



**Iron Maidens Thoroughbreds
Gulfstream Park, Race 10
Fountain Of Youth Stakes, Grade 2
1 1/8 miles, 3 YO
February 26, 2011**



The Fountain Of Youth Stakes (G-2) is the first serious Triple Crown prep race that divides the miler types from true route runners. Winning this contest doesn't guarantee a win or in the money finish in the Kentucky Derby. The last horse to pull off the Fountain Of Youth/Kentucky Derby double was Thunder Gulch in 1995.

This year, all eyes will be on [TO HONOR AND SERVE](#) (Bernardini – Pilfer, by Deputy Minister) as he makes his three year old season debut. One of the favorites for the Kentucky Derby, To Honor And Serve demolished his competition by over 12 lengths in his last two races, the Grade 2 Nashua and Remsen Stakes. He has a pedigree well-suited to the Classic distances and the Bill Mott Trainee has been working spectacularly over the deep Payson Park surface.

To Honor And Serve's main competition may come in the form of Gourmet Dinner and Soldat.

[GOURMET DINNER](#) (Trippi - Potluck Dinner, Pentelicus) had no answer against an overpowering Comma To The Top in the Cash Call Futurity (G-1) and Dialed In out finished him in the Holy Bull Stakes (G-3). Gourmet Dinner has speed top and bottom in his pedigree. His dam Potluck Dinner was unplaced in her only start, but has shined as a broodmare. All six of her foals to race are durable, sound winners. Her first foal, l'mroyalmecke'd, raced 55 times and was stakes placed. She also produced stakes winner Gaston A. Potluck Dinner is a half-sister to the sprint stakes winners Lady Gin and Sea Of Green. Another half-sister, Almost Aprom Queen, is the dam of 2010 Oak Leaf Stakes (G-1) winner Rigoletta. Gourmet Dinner has been working strongly, including a recent bullet work over the Gulfstream surface.

Never unplaced in six lifetime starts, [SOLDAT](#) (War Front – Le Relais, by Coronados Quest) demolished a field of promising allowance runners going 1 1/8 miles over a sloppy Gulfstream surface in his three year old debut. Soldat has a speed over stamina pedigree with a mix of dirt and turf attributes. His first crop sire, a son of Danzig, is a Grade 2 winning dirt sprinter while damsire Coronado's Quest won the Travers Stakes. Second damsire Apalachee was a Champion sprinting juvenile in Europe. Soldat's works are strong.

[SHACKLEFORD](#) (Forestry – Oatsee, by Unbridled) was also impressive in a 1 1/8 mile allowance race at Gulfstream, beating out a hard-luck Casper's Touch and El Grayling. Like Soldat, Shackleford has a speed over stamina pedigree. He's a half-brother to Alabama Stakes (G-1) heroine Lady Joanne and Grade 2 winner Baghdaria. His dam and second dam are both stakes winners. The Dale roman's trainee had an easy five furlong maintenance work and could be ready to improve in his second start of the year.

[EL GRAYLING](#) (El Prado (IRE) - Smokey Diplomacy, by Dynaformer) weakened on the lead and was third to Shackleford in the aforementioned allowance race. He won his maiden over the turf, but otherwise, has only placed twice in five outings since then. El Grayling has the pedigree of a late-maturing turf router, although his dam placed in a stakes race over the dirt, showing the influence of her damsire Relaunch. The sire of El Grayling gets winners over all surfaces and his best progeny over dirt are Madaglia D'Oro and Borrego. The pretty gray colt's morning works have been slow.

CASPER'S TOUCH (Touch Gold – Lizzy Cool, by Saint Ballado) was mugged by Shadow Warrior in the stretch of the allowance race, but he rushed up determinedly to grab second, only 2 ½ lengths behind Shackelford. Casper's Touch has a pedigree rife with stamina influences. He's a half-brother to multiple stakes winning sprinter Cool Bullet. His dam is a stakes winner and his third dam a multiple grade 1 stakes winner. Casper's Touch had an easy maintenance breeze for the Fountain of Youth.

RACING APTITUDE (Aptitude – Ecclesiastes, by Saint Ballado) has won two of seven starts, including the Arthur I Appleton over the turf. He's been unplaced in the remainder of his contests. His sire was successful at 1/14 miles, but his offspring that run over dirt seldom win past 1 1/16 miles. Racing Aptitude's dam was unplaced in her only start, but produced three stakes winners from her foals. Racing Aptitude has inbreeding to the blue hen Almahmoud through her daughters Natalma and Cosmah. He's been working well at Calder and the Teshar barn is 26% with the turf to dirt angle.

Mentioned in our watch list last week, **BOWMAN'S CAUSEWAY** (Giant's Causeway – Victory Encounter, by Victory Speech) jumps into graded stakes competition only two weeks after winning his maiden. The Patrick Biancone trainee has a stamina oriented pedigree and his dam won four stakes races, including the Vanity Handicap (G-1) at 1 1/8 miles.

SELECTIONS:

How the track is playing: 64% of the front runners/pace pressers are victorious while stalkers have a tough time closing. Definite speed bias, especially on the rail. Guarantees

TO HONOR AND SERVE will probably be the favorite. He's proven at the distance and has the right running style for the track. He's worked some bullets over a tiring Payson Track to shake the rust off, and he's fit and ready to go. **CASPER'S TOUCH** is coming in off of a tough race just a few weeks ago. It's interesting that his jock jumps to a horse he's never ridden in a race. **BOWMAN'S CAUSEWAY** won his maiden just two weeks ago, hitting his highest BRIS speed figure. He has the pedigree, but he's taking on too much too soon. **SHACKLEFORD** should improve in his second race off of a layoff, this is probably as far as he wants to run, but he did it easy last time out. Despite his swift works, **GOURMET DINNER** doesn't have the pedigree to win at 1 1/8 miles, at least not against top company. He's certainly classy enough to take a piece of the pie. **SOLDAT** has never finished out of the money, but he's never won over a fast track. Is he one of those turf horses who can handle a muddy track but is less than his best over a fast track? Like **SOLDAT**, **EL GRAYLING** is a turf horse who is talented enough to finish in the money over dirt.

#7 TO HONOR AND SERVE

#1 SOLDAT

#2 GOURMET DINNER

#8 SHACKLEFORD – longshot pick 5-1 or higher

<http://www.horseracingnation.com/news/Archrarch Can he emulate Smarty Jones 123>

hope spring eternal i