

DARDEN RESTAURANTS INC
 Form 4
 September 19, 2006

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 *
 SMITH JACK A

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
 (Street)

3. Date of Earliest Transaction (Month/Day/Year)
 09/15/2006

Director 10% Owner
 Officer (give title below) Other (specify below)

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		4. Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (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 Ownership (Instr. 4)
			Code	V	Amount	(A) or (D)			
Common Stock	09/15/2006		A		2,575	A	\$ 0	52,381	D

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

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SEC 1474 (9-02)

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

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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 (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.
Stock Option (Right to Buy)	\$ 38.84	09/15/2006		A	3,000	09/15/2007 09/15/2016	Common Stock	3,000

Reporting Owners

Reporting Owner Name / Address	Relationships			
	Director	10% Owner	Officer	Other
SMITH JACK A 5900 LAKE ELLENOR DRIVE P.O. BOX 593330 ORLANDO, FL 32859-3330	X			

Signatures

Douglas E. Wentz, Attorney-in-fact for SMITH, JACK A., 5900 Lake Ellenor Drive, P.O. Box 593330, Orlando, FL 32859-3330 09/19/2006

**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).

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

Potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB number.