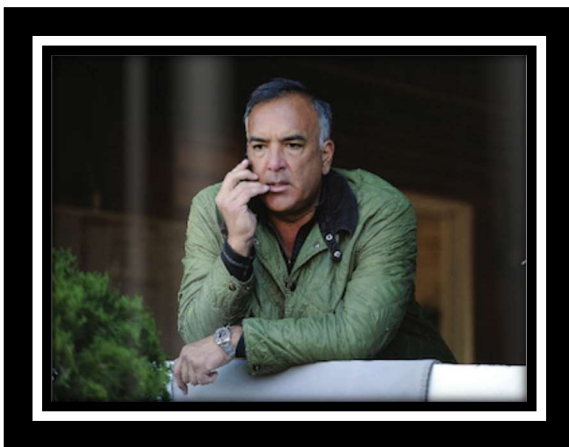
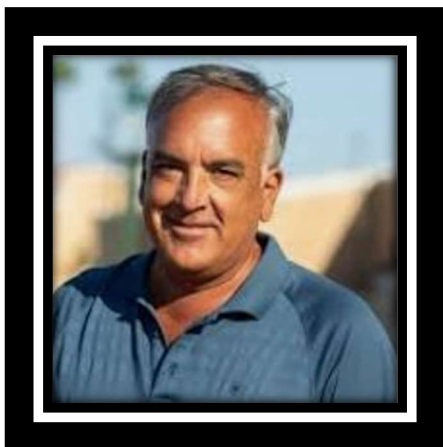


ROBERT HESS, JR.



PROFILE

Growing up, Robert Hess, Jr., had two ambitions: play baseball as long as he could and then become a racehorse trainer like his father.

He played baseball – and played it well – until a shoulder injury cut short his career after one season at Stanford. But he's still training thoroughbreds and winning.

Hess idolized his father, the late Robert Hess, Sr., who was still training horses at 86 years old when the Covid-19 epidemic spread through Golden Gate Fields and took his life in 2020.

"When other kids were going out, I'd go to bed early so I could get up at 4:30 a.m. and go to the track with my dad," Hess recalled. "The best part was just being with my dad, learning from him. Being with the horses, learning what makes them tick."

Beginning in the summer of 1983, the year he graduated Moreau High, the younger Hess alone would take a few of his father's horses to race at Del Mar, near San Diego. He did that every summer while attending Stanford.

ROBERT HESS, JR.

Those summers at Del Mar soon paid dividends. The day after his graduation from Stanford in 1987, Hess -- with just \$700 cash in his pocket -- drove his truck and trailer to Hollywood Park and began training under his own name.

"My first two starters were at Hollywood Park on July 4th, 1987," Hess recalled. "One finished last and the other didn't finish the race. Not an auspicious beginning."

His fortunes soon changed, however, and by the 1990s he was winning leading trainer titles at Hollywood and Del Mar and his horses were regularly earning more than \$1 million per year, often more than \$2 million. He had made it in the big leagues of thoroughbred horse racing. Hess is currently closing in on 1,500 victories and \$52 million in career earnings.

Many of Hess's victories have come in partnership with Hall of Fame jockey Kent Desormeaux, a union that began early in their careers.

Desormeaux has been aboard almost 40 percent of Hess's winners.

Hess has two adult sons, Garrison and Christian, and makes his home in Arcadia, near Santa Anita.