



Pedigree suggests Sharp Humor could find spot on Triple Crown trail

One of the bright new prospects to join the Triple Crown trail during the past week is Sharp Humor, the 13.80-to-1 winner of the \$150,000 Swale Stakes (G2) at Gulfstream Park.

The bay three-year-old son of Distorted Humor outlasted 7-to-5 favorite Noonmark by a neck to capture his first graded stakes race, completing the seven-furlong contest in 1:22.14.

The Swale was Sharp Humor's seasonal bow and his graded stakes debut. Last year, he won three of his five starts, including a pair of stakes at Belmont Park restricted to New York bred—the Bertram F. Bongard Stakes at seven furlongs and the Sleepy Hollow Stakes at one mile.

With the Kentucky Derby (G1) less than two months away, Sharp Humor's lack of experience around two turns would, at this point, seem to be his biggest question mark. Moreover, the Swale Stakes, in its 20 previous runnings, has not proven to be a very successful prep race for the Derby.

To his favor, however, Sharp Humor does appear to benefit from a pedigree that furnishes a variety of stamina elements suggestive of handling a classic distance.

Bred by Patricia Purdy, Sharp Humor is the second winner out of Bellona, an unraced daughter of 1991 three-year-old champion male Hansel. His second dam, Basoof, was a winning half-sister to Shadeed, winner of the 1985 Two Thousand Guineas (Eng-G1).

The bottom half of Sharp Humor's pedigree appears rich with distance potential. The sires of his first and third dams, Hansel and Damascus, were multiple classic winners, while



SHARP HUMOR

Bill Denver/EquiPhoto

Sharp Humor, b. c., 2003

Distorted Humor 93 435 fls, 35 SWs SI 2.58 DI=2.30	Forty Niner 85 11 wins, \$2,726,000 Champion 718 fls, 54 SWs SI 2.43 DI=2.63	Mr. Prospector 70 1178 fls, 180 SWs SI 5.08 DI=3.95	Raise a Native 61
		File 76 10 fls, 1 SW DI=1.38	Gold Digger 62
	Danzig's Beauty 87 3 wins, \$205,806, SW 12 fls, 2 SWs DI=3.44	Danzig 77 1038 fls, 189 SWs SI 5.35 DI=4.71	Tom Rolfe 62
		Sweetest Chant 78 11 fls, 1 SW DI=4.60	Continue 58
Bellona 94 5 fls, 1 SW DI=2.69	Hansel 88 7 wins, \$2,936,586 Champion 290 fls, 18 SWs SI 1.73 DI=2.29	Woodman 83 1786 fls, 105 SWs SI 1.62 DI=3.31	Northern Dancer 61
		Count On Bonnie 81 10 fls, 2 SWs DI=1.57	Pas de Nom 68
	Basoof 83 1 win, \$3,235 14 fls, 0 SWs DI=3.00	Believe It 75 803 fls, 30 SWs SI 1.38 DI=2.43	Mr. Prospector 70
		Continual 76 12 fls, 1 SW DI=3.47	Playmate 75
			Dancing Count 68
			Buena Notte 64
			In Reality 64
			Breakfast Bell 70
			Damascus 64
			Continuation 71

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Sharp Humor hails from the fourth crop of the accomplished Forty Niner stallion Distorted Humor, who gained notoriety as a Kentucky sire with his first crop, which featured the New York-bred Funny Cide, winner of the 2003 Kentucky Derby and Preakness Stakes (G1).

Another Grade 1-winning New York-bred son of Distorted Humor is last year's Whitney Stakes (G1) winner Commentator, whose pedigree is remarkably similar to that of Sharp Humor's. The sires of Commentator's second and third dams, Woodman and Believe It, also serve as Bellona's two grandsires.

Sharp Humor's sire and dam both descend in tail-male to Mr. Prospector. A subtle but per-

haps more valuable duplication involves Sharp Humor's fifth dam, the influential Claiborne Farm matriarch Continue, who also appears in his pedigree as the granddam of his paternal grandsire, Forty Niner.

Reinforcement of the tail-female line through inbreeding, such as this, has been shown to be a successful method for the breeding of superior individuals for hundreds of years.

With a pedigree both solid and clever in nature, Sharp Humor has the right stuff to be afforded the last laugh on Derby Day. It might just be a question of whether he has enough time to get his act together.

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