LONGTIME FRIENDS BOREL, BRADLEY
ATTEMPT CLARK TRIUMPH WITH THE PLAYER

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Thursday, Nov. 23, 2017) – A little more than 16 months ago, then-retired Hall of Fame jockey Calvin Borel was living on trainer William “Buff” Bradley’s Indian Ridge Farm in Frankfort, Ky. On Friday, the 50-year-old rider will get a leg up to ride The Player as one of the favorites in Friday’s marquee race of Churchill Downs’ Fall Meet – the Grade I, $500,000 Clark Handicap Presented by Norton Healthcare.

“Buff has done so much for my career,” Borel said. “We’ve been through the lowest of lows and the highest of highs together. That’s what friends are for. We’ve been through it all. It’s very special to be able to ride this horse in such a big race for Buff.”

Bradley and Borel have been friends since the early 1990s. Borel has ridden some of Bradley’s top horses including $2 million earner Brass Hat and multiple Eclipse Award-winning mare Groupie Doll.

The Clark would be only the third time Borel would ride The Player for Bradley and co-owner Carl Hurst, as they most recently teamed to win Keeneland’s Oct. 28 Fayette (GI) by three lengths.

“Calvin rode a great race that day,” Bradley said. “The race was really emotional for me because I was thinking about my (late) dad (Fred) who bred The Player with us. He’d be really proud to know where we are at now with him.”

Borel has worked The Player in each of his most recent published workouts but a five-furlong bullet breeze on Nov. 17 installed some extra confidence in Bradley and Borel.

“I couldn’t get Calvin to stop smiling after he got back from the work,” Bradley said. “Calvin kept patting him and couldn’t say enough about how he went. He told me after the breeze ‘Buff, you have him in the perfect spot for this race. He couldn’t be doing things any better.’ I just hope that is the case.”

“I couldn’t imagine this horse coming into the race any better than he is,” Borel said. “He ran so well in his last start but has shown in the mornings no regression at all. Our fingers are crossed.”

The 1 1/8-mile Clark leads a trio of stakes races on Friday’s 12-race card that is traditionally the most popular racing day Churchill Downs’ Fall Meet. The main event is scheduled as the 11th race on the Friday program that also features the 27th running of the $200,000 Mrs. Revere (GII) for 3-year-old fillies on turf and the 13th running of the $80,000-added Dream Supreme Overnight Stakes for fillies and mares. Post time for Friday’s first race is 1 p.m. (EST).

Like the Kentucky Derby Presented by Woodford Reserve (GI) and the Longines Kentucky Oaks (GI), the Clark Handicap was run for the first time in 1875’s inaugural racing meet at Churchill Downs, which was then known as the Louisville Jockey Club. The Clark, the Derby and the Oaks have been run each year without interruption since their debuts.

The field for the Clark Handicap (with jockeys, assigned weight and morning line odds): Hoppertunity (Florent Geroux, 123 pounds, 3-1); Seeking the Soul (John Velazquez, 116, 6-1); Good Samaritan (Joel Rosario, 116, 8-1); Destin (Ricardo Santana Jr., 121, 10-1); Goats Town (Chris Landeros, 114, 30-1); Mo Tom (Brian Hernandez Jr., 114, 20-1); The Player (Calvin Borel, 119, 6-1); Honorable Duty (Corey Lanerie, 120, 5-1); and Diversify (Irad Ortiz Jr., 123, 5-2).

Destin hopes to cap 2017 campaign with Grade I victory in the Clark – Twin Creeks Racing Stable and Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners’ Destin recorded his third graded stakes victory on Nov. 3 at Del Mar in the $200,000 Marathon Stakes (Grade II) on the Breeders’ Cup undercard but will have to overcome a cut back of five-eighths of a mile in Saturday’s Grade I, $500,000 Clark Handicap Presented by Norton Healthcare at Churchill Downs.

“It’s not often where we wish the race to be 1 ¼ miles,” assistant trainer Ginny DePasquale joked. “We’re so proud of him after the Marathon and surprisingly the race really didn’t take much out of him at all.”

Trained by Todd Pletcher, Destin, a 2016 Kentucky Derby (GI) alumnus, began his 2017 campaign in late May following a nine-month layoff. The 4-year-old colt by Giant’s Causeway recorded a narrow victory in a conditioned allowance race on Aug. 23 at Saratoga, and defeated Clark rival Seeking the Soul. A troubled fifth-place finish in the Oct. 7 Jockey Club Gold Cup (GI) followed his allowance score.
ARRIVAL ATTEMPTS STAKES COMPANY FOR FIRST TIME IN WIDE-OPEN JOCKEY CLUB – John Oxley, Gainesway Farm, Helen Alexander and Stuart Huston’s recent eye-catching maiden winner Arrival will attempt stakes company for the first time as a late supplemental entry to Saturday’s $200,000 Kentucky Jockey Club (Grade II) at Churchill Downs.

“We’re really proud of his maiden effort,” assistant trainer Norm Casse said. “We think he deserves a shot in this race. We feel like he inherited the lead last time and he won despite of that. Obviously there is a lot more speed signed on for this race but he has a high cruising speed and I can’t imagine him being too far off the pace.”

Trained by Norm’s father Mark, a two-time Kentucky Jockey Club winning conditioner, Arrival was an $800,000 purchase at the 2016 Keeneland September Yearling Sale. The colt was supplemental to the Jockey Club for $6,000 after not originally nominating for the race.

One of the probable pace setters in the Jockey Club could be Cash Is King and LC Racing’s Diamond King for trainer Robert “Butch” Reid. The 2-year-old Quality Road colt pressed the early pace in a first-level allowance race at Parx in his last start through an opening quarter mile in :21.81 before taking control in the final stages of the 6 ½-furlong race and recording a 2 ¼-length win.

“We don’t get many opportunities to run two turns in Philly,” Reid said. “I think the two turns should hit him right between the eyes. He’s speedy but doesn’t necessarily have to be on the lead. He may just be quicker than the rest of the field and inherit it naturally.”

The 1 1/16-mile race is the co-headliner on the penultimate day of the 21-date Fall Meet. Billed as “Stars of Tomorrow II,” each of the 12 races is exclusively for 2-year-olds that may have aspirations of trail-blazing their way to next spring’s Kentucky Derby Presented by Woodford Reserve (GI) and Longines Kentucky Oaks (GI).

The Kentucky Jockey Club – a “Prep Season” race on the “Road to the Kentucky Derby” in which the Top 4 finishers will receive 10-4-2-1 points, respectively – goes as Race 11 at 5:56 p.m. (all times Eastern). First post is 1 p.m. The co-featured $200,000 Golden Rod (GII) for fillies is Race 9 at 4:57 p.m.

The complete field for the Kentucky Jockey Club from the rail out (with jockey and morning line odds): Gotta Go (Chris Landeros, 6-1); Diamond King (Frankie Pennington, 20-1); John Tippmann (Rayan Gazader, 20-1); Arrival (Julien Leparoux, 12-1); Givemeaminit (Brian Hernandez Jr., 6-1); Enticed (Junior Alvarado, 4-1); Promises Fulfilled (Alex Cianchari, 8-1); High North (Corey Lanerie, 30-1); Reride (Ricardo Santana Jr., 20-1); Bravazo (Jon Court, 8-1); Quip (Florent Geroux, 8-1); Tiz Mischief (Robby Albarado, 8-1); Lone Sailor (Channing Hill, 12-1); and Peppered (Joe Rocco Jr., 12-1).

All starters will carry 122 pounds. High North will race with Lasix for the first time.

MONOMOY GIRL MADE SOLID 8-5 MORNING LINE FAV FOR SATURDAY’S GOLDEN ROD – Monomoy Stables and Michael Dubb’s Monomoy Girl will attempt to remain unbeaten as the 8-5 morning line favorite in Saturday’s $200,000 Golden Rod (Grade II) at Churchill Downs.

“We’ve been so proud of her throughout the early stages of her career,” trainer Brad Cox said. “She’s really shown us in the mornings that she can handle the dirt and has trained lights out since the Rags to Riches.”

Prior to winning the Rags to Riches by 3 ¼ lengths, Monomoy Girl was victorious in two turf races: a maiden special weight by 3 ¾ lengths on Sept. 5 at Indiana Grand, and a first-level allowance by 1 ¼ lengths on Sept. 28 at Churchill Downs.

The 1 1/16-mile race is the co-headliner on the second-to-last of the 21-day Fall Meet. Billed as “Stars of Tomorrow II,” each of the 12 races is exclusively for 2-year-olds.

The Golden Rod – a “Prep Season” race on the “Road to the Kentucky Oaks” in which the Top 4 finishers will receive 10-4-2-1 points, respectively – goes as Race 9 at 4:57 p.m. (all times Eastern). First post is 1 p.m. The co-featured $200,000 Kentucky Jockey (GII), which attracted 14 colts and geldings, is Race 11 at 5:56 p.m.

The Golden Rod field from the rail out (with jockeys and morning line odds): Caroline the Great (Calvin Borel, 30-1); Undivided (Alex Cianchari, 30-1); Dessert Honeys (Channing Hill, 15-1); Sultry (Corey Lanerie, 4-1); Road to Victory (Julien Leparoux, 8-1); Monomoy Girl (Florent Geroux, 8-5); Cash Out (Junior Alvarado, 8-1); Stronger Than Ever (Robby Albarado, 15-1); Deadline (Brian Hernandez Jr., 15-1); Kelly’s Humor (Ricardo Santana Jr., 5-1); Foxtrot Sally (Joe Rocco Jr., 15-1); and Ipanema Beach (Chris Landeros, 20-1).

“T’m really pleased with how he’s been doing since we got him to Kentucky,” DePasquale said. “His first day training at Churchill (Tuesday) he had a little bit of jet lag but (Wednesday) returned to his feisty ways and looked well.”
IVY BELL ATTEMPTS TO OVERCOME OPEN MIND MISHAP AS 3-1 MORNING LINE FAVORITE – Brook T. Smith

Investment’s West Virginia Secretary Stakes winner Ivy Bell hopes to rebound after she clipped heels as the heavy favorite in the Sept. 16 Open Mind Stakes at Churchill Downs.

Bet down to the 3-5 favorite in the Open Mind, Ivy Bell commenced a run along the inside on the final turn and drew close to pace setter and fellow Dream Supreme contender Mayla at the top of the stretch. As the two crossed the quarter pole after a half-mile in :45.81, Mayla came in near the eighth pole and put Ivy Bell in tight along the rail as she clipped heels and dropped Hernandez. Both horse and jockey appeared fine after the incident. Ivy Bell was caught by an outrider and Hernandez walked back to the jockey’s room after a quick visit by EMTs.

The Dream Supreme is carded as Race 10 with a scheduled post time of 5:27 p.m. (all times Eastern) First post for Friday’s 12-race program is scheduled for 1 p.m.

The field from the rail out (with jockey and morning line odds): Southern Ring (Julien Leparoux, 8-1); Miss Kentucky (Ortiz, 12-1); Kathballu (Robby Albarado, 4-1); Fiesta (Channing Hill, 30-1); Athena (Joe Rocco Jr., 10-1); Ivy Bell (Brian Hernandez Jr., 3-1); Put Da Blame On Me (Joel Rosario, 6-1); Mayla (Corey Lanerie, 4-1); Auntjenn (Florent Geroux, 8-1); and Hailstorm Slew (Jon Court, 10-1).

KENTUCKY DERBY FUTURE WAGER OPENS THURSDAY – The first of Churchill Downs’ four 2018 Kentucky Derby Future Wager pools kicks off its four-day run on Thanksgiving Day. This week’s Derby Futures pool, which coincides with the lone Kentucky Derby Sire Future Wager, is the first of four that will be conducted in the months leading up to the 2018 running of the famed “Run for the Roses.”

Winning mutuel payouts on the $2 minimum bet will be determined by the odds that are in place at the conclusion wagering on Sunday at 6 p.m. (EST).

For more information visit: https://www.kentuckyderby.com/wager/future-wager

MILESTONE WATCH – Jockey Brian Hernandez Jr. began Thursday one win away from 500 victories at Churchill Downs while Ricardo Santana Jr. was six wins away from 200. … Trainer Greg Foley (399) was one win away from 400 career victories beneath the historic Twin Spires while trainer Ian Wilkes was targeting 200 career victories at Churchill Downs (197 wins). … Trainer Mike Maker was four wins away from 2,000 career victories.

FREE ONLINE BRISNET PAST PERFORMANCES FOR CHURCHILL DOWNS; NEW BRISNET BETTING GUIDE DEBUTS ON-TRACK – Throughout Churchill Downs’ Fall Meet, Brisnet.com is offering horseplayers complimentary past performances for each day’s races at the Louisville, Ky. racetrack. To download the free Churchill Downs past performances online, guests can visit: https://www.brisnet.com/product/past-performances/FPP.

Additionally, Brisnet.com has introduced an excellent new product for on-track guests at Churchill Downs. The Brisnet.com Betting Guide features informative Brisnet.com Premium Plus Past Performances for four-to-eight different racetracks around the country in a bound book with high-quality paper. The book will retail for only $5, which means the new product will be significantly cheaper for Churchill Downs’ guests compared to previously-offered past performance products. It also will have better quality and more targeted content for horseplayers.

The new Brisnet.com Betting Guide is available at program stands and other distribution locations throughout Churchill Downs.

DOWN THE STRETCH – Thursday’s 20-cent Single 6 Jackpot has a carryover of $75,991 and will begin in Race 7 at 2:24 p.m.

-END-