

Macho Again 1.16, Courtesy of *The Daily Racing Form*

Fair Grounds | Posted 1/16/2009, 5:07 pm

Stewart and His Horses Raring To Go

By Abram Himelstein

NEW ORLEANS - Dallas Stewart emerged from quarantine looking to make up for lost time. After three weeks of being prohibited from racing and only being allowed to train after the general population had finished, Stewart had the equine herpesvirus quarantine on his barn lifted Thursday.

With the ban removed, Stewart entered two horses for races at Fair Grounds on Sunday. He will now also be allowed to send Macho Again to Gulfstream for the Jan. 24 Sunshine Millions.

Stewart's horses, along with those of Neil Howard, who also is stabled in Barn 4, had been quarantined since Dec. 26, after a filly trained by Stewart tested positive for equine herpes. The quarantine was lifted when the results of a Jan. 13 retest of the 66 horses in the barn came back negative for all.

"Our meet is just starting," Stewart said Friday. "It's nice to be able to train your horses again in a really proper way."

Stewart's first starter Sunday will be Blackberry Road, who will race in the sixth race, a six-furlong allowance. He has more class than most in the race, with a pair of second-place finishes in graded races.

He campaigned last year at the Fair Grounds as a 3-year-old, finishing second in the Grade 3 Lecomte and fourth in the Grade 2 Louisiana Derby.

He had two works during the quarantine period, and Stewart feels he's ready to break a three-race streak of third-place finishes.

"He's jumping out of his skin, ready to run," Stewart said.

Stewart's big horse, Macho Again, is now cleared to travel and will begin his 4-year-old campaign in the Sunshine Millions Classic at Gulfstream. He worked five-eighths here Friday in 1:02.80.

Macho Again finished second to Big Brown in last year's Preakness and defeated Pyro in the Grade 2 Jim Dandy. He finished sixth when trying turf for the first time in the Woodchopper here Dec. 20.

"He worked really good today, he's training great," Stewart said Friday. "He looks like he's really on top of his game."