

## **Gary Stevens**

### **Thoroughbred Racing Analyst**

After an incredible Hall of Fame career as a jockey, spanning 27 years Gary Stevens retired in November of 2005 to join NBC Sports and the TVG network as an on-air racing analyst. In January of 2008 he left TVG to join horse racing's HRTV network and continues to work with NBC Sports. Having won three Kentucky Derbys, two Preakness Stakes and three Belmont Stakes, he brings a tremendous amount of hands-on knowledge into the broadcast booth.

Stevens was born in Caldwell, Idaho into a family of horse people. His father, Ron is a trainer and had him grooming horses at eight years-old. His mother Barbara was a rodeo queen and his brother Scott is a jockey.

As a child Stevens suffered from Perthes Syndrome, a painful disease of the hip socket that forced his leg into a brace. Although doctors predicted he would wear the brace for years, he was able to walk without it a mere eighteen months later.

Before he was 14, he was riding winners in Quarter Horse races at the bush tracks and fairs. He rode his first Thoroughbred winner, Lil Star for his dad, in his first start, at age 16, at Les Bois Park in Idaho. Shortly thereafter he became the top jockey in Washington, winning the riding title at Long Acres in 1983-84. He moved his tack to southern California in 1984 and his career skyrocketed.

Stevens was one of the most successful jockeys in history. He reached his 5000<sup>th</sup> career victory in October 2005, at Belmont Park where he rode three year-old filly, Joint Aspiration to a two length victory in the Gaviola Stakes. He is one of only 20 jockeys in history to reach the milestone, joining the ranks of fellow Hall of Fame riders Laiffit Pincay, Bill Shoemaker, Pat Day, Angel Cordero, Jr., and Jerry Bailey.

He is ranked fifth on the all-time North American jockey earnings list with more than \$221 million in purse earnings. In 1993 he became the youngest jockey to surpass the \$100 million mark. He was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1997 at age 34, becoming the fourth youngest to receive the honor. He won the Eclipse Award as North America's Outstanding Jockey in 1998.

His stellar career includes wins in virtually every major race in North America. In addition to his three wins in the Kentucky Derby he has won two Preakness Stakes, three Belmont Stakes, eight Breeders' Cup races, and a record nine Santa Anita Derbys. He has won numerous races overseas including the 1991 Japan Cup aboard Golden Pheasant, and the 1998 Dubai World Cup aboard Silver Charm.

Stevens feels his most memorable day in the winners' circle came in his first Kentucky Derby victory in 1998. He rode the D. Wayne Lukas trained filly Winning Colors to victory and into the history books as only the third filly to win the fabled race. He subsequently earned more roses under the twin spires at Churchill Downs aboard another

Lukas trained colt, Thunder Gulch in 1995 and on the Bob Baffert trained colt, Silver Charm in 1997. Silver Charm came within a whisker of winning the Triple Crown.

Stevens has won multiple riding titles at Santa Anita, Hollywood Park, Del Mar and Oak Tree. In 1996 he was bestowed the honor of receiving the George Woolf Memorial Jockey Award which was named after the legendary jockey he would later portray in the movie Seabiscuit. The award is given to the rider whose personal character, leadership, and career achievement bring affirmative attention to the sport of horse racing and is voted on by his peers.

In addition to the many accomplishments on the track, he earned accolades for his performance as jockey George Wolf in the 2003 Oscar nominated movie **Seabiscuit**. That same year, **People** magazine featured Stevens in their 50 Most Beautiful People issue.

Gary is married to Angie Athayde-Stevens whom he met on the set of Seabiscuit. He has four children from his first marriage: Ashley, TC, Riley and Carlie. Gary and Angie split their time between Louisville, KY and Southern California where they have a home a stones throw away from Santa Anita Race Track where so many of his fond racing memories were born.