

THE PUMA

**Chestnut colt by Essential Quality – Eve of War by Declaration of War
\$150,000 purchase at the 2025 OBS April 2-Year-Olds in Training Sale**

Breeder: Hidden Brook Farm & Brian Kahn (Kentucky)

Birth date: Feb. 7, 2023

Owner: OGMA Investments, JR Ranch & High Step Racing

Trainer: Gustavo Delgado, Sr.

Jockey: Luis Saez

Lifetime Record: 4 1-2-1

Lifetime Earnings: \$442,280

THE PUMA

- Last out was the runner-up by a nose in the Florida Derby (Grade 1) March 28.
- Qualified for the Kentucky Derby (Grade 1) but was forced to scratch 12 hours before the race due to a skin infection in his left front leg that caused the pastern to swell and he became lame.
- The infection also kept him out of the Preakness.
- Has trained up to the Haskell.
- Won the Tampa Bay Derby (Grade 3) on March 7 by three-quarters of a length over Further Ado.
- Unraced as a 2-year-old.
- Gets his name from his trainer's nickname, acquired for his resemblance to Jose Luis Rodriguez, the Venezuelan singer called "El Puma."

BREEDING

- The Puma is a son of two-time Eclipse Award winner Essential Quality.

- Essential Quality, by Tapit, won the 2000 Breeders' Cup Juvenile (Grade 1) and the 2001 Belmont (Grade 1).
- He is the only horse to win both of those races.
- His first crop of 3y-year-olds are on the track in 2026 and three of them are stakes winners.
- The Puma is his most successful offspring to date.
- The Puma's dam is Eve of War, who was third in the 2020 Monmouth Oaks (Grade 3).
- She is by Declaration of War, a multiple Grade 1 winner in Europe.
- She has produced one other named foal, a 2-year-old colt by Charlatan.

OGMA INVESTMENTS, JR RANCH, & HIGH STEP RACING

- Trainer Gustavo Delgado, Sr., and assistant trainer Gustavo Delgado, Jr., are OGMA Investments.
- JR Ranch is headed by Jose Aguirre, a relative newcomer to the sport.
- Randy Guy is the managing general partner of High Step, which is based in Milton, Ga.
- The other High Step partners are Joe Noble, Kevin Avera, Jim Ferreira, and former Chicago Bears and Miami Dolphins offensive lineman Todd Perry.
- Ramiro Restrepo is the racing manager and bloodstock agent for the ownership group.
- Ramiro Restrepo and Gustavo, Sr., are long-time friends.
- Restrepo is a Miami native and a fifth generation horseman.
- He is a bloodstock agent and is also the South Florida market representative for the Fasig-Tipton auction house.
- The Delgados and Restrepo were owners of 2023 Kentucky Derby winner Mage, the Haskell runner-up that year.
- High Step owned micro shares of Mage through the syndicate Commonwealth.
- In addition to the Delgados, High Step employs trainers Brendan Walsh, Michael McCarthy, George Weaver, Amelia Green and Riley Mott.

GUSTAVO DELGADO, SR.

- Haskell record: 1 0-1-0
- Born March 25, 1957 in Maracaibo, Venezuela.
- Won the 2023 Kentucky Derby with Mage, the Haskell runner-up.
- Four-time winner of the Venezuelan Triple Crown.
- Five-time winner of the Clasico Simon Bolivar, Venezuela's most famous race.
- Three-time winner of the Clasico Internacional del Caribe (Grade 1).
- Trained 2009 Venezuelan Horse of the Year Bambera.
- Came to the U.S. with 25 horses.
- Son Gustavo, Jr., is his assistant and translator.
- Mage was his third Kentucky Derby starter and his third Grade 1 winner in the U.S. The others are Paolo Queen and Bodeexpress.

LUIS SAEZ

- Haskell record: 6 2-2-1
- Born May 19, 1992 in Panama City, Panama.
- Won the 2024 NYRA Bets Haskell aboard Dornoch.
- Won the 2019 TVG.com Haskell Stakes with Maximum Security.
- One of the top riders at tracks primarily in the Eastern U.S.
- Finished second in the Haskell twice: 2025 with Gosger, 2018 with Bravazo and was third in 2014 aboard Wildcat Red.
- Through July 14 he was 16 wins shy of the 4,000 career victory milestone.
- Won the 2024 Belmont Stakes (Grade 1), his second, on Dornoch. Won the 2021 Belmont on Essential Quality.
- 2025 was a banner year as he won 6 Grade 1 races, including the Kentucky Oaks aboard Good Cheer.
- Also won the Kentucky Oaks in 2022 aboard Secret Oath.
- Won three Grade 1s each year in 2024, 2023 and 2022.
- Has won leading rider titles at tracks in New York, Florida and Kentucky. Won the Saratoga title in 2021.
- In 2021 he also enjoyed success overseas, winning the \$12 million Dubai World Cup with Godolphin's Mystic Guide.

- In 2020 he traveled to Saudi Arabia and crossed the wire first in the inaugural running of the \$20 million Saudi Cup (Grade 1) on Maximum Security.
- Notched two seven-day wins at the Gulfstream championship meet in 2018.
- Began riding in the U.S. in 2009 at Calder Race Course after winning 37 races in Panama.
- Is a graduate of the renowned Laffit Pincay Jockey School in his native country, as were younger brothers Sebastian and Juan.
- Sebastian's last mount was at Colonial Downs in September of 2025.
- Juan died at age 17 as a result of a tragic spill at Indiana Grand (now Horseshoe Indianapolis) in October of 2014.