



**Iron Maidens Thoroughbreds**  
**Golden Gate, Race 8**  
**El Camino Real Derby, Grade 3**  
**1 1/8 Miles 3 YO**  
**February 12, 2011**



Thoroughbred breeding in the US leans more and more towards speed every year. The majority of the races are held between five furlongs and 1 1/16 miles. An extra furlong doesn't seem like much, but it can be the difference between winning and losing a race. Natural talent and the heart of the particular thoroughbred can take him far, but pedigree can help determine the horse that will have that little extra it takes to win.

The overwhelming favorite in the El Camino Real Derby is [COMMA TO THE TOP](#) (Bwana Charlie – Maggies Storm, by Stormy Atlantic), who boasts a five win race streak, which started at Golden Gate. Comma To The Top has a sprinter/miler pedigree. His high cruising speed and ability to put away his foes mid-race could carry him to 1/18 miles but he'll be running on fumes at the end. Comma To The Top is Bwana Charlie's best runner. His dam, Maggies Storm, placed once in four tries. She is a half-sister to the stakes winner miler Yes He's a Pistol and stakes placed Dumaai of Course. Comma To The Top isn't facing the toughest group, but he will face a distance test. Read his pedigree profile here.

Comma to the Top's main challenger could be [POSITIVE RESPONSE](#) (Pomeroy – Lisa's Approval, by Farma Way), who has been improving in every race. Positive Response has a speed over stamina pedigree. His sire gets sprinter/miler types and hasn't produced a stakes winner at 1 1/8 miles. His damsire won at 1 ¼ miles and Positive Response's dam won at two turns over the lawn. Positive Response is the first stakes winner in two generations of his distaff family. He's already bested Jakesam and Bluegrass Reward and brings a bullet work to the starting gate, but like Comma To The Top, the distance is a question mark.

The aforementioned [JAKESAM](#) (Smoke Glacken – Deputy Sarah, by Deputy Commander) has seen the tail ends of Comma To The Top and Positive Response in front of him. He's won at the maiden and allowance levels, but appears to be a notch below the best. Jakesam has a speed over stamina pedigree. His sire gets mostly sprint types, but does have three winners at 1 1/8 miles, including Persistently, who has similar breeding to Jakesam. His damsire Deputy Commander and second damsire Holy Bull both won the Travers Stakes. Jakesam dam is a half-sister to Grade 2 stakes winner Higher World. The pretty gray colt might put pressure on the top two early.

[SILVER MEDALLION](#) (Badge of Silver – Another Vegetarian, by Stalwart) won the Eddie Logan stakes on the grass last time out. Silver Medallion is a half-brother to Sweet Talker, winner of the Queen Elizabeth II Challenge Cup (G-1) over the lawn. His sire Badge of Silver is represented by his first crop this year and has three winners over the turf. His dam Another Vegetarian is a half-sister to a stakes winner. Silver Medallion has been rank, pulled, bumped and steadied in most of his races, making me wonder what he can do with a clean trip.

[BLUEGRASS REWARD](#) (Good Reward – Bluegrass Belle, by Unbridled's Song) was a gaining third behind Positive Response and Jakesam in the California Derby. He has the pedigree to be a factor at longer distances. Bluegrass Reward so far is the top runner for his second crop sire, who won up to 1 ¼ miles over the turf. His dam is a half-sister to a stakes placed runner. Thorn Song, a Grade 1 turf miler was produced by this female family. Bluegrass Rewards breezes have been slow stamina oriented affairs.

After breaking into the winning ranks in his fifth attempt three weeks ago, [FORMULA GOLD](#) (Formal Gold – Pundit, by Beau Genius) jumps into tough competition. He has a distance oriented pedigree. His sire fought with Skip Away and Will’s Way through many prestigious handicaps during his racing career. Formula Gold’s damsire won up to 1 1/8 miles, and as a broodmare sire, has winners at 1 ¼ miles. Formula Gold is a half-brother to the stakes placed miler Bleach Blonde. Formula Gold hasn’t worked since the beginning of December, which is unusual.

### **Selections:**

How the track is playing: Contrary to almost every other track in the US this winter, the front runner isn’t always the winner at Golden Gate. 80% of the races this meet at 1/18 miles have been won by the mid pack or steady one-run closers while the front runners have wired the field 20% of the time. Strangely, pace pressers are at a major disadvantage.

**COMMA TO THE TOP** has the most speed in this race. Can he get away with an easy lead and coast home on fumes? He’s certainly seems talented enough, but this ain’t Southern California and those one-run Zenyatta types can close at Golden Gate. **POSITIVE RESPONSE** and **JAKESAM** could keep **COMMA TO THE TOP** working on the front end. The only one-run type is **BLUEGRASS REWARD**. He has the pedigree and could come running at the end. **SILVER MEDALION** strikes me as a potentially nice turf horse. His works over dirt are average. While his pedigree indicates that he should run over anything, I’ll take a pass. What about **FORMULA GOLD**? Did the light bulb suddenly go on? He’s never run a bad race and could be a live longshot if things fall apart.

**#2 BLUEGRASS REWARD**

**#1 COMMA TO THE TOP**

**#5 POSITIVE RESPONSE**

**#3 FORMULA GOLD – longshot pick**