



Steve Asmussen

Born: Nov. 18, 1965, Gettysburg, S.D.

Residence: Arlington, Texas

Family: wife, Julie; sons, Keith James, Darren Scott and Eric Mark

Breeders' Cup Record: 44-6-6-2 | \$12,072,180

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- Hall of Fame trainer Steve Asmussen earned his second Breeders' Cup Classic victory in 2017 with Gun Runner, who easily defeated a top field of horses en route to his fourth straight Grade 1 victory and the Horse of the Year title. Gun Runner retired to Three Chimneys Farm in 2018 after winning the \$16 million Pegasus World Cup Jan. 27 at Gulfstream Park. He is ranked second only to 2016 Breeders' Cup winner Arrogate in career earnings with \$15,988,500.
 - Asmussen earned his fifth Breeders' Cup victory in 2014 when Kentucky Oaks winner Untapable ended her season with a dominate victory in the Distaff. Overall, the trainer has a Breeders' Cup record of 41-6-2 and earnings of \$8,742,180. His other wins were the 2012 Dirt Mile with Tapizar; the 2011 Turf Sprint with Regally Ready; the 2011 Juvenile Fillies with My Miss Aurelia; and the 2007 Classic with Curlin.
 - The trainer first entered the Breeders' Cup picture in 2003, saddling Posse in the Sprint, Cuvee in the Juvenile, and Lady Tak in the Distaff; Posse finished best, coming home fourth. After an also ran finish with Private Vow in the 2005 Juvenile and no entries in 2006, Asmussen had a breakthrough Breeders' Cup in 2007. In addition to Curlin's Classic victory, Pyro and Kodiak Kowboy finished second and third, respectively, in the Juvenile. In 2008, Curlin returned to the Classic but could not repeat, finishing fourth.
 - Asmussen's Breeders' Cup stars have been well rewarded on Eclipse Awards night. In addition to being named Horse of the Year, Gun Runner was the champion older male in 2017. Untapable was crowned champion 3-year-old filly in 2014. Curlin was twice named Horse of the Year, for 2007 and 2008, and Kodiak Kowboy, returned to Asmussen for his final two starts after a stint with Larry Jones, was named top sprinter for 2009 despite not running in the Breeders' Cup that year. My Miss Aurelia, undefeated in four starts as a 2-year-old, took home the Eclipse Award as 2011's top juvenile female.
 - Was inducted into the National Museum of Racing Hall of Fame in August 2016.
 - In addition to Gun Runner, his best horses in 2018 have been Cotillion Stakes (G1) winner Midnight Bisou, Met Mile (G1) winner Bee Jersey, Jim Dandy Stakes (G2) winner Tenfold, Gallant Bloom Stakes (G2) winner Union Strike and Super Derby (G3) winner Limation.

- His top runners in 2016 were Gun Runner and Creator, who both have had a major impact in the major 3-year-old races. Gun Runner won the Louisiana Derby and then finished third in the Kentucky Derby (G1), third in the Travers Stakes (G1) and second in the Pennsylvania Derby (G2). Creator won the Arkansas Derby (G1) and after a troubled trip in the Derby rebounded to give Asmussen his second Classic win with his victory in the Belmont Stakes (G1). After two poor performances at Saratoga, Creator was given a vacation and subsequently retired and sold to Japanese connections. The son of Tapit, who raced for WinStar Farm and Bobby Flay, now stands stud at the Japan Bloodhorse Breeders' Association.
- Asmussen was North America's leading trainer by wins in 2002, 2004, 2005, 2007 through 2011 and 2013. He won the Eclipse Award as outstanding trainer in 2008, when he set the record for number of wins in a year with 622, and won the award again in 2009 when he broke his own record with 650 wins. He also was the first trainer in history to win 500 races in one year, scoring 555 in 2004, crushing the record of 476 held by Jack Van Berg since 1976. Asmussen set a North American record on Feb. 7, 2004, when he won 10 races in one day, including three stakes, from 16 starters at five tracks.
- Asmussen won his 8,000th race May 5, 2018 when Lookin at Lee won the third race on the Kentucky Derby undercard. Through Oct. 10, 2018, he has 8,172 victories and is second among all North American trainers only to Dale Baird, whose win total stood at 9,445 when he was killed in an auto accident in 2007. Asmussen became just the second trainer in history to earn 7,000 career wins April 1, 2015 when Drama Coach won the second race at Oaklawn Park ... Saddling Basalt at Remington Park, Asmussen earned his 6,000th win on Nov. 18, 2011, the fifth trainer to reach that milestone.
- He holds multiple training titles including at Ellis Park, Fair Grounds, Keeneland, Lone Star Park, Monmouth, Oaklawn Park, Remington Park, Retama Park, Sunland Park, and Churchill Downs.
- Asmussen currently divides his operations between New York, Kentucky, Louisiana, Arkansas, Texas and Oklahoma. His assistants are Scott Blasi, Darren Fleming, and Toby Sheets.
- Among Asmussen's major clients is Winchell Thoroughbreds, who own Gun Runner and also owned Untapable ... The trainer's operation suffered a blow in 2011 with the death of leading client Jess Jackson of Stonestreet Stable. Two horses that Asmussen trained for Jackson left near-indelible marks on racing's history books, earning three straight Horse of the Year Eclipse awards between them: Curlin in 2007 and 2008 and Rachel Alexandra in 2009.
- Rachel Alexandra was purchased by Jackson and Harold McCormick after her 20-length win in the 2009 Kentucky Oaks. The filly was undefeated in eight starts as a 3-year-old, including historic wins over males in the 2009 Preakness Stakes and Haskell Invitational and over older males in the 2009 Woodward Stakes. Retired in 2010, she was bred to Curlin and delivered her first foal in January 2012. The foal was named Jess's Dream following a naming contest that drew more than 6,500 submissions.

- Asmussen trained Curlin from his second start after Midnight Cry Stables sold majority interest in the colt to Stonestreet and partners George Bolton and Padua Stables; Stonestreet eventually owned the horse outright. Curlin won the Preakness Stakes and Breeders' Cup Classic in 2007 and followed with wins in the Dubai World Cup, Stephen Foster Handicap, and Jockey Club Gold Cup in 2008. The Gold Cup win pushed his career earnings over the \$10 million mark and past Cigar as the top American earner in history. After finishing fourth in the 2008 Breeders' Cup Classic, Curlin was retired to stand at Lane's End Farm. Curlin was scheduled to stand the 2016 season at Hill 'n' Dale Farm.
- Asmussen learned the racing business from his parents, Keith and Marilyn Asmussen, who breed, own, and train. He was helping to walk hots and mucking stalls by the age of five. In a childhood accident, he lost part of one thumb while holding a horse through a chain link fence.
- Asmussen took out his jockey's license at age 16 and rode for three years in California, New Mexico, and New York before difficulty maintaining weight forced him to abandon race riding. His brother, Cash, now also a trainer, was the Eclipse Award top apprentice jockey in 1979 before becoming a champion rider in Europe. The Asmussen family operates Asmussen Horse Center, a breeding and sales operation, and El Primero Training Center, both in Laredo, Texas.
- Asmussen began training Thoroughbreds and Quarter Horses in New Mexico in 1986 and won his first Thoroughbred stakes in 1987, the Bessemer Stakes with Scout Command at Birmingham Race Course. His first graded win, the G3 Derby Trial in 1996, came with Valid Expectations, his first major contender and winner of seven stakes from 1995 through 1997. His first G1 win came in 1999 with Mother Goose Stakes winner Dreams Galore.