



BREEDERS' CUP FOCUS: MILE

BY JASON SHANDLER

Shakespeare

Owner	Dell Ridge Farm & William Schettine
Breeder	Dell Ridge Farm
Trainer	Kieran P. McLaughlin

Any starter who makes it to the 2007 Breeders' Cup World Championships at Monmouth Park is an extraordinary

the property formerly owned by Hill 'n' Dale Farm.

Shakespeare was originally consigned to the Keeneland September yearling sale in 2002 but was bought back. William Schettine purchased a half-interest as a yearling.

story. But with all due respect to the rest of the starters, none makes a better fairy tale than Shakespeare, who has returned from a near career-ending injury to become one of favorites for the \$2 million NetJets Breeders' Cup Mile (gr. IT) Oct. 27.

By Theatrical, out of That's a Nice mare Lady Shirl, Shakespeare was one of the most talented young turf horses in the world in 2005, winning the first five starts of his career, including a pair of graded stakes in New York that fall. It led to an appearance in the



Shakespeare

John Deere Breeders' Cup Turf (gr. IT), in which he was attempting to become the first undefeated American grass champion.

Trained at that time by Bill Mott, Shakespeare finished last and it was later determined that he had suffered a serious tendon injury in his left front leg. It forced the superstar to the sidelines, leaving everyone to wonder if he would ever race again.

Fast forward 21 months to Aug. 2, 2007. Making a triumphant return at Saratoga, Shakespeare won a one-mile allowance event, this time under the care of Kieran McLaughlin, who took over the 6-year-old's training after co-owner Frank Justice transferred a handful of horses into McLaughlin's barn.

Six weeks later, Shakespeare's marvelous comeback got even better, when he came from 7 3/4 lengths back at the half-mile pole to take the Woodbine Mile (Can-IT) in miraculous fashion under Garrett Gomez. It was an electrifying move along the rail that proved the bay horse was unquestionably back to his old form.

Now the versatile horse, who had never attempted a race fewer than eight furlongs before this year, will try to complete his transformation into a miler at the Breeders' Cup.

Shakespeare is a homebred of Dell Ridge Farm in Lexington. Formed in 1998, Dell Ridge is owned by Justice, who purchased

Dell Ridge, who also owns Shakespeare's stakes-winning sister Fantastic Shirl, is mainly a breed-to-sell operation that has about 12 horses in training and 25 broodmares. It is hoping for its first Breeders' Cup win. The miraculous comeback by Shakespeare has the whole farm ecstatic.

"He has tremendous ability. We spent a lot of time with him on the farm, making sure his rehab went slowly," said Dell Ridge manager Des

Ryan. "It's one of those things where you have to be patient and do what's best for the horse. He actually had a cannon bone fracture after the second race of his career and had screws put in for that, so he's been kind of unlucky.

"But he's just such a fantastic horse. It would be a great story for the industry if he wins (the Breeders' Cup). He deserves it."

THEATRICAL (IRE), dkb/br, 1982	Nureyev, 1977	Northern Dancer, 1961	Nearctic Natalma
	Tree of Knowledge (IRE), 1977	Special, 1969	Forli Thong
SHAKESPEARE, b h, February 4, 2001	That's a Nice, 1974	Sassafras (FR), 1967	Sheshoon (GB) Ruta (FR)
	LADY SHIRL, b, 1987	Canonization, 1976	Sensibility, 1971
		Hey Good Lookin', 1966	Noholme II Lady Vale
		Our Bonnie S., 1958	Palestinian Chickdale
		Native Heritage, 1967	Raise a Native Tim's Princess
		Heatherglow, 1972	The Axe II Brilliantly



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