Trainer Jerry Bozzo, 97, Gets Win at Gulfstream Park

By The Associated Press

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HALLANDALE BEACH, Fla. — Until Jerry Bozzo, no trainer had ever won a thoroughbred race at the age of 96.

And now, make it 97.

Bozzo bettered his own mark Saturday, when Gusty Wind prevailed in the fifth race at Gulfstream Park by nearly four lengths in a mild upset. Gusty Wind, with Luca Panici aboard, returned $14.80 for the win.

"It's very gratifying. I wish I could have been there in the winner's circle," Bozzo, who watched the race on his computer at home, told Gulfstream Park officials afterward. "That would have pumped me up even more."

Bozzo became the oldest trainer to win a race on June 3, 2017, when Cotton Tooyah won at Gulfstream for the then-96-year-old. Before that, the oldest trainer to win a race was Noble Threewitt, who was 95 when Threeatonce won a maiden race at Santa Anita in 2006.

Bozzo, born Oct. 25, 1920, is a retired aeronautical engineer, industrialist and World War II veteran. He graduated from Carnegie Tech, which is now called Carnegie Mellon, and MIT. He has been training and breeding thoroughbreds in South Florida for nearly 50 years, and talked to Panici on Friday night to discuss strategy for Saturday.

"Good for him," Panici said. "He is a man with an amazing history."