

# Making Runners

*Follow along as yearlings become racehorses. Sixth in a series.*

**By Richard Chamberlain**



Whole Lot Of Karma and Chris O'Dell

WENDY O'DELL

THE *RACING JOURNAL* CONTINUES ITS SERIES LOOKING AT THE process of turning race-bred prospects into racehorses. The two colts being profiled are products of Vessels Stallion Farm at Bonsall, California.

Harems Last Dash is a First Down Dash colt whom Vessels co-bred with Robert and Helen Wood of Seagraves, Texas. Out of the blue-hen Beduino (TB) mare Harems Choice, Harems Last Dash is in training with Mike Joiner at Ruidoso Downs.

The other is being trained by Chris O'Dell at Los Alamitos. Whole Lot Of Karma is a gelding by Apollo (TB)

out of the winning First Down Dash mare Its Good To Be Queen. The *Racing Journal* last spoke May 4 with Joiner and May 6 with O'Dell.

## **Whole Lot Of Karma** **Chris O'Dell, trainer**

"KARMA" QUALIFIED ON THE 17TH OF APRIL. I WORKED HIM with a Tres Seis filly, Faster Car, and they both worked heads up :12.8 from the gate. The jockeys didn't hit them at all. You don't really have to do that – the stewards are more concerned

about keeping them straight. The first time like that, we don't push them very hard. We let them cruise on their own natural ability. We're just trying to get some competitive juices flowing, and see how they stride and things like that. Then we came back yesterday to qualify him again, and he worked :12.20, handily, the second-fastest of 19 works, while the jockey just sat on him. He is coming right along, broke sharp and ran straight.

We're about ready to start looking for a race. He's a late-maturing colt. Even though we'll probably run him before then, he's probably going to do his best in the fall. Being by Apollo, he's bred to run on down the track. The filly that I worked him with is a pretty nice filly who is real quick out of the gate. She keeps him honest. She makes him work at it. He had to work the first part of it to stay up with her, had to come and catch her just a little bit, but that's his forte. He's going to like to run a little farther – 220 is not going to be his deal. But having said that, he is pretty quick.

Karma does everything we want him to do, but sometimes it takes awhile for him to do what we want to do. Sometimes he's more interested in jumping around and playing instead of always being serious and doing what he's supposed to do. He's a good-feelin' kind of colt. He gallops and does his job, and he's good to do everything with. He's not hard to handle at all. So far, he's stayed perfectly sound, he eats good and there is nothing bad to say about the colt. He's got a good mind and he's just learning how to use his motor.

We gallop him every other day or so, and walk him through the gate. Once you get them to where they've learned the gate is where they go, you almost go the opposite way: You start getting them to settle down and stand in the gate, or otherwise they start trying to flip over and stuff. So you go the other way and try to rein them in a little bit. At first, it's go in the gate and go, go, go, and now it's go in the gate, relax, stand in there and go when we tell him to. It's a lot of mental work for young colts, but he's very cooperative and does everything we've asked him to do. He loves to go out on the track, he loves to go on the walker, and no matter what we ask him to do, he loves to go.

In his second work, I was looking for him to go a little faster, be a little more professional and know a little more what he's doing. A first workout is like a first race: They're kind of lost and don't know what is going on. The second time, they know what they're doing. If they've got something under the hood, you'll probably see it. But I don't expect him to necessarily jump out there and win his first out. It's going to take him a race or two to get in the flow, but as we go through the year and they start running farther on down the track, he's going to get better and better.

Karma is going to do what we want him to do. He's got a lot of class and he does everything we ask. He just has to learn how to use it all and get everything pointed in the right direction. That just comes with maturity and a little age. But he came back really good, jumping and playing and wanting to do something, so we will have to get him in a race pretty soon after. Sometimes if you wait a little too long, once you get them ready, you do more harm than good. You can sit on an older horse, but when you get a baby ready to go, it's usu-

**"You never know what a young colt will do, but you try to make a star out of him."**



Harems Last Dash, Justin Joiner up

LINDA JOINER

ally better to go ahead and give him an out and let him learn and grow from it.

You never know what a young colt will do, but you try to make a star out of him. We'll get him on the stage, give him a chance to shine and let him show what he can do. We're getting close.

## **Harems Last Dash** **Mike Joiner, trainer**

WE TOOK "LAST DASH" TO RUIDOSO DOWNS LAST WEEK, AND HE settled in just fine, no problems. But last month, before we took him up there, we gated him a couple of times at Sunland Park. We gated him with company both times, and we're going to put one more gate in him next week at Ruidoso. Then, planning ahead, we'll try to find him a maiden race at Ruidoso and aim for the Rainbow Futurity (G1) trials on July 2.

When we worked him at Sunland, the colt did fine. All we're looking for right now is just for him to learn his job. We want to let him kind of figure out what he's supposed to do, see how to get out of the gate and what to do in case he gets banged around at the gate, gets run over or bumped around a little bit down the racetrack or whatever – it's just a learning experience at this point. That's all we wanted. And sure, I think he's learning: He seems to be doing everything right and improving a little bit every time. I think we're making progress, and his progress is really good. We're absolutely satisfied with him at this point.

We've had him on the track at Ruidoso. We've taken him a few times by himself, without a pony. He did just fine. But of course, he'd been on the track at Sunland, and there isn't a lot different to look at. He never really even looked around. He's pretty good about tending to his business and doing his job.

Back at the barn, he's basically pretty good to handle. He's a stud colt, so he can get a little bit ornery once in awhile. But on the whole, he's pretty good. No real problems.

Last Dash has a good appetite and eats good, eats it all, everything we give him. He has no health issues at all. He's perfectly healthy – no soundness problems whatsoever. We're looking forward to the summer. ■