



## *Iron Maidens Thoroughbreds*

### *Killer Graces*

### *Pedigree Profiles*

*August 9, 2011*



Top California filly Killer Graces emulated her stablemate Champion Filly Blind Luck's running style in winning the Cinderella and Landaluce Stakes. However, Killer Graces checked in a shocking sixth in the Sorrento Stakes (G3) this past weekend. Is she just a win early type that won't progress or is there a reason for her poor performance?



**KILLER GRACES** (Congaree – Heatherdoesntbluff, by Old Trieste) was favored in the Sorrento (G3), but had no real excuse, lingering at the back of the pack and checking in sixth of seven. She did bobble slightly when the gates opened, but she lost no ground and was able to use her stalking style to no avail. Don't hold Killer Grace's uncharastically dull effort in the Sorrento against her. There are clues in the filly's pedigree that indicate she may not enjoy the Polytrack.



Killer Graces' sire Congaree won the 1 1/8 mile Wood Memorial at three, but later found a mile to be his favored distance. Congaree, a son of two-time European Champion Arazi, was the first horse to win back-to-back Met Miles (G1) in 2002 – 2003. Congaree ran the fastest mile in North America in the 2002 edition of the Met Mile. He competed in 22 consecutive graded stakes races and won ten of them, five of which were Grade 1 events. Congaree was an Eclipse Award finalist in

the Sprinter, Champion Older Male and Horse of the Year categories, but amazingly, won none of those awards.

Like most top runners, Congaree started his stud career in Kentucky. He was moved to New York last year. Congaree's offspring a mainly sprinter/milers, but he is represented by one winner who has been successful twice at 1 1/8 miles. His son Jeranimo was victorious in the Strub and San Gabriel Handicap, both Grade 2 events. Congaree has produced three graded stakes winners from four racing crops. The majority of his offspring are best over dirt. He does have a few winners over turf and synthetics, but his offspring have a 11-0-1-2 record in the last four years over the Del Mar Polytrack.



Old Trieste, Killer Graces damsire, was a solid California horse who was unplaced in his only forays out of state. A son of A.P. Indy out of a graded stakes mare, Old Trieste was a Grade 2 performer between a mile to 1 1/8 miles. He finished tenth in the 1998 Kentucky Derby after breaking poorly and nearly falling. He returned to California and Old Trieste reeled off four consecutive Grade 2 victories.

In the breeding shed, Old Trieste had a brief but solid career. From only three racing crops Old Trieste sired Met Mile hero Silver Train and Blue Grass Stakes winner Sinister Minister. Old Trieste's daughters are starting to bear offspring and the stallion may ultimately prove to be a strong broodmare sire. Besides Killer Graces, his daughters have produced last year's Arlington – Washington Futurity victor Major Gain, Lingote de Oro, a multiple Group 1 winner in Argentina, and listed stakes winners Clear Sailing and Mizzen You. As a Polytrack sire, Old Trieste has very few winners and only 20% of his runners finish in the money at Del Mar.

Killer Graces dam Heatherdoesntbluff faced the starter five times in California. She placed third once and earned her sole win in her final race, a 1 1/16 mile maiden claiming affair. Heatherdoesntbluff isn't bluffing as a broodmare. She's produced only two foals, both fillies, but both are precocious youngsters. Rockin Heather (by In Excess) isn't quite as talented as her younger half sibling Killer Graces. Rockin Heather won her debut but was seventh in the Cinderella. She placed in one listed stakes and finished third twice in two others. Rockin Heather is presently competing unsuccessfully in claiming races on the Southern California circuit. Perhaps a move to northern climes would fit her talents.

Delving deeper into the Killer Graces' female family, there is little blacktype in the first four generations. Her dam Heatherdoesntbluff is a half sister to stakes placed Southern Ridge (by Southern Image). The second dam Michigan Bluff (by Skywalker) won the 1 1/8 mile Hillsborough Handicap (G3) at Bay Meadows. She was the only stakes winner produced by her dam Middlefork Rapids (by Wild Again), a two-time graded stakes winner. One has to skip two generations to find a mare of note, but Killer Graces is a descendant of the fantastic mare La Troienne, one of the most important mares in American breeding.



As we discovered from Killer Graces performance and pedigree, Polytrack isn't her optimal surface. Her trainer Jerry Hollendorfer doesn't hesitate to ship horses to other tracks if they don't like the surfaces at home, so maybe Killer Graces will show up at Saratoga later this summer. Killer Graces resembles Blind Luck in both her style of running and appearance. Killer Graces is a large, blazed-faced, chestnut filly. She has a long, fluid stride and makes her run from the back of the pack. Her one-run stalker style will aid her as the race distances lengthen. Killer Graces should love the 1 1/16 miles of the Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies, and if she resumes her winning ways, could have a legitimate shot at year-end honors.