

Breeders' Cup World Championships

Saturday, November 7, 2020

Lexington, Kentucky, USA

Keeneland Race Course



Jun Park Brad Cox

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Well, somebody very familiar in here. Brad Cox, congratulations. The Breeders' Cup Dirt Mile. Knicks Go. Now six Breeders' Cup wins for you. Three so far during this year. This horse loves Keeneland. He now owns two track records here.

BRAD COX: Yeah, it's amazing how this game is. This was never something that we even had on our target when we ran this horse a month ago or five weeks ago at Keeneland. That was just a preparation race for possibly the Clark Handicap or the Cigar Mile. He's obviously very impressive in the third level and breaking the track record and doing it with ease. So I thought as long as he's doing well, we would give him an opportunity here, if he could even get in. There was no certainty that he would even make the body. But very thankful for Breeders' Cup for allowing him to run and he it looks like he made the right, they made the right decision. He's a very nice horse.

THE MODERATOR: He had won the Keeneland Breeders' Futurity here as a two-year-old, so obviously a real fondness for the track here. The fractions, and we know the track is playing very fast, but was it always the intention to just let him go. It looks like this has become his style of running.

BRAD COX: It was. And given how the track's, it's obviously very fast and seems like it's, speed's very, very good. It seems to be good on big days and continued to see more of that yesterday and today. So yeah, it was the plan. I just told Joel to ask him to run out of there, try to establish a position going into the first turn and clear off if possible. He didn't get a breather, though. He had a very good horse breathing down his neck up around the turn and up the back side. And this race for this horse it was just a very good set up. We have a short stretch here and it just set up extremely well, very, very well for him.

THE MODERATOR: And going the mile, the two-turn mile here at Keeneland, that's a short run into there, so his new style of running or style of running, obviously, aided that.

BRAD COX: Yes, very much so. He obviously has speed. He's effective around two turns. He showed that as a two-year-old in the Breeder's Futurity. And also in the Breeder's Cup at Churchill. I mean, he ran a huge race at Churchill. And he's a very class classy animal, a very forward animal to train and he's a very nice horse and very proud of what he was able to step up and do today.

THE MODERATOR: Now we're joined by Jun Park, the racing representative here for the Korean Racing Authority. And this horse now, just a four-year-old and a very light campaign this year. What are your thoughts, first, on his performance today here at Keeneland, very impressive track record performance?

JUN PARK: Yeah, there was a long layoff. After a long layoff, he endured all the things this year, but he recovered very well. And we know he has a lot of talent and he, obviously he loves Keeneland. So Brad picked the right race and then he won impressively. And then actually, we didn't think about coming to the Breeders' Cup. Since Breeders' Cup is held at Keeneland, so we give it a try. And of course Brad, he had a lot of confidence with the horse and that's why we are here today.

THE MODERATOR: And I'll ask for the press box to send down any questions for either Brad or for Mr. Park.

But also so, Mr. Park, I know trying to develop the Korean or breeding program, racing program, you purchased this horse here at Keeneland. Was that always the plan to kind of develop this horse into potentially a sire for Korea?

JUN PARK: Yes, correct. Especially this kind of a horse. That's what we're looking for for breeding as a stallion prospect. We also have a good selection system, which is created by the team at the Korea Racing Authority and that's why we're buying the colts in the United States. And then I believe this victory will make the Korea horse industry more forward, more globalized and improve the Korean homebred as well.

THE MODERATOR: So that being said, with only two starts this year as a four-year-old, or three now, are the plans to let him go ahead and race next year as a five-year-old or has that been decided?

JUN PARK: Well, yeah, we have to decide. We have to discuss more further with Brad and of course the Korea Racing Authority and then there might be another option.

THE MODERATOR: Did the demonstrated speed of the track yesterday, the way it played, influence his running style for today, the way you wanted the race to unfold for him?

BRAD COX: Not really. Regardless, really, how it played out, we think speed's his weapon. So we just wanted to establish a presence early on and try to clear off, exactly like Joel was able to do. Not really clear off, but ask him to run out of there and be forwardly placed. So, honestly, no, it didn't have really anything to do with how the track was playing. We just thought it would just give us a better chance of winning the way the track was playing.

THE MODERATOR: And you said he could be very headstrong to train, so it would be better just to let him go.

BRAD COX: Oh, he's very, very strong. He's a horse that we do some different things with him. Like we normally don't breeze in rings, he breezes in rings. We try to break him off, we don't put him right on the rail, we try to keep him in the four, five pack, just kind of let him gradually ease into his work. He's a very aggressive horse.

THE MODERATOR: Incredible, fantastic success of your stable and I know you always give a lot of credit to your team, your owners, everybody behind the scenes, with all this big success, will you be looking to expand, I know you like to be able to kind of keep your stable where you can always see all the horses all the time.

BRAD COX: Obviously, Kentucky's home base and we have had a presence in New York the last three years and obviously we travel south, but I think this part of the country's where we're going to totally be -- as our home base, I should say.

THE MODERATOR: And Mr. Park, what about expanding Korean Racing Authority with more horses over here in America.

JUN PARK: I mean, this year, due to the COVID 19, a little bit unusual circumstance, but we'd like to buy more yearlings in the United States and then we are hoping the same quality horse we can get in the future.

THE MODERATOR: The horse's name, and over in America everybody wants to call it "Knicks Go," but explain his name.

JUN PARK: Yeah, and you know, I told you a little bit at the beginning, this venture is a good, I like to give a good credit to the team, who create K-Nicks at the Korea Racing Authority. Of course, it's all teamwork and we are very involved in Knicks Go, we appreciate all the hard work.

THE MODERATOR: Well congratulations to both of you. Very impressive track record performance. He now owns two of those here at Keeneland, but winning the Breeders' Cup Dirt Mile, congratulations.

JUN PARK: Thank you.

BRAD COX: Thank you.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports...