



MICHAEL MAKER

Born: Feb. 2, 1969 in Garden City, Mich.

Resident: Louisville, Ky.

Family: Wife, Barbara, and son, Michael.

Breeders' Cup victories: Dirt Mile – Furthest Land (2009).

Mike Maker is no stranger to the world of Thoroughbred training. After all, his father, George, was a trainer and the younger Maker spent several years under the tutelage of Hall of Fame conditioner D. Wayne Lukas, following in the footsteps of such high-profile trainers as Todd Pletcher, Kiaran McLaughlin and Dallas Stewart.



During his time with Lukas, Maker helped develop such stars as 1999 Kentucky Derby and Preakness winner and Horse of the Year Charismatic, and Breeders' Cup winners Cat Thief (1999 Classic), Spain (2000 Distaff, now Ladies' Classic) and Orientate (2002 Sprint).

After his tour of duty with Lukas, he went on his own in 2003 and has been a winner ever since. He posted some high-water marks for himself in 2008 and 2009.

In 2008, he set a record for victories in a fall meet at Churchill Downs with 31, smashing the former record of 20 victories set by Dale Romans in 2003. Highlighting his 2009 was the victory by Furthest Land in the Breeders' Cup Dirt Mile for major clients Kenneth and Sarah Ramsey, for whom he trains approximately 60 horses. For the year, purse earnings for the trainer's horses totaled \$4,407,579 on a 25 percent win mark and a 52 percent in-the-money status.

Maker got his start with his father at Michigan's Hazel Park and Detroit Race Course, walking hots early and working his way up to being assistant trainer. He recalls that like most youngsters dedicated to the sport, he has always dreamed of winning the Kentucky Derby. So far, he's not saddled a Derby runner, but he has two prime prospects in the Ramseys' Dean's Kitten and Thomas and Jack Conway's Stately Victor.

Maker tells of not only working at the racetrack but also being a racing fan. As such, he bought his first horse when he was 13, thanks to money earned through a *Detroit Free Press* paper route and from his racetrack work on weekends with his dad. The horse won the first race in which Maker ran him ... and, naturally, he was hooked on the feeling.

On his website, Maker quotes Lukas as saying, about him: "Like all these young guys that are successful, he's grown up with it. He's been a success in our program at every level. He's a very astute trainer with good horsemanship skills, and he's remarkably adept at dealing with people."