



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

Brisnet Free Past Performances (copy and paste into web browser):

Lexington: https://www.twinspires.com/documents/brisnet/past-performances/Lexington_Keeneland_ultimatepps_2026.pdf

ROAD TO KENTUCKY DERBY 152 CONCLUDES SATURDAY IN LEXINGTON

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Thursday, April 9, 2026) – The Road to the Kentucky Derby presented by Woodford Reserve concludes Saturday with the \$400,000 Lexington Stakes (Grade III) at Keeneland, the final opportunity for horses to earn qualifying points ahead of Kentucky Derby 152. While it's not impossible for a horse to earn their way into the field, they would need multiple defections from the current top 20 to secure a spot in the starting gate on the first Saturday in May.

The Lexington Stakes awards qualifying points to the top five finishers on a 20-8-6-4-2 scale. Even with a victory, **Confessional**, currently the top point earner in the race with 15 points, would exit the race with a maximum of 35 points, short of the current cutoff of 50 points to make the Kentucky Derby field.

While Saturday marks the final chance to earn points, attention also will shift to Churchill Downs where several potential Derby contenders are based, including **Albus**, **Commandment**, **Fulleffort**, **Further Ado** and **Wonder Dean (JPN)**.

Chip Honcho, based in Barn 38 for trainer **Steve Asmussen**, would need three defections to draw into the field. Asmussen has said Chip Honcho is undecided if he's run in the Kentucky Derby should he get in the field.

Also, trainer **Michael McCarthy** said on **At the Races with Steve Byk** that **Stark Contrast**, runner-up in the Jeff Ruby Steaks with 50 qualifying points, is more likely to target the \$1 million American Turf. "He may win on the first Saturday in May, I don't think it'll be in the Kentucky Derby," McCarthy said. "Being by Caravaggio out of a Quality Road mare, we just think something like the American Turf would be in his wheelhouse."

Here are the probable Kentucky Derby starters (with jockeys and trainers): **Albus** (TBA, Riley Mott); **Commandment** (Luis Saez, Brad Cox); **Danon Bourbon** (TBA, Manabu Ikezoe); **Emerging Market** (Flavien Prat, Chad Brown); **Fulleffort** (Tyler Gaffalione, Brad Cox); **Further Ado** (John Velazquez, Brad Cox); **Golden Tempo** (Jose Ortiz, Cherie DeVaux); **Incredibolt** (Jaime Torres, Riley Mott); **Pavlovian** (Edwin Maldonado, Doug O'Neill); **Potente** (Juan Hernandez, Bob Baffert); **Renegade** (Irak Ortiz Jr., Todd Pletcher); **Right to Party** (Chris Elliott, Kenny McPeck); **Silent Tactic** (Cristian Torres, Mark Casse); **Six Speed** (TBA, Bhupat Seemar); **So Happy** (Mike Smith, Mark Glatt); **The Puma** (Javier Castellano, Gustavo Delgado); and **Wonder Dean (JPN)** (TBA, Daisuke Takayangi).

Possible (with trainer, status): **Ottinho** (Chad Brown, will watch training post Blue Grass); **Class President** (Todd Pletcher, missed Blue Grass and workout); and **Stark Contrast** (Michael McCarthy, more likely for May 2 American Turf).

Also eligible in order of preference (with trainer, status): **Iron Honor** (Chad Brown, will watch train after Wood Memorial); **Chief Wallabee** (Bill Mott); **Chip Honcho** (Steve Asmussen, possible for May 16 Preakness); **Grittiness** (Todd Pletcher, no published workouts since second in March 14 Virginia Derby); **Talkin** (Danny Gargan, May 16 Preakness); **Nearly** (Todd Pletcher, possible for May 2 Pat Day Mile); **Bravaro** (Saffie Joseph Jr.); **Litmus Test** (Bob Baffert); **Great White** (John Ennis); **Napoleon Solo** (Chad Summers); and **Ocelli** (Whit Beckman).

COX DUO EZUM, CONFESSIONAL LOOM LARGE IN LEXINGTON STAKES – Trainer **Brad Cox's** duo of **Shadwell Stable's** 19-length maiden special weight winner **Ezum** and **Steve Landers Racing's** Virginia Derby third-place finisher **Confessional** lead a competitive field of 11 3-year-olds entered in Saturday's \$400,000 Lexington Stakes (GIII) at Keeneland, the final race on the Road to Kentucky Derby 152.

Run at 1 1/16 miles, the Lexington Stakes awards the top five finishers qualifying points on a 20-8-6-4-2 scale toward a possible spot in the starting gate for the \$5 million Kentucky Derby presented by Woodford Reserve (GI) on Saturday, May 2 at Churchill Downs. The Lexington Stakes goes as Race 10 at 5:48 p.m. ET.

Ezum leads the field as the 2-1 morning line following his dominant maiden victory on March 14 at Colonial Downs. A son of Essential Quality, Ezum will exit post No. 9 under jockey **Flavien Prat**.

Stablemate Confessional drew one spot to his outside with **Irad Ortiz Jr.** in the saddle. Also a son of Essential Quality, Confessional won his debut by three lengths at Keeneland, then unsuccessfully tested the Road to the Kentucky Derby in the Sam F. Davis and Virginia Derby. He'll attempt to get back on track in Saturday's race as the 7-2 second choice on the morning line.

The Lexington Stakes also includes impressive maiden winner **Corona de Oro**. Owned in partnership by **On Our Own Stable, Commonwealth Stable, U Racing Stables, Saints or Sinners, Titledown Racing, Jim Nichols, Ed Barker, Daniel Rivers, John Haines and Dallas Stewart**, Corona de Oro broke his maiden by 4 ½ lengths on March 7 at Fair Grounds under jockey **Brian Hernandez Jr.** The son of Bolt d'Oro enters the Lexington following a swift five-furlong move in :59.80 on April 3 at Churchill Downs. Hernandez has the call in the Lexington from the rail.

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

- Corona de Oro (Hernandez, Stewart, 6-1)
- **Exhibition Only** (Ruben Silvera, Rudy Rodriguez, 10-1)
- **Decisive Win** (Antonio Fresu, Doug O'Neill, 15-1)
- **Enforced Agenda** (Javier Castellano, George Weaver, 10-1)
- **Mister T** (Mitchell Murrill, Climaco Galindo-Torres, 30-1)
- **Ramblin** (Mario Gutierrez, Bobby Barnett, 20-1)
- **The Hell We Did** (Luis Saez, Todd Fincher, 8-1)
- **Trendsetter** (Kazushi Kimura, Ben Colebrook, 20-1)
- Ezum (Prat, Cox, 2-1)
- Confessional (Ortiz, Cox, 7-2)
- **I Did I Did** (Juan Hernandez, Mike Maker, 10-1)

TOP OAKS CONTENDER PROM QUEEN BREEZES HALF-MILE IN :49.40 THURSDAY – Gary and Mary West's Gulfstream Park Oaks (Grade II) winner **Prom Queen** began her serious preparation for the \$1.5 million Longines Kentucky Oaks on Thursday when she breezed a half-mile in :49.40 at Churchill Downs.

Prom Queen began her work from the three-furlong pole with trainer **Brad Cox's** exercise rider **Edvin Vargas** in the irons while completing an opening eighth-mile in a leisurely :13.40. She continued through the wire clocking three furlongs in :37.20 while completing her move with a five-furlong gallop out in 1:02.40.

"We just had her go an easy half today in her first work back from the Gulfstream Oaks," Cox said. "She did everything the right way and galloped out easily around the turn."

A daughter of Quality Road, Prom Queen cruised to a 2 ¾-length victory two weeks ago in the Gulfstream Park Oaks in only her third career start. Prior to that race she dominated a 1 1/16-mile maiden special weight at Gulfstream Park by eight lengths.

Prom Queen is one of two Oaks hopefuls currently based at Churchill Downs along with her stablemate **Life of Joy**.

WHERE TO WATCH LEXINGTON STAKES

- Watch live, on-site coverage of the Lexington Stakes on FanDuel TV
- Watch and wager on the Lexington Stakes on www.twinspires.com.

COADY MEDIA KENTUCKY DERBY COVERAGE – Here is the link to access Coady Media's daily photo coverage of the Kentucky Derby and Kentucky Oaks morning training, along with race day coverage: <https://www.coadyplus.com/gallery-collection/152nd-Kentucky-Derby/C0000KUCsBDLVdJ4>.

Please credit photos: Coady Media

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. www.ChurchillDowns.com.

ROAD TO KENTUCKY DERBY LEADERBOARD –

Here are the Top 20 horses on the Road to the Kentucky Derby Leaderboard and four possible also-eligibles:

| <u>Position</u> | <u>Horse</u> | <u>Trainer</u> | <u>Resume</u> | <u>Possible Next Start</u> | <u>Points</u> |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--|---|---------------|
| 1 | Commandment | Brad Cox | 1 st – Florida Derby 1 st – Fountain of Youth | May 2 Kentucky Derby | 150 |
| 2 | Further Ado | Brad Cox | 1 st – Blue Grass 1 st – Kentucky Jockey Club 2 nd – Tampa Bay Derby | May 2 Kentucky Derby | 135 |
| 3 | Renegade | Todd Pletcher | 1 st – Arkansas Derby 1 st – Sam F. Davis 2 nd – Remsen | May 2 Kentucky Derby | 125 |
| 4 | So Happy | Mark Glatt | 1 st – Santa Anita Derby 3 rd – San Felipe | May 2 Kentucky Derby | 115 |
| 5 | Fulleffort | Brad Cox | 1 st – Jeff Ruby Steaks 2 nd – John Battaglia Memorial | May 2 Kentucky Derby | 110 |
| 6 | The Puma | Gustavo Delgado | 1 st – Tampa Bay Derby 2 nd – Florida Derby 3 rd – Sam F. Davis | May 2 Kentucky Derby | 106 |
| 7 | Silent Tactic | Mark Casse | 1 st – Southwest 2 nd – Arkansas Derby 2 nd – Rebel 2 nd – Smarty Jones | May 2 Kentucky Derby | 100 |
| 8 | Emerging Market | Chad Brown | 1 st – Louisiana Derby | May 2 Kentucky Derby | 100 |
| 9 | Albus | Riley Mott | 1 st – Wood Memorial | May 2 Kentucky Derby | 100 |
| 10 | Potente | Bob Baffert | 1 st – San Felipe 2 nd – Santa Anita Derby | May 2 Kentucky Derby | 100 |
| 11 | Pavlovian | Doug O'Neill | 2 nd – Louisiana Derby 2 nd – Sunland Derby | May 2 Kentucky Derby | 70 |
| 12 | \$-Right to Party | Kenny McPeck | 2 nd – Wood Memorial 3 rd – Gotham | May 2 Kentucky Derby | 65 |
| 13 | Incredibolt | Riley Mott | 1 st – Virginia Derby 1 st – Street Sense | May 2 Kentucky Derby | 60 |
| 14 | Golden Tempo | Cherie DeVaux | 1 st – Lecomte 3 rd – Risen Star 3 rd – Louisiana Derby | May 2 Kentucky Derby | 60 |
| 15 | Ottinho | Chad Brown | 2 nd – Blue Grass | TBD | 56 |
| 16 | Class President | Todd Pletcher | 1 st – Rebel | TBD | 50 |
| 17 | Stark Contrast | Michael McCarthy | 2 nd – Jeff Ruby Steaks | May 2 American Turf or Kentucky Derby | 50 |
| 18 (Euro/Mideast) | Wonder Dean (JPN) | Daisuke Takayanagi | 1 st – UAE Derby 4 th – Saudi Derby | May 2 Kentucky Derby | INVITE |
| 19 (Euro/Mideast) | Six Speed | Bhupat Seemar | 1 st – UAE 2000 Guineas 2 nd – UAE Derby | May 2 Kentucky Derby | INVITE |
| 20 (Japan) | Danon Bourbon | Manabu Ikezoe | 1 st – Fukuryu | May 2 Kentucky Derby | INVITE |
| 21 (AE) | Iron Honor | Chad Brown | 1 st – Gotham | TBD | 50 |
| 22 (AE) | Chief Wallabee | Bill Mott | 2 nd – Fountain of Youth 3 rd – Florida Derby | May 2 Kentucky Derby | 50 |
| 23 (AE) | Chip Honcho | Steve Asmussen | 1 st – Gun Runner 2 nd – Risen Star 4 th – Lecomte | May 2 Kentucky Derby or May 16 Preakness Stakes | 49 |
| 24 (AE) | Grittiness | Todd Pletcher | 2 nd – Virginia Derby 2 nd – Withers 5 th – Remsen | TBD | 36 |