

BARN NOTES

OCT. 2-24 | NO RACING Mondays & Tuesdays | First Post 1 p.m. | Gates Open 11 a.m.

Ortiz Returns from Foot Injury with Friday Stakes Win

Irad Ortiz Jr. saw plenty of races over the last several weeks. The problem was it wasn't from his usual vantage point.

"I was watching on the TV for a long time," Ortiz said after riding Friday's third race at Keeneland. "It was almost two months, maybe five or more days shy of two months."

That's how long Ortiz, a five-time Eclipse Award winner, spent on the sidelines recovering from a foot injury sustained in a prerace incident Aug. 8 at Saratoga Race Course. He broke seven bones in his left foot and thought his year would end halfway through the Saratoga meet, with no chance to ride at the opening of the new Belmont Park, Fall Stars Weekend at Keeneland and the Breeders' Cup World Championships — or any race anywhere for that matter.

"I thought I was done for the year," Ortiz said, walking back to the Jockeys Quarters after guiding the 2-year-old filly Virabhadrasana to a fourth-place finish in the third race at 6 furlongs on the main track.

Ortiz rode seven races Friday and won with his fifth mount, guiding Nakatomi up the rail late to take the Stoll Keenon Ogden Phoenix (G2) to kick off the Fall Stars Friday card. He finished third on another mount, Staged, for trainer Bill Mott in the fifth race. Brad Cox gave him a leg up on four other runners, and Ortiz credited Cox for helping with his comeback.

"It feels great to be able to be out there competing, enjoying the races," Ortiz said. "I was getting ready, getting fit and doing a lot of rehab on my foot. I had a lot of people help me. People like Brad — I was getting on horses early for him, getting fit."

Ortiz won last year's Fall Meet riding title with 25 wins and led jockeys at this year's Spring



Irad Ortiz Jr. and Nakatomi

Meet with 22 wins. He felt the love from Keeneland fans not long after Kinnon LaRose gave him a leg up on Virabhadrasana. Spectators along the Saddling Paddock clapped and cheered the 34-year-old jockey, who ended the day with 4,637 victories.

"That was so great," Ortiz said of the experience. "Honestly, I've been getting huge support from everybody in the industry. It feels great to have the support from a lot of people in the track and out of the track. It's amazing. I'm glad and I feel very, very special to have those people supporting me, check on me every single day." ■ *By Tom Law*

Race Day Essentials



How to Watch

Saturday, Oct. 3

3-6 p.m.

NBC, FanDuel TV

Sunday, Oct. 4

5-6:30 p.m. Peacock,

FanDuel TV

**Keeneland
YouTube**

WATCH HERE

Complimentary Digital Program



FREE DOWNLOAD

Upcoming Events

Saturday, Oct. 3-

Sunday, Oct. 4

Tailgating on The Hill



COOLING OUT

EMPHATIC

On Friday, Gainesway Stable and Andrew Rosen's Nyquist filly scored a frontrunning win in the \$650,000 Darley Alcibiades (G1) to improve to 3-for-3 and secure a spot in the Oct. 30 Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies (G1) at Keeneland.

"She came out awesome. She's grand, all good."
– Paul Madden, assistant to trainer Brendan Walsh

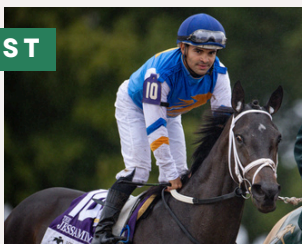


SERENAS GHOST

Moving Forward Racing's Girvin filly rallied up the rail under Luis Saez to edge Seneca Park in Friday's \$400,000 Jessamine (G2) Presented by Keeneland Sales. The 1 1/4-length win earned her a berth in the Oct. 30 John Deere Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies Turf (G1) at Keeneland.

"Serena came out of race in good order. On to the Breeders' Cup." – Trainer Joe Sharp

"Great win, nice filly. She was always there for me and I could have gone inside or gone outside with her."
– Jockey Luis Saez



NAKATOMI

Qatar Racing and Mrs. Fitriani Hay's 7-year-old gelding Nakatomi won the Stoll Keenon Ogden Phoenix (G2) for the second consecutive year. He has run in the race four times.

"He came back in perfect order. Looks like we are going to go in the (Cygames) Breeders' Cup Sprint (G1) (on Oct. 31 at Keeneland). The race could possibly set up for him the way his running style is. It's a sprint so everyone is going to be rolling early and we may get lucky with his late run like we did yesterday."
– Trainer Wesley Ward



Hazlewood Welcomes Chance to Ride Against Sport's Best

Yedsit Hazlewood is beginning a new chapter in his riding career this fall, making his Keeneland debut with an opportunity to compete alongside the nation's top jockeys while earning the confidence of trainers who believe in his potential.

For the 18-year-old from Panama, riding at Keeneland has already made a strong impression.

"Different experience with the best trainers and the best jockeys, so I'm excited," said Hazlewood, an Eclipse Award finalist for outstanding apprentice jockey in 2025.

Following his first mount at Keeneland on Friday, Hazlewood came away impressed with the historic race track.

"It was very good," Hazlewood said. "It's beautiful here. I think it's my favorite place now."

Trainer Ron Moquett is among those giving Hazlewood opportunities, pointing to the young rider's ability to find the winner's circle and his athleticism as qualities that stand out.

"He wins a lot of races; that's what I like about him," Moquett said. "He brings energy."

Moquett gave Hazlewood a leg up for his first Keeneland mount, Mena, in Friday's second race. Mena finished fourth.

"I compare (Hazlewood) a little bit to a (Ricardo) Santana (Jr.) at his age, which means horses run for him and he's athletic," Moquett said. "He's got to do a lot of work to get to the level Santana is at now, though. I'd rather have somebody who has a ton of energy. Rather than someone who smokes three packs of cigarettes and gets tired at the end of the stretch."

Trainer Wesley Ward, who won the 1984 Eclipse Award as outstanding apprentice, also sees plenty of upside in the young rider, believing the opportunity to compete against experienced jockeys at Keeneland will help accelerate his development. Ward named Hazlewood on three horses entered Wednesday and Thursday.

"He's a very talented rider, young guy, so he's got a lot of trying in him, that's for sure," Ward said. "He's come to the right place, because this is where the best jockeys in the United States are riding."

Ward believes being surrounded by accomplished riders such as Irad Ortiz Jr. and John Velazquez will provide Hazlewood with valuable experience as he continues to improve.

"He's going to look to his left, and you've got Irad; look to the right, you've got Johnny V," Ward said. "It's like any sport: When you start playing with the better athletes, you're going to make yourself better. He's going to really improve as a rider." ■ **By Jax Rogers**

Connections of Adonius (IRE) Hope Development Continues

Adonius (IRE) showed up at Rebecca Menzies' Howe Hills Stables training yard in Sedgfield, England with a reputation to match his rambunctious personality.

"He was tough and wild," Menzies said this week at Keeneland, where Adonius drew the rail in the field of nine entered for Sunday's \$350,000 Indian Summer (G3) Presented by Keeneland Select.

Menzies can show videos on her iPhone to prove it, with the son of Soldier's Call (GB) bucking and rearing on the gallops and in round pens at her facility. He's since mellowed — quite a bit — and arrived in Kentucky last month acting like an old pro.

Adonius started his American stay in quarantine at Churchill Downs with Menzies' work rider Diaz Gibson. He moved with Gibson and later Menzies in from overseas this week into trainer Brendan Walsh's barn at Keeneland. Walsh's assistant Paul Madden helped with the adjustment and Adonius received a stall with a view of the training track and a nearby barn.

"Since we've been here it's been great," Menzies said. "The horse has slotted into the routine really well. He can be quite a keen-going horse at home, but here he's very relaxed. There's so much for him to look at. It's very different where we train. We train on a private gallop, so he usually does a lot of work on his own. Here he can see all these horses."

Adonius won his first two races eight days apart in early April for owner

Michael Hughes — going 5 furlongs on the turf at Musselburgh — before Sean and Anne Clancy's Riverdee Stable and Larry Connolly's West Paces Racing came on board as partners. The gelding added a third victory at Chester going 5 furlongs again May 6 before his connections started thinking big.

After almost three months off, Adonius finished second in back-to-back stakes efforts behind highly regarded runners Pershaada in the Molecomb (G3) at Glorious Goodwood in late July and the Julia Graves Roses at York in late August. The plan was always to come to the U.S. for a run in the Indian Summer, with a big dream of landing in the Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf Sprint (G1). That could be a reality since the Indian Summer is a "Win and You're In" for the Oct. 30 Juvenile Turf Sprint at Keeneland.

But first things first, Menzies said.

"His form is very solid, but we're at a total unknown pitching him in against these American 2-year-olds," Menzies said. "Honestly, we can only go off time and stuff from home. The horse is going to race for Sean and the lads in Saratoga next year, so that plan was that he was going to come over here at some point. This is massive bonus for us as a yard to be able to run him in this race here. To gain the experience, to have a runner of this nature, and even with the traveling, the paperwork, it's all very new for us. And exciting." ■ *By Tom Law*

Trainer Rebecca Menzies (left) and work rider Diaz Gibson (right) with Adonius (IRE)



WHAT'S IN A NAME

JOE SHIESTY



JOH SHY-stee

Race 6

"Joe Shiesty" is a popular fan-driven nickname for Cincinnati Bengals quarterback Joe Burrow, playing off his first name and the slang term "shiesty," which can suggest someone slick or little mischievous.

FROM KEENELAND LIBRARY ARCHIVES

OCT. 3, 2008

Keeneland became the first track in North America to offer live race coverage and simulcasts in high-definition.



PERSONAL

PICK 5 BEN HUFFMAN

Keeneland Racing Secretary

Birthplace: Louisville, Kentucky

Birth Date: Nov. 1, 1968

Q: What does a Racing Secretary do?

A: A Racing Secretary writes different types of races for each race meet for different categories such as distances, prize money, competition level, etc., and spaces them out so trainers can select what races they want to enter. My team and I also allocate stall space in our barn area. That's a biggie. Because Kentucky racing is very strong, a lot of trainers want to race here. We weigh it out to be fair to everyone.

Q: What is your favorite part of the job?

A: Keeneland's just a unique traditional place. When you pull into the gate, it's like pulling into a national park. Most importantly, though, it is the racing and the top horses and people that race here. They all come through here and make it a really special place to work.

Q: Where do you go on vacation?

A: I am able to take a vacation or two, here and there. I've got a couple of favorite lakes. I like being on the water.

Q: Favorite food?

A: I'm just kind of a steak guy. Ribeye steak or a great cheeseburger.

Q: Who are some of the celebrities you have met through your years in racing?

A: (Former University of Kentucky men's basketball coach) John Calipari and I did the post-position draw for the 2015 Breeders' Cup here and it was a big event. Drawing races in front of a large group of people can be nerve-racking with all the lights and cameras. I've met a lot of celebrities especially during the Breeders' Cup and at the Kentucky Derby.



INSIDE THE DETAILS

Know the Game

Stakes Winner's Circle

Keeneland's new Stakes Winner's Circle debuted during the 2025 Fall Meet. After each stakes race, the winning horse and connections return through the tunnel to the Stakes Winner's Circle, bringing the celebration closer to fans. The space also features two historic bronze statues by French sculptor Isidore Bonheur, "Horse and Jockey".

PEOPLE • HORSES • STATS

Worth Knowing

Irad Ortiz Jr. earned his third Keeneland leading rider title during the 2026 Spring Meet with 22 wins. He will be recognized for that title today after Race 5.



Irad Ortiz Jr. aboard Further Ado

Barn Notes Contributors

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Keeneland Photos

2026 Breeders' Cup at Keeneland

Pre-Entries Released | Thursday, Oct. 22

Post Position Draw | Monday, Oct. 26

Racing | Friday, Oct. 30 and Saturday, Oct. 31

Upcoming Sales Events at Keeneland

Championship Sale at Castleton | Wednesday, Oct. 28

November Breeding Stock Sale

Tuesday, Nov. 3-Wednesday, Nov. 11

November Horses of Racing Age Sale | Thursday, Nov. 12



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