

**Kentucky Derby Update: The Derby Dispatch for Thursday, April 3, 2025**

**Apr 03, 2025**



Brisnet Past Performances:

UAE Derby: <https://www.brisnet.com/document/UAEDerby25.pdf>

Santa Anita Derby: <https://www.brisnet.com/document/SADerby25.pdf>

Wood Memorial: <https://www.brisnet.com/document/WoodMemorial25.pdf>

Blue Grass: <https://www.brisnet.com/document/BlueGrass25.pdf>

Kentucky Derby Future Wager Pool 6:

<https://www.brisnet.com/document/Derby25Future6.pdf>

Inside the Kentucky Derby Podcast: Superfecta of Derby Preps Preview

**ROAD TO KENTUCKY DERBY NEARS FINISH LINE WITH MAJOR PREPS ACROSS THE GLOBE**

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Thursday, April 3, 2025) – The Road to the Kentucky Derby enters its penultimate weekend with four pivotal races – including three Grade I events and the

Euro/Mideast finale – set to help determine who qualifies for the 151st running of the \$5 million Kentucky Derby presented by Woodford Reserve (Grade I) on Saturday, May 3 at Churchill Downs.

However, severe weather has shifted the weekend schedule. The \$1.25 million Blue Grass (GI), originally slated for Saturday at Keeneland, will now be run Tuesday after Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear declared a state of emergency for the Commonwealth. According to the National Weather Service, more than six inches of rain are expected to fall in Lexington, prompting Keeneland to move Saturday's entire card to Tuesday.

The revised prep schedule now includes two major domestic preps on Saturday: the \$750,000 Wood Memorial (GI) at Aqueduct and the \$500,000 Santa Anita Derby (GI).

Internationally, the \$1 million UAE Derby (GII) at Meydan caps the Euro/Mideast Road to the Kentucky Derby with a deep cast of 3-year-olds including a trio of Kentucky Derby hopefuls from Japan along with Gotham (GIII) winner Flood Zone, who has already accrued 50 qualifying points on the traditional Road to the Kentucky Derby.

The Blue Grass and Wood Memorial will award 100-50-25-15-10 points to the top five finishers but the Santa Anita Derby will award 75-37.5-18.75-11.25-7.5 points because only five horses are entered. Should the field scratch down to four or less, the points would be reduced by an additional 25% to 50-25-12.5-7.5-5.

Last weekend on the Road to the Kentucky Derby, Sandman and Tappan Street became the latest colts to clinch their Derby berths with victories in the Arkansas Derby (GI) and Florida Derby (GI), respectively.

Just four weeks remain until the "Run for the Roses."

RIVER THAMES TABBED AS 5-2 FAVORITE IN GRADE I, \$1.25 MILLION BLUE GRASS – WinStar Farm, CHC Inc., Pantofel Stable and Wachtel Stable's River Thames, runner-up in last month's Fountain of Youth Stakes (Grade II), headlines a field seven of 3-year-olds entered in Tuesday's 101st running of the \$1.25 million Toyota Blue Grass (GI) at Keeneland.

Due to historic rainfall forecasted in the Central Kentucky region, Keeneland officials announced Wednesday that Saturday's card would be moved in its entirety to Tuesday.

The Blue Grass, contested at 1 1/8 miles over the main track, offers Kentucky Derby qualifying points to the top five finishers on a 100-50-25-15-10 scale. It is carded as Race 10 on an 11-race program with a scheduled post time of 5:52 p.m. First post is 1 p.m.

River Thames, trained by four-time Blue Grass winner Todd Pletcher, drew the rail with Irad Ortiz Jr. aboard. The two-time winner owns 25 Derby qualifying points after a second-place finish in the Fountain of Youth on March 1 at Gulfstream Park and was tabbed as the 5-2 morning-line favorite.

East Avenue, last year's Breeders' Futurity winner at Keeneland, will look to rebound from a 10th-place effort in the Fasig-Tipton Risen Star (GII). Trained by Brendan Walsh, the Godolphin homebred has banked 20 points and drew No. post 5 under Luan Machado.

Tampa Bay Derby winner Owen Almighty returns to Kentucky with three wins and two runner-up finishes from six starts. Trained by Brian Lynch, the Tampa Bay Derby (GIII) winner will break from post 4 with Jose Ortiz in the saddle.

Grade I winner Chancer McPatrick enters the Blue Grass off a runner-up finish in the Tampa Bay Derby. Trained by Chad Brown, the Flanagan Racing colt will break from post 6 with Flavien Prat aboard.

Whitham Thoroughbreds' Burnham Square will attempt to rebound from his disappointing fourth-place finish in the Fountain of Youth. Trained by Ian Wilkes, Burnham Square scored a 1 ¾-length victory in the Feb. 1 Holy Bull (GIII) over eventual Florida Derby (GI) winner Tappan Street. Jockey Brian Hernandez Jr. will have the call from post 3.

The field for the Blue Grass from the rail out (with jockey, trainer and morning line odds):

River Thames (Irado Ortiz Jr., Pletcher, 5-2)

Render Judgment (Sheldon Russell, Kenny McPeck, 20-1)

Burnham Square (Hernandez, Wilkes, 4-1)

Owen Almighty (Jose Ortiz, Lynch, 3-1)

East Avenue (Machado, Walsh, 3-1)

Chancer McPatrick (Prat, Brown, 7-2)

Admiral Dennis (Luis Saez, Brad Cox, 20-1)

TOP KENTUCKY DERBY CONTENDERS JOURNALISM, CITIZEN BULL CLASH IN SANTA

ANITA DERBY – Two of the top 3-year-olds in the country, dynamic San Felipe (Grade II)

winner Journalism and Eclipse Award winner Citizen Bull, will square off for the first time in Saturday's 88th running of the \$500,000 Santa Anita Derby (GI), a key stop on the Road to the Kentucky Derby.

Run at 1 1/8 miles, the Santa Anita Derby is scheduled as Race 10 with a post time of 7:30 p.m. Because there were only five horses entered in the race, the overall qualifying points to the \$5 million Kentucky Derby presented by Woodford Reserve (GI) were downgraded by 25%. The winner will receive 75 points with the second-through fifth-place finishers being awarded 37.5, 18.75, 11.25 and 7.5.

Journalism, trained by Michael McCarthy, enters the Santa Anita Derby off a dominant win in the San Felipe on March 1, where he rallied from off the pace to defeat Barnes by 1 ¾ lengths. The Curlin colt has won three of four starts, including last year's Los Alamitos Futurity (GII). Jockey Umberto Rispoli has the call from the rail.

Last year's champion 2-year-old Citizen Bull returns for his second start of the year after a front-running win in the Robert B. Lewis (GIII) over one mile in early February. Trained by Bob Baffert, the Into Mischief colt is 4-for-5 lifetime, including Grade I victories in the Breeders' Cup Juvenile and American Pharoah. Martin Garcia will ride from post No. 2

Baffert also sends out the highly regarded colt Barnes. A \$3.2 million purchase by Zedan Racing, the son of Into Mischief won the seven-furlong San Vicente (GII) earlier this year. Juan Hernandez rides out of post 4.

The field for the Santa Anita Derby from the rail out (with jockey and trainer):

Journalism (Rispoli, McCarthy)

Citizen Bull (Garcia, Baffert)

Westwood (Tiago Pereira, John Shirreffs)

Barnes (Hernandez, Baffert)

Baeza (Hector Berrios, John Shirreffs)

**WITHERS WINNER CAPTAIN COOK RETURNS TO FACE FULL FIELD IN WOOD MEMORIAL –**

Captain Cook will look to build on his impressive Withers Stakes (Listed) victory two months ago as he headlines an uber-competitive field of 12 3-year-olds entered in Saturday's 100th running of the Grade II, \$750,000 Wood Memorial at Aqueduct.

The nine-furlong test offers 100-50-25-15-10 qualifying points to the top five finishers on the Road to the Kentucky Derby and is slated as Race 12 on a 13-race card with a post time of 6:10 p.m.

Captain Cook, owned by St. Elias Stable and trained by Rick Dutrow Jr., enters off a sharp score in the Withers on Feb. 1, earning 20 qualifying points. The son of Practical Joke has won both starts since being purchased for \$410,000 at the Keeneland Horses of Racing Age Sale in November, including a dominant maiden win at Aqueduct in December. Jockey Manny Franco will have the riding assignment in the Wood Memorial and break from post No. 2.

Dutrow also sends out McAfee, who was fifth last out in the one-turn mile Gotham (GIII). A half-brother to Horse of the Year Thorpedo Anna, McAfee broke his maiden on debut at Churchill Downs. Eric Cancel has the mount from post 10.

Sand Devil, a New York-bred homebred for Chester Broman Sr., finished second in the Gotham to collect 25 qualifying points. Trained by Linda Rice, the Violence colt went 3-for-3 against state-bred company to begin his career and will try two turns for the first time. Jose Lezcano will be in the irons from post 5.

Hill Road, third in last year's Breeders' Cup Juvenile (GI), brings graded stakes experience to the field for trainer Chad Brown. The Quality Road colt earned 15 qualifying points with a third-place effort in the Tampa Bay Derby (GIII).

Rodriguez, trained by Hall of Famer Bob Baffert, ships in from California with 21.25 Derby qualifying points. The \$485,000 son of Authentic was second in the Robert B. Lewis (GIII) and third in the San Felipe (GII) in his last two starts at Santa Anita. Mike Smith will ride from the rail.

The field for the Wood Memorial from the rail out (with jockey and trainer):

Rodriguez (Smith, Baffert)

Captain Cook (Franco, Dutrow)

Tiger Twenty Four (Javier Castellano, Bill Mott)

My Mitole (Luis Rivera Jr., Carlos Martin)

Sand Devil (Lezcano, Rice)

Hill Road (Rosario, Brown)

Grande (Dylan Davis, Todd Pletcher)

Passion Rules (Kendrick Carmouche, Brad Cox)

Bear Claw Necklace (Romero Maragh, Saffie Joseph Jr.)

McAfee (Cancel, Dutrow)

Statesman (Samuel Marin, Shug McGaughey III)

Omaha Omaha (Raul Mena, Michael Gorham)

**GOTHAM WINNER FLOOD ZONE SET FOR INTERNATIONAL SHOWDOWN IN UAE DERBY –**  
Wathnan Racing's Gotham (Grade III) winner Flood Zone is set to face an international cast of 3-year-olds in Saturday's \$1 million UAE Derby (GII), the final leg of the Euro/Mideast Road to the Kentucky Derby.

The 1 3/16-mile UAE Derby, which will be run as part of Dubai World Cup night at Meydan Racecourse, will go as Race 5 at 11 a.m.

Trained by Brad Cox, Flood Zone scored a 3 ¼-length victory in the March 1 Gotham under jockey Rey Gutierrez. The son of Frosted will be ridden by Florent Geroux in the UAE Derby from post No. 5.

The field for the UAE Derby includes four horses from Japan, three of which would be under consideration for the Kentucky Derby if they were to receive an invitation, according to their connections: Admire Daytona (JPN), Dragon (JPN) and Shin Forever.

The field for the UAE Derby in order of post positions (with jockey and trainer):

Don in the Mood (JPN) (Ryusei Sakai, Teichi Konno)

Queen Azteca (Carlos Lopez, Niels Petersen)

Admire Daytona (Christophe Lemaire, Yukihiro Kato)

Dragon (JPN) (Yutaka Take, Mikio Matsunaga)

Flood Zone (Geroux, Cox)

Heart of Honor (GB) (Saffie Osbourne, Jamie Osbourne)

Shin Forever (Akira Sugawara, Hideyuki Mori)

Rafid (John Velazquez, Doug Watson)

Galactic Star (Tadhg O'Shea, Bhupat Seemar)

BLUE GRASS QUOTES

Burnham Square (trainer Ian Wilkes): "He made some mistakes in the Fountain of Youth but he did some good things, too. He came running down the lane and galloped out good."

Owen Almighty (trainer Brian Lynch): "The distance is always a concern. I think he will relish a possible off track and that is a thing that might be in his favor."

SANTA ANITA DERBY QUOTES

Journalism (trainer Michael McCarthy): "I let him run a little bit down the lane with a solid gallop-out (in his last work going five furlongs in 1:01.40). He did everything we asked of him. We'll keep him in his regular routine going into the race – nothing special."

WOOD MEMORIAL QUOTES

Captain Cook (trainer Rick Dutrow Jr.): "He's doing good... very good. Two days after he ran, he seemed like he came out of it good. It was noticeable, and he's been following it up every day with good training, good breezing and good living. He put in a big run going one mile and an eighth, which was tough, and he nailed it. We set him up for another two-turn race and it happened to be this race in two months, which is beautiful because I love time."

Hill Road (trainer Chad Brown): "He wasn't nearly fit enough to be ready to win a race like that, but I wanted to give him a chance to get on the trail. I thought he ran very respectable, and he galloped out super. It appears he has gotten a lot out of that race in his morning training, and I'm expecting him to take another step forward as we get him out to a mile and an eighth."

Rodriguez (trainer Bob Baffert): "He showed a big run. I think he's a nice horse that just needs to mature mentally and physically. Hopefully, he breaks well, gets into a nice rhythm

and we'll see what happens. Mike Smith will go up to ride him and he's very good on those types of horses. I think he's very talented. He just needs to break well and get a good trip. He's been doing well. He came back and worked well, and I thought the Wood would be a good spot for him.”

Sand Devil (trainer Linda Rice): “We’ve had three nice breezes in him consecutively. I was very happy with the breeze last week and happy again today (Sunday). He went very well. Jose Lezcano worked him. He galloped out a nice seven-eighths, so he is really as good as we can have him.”

#### HOW TO WATCH THE BLUE GRASS, SANTA ANITA DERBY, WOOD MEMORIAL

Watch the Santa Anita Derby on CNBC’s Road to the Kentucky Derby coverage with Ahmed Fareed, Jerry Bailey, Randy Moss and Britney Eurton. Live streaming is available on Peacock.

FanDuel TV will have live, on-site coverage at Keeneland and Santa Anita along with simulcasting of the Wood Memorial.

Fox Sports will have live, on-site coverage at Aqueduct throughout the weekend with the Wood Memorial airing on FS2

Stream live on TwinSpires.com, the official wagering provider of Churchill Downs Incorporated and the Kentucky Derby.

#### HOW TO WATCH THE UAE DERBY

Fox Sports will have coverage at Meydan, airing on FS1 beginning at 9 a.m.

Stream live on TwinSpires.com, the official wagering provider of Churchill Downs Incorporated and the Kentucky Derby.

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:

#### Saturday

SA, R4 (4:30 p.m.), \$200,000 Santa Anita Oaks (GII), 3yo f, 1 1/16 M

AQU, R9 (4:34 p.m.), \$200,000 Gazelle (GIII), 3yo f, 1 1/8 M

AQU, R12 (6:10 p.m.), \$750,000 Wood Memorial (GII), 3yo, 1 1/8 M

SA, R10 (7:30 p.m.), \$500,000 Santa Anita Derby (GI), 3yo, 1 1/8 M

#### Monday

KEE, R9 (5:16 p.m.), \$750,000 Ashland (GI), 3yo f, 1 1/8 M

#### Tuesday

KEE, R10 (5:52 p.m.), \$1.25 million Blue Grass (GI), 3yo, 1 1/8 M

SANTA ANITA DERBY CONTENDER JOURNALISM MADE 4-1 FAVORITE IN FINAL KENTUCKY DERBY FUTURE WAGER – The final pool of the Kentucky Derby Future Wager is set to make its three-day run Thursday-Saturday, where Santa Anita Derby (Grade I) contender Journalism was tabbed as the solid 4-1 favorite in the field of 39 individual horses, plus a 40th option for “All Other 3-Year-Olds” not listed.

Unlike the first five Future Wager pools, Pool 6 will close Saturday at approximately 4 p.m. (all times Eastern), prior to the \$750,000 Wood Memorial (Grade II), \$500,000 Santa Anita Derby (GI) and \$1.25 million Blue Grass (GI).

Wagering for Pool 6 opened Thursday at noon through TwinSpires.com, as well as simulcast and ADW outlets nationwide. Like the first five pools, win and exacta wagering is offered.

Journalism, the impressive winner of last month’s San Felipe (GII), is set to face a compact field in the Santa Anita Derby, including Eclipse Award winner Citizen Bull. Journalism, trained by Michael McCarthy and owned by Bridlewood Farm, Don Alberto Stable, Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners, Elayne Stables 5 and Bob Lapenta, closed as the 5-1 favorite in Pool 5 of the Kentucky Derby Future Wager.

The complete field for Pool 6 of the Kentucky Derby Future Wager (with trainer, sire and morning line odds):

#1 Admiral Dennis (Brad Cox, Constitution, 80-1); #2 American Promise (D. Wayne Lukas, Justify, 30-1); #3 Baeza (John Shirreffs, McKinzie, 60-1); #4 Barnes (Bob Baffert, Into Mischief, 15-1); #5 Built (Wayne Catalano, Hard Spun, 50-1);

#6 Burnham Square (Ian Wilkes, Liam's Map, 40-1); #7 Caldera (D. Wayne Lukas, Liam's Map, 40-1); #8 Captain Cook (Rick Dutrow, Practical Joke, 25-1); #9 Chancer McPatrick (Chad Brown, McKinzie, 30-1); #10 Chunk of Gold (Ethan West, Preservationist, 30-1); #11 Citizen Bull (Bob Baffert, Into Mischief, 10-1); #12 Coal Battle (Lonnie Briley, Coal Front, 25-1); #13 Dragon (JPN) (Mikio Matsunaga, Mind Your Biscuits, 50-1); #14 East Avenue (Brendan Walsh, Medaglia d'Oro, 30-1); #15 Final Gambit (Brad Cox, Not This Time, 40-1); #16 Flood Zone (Brad Cox, Frosted, 40-1); #17 Flying Mohawk (Whit Beckman, Karokontie, 60-1); #18 Grande (Todd Pletcher, Curlin, 60-1); #19 Hill Road (Chad Brown, Quality Road, 40-1); #20 Journalism (Michael McCarthy, Curlin, 4-1); #21 Luxor Cafe (Noriyuki Hori, American Pharoah, 20-1); #22 Madaket Road (Bob Baffert, Quality Road, 50-1); #23 McAfee (Rick Dutrow, Cloud Computing, 90-1); #24 My Mitole (Carlos Martin, Mitole, 80-1); #25 Omaha Omaha (Michael Gorham, Audible, 99-1); #26 Owen Almighty (Brian Lynch, Speightstown, 30-1); #27 Passion Rules (Brad Cox, Fresian Fire, 50-1); #28 Publisher (Steve Asmussen, American Pharoah, 25-1); #29 Render Judgment (Kenny McPeck, Blame, 80-1);



#30 River Thames (Todd Pletcher, Maclean's Music, 40-1); #31 Rodriguez (Bob Baffert, Authentic, 50-1); #32 Sand Devil (Linda Rice, Violence, 80-1); #33 Sandman (Mark Casse, Tapit, 8-1); #34 Shin Forever (Hideyuki Mori, Complexity, 50-1); #35 Sovereignty (Bill Mott, Into Mischief, 10-1); #36 Statesman (Shug McGaughey III, Constitution, 80-1); #37 Tappan Street (Brad Cox, Into Mischief, 10-1); #38 Tiger Twenty Four (Bill Mott, Lord Nelson, 80-1); #39 Tiztastic (Steve Asmussen, Tiz the Law, 15-1); #40 All Other 3-Year-Olds (20-1).

In total, there are 14 new entrants in Pool 6 than Pool 5: Admiral Dennis, American Promise, Dragon (JPN), Final Gambit, Flying Mohawk, McAfee, My Mitole, Omaha Omaha, Passion Rules, Publisher, Render Judgment, Shin Forever, Statesman and Tiger Twenty Four.

There are no refunds in the Kentucky Derby Future Wager. Should Churchill Downs officials determine during the duration of this week's three-day pool that one of the wagering interests has experienced an injury, illness or other circumstance that would prevent the horse from participating in the Kentucky Derby, betting on the individual horse will be suspended immediately. Pool 6 will be final pari-mutuel opportunity to wager on the Kentucky Derby prior to the race.

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

**DOWN THE STRETCH** – The Road to the Kentucky Oaks will culminate this weekend with a trio of Championship Series races beginning Saturday with the \$200,000 Santa Anita Oaks (GII) and \$200,000 Gazelle (GIII) at Aqueduct. The action continues Monday with the re-scheduled \$750,000 Ashland (GI) at Keeneland. All three races will award 100-50-25-15-10 qualifying points toward a spot in the starting gate for the \$1.5 million Longines Kentucky Oaks (GI) on Friday, May 2 at Churchill Downs although the Santa Anita Oaks would drop to 75-37.5-18.75-11.25-7.5 with a scratch. ...

Six Kentucky Derby contenders have arrived at Churchill Downs: Built (trainer Wayne Catalano, Barn 14); Final Gambit (Brad Cox, 22); Flying Mohawk (Whit Beckman, 21); Publisher (Steve Asmussen, 38); Sandman (Mark Casse, 36) and Tiztastic (Asmussen, 38). Several trainers are watching the weather to make shipping plans including Cox, who's Florida Derby (GI) winner Tappan Street could ship after rain clears the area early next week. ...

Shipping arrangements are being made for Japan Road to the Kentucky Derby winner Luxor Café. Should the colt's connections officially accept the invitation to compete in the Kentucky Derby, he would fly from Japan to Chicago in mid-April. Once he passes a

minimum 42-hour quarantine by the USDA, he'd van to Churchill Downs and be stabled at the Kentucky Import Center, located adjacent to the Churchill Downs stable gate.

Trainer Lonnie Briley reported Coal Battle will likely arrive at Churchill Downs in the coming days to begin preparing for the Kentucky Derby. Briley said after the Arkansas Derby the colt would have four walk days, followed by four or five days of training prior to his arrival in Kentucky. ...

Stakes nominations for all Kentucky Derby week races close Wednesday. For more information, visit [www.churchilldowns.com/horsemen](http://www.churchilldowns.com/horsemen).

#### UPCOMING ROAD TO KENTUCKY DERBY RACES

April 12 (three weeks out) – \$400,000 Lexington (GIII), 1 1/16 miles, Keeneland (Top 5 points: 20-10-6-4-2)

Known possible starters (with trainer): American Promise (Wayne Lukas); Bullard (Michael McCarthy); Caldera (Wayne Lukas); Gosger (Brendan Walsh); Praetor (Chad Brown)

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.