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RACHEL ALEXANDRA FIRST FILLY IN 85 YEARS TO WIN PREAKNESS STAKES, TEAM VALOR'S BARRY IRWIN SOLD THE WINNER'S SIRE MEDAGLIA D'ORO



Rachel Alexandra today became the first filly to win the Preakness Stakes since Nellie Morse turned the trick in 1924. She capped a dream week for her sire when his daughter Payton d'Oro won the filly's equivalent of the Preakness in the Black-Eyed Susan the day before.

Barry Irwin, owner of Team Valor International, bought the filly's sire, \$5.7-million earner Medaglia d'Oro, after he was retired from racing for his current owners, who stand him at their Stonewall Farm near Versailles, Kentucky.

Medaglia d'Oro had been marketed for some time before Irwin entered the picture to secure him on behalf of Mrs. Audrey Haisfield of Palm Beach, Florida. Mrs. Haisfield had asked Irwin for his assistance in acquiring a few stallions to stand at their new complex on Midway Road adjacent to famed Lane's End Farm.

Irwin negotiated the sale with Bobby Frankel, who had trained the son of El Prado in all but the first of his races. As a racehorse, Medaglia d'Oro was the epitome of consistency, finishing first or second in all but 2 of his 17 starts while racing against the best international competition.



Medaglia d'Oro numbered among his best races victories in such races as the Grade 1 Travers and Whitney Stakes at Saratoga. He finished second in such races as the Emirates Airlines World Cup in Dubai, the Classic Belmont Stakes, the Pacific Classic and the Breeders' Cup Classic.



"He was not cheap, which is why he had been on the market for awhile," said Barry Irwin. "When I bought him, I thought he was the best looking horse of his era in training in the United States. When he went to stud, I thought he was among the very best looking animals in the bluegrass. It has often been said that horse racing is not a beauty contest. I disagree and I think that Medaglia d'Oro is a living example that beauty yields the best results, both on the track and in the sales ring."

Medaglia d'Oro entered stud at Hill 'n Dale Farm near Lexington, Kentucky, but Mrs. Haisfield elected to move the stallion and install him in her new stallion division at Stonewall Farm, where he has held court over the past few seasons.

The handsome stallion has developed into the hottest commodity now standing in the bluegrass, as he is a runaway leader among second-crop stallions and his stud fee has risen steadily throughout the season. Irwin said his stud fee could rise into six figures next season, despite a sluggish economy.



Irwin acquired two other stallions for Mrs. Haisfield, both of whom won Eclipse Awards for Mrs. Haisfield and her racing partners after the horses were acquired during their racing careers with an eye to standing them at Stonewall Farm.

Leroidesanimaux promptly won the Grade 1 Atto Mile by nearly 8 lengths in course record time in his first start for Mrs. Haisfield, who later saw him voted Champion Turf Horse in North America. His first foals race this season.

Lawyer Ron was bought before the Classics at 3 and he garnered most of the votes he needed to win an Eclipse Award as the Champion Older Horse in North America with a stunning victory in the Grade 1 Whitney Stakes at Saratoga. He entered stud last season and his first foals will reach the races in 2011.