

EURO CHARLINE IGNITES FOR HISTORIC GRADE 1 WIN AT ARLINGTON PARK ENGLISH IMPORT IS FIRST 3YO TO PREVAIL IN \$750,000 BEVERLY D. STAKES DISCOVERED AT LOW-LEVEL TRACK, NOW TOP-RATED TURF FEMALE IN U.S.



The region-specific name proved no barrier for Euro Charline, who emerged as an American star with a flair for history on August 16 when she surged to a ground-breaking victory in the \$750,000 Beverly D. Stakes at Arlington Park near Chicago.

The English import became the first 3-year-old filly to upstage elders in the international Grade 1, annually one of the most important races on the domestic calendar for turf females, and this was no soft edition, with six Grade 1 winners in the field of 11. Euro Charline showed a new dimension in her first start beyond a mile, bursting to the front from the center of the course inside the final furlong, and she cruised to the wire to prevail by a comfortable three-quarters of a length at odds of nearly 11 to 1.

Team Valor CEO Barry Irwin greeted the brutish filly in the Arlington winner's circle, just as he did the very first horse to carry the stable's distinctive green and red silks, Star of Cozzene, who dominated the Grade 1 Arlington Million on the same card in 1993. Twenty one years later, Team Valor joined Godolphin and Juddmonte, global superpowers in Thoroughbred racing, as the only owners to win both of Arlington's centerpiece events.

Euro Charline, who was unlucky in a third-place finish in the Group 1 Coronation Stakes at Royal Ascot in June, became the 26th Grade or Group 1 winner for a partnership managed by Irwin.

She validated a bold plan as the only 3-year-old in this year's Beverly D.

and just the fifth to start in the race since 2000. Newmarket-based trainer Marco Botti told Irwin for weeks that he thought the filly was good enough to make an impact. Originally, they were going to bring her across the pond for the Grade 2 Lake George Stakes at Saratoga Race Course on July 20, but Irwin pulled the plug only a few days before that race when complications arose in her travel itinerary, which would have required about 18 hours to get her to New York. He thought it much better to wait instead for Arlington's premier day, where she could catch a direct flight with the day's other international runners. The card included a stakes race for 3-year-old fillies, but Botti was confident she belonged in the Beverly D., and Irwin agreed once they were able to line up leading English jockey Ryan Moore for the mount.



With Euro Charline's victory, Team Valor joined Godolphin and Juddmonte as the only owners to win both of Arlington Park's centerpiece races, the Arlington Million and Beverly D. Mathea Kelley photos.

Moore had put on a show at Arlington in 2013 by sweeping 2 of the 4 international stakes, and he got right back to it this year by winning the Grade 1 Secretariat Stakes immediately preceding the Beverly D. He was a perfect match for Euro Charline, who is handy enough that she led throughout a stakes win at Ascot on July 25.



Stretching out an additional furlong and a half on Saturday from post position two, she settled beautifully and bided her time along the rail in midpack. When Moore began to rouse her in the far turn, she immediately put herself in striking position in fourth place before she swung out into the lane and gobbled up ground in the stretch, reaching the front with about a sixteenth of a mile to go. She actually idled a bit when she found herself in front but the race was already in the bag, as multiple Grade 1 winner Stephanie's Kitten could only pick up the pieces to her inside, finishing second as the 2.90-to-1 favorite.

Moore said "She traveled real sweet and kicked on like a good filly would."

Irwin was quick to credit Botti, who also plundered an American Grade 1 for Team Valor in 2009 with Gitano Hernando, a diamond plucked out of the rough of England's winter all-weather circuit, just like Euro Charline.

"This filly is a freak, but it also shows what an advantage it can be to prepare a young horse in Europe," Irwin said. "You would never see an American horse do that going from a mile to a mile and three sixteenths, they wouldn't be fit enough. Marco has done a terrific job with her."

Ever since snatching up Euro Charline after watching her win her second start by 9 lengths at Wolverhampton in March, Irwin had considered her to be an ideal candidate for American racing, where the daughter of Group 1-winning sprinter Myboycharlie can utilize her tactical speed on fast ground.

"Euro Charline has an enormous amount of scope and presence," Irwin said when he presented her to Team Valor clients for syndication. "She gives one the distinct impression that she will out-run her pedigree. She is freakish. Freaks outrun their pedigrees."

The morning after the Beverly D., "freaky" Charline was transferred to the care of Todd Pletcher, the leading U.S. trainer who has a long history of success with Team Valor, including Breeders' Cup winner Pluck and Grade 1 winner Unbridled Belle. He is now presented with a 3-year-old filly who

immediately vaulted to the top of *Daily Racing Form* handicapper Mike Watchmaker's rankings for all turf females in the U.S., regardless of age.

Botti said "We shall be very sad to see Euro Charline go, but this was always the plan with her and it was great to sign off with such a great win – which I knew she was so capable of doing. It has been a pleasure to train for Mr. Irwin and Team Valor."



Upon seeing Euro Charline in the flesh for the first time this spring, Barry Irwin told her partners that she is the best-looking filly he has ever managed.

Euro Charline also is a rarity of contemporary racing in that she achieved her feat without the use of Lasix, the diuretic that is legal as an anti-bleeding medication on raceday in the U.S. but is banned almost everywhere else, including Europe. Irwin has been at the forefront of a growing movement to rid American racing of the specter of permissive drugs. Of the 63 horses who participated in Arlington's 6 stakes on Saturday, only four of them raced without Lasix, and all four were European shippers. That short list included Euro Charline and Just the Judge, who ran first and third in the

Beverly D., with five American Grade 1 winners behind them.

On top of the prestigious victory, the Beverly D. carried a "Win and You're In" incentive for the Breeders' Cup Filly and Mare Turf on November 1 at Santa Anita Park—with the victory, Euro Charline would be exempt from all entry fees and assured of a spot in the field, and she also would receive a \$10,000 travel voucher.

In the meantime, the filly will point for the Grade 1 Queen Elizabeth II Challenge Cup on October 11 at Keeneland, reverting back to the 3-year-old filly division.

From *Daily Racing Form* comes the following:

Euro Charline Posts Upset in Beverly D.

Making history as the first winning 3-year-old in the Beverly D., Euro Charline stormed to victory Saturday when getting a terrific ride from Ryan Moore in the 25th running of the Grade 1, \$750,000 race at Arlington Park.

The Beverly D. is a Win and You're In event for the Breeders' Cup Filly and Mare Turf.

Overlooked at 10-1, Euro Charline saved ground while racing near the back of the pack before being angled off the rail at the quarter-pole. Once clear on the outside, she accelerated to the lead inside the eighth pole before finishing three-quarters of a length clear of late-running Stephanie's Kitten, a lukewarm 5-2 favorite in a field of 11 fillies and mares.

Euro Charline returned \$23.60 as sixth choice after finishing the 1 3/16-mile distance in 1:55.52 over firm turf.

“She traveled real sweet and kicked on nicely like a good filly would,” said Moore, who in the prior race on Arlington’s big day had won the Grade 1 Secretariat aboard Adelaide.

A British-bred by Myboycharlie, Euro Charline is owned by Team Valor International, the prominent American-based syndicate headed by Barry Irwin, who was on hand. Irwin was quick to praise trainer Marco Botti, who did not make the trip and was represented by his wife and traveling assistant, Lucie.

“All credit on this goes to Marco Botti,” said Irwin. In regard to running against older mares, “I thought he was crazy, that it was a huge challenge, and I didn’t really want to do it, to tell you the truth. So this is all him.”

Irwin said Euro Charline was to be turned over to Todd Pletcher, effective Sunday, with the Queen Elizabeth II Challenge Cup at Keeneland on Oct. 11 her intended next start. The QE II is restricted to 3-year-old fillies.

La Tia set a fairly moderate pace in the Beverly D., going in splits of 24.44, 49.90, and 1:13.56. Although she was still clear passing the furlong pole, several others had full heads of steam, most notably Euro Charline, who opened a clear advantage between calls before Stephanie’s Kitten closed belatedly to trim the final margin.

“I thought the jock had her in a perfect spot,” said Irwin. “The minute he found that split, it was all over.”

Just The Judge finished third, a neck behind Stephanie’s Kitten, with La Tia settling for fourth by another half-length.

After the top four, the order was Somali Lemonade, I’m Already Sexy, Street of Gold, Sparkling Beam, Emollient, Tannery, and Alterite.

Both Stephanie’s Kitten and Alterite are based in New York with Chad Brown. Alterite, the 3-1 second choice, faded badly after making a brief outside run leaving the half-mile pole.

By winning for the fourth time in seven career starts, Euro Charline became the 12th foreign-bred horse to win the Beverly D. in the last 13 runnings. During that long span, the only American-bred winner was Dynaforce (2009).

The \$2 exacta (2-5) paid \$131.40, the \$1 trifecta (2-5-1) returned \$335.10, and the 10-cent superfecta (2-5-1-7) was worth \$367.78.

From *Daily Racing Form* comes the following:

Connections Plan Next Move for Euro Charline

The Beverly D. winner Euro Charline was scheduled to leave Arlington Park on Monday for Saratoga, where she will be trained by Todd Pletcher in what marks a noted departure from the recent norm for the filly’s owner, Team Valor International.

Euro Charline became the first 3-year-old to win the Beverly D. in the 25-year history of the Grade 1 race when she finished three-quarters of a length clear of Stephanie’s Kitten on Saturday at Arlington.

Euro Charline had been trained in England by Marco Botti but will remain in America with Pletcher, who previously trained for Team Valor before the ownership syndicate went private several years ago with Graham Motion, then last year with Rick Mettee.



Barry Irwin leads in Euro Charline and Ryan Moore.

Team Valor president Barry Irwin said Sunday his private barn at the Fair Hill Training Center in Maryland is up for sale and that he is in the process of dispersing Team Valor's approximately 40 American runners throughout the country, with Pletcher and Dale Romans among his new trainers and Mettee planning to move to Southern California to continue to train a string for Team Valor. Horses also will go to Wayne Catalano, Tom Bush, and Ralph Nicks, said Irwin.

"I've just come to the realization that I'd rather be at the racetrack," said Irwin. "Nothing against Rick – he's still going to train for us. I've just always done better with our horses spread out."

Euro Charline will be at Saratoga for a brief period before moving down to Pletcher's main base at Belmont Park, where she will be prepped for the Grade 1 Queen Elizabeth II Challenge Cup on Oct. 11 at Keeneland, said Irwin.

"I really want to win that race," he said.

Irwin noted Euro Charline raced without Lasix in the Beverly D., which marked her first race in America after six starts in England. Team Valor bought her privately following her second start in March.

"One as clean-winded and fit as her, you're not giving up anything by not using it," he said. "It seems when they come over here, they're so much fitter than our horses."

Irwin said Euro Charline "had been pretty unlucky" in prior starts.

"She's always been better than she's had a chance to show. She kept getting in trouble. Based on this win [Saturday], she might not just be a local horse. We might have to look at something like the Dubai Duty Free next spring or some other major races."

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