

# The Last Superhorse of the Twentieth Century: Secretariat and the Dawn of the Modern Thoroughbred

## A Legacy Unparalleled: The Rise of Secretariat

In the annals of horseracing, the name Secretariat evokes a reverence akin to royalty. Born on March 30, 1970, at Meadow Stable in Doswell, Virginia, this exceptional Thoroughbred possessed an indomitable spirit and an unparalleled physical prowess that would forever alter the landscape of the sport.

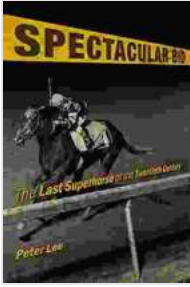
Sired by the champion Bold Ruler and out of Somethingroyal, Secretariat inherited an extraordinary genetic lineage. His dam's sire was Princequillo, a renowned stamina machine, while his grandsire, Nasrullah, was a legendary sire known for his exceptional speed and athleticism. From the moment of his birth, it was evident that Secretariat was destined for greatness.

## A Phenomenal Three-Year-Old Campaign

As a three-year-old in 1973, Secretariat embarked on a campaign that would cement his place in history as one of the greatest racehorses of all time. Under the guidance of legendary trainer Lucien Laurin and the astute ownership of Penny Chenery, he embarked on a remarkable journey that culminated in an unprecedented Triple Crown victory.

**Spectacular Bid: The Last Superhorse of the Twentieth Century (Horses in History)** by Peter Lee

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5



Language	: English
File size	: 6188 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 271 pages
Lending	: Enabled



## **Kentucky Derby: A Record-Breaking Victory**

On a sun-drenched afternoon at Churchill Downs, Secretariat entered the 100th Kentucky Derby as a heavy favorite. With jockey Ron Turcotte aboard, he bided his time near the back of the pack before unleashing a devastating late surge. In a breathtaking display of speed and power, he passed horse after horse, eventually crossing the finish line with an astounding 2 1/2-length margin of victory.

## **Preakness Stakes: Unstoppable Momentum**

Two weeks later, Secretariat faced a formidable challenge at Pimlico Race Course in Baltimore. Despite a slow start, he gradually gained ground on his rivals, eventually overtaking them with a powerful stride that left no doubt as to his superiority. His victory in the Preakness Stakes extended his winning streak to six and set the stage for a historic attempt at the Triple Crown.

## **Belmont Stakes: The Race of a Lifetime**

On a sweltering June 9, 1973, the Belmont Stakes presented Secretariat with his greatest challenge yet. Facing a field of 10 rivals, he was

determined to etch his name into the annals of horseracing history.

From the starting gate, Secretariat took the lead and never looked back. With each stride, he extended his advantage over the field, leaving his opponents in his wake. As he thundered down the stretch, the crowd erupted in a thunderous ovation, recognizing the magnitude of his achievement.

In the end, Secretariat crossed the finish line 31 lengths ahead of his nearest competitor, setting a record that still stands today. His winning time of 1:59.40 for the 1 1/2-mile race shattered the previous record by more than two seconds, establishing him as the fastest Thoroughbred in history.

### **An Icon of the Racing World**

Secretariat's Triple Crown victory was not merely a sporting achievement but a cultural phenomenon. He became a household name, capturing the hearts and imaginations of people from all walks of life. His image adorned magazine covers, newspapers, and television screens, and he was even awarded the prestigious Time magazine "Horse of the Year" honor.

### **Retirement and Legacy**

After his historic Belmont Stakes victory, Secretariat was retired to stud at Meadow Stable, where he continued to make his mark on the sport. His descendants have gone on to achieve great success on the racetrack, including his champion son, Storm Cat, and his grandson, A.P. Indy.

Beyond his racing accomplishments, Secretariat's legacy extends to his influence on the modern Thoroughbred. His exceptional speed, stamina, and athleticism have become the benchmark against which all other

Thoroughbreds are measured. He is widely regarded as the progenitor of the modern Thoroughbred, a legacy that continues to inspire generations of horse enthusiasts.

## **The Enduring Impact of Secretariat**

Nearly five decades after his Triple Crown victory, Secretariat's impact on horseracing and beyond remains profound. He revolutionized the breeding and training methods used in the sport, and his descendants continue to dominate the industry's most prestigious races.

## **A Transformative Force in Breeding**

Secretariat's exceptional genetic makeup has had a transformative impact on Thoroughbred breeding. His descendants have inherited his speed, stamina, and athleticism, creating a dynasty of champions that has left an indelible mark on the sport.

## **A Model for Training and Conditioning**

Secretariat's training regimen, developed by Lucien Laurin, set a new standard for the conditioning of Thoroughbreds. His emphasis on interval training and weight-lifting helped to maximize Secretariat's potential and paved the way for modern training methods that prioritize athleticism and longevity.

## **A Cultural Icon and Inspiration**

Beyond the racetrack, Secretariat has become a cultural icon, inspiring countless works of art, literature, and film. His story of triumph and determination continues to resonate with people around the world, serving as a reminder of the power of dreams and the pursuit of excellence.

## A Farewell to the Superhorse

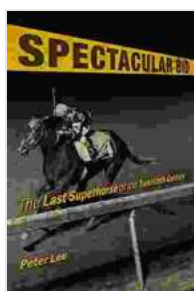
On October 4, 1989, at the age of 19, Secretariat passed away due to complications from laminitis. His death was mourned by horse racing enthusiasts around the globe, and he was laid to rest with full honors at Meadow Stable, the place where his legend began.

## A Lasting Legacy

Though his physical presence is gone, Secretariat's legacy lives on. His Triple Crown victory, his record-breaking performances, and his influence on the modern Thoroughbred have ensured his place in history as one of the greatest racehorses of all time.

As we look back on the life and accomplishments of Secretariat, we are reminded of the indomitable spirit that drives all great athletes. His story is a testament to the power of perseverance, the pursuit of excellence, and the enduring bonds between humans and animals.

In the annals of horseracing, the name Secretariat will forever be synonymous with greatness. He was the last superhorse of the twentieth century, a symbol of an era that will never be forgotten.



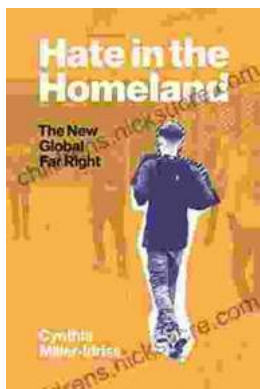
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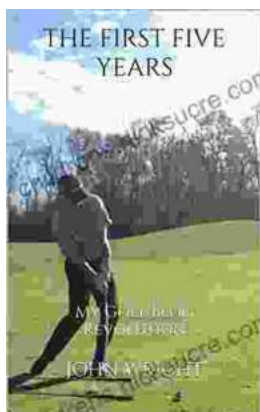
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