

Owning the “DERBY” Horse

by Laura Grubb

The Kentucky Derby is *the race* — the one that transcends all other horse races and whose popularity captures the imagination of the mainstream like no other. For most involved in horseracing, owning a horse that makes the trip to Louisville for the Derby is the ultimate goal. From the whirl of the infamous Derby parties, to the early morning workouts, to hearing the emotional strains of “My Old Kentucky Home,” the Kentucky Derby is horseracing at its finest.

Four California owners were interviewed who were fortunate enough to own a “Derby” horse. Sidney and Jenny Craig have had two starters, Dr. Devious in 1992 and Tossofthecoin in 1993. Trudy McCaffery, along with her partner John Toffan, started Mane Minister who finished third in 1991. Charles Dunn started Jumron in 1995, and Robert and Beverly Lewis had the unique experience of starting the entry of Serena’s Song and Timber Country also in 1995.

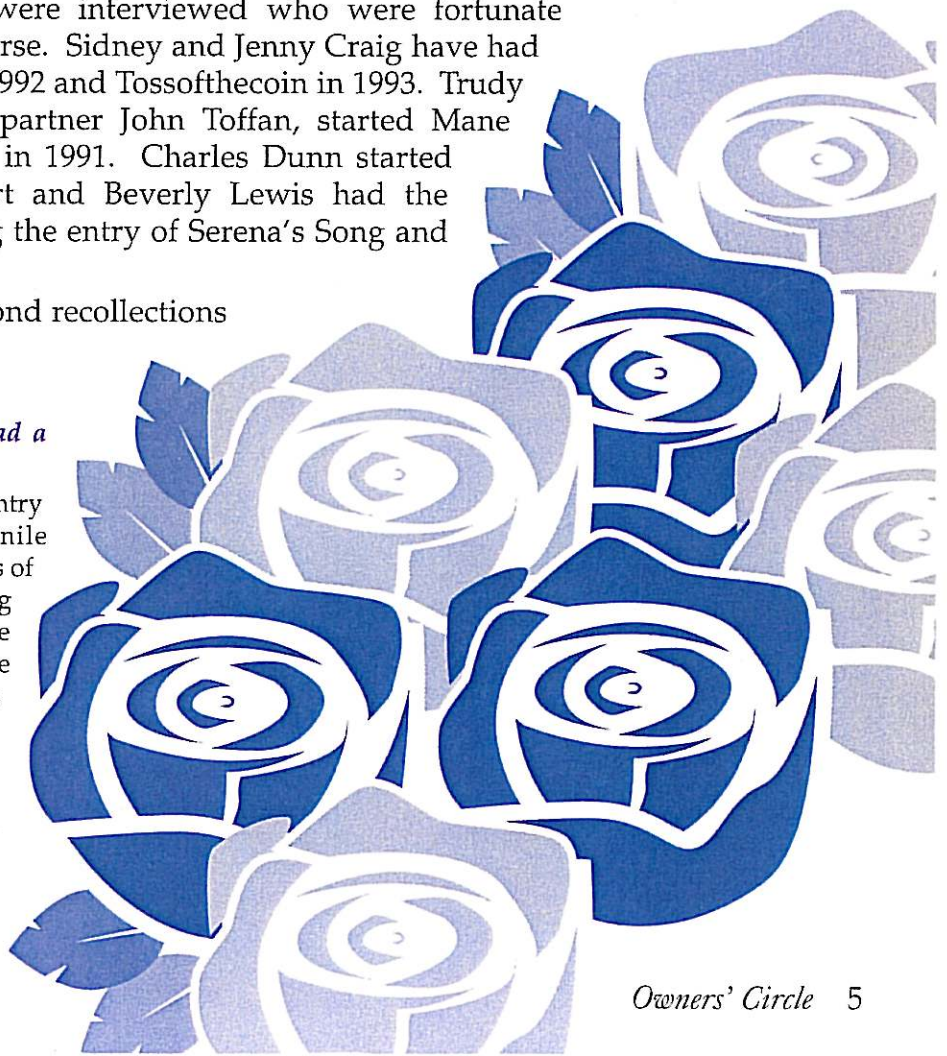
Following are their very fond recollections of owning a “Derby” horse.

When did you realize that you had a “Derby” horse?

Bob Lewis: As Timber Country was recognized as the Juvenile Champion, we felt in the early days of November if racing luck was going to be with us, and if the “horse gods” would shine upon us, we would be in the Kentucky Derby. As far as Serena’s Song is concerned, it was her conquest of the boys in the Jim Beam Stakes in April that probably best positioned her for the Kentucky Derby.

Sidney Craig: Both horses were purchased with the Derby

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Van De Kamp

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Mr. Van de Kamp has had a long and distinguished career in public service. A graduate of Stanford Law School, he has also served as Director of the Executive Office of U.S. Attorneys in Washington, D.C. During his tenure as Los Angeles County District Attorney, he established the office's first Victim Assistance Program and chaired the state committee establishing such programs throughout California. Additionally, he successfully worked for programs dealing with crimes against police, sexual assault, child abuse, and fought for juvenile justice and bail reform measures.

Under his leadership as Attorney General, Mr. Van de Kamp created the Public Rights Division which vigorously fought to enforce antitrust laws, statutes protecting the consumer, civil rights, and the environment. He also devised and sponsored the Trial Court Delay Reduction Act ("Fast Track"), and brought the Attorney General's

office into the forefront of the high-tech era. The National Association of Attorney Generals presented him with their coveted Wyman Award in 1989 in recognition of his outstanding effectiveness in office.

A horse owner in the early 70's, Mr. Van de Kamp stepped back from ownership after he was appointed and elected District Attorney. Since he left the Attorney Generalship, his wife has had an ownership interest in horses running in the East. Van de Kamp has recently rejoined an old partner and former colleague in the ownership of two Cal-Bred three-year-olds, Shanghana by Corwyn Bay out of Rio Tejo, and On Every Street, by Kennedy Road out of Edgescote Lady.

Mr. Van de Kamp, 60, lives in Pasadena with his wife, Andrea, a Senior Vice President of Sotheby's, and their daughter, Diana. 🐾

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in mind. Jenny purchased Dr. Devious as a birthday present for me, and we purchased Tossofthecoin specifically for the Derby about a month before.

Did you feel much pressure with having a horse in the Derby?

Trudy McCaffery: I was a wreck. I'm still recovering.

Charles Dunn: I started to feel the pressure weeks before the Derby, with constant concerns of how the horse was doing. Once the actual day arrived, it was almost a relief.

Sidney Craig: The nerves began in the paddock. Sometimes the anticipation is more exciting than the actual event. I visualized winning the race many times before it was actually run and that was almost as thrilling as if we had won.

What were the early morning workouts like with all of the media attention?

Sidney Craig: The year Dr. Devious ran, Arazi was the big star. The press usually gives all of the attention to the favorite. So, when Arazi

would come out, a hush would fall over the crowd. It was like Liz Taylor making her entrance to the Academy Awards.

Bob Lewis: You had to appreciate the fact that, virtually overnight, we had an entry in the Kentucky Derby with Serena's Song and Timber Country. So many people in this industry, I think virtually everyone, long or hope to be in the Kentucky Derby. To be in it for our first experience, and then to be there with two horses at the same time, was absolutely incredible.

Trudy McCaffery: We didn't get a lot of attention as we were a longshot, but that was okay. We were in the same barn as Hansel and Strike the Gold, and that was a lot of fun just being around the favorites.

Charles Dunn: My uncle, who had had experience with horses in the Derby, tried to prepare me, but you cannot comprehend it until you are there.

What was the Derby like from a social aspect?

Sidney Craig: We attended both of the "big" parties, which were the Governor's Ball and Marylou Whitney's party. They were star-studded events and, as owners of a horse in the race, everyone is coming up

