

Breeders' Cup World Championships

Friday, October 31, 2025

Del Mar, California, USA

Del Mar Fairgrounds

Juvenile Fillies Turf

Oisin Murphy

Steve Weston

Donnacha O'Brien

Press Conference



pumping. Could you give us a flavor how you're feeling in this moment given everything that's happened this year and now you're winning another Breeders' Cup race?

OISIN MURPHY: It's a bit surreal. If she hadn't run in Ireland, she would have been fancy today because her first three runs were excellent.

Donnacha and I both thought she had a chance. And actually Steve texted months ago saying he hoped she could get here.

It's really good. That's my seventh group win of the year, and a lot have been on bigger priced horses. And Donnacha could tell you in a minute from riding himself, but that's what you work really hard towards.

Q. The man beside you is quite modest, but he's had some success in Group One races. Could you talk to me about how special he is as a trainer at this time of his career?

OISIN MURPHY: When he learned from his dad, and he doesn't complicate things. He doesn't have a huge string of horses, so he manages to find a lot of good ones in comparison to the numbers.

He's provided me with winners at a very healthy strike rate. So it's great to be able to team up. He would still be riding if he wasn't a foot taller than me.

Q. Donnacha, your first Breeders' Cup win. They say every journey begins with a first step. You're a little bit behind your father. But how does it feel to win your first Breeders' Cup race?

DONNACHA O'BRIEN: It feels incredible. We've been coming here a long time, since we were babies, really. To watch Dad do it year in and year out, and Joseph to get winners. Nice to be on the board.

Q. Take us through your thought process on getting her to this race and giving her the time off after her

THE MODERATOR: We're joined with winning trainer Donnacha O'Brien and winning jockey Oisin Murphy.

Q. Oisin, could you take us through the race? Looked like you got to the fence pretty quickly in the first 150 yards or so?

OISIN MURPHY: Yeah, she broke fairly, and both Donnacha and I both thought she may not have the early speed to get toward the lead. I was able to get down to the fence inside the horse drawn 9, whose favorite, Irad.

And I just hoped then that I could get back on the back of the right one. And John Velazquez, I think, was inside me from 7 -- sorry, just in front of me. I thought that was a decent pitch.

Q. Then just take us through the rest of the race. Looked like down the back stretch you had a pretty good amount of horse under you midway through the race?

OISIN MURPHY: Well I asked her to switch leads. So when you do that they can latch on. And she took a few strides and she switched out.

To be honest she took to the track very well. Donnacha was very upbeat the way she trained in the mornings. And she's incredibly athletic. And she handled the track like it was made for her.

Q. We know how the year started and how you had to kind of pick things up again. But you've also spoken about how having winners on these big days, that's what really gets you going, that what gets your blood



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most recent run two and a half months ago.

DONNACHA O'BRIEN: Her form was very strong in the early part of the year. When we run her at the Curragh, probably shouldn't; they got a shower rain literally half an hour before the race and the ground went soft. We probably shouldn't have run her. She's a really low mover.

Then after she disappointed there, we just gave her a bit of time. And Steve wanted to come here. So a fair bit to him. He made the shout to come to the Breeders' Cup. So we just worked back from here, and she'd been training exceptionally the last few weeks. You know, we came here thinking that we were overpriced and that we had a live shot.

Q. Steve, what was the reason that you were so confident off that last (indiscernible) run to continue on and come over here for this race?

STEVE WESTON: First, it was obvious it was very soft, and that's not, you know, her type of track. Our goal every year or my goal every year is to make it to the Breeders' Cup with a 2-year-old. Fortunate enough that Donnacha and Mark McStay picked Balantina out at the Arqana sale. They both liked her. She was Hip Number 68. That must be a good, lucky number for me now. And Donnacha said, you know, when I was in Ireland early in the year, he thought she was going to be early. And she was. She did well.

She broke poorly in her first start. Then Oisin got on her and she broke really well. She won her second start. She went to Ascot. She broke poorly. She broke 17th out of 17. Okay. She ended up winning third. That told everybody that she had a lot of talent.

And Donnacha brought the talent out in her. And Oisin gave her an amazing trip. And this is a dream of a lifetime. I bred another horse called Jody's Pride. She came close. She lost to FYI a couple of years ago, and this was just incredible. A dream of a lifetime.

I got into this business about 10 years ago, and we've come a long ways, and I have to thank a lot of people. I have to thank, naturally, Donnacha, Mark McStay for picking her out. Recently, I'll have to thank my partner, Dean Reeves. Recently, we sold part of Balantina to Medallion. They're lucky, and maybe they helped bring the luck to both Dean and myself.

Just fantastic. Wonderful horse. I thought it was exciting being with Donnacha when we won at Royal Ascot. But this might have topped the cake being 25- or 30-to-1 is just amazing.

Q. Steve, I wanted to ask you, you had great success with Donnacha with Porta Fortuna, and your ownership group is essentially American. What is it that attracts you to having horses trained in Europe and more specifically with Donnacha in Ireland?

STEVE WESTON: That's a great question. I believe that we are better off, the Americans, of buying our horses, leaving them in Europe for a time and letting them grow, having the advantage to compete against possibly the best turf horses in the world. And there's no reason to rush them to the States.

If they're able to compete in Europe, you know, under group conditions, you know, they should stay. We didn't feel right now that Balantina was at that highest level. We thought, well, maybe we'll bring her to the States, and maybe we could be fortunate enough to see if Breeders' Cup will let us in. And they let us in, and the horse did the rest. And Oisin gave her an amazing ride.

Q. I know you've got Porta Fortuna going to the sale soon. Is this a sense of one door closing and another busting wide open now?

STEVE WESTON: I guess it does. It will be sad. It will be sad when we do sell Porta. She's something that we'll never find again, a horse of her caliber. I'm happy to be with Donnacha. His first Ascot win was with Donnacha. And now his first Breeders' Cup win is with Donnacha, and we hope to have many more in the future.

You're asking about Ireland, the horses and the people are just wonderful, and I enjoy it immensely.

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