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KENTUCKY DERBY HOPEFUL WENT THE DAY WELL'S PURCHASE STORY TEAM VALOR'S BARRY IRWIN TELLS SAGA OF HOW COLT JOINED STABLE INQUIRING MINDS WANT TO KNOW HOW B. EYE MADE IT BACK TO DERBY



Went The Day Well was identified as a Triple Crown prospect by B. Eye after he flew home to finish second at Haydock in a maiden grass race in England.

Went The Day Well has put 2012 Kentucky Derby winners Barry Irwin and his Team Valor International stable back in the Run for the Roses for a second consecutive season.

Incredulous reporters want to know if it is luck or skill, and how Irwin landed upon a New York-bred in England that had the tools to make it into the Kentucky Derby, with what appears to be a fighting chance.

What follows are excerpts from a story published in Team Valor's twice-weekly *Insiders' Bulletin* that reveals how confident Irwin was in the colt when he offered him to his clients last October, after the colt had finished second in his first start.



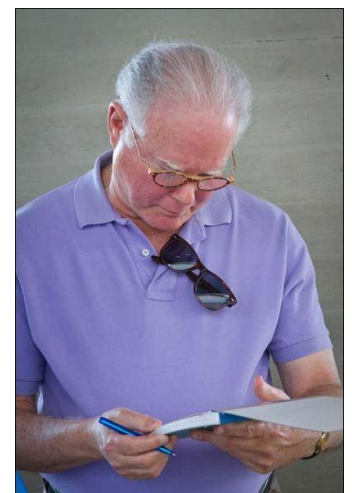
Barry Irwin spent the weekend in Europe, a trip sparked by completion of a topsy-turvy negotiation that landed Team Valor a chance to buy a bona fide Triple Crown prospect in England.

Upon the day of his arrival in Great Britain, seasoned traveler Irwin was picked up by his European agent and driven to the English Midlands, between London and Birmingham, where he feasted his famous eyes upon a 2-year-old New York-bred, English-raced colt by Proud Citizen out of a Tiznow mare with the unusual name of Went The Day Well.

In his lone outing, Went The Day Well was sandwiched at the break and raced about eighth or ninth of 14 for much of the 8 furlongs, until he finally got some running room inside the furlong grounds when in sixth place. Once the colt swung into gear, he ate his rivals alive, especially in the final strides, when he passed one horse after another to fall just three-quarters of a length shy of victory. The sensational effort, in which he split a pair of well-regarded colts with previous race course experience, did not go unnoticed.

Irwin, who is a relentless negotiator when he really wants something, employed three different agents to wear down the husband-and-wife LAM Partnership to obtain a controlling 75-percent interest in the colt, who will be exported to Florida later in the month.

Barry Irwin is a persuasive negotiator.



“This is a sensational colt, both in terms of ability and conformation,” Irwin said. “Not since we bought Captain Bodgit (second 1997 Kentucky Derby as the favorite) some 14 years ago have we had an opportunity to buy a horse that has as much Triple Crown potential.”



Went The Day Well exhibited a long, ground-eating stride in Florida score.

(Bear in mind that the colt had finished second in a maiden grass race in England in his only race.)

“But, believe me, as sensational as that race was, the colt in person looked so good that I am more excited about what I found when I inspected him than I was when I first saw the race replay,” he said. “He has it all. He has the pedigree, style and look of a true 10-furlong horse, as did Gitano Hernando when I bought him. He has all the size and bone and depth of his broodmare sire Tiznow, but the quality and class of his sire Proud Citizen, a horse that I am very partial to, having bought his son Motovato and bred to him over the past few seasons.

“His overall depth, his powerful chest, the great bone of his limbs are all noteworthy. Standing behind him, the length of his hip from the end of his back to his hock is amazing to witness. He has the rear end of a miler, the length of a router and the energy of a sprinter. And he has an absolutely wonderful disposition.

“I syndicated him over the weekend and took the biggest share in one of our bought horses ever and immediately purchased his dam (back in Kentucky). That’s what I think of him!”

Ten partners will race the colt and they were individually invited by Irwin based on their level of involvement with the stable and their support of Irwin and his far-ranging equine racing projects.

Irwin said that all of the participants took a substantial interest in Went The Day Well, who will be nominated to the Triple Crown early next season.



Newly inducted Hall of Fame rider John Velazquez won Derby last year.

Later, after the colt broke his maiden in his second Florida outing and fourth career start, Irwin admitted that it might “Sound kind of nutty to be talking Triple Crown with a colt that couldn’t break his maiden in two starts in England and had never even so much as jogged on a dirt track. But the physical scope of the colt and his two strong efforts stamped him as a colt to be reckoned with over here.”