

# Breeders' Cup World Championships

Saturday, November 6, 2021

Del Mar, California, USA

Del Mar Racetrack

**Todd Pletcher**

**Elliott Walden**

**Teo Ah Khing**

**Kenny Troutt**

Press Conference



him to ration out his speed a little bit and settle and relax and the team's done a great job of that.

**Q. Todd, congratulations. How does this performance compare to Knicks Go's from last year's? I know it was noted that at 21 and 44 the fractions were faster than Knicks Go and as you indicated before he has the rare ability to continue to go at such a high speed after running those fractions, so where does this performance rank historically?**

**TODD PLETCHER:** It's very difficult to compare performances from year to year, especially when the Breeders' Cup's run on different tracks. But I think any way you slice it this is an outstanding performance and supremely impressive.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

**TODD PLETCHER:** We'll enjoy this and we'll huddle up with everyone in a day or two and come up with a game plan.

**Q. Now joining us is Elliott Walden from WinStar, Kenny Troutt from WinStar Farm, and Teo Khing from China Horse Club. Congratulations on Life Is Good. Big victory. Todd had mentioned that he could have run in any of the spring races, the sprint, the mile, or the classic, so what was the decision that made, came to run in this particular race, Elliott?**

**ELLIOTT WALDEN:** Well, with his injury and having the time off he was only going to have one race around at a mile or greater. We knew he was going to have two preps and so it just seemed like when I thought about it and Todd, we discussed it, it just seemed like it was too much of a stretch to run him in the classic.

Knicks Go is a wonderful horse. He's beaten Medina Spirit a couple times but there's a lot of speed in the race. To take him from seven furlongs -- so the decision was really made to run in the mile before the Kelso. So when we ran in the Kelso we knew we were going to run in the mile.

**Q. Life Is Good winning the Breeders' Cup Dirt Mile and trainer Todd Pletcher. This is his third start off the layoff and this was just an extremely impressive performance today.**

**TODD PLETCHER:** It was, and it was great to see. We were anticipating a good performance or an exceptional performance, just it's rare that you have a horse train as well as this horse does and breeze as impressively as he does and do everything as effortlessly and easily as he is capable of.

So we were hoping for a big effort. We felt like he was sitting on a big effort and then you just hope everything goes smoothly with the ship and settling in in new surroundings and get a clean break and all classic things that you need to go right for him to show his talent.

**Q. Since he came to your barn what are some of the things that he's shown to you and that made you consider this race as opposed to maybe the classic or even the sprint?**

**TODD PLETCHER:** Well, I mean, he's one of classic rare horses that you could consider three different races on the card. Who knows, he might even grass on top of that. But he's just, he's super fast, but what we have seen from him in his training is he has the ability to go fast and keep going and I think that's what everyone was able to see today.

We breeze him. He'll go a half in 49 and then gallop out six furlongs in 1:12 with the rider never moving on him, so I think it gives us confidence that he would handle the two turns. And he's been straight as an arrow for us and he's very professional. The key for him is just us trying to get

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**Q. You all have had a great partnership, WinStar, China Horse Club. Teo, tell us a little bit about that partnership, how it came about, and all the incredible success you've had, including now, Life Is Good.**

TEO AH KHING: Well, when we first look at racing in America and we ask around and we want to identify and find the giants in the country and so the one name came out and we were very fortunate and the Lord led to us meet Kenny and his family and we fell in love with the family and that's how we started the love story.

**Q. It's a great story. Kenny, you all have had so much success over here and then what Teo just said about the partnership, and with Elliott as well and then Todd taking over training of this horse, just explain a little bit about the decisions that that --**

KENNY TROUTT: Well, Baffert had some issues, which we were a little concerned he wasn't going to be able to run in this race and so that's why we decided to do that. And Baffert was a great trainer and we really support him too. So I want everybody to understand that too. So, but, yeah, so that was a real challenging and hard thing to do and everything, but and so we did it and thank God, God's really blessed us and now we're starting winning again.

**Q. Elliott, we asked Todd about this horse, looking to next, year since he is so lightly raced, will we see him racing again next year?**

ELLIOTT WALDEN: We hope so. That's assuming he comes out okay. And we're going to take him to WinStar and go over him well. If everything checks out good, that's our plan to run him next year.

**Q. When you say you might race him next year, have you got any sort of plans early season, abroad anywhere like Saudi or Dubai or something?**

ELLIOTT WALDEN: Yeah, we were certainly look at all options. Yes.

**Q. Today's performance was such a big effort from him, but is it bittersweet at all for you looking back on his hind ankle injury that he, hypothetically, could have won the Derby, the Triple Crown and potentially have been Horse of the Year if the injury didn't occur?**

KENNY TROUTT: Not really. I mean, we've been in this business long enough to know that things happen and if you take care of the horse, they will take care of you. And so it was a tough phone call to make and when Bob called me and said, Hey, he didn't come out of work good. You know, I called these guys and they take it like pros and

they understand that as long as we take care of the horse, the horse will take care of us and that's exactly what happened today.

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