

BARN NOTES

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

French Import Braida (FR) Set for Queen Elizabeth II Challenge Cup Presented by Dixiana

Francis-Henri Graffard and his team sent Braida (FR) from France to Keeneland with a simple expectation.

"Win. Always win," said Antoine Coutier, a rider for Graffard who made the trip with the 3-year-old daughter of Mehmas for Saturday's \$750,000 Queen Elizabeth II Challenge Cup (G1) Presented by Dixiana.

Expectations for big victories are not a reach for Graffard and his stable. On Sunday, he took the Qatar Prix de l'Arc the Triomphe (G1) with Daryz. His other marquee international wins are the 2025 Maker's Mark Breeders' Cup Filly and Mare Turf (G1) with Gezora (FR); the 2025 Japan Cup (G1) and the 2026 Dubai Sheema Classic (G1) with Calandagan; and the 2025 Grosser Preis von Baden (G1) with Goliath (GER).

Alain Jathiere's Braida gives the stable another big chance. She comes into the 9-furlong QE II Presented by Dixiana with three wins in five starts. Her two defeats came by a nose in her debut last year on the all-weather track at Deauville and after what Coutier called a "very, very unlucky" trip in the Darley Prix de Lierury (G3) going 1 mile on turf in mid-August at Deauville.

The QE II Presented by Dixiana gives Braida the challenge of taking on 10 North American runners, including Canadian classic winner Luster and Grade 1 winners Tam Tam and Kensington Lane (IRE), and racing at a new distance. Braida raced 1 mile three times and at 7 furlongs twice in her first five starts.

"She's won at 7 furlongs and 8 furlongs, but never run this far," Coutier said. "We will see."

Coutier traveled with Graffard to Keeneland in 2022, when Malavath (IRE) finished fifth at 51-1

in the \$2 million NetJets Breeders' Cup Mile (G1), beaten only 1¼ lengths by eventual champion Modern Games (IRE). He's excited to be back, after the filly spent part of last week in routine quarantine at Churchill Downs. Braida trained on the main track this week before taking a spin over Keeneland's turf course Thursday morning.

"She's been quiet," Coutier said. "That's her temperament, like at home. Her temperament is probably her best quality, that and she has a good turn of foot if she's relaxed."

Mickael Barzalona, who teamed with Graffard with Gezora at last year's Breeders' Cup at Del Mar and rode Daryz for the trainer in the Arc de Triomphe, will ride Braida Saturday from post six. She's the 8-1 co-fourth choice on the morning line for the QE II Presented by Dixiana, which goes as the ninth race on the 10-race card.

▪ By Tom Law



Braida (FR) in her stall at Keeneland

Race Day Essentials



How to Watch

Every Race Day

FanDuel TV

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Friday, Oct. 9 & Saturday, Oct. 10

4-6 p.m.

FS2

Sunday, Oct. 11

3:30-5:30 p.m.

FS1

Complimentary Digital Program



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Upcoming Events

Friday, Oct. 9

Big Blue Day

Saturday, Oct. 10

Jockey Autograph

Signing



Tiz Dashing Stretches out in Sycamore

Sackatoga Stable's Tiz Dashing heads into unknown territory in Friday's \$400,000 Sycamore (G2) at Keeneland, stretching out for the three-turn turf stakes and going 1½ miles for the first time in his career.

The 4-year-old son of Tiz the Law won't head into unknown company in the 32nd running of the Sycamore, with a dozen stakes appearances in his career, two graded stakes wins and four other stakes placings. He comes out of a victory in an allowance race at Saratoga that featured Grade 1 winner Carson's Run and Grade 2 winners Cugino and Capture the Flag as its other three competitors.

"He ran a good race in that group against a whole bunch of really good graded stakes winners," Sackatoga Stable Operating Manager Jack Knowlton said. "He's run some good races and some good numbers. We're excited to stretch him out."

"The unknown is, of course, the distance," Knowlton continued. "It's quite a leap from a mile and three-sixteenths to a mile and a half, but (jockey) Javier (Castellano) certainly feels that he'll be able to handle it. It's absolutely worth taking a shot at, and if he does well, that opens up a lot of possibilities for him down the road."

Trained by Barclay Tagg, Tiz Dashing opened the season with a victory in the Canadian Turf (G3) in late February at Gulfstream Park. He earned a trip to Keeneland for the Spring Meet and finished seventh, beaten 3¾ lengths by Zulu Kingdom (IRE) in the Maker's Mark Mile (G1) before another close eighth in the Resorts World Casino Manhattan (G1) going 1 3/16 miles on the turf at Saratoga.

Tagg shortened Tiz Dashing up for his next start, a fifth again behind Mi Bago and Zulu Kingdom in the 1-mile Kelso (G3) July 5 at Saratoga. He defeated Carson's Run by 2¼ lengths in the 1 3/16-mile allowance race Aug. 21 to set up his Keeneland return.

"We looked at a couple stakes after the (Kelso) but wound up in that allowance race for a couple reasons," Knowlton said. "One, you always want to help out the racing office when you can and two, we thought it might be an easier spot in the mile and three-sixteenths race. Then it came up pretty tough, but it all worked out."

Tiz Dashing will be ridden in the Sycamore by Castellano, who rode the colt to win the 2025 Hill Prince (G3) and the Canadian Turf this winter. Tiz Dashing drew post eight and is the 9-2 second choice on the morning line for runners within the body of the field of 12. ■ *By Tom Law*

Just a Touch Ready for Friday Keeneland Return

Qatar Racing, Fergus Galvin, Adrian Regan and Marc Detampel's Just a Touch bids for his third win at Keeneland – and second on the turf – when he makes his fourth appearance here in Friday's featured Sycamore (G2).

The 5-year-old son of Justify also looks to improve to 4-for-5 on the grass in the 1½-mile Sycamore, and trainer Brad Cox doesn't want a redo of the lone blemish two starts back.

"Hopefully that Monmouth race doesn't show up," Cox said of a well-beaten seventh in the United Nations (G2) on the NYRA Bets Haskell Day undercard. "I don't know what that was all about."

Just a Touch's other turf races include a win going 1 1/16 miles on the grass during the Keeneland Spring Meet, along with stakes wins in the Cape Henlopen (L) at Delaware Park and the Colonial Cup at Colonial Downs. He's made his last four starts on the grass after being successful on the dirt, including seconds in the Toyota Blue Grass (G1) at Keeneland and the Gotham (G3) to earn a spot in the Kentucky Derby (G1) Presented by Woodford Reserve.

The change to the turf came after four straight losses, twice in Grade 1 stakes, in 2025 and early 2026.

"We were second and third in a lot of these stakes, just not able to break through," Cox said. "He trained like a really, really good horse on the dirt. We felt like we were giving him another opportunity on the turf. He won here on the turf in the spring, at a shorter distance. He's honest, and I think he'd run on anything. We're trying to make him a graded stakes winner and hopefully this is the spot."

Just a Touch, the 5-2 favorite on the morning line for jockey Irad Ortiz Jr., drew post two in the full field of 12.

Cox might have another potential star with a pedigree he's quite familiar with in Godolphin's Jump Seat, winner of a 1 1/16-mile maiden race Wednesday at Keeneland. The 2-year-old daughter of Flightline improved off a second in her debut at Ellis Park with a 2¼-length win under Ortiz.

Jump Seat is out of the Grade 3-placed Elusive Quality mare Delightful Quality, dam of champion and classic winner Essential Quality and stakes winner Famed.

"She's a three-quarter sister to Essential Quality, so we always thought she'd be one that could handle two turns and handle Keeneland," Cox said. "The stamina is there. That might be about it as far as similarities go. They don't look alike. She reminds me of her sister Famed, who is by Uncle Mo. Color, her stride, the way she moved. (Famed) was a good filly herself, a stakes winner." ■ *By Tom Law*

Today's Make-A-Wish Day Helps Make Wishes Come True for Kentucky Children

Today is the 19th year of one of Keeneland's most meaningful events, Make-A-Wish® Day, which brings together Keeneland, local Thoroughbred farms, businesses and supporters to help make wishes come true for Kentucky children with critical illnesses. They do so by supporting the Make-A-Wish mission and celebrating the children and families at the heart of the event.

Since its inception, Make-A-Wish Day at Keeneland has raised more than \$1.7 million for Make-A-Wish Ohio, Kentucky & Indiana (OKI) — enough to help make more than 170 wishes come true.

This year, 10 Kentucky Wish kids and their families will be honored as special guests and enjoy a special race-day experience that includes presenting a trophy and meeting jockeys. Wish alumni Reed, 16, of Corbin, Kentucky, began the day by singing the National Anthem in the Keeneland Paddock.

Today's special guest is Linda Pauling, mother of Chris Greicius, whose wish to become a police officer inspired the creation of Make-A-Wish in 1980. The effort sparked a movement that has since brought hope, strength and joy to children and families around the world.

The day also will celebrate the Cody Dorman Legacy Fund, which continues Cody's desire to help make wishes come true for other children. Dorman was born with a rare genetic disorder that limited his ability to move and speak. Through Make-A-Wish OKI, he met the Thoroughbred Cody's Wish and began a remarkable bond that captured international attention.

The Cody Dorman Legacy Fund supports wishes for children with critical illnesses. More than \$100,000 has been raised for the fund to date. Big Ass Fans and Breeders' Cup are supporting the fund once again this year.

Make-A-Wish Day at Keeneland is held in honor of John Greely IV, a fourth-generation Kentucky Thoroughbred horseman and philanthropist who was instrumental in creating the event. His vision helped establish a tradition that continues to bring together Kentucky's Thoroughbred community in support of children and families.



HONORARY WISH KIDS



Annie

3 Years Old | London



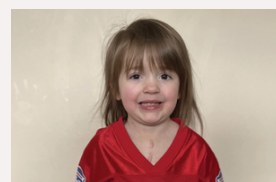
Ashton

15 Years Old | Frankfort



Avery

5 Years Old | Louisville



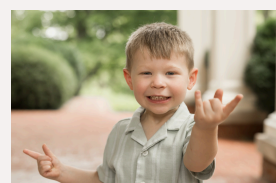
Audrey

4 Years Old | Corbin



Avery

18 Years Old | Nicholasville



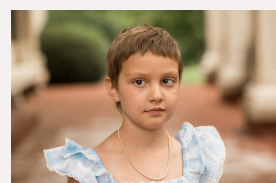
Carson

3 Years Old | Mount Sterling



Evelyn

3 Years Old | Winchester



Hannah

8 Years Old | Taylorsville



Jonathan

11 Years Old | Nicholasville



Riley

18 Years Old | Nicholasville

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PERSONAL

PICK 5

JILL “JILL BABE” GUILLEN

Keeneland Jockeys Quarters Cook

Birth Date: Jan. 25, 1968

Birthplace: Winchester, Kentucky



Q: What’s your favorite part of the job?

A: Watching the jockeys eat my food. When they eat my food, it’s the best thing in the world. Last meet, I was waiting on two of them, Luan Machado and Edgar Morales. They got up and were walking to the trash can and they (motioned) like they could lick the plate. That meant everything.

Q: Do you remember your first day working at Keeneland?

A: Very much so. It was Oct. 8, 1994, and I worked in the Phoenix Room. I was a server, and it was exciting, incredible— you feel like you were going to church but in a real exciting exotic way. You walk through the grounds and the Paddock is just so beautiful, the wind is blowing, and I’m like, this is going to be good. And it was; it was incredible. I got a lot of letters. Back then people wrote letters, and I got a lot of compliments and letters of my service, and I got Employee of the Day even. It was phenomenal, incredible. I’ll never forget it.

Q: Do you have a favorite jockey?

A: That’s too hard. I love them all with all my heart. They’re like my little boys. I’m closer to some: Robby Albarado, Corey Lanerie and Garrett Gomez. I was so close to them, you know, and two of them (Albarado and Gomez) aren’t with us anymore, but I just hold them in my heart. (Lanerie retired in 2026.)

Q: What is your favorite food that you make?

A: A grilled ham and cheese on white toast with American cheese. After I toast it, I take it and put it with a teeny smidge of butter and I get the bread real toasty. When you pull it apart, it’s kind of stuck together. I make the eggs a little bit runny. When you bite into it, it kind of rolls down like a ribbon.

Q: Do you have any hobbies outside of work?

A: I like to read and watch movies. I also like to go out to lunch with my girlfriends. Mostly I just get prepared for the next day of work.

WHAT’S IN A NAME

PALESTRA



pah-LEHS-tra

Race 8

Marco Palestra is an Italian soccer player for Chelsea and the Italian national team.

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Worth Knowing

Today’s Make-A-Wish Day will welcome Linda Pauling, mother of Chris Greicius, the young boy whose wish to become a police officer inspired the creation of Make-A-Wish in 1980.

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