

Prat, Flavien: Born: August 4, 1992. From: Melun, France.

Prat, whose first victory at racing's highest level came in his native France aboard *Indonesienne* with a perfectly timed ride in the 2013 Group 1 Prix Marcel Boussac Criterium des Pouliches, had his first mount in the United States in 2009.

Prat moved his tack from France to Southern California on a full time basis in 2014. Trainer Richard Mandella said Alain and Gerard Wertheimer, for whom Prat was riding second call in France, asked if he would put the young rider to work and “show him around a little bit.” Mandella was impressed, not only by Prat's talents but his attitude.

“Just immediately, you could see he was a polished professional, and not only that, the greatest kid you could ever meet,” the Hall of Fame conditioner said. “He had great hands and communication with the horses. He just had all the qualities you need, along with a great personality. He can win two stakes races the day before and the next morning you wouldn't know it. And if he loses, he loses. He's got an even temper and demeanor and is just a very good person.”

In September 2015 Prat was injured in an awful spill at Los Alamitos racecourse that left him with a punctured lung and five fractured vertebrae in the middle of his back, injuries that put him in a body cast for two months, and out of racing action for over three months, missing Breeders Cup 2015.

Prat, who comes from a family of Standardbred horsemen, first learned to ride on trotters and ponies. He attended the French jockey school, where aspiring riders not only learn horseback skills but have to take care of the horses they ride.

One thing the jockey school doesn't teach is English, and that had been something of a barrier for Prat. When he was injured, however, he signed up for the Berlitz School of Language in Pasadena and took an intensive course in conversational English, attending classes four days a week for 2 ½ hours a day.

Prat was the Leading Rider at the recently concluded Del Mar meet. He's cracked the top 10 in North American earnings for the first time and is riding for some of the deepest stables in the country.

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