

PLUCK RUNS HIMSELF INTO THE HISTORY BOOKS IN SPECTACULAR STYLE, TEAM VALOR HOME-BRED ABLE TO REVERSE MISFORTUNE IN JUVIE TURF, GARRETT GOMEZ TURNS IN ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME RIDE IN BREEDERS' CUP, BARRY IRWIN WINS HIS SECOND BREEDERS' CUP; PRIZED WON TURF IN '89



Irwin and Gomez taking in the moment.

Pluck raised the hairs on the necks of men and gave women goose bumps on their limbs with one of the most remarkable displays of athleticism, courage, determination, grit and talent in the long, storied history of the Breeders' Cup.

Barry Irwin promised all of the partners that no matter what the Breeders' Cup rules were in limiting the winners' circle to only those racing partners with credentials, he would insure that every partner and their family made it into the hallowed enclosure if Pluck obliged by winning.

It was an excited group of owners that was hustled from various viewing locales within the cavernous Churchill Downs plant by the track's host Maureen Kirk and Team Valor's staff of Megan Jones, Aron Wellman and Amy Collingsworth.

Barry and Kathleen Irwin watched the race from the main track and Barry walked the horse in a big circle four times to stall the winners' circle ceremonies so that owners had enough time to make it downstairs and gather in two rows, as the television crew waited patiently for Team Valor's racing partners.



Two days before Saturday's Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf, Team Valor hosted a party that was attended by nearly 30 Pluck partners, their families and TVI staff Barry Irwin, Kathleen Irwin, Aron Wellman, Amy Collingsworth, Monty Collingsworth and Megan Jones.

Irwin addressed those on hand, telling Pluck's owners that because of TVI's relationship with the Breeders' Cup that they were able to get enough paddock passes for each owner and in some cases two passes. "The winners' circle is limited to those with paddock passes," he said.

"But I promise you that if we win, each and every one of you and your family will be down there!"



Pluck surged to the lead so fast, Garrett Gomez was able to take him in hand.

Pluck's route to victory in the BC Juvenile Turf was unusual and maybe unprecedented.

First of all, he had the worst possible outside post position of all of the BC races, because no horse racing over the distance of a mile on grass had been able to win in the last 5 years.

To make matters worse, when the gates sprung open, Pluck stumbled, almost touching his nose on the sod. Rounding the first turn, Garrett Gomez had to swerve his mount around the fallen rider of a horse that had slipped on the soft turf and broke his shoulder.

Gomez rode one of the most sensitive, cool and brilliant rides one is ever likely to witness. Even his own agent, Ron Anderson, said "Hey, I've won 25 of these Breeders' Cup races and 13 Triple Crown races with four different jockeys, but I've never seen a guy ride this well or a horse overcome what your colt did. I've watched that replay a number of times now and I am thoroughly impressed." Instead of trying to make up the lost ground on Pluck, who trailed the field by several lengths after the stumble and the swerve, Gomez kept gathering him, settling him and making sure the colt had been able to retain his soundness and his faculties. When Gomez realized he was sitting on a keg of pure dy-no-mite, he bided his time even a while longer.

Barry Irwin was worried at the half-mile pole that Gomez was going to ease the colt and wait for a better scenario, discretion being the better part of valor, to use an appropriate cliché. But rounding the turn, Gomez let Pluck gradually creep into the race. Rounding the final bend, Pluck was still last, but he was now in touch with the field. Gomez got a split just inside the lane and, using hands and heels only and no whip whatsoever, he managed to get Pluck to build up a head of steam that is rarely witnessed in a Thoroughbred.



"I was on ground level," said Irwin. "He finished with such power, it was frightening. He gave the crowd a glimpse of what a real Thoroughbred is capable of." Pluck rushed past his 2-year-old rivals so fast that Gomez was able to wrap up on him and win with something in hand. "I was standing with a bunch of seasoned racing professionals," Irwin said. "We all just looked at each other, shook our heads and shared various utterances of disbelief. It was astonishing to see him overcome the trouble, come from so far back and win so easily.

Pluck strikes a winning pose as he approaches the finish.

"I learned two valuable lessons for the future from this race. Hey, I've only been doing this for the better part of half a century, so I still have a lot to learn!

“First I learned that just because the colt had run slower than the filly counterpart in winning at Woodbine, when a horse wins, nobody really knows how much was in the tank. Obviously, there was a helluva lot more gas in the tank than any of us could have known.

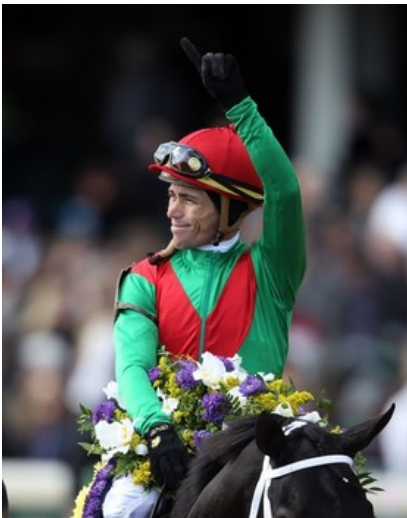
“Secondly, I’m going to be careful about making excuses for our horses in the future, because based on what Pluck was able to overcome at this high level of racing, most excuses will be feeble in comparison. If a horse is good enough, it will find a way to win. If it can’t, well maybe it just isn’t good enough on the day.”



Todd Pletcher did a magnificent job in training Pluck, a talented, but green colt that does not want to be hit with a whip. Garrett Gomez listened to Pletcher and Irwin and rode the colt with confidence and it paid off with a Breeders’ Cup triumph.

From an historical viewpoint (which is mostly what Barry and Kathleen Irwin care about, because they are in this endeavor to make history and bring satisfaction and pleasure to their racing partners), what is the significance and impact of the win by Pluck in the Breeders’ Cup Juvenile Turf of 2010?

- **Breeders’ Cup Wins** – this is the second Breeders’ Cup win for the stable, following the win by Prized in 1989, when he became the first and only horse to win the Breeders’ Cup Turf with out benefit of a previous race on the greensward. He also was the first and only horse in the history of racing in North America to win a million-dollar race on dirt and turf in the same year.
- **Home-bred** – Pluck has opened the door to allow Team Valor to breed and race more home-breds, because it has shown it can breed a top-class international racehorse. Pluck is the first foal out of the South African import Secret Heart, who is now the producer of a Breeders’ Cup winner. Because of this, her own superior conformation and excellent race record and her tremendously rich pedigree, she is now the most valuable asset owned by Team Valor breeding program.
- **Earnings** – the \$540,000 first prize, coupled with the colt’s previous earnings, most from his victory in the lucrative Grade 3 Summer Stakes at Woodbine, now stand at \$725,440, making him at this point of the season the second leading money-earning 2-year-old behind pro tem divisional leader and Horse of the Year candidate Uncle Mo. He proves that it makes good sense to breed a horse to run on the grass and that grass horses are capable of winning a lot of money, even at age 2. There is a real prejudice against grass horses in the United States, a feature this is not shared by Barry Irwin, who raised more than a few eyebrows in post-pace interviews when he made no bones about breeding Pluck strictly for the turf.
- **Million-Dollar Races** – the Breeders’ Cup Juvenile Turf was the tenth race won by a horse with a purse of at least \$1 million syndicated for racing purposes since 1987 by Barry Irwin and was the first \$1 million race won by a 2-year-old for these racing partnerships.
- **Stakes Wins** – the victory in the Breeders’ Cup Juvenile Turf was the fifteenth of the season for a Team Valor International-owned racehorse. Team Valor has won 8 Graded races with 6 different runners so far in 2010.





Quotes and Headlines from the Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf:

SOUTH AFRICA'S BREEDERS' CUP LEGACY GROWS IN JUVENILE TURF

South African breeding was boosted on the biggest stage in world racing when a son of Fort Wood mare, Secret Heart won the Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf at Churchill Downs on Saturday.

---SAHorseracing.com

"Yeah, actually, he stumbled pretty hard his first jump. When he came up, he just -- it took him a couple jumps to kind of recuperate from what happened. You know, I got him to where he was traveling OK going into the first turn, and then the horse in front of me fell. I had to dodge Anna (Napravnik). She was sliding in right in front of me, and he had to kind of sidestep her."

—[jockey Garrett Gomez on his eventful trip aboard Pluck](#)

"You know, to have much less the one thing happen, but we had the two things happen, the second one didn't bother us as bad as the first one, but he was able to, you know, get himself back under himself and start moving forward. You know, I mean, I still like the way he was traveling at the half-mile pole. He was moving up good, he was doing things good. I just thought it was going to be too much for him to overcome."

—[Gomez on his low expectations after Pluck's trouble](#)

"When we went into the turn, I wasn't bumped or anything like that. The turf was a little bit soft and the turns were tight, so his footing just slipped out beneath him. I feel all right. There was no bumping. He just slipped. It was just something that was unfortunate."

—[Anna Napravnik on the fall that proved fatal to Rough Sailing in the Juvenile Turf](#)

"Follow-up report on Rough Sailing is that he sustained a fracture of the humerus in the right forelimb. It's not a fracture that's repairable in an adult horse. The owner has gone ahead and requested euthanasia, and that's being done."

—[Dr. Wayne McIlwraith, on-call veterinarian, on the injury to Rough Sailing](#)

"We don't know for sure, but it's not uncommon for the scenario to be a primary fracture or a fracture second -- you know, a fracture in the humerus that then leads to the horse going down. But we don't know for sure. Postmortem will probably confirm the exact cause of the fracture and whether we can relate that back to being sustained because he went down or being the primary injury."

—[McIlwraith on whether the fracture caused the fall, or the fall led to the fracture](#)

Pluck bobbed at the start, was unhurried into stride, steadied and swerved to avoid the downed jockey entering the first turn, lagged well back through the backstretch, took closer order through the final turn, came four wide and split horses inside the three-sixteenths pole, quickened once clear and kicked away late under a stern hand ride.

---[Daily Racing Form chart footnote for Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf](#)

Holy Pluck!

---[Henry Mast, Pluck racing partner](#)

I'm proud to be a Team Valor partner!

---[Keith Tingberg, Team Valor racing partner](#)

Hi Barry, we want to put Pluck on the front cover of Parade magazine in South Africa, plus use him extensively on the media release on the Premier Cape Yearling Sale.

---[Robin Bruss, South African agent who found Secret Heart for Barry Irwin](#)

From the National Thoroughbred Racing Association comes the following:

BREEDERS' CUP WORLD THOROUGHBRED CHAMPIONSHIPS

November 6, 2010

Barry Irwin / Todd Pletcher

ERIC WING: Okay. Before we speak to our winning connections, want to let everybody know the margins in the Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf. The winner Pluck finished first by one length. Second was Soldat by 1 1/2 lengths. And third was Willcox Inn, who was a head in front of the fourth place horse Madman Diaries. We're joined now by the winning trainer and owner of Pluck. On the left, Todd Pletcher. His fifth Breeders' Cup win lifetime, second of this weekend. Of course, he won with More Than Real yesterday, thereby sweeping the juvenile -- the two juvenile Breeders' Cup races on Friday and Saturday. And on our right is Barry Irwin of Team Valor International. For Barry, this is the second Breeders' Cup winner he's been associated with. His Team Valor co-owned prized, winner of the Breeders' Cup Turf back in 1992. Congratulations, gentlemen.

ERIC WING: Todd, Pluck was way back early. The fractions weren't even particularly fast by normal standards. Were you concerned that he was being left with too much to do?

TODD PLETCHER: Well, any time you stumble through your nose leaving the gate and have to avoid a fallen rider, at that point you're way last. I'm kind of thinking, I just hope he makes a run and hits the board, and we salvage something out of it. Obviously, it was very concerning after the first half mile.

ERIC WING: Barry, Pluck, Team Valor not only owns him but bred him as well. He kind of bears a characteristic stamp of Team Valor horses being out of a South African mare. Can you talk about the thinking that went into breeding Pluck and some of the general philosophies you have of using some of those South African males and females?

BARRY IRWIN: I can't remember why I planned the mating, to tell you the truth, but it worked out well. I bought probably 20-something fillies down there so far. This is one of the few I kept to breed from. She's huge. She's about 16.2 1/2. She's a Grade 1 performer herself. Got a fabulous pedigree. And this was the first foal, and he just always looked good. So we decided to keep him. Anybody that bred this foal Pluck, we allowed them the chance to be bought out at \$180,000, and we offered parts of him to some new people. In this horse, we have ten newcomers that bought 5 percent each for \$9,000 and made four payments. So they had a lot of fun today. I'll just say this, as a guy that used to be a turf rider, I don't remember ever seeing a race like that, let alone ever being involved in it. It was super.

ERIC WING: Todd, given the adversity that Pluck encountered, which you referred to earlier, does that leave you, I imagine, even more impressed with what he was able to do coming down the lane?

TODD PLETCHER: You know, this colt's shown a lot of natural ability from day one. He's been a little bit of a playful colt that needed to get a little more professional. Even though he was winning races, he was still waiting on horses a little bit. He would sometimes veer in a little bit or veer out. Just, you know, you could tell there was a lot of natural ability, just kind of the light was still going on. You could see by the way he finished today, this was the first time he really leveled off and set sail through the lane and put it all together.

ERIC WING: Questions either here in the room or upstairs in the press box?

Q. This is for trainer Pletcher. More Than Ready yesterday and Pluck today, they both made the tops in Woodbine in Toronto. There must be some significance to the Toronto stop. In view of your Breeders' Cup options next year, would you really seriously consider making stops in Toronto?

TODD PLETCHER: Yeah, I'm going to try to get a More Than Ready colt and a More Than Ready filly and take them to Woodbine next year.

The one thing that I think was key about this race for these two horses was the spacing was very good. We had extra time. Both horses went up there, ran very well, came out of it in good shape. We shipped them into Churchill. They were well acclimated here. They spent about a month here.

To me, it was more about the timing. We had choices to make, maybe wait another week or two weeks for the Miss Grillo or the two weeks for the races at Keeneland or the Pilgrim Stakes at Belmont. It just seems the timing, the space worked very well. Obviously, Woodbine is a terrific place to run on the turf. We were fortunate it worked out well for both horses.

Q. Barry, if we'd have had a camera on you and a mic beside you during the race, what would we have seen and heard?

BARRY IRWIN: Well, you would have heard a lot of words that started with the letter F, as an example. At the 1/2 mile pole, my main thought was, geez, I hope this horse isn't hurt because every time we get a horse that stumbles at the start, something happens.

We had Todd train another horse for us called Fantastico Roberto. And he ran a Grade 1 a month ago. He veered left at the start, stumbled, and pulled a bunch of ligaments out, and he might never run again. So I was really worried.

When I saw him making the move, my thought was, nah, you're just dreaming. This isn't going to happen.

I'll tell you one other thing. We ran two fillies today, two 3-year-old fillies from South Africa running in preps for their Guineas down there, and they both won today. It's been a big day. 3 for 3.

Q. Tom, I know you supported More Than Ready, and you have always thought highly of him as a sire. This is a pretty significant feat, though, to win both juvenile races. Can you tell us what your feelings are about him as a sire.

TODD PLETCHER: Well, he will always be one of my favorite horses. You know, I mean, he was one of, if not the first, really good horse that I trained. You know, he's such a talented horse, with such a great disposition. To see him go on and do well as a sire, not only here, but in Australia, he's a real phenomenon. This colt physically is almost a clone of More Than Ready himself. He's almost black in color, a very similar head. Just, you know, if you looked at pictures of the two as 2-year-olds, the similarities are amazing. So it's a very special case for me to train two offspring to win Breeders' Cup races from him.

BARRY IRWIN: They had a TV thing yesterday, and you were holding More Than Ready -- or, actually, it looked like your son because you're not -- he looked just like him except for the star.

TODD PLETCHER: It's amazing.

ERIC WING: Apparently, the only F words needed for Pluck today are fast and first. Pluck, the winner of the Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf. Todd Pletcher and Barry Irwin, congratulations.

From Gold Circle's website in South Africa comes the following:

Pluck proves more than ready

By David Thiselton

Barry Irwin had an amazing Saturday as his colors were carried to victory in 2 feature races in South Africa with Ebony Flyer and Success Counts respectively before his home-bred colt Pluck scored an incredible win later on in the Grade 2 Breeder's Cup Juvenile Turf over one mile at Churchill Downs.

Pluck is by More Than Ready and is out of the former Laurie Jaffee-owned Fort Wood mare Secret Heart. Irwin was not at all confident of winning the Breeder's Cup Juvenile Turf. Pluck had won his Breeder's Cup preparation race in Canada well, but the time was slower than the two-year-old filly's race on the same day. Then a week before the Breeder's Cup, the colt galloped four furlongs with a two-year-old filly, More Than Real, and was outworked by her.

"I was depressed until Friday when More Than Real won the BC Juvenile Filly's Turf!" he said. "I still didn't think our colt would finish in the top three. He was in gate number 12 and in the last five years no horse had won from there at Churchill Downs!" As the gates opened Pluck stumbled and went down nearly to his nose. "I was sickened when he began so far back," said Irwin. "But when a horse slipped on the wet turf and dropped his rider rounding the first bend and our rider had to manoeuvre Pluck around the jockey, I threw my hands up in the air and said to my wife 'What else can happen?'"

"Halfway through the race my main concern was whether my colt was injured because he was so far back and the rider had collected him and was not moving. As he started his move, I watched at ground level on the dirt track and had a hard time believing what I was seeing. When Pluck reached his top end speed, it was like a runaway locomotive - he was powering into the lead with an amazing degree of force. I was so stunned, I never said a word, never cheered - I just watched in pure amazement. "Pluck obviously had more in the tank when he won at Woodbine than any of us realised. We may now point him for the Irish Two Thousand Guineas."

After Ipi Tombe had won the Dubai Duty Free for Irwin he bought a group of about half a dozen mares in South Africa, one of them being the former Laurie Jaffee-owned Secret Heart. He had also tried to buy Secret Heart's half-sister Promisefrommyheart, whom he considered a top-class international star in the making, but her owners would not consider selling her, even though he had offered them almost double what he paid for Ipi Tombe.

Secret Heart had won a Listed and been placed in several Grade 1 races and Irwin planned from day one to retain her as a broodmare due to "her racing class, her ample size (16 hands two-and-a-half inches) and her terrific pedigree." So she was retired to stud after placing in the Prix du Cap for the Snaiths and being placed once in the USA. She was bred to More Than Ready as Irwin liked the cross of Turn-To over Northern Dancer.

"Pluck was a looker from day one and I told our racing partners that we should retain him for racing," said Irwin. "We sold the second foal this year as a yearling at Saratoga. He is a smaller colt than Pluck and is a son of Arch, another representative of the Turn-To sire line."

Secret Heart currently has a filly foal by yet another Turn-To sire line stallion in Hat Trick, a Champion son of Sunday Silence, that Robin Bruss and Irwin bought from Shadai Stud in Japan and sold to Walmac International a couple of years ago. She is currently in foal to Kingmambo's promising son Kitten's Joy, whose first crop is racing this year at three. Irwin revealed that they would now breed Secret Heart back to More Than Ready.

From *The Blood-Horse* comes the following:

PLUCK ROARS TO BREEDERS' CUP JUVENILE TURF SCORE

By Jason Shandler



Team Valor International's homebred Pluck came from last at top of the lane and used a devastating turn of foot to pick off his rivals in winning the \$909,000 Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf (gr. IIT) (VIDEO) by one length Nov. 6 at Churchill Downs.

Pluck is by More Than Ready, who sired the Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies Turf (gr. IIT) winner More Than Real on opening day of the World Championships. Both horses were ridden by Garrett Gomez and trained by Todd Pletcher. Gomez earned his 11th Breeders' Cup victory, while Pletcher added a fifth to his resume.

The race was marred by the spill of Rough Sailing on the first turn. The son of Mizzen Mast stumbled going wide on the first turn while near the back of the field and went down while throwing jockey Anna Napravnik to the ground. Napravnik was able to get up under her own power and walk off without an apparent serious injury. It was reported that Rough Sailing suffered a fractured front shoulder and was later euthanized.

"We had to put him down because he broke his shoulder," said Mike Stidham, trainer of Rough Sailing. "It looked like his back end slipped out from under him, and then he got up and galloped off. But when we got him over to the backside, he couldn't move his leg forward, and we knew it was high up. We don't know if the fall caused the shoulder or the shoulder caused the fall."



The start of the BC Juvenile Turf did not go well for Pluck, as he stumbled badly at the break and was last heading into the first turn. Gomez and Pluck trailed the field while Madman Diaries led the way under Jeffrey Sanchez, cruising through splits of :24.01, and :47.97. Humble and Hungry pressed the pace, while Air Support and Banned were also up close.

Madman Diaries cut the corner still holding a narrow edge over Banned and those two battled through mid-stretch. But Pluck was full of run while splitting horses at the top of the lane. After being angled outside picked off his rivals until edging clear late to score his first grade I win.

"He did everything really good. I mean, he overcame a lot," Gomez said. "He stumbled to his nose leaving the gate. The horse (Rough Sailing) fell in front of him going to the first turn. He had to avoid that. I pretty much went to Plan C and just tried to let him gallop along and tried to come up with some kind of run. He actually turned in a brilliant performance."

The final time for one mile on the firm turf course was 1:36.98. Soldat, who made a bold run on the inside with Alan Garcia aboard, finished 1 1/2 lengths in front of third-place Willcox Inn, who was a head better than Madman Diaries.

"He did everything really good," Gomez said. "I mean, he overcame a lot. He stumbled to his nose leaving the gate. The horse (Rough Sailing) fell in front of him going to the first turn. He had to avoid that. I pretty much went to Plan C and just tried to let him gallop along and tried to come up with some kind of run, and hopefully, he could overcome as much as he could overcome. He actually turned in a brilliant performance."

Pluck, who is out of the Fort Wood mare Secret Heart, entered the race off a similar late-closing victory in the Sept. 18 Summer Stakes (Can-IIIT) at Woodbine. He improved to 3-0-1 from five starts and upped his earnings to \$725,440 with the winning purse of \$540,000.

"He stumbled badly at the start and had to maneuver (around) a fallen rider," Pletcher said. "At that point, you're just kind of hoping you can regroup and hit the board. He really exploded down the lane. "We knew he had an explosive turn of foot. To me, he's been a colt that has been very talented but he's still learning. It was a matter of putting it all together and focusing on running straight. His last start was an improvement but you could still see that when he made the lead, he waited a little bit. He was doing a lot of things on natural talent but today, he really polished off the race at the end."

From *Sporting Life* in England comes the following:

PLUCK SURGES TO DRAMATIC JUVENILE TURF VICTORY

Pluck produced a terrific stretch run to win the Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf at Churchill Downs. Todd Pletcher's colt was interfered with in the early stages when Rough Sailing slipped up on the first bend, sending him to the back of the field. Jockey Garrett Gomez refused to panic and when he turned into the straight Pluck (9/1) sprouted wings and cut down his rivals in tremendous style. The winner showed real stamina and an excellent turn of foot to repel all-comers in great style.

Pletcher was amazed to see his colt power to victory after the trouble he encountered. He stumbled badly at the start and had to swerve a fallen rider. At that point you're kind of hoping you can regroup and hit the board but he really exploded down the straight," he said. Gomez added: "He did everything really good, overcame a lot. He turned in a brilliant performance."

Aidan O'Brien's Master Of Hounds - sent off the 100/30 favourite - had every chance down the stretch but just couldn't live with the finishing kick of the winner and was out of the places. Mantoba meanwhile - ridden by Frankie Dettori and trained by Brian Meehan - was a disappointment. John Gosden's Utley ran on down the straight but also finished out of the places.

Johnny Murtagh said of Master Of Hounds: "You really need to jump fast here and ideally I would have loved to have been sitting in fourth or fifth on him. "To be fair he closed the gap, but just flattened out a bit at the end and the winner came past us most impressively."

Dettori said of Mantoba: "I was checked at the first turn and then after that it was hard to get out of trouble. He did make some late headway but wasn't seasoned enough for a race like that."

Gosden was pleased with Utley's run, saying: "I am really happy with him, but as is often the case things happen a bit quick in these races. "He finished well and I'm sure there's better to come, but it was a tremendous performance from the winner to come from the 13-hole (stall) like he did."

From the *Louisville Courier-Journal* comes the following:

PLUCK SHOWS PLENTY OF IT IN JUVENILE TURF WIN

By Gregory A. Hall

Pluck lived up to his name Saturday, winning the Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf after stumbling out of the gate, being steered around a fallen jockey and finally finding room for a hard-closing charge to take the \$1 million, Grade II race.

Barry Irwin's Team Valor International syndicate earned its second Breeders' Cup victory, but at the start Irwin was convinced that would be impossible.

After the stumble at the gate, his first word "was an expletive," said his wife, Kathleen Irwin.

"As a guy that used to be a turf writer, I don't ever remember seeing a race like that, let alone ever being involved in it," Barry Irwin said. "It was super."

Although Pluck now boasts three victories in five starts, trainer Todd Pletcher said the colt's earlier races showed he "needed to get a little more professional," because he would veer slightly. "You could see by the way he finished today, this was the first time he really leveled off and set sail through the lane and put it all together."

The son of More Than Ready out of the Fort Wood mare Secret Heart entered the race off a victory in the Grade III Summer Stakes at Woodbine in Toronto.



It was Pletcher's fifth Breeders' Cup win and second this weekend, wrapping up a daily double of sorts for him, jockey Garrett Gomez and More Than Ready. The stallion also sired Friday's Juvenile Fillies Turf winner More Than Real, a Pletcher trainee also ridden by Gomez.

After the rough start, Pluck settled at the back of the pack through the first six furlongs of the mile race before moving up through the final turn, going four wide, splitting horses and charging to a one-length victory over Soldat in 1:36.98.

As the fourth choice, Pluck paid \$14.80 and raised his career earnings to \$725,440 with the \$540,000 winner's check.

Willcox Inn, a 23-1 shot, finished third, and early leader Madman Diaries held on for fourth. The favored European invader Master of Hounds never was a factor after being steadied entering the first turn. Rough Sailing slipped going around the first turn and suffered a fatal injury. Jockey Rosie Napravnik was uninjured.