



## Shaun Bridgmohan

**Born:** June 24, 1979 in Spanish Town, Jamaica.

**Resident:** Hempstead, N.Y.

**Family:** Stephanie (wife), Alexander (son) and a second child due in March.

**Shaun Bridgmohan's record at Keeneland:**

**Total Wins:** 40

**Stakes Wins:** (3)

- Tied with Calvin Borel as leading rider at the 2006 Churchill fall meet.
- Won three stakes at Gulfstream Park on Jan. 7, 2006—the Hal's Hope (G3), the Mr. Prospector (G3) and the Aventura. He then added a victory in the Ft. Lauderdale Stakes the following day.
- Leading rider at Arlington Park in 2005.
- Ranked 12th by wins and 16th by earnings in 2005.
- Eclipse Award-winning apprentice jockey in 1998.
- Tied with John Velazquez for leading rider at the 2002 Aqueduct spring meet.
- Among the top 10 riders in New York from 1998-2003.
- Became the 11th rider to win six races in a single day in New York when he won with six of nine mounts on Feb. 15, 1998.
- Leading apprentice rider at the 1997 Tropical-at-Calder meeting.
- First Grade 1 win came on Brutally Frank in the 2000 Carter.

Last year, Shaun Bridgmohan won 134 races and ranked 29th by earnings with better than \$6.4 million. He won more than 15 stakes races, topped by Appealing Zophie's victory in the Spinaway (G1). He also won two stakes at Keeneland, both Grade 3s—the Fifth Third Eklhorn aboard Pellegrino (Brz) and the Central Bank Transylvania on Chin High—and finished third in the spring meet standings and fifth during the fall meet.

Other graded victories came aboard Richwoman (the Debutante), Dattrick (Kentucky Breeders' Cup), Gaff and On Thin Ice. Ten of his stakes wins came on horses trained by Steve Asmussen or his assistant, Scott Blasi.

With new agent Drew Molica, he rode at Aqueduct through the winter. Their plans were up in the air in mid-January and Molica said coming back to Kentucky was "certainly a possibility. It'll be his decision."

Asked to describe his client, Molica said: "He's very bright and very athletic. He's the whole package. He's well rounded and just the consummate professional. He's wonderful to work with. He's a piece of bread. There's nothing wrong with a piece of bread, right?"

The previous year had been a very good one for Bridgmohan. He won the '05 riding crown at Arlington Park. He finished 12th nationally by races won, with 247, and 16th by money won, with \$7,703,566. His only previous year with higher earnings came in 2002 when his mounts earned \$8.7 million.

"He works incredibly hard," said former agent Dennis Cooper. "Whatever he gets, he deserves. This is what he wants to do."

In his first meet at Keeneland in the fall of 2005, he finished third in the standings with 14 wins. In his first Churchill meet, he finished third with 24 victories, just two behind Mark Guidry and Bejarano who tied for the riding crown with 26 apiece.

"That was better than excellent," said Cooper, who hooked up with Bridgmohan

before the Arlington meet began and formerly handled the books of Guidry and Rene Douglas. "I called two people before I took his book—Todd Pletcher and Steve Asmussen—and they had nothing but good things to say about him. He's come so far this year."

Indeed, Bridgmohan rode first call for Asmussen at Keeneland and Churchill in the fall of 2005 and following that at Gulfstream Park. "We'll see where that takes us," Bridgmohan said.

His family moved to Florida from Jamaica when he was 10. His father Gerald was a big racing fan and used to take Shaun along to the racetrack. While still a 16-year-old high school student, he started working at the track as a groom and a hotwalker and then as an exercise rider.

His first jobs were with trainers Anthony Peccoraro (who died in 2005) and Oliver Edwards. Initially, he worked on Saturdays and Sundays, and once he started galloping horses, he would go to the track in the mornings before school began as well as on the weekends. But his father insisted that he finish high school before he could become a jockey.

"It was my Dad's dream to be a rider," Bridgmohan said. "He wasn't able to do it, so he wanted me to be a rider." Shaun's younger brother, 18-year-old apprentice rider Jermaine, is following a similar path. He set a record of 110 wins during the 60-day Tropical at Calder meet that ended Jan. 2, 2007.

Once he graduated from high school, Shaun began riding and won his first race on Sept. 4, 1997 at Calder. By January of 1998, he had moved his tack to New York. He became the 11th rider to win six races in a day in New York when he won with six of nine mounts on Feb. 15, and the first apprentice to turn the trick since Steve Cauthen 21 years earlier. He won his first stakes and first graded stakes on the Mark Hennig-trained

Panama Canal in the Next Move Handicap (G3) on March 29.

"It's an awesome feeling to win my first stakes race, and I just want to thank Mark for giving me the opportunity to ride this filly," he told *The Blood-Horse*.

He was voted the Eclipse Award for leading apprentice in 1998 after winning 199 races, 171 of which were as an apprentice, and his mounts earned \$5.3 million.

Veteran trainer Joe Aquilino was quoted that year as saying about Bridgmohan: "He's a heady rider for a young guy. He's got a good feel for a race, the right sense of pace, he's good from off the pace, on the lead, knows when to go inside, knows when to stay outside—the feeling. . . it's kind of in him."

In 1999, he won 130 races and his mounts earned nearly \$5 million. "I won with the first horse I rode after I lost the bug," he said, "But then things got slow for a while. But I continued to work hard and pretty quickly things got going again."

He won his first Grade 1 race when he guided Brutally Frank to victory in the 2000 Carter Handicap and his second in the following year's Carter with Peeping Tom, who became his first Breeders' Cup mount that year in the Sprint. He also had his first mount in a Triple Crown race in 2001 aboard Paraneck Stable's Grifinite in the Preakness (they finished fifth).

His third Grade 1 score came aboard Evening Attire in the 2002 Jockey Club Gold Cup. Bridgmohan then rode him to a fourth-place finish in the Breeders' Cup Classic. He also won five races at Belmont Park on Sept. 25, 2002.

After finishing among the top 10 New York riders for a number of years, he decided to go to Arlington in 2005. He finished 50 wins ahead of his nearest rival and won eight stakes, including the Pucker Up (G3) on Royal Copenhagen (Fr).

He won his first Keeneland stakes on For All We Know in the Lexus Raven Run (G2) for trainer John Ward. He then won his first three at Churchill—the Kentucky Jockey Club (G2) on Private Vow for Asmussen, the Ack Ack Handicap (G3) with Straight Line for Harvey Vanier and the Grand Canyon Handicap on Lewis Michael for Wayne Catalano.

Bridgmohan started 2006 off with a bang, winning four stakes at Gulfstream on consecutive days, two of which were graded. He won the Hal's Hope with On Thin Ice for Joe Orseno, the Mr. Prospector on Gaff and the Aventura with Doctor Decherd, both for Steve Asmussen, and the Ft. Lauderdale with Honor in War for Paul McGee.

Having the backing of the juggernaut that is Asmussen's stable certainly didn't hurt his chances for a Triple Crown prospect. He and Private Vow finished 15th in last year's Kentucky Derby, and he'll be looking to improve on that finish this year.

