



WHAT YOU MIGHT NOT KNOW

ABOUT WISE DAN

TRAINING BUDDY: Exercise riders used to be afraid of Wise Dan in his younger days. "He wasn't mean; not one time did that horse try to rear up or kick or hurt anybody, but he was really headstrong," Charlie LoPresti recalled. Then along came Damien Rock, a native of Ireland, who coaxes this fiery competitor to relax and prepare for his races without doing too much. "He's tough, but Damien knows him," the trainer went on. "You've got to let him think you're doing things his way. You can't force him to do them your way."

BANK ACCOUNT: \$3,541,638

AIRPLANE FUEL: In full training Wise Dan eats 13-14 quarts of a high-energy grain mix called Race 13, produced by Hallway Feeds. "One would compare it to airplane fuel," LoPresti's wife Amy said.

TONS OF TALENT: Last summer after winning the Fourstardave Handicap at Saratoga, Wise Dan tipped the scales at 1,160 pounds. Charlie LoPresti said he weighed about 1,200 pounds after his winter break.

TAKE YOUR VITAMINS: Re-Borne, Platinum Performance Complete Joint Supplement, and GastroGard are the supplements that help Wise Dan stay healthy and happy.

NO SWEETS FOR ATHLETES: The LoPresti barn is not big on treats such as peppermints, but Wise Dan can have all the alfalfa, orchard grass, and timothy hay he wants.

NIKES, HORSE-STYLE: Wise Dan wears a size 7 "Fast Break" shoe, a product developed by Kerckhaert, a leading horse shoe manufacturer. The toe of the shoe is squared off instead of rounded, with the idea that this shape causes less stress on the upper limb and results in better hoof condition.

MIXING IT UP: For a change in routine, Wise Dan gets turned out in a round pen on the hill overlooking the LoPresti barn off Rice Road. He also spends about 20 minutes on a vibration plate, which has recently become popular in the Thoroughbred racing industry. Most horses seem to enjoy the movement and relax while standing on it. Wise Dan definitely does.

A HORSE IS A HORSE: Even though Wise Dan is now recognized as a superstar, around the barn he's just a member of the team. "I don't want to treat him any differently than we have all along," said Charlie LoPresti. "I think horses pick up on that kind of stuff, and we've got to be really careful we don't put too much pressure. I think people put too much pressure on horses. They have enough pressure with what they do, when they get to be those kinds of runners."

By Claire Novak

Many runners come and go from Keeneland and many make their mark, but none compiled as impressive a 2012 record here as Horse of the Year Wise Dan. This brilliant chestnut started his campaign—which brought him Eclipse Award honors in three divisions—with a record-setting performance in the track's Ben Ali Stakes and prepared him for his Breeders' Cup Mile score with victory in its Shadwell Turf Mile. Wise Dan, who wins on all surfaces, currently is prepping for a 2013 return to the races in the Maker's 46 Mile on the turf on April 13.

Wise Dan is the "house horse" at Keeneland. He is stabled off Rice Road with easy walk-over access to the main track, and although his victories may come at tracks across the nation, he is trained here under Charlie LoPresti's watchful eye. Even his family roots trace back to Keeneland: His sire, Wiseman's Ferry, won here in 2002, and his dam, Lisa Danielle, was purchased by agent Cecil Seaman at the 1995 Keeneland September sale.

Wise Dan races for 83-year-old owner/breeder Morton Fink, an Illinois native who finds his greatest thrill in traveling to the 6-year-old gelding's races. You will find Hall of Fame jockey John Velazquez in the saddle any time Wise Dan runs; Velazquez's agent, retired Hall of Fame rider Angel Cordero Jr., compares Wise Dan to the greats such as John Henry, Kelso, and Forego and once told LoPresti, "I'd go to the moon to ride that horse!" 🐎

Wise Dan wins the Shadwell Turf Mile for trainer Charlie LoPresti and owner Morton Fink at the 2012 Keeneland fall meet.