

2017 KENTUCKY OAKS & DERBY GUIDE

Presented by:

***Guaranteed
Tip Sheet***



Pletcher & Velazquez Always Dreaming of a 2nd Derby win



Classic Empire strikes back in Arkansas Derby



Irish War Cry winning Wood

Thank you for purchasing the 2017 Kentucky Oaks & Derby Guide presented by Guaranteed Tip Sheet and RacingDudes.com!

The Kentucky Derby is a part of the American fabric. During "the fastest two minutes in sports" the whole country turns its eyes to Churchill Downs in Louisville, Kentucky, to see what 3-year old horse will win the "Run for the Roses."

The Derby has been run every year since 1875 and famous horses that have won the race include Triple Crown winners Secretariat, Seattle Slew, Affirmed and most recently, American Pharoah. The 143rd running of the Kentucky Derby will be on Saturday, May 6, 2017 at approximately 6:30 p.m. (EDT).

The 1¼ mile race ran on the main dirt track is not only a spectacle; it's also an opportunity to make a wager and hopefully make a major return! This "2017 Kentucky Oaks & Derby Guide presented by Guaranteed Tip Sheet and RacingDudes.com" will give you the information needed to hopefully make that major score!

This Guide includes:

- Kentucky Derby Overview including:
 - Picks from Guaranteed Pick Sheet, Racing Dudes and Saratoga Slim
 - Introduction
 - Post position analysis
- Horse capsules for each of the 20 projected horses in the 2016 Kentucky Derby field including:
 - Trainer, jockey, morning line (M/L) odds, horse running style (i.e., early speed, presser, closer)
 - Pros (positive angles on the horse), Cons (negative angles on the horse) and the Bottom Line
 - The horse capsules are broken into five categories – Win Contenders (horses to use to win or on top in exotic wagers), Can Hit the Board (horses to use in the 2nd & 3rd place slots), Exotic Plays (horses to use, but only in the 3rd or 4th place slots), Consider / Tosses (horses to possibly use or toss), Tosses (horses to not include on tickets)
- Historical pace analysis including the running styles of the past 15 Kentucky Derby winners
- Late pace analysis to help pick the winner & longshots to hit the board
- Kentucky Oaks Overview with filly profiles, pace scenario and wagering approach
- Wagering strategy including trifecta, superfecta and Oaks/Derby double approach

For questions and to discuss more feel free to visit guaranteedtipsheet.com or racingdudes.com or tweet us at @SaratogaSlim or @racing_dudes on Twitter. Please note all horse capsules, pace analysis and wagering strategy were written by Saratoga Slim. Oaks previews by Aaron Halterman of Racing Dudes.

Never wager more than you can afford to lose.

Thank you,
Racing Dudes

Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Kentucky Derby Overview with Picks.....	3
Horse Capsules - Win Contenders	4
Horse Capsules - Can Hit the Board.....	5
Horse Capsules - Exotic Plays	6
Horse Capsules - Considers / Tosses	7
Horse Capsules - Tosses	8
Historical Pace Analysis - Past 16 Derbies	9
Aligning Running Styles to Pace	10
Predicting the Derby Pace.....	10
2017 Kentucky Derby Running Styles.....	11
Late Pace Key to Picking Derby Winner & Longshots	12
Kentucky Oaks - Overview	15
Kentucky Oaks / Derby Days Wagering Strategy	17



Purse:	\$2 million
Distance:	1¼ miles (Dirt)
Age:	3 Year Olds
Post Time:	Sat., May 6 th ~6:34 p.m. (EDT)

The focus of this "2017 Kentucky Oaks & Derby Guide presented by Guaranteed Tip Sheet and RacingDudes.com" is for our readers to make a score! Let's start off with our Kentucky Derby picks and build out from here:

Racing Dudes, Saratoga Slim & Guaranteed Tip Sheet (GTS) Kentucky Derby Picks (AS OF MAY 3):

	Aaron	Jared	Slim	GTS	CONSENSUS*	Pts.
Win	Irish War Cry	McCracken	Always Dreaming	Always Dreaming	Irish War Cry	22
Place	Classic Empire	Sonneteer	Classic Empire	Irish War Cry	Classic Empire	22
Show	Hence	Classic Empire	Irish War Cry	Classic Empire	Always Dreaming	21
4th	Always Dreaming	Irish War Cry	Hence	Gunnevera	McCracken	10

*Consensus scored on 10 points for Win, 7 points for Place, 4 points for Show & 1 point for 4th

The Kentucky Derby is such a rare opportunity to win big mainly because of the size of the field. Most of the time, horse races will average about 8 horses in the starting gate with a maximum 14 horses allowed. Since the Derby is such a sought-after race to enter, though, Churchill Downs allows a maximum of 20 horses in the field. Since the field is so large with so many betting interests, the money is spread more evenly amongst the entrants and allows for major payouts. There was over \$110 million wagered in the Win, Place, Show, Exacta, Trifecta and Superfecta pools in 2016 paid out to the winning tickets (after the track's take-out), so there is a lot on the line. These bet types will be covered later in the Guide.

As said before, the Derby will comprise of a maximum of 20 horses. These horses are all three years old. The top 20 horses are selected based on the points that they have earned during designated Derby Prep Races that started in September 2016 and ended in mid-April 2017. Churchill Downs has now used this point system for the past five years.

Post Position Analysis: Since there are so many horses in one gate, post position analysis is an important part of handicapping the Derby. **Please note that this Guide has been written before the Post draw for the Kentucky Derby and the post positions can affect which horses you play dramatically.**

For your reference, below is a table showing performance from each post position (1-20) since the use of a starting gate in 1930 including total starts, total 1st place, 2nd place & 3rd place finishes, win % from that post and "In The Money" % (ITM) (1st, 2nd or 3rd) from that post:

Post	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Starts	87	87	87	87	87	87	86	86	83	80	76	72	70	62	55	45	38	30	25	15
1st	8	7	5	5	9	2	6	8	4	9	2	3	5	2	5	4	0	1	1	1
2nd	4	5	6	6	8	7	6	5	5	6	5	3	5	5	2	3	1	4	1	0
3rd	5	13	8	4	3	3	5	4	8	9	3	3	7	5	1	3	2	0	0	1
Win %	9.2%	8.0%	5.7%	5.7%	10.3%	2.3%	7.0%	9.3%	4.8%	11.3%	2.6%	4.2%	7.1%	3.2%	9.1%	8.9%	0.0%	3.3%	4.0%	6.7%
ITM %	19.5%	28.7%	21.8%	17.2%	23.0%	13.8%	19.8%	19.8%	20.5%	30.0%	13.2%	12.5%	24.3%	19.4%	14.5%	22.2%	7.9%	16.7%	8.0%	13.3%

Even though the #1 post position shows a 9.3 win %, any horse that draws the 1 post position is a complete "toss-out." The rail is the worst place to be since the Churchill chute basically lines up directly with the horse running into the rail. With 19 horses all pushing from the outside into the rail, the horse in the 1 position is in danger of getting hit into the rail to start the race. No horse has won the Derby from the 1 slot since Ferdinand in 1986. Additionally, a horse hasn't won from the 2-post position since Affirmed in 1978. The 3-post position hasn't won since 1998 with Real Quiet, so being on the inside is not a great place to be, even though the percentages in the table are skewed due to smaller fields in the past.

Another post position to be wary of is the #17 slot. No horse has ever won from this post position. Maybe it's just a coincidence, but 38 horses have started from this post without a winner to date.

The most favorable post positions are generally believed to be 5 through 16. Post positions 14 and 15 have the advantage of being at end of the main 14 horse gate and the start of the 6-stall auxiliary gate giving these two horses a little bit extra room to break. This even helps the horses in the 13 and 16 post positions to break more cleanly. The highest win and ITM % above are highlighted in green and the 13 through 16 have performed well including wins in three of the last four years: Orb (15 post) in 2013, American Pharoah (15 post) in 2015 and Nyquist (13 post) in 2016.

Some would think the far outside posts would be disadvantageous, but since 1999 a total of eight winners have won from the auxiliary gate (posts 15 through 20). In addition to the wins from post 15 discussed above, Big Brown won from Post 20 in 2008, Animal Kingdom won from Post 16 in 2011, I'll Have Another won from Post 19 in 2012.

#5 Always Dreaming



Leslie Martin

M/L Odds: 5/1

Trainer: Todd Pletcher

Jockey: John Velasquez

Early/Presser (E/P7)

Pros: His Grade-1 Florida Derby win by 5 lengths was eye-catching as his final time was only 3/5 of a second behind the track record set by the #1 horse in the world Arrogate in the Pegasus at the end of January. The way he was finishing had the look of a classic Kentucky Derby winning stride. His ability to rate in the Florida Derby will serve him well in the Kentucky Derby, as he will be able to show early speed to be involved from the start. This may be Pletcher's best chance to win a 2nd Kentucky Derby, as he's undefeated in his three starts for Pletcher winning by a combined 20 lengths! Sired by Bodemeister, who was a tough luck 2nd in the 2012 Derby, Always Dreaming should have plenty of distance pedigree, but there are some sprint influences on his dam side.

Cons: Lightly raced with only 5 career starts, but in this group of many lightly raced colts, it shouldn't be that big of a disadvantage. Pletcher brought him along slowly opting for a slow allowance win over a deep Gulfstream track instead of sending him directly to the Tampa Bay Derby. Will the Derby be too much, too soon? *Has been overly energetic since arriving at Churchill Downs in mornings.*

Bottom Line: Likely Derby 2nd choice is a strong key horse to lean on in all wagers

#14 Classic Empire



Chris Aplin

M/L Odds: 4/1

Trainer: Mark Casse

Jockey: Julien Leparoux

Early/Presser (E/P6)

Pros: The two-year old Eclipse award winning champion returned to his winning ways in the Grade-1 Arkansas Derby after a tumultuous winter. Showed the ability to overcome adversity in the Arkansas Derby by keeping cool in between a pack of horses early and when Leparoux found space at the top of the stretch, finished with a flurry to win over Conquest Mo Money. His Breeders' Cup Juvenile win to end 2016 may still be the top race run by any horse in this crop. When he puts it all together mentally, he's the best horse in the field and physically the most talented. Sired by Pioneer of the Nile, who sired Triple Crown winner American Pharoah, he has plenty of distance influence in his pedigree.

Cons: His propensity to lose his cool and focus before races is his Achilles heel. His only two losses were caused by his mental antics including in the Grade-1 Hopeful as a juvenile at Saratoga where he spun out of the gate and threw his jockey. He started this year by getting very hot before the Holy Boss and ran flat to get third. After the Holy Boss, a foot abscess was discovered, which made him miss 10 days of training. His eventful winter continued as he was unwilling to work out and had back troubles. All of these bumps in the road are troublesome since most horses that win the Derby usually have everything go to plan in their three-year old season & that hasn't been the case here.

Bottom Line: As the favorite, he'll be tough to beat if he puts it all together, need to use

#17 Irish War Cry



Coady Photography

M/L Odds: 6/1

Trainer: Graham Motion

Jockey: Rajiv Maragh

Early/Presser (E/P8)

Pros: All is well again after a dismal Fountain of Youth performance, as the NJ-bred stalked a moderate pace to pull away late to win the Wood Memorial. One of the early Derby favorites after his front-running Holy Bull win to start February, he showed versatility in his Wood win to come off the pace. Motion won the Derby with Animal Kingdom in 2011, so there's no doubt he knows how to get his charge to fire his best on the first Saturday in May. Has plenty of stamina influence on top side of pedigree sired by two-time horse of the year Curlin.

Cons: He's a roller coaster ride who can throw in a clunker then look dominant demonstrated by his horrendous Fountain of Youth (FoY) before his Wood triumph. Motion has blamed the dry, cuppy track on FoY day for that performance. Has had trouble settling at points in his career including FoY and Marylander. Ability to settle will be key in 20-horse field. Maragh has an amazing comeback story here, but has only a third on Mucho Macho Man and fourth on Wicked Strong in his Derby history.

Bottom Line: Erratic nature makes him tough to trust, but needs to be included defensively

#2 Thunder Snow



Andrew Watkins

M/L Odds: 20/1

Trainer: Seed bin Suroor

Jockey: Christophe Soumillon

N/A (Most Likely E/P)

Pros: UAE Derby winner beat Japan's top 3-year old Epicharis in a thriller. Thunder Snow also beat third place finisher Master Plan for trainer Todd Pletcher, who had won the OBS Championship and finished second to Derby prospect Tapwrit in December, so there is some class comparison. After running 6 times on turf to start his career, the Irish-bred is undefeated in 2 dirt Group races at Meydan having romped in the 2000 Guineas before his UAE Derby victory.

Cons: A horse who's won the UAE Derby has never won the Kentucky Derby, so he'll have history to overcome. The ship to the United States only six weeks after winning the UAE Derby is a tough ask, but he's been impressive in his only two dirt starts. Was "green" late in the UAE Derby switching leads a few times and drifting before being able to rally past Epicharis in the final jump. His Godolphin ownership has "flip flopped" a couple times on their plans to ship to the U.S. for the Kentucky Derby, as he was possible to return to the grass in Europe.

Bottom Line: Can be the surprise horse to spring the upset and need to use defensively

#8 Hence



Coady Photography

M/L Odds: 15/1

Trainer: Steve Asmussen

Jockey: Florent Geroux

Closer (S1)

Pros: A late developing Asmussen charge is intriguing as he made a huge move to win Sunland Derby from far back early and drew off to win by almost 4 lengths. That win was flattered when 4th place finisher Irap came back to win the Blue Grass Stakes and 2nd place finisher Conquest Mo Money ran 2nd in the Arkansas Derby. After a maiden win over a sloppy-sealed Oaklawn strip to start 2017 where he almost slammed into the rail, he was a hype horse going into the Grade-3 Southwest, but was empty finishing a disappointing seventh.

Cons: His Southwest clunker does not invoke confidence at this class level, but he was making his Stakes debut there, so maybe he's developed enough since that February try. Sired by top sprinter Street Boss doesn't scream distance, but being out of an A.P. Indy mare should help on the female side of his pedigree. The way he was finishing strong in the Sunland Derby should help silence some distance skeptics. He'll have to be nearer to the pace like he was in his maiden score or at least mid-pack in the Derby to have a chance to win it all.

Bottom Line: Could be a key horse to use underneath at a huge price & will be running late

#15 McCracken



SV Photography

M/L Odds: 10/1

Trainer: Ian Wilkes

Jockey: Brian Hernandez, Jr.

Closer (S3)

Pros: Was the Derby favorite for most of 2017 after his strong Sam F. Davis win. Continued to be the favorite, even though he was forced to skip the Tampa Bay Derby with a minor ankle strain. Undefeated in three races as a juvenile at Churchill Downs including the Grade-2 Kentucky Jockey Club, his love for Churchill will be highlighted thoroughly leading up to the Derby. Wilkes got Derby wins as an assistant for Carl Nafzger with Unbridled in 1990 and Street Sense in 2007. *Has been working lights-out since returning to Churchill.*

Cons: After his minor ankle strain, returned in the Blue Grass Stakes, but came up empty in the stretch to get a disappointing third. He was rank early and in between horses nearer to the early pace than usual and may have been short coming off a layoff, but his lack of burst in the stretch may be a sign of distance limitations now stretching out an extra furlong in the Derby. Even though the ankle was described as a minor setback, any bump along the Derby road is tough to overcome to get in the winners' circle. As a closer, will need a perfect trip to win.

Bottom Line: Need to use defensively underneath in exotic plays, but no longer a key horse.

#19 Practical Joke



NYRA

M/L Odds: 20/1

Trainer: Chad Brown

Jockey: Joel Rosario

Presser (P3)

Pros: One of the classiest horses in the Derby field winning two Grade-1s as a juvenile and a third-place finish in the Breeders' Cup Juvenile. Hasn't disgraced himself in two starts as a three-year old with two second place finishes in the Fountain of Youth and Blue Grass. Trained by Eclipse-award winner Brown, he'll be primed for his third race of the year.

Cons: Distance limited sired by Into Mischief, he looked like he hit a wall in the stretch of both of his races in 2017, especially in the Blue Grass where he had every reason to pass Irap in deep stretch, but couldn't get by. In both of his races this year, his jockey made a bold early move before the far turn, so that may be a possible reason that he faltered late. Still, the extra furlong of the Derby doesn't bode well for his chances to win it all. His come-from-behind style also isn't a fit to win in Louisville, but may still be making up ground late with a well-timed ride and clean trip.

Bottom Line: Have to use defensively underneath based on his class in this field

#10 Gunnevera



Lauren King

M/L Odds: 15/1

Trainer: Antonio Sano

Jockey: Javier Castellano

Closer (S1)

Pros: Multiple Graded Stakes winner as a juvenile stepped up to the top of the Derby ranks after his romping Fountain of Youth (FoY) win by almost 6 lengths. His late deep closing kick may be the best in the crop. Sano is not the household name trainer, but is all-time winningest trainer in Venezuela. Gets a major boost keeping 3-time Eclipse winner Castellano in the irons.

Cons: Saddled with the outside post in the Florida Derby, he bounced off his huge FoY win and could only muster a late running third getting mixed reviews by analysts. Some have said it's fine and he'll be able to advance off his Florida Derby into the Kentucky Derby and others have said he's cooked. How he trains leading up to the Derby will be very telling. As a deep closer, his chances in the Derby may be compromised if he can't work out a perfect trip. Out of the first crop of sire Dialed In, who ran eighth in the 2011 Derby, there are questions if 10 furlongs is an optimal distance for him.

Bottom Line: As a deep closer, it's tough to see him winning, but he could be an exotics play

#12 Sonneteer



Coady Photography
M/L Odds: 50/1

Trainer: Keith Desormeaux | **Jockey: Kent Desormeaux** | **Closer (S2)**

Pros: Finished late-closing 2nd in the Rebel and 4th in the Arkansas Derby to piece together enough points to get in the Kentucky Derby. Has the highest last-out late pace Brisnet speed figure in the field with a gaudy 109 in the Arkansas Derby, so he may get better with distance. Desormeaux is a three-time Derby winning jockey and swerved Exaggerator to a late-closing second place finish in last year's Derby, so he knows how to get through a 20-horse field.

Cons: A maiden who has yet to win a race in 10 career races, but has kept good company behind classy horses his whole career. Has only sprint influence on the bottom side of his pedigree, so the 10-furlong Derby distance may be a question.

Bottom Line: May be flying late, but only use underneath if you have a large budget

#16 Tapwrit



SV Photography
M/L Odds: 20/1

Trainer: Todd Pletcher | **Jockey: Jose Ortiz** | **Presser (P2)**

Pros: As a \$1.2 million purchase at Saratoga's Fasig-Tipton sale as a yearling, he's always been a top prospect sired by Tapit and out of Grade-1 winner Appealing Zophie. It took some time for him to arrive on the scene, but then he took the off-the-turf, sloppy Pulpit Stakes in mid-December at Gulfstream over his late charging stablemate Master Plan and took off. His late charge to get second in the Sam F. Davis behind top prospect McCracken was followed up by a romping win in the Tampa Bay Derby, where he was ultra-impressive.

Cons: He then followed up that Tampa romp with a Blue Grass run that is a huge red flag, as he swung out wide for the stretch run and was flat as a pancake when the real running started. Maybe he just loved the slop at Gulfstream and the quiriness of Tampa, because his only other win was a low-level maiden win at Gulfstream Park West. Has shown the ability to sit mid-pack and pounce, but with horses with more natural speed in the Derby may get shuffled back early.

Bottom Line: Tough to back a horse coming off such a miserable last prep, but has looked good

#1 Lookin at Lee



Coady Photography
M/L Odds: 20/1

Trainer: Steve Asmussen | **Jockey: Corey Lanerie** | **Closer (S0)**

Pros: Finished in the top 4 of three Grade-1 and two Grade-3 Stakes, he is one of the classiest horses in the field finishing behind top horses Classic Empire, Practical Joke and the retired Not This Time. He is always flying late like he was to get third in the Arkansas Derby after swerving around in the stretch. Gets a jockey change to Lanerie who should ride the rail the whole Derby until he swings him out for his late move. Asmussen has said that he's the type that will get better with added distance as he has good distance influence sired by Lookin at Lucky.

Cons: Hasn't won a race since last August, so highly doubtful he'll win here. His non-effort in the Rebel Stakes shows that he can throw in a clunker, even though he's been very consistent to hit the board in his other Stakes starts.

Bottom Line: Throw in lightly at the bottom of tickets if budget allows

#20 Patch



@AdolphsonRacing Twitter

M/L Odds: 30/1

Trainer: Todd Pletcher | **Jockey: Tyler Gaffalione** | **Presser (P3)**

Pros: Lost his left eye in an accident when he was a foal and the fact he's run so well with only one eye will be one of the most heart-warming stories of the Derby. Showed a late kick in his second-place finish in the Louisiana Derby to finish close behind Girvin with a strong gallop out. He also closed like a rocket in his debut race at Gulfstream in January moving from 9th place in the stretch to finish 2nd passing horses like they were tied to the rail. Has tremendous distance pedigree on his dam side and may be more suited for the Belmont Stakes at 1½ miles.

Cons: Has only three lifetime races, so he's the most lightly raced horse in the Derby field. Unraced at two years old, also, must overcome "The Curse of Apollo" since no horse has won the Kentucky Derby who didn't have a start as a two-year old since Apollo did it in 1882. Has always been a member of the Pletcher "B Team" as a late developer for the barn.

Bottom Line: A great story, but lightly raced makes it tough to see him hit the board

#18 Gormley



Benoit Photo

M/L Odds: 15/1

Trainer: John Shireffs | Jockey: Victor Espinoza

Early/Presser (E/P8)

Pros: The only horse with a Grade-1 win as both a juvenile and at three-years old, the "good" Gormley has shown the spirit to win multiple graded stakes in his career. Has the ability to get involved early, but Shireffs trained him to settle and stalk a fast pace for his win in the Santa Anita Derby. Espinoza has won three Derbies (War Emblem in 2002, California Chrome in 2014 and American Pharoah in 2015) so he knows how to manage a horse with speed in this field.

Cons: Won the slowest Santa Anita Derby since 1957, so that race and its bunched finish is questionable. Before that, folded on the turn when confronted by classy Mastery in the San Felipe & was also a no-show in the Breeders' Cup Juvenile. When he's been asked against the best in his crop, he's had no answer. Is a true "Jeckyl & Hyde" horse who can run huge (like he did to win Grade-3 Sham) and has followed up every big win with a clunker in his last five races.

Bottom Line: Tough to trust and has not "classed up" when he's had his chance vs. the best

#11 Battle of Midway



Zoe Metz

M/L Odds: 30/1

Trainer: Jerry Hollendorfer | Jockey: Flavien Prat

Early/Presser (E/P6)

Pros: Got into a nasty speed duel to start the Santa Anita Derby and was able to hold on for second in a blanket finish of five horses. Showed that he was game beating top Baffert prospect Reach The World in a key allowance win before the Santa Anita Derby. Sired by Smart Strike, who has sired top distance horses like Curlin, has plenty of stamina on the top side of his pedigree. His ability to show speed early should help him be involved from the start of the Derby.

Cons: Lightly raced with only 4 lifetime starts (all at Santa Anita Park) and was unraced as a two-year old. Will have to overcome "The Curse of Apollo" since he didn't have a start as a two-year old. The Santa Anita Derby was a slow Derby prep and he'll be taking a step-up in class in the Derby from racing against a lot of the same horses multiple times out west.

Bottom Line: Tough to back a lightly raced colt with average speed figures stepping up in class

#6 State of Honor



Coglianesse Photo

M/L Odds: 30/1

Trainer: Mark Casse | Jockey: Jose Lezcano

Early (E7)

Pros: Maybe the grittiest runner in the Derby, has always grinded it out in deep stretch showing heart in all his starts in 2017. Has bullied his way into the Derby with 2nd place finishes in both Florida and Tampa Bay Derbies & a strong 3rd in Sam F. Davis. Ontario-bred has plenty of foundation with 10 lifetime starts & has good front-end speed to be involved early in the Derby.

Cons: Even his trainer Casse has said that he may be better suited to running at a mile so his distance capability is questionable, but he's the type that will keep grinding and may hold on late for a piece like he's done all year behind top horses like McCracken, Tapwrit & Always Dreaming. Casse took the blinkers off in the Florida Derby to try to get him to settle, but he was still running early with his head up like he did in his Tampa races, but eventually hit his stride. Still those types of antics can be detrimental in the Derby using early energy when he'll need it late at 10 furlongs.

Bottom Line: Grit can only take you so far & more talented colts should outshine him here

#9 Irap



Coady Photography

M/L Odds: 20/1

Trainer: Doug O'Neill | Jockey: Mario Gutierrez

Early/Presser (E/P6)

Pros: When the blinkers were taken off for the Blue Grass, he excelled stalking a good early pace, pounced and held off multiple Grade-1 winner Practical Joke late in deep stretch to win at 31/1 odds. Big son of two-time Breeders' Cup Classic winner Tiznow should have plenty of stamina influence on the top-side of his pedigree.

Cons: His win in the Blue Grass was the first of his career, as he entered the race winless in his 7 career races. Still, he was admirable behind top horses in Mastery, Royal Mo, Conquest Mo Money and Hence in those losses all in Stakes company, so he has back class. Has had some foot issues in his career. Half-bother to champion sprinter Speightstown out of the Storm Cat mare Silken Cat has plenty of speed on the bottom-side of the pedigree, so distance could be a question.

Bottom Line: May be a pace presence, but will get more pressure than Blue Grass

Also Eligible:

- 21. Royal Mo (Gary Stevens) (E7) (20/1):** If the Derby was a beauty contest, he could win as a big, strapping son of Uncle Mo. Was all out on the blazing Santa Anita Derby pace & held on for 3rd. Trained by Shireffs & has the same owners as Gormley. He'd be tough to back in the Derby based on his flop in the Rebel two-back.
- 22. Master Plan (TBD) (33) (50/1):** Arrived on the scene with a late-closing 2nd to Tapwrit in the sloppy Pulpit Stakes back in December at Gulfstream. Would then win the OBS Championship over synthetics & ship to the UAE Derby, where he finished a good late-closing 3rd behind Thunder Snow. Would be moving late if he made the Derby gate.

#4 Untrapped



Coady Photography

M/L Odds: 30/1

Trainer: Steve Asmussen

Jockey: Ricardo Santana

Presser (P2)

Pros: Has clunked up in a few Derby preps at Fair Grounds and Oaklawn to hit the board and piece together enough points to get in the Derby gate. Gets Santana back in the saddle that rode him in arguably his best two races getting seconds in the Lecomte and Risen Star at Fair Grounds. Has gotten positive reports training at Churchill.

Cons: His sixth-place finish in the Arkansas Derby showed his distance limitations. Seems to be able to make a move on the turn, but flatten in the stretch in each of the Derby preps. Sired by Trappe Shot gives him sprint influence, but does get a lot of stamina influence from his damsire Giant's Causeway. Asmussen will remove the blinkers in this spot in a possible sign that he's grasping at straws to get him to finish stronger.

Bottom Line: Distance limitations too big of a question to use

#13 J Boys Echo



Robert Mauhar

M/L Odds: 20/1

Trainer: Dale Romans

Jockey: Luis Saez

Presser (P2)

Pros: Ran huge winning the Grade-3 Gotham to start March at Aqueduct and received huge speed figures for that performance on both Brisnet and Beyer. Romans has been high on this one since losing his top Derby prospect Not This Time for the same owners in the Albaughs. Has very good stamina pedigree sired by Mineshaft.

Cons: Another who ran a disappointing Blue Grass & has shown some inconsistency in his running lines. Had some excuses in the Withers to start his 3-year old campaign & was moving well late, but didn't do much to end 2016 in an underwhelming Delta Jackpot. He's a late mover, who will need everything to go perfect in the Derby to stand a chance to even hit the board.

Bottom Line: Will need a perfect trip & not talented enough to overcome adversity, play against

#7 Girvin



Hodges Photography

M/L Odds: 15/1

Trainer: Joe Sharp

Jockey: Mike Smith

Presser (P1)

Pros: Undefeated on dirt, he's beaten everything thrown at him in questionable fields in the Grade-2 Risen Star and Louisiana Derby. Sired by Tale of Ekati, who was 4th in the 2008 Derby, out of an un-raced Malibu Moon mare, Girvin has decent distance pedigree. He showed plenty of late kick in the Louisiana Derby, so the extra furlong in the Kentucky Derby shouldn't be overly troublesome.

Cons: *Recent news is that he has a quarter crack and is wearing Z-bar shoes. He missed a recent workout, so this negative news drops him down significantly.* Lightly raced with only four lifetime starts (all at Fair Grounds), Girvin's speed figures aren't on the same level as the top of the crop & he'll need to make a jump forward to win. He's not a deep closer, but his lack of true early speed may put him in mid-pack where he'll need to make a trip in this 20-horse field. Sharp brings his first horse in his career to the Derby so there are some questions about how he'll prepare Girvin. He also loses the only jockey he's ever known as Brian Hernandez, Jr. has opted to ride McCracken, but Mike Smith is the top "money rider" in the game, so may be an upgrade.

Bottom Line: Recent news makes him a very questionable horse to play

#3 Fast and Accurate



Coady Photography

M/L Odds: 50/1

Trainer: Mike Maker

Jockey: Channing Hill

Early/Presser (E/P6)

Pros: Stayed on the rail close to the pace in the Spiral Stakes before making a three-wide move taking over and holding on in the stretch to qualify for the Derby. His connections believed enough in him to supplement to the Derby for \$200,000 after his Spiral win. The son of Hansen, who ran ninth in the 2012 Kentucky Derby, has the same owner in eccentric Dr. Kendall Hansen.

Cons: His one race on dirt in his career was a fifth-place finish back in October 2016 at Parx where he got a 58 Brisnet speed figure, so his dirt form is very questionable. The Spiral is one of the last Derby preps ran on synthetics. He was available to be bought for \$30,000 running in his maiden claiming win back in December at Turfway, so the fact that he's entered in the Derby for almost 7 times what he could've been bought doesn't really make you want to put your money through the windows.

Bottom Line: If he finishes anywhere near the top 5, it would be a huge surprise

Handicapping the horses in the Kentucky Derby is just half the battle. Trying to predict the pace in the race is the next part of putting together the Derby puzzle.

The importance of pace is demonstrated by the table below showing the past 16 Kentucky Derbies with the winner, where the horse sat in position and lengths back at the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile point in the race, the fractions ran in the race at the $\frac{1}{2}$ mile and $\frac{3}{4}$ mile point and a rating of the pace based on where the times rank in the past 16 years:

Year	Winner	BRIS Running Style		Winning Style	Place at 3/4 Mile	Lengths back at 3/4 Mile	Fractions		Pace	Track Condition
							1st 1/2 Mile	1st 3/4 Mile		
2001	Monarchos	S3	Closer	Pressed	10th	7.5	44.86	1:09.25	Fastest	Fast
2002	War Emblem	E6	Early	Early	1st	N/A	47.04	1:11.75	Slow	Fast
2003	Funny Cide	E/P6	Early/Presser	Early/Pressed	3rd	1.5	46.23	1:10.48		Fast
2004	Smarty Jones	E/P7	Early/Presser	Early/Presser	2nd	2.5	46.73	1:11.80	Slow	Sloppy
2005	Giacomo	E/P5	Early/Presser	Closed	18th	14.75	45.38	1:09.59	Fast	Fast
2006	Barbaro	E/P7	Early/Presser	Early/Pressed	4th	3	46.07	1:10.88		Fast
2007	Street Sense	S2	Closer	Closed	17th	12	46.26	1:11.13		Fast
2008	Big Brown	E/P8	Early/Presser	Early/Pressed	6th	3.75	47.04	1:11.14		Fast
2009	Mine That Bird	E/P4	Early/Presser	Closed	19th	14	47.23	1:12.09	Slow	Sloppy (Sealed)
2010	Super Saver	E6	Early	Presser	4th	6.5	46.16	1:10.58		Sloppy (Sealed)
2011	Animal Kingdom	P3	Presser	Presser	10th	6	48.63	1:13.40	Slowest	Fast
2012	I'll Have Another	E/P7	Early/Presser	Pressed	6th	6.5	45.39	1:09.80	Fast	Fast
2013	Orb	P2	Presser	Closed	17th	14.5	45.33	1:09.80	Fast	Sloppy (Sealed)
2014	California Chrome	E/P7	Early/Presser	Early/Pressed	3rd	0.5	47.37	1:11.80	Slow	Fast
2015	American Pharoah	E/P7	Early/Presser	Early/Pressed	3rd	1.5	47.34	1:11.29	Slow	Fast
2016	Nyquist	E/P5	Early/Presser	Early/Pressed	3rd	2	45.72	1:10.40	Fast	Fast

Key

Fastest Pace

Fast Pace

Slow Pace

Slowest Pace

***Note:** The run-up distance was changed from zero to 34 feet starting in 2009.

Slow Paced Derbies:

Just like in any race on any given day of the year with a slow pace, a horse needs to stay closer to the pace to win. Not surprisingly, in 4 out of the 6 slowest Derbies in the past 16 years, horses that were on the lead or within a half to $2\frac{1}{2}$ lengths of the lead at the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile point won the Derby including:

- War Emblem in 2002 – only horse in last 15 years to go gate-to-wire to win Derby
- Smarty Jones in 2004 – $2\frac{1}{2}$ lengths back at $\frac{3}{4}$ mile point
- California Chrome in 2014 – $\frac{1}{2}$ length back at $\frac{3}{4}$ mile point
- American Pharoah in 2015 – $1\frac{1}{2}$ lengths back at $\frac{3}{4}$ mile point

In the slowest paced Derby in the last 16 years, Animal Kingdom in 2011 used his pressing style to sit 6 lengths off the lead to win. So even in that Derby, Animal Kingdom needed to keep “in touch” with the leaders early, even though he was sitting in 10th at the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile point.

The outlier for slow-paced Derbies was in 2009 when Mine That Bird closed from 14 lengths back to win, but that was one of the most unforeseen and unlikely results in Derby history, so it will be looked at as a true anomaly in this analysis.

Fast Paced Derbies:

In contrast, when a fast pace ensues, the pace may “melt down” on the front end and set it up for mid-pack runners and closers. To that point, in the 4 fastest Derbies in the past 16 years, in each case the winner pressed from mid-pack or closed from $6\frac{1}{2}$ to $14\frac{3}{4}$ lengths back at the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile point in the race:

- Monarchos pressed in mid-pack **$7\frac{1}{2}$ lengths** back at the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile point in 2001 into the fastest pace to win.
- Giacomo closed from **$14\frac{3}{4}$ lengths** back into at the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile point in 2005 into a fast pace to win.
- I'll Have Another pressed in mid-pack **$6\frac{1}{2}$ lengths** back at the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile point in 2012 into a fast pace to win.
- Orb closed from **$14\frac{1}{2}$ lengths** back at the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile point in 2013 into a fast pace to win.

Last year's Derby ranks as the 5th fastest paced Derby in the past 16 years, but is an outlier in this discussion, because Nyquist was only **2 lengths** back at the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile point sitting 3rd in the race and still held onto win. The 2nd place finisher last year, Exaggerator, though, was $10\frac{1}{4}$ lengths back in 15th place at the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile point and closed strong, so the fast pace did play into the closer's mentality, in this case.

Additionally, in each slow or fast paced case, the early/presser or closer Brisnet running style of the winning horse almost perfectly aligned itself with how the horse ran and won the race.

Run Style Definitions

[E] A winner exhibiting a typical 'E' (or Early) run style would show the horse leading or battling for the lead through the duration of the race. An 'E' horse is any horse which typically vies for the early lead or whose better races are run on the lead. Most 'E' horses are need-the-lead types which can not reasonably be expected to successfully rate behind a pacesetter.

[E/P] A winner exhibiting a typical 'E/P' (or Early/Presser) run style would show the horse running 2nd or 3rd and within a few lengths early before making the winning move. A 'E/P' horse, like an 'E' horse, may also run on the frontend. However, unlike an 'E' horse, it can reasonably be expected to successfully lay just behind a pacesetter.

[P] A winner exhibiting a typical 'P' (or Presser) run style would show the horse running in the middle-of-the-pack early before making his winning move. A 'P' horse may at times run close to the pace but rarely, if ever, challenges for the lead early. Unlike a 'S' horse, the 'P' horse doesn't typically run from the rear-of-the-pack in it's better races.

[S] A winner exhibiting a typical 'S' (Sustain or Closer) run style would show the horse running in the back-of-the-pack early before making his late winning move.

[NA] A 'NA' (or Not Available) run style is used for first-time-starters and those horses without any meaningful running lines to accurately assess the horse's preferred run style.

[Early Speed Points] Ranging from a low of 0 points to a high of 8 points, this measures the Early Speed ability of the horse based upon its running position and beaten lengths at the 1st Call in recent races at today's distance. The higher the points, the more early speed the horse has shown in recent races. The Early Speed points are displayed in the past performances after the horse name and in parenthesis alongside BRIS Run Style - e.g. (P7).

For those not familiar with the Brisnet Run Style Definitions, please see the descriptions to the left from the Brisnet.com website and library and a summary below:

- The run style of the horse is either:

E = Early
E/P = Early/Presser
P = Presser
S = Sustained or Closer

- The number next to the run style represents the early speed points. The numbers range from 0-8 and measure the Early Speed of the horse based on its running position and beaten lengths at the first call of recent races. The higher the number, the more early speed a horse has shown in recent races.

In the 6 slowest Derbies in the past 15 years, the winner was either an Early (E), Early/Presser (E/P) or Presser (P) style runner, meaning that they naturally wanted to be nearer to the early pace:

- 2002 – War Emblem (E6)
- 2004 – Smarty Jones (E/P7)
- 2009 – Mine That Bird (E/P4)
- 2011 – Animal Kingdom (P3)
- 2014 – California Chrome (E/P7)
- 2015 – American Pharoah (E/P7)

Even Mine That Bird that closed from 14 lengths back at the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile mark still came into 2009 Derby with a slow pace rated as an E/P4 early/presser by Brisnet.

On the other end of the spectrum, in 2 out of the 4 years of fast-paced Derbies, the winner came into the race displaying the Presser or Closer running style, meaning that they more naturally wanted to lay back off the hot early pace and make one run late. These two horses include Monarchos (S3) in 2001 and Orb (P3) in 2013 that both closed into hot paces to win the Kentucky Derby.

Predicting the Derby Pace

Now that the importance of pace and correlation has been demonstrated, the next step is to try to predict the pace of this year's Derby. Using the running styles as an indicator of how much early speed is in the race is a great way to look back and predict future pace.

The table below shows the past 8 Kentucky Derbies with the Pace ranked, the top speed horses coming into the race based on the E and E/P running styles, the quantity of each running style in the race (noting the total of E8 and E/P8 horses) and pace description.

From the table below, in almost all cases horses with E running styles set the early Derby pace:

- In 7 of the last 8 years, horses with E running styles set the early pace (the exception being Palace Malice (P3) in 2013 when his trainer Todd Pletcher added blinkers and he decided to blaze fast fractions in the slop).
- Moreover, in 5 of the last 8 years, horses with E8 running styles set the early fractions. E8 horses have the most early speed and are naturally "need to lead" types.

Pace:	Fast	Slow	Slow	Fast - Sloppy (Sealed)	Fast	Slowest	Fast	Slow - Sloppy (Sealed)
Year:	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
Top Speed Horses	Danzing Candy E 8 Outwork E 8 Mohaymen E/P 6 Nyquist E/P 5 Destin E/P 4 Shagaf E/P 4	Dortmund E 8 Materiality E/P 8 Firing Line E/P 8 Upstart E/P 7 American Pharoah E/P 7	Wildcat Red E 8 Chitu E/P 8 General A Rod E/P 8 California Chrome E/P 7 Harry's Holiday E 6 Uncle Sigh E 5	Giant Finish E 8 Falling Sky E 8 Goldencents E/P 8 Verrazano E/P 7 Oxbox E 4 Palace Malice P 3	Bodemeister E 8 Trinniberg E 8 Hansen E 8 Gemologist E/P 7 I'll Have Another E/P 7 Take Charge Indy E/P 5	Decisive Moment E 8 Comma to the Top E 7 Shackleford E 6	Line of David E 8 Sidney's Candy E 8 Conveyance E 8 Discreetly Mine E 8 American Lion E/P 8 Super Saver E 6	Join in the Dance E 8 Atomic Rain E 6 Regal Ransom E 2 Pioneer of the Nile E/P 5
# of Horse Run Styles	2 x E8 2 E 4 E/P 5 P 8 S 1 N/A Total field = 20	1 x E8 1 E 2 x E/P8 9 E/P 3 P 4 S 1 N/A Total field = 18	1 x E8 3 E 2 x E/P8 11 E/P 6 P 0 S 0 N/A Total field = 20	2 x E8 3 E 1 x E/P8 5 E/P 7 P 4 S 0 N/A Total field = 19	3 x E8 3 E 3 E/P 8 P 5 S 1 N/A Total field = 20	1 x E8 3 E 7 E/P 6 P 3 S 0 N/A Total field = 19	4 x E8 5 E 1 x E/P8 7 E/P 6 P 2 S 0 N/A Total field = 20	1 x E8 3 E 7 E/P 4 P 5 S 0 N/A Total field = 19
Pace Description	Danzing Candy (E8) blasted from the #20 post to set a fast pace, followed by Nyquist (E/P5) & Gun Runner (P4). Nyquist sat off fast pace & pounced to win.	Dortmund (E8) & Firing Line (E/P8) set pace early. American Pharoah (E/P7) sat off slow pace & pounced to win.	Uncle Sigh (E5) & Chitu (E/P8) set slow pace early. California Chrome (E/P7) sat off pace & pounced to win. Pace slow once lone E8 Wildcat Red had bobbled break.	Palace Malice (P3) set fast pace (after adding blinkers). Goldencents (E/P8) & Verrazano (E/P7) attended pace. Oxbox (E4) sat 2nd. Fast pace set up for Orb's close to win.	Trinniberg (E8 sprinter) & Bodemeister (E8) dueled early with Hansen (E8) sitting 3rd. Take Charge Indy (E/P5) sat 4th. Gemologist (E/P7) sat 5th. I'll Have Another (E/P7) sat 6th on fast pace & won.	Shackleford (E6) and Comma to the Top (E7) battled early. Decisive Moment (E8) sat 3rd. Animal Kingdom (P3) sat mid-pack in 10th & moved late to win.	Conveyance (E8) set the pace. Sidney's Candy (E8) sat in 2nd. Line of David (E8) was in 3rd early. Discreetly Mine (E8) was 4th 7 then 5th early. Super Saver (E6) was 6th, then 4th before moving	Join in the Dance (E8) set slow pace. Regal Ransom (E2) sat 2nd. Pioneer of the Nile (E/P5) was 3rd & 4th early and finished 2nd. Mine That Bird (E/P4) closed to win from far back.

Importantly, in the top 4 fastest Derbies in the past 8 years, there was more than one horse with an E8 running style entered:

- Two E8s were entered in 2016 (Danzing Candy & Outwork)
- Two E8s were entered in 2013 (Giant Finish & Falling Sky)
- Three E8s were entered in 2012 (Bodemeister, Trinniberg & Hansen)
- Four E8s were entered in 2010 (Line of David, Sidney's Candy, Conveyance & Discreetly Mine)

Since E8 horses have the most early speed and are "need to lead," it's natural that if two horses with these characteristics "hook up" on the front end that they will press each other and a fast pace will ensue.

Another item that plays into this pace discussion is the implementation of the Derby points system starting in 2013. With the change from Graded Stakes earnings, which included sprint races, to only awarding point in races over a mile, the Derby points system has thus eliminated the entry of "pure" sprinters in the Kentucky Derby.

Since "proper" route horses are winning the longer Derby preps and receiving the points to qualify, the elimination of front-end sprinter speed is naturally slowing the pace of the Derby. This wasn't seen in the first year of the points system due to fast pace set by the aforementioned Palace Malice. The pace in the Derbies in 2014 and 2015 trended Downward, but then the pace heated up again in 2016.

Additionally, with only one pure E8 horse entered in 2014 and 2015, a natural front-end showdown was lacking. When Wildcat Red (E8) bobbled at the break in the 2014 Derby, Uncle Sigh (E5) and Chitu (E/P7) set a slow pace with California Chrome stalking close by and taking over late.

In 2015, Dortmund was the lone E8 and got out on the lead with Firing Line (E/P8) and American Pharoah (E/P7) close by. The result was a "merry-go-round" which was highly criticized as a slow Derby overall.

Even though Outwork (E8) only sat fourth early in last year's Derby, the other E8 in the race Danzing Candy was on an all-out mission to get the lead from the far outside post and sped up the early fractions.

Note: One other change that occurred after the breakdown of Eight Belles in the 2008 Derby was that Churchill analyzed ways to make the Derby safer, which is good for all involved, but is another reason for slower timed Derbies. This is why only those Derbies after 2009 area analyzed above.

2017 Kentucky Derby Running Styles

Turning to this year's Derby, the table on the next page shows the Brisnet running styles for each horse entered in the 2017 Kentucky Derby in post position order and their morning line (M/L) odds.

It should be immediately noted that no E8 horses will be entered. **State of Honor** is the only "Early" horse rated as an E7 in this year's field. The Casse clan has experimented with and without blinkers with State of Honor, but either way, he has shown eagerness to get on the lead and might possibly be sent to set a hot pace for his stablemate Classic Empire (even though they have different owners). Leaving from the #6 post, he'll have to move early from the gate.

Owner Kendall Hansen has said that Fast and Accurate will look to get the lead, but there are questions if he is fast enough out of the gate to get the lead in this group. Either way, he will be close-up to start the race and need to gun it from his inside #3 post.

Post Position	Horse	Brisnet Running Style	M/L ODDS
1	Lookin At Lee	S0	20/1
2	Thunder Snow	N/A (E/P)	20/1
3	Fast and Accurate	E/P7	50/1
4	Untrapped	P2	30/1
5	Always Dreaming	E/P7	5/1
6	State of Honor	E7	30/1
7	Girvin	P1	15/1
8	Hence	S1	15/1
9	Irap	E/P6	20/1
10	Gunnevera	S1	15/1
11	Battle of Midway	E/P6	30/1
12	Sonneteer	S2	50/1
13	J Boys Echo	P2	20/1
14	Classic Empire	E/P6	4/1
15	McCraken	S3	5/1
16	Tapwrit	P2	20/1
17	Irish War Cry	E/P8	6/1
18	Gormley	E/P5	15/1
19	Practical Joke	P3	20/1
20	Patch	P3	30/1
Also Eligible			
21	Royal Mo	E7	20/1
22	Master Plan	S3	50/1

Always Dreaming leaving from the #5 post also must get moving early and has shown eagerness in the mornings training at Churchill Downs.

The second flight of horses pressing the pace will include **Irish War Cry** looking for the perfect stalking trip and will be able to find a spot to draft behind the leaders leaving from the #17 post.

Others that will be pressing the pace based on post position and how they break are **Irap** from the #9 post and **Battle of Midway** from post #11.

Both **Gormley** and **Classic Empire** sat behind the pace setters in their big final prep wins and most likely will be in the back of the second flight in the Derby leaving from outside posts.

The third flight of horses will be comprised of a mix of horses that could include **McCraken**, **Practical Joke**, **Girvin** and **Patch**.

Horses that will be looking to make a late run from the back of the pack will include **Gunnevera**, **Hence**, **Lookin at Lee** and **Sonneteer**.

Predicting the 2017 Kentucky Derby Pace:

Predicting a fast pace in this year's Derby is totally contingent upon **State of Honor** breaking well and dueling early. If this happens, a "pace meltdown" may occur and allow mid-pack horses and closers to get up in the final strides to hit the board.

The most likely outcome in the race is that **State of Honor** will fade after setting a moderate to fast pace and not be involved in the race late.

A moderate to fast pace is a likely outcome because of the correlation of number of early/presser horses in past Derbies. An all-out blazing fast pace is not likely, though, since in this Derby points system era, pure sprinters are not making the gate and speeding up the pace. The paces in 2014 and 2015 were very slow paces, but also had a lack of pure E8 horses. This year's pace may be much like the 2014 and 2015 Derbies when E8 types were not prevalent.

With a moderate pace expected, horses that have shown the capability to be near the pace, stalk and pounce late may be the top candidates to win the Derby in this new point system paradigm, just like California Chrome and American Pharoah did in 2014 and 2015.

Always Dreaming, **Classic Empire** and **Irish War Cry** are the top three horses that can get that type of trip this year.

For more Derby pace analysis, check out RacingDudes.com for an article named "2017 Kentucky Derby Pace Thesis" that has been released during Derby week.

The next section will evaluate how middle and late pace can be used to identify these horses that can put in a long, sustained run to win the Derby or hit the board at long odds making your day, month or year of wagering.

Late Pace Key to Picking Derby Winner & Longshots

Picking the Kentucky Derby winner and longshot is a part of American folklore. Hollywood movies have been based on the Derby longshot including the movie "50 to 1" about 2009 Kentucky Derby winner Mine that Bird.

The Derby longshot cannot be picked haphazardly, though. Unlike 2016 when the top echelon of 3 year olds separated themselves from the pack including Nyquist, Exaggerator and Gun Runner, this year the winners of the Derby preps have been more widespread. The chance for a "bomb" to take the top win spot is still difficult to predict, but there is plenty of money to be made picking the right horses underneath in exotic wagers like the exacta, trifecta and superfecta.

In the past 8 years including the 50-1 longshot Mine That Bird in 2009, a total of seven horses with odds of more than 20-1 have finished in the top four of the Kentucky Derby. Six of these seven horses came off the pace to close into their final position as can be seen in the table below (only Shackleford in 2011 was on or near the lead and faded to 4th to hit the superfecta at long odds):

Year	Horse Name	Position at 1/2 Mile	Finish	Derby Odds
2009	Mine That Bird	19 th	1 st	50.6
2010	Make Music for Me	20 th	4 th	30
2011	Animal Kingdom	12 th	1 st	20.9
2011	Shackleford	1 st	4 th	23
2012	Went The Day Well	17 th	4 th	30.6
2013	Golden Soul	15 th	2 nd	35.4
2014	Commanding Curve	18 th	2 nd	37.8

Spotting these horses as they progress during the Derby prep races is the key to picking the longshot. Horses coming into the Derby in top form from their final prep have shown to be the most successful. To prove this point, a full chart of the top four finishers in the past eight Kentucky Derbies are shown in the table below with their final prep and speed figures (courtesy of Brisnet):

			Name	Run Style	Final Prep	Final Prep Finish	E1	E2	LP	E2 & LP Ave.	LP minus E2	Bris	Derby Odds	
2009 Sloppy	Average Pace	1	Mine That Bird	E/P4	Sunland	4	81	89	79	84	-10	88	50.6	
		2	Pioneerof the Nile	E/P5	SA Derby	1	72	81	105	93	24	95	6.3	
		3	Musket Man	P4	Ill. Derby	1	87	93	110	101.5	17	104	19	
		4	Papa Clem	E/P5	Ark. Derby	1	89	89	106	97.5	17	100	12.2	
2010 Sloppy	Average Pace	1	Super Saver	E6	Ark. Derby	2	89	97	96	96.5	-1	99	8	
		2	Ice Box	P3	Fl. Derby	1	78	90	108	99	18	101	11.7	
		3	Paddy O'Prado	E/P5	Bluegrass	2	101	109	76	92.5	-33	94	12.3	
		4	Make Music for Me	P1	Bluegrass	6	88	97	80	88.5	-17	90	30	
2011	Slowest Pace	1	Animal Kingdom	P3	Spiral	1	76	84	101	92.5	17	97	20.9	
		2	Nehro	S3	Ark. Derby	2	78	84	109	96.5	25	99	8.5	
		3	Mucho Macho Man	E/P6	La. Derby	3	88	90	98	94	8	96	9.3	
		4	Shackleford	E6	Fl. Derby	2	102	112	84	98	-28	101	23	
2012	Fast Pace	1	I'll Have Another	E/P7	SA Derby	1	77	82	109	95.5	27	98	15.3	
		2	Bodemeister	E8	Ark. Derby	1	96	100	105	102.5	5	105	4.2	
		3	Dullahan	S	Bluegrass	1	102	106	93	99.5	-13	102	12.1	
		4	Went The Day Well	P5	Spiral	1	83	94	101	97.5	7	103	30.6	
2013 Sloppy	Fast Pace	1	Orb	P2	Fl. Derby	1	76	87	103	95	16	97	5.4	
		2	Golden Soul	S2	La. Derby	4	83	96	100	98	4	100	35.4	
		3	Revolutionary	S3	La. Derby	1	95	112	94	103	-18	105	6.4	
		4	Normandy Invasion	S2	Wood	2	71	80	114	97	34	99	9.3	
2014	Slow Pace	1	California Chrome	E/P7	SA Derby	1	103	110	97	103.5	-13	106	2.5	
		2	Commanding Curve	P1	La. Derby	3	84	102	91	96.5	-11	98	37.8	
		3	Danza	E/P5	Ark. Derby	1	89	97	106	101.5	9	104	8.7	
		4	Wicked Strong	P	Wood	1	103	114	86	100	-28	103	6.5	
2015	Slow Pace	1	American Pharoah	E/P7	Ark. Derby	1	98	103	95	99	-8	102	2.9	
		2	Firing Line	E/P8	Sunland	1	99	104	94	99	-10	101	9.5	
		3	Dortmund	E8	SA Derby	1	111	118	89	103.5	-29	106	4.3	
		4	Frosted	E/P4	Wood	1	94	108	101	104.5	-7	107	10.3	
2015	Fast Pace	1	Nyquist	E/P5	Fl. Derby	1	91	94	95	94.5	1	97	2.3	
		2	Exaggerator	P3	SA Derby	1	84	100	98	99	-2	102	5.1	
		3	Gun Runner	P4	La. Derby	1	90	98	98	98	0	100	10.3	
		4	Mohaymen	E/P6	Fl. Derby	4	88	92	81	86.5	-11	87	11.8	
					8 Year Average =			88.9	97.3	96.9	97.1	-0.3	99.6	

**Races ran on synthetic tracks*

Since longshots have recently shown the ability to run strong late, the E2 and LP columns are important in identifying what horses are coming into the race strong and have ability to still have fast pace figures at the end of the 1 & 1/8 mile final prep races.

For those not accustomed to the Brisnet nomenclature:

- E2 is the pace rating that measures how fast the horse ran from the start to the second call of the race (6 furlong (¾ mile) pace in most route races)
- LP is a pace rating that measures how fast the horse ran from the second call of the race to the finish

From the charts:

- The top four Derby finishers over the past 8 years ran an average E2 of 97.3 in their final Derby prep
- The top four Derby finishers over the past 8 years ran an average LP of 96.9 in their final Derby prep

Focusing on the 2017 Kentucky Derby, the winner may very likely come from the second flight of pressers, as discussed above in the Predicting the Pace section. The ability to show late pace is not only a characteristic of closers, though, as pressers have also shown strong LP figures in their final preps. The key is to use these pace numbers to identify horses that can put in a long, sustained run to win the Derby or hit the board.

The table below shows the top 25 Kentucky Derby contenders for 2017 with their E1, E2, LP pace figures from their final prep (courtesy of Brisnet). The table is in order of the final speed figure (see BRIS column):

	Name	Final Prep	Final Prep Track Condition	Final Prep Finish	E1	E2	LP	E2 & LP Ave.	LP minus E2	BRIS
1	Hence	Sunland	Fast	1st	106	108	93	100.5	-15	103
2	Always Dreaming	Fl. Derby	Fast	1st	93	101	99	100.0	-2	102
3	Irish War Cry	Wood	Fast	1st	106	119	80	99.5	-39	102
4	Irap	Bluegrass	Fast	1st	90	104	92	98.0	-12	100
5	Girvin	La. Derby	Fast	1st	89	97	96	96.5	-1	99
6	Gormley	SA Derby	Fast	1st	103	116	77	96.5	-39	99
7	Practical Joke	Bluegrass	Fast	2nd	87	101	93	97.0	-8	99
8	Battle of Midway	SA Derby	Fast	2nd	114	122	71	96.5	-51	98
9	Patch	La. Derby	Fast	2nd	89	97	94	95.5	-3	98
10	Royal Mo (AE)	SA Derby	Fast	3rd	114	122	70	96.0	-52	98
11	State of Honor	Fl. Derby	Fast	2nd	91	98	92	95.0	-6	97
12	McCraken	Bluegrass	Fast	3rd	87	98	90	94.0	-8	96
13	Classic Empire	Ark. Derby	Fast	1st	89	91	97	94.0	6	96
14	Gunnaveera	Fl. Derby	Fast	3rd	71	85	102	93.5	17	95
15	Lookin At Lee	Ark. Derby	Fast	3rd	81	84	101	92.5	17	94
16	Sonneteer	Ark. Derby	Fast	4th	71	75	109	92.0	34	94
17	J Boys Echo	Bluegrass	Fast	4th	84	96	87	91.5	-9	93
18	Untrapped	Ark. Derby	Fast	6th	90	93	84	88.5	-9	90
19	Tapwrit	Bluegrass	Fast	5th	83	96	76	86.0	-20	87
20	Fast and Accurate	Spiral	Fast (Synth)	1st	96	104	65	84.5	-39	86
21	Thunder Snow	UAE Derby*	Fast	1st	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
22	Master Plan (AE)	UAE Derby*	Fast	3rd	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

*All final preps ran at 1 1/8 Mile except UAE Derby at 1 & 3/16 Mile

All values over 97 for E2, LP and overall Bris speed figure are highlighted in green, since this is the prerequisite that has been set from the past 8 Derbies to hit the superfecta.

A lot of horses have met this prerequisite, so to hone in more from the past 8 Derbies, a horse should have been able to average a 97.1 between their E2 & LP figures to hit the superfecta. Only 5 horses out of the 25 listed had an E2 & LP average higher than 97 including: **Hence (100.5), Always Dreaming (100), Irish War Cry (99.5), Irap (98) and Practical Joke (97).**

Since all of the Derby preps are ran at 1 & 1/8 mile (except the UAE Derby at 1 & 3/16 mile), the final pace figure is an important figure to use as all of these horses stretch out to 1¼ mile for the first time. The horses that are showing speed late are more likely to be able to stretch out, regardless if they are frontrunners, pace pressers or closers.

Again, only 5 horses out of the 25 listed had an LP higher than 97 including: **Sonneteer (109)**, **Gunnevera (102)**, **Lookin at Lee (101)**, **Always Dreaming (99)** and **Classic Empire (97)**.

It should be noted that only **Always Dreaming** shows up on both of the prerequisite lists discussed above.

A major disclaimer here is that it is difficult to base any betting strategy on only one race, especially the horse's last race. Still, comparing the late pace figures from the final prep to the Kentucky Derby does show some data correlation over the past few years that cannot be ignored when trying to identify a Derby winner and longshot.

The Picks:

From the horses identified from this data correlation, **Hence**, **Lookin at Lee** and **Sonneteer** are the key horses to use underneath that will most likely be at odds over 15-1. Lookin at Lee and Sonneteer both have made the gate and need to be used very lightly at the bottom of exotic wagers. The wagering strategy to be discussed will focus on **Hence**. Mixing Hence on all tickets is the key to try to get some value in exotic plays in the Derby.

Looking at trying to pick the Derby winner, **Always Dreaming** stands out as the strongest candidate based on his last race performance. He is the key horse to bet win money on and to use on top in all exotic plays.

Classic Empire and **Irish War Cry** both have the back class and meet one of the Brisnet speed figure prerequisites to be in the picture late in the race. Both need to be used underneath on all tickets. If Classic Empire fires his best shot and his talent comes to the forefront, he will win the Derby, but those are big questions with his mental make-up. Classic Empire must be played defensively in the top spot, just in case he runs to his talent level. Irish War Cry has a slow Brisnet late pace number from the Wood, so he will be used lighter on tickets.

Gunnevera and **Practical Joke** are the other two to be used lightly underneath on some tickets based on their back class and their ability to finish based on the Brisnet prerequisites.

Note on Workouts:

Workouts are important to watch for yourself and analyze. Workouts are available on the Kentucky Derby YouTube channel and on their website. There will be plenty of hype on certain horses after their workouts at Churchill Downs or at other tracks across the country. It's important to try to rely on professionals that watch workouts everyday instead of every person on Twitter or social media saying that this horse looks awesome!

Incorporate workouts into your handicapping by taking a negative approach. If you hear something negative about a horse (e.g., high temperature, uncomfortable during works, physical issues) then that may be a reason to shy away from that horse in your wagering strategy. Don't jump on a horse that you may have not been so excited about just because a bunch of people are saying, "He looks great!" and "What an awesome work!"

Kentucky Oaks – Overview

Purse:	\$1 million
Distance:	1 & 1/8 miles
Age:	3-year-old fillies
Post Time:	Fri., May 5 th ~6:12 p.m. (EDT)

When top 3-year-old filly contender Unique Bella went down with an injury the Kentucky Oaks picture looked muddled, but in the last few weeks a couple of talented future stars have emerged making this year's races one of the strongest in recent memory. Each probable filly to run in the Oaks is spotlighted as Win Contenders, Can Hit the Board, Exotic Plays and Others below. The Oaks pace scenario, wagering strategy and picks can be found after the filly spotlights:

WIN CONTENDERS

#4 Paradise Woods – California lost one super star when Unique Bella went down with an injury right before the Grade 1 Santa Anita Oaks, but Paradise Woods may step up and fill those shoes with relative ease. She went wire to wire in the Santa Anita Oaks to win by nearly twelve lengths, and her speed figure in that race came back faster than any other three year old in the country regardless of gender. Trainer Richard Mandella has compared this filly to Beholder so obviously, that speaks volumes as to just how good she might become.

#7 Farrell – Winner of four straight races, and all four of them have been romps. In the first three races of the streak she was basically a wire to wire winner, but last time out in the Grade 2 Fair Grounds Oaks she showed she could sit off the pace somewhat and still win. Really love that they tried to experiment with that, and it worked out well with the filly listening to instructions. Hard to knock her in any way.

#10 Miss Sky Warrior – Rides a FIVE race winning streak into this race, and last time out she was ultra-impressive winning the Grade 2 Gazelle Stakes at Aqueduct by thirteen lengths. She also has two other Grade 2 victories and a Grade 3 victory as well. Serious player who can sit the perfect kind of trip for a race like this one.

#14 Salty – Fell way behind early on in the Grade 2 Gulfstream Park Oaks, but came running down the stretch and passed them all with ease. Lightly raced horse with just three races under her belt, but she's won two of them very easily and only lost the other one by a neck. Will be running fast down the lane.

CAN HIT THE BOARD

#13 Abel Tasman– Two races back she gave super star Unique Bella a test in the Grade 3 Santa Ysabel Stakes as she finished second to her by only two and a quarter lengths. Last time out she didn't far quite as well in the Grade 1 Santa Anita Oaks where she finished second beaten eleven and three quarters. Her trip was poor in that last race so could bounce back today at an inflated price.

#12 Daddys Lil' Darling– A fast closing second in the Grade 2 Ashland Stakes at Keeneland last time out to Sailor's Valentine. Was a Grade 2 winner as a two year at Churchill Downs, and also has a second place finish in another Grade 2 at Churchill Downs. Running third off a layoff in this spot.

EXOTIC PLAYS

#8 Sailor's Valentine - Came out of nowhere to win the Grade 1 Ashland Stakes at Keeneland last time out at an eye popping 22-1. Last year Weep No More upset the Ashland Stakes before running poorly in the Kentucky Oaks. The Ashland came back slow from a speed figures standpoint.

#6 Vexatious - Will be a wise guy horse for some as her trip in the Grade 3 Fantasy Stakes last time out was eventful to say the least. However, it's hard for me to get too high on her as she was beaten badly by Farrell two races back. The talent is there though to make her dangerous.

#3 Mopotism – She's hit the board in two graded stakes races, but last time out was a very flat fourth in the Grade 1 Santa Anita Oaks. Will need improvement to turn the tables.

OTHERS:

#1 Ever So Clever – Finally put it all together in come from behind fashion to win the Grade 2 Fantasy Stakes at Oaklawn Park. Her form is very spotty.

#9 Wicked Lick - Only has one lifetime win which came way back in September of last year, but the win did come at Churchill Downs. Has been smoked by Farrell at Fair Grounds all this year.

#11 Tequilita – Ran 2nd by over four lengths to Salty in the Grade 2 Gulfstream Park Oaks. However, she did win the Grade 2 Forward Gal the race prior.

#5 Jordan's Henny – Broke her maiden in her last start of 2016, and has hit the board twice in Grade 2 events at Gulfstream Park in 2017. If you feel like you must play a long shot underneath in this race she wouldn't be the worst option.

#2 Lockdown – Second in the Grade 2 Gazelle Stakes at Aqueduct, but was beaten by an eye popping thirteen lengths by Miss Sky Warrior.

Oaks Pace:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Early Speed: Jordan's Henny, Farrell, Lockdown, Miss Sky Warrior, Paradise Woods• Pressers: Mopotism, Wicked Lick, Sailor's Valentine, Tequilita, Vexatious• Closers: Abel Tasman, Daddys Lil Darling, Ever So Clever, Salty
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Lockdown will most likely be on the lead with **Farrell**, **Miss Sky Warrior**, and **Paradise Woods** sitting just behind the top two. It was important that **Farrell** showed the ability to rate behind horses last time out, and **Paradise Woods** has also shown the ability to do that in a prior race as well although it was around one turn. It's also possible that **Paradise Woods** could become the "speed of the speed" and wire the field while running them off their feet. However, if the high caliber horses do get caught up in a speed dual up top it will benefit **Abel Tasman** and **Salty**. Both horses like to do their best running late, and both have proven form closing ground on tracks that can sometimes be unkind to closers. The long Churchill Downs stretch can favor those kinds of horses at times, but the outside draws of some of the best closers might make it interesting.

Kentucky Oaks Wagering Strategy:

The Kentucky Oaks has lost a big name for the second year in a row, but also for the second year in a row it becomes a much better betting race. The horses to focus around are: **Paradise Woods, Miss Sky Warrior, Farrell, and Salty**. The winner is likely to come from one of those four so those are the horses to play in the multi race wagers. It's all about **Paradise Woods** on the win end of things as she just could be better than the rest of these. For the trifecta key **Paradise Woods** in the top spot over **Farrell, Miss Sky Warrior, Salty, Able Tasman** over **Farrell, Miss Sky Warrior, Abel Tasman, Salty, Daddy's Lil Darling**.

A fun bet to play that usually draws a big pool is the Kentucky Oaks / Derby double. Using Paradise Woods and Farrell in the Oaks with Classic Empire, Irish War Cry, and Always Dreaming in the Derby would give 6 combinations and cost \$12 for a \$2 double. With the Kentucky Derby being completely wide open even if one of the three favorites win this race you could be looking at a decent return.

Racing Dudes, Saratoga Slim & Guaranteed Tip Sheet (GTS) Kentucky Oaks Picks (AS OF MAY 3):

	Aaron	Jared	Slim	GTS	CONSENSUS*	Pts.
Win	Paradise Woods	Paradise Woods	Paradise Woods	Miss Sky Warrior	Paradise Woods	37
Place	Farrell	Farrell	Salty	Paradise Woods	Miss Sky Warrior	18
Show	Miss Sky Warrior	Abel Tasman	Miss Sky Warrior	Daddys Lil Darling	Farrell	14
4th	Salty	Daddys Lil Darling	Abel Tasman	Salty	Salty	9

**Consensus scored on 10 points for Win, 7 points for Place, 4 points for Show & 1 point for 4th*

Kentucky Oaks / Derby Days Wagering Strategy

Since there is a good deal of "uninformed money" in the Kentucky Derby pool, those that are more informed have an upper-hand. Hopefully, reading the horse capsules and pace analysis above has helped you become one of those informed members of the pari-mutuel wagering pool and made you ready to approach your wagering strategy.

Handicapping is only a part of the Kentucky Derby puzzle and learning about what bets are available to you and where to focus your money is as important as picking the winner.

Before looking at the bets available to you, money management must be discussed first. You will lose your shirt if you don't decide on your budget going into the Derby weekend. There have been many days at the track where I start chasing, lose track of where I'm at with my budget, start betting and even if I hit a few races late, I still come out behind for the day. Deciding on your budget going in and being disciplined to keep to those bets will make you more confident going into the big 2 days of wagering over the Oaks and Derby days.

I personally play about \$50 to \$100 on a given weekend on Stakes and other races. On Derby weekend with the opportunities more abundant, I am looking to increase my budget four times to \$200 over the two days of racing. You can decide what you are willing to wager on these two days. It might be more than I am willing to wager or less. The wagering strategy below will be based on my \$200 budget and you can adjust accordingly to your own budget. I'll be looking to budget about \$100 on betting on the Kentucky Derby by itself and use the rest of my budget on multi-race wagers and undercard race plays.

So without further delay, here are the bets available to you and how you may want to structure your tickets:

Win: A rule of wagering is "Always start with your win bet." Look to make Win wagers on horses with odds greater than 5/1 in the Derby. It is very tough to take short odds like 5-2 or 3-1 on the favorite in such a large field of 20 horses. So many things can go wrong in this huge field and the value is not there in the Win pool on a heavily bet favorite.

I'll watch the board on Derby day and see what overlays exist in the wagering (horses going off at higher odds than their actual chance of winning the race). Based on the pace & speed figure analyses above, I'll be looking to make a win wager on **Always Dreaming** (projected at 6/1 odds). In most races on regular days, I'll only make one win wager in a race, but will look at the odds on **Hence** to win also and if they are higher than 15/1, I may extend to two horses in the win pool, but not bet more than two horses.

I'll start off my wagering by placing a **\$20 Win wager** on **Always Dreaming**.

Place & Show: Betting place (horse to come in first or second) or show (horse to come in first, second or third) should be reserved for the longshots in the field. I personally don't play in the place & show pools. If I was to play in these pools, I would only make place & show bets on horses greater than 20-1 in the Win pool. Those win odds should provide a good gauge to what horses will be good bets in the Place & Show pools and you can also find the Place & Show pool totals available on the tote board if you want to figure out what the pay-outs may be.

Exacta: Betting the top two finishers in the race in an Exacta is a fun bet that can return a handsome return. To win with the Exacta, both horses you bet must end up first and second in the Derby. The bet can be made straight or in a box.

For example, if you wanted to say **Always Dreaming** and **Hence** are going to finish first and second, then you can either play it straight Always Dreaming in first and Hence in second or you can box them. In a box, you would still win if Hence comes in first and Always Dreaming finishes in second. To play an exacta box, your bet amount is doubled to cover the two combinations.

A good strategy for the Derby (and the Derby only!) is to play a 4-horse exacta box. If any of the 4 horses come in first and second, then you win. A four-horse exacta box gives you 12 combinations of finish. Therefore, a \$2 exacta box would **cost \$24 to bet**. \$1 is the lowest denomination bet for the exacta box (\$2 is the minimum for a straight exacta on Oaks / Derby days). A good strategy is to use a mix of a few horses with pressers with a few closers in the exacta box. A good mix of favorites and longshots can make a nice score. An example of this type of exacta box can be seen below:

\$2.00 Exacta Box		
4	1st	Always Dreaming, Hence, Classic Empire, Irish War Cry
3	2nd	Always Dreaming, Hence, Classic Empire, Irish War Cry
\$24		

If you are using the favorites in an exacta, it is smart to play the bet multiple times, since the payouts will be much smaller if a favorite wins. Watch the exacta payouts (starting with the advanced wagering on Friday and before the Derby begins) and adjust the weighting of your bets accordingly.

Trifecta: Betting the top three finishing horses in the race in a Trifecta is more challenging and can end up in a bigger

score. Boxing three horses in a \$.50 Trifecta only costs \$3. The minimum denomination for the Trifecta bet is \$.50. It is possible to manage Trifecta wagering using boxes and straight bets to minimize your bet size. One strategy is to key three horses in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd spots and use 4 other horses in the other spots.

For example, if you want to key Always Dreaming, Classic Empire and Irish War Cry in 1st & 2nd over 4 other horses in third, then that would make up 24 combinations. For a \$1 trifecta, this bet would cost \$24. If you wanted to use those 4 horses in first over Always Dreaming, Classic Empire and Irish War Cry in 2nd & 3rd, then the bet is another \$12. Lastly, you can key Always Dreaming, Classic Empire and Irish War Cry in the 1st and 3rd spot with the other 4 horses in 2nd for another \$12 bet.

These trifecta bets come to \$48. **I will also play a \$2 trifecta box with Always Dreaming, Classic Empire and Irish War Cry for \$12** for a **total \$60 in trifecta plays**. If I'm feeling like I want extra coverage, I will throw **Hence** in that \$2 trifecta box for a total \$24 bet. Here is how that type of bet can be played:

\$1.00 Trifecta			\$0.50 Trifecta			\$0.50 Trifecta		
3	1st	Always Dreaming, Classic Empire, Irish War Cry	3	1st	Always Dreaming, Classic Empire, Irish War Cry	4	1st	Hence, McCracken, Thunder Snow, Sonneteer
2	2nd	Always Dreaming, Classic Empire, Irish War Cry	4	2nd	Hence, McCracken, Thunder Snow, Sonneteer	3	2nd	Always Dreaming, Classic Empire, Irish War Cry
4	3rd	Hence, McCracken, Thunder Snow, Sonneteer	2	3rd	Always Dreaming, Classic Empire, Irish War Cry	2	3rd	Always Dreaming, Classic Empire, Irish War Cry
\$24.00	Total Bet		\$12.00	Total Bet		\$12.00	Total Bet	

With my bets so far, I am at **\$104 of my initial \$100 Derby race budget**. I have keyed on Always Dreaming and Classic Empire in my plays. You must have conviction and focus on one to three horses that you want to key or your tickets will explode in size and you'll be betting more than your budget quickly. Also, if you spread too much, you won't even know what you are rooting for when watching the biggest race of the year. Focusing on a few horses makes the Derby more fun to watch and keeps you inside your budget.

Bets that I may use additionally would be extra exactas with Always Dreaming in the top slot over my other top horses based on payouts.

Superfecta: If I'm doing well on the day going into the Derby or am alive in some of my multi-race wagers, I may look to swing for the fences and play a superfecta.

One of the biggest scores is the superfecta – betting the top four finishers in the Derby. Over the last 11 years, this \$1 minimum wager has paid over \$24,000 each year except in 2014 when it paid \$7,600, 2015 when it paid only \$634 and in 2016 when it paid only \$542.

The \$1 minimum on the superfecta makes it a tough bet to make for a normal person with a small to medium budget. If you are holding a Kentucky Derby party and want to have everyone throw in \$10 into a pool, then the superfecta will be the most fun play where everyone can split a big win.

A good strategy for a smaller budget is to start with two horses boxed over another two horses boxed for 4 combinations and a \$4 total bet as shown below:

\$1.00	Superfecta	
2	1st	Always Dreaming, Classic Empire
1	2nd	Always Dreaming, Classic Empire
2	3rd	Hence, Irish War Cry
1	4th	Hence, Irish War Cry
\$4.00	Total Bet	

A good approach to Superfecta wagering is to start with this 2-by-2 grid and then build out the tickets and combinations from there. With so many combinations and so many horses, tickets can get expensive quickly in Superfecta wagering. A \$1 Superfecta 6 horse box costs \$360 to play! Unless you are a big bankroll player, you may want to build out tickets with the most likely winners in the top two spots in the Superfecta, betting over horses that you believe can get up to finish in 3rd and 4th. Using closers in the 3rd and 4th spot is a good strategy.

Continuing to build out on the 2-by-2 grid above, by adding 3 horses like McCracken, Thunder Snow and Sonneteer to the 3rd & 4th place slots adds to a total of 40 combinations to equal to the **\$40 ticket** shown to the left below.

As a back-up bet to get Irish War Cry in the top spot, I may box 3 horses in the first 3 spots over 4 other horses in the 4th position for 24 combinations and a **\$24 total bet**. For example, boxing **Always Dreaming, Classic Empire** and **Irish War Cry** in the first three slots over 4 horses in the fourth spot could be a final bet as shown to the right below:

\$1.00	Superfecta		\$1.00	Superfecta	
2	1st	Always Dreaming, Classic Empire	3	1st	Always Dreaming, Classic Empire, Irish War Cry
1	2nd	Always Dreaming, Classic Empire	2	2nd	Always Dreaming, Classic Empire, Irish War Cry
5	3rd	Hence, Irish War Cry, McCracken, Thunder Snow, Sonneteer	1	3rd	Always Dreaming, Classic Empire, Irish War Cry
4	4th	Hence, Irish War Cry, McCracken, Thunder Snow, Sonneteer	4	4th	Hence, McCracken, Thunder Snow, Sonneteer
\$40.00	Total Bet		\$24.00	Total Bet	

These three bets would **equal \$68** additional to my original \$104 bet so far, so I may not dip into the superfecta pool.

Multi-Race Wagers: With \$100 to \$150 remaining in my original budget, I will spread money and pick my spots over the two days of racing. From Friday, May 5 to Saturday, May 6, Churchill Downs will hold a total of 13 Graded Stakes races covering all the major divisions in North American horse racing.

With the best horses in North American converging on Louisville over these two days, opportunities to bet on Graded Stakes winning horses at long odds will be available and it will be important to pick your spots, always looking for value. Here are the multi-race wagers available to you over the Oaks / Derby days:

Oaks/Derby Double: this bet is evaluated in the Kentucky Oaks Overview page in this Guide.

Oaks / Woodford / Derby Pick 3: Including the Grade-1 Woodford Reserve Turf Classic with your Oaks & Derby thoughts can result in a big hit. With a \$1 minimum denomination, you will want to go "skinny" in at least one leg of the Pick 3. I don't feel strong about a horse in the Woodford, so I may play a \$1 Pick-3 singling **Paradise Woods** in the Oaks, spread in the Woodford with four horses with **Always Dreaming, Classic Empire** and **Irish War Cry** for a total \$12 ticket. I may throw **Thunder Snow** into this wager, if I can limit the Woodford coverage to only three horses.

Woodford / Derby Double: I've had my best success by backing up my bets with Woodford / Derby doubles to California Chrome and American Pharoah in past years, so this is a good bet if you don't hit on the Oaks as your first leg of the Oaks / Woodford / Derby Pick 3.

Pick 3s, Pick 4s and Pick 5s: Opportunities to break the bank will be abundant over the two days in these pools, if you are willing to handicap the undercard races. The \$0.50 minimum wager makes these wagers manageable on a smaller budget. The Pick-6 pool is a \$2 minimum wager and very tough to manage on a small budget.

A great tool named DRF Ticket Maker is available on-line and on your phone to create these multi-race tickets. You can rank the chance of a horse winning each leg of these wagers as either A, B or C and the program creates the tickets for you based on your budget. You will need to go "skinny" in a few legs in these wagers or your tickets will get expensive quickly.

Thank you once again for reading through this 2017 Kentucky Derby Guide presented by Guaranteed Tip Sheet and RacingDudes.com!

GOOD LUCK TO ALL!