

**Ortiz, Irad, Jr.:** Born: Aug. 11, 1992. From: Trujillo Alto, Puerto Rico.

Grandfather, uncle and brother were and/or are all jockeys. Attended Escuela Vocacional Hipica, a Puerto Rican school for prospective jockeys, following in the footsteps of his grandfather, Irad, and uncle, Ivan, who also were riders. He began his career in early 2011 in Puerto Rico and got off to an impressive start. He won with 76 of 357 mounts there before coming to the United States in June 2011.

Enter Efraim "Pito" Rosa, a peace officer who works in the jockeys' room at New York Racing Association tracks. Pito knew the Ortiz brothers' grandfather, Irad Ortiz, and because of that relationship he watched Irad ride in Puerto Rico and then referred him to agent Tony Micallef. Ortiz notched his first win on US soil very quickly, on June 24, 2011 with Millennium at Belmont Park. He finished the year ranked 11th among New York-based riders with 70 wins. Got off to a phenomenal start to his riding career, with nearly 500 winners and purse earnings of over \$23 million in his first two and a half years in the saddle.

Pito also introduced Irad to retired Hall of Fame jockey Angel Cordero Jr., a fellow Puerto Rico native, and Irad's idol. Cordero soon became a mentor and a friend to Irad. Irad's younger brother (by one year) Jose followed him to New York soon after.

He and his brother, Jose, have earned leading rider honors in 10 out of the last 12 race meets in New York, including the last 8 in a row. In nearly every case the brothers finished 1-2 in the meet's standings.

Irada tied Javier Castellano for leading rider at the recently concluded Belmont Park Fall meet. Parents just moved to New York.

Just earned his 12th leading rider title at Aqueduct by winning the Spring meet title. Especially impressive since he was riding in FL all winter.