

Cosequin Presents OTTB Showcase: Happy Accidents

by [Jen Roytz](#)

Courtesy PaulickReport.com



Show Master, aka Blaster, is a bit accident prone, but Jordan says, "I love his willingness and his trust in me."

Often a single experience can prompt a shift in one's outlook on a subject. For 18-year-old Jordan Thompson, it was her first ride on a horse named Blaster that changed her entire perspective on off-track Thoroughbreds.

Blaster raced as Show Master, a Michigan-bred who raced 12 times with a single win coming in a 5 ½-furlong maiden special at Great Lakes Downs in 1:12.19, a time that would have been considered sluggish even for a six-furlong race.

After a dozen starts, all with that similar turn of foot, the gelding's connections sold him to a trainer who had planned to race him but instead found him an off-track home with riding coach and trainer Halliea Milner — and with that his off-track training began.

The plan had originally been for Blaster to be an eventer for Halliea, but it soon became apparent that due to a combination of physical limitations, mental roadblocks, and being inherently accident-prone, eventing turned out not to be the career he was best suited for. Instead, Halliea trained him on the flat and over small fences, and eventually allowed students to use him in their lessons. One of the students that got to take him for a spin in her lessons was Jordan.

“From the moment I first got on him, I knew he was the horse for me,” said Jordan. “My trainer said I had the biggest smile on my face. I started leasing him soon after that and worked out a deal with Halliea that I would work for her, and the money I made would go toward his asking price.”

It took Jordan a year of hard work to pay for him, but it was well worth it, as she recalls dancing blissfully around her room celebrating the day he was officially hers.

Jordan and her family relocated several times as she was growing up, and in each place she found a farm where she could ride. She transitioned from hunter/jumpers to eventing and back again, which has given her a well-rounded set of skills as a rider, and it was exactly that versatility of disciplines that Blaster needed from his partner.



Blaster is a ðgoofð but heð inspired Jordanð love for off-trackers

ðI started working with him to build more confidence over jumps and more muscle,ð said Jordan. ðWeðve gone to shows, done the jumpers and eventing alike, and he is really into Natural Horsemanship.ð

Blasterð history of injuries both on and off of the track have made it difficult for him to progress to the high levels of jumping or eventing. According to Jordan, he is a horse that constantly finds new ways to hurt himself.

ðWhen the ground is completely frozen, he thinks thatð a good time to run around and slide everywhere, and right before the big snow storm this year, he thought his blanket was a horse-eating octopus and ripped it off of himself. Heð caught his leg in the fence before and more recently ran into a fence post, putting a three-corner tear in his chest. He is very accident-prone.ð

In addition to finding new and innovative ways to injure himself, Blaster also thoroughly enjoys eating, literally squealing like a pig at feed time.

ðBlaster is a total goof, but I love his quirkiness,ð said Jordan. ðI love his willingness and his trust in me. My proudest moment with him was one day after a short ride, he was patiently waiting for me in the hallway leading to the tack room. He stood quietly like a champ until I was done untacking him and then trusted me enough to back up without being able to see anything behind him. I was so proud! It was the first time he really showed me that he trusted me more than anyone else.ð



Jordan knows Blaster's limitations may well dictate what they can and can't do in the saddle together, but that doesn't seem to faze her a bit. She gushes about wanting to keep him for the rest of his life, regardless of his abilities or limitations.

"Thoroughbreds are so versatile. I find it so amazing that they can go from racing to competing in so many other disciplines," said Jordan. "Before I rode Blaster, I was completely sold on getting a Quarter Horse or Warmblood. He completely changed my view on Thoroughbreds. Now OTTBs are the only horses I want to ever own."

THE DEETS:

Name: Show Master (a.k.a. "Master" or "Blaster")

Born: March 27, 2002

Color: Bay

Sire: Clear Course

Dam: Show Opener

Sale History: None

Race Record: 12-1-1-3

Race Earnings: \$17,771

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 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**.*