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An interview with:

**JIM ROME
MIKE PUYPE
ALEX SOLIS, JR.**

THE MODERATOR: Ladies and gentlemen, for the second year in a row, the winner of the \$1 million Breeders' Cup Turf Sprint is Mizdirection. We're joined now on stage by from the left, Alex Solis, Jr., who was instrumental in the purchase of this filly, and Jim Rome, broadcaster extraordinaire, and a great friend of horse racing, the co-owner and head of the partnership, as well as trainer Mike Puype. Jim, let's start with you. How does this compare to last year and how excited were you to get this win?

JIM ROME: I'll say again, right now what I said last year at this time, and I know I've been saying it, but outside of the day I married my wife Janet, and the birth of my two boys, last year's win right here was the single greatest and most surreal day of my life, and today might be better. It might be better. It's that good. It is that good.

And again, I want to reiterate, Mike Puype and his staff did an amazing job to get the big mare ready. And I want to congratulate him. But there is something special about this girl. I'll say it for the record and I'm not afraid to say it, she's one of the loves of my life. I love this mare. It was amazing.

THE MODERATOR: That was a wild finish.

JIM ROME: Standard for her. Standard operating procedure. You know, the great thing about the mare in Mizdirection, she's versatile, she can run up front, she can run off the pace, and we know she can close and she can finish. But she's an all-day gamer. She's a warrior. She likes to

run. I could not be more proud of her. I'm absolutely ecstatic.

THE MODERATOR: Mike, I believe this is her last start. Can you tell us what's going to happen with Mizdirection from here?

MIKE PUYPE: Yeah, she, unfortunately, she'll be leaving early in the morning, very early, and she'll be getting on a plane and going to Fasig-Tipton for the sale. I believe she's in Monday and test the market and see what she's going to yield and go from there.

THE MODERATOR: Jim, can you talk about why that's the right decision at this moment?

JIM ROME: I was saying outside on the track and Mike and I have been talking about this a lot and Alex and I have. And I said to Mike Puype, as soon as this thing is over, no matter what happens, you and I are going to go to a bar and you and I are going to get blasted because we love this girl. In terms of why do you do something like this? One of the only things I don't like about this business is that it's a business. Mizdirection saved my racing life. The Miz ride has been one of the great experiences of my life. But the fact is before we got in business, the Mizdirection business, I always had a great passion for the sport, but we got our brains beaten in and we lost a lot of money.

It's so rare to have an opportunity to take money off the table. And I want to see her go out a champion. I want her off the track. I want her to have a good life as a mama, and I think the time is right to sell. It's gut-wrenching. It's tearing me up, but from a business standpoint, and this is a business, it's something we need to do.

THE MODERATOR: Alex, you hoped to bring everybody to this point today. Can you talk about the culmination of her career and remembering back when you first encouraged all of these folks to get involved with this mare?

ALEX SOLIS, JR.: From the beginning she's been amazing. We bought her at the sale.

Whenever you think she's at her top, she just keeps on giving you more. The whole thing has been so special. I don't know, there is nothing really I can say that these guys haven't said already. This filly is just, besides her personality and to be around the barn and how much she gives, you're not going to find a more honest horse. That's all I can say. I'm just very proud.

Q. 7 for 7 at Santa Anita, that is astounding. Your thoughts on that incredible perfect record at this track?

MIKE PUYPE: I think it would be a shame if they didn't name a graded stake after her after this. I mean, she owns a piece of the lawn. She's never been beaten down the hill. She's beaten boys twice. She'll set the Breeders' Cup record for all time on two five-month layoffs. I doubt that will ever happen again.

So enough said. The mare makes me look good. She's all heart. She's all game. She knows her way. Mike Smith gave her a perfect ride. If any other ride but that, you might not have even won today, because there was a little more speed that showed on paper that didn't show up. You were getting a little pressure on Renee. It was the kind of pace that she could have burst away and got us. I think the ending distance hurt Renee a little bit at the end. If we had to make up any more ground than Mike permitted today, it could have been a different story. I'll give him a lot of credit. He won't take any because he's going to refer to me. That's an absolute top ride again.

She's won on the lead, she's run from second, third, fourth, sixth, eleventh, it doesn't matter. She's won on the dirt, I just don't think you're going to get a horse to come and do those kind of things at this track. It is amazing.

THE MODERATOR: There is credit to go around. It is very difficult to win any race off a five-month layoff. You won two Breeders' Cup Races off five-month layoffs in consecutive years. Jim, maybe you can talk about the training job Mike has done to prepare her, and what it takes to get a horse ready off such a long break.

JIM ROME: Mike's always done great off layoffs, but understand, Mike Puype loves this horse. He loves all his horses and he gives you everything he has. But this was his mission. We've been talking about this since the second the race ended last year. We made this our goal for this year, and he's given us absolutely everything he's got.

If Mike Puype's at the track normally at 4 in the morning, he's been getting up at 2 a.m. every morning to make sure the mare was ready. He knew this was a huge day. I know he loves the mare, and you couldn't find a better trainer and a more honest trainer. I'm so proud of Mike and the barn; they did an amazing job.

THE MODERATOR: Mike, things didn't really come together for her to get a start at Del Mar. Can you talk about why she ended up with a five-month layoff?

MIKE PUYPE: It's kind of interesting, because we went to New York, and we were a little unfortunate. They had about a three-inch rain storm the night before the race. I actually walked on the course the day of the race and knew we were a little damp. But it was a lot different kind of grass than she probably prefers. She likes it a little lower cut, little quicker.

We brought her back, gave her a break at the farm for a month, and brought her back. We kind of toddled with the idea of possibly running her at the end of Del Mar. It just wasn't going to fit on the schedule with the works. Worked her one time on the turf there. Felt it was a little choppy. I didn't want to work her on the synthetic.

I got some information from the raking secretary, and he basically said there was going to be no prep race for the fillies. It was just going to be boys. So I huddled with all the owners and Alex, and we had open discussions. Just realized at that point in time we're going to put our best effort together and get her ready to run downhill off the layoff. I told him I could do it. I could get her. It was a schedule that was tight, because when we got to Santa Anita I didn't want to work her on the dirt either. I wanted to wait for the turf course to open.

So the first day the turf course was open, we were on it. We worked a half that day. And we proceeded from there. But the bottom line is I told him if anything comes up with her, if she gets sick in her stomach or has a foot problem, the problem was we were on a very tight schedule. So I'm just grateful for everything.

The guys worked really hard on her in the barn. Everyone did their job. The schedule was so tight, if there were any mishaps, we weren't going to make it. But it was a schedule based on trying to peek on the right day.

She had run the best Ragozin Sheet number and her best Beyer off a five-month layoff.

I felt there was a good chance she could do it again. If they'd done it once, they'll do it again. And that mare is so competitive, she wants to win. She's just, she's awesome.

THE MODERATOR: Jim, you mentioned that your involvement in racing, obviously, didn't start with a Breeders' Cup caliber filly. Talk about other horses that you owned and how you got drawn to the game well wave this?

JIM ROME: My wife Janet said at one point you need a hobby. All you do is work. You don't have any hobbies. And Billy Koch owner of Little Red Feather had approached me once to buy into a horse and it never really interested me. And Janet said you need to get out of the house and stop working. Let's do this, it will be fun. You'll like this.

And, of course, the worst thing that could have happened to me did happen to me; a horse that was 15-1 came out of the closet to win from last to first, and all of a sudden I'm looking around for horses to buy. Had that horse finished middle of the pack I probably would have lost interest right away, but it was so fascinating and so spectacular.

Because then I didn't know what it was about. Everybody likes to throw it in my face. Weren't you the guy that dogged the sport back in the day? I'll say, guilty, yes, I did. But I'd never spent time around the barns or the animal or the jockeys or the trainers then when I started to come around and I got to know the horses. At the end of the day, Janet and I are in this for -- the biggest reason we're in this is we love the animals. We love the horses. So had I not gotten that first bite, I would have never known how special it was. So I got the experience which drew me in, and the more time I spent with the horses, I just fell in love. It didn't matter if it was a Stake horse or Breeders' Cup or a claimer, I loved all the horses. They're all different, they all have a different story, and I think they're a fascinating animal.

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