

DARDEN RESTAURANTS INC  
 Form 4  
 December 30, 2004

**FORM 4** UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION  
 Washington, D.C. 20549

OMB APPROVAL  
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Check this box if no longer subject to Section 16. Form 4 or Form 5 obligations may continue. See Instruction 1(b).

**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES**

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, Section 17(a) of the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 or Section 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

(Print or Type Responses)

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person \*  
 SWEATT BLAINE III

2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol  
 DARDEN RESTAURANTS INC [DRI]

5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer

(Check all applicable)

(Last) (First) (Middle)  
 5900 LAKE ELLENOR DRIVE, P.O. BOX 593330

3. Date of Earliest Transaction (Month/Day/Year)  
 12/28/2004

Director  10% Owner  
 Officer (give title below)  Other (specify below)  
 EVP & President, New Business

(Street)  
 ORLANDO, FL 32859-3330

4. If Amendment, Date Original Filed(Month/Day/Year)

6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing(Check Applicable Line)  
 Form filed by One Reporting Person  
 Form filed by More than One Reporting Person

(City) (State) (Zip)

**Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned**

1. Title of Security (Instr. 3)	2. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year)	2A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year)	3. Transaction Code (Instr. 8)	4. Securities Acquired or Disposed of (A) or (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5)	5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 3 and 4)	6. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4)	7. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 4)
				(A) or (D)	Price		
				Code	V	Amount	
Common Stock	12/28/2004		M	A	6,788	\$ 6.4763	399,108 D
Common Stock	12/28/2004		F	D	2,979	\$ 27.31	396,129 D
Common Stock	12/29/2004		G	V	183	\$ 0	395,946 D
Common Stock							2,153.407 <sup>(1)</sup> I Savings Plan

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

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(9-02)

**Table II - Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned**  
(e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

1. Title of Derivative Security (Instr. 3)	2. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security	3. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year)	3A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year)	4. Transaction Code (Instr. 8)	5. Number of Derivative Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4, and 5)	6. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year)	7. Title and Amount of Underlying Securities (Instr. 3 and 4)	8. Amount or Number of Shares
Stock Option (Right to Buy)	\$ 6.4763	12/28/2004		M	6,788	12/12/1997 01/12/2005	Common Stock	6,788

## Reporting Owners

Reporting Owner Name / Address	Relationships			
	Director	10% Owner	Officer	Other
SWEATT BLAINE III 5900 LAKE ELLENOR DRIVE P.O. BOX 593330 ORLANDO, FL 32859-3330	X		EVP & President, New Business	

## Signatures

Douglas E. Wentz., Attorney-in-fact for SWEATT, III, BLAINE, 5900 Lake Ellenor Drive, P.O. Box 593330, Orlando, FL 32859-3330, Darden Restaurants, Inc. (DRI)

12/30/2004

\_\_Signature of Reporting Person

Date

## Explanation of Responses:

\* If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see Instruction 4(b)(v).

\*\* Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations. See 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).

The number of shares reported is based on a plan statement dated September 30, 2004, and is derived from an undivided interest in a fund (1) consisting of both Darden common stock and a small cash position that fluctuates from time to time. The number of shares reported may change based on the size of the cash position at the time of reporting.

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, see Instruction 6 for procedure.

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