

# Whirlaway

by Kathleen Jones

Whirlaway was an oddball to say the least, but he was brilliant. In his debut race at age 2, he ran straight to the outside rail and followed it all the way around the track - and still won. In the Saratoga Special, he nearly fell at the start, thus spotting his rivals many lengths. He was still trailing the field when he bore out on the final turn, and followed the outside rail, close to the crowd, all the way up the homestretch to what was an unbelievable victory.



Trainer Ben Jones certainly had his hands full trying to straighten out this colt. For the Derby, Jones brought in the "Master" jockey Eddie Arcaro to insure the best possible ride. He also had a few tricks up his sleeve. In the saddling enclosure, he took a knife and cut away part of the inside blinker, allowing Whirlaway to see the inside rail better, but not the crowd or the outside rail. Prior to race, he walked Whirlaway all the way around the track near the inside rail, just to show him where it was. Then he walked the colt back and forth in front of the huge crowd to get him used to the noise of it.

Whirlaway typically began slowly in his races, preferring to make one big run. In the Derby, the opening fractions were set by a well-regarded King Ranch colt named Dispose. Porter's Cap and Blue Pair were in hot pursuit, while Whirlaway lagged near the back. After a half mile, he had worked his way up to 8th in the 11 runner field. Not until the final turn did he make his patented move, shooting between horses and assuming command. At the head of the stretch he led by three lengths, and effortlessly increased the margin to 8 at the wire.

His Derby time of 2:01 2/5 was a new track record, and stood as the stakes record for 21 years until Decidedly shave a full second off it in 1962.

In the Preakness Stakes, Whirlaway began even more slowly, allowing the pack to get away by some 10 lengths. The pack swept into the first turn, led by King Cole and Dispose. Far, far back was Whirlaway waiting for the right time to start running. That moment came after three quarters of a mile had already passed. Suddenly on the backstretch, Whirlaway launched from his trailing position and advanced frighteningly fast on the leaders. Arcaro said this colt always scared him. "You were afraid to go to the outside with him, because you never knew if he'd bolt to the outer rail. That left only one option - take him straight up through a pack of horses that were slowing down, and pray for an opening."

The move Whirlaway made in this race was breathtaking. Within a matter of a single furlong, he had moved from last to first and continued his romp to the wire, daring the others to catch him if they could. Arcaro eased up late in the stretch, and the colt won by 5 1/2 lengths, but it could have been more.

For the Belmont Stakes, only three others horses arrived to face Whirlaway. The shape of this race changed from the start when Itabo took the lead and slowed the pace down to reserve himself for later in the race. Arcaro saw what was happening and urged Whirlaway up to the lead. At the halfway marker he led by 7 lengths. He turned toward home with a sizeable lead and Arcaro allowed him to coast to the wire in the middle of the track. The official winning margin was 2 1/2 lengths over Robert Morris, Yankee Chance and Itabo.

Whirlaway earned the championship title as well as Horse of the Year honors at 3 and then again at four as he took truckloads of trophies home to Calumet.

Whirlaway stood for a time at stud in Kentucky then was sent for stud duty in France at Haras de Fresnay-le-Bouffard. It was here that he died at the relatively young age of 15. His most prominent offspring were stakes winners SPUR ON, GOING AWAY, DART BY, WHIRL SOME, SCATTERED in the U.S., and WHIRANEK and KURUN in Europe. His daughters also produced some worthwhile runners in stakes winners LADY PITT (champion), GO LIGHTLY, VAPOR WHIRL, DAWN WATCH (FR) and others.

Pedigree:

Whirlaway, ch.c. born 1938	*Blenheim 2nd, 1927	Blandford (GB), 1919	Swynford (GB)
			Blanche
	Dustwhirl, 1926	Malva (GB), 1919	Charles O'Malley
			Wild Arum
	Ormonda, 1916	Sweep, 1907	Ben Brush
			Pink Domino
			Superman
			Princess Ormonde

(female family # 8)

**Born:** 1938, bred in Kentucky by Calumet Farm

**Died:** April 6, 1953 (age 15) at Haras de Fresnay-le-Bouffard. He is buried there, but a marker has been placed to his memory in the Calumet cemetery.

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Racing Record:

Year	Age	Starts	1st	2nd	3rd	unp.	earnings
1940	2	16	7	2	4	3	\$ 77,275
1941	3	20	13	5	2	0	272,386
1942	4	22	12	8	2	0	211,250
1943	5	2	0	0	1	1	250
total		60	32	15	9	4	\$561,161

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Stakes Record:

at 2:

- won - Saratoga Special
- won - Hopeful Stakes
- won - Breeders' Futurity
- won - Walden Stakes
- 2nd - Grand Union Hotel Stakes
- 2nd - United States Hotel Stakes
- 3rd - Belmont Futurity
- 3rd - Arlington Futurity
- 3rd - Pimlico Futurity
- **Champion 2yo Colt**

at 3:

- won - Kentucky Derby
- won - Preakness Stakes
- won - Belmont Stakes
- won - Dwyer Stakes
- won - American Derby
- won - Lawrence Realization
- won - Travers Stakes

- won - Saranac Handicap
- 2nd - Classic Stakes
- 2nd - Narragansett Special
- 2nd - Jockey Club Cold Cup
- 2nd - Blue Grass Stakes
- 2nd - Kentucky Derby Trial
- **Champion 3yo Colt**
- Horse Of The Year

at 4:

- won - Massachusetts Handicap
- won - Brooklyn Handicap
- won - Jockey Club Gold Cup
- won - Narragansett Special
- won - Dixie Handicap
- won - Louisiana Handicap
- won - Washington Handicap
- won - Governor Bowie Handicap
- won - Trenton Handicap
- won - Clark Handicap
- 2nd - Butler Handicap
- 2nd - Suburban Handicap
- 2nd - Arlington Handicap
- 2nd - Riggs Handicap
- 2nd - Manhattan Handicap
- 2nd - Phoenix Handicap
- 3rd - New York Handicap
- 3rd - Carter Handicap
- **Champion Handicap Horse**
- Horse Of The Year