



THE DERBY DISPATCH

Contacts: Darren Rogers (502) 636-4461 (o), (502) 345-1030 (m) or Darren.Rogers@KyDerby.com @DerbyMedia
Kevin Kerstein (502) 635-4712 (o), (610) 420-6971 (m) or Kevin.Kerstein@KyDerby.com @HorseRacingKK

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Kevin Kerstein
Kentucky Racing Communications
Churchill Downs, Ellis Park, Turfway Park
(610) 420-6971 (mobile)
(502) 635-4712 (office)
Kevin.Kerstein@KyDerby.com

Free Brisnet.com Past Performances:

Florida Derby: <http://www.brisnet.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/FLDerby23.pdf>

Arkansas Derby: <http://www.brisnet.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/ArkansasDerby23.pdf>

Kentucky Derby Future Wager Pool 6: <http://www.brisnet.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Derby23Future6.pdf>

Inside the Kentucky Derby Podcast: <https://www.kentuckyderby.com/horses/news/inside-the-kentucky-derby-podcast-florida-and-arkansas-derby-preview>

EARLY DERBY FAVORITE FORTE SET FOR RETURN IN FLORIDA DERBY; OAKLAWN ROAD TO DERBY CONCLUDES WITH GRADE I ARKANSAS DERBY

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Thursday, March 30, 2023) – The days are ticking down until the first Saturday in May and horses are aiming for their final shot to qualify for the \$3 million Kentucky Derby presented by Woodford Reserve (Grade I).

Forte, the early favorite for this year's Kentucky Derby, will be in action Saturday against 11 rivals in the \$1 million Florida Derby at Gulfstream Park. About one hour later, a competitive field of 11 3-year-olds were entered in the \$1.25 million Arkansas Derby (GI) at Oaklawn.

Only five weeks and six chances remain for horses to qualify for their spot in the starting gate in the "Run for the Roses."

CHAMPION FORTE DRAWS POST 11 OF 12 IN \$1 MILLION FLORIDA DERBY – **Repole Stable** and **St. Elias Stable's Forte** has been the talk of the Road to the Kentucky Derby for nearly six months and now the 3-year-old will have his final stop before the Kentucky Derby presented by Woodford Reserve (Grade I) in Saturday's \$1 million Florida Derby (GI) at Gulfstream Park.

Forte, who was tabbed as the heavy 4-5 favorite, drew post No. 11 of 12 in the Florida Derby. The 1 1/8-mile race has a post time of 6:40 p.m. (all times Eastern).

Trained by **Todd Pletcher**, Forte made his seasonal debut four weeks ago in the \$400,000 Fountain of Youth (GII) where he defeated eight rivals by 4 ½ lengths. The son of Violence jumped onto the Road to the Kentucky Derby in the Oct. 8 Breeders' Futurity (GI) at Keeneland where he gamely held off **Loggins** by a neck. One month later, Forte rallied from four lengths off the early pace in the \$2 million Breeders' Cup Juvenile (GI) to win by 1 ½ lengths and cement juvenile championship honors. Jockey **Irad Ortiz Jr.** has been aboard Forte for all six of his lifetime starts. Forte's only blemish on his résumé is a fourth-place finish in the Sanford (GIII) on July 16 at Saratoga.

Drawn one spot to Forte's inside is **SF Racing, Starlight Racing, Madaket Stables, Robert Masterson, Stonestreet Stables, Jay Schoenfarber, Waves Edge Capital** and **Catherine Donovan's Fort Bragg**. Tabbed as the 5-1 second choice on the morning line odds, Fort Bragg finished third in the Los Alamitos Futurity and fifth in the San Felipe (GII). The **Tim Yakteen**-trained son of Tapit was originally entered in last Sunday's Sunland Park Derby (GIII) but his connections opted to run in the Florida Derby. **Joel Rosario** will have the call.

Drawn in post 12 is **West Paces Racing** and **Stonestreet Stables'** Remsen (GII) winner **Dubyuhnell**. Trained by **Danny Gargan**, Dubyuhnell enters the Florida Derby from a seven-week absence following an enigmatic eighth-place finish in the Sam F. Davis (GIII) at Tampa Bay Downs. Dubyuhnell will be ridden by **Jose Ortiz**.

Here's the complete Florida Derby field from the rail out (with jockey, trainer and morning line odds):

1. **Jungfrau** (Paco Lopez, Bill Mott, 20-1)
2. **West Coast Cowboy** (Sonny Leon, Saffie Joseph Jr., 20-1)
3. **Shaq Diesel** (Miguel Vazquez, Renaldo Richards, 30-1)
4. **Mage** (Luis Saez, Gustavo Delgado, 10-1)
5. **Mr. Peeks** (Edwin Gonzalez, Joseph, 30-1)
6. **Nautical Star** (Leonel Reyes, Joseph, 30-1)
7. **Il Miracolo** (Jesus Rios, Antonio Sano, 30-1)
8. **Mr. Ripple** (Edgard Zayas, Joseph, 30-1)
9. **Cyclone Mischief** (Javier Castellano, Dale Romans, 8-1)
10. Fort Bragg (Rosario, Yakteen, 5-1)
11. Forte (Irad Ortiz Jr., Pletcher, 4-5)
12. Dubyuhnell (Jose Ortiz, Gargan, 6-1)

Fans can watch and wager on the Florida Derby on www.TwinSpires.com, the official wagering provider of Churchill Downs Incorporated and the Kentucky Derby.

REINCARNATE TABBED AS SLIGHT 5-2 FAVORITE IN EXTREMELY COMPETITIVE ARKANSAS DERBY – California-based 3-year-old **Reincarnate** will invade Hot Springs, Ark. in hopes of qualifying for the “Run for the Roses” but will have to face 10 rivals in Saturday’s \$1.25 million Arkansas Derby (Grade I).

The Arkansas Derby will go as the Race 12 on Oaklawn’s program with a post time of 7:50 p.m. ET. The 1 1/8-mile contest will award points to the top five finishers on a 100-40-30-20-10 scale for the \$3 million Kentucky Derby presented by Woodford Reserve (GI).

Reincarnate, now under the care of **Tim Yakteen**, shipped to Oaklawn four weeks ago for the Rebel (GII) and finished third over sloppy going. Previously, Reincarnate was under the care of **Bob Baffert** and won the Sham (GIII) at Santa Anita.

“We got in all sorts of trouble in the stretch from (**Bourbon Bash**),” jockey **John Velazquez** said following the Rebel. “He was making a run.”

Velazquez will be back in the irons from post No. 8 and was tabbed as the 5-2 morning line favorite

Another talented 3-year-old entered in the Arkansas Derby is **Winchell Thoroughbreds’ Red Route One**. Trained by **Steve Asmussen**, Red Route One was the runner-up in the Rebel behind front-running **Confidence Game**. The son of Gun Runner will add blinkers for the Arkansas Derby and get a change of jockey from **Cristian Torres** to **Tyler Gaffalione**. Red Route One was slated as the 3-1 second choice on the morning line and drew post 10.

Frank Fletcher’s Holy Bull (GIII) winner **Rocket Can** will ship from South Florida for the Arkansas Derby. Trained by **Bill Mott**, Rocket Can previously finished second behind **Forte** in the Fountain of Youth (GII). The well-bred son of Into Mischief has yet to finish worse than second since stretching out to two-turns on Oct. 31. **Junior Alvarado** will have the mount from post 7.

Another top entrant in the Arkansas Derby field is **Albaugh Family Stables’** Risen Star (GII) winner **Angel of Empire**. The **Brad Cox** trainee was the one-length winner of the Feb. 18 Risen Star at odds of 13-1. The son of Classic Empire will be ridden by **Flavien Prat** from post 6 at odds of 9-2.

Here is the complete field for the Arkansas Derby from the rail out (with jockey, trainer and morning line odds):

1. Borubon Bash (Rey Gutierrez, Wayne Lukas, 15-1)
2. **Interlock Empire** (David Cabrera, Kenny McPeck, 20-1)
3. **Harlo Cap** (Ricardo Santana Jr., Asmussen, 15-1)
4. **Two Eagles River** (Nik Juarez, Chris Hartman, 10-1)
5. **Airtime** (Torres, Robertino Diodoro, 15-1)
6. Angel of Empire (Prat, Cox, 9-2)
7. Rocket Can (Alvarado, Mott, 4-1)
8. Reincarnate (Velazquez, Yakteen, 5-2)
9. **King Russell** (Rafael Bejarano, Ron Moquett, 30-1)
10. Red Route One (Gaffalione, Asmussen, 3-1)
11. **Kolomio** (James Graham, Keith Desormeaux, 30-1)

Airtime is not nominated to the Triple Crown.

ARKANSAS DERBY QUOTES –

Keith Desormeaux, trainer, Kolomio: “I got lucky enough to get him. It was a two-way shake and the horse has just been training out of his mind over the last five or six weeks. We’ve got a bad case of Derby fever with Confidence Game and Single Ruler stoking the coals. We’re going to give it a shot. This is what Derby fever does to you. Man, I better check my temperature now that I’m saying all this stuff out in the open. It seems like real wackiness but it’s a lot of fun. And Big Chief Racing claimed the horse and we’re old friends. That’s Exaggerator’s owner and it would be a great story and a lot of fun to get back to the Derby.”

Chris Hartman, trainer, Two Eagles River: “He’s been working up a storm. The horse is coming into hand pretty good right now. The decision to go here – I’m a little bit of a homer on that aspect. I would rather run him out of his stall than to haul him anywhere.”

Kenny McPeck, trainer, Interlock Empire: “Interlock Empire’s race the other day was a pleasant step forward for him. He was shot out of a cannon the last part there and I like that David Cabrera was able to get him to relax and finish like he did. It’s a little ambitious but it seems to me the Arkansas Derby is pretty well wide open at this point. You only get so many shots. I think there’s 1.25 million reasons to try.”

Bill Mott, trainer, Rocket Can: “The owner of Rocket Can (Frank Fletcher) is from Arkansas and he lets me run his horses all winter in Florida. If he wants to run in Arkansas, that’s more than fair with me.”

FLORIDA DERBY QUOTES –

Todd Pletcher trainer, Forte: “The Fountain of Youth couldn’t have gone any better for us. When Irad and I spoke before the race we kind of had a certain plan in mind and sort of had laid out where we hoped he would be. As you know a lot of times when the gate opens things can change and you have to be prepared to adjust to that but really the race unfolded almost exactly the way we thought it would and we were in exactly the position we hoped we would be. The real key is when called upon, he was there. Irad’s gotten to know this colt really well. He’s rode him in every start and he’s worked him quite a few times. I think part of what we’ve been trying to do in the mornings is sort of replicate his running style, sitting of a horse just a little bit and then teaching him to finish up and kind of stay focused. As impressively as he’s won a couple of these races, he’s kind of come to the wire with his ears up taking everything in. Obviously, as these races get a little more difficult, he’ll need to stay focused.”

ADDITIONAL DERBY NEWS AND NOTES –

The European Road to the Kentucky Derby will conclude Saturday at 2 p.m. with the Woodford Reserve Cardinal Condition Stakes at Chelmsford. Late Triple Crown nominee **Brave Emperor (IRE)** is likely to enter the race along with fellow Triple Crown nominee **Stormy Entry**. The top five finishers will receive points on a 30-12-8-4-2 scale. If Brave Emperor finishes ahead of Stormy Entry he would be the top point earner in the series. Stormy Entry could snatch the berth with a win....

Winchell Thoroughbreds’ Disarm was the first contender for this year’s Kentucky Derby to arrive at Churchill Downs. He and 13 of his stablemates arrived to Hall of Fame trainer **Steve Asmussen’s** Barn 38 around 6 a.m. Tuesday. ...

Japan’s Kentucky Derby hopes **Derma Sotogake (JPN)** and **Continuar (JPN)** are slated to fly next week from Dubai to Chicago where they will quarantine prior to vanning to Churchill Downs on April 8. Continuar has received an invitation to compete in the Kentucky Derby via the Japan Road to the Kentucky Derby. ...

The connections of Jeff Ruby Steaks (GIII) runner-up **Major Dude** stated he would be more likely to return to turf than target the Kentucky Derby. ...

Several **Brad Cox** trainees have arrived to Churchill Downs including 3-year-olds **Instant Coffee**, **Jace’s Road** and **The Alys Look**. Cox stated he would watch how Instant Coffee trained in the next several days before making a decision about running him in the April 15 Lexington (GIII). ...

A total of 13 horses were made late Triple Crown nominees with a \$6,000 payment that was due Monday. Among the group is Sunland Park Derby (GIII) winner **Wild On Ice**. ...

Derby fans can keep up with all the news and notes on the Road to the Kentucky Derby by listening to “**Inside the Kentucky Derby**: - available on iTunes, Spotify and YouTube.

JEFF RUBY STEAKS WINNER TWO PHIL'S MOVE TO NO. 1 ON DERBY LEADERBOARD – Following Saturday's Jeff Ruby Steaks (GIII), **Patricia's Hope** and **Phil Sagan's Two Phil's** moved to the top of the Road to the Kentucky Derby leaderboard with 123 points.

Here are the Top 20 horses on the Road to the Kentucky Derby Leaderboard:

<u>Position</u>	<u>Horse</u>	<u>Trainer</u>	<u>Résumé</u>	<u>Possible Next Start</u>	<u>Points</u>
1	Two Phil's	Larry Rivelli	1 st Jeff Ruby Steaks 2 nd Lecomte 3 rd Risen Star	May 6: Kentucky Derby	123
2	Derma Sotogake (JPN)	Hidetaka Otonashi	1 st UAE Derby	May 6: Kentucky Derby	100
3	Kingsbarns	Todd Pletcher	1 st Louisiana Derby	May 6: Kentucky Derby	100
4	Forte	Todd Pletcher	1 st Fountain of Youth 1 st Breeders' Cup Juvenile 1 st Breeders' Futurity	April 1: Florida Derby	90
5	Practical Move	Tim Yakteen	1 st San Felipe 1 st Los Alamitos Futurity	April 8: Santa Anita Derby	60
6	Confidence Game	Keith Desormeaux	1 st Rebel 3 rd Lecomte 5 th Iroquois	April 8: Blue Grass or May 6: Kentucky Derby	57
7	Angel of Empire	Brad Cox	1 st Risen Star 2 nd Smarty Jones	April 1: Arkansas Derby	54
8	Raise Cain	Ben Colebrook	1 st Gotham 2 nd Gun Runner	April 8: Blue Grass or Wood Memorial	54
9	Wild On Ice	Joel Marr	1 st Sunland Park Derby	TBA	50
10	Tapit Trice	Todd Pletcher	1 st Tampa Bay Derby	April 8: Blue Grass	50
11	Jace's Road	Brad Cox	1 st Gun Runner 3 rd Louisiana Derby 3 rd Iroquois 4 th Southwest	May 6: Kentucky Derby	45
12	Rocket Can	Bill Mott	1 st Holy Bull 2 nd Fountain of Youth	April 1: Arkansas Derby	40
13	Disarm	Steve Asmussen	2 nd Louisiana Derby	May 6: Kentucky Derby	40
14	Sun Thunder	Kenny McPeck	2 nd Risen Star 4 th Southwest 5 th Louisiana Derby	TBA	34
15	Red Route One	Steve Asmussen	2 nd Rebel 2 nd Southwest 3 rd Breeders' Futurity 4 th Kentucky Jockey Club	April 1: Arkansas Derby	33
16	Instant Coffee	Brad Cox	1 st Lecomte 1 st Kentucky Jockey Club 4 th Breeders' Futurity	TBA	32
17	Funtastic Again	Wesley Ward	3 rd Jeff Ruby Steaks	TBA	30
18	Classic Car Wash	Mark Casse	2 nd Tampa Bay Derby 3 rd Sam F. Davis	April 8: Blue Grass	26
19	General Banker	James Ferraro	3 rd Gotham 3 rd Withers 3 rd Jerome	April 8: Wood Memorial	24
20	Continuar (JPN)	Yoshito Yahagi	1 st Cattleya 3 rd UAE Derby	May 6: Kentucky Derby	Japan RTKD Invite

UPCOMING ROAD TO KENTUCKY DERBY RACES

April 8 (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): Arctic Arrogance (Linda Rice); *Dreamlike* (Todd Pletcher); Hit Show (Brad Cox); Lord Miles (Saffie Joseph Jr.); Ninetypercentmaddie (Butch Reid); *Raise Cain* (Ben Colebrook); Shadow Dragon (Bill Mott); Slip Mahoney (Brad Cox)

April 8 (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): Blazing Sevens (Chad Brown); *Classic Car Wash* (Mark Casse); *Classic Legacy* (Bill Mott); *Confidence Game* (Keith Desormeaux); Hayes Strike (Kenny McPeck); *Mage* (Gustavo Delgado); Major Blue (Wayne Lukas); Mendelssohn's Song (Kenny McPeck); *National Treasure* (Tim Yakteen); *Raise Cain* (Ben Colebrook); Tapit Trice (Todd Pletcher); Verifying (Brad Cox)

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

Known possible starters (with trainer): *Cave Rock* (Bob Baffert); Dazzle Silver (Keith Desormeaux); Geaux Rocket Ride (Richard Mandella); I Don't Get It (Doug O'Neill); Mandarin Hero (JPN) (Terunobu Fujita); Practical Move (Tim Yakteen); Skinner (John Sherriffs);

April 15 (three weeks out) – \$400,000 Lexington (GIII), 1 1/16 miles, Keeneland (Top 4 points: 20-8-4-2)

Known possible starters (with trainer): *Bo Cruz* (Al Stall Jr.); *Instant Coffee* (Brad Cox)

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.

-END-