

MORNING LINE ODDS

Mike Battaglia has been Churchill Downs' morning line odds maker for 52 years since 1974. He also served as the track's announcer from 1977-97 and simulcast host from 1997-2007.

Battaglia, who resides in Northern Kentucky, is a former horse racing analyst for NBC and retired as the track announcer for Turfway Park in early 2016 and simulcast host for Keeneland Race Course in 2016. He also served as a Vice President for Turfway Park.

Morning line odds, which are odds given to horses in a race prior to the start of betting as a prediction how the linemaker thinks the public will bet, will be revealed at the Kentucky Derby Post Position Draw.

Battaglia has correctly predicted the Derby favorite 76.5% of the time: 39-for-51.

Morning Line Odds were first published in the official Kentucky Derby Day program in 1949. Records prior to 1949 are incomplete.

Battaglia's Morning Line Favorites (Since 1974)

ML Favorite	Year	ML Odds	Final Odds
Journalism	2025	3-1	3.42-1*
Fierceness	2024	5-2	3.21-1*
Forte	2023	3-1	SCR
Zandon	2022	3-1	6.10
Essential Quality	2021	2-1	2.90-1*
Tiz the Law	2020	3-5	0.70-1*
Omaha Beach	2019	4-1	SCR
Game Winner (revised)		9-2	6.80-1
Justify	2018	3-1	2.90-1*
Classic Empire	2017	4-1	6.80-1
Nyquist	2016	3-1	2.30-1*
American Pharoah	2015	5-2	2.90-1*
California Chrome	2014	5-2	2.50-1*
Orb	2013	7-2	5.40-1*
Bodemeister	2012	4-1	4.20-1*
Dialed In	2011	4-1	5.20-1*
Lookin At Lucky	2010	3-1	6.30-1*
I Want Revenge	2009	3-1	SCR
Big Brown	2008	3-1	2.40-1*
Curlin	2007	7-2	5.00-1
Brother Derek	2006	3-1	7.70-1
Bellamy Road	2005	5-2	2.60-1*
The Cliff's Edge	2004	4-1	8.20-1
Empire Maker	2003	6-5	2.50-1*
Harlan's Holiday	2002	9-2	6.00-1*
Point Given	2001	9-5	1.80-1*
Fusaichi Pegasus	2000	9-5	2.30-1*
General Challenge / Excellent Meeting-f	1999	3-1	4.80-1*
Indian Charlie	1998	2-1	2.70-1*
Pulpit	1997	2-1	5.70-1
Unbridled's Song	1996	8-5	3.50-1*
Timber Country / Serena's Song-f	1995	5-2	3.40-1*
Holy Bull	1994	8-5	2.20-1*
Prairie Bayou	1993	5-2	4.40-1*
Arazi	1992	6-5	0.90-1*
Fly So Free	1991	5-2	3.30-1
Summer Squall	1990	7-5	2.10-1
Easy Goer / Awe Inspiring	1989	3-5	0.80-1*
Private Terms	1988	5-2	3.40-1*
Demons Begone	1987	5-2	2.20-1*
Snow Chief	1986	6-5	2.10-1*
Chief's Crown	1985	9-5	1.20-1*
Althea-f / Life's Magic-f	1984	5-2	2.80-1*
Marfa / Balboa Native / Total Departure	1983	5-2	2.40-1*
El Baba	1982	5-2	3.30-1
Proud Appeal / Golden Derby	1981	2-1	2.30-1*
Rockhill Native	1980	8-5	2.10-1*
Spectacular Bid	1979	3-5	0.60-1*
Alydar	1978	1-1	1.20-1*
Seattle Slew	1977	1-2	0.50-1*

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ML Favorite	Year	ML Odds	Final Odds
Honest Pleasure	1976	3-5	0.40-1*
Foolish Pleasure	1975	9-5	1.90-1*
Cannonade / Judger	1974	8-5	1.50-1*

Morning Line Favorites (1949-73)

ML Favorite	Year	ML Odds	Final Odds
Secretariat / Angle Light	1973	1-1	1.50-1*
Riva Ridge	1972	9-5	1.50-1*
Eastern Fleet / Bold and Able	1971	5-2	3.80-1
Terlago	1970	7-2	7.40-1
Majestic Prince	1969	7-5	1.40-1*
Forward Pass	1968	8-5	2.20-1*
Damascus	1967	2-1	1.70-1*
Abe's Hope	1966	5-2	3.20-1
Bold Lad	1965	8-5	2.00-1*
Hill Rise	1964	6-5	1.40-1*
Candy Spots	1963	6-5	1.50-1*
Ridan	1962	2-1	1.10-1*
Carry Back	1961	5-2	2.50-1*
Tompion	1960	7-5	1.10-1*
First Landing	1959	3-1	3.60-1*
Tim Tam	1958	8-5	2.10-1
Bold Ruler	1957	8-5	1.20-1*
Needles	1956	2-1	1.60-1*
Nashua	1955	4-5	1.30-1*
Correlation	1954	5-2	3.00-1*
Native Dancer / Social Outcast	1953	3-5	0.70-1*
Hill Gail / Top Blend	1952	6-5	1.10-1*
Mameluke / Counterpoint	1951	3-1	5.90-1
+Your Host	1950	5-2	1.60-1*
+Hill Prince	1950	5-2	2.50-1
Olympia	1949	6-5	0.80-1*

* Favorite

+ Your Host and Hill Prince – not a coupled wagering interest – were made co-morning line favorites at 5-2 in 1950.