

# Cost of Freedom: Taking Another Bow



by MARCIE HEACOX

California-bred Cost of Freedom served notice that he's returned to full strength after a win in the grade III, \$100,000 Los Angeles Handicap at Hollywood Park on June 5.

He rose from the claiming ranks to become a grade I winner, but then had to grapple with recurring soundness issues and losing comebacks before his return to stakes glory.

"He's back to his old self, huh?," winning jockey Tyler Baze said. "He's just incredible. He's one hundred percent right now and if they can just keep him like this for the rest of the year, it's on to the Breeders' Cup again."

Baze sent Cost of Freedom to his customary leading position shortly after the gates opened. Grade I-winning Cal-bred M One Rifle, the second choice in the field of seven, stayed on his hip in second. The expected showdown between the two speedsters never materialized as M One Rifle faded entering the stretch and E Z's Gentleman took up his position chasing the even-money favorite.

Cost of Freedom widened the gap at the top of the stretch and held sway to the finish line to win by three quarters of a length. He carried 122 pounds over six furlongs in 1:08.49, less than a second off the track record.

E Z's Gentleman finished second and longshot Cal-bred My Summer Slew raced in third throughout. M One Rifle, Hiya Silver, Jiggly and Bet On Victor completed the order of finish.

Cost of Freedom is owned by Gary and Cecil Barber and trained by John Sadler, who posted a record fifth win in the Los Angeles. Bred by Harris Farms, the seven-year-old dark bay or brown gelding is by their stallion Cee's Tizzy out of Freedom Dance, by Moscow Ballet.

Sold for \$20,000 at the 1996 California Thoroughbred Sales (CTS) Del Mar Select & Preferred Yearling Sale, Harris Farms claimed back Freedom Dance for \$16,000 when she won her final career start in February of 2000.

"As I recall, Freedom Dance was bred to Cee's Tizzy not for pedigree reasons so much as the fact he was the best stallion we had standing at the time, and she was from such a good female family," farm veterinarian Dr. Jeanne Bowers-Lepore explained.

Freedom Dance is a half-sister to dual stakes winner Top of Our Game and stakes winner Truly Needy. She won nine times and earned \$136,922 in 17 starts. As a broodmare, she's produced four winners, including Cost of Freedom and the \$148,680-earner Never Ever.

Freedom Dance has a two-year-old Kitten's Joy colt named Turn On the Pumps in training and is currently in foal to California's leading sire Unusual Heat.

Cost of Freedom began his career in claiming and allowance races, with a runner-up finish in the 2008 edition of the \$150,000 Tiznow Stakes along the way. In July of 2008, Cost of Freedom was claimed for \$50,000 by Sadler who also claimed Never Ever for \$40,000 in October of 2005.

"John Sadler and I have been friends for years, back to when he worked for Eddie Gregson," said John Harris. "I never feel bad about losing a horse, and am delighted when they go on and do well."

Cost of Freedom proceeded to win an allowance race and then the grade I, \$250,000 Ancient Title Stakes in September of 2008. Multiple failed vet exams followed, resulting in scratches from two stakes races. He made a comeback last September that culminated with a third-placed run in the Sentient Jet Breeders' Cup Sprint (grade I). After another six-month sabbatical, he returned with a sharp allowance optional claiming win at Hollywood Park.

Cost of Freedom has now won eight of 15 starts and earned \$666,105 since his debut in August of 2006. Gary Barber said his next race may be the Del Mar Thoroughbred Club's grade I Bing Crosby Stakes on Aug. 1. 🐾

## Grade III Los Angeles Handicap Hollywood Park—Saturday, June 5, 2010



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