

# Breeders' Cup World Championships

Saturday, November 2, 2024

Del Mar, California, USA

Del Mar Fairgrounds

**Mark Edwards**

**Kenneth McPeek**

**Brian Hernandez Jr.**

**Judy Hicks**

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Mark Edwards representing some of the ownership group here. What an incredible filly, incredible year. Take us through what this whole experience has meant to you.

MARK EDWARDS: Well, I've been involved in horse racing maybe 15 years, ownership variety. I've been following the horses since I was like zero (smiling). To get to this level with such a special horse, for everybody.

We've had a lot of horses we hope they win. When she runs, I expect her to win. Obviously it's a horse race and that doesn't always happen. Boy, she is so special. She's such a treat to be around. She's feisty and she's fast.

THE MODERATOR: She's been feisty in the mornings here training. So relaxed out on the track today. When Brian sent her to the front, were you, I know she's the best?

MARK EDWARDS: When I saw Brian take her to the front, I loved it because he wasn't urging her. She was running on her own. He was letting her do what she wants to do.

The fractions were very honest. I thought she's got this. Brian didn't disappoint. Brought it home. She didn't disappoint. It was a thrill.

Winning the Breeders' Cup Distaff is something I never thought I would be doing.

THE MODERATOR: Ken McPeek stepping up here now. We've been talking to Mark about how special this filly is. Now getting you your first Breeders' Cup win. To happen with a filly like her...

KENNETH McPEEK: Well, it's a little bit of a relief. At the same time I was proud of the runners I've had in the past. It's a humbling business. She's so special, makes it look so easy. Really made our job easy all year long.

THE MODERATOR: Derby win, Oaks win, now a Breeders' Cup culmination here with her. What are your thoughts on going forward? And the question I'm sure everybody wants to know, Horse of the Year?

KENNETH McPEEK: Every intention of racing her next year. We'll put a plan together for that. I think she's been so much fun, and she's healthy, we'll probably let her visit Dr. Bramlage and poke on her a little bit, make sure that everything is in good order before we firmly make that decision.

I think next year could be a lot of fun.

THE MODERATOR: Brian Hernandez, again a phenomenal year, and now culminating with this win on this great filly. Take us through the trip. We were talking about broke out of the gate, you were on the lead. How easy do you think you were going?

BRIAN HERNANDEZ JR.: Yeah, that was our game plan. Kenny and I discussed it. She's the best filly in the country this year. We wanted to ride her accordingly.

The biggest question is just make sure she stood up in the gates, left there in good order. When she did that, it made my job so much easier. What I have to do after that fact is stay out of her way, stay on her back more than anything.

We got to the second turn, I was able to see the nose of Raging Sea there, knowing that was probably the horse to beat. For her to make a run at us that early, not get to me, put more confidence in myself going around the turn. She turned for home, and she showed her dominance.

THE MODERATOR: We'll go to the press with questions.

**Q. Brian and Kenny, how did this race change your how would it have been run differently if Idiomatic had**



**been in?**

KENNETH McPEEK: I don't think about those things. I don't think anybody should. That's all hindsight. It's just unfortunate that Idiomatic didn't make the race.

Certainly way out of our control. Unfortunate for some of the fans, I suppose. It's hard to really concern yourself with it otherwise.

BRIAN HERNANDEZ JR.: Same here. We never really had to worry about it because they deflected a couple weeks ago before the PPs even came out. We came in here prepared with our horse, knew the job we needed to do. That's all we had to worry about.

**Q. Brian, at the top of the lane, what was she feeling like underneath? Looked like she was loaded.**

BRIAN HERNANDEZ JR.: Yeah, that was the thing. The entire race she was just loaded and doing her normal things. You watch her train in the mornings and stuff like that. She clips off 12s, 12s, 12s. That's what she did today. When she gets in her nice, comfortable rhythm, all I have to do is stay out of her way.

Going around the second turn, you know after being open her so many times, there's going to be plenty left when you ask the question of her.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

BRIAN HERNANDEZ JR.: Definitely. When we got to the second turn, it was Raging Sea trying to push us along, it didn't faze her at any point, I knew from that point we were going to have a pretty easy trip down the lane.

**Q. You mentioned you want to keep her in training next year. Any idea about going abroad, Dubai or Saudi?**

KENNETH McPEEK: February is a lovely time of the month to visit Riyadh.

Yeah, yeah, I definitely will consider it. We'll look at all the options. Yeah, I wouldn't mind take her, who knows. Maybe the Gulfstream race, the Pegasus, Saudi, Dubai. Some interesting things out there. We're going to keep a close eye on the Classic here today and let's see that group of horses compete, see what else is out there.

She certainly at this stage can fit against any of them.

One thing I want to mention off the questions. This wasn't as easy a week as everybody thinks it might have been.

She got off the truck from the plane flight, had a cut on her hip. It was quite a concern. Then she had a large hematoma on her stifle. She was a little stiff on it the first day. We actually lost a day of training because of it.

The team did a really good job getting that problem cleaned up. We had to treat her. So it wasn't a straight line. Little nerve-wracking the first couple days that she was here to get that cleaned up and sorted out.

Fortunately she's tough and she went out there and trained with it. Never missed a beat. It gives you an idea that none of this is easy.

THE MODERATOR: Judy, you've known how tough she is from day one.

JUDY HICKS: She has. She's been big and tough, but she also has a soft side. We know that she allows anybody and everybody to give her peppermints. Lida, who is not with us today, the gal who foaled her out, actually got her to where she laid down and put her head in her lap and go to sleep.

She has two sides to her: the grizzly and the laid-back girl. I just want to thank Kenny for his efforts. It's been a team effort. I'm so happy to be a part of it all.

**Q. Most of us know the story, but perhaps this is the world stage, can you share where the Thorpedo Anna the name comes from?**

MARK EDWARDS: My granddaughter's name is Anna Thorp. She's a competitive swimmer at Sacred Heart in Louisville. Early on some of her coaches called her a Thorpedo, which a take-off from Ian Thorpe, the great Australian swimmer.

When I called Kenny, we were at Keeneland, I think we had broken a maiden with a horse that day, when it was over, I called him and said, Do you have any horses for sale?

He said, Yes, I have a fast Anna filly.

I said, Anna, I can outtake her if I name her?

Truth be told, I would have bought her anyway (laughter). He thought for about half a second, Okay. So I threw it to Anna and said, Come up with a name.

She thought for a couple weeks said, I can't do it. You come up with one.

I mistakenly said earlier once upon a time, her mother

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

suggested it should be Anna's Attitude. Actually, that was her father. I said, No, we're going with Thorpedo Anna.

**Q. Kenny, what is it about her, a three-year-old filly, she seems quite durable? Take us through the year.**

KENNETH McPEEK: She never misses a meal. Kind of like me (laughter). I think that makes the job easier.

She really loves to go to work every day. We got into a really good rhythm with her at the Fairgrounds this winter. She wasn't at Churchill that long. She went on to New York later on in the spring. In New York, if you watched her go to the track every day, once you hung the bridle on her, you could drop the reins and she would walk to the track, knew exactly which gap to go on, knew exactly where to back up to, where to gallop from.

Danny just has to stay out of her way to some extent. She's very workmanlike. I think the key is she has speed, galloping speed. She just keeps going and going and going. That first quarter of a mile, she's fast. It makes all the difference.

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations to all of you. Thorpedo Anna winning the Breeders' Cup Distaff.

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