

OWNER PROFILE



Bob Weist (right) with "Calling You" and trainer Jose DeLima after purchasing the filly.

Robert F. Wiest

A SEMI-RETIRED COMMODITIES TRADER, ROBERT (BOB) F. WIEST HAS ALSO AUTHORED A BOOK AND NUMEROUS ARTICLES ON TRADING COMMODITIES IN INDUSTRY PUBLICATIONS. UNTIL RECENTLY, BOB'S PRIMARY OCCUPATION INVOLVED MANAGING COMMODITY TRADING AND INVESTMENT ACCOUNTS. NOW HE CHOOSES TO DEVOTE AS MUCH TIME AS POSSIBLE TO HIS THOROUGHBREDS.

Q. When did you first become interested in thoroughbred racing?

A. About twenty years ago I went to a thoroughbred auction held at Del Mar to buy my daughter a show jumping prospect. He was a large, noble looking horse with a bit of fire in his eye. When we went to pick up the horse we met with reality that he may not have the best temperament for living in our backyard, as he was a lot more horse than what we had originally thought. Realizing that he was not going to work out as a show horse, I quickly came up with the idea to take him to Caliente. I met a trainer who was willing to work with us and see what he could do with this horse. About a month later the trainer called and said the horse was ready to race in a \$1,000 claiming race. He did

not win, but the excitement I felt watching him run was unlike anything I had experienced before. To my surprise when I got back to the barn I found out he had been claimed. Although I did not pursue ownership at that time due to other responsibilities, I always knew I wanted to be involved again.

Q. How did you find your current trainer?

A. I met a local bloodstock agent at the 1996 Barretts May Sale. I told her I was interested in buying a couple of horses that were ready to run. She introduced me to a trainer, and with his help I bought two fillies, "Excellent Half" and "Calling You."

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GIVING BACK TO RACING'S FANS - DEL MAR THOROUGHBRED CLUB - TOC "OWNER FOR A DAY"

Many thanks to all the owners, trainers, jockeys, and racetrack personnel who made racing fans feel at home as "Owners For a Day." This program, jointly sponsored by Del Mar and TOC, gave contest winners the opportunity to have an "insider's look" at racing, including a backside tour, lunch in Del Mar's Clubhouse Terrace, and a trip to the saddling paddock. Some lucky winners even visited the winner's circle!

In particular, we would like to thank owners Sean & Natalie Redding, John Harris, Michael & Loretta Lima,



Jockey Michael Hunter is joined in Del Mar's paddock with "Owners For a Day" (from left) Tim, Patty, Meagan and Patrick McDuffie.

Jack Finley, Mike Pegram, Gary Burke; trainers Phil Gleaves, Ian Jory, Carla Gaines, Jack Carava, Henry Moreno, Laura Pinelli, Eduardo Inda, Dan Hendricks, Mike Mitchell, and Bob Baffert; assistant trainers Nancy Tripp, Jeff Metz, and Suzanne Frank; jockeys Laffit Pincay, Jr., Kent Desourmeux, Michael Hunter, Chris Antley, Eddie Delahoussaye, and Alex Solis and Del Mar's Julie Sarno and Ann Palmer for the time and attention they gave to these fans.

Toe Grab Injuries

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injury for horses shod with regular toe grabs were 3.5 times greater for any injury and 16 times greater for suspensory apparatus failure. These results clearly show that horses shod with toe grabs are more likely to be injured, and that the risk of injury increases with taller toe grabs. Because very few Thoroughbreds were shod with "high" toe grabs, estimates could not be made for their proportionate increase in odds of injury. However, it is likely that they would be even greater.

The good news is with rim shoes, an alternative to toe grabs which still offer increased traction, the odds of injury were two-thirds lower compared to horses shod without rims.

How do toe grabs lead to these injuries?

"Because toe grabs only elevate the toe of the hoof they lower the functional hoof angle (similar to the long toe, low heel conformation many racehorses develop) which may effect the angles of the joints up the limb while the horse is galloping," says Dr. Kane. "They may also give too much traction, stopping the hoof suddenly on each stride." He goes on to explain, "each time a horse's hoof lands it naturally slides a little bit as it touches the ground. This helps dissipate some of the force of landing. With toe grabs, we think the hoof may stop too quickly and additional forces

may be transferred to the bones, tendons and ligaments causing injury." He is quick to add, "The study we've just completed identified a link between grabs and injury, pointing us in the right direction. Exactly HOW they cause the injuries needs further research to examine these two theories. We would also like to look at more common injuries (e.g., bucked shins, strained suspensories) to see if a similar pattern exists with toe grabs and rims."

The U. C. Davis research team hopes that by spreading the word among owners, trainers, farriers and veterinarians about the risk associated with toe grabs and the safer rim shoe alternative, they can decrease the risk of injury for horses and improve the safety of racing.

This research was supported by the Grayson-Jockey Club Research Foundation, the California Center for Equine Health and Performance (formerly the Equine Research Laboratory) with funds provided by the Oak Tree Racing Association, the State of California satellite wagering fund, contributions by private donors, and by Mr. and Mrs. Amory J. Cooke, and the Hearst Foundation. 🐾

Albert J. Kane, DVM, MPVM is a PhD candidate with the U.C. Davis School of Veterinary Medicine's Veterinary Orthopedic Research Laboratory and the Department of Medicine and Epidemiology

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Q. How would you describe your best day in racing?

A. My best day so far was when "Calling You" had her first start. She was running against some very well bred and expensive horses, and it looked like she was out-classed. The race was 5 1/2 furlongs and she was positioned on the outside. She broke well and by the far turn was ahead by a neck. Still on the outside I worried that she might not be able to hold on as the other horses closed in. Would she be strong enough? This time span could not have been more than 30 seconds, yet it seemed like it was a lifetime before she would reach the end of that race. I found myself on my feet and shouting loudly as she crossed the finish line. It was a "thrill of a lifetime."

Q. How do you feel about your overall racing experience?

A. So far, everyone I have met has been great, from park-

ing attendants, the backside personnel, racing office employees, as well as the fans. They have all made this a very special experience. I am proud to be a part of the tradition of Thoroughbred racing and hope to continue. In the future I may get more involved with the breeding aspect of the sport.

In closing, Mr. Wiest is a man who not only loves the game but who has a great passion for the horse. As he explained during this interview, he finds himself praying with his family before each race "that whether his horse wins or loses that she will come back sound." 🐾

We would like to thank owner Renee Dupont, a member of TOC's Marketing/Public Relations Committee, for volunteering her time to conducting this Owner Profile.