

ONE on ONE Alex Brown



Alex Brown is an exercise rider at Sam Houston Race Park, and most notable, he is known for running a website that plays host to Fans of Barbaro. The magnificent Thoroughbred entered the 2006 Kentucky Derby undefeated and ended up winning by the largest margin since 1946; however, two weeks later Barbaro ran in the Preakness Stakes and fractured several bones in his leg that ended his racing career and eventually led to his death.

The national spotlight surrounded Barbaro after his breakdown in the Preakness and he became the object of care and affection from the public in a way only a few animals ever have before. Brown recognized the amount of attention from Barbaro's admirers and decided to combine his passion for horses and interest in marketing and technology by creating a website where he, along with trainer friend Tim Woolley, blogged about training horses and various racing topics. "After Barbaro won the Kentucky Derby I told Tim, 'since there aren't many people reading our site, we should write about Barbaro getting ready for the Preakness.' So I ran some Google ads to drive traffic to the website."

"When Barbaro got hurt in the Preakness my immediate reaction was to quit and not continue this project under the circumstances; but the next day while Barbaro was at New Bolton Wellness Center I was looking around on the internet and I could tell people were Googling Barbaro and getting no answers." After calling a few of the veterinarians working with Barbaro, Brown was able to update the ads he ran off his website. "That night Barbaro came out of surgery and I was actually the first person to post anything about it."

Brown was there throughout Barbaro's recovery and became close friends with his owners, Roy and Gretchen Jackson. "Mrs. Jackson made it clear she wanted to support horse welfare issues, and one of the key issues she wanted to focus on was ending horse slaughter." The zealous combination of Brown, the Fans of Barbaro and Jackson focused on rescuing horses in the slaughter pipeline. "The first horse we saved was September 2006, and now we've been able to rescue more than 1,900 horses and raise more than \$800,000 to support the cause and raise awareness."

What started off as a project has developed into a force in terms of rescuing horses. "When Barbaro passed away I decided to focus solely on this project and put everything else to the side," stated Brown, a former internet marketing professor at the University of Delaware. In late 2007, while working at Presque Isle Downs, Brown met up with one of Steve Asmussen's trainers and asked him if he could help him with a job in Texas. Following that conversation Brown found his way to Houston, Texas, just before the start of the 2007-2008 Thoroughbred Meet. "I think this is a brilliant race track and the surface is amazing. The trainers here seem to really care about what goes on with their horses."

"This one project has drawn together all the things I'm skilled at and passionate about, including marketing, technology and horses. I've committed myself to ending horse slaughter. I love looking in the mirror each morning and being proud of what I'm doing and feeling as if I'm giving something back."

FUN FACTS

Favorite Website:
www.alexbrownracing.com

Favorite Music:
Clash (English Punk rock band)

Favorite Actor/Actress:
Julia Roberts

Favorite Food:
Indian food

Favorite Drink:
Tetley's

Favorite Vacation Destination:
Wellington, New Zealand

