



JOHN VELAZQUEZ

Born: Nov. 24, 1971 in Carolina, Puerto Rico

Residence: West Hempstead, N.Y.

Height: 5'6"

Weight: 109 pounds

Family: Wife, Leona; daughter, Lerina; son, Michael Patrick

Eclipse Award: Won as nation's top rider in 2004 and 2005

Major Victories: Belmont Stakes – 2007, filly Rags to Riches; Breeders' Cup – Da Hoss, 1998 Mile; Caressing, 2000 Juvenile Fillies; Starine, 2002 Filly & Mare Turf; Storm Flag Flying, 2002 Juvenile Fillies; Ashado, 2004 Distaff (now Ladies' Classic); Speightstown, 2004 Sprint, and English Channel, 2007 Turf; Dubai World Cup: Roses in May in 2005 ... Won two races during the 2009 Royal Ascot meet for American trainer Wesley Ward – Strike the Tiger in the Windsor Castle Stakes and Jealous Again in the Queen Mary Stakes



Enjoyed career-best year in 2005, breaking Jerry Bailey's North American record of \$23.3 million by posting purse earnings of \$24,474,923; it gave him two straight years at the top of the earnings list, having put up \$22.2 million in earnings in 2004 ... Apparently was rolling along toward what could have been another top earnings year before suffering a major injury in the spring of 2006; gave way to Garrett Gomez as first-call rider for Eclipse Award trainer Todd Pletcher ... Came back to wind up fourth on the earnings list with \$16,502,754 ... Close connection to Pletcher put him in position to put up his big numbers in 2005, repeating that connection from 2004 ... For 2005, scored 44 graded stakes wins, 30 aboard Pletcher trainees, and 65 stakes victories all told ... Among stakes winners ridden: champion older female Ashado, champion turf male Leroidesanimaux, Dubai World Cup victor Roses in May, Travers Stakes winner and Breeders' Cup Classic runner-up Flower Alley and other Grade I winners Bandini, Sand Springs, Happy Ticket, Luas Line, Honey Rider and Adieu ... In 2004, went to winner's circle 335 times, third best behind Rafael Bejarano and Ramon Dominguez ... Partnered with trainer Pletcher to dominate New York racing four years in a row ... As an example, they combined for five victories on one day at Saratoga during 2004 ... Broke his record of 61 victories at Saratoga meeting set in 2003 by posting 65 wins in the six-week 2004 season ... Set a Saratoga record with six victories on one card – Sept. 3, 2001 ... In spite of all those highlights, has not fared well in the Kentucky Derby, with a second aboard Invisible Ink in 2001 his only close finish among 11 starts; next closest was fourth

on More Than Ready in 2000 ... Won his 4,000th career race in 2008 ... First win came in 1990 aboard Rodas at El Comandante Racetrack in San Juan, Puerto Rico ... Entered Puerto Rican jockey school in June 1988 and a year and a half later began riding in his homeland ... In March 1990 came to New York under the guidance of Hall of Fame rider Angel Cordero Jr. ... Ironically, was injured in a four-horse accident that ultimately ended Cordero's riding career in January 1992 and put the Hall of Fame rider in line to take over the agent reins for Velazquez ... Won the George Woolf Memorial Jockey Award in 2009 ... Won Bill Shoemaker Award as outstanding jockey at 2004 Breeders' Cup at Lone Star Park ... Stands third on the career money-won list among active riders, behind Kent Desormeaux and Edgar Prado; he's seventh all time, with earnings of more than \$224 million ... Other outstanding horses ridden over the years: Cetewayo, Sir Bear, Three Ring, Marley Vale, Circle of Life, Lodge Hill, Valor Lady, Smokin Mel, Capote Belle, Yanks Music, Ordway, Honour and Glory, Signal Tap, Perfect Arc and Irish Linnet ... 2009 purse earnings: \$13,069,881, sixth best in the nation.