



## 152nd Longines Kentucky Oaks

Post-Race News Conference  
Friday, May 1, 2026  
Churchill Downs



**JIM MULVIHILL:** As we wait to see if we are joined by any of the owners, we would like to welcome in the winning trainer and jockey of the Longines Kentucky Oaks, Jose Ortiz, Chad Brown. Congratulations to you both. We are also joined by Doug Cauthen of Three Chimneys and Douglas Scharbauer. Congratulations to all of you.

I think, Jose, I would like to start with you. You were admiring your trip on the replay. Can you just take us through it, please.

**JOSE ORTIZ:** Yeah, she broke really good. She was able to fall behind Meaning, which me and Chad [Brown] talked about one of the possibilities, that she was a very nice filly to follow. And the plan went like we thought it was going to go. Rarely that happens. We were very happy that it happened in a race like this.

**JIM MULVIHILL:** Chad, can you tell us about the trip and Jose's ride.

**CHAD BROWN:** Yeah. It worked out just as we had planned. These big races, with big fields, you have to have plans, A, B, C, sometimes D. We never got to plan B, because that's exactly how we laid it out. And Jose [Ortiz] executed it perfectly. And this incredibly talented filly cooperated. She was there for him at every pole.

**JIM MULVIHILL:** Can you just tell us about your reaction to the performance and her entire campaign -- short campaign this year, and seeing it all come together.

**CHAD BROWN:** Well, it's been quite a journey. This horse came to me last summer, and you could tell right away from the first work that she had unbelievable ability. I have to give a lot of credit to Three Chimneys Farm, the Torrealba family. They bred this horse. I trained her mother.

Many of the team members from the farm are here today, which is extra special for me, because I know how hard it is to raise a horse like this. You can go through thousands of horses and not get one like this to come in your barn. And I have a lot of nice horses that come in, so I know how hard it is.

And the Scharbauer family, and between the two of them, they decided to send the horse to us. And getting a bad phone call in the fall when she had pneumonia, this filly was struggling. She had a severe case of it, in the clinic for over a month. And everyone was patient. We had a wonderful team of veterinarians that helped her get back.

We would have never thought we'd be here today when I gave that phone call. But, you know, the filly took us here. No one pushed me to run the horse here. It was probably a surprise to the owners that I ended up putting her on this track to get here not too long ago. Good horses take you here.



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**JIM MULVIHILL:** Doug [Cauthen], I would like to come to you and get your reaction.

**DOUG CAUTHEN:** This was an amazing ride, obviously, but a well-laid plan for a long time by Chad [Brown]. Like he said, there were a lot of bumps in the road. I went to Payson [Park] quite a bit this winter and saw his process. And it was the very last work before he decided to go to New York, but he was thinking about it.

So just seeing that process and then seeing it happen was pretty amazing. And then a wonderful trip and amazing ride and a great partner.

**JIM MULVIHILL:** Douglas, any additional thoughts?

**DOUGLAS SCHARBAUER:** I think he hit it right on the head. This filly, to be in the condition that he's been in during his 2-year-old year, and not to run him for the first time until after he turned three, and then to find out he's got the ability he's got, it just -- I mean, of course, his pedigree certainly lends itself to that.

But having the kind of trouble that Chad [Brown] had with him as a 2-year-old, and wanting to be sure he stayed healthy, so that he could get him to come back, and then to come back as a 3-year-old and do this after just two outs, I think is incredible. I really do.

My grandfather -- my mother's father, my grandfather on my mother's side -- won the Kentucky Derby in 1959 with Tomy Lee. And it was a duel down the stretch. Tomy Lee and Sword Dancer hooked up. But I think Tomy Lee won by a nose. Then Mother (Dorothy Scharbauer) was 28 years old at that time.

And then 28 years later, we came back in 1987 with Alysheba. Alysheba won both the Derby and the Preakness, and we were looking for the Triple Crown, but we didn't get there in the Belmont Stakes.

This filly with no more than two outs -- I mean, with not starting her till her 3-year-old year, I just think our trainer -- I think he's done one fantastic job. I have never seen this. I've never seen it happen like this.

**JIM MULVIHILL:** There's a lot to talk about there. But, Chad, I do want to follow-up just on her being so lightly raced and how did you balance tightening her for this race without overdoing it? Can you talk about that process.

**CHAD BROWN:** Yeah, it's a good question. I put stuff in front of her that I thought she could do. And we try to find that balance running 3-year-olds this early in the season, going for Triple Crown races or the Oaks or whatever. You try to get the horses here the best you can in position to win, but you don't



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want to jeopardize the rest of their season.

And it is a great question, because it's a fine line you walk of how far you push for this. Because if you swing and you miss and you've really, you know, trained them hard to do it and you don't win and you have compromised your season, that can happen. I've seen it happen. I've had it happen and learned from it.

So it's a balance. And when you have the right horse, though, and you have the right team, things have a way of working themselves out.

**JIM MULVIHILL:** Douglas, to follow up on another point you made, you talked about your family. Clarence and Dorothy [Scharbauer] are not with us anymore, but can you talk about being in this position and being here this weekend and what it means to you and thinking about your parents.

**DOUGLAS SCHARBAUER:** They both passed away, but I know -- I don't have any doubt that both of them were certainly watching this from above. After she hit the finish line, I'm sure both of my parents were smiling. And they loved horse racing.

My father ran quarter horses most of his life, and he was President of the AQHA, the American Quarter Horse Association, in 1975 for one year. But Mother, I mean, after her father won the Derby in '59, she talked my father into coming back to Kentucky and getting back into the thoroughbred business.

And both of my parents just, whether it was quarter horses or thoroughbreds, they loved all of it. They loved both of them. I mean, it's always been an excitement with me, and it will never change. I love this sport. I just love it.

I bought Valor Farm about ten years ago. I made a deal with my two brothers and sister. I've got that. And it's a well-run farm in Texas. Nothing like Kentucky, but well. We're getting there. But it doesn't look the same as these in Kentucky, I'll say that.

But whether it's quarter horse or thoroughbred, but thoroughbred racing, it's something my mother wasn't going to give up. And after they accomplished what they did with Alysheba, both of them loved it 'til the day both of them died. But I know they were looking down today.

**JIM MULVIHILL:** Doug, can you talk a little bit about the partnership and Goncalo and the Scharbauers and how this all came to pass.

**DOUG CAUTHEN:** Absolutely. Goncalo Torrealba has always wanted to win the Oaks. He has always said for years -- Chad [Brown] even know him way back when at [Bobby] Frankel's barn. The Oaks



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was the most important race for him. So to win this is amazing for Goncalo and for the whole Torrealba family.

I got to thank Mr. Scharbauer and his manager, Donny Denton, for answering the phone when I called before she was going to the ring to say, Hey, can we stay in? And kindly, we stayed in, and this partnership brought us here.

So, you know, teamwork makes it all work.

Valor Farm's got a great team. Three Chimneys has a great team. As Chad said, it's great to see both groups here, because everybody makes it happen. It's fun to celebrate together. But the Torrealbas are pretty fired up.

**JIM MULVIHILL:** Before we open it up, I would like to ask everybody their impressions of Kentucky Oaks under the lights in the primetime. What was the vibe out there?

**JOSE ORTIZ:** For me, just very long day. (Laughter)

It was a good -- great day for me racing. I got five wins and capped it off with the Oaks. Just amazing. Yeah, good vibe. I hope it -- it's for the public. If they have fun, it's good to me.

**CHAD BROWN:** So it was a really cool experience, and it's nice to utilize this facility with the lights and all. And I would definitely do it again. Obviously, my horse ran terrific.

But I've spent many, many Derby weekends looking at the infield wishing I could go in there and hold one of these trophies. So of course, I won the first one where we're in the paddock.

Maybe tomorrow. Maybe tomorrow, if I'm lucky, I'll get that trip to the infield. That was the only negative. Everything else about it was an incredible experience today with this post time.

**JIM MULVIHILL:** Since you mentioned it, you have another lightly raised 3-year-old running tomorrow. How does this bode for the Derby?

**CHAD BROWN:** If it's working, we're going to keep doing it. Two starts and go.

He's got a tall order. Obviously, it's a larger field than the Oaks field. But, still, a horse that has only run twice. You have to really step up like this incredible filly did today, give up some experience and have just overall raw ability override it. And I'm hoping tomorrow we can do the same.



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**JIM MULVIHILL:** Guys, your Oaks experience?

**DOUG CAUTHEN:** It was pretty damn good.

**JIM MULVIHILL:** No complaints.

**Q. Can you take us back to when she got pneumonia and how dire was it? You said you didn't imagine this day, but was it -- she wasn't going to race at all again? Can you just expound on that?**

**CHAD BROWN:** The vet that worked on her, Dr. Rodney Belgrave, in the Mid-Atlantic, he's the one who got her and really got to work on her. It was a very serious case of it.

Those things -- with horses when they have serious setbacks like that, you just have to take things as they come day to day, week to week, month to month and see how they come out of it.

Although she had a good prognosis, you don't know until you start putting them back in training and observing if there's any permanent changes when a horse has fluid in their lungs.

It was -- her career was really up in the air. She didn't have to be here today. She didn't have to run again. She could have never run, easily. I've had it happen with several horses.

The fact that not only did she overcome it and ended up here today as an undefeated horse in the Oaks is remarkable. I have a lot of nice horses in my care, and I have seen a lot of different setbacks with horses. But this is way up at the top of the list of perseverance for a horse to overcome things. It's at the top.

**Q. Jose, you talked about the second turn. You were following Meaning. Can you describe what you were doing? Did you tip out? Did a gap open which allowed you -- what happened? Take us through the second turn, especially.**

**JOSE ORTIZ:** I dip out. Meaning had a beautiful trip under Juan [Hernandez]. I followed him. I end up just perfect. Saved ground on. Tipped out right at the quarter pole. It was just a dream trip. I was very happy to be in the position I was.

**Q. Running her for the first time long at Tampa, can you talk about that circumstance. Is that any indication that you thought maybe this was a long-term goal?**

**CHAD BROWN:** I did the same with the horse that's in the Derby tomorrow (Emerging Market). I want



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to at least give myself a chance. I wasn't pushing the horses that way. But I figured if I can at least -- which I don't hardly ever do, run a horse two turns on dirt first time out. I did it with both horses because I thought they had the ability to do it. At least it would put them in position to get into a points race. Whether we ended up in the Oaks or Derby with either of them, there was no pushing. And both horses were able to win.

In particular, this filly won so easy, and I think some people looked at her number in that race and said: Well, she didn't run that fast. She ran so fast in New York, she is going to bounce or react from it. I was never worried about it. I told the owners and everyone involved, because in her debut race, she really didn't run the last 1/8th of a mile. She just trotted under the wire. That was the only reason her figure was slow.

In her last race in New York, she got sick again between her maiden race (Tampa Bay Downs) and the Gazelle (Stakes), really. I only disclosed it this week, when people were asking me about her figures. I said: Well, she was really only 70% for New York.

Today she was 100% for the first time. And walking over, I was saying to some of the connections, this is the first time I'm actually going to turn her head loose in a race. I have never, never asked the horse. Today she got asked and she answered.

**Q. Chad, can you talk about Gun Runner as a sire and that horse's influence on the sport. And then obviously you had Sierra Leone also. In addition to that, going into this weekend, can you honestly have more confidence in Always a Runner or Emerging Market? Again, congratulations to both of you.**

**CHAD BROWN:** As far as Gun Runner goes, obviously, one of the best sires in the world. In the first crop, I had a Preakness winner by the horse that Three Chimneys bred I bought as a yearling, Early Voting.

I've had plenty of them, fortunately, in my care. And I'd say that class and the athleticism of these horses, they can come in all shapes and sizes, but I've never seen one that's not an excellent mover. And I think that great stallions, when they throw that and they're all efficient, excellent movers, like you look at this filly. You can watch this replay. Look at the mechanics of this horse. And that stallion, that's what he consistently throws all the time. It's remarkable.

And, yeah, I'm not going to touch the other question with Emerging Market. (laughter)

**JIM MULVIHILL:** Thank you all for spending some time with us. Congratulations, once again, to Always a Runner, winner of the Longines Kentucky Oaks.