

CHARLIE LoPRESTI

JOSE LEZCANO

MORTON FINK

THE MODERATOR: Ladies and gentlemen, your winner of the \$2 million Breeders' Cup Mile for the second straight year is Wise Dan. We've got jockey Jose Lezcano who picked up the mount earlier today, as well as trainer, Charlie LoPresti. Jose, we're going to start with you because we know you've got a flight to catch. So maybe first you can tell us at what point today did you find out that you were going to pick up this mount on Wise Dan?

JOSE LEZCANO: I found out like since my agent called me and he said, we'll ride the horse.

THE MODERATOR: Let's talk about the actual race. You were further back than we're used to seeing. Just tell us about the trip?

JOSE LEZCANO: Well, he stumbled out of the gate really bad. I had to let her go. She tried to go to plan B, you know, waiting, and she gave me a good run and win the race. She's a champion horse, you know?

THE MODERATOR: What happened out of the gate?

JOSE LEZCANO: She stumbled very bad.

THE MODERATOR: Any idea what happened?

JOSE LEZCANO: She tried to break so fast that she just lose her balance.

THE MODERATOR: Just being reunited after so long, you've had big wins on him before, but it's unfortunate circumstances, but at the same time it must feel nice to get on a horse this great once again?

JOSE LEZCANO: Yeah, first everybody pray for Johnny and his family. You don't want to see that happen to a good horse like her, but that's the way the business happens. We're sorry.

THE MODERATOR: Certainly, we're all thinking of Johnny here today. Questions for Jose only if anybody wants to ask questions of Jose because he has a flight to catch. All right. Appreciate your time. Thanks, and congratulations. Great ride. Charlie LoPresti, it was, as we were just talking about it was an eventful trip further back than we're used to seeing. Can you just take us through it from your perspective?

CHARLIE LoPRESTI: I didn't realize he stumbled so badly leaving the gate. I just didn't watch the break so close. I was more concerned where front runners were going to be and how the race was going to set up. It went by me past the stands the first time. He had a lost horse under him, and he was pretty strong. I was just worried that he wouldn't run over top of horses and clip heels.

But he got him to settle. That is one thing Johnny has always said. If you can get him in behind horses, he's a little bit strong. But if you can get him in behind there, he'll switch off, and did he that on the back side. He was further back than I've ever seen him, but that's not a bad thing because of the pace up front. I wasn't sure he was going to get there, but I knew he was rolling around the turn. I knew the front runners were getting slower, and I'm really proud of what he did today.

But more than anything, my heart goes out to Johnny and his family. I really wanted Johnny to ride the horse. He's done so much with him. But I can tell you, Jose has done a great job with this horse. He's always picked him up whenever Johnny has been hurt, and a lot of people ask me do you have faith in him, and I said I've got the utmost faith in him because he knows the horse; he knows what kind of horse he's sitting on. Like you said, he went to plan B, and he didn't panic, and it worked out.

THE MODERATOR: Now you want everything to go perfect coming up to a race like this. So can you talk about when you saw Johnny get injured earlier, and just what went through your mind, and how that affected your day coming up to the race?

CHARLIE LoPRESTI: The most important thing for me that Johnny was going to be okay. We can always live to run another day. I was more concerned with Johnny. Now found out that he underwent surgery. That is the most important thing, but I wasn't too worried.

Lezcano's agent called me and said he was open in the race. I had several agents call me during the day, but I always knew that if something happened where Johnny couldn't ride, I would have a perfect back-up plan. It couldn't have worked out any better.

THE MODERATOR: It seems like you put a lot of pressure on yourself throughout the year. You've expressed your hope that Wise Dan could go throughout the year undefeated. Could you just talk about the pressure of preparing him for this race and a lot of which seems like perhaps you put on yourself, but is it a huge relief and how have you felt the last few weeks?

CHARLIE LoPRESTI: Yeah, it's a big relief because I think a lot of people, the scuttlebutt was that they lost some faith in him. I never lost any faith in the horse. I don't think that the weather conditions and the track conditions helped us. I blame myself a little bit for it because he ran such a great race at Woodbine, and I wasn't -- I didn't breeze this horse in between.

I thought that he got so much out of that race and he was so great that maybe that was the wrong thing to do to breeze him, and I don't know that it got him beat. But I still think that maybe I should have breezed him one time in between. I didn't make that same mistake between that race and this race. I breezed him once, and he had some strong gallops. I knew he was ready.

THE MODERATOR: The race come up is obviously going to have implications on the Horse of the Year. So it's almost not fair asking without this race having been run, but since we're all here pending the result of this, can you talk about your feelings on Wise Dan being deserving of Horse of the Year?

CHARLIE LoPRESTI: Well, I think if he would have won the race at Keeneland, the Shadwell, we would have had a strong point. If Game on Dude wins today, I mean, he's undefeated. He wins the Breeders' Cup Classic, it's going to be hard to argue that Wise Dan should be Horse of the Year. But we'll see what happens here in a little bit. I think our horse is deserving to be in the running.

Q. Can you talk about what's going to happen with Wise Dan next year? Will we see him back here?

CHARLIE LoPRESTI: Well, I'll talk it over with Mr. Fink. I'm sure as long as he's okay, he'll be back. Maybe we won't run him as much as we did this year. We'll be really careful how many times we try to run him, and try to stay away from the handicap races. I was a little worried coming into this race, because he's had a very hard year in the fact of the weight that he had to carry and the racetracks that he had to run over.

I mean, you look at the Firecracker, the Woodford, the race at Keeneland, he's had some really tough races. He's had to overcome a lot. We didn't scratch. We danced every dance, but you always worry about a horse of his age if it's too much. I think we're going to be a lot more careful what we do with him next year.

Q. Yet, he handled everything that you've thrown at him. So just talk about what an exceptional animal he is?

CHARLIE LoPRESTI: Well, he is an exceptional animal, but he's not made of iron. We just need to be a little bit more careful with him next year. But he's sound and he loves to run, and he loves to train. I know one thing about him, even in defeat, he'll give you his all.

Q. Charlie, can you talk about with everything, a few of the glitches that he might have come along with this year compared to last year? Does this win, this repeat win in the Breeders' Cup, does it mean more than last year's victory or where do you put this one?

CHARLIE LoPRESTI: Well, it means a lot to me. The biggest thing, I didn't sleep for two nights after he got beaten because I just felt bad for him. It was really disappointing. I wasn't ever disappointed in the horse, I was just disappointed that we got him beat. I wanted to keep him undefeated just for this year.

But I'm proud of him, and I'm proud of everything that he's done, and I especially want to thank Mr. Fink and Elaine for giving us the opportunity to be around these horses and Lisa Danielle, his mother who has produced such great horses, and dad gone it, I'm going to get a successful 101 of these days.

Q. Mr. Fink, by all means, just tell us how you're feeling right now and how proud you are of Wise Dan?

MORTON FINK: I don't think you can come up with the right words on how proud I am of him. But I can tell you that I got my birthday party, which is one month from now, a little early this year, and he keeps me going. I said that before, and I meant it. You ask my family, they don't even want to think of Wise Dan and how it would be.

Q. You heard me ask Charlie about next year.

MORTON FINK: As long as the horse is sound and close to being just like he is now, he runs. If he's over the hill, he's done more than enough for us, and he won't.

Q. Just talk about the pleasure that you get from watching him win race after race for the most part?

MORTON FINK: I hope I get more pleasure like that.

Q. Will you be at the barn tomorrow, and what time?

CHARLIE LoPRESTI: He's on a flight tonight.

MORTON FINK: An early flight.

CHARLIE LoPRESTI: At 1:30 in the morning, we'll load here, and he'll be at his barn in Kentucky tomorrow afternoon.

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