

# COSEQUIN PRESENTS OTTB SHOWCASE: MOST WANTED THOROUGHBREDS

by **Jen Roytz**

Courtesy PaulickReport.com



Rosie Napravnik, shown here on the cross-country course on her own off-tracker, Old Ironsides, will be competing on Dare Me in the Thoroughbred Makeover.

With the BreedersøCup coming to Lexington for the first time in history, the city is buzzing with excitement. Parties have been planned, concerts have been booked, and Lexington's leaders have come together to create the BreedersøCup Festival, a week-long celebration of all things Kentucky, including horses, bourbon, and good old Southern hospitality that culminates with the 2015 BreedersøCup. The festival is book-ended with some pretty fantastic Thoroughbreds.

The kick-off event for the BreedersøCup Festival is the much-anticipated TCA Thoroughbred Makeover and National Symposium, a three-day long event running October 23-25 at the Kentucky Horse Park featuring seminars, demonstrations and the weekend's premier event, the Thoroughbred Makeover, in which nearly 200 horse and rider combinations will compete for their share of \$100,000 in cash and prizes and the title of "America's Most Wanted Thoroughbred."

The horses competing have come from all walks of life, from stakes stars and those with BreedersøCup resumes to allowance and claiming level runners and a few who trained at the track, but never made it to their first start, all coming together to show the potential and versatility racehorses have after the track. Ridden by a mix of professionals, amateurs and juniors, the horses are allowed to compete in up to two of the ten offered disciplines ó barrel racing, competitive trail, dressage, eventing, field hunter, freestyle, polo, show hunter, show jumping, and working ranch.

The weekend will also include seminars on a wide range of topics, including Health Management of Your OTTB, Soundness Issues and Pre-Purchase Exams, What Racehorses Know, Selling or Placing Your Thoroughbred, Picking Prospects, and more. There will also be a vendor fair and demonstrations by notable riders.

With the BreedersøCup just a week away from the Thoroughbred Makeover, it is only appropriate that several of the horses entered have some pretty impressive connections to the World Thoroughbred Championships, including Caught Me Looking, whose half-brother, Smooth Roller, recently won the G1 Awesome Again Stakes and is heading to the BreedersøCup Classic. Both were bred by John Cummins, who, along with his wife, Bridget McNeese, will be on hand to watch both horses compete.



A half brother to BreedersøCup Classic contender Smooth Roller, Caught Me Looking has been entered in the Thoroughbred Makeover by Bridget McNeese and husband John Cummins, who bred both horses.

“As a breeder, you would love to get Secretariat every time one of your mare produces a foal, but that just isn’t going to happen,” said Bridget. “These horses that don’t make it on the track still have value and worth, just in a different venue. John and I have had fun and even a bit of success finding that different venue for them. To have a horse we bred competing in the Makeover and then a week later to have a horse we bred competing in the BreedersøCup is going to be quite exciting for us. They both have accomplished so much, albeit on different paths, and we couldn’t be prouder.”

If that isn’t enough for the Thoroughbred enthusiast, also taking place that weekend on the Kentucky Horse Park grounds is the annual Hagyard Mid-South Eventing and Dressage Association Team Challenge, which typically draws more than 400 horse and rider combinations from around the region. With such close proximity to Halloween and the camaraderie a team competition encourages, many of the teams will dress their horses and themselves in costume as they compete through the three phases.

Spectators are welcome to come out to the Kentucky Horse Park and take in all that the TCA Thoroughbred Makeover and National Symposium has to offer. General Admission to the Thoroughbred Makeover is free and allows access to all ten discipline competitions, the vendor fair and the Makeover Marketplace where ex-racehorses available for purchase or adoption will be showcased. Tickets to the finale on Sunday, where America's Most Wanted Thoroughbred will be crowned, are \$15, and tickets to attend the seminars are \$25 each and grant access to any and all seminar topics offered throughout the weekend.

Friday evening the Retired Racehorse Project will host an exclusive launch party for its highly anticipated new magazine, *Off-Track Thoroughbred* from 6:30-9:00 in the Kentucky Horse Park Visitor Center. Tickets to the party are \$25 each and will include drinks, hors d'œuvres and live music by Shades of Grass and Temptation Thompson.



Former assistant to Bobby Frankel, Nuno Santos is bringing Rapsandtaps, a son of Tapit, and will compete in dressage

“TCA applauds and supports the work of the Retired Racehorse Project,” said Erin Crady, executive director of the Thoroughbred Charities of America, title sponsor for the Thoroughbred Makeover. “By showcasing the versatility of off-track Thoroughbreds through their Makeover competitions and events, RRP, over a very short time, has contributed to an increase in the demand for off-track Thoroughbreds within the sport and pleasure horse market. This, in turn, has led to an increase in the value of retired racehorses, which will, hopefully, lead to more Thoroughbreds retiring from the racetrack while they are sound.”

**To see a list of the 187 horses competing in the TCA Thoroughbred Makeover, go to <http://www.retiredracehorseproject.org/contestant-list>.**

*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 ([Jenlroytz@gmail.com](mailto:Jenlroytz@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.*

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