



**Mark Guidry**

**Born:** August 6, 1959 in Lafayette, La.  
**Resident:** Louisville, Ky.  
**Family:** Tina (wife), Fallon (daughter), Marcus and Mecus (sons).

**Mark Guidry's record at Keeneland**  
**Total wins: 74**  
**Stakes Wins (9)**

- Won 2006 Kentucky Oaks with Lemons Forever.
- Co-leader at 2005 Churchill Downs' fall meet.
- Ranked 19th by earnings in 2006 with \$7.4 million.
- Won the 4,000th race of his career at Arlington Park on July 1, 2000, aboard Manito wish.
- Leading rider at Sportsman's Park nine times (1991-92, 1994-2000).
- Two-time leading rider at Arlington Park, in 1992 and 2000.
- Leading rider at Hawthorne seven times, 1990-91, 1994-96 and 1998-99.
- Leading rider at Delta Downs in 1978.
- Posted three six-win days during the 1992 Sportsman's Park meeting, one of which was Illinois Red Letter Day on April 25 that included four stakes.
- Inducted into the Hawthorne Hall of Fame in 1997.
- Winner of the George Woolf Memorial Award in 2006. He also was elected to the Jockeys' Guild Senate and was a finalist for the Mike Venezia Award.
- Won the Queen Elizabeth II Challenge Cup (G1) with Riskaverse in 2002.

Mark Guidry, the dominant rider on the Chicago circuit during the 1990s, decided it was time to alter his strategy in 2000 and try the Florida-Kentucky circuit. The hope was to find a Derby mount and see how he fared against the big-name riders.

The strategy paid quick dividends with his first Derby mount in 2000 aboard Deputy Warlock and his second in 2001 with Balto Star. Both finished far back.

After piloting Buzzards Bay to victory in the 2005 Golden Gate Derby, he got the mount on him in the Derby and they finished a good fifth. "We had no excuses," he said.

Though he finished unplaced aboard Sharp Humor in last year's Derby, Guidry had a fine season, finishing 19th by earnings with \$7,424,003 from 131 wins in 890 mounts. His biggest victory came aboard Lemons Forever in the Kentucky Oaks (G1), while other graded scores came aboard Sharp Humor, Silverfoot, Rich in Spirit, Bright One, Get Funky, Brilliant, Officer Rocket (GB) and Leah's Secret.

He also was chosen to receive the George Woolf Memorial Award and was elected to the Jockey's Guild Senate. Of the George Woolf Award, he said: "This is the icing on the cake. It ranks way over any other accomplishments I've had in my career."

With new agent Terry Miller, Guidry rode at Gulfstream in the winter of 2005 after having tried the Santa Anita meet the previous winter "to shake things up a bit."

By the end of 2005, he had recorded a winning percentage of 22 as he won 177 races from 818 mounts and earned \$7,679,679. Victories included the Santa Anita Derby (G1) on Buzzards Bay, the Washington Park Handicap (G2) on Perfect Drift and the Golden Rod Stakes (G2) with French Park.

Guidry also matched his best finish in a Breeders' Cup race in 2005, a third in the Classic aboard Perfect Drift. (He previously finished third on She's A Devil Due in the 2000 Juvenile Fillies.)

His Grade 3 wins included the West Virginia Derby on Real Dandy, the Arlington Matron on Indy Groove and the Arlington-Washington Breeders' Cup Futurity with Sorcerer's Stone.

"It's been a great year," Guidry said in late November. "Winning the Santa Anita Derby was probably the ultimate thrill. It came at so good a time. That was my first time to be out there in California."

He organized a number of fund-raisers to aid families of racetrack people adversely affected by the Gulf Coast hurricanes. He and other riders at Arlington raised \$56,000. "There were so many people in need in Louisiana," he said.

Guidry, who has more than 4,900 wins, said reaching 5,000 is "absolutely a goal of mine. That would be a nice accomplishment."

In 2004, Guidry won 120 races and earned \$3.9 million. Top winning mounts included Angela's Love in the Gardenia Handicap (G3) and Roses in May in the Prairie Meadows Cornhusker Breeders' Cup Handicap (G3).

Guidry wasn't disappointed, though. "It's been very slow reaching my goals," he said after moving his tack. "But I'm keeping a good attitude. This is a humbling game. I still have a goal in focus, to find a 2-year-old that will take me to the Derby."

He had hoped that horse could have been Sorcerer's Stone with whom he won a pair of stakes in 2005. The colt missed the Derby due to injury.

"I'm still enjoying riding," he continued. "It's a tough game. It gets in your blood. Right now, I'd just have to say I just want to relax. I can't give up. I've got to keep on stroking. If you give up, you don't get the opportunities."

Asked about his decision to stop concentrating on the Chicago circuit, he replied: "It was time to venture out. I was 41. I still wanted to reach a few goals."

He told *Thoroughbred Times*: "This isn't about money. If it was, I would never have left Chicago. It's about getting opportunities. There are a lot of riders out there who can horseback but never had this opportunity. I'm fortunate that I can take this shot."

In 2003, Guidry won 117 races and his mounts earned \$4.76 million. Highlights included winning the Lake Placid Handicap (G2) at Saratoga aboard Sand Springs, and Grade 3 races aboard San Dare, Offlee Wild, Political Attack, Ebony Breeze and Sand Springs.

The Cajun-born rider has accomplished a great deal in his riding career. Like many other Louisiana natives, Guidry started out riding at the bush tracks at a young age. In his case, it was age 9. By that time, he had already known how to saddle a horse for several years.

At 16, he began riding at pari-mutuel tracks and rode his first winner, Tempermental Tom, at Delta Downs. He rode in Louisiana until 1986 when he moved his tack to Fairmount Park in Illinois.

From there it was on to Chicago where he was the leading rider at Hawthorne seven times, at Sportsman's Park nine times and at Arlington twice. He was inducted into the Hawthorne Hall of Fame in 1997.

Among the horses he's ridden over the years have been Horse of the Year Black Tie Affair (Ire) and champion turf horse Buck's Boy as well as Polar Expedition and Megans Bluff.

Guidry won his first Keeneland stakes in 1990 with Black Tie Affair (IRE) in the Commonwealth Breeders' Cup. His biggest so far came with Riskaverse in the 2002 Queen Elizabeth II Challenge Cup.

In 2002, his mounts compiled \$6.9 million in earnings. He also won the Humana Distaff (G1) with Celtic Melody, the Bonnie Miss (G2) with Dust Me Off, and five Grade 3 races that year.

In 2001, his victories included the Arlington Classic (G2) with Baptize and the W.L. McKnight Handicap (G2) on Profit Option. Overall, his mounts won 145 races and earned \$6,105,128.

"I just want to keep going as long as I feel I still have that competitive drive and want to win all the time," he told *Illinois Racing News*.

Don't expect Mark Guidry to bypass any good opportunities any time soon.