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## **TOP 2-YEAR-OLD PROSPECT EAST AVENUE RETURNS TO CHURCHILL DOWNS AFTER BREEDERS' CUP STUMBLE**

**LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Friday, Nov. 8, 2024)** – Godolphin's promising 2-year-old colt **East Avenue** returned to trainer **Brendan Walsh**'s barn at Churchill Downs on Sunday, two days after a disappointing ninth-place finish in the Breeders' Cup Juvenile (GI).

Sent off as the 9-5 favorite, East Avenue stumbled badly leaving the gate under jockey **Tyler Gaffalione**, effectively ending his chances in the championship-deciding race. Despite the setback, Walsh remains optimistic about East Avenue's potential on the Road to the Kentucky Derby.

"You could hear it in the stands after it happened – everyone gasped," Walsh said. "You think of a million scenarios before your horse loads into the gate and that was the last thing on my mind. We were so confident in him but we'll just draw a line through it and move on."

Gaffalione, who was back breezing horses for Walsh on Friday morning, echoed his confidence in East Avenue following the Breeders' Cup misstep.

"The really good horses have a different energy about them. You feed off it," Gaffalione said. "It was disappointing how it played out last week but we'll be back."

East Avenue solidified his standing as a top contender for Kentucky Derby 151 following his front-running win in the Breeders' Futurity (GI) at Keeneland in early October. Before the Breeders' Cup, East Avenue closed as the second individual choice at 11-1 in the first Kentucky Derby Future Wager pool, just behind **Chancer McPatrick** at 9-1.

**VETERANS' DAY: MILITARY APPRECIATION DAY ON SUNDAY** – Churchill Downs will observe and honor those who sacrificed so that we may continue to enjoy our freedoms and celebrate active and retired military members on Sunday. Free general admission is offered to active and retired military members who present their I.D. or they can purchase discounted tickets to Millionaires Row or Skye Terrace (subject to availability) for a special \$45 lunch by calling (502) 636-4450.

Local trainers who served in the military include **Gary "Red Dog" Hartlage** (Army), **Jeff Hiles** (Marines), **Rick Hiles** (Air Force), **Neil Howard** (Navy) and **Mark Simms** (Army).

**DOWN THE STRETCH** – Racing resumed Friday at Churchill Downs with a first post of 1 p.m. The nine-race program featured a \$3,481 carryover in the Derby City 6 Jackpot in Races 4-9. ... TwinSpires will host a \$400 Kentucky Derby Betting Challenge qualifier on Saturday. The contest will award at least one \$5,000 seat to the \$250,000 Kentucky Derby Betting Challenge. For more information and to register, visit [www.twinspires.com/tournaments](http://www.twinspires.com/tournaments). ... **"Inside Churchill Downs"** returns Friday on **ESPN 680/105.7** and features guest handicapper **Joe Kristufek**. The one-hour show will recap last weekend's Breeders' Cup World Championships and look ahead to Saturday's card at Churchill Downs. Those outside the Louisville area can listen live on [www.espnloouisville.com](http://www.espnloouisville.com). ... For the latest information about the Churchill Downs Fall Meet, visit [www.churchilldowns.com](http://www.churchilldowns.com).

### **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](http://www.ChurchillDowns.com).

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