



INTERACTIF

THE HORSE

After finishing a distant eighth in the Grade II Sanford as a 2-year-old in 2009, Interactif, owned and bred by the French brothers Alain and Gerard Wertheimer, who breed and race as Wertheimer and Frere, took to the turf and synthetic surface to post a more impressive record of two wins, two second, a third and a fourth in his next six starts.

Unfortunately, the fourth came in his most recent race, Keeneland's Toyota Blue Grass Stakes, a race his trainer, Todd Pletcher, hoped would keep him in sharp form.



A run in the Kentucky Derby means a return to a dirt surface, creating questions about how he'll do on the Churchill Downs surface.

THE OWNERS/BREEDERS

Wertheimer et Frere

The Wertheimer brothers, Alain and Gerard, racing and breeding as Wertheimer et Frere (brother), are the senior members of the French family that owns the world famous Chanel perfume manufacturing business that also sells high-end clothing and accessories. The brothers, who live in Switzerland, are ranked 65th on the Forbes list of richest people with listed net worth of \$7.5 billion.

The brothers inherited Chanel upon the 1996 death of their father, Jacques, at age 86.

As impressive as their business resume is, the brothers are widely known also for their tremendous influence in racing and breeding of Thoroughbreds. Their interest in racing goes back two generations in a family that has been responsible for developing such influential stallions as Lyphard, Riverman and Green Dancer. Their grandfather, Pierre, was a bastion of European racing, winning such English classics as the 1956 Epsom Derby. Upon his death in 1966, the famed blue and white silks passed on to his widow, who became France's leading owner in 1972 and when she died in 1974, Jacques Wertheimer took the reins.

Jacques Wertheimer was France's leading owner in his first year as he swept the 1975 French 1,000 Guineas, 2,000 Guineas and Prix du Jockey-Club with Ivanjica, Green Dancer and Val de L'Orne. Ivanjica came back to win the 1976 Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe, a race Wertheimer won again in 1981 with Gold River, great granddam of 2008 and '09 Breeders' Cup Mile winner Goldikova, bred and owned by the Wertheimer brothers.

Goldikova, trained by two-time Mile champion jockey Freddie Head aboard Miesque, is the latest of three Breeders' Cup champions for Wertheimer et Frere, the others being Halfbridled in the 2003 Juvenile Fillies and Kotashaan in the 1993 Turf, both trained by longtime conditioner for the brothers in California Hall of Famer Richard Mandella. Kotashaan also reigned as America's Eclipse champion turf horse and Horse of the Year in 1993.

In addition to Mandella, who trains Triple Crown prospect Setsuko for the Wertheimers, the brothers also have another Triple Crown hopeful – Interactif – with trainer Todd Pletcher. The brothers gradually took over the operation of the family's stable, for a time running as La Presle Farm and counting Kotashaan's honors and the brilliant victory over Cigar by Dare And Go in the 1996 Pacific Classic among the stable's top performances before changing to Wertheimer et Frere.

Other notable Group I victories: the 1998 Prix Marcel Boussac by Juvenia, the 1999 Criterium de Saint-Cloud by Goldamix, the 2000 Prix de Diane by Egyptband and that year's Grand Criterium by Okawango.

The Wertheimers were France's champion owners in 1999 and 2000.