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DERBY WINNER NYQUIST HEADING TO PIMLICO MONDAY

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Sunday, May 8, 2016) – Trainer Doug O’Neill was at Barn 41 shortly after 5 a.m. to give a check on his Kentucky Derby winner **Nyquist** Sunday and the readout was a good one.

“He’s doing great,” O’Neill said. “He had his head out over the webbing, looking bright eyed. He ate it all up last night. Couldn’t be doing better. He’s just such a special horse.”

O’Neill had the horse jogged down the shedrow for a just-in-case look, but that turned out fine, too. By 6 o’clock the Uncle Mo colt had been walked, bathed and put back into his stall.

The trainer was joined his brother Dennis and Tom Knust, the jockey agent for winning rider Mario Gutierrez. Added to the group was Churchill Downs starter Scott Jordan, who dropped by the barn to offer congratulations.

Jordan relayed that the NBC crew broadcasting the race initially had told him they were allotting five minutes of air time for him to get all 20 runners into the gate. He had told them that he thought two minutes would be plenty enough. The NBC guys adjusted to three minutes.

“We started loading and it was going pretty good,” Jordan said. “The NBC guys said I had to slow it down. I told them ‘Sorry, fellas, you’re on my time now.’ We got ’em all in in a minute and 38.”

O’Neill said that Nyquist would be headed to Maryland Monday for the next step on the Triple Crown trail, the Preakness Stakes (GI) on May 21.

“He’ll be part of six horses we send up there, including the filly,” he said. The filly would be **Land Over Sea**, the 3-year-old who was a bang-up second in Friday’s Kentucky Oaks (GI). Both she and Nyquist are owned by Paul Reddam.

O’Neill added that several of his Derby “crew,” among them chief assistant trainer Leandro Mora and exercise rider Jonny Garcia, were heading back Sunday to his main stable at Santa Anita. He was off to the airport, too, to grab a California flight. He indicated he’d rejoin Nyquist in Maryland Wednesday or Thursday of the coming week.

EXAGGERATOR (second) – Exaggerator, the Kentucky Derby runner-up who used a powerful late kick to come from far back in the field to be beaten just over a length by Nyquist, was doing well at his Barn 25 stall Sunday morning.

Groom Vic Bargac had the Curlin colt out for a walk of the barn area early and reported that his charge was in fine shape following his big effort.

“He’s good,” he said. “He ate it all last night and he liked his breakfast today, too. He’s doing very well.”

Trainer Keith Desormeaux designates Sundays as a day of rest at his barn and, other than the necessary tasks to care for the well-being of the animals, it was quiet along his shedrow.

Following his Derby 142 effort, Desormeaux indicated he’d look forward to a rematch with Nyquist. That appears likely to happen on Saturday, May 21 at Pimlico in Maryland in the 141st edition of the Preakness Stakes.

GUN RUNNER (third)/CREATOR (13th) – Trainer Steve Asmussen’s Derby duo – Winchell Thoroughbreds and Three Chimneys Farm’s **Gun Runner** and WinStar Farm’s **Creator** – came out of the race in good order, Asmussen said Sunday morning.

Gun Runner finished third, 4 1/2 lengths behind winner Nyquist, and Creator finished 13th, beaten 18 1/4 lengths.

Gun Runner held a narrow lead entering the stretch, but was overpowered by Nyquist.

“I’m very proud of him,” Asmussen said of Gun Runner. “I thought he gave a great effort. An excellent running of the Derby, for sure.”

The late-running Creator encountered traffic trouble as he was approaching the stretch and jockey Richardo Santana Jr. had to check him.

“I thought Creator lost all chance at the quarter pole. Those horses came together real hard,” Asmussen said.

Plans for both horses are on hold. “Both horse are stabled here now,” Asmussen said. “We’ll give them a couple of days. They’ll go back to the track on Wednesday, and I’ll speak with the owners and see what should happen next.

“I’m very comfortable with who both horses are. I think they should both have a very big year.”

MOHAYMEN (fourth) – Shadwell Stable's **Mohaymen** exited his fourth-place finish in the Kentucky Derby in good order.

The Daily Racing Form reported that trainer Kieran McLaughlin would skip the remainder of the Triple Crown with the son of Tapit and focus on the Travers Stakes (GI) at Saratoga.

McLaughlin said Mohaymen had too much ground to make up in the stretch after having trouble handling the racetrack during the early stages of the Derby.

SUDDENBREAKINGNEWS (fifth) – Trainer Donnie Von Hemel reported Sunday morning that Samuel F. Henderson's **Suddenbreakingnews** was "tired," but otherwise fine after his fast closing fifth-place finish in the Kentucky Derby.

"He's fine," Von Hemel said. "He's walking good. There are no issues soundness-wise."

The Mineshaft gelding was one of several horses bothered at the start when another horse came over on them, but was able to find smoother sailing through the stretch.

"We had some bad luck at the start," Von Hemel said. "Overall, he showed up, he performed. I'm extremely proud of him."

Von Hemel said that all two-turn races for 3-year-olds were on the table, including the Preakness Stakes (May 21) and Belmont Stakes (June 11), but no decision would be made for at least a week.

DESTIN (sixth)/OUTWORK (14th) – Trainer Todd Pletcher reported that his two Derby colts, **Destin** (who finished sixth) and **Outwork** (14th), were "both in good order," Sunday morning and would be flown to New York on Monday where their future options would be considered.

Their efforts Saturday were the 16th time the trainer has been through the Kentucky Derby challenge and he was asked for his thoughts about trying to win America's most famous race.

"It's a case of managing expectations," he said. "I think we did everything we could to have them ready to take that next step; to have them go up to the next level. You want to give them their best chance to win. And we did. They were prepared well; everything we wanted for them worked out as we'd hoped. They were ready. We'd done all we could to get them to that point. I have no regrets about how they were prepared. The eight weeks between his last race and the Derby wasn't a factor for Destin. He was where we wanted him to be. They handled the paddock well and they paraded well. Sometimes you just have to manage your expectations.

"From a trainer's perspective, I find it interesting that both the Derby (**Nyquist**) and Oaks (**Cathryn Sophia**) winners did not breeze over the track. There are lots of things you think about for your horses coming up to a race; the things you need to do to get your horse ready. But maybe coming in here early and getting them a breeze on the track isn't as necessarily important as it is in other places."

The trainer also indicated that joining his Derby colts on the flight to New York would be his highly promising colt **Stradivari**, who had worked six furlongs at Churchill on Derby morning in 1:14.40.

"We'd like to run him in the Preakness (May 21)," the trainer said. "Or if he doesn't get in, we'd go for the Sir Barton (mile and one-sixteenth, \$100,000) on the Preakness undercard."

BRODY'S CAUSE (seventh) – Albaugh Family Stable's **Brody's Cause** came out of his seventh-place Kentucky Derby finish in good order.

Stable manager Jason Loutsch said no decision has been made on a possible start in the Preakness Stakes for the Dale Romans-trained Blue Grass (GI) winner.

"We will not make plans until mid-week. We'll see how he is on the track Wednesday," Loutsch said in a text.

The Romans-trained **Cherry Wine**, who didn't draw in off the also-eligible list for the Kentucky Derby, is also a candidate for the second leg of the Triple Crown.

MO TOM (eighth) – G M B Racing's **Mo Tom**, who finished eighth in the Kentucky Derby for trainer Tom Amoss, might be headed to the third jewel of the Triple Crown, G M B racing manager Greg Benseal said Sunday morning.

"I talked to Tom," Benseal said. "The horse came back good. We're probably going to give him a little break here. At the end of the day, we'd like to take a shot at the Belmont. We'll see how he trains the next 10 days or two weeks and decide from there."

Mo Tom, who had traffic issues between the three-eighths pole and quarter pole in the Derby, finished 10 1/4 lengths behind Nyquist.

LANI (ninth) – Koji Maeda's **Lani** came out of his Kentucky Derby effort in good shape according to trainer Mikio Matsunaga.

"He is not too tired this morning," Matsunaga said. "He will go to Belmont Park tomorrow and the Preakness is still possible. There is no change in our plan."

Ridden by Yutaka Take, Lani finished ninth, 10 3/4 lengths behind Nyquist.

"I think he was a little fresh early and strong the first furlong," Matsunaga said. "Then he was one-paced in the stretch."

It was the first Derby experience for Matsunaga and a favorable one.

"I was very much impressed by the atmosphere yesterday," Matsunaga said. "I talked with Mr. (Bob) Baffert and he said to enjoy the best race in the world."

And would he like to test "the best race in the world" again?

"Yes, but with a different type horse," Matsunaga said. "I would want one that is tough, very capable and possibly a front-runner ... and easier to handle."

MOR SPIRIT (10th) – George Alvarez, Hall of Fame trainer Bob Baffert's go-to exercise rider for last year's Triple Crown winner **American Pharoah** and now **Mor Spirit**, was holding down the fort Sunday morning for assistant trainer Jimmy Barnes and Baffert. He reported Mor Spirit, 10th in the Kentucky Derby, came of the race in good shape.

"He's fine, no excuses," Alvarez said. "It just wasn't his day."

Alvarez said that the Baffert contingent of horses likely would remain at Churchill Downs until Preakness time. Among the horses possible for the Preakness is their Lexington Stakes winner **Collected**.

MY MAN SAM (11th)/SHAGAF (DNF) – Trainer Chad Brown, who was just leaving to catch a plane back to New York Sunday morning, said both My Man Sam and Shagaf seemed fine Sunday morning.

"The both look good," Brown said. "So far, so good. They'll both leave for New York tomorrow (Monday) and we'll regroup from there."

TOM'S READY (12th) – G M B Racing's **Tom's Ready** came out of the Derby healthy but "a little tired," trainer Dallas Stewart said Sunday morning.

Tom's Ready finished 12th, 17 lengths behind Nyquist. Jockey Brian Hernandez Jr. gave Tom's Ready an excellent trip, Stewart said.

"I'm very happy with the way he came back," Stewart said. "He looks good. ... He's bright enough, and we're happy that he was able to run in it. Congratulations to the winner and everybody who hit the board. It looked like a great race for everybody."

"It's such a great thing to be in the race. Where we're going to go from here, we'll just have to take a week or so and see. I don't have feelings that we'll go to the Preakness. I don't think that that's the right thing to do. Maybe something at Belmont. I might shorten him up a little bit. I don't know. There are a lot of good races. We'll sit down and write them all down and look at every 3-year-old race and see where we need to be. Sometimes coming off a race like this, he's still a non-winners-of-two. Maybe just give him a little shot to win one and get his head back. Try to make a good year of it."

DANZING CANDY (15th) – Cliff Sise Jr., trainer of Derby pacesetter **Danzing Candy**, who finished 15th, said an endoscopic exam after the race revealed that the colt had "a little thickness in the epiglottis."

"He entrapped a little bit," Sise said Sunday morning.

Following Saturday's race, Danzing Candy's rider, Mike Smith said, "As loud as the crowd was, I could hear him (breathing hard) down the lane. When I pulled him up, he sounded like a lion."

Sise said medication should correct the problem. There are no immediate race plans for Danzing Candy, who will return to his Southern California home base Tuesday.

TROJAN NATION (16th) – **Trojan Nation**, the Derby 16th-place finisher, was headed back to California Sunday on a flight that contained several other Santa Anita-based runners who were brought east for stakes engagements at Churchill Downs this past week.

Trainer Paddy Gallagher also was westbound on an early flight, glad for the Derby experience and glad his big maiden had come out of it all in good shape. "He seemed fine this morning," the Irishman said.

OSCAR NOMINATED (17th) – Trainer Mike Maker reported Sunday at 8:45 a.m. that **Oscar Nominated**, 17th in the Kentucky Derby, come out of the race in good order and was on his way back to his nearby home at the Trackside Training Center.

Oscar Nominated was making his first start on dirt Saturday and following the race his rider Julien Leparoux said the Kitten's Joy colt was "spinning his wheels." Maker said following the race that Oscar Nominated likely would be returned to turf.

MAJESTO (18th) – Grupo 7C Racing Stable's **Majesto** came out of the race in good order according to trainer Gustavo Delgado. Delgado said plans for the colt are undecided.

WHITMORE (19th) – Even after finishing 19th of 20 in Saturday's Kentucky Derby, Whitmore remained the same "happy" horse he's been all week Sunday morning.

"We took him out to graze this morning and he walked," trainer Ron Moquett said. "He's walking good. He's happy. We'll live to fight another day. I think the jock (Victor Espinoza) made it look worse than it really was."