

Cosequin Presents OTTB Showcase: Facebook and Fence Posts

by [Jen Roytz](#)
PaulickReport.com



Carleigh and Mason at the New Vocations Hunter Pace last weekend

Facebook has become a great connector of people and information. Looking for a good restaurant to try? Ask your Facebook friends for input. Then, once you dine there, post photos and information for your friends so they can enjoy (or avoid) the same experience you had. Before you know it, seemingly everyone with a computer and the ability to double click will know what you thought of that tuna tartar you posted a photo of at the restaurant your Facebook friend recommended.

That's why when Carleigh Fedorka posted on her Facebook page that she'd just sold her horse and was looking for a new off-the-track project to bring along, it wasn't long before she was presented with exactly what she was looking for, and then some.

She received a number of responses, but most fell short of her criteria. Then she heard from Jak Knelman, whose family owns Farfellow Farm in Paris, Ky. He'd seen her post and contacted her about a horse that might fit the bill.

The Knelmans had a horse sitting in a pasture whose racing career hadn't turned out quite as lucrative as his owners had hoped. Cold as Stone had earned his lone win at the \$4,000 claiming level at Thistledown in northeast Ohio, and in his final race, he finished a dismal eighth in a non-winners of two races claiming event with the same claim price. He obviously wasn't meeting the Knelman's expectations, but that didn't mean he didn't have potential for other sports.

“When it became clear that he was not going to succeed as a racer, we retired him back to the farm,” said Suzanne Knelman. “Our farm actually has more non-producing horses than producers, which isn't a great economic model, but it's how we want to be involved in this business.”

The Knelman's turned Cold as Stone out at their farm for the better part of a year, and that's where he was when Jak saw Carleigh's post on Facebook about wanting to find a new eventing prospect to bring along.

Carleigh went out to Farfellow Farm to take a look at Cold as Stone and rather quickly decided that he was most definitely what she was looking for.



Carleigh and Mason schooling the stadium course

“Visually I liked him,” said Carleigh. “He is very well put together and fit all of my criteria. He was between three and five years-old, taller than sixteen hands, gelded and above all else, he was sound! But, when I got on I realized how amazing his brain was and how soft his mouth is. He just naturally floated around in a frame.”

Carleigh has been riding since childhood and has brought along a number of off-track Thoroughbreds. In addition to her riding experience, she has worked in the Thoroughbred industry as a professional, managing the yearling division at Hinkle Farm before going back to school recently to pursue a doctorate in Equine Reproduction at the University of Kentucky’s Gluck Equine Research Center.

“Luckily, the Knelmans had already done the job of letting him down. He was pleasantly plump and barefoot, so my retraining involved a lot of flatwork mixed with a lot of hacking on the trails,” said Carleigh. “Luckily, he has enjoyed both!”

It’s only been a month since the pair has been together, and this past weekend’s inaugural New Vocation’s Hunter Pace at Scheffelridge Farm was their first outing away from their home base. “Mason,” as he’s referred to in his off-track life, was faced with a number of new variables and questions, but he took everything in stride.

“It was a milestone of many proportions,” said Carleigh. “He jumped every fence I put in front of him, was relaxed the entire time, tied to the trailer like a gentleman, and then schooled the stadium like he was at an actual event. You couldn’t have taken the smile off of my face on Sunday.”

Carleigh and Mason teamed up with former “OTTB Showcase” feature Dream Steeler and his owner/rider Christine Siegel ([read about them here](#)) for the hunter pace, and the pair ended up taking top honors in the Thoroughbred division.

“We were very excited to host 90 riders at our inaugural hunter pace,” said Sarah Coleman, Director of Education and Development at New Vocations Racehorse Adoption . “Carleigh and

Christine were the closest to the optimal time without going over of the Thoroughbred teams in all of the divisions.ö



Mason and Carleigh school over fences as Christine takes photos atop Dream Steeler

Learn more about the hunter pace [here](#).

The event proved popular with Central Kentucky riders, with event organizers aiming for a sense of camaraderie over competition. Laughter and upbeat chatter could be heard throughout the course that wound through fields and woods, making it the perfect event for seasoned and green horses and riders alike.

Members of the Georgetown College Equestrian Team volunteered at the event and added to the positive vibes on and off of the course, providing assistance with check-in, photography services, hosting a silent auction, and manning the "toddy and potty stops" on course where people could take a quick bathroom break or enjoy a cup of apple cider, with or without a shot of bourbon provided by Buffalo Trace Distillery.

Carleigh's plan for Mason is to keep taking him on outings and begin competing at combined training events. Eventually, she will sell him as a show horse and get another project to bring along, but until then, she's having the time of her life helping Mason learn the ropes.

"I have another off-track horse who is my "keeper" and we'll hopefully keep moving up the levels together, but Mason definitely excels at jumping and I truly see "upper level" potential in his future," said Carleigh. "Flatwork isn't hard for him, but he's still learning how to relax through his frame. I think his cocky nature will allow him to thrive as an eventer. He loves hacking, and he just soared over the cross country fences at the hunter pace!"

Carleigh's experience with and knowledge of Thoroughbreds has made her a huge fan of them on and off the track.

"With Thoroughbreds off of the track, someone has already tied, trailered, bathed, bandaged, saddled, taught lead changes, walked and grazed them. You are getting a horse who is 75 percent finished in his training before you even get on the mounting block," said Carleigh. "I thank the people from Farfellow Farm every day, as well as Mill Ridge, where I got my other horse, and their two-year-old and race trainers for the amazing manners they have instilled in these horses!"

THE DEETS:

Name: Cold As Stone (a.k.a. ðMasonö)

Born: March 6, 2010

Color: Bay

Sire: Dehere

Dam: A Song in A Minor

Sale History: Sold at KEENOV in 2010 as a weanling for \$12,000

Race Record: 9-1-2-0

Race Earnings: \$9,285

If you have or know of a retired Thoroughbred with an interesting story to tell, we'd love to hear about it! Just email Jen Roytz (Jenroytz@gmail.com) with the horse's Jockey Club name, background story, and a few photos.

Jen Roytz was the marketing and communications director at Three Chimneys Farm in Midway, Kentucky. She is a freelance writer and marketing and public relations consultant for various entities, both equine and non-equine. She can also still be found on the back of an OTTB most days.

*Contact Jen on **Facebook** and **Twitter**.*