



## WESLEY WARD

**Born:** March 3, 1968 in Selah, Wash.

**Resident:** Glendora, Calif., and Boca Raton, Fla.

**Family:** Wife, Kimberly; daughter, Denaë, and sons, Riley and Jack.

**Eclipse Award:** 1984 as apprentice jockey; won 335 races and more than \$5 million in purse money during the season; led jockey standings that year at Aqueduct, Belmont Park and The Meadowlands.



Wesley Ward grew up in the business assisting his father, Dennis, at Longacres in Washington before going out on his own as a trainer.

Ward turned to honing his training skills after weight problems took him away from riding as a jockey in 1989. In addition to riding in New York and New Jersey, he rode in Italy, Chicago and Southern California before hanging up his tack. He rode future Kentucky Derby winner Ferdinand for his maiden victory as a 2-year-old in 1985.

After being headquartered on the Southern California training circuit for several years, Ward moved his operation to Florida where he has become a rising force in the state's training fraternity. He has placed himself among the top 15 trainers and has maintained one of the highest winning percentages among the group. In addition, he has maintained a string of horses in Southern California under the guidance of his long-time assistant, Blake Heap.

Never one to shy away from competition, Ward made history in June of 2009 by becoming the first American trainer to win a race at the prestigious Royal Ascot meet in England when his 2-year-old trainee Strike the Tiger captured the Windsor Castle Stakes. The following day, his 2-year-old filly, Jealous Again, won the Group II Queen Mary Stakes. The two winners were among five juveniles, plus the sprinter Cannonball that Ward ran at Royal Ascot.

Following Royal Ascot, Ward, who was part owner of Jealous Again, sold the filly to Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid at Maktoum's Darley Stable.

In 2007, Ward saddled One Hot Wish to run a world record 48.87 for 4 1/2 furlongs at Keeneland's spring meet.

A major client for Ward these days are Kentuckians Kenneth L. Ramsey and his wife, Sarah, who own Kentucky Derby prospect Pleasant Prince under Ward's care. The Ramseys also have a second prospect, Dean's Kitten, trained by their other major conditioner, Michael Maker, based in Kentucky.

Ward scored his first stakes victory with Unfinished Symph in the 1994 Cinema Handicap at Hollywood Park. The horse went on to finish third in the Breeders' Cup Mile that year. Another training coup for Ward came with Men's Exclusive, the Cal-bred gelding that posted earnings of \$1.4 million before being retired at age 10.

Ward's purse earnings for 2009 totaled \$2,057,875, the second straight year where his earnings topped \$2 million.

Other major winners: Bear Fan, Omega Code, Courageous King and Yogi's Polar Bear.