NEWS RELEASE

DSG Teammate Part-Owner of Kentucky Derby Winner

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A quarantine hobby quickly became a passion for store manager Mike Hodgkiss
Mike Hodgkiss was on a conference call back in the spring when the topic of quarantine hobbies came up.

“I said, ‘I started buying shares in race horses,’” said Hodgkiss, who is the manager of Store #1318 in Bay Shore, NY.

His teammates thought he was joking. Someone asked if he planned on winning the Kentucky Derby, one of the most prestigious races. Actually, yes. That’s exactly what Hodgkiss did, even though it seemed improbable.

“Never, when I put my money down, did I think my horse would be in the Kentucky Derby, yet alone win the Kentucky Derby,” said Hodgkiss.

That’s right, he went from hobby to top of the heap in just a few months. He couldn’t travel to the Derby due to COVID-19 restrictions, but his friends in Long Island made sure he got the proper owner’s treatment. Sporting a soft pink blazer and mint green pants, Hodgkiss and his family were given access to a friend’s second level deck, which was dubbed “The Owner’s Suite” for race day.

The Kentucky Derby is often referred to as the most exciting two minutes in sports. After witnessing his horse win the race, Hodgkiss said he was in such shock as he sat motionless for another two minutes as he soaked in what had happened.

“Then I just went absolutely nuts,” Hodgkiss said with a chuckle. “I went from being a mannequin to weeping for joy.

It was just an unbelievable feeling."

What made it all the more special was he got to share the moment with his wife Dana, daughter Kiersten and son Michael. He said watching the races with his family has become a bonding experience that will last a lifetime.

Hodgkiss is one of about 500 owners of Authentic. Hodgkiss and his fellow owners have what are known as microshares, which allow for more people to get in on the action of ownership. Authentic is one of nine horses that Hodgkiss has ownership in. Nowadays he's a seasoned veteran and student of the track who notes things such as which horses run best on turf or dirt to gain a competitive edge.

Hodgkiss is a huge sports fan who has season tickets to the NY Islanders hockey team. He's also into fantasy sports. The way he got started in horse racing is a funny story.

"I Googled, 'How do I buy a racehorse' then filled out the paperwork and went from there," said Hodgkiss, who has been a DICK'S teammate for 18 years.

After winning the Kentucky Derby, Hodgkiss received a plaque with his name on it as an owner of Authentic. He has it hanging on the wall in his office, just in case anyone thinks he's joking about this horse ownership thing.

Want to catch Authentic in action? You can root along with our teammate Mike Hodgkiss Nov. 6 when Authentic runs in the Breeders' Cup race!

*We want to hear from you. If you have story you would like to share, email Teammate Communications today.