

Pegasus World Cup Invitational

Saturday, January 27, 2024
Hallandale Beach, Florida, USA
Gulfstream Park

Jimmy Barnes

Jack Wolf

Bat Masterson

Tom Ryan

Gregg Slager

Adrian Wallace

Media Conference

THE MODERATOR: Adrian Wallace, who is the nomination sales at Coolmore, America; Tom Ryan; Gregg Slager.

Bat Masterson as well of National Treasure.

We'll start with Jimmy Barnes.

Jimmy, talk about what you saw out there. That was a phenomenal effort done the hard way.

JIMMY BARNES: Absolutely. I have to give a lot of credit to Flavien Prat because he just rode the horse excellent. He got plenty of instructions today. At the end, when we finally gave him a leg up, I said, just get him out of the gate. Put him in the race.

He was able to give him a breather down the back side. We knew it was going to be a hot pace. He had stepped up. He had been running against good horses, so we knew how good he was.

THE MODERATOR: Talk about when he hit the far turn. You could see Senor Buscador moving, and you were assuming command. What were your thoughts and what Flavien had left in the tank?

JIMMY BARNES: From what I could see, he was moving but he was still struggling to move, from what I could see. Really when they turned for home, I was pretty comfortable the whole way through the stretch. I got a little nervous at the end when they still were coming.



**PEGASUS
WORLD CUP
2024** PRESENTED BY
Baccarat

Really what a gutty little horse. That's the way he wants to run like that, and he really shows up.

THE MODERATOR: Jack Wolf, talk a little about it as well, what your thoughts were as the race was unfolding. Obviously they were moving at a pretty good clip out there.

JACK WOLF: I think they were moving pretty quickly. He moved quickly in the Preakness too. He's a very game horse.

Bob has done a terrific job of placing him here. I think a few of us wanted to try to go to Saudi, but Bob chose this spot, which was perfect.

This distance with the post position -- thank God we had the good post position -- and it all turned out great.

THE MODERATOR: Bat or Tom, you can talk. This horse has brought you to a lot of different places. The partnership has had a lot of success through the last several years. From a Preakness winner now to a Pegasus World Cup winner. Bat Masterson?

BAT MASTERSON: It's just a great partnership. The guys in this partnership, they have this great attitude about taking a good horse and making him a winner.

Baffert's done a wonderful job with this horse and does a wonderful job with all the horses. I'm just glad that I'm a part of this partnership.

THE MODERATOR: Tom, did you want to add anything?

TOM RYAN: Look, I'd just add it's a wonderful partnership. Great group of people that have stood behind us the whole way throughout over the last five or six years.

Bob has taken us to places that we probably didn't feel we could arrive. This horse, what he did today, sitting off a horse, showed a new dimension. He's going to be a very

ASAP sports . . . when all is said, we're done.®

nice 4-year-old.

Bob always said that to me, whatever he's done at 2, there will be more at 3 and a lot more at 4.

THE MODERATOR: Gregg, did you want to add to it, a horse that seemingly is back-to-back monster efforts on the precipice of being one of, if not the top handicap horse in the country?

GREGG SLAGER: Impressive. What he's shown the last two races is a lot of resilience under pressure. He could have folded in the Breeders' Cup, and he made it a photo finish, and he did the same thing here. He showed that resilience that he had and he was able to beat off all comers, and we're really excited about it.

THE MODERATOR: Adrian Wallace with Warm Heart, if this was a swan song, a heck of a way to go out on top.

ADRIAN WALLACE: An incredible way to go out. First of all we would like to say a sincere thanks to all of First Racing, Gulfstream Park for putting on such a wonderful event. It's great to be part of it, and it's great for this filly to go out in such a fashion.

She acquitted herself so well as a 3-year-old; she's now a three-time Grade 1 winner up from 1 1/8 so 1 1/2, and she's done it in four different countries. She finished a very game second to Inspiral in the Breeders' Cup and ran a great race in Hong Kong as well.

I think Ryan Moore may need to donate (indiscernible) to Gulfstream Park. What a sensational ride.

For Aidan O'Brien to bring a filly like her back as a 4-year-old, considering the winter we had in Ireland to get her ready for this performance, set a new track record at Gulfstream Park.

THE MODERATOR: When did this race pop up on the radar to you guys? I know she is going to be retired. When did you say, you know what, she's kicking the barn down, let's give it a shot?

ADRIAN WALLACE: As Embry Wagner (phonetic) said to me a few minutes ago, the reason we come here is a million reasons. It's all about the show. It's all about what First Racing put on. Putting on this event in its eighth year is truly sensational.

It's got a great part in the calendar. The prize money is exceptional. Now Warm Heart continues on to her next career as a brood mare. She'll hopefully visit Justify in the coming weeks. She's by Galileo, of course, who needed

no introduction out of Fastnet Rock mare. That cross has worked very, very well with Justify.

Storm Boy was a very impressive horse in Australia, being by Justify and a Fastnet Rock mare as well.

Hopefully she'll have a good first and second career. If she can live up to what she's done on the track, we'll be blessed.

THE MODERATOR: Talk about the trip today, 9 furlongs, 1 1/8. You mentioned a group 1 winner at 1 1/2, that's a lot different than 1 1/8 at Gulfstream Park. Were the team confident she would handle the much sharper trip today?

ADRIAN WALLACE: I think that was the doubt. The way Ryan rode her, she was up close to the lead. I think that was the key in the race. She was on the front end. It was a fast pace.

Obviously the ground is very, very good today. I think the one worry we had was whether 1 1/8 was her ideal trip. I think maybe we learned today that she's exceptionally versatile.

THE MODERATOR: Did Ryan have any instructions from Aidan or the team about the race to keep her close or to try to maintain contact?

ADRIAN WALLACE: I think that was the instructions. Basically break as well as you can, be up close to the lead, and then let it unfold from there. Really Ryan Moore needs very little instruction. He's such a wonderful pilot. He's an absolute gentleman. One of the greatest jockeys we've ever seen in the world. We're privileged to have him as part of the Ballydoyle and Coolmore team.

THE MODERATOR: Jimmy Barnes, I want to bring you back in, talk a little bit more about National Treasure. It's tough to double up the Breeders' Cup, losing by that much to a horse of the year now and to do it again, back to back huge performances. Where does he go from here? The sky the limit?

JIMMY BARNES: We'll leave that up to Bob and Tom and the connections. Just get him on the road and get him healthy and get him to the race. Hopefully Prat gives the performances he does.

THE MODERATOR: How about the distance today, nine furlongs? It was maybe the one hurdle you haven't jumped over yet?

JIMMY BARNES: I wasn't really concerned about the distance, no.

THE MODERATOR: Did you want to comment? You were shaking your head, Gregg.

GREGG SLAGER: He's continued to get bigger and stronger. The distance didn't seem like -- we had a little low in between after the Preakness, and they kept training him and Jimmy and Bob just put him onto the program and really were able to show what he can do at the longer distances.

THE MODERATOR: Sure. Preakness winner at 1 3/16. Jack Wolf, go ahead.

JACK WOLF: We've got to thank Jimmy Barnes. We've been with him five or six years and he travels with these horses. He gets them ready. He gets them across the country on not necessarily good transportation.

In any case, thank you, Jimmy, for the great job you do.

THE MODERATOR: Jack, you've won a lot of significant races in your life, a Pegasus World Cup, talk a little about it. It's a huge event here at Gulfstream Park. But to be up here after winning this race, what does it feel like?

JACK WOLF: You know I helped start the Pegasus when it originally started, and Bob Baffert told me it couldn't be done.

Of course Bob's horse won and he got a piece of the \$12 million, so that's pretty special. The Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance is the charity here which I also helped get started. I'm going to start crying.

THE MODERATOR: I'm going to cry myself. Bat, you talk about it. You owned Tappen. You've had serious horses in your career.

BAT MASTERSON: I've had a lot of serious horses. The thing different is I raced them myself. In this, racing with these guys is so much fun. It's a joy to be there with them and watch these horses race and watch them win.

Again, it was another great day.

Jimmy has done a great job.

THE MODERATOR: Tom, talk about the partnership. What makes it so unique?

TOM RYAN: I think the partnership is unique in the sense that we're almost one of the initial big partnerships in American racing.

It is, in my view, part of the future and fabric of American racing going forward. It's part of the way to expand ownership. It's part of the way for people to enjoy the ups and downs of racing.

This group is a great example of that happening. We've been fortunate to win Kentucky Derbys and Breeders' Cups, and now we've won a Pegasus. This is a fantastic group. Hopefully we can continue to grow bigger and stronger.

Winning a Pegasus to me is very important on this stallion's resume going forward. When you think about the first three winners, Arrogate, Gun Runner, City of Light, Life Is Good has won recently, they're pretty good --

THE MODERATOR: Stallions.

TOM RYAN: -- example of how this is fastly becoming a stallion-making race. I think that also goes on National Treasure's resume.

THE MODERATOR: I know it's early, but we always have to ask this question. Have you guys thought about a campaign, or are there other significant goals?

TOM RYAN: No, but I know Amanda has.

THE MODERATOR: We'll leave that one unturned. I guess he can open it up. Anybody have any questions for the connections up here? Guys, the floor is yours. Anything to add? Thank you for taking the time for coming up here.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports