



# THE DERBY DISPATCH

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## ROAD TO KENTUCKY DERBY CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES CONTINUES SATURDAY WITH \$1 MILLION REBEL

**LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Thursday, Feb. 24, 2022)** – The Road to the Kentucky Derby Championship Series will continue Saturday at Oaklawn Park with the \$1 million Rebel (Grade II) where 10 horses in the 1 1/16-mile event are currently eligible to gain a maximum of 85 points toward qualifying to the \$3 million Kentucky Derby presented by Woodford Reserve (Grade I) on the first Saturday in May.

A total of 11 horses passed the entry box at Oaklawn on Monday for the Rebel including undefeated colt **Newgrange**, who was made the 9-5 morning line favorite. The son of Violence, owned by **SF Racing** (Gavin Murphy), **Starlight Racing** (Jack Wolf, et al.), **Madaket Stables** (Sol Kumin), **Robert Masterson**, **Stonestreet Stables** (Barbara Banke), **Jay Schoenfarber**, **Waves Edge Capital** (Gregg Slager), **Catherine Donovan**, **Golconda Stable** (Ben Goldberg) and **Siena Farm** (Anthony Manganaro) is ineligible to garner points in the Rebel because his trainer **Bob Baffert** is suspended by Churchill Downs Incorporated from competing in the 2022 Kentucky Derby.

The Rebel will go as Race 11 of 12 with a post time of 6:22 p.m. (all times Eastern). Racing at Oaklawn will be featured on America's Day at the Races on Fox Sports 2 from 1-7 p.m. Fans can wager on the Rebel at [www.TwinSpires.com](http://www.TwinSpires.com), the official wagering provider of the Kentucky Derby and Churchill Downs Incorporated.

In his last start, Newgrange gamely dug deep in the late stages of the \$750,000 Southwest Stakes (GII) to hold off fast-charging rival **Barber Road**. The duo are set to have a rematch in the Rebel. Owned by **WSS Racing** and trained by **John Ortiz**, Barber Road finished fourth on debut at Colonial Downs but, after adding blinkers, has not crossed the wire worse than second in his next five starts. The gray son of Race Day will be ridden by **Reylu Gutierrez** from post No. 9 at morning line odds of 9-2.

Newgrange and Barber Road were the one-two finishers of the Southwest but the three horses that finished directly behind them are also entered in the Rebel: **Ben Diesel** (post 6, 6-1); **Kavod** (post 1, 12-1); and **Dash Attack** (post 11, 8-1).

One of the newcomers in the field is maiden winner **Ethereal Road** for owner **Aaron Sones** and four-time Kentucky Derby-winning trainer **D. Wayne Lukas**. Ethereal Road, who will break under **Luis Contreras** from post 10 at odds of 12-1, garnered his first win in memorable fashion after he trailed by 16 lengths in a 1 1/16-mile maiden special weight contest. Into the far turn, the son of Quality Road began a swift charge around rivals and finished in front by four lengths.

"It takes them three-eighths of a mile to get that momentum going again," Lukas said about Ethereal Road, who stands at 16.3 hands and weighs approximately 1,300 pounds. "But when they get going, if they've got the ability, again, I emphasize that – they've got to have the ability – when they get going, they pass horses if they've got the ability. What he did on the turn, if you just took the video and ran it up the half-mile and said, 'Oh, here, let's watch this' – from the half-mile (pole) to the wire, that was spectacular. Every jump he passed a horse."

Lukas won the Rebel in 1989 with **Manatash Ridge** and 2013 with **Will Take Charge**.

A variable that horses may have to deal with Saturday is the weather. The National Weather Service forecast reported that a quarter to a half-inch of ice is possible through Thursday night in Hot Springs, Ark. Conditions are slated to improve Friday with mostly sunny skies and highs near 45 degrees.

**EPICENTER CRUISES TO RISEN STAR VICTORY, EARNS 50 POINTS ON ROAD TO DERBY LEADERBOARD** – **Winchell Thoroughbreds'** **Epicerter** faced no early challengers on the lead and was able to comfortably repel the late bids of **Smile Happy** and **Zandon** to win last Saturday's \$400,000 Risen Star presented by Lamarque Ford (Grade II) at Fair Grounds. With his victory, Epicerter earned 50 points on the Road to the Kentucky Derby, which brought his overall total to 64 points.

Here are the Top 20 horses on the Road to the Kentucky Derby leaderboard: 1. **Epicenter** (64 points); 2. **Smile Happy** (30, runner-up in Risen Star, winner of Kentucky Jockey Club); 3. **Classic Causeway** (16, winner of Sam F. Davis, runner-up in Kentucky Jockey Club and third in Breeders' Futurity); 4. **Pappacap** (14, runner-up in Breeders' Cup Juvenile and American Pharoah, third in Lecomte); 5. **Zandon** (14, third in Risen Star, runner-up in Remsen); 6. **White Abarrio** (12, winner of Holy Bull, third in Kentucky Jockey Club); 7. **Mo Donegal** (12, winner of Remsen, third in Holy Bull); 8. **Rattle N Roll** (10, winner of Breeders' Futurity); 9. **Jack Christopher** (10, winner of Champagne but no public workouts since); 10. **Make It Big** (10, winner of Springboard Mile); 11. **Slow Down Andy** (10, winner of Los Alamitos Futurity); 12. **Major General** (10, winner of Iroquois); 13. **Dash Attack** (10, winner of Smarty Jones); 14. **Early Voting** (10, winner of Withers); 15. **Call Me Midnight** (10, winner of Lecomte); 16. **Courvoisier** (10, winner of Withers); 17. **Barber Road** (8, runner-up in Southwest); 18. **Commandperformance** (6, runner-up in Champagne, fourth in Breeders' Cup Juvenile); 19. **Mackinnon** (5, runner-up in El Camino Real Derby, fourth in Sham); and 20. **Pioneer of Medina** (5, fourth in Risen Star).

**WATCH AND WAGER ON THE REBEL** – The Rebel goes as Race 11 of 12 on Saturday's program at Oaklawn, and has an approximate post time of 6:22 p.m. ET. The race will air live on Fox Sports 2 and fans can wager on [www.TwinSpires.com](http://www.TwinSpires.com).

Free past performances for the Rebel, courtesy of Brisnet, are available at <http://www.brisnet.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Rebel22.pdf>.

Fans in the Louisville area can watch and wager on the action from Oaklawn and numerous other racetracks around the country from Churchill Downs. Gates open for simulcasting from the Aristides Lounge at noon.

**OTHER 3-YEAR-OLD RACES TO WATCH** – On the undercard of Saturday's Rebel, six Triple Crown nominees will attempt to garner their second lifetime victory in a conditioned allowance event run at 1 1/16 miles. The expected heavy favorite is **McLaren Vale**, who runs under the same ownership as **Newgrange** in the Rebel. Other Triple Crown nominees that entered the race are **Call Me Jamal**, **Costa Terra**, **Great Escape**, **Ignitis** and **Sky and Sand**. ... On Saturday morning, 16 3-year-olds will compete in the \$1.5 million Saudi Derby (GIII) in Riyadh. The early 5-2 favorite is Triple Crown nominee **Pinehurst**. Horses from Japan have won the first two runnings of the Saudi Derby (**Pink Kamehameha** and **Full Flat**) and are represented this year by **Consigliere** and **Sekifu**.

A calendar of 3-year-old races to watch this week:

**Thursday**

- 2:50 p.m. ET, Aqu 5, Mdn 80k, 3yo, 1 1/8 M

**Saturday**

- 10:05 a.m. ET, KSA 5, \$1.5 million Saudi Derby (GIII), 3yo, 1 M
- 3:10 p.m. ET, OP 5, \$300,000 Honeybee (GIII), 3yo f, 1 1/16 M
- 4:05 p.m. ET, GP 9, Mdn 60k, 3yo, 1 1/8 M
- 4:13 p.m. ET, OP 7, OC 80000n1x, 3yo, 1 1/16 M
- 4:45 p.m. ET, OP 8, Mdn 84k, 3yo, 1 1/16 M
- 6:22 p.m. ET, OP 11, \$1 million Rebel (GII), 3yo, 1 1/16 M (RTKD: 50-20-10-5)
- 9:16 p.m. ET, TP 7, Mdn 62k, 3yo, 1 M (AW)

**Sunday**

- 5:59 p.m. ET, Sun 9, \$100,000 Mine That Bird, 3yo, 1 1/16 M

**BACK ON TRACK** – **Gold Square's Cyberknife** is back on the Road to the Kentucky Derby following his three-length victory Saturday in a first-level allowance contest at Fair Grounds. Trained by **Brad Cox**, the Gun Runner colt recorded a career best 94 Brisnet speed rating and could run next in the \$1 million Louisiana Derby (GI) on March 26.

**DOWN THE STRETCH** – Owner **Ron Winchell** reported **Epicenter** is likely to compete in the \$1 million Louisiana Derby (GI) for his final start prior to the Kentucky Derby. ... **Briland Farm's Secret Oath**, the emphatic 7 1/4-length winner of the \$200,000 Martha Washington, returns Saturday as the 3-2 morning line favorite in the 35<sup>th</sup> running of the \$300,000 Honeybee (GIII) at Oaklawn. The compact field of six 3-year-old fillies will compete for a total of 85 points on the Road to the Kentucky Oaks Championship Series. Carded as Race 5 Saturday, the complete field from the rail out (with jockey, trainer and morning line odds): **Optionality** (Tyler Gaffalione, Steve Asmussen, 7-2); **Yuugiri** (John Velazquez, Rodolphe Brisset, 5-2); **Secret Oath** (Luis Contreras, D. Wayne Lukas, 3-2); **Ice Orchid** (Ricardo Santana Jr. John Ortiz, 6-1); **Feel Like a Girl** (Pedro Cotto Jr., Carl Deville, 6-1); and **Red Queen** (Francisco Arrieta, Genaro Garcia, 15-1). **Feel Like a Girl** and **Red Queen** were not made early nominees to the Longines Kentucky Oaks. ...

Undefeated filly **Shahama** overcame a very slow start to remain undefeated by winning the UAE Oaks (GII) by two lengths. Her victory was worth 50 points on the Road to the Kentucky Oaks. The four-time winner could run next against the boys in the \$1 million UAE Derby (GII) on the undercard of the \$12 million Dubai World Cup (GI) run Saturday, March 26. Shahama was nominated for the Kentucky Oaks but her jockey, **Adre de Vries**, stated after the UAE Oaks, “We’ll have to wait to see what the connections want to do. There’s options for America, the (UAE) Derby is an option. I’ll leave it up to them.” ... On Monday, the **Kentucky Horse Racing Commission** disqualified **Medina Spirit** from his victory in the 2021 Kentucky Derby after he failed a post-race test. Second-place finisher **Mandaloun** was awarded the victory for owner/breeder **Juddmonte**, trainer **Brad Cox** and jockey **Florent Geroux**. Mandaloun will compete Saturday in the \$20 million Saudi Cup (GI). Coverage of the Saudi Cup will air starting at 9 a.m. ET on Fox Sports 1.

**WHERE ARE THEY NOW: 2004 REBEL WINNER SMARTY JONES** – It’s been 18 years since **Someday Farm’s Smarty Jones** became the winner of the 130<sup>th</sup> running of the Kentucky Derby (GI). The Pennsylvania-bred colt won that year’s Rebel Stakes as a prep before competing in the Derby.

Now, Smarty Jones is back in the Keystone State at **Rodney and Sharon Eckenrode’s Equistar Farm**.

Equistar Farm is located in the Susquehanna Valley region of Pennsylvania, about 100 miles west of Parx Racing, where Smarty Jones began his career as a racehorse. Smarty Jones is one of four active stallions on the 60-acre farm, which also includes 2015 Kentucky Jockey Club (GII) winner **Airoforce**.

In the 2004 Rebel, Smarty Jones, and jockey **Stewart Elliott**, sat outside of the early pacesetter **Purge**. At the top of the homestretch, Smarty Jones drew alongside Purge and took command for a 3 1/4-length victory. The final time for the 1 1/16-mile race was 1:42.07, the fastest in the last 33 runnings of the Rebel.

Smarty Jones would go on to win the 2004 Arkansas Derby (GI) prior to his victory in the Kentucky Derby. Two weeks after the Kentucky Derby he won the Preakness (GI) but was denied a Triple Crown in the Belmont (GI) by **Birdstone**.

Smarty Jones spent several years of his stallion career in Uruguay. Since his retirement in 2004, Smarty Jones produced 15 crops of horses in the U.S. that have earned more than \$31.7 million on the track.

## UPCOMING ROAD TO KENTUCKY DERBY CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES RACES

**March 5 (nine weeks out) – \$400,000 Fountain of Youth (GII), 1 1/16 miles, Gulfstream Park (Top 4 points: 50-20-10-5)**

Known possible starters (with trainer): A. P.’s Secret (Saffie Joseph Jr.); Emmanuel (Todd Pletcher); Howling Time (Dale Romans); Giant Game (Dale Romans); In Due Time (Kelly Breen); *Mo Donegal* (Pletcher); Rattle N Roll (Kenny McPeck); Simplification (Antonio Sano); and *Tiz the Bomb* (Kenny McPeck).

**March 5 (nine weeks out) – \$400,000 San Felipe (GII), 1 1/16 miles, Santa Anita (Top 4 points: 50-20-10-5)**

Known possible starters (with trainer): Forbidden Kingdom (Richard Mandella) and Messier (Bob Baffert).

**March 5 (nine weeks out) – \$300,000 Gotham (GIII), one mile, Aqueduct (Top 4 points: 50-20-10-5)**

Known possible starters (with trainer): *Early Voting* (Chad Brown); Fromanothamutha (Ray Handal); Golden Code (Todd Pletcher); *Major General* (Todd Pletcher); and Morello (Steve Asmussen).

**March 5 (nine weeks out) – \$125,000 John Battaglia Memorial, 1 1/16 miles (Tapeta), Turfway Park (Top 4 points: 10-4-2-1)**

**March 12 (eight weeks out) – \$400,000 Tampa Bay Derby (GII), 1 1/16 miles, Tampa Bay Downs (Top 4 points: 50-20-10-5)**

Known possible starters (with trainer): Belgrade (Graham Motion); Classic Causeway (Brian Lynch); *Major General* (Todd Pletcher); *Rattle N Roll* (Kenny McPeck); and Shipsational (Ed Barker).

**March 26 (six weeks out) – \$1 million Louisiana Derby (GII), 1 3/16 miles, Fair Grounds (Top 4 points: 100-40-20-10)**

Known possible starters (with trainer): Call Me Midnight (Keith Desormeaux), Cyberknife (Brad Cox), Epicenter (Steve Asmussen), Pioneer of Medina (Todd Pletcher), *Smile Happy* (Kenny McPeck); and *Zozos* (Brad Cox)

**March 26 (six weeks out) -- \$1 million UAE Derby (GII), 1 3/16 miles, Meydan Racecourse (Top 4 points: 100-40-20-10)**

Known possible starters (with trainer): Shahama (Fawzi Nass)

**March 27 (six weeks out) – \$500,000 Sunland Derby (GIII), 1 1/8 miles, Sunland Park (Top 4 points: 50-20-10-5)**

**April 2 (five weeks out) – \$1.25 million Arkansas Derby (GI), 1 1/8 miles, Oaklawn Park (Top 4 points: 100-40-20-10)**

Known possible starters (with trainer): *Zozos* (Brad Cox)

**April 2 (five weeks out) – \$1 million Florida Derby (GI), 1 1/8 miles, Gulfstream Park (Top 4 points: 100-40-20-10)**

Known possible starters (with trainer): White Abarrio (Saffie Joseph Jr.)

**April 2 (five weeks out) – \$600,000 Jeff Ruby Steaks (GIII), 1 1/8 miles (Tapeta), Turfway Park (Top 4 points: 100-40-20-10)**

Known possible starters (with trainer): *Tiz the Bomb* (Kenny McPeck)

**April 9 (four weeks out) – \$1 million Blue Grass (GI), 1 1/8 miles, Keeneland (Top 4 points: 100-40-20-10)**

Known possible starters (with trainer): *Smile Happy* (Kenny McPeck), Zandon (Chad Brown) and *Zozos* (Brad Cox)

**April 9 (four weeks out) – \$750,000 Santa Anita Derby (GI), 1 1/8 miles, Santa Anita (Top 4 points: 100-40-20-10)**

**April 9 (four weeks out) – \$750,000 Wood Memorial (GII), 1 1/8 miles, Aqueduct (Top 4 points: 100-40-20-10)**

Known possible starters (with trainer): *Early Voting* (Chad Brown) and *Mo Donegal* (Todd Pletcher)

**April 16 (three weeks out) – \$400,000 Lexington (GIII), 1 1/16 miles, Keeneland (Top 4 points: 20-8-4-2)**

Note: The possible fields for upcoming Kentucky Derby Championship Series races are fluid as owners and trainers vie for points. Known possible horses mentioned to be under consideration for each race are based on published news reports and other sources. Horses listed in *italics* are possible for multiple races.

**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 saddling paddock and 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](http://www.ChurchillDowns.com).

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