



George R. "Rusty" Arnold II

Born: March 26, 1955 in Paris, Ky.

Rusty Arnold's record at Keeneland

Total wins: 198

Stakes Wins (8)

- Leading trainer at Keeneland three times—the spring of 1985 and 1986 and the fall of 1987.
- His 13 wins in 1986 set a record for a Keeneland spring meeting that lasted until 1999.
- Third-leading trainer at Keeneland with 198 career victories.
- Won the Three Chimneys Spinster Stakes (G1) in 1997 with Clear Mandate and the Lane's End Breeders' Futurity (G1) in 2007 with Wicked Style.
- Leading trainer at Churchill Downs in the fall of 1987.
- Won the Test Stakes (G1) at Saratoga in 2001 with Victory Ride.

A couple of Rusty Arnold's biggest thrills as a Thoroughbred trainer have come at Keeneland. In 1997, G. Watts Humphrey Jr.'s homebred Clear Mandate won the Spinster Stakes.

Arnold and Humphrey shook hands after the race and then hugged each other.

"This is a great win for both of us," Arnold said at the time. "We both grew up around here and we both always dreamed of winning a race like this at Keeneland. This is a dream come true. Really and truly it is."

Why? "Because it was at Keeneland, and it's one of the best races at Keeneland," he explained. "And I'd been second the year before with Top Secret and then came back to win it."

In 2007, he saddled Wicked Style to win the Breeders' Futurity for Ashbrook Farm, owned by Glen Bromagen of nearby Woodford County. Earlier in his career, he had trained multiple stakes winner Tricky Creek for Bromagen.

Arnold's roots in racing go back two generations to his grandfather, James Russell, who was broodmare foreman at Elmendorf Farm. His father, George R. Arnold Sr., and his brother Terry jointly own 70-acre Fair Acres Farm near Lexington, where they breed horses to race or sell. Terry also manages Dixiana Farm near Lexington.

Born in Paris, Ky., Arnold, who turned 53 in March, grew up around horses. He told Maryjean Wall in an article in the *Lexington Herald-Leader*: "When you grow up in Kentucky and your family owns a farm and you're the oldest son, your job is to work there until your father retires and then take it over. But I got really involved in the racetrack and liked it a lot more. I liked the excitement and the moving around, and I just stuck with that."

He worked on the family farm on weekends and during the summers while growing up. Then he began breaking yearlings and went to work for trainer Eugene Euster. He also attended the University of Kentucky where he took pre-veterinary classes. But the racetrack won out. He galloped horses for Euster initially and then became his assistant trainer.

By 1975, he had gone out on his own and it was that summer that he saddled his first winner, La Yo Quiero, at Delaware Park. His first stakes winner was Fleeting North in the 1976 Neptune Handicap at River Downs.

He went to New York in 1980 and got a big break in 1985 when he was named to train a division of John Ed Anthony's Loblolly Farm after Shug McGaughey left to train for the Phipps family.

Arnold's stakes winners since have included Little Missouri, Rootootootenwooten, Top Secret, The Wheel Turns, Tricky Creek, Wavering Monarch, West by West, Delay of Game and Reflect the Music. The latter pair provided him with a stakes double on March 11, 2000, when Delay of Game won the Tampa Bay Breeders' Cup and Reflect the Music won the Wintergreen Stakes at Turfway.

In 2001, his stable successes included the Test Stakes (G1) with Victory Ride, owned by G. Watts and Louise Humphrey, and the Aqueduct Handicap (G3) with John Peace's Liberty Gold.

The following year, he won two more stakes with Victory Ride, including the Madison Stakes at Keeneland. His other stakes performers that year included Belle Artiste, winner of two stakes at Monmouth Park, and Fircroft, who won the Miss Grillo Stakes at Aqueduct.

In 2003, he saddled Final Round to win the La Troienne (G3) at Churchill and also won stakes at four other racetracks, including the New Castle Handicap at Delaware Park with Jaramar Rain and the Three Ring Stakes at Calder with Ender's Sister.

In 2004, Arnold won his seventh stakes race at Keeneland—the Bourbon County with Rey de Café—as well as the Suncoast Stakes and Florida Oaks at Tampa Bay Downs, both with Ender's Sister; the Red Cross Stakes at Monmouth Park with Final Round; and at Calder, the Silver Bells Stakes with Double Scoop and the London Lil Stakes with High Speed Access.

He won the 2005 Stonerside Forward Gal Stakes (G2) with Dixiana Farm's Letgomyecho, and the Crown Royal American Turf (G3) and Hill Prince Stakes (G3), both with Rey de Café.

Arnold has been training for primary client G. Watts Humphrey, Jr. since the early 1990s. Humphrey bred and owned Rey de Café.

Arnold's statistics from 1976 through early January 2007 were 1,324 wins and earnings of \$42,260,756, according to Equineline.com. He was credited with 87 stakes winners during that time period.

During 2007, he also won the Audubon Oaks with Katerbug, owned and bred by Watts Humphrey, and the Arlington-Washington Futurity (G3) with Wicked Style. Overall, his stable won 32 races and earned \$1,952,114.

Leprechauns Wish provided him with his first stakes win at Keeneland in the fall of 1986 when he narrowly won the Keeneland Breeders' Cup Stakes at odds of 20-1. Arnold had suffered through four seconds in stakes at the spring meet that year, including a nose loss by Clever Wake in the Phoenix Handicap.

Arnold considers Glencrest Farm's Wavering Monarch one of the best horses he has trained. Wavering Monarch made his first two starts at Keeneland in the spring of 1982, winning both. He then ran third in the Blue Grass Stakes before running 12th in the Kentucky Derby (G1). Later that year, he won the Haskell Invitational Handicap (G1) and the Omaha Gold Cup (G2).

One of his favorite horses was Divine Warning, who won seven of 13 starts on Keeneland's turf course, with two seconds, two thirds, and two fourths. In one stretch, Divine Warning won at least one race at five consecutive meetings, beginning with the spring 1991 meet and ending in the spring of 1993.

"He never won a stakes at Keeneland, but he was still a crowd favorite," he told Richard Rosenblatt in an article that appeared in Keeneland's fall program in 2000.

"He was around for so long you just get to know the personality and he became my favorite," he said.

He doesn't set goals, per se. "I'd say that I try to get the most out of each horse I get." Like all trainers he seeks to "get good horses and win big races."

He has already achieved a personal goal he had, pertaining to races won at Keeneland. "I don't think I'm going to catch Wayne (Lukas), but I'm going to get everybody else. I'm going to be in the Top 5." He is not only well inside the Top 5 now, but with 198 career victories he ranks third, behind Lukas and Bill Mott. He has won at least one race at every Keeneland meet dating back to the spring of 1986 (except for one meet in the late 1980s when he didn't run any horses here).

Local boy Arnold still views Keeneland as his favorite track. "I grew up there. Before I was 10, I was out there watching races. It was the only track I knew existed.

"I don't get to come back often enough, so when I do I try to make the most of it. And you always like to come back and do well in front of all your friends."