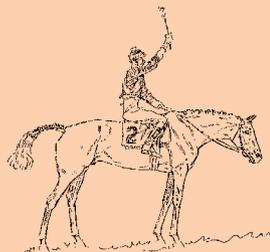


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Thrill of a Lifetime

Knicks Go comes through at Breeders' Cup for Moore

By Sara Gordon

As horses breezed through the darkness of an early Friday morning at Keeneland, with only the sound of cameras shuttering at rapid speeds rising above the rhythm of galloping hooves, Sabrina Moore leaned against the rail and waited.

Accompanied by her mother Angie, Moore had made the trip from her home in Butler, Md., to Lexington, Ky., home of the 2020 Breeders' Cup World Championships, Thursday night before the first official day of racing. Driving through the night, she had one goal in mind: make it to Keeneland by Friday morning to watch Knicks Go train.

It had been nearly two years since she'd last seen him, in his Breeders' Cup debut in the 2018 Juvenile-G1, and even longer since she'd been up close and personal. But as the talented assembly of bays, chestnuts and grays passed in a blur, many adorned with the purple saddle towels signifying Breeders' Cup contenders, only one caught Moore's eye.

"As soon as he actually came out, I was like 'OK that's him.' He's kind of, I don't know, he has this presence to him. Actually [trainer] Brad Cox explained it perfectly, he's aggressive but he's classy. And that's what I've tried to explain to people," said



After Knicks Go galloped in track record time for the Breeders' Cup Dirt Mile, Sabrina (right) and her mom Angie Moore received the breeder's trophy from Case Clay of Three Chimneys Farm.

Eclipse Sportswire Photos

Moore. "It was really cool to actually see him come by. He is so full of himself and you [could] just tell he was feeling so good, so that was just awesome. I watched him go by basically three times. And watching him out there on the racetrack, just before he went off, just standing there, in the sunrise, it was complete bliss. It was really neat."

The 29-year-old, co-owner and operator of GreenMount Farm in Glyndon, Md., bred the 4-year-old Maryland-bred son of Paynter and the Outflanker mare Kosmo's Buddy with her mother. As his breeder watched, the colt made his final preparations for the Dirt Mile-G1 the next day.

Consigned by Bill Reightler as a weanling in the 2016 Keeneland November sale, Knicks Go was purchased by Northface Bloodstock for \$40,000, and a year later returned to the ring to sell for \$87,000 as a yearling to Korea Racing Authority. Winning on debut at Ellis Park in July of his 2-year-old season, the colt made two stakes attempts before making headlines with a 70-1 upset in the Breeders' Futurity-G1 at Keeneland.

He punched his ticket to the Breeders' Cup Juvenile-G1 at Churchill Downs and settled for second behind favorite and eventual division champion Game Winner.

After the promising juvenile campaign, Knicks Go struggled through eight losses in as many tries the next season and didn't win again until his 4-year-old debut after moving from trainer Ben Colebrook to Cox. The colt won an Oaklawn Park allowance in February, before going to the sidelines for almost eight months. The gray emerged in October at Keeneland, blazing to a lopsided allowance win at 1 $\frac{1}{16}$ miles and putting the Breeders' Cup in play again.

"I didn't know he would come back as good as he did," said Moore. "I wanted this win to be more for him than anything, because I just feel like he had so much more to prove. I was so nervous about



Sara Gordon

Sabrina Moore has Pinkprint (by Not For Love), the second foal from Kosmo's Buddy. The mare has produced a yearling colt by Great Notion, a weanling filly by Tiznow and is in foal to Congrats. Right, Knicks Go as a foal at the Moore's GreenMount Farm.



it. [With] that high expectation, [and] him going in as one of the favorites, I was just like, 'Man this horse can't flop again.' But he was just in such good form and you could just see he was a different horse than last year. But I don't like to count my chickens before they hatch."

She could have given them names.

Sent off the 9-5 favorite in a field of 12, Knicks Go and Joel Rosario zipped through early fractions of :21.98 and :44.40 as Complexity gave chase. Unfazed by the challenger, Knicks Go hit three-quarters of a mile in 1:08.25 and kicked away to win by 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ lengths after 1:33.85 for a mile. The time was one of several track records set on the Keeneland dirt over the weekend. Longshot Jesus' Team, third in the Preakness-G1 at Pimlico in October, finished second, a nose ahead of Sharp Samurai.

Though the atmosphere of the Breeders' Cup was unique compared to years past, with only owners and breeders al-

lowed on the grounds as part of the event's Covid-19 protocols, Moore's nerves weren't any less overwhelming. Following a few last moments in the paddock, Sabrina and Angie headed to a spot on the rail, right in front of the starting gate, and waited.

"I said it two years ago and it happened again, I swear I blackout when I'm watching this race. It's just almost like an out-of-body experience, like you're there but your mind is not concentrating really on what is happening," said Moore. "It went in 1:33.85 but I swear to God it went in like five seconds."

Knicks Go became just the fifth Maryland-bred to win a Breeders' Cup race, joining Safely Kept (Sprint, 1990), Concern (Classic, 1994), Cigar (Classic, 1995) and Sharing (Juvenile Fillies Turf, 2019).

"I watched him break from the gate, and I could see him so close and you could just see his eyes, he just looked ready," Moore said. "I'm sure they all did but it was just kind of cool to be that close and watching his emotions and his reactions. Then I could see him coming down the lane and I could see there was a gap and I just knew it, he had it. It was super—I don't know, I don't even know, I had to mute the video because I don't even know what I said. I know I didn't scream or anything, because I think I was just crying."

The reaction from those watching on-site was intense, but nothing near the level blazing across social media as Twitter and Facebook feeds filled with congratulatory posts and Moore's phone was overwhelmed with messages.

"I was walking to the winner's circle and I looked down at my phone and I had 80 text messages. But once again, it's super humbling, that everybody, even if they're just like paying attention, remembers you and knows that little part that you had," she said. "In the grand scheme of things, I did have a little part in his life. As far as how long he's been alive and how long I had him, it wasn't that long, but I still put a lot of time and energy and you know, it's not easy per se, but like I said, it's really nice people remember that."

Knicks Go improved to 5-3-1 from 17 career starts as the winner's share of \$520,000 pushed his earnings to \$1,348,995. There's a chance the colt will make one more start before retiring to stud duty in South Korea.

"I think it's really cool that he [could be] a staple over there and hopefully I'll be able to see some of his babies, maybe some will come and sell at Keeneland or something,"

said Moore. "I'm sad for it to be over, but you know, onward and upward and hopefully there's another one that's half as good as him down the road."

Knicks Go was the third foal of five produced by Kosmo's Buddy for GreenMount before the mare was purchased privately by Jun Park, of KRA, for a client, after she RNA'd for \$195,000 at the 2018 Fasig-Tipton Kentucky fall mixed sale. Sallusto and Albina later bought her for Newtownanner Stud Farm, where she now resides in Versailles, Ky. Kosmo's Buddy produced a filly by Justify this year and was bred to Ghostzapper for 2021.

However, the Maryland-bred legacy continues with Knicks Go's half-siblings: Chanel Number One (8-year-old mare by English Channel), Pinkprint (7-year-old mare by Not For Love), Super Buddy (6-year-old gelding by Super Saver), Believe Your Eyes (3-year-old colt by Orb) and a 2-year-old colt by Broken Vow.

Chanel Number One, who won once from 10 starts before retiring to become a broodmare in 2017, now resides in Kentucky. After a year with Blackstone Farm in Pine Grove, Pa., where she produced Color Crush (2-year-old filly by Tonalist), she was purchased for \$50,000, in foal to Outwork, by Sebastian Murat at last year's Keeneland January sale. The Outwork yearling is a filly and Chanel Number One produced a colt by Ghostzapper this year and was bred back to him for 2021.

Moore still owns Pinkprint, now a broodmare, who has a yearling colt by Great Notion,



From our new permanent home in Preisterstown—the Maryland Horse Breeders Association staff

produced a filly by Tiznow this year and was bred to Congrats for 2021.

Super Buddy, a \$62,000 weanling who sold for \$75,000 as a yearling to Pike Racing, has earned \$137,237 with four wins, three seconds and four thirds in 30 starts. The gelding, finishing fifth last time out in March, is owned by Victor George Bahna Jr. and trained by Ferris Allen.

Believe Your Eyes, purchased privately, has yet to start while the 2-year-old colt by Broken Vow, purchased by Rock Brothers Breeding as a weanling for \$115,000, is still in training.

It's all a little overwhelming for Moore, who dove

into breeding and racing as a profession in 2011. Her mother was a fan, attended the Preakness regularly and helped her daughter get started in the business with the purchase of some broodmare prospects—Kosmo's Buddy in 2010, Mystic Love in 2013 and others. Sabrina worked with consignor Bill Reightler to learn the sales business, took on some boarders, foaled mares, raised young horses and has turned GreenMount into a player among Maryland breeders. A Bernardini—Mystic Love filly won the Maryland Horse Breeders Association yearling show this summer, and sold in September for \$100,000 at Fasig-Tip-

ton Kentucky. Knicks Go might have some company on the farm's honor roll soon.

"I just feel extremely grateful and lucky," said Moore. "I know people work their whole lives to get one nice horse and I've just been doing it for such a little amount of time, and I'm just super blessed. This is a Bill Reightler quote, 'The stars aligned,' [but] they really did and not for lack of hard work or money put into it. I mean really, everything just has to go perfectly for this to pan out and you know, it has, and I'm extremely lucky and grateful."

Maryland-bred brings \$1.1 million at Fasig-Tipton Kentucky November Sale

Maryland-bred champion Dancing Rags and stakes winner Ghou's Night Out were the only Maryland-breds sold at the elite Fasig-Tipton November Sale in Lexington,

Ky., Nov. 8. Combined they brought \$1,220,000.

Consigned by Royal Oak Farm (Damian and Braxton Lynch) agent, Grade 1-winner Dancing Rags, in foal to Cur-

lin, was purchased by Nobutaka Tada for \$1.1 million. One of the last broodmares owned by the late Phyllis Wyeth, Dancing Rags is a daughter of Wyeth's classic winner Union

Rags, and was purchased by Wyeth's Chadds Ford Stable for \$210,000 as a 2-year-old at Ocala in March 2016.

Dancing Rags made her stakes debut in Keeneland's

NEW for 2021

Maryland Stallion Season Auction benefiting The Maryland Horse Foundation

See page 68 for details

Maryland-bred top earners in 2020

(through November 7)

1. Knicks Go \$608,440	11. Double Crown \$150,625
2. Field Pass 380,860	12. Majestic Reason 150,000
3. Harpers First Ride . . . 375,623	13. Pete's Play Call 144,445
4. Sharing 308,451	14. Stroll Smokin 133,857
5. Laki 215,030	15. Karan's Notion 129,724
6. Project Whiskey 198,280	16. Nick Papagiorgio 124,577
7. Galerio 196,080	17. Plata O Plomo 123,834
8. Eastern Bay 190,600	18. Fiya 121,846
9. Artful Splatter 188,717	19. Blamed 121,300
10. Never Enough Time . . 178,131	20. Monday Morning Qb . 120,155

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Fasig-Tipton Kentucky November Sale *continued*

Alcibiades-G1 that October, won the "Win and You're In" race for the Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies-G1, and ran on Breeders' Cup day, finishing eighth of 12.

Bred by David DiPietro, Dancing Rags was voted Maryland-bred champion 2-year-old filly. Unplaced in three starts at 3, she retired to Wyeth's broodmare band and produced her first foal, an Into Mischief filly, in 2019 and a War Front filly this past March. The half-sister to graded winner Coup de Grace is out of Storm Cat's graded stakes-placed daughter Home Court; her second dam is champion Jewel Princess.

Ghostzapper's 6-year-old daughter Ghoul's Night Out, consigned by Taylor Made Sales Agency as a broodmare prospect, was purchased by Hill 'n' Dale at Xalapa for \$120,000. The \$42,000 yearling bred by Two Legends Farm and Sycamore Hall Thoroughbreds sold again the next year

at the 2016 OBS Spring Sale for \$150,000.

Campaigned by Mens Grille Racing, she broke her maiden in her fifth start, picked up three allowance wins, and won the Jameela in her stakes debut as a 5-year-old. She finished third in the 2019 Maryland Million Ladies Stakes in what would be her final start. Ghoul's Night Out retired with a record of 5-8-4 from 26 career starts and earnings of \$270,606. Her dam, the stakes-winning Not For Love mare Amie's Legend, is a half-sister to stakes winner/stakes producer Celestial Legend and to the dam of Whereshetoldmetogo.

Enchanted Ghost, a 5-year-old multiple stakes-winning daughter of Ghostzapper who sold for \$335,000 as a racing or broodmare prospect at last year's sale to Double Bridges and made her last start this past January when third in the Geisha Stakes, was an RNA this year at \$625,000 in foal to Tapit.

Maryland Report of Mares Bred in 2020

The Jockey Club's Report of Mares Bred statistics for the 2020 breeding season showed Maryland ranked sixth among the states and provinces, with 806 mares reported bred to 29 stallions. Maryland stallions averaged 27.8 mares per book, second behind Kentucky among the top 10 states.

The busiest stallions in Maryland were Northview Stallion Station's Golden Lad with 103, Irish War Cry (76) and Madefromlucky (66), and Wasabi Ventures' first-year stallion Force the Pass (57), standing at Anchor and Hope Farm. Maryland's leading sire, Northview Stallion Station's Great Notion, covered 55 mares.

Based on RMBs received through Oct. 18, The Jockey

Club reported that 1,067 stallions covered in 27,970 mares in North America during 2020. Maryland was one of four states in the top 10 to have an increase in mares bred over 2019.

Nationwide, the number of stallions declined 5.9 percent from the 1,134 reported at the same time in 2019, and the number of mares bred decreased 4.3 percent from the 29,218 reported last year.

The Jockey Club estimates an additional 2,500 to 3,500 mares will be reported as bred during the 2020 breeding season.

RMB statistics for all reported stallions in 2020 are available through the Fact Book section of The Jockey Club's website.