



JACKSON BEND

THE HORSE

Jackson Bend is another horse that needs some defections from the present top 20 moneymakers wanting to get into the Kentucky Derby gate.

If this colt makes it, he'll give Robert LaPenta, this time with partner Jacks or Better Farm, and trainer Nick Zito their second runner in this year's Derby.

Since posting five straight victories during his 2-year-old season, Jackson Bend is 0 for 3 as a 3-year-old. Each loss has resulted in a runner-up finish, meaning the difference between win and place money in the graded stakes – even in one of the races – would have been enough to put him in the field.

Even so, he remains a highly possible starter.

THE CO-OWNERS

Robert V. LaPenta and Jacks or Better Farm

Robert V. LaPenta has been involved with racing since 1998, when he became a partner with University of Louisville basketball coach Rick Pitino. He then started his own stable in 2001.

At that time, he bought eight yearlings for a total of \$895,000. The top runner of that group was Zavata, who won the 2002 Saratoga Special while racing for Michael Tabor.

The owner hit the racing heights in 2008 when his 36-1 longshot, Da' Tara, captured the Belmont Stakes and denied Kentucky Derby and Preakness winner Big Brown a chance to win the Triple Crown. His Brave Victory and Miner's Escape finished seventh and 10th, respectively, in the 2009 Belmont.

LaPenta was born Aug. 20, 1945 in Yonkers, N.Y. He lives in Westport, Conn., and his family includes son Robert Jr. LaPenta Sr. is a graduate of Iona College with a degree in accounting. He received a Doctor of Humane Letters degree from the school in 2000. He is a member of Iona's Board of Trustees and donated \$7 million toward the construction of the college's LaPenta Student Union Building.



LaPenta is chairman of the board, president and chief executive officer of L-1 Identity Solutions, a provider of technology, products and solutions that protect and secure personal identities and assets. The firm is based in Stamford, Conn.

He is the founder and former president and CEO of L-3 Communications Corporation, a provider of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance systems. Previously, he had served as a vice president of Lockheed Martin Corporation.

LaPenta took home his first Eclipse Award following War Pass' victory in the 2007 Breeders' Cup Juvenile. Prior to the Breeders' Cup, the colt had won the Champagne Stakes, but he never regained his juvenile form as a 3-year-old, his best finish being a second in the Wood Memorial. After the race, a fractured sesamoid was detected in his left foreleg and he was retired. He earned \$1.5 million during his racing career and stands stud at Lane's End Farm in Versailles, Ky.

During 2008, also, LaPenta posted a big win in the Fountain of Youth with Cool Coal Man.

LaPenta owns approximately 65 horses, with 25 being stabled with Hall of Fame trainer Nick Zito. His The Cliff's Edge won the 2004 Blue Grass Stakes before finishing fifth in the Kentucky Derby. He was second in that year's Travers Stakes before being retired to stud. LaPenta's Pies Prospect won the Pegasus Stakes at The Meadowlands and the Fred Hooper at Calder in 2004.

Another of his high-profile runners – Andromeda's Hero – captured the 2005 Sam F. Davis Stakes at Tampa Bay Downs and finished second in the Belmont Stakes. He was eighth in the Kentucky Derby.

Jacks or Better Farm is owned by Fred and Jane Brei, who live in Ocala, Fla. Jackson Bend was bred by Jacks or Better Farm.

Fred Brei was born Sept. 26, 1942 in Poplar Grove, Ill., and Jane Brei was born May 2, 1945 in LeMars, Iowa. They have four daughters, Teri, Liz, Charlene and Lisa, and two sons, Fred III and Chris.

Fred Brei is a builder/developer. He was founder and chief executive officer of Canterbury Corp., a long-term retirement facility in Crystal Lake, Ill., until he sold it in 1995. Jane Brei is a retired registered nurse. They moved to Ocala in 1995 and established the 88-acre Jacks or Better Farm in 1997.

Fred bought a broodmare in 1972 at Keeneland and raced a small stable in the Midwest prior to taking a break from racing to concentrate on his business ventures.

When the Breis started the Florida farm, they intended to be commercial breeders, but when their foals failed to bring the prices they expected, they began racing their stock and wound up becoming one of Florida's most

successful homebred breeders. In fact, they were honored with Florida's Needles Award in 2001 and 2004 as the state's outstanding small breeder.

They've campaigned such runners as the multiple Grade III-winning Radical Riley and four-time stakes winner Hear No Evil, as well as Bourbon N Blues, Scrubs, Ladyinaddress, Friday's a-Comin', Antsinmypants and Winnie's Pooh Bear.

In addition, they bred and raced Midas Eyes in his first two starts before he was sold to Edmund Gann. The Breis bought Midas Eyes' dam, Bayou Plans in foal to Mountain Cat at the 1997 Keeneland November mixed sale, but Jane Brei gets the credit. She picked out the mare at the last minute in the walking ring just before she was led into the sales pavilion because she liked the look in her eyes.

Jacks or Better has a graded stakes winner in Bayou's Lassie, a half-sister to Midas Eyes.

Just as in the case of Midas Eyes, the Breis raced Jackson Bend during his juvenile season before selling a majority interest to Robert LaPenta. For the Jacks or Better Farm, Jackson Bend posted a record of five victories and a second in six starts as a 2-year-old.

THE BREEDER

Jacks or Better Farm (see co-owner).