

1989 Ben O'Meara



Ben O'Meara started in the horse world as a groom and blacksmith in Brooklyn. A self-taught rider, he first attracted attention in the show ring with a top performance at the 1961 National Horse Show aboard his horse, P.D. a police department failure. Aboard Jacks Or Better, O'Meara captured the PHA Championship in 1962 and that same year tied for the National Horse Show Jumper Championship with Kathy Kusner and Unusual.

A progressive figure who invented a number of riding techniques still used today, O'Meara helped forge strong links between professional rider/trainers and the USET at a time when many pros regarded the USET with uncertainty. A strong Team supporter, several of his horses competed for the Team after they had been sold. Jacks Or Better, for example, won the Grandprix of Aachen with Neal Shapiro, and Untouchable went to the Tokyo and Mexico City Olympics with Kathy Kusner.

O'Meara produced many winners; he developed the horse, Silver Lining, and sold Good Twist to Frank Chapot as a 3-year-old. He also had a number of show ring victories aboard The Hood, including the Jumper Championship at the National Horse Show, and Grey Lady. O'Meara began the 1966 season with wins in Florida aboard Gone Flying. Tragically his career ended when he was killed in a plane crash at the age of 27. Later that year Gone Flying won the National Horse Show Jumper Championship with Barney Ward in the irons.

