

## Former Partridge has Derby hopeful

By ROB LONGLEY -- Toronto Sun 03/25/2005

While starring in the play Blood Brothers at the Royal Alex Theatre in 1996, David Cassidy was a regular visitor to Woodbine Racetrack. The entertainer, best known as the star of the 1970s TV hit The Partridge Family, has even owned horses that raced for trainers Jim Day and Arthur Silvera at the Rexdale track.



What started as a hobby has turned into a passion and Cassidy now has much grander racing aspirations.

Tomorrow in Covington, Ky., Cassidy's Mayan King will face the music when he takes his first steps on the Kentucky Derby trail.

The pop legend is the managing partner of the group which owns the colt, a son of Stephen Got Even, who is undefeated in two career starts. Tomorrow, he'll take a big jump up in class in the \$500,000 US Lane's End Stakes at Turfway Park.

A top three showing there and Mayan King would graduate to contender status for the Run for the Roses across the state at Louisville's historic Churchill Downs on May 7.

"It's a lot to ask of a horse with a lack of experience, but he doesn't have a lack of talent or heart," Cassidy said during a conference call this week. "Like everyone going in, you are cautiously optimistic."

Cassidy said his love of horses began in the 1970s when he took a break from his television duties to get to Baltimore to see Secretariat win the 1973 Preakness Stakes.

The past few years, Cassidy has had some success raising thoroughbreds, but at \$210,000 US as a yearling, Mayan King is his biggest financial outlay into racing.

"He was a horse I had to have," Cassidy said. "The day I bought him, I thought he was a Derby horse."

"It really is a passion for me and I would have to say if I could win the Kentucky Derby, there would be nothing on the face of the earth that would compare to the thrill and the high of it."

"To say it's a dream ... it's beyond that."

It may be a big dream at that, however. Mayan King is listed as a 15-1 long shot in the nine-horse Lane's End, a 1 1/8th mile test. Spanish Chestnut (5-2) and Magna Graduate (3-1) are the favourites.

Cassidy won't be able to attend the race because he has a gig at a casino in Connecticut. Come post time, however, it's a safe bet he'll be in the casino's race book urging him on.





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Yes

No