



### Todd Pletcher

**Born:** June 26, 1967 in Dallas, Texas

**Todd Pletcher's record at Keeneland**

**Total wins: 143**

**Stakes wins: 34**

- Won four straight Eclipse Awards for outstanding trainer—2004 to 2007—and added a record fifth in 2010 (Bobby Frankel also earned five.)
- Leading trainer by earnings for the fourth consecutive year in 2007, when he set a record for earnings of \$28.1 million. Added a fifth title in 2010.
- Set records for graded stakes wins (57) and stakes wins in a year (100) in 2006.
- Won his first Triple Crown race in 2007—the Belmont (G1)—with the filly Rags to Riches and his first Kentucky Derby (G1) in 2010 with Super Saver.
- Won six Breeders' Cup races – three in 2010, the Juvenile (G1) with Uncle Mo, the Juvenile Turf (G2) with Pluck and the Juvenile Fillies Turf (G2) with More than Real. He previously won the 2007 Turf (G1) with English Channel and the 2004 Distaff (G1) with Ashado and Sprint (G1) with Speightstown.
- Trainer of Canadian champion Archer's Bay (1998), and Eclipse winners Left Bank (2002), Ashado (2004-2005), Speightstown (2004), Fleet Indian and Wait a While (2006), Rags to Riches, English Channel and Lawyer Ron (2007) and Uncle Mo (2010).
- Won his 2,000th career race on Jan. 13, 2008, at Santa Anita.
- Leading trainer by wins at Saratoga (seven times, including 2010), Belmont Park (11 times), Aqueduct (three times), Keeneland (spring 2005 and '08), Monmouth (2007) and Gulfstream (seven times, including 2010).
- Ranks third at Keeneland in career stakes wins with 30.

Todd Pletcher was back on top in 2010, with his fifth Eclipse Award as leading trainer. He also was leading trainer by earnings for the fifth time with his stable accumulating \$23.1 million. From among his runners came three Breeders' Cup winners (Uncle Mo, Pluck and More Than Real) and Kentucky Derby winner Super Saver. Other Grade 1 stars for the stable were Quality Road (Metropolitan, Donn and Woodward), Devil May Care (Mother Goose and Coaching Club American Oaks), Eskendereya (Wood Memorial), Life at Ten (Ogden Phipps Handicap and Beldame Invitational), Malibu Prayer (Ruffian Invitational), R Heat Lightning (Spinaway) and Discreetly Mine (King's Bishop). Uncle Mo, who also won the Champagne (G1), became his 10th individual champion.

Beginning 2011, he ranked third all time among North American trainers with \$194.9 million, behind former mentor D. Wayne Lukas (\$256.6 million) and the late Bobby Frankel (\$227.9 million).

The stable finished second in earnings in both 2008 and 2009, with \$13.7 million and \$15.4 million, respectively. His runners accounted for 58 stakes wins in 2009, with Grade 1 winners Game Face, Take the Points and Devil May Care leading the way.

The previous year, the stable won 48 stakes. Grade 1 victories came in the Yellow Ribbon (Wait a While) and Clement L. Hirsch Memorial Turf Championship (Red Giant), both on Sept. 27, and the Toyota Blue Grass (Monba). He also won the second leg of the Canadian Triple Crown—the Prince of Wales—with Harlem Rocker.

For the four years previous, Pletcher won the Eclipse Award for outstanding trainer and led all trainers by earnings. In 2007, he broke his own record for earnings with \$28,111,697, even though he served a suspension until Feb. 10. He also ranked third by number of wins with 289.

Highlights of 2007 included his first classic victory with Rags to Riches in the Belmont as she became the first filly to win the race in 102 years, and his third Breeders' Cup triumph, with English Channel in the Turf. With 54 individual stakes winners, his runners won 91 stakes, of which 55 were graded and 16 were Grade 1s. Other noteworthy wins included the Coaching Club American Oaks, Whitney, Woodward, Juddmonte Spinster, Kentucky Oaks, Florida Derby and Haskell Invitational. His three champions in one year—Lawyer Ron, Rags to Riches and English Channel—equaled the record set by D. Wayne Lukas in 1995.

The previous year, Pletcher broke Lukas' longstanding records for number of stakes wins (92) and graded stakes wins (53) in a single season. His stable won 294 races and set the previous earnings record of \$26.8 million. Of these victories, 100 came in stakes with 57 different horses, including Eclipse Award winners Fleet Indian and Wait a While. Of the 100 stakes wins, 57 came in graded events, 17 of which were Grade 1 races. Among the highlights were Grade 1 victories by Bluegrass Cat, Circular Quay, Honey Ryder, Magnificent Song, Go Deputy, Pool Land, Wait a While, English Channel, Scat Daddy, Spun Sugar, Bishop Court Hill and Fleet Indian.

He told Leslie Deckard, formerly of *The Blood-Horse*, "No matter how good you are doing, there is always room for improvement. We have a simple philosophy around our barn and that is to try to do the best with each horse that we get. If the horse turns out to be a graded stakes winner, that is great, or if he or she finds their forte at a lesser level, that is great, too."

He says breaking the record of his former boss, Lukas, for stakes wins in a year was the accomplishment he was most proud of in 2006.

In 2006, he became the first trainer whose runners earned more than \$20 million in a year and captured Grade 1 races with Forest Danger, Bandini, champion Ashado, Flower Alley, Host (CHI), Adieu and Purge.

Pletcher won his first training title at Keeneland in the spring of 2005 and repeated at Saratoga, Gulfstream and Belmont (in the fall). He had 47 individual stakes winners in 2005.

His trainees earned \$17.5 million in 2004 and he won his first two Breeders' Cup races with horses who both earned championships in their divisions—Ashado and Speightstown. Ashado's five stakes wins included the Distaff (G1) and Kentucky Oaks (G1).

Also winning at the Grade 1 level were Proud Accolade and Lion Tamer.

In 2003, his stable won 199 races and earned \$12,356,924, second to Bobby Frankel. He conditioned Grade 1 winners Balto Star, Marylebone, Ashado, Harmony Lodge and Harlan's Holiday. A year earlier, his stable won 147 races, including the Whitney Handicap (G1) with Left Bank, and earned \$8.7 million to rank fourth. In 2001, his stable earned \$7,731,203, for a sixth-place ranking and Grade 1 races came courtesy of Left Bank and Tweedside.

His stable cracked the top 5 for the first time in 2000 with earnings of more than \$6.8 million and he saddled four Kentucky Derby (G1) starters—More Than Ready, Trippi, Graeme Hall and Impeachment.

Cot Campbell, president of Dogwood Stable that campaigned Trippi and Impeachment, said of Pletcher: "I like him because one, he's a good guy. Two, he's a marvelous horseman. Three, he is a straight shooter with information. ... And he's a terrific detail man. He's a star."

Pletcher grew up around racing as his father, J.J. Pletcher, trained Quarter Horses and Thoroughbreds throughout the West, Southwest and Midwest. He credits his father with teaching him how to look at a horse. He spent summers working for his father, who encouraged him to become a trainer. His father now operates Payton Training Center near Ocala.

Between his junior and senior years of high school, Pletcher worked for Henry Moreno in Southern California. And while attending the University of Arizona, he worked for D. Wayne Lukas between his sophomore and junior years and for Charlie Whittingham the following summer. He kept in touch with Lukas and after graduating with an animal science degree in 1989, he went to work for him in New York under Lukas' son, Jeff. By 1991, he was promoted to assistant trainer, splitting his time between Florida and New York.

"He's smart and innovative and he's going to make adjustments," Lukas told Jennie Rees of *The Courier-Journal* about Pletcher. "He's creative enough to know that he can take a little from me, a little from his father, a little from other people he's come in contact with—and he becomes his own person."

Pletcher went out on his own in December 1995 after six and a half years with Lukas and saddled his first winner two months later at Gulfstream Park with Majestic Number. He admitted he was nervous about starting out on his own with a small string of horses. He told Maryjean Wall of the *Lexington Herald-Leader*: "I had no idea what to expect. I had seven horses and none had past performances to speak of. You really throw yourself out there and just hope with your reputation and people knowing you'll work hard, that will be enough."