



## Jose Adeon Santos

**Born:** April 26, 1961 in Concepcion, Chile.

**Resident:** Hollywood, Fla.

**Family:** Rita (wife), Nadia, Sophia, Selena and Savannah (daughters), Jose Ricardo and Jose, Jr. (sons).

**Jose Santos' record at Keeneland**

**Total wins: 75**  
**Stakes Wins (20)**

- Led the nation's jockeys by money won four straight years—1986, \$11,329,297; 1987, \$12,375,433; 1988, a then-record \$14,856,214; and 1989, \$13,859,075.
- Won the Eclipse Award in 1988 as the nation's outstanding jockey.
- Won the 2003 Kentucky Derby and Preakness with Funny Cide.
- Won the Belmont Stakes and the Travers Stakes in 1999 with Lemon Drop Kid.
- Winner of seven Breeders' Cup races—1986 Turf with Manila; 1987 Juvenile on Success Express; 1989 Mile on Steinlen (GB); 1990 Juvenile Fillies with Meadow Star and Juvenile with Fly So Free; 1997 Turf on Chief Bearhart; and the 2002 Classic with Volponi.
- Received George Woolf Memorial Jockey Award in 1999.
- Leading rider at Saratoga in 1987, breaking the 11-year streak by Angel Cordero, Jr.
- Leading rider in New York from 1986-1988.
- Has also topped the riders' standings at Calder (tie in summer of 1984), Gulfstream (1985) and Hialeah (1985).
- Winner of ESPN's ESPY Award in 2003 for outstanding jockey.

Chilean-born Jose Santos began working as a groom when he was eight and sold newspapers in order to bring home money each day. He grew up in a large family with seven brothers and one sister.

"We were poor," he recalled. "We didn't eat so good, because I had so many brothers. I went to school for only six years. I worked in the morning and went to school at night."

He learned the fundamentals of riding from his father, Manuel.

"My father was a jockey, so I went to the racetrack a lot as a little boy," he said. "I started working in the barns when I was eight years old."

He rode in his first race at the Hipico Racecourse in southern Chile at 15 and won his first race on Oct. 24, 1976, aboard Sebueso. Three of his brothers were also jockeys. Santos competed there for two years before moving on to Colombia, where he rode for five years. Back in Chile, he rode at the country's leading track in Santiago and went back to Colombia.

In January 1984, he came to the United States, considered one of the leading riders in South America. He quickly made an impact, tying for the riding title with Alex Solis at the summer meet at Calder that year. At Gulfstream's 50-day meet the following winter, he rode a record 62 winners, breaking Angel Cordero, Jr.'s record. Then he was the leading jockey at Hialeah's 1985 spring meet with 53 triumphs.

In July 1985, Santos relocated to New York. In his first full year on the New York Racing Association circuit in 1986, he led all jockeys with 237 victories, and was the leading rider in New York for the next two years with 248 victories and 298, respectively.

He won his first Breeders' Cup race in 1986 with a brilliant ride on Manila, urging the colt to victory despite dropping his whip about 40 yards from the wire. "I think that's one of the most exciting races I ever won," he said afterward.

He also won his first earnings title that year and his other victories included the Tom Fool (G2) with Groovy, the Mother Goose (G1) on Life At the Top and the Turf Classic (G1) on Manila.

In 1987, Joe Hirsch wrote in *Daily Racing Form* that "many regard Santos as the next great American rider in the mold of an Eddie Arcaro or a Bill Shoemaker."

Santos won his second earnings title in 1987 and his second Breeders' Cup race with Success Express (the Juvenile). He also won the Florida Derby and Pegasus with Cryptoclearance, the Yellow Ribbon with Carotene, the Wood Memorial with Gulch and the Kentucky Oaks with Buryourbelief, all Grade 1 races.

He set an earnings record (since broken) of more than \$14.8 million in 1988 and was honored with the Eclipse Award. He won the Jockey Club Gold Cup (G1) with Waquoit, Carter Handicap (G1) with Gulch, and the Grey Lag (G3) with King's Swan, to list just a few.

In 1989, he won his fourth consecutive earnings title, won five stakes at Keeneland, including the Alcibiades and Breeders' Futurity, plus the Arlington Million and Breeders' Cup Mile with Steinlen, the Man o' War (G1) with Yankee Affair, and the Widener and the Donn handicaps with Cryptoclearance, both Grade 1 events.

In 1990, Santos rode three horses who earned Eclipse Awards—Horse of the Year

Criminal Type and the juvenile colt (Fly So Free) and filly (Meadow Star) champions. He also won two Breeders' Cup races, with Fly So Free and Meadow Star.

He has since added two more Breeders' Cup victories—the 1997 Turf on Chief Bearhart and the 2002 Classic with longshot Volponi.

In 1999, he received the George Woolf Memorial Jockey Award. "I'm honored because this is such a prestigious award," he said at the time. "I remember being a finalist in the voting about 10 years ago, and I was disappointed that I didn't get it. But it was worth the wait. I feel very honored."

It was also the year he won his first Triple Crown race, the Belmont, with Lemon Drop Kid aboard whom he also scored his first victory in the Travers.

In 2002, Santos won more than 25 stakes and his mounts earned more than \$11.9 million to rank ninth nationally. In addition to Volponi's victory in the Breeders' Cup Classic, Santos also piloted Imperial Gesture to win the Gazelle Handicap (G1) and Mandy's Gold in the Ruffian Handicap (G1).

In 2003, he added two more classic victories—the Kentucky Derby and Preakness with the wildly popular Funny Cide. He considers those victories to be among the highlights of a career that has been full of accomplishments. In addition, he also won the Prioress (G1) with House Party, the Personal Ensign (G1) with Passing Shot, the Jerome (G2) with During, the Nassau County Breeders' Cup (G2) with House Party and six other graded races. For the year, his mounts earned more than \$11.4 million to rank seventh nationally.

In 2004, Santos won 137 races and his mounts earned \$7,601,843. The Grade 1 highlights were provided by Funny Cide (Jockey Club Gold Cup), the Cigar Mile (Lion Tamer) and the Garden City Breeders' Cup (Lucifer's Stone). He also won graded races with Request for Parole, Coney Kitty (Ire), Passing Shot, Mustanfar, Cool Conductor and Eleusis.

His latest stakes wins at Keeneland (the Appalachian and the Sycamore Breeders' Cup [G3] in 2004) give him a total of 20 to rank 10th.

In 2005, he won the Flower Bowl Invitational (G1) on Riskaverse and graded races with Medallist, Cape Hope and Evening Attire. He won 113 races and \$6,129,799 to rank 29th by earnings. Last year, he was the regular pilot of Fleet Indian and won the Bel-dame (G1) and Personal Ensign (G1) with her. He also won the Carter (G1) on Bishop Court Hill, and other graded races with War Front, Pommies Frites and Mo Cuishe. He ranked 34th with earnings of \$6,155,055.

