



BREEDERS' CUP FOCUS: FILLY & MARE SPRINT

BY ESTHER MARR

Owner	Everett Novak's New Farm
Breeder	Everett Novak's New Farm
Trainer	Ben Perkins Jr.

Wild Gams

New Jersey-bred Wild Gams, who is fully accustomed to running in the Northeast,

will have a home-court advantage if she competes in the \$1-million Filly & Mare Sprint Oct. 26 at Monmouth Park.

Trained by Ben Perkins Jr., the 4-year-old filly's Oct. 6 victory in the Thoroughbred Club of America Stakes (gr. III) at Keeneland showed her connections she was ready to face elite company in the new Breeders' Cup race, given she stays healthy and sound.

Foaled and raised on Everett "Ebby" Novak's New Farm near Marlton, N.J., Wild Gams is a daughter of Forest Wildcat, who raced part of his career for Novak and Perkins' father, Ben Perkins Sr. Novak still owns a major interest in the stallion, who stands at Fred Seitz' Brookdale Farm near Versailles, Ky.

"Wild Gams was a nice yearling, but kind of small—nothing spectacular," Ben Perkins Jr. said. "But she was just a nice, balanced, refined filly. When we started training her as a 2-year-old, she showed a lot of quality right from the beginning."

Perkins said he and Novak began mapping out a strategy to prepare Wild Gams for the Breeders' Cup after she concluded an impressive 3-year-old season. The filly captured four stakes last year, including two grade III events: the Safely Kept Breeders' Cup Stakes at Laurel Park and the Cicada Stakes at Aqueduct.

Perkins and Novak were disappointed with Wild Gams' first two efforts this year, however, and decided to sideline the filly for nearly four months after she finished third in the May 20 Mac's Sparkler Stakes at Belmont Park.

Perkins was first exposed to horse racing through his father, who began training horses for Novak in the early 1990s and now helps oversee his breeding operation. After Ben Perkins Sr. retired from training in 2000, his son took over the majority of his barn.

Novak, who has recently delved more into the breeding side of the industry, is the founder and chief executive officer of Unique In-

dustries, a party supply manufacturing company. Unique Industries holds licensing rights to a number of characters, including Spider-Man, SpongeBob SquarePants, Barney, and Scooby-Doo.

With about 15 horses in training with Perkins, Novak also has an active broodmare band, as well as several yearlings and weanlings at his farm. Bloodstock agent Mark Reid bought Wild Gams' dam, Diamonds and Legs, privately on Novak's behalf after she retired from racing.

"One of the things we found with Forest Wildcat as a stud was when you crossed him mares with some distance pedigree and some size, he seemed to do well," Perkins said. "Being a (stakes winning) Quiet American mare, Diamonds

and Legs was the kind of thing we look for. She's good sized with a lot of leg under her."

Since the mid 1990s, Novak has raced more than three dozen stakes winners in his purple and black New Farm silks, including grade I victors Conveyer, Delaware Township, and Wildcat Heir. New Farm still retains an interest in the latter two, who are now standing at stud.



Wild Gams

ANNE M. EBERHARDT

FOREST WILDCAT, dkb/br, 1991	Storm Cat, 1983	Storm Bird, 1978	Northern Dancer South Ocean
	Victoria Beauty, 1972	Terlingua, 1976	Secretariat Crimson Saint
WILD GAMS, b f, April 19, 2003	Quiet American, 1986	Bold Native, 1965	Raise a Native Spring Beauty
		Abifaiith, 1964	Seaneen Sherry Jen
DIAMONDS AND LEGS, b, 1996	Ah Love, 1990	Fappiano, 1977	Mr. Prospector Killaloe
		Demure, 1977	Dr. Fager Quiet Charm
		Lear Fan, 1981	Roberto Wac
		Colinear, 1971	Cohoos Beck Road



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