



Johnny Bear

Johnny Bear
Own: Colebrook Farms and Bear Stables Ltd

Ch. g. 7 (Mar)
Sire: English Channel (Smart Strike) \$25,000
Dam: In Return (Horse Chestnut) \$41
Br: Tall Oaks Farm (Ont-C)
Tr: Brnjas Ashlee (121 14 23 21 .12) 2018:(127 14 .11)

Year	Age	Sex	Color	Starts	Wins	Pls	Pos	Stakes	Stakes Won	Stakes Pls	Total
2018	5	1	1	1	1	0	0	\$859,208	98	0	\$0
2017	11	5	1	1	1	0	0	\$262,682	98	1	\$2,640
2017	11	5	1	1	1	0	0	\$385,224	97	2	\$107,965
2017	11	5	1	1	1	0	0	\$693,173	98	3	\$723,893

Date	Track	Class	Dist	Time	Place	Starts	Notes
15Sep18-TWO	fm	1 1/4	1:13.12	2	25	3	NrthDanc-G1
23Aug18-ZWO	gd	1 1/4	1:15.12	4	2	2	HaltorB 100K
22Jul18-BWO	gd	1 1/4	1:17.2	2	29	3	Nijesky-G2
21Jun18-BWO	fm	1 1/4	1:14.2	2	25	3	Sinespl-G3
15Mar18-BWO	fm	1 1/4	1:15.1	3	2	3	Alw 8536 Inc
10Nov17-BWO	fst	1 1/8	1:43.2	3	2	3	Alw 9047 Inc
15Oct17-BWO	sf	1 1/4	1:18.4	2	10	2	CanIntl-G1
16Sep17-BWO	fm	1 1/4	1:15.2	3	2	2	NrthDanc-G1
30Aug17-BWO	fm	1 1/4	1:16.2	3	2	2	HaltorB 125K
22Jul17-BWO	fm	1	1:47.1	3	2	2	OC 80K-C-N

WORKS: Oct5 WDW tr:1.5f gd 1:02.1 B 3rd Aug23 WDW tr:1.5f gd 1:01.1 B 4th Aug11 WDW tr:1.5f gd 1:01.1 B 4th July13 WDW tr:1.5f gd 1:00.1 B (d) 12:07

TRAINER: Won:LastStart:136 06 (\$1.8M) Turf:107 14 (\$2.1M) Routes:162 15 (\$2.8M) Stakes:10 40 (\$7.9M)

- Two-time Grade 1 Northern Dancer upsetter Johnny Bear will look to gain more respect and continue to make his connections proud as he takes aim at the Pattison Canadian International.
- “If you look at his form for the last year, you can’t really argue that the horse has talent,” said trainer Ashlee Brnjas of Canada’s 2017 Champion Male Turf Horse. “It just wasn’t always the right day or the right distance. He’s very specific about distance, turf conditions and jockey. And Luis [Contreras] and him seem to really get along.”
- With the home field advantage, Johnny Bear will be looking for redemption in the International after being hampered by unfavourable weather conditions in last year’s edition. “Well obviously, he, aside from us, is a big fan of that turf course,” said Brnjas, who is hoping for sunny skies after describing the first attempt as a “disaster” for the gelding who hopped like a bunny over the soft turf and trailed the IO-horse field. “Clearly, the horse wasn’t going to be competitive that day.”
- Bred in Ontario by Ivan Dalos’ Tall Oaks Farm, the seven-year-old English Channel-In Return gelding was the 2012 Canadian Thoroughbred Horse Society Yearling Sale topper and is a full-brother to last year’s Breeders’ Stakes winner Channel Maker, who recently added the Grade 1 Joe Hirsch Turf Classic Stakes to his resume.
- While his early days were trying for his connections, the beloved local star has blossomed from a sleepy youngster into a multiple-graded stakes winner and has proven to be a special racehorse for all involved, including Brnjas’ father John Burness (Colebrook Farms) and Danny Dion (Bear Stables).
- “He’s the coolest horse. He just doesn’t care about anything. He’s very laidback. If he were a person, he would be a surfer.”

Owners – Colebrook Farms and Bear Stables, Ltd.

John Burness operates Colebrook Farms, a 300-acre, state-of-the-art Thoroughbred breeding and training centre in Uxbridge, Ont. His own racing stable consists of 45 to 50 horses that compete at Woodbine and Eastern U.S. racetracks. The breeding division produces 35 to 45 foals per year out of mares belonging to Colebrook and clients. As an owner and breeder, Burness has enjoyed success with multiple stakes winners Reconnect and Seen It All Before.

Danny ‘Bear’ Dion, a native of Chibougamau, Que., is president and former owner of Bear Slashing Ltd., an Alberta-based land clearing and site-preparation company he founded in 1988 and built into a multi-million-dollar business. Dion founded Bear Stables in 2002 and has made a splash in Thoroughbred racing since. He was accorded a Sovereign Award as Canada’s top owner in 2008, the same year his Champion Sprinter Fatal Bullet was named Horse of the Year and Bear Now was named Champion Older Mare.

Trainer – Ashlee Brnjas

Initially beginning her equine career with hunters and jumpers, Ashlee Brnjas followed the advice of her father, who said, “If you want to play with ponies, you have to earn money, not ribbons.” Brnjas turned her attention to training Thoroughbreds 11 years ago for her father’s Colebrook Farms. She earned her first stakes score in the 2009 edition of the Labatt Cup with Alkmene at Fort Erie and won her first Woodbine stakes on her wedding day, September 10, 2011, when Reconnect connected at 70-1 in the La Prevoyante. Reconnect crossed the wire 30 minutes after Brnjas said ‘I do’ as the conditioner was having her wedding photographs taken. Pulling off the upset in back-to-back editions of the Northern Dancer Turf Stakes, Johnny Bear gave Brnjas her first Grade 1 stakes wins.

Jockey – Luis Contreras

Born in Mexico City, Luis Contreras, 32, began riding in his homeland at age 16 and rode more than 100 winners in four consecutive seasons before moving to Golden Gate in Northern California. Since arriving at Woodbine in 2009, Contreras has won three riding titles from 2011 to 2013 and back-to-back Sovereign Awards as Outstanding Jockey in the first of those seasons. Contreras won the 2011 Queen’s Plate with Inglorious in his first try then took the Prince of Wales and Breeders’ Stakes with Pender Harbour to become the first rider to win all three Canadian Triple Crown races with different horses. Last year, he swept the first two legs with Queen’s Plate champion Holy Helena and Prince of Wales winner Cool Catomine. He currently sits third in the Woodbine jockey standings.