

The 700 Level

## A delivery of letters on the Pony Express

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Chapman, Mr. Servis and Mr. Elliott:

I just wanted to write you and express my sympathy for your loss at Belmont Park. It was a terribly disappointing loss for all of us. I was one of the 120,000 in attendance and heard firsthand the hush of the crowd as Birdstone raced across the wire in the biggest upset of our time.

But I also wanted to let you know that Smarty Jones is still loved and admired, and that all of us, the true fans, will continue to follow his career with avid interest and enthusiasm. He has certainly inspired me. I work at a New Hope bed-and-break, fast and rearranged a tough weekend schedule just to make the trip to Belmont. My friend and I woke up at 4:45 a.m. in order to guarantee a swift trip to Elmont, where we luckily retained a picnic table on the backstretch by 8:30 a.m., then patiently waited over nine hours for a glimpse of the legendary chestnut colt. And what do I think now? It was well worth it!

While the timing is most unfortunate, it is important to remember that no horse is ever 100 percent unbeatable. Like all the greats, even Seabiscuit and Secretariat, he lost. But he lost fighting like a champion all the way.

I just wanted to say thank you to all of you, Team Smarty Jones, for your continued inspiration to all of us.

Diana Veerto

New Hope

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BILL DENVER/Equi Photo

From limericks to love notes, Smarty Jones has inspired fans coast to coast after his loss in the Belmont Stakes in Elmont, N.Y., last weekend.

### Where to Write

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Letters should be no more than 300 words, and they must include a home address and phone number (day and evening). The Inquirer reserves the right to edit submissions.