

## West Point Thoroughbreds in Limelight

by Karen Johnson

Bloodhorse

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### West Point Thoroughbreds' Macho Again.

Photo: Anne M. Eberhardt

Terry Finley, the president of West Point Thoroughbreds, was nearly as busy as a cadet in training at the U.S. Military Academy June 6. Finley, whose partnership will run [Macho Again](#) in the \$1 million Belmont Stakes (gr.I), was interviewed by two local television stations, hosted a group of cadets from his alma mater, West Point, and entertained several of the 16 people involved in the syndicate that owns Macho Again.

Finley, 44, loved every minute of it, and truly enjoys talking about West Point Thoroughbreds, which he founded in 1991. West Point has been tremendously successful, campaigning grade I winners: Dream Rush, Flashy Bull, Irish Smoke, and Lear's Princess.

In the Preakness Stakes (gr.I), Macho Again, a son of [Macho Uno](#), finished second to Big Brown. The runner-up, who went off at odds of 40-1, was beaten 5 ¼ lengths by Big Brown. Finley is quick to point out the unique exacta.

"I thought it was very, very cool that two partnerships, finished one-two, in an American classic race -- IEAH and West Point," Finley said the day before the Belmont Stakes.

Macho Again, with nine starts, is the most seasoned of the Belmont runners, but he has yet to win beyond 7 ½ furlongs, and has a pedigree that might make getting the 1 ½ miles of the Belmont tricky. The colt who is trained by Dallas Steward has won three races, including the Derby Trial at Churchill Downs April 26.

"He ran really, really well in the Derby Trial and we were thinking of the Woody Stephens (on the Belmont undercard) or the Ohio Derby, but one thing or another led us to Preakness," Finley said. "We wondered if it was too much of a shot, but Dallas was comfortable enough to take a shot."

Finley said Macho Again is in the Belmont to win it, not to finish second to Big Brown, who will be a heavy favorite to capture the Triple Crown and to become the first horse to accomplish the feat in 30 years, and the 12th overall.

"We are not here to be second," Finley said. "We are here to win it. If we end up fifth because we have done everything we could to win it, that's okay. We are accepting of that. So you know, you need to pick up some lengths. That is at the heart of that."

Stewart said the colt has been on his toes since the Preakness.

"He's been very energetic since he ran (in the Preakness)," Stewart said. "(The Preakness) wasn't really surprising. If we didn't think we had a nice horse, we wouldn't have brought him over there."

Stewart, a former assistant to D. Wayne Lukas, tabbed Garrett Gomez to ride Macho Again. Gomez will be the sixth different pilot for Macho Again.

"(Gomez) knows the track," Stewart said. "He rides here every day. He's local. It's a bit like having a little edge."