

BARN NOTES

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

Luster Settles Back in at Keeneland for QE II

About a month before the Aug. 15 King's Plate at Woodbine, a five-time winner of North America's oldest stakes race summed up the 2026 renewal of the Canadian classic.

"If the filly runs back, we're probably all running for second," trainer Mark Casse said about Luster, who he would try to beat in the King's Plate with a horse named Military Time.

Luster proved Casse right, along with the pundits and gamblers who hammered her down to 2-5 odds for the King's Plate with a powerful 7 1/4-length win. The Ontario-bred daughter of Knicks Go won for the fifth time in six starts and looks to extend her win streak to four Saturday in the 43rd running of the \$750,000 Queen Elizabeth II Challenge Cup (G1) Presented by Dixiana.

Luster doesn't figure to be as short a price this time. She's 5-2 on the morning line against a strong field that includes Grade 1 winners Tam Tam and Kensington Lane (IRE) and major players Faithful Departed, Braida (FR), Deep Learning and Storm's Wake.

Luster shipped from Woodbine to Keeneland Wednesday, bedded down in the stakes barn and walked the shedrow Thursday.

"She's comfortable here," said Sue Lorimer, assistant to trainer Josie Carroll. "She was here in the spring."

Exercise rider Tanis Johnson made the trip with Lorimer and Luster, with Carroll set to arrive in Lexington Friday afternoon. Luster galloped under Johnson on the main track early Friday morning and visited the Paddock toward the end of training hours, with a little grazing outside the stakes barn mixed into her morning.

"She's very relaxed here," Johnson said. "When she's walking, she's not dragging me around like she does at Woodbine. That's exactly what she



needs right now, a little peace and quiet, because (Saturday) I don't think she'll be too peaceful. She'll be ready to go. She's definitely on the muscle."

Luster gave Johnson plenty of positive signs during her first visit to Keeneland's main track since before her victory in a 11/16-mile allowance race on the turf during the Spring Meet.

"I can hardly breathe when I'm pulling her up, especially down here," Johnson said. "I feel like the air is a little dry and then it's like, 'Whew, oh my goodness.' She doesn't stop when you're done galloping. She's going to drag you all the way home. I don't have to do much, just kind of let her take the wheel and make sure she doesn't go too fast."

Luster followed her Keeneland allowance win with a third in the Ruling Angel (L) Presented by Ketel One going 7 furlongs on Woodbine's all-weather track in May. She won three straight after that – the Selene (G3), the Woodbine Oaks Presented by Stella Artois and the King's Plate.

An \$80,000 purchase at the 2024 Keeneland September Yearling Sale, Luster races for owner Gainesway Stable and Andrew Rosen. Those owners will bid for a second Grade 1 win of the Fall Meet after taking the Darley Alcibiades (G1) on opening day with another September Sale graduate, Emphatic. ■ *By Tom Law*

Race Day Essentials



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Friday, Oct. 9 & Saturday, Oct. 10

4-6 p.m.

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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

\$400 Fall Challenge

Saturday, Oct. 10

Jockey Autograph Signing

BCBC-NHC Fall

Handicapping Challenge



Tam Tam Looks to Continue Turf Success in QE II Presented by Dixiana

Rigney Racing's Tam Tam will look to continue her emergence on the turf when she runs in Saturday's \$750,000 Queen Elizabeth II Challenge Cup (G1) Presented by Dixiana.

The daughter of Medaglia d'Oro enters the 1 1/8-mile invitational for 3-year-old fillies off a victory in the Aug. 22 Del Mar Oaks (G1), where she scored by 1¼ lengths in her first Grade 1 start. The victory marked another step forward for Tam Tam and gave her connections confidence that she belongs among the top fillies in the division. Trainer Phil Bauer said Tam Tam has continued to impress him in the mornings as she prepares for Saturday's race.

"She's one of those horses that makes you smile when she trains," Bauer said. "She's coming into it as good as we can ask her to."

Much of Tam Tam's success has come since making the transition from dirt to turf, a change Bauer believes has brought out the best in the filly. Her improvement on the surface has been significant, with Bauer pointing to her ability to handle the grass.

"I think it was the surface switch," Bauer said. "She seems night and day to me as far as just being able to get a hold of the grass."

Junior Alvarado has been aboard Tam Tam throughout her last five starts and has seen the progress firsthand. He credited Bauer for developing the filly and believes she has shown she belongs against top-level competition.

"Phil Bauer has done an amazing job developing her,"

Alvarado said. "I could tell he always liked her, and you can see the progress. She's been handling the Grade 1 company well, but this is going to be a tough race."

Alvarado said the key will be allowing Tam Tam to run comfortably rather than trying to force her into a particular style.

"I think for her, it's about letting her do what she wants to do," Alvarado said. "She doesn't want to be held too much and doesn't want me to get into a fight with her. As long as you let her travel without fighting her, she will always give you a kick at the end."

In the QE II Presented by Dixiana, Tam Tam drew post three in the 11-horse race. She is the 4-1 third choice in the morning line. ■ *By Jax Rogers*

Lookin At Diamond Takes on Another Grade 1 Field

Trainer Leonard Powell saw enough in Lookin At Diamond's Grade 1 debut in California to take another shot at the highest level in Kentucky.

Lookin At Diamond makes her second straight Grade 1 start in Saturday's \$750,000 Queen Elizabeth II Challenge Cup Presented by Dixiana off a closing second in the Del Mar Oaks. The 3-year-old daughter of Lookin At Lucky arrived at Keeneland Tuesday and settled into the stable area as her trainer expected.

"She's a very straightforward filly, no problems here or at home," Powell said outside the filly's stall Thursday morning. "She shipped in Tuesday, jogged Wednesday and galloped (Thursday)." On Thursday, Lookin At Diamond also visited the Paddock with fellow California shipper Ag Bullet, set to race in Sunday's Franklin (G2), and runners from trainers Steve Asmussen, Brendan Walsh, Todd Pletcher and Chad Brown during a busy schooling session. Lookin At Diamond galloped again Friday.

Owned and bred by Diamond 100 Racing Club, Lookin At Diamond won a maiden race in her second start May 2 at Santa Anita before a third there in the Honeymoon (L) prior to the 1 1/8-mile Del Mar Oaks. In the Del Mar Oaks, she finished second by 1¼ lengths to Tam Tam and edged Kensington Lane (IRE) by that same margin for the place spot.

"That was a very good run," Powell said of the Del Mar Oaks. "The winner was much the best that day, but the winner got a very good trip, too. We had to close from the back of the pack. I'd lost a bit of training with her early in the meet, in July, so hopefully we can move up a bit and be closer."

Lookin At Diamond didn't miss any training after the Del Mar Oaks. She tuned up for the QE II Presented by Dixiana with a pair of easy works – a half in :51.40 Sept. 20 and 5 furlongs in 1:00.80 Sept. 27 – at Santa Anita before heading east.

In the 1 1/8-mile QE II Presented by Dixiana, Lookin At Diamond will meet Tam Tam and Kensington Lane again in a strong field led by King's Plate winner Luster, Grade 3 winner and Grade 1-placed Faithful Departed and European shipper Braida (FR). Lookin At Diamond is 20-1 on the morning line for Powell and jockey Julien Leparoux. With a victory, she will become Powell's first Keeneland winner.

"Coming out of (the Del Mar Oaks) gave me confidence to come here," Powell said. "The fact she's Kentucky-bred makes it more enticing. She showed last time that she belongs with those, you know? And there aren't many opportunities for 3-year-old fillies, restricted to 3-year-old fillies." ■ *By Tom Law*

Outfielder Delivers Impressive Late Surge to Win Thursday Allowance

Keeneland-based Outfielder gave his connections plenty to celebrate Thursday at Keeneland, unleashing an impressive late surge to win the seventh race, a \$140,000 allowance at 5 ½ furlongs on the turf in 1:02.41.

“(Retired European champion jockey) Frankie Dettori and Kia (Joorabchian) were on FaceTime (during the race),” winning trainer and co-owner Wesley Ward said of the representatives of co-owner Amo Racing USA while holding up his iPhone. “They were all excited.”

Despite appearing to lose momentum turning for home, the 3-year-old son of Speightstown and Irad Ortiz Jr. found another gear in the final furlong, producing a powerful burst to win by a half-length over Throckmorton.

“Turning for home,” Ward said, “I didn’t think we were going to get there. He switched leads and kind of lost his momentum, then at the eighth pole he made that big surge and he was on home.”

Outfielder improved to 3-for-5 in 2026 with the win, adding the allowance to his victories this year Animal Kingdom at Turfway Park and the William Walker (L) at Churchill Downs. He’s won five of nine career starts with \$552,426 in earnings.



“He was always meant to be a nice horse, he’s only been beaten a couple times,” Ward said. “He’s a good horse.”

Outfielder’s performance came after Ward experienced a tough finish in last Sunday’s Indian Summer (G3) Presented by Keeneland Select with the filly Ruiva. Ward watched Ruiva lead before being caught late by Adonius (IRE), giving him an appreciation for both sides of a close finish.

“That’s the way we were in the Indian Summer the other day,” Ward said. “We were in front, like the other horse (pacesetter Throckmorton in Outfielder’s win), and they got me. I know how it is on both sides.”

Following Thursday’s effort, Ward said he would discuss Outfielder’s next steps with Joorabchian and co-owner Jayson Werth of Two Eight Racing. Dettori serves as Amo Racing’s global brand ambassador.

“We’ll sit down and talk about it,” Ward said. “He’s a good horse, it’ll be tough.” ■ By Jax Rogers



FROM KEENELAND LIBRARY ARCHIVES

OCT. 9, 2010

Keeneland held its only Arabian race, the President of the United Arab Emirates Cup. Grilla took home the victory.



PERSONAL

PICK 5

JIM GOODMAN

Keeneland Director of Wagering Development

Birth Date: Dec. 12, 1953

Birthplace: Glasgow, Kentucky



Q: How did you come into your position at Keeneland?

A: I retired when I was 49, after 29 years of service in Kentucky State Parks. I became a mutuel clerk here. At that time, it was \$20 an hour and that was 21 years ago. I'd been coming to the race track since I was 18. Loved the job (as a mutuel clerk). The assistant director of mutuels (position became available); somebody called me and said I should apply for that. I wasn't sure I wanted to get back into management, but the timing was great. I got that job and right about then the simulcast director at the time was retiring, so I got that job within six months. After that the mutuels manager left, and I took over that job. Now I'm wagering development, which basically is mutuels, simulcasting contracts, programs.

Q: What's your favorite Keeneland moment?

A: June 2005. (Keeneland was open for simulcasting when not holding live racing at the time) and the Paddock was set up (with tables for patrons). It was a big deal. I sat down under one of the trees in the Paddock and looked around and said, 'They pay me to come here. This is really good.' That was within four or five weeks of me starting.

Q: What is the biggest handicapping superstition you know?

A: Everybody when I first came to work here (said) '\$50 bills, bad luck.' When I worked as a mutuel clerk — maybe (because) I was the new guy on the block — they gave me all the 50s. I started handing them out. I had one guy that literally backed away and would not touch it. He got mad.

Q: What do you do in your leisure time?

A: I play golf. Love UK basketball and football. I go to race tracks when I'm not working. When I go to Churchill, Horseshoe Indy, Turfway, Ellis, I don't have to worry about how things are — how the mutuel clerks are — even though I still notice (wagering operations there). I have an 8-year-old granddaughter, Ella, whatever she wants to do is what papa does.

Q: Keeneland has major handicapping contests Friday and Saturday that offer berths in the BCBC (Breeders' Cup Betting Challenge) and the NTRA National Horseplayers Championship. What makes a successful contest?

A: It's numbers (of players) of course, but it's also the way you treat people. Our contests are the premier contests in the country — among the top four or five at least. The reason the players come back here is we take really good care of them. My Green Room captain contacts every person that wants to come, takes care of their ticket needs, parking and even talks about restaurant recommendations if they haven't been here. The biggest thing with handling a tournament is (ensuring) that everything goes well.

WHAT'S IN A NAME

COL FRANK SLADE



KER-nul FRANK SLAYD

Race 5

The character portrayed by Al Pacino in the 1992 film "Scent of a Woman", a role that earned Pacino the Academy Award for Best Actor. This colt is sired by Oscar Performance.

PEOPLE • HORSES • STATS

Worth Knowing

"He galloped out big like he always does. Everyone is happy with him today."

Jose Ortiz after breezing Keeneland-based Kentucky Derby (G1) and Belmont (G1) winner Golden Tempo **5 furlongs in 1:01.80** in company on Friday.

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