



Merriebelle Stable

Founded: 2012

Owners: John J. Moores and Charles Noell

- Racing and breeding operation of the longtime business partners whose Argentine import Blue Prize (ARG) will try to win the \$2 million Longines Breeders' Cup Distaff after her fourth in last year's race.
- The 6-year-old Pure Prize mare gained automatic entry into the Distaff after a rare repeat victory the Juddmonte Spinster (G1)—she is one of only four horses to do so in the event's 64-year history—Oct. 6 at Keeneland Race Course. The Spinster is part of the Breeders' Cup Challenge "Win & You're In" series.
- Blue Prize has a 2-1-2 record from five starts in 2019, her only other win of the year coming in the listed Summer Colony Stakes Aug. 18 at Saratoga Race Course.
- Blue Prize's racing career began at age 2 in Argentina and she scored her first graded win there at age 3 in the 2016 Seleccion (G1) at Palermo and was the season's champion 3-year-old filly. Her first U.S. start came eight months later in June 2017 for fellow Argentine Ignacio Correas, a Kentucky-based trainer for whom she provided his breakthrough Grade 1 win in last year's Spinster.
- Bluegrass Thoroughbreds Services' John Stuart and Peter Bance brokered the private sale of Blue Prize for Merriebelle from owner Bullines S.A. in Argentina. Bullines president Ignacio Pavlovsky recommended Correas take over training duties in the U.S.
- Blue Prize was one of two runners for the stable at last year's World Championships—Happy Like a Fool, a Grade 3 winner owned partnership with Coolmore and associates Michael Tabor and Derrick Smith, was sixth in the Filly & Mare Sprint (G1).
- In 2013, stable acquired the bloodstock—approximately 30 horses, including broodmares, foals, yearlings and horses in training—developed by Ireland's Kilfrush Stud, including English and French Group I winner Immortal Verse. Later that year, partnership sold her for 4.7 million guineas (approximately \$8,090,580), a European sales record for a broodmare, at the 2013 Tattersalls December sale.

- After Noell's 2013 purchase of Ardraccan House Stud in County Meath, Ireland, to be Merriebelle's European base, stable bought properties in Kentucky—Chanteclair Farm and the former Stonewall Stallions farm, both in Midway.
- Merriebelle is engaged in both flat racing and steeplechasing in America, Europe and Australia as well as breeding.
- Moores, a former computer specialist for Shell Oil, resides in San Antonio, Texas. He helped found BMC Software in 1989 and the company became one of the largest software firms in the U.S. 1992, after leaving BMC, Inc. to pursue investment opportunities in several strategic
- Along with Noell, Moores in 1992 founded venture capital firm JMI Equity, an American growth equity firm focused on investing in leading software, Internet, business services and healthcare IT companies.
- In 1994, Moores bought the San Diego Padres and sold the Major League Baseball team in 2012 for a reported \$800 million.
- Moores is well known as a philanthropist, his gifts including \$51 million to his alma mater, the University of Houston.
- Noell is based in Baltimore and is an avid foxhunter and a longtime steeplechase enthusiast. He is a past member of the National Steeplechase Association's board of directors.
- A venture partner in JMI, which he co-founded, Noell serves on the board of numerous privately held companies. Former director of ServiceNow (NYSE: NOW).
- Noell holds MBA from Harvard Business School and graduated with a BA in history from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
- Merriebelle's racing silks were derived from those of the late Prince Saud bin Khaled, whose Palides Investments bred 31 stakes horses in 15 years at Chanteclair Farm, now the home to Merriebelle's U.S. breeding stock.