kind of car do you drive? Is it a fast car?

A: I have a Toyota Crown right now. Not really (fast). I like fast horses.

INSIDE THE DETAILS

Know the Game

Darley Alcibiades (G1)

Named for foundation mare Alcibiades, owned by Keeneland founder Hal Price Headley, the Darley Alcibiades (G1) has been a Fall Meet tradition since 1952. The 1 1/16-mile race for 2-year-old fillies is a steppingstone to the Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies (G1), with the winner earning a starting-gate spot. Darley has sponsored the race since 2003.

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Worth Knowing

Hall of Fame jockey Pat Day holds the record for most wins — 5 — in the Jessamine (G2) now presented by Keeneland Sales. His first came in the inaugural in 1991 with Shes Just Super, followed by Parade Queen (1996), Perfect Sting (1998), Solvig (1999) and Stylelistick (2001). Day is Keeneland's all-time leading jockey by wins (918), stakes wins (95) and meet titles (22).



Barn Notes Contributors

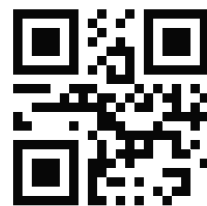
Liane Crossley
Meredith Daugherty
Gabby Gaudet
Tom Law
Amy Owens
Jax Rogers
Keeneland Photos

2026 Breeders' Cup at Keeneland

Pre-Entries Released | Thursday, Oct. 22
Post Position Draw | Monday, Oct. 26
Racing | Friday, Oct. 30 and Saturday, Oct. 31

Upcoming Sales Events at Keeneland

Championship Sale at Castleton | Wednesday, Oct. 28
November Breeding Stock Sale
Tuesday, Nov. 3-Wednesday, Nov. 11
November Horses of Racing Age Sale | Thursday, Nov. 12



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