



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

ROAD TO KENTUCKY DERBY CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES BEGINS SATURDAY WITH GRADE II, \$400,000 RISEN STAR AT FAIR GROUNDS

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Thursday, Feb. 15, 2024) – The excitement is building for the \$5 million Kentucky Derby presented by Woodford Reserve (Grade I) and a major milestone along the way is Saturday's start of the Road to the Kentucky Derby Championship Series with the \$400,000 Risen Star (GII) at Fair Grounds Race Course & Slots.

Several promising 3-year-olds have already garnered points during the Road to the Kentucky Derby "Prep Season," a set of 20 foundation-building races that awarded the winning horse between 10 and 30 points. Now, as the distances get longer and the races get closer to the Kentucky Derby, qualifying points will increase.

The Championship Series unfolds across 16 races at 10 different racetracks around the world. Saturday's Risen Star will award the winner 50 points with 25 points given to the runner-up. The third through fifth-place finishers will be awarded points on a 15-10-5 scale.

In addition to the Risen Star, the weekend action also will feature Sunday's \$400,000 Sunland Derby (GIII), which will award 20-10-6-4-2 points to the top five finishers. And, on the Japan Road to the Kentucky Derby, a large field of 14 3-year-olds are scheduled to contest the Hyacinth Stakes at Tokyo Racecourse.

Since the point series was adopted in 2012-13, it has taken an average of 23.6 points to make the field of 20 for the Kentucky Derby. Last year, an additional 577 points were up for grabs by awarding points to the fifth-place finishers. This year, the point structure was altered to increase points for the runner-up in races and create more separation from the third-place finisher. In total, 130 additional points are possible to be awarded.

In 11 short weeks, the Derby will be here. Get ready for an exhilarating journey on the Road to the Kentucky Derby.

TRACK PHANTOM LEADS IMPRESSIVE CAST OF 12 TO KICK OFF ROAD TO KENTUCKY DERBY CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES – L and N Racing, Clark Brewster, Jerry Caroom and Breeze Easy's Lecomte (Grade III) and Gun Runner Stakes winner Track Phantom heads a talented and competitive field of 12 3-year-olds with Kentucky Derby aspirations who entered Saturday's \$400,000 Risen Star (GII) at Fair Grounds Race Course & Slots.

Run at 1 1/8 miles, the Risen Star is the third of four Road to the Kentucky Derby qualifying races held at Fair Grounds, culminating with the \$1 million TwinSpires Louisiana Derby (GII) on Saturday, March 23. Track Phantom, who swept the first two races, is the only multiple prep-winning horse so far on the Road to the Kentucky Derby.

The Risen Star is the final race on the 14-race program with a post time of 7:17 p.m. (all times Eastern). First post on the stakes-laden card is 1 p.m.

Trained by **Steve Asmussen**, Track Phantom was installed as the 7-2 morning line choice in the Risen Star with three-straight victories on his resumé, highlighted by a 2 3/4-length score in the Lecomte and 1 1/4-length victory in the Gun Runner. A \$500,000 purchase at the 2022 Keeneland September Yearling Sale, Track Phantom has been based at Fair Grounds since late November and has become the top 3-year-old on the circuit. Jockey **Joel Rosario**, who was in the saddle in the Lecomte, will have the return-call for the Risen Star and break from post No. 11.

Asmussen has won the Risen Star a record-tying three times including in 2022 with eventual Kentucky Derby favorite and runner-up **Epicenter**. Along with Track Phantom, Asmussen entered eye-catching 10-length maiden special weight winner **Hall of Fame** in the Risen Star. Owned by **Mrs. John Magnier, Michael B Tabor, Derrick Smith, Westerberg, Dandharvi and Rocket Ship Racing**, Hall of Fame is a regally bred son of the 2016 Risen Star winner and Asmussen-trained **Gun Runner** out of the Giant's Causeway mare Flag Day. He was purchased for \$1.4 million at the 2022 Fasig-Tipton August Sale. **Ricardo Santana Jr.** will have the call on Hall of Fame from post 7.

Several of Hall of Fame's owners have a second chance at glory in the Risen Star with their Remsen Stakes (GII) runner-up **Sierra Leone**. Trained by **Chad Brown**, Sierra Leone is set to make his 3-year-old debut after his erratic second-place finish to **Dornoch** in the Dec. 2 Remsen. For his seasonal bow, Brown has opted to add blinkers and change riders to **Tyler Gaffalione**. The duo will break from post 4 as the 4-1 second choice on the morning line odds.

Another horse making his 3-year-old debut is **Ribble Farms, Michael Eiserman, Earl Silver, Kenneth Fishbein** and **Daniel Fishbein's** Kentucky Jockey Club (GII) hero **Honor Marie**. Under the care of **Whit Beckman**, Honor Marie began his career with two victories from just three starts including his professional two-length win in the Kentucky Jockey Club. Honor Marie will break from post 3 under **Rafael Bejarano**.

Here is the complete Risen Star field from the rail out (with jockey, trainer and morning line odds): **Tizzy Indy** (James Graham, Keith Desormeaux, 50-1); **Awesome Ruta** (Mitchell Murrill, Joe Foster, 30-1); Honor Marie (Bejarano, Beckman, 6-1); Sierra Leone (Gaffalione, Brown, 4-1); **Moonlight** (Florent Geroux, Todd Pletcher, 12-1); **Real Men Violin** (Brian Hernandez Jr., Kenny McPeck, 8-1); Hall of Fame (Santana, Asmussen, 6-1); **Catching Freedom** (Luis Saez, Brad Cox, 5-1); **Cardinale** (Flavien Prat, Pletcher, 12-1); **Resilience** (John Velazquez, Bill Mott, 12-1); Track Phantom (Rosario, Asmussen, 7-2); and **Bee Dancer** (Corey Lanerie, Dallas Stewart, 20-1).

Awesome Ruta is not currently nominated to the Triple Crown. He can become eligible with a \$6,000 late payment due Monday, April 1.

Fans can watch and wager on all the action from Fair Grounds in www.TwinSpires.com, the official wagering provider of Churchill Downs Incorporated and the Kentucky Derby.

STRONGHOLD TABBED 5-2 MORNING LINE CHOICE IN SUNLAND DERBY – **Eric and Sharon Waller's** Los Alamitos Futurity (Grade II) runner-up **Stronghold** was tabbed as the 5-2 morning line favorite in the field of eight 3-year-olds set to contest Sunday's 19th running of the \$400,000 Sunland Derby (GIII).

Run at 1 1/16 miles, the Sunland Derby will go as Race 9 with a post time of 6:17 p.m. The top five finishers will receive points on a 20-10-6-4-2 scale towards a spot in the starting gate for the \$5 million Kentucky Derby presented by Woodford Reserve (GI).

Trained by **Phil D'Amato**, Stronghold jumped on the Road to the Kentucky Derby when he finished a close second behind **Wynstock** in the Los Alamitos Futurity. The son of Ghostzapper began his career based at Churchill Downs but shipped to D'Amato's Santa Anita Park string in October. The Sunland Derby will be Stronghold's first start of his 3-year-old campaign, and he will once again unite with jockey **Antonio Fresu** from post No. 5.

Another top prospect entered in the Sunland Derby is **Kirk and Judy Robison's** Smarty Jones Stakes third-place finisher **Informed Patriot**. Trained by **Steve Asmussen**, Informed Patriot finished 2 3/4 lengths back of **Catching Freedom** in the Smarty Jones Stakes on New Year's Day at Oaklawn. The son of Hard Spun will have the riding services of **Joel Rosario** and break from the far outside post 8.

Here is the Sunland Derby field from the rail out (with jockey, trainer and morning line odds): **No Trouble** (Ken Tohill, Joel Marr, 10-1); **Surroundedbyangels** (Alejandro Medellin, Bart Hone, 12-1); **Curlin's Kaos** (Diego Herrera, Antonio Garcia, 5-1); **Lucky Jeremy** (Christian Ramos, Bill Morey, 4-1); Stronghold (Fresu, D'Amato, 5-2); **Alotaluck** (Oscar Ceballos, Ty Garrett, 6-1); **Da Ringo** (Alfredo Juarez Jr., Jose Gonzalez Jr., 20-1); and Informed Patriot (Rosario, Asmussen, 3-1).

No Trouble, Surroundedbyangels and Da Ringo are not currently nominated to the Triple Crown but can become eligible with a \$6,000 late payment due April 1.

Watch and wager on the Sunland Derby on www.TwinSpires.com, the official wagering provider of Churchill Downs Incorporated and the Kentucky Derby.

FIVE TRIPLE CROWN NOMINEES SCHEDULED TO COMPETE IN JAPAN'S HYACINTH – Five Triple Crown nominees, led by Cattlea third-place finisher **Unquenchable (JPN)**, are scheduled to compete in Sunday's Hyacinth Stakes, the next stop on the Japan Road to the Kentucky Derby.

Run at about one mile at Tokyo Racecourse, the Hyacinth will go as the ninth race on the card with a post time of approximately 12:25 a.m. ET.

Unquenchable (JPN) is conditioned by **Mizuki Takayanagi** and top jockey **Christophe Lemaire** will have the ride in the Hyacinth.

Another expected to attract strong consideration from bettors is two-time winner **Ballon d'Or (JPN)**, who is trained by Ritto-based conditioner **Mikio Matsunaga**. The son of New Year's Day will be ridden by **Masami Matsuoka**.

Other Triple Crown nominees entered: **Ramjet (JPN)**, **Y Y Legend (JPN)** and **Habire (JPN)**.

For more information about the Hyacinth, visit: https://en.netkeiba.com/race/shutuba.html?race_id=202405010809.

RISEN STAR QUOTES

- **Steve Asmussen, trainer, Track Phantom, Hall of Fame** – “I think the Lecomte was as easy on (Track Phantom) as you could have wanted it to be, with him still getting something out of it. ... Hall of Fame was ridden more aggressively in his maiden win because he’s playing a little catch up on a horse like Track Phantom but the ability is there. You want a clean run into the first turn. The distance gives us a little more room going into it. I want and expect both of them to break cleanly, establish some position and just be allowed to show who they are. ... It’s easy to compare what Track Phantom’s done with what Epicenter did two years ago. It is also very easy to compare Hall of Fame to what Disarm was last year but with better timing. We are extremely excited about them.”
- **Brad Cox, trainer, Catching Freedom** – “We’re going to need to improve off the Smarty Jones. Physically he looks great. He’s had a good bit of time between races and he’s been moving well since he shipped back to Fair Grounds from Oaklawn. We’ll see if he’s up for it.”
- **Whit Beckman, trainer, Honor Marie** – “He’s been training well throughout the winter down here, we’re happy with his overall condition. To me, he’s a very talented horse and we’ll see if he made a jump from his form last year. Early on he was always just kind of aloof, lights weren’t really on. Now we’re really starting to see him wake up and I know he knows what he’s doing out there. He’s put on a lot of weight, a lot of muscle.”

HOW TO WATCH THE RISEN STAR – The Risen Star goes as Race 14 at Fair Grounds on Saturday’s 14-race program with an approximately post time of 7:17 p.m. ET. It will air live on FanDuel TV and can also be watched on the Smart TV app Churchill Downs LIVE and www.TwinSpires.com.

RISEN STAR KEY RACE FOR PRODUCING DERBY CONTENDERS – The quality of the Risen Star field was confirmed during the race’s last several runnings, in particular the last three.

In 2021, **Mandaloun** won the Risen Star en route to his victory via disqualification in the Kentucky Derby and in the last two years, the race has produced the second and third place finishers of the Derby: **Epicenter** and **Zandon** in 2022) and **Two Phil’s** and **Angel of Empire** in 2023.

Three horses have run in the Risen Star and gone on to win the Kentucky Derby: **Mandaloun** (2021), **Country House** (2019) and **War Emblem** (2002).

Mandaloun was the only winner of both the Risen Star and Kentucky Derby. Country House finished second to eventual Preakness Stakes (GI) winner **War of Will** while War Emblem finished sixth to **Repent**.

The overall record of Kentucky Derby contenders from the Risen Star since 1985 is 71-3-4-6.

KEY RACES TO WATCH TO WATCH – This weekend there are several races around the world that could have implications on the Kentucky Derby and Kentucky Oaks. Here are some of the key races:

Friday

- 4:46 p.m. ET, OP 7, Mdn 115k, 3yo, 6 F
- 8:25 p.m. ET, TP 6, OC 50000n1x, 3yo f, 1 M (Tapeta)

Saturday

- 1:58 p.m. ET, FG 3, OC 100000n1x, 3yo, 1 1/16 M
- 2:56 p.m. ET, FG 5, Alw 65000n2L, 3yo f, 1 1/16 M
- 3:22 p.m. ET, Aqu 7, \$100,000 Ruthless, 3yo f, 7 F
- 3:25 p.m. ET, FG 6, Mdn 65k, 3yo f, 6 F
- 3:37 p.m. ET, GP 8, Mdn 89k, 3yo, 1 M
- 3:54 p.m. ET, FG 7, Mdn 65k, 3yo, 6 F
- 4:52 p.m. ET, FG 9, Mdn 65k, 3yo, 1 1/16 M
- 5:50 p.m. ET, OP 9, \$150,000 Dixie Belle, 3yo f, 6 F
- 6:48 p.m. ET, FG 13, \$300,000 Rachel Alexandra (GII), 3yo f, 1 1/16 M
- 7:17 p.m. ET, FG 14, \$400,000 Risen Star (GII), 3yo, 1 1/8 M

Sunday

- 12:25 a.m. ET, Tokyo 9, Hyacinth Stakes, 3yo, 1 M
- 3:07 p.m. ET, GP 7, Mdn 89k, 3yo f, 1 M
- 5:13 p.m. ET, Sun 7, \$250,000 Sunland Park Oaks, 3yo f, 1 M
- 6:17 p.m. ET, Sun 9, \$400,000 Sunland Derby (GIII), 3yo, 1 1/16 M

GRADE I WINNER LOCKED 10-1 MORNING LINE CHOICE IN DERBY FUTURE WAGER POOL 4 – Just 11 weeks remain until the \$5 million Kentucky Derby presented by Woodford Reserve (Grade I) and fans will have the fourth of six opportunities on Friday-Sunday to wager on Pool 4 of the Kentucky Derby Future Wager. The three-day pool features a wide-open cast of 39 3-year-olds led by **Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners** and **Walmac Farm's** Grade I winner **Locked**, who was tabbed as the 10-1 individual favorite, along with the popular No. 40, “All Other 3-Year-Olds” not listed, as the overall 2-1 morning line choice.

Pool 4 of the Kentucky Derby Future Wager will open Friday at noon (all times Eastern) and close Sunday at 6 p.m. Like the first three pools, Pool 4 will feature \$2 Win and Exacta wagering.

Locked, who won the Breeders' Futurity (GI), garnered solid support in the first three pools of the Kentucky Derby Future Wager, closing at odds of 22-1, 14-1 and 18-1, respectively. The **Todd Pletcher**-trained son of Gun Runner remains based at Palm Beach Downs in South Florida, with his next start still to be determined after he developed a fever last week which made him miss a scheduled workout.

Wagering in the second and third pools of the Kentucky Derby Future Wager was centered upon 8-1 favorite **Fierceness**, who was named the Champion 2-Year-Old of 2023. In his 3-year-old debut, the **Repole Stable**-owned Fierceness finished second to Hades in the Holy Bull (GIII). While not the morning line favorite in Pool 4, the accomplished Fierceness was tabbed as the 12-1 second choice on the morning line.

Here are the 40 betting interests in order of their program numbers (with trainer, sire and morning line odds):

- #1 **Agate Road** (Todd Pletcher, Quality Road, 50-1);
- #2 **Amante Bianco (JPN)** (Keisuke Miyata, Henny Hughes, 90-1);
- #3 **Born Noble** (Todd Pletcher, Constitution, 40-1);
- #4 **Capital Idea** (Christophe Clement, Classic Empire, 80-1);
- #5 **Catching Freedom** (Brad Cox, Constitution, 25-1);
- #6 **Conquest Warrior** (Shug McGaughey III, City of Light, 20-1);
- #7 **Deterministic** (Christophe Clement, Liam's Map, 99-1);
- #8 **Dimatic** (Steve Asmussen, Gun Runner, 80-1);
- #9 **Domestic Product** (Chad Brown, Practical Joke, 60-1);
- #10 **Dornoch** (Danny Gargan, Good Magic, 15-1);
- #11 **El Grande O** (Linda Rice, Take Charge Indy, 80-1);
- #12 **Epic Ride** (John Ennis, Blame, 60-1);
- #13 **Fierceness** (Todd Pletcher, City of Light, 12-1);
- #14 **Forever Young (JPN)** (Yoshito Yahagi, Real Steel-JPN, 30-1);
- #15 **Hades** (Joe Orseno, Awesome Slew, 30-1);
- #16 **Hall of Fame** (Steve Asmussen, Gun Runner, 20-1);
- #17 **Honor Marie** (Whit Beckman, Honor Code, 25-1);
- #18 **Imperial Gun** (Steve Asmussen, Gun Runner, 80-1);
- #19 **Just Steel** (Wayne Lukas, Justify, 80-1);
- #20 **Just a Touch** (Brad Cox, Justify, 60-1);
- #21 **Knightsbridge** (Bill Mott, Nyquist, 30-1);
- #22 **Lat Long** (Kenny McPeek, Liam's Map, 90-1-);
- #23 **Liberal Arts** (Robert Medina, Arrogate, 60-1);
- #24 **Locked** (Todd Pletcher, Gun Runner, 10-1);
- #25 **Lucky Jeremy** (Bill Morey, Lookin At Lucky, 90-1);
- #26 **Mystik Dan** (Kenny McPeek, Goldencents, 20-1);
- #27 **Nash** (Brad Cox, Medaglia d'Oro, 30-1);
- #28 **No More Time** (Jose D'Angelo, Not This Time, 40-1);
- #29 **Real Men Violin** (Kenny McPeek, Mendelssohn, 90-1);
- #30 **Resilience** (Bill Mott, Into Mischief, 99-1);
- #31 **Sierra Leone** (Chad Brown, Gun Runner, 15-1);
- #32 **Speak Easy** (Todd Pletcher, Constitution, 30-1);

- #33 **Stronghold** (Phil D'Amato, Ghostzapper, 99-1);
- #34 **Timberlake** (Brad Cox, Into Mischief, 30-1);
- #35 **Track Phantom** (Steve Asmussen, Quality Road, 20-1);
- #36 **Tuscan Gold** (Chad Brown, Medaglia d'Oro, 50-1);
- #37 **Tuscan Sky** (Todd Pletcher, Vino Rosso, 80-1);
- #38 **Uncle Heavy** (Butch Reid Jr., Social Inclusion, 40-1);
- #39 **West Saratoga** (Larry Demeritte, Exaggerator, 99-1); and
- #40 "All Other 3-Year-Olds from 2021 Foal Crop" (2-1).

Seven of the 14 horses entered in Saturday's \$400,000 Risen Star (GII) at Fair Grounds are in Pool 4: Catching Freedom, Hall of Fame, Honor Marie, Real Men Violin, Resilience, Sierra Leone and Track Phantom.

Inaugurated in 1999, the Kentucky Derby Future Wager has been offered for a 26th consecutive year. Other Future Wager dates are set for March 15-17 (Pool 5) and April 4-6 (Pool 6). The lone Kentucky Oaks Future Wager will coincide with Kentucky Derby Future Wager Pool 5.

More information, Brisnet.com past performances and real-time odds on the Kentucky Derby Future Wager will be available before the pool opens Friday online at <https://www.kentuckyderby.com/wager/future-wager/>.

CHAMPION FIERCENESS LEADS ROAD TO KENTUCKY DERBY LEADERBOARD – Through 19 races on the Road to the Kentucky Derby Prep Season, **Repole Stable's** Fierceness tops the leaderboard with 36 points. The talented Breeders' Cup Juvenile (GI) winner made his 3-year-old debut two weeks ago, finishing third to **Hades** in the Holy Bull (GIII).

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

<u>Position</u>	<u>Horse</u>	<u>Trainer</u>	<u>Resumé</u>	<u>Possible Next Start</u>	<u>Points</u>
1	Fierceness	Todd Pletcher	1 st – Breeders' Cup Juvenile 3 rd – Holy Bull	March 30 Florida Derby	36
2	Track Phantom	Steve Asmussen	1 st – Lecomte 1 st – Gun Runner	Feb. 17 Risen Star	30
3	Mystik Dan	Kenny McPeck	1 st – Southwest 5 th – Smarty Jones	March 30 Arkansas Derby	21
4	Hades	Joe Orseno	1 st – Holy Bull	March 30 Florida Derby	20
5	Uncle Heavy	Butch Reid	1 st – Withers	April 6 Wood Memorial	20
6	No More Time	Jose D'Angelo	1 st – Sam F. Davis	March 9 Tampa Bay Derby or March 30 Florida Derby	20
7	Locked	Todd Pletcher	1 st – Breeders' Futurity 3 rd – Breeders' Cup Juvenile	TBA	19
8	Liberal Arts	Robert Medina	1 st – Street Sense 3 rd – Southwest 3 rd – Iroquois	March 30 Arkansas Derby or April 6 Blue Grass	19
9	West Saratoga	Larry Demeritte	1 st – Iroquois 3 rd – Sam F. Davis 5 th – Breeders' Futurity	March 2 John Battaglia Memorial or March 9 Tampa Bay Derby	17
10	Timberlake	Brad Cox	1 st – Champagne 4 th – Breeders' Cup Juvenile	Feb. 24 Rebel	16
11	Just Steel	Wayne Lukas	2 nd – Southwest 2 nd – Smarty Jones	Feb. 24 Rebel	15
12	El Grande O	Linda Rice	2 nd – Withers 2 nd – Jerome	March 2 Gotham	15
13	Nash	Brad Cox	2 nd – Lecomte 3 rd – Gun Runner	Feb. 17 n1x at FG	13
14	Honor Marie	Whit Beckman	1 st – Kentucky Jockey Club	Feb. 17 Risen Star	10
15	Agate Road	Todd Pletcher	2 nd – Sam F. Davis	March 9 Tampa Bay Derby	10
16	Otto the Conqueror	Steve Asmussen	1 st – Springboard Mile	TBA	10
17	Dornoch	Danny Gargan	1 st – Remsen	March 2 Fountain of Youth	10
18	Catching Freedom	Brad Cox	1 st – Smarty Jones	Feb. 17 Risen Star	10
19	Domestic Product	Chad Brown	2 nd – Holy Bull	March 9 Tampa Bay Derby	10
20	Moonlight	Todd Pletcher	2 nd – Street Sense 4 th – Remsen	Feb. 17 Risen Star	7

DOWN THE STRETCH –

The Road to the Longines Kentucky Oaks will continue Saturday at Fair Grounds with the \$300,000 Rachel Alexandra Stakes (GII), featuring Golden Rod (GII) winner **Intricate** along with Pocahontas (GIII) winner **V V's Dream** and Untapable winner **Alpine Princess**. The Rachel Alexandra, which goes as Race 13, is the kickoff on the Championship Series for the \$1.5 million Longines Kentucky Oaks (GI) and will award the top five finishers points on a 50-25-15-10-5 scale. Trainer **Brad Cox** stated **West Omaha** could be scratched in favor of the Feb. 24 Honeybee (GIII) stakes. ...

The \$250,000 Sunland Park Oaks will go as Race 7 Sunday at Sunland Park featuring three-time stakes winner **Candy Aisle** as the 2-1 morning line favorite. The race will award the top five finishers qualifying points on a 20-10-6-4-2 scale for the Kentucky Oaks. ...

Race 3 on the undercard of the Risen Star at Fair Grounds features **Godolphin's** Lecomte (GIII) runner-up and Gun Runner third-place finisher **Nash** in a first-level allowance contest at 1 1/16 miles. The field of seven 3-year-olds also includes Lecomte fourth-place finisher **Ethan Energy** and debut winner **Tuscan Sky. Moonlight**, who was cross-entered in this race and the Risen Star, is likely to stay in the Risen Star field, according to trainer **Todd Pletcher**. ...

Japan Road to the Kentucky Derby contender **Amante Bianco (JPN)** finished second on Wednesday in the Kumotori Sho at NAR's Ohi Racecourse. The unique registered white racehorse stumbled badly leaving the starting gate and was second-best behind **Blue Sun**. Amante Bianco previously won the Nov. 25 Cattleya Stakes on the Japan Road to the Kentucky Derby. ...

Nominations to the \$1.5 million Longines Kentucky Oaks (GI) close Saturday. To nominate, call the Churchill Downs racing office at (502) 638-3806. ...

“**Inside the Kentucky Derby**” is your place to go for all the latest news and notes on this year's Road to the Kentucky Derby. Listen and subscribe on your favorite podcast platform. ...

Stall applications for 2022 Spring Meet at Churchill Downs are due Friday, March 1. The barn area at Churchill Downs is set to open Tuesday, March 19 and the first day of training is scheduled for Friday, March 22.

UPCOMING ROAD TO KENTUCKY DERBY RACES

Feb. 24 (10 weeks out) – \$1.25 million Rebel (GII), 1 1/16 miles, Oaklawn (Top 5: 50-25-15-10-5)

Known possible starters (with trainer): Just Steel (Wayne Lukas); Muth (Bob Baffert); Tejon Pass (Peter Miller); Timberlake (Brad Cox); and Time for Truth (Ron Moquett).

March 2 (nine weeks out) – \$400,000 Fountain of Youth (GII), 1 1/16 miles, Gulfstream Park (Top 5: 50-25-15-10-5)

Known possible starters (with trainer): Dornoch (Danny Gargan) and Real Macho (Rohan Crichton).

March 2 (nine weeks out) – \$400,000 San Felipe (GII), 1 1/16 miles, Santa Anita (Top 5: 50-25-15-10-5)

March 2 (nine weeks out) – \$300,000 Gotham (GIII), one mile, Aqueduct (Top 5: 50-25-15-10-5)

Known possible starters (with trainer): Bergen (Brad Cox); El Grande O (Linda Rice); Just a Touch (Brad Cox); Maximus Meridius (Butch Reid); Scatify (John Sadler); and Slider (John Sadler).

March 2 (nine weeks out) – \$150,000 John Battaglia Memorial, 1 1/16 miles (Tapeta), Turfway Park (Top 5: 20-10-6-4-2)

Known possible starters (with trainer): Blue Eyed George (Michael McCarthy); Epic Ride (John Ennis); Salvattore Prince (Jose D'Angelo); and West Saratoga (Larry Demeritte).

March 9 (eight weeks out) – \$400,000 Tampa Bay Derby (GIII), 1 1/16 miles, Tampa Bay Downs (Top 5: 100-50-25-15-10)

Known possible starters (with trainer): Agate Road (Todd Pletcher); Domestic Product (Chad Brown); No More Time (Jose D'Angelo); and West Saratoga (Larry Demeritte).

March 23 (six weeks out) – \$1 million Louisiana Derby (GII), 1 3/16 miles, Fair Grounds (Top 5: 100-50-25-15-10)

Known possible starters (with trainer):

March 23 (six weeks out) – \$700,000 Jeff Ruby Steaks (GIII), 1 1/8 miles (Tapeta), Turfway Park (Top 5: 100-50-25-15-10)

Known possible starters (with trainer): Tennessee (Brad Cox).

-more-

March 30 (five weeks out) – \$1 million UAE Derby (GII), 1 3/16 miles, Meydan Racecourse (Top 5: 100-50-25-15-10)
Known possible starters (with trainer): Mendelssohn Bay (Bhupat Semar).

March 30 (five weeks out) – \$1 million Florida Derby (GI), 1 1/8 miles, Gulfstream Park (Top 5: 100-50-25-15-10)
Known possible starters (with trainer): Fierceness (Todd Pletcher) and Hades (Joe Orseno).

March 30 (five weeks out) – \$1.5 million Arkansas Derby (GI), 1 1/8 miles, Oaklawn Park (Top 5: 100-50-25-15-10)
Known possible starters (with trainer): Liberal Arts (Robert Medina) and Mystik Dan (Kenny McPeck).

April 6 (four weeks out) – \$750,000 Wood Memorial (GII), 1 1/8 miles, Aqueduct (Top 5: 100-50-25-15-10)
Known possible starters (with trainer): Domestic Product (Chad Brown); Dornach (Danny Gargan); and Uncle Heavy (Butch Reid).

April 6 (four weeks out) – \$1 million Blue Grass (GI), 1 1/8 miles, Keeneland (Top 5: 100-50-25-15-10)
Known possible starters (with trainer): Domestic Product (Chad Brown); Dornach (Danny Gargan); Liberal Arts (Robert Medina) and Mystik Dan (Kenny McPeck).

April 6 (four weeks out) – \$750,000 Santa Anita Derby (GI), 1 1/8 miles, Santa Anita (Top 5: 100-50-25-15-10)

April 13 (three weeks out) – \$400,000 Lexington (GIII), 1 1/16 miles, Keeneland (Top 5: 20-10-6-4-2)

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.

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 and Race and Sports Book. www.ChurchillDowns.com.

-END-