

June 30, 2013

## **BLACK ELEGANCE DAZZLES IN LISTED MANTOVANI IN TEAM VALOR BOW IRISH-BRED 2-YEAR-OLD FILLY IS NOW UNBEATEN FROM BOTH HER STARTS FOOTSTEPSINTHESAND FILLY EN ROUTE TO RICK METEE'S FAIR HILL BARN**

Black Elegance, whose 4 ½-length San Siro maiden win was impressive enough to spur Team Valor International to buy her, won today's Listed Premio Gino Mantovani with true panache over the same course and in the process establishing herself as a leading member of her generation in Italy.

However, the Irish-bred daughter of Footstepsinthesand already has her passage booked to America to join trainer Rick Mettee's stable at Team Valor's private barn at Fair Hill training center in Maryland. Barry Irwin, TVI's CEO, said "We could run her in late August at Saratoga or wait until October and run her at Keeneland. She is a sparse filly and may benefit from a break in the action." The winner will be pointed for the Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies Turf.



*Black Elegance glides toward the wire for an easy 2½-length victory today in the Listed Premio Mantovani.*

After an interminable delay in loading the 9 fillies, the field after a second attempt finally left the gate, after at least 20 minutes was used trying to get the participants into the "Iron Monster." Prior to the start, the gate crew cried uncle, scratching two of the intended starters. Black Elegance had to withstand a pair of lengthy delays, as she was loaded into the gate second on both attempts.

Black Elegance, dispatched as the 5 to 2 favorite over 6-length Rome maiden winner Rayos de Sol, jumped to the lead from her number 2 stall and led every step of the way to win the 7 ½-furlong Listed stakes geared down by 2 ½ lengths.

Under pressure from the beginning, Black Elegance first had to deal with one pace presser and then a second filly, so that they pin-wheeled around the turn with the Team Valor filly on the fence. Jockey Franco Branca never panicked, the filly always was relaxed with her ears flopping sideways and she entered the home straight half a length up on her two rivals.

Every runner was off the bridle 2 furlongs from home, when Black Elegance went into a daylight lead without being asked. When Branca pushed her once, she spurted clear. Although he looked back to see where his rivals were and she seemed home free, the jockey kept her interested until she reached the wire. Branca commented that the filly was always relaxed and she had plenty in reserve.

Second was Tucci, third was Denusa, which had finished third to her in their mutual debuts and once again was beaten 4 ½ by Black Elegance. Final time of 1:33.10 was 1.7 seconds faster than males required in the comparable colt version of this tradition ending to the first half of the Milan season.

Black Elegance is the seventh individual stakes winner and she was winning the seventh stakes this season for Team Valor International, whose sister stable Valor Ladies also has a stakes winner this season with Italian import Tuttipaesi, winner last season of this same Premio Mantovani.