



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## **THE PUMA SCRATCHES FROM DERBY 152; OAKS HEROINE ALWAYS A RUNNER HEADED TO SARATOGA**

**LOUISVILLE, KY (Saturday, May 2, 2026) – OGMA Investments, JR Ranch, High Step Racing, TCC Stables and Bruce Zoldan's The Puma** was declared out of Kentucky Derby 152 Saturday morning.

"We discovered some swelling in his leg due to a skin infection," trainer **Gustavo Delgado** said. "It's incredibly disappointing but the swelling should go down within a day or two. It's just really bad timing."

### **LONGINES KENTUCKY OAKS FOLLOW UP**

**ALWAYS A RUNNER (Winner) – Douglas Scharbauer and Three Chimneys Farm's Always a Runner** delivered a decisive performance Friday night under the lights at Churchill Downs to win the \$1.5 million Longines Kentucky Oaks (GI), the first edition of the race run in primetime.

"It was a great day of racing for me," jockey **Jose Ortiz** said. "I got five wins and capped it off with the Oaks. It's just amazing. It was a good vibe. I hope the public had fun. As long as they did, it's good to me."

"These big races, with big fields, you have to have plans A, B, C, sometimes D," trainer Chad Brown said. "We never got to Plan B, because that's exactly how we laid it out. Jose executed it perfectly, and this incredibly talented filly cooperated. She was there for him at every pole."

Brown indicated the filly will head to Saratoga Race Course for a summer campaign targeting the major Grade I races for 3-year-old fillies throughout the spring and summer.

**MEANING (Second)/BROOKLYN BLONDE (13th) – "They're both fine this morning,"** noted assistant trainer **Justin Curran** at Barn 29 in reference to trainer **Michael McCarthy's** twosome of **Meaning** and **Brooklyn Blonde** after their runs in Friday's Grade I Kentucky Oaks.

Meaning, who is owned by **Brindlewood Farm** and **Eclipse Thoroughbreds**, ran a powerful second in the nine-furlong classic under California rider **Juan Hernandez**. **Sun-Kissed Stables** and **Bobby Flay's Brooklyn Blonde**, who had another Californian -- **Kazushi Kimura** -- in the boot, finished 13th and last in the 152nd edition of the Run for the Lillies.

The future is bright and wide open for the bay Meaning, though the thought around the barn concerning the chestnut "Brooklyn" was that she likely needed to shorten up in distance.

**COUNTING STARS (Third)/SEARCH PARTY (10th) – Allen Hardy, assistant to trainer Mark Casse,** said the barn's two Oaks runners "came out of the race in good order and ate up."

**West Point Thoroughbreds' Counting Stars** was close to the front for the bulk of the mile and an eighth race and surged late to get third from **Explora** by a neck.

"I thought the rider (**Francisco Arrieta**) did a heck of job weaving through horses to get up for third," Hardy said.

**EXPLORA (Fourth) – Trainer Bob Baffert's** longtime clients – **Mike Pegram, Karl Watson** and **Paul Weitman** – got to do some serious rooting as their filly **Explora** led the way from the start to the stretch in Friday's renewal of the Run for the Lillies. Though she lost a photo for third at the end of the nine furlongs, the daughter of Blame gave her folks a thrill and acquitted herself well in the classic and was doing fine back at Barn 33 Saturday morning.

"She's very good," said assistant trainer **Dan Ward**.

The stable will be busy today again. They run a pair -- **Litmus Test** and **Potente** -- in this afternoon's 152nd Kentucky Derby.

**PROM QUEEN (Fifth) – Gary and Mary West's Prom Queen** finished fifth in the Oaks for trainer **Brad Cox**.

"She looks good this morning," Cox said. "She ran a solid race and just couldn't quite catch the leaders late."

**ZANY (Sixth) – Repole Stable's Zany** survived the battle and will live to fight another day.

At Barn 39 Saturday morning, trainer **Todd Pletcher** reported that his daughter of American Pharoah had come out of her sixth-place finish in Friday's \$1.5 million Kentucky Oaks in good order.

"She's fine," the conditioner said. "Irad (jockey **Irad Ortiz, Jr**) said she didn't get away too well, that she brushed the side of the gate and then got shuffled back. She just didn't do much running after that."

Pletcher said it was likely that the chestnut would be shipped up to Saratoga with the stable's other horses next week.

**PERCY'S BAR (Seventh) – Hat Creek Racing's Percy's Bar** is scheduled to return to **Ben Colebrook's** farm in Lexington on Sunday morning.

"She came out of the race well," Colebrook said. "You needed to be close (to the pace) yesterday. She will go to my farm for a few days and then figure it out from there."

**DAZZLING DAME (Eighth) – Respect the Valleys, Medallion Racing and Madaket Stables' Dazzling Dame**, who pressed the early pace of **Explora** before finishing eighth, is scheduled to return to her home base at Fair Hill Training Center in Maryland on Sunday.

"She ran hard," said **Emma Wolfe**, assistant to trainer **Brittany Russell** who left Louisville early Saturday morning. Plans going forward are to be determined. "She is a filly that likes a lot of time between races," Wolfe said.

**RESIST (Ninth) – Military Pike Racing Stables' Resist** finished ninth in the \$1.5 million Longines Kentucky Oaks (GI) after drawing into the field off the also-eligible list. Trainer **Tommy Drury Jr.** reported the filly came out of the race in good order Saturday morning.

"All is well this morning," Drury said. "She didn't have the opportunity to save any ground into the first turn, but all things considered I thought she ran a very good race."

**PASHMINA (11th) – Red White and Blue Racing's Pashmina** walked the shedrow at Barn 43 following her Oaks effort.

Trainer **Rob Atras** said Pashmina would head back to Belmont in the next few days with plans to be determined.

**LOVELY GREY (12th) – Go Go Grey Stable's Lovely Grey** finished 12th for trainer **Kelsey Danner**. Owner **Dave Portnoy** reflected on the experience following the race.

"It was an unreal experience," Portnoy said. "I wish she would have run better, but we were asking a lot. She's healthy and that's what's most important."

#### **ABOUT CHURCHILL DOWNS RACETRACK**

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