

STABLE TOUR

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SEPTEMBER 10 // 4 PM



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with **Horacio DePaz**

Horacio DePaz smiled with Happy Farm in the Saratoga winner's circle Monday, his third win at the meet, accepted congratulations and departed quickly to catch a plane back to Maryland later in the day.

DePaz, head trainer at Sagamore Farm since 2015, is based at Kevin Plank's farm in Reisterstown, Md., and stabled at Saratoga for the first time this year with a string of 10. The group is bedded down on the Oklahoma Training Track in the back of Hall of Fame trainer Shug McGaughey's barn.

"It's a great privilege to be able to train for a farm that has such a huge historical part in horse racing," said DePaz, 32, a native of Snyder, Texas, who worked nearly five years for Todd Pletcher before starting with Sagamore as an assistant in 2011. "It's an honor to be in that barn. That barn holds a lot of history just like being here at Sagamore Farm, you like the history of what they've done and the horses that have been here. It's the same thing with Shug and the Phipps barn.

"It just goes way back in history and honestly it's an honor to go in there with our horses being the first time that we're stabled at Saratoga that we were able to land in a spot like that."

DePaz and Sagamore won three races with a second from 10 starts through Wednesday.

"We came up last year there and we just shipped in and ran and this has been my first year to be stabled there throughout the meet," said DePaz. "It's a great place to train, the ambiance and everything there. You've got the top horses and the top trainers and it's really nice to have a presence with our horses.

"Our horses started opening weekend very good and they ran up to their form, but Saratoga's tough. You



Lizzy Marks

can bring a nice horse and he can get beat just as easily as any other horse. Overall, I'm pretty happy for us being able to make a presence there."

After training at Laurel and Sagamore Tuesday morning, DePaz took some time to talk with The Special's Shayna Tiller.

Southampton Way: A winner Opening Day, 2-year-old Into Mischief filly finished second in Grade 2 Adirondack Saturday. "It was great, first runner and you get that one off your back. Obviously you're always chasing a win when you're at Saratoga. It was really good too because she's another homebred and we really pride ourselves in trying to breed competitive horses that can run against the very nice Kentucky horses. It was really special for us. She was grand champion in Timonium at the yearling show for Maryland-breds. We've always thought highly of her, she's always been a very good-looking filly since she was born. (The Adirondack) was a step up, I liked the filly, I liked the post going into the race. Obviously the bias of the track with it being so speed favoring can be challenging on a horse like her. She definitely wants to be more of a two-turn type of horse and possibly turf. Her siblings have been turf horses, a majority of them, so it's not out of the realm that she'll take a liking to the turf running long. That'll be more of an experimental type thing and she'll tell us what she prefers. Possibly in the Miss Grillo at Belmont."

Proportionality: Sagamore's homebred daughter of Discreet Cat finished seventh in the Adirondack after breaking her maiden at Laurel July 9. "I thought she would be closer

to the pace, she hopped the start and didn't break well. She's never taken the dirt being a horse that's only run one time, she really didn't take to that really well. She needs to sit close to the pace or be in the clear, so as soon as she didn't break the race was over for her. It was a trial run for her just so she could get around there. She came out of it well, we'll regroup her and bring her back to Maryland, she's got some Maryland-bred races she can run going three-quarters."

Chubby Star: Three-year-old Malibu Moon filly won an allowance at Keeneland in April, finished second in the James W. Murphy at Pimlico, fourth in the Grade 3 Regret at Churchill and fourth in the Grade 3 Lake George. "She's a filly that we've always thought puts in honest efforts and she's just right there, maybe just below graded stakes company but above allowance-type company. She's always hitting the board or running fourth so she's pretty consistent. (In the Lake George) she went to the lead and didn't settle as well as we'd like her to and she got caught by some nice horses coming down the lane and came up a little bit short. But she's come out of it well and there's the Riskaverse, so we're going to give it a shot there. The company will be more along her lines and hopefully she'll perform well."

Happy Farm: Ghostzapper gelding provided the barn's third win in starter allowance Monday. "He's an honest little horse. Doesn't show you a lot in the morning unless he really has to do it in company. He's laid back, easy going, gets a little happy but not over the top. He's everybody's pet basically between the farm and Laurel so he's been quite the little jewel for us. Happy people make happy horses,

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es, and it reflects on our horses. He carries the banner for us. He wasn't the easiest horse to get to the races because he's always carried a lot of weight on him. It took a lot of effort to gallop one time around the track, things eventually started coming together. He's improving every start. It was a really gutsy win, he dug in, he's competitive. He's one you wouldn't have thought highly about in the morning and is all heart in the afternoons."

Barry Lee: Named for former University of Wisconsin football coach Barry Alvarez, the 2-year-old son of Violence finished eighth in Sunday's Grade 2 Saratoga Special. "The horse has a lot of talent as far as speed goes. They just went quick and he wasn't able to maintain that pace moving forward and got beat by a very nice, seasoned horse. I felt bad for him because he was doing really good coming into that race so you wish he could've had a better performance to showcase because he had a very impressive win at Laurel. We've been really high on the horse."

Scary Not Scared: Eighth in July 30 maiden special weight as the 3-1 second choice, 2-year-old Malibu Moon filly cost \$350,000 last year. "She'd been working in company with Southampton Way and was working pretty head-on with her. Southampton Way had already experienced a race underneath her belt, whereas Scary Not Scared had never really shipped out of Laurel. When she got up she was pretty peaked to run well, then we waited another week to run her and she was kind of coming off her peak and got a little quiet on me. In the post parade she wasn't too into the bridle. The first-time experience got to her. We'll try to find an easier spot to run her back."

Ginger N Rye: Multiple stakes-placed 5-year-old More Than Ready mare won an allowance July 23 off nine-month layoff. "She's another homebred, actually my first winner when I started training for Sagamore so she's something special to us. She got quite a bit of a layoff, she just wasn't right, her blood work got a little bit out of whack throughout the year so it took us a while to get her back. She came back and was training well enough

Stable Tour —

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to go to Saratoga, she ran there pretty competitively last year. We thought she had the class to be able to go up there and do something. Choosing to run short — she broke her maiden going three-quarters off a layoff she came back going 5 1/2 and got beat by a nose, so I knew she would be able to sprint. She's pretty versatile. Clearly she liked going 5 1/2 that day so she was really on her game that day. She's a filly that as long as she's happy she's going to put in an honest effort every time, and she was happy. We have the Smart N Fancy going 5 1/2 and then there's races in Maryland so we're just trying to find a spot for her."

Winner's Dream: 4-year-old Drosselmeyer filly finished fifth in a July 24 allowance going 9 furlongs on the main track. "She's not necessarily a two-other-than type of filly. We thought she would be able to compete up there going a mile and an eighth, the track was off going. Her works are very fast and the only time she's ever worked slow was on a muddy track at Laurel. We'd already shipped her up there and the way the forecast came in, we were just already there so we figured we'd give it a shot and clearly she didn't take a liking to it. We're going to regroup and try to find another spot, not sure if we'll be in Saratoga or Maryland."

He Hate Me: A \$90,000 purchase at last year's Fasig-Tipton Kentucky July sale of selected yearlings, the son of Algorithms won the Tremont Stakes at Belmont Park in June. "After the Tremont we gave him some time off, he came back to Maryland and got sick on me the week after that race so we wanted to give him some time, just let him recoup. We did a lot with him, he broke his maiden and came back in two weeks so we wanted to give him some time to recover from all of that. We brought him to the farm to let him R and R a little bit, he's back under tack now and hopefully should get him going in the fall."

Recruiting Ready: Another son of Algorithms, he won three straight this spring including the Bachelor at Oaklawn and Chick Lang at Pimlico. He finished third in the Grade 2 Woody Stephens at Belmont June 10. "He ran an honest third. He's a horse that sets a very fast pace but he still held on there for third, he's a pretty talented little horse. He got sick on me and had been campaigned pretty hard at the beginning part of the year so hopefully we can R & R him and get him back going. He's under tack as well, just trying to get him going this fall and the beginning of next year as a 4-year-old sprinting. With age he's going to develop and become a stronger horse, he was a very fast 2-year-old, fast 3-year-old and we've found his spot. He's a very versatile horse, ran at so many different racetracks, ran against such good company that his form goes very deep."

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