

MOLLY HUGHES BRAVO

IRISH WIT MEETS PORTUGUESE PASSION



READ MARTA HUGHES BRAVO'S INTERVIEW ON PAGE 90



IN THE SHOWJUMPING WORLD - SOME FAMILY NAMES CARRY A CERTAIN WEIGHT. BUT FOR SISTERS MOLLY, MARTA, AND MATILDE HUGHES BRAVO, THAT WEIGHT IS LIGHTENED WITH A HEALTHY DOSE OF IRISH WIT AND A WHOLE LOT OF PORTUGUESE PASSION.

RAISED IN A FAMILY STEEPED IN EQUESTRIAN EXCELLENCE, THIS TRIO IS PROBABLY A WONDERFULLY CHAOTIC YET FUN MIX OF COMPETITION, COLLABORATION AND, CONSTANT BICKERING. WE CHAT WITH NUMBER ONE, MOLLY, WHOSE JOURNEY WAS ALMOST PRE-DESTINED. SHE TELLS US

ABOUT GROWING UP IN A “HORSEY HOUSEHOLD,” THE UNIQUE DYNAMICS OF COMPETING AGAINST YOUR OWN SIBLING, THE SPECIAL CONNECTION SHE HAS WITH THE HOME-BRED HORSES OF HUGHES HORSE STUD (HHS) - AND - LIFE ON THE GROUND FROM HER GO-TO PRE-COMPETITION MUSIC TO THE BIGGEST MISCONCEPTIONS PEOPLE HAVE ABOUT SHOWJUMPING.

With both of your parents being showjumpers and your mom running a breeding farm, it seems like horses are truly a family affair. What is it like growing up in such a horsey household, and was there ever any doubt you would follow in their footsteps?

I am very lucky to have grown up around horses and to have been around such great horse people. I always dreamt of becoming as successful as my parents. There are of course many highs and lows so there are always doubts but I try work past them and look at the positives.

You and your sister Marta are young, talented riders. How do you balance being competitive with each other while still being a supportive sister?

My sister and I are four years apart so we didn't compete much against each other in pony shows which probably was a good thing as it would have been very competitive between us. But now as we are older, I think we just want the best for each other and we try to support and help each other as best as we can.

The family business, Hughes Horse Stud (HHS), is known for producing top-quality horses. Do you feel a special connection or a certain pressure when you ride a home-bred horse?

I love riding our home bred horses. I am interested in the breeding side I find it very interesting to see offspring from horses I rode or my parents rode and see similarities come through them all and see how it all works. I don't feel too much pressure riding home bred horses I try just take the positive side of being fortunate enough to be able to ride quality horses that were bred at home.

What is the best piece of advice you have received from your parents, either about riding or about life in general?

Don't mind or care about what other people think.

As the older sister, do you feel a responsibility to guide Marta, or do you learn from each other?

I try help Marta with whatever she needs we both learn from each other.



You've had some significant wins with HHS horses, like HHS Mercedes. What makes a specific horse a "partner" for you in the ring?

I think it's very important that you and your horse trust each other in the ring, I believe that's really important for a good combination.

Looking ahead, what are your major goals for the next five years? Is there a particular championship or event you dream of competing in?

In the next five years my goals are to keep producing a nice string of horses and also compete at the highest level I can and be successful at it. I always dreamt of jumping in the 5* classes at the Dublin Horse Show, so hopefully I can try to achieve that dream in the future.

If you could have a superpower that would help you in showjumping, what would it be?

To be unbeatable.

What's a song or artist you love to listen to before a competition to get in the zone?

Hypnotize - 2007 remaster by Notorious B.I.G.

What is the biggest misconception people have about showjumping?

That it's a glamorous sport. Although it has glamorous aspects the majority of it is not at all glamorous.

Besides riding, what's a hobby or interest you have that might surprise people?

I used to play hockey which I really enjoyed and I want to eventually get back to playing again.

If you could trade places with any other athlete for a day, who would it be and why?

I would like to trade places with Laura Kraut for the day because I would love to jump her mare Bisquetta and especially would have loved to trade on the day she won the Rolex Grand Prix in Dublin this year having had the only clear round. The feeling must have been amazing.

Tell us about an embarrassing moment you had at a big show?

Just recently I was jumping a small class on a young horse and I asked my friend to video by the side of the arena and when I jumped number 12 I thought I was finished so trotted over to her to get my phone back when she told me that I still had one more fence to jump! 🐾

Molly was born on 19 July, 2002 and represents Portugal

Her best horses and results are:

HHS Tokyo: 5th at the 150m Plusvital Premier Grand Prix, 2025

HHS Orchidee: 4th at the 145m CSI2 Premier Grand Prix, 2025*

HHS Mercedes: won the 7yo Ashford Farm Grand Prix at the Sunshine Tour, 2024

HHS Ice Flo: winning the 7yo Final at the Millstreet International Horse Show and the Final in Valkenswaard and the Boomerang Final, 2024

HHS Catwalk: winner of the Portuguese Junior Championship, 2020