



THE DERBY DISPATCH

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ROAD TO KENTUCKY DERBY CONCLUDES WITH LEXINGTON STAKES

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Thursday, April 13, 2023) – The 37-race Road to the Kentucky Derby will conclude Saturday where 11 3-year-olds will have their final opportunity to garner qualifying points for the \$3 million Kentucky Derby presented by Woodford Reserve (Grade I).

The drama-filled series, which began in September, now has owners and trainers sitting on the edge of their seats hoping their horse can have the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to qualify for the Kentucky Derby.

While Saturday's \$400,000 Lexington Stakes (GIII) at Keeneland will only offer 40 points to the top five finishers, **Winchell Thoroughbreds' Disarm** (40 points) can qualify for a spot in the Derby field with a top three finish. Points will be awarded in the Lexington on a 20-8-6-4-2 scale and **Jace's Road** (45 points) is the last horse currently qualified in the Derby field.

There will be a lot of moving parts throughout the next three weeks until the Kentucky Derby is run on May 6, but Saturday's Lexington is a major part of deciding who's in and who's out of this year's field.

DISARM ATTEMPTS TO QUALIFY FOR KENTUCKY DERBY 149 IN LEXINGTON – **Winchell Thoroughbreds' Disarm**, runner-up in the TwinSpires.com Louisiana Derby (GII) in his most recent start, will try to earn a spot in the Kentucky Derby presented by Woodford Reserve (GI) starting gate when he heads a field of 11 3-year-olds entered for Saturday's 41st running of the \$400,000 Lexington (GIII).

The 1 1/16-mile test will go as the ninth race on Saturday's 11-race program at Keeneland with a 5:16 p.m. (all times Eastern) post time. First post Saturday is 1 p.m.

The Lexington is the final race on the Road to the Kentucky Derby and carries 40 points that will be awarded on a 20-8-6-4-2 basis to the first- through fifth-place finishers. The Derby is limited to the top 20 point earners and invitees that pass the entry box.

Trained by **Steve Asmussen**, Disarm has his 40 points from the Louisiana Derby. The current cut is 45 points.

Owning a record of 4-1-2-1, Disarm will be ridden Saturday by **Jose Ortiz** and exit post position 6. Disarm garnered much attention when he broke his maiden at second asking by 6 ¼ lengths on Aug. 6 at Saratoga. Following that race, Disarm was on the sidelines until Feb. 19 where he finished second by four lengths to **Two Eagles River** in a first-level allowance contest at Oaklawn. In the Louisiana Derby, Disarm was defeated 3 ½ lengths to **Kingsbarns**.

The field for the Lexington (with jockey and trainer):

1. **Baseline Beater** (Corey Lanerie, Neil Pessin)
2. **Reinvest** (Joe Talamo, Tim Hamm)
3. **Demolition Duke** (Flavien Prat, Brad Cox)
4. **Transect** (Gerardo Corrales, Paulo Lobo)
5. **First Mission** (Luis Saez, Brad Cox)
6. Disarm (Ortiz, Asmussen)
7. **Denington** (Brian Hernandez Jr., Kenny McPeck)
8. **Empirestrikesfast** (Frankie Dettori, Bill Mott)
9. **Prairie Hawk** (John Velazquez, Saffie Joseph Jr.)
10. **Curly Larry** and Mo (Rey Gutierrez, Caio Caramori)
11. **Arabian Lion** (Irad Ortiz Jr., Bob Baffert)

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HOLY BULL WINNER ROCKET CAN DRILLS HALF-MILE IN :46.60 AT CHURCHILL DOWNS – Frank Fletcher Racing Operations' Holy Bull Stakes (GIII) winner **Rocket Can** continued his serious training towards the Kentucky Derby with a bullet half-mile move in :46.60 Thursday at Churchill Downs under exercise rider **Guelser Cardona**.

Rocket Can's move was the fastest of 34 horses at the distance Thursday morning. The striking gray son of Into Mischief worked at 7:30 a.m. on the outside of allowance winner **Lady Arsinoe**. Rocket Can began his move one length back of his **Bill Mott**-trained stablemate and finished even at the wire. Rocket Can galloped out five furlongs in :59.20 and completed six furlongs in 1:12.60.

Rocket Can finished second to **Forte** in the Fountain of Youth (GII) following his win in the Holy Bull and, most recently, finished fourth as the beaten favorite in the Arkansas Derby (GI).

KENTUCKY DERBY ARRIVALS – As of Thursday, there were 10 Kentucky Derby contenders on the grounds at Churchill Downs: **Angel of Empire** (Barn 22), **Confidence Game** (24), **Continuar (JPN)** (Q1), **Derma Sotogake (JPN)** (Q1), **Hit Show** (22), **Jace's Road** (22), **Rocket Can** (19), **Sun Thunder** (6), **Verifying** (22) and **Wild On Ice** (43).

The next horses scheduled to arrive at Churchill Downs are **Todd Pletcher's** trio of contenders: **Forte** (Monday), **Kingsbarns** (Monday) and **Tapit Trice** (Sunday). They will all be stabled in Pletcher's Barn 39.

Trainer **Larry Rivelli** reported Jeff Ruby Steaks (GIII) winner **Two Phil's** would remain stabled at Hawthorne and ship to Churchill Downs on May 1.

There also were several Derby hopefuls on the outside of the top 20 that arrived at Churchill Downs: No. 22 **Cyclone Mischief** (Barn 4), No. 25 **King Russell** (10) and No. 26 **Disarm** (38).

UPCOMING KENTUCKY DERBY WORKS – Three Kentucky Derby contenders are tentatively scheduled to work Saturday at Churchill Downs: **Angel of Empire** (5:30 a.m.), **Confidence Game** (7:30 a.m.) and **Jace's Road** (5:30 a.m.).

Wild On Ice would be on target to work either Saturday or Sunday. The Sunland Derby (GIII) winner trains daily around 6:30 a.m.

Those horse's official times and splits will be shared on Twitter via @HorseRacingKK.

JAPAN KENTUCKY DERBY CONTENDERS DERMA SOTOGAKE, CONTINUAR BEGIN TO RAMP UP WORK – Japan's duo of Kentucky Derby contenders – **Derma Sotogake (JPN)** and **Continuar (JPN)** – arrived at Churchill Downs around 5 a.m. Saturday and have already been getting acquainted with Churchill Downs.

Both horses have trained daily at either 7:40 a.m. or 9 a.m. and begin their time on the track by jogging in the one-mile chute accompanied by veteran horseman **Mike Crowder** on his lead pony.

Derma Sotogake is ridden daily by **Masatoshi Segawa** while Continuar has **Kazunari Yoshida** in the irons.

Both horses are scheduled to increase their training regiments next week, according to **Kate Hunter**, the Kentucky Derby representative for the **Japan Racing Association**. Not only have Segawa and Yoshida been getting acquainted to Churchill Downs, the duo began sightseeing the Louisville area including eating lunch at the famous Wagner's Pharmacy and visiting the Kentucky Derby Museum.

Derma Sotogake and Continuar are stabled in the Quarantine Barn 1 at the Kentucky Import Center at Churchill Downs.

LONGINES KENTUCKY OAKS NEWS AND NOTES –

Six of the 14 fillies in the \$1.25 million Longines Kentucky Oaks (GI) are currently stabled at Churchill Downs: **Botanical** (Barn 22), **Flying Connection** (43), **Pretty Mischievous** (9), **Southlawn** (5A), **The Alys Look** (22) and **Wet Paint** (22). **Affirmative Lady** arrived from Florida on Thursday to trainer **Graham Motion's** string at Keeneland. ...

Fair Grounds Oaks (GII) winner **Southlawn** had her first work back since qualifying for the Kentucky Oaks when she clipped four furlongs in :47.60 under jockey **Rey Gutierrez**. Southlawn galloped out five furlongs in 1:00.20, six furlongs in 1:13.20 and was up seven furlongs in 1:26.80. Trainer **Norm Casse** reported Southlawn will work every Thursday. ...

Trainer **Brad Cox** reported his trio of Oaks contenders – Botanical, The Alys Look and Wet Paint – will breeze Friday at Churchill Downs. ...

UAE Oaks winner **Mimi Kakushi** is tentatively scheduled to arrive to the Kentucky Import Center at Churchill Downs on April 22. ...

Rachel Alexandra (GII) winner **Pretty Mischievous** arrived to Churchill Downs on Wednesday from Keeneland and is scheduled to work Friday, according to her trainer **Brendan Walsh**.

SHAPING UP: THE KENTUCKY DERBY – Here are the horses (with trainers) that are currently qualified for the Kentucky Derby and those on the also-eligible list (in alphabetical order with AEs listed last in preference order):

Angel of Empire (trainer Brad Cox); **Blazing Sevens** (Chad Brown); **Confidence Game** (Keith Desormeaux); **Continuar (JPN)** (Yoshito Yahagi); **Derma Sotogake (JPN)** (Hidetaka Otonashi); **Forte** (Todd Pletcher); **Hit Show** (Brad Cox); **Jace's Road** (Brad Cox); **Kingsbarns** (Todd Pletcher); **Lord Miles** (Saffie Joseph Jr.); **Mage** (Gustavo Delgado); **Practical Move** (Tim Yakteen); **Raise Cain** (Ben Colebrook); **Reincarnate** (Tim Yakteen); **Rocket Can** (Bill Mott); **Sun Thunder** (Kenny McPeck); **Tapit Trice** (Todd Pletcher); **Two Phil's** (Larry Rivelli); **Verifying** (Brad Cox); and **Wild On Ice** (Joel Marr).

Also-Eligibles: **Skinner** (John Shirreffs); **Cyclone Mischief** (Dale Romans); **Major Dude** (Todd Pletcher); and **Mandarin Hero (JPN)** (Terunobu Fujita).

SHAPING UP: THE KENTUCKY OAKS – Here are the horses (with trainers) that are currently qualified for the Longines Kentucky Oaks and those on the also-eligible list (in alphabetical order with AEs listed last in preference order):

Affirmative Lady (Graham Motion); **And Tell Me Nolies** (Peter Miller); **Botanical** (Brad Cox); **Defining Purpose** (Kenny McPeck); **Dorth Vader** (Mike Yates); **Flying Connection** (Todd Fincher); **Gambling Girl** (Todd Pletcher); **Mimi Kakushi** (Salem bin Ghadayer); **Pretty Mischievous** (Brendan Walsh); **Promisher America** (Ray Handal); **Shidabhuti** (Chad Brown); **Southlawn** (Norm Casse); **The Alys Look** (Brad Cox); and **Wet Paint** (Brad Cox).

Also-Eligibles: **Wonder Wheel** (Mark Casse); **Taxed** (Randy Morse); **Julia Shining** (Todd Pletcher); **Hoosier Philly** (Tom Amoss); and **Punchbowl** (Brad Cox).

ABOUT CHURCHILL DOWNS RACETRACK

Churchill Downs Racetrack ("CDRT"), the world's most legendary racetrack, has been the home of The Kentucky Derby, the longest continually held annual sporting event in the United States, since 1875. Located in Louisville, CDRT features a series of themed race days during Derby Week, including the Kentucky Oaks, and conducts Thoroughbred horse racing during three race meets in the Spring, September, and the Fall. CDRT is located on 175 acres and has a one-mile dirt track, a 7/8-mile turf track, a stabling area, and provides seating for approximately 60,000 guests. The stable area has barns sufficient to accommodate 1,400 horses and a 114-room dormitory for backstretch personnel. CDRT also has a year-round simulcast wagering facility. www.ChurchillDowns.com.

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