

# 147th Preakness Stakes

## Media Conference

Saturday, May 21, 2022

Baltimore, Maryland, USA

Pimlico Race Course

**Seth Klarman**

**Chad Brown**

**Jose Ortiz**

Media Conference

THE MODERATOR: So happy to be joined by the winning connections of your Preakness 147th running here in Early Voting. We have owner Seth Klarman and trainer Chad Brown with us. Jose Ortiz will be joining us as well. I'm going to start with you, Mr. Klarman here, if that's okay. I wanted to wish you a happy birthday. Must be quite the birthday gift to be back here with yet another Preakness winner.

SETH KLARMAN: Absolutely. Thank you.

CHAD BROWN: Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Tell me about what this means for you growing up not too far from here and then returning to the scene.

SETH KLARMAN: You know, I've lived my adult life in Boston, but it's an incredible experience to come back to my hometown and have a chance to compete at this level and check out the horse ready, and Jose gave a brilliant ride. It's one of the highlights of a career owning race horses. Really extraordinary feeling.

THE MODERATOR: Tell me a little bit about what was going through your mind whilst you were watching, when the gates opened, and then that final quarter.

SETH KLARMAN: Our plan was to consider going for the lead, and it looked like to me like he broke a tiny bit slower than the horse just inside. I'm not sure. But he looked like he was coasting, and then the seventh horse just went, and Jose followed Chad's instruction, which was take the lead if they'll give it to you, but if somebody really wants it, let them go. Chad thought that might work out even better. We won't know, but it worked out really well.

THE MODERATOR: It certainly did. We'll go to you,

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Chad. Of course, the strategy part was in a way already preconceived. I remember speaking to you beforehand asking were you going to go for the lead, and you were saying perhaps not. When you were watching it, were you, of course, happy with the way it was unfolding throughout?

CHAD BROWN: I was thrilled with it. We were prepared to go to the lead. Especially the way the track was playing all day. It would have been foolish not to plan on going to the lead, and certainly not take anything away from the horse, but in working with this horse, and Jose has been instrumental as well along with my staff, particularly my New York-based staff in the winter, this horse was there. They did a terrific job, I want to point out.

When we've been working the horse, we give him a target, and he rates nice, and he fasts them and finishes them off well. I was convinced in the Wood that he was waiting on horses is why he got beat. He got beat by a good horse, don't get me wrong, with a good trip, but when you are doing this long enough, you can tell a tired horse from a horse that's waiting on horses. And I can see it in his work sometimes as well.

So I relayed to Seth several times, hey, this horse doesn't need the lead. I'm not brave enough to take him back in a paceless race, but if there's a target, he is going to be better. Down the back side, we looked at each other, and he said, well, you got your wish. We'll see how he runs. It unfolded perfect.

THE MODERATOR: Talking a little bit about his campaign of force and resembles the campaign of your own Preakness winner, Cloud Computing, what is it about going to the Wood Memorial and then giving them time and coming here. That is so effective.

CHAD BROWN: With both horses it's important to know that they're coming out of the Wood and giving them time, but they're lightly raced horses. It's not like a horse that we gave time to out of the Wood that also had three starts at Truro, it's their sixth or seventh start. This a lightly raced horse. In both cases that was only the horse's third start.

When you start participating in the Kentucky Derby enough now, you realize what a tough race it is with 20 horses. As the trainer, you have to deal with the aftermath when it doesn't work out.

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Sometimes it's not pretty. Those horses need time physically or mentally, and it can really cost a good part of your 3-year-old year if you swing and miss. You could ship all the way over there, draw terrible, the weather. You name it.

So you better go over there with a horse, talking from a guy, I haven't won the race, but we've had a couple of close calls, and I'm a student of it. I feel like you have to have a horse with some experience, and you have to be prepared for a bad post or a bump here or there or a wet track or something.

This horse just didn't have the experience. He is out there on loose leads. He didn't have dirt in his face really. A nice horse, but to throw him in a 20-horse field would not have worked out well for him, I don't believe. It really wasn't that hard of a decision.

There will be Wood Memorials that we'll run that we will run in the Derby, but it depends on the horse.

THE MODERATOR: Straight off the race, probably a little early to call the plans here, but do we have any targets later on down the line in mind for him?

CHAD BROWN: Certainly a race like the Travers. I know it's a tick further. I don't believe he will have any trouble getting the mile and a quarter. Growing up just 20 minutes from Saratoga, Baltimore native, that was his race today, the Travers would be for me, so that would be really at the top of the list.

But there will be some racing before that. We'll get him back to Belmont, assess him, train him a bit, and then start to map out a campaign that hopefully leads us to the Midsummer Derby.

THE MODERATOR: You mentioned before --

SETH KLARMAN: (Off microphone.)

CHAD BROWN: Thank you. You keep on sending me horses like this, we'll win the Travers, believe me.

THE MODERATOR: You mentioned before that he overwintered in New York as well. What is he like to train? He clearly seems to take it to it well and can go in any conditions?

CHAD BROWN: He is a cool horse. Again, I can't thank my staff enough, particularly the wintertime crew. He stayed there in the winter, and why? Because he is that kind of make-up. He was lightly raced. I didn't want to

interrupt his schedule. Sometimes you ship horses down to Florida that are just getting started, and then you have to adjust to ironically the humidity and heat and such when he is just getting going. The weather looked good, so I left him there.

He is a big, handsome, burly -- I said the other day to somebody, he is like a bar fighter. He has a good mind on him, but he is going to step into you if you get in his face, this horse. He has enough condition and enough strength and enough constitution about him to withstand the winter, the summer, different track conditions.

You put him in company with a horse in a real stretch duel, like if he is on the right side of it today or on the wrong side of it in the Wood, he is going to fight all the way to the wire, and you can pick up on this with horses like him when they're young.

He is just a really cool horse to be around. I'm so proud of him. He really did all the work today, and I'm so proud of him. He came over here in his fourth start, and he stepped on to the turf course, and there's everything going on. There's bands. There's this and that.

I didn't know how he was going to take it, and I'm so proud of the horse that he kept his composure, and he did exactly what we trained him to do.

THE MODERATOR: Congratulations. We are also joined here by winning rider Jose Ortiz. Jose, of course, watching you right after the wire visibly emotional, would you be able to put into words for us what that moment meant for you and what was going through your mind?

JOSE ORTIZ: It's amazing. This race is a dream come true for any rider, you know? It's a Triple Crown race. Already won the Belmont, but I've never won the Preakness before. We were very close with Good Magic. I still feel he was the best horse in the race that day, but it was crazy conditions and fog, sloppy. And honestly, I didn't have the best trip.

The trip I wanted today, I had the trip I wanted. We planned it out, and we execute with perfection, and we came out top.

THE MODERATOR: You did, indeed. Tell me about the start and the trip that you had. I thought he broke pretty sharply, but we did see you let someone else take the lead.

JOSE ORTIZ: Yeah, he is a very good horse out of the gate. He always has been. He broke well, and that was the main thing. Break good. Go forward. We knew that Armagnac had speed, and he never has passed a horse

on his right, and we knew he was probably going to go into the lead, and he did.

But we were ready for it. We execute the plan perfectly, like I said before.

THE MODERATOR: What was the feeling that he was giving you? Did you feel like you were sitting on a loaded gun basically?

JOSE ORTIZ: On the back side it just felt like we had been drilling in the morning. We had been working him just next to a horse, and he was very relaxed. I was very confident passing the 5/8 pole. I knew I was in a good spot. I took a peek back. Nobody there. I knew my horse was ready. Chad had him ready. He has been working with a very good horse. I think he is a player on the older division, and we've been working with him.

Honestly, he has been working unbelievable. Like I say, they deserve all the credit. They pass on the Derby. Not a lot of people would do it, and it paid off today.

CHAD BROWN: I would like to add one thing about Jose. If you remember, he rode Zandon in New Orleans, and he had ridden Early Voting, a winner in the Withers. When they're both going to run on the same day in the Blue Grass and the Wood Memorial, I just chose. He is going to go ride Early Voting, and I made a change on Zandon.

So I called him to tell him, and he never complained about it. He said, Boss, I'll go where you tell me to go. That's it. He was happy to ride Early Voting. It's hard to be taken off Zandon when they're on the same day because we knew that horse was probably going to go win the Blue Grass and go to the Derby as one of the favorites. That's how he is. He said, I'll go where you tell me to go.

He didn't win the Wood, but it's our feeling that's his horse. He went there for us that day, and that's going to remain his horse. It was never even a thought after the horse got beat to make a change.

He went up there and rode him for us, and he rode him brilliantly. I want to point that out. Talk about being a team player. He doesn't give me any trouble with those conversations, and he is very nice to work with that way.

JOSE ORTIZ: Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Chad, do you also take to perhaps the aspect of knowing a horse and certain jockeys, certain -- suiting certain horses, and Jose suits Early Voting?

CHAD BROWN: You get experience riding the horses,

and when they come out and breeze the horses and such, it's a big advantage. With using jockeys in the morning really most of the time I would use jockeys out of the gate or on turf works. I have great exercise riders. I'm so lucky. They do such a great job, and out of a luxury of not having to have the jockeys out there working too much outside of some gate works and again on turf I like to use them, but on this horse we called an audible, and I wanted him to come out a couple of times and work him, and it just -- it furthered the relationship really.

Particularly, I would not want to speak out of turn because I'm not riding the horse, but when he had a target down the back side, the way he worked the other day when I gave him a target of a good horse in Miles D, he was third in the Travers, and he was able to just take him over in hand, and the horse was much more focused, we both felt, after the work. I think it really paid off, and those are the little things in practice that you do.

**Q. Of course, Jose Ortiz's opinion, when it comes to riding Early Voting and being associated with him from the get-go, do you believe that helped you, and what has that been like?**

JOSE ORTIZ: I know the horse very well. I work him out of the gate when he was a baby even before he run, and Chad has been high on him. I like him a lot the day I worked him. I rode him first time out. I rode the second time out in the Withers, and then I was able to work him at the Wood -- or for the Wither, maybe, I worked him. And then for the Wood I just flew in.

For this race I was able to work him twice, and I was very confident. I was very high. I had to jump off Simplification, who ran a huge race, but I felt like I'm going to jump off a good horse to ride the horse that is going to win the Preakness.

And I think going forward, this horse I think it's going to be a better horse. It was a tough decision. It wasn't easy. The other horse is nice and run well. They gave me the opportunity to ride him in Florida, and I think we did well. We run a very good third on the Derby.

Like I say, I wanted to ride the winner of the Preakness, and I felt like this horse was working lights-out, and I knew that I had a huge shot with this horse. You know, he worked -- if he stays healthy, I knew he was going to be a player big-time on this race. So very happy.

THE MODERATOR: The feeling was clearly right. Before I open the floor -- before I open this up to questions here from the floor, Mr. Klarman, tell me about the journey with this horse and what it's been like for you with him being put

through his paces and going with him and now landing here in the press conference afterwards winning the Preakness.

SETH KLARMAN: He wasn't the earliest developer. Chad was pretty excited about him all along, but, of course, you have to prove it on the track, and we were really excited. He initially after his first race or two wasn't fast enough to compete with the best 3-year-olds, but every race he got better.

We were pretty excited that he would continue to develop, and that's part of why we wanted to make sure he had enough time to continue to develop. We're just so proud much him and, of course, this team.

**Q. Mr. Klarman, can you speak to your experience having Chad as your trainer and what sets him apart? Obviously, you guys have been very successful.**

SETH KLARMAN: Chad is an extraordinary trainer, but he is really an extraordinary guy, extraordinary person. Chad's extremely hungry, and he works all the time. He never stops thinking about this. Attention to detail. Great desire to get better. And so there's a real opportunity.

I think when people that are like that take in information and they're always looking to improve, and it's -- Chad is a wonderful friend, but it's really extraordinary to see somebody. He has close to photographic knowledge if you asked him about any of the horses. He knows their record. He knows where he wants to run them. He has brilliant spotting ability. He can figure out exactly what great race is.

I feel incredibly fortunate that we met and that once we met him, we quickly developed confidence, and he ended up being basically our only trainer.

**Q. Seth, if I could ask you, when you got into the business of owning horses, was it a realistic dream to own Triple Crown-winning horses and to now have won twice here in Baltimore? Where that rates in terms of what your expectations were when you got in?**

SETH KLARMAN: The first horse I bought was in partnership with a friend growing up, and I might have had to spend a night or two on the couch because my wife who's here wasn't thrilled with that, and it was a pretty inexpensive horse.

It was not a dream. I didn't think about that. I didn't think anybody could realistically imagine they would own horses. Horses are expensive. And I didn't grow up with a lot of

resources.

But when I had the resources, a friend suggested that I join a partnership in the early '90s. We invested in a partnership and said maybe we could do this ourselves. That's Jeff Ravich, and that's why we're called Klaravich, and my first partner. It just took off from there.

**Q. Seth, could you talk a bit about acquiring -- the process of acquiring this horse and what you guys thought of him early on that attracted you to him?**

SETH KLARMAN: I think Chad could probably better answer some of that, but we have a great team. Chad goes to the sales. Chad works with the team that he has assembled at the sales. We have a long list. We narrow it down to a short list. The horse needs to have a decent pedigree, needs to be physically a horse that we think will be able to handle training and be healthy. It has to be in the right price range. We're not going to pay any amount for a horse.

When you meet those three criteria, there's a chance we'll buy at the sale.

CHAD BROWN: I would just like to add to that. For our sale team, to give some acknowledgment, Mike Ryan and his wife, Mary, they're a huge part of scouting these horses for us and bringing them to my attention.

And our vet team at Rood & Riddle, led by Scott and Debbie Pierce and all the other members there, are a huge part of our team as well. It's a tall order to go to the Keeneland September sale with 5,000 horses there and narrow it down to really what we're looking for. That's our big draft, you know, like you'd have in any other sport.

They're really crucial people I just named in identifying and then vetting the horses and such. And the horse went down to Niall Brennan, another partner of ours on our team, for the early training, him and his team. Did a fabulous job. Niall identified very early -- even this was a later horse, but this horse had plenty of ability. He has always liked him, and I want to give him credit as well.

**Q. Chad, what does this say about going to New York as opposed to going through Florida or Oaklawn or going through Louisiana?**

CHAD BROWN: I've always felt that New York is a fine place to develop these kind of horses. I think a lot of it probably comes down to circumstances where the horses end up some years, and it looks to be a little slanted here or there, or this race is a poor prep, and there hasn't been one in 20 years and this and that.



You have a couple of crops where that can all change, right? I'm a native New Yorker. I'm very appreciative for NYRA and the facilities they offer us to train at year-round at all their tracks, and we've developed several horses there.

Cloud Computing was another horse that wintered up there. Not only both of them running the Wood, but they didn't even go to Florida. It can be done, and I think it just depends on the horse and always just being aware of your environment where you are training these horses, and New York is a good environment.

**Q. Zandon, Early Voting, running on the same day. You talked about the decision, Jose goes -- and he says, Wherever you want me to go, Boss. You are making a decision. What's in that decision? Why is he the right one for this one? Because there's something there. I would love to hear what it is.**

CHAD BROWN: The first part of it was that Early Voting was coming off a win, so rarely do I take someone off a horse that won and let them stay on a horse that got beat. The horse didn't get beat because of him. The horse Zandon just jumped at the gate, and the Risen Star had no chance after that. Actually rode him very well to be third. It helped us in the Derby, that trip. That's the first thing.

Then, furthermore, he is the only jockey has had that horse. Not only is he coming off a win. I saw the relationship developing with those two. I wasn't sure he was a Derby horse, but I was sure he was a good horse and a Grade 1 horse.

I just know that's a partnership that I want to continue growing, developing that horse, and then I could figure out where I am with Zandon who has a new rider every time he ran up until then. That's really what it came down to.

SETH KLARMAN: If I could say, Jose is an extraordinary judge of pace. I think you saw that today in the fifth race with Technical Analysis. He was able to get to an easy lead, coasted around, and this race that was the plan, and he started looking like that might be what he did, but when the 7 wanted it really badly, he knew it was fast, and he took back. I think that just tells you in two races on a single day the résumé of Jose Ortiz. Really extraordinary.

**Q. My question to Jose. A couple of times it looked like you took a peek behind you as you went for home. Does that mean you had so much horse or were you wondering where Epicenter was?**

THE MODERATOR: I have to repeat it. A question for

Jose. A couple of times you had to peek around. You would have a look at other horses. Was that to see where the other horses were coming?

JOSE ORTIZ: Both. Yes. I knew I was in the right position. I knew we were going on a pace that was moderate. I don't know what it was. It felt like a 47 and change. I don't know. But my horse was doing very nicely. I was very happy with my position.

Second of all, when we hit the 5/8, I felt like I had a lot of horse, and then I want to see where Epicenter is at. I want to see where Secret is at because I thought she had a good shot.

I didn't see nobody, and I say, well, I'm going to bide my time now. I just felt better at that point.

**Q. Were you surprised Epicenter was that far back?**

THE MODERATOR: Were you surprised Epicenter was that far back?

JOSE ORTIZ: I didn't see him, so I figured he was inside, so I say, all right. I just have to worry to whoever was coming inside of me to put pressure on me earlier than I want to. I knew inside nobody is going to go there because I had the horse in front of me, and I had the position. Whoever was coming had to come around me.

And when I took a peek back at the 3/8 pole, I couldn't believe it. I was just traveling nicely. I looked. I saw Saez coming. Saez was coming, moving. He was moving. I felt like I was sitting on a lot of horse.

The horse was ready. Chad had him ready, and I just went out there, did my job, and like I said before, I executed the plan we had. We talked about it. We had a plan, and we executed it. That's how you win races.

THE MODERATOR: Two questions, Chad. First of all, when Jose came back, he was very emotional. What did you say to him when you first talked to him as he was coming back on the horse?

CHAD BROWN: So I just said to him that he was well deserved, this race. We talked about it in the paddock briefly. I gave him a leg up. I said, you deserve to win this race. We thought Good Magic that day was the best horse. It got screwed up in the fog, and it was a weird trip and the rain. If I had gotten a track like today there, I just don't see any way they would have lost, the horse.

It just was unfortunate. Bad luck for the horse, for our connections, for Jose. And since then, I've been telling

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him, you know, you're owed a Preakness because I just felt like your partnership with that horse was very good as well.

I reminded him that in the paddock. When he came back, that's the first thing I told him. I said, I told you you had one coming.

THE MODERATOR: Then the second question would just be, this is the second time you've won the Preakness with horses that are lightly raced. Followed a similar path. Can you just speak to does that say anything to how you as a horseman have to train horses? Is that a change in the sport, modern era, or does it really come down to just the individual?

CHAD BROWN: I think it's a little bit of both. It's a great question. I definitely think now horses -- lightly raced horses can reach greater heights maybe quicker in their career, meaning in career number of starts.

They also appreciate spacing. A lot of people might not agree with that, some old-time trainers and such. There's something to it when you look at the numbers. Not every horse, but in general.

I also think it comes down to the individual horse. Like I said, I hope I have another Preakness winner, and maybe it's in his eighth start of his life and he ran a bunch at 2. I just spoke of Good Magic, who was a champion 2-year-old and was running back on two weeks' rest. I thought he was the best horse that day. So I'll do it. It just depends on the horse, I think.

THE MODERATOR: Final question before we go. Where will we find the horse tomorrow? When will he be shipping out? Opportunities for photos?

CHAD BROWN: Sometime in the morning. I'm going to go back there and handle that right now. He was scheduled to leave quite early. 5:00 or 6:00 in the morning. Depending on if the horse was healthy and such. I'll probably finalize that in a little bit. There's a chance it could be a little later in the morning as well. Anyone's fine to reach out. You can ask at the barn. We'll let you know.

Thank you.

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