



xb wager guide

May 5, 2018
Churchill Downs



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Welcome to Xpressbet's FREE Kentucky Derby Wager Guide!

Fellow Racing Fan,

Unbeatens Justify and Magnum Moon could end the 136-year Apollo Curse that demands a Kentucky Derby champ must race at 2. Xpressbet Florida Derby winner Audible has just one loss on his resume and hails from the powerful Todd Pletcher stable. That outfit also accounted for the Louisiana (Noble Indy) and Arkansas (Magnum Moon) Derbies, as well as the Wood Memorial (Vino Rosso)! Add Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf and explosive UAE Derby winner Mendelssohn to the mix and we can hardly wait until May 5.

As intriguing as it already is, the Kentucky Derby becomes infinitely more stimulating when you have a few bucks riding on the outcome. We humbly suggest that Xpressbet is the best online, telephone and mobile wagering service in the nation. In order to help you to cash a ticket on the Derby, we're proud to present this FREE Kentucky Derby Wager Guide.

Xpressbet will offer online, phone and mobile wagering for the entire Triple Crown—and produce FREE Wager Guides for remaining events: Preakness (available May 11) and Belmont (available June 1).

As a current account holder, you know Xpressbet is the best place to watch and wager on great racing from around the world. If you don't already wager with Xpressbet, act now to earn up to \$500 in bonus cash—that certainly will come in handy during the Triple Crown. See details at Xpressbet.com.

The Kentucky Derby is important worldwide and Xpressbet is pleased to arm horseplayers with valuable information. That's why we've recruited top handicappers, writers and broadcasters to examine the race—Analysis, Main Contenders, Value Plays and \$100 Wagering Strategies.

In addition to race-by-race expert commentary, inside you'll also find oodles of useful Stats and Trends, a handy Exotic Wagering Chart and much more.

Following the Kentucky Derby post-position draw, Xpressbet will produce an updated guide to reflect adjusted expert opinions based on up-to-the-minute information. Visit Xpressbet.com the day before each Triple Crown event for a FREE revised and enhanced version.

Xpressbet hopes your 2018 Kentucky Derby wagering experience is fruitful and we look forward to serving as your advance deposit account wagering provider for the big day and in the future.

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See How They Prep

By **Jeremy Plonk**, Xpressbet
@HorsePlayerNow



Since 1986, every Kentucky Derby champion except Charismatic exited a 9-furlong final tune-up. A strong prep finish often is an indicator of Kentucky Derby success.

Louisiana Derby (March 24): NOBLE INDY made the lead after 6 furlongs and came home the final 3/8ths in 38.81 with a final furlong in 12.99 while battling to hold off the late surges of LONE SAILOR and MY BOY JACK. The former made up 3-3/4 lengths and the latter 10 lengths over that final 3 furlongs. That puts LONE SAILOR at an estimated 38.06 final 3 furlongs and MY BOY JACK at a stirring 36.81.

Florida Derby (March 31): The Trakus system measured AUDIBLE in 37.51 over the final 3 furlongs with a final 1/8 in 12.52 while rallying from more than 11 lengths behind a runaway pace set by PROMISES FULFILLED. Runner-up HOFBURG came from 15 lengths back, but his final 3/8 and 1/8 splits each were more than a length slower than AUDIBLE (37.80 and 12.78). By comparison, last year's Florida Derby and Kentucky Derby winner Always Dreaming went in 36.56, 12.53.

Santa Anita Derby (April 7): This race attracted a small field of 7 runners with JUSTIFY and BOLT D'ORO taking most of the wagering action in what appeared on paper as a two-horse race. The 1-2 carousel throughout saw the winner, JUSTIFY, clock a final 3 furlongs in 37.11 with a final furlong in 12.70, according to Trakus. Runner-up BOLT D'ORO chased to no avail in 37.38 and 12.90. 2014 Derby winner California Chrome came home here in 36.55, though the SA track has played slower this year.

Blue Grass (April 7): After 6 furlongs, GOOD MAGIC and FLAMEAWAY already had engaged side-by-side for a lengthy drive. Eventual winner GOOD MAGIC came home in 38.27 (13.28 final 1/8), while FLAMEAWAY clocked 38.62 (13.36 final 1/8), according to Trakus. Though he did encounter stretch interference, the positional rally by FREE DROP BILLY actually registered slower than the top pair at 38.67 (13.34 final 1/8). This edition came home slowest of four Blue Grass Stakes since Keeneland returned to dirt.

Wood Memorial (April 7): With speedster Old Time Revival running off down the backstretch, a patient VINO ROSSO was able to gather himself and rally 4 1/2 lengths over the final 3 furlongs in 37.66 for the score. He got the final 1/8 in 12.73 to best ENTICED, whom Trakus clocked in 38.30 (13.16 final 1/8). FIRENZE FIRE was farther back than usual, but still finished in just 39.36 (13.59) in a distant fourth-place effort. This was the fastest come-home time in the Wood since Frosted (36.60) in 2015.

Arkansas Derby (April 14): MAGNUM MOON cruised wire-to-wire in a win that saw his final 3 furlongs in a sizzling 36.47 and final furlong in 11.99. Quip pursued in second throughout and came home in approximately 37.27 and 12.39. Third-place SOLOMINI lost 2 lengths on the winner over the final 3/8 while passing horses in approximately 37.07 and 12.24. MAGNUM MOON joined Bodemeister, Curlin & Afleet Alex as the only winners of this race the last 20 years to shade :12 in the final furlong.

Expert	Bob Neumeier (HPNow)	Millie Ball (XBTV.com)	Jeff Siegel (XBTV.com)	Jon White (Santa Anita)	Dick Jerardi (DRF)	Steve Byk (SiriusXM Radio)
First	Audible	Audible	Justify	Justify	Justify	Justify
Second	Justify	Justify	Mendelssohn	My Boy Jack	Lone Sailor	Good Magic
Third	Mendelssohn	Mendelssohn	Good Magic	Mendelssohn	Hofburg	Bolt d'Oro
Fourth	Hofburg	My Boy Jack	Audible	Bolt d'Oro	Solomini	Flameaway

Derby Extras

By Jeremy Plonk, Xpressbet
@HorsePlayerNow



? Know This

Battling Apollo

Last year, Battle of Midway (3rd) and Patch (14th) unsuccessfully attempted to break the Apollo Curse that began in 1882 when Apollo won the Kentucky Derby without having raced at two. The unbeaten streak now stands at an impressive 61: 0-3-5. However, this year, both Todd Pletcher and Bob Baffert have legitimate challengers in Magnum Moon and Justify. The pair of powerhouse trainers are 0-for-7 in previous attempts to lift the curse.

No April Prep

Since 1920, Derby starters without an April prep are 94: 5-6-5. The five winners are Orb, Animal Kingdom, Mine That Bird, Big Brown and Needles. Notably, a horse without an April prep has finished in the Derby top 3 in 9 of the last 11 years.

Outside Looking 'Win'

Following filly Genuine Risk's 1980 Derby victory, the era of 'full' Derby fields began in earnest. The 1981 Derby gate accommodated 21 starters and has attracted near-capacity attendance since. During that time, posts 5-16 have won 30 of 36 Derbies. Also, horses breaking from the auxiliary gate (15-20) have finished in the Derby top three 25 times in 37 years from 111 possible trifecta spots.

Stats & Trends

Winning Derby Post Positions

(Since 1930)

Post	Wins	Last Winner	Year
1	8	Ferdinand	1986
2	7	Affirmed	1978
3	5	Real Quiet	1998
4	5	Super Saver	2010
5	10	Always Dreaming	2017
6	2	Sea Hero	1993
7	6	Street Sense	2007
8	8	Mine That Bird	2009
9	4	Riva Ridge	1972
10	9	Giacomo	2005
11	2	Winning Colors	1988
12	3	Canonero II	1971
13	5	Nyquist	2016
14	2	Carry Back	1961
15	5	American Pharoah	2015
16	4	Animal Kingdom	2011
17	0	N/A	N/A
18	1	Gato Del Sol	1982
19	1	I'll Have Another	2012
20	1	Big Brown	2008

Winning Derby Beyer Figures

(Last 20 years)

Year	Horse	BSF
2017	Always Dreaming	102
2016	Nyquist	103
2015	American Pharoah	105
2014	California Chrome	97
2013	Orb	104
2012	I'll Have Another	101
2011	Animal Kingdom	103
2010	Super Saver	104
2009	Mine That Bird	105
2008	Big Brown	109
2007	Street Sense	111
2006	Barbaro	111
2005	Giacomo	100
2004	Smarty Jones	107
2003	Funny Cide	108
2002	War Emblem	114
2001	Monarchos	116
2000	Fusaichi Pegasus	108
1999	Charismatic	108
1998	Real Quiet	107

Four of Last Seven Won From Auxiliary Gate

Post	Horse	Year
19	I'll Have Another	2012
16	Animal Kingdom	2011
15	Orb	2013
15	American Pharoah	2015

Most Career Starters, Active Trainers

Sts.	Trainer
48	D. Wayne Lukas
48	Todd Pletcher
27	Bob Baffert
26	Nick Zito

Most Starters Without A Win, Trainers

Sts.	Trainer
18	Steve Asmussen

Most Starters In A Derby, Trainer

Sts.	Trainer	Year
5	Todd Pletcher	2013
5	Todd Pletcher	2007
5	Nick Zito	2005
5	D. Wayne Lukas	1996

Meet the Derby Contenders

By Johnny D., Xpressbet
@XBJohnnyD



Justify: He's big, strong, gorgeous, unbeaten, untied and unscored upon in three starts, including the Santa Anita Derby. His trainer is Bob Baffert and he has a stride that goes from here to all the way over there. What's not to like? Glad you asked. He's jammed three victories into 76 furious days, raced a total distance of 3 miles and faced merely 14 foes. Justify attempts to become the first since 1882 to win the Kentucky Derby without racing at 2.



Magnum Moon: Unbeaten in four starts, including the Arkansas Derby, he joins Justify in bucking the Apollo Curse by not having raced at 2. Also, like Justify, he has a first-rate trainer in Todd Pletcher. While owning figures that are not quite as fast as Justify's, Magnum Moon's preferable style is to stalk pacesetters until the stretch where he crushes opponents. He's won each race by at least two lengths! Among Derby foes he's vanquished are Solomini and Combatant.



Audible: The Xpressbet Florida Derby winner is unbeaten in 2018 and will attempt to join the last six Derby winners—all undefeated in pre-Derby 3-year-old seasons. Justify, Magnum Moon and Mendelssohn also are unbeaten this year. This New York-bred son of Into Mischief also won Gulfstream's Holy Bull Stakes by five and one-half lengths this year. His style is to race from just off the pace, but he's adapted behind hot early fractions to close from well back, too.



Good Magic: He's the reigning 2-year-old champ and winner of the Blue Grass Stakes at Keeneland in his last start. You may remember he won the BC Juvenile at Del Mar as a maiden. A bit under the radar this year because of the success of the above trio of runners and international invader Mendelssohn, Good Magic failed to adequately fire when third first-out this year in the Xpressbet Fountain of Youth Stakes. Chad Brown calls the shots for this son of Curlin.



Mendelssohn: He concluded 2017 with a score in the BC Juvenile Turf at Del Mar and has won both of his 3-year-old starts. The most recent was a scintillating 18 ½-length tally in the UAE Derby at Meydan in Dubai. Obviously accustomed to travelling, Mendelssohn also has raced in Ireland and Great Britain. He's trained by one of the world's best in Aidan O'Brien. The UAE Derby was his first start on dirt and he handled it well, but the madness of the Kentucky Derby is another hurdle.



Bolt d'Oro: He finished third in the BC Juvenile at Del Mar behind Good Magic and Solomini and then lost out in a tight vote to the former for 2-year-old championship honors. 'Bolt overcame an early-season muscle issue to match strides with highly-regarded but now sidelined McKinzie in the San Felipe Stakes at Santa Anita, ultimately winning that race via disqualification. More was expected of 'Bolt in the Santa Anita Derby, but Justify cleared to an uncontested lead and galloped home.

An Embarrassment of Riches

By Bob Neumeier, HorsePlayerNow.com

Analysis: It's unusual to have three horses that performed at the highest level, namely AUDIBLE, JUSTIFY and MENDELSSOHN. The trainers of these gems have already proven to be at the apex of their profession – Bob Baffert, Todd Pletcher and Aidan O'Brien. Wait, there's more. In the expected 20-horse field, three contenders were purchased for seven figures and 10 have been auctioned for six figures.

Main Contenders: Whether you are a fan of quantitative analysis or the "eyeball" test, it's impossible to ignore AUDIBLE, JUSTIFY or MENDELSSOHN. Two of the three have possible strikes against – JUSTIFY with no 2-year-old races (the infamous "Apollo Curse") and MENDELSSOHN with a possible "bounce" given his blow-away win in the UAE Derby. And that win may have been bias-aided, according to some pundits. But I see zero knocks against AUDIBLE with dynamite, improving figs and a top conditioner.

Value Plays: A shopping list of possibilities exists – MAGNUM MOON (undefeated), HOFBURG (any kind), GOOD MAGIC (Breeders' Cup Juvenile and Blue Grass winner), VINO ROSSO (Wood Memorial winner) and a slew of others.

\$100 Wagering Strategy:

- \$1 Superfecta Part-Wheel: AUDIBLE with MENDELSSOHN, JUSTIFY with MENDELSSOHN, JUSTIFY with GOOD MAGIC, NOBLE INDY, VINO ROSSO, BOLT D'ORO, ENTICED, MAGNUM MOON, FREE DROP BILLY, LONE SAILOR, HOFBURG, SOLOMINI, MY BOY JACK, INSTILLED REGARD (\$24)
- \$1 Superfecta Part-Wheel: MENDELSSOHN, JUSTIFY with AUDIBLE with MENDELSSOHN, JUSTIFY with GOOD MAGIC, NOBLE INDY, VINO ROSSO, BOLT D'ORO, ENTICED, MAGNUM MOON, FREE DROP BILLY, LONE SAILOR, HOFBURG, SOLOMINI, MY BOY JACK, INSTILLED REGARD (\$24)
- \$1 Superfecta Part-Wheel: AUDIBLE with GOOD MAGIC, NOBLE INDY, VINO ROSSO, BOLT D'ORO, ENTICED, MAGNUM MOON, FREE DROP BILLY, LONE SAILOR, HOFBURG, SOLOMINI, MY BOY JACK, INSTILLED REGARD with MENDELSSOHN, JUSTIFY with MENDELSSOHN, JUSTIFY (\$24)
- \$1 Superfecta Part-Wheel: AUDIBLE with MENDELSSOHN, JUSTIFY with GOOD MAGIC, NOBLE INDY, VINO ROSSO, BOLT D'ORO, ENTICED, MAGNUM MOON, FREE DROP BILLY, LONE SAILOR, HOFBURG, SOLOMINI, MY BOY JACK, INSTILLED REGARD with MENDELSSOHN, JUSTIFY (\$24)
- \$2 Exacta Part-Wheel: AUDIBLE over MENDELSSOHN, JUSTIFY (\$4)

Bob's Picks

1. AUDIBLE
2. JUSTIFY
3. MENDELSSOHN
4. HOFBURG



Stats & Trends

Win-Place-Show Odds

(Last 25 years, Odds to \$1)

Win Odds

Average: 12.90

High: 50.60 (Mine That Bird, 2009)

Low: 2.30 (Fusaichi Pegasus, 2000; Nyquist, 2016)

Notable: 5 consecutive winners have been 5-1 or less.

Place Odds

Average: 17.00

High: 71.60 (Closing Argument, 2005)

Low: 2.50 (Empire Maker, 2003)

Notable: Bodemeister in 2012 was the last favorite to run second.

Show Odds

Average: 10.74

High: 40.00 (Battle of Midway, 2017)

Low: 2.70 (Indian Charlie, 1998)

Notable: Only twice in the last 25 years has the show horse been over 20-1 odds.

Exacta Payoffs

(Last 25 years, \$2 Payoffs)

Average: \$799.82

High: \$9,814.80

(Giacomo-Closing Argument, 2005)

Low: \$30.60 (Nyquist-Exaggerator, 2016)

Notable: 4 of the last 7 exactas have paid between \$306 and \$340.

? Know This

Soph Streakers: 6 consecutive Derby winners were undefeated as pre-Derby 3-year-olds compiling a combined 15-0 prep record. Additionally, the last 5 Derby winners all were riding extended winning streaks. Nyquist (2016) had won 7 in a row; American Pharoah (2015), California Chrome (2014) and Orb (2013) had won 4 in a row before the Derby. Last season's winner Always Dreaming had won 3 in a row!

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Exotic Wagering Chart



Kentucky Derby exotic wagers usually produce hefty payoffs. Use this handy Exotic Wagering Chart to help plan your attack.

Exacta Box: (\$1 Wager)

2 horse box	\$2
3 horse box	\$6
4 horse box	\$12
5 horse box	\$20
6 horse box	\$30
7 horse box	\$42
8 horse box	\$56

Exacta Wheel: (\$1 Wager)

One Horse with All

6 horse field	\$5
7 horse field	\$6
8 horse field	\$7
9 horse field	\$8
10 horse field	\$9

Trifecta Box: (\$.50 Wager)

3 Horse Box	\$3
4 Horse Box	\$12
5 Horse Box	\$30
6 Horse Box	\$60
7 Horse Box	\$105
8 Horse Box	\$168

Trifecta Wheel: (\$.50 Wager)

One Horse with All with All

(Example: 1/All/All or All/1/All or All/All/1)

7 Horse Field	\$15
8 Horse Field	\$21
9 Horse Field	\$28
10 Horse Field	\$36

One Horse with Two Horses with All

(Example: 1/2,3/All or 2,3/1/All or 1/All/2,3 or All/2,3 or 2,3/All/1 or All/1/2,3 or All/2,3/1)

7 Horse Field	\$5
8 Horse Field	\$6
9 Horse Field	\$7
10 Horse Field	\$8

Trifecta Key: (\$.50 Wager)

1 Horse with 3 others	\$3
(Example: 1/ 2, 3, 4/ 2, 3, 4)	
1 Horse with 4 others	\$6
(Example: 1/ 2, 3, 4, 5/ 2, 3, 4, 5)	
1 Horse with 5 others	\$10
(Example: 1/ 2, 3, 4, 5, 6/ 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)	
1 Horse with 6 others	\$15
(Example: 1/ 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7/ 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)	
1 Horse with 7 others	\$21
(Example: 1/ 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8/ 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)	

Superfecta Box: (\$1 Wager)

4 Horse Box	\$24
5 Horse Box	\$120
6 Horse Box	\$360

Superfecta Wheel: (\$1 Wager)

One Horse with All with All with All

(Example: 1/All/All/All or All/1/All/All or All/All/1/All or All/ All/ All/1)

7 Horse Field	\$120
8 Horse Field	\$210
9 Horse Field	\$336
10 Horse Field	\$504

One Horse with Two Horses with All with All

(Example: 1/2,3/All/All or 2,3/1/All/All or 1/All/All/ 2,3 or 2,3/All/All/1 or All/All/1/ 2,3 or All/All/2,3/ 1)

7 Horse Field	\$40
8 Horse Field	\$60
9 Horse Field	\$84
10 Horse Field	\$112

Superfecta Key: (\$1 Wager)

1 Horse with 3 others	\$6
(Example: 1/2, 3, 4/2, 3, 4/2, 3, 4)	
1 Horse with 4 others	\$24
(Example: 1/2, 3, 4, 5/2, 3, 4, 5/2, 3, 4, 5)	
1 Horse with 5 others	\$60
(Example: 1/2, 3, 4, 5, 6/2, 3, 4, 5, 6/2, 3, 4, 5, 6)	
1 Horse with 6 others	\$120
(Example: 1/2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7/2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7/2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)	
1 Horse with 7 others	\$210
(Example: 1/2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8/2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8/2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)	

Hear You Loud & Clear

By Millie Ball, XBTV.com

@camillayakteen

Analysis: AUDIBLE is the only 3-year-old colt from North America heading into this year's Kentucky Derby boasting both the experience of racing at 2 and an undefeated record thereafter. His average win margin since breaking his maiden is 5 lengths. And as the distances of his races have increased, so have his speed figures. So here is the gamble: How will he stack up with the best California has to offer (we won't know until he tries for the first time Derby Day); and can he perform as well over a mile and one-quarter? While his pedigree stamps him as more of a miler, AUDIBLE looked strong winning the Xpressbet Florida Derby and Trakus recorded that no-one suffered more ground loss than he did. The son of Into Mischief relaxes in his races, yet has enough tactical speed to work out a good trip. He will arrive at Churchill with 5 lifetime starts, as did his stablemate and last year's Derby winner, Always Dreaming.

Main Contenders: AUDIBLE is a fresh, progressive, talented 3-year-old who appears to have exited the Xpressbet Florida Derby in excellent shape judging from his above-par work on April 20. I firmly believe JUSTIFY is the best 3-year-old in the country, but his lack of experience, without the 2-year-old foundation, deters me from making him my top pick. While he is exceptionally gifted, this is racing's biggest national stage and I'm not confident he's ready for that. Perhaps equally as talented is MENDELSSOHN, whose ability surpasses any of his former Euro counterparts that have 'run for the roses'. And his trainer, Aidan O'Brien, eager to add America's most prestigious prize to his remarkable resume, has campaigned this regally bred colt with this goal in mind.

Value Plays: MY BOY JACK is the most dangerous closer, and one whose lighter frame assists his resilience. One has to admire his consistency and appeal for a classic distance, especially for a colt that cost tuppence! VINO ROSSO is bred to get a classic distance and rightfully earned a career-best when stretched out to 9 furlongs in the Wood Memorial, proving he has both the courage to overcome adversity and the heart to win the battle. He worked forwardly on April 20.

\$100 Wagering Strategy:

- \$50 Win: AUDIBLE (\$50)
- \$5 Exacta Key-Box: AUDIBLE with JUSTIFY, MENDELSSOHN, MAGNUM MOON, MY BOY JACK, VINO ROSSO (\$50)

Millie's Picks

1. AUDIBLE
2. JUSTIFY
3. MENDELSSOHN
4. MY BOY JACK



Stats & Trends

Trifecta

(Since 1995, \$2 Payoffs)

Average: \$11,709.00

High: \$133,134.80

(Giacomo-Closing Argument-Afleet Alex, 2005)

Low: \$173.40

(Nyquist-Exaggerator-Gun Runner, 2016)

Notable: Last year's \$16,595.40 payoff is the largest since \$41,500.60 in 2009.

Superfecta

(Since 1996, \$1 Payoffs)

Average: \$81,551.37

High: \$864,253.50

(Giacomo-Closing Argument-Afleet Alex-Don't Get Mad, 2005)

Low: \$350.00

(Silver Charm-Captain Bodgit-Free House-Pulpit, 1997)

Notable: The \$75,974.50 payoff last year was the highest since \$101,284.60 in 2010.

Highest-Priced Super Finishers

(Last 20 Years, Odds to \$1)

Odds	Horse	Year	Fin.
71.60	Closing Argument	2005	2nd
50.60	Mine That Bird	2009	1st
50.30	Giacomo	2005	1st
41.70	Limehouse	2004	4th
40.00	Battle of Midway	2017	3rd

? Know This

'Wood' You Help a Brother Out?: Aqueduct's Wood Memorial offers a woeful 30: 0-0-0 Kentucky Derby record since alumni Funny Cide and Empire Maker swept the 2003 exacta.

Modest Margins: The Derby hasn't been won by 3 or more lengths since Mine That Bird's 2009 six and three-quarter length romp.

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He Can Justify Favoritism

By Jeff Siegel, XBTV.com

@jsiegelracing

Analysis: It's hard to believe that between 1980 and 1999 – that's 20 consecutive renewals of the Triple Crown's First Jewel – the Kentucky Derby favorite failed to deliver the goods. But it seems handicappers have gotten smarter, because since the year 2000, the betting choice has won no less than nine times, including the last five in a row. This year the streak could easily extend to six, though **JUSTIFY** will be facing arguably the toughest, deepest Derby field since the turn of the century. The undefeated son of Scat Daddy has both won sprinting, routing, on the lead and from off the pace, on both fast and wet ground, and with triple-digit Beyer speed figures in all three of his career victories. Okay, so **JUSTIFY** didn't make his debut until the third week in February and, yes, no Derby winner since Apollo failed to make a start during his juvenile campaign. Here's hoping the 136-year long "curse" is nothing more than a coincidence!

Main Contenders: **JUSTIFY** owns the best credentials, is the fastest colt in the race, and barring bad racing luck should continue his winning ways. But he'd better bring his "A" game because **MENDELSSOHN** is the most gifted European-based colt ever to contest the Derby. Last year's Eclipse Award-winning juvenile **GOOD MAGIC** is back in winning form and ready to produce another significant forward move. **AUDIBLE**, **VINO ROSSO**, **MAGNUM MOON** and **NOBLE INDY** each enter the Derby off victories in critical Derby preps. And don't forget about two-time Grade 1 winner **BOLT D'ORO**. Now that's a salty group.

Value Plays: **HOFBURG** is intriguing despite having just three career starts (but at least he ran as a two-year-old!). A closing second in the Xpressbet Florida Derby while almost eight lengths clear of the others, the son of Tapit has numbers that have risen dramatically with each outing and a pedigree that suggests the Derby's testing 10-furlong trip will be no issue. If there's a pace meltdown, he could make some serious noise late.

\$100 Wagering Strategy:

- \$30 win: **JUSTIFY** (\$30)
- \$10 Exacta Key-Box: **JUSTIFY** with **MENDELSSOHN**, **GOOD MAGIC** (\$40)
- \$5 Exacta Key-Box: **JUSTIFY** with **AUDIBLE**, **VINO ROSSO**, **HOFBURG** (\$30)

Jeff's Picks

1. **JUSTIFY**
2. **MENDELSSOHN**
3. **GOOD MAGIC**
4. **AUDIBLE**



Stats & Trends

2017 Derby Handle Totals

(Handle in Millions Except High-Five)

Pool	Handle
Win/Place/Show	\$58.1
Trifecta	\$30.7
Exacta	\$23.3
Superfecta	\$13.0
Pick Four	\$3.4
Oaks/Derby Double	\$2.5
Pick Five	\$1.7
Pick Six	\$1.1
High-Five	\$400k

Lowest-Priced Derby Favorites

(Last 20 Years, Odds to \$1)

Odds	Horse	Year	Fin.
1.80	Point Given	2001	5th
2.30	Nyquist	2016	1st
2.40	Big Brown	2008	1st
2.50	California Chrome	2014	1st

Highest-Priced Derby Favorites

(All-Time, Odds to \$1)

Odds	Horse	Year	Fin.
6.30	Lookin At Lucky	2010	6th
6.00	Harlan's Holiday	2002	7th
5.50	Sweetnorthernst	2006	7th
5.40	Orb	2013	1st
5.20	Dialed In	2011	8th
4.90	Street Sense	2007	1st
4.80	General Challenge/ Excellent Meeting	1999	5th
4.70	Always Dreaming	2017	1st
4.40	Prairie Bayou	1993	2nd
4.20	Bodemeister	2012	2nd
4.10	Smarty Jones	2004	1st

? Know This

New King Crowned: The Xpressbet Florida Derby at Gulfstream supplanted Keeneland's Blue Grass as the most fruitful tree for Kentucky Derby winners when Always Dreaming became the race's 23rd alumnus to win roses.

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Colt, Trainer Justify Faith

By Jon White, Santa Anita Oddsmaker
@PostTimeJon

Analysis: Apollo won the Kentucky Derby in 1882 without having started as a 2-year-old. Since Apollo, 135 straight Kentucky Derby winners have raced at 2. Will JUSTIFY or MAGNUM MOON snap that long streak? I think JUSTIFY can do it. Trainer Bob Baffert, who has won the Kentucky Derby four times and swept the 2015 Triple Crown with American Pharoah, has said JUSTIFY is "just a phenomenal talent." In each of JUSTIFY'S races so far, the big, grand-looking colt has been poetry in motion. For me, it all pretty much boils down to this: "In Baffert I Trust." I believe it's significant that Baffert is not taking the same patient approach with JUSTIFY that he did the last two years with Arrogate and West Coast, who both also did not race at 2. It suggests to me that Baffert is confident that JUSTIFY, unlike Arrogate or West Coast, has the physical tools and the temperament at this early stage of his career to run in and win the Kentucky Derby. Meanwhile, MENDELSSOHN certainly merits respect off his scintillating 18 1/2-length victory in the UAE Derby. It's a plus for MENDELSSOHN that he already has won an important race in the America, having taken last year's Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf. MAGNUM MOON obviously has much ability, but what concerns me is he drifted out to the middle of the track during the stretch run when he won the Arkansas Derby.

Main Contenders: Main contenders, in order of preference, are Santa Anita Derby winner JUSTIFY, Lexington Stakes winner MY BOY JACK, San Felipe Stakes winner BOLT D'ORO, UAE Derby winner MENDELSSOHN, Xpressbet Florida Derby winner AUDIBLE, Blue Grass Stakes winner GOOD MAGIC, Arkansas Derby winner MAGNUM MOON and Wood Memorial winner VINO ROSSO.

Value Plays: I think MY BOY JACK has a good chance to finish fourth or better at what should be a nice price from 15-1 to 25-1. While MY BOY JACK has a come-from-way-back running style, I believe he is capable of rallying early enough to be either first or second with a furlong to go. That is very important because as 52 of the last 55 Kentucky Derby winners were either first or second with a furlong to run.

\$100 Wagering Strategy:

- \$60 Win: JUSTIFY (\$60)
- \$10 Place and Show: MY BOY JACK (\$20)
- \$1 Exacta Wheel: MENDELSSOHN with ALL (\$19)
- \$1 Exacta: JUSTIFY over MY BOY JACK (\$1)

Jon's Picks

1. JUSTIFY
2. MY BOY JACK
3. MENDELSSOHN
4. BOLT D'ORO



Stats & Trends

Prior Career Starts for Derby Winners (Last 10 years)

Year	Derby Winner	Sts	2YO	3YO
2017	Always Dreaming	5	2	3
2016	Nyquist	7	5	2
2015	American Pharoah	5	3	2
2014	California Chrome	10	7	3
2013	Orb	7	4	3
2012	I'll Have Another	5	3	2
2011	Animal Kingdom	4	2	2
2010	Super Saver	6	4	2
2009	Mine That Bird	8	5	3
2008	Big Brown	3	1	2

Prep Race Winners to Win Derby

Race	Horse	Year
Arkansas Derby	American Pharoah	2015
Blue Grass	Strike the Gold	1991
Florida Derby	Always Dreaming	2017
Louisiana Derby	Grindstone	1996
Santa Anita Derby	California Chrome	2014
Spiral	Animal Kingdom	2011
Sunland Derby	N/A	N/A
Wood Memorial	Fusaichi Pegasus	2000

Days Between Final Prep & Derby (Last 5 Years)

Year	Horse	Days
2017	Always Dreaming	35
2016	Nyquist	35
2015	American Pharoah	21
2014	California Chrome	28
2013	Orb	35

? Know This

Inside Misinformation: It's been two decades since a horse breaking from posts 1 through 3 has won the Derby. Real Quiet's 1998 score from the 3-hole was most recent. Ferdinand won from the rail in 1986 and Affirmed scored out of post 2 in 1978.

Favorite Is Superior Horse

By Dick Jerardi, Daily Racing Form
@DickJerardi

Analysis: This is an incredibly consistent group of 3-year-olds, with one superior horse (JUSTIFY) and one mystery horse (MENDELSSOHN). Three of the major contenders – JUSTIFY, MAGNUM MOON and AUDIBLE – are a combined 9-for-9 in 2018, with dominating wins in five major preps. The group that includes BOLT D'ORO, GOOD MAGIC, NOBLE INDY and SOLOMINI has never finished a race worse than third and has combined for six graded stakes wins. There is quality and there is depth. Thus, this Derby winner almost has to be a really good horse and, if it's the horse that I think it's going to be, a serious threat to win the Triple Crown.

Main Contenders: JUSTIFY is the fastest horse and it's not really close. If he runs back to his 107 Beyer in the Santa Anita Derby or goes even higher, they are all running for second. If there is a choice between experience and talent, I will take talent every time. MENDELSSOHN was so impressive winning the UAE Derby that he may go off second choice. His race in Dubai was spectacular, but can he repeat it under far different circumstances? Todd Pletcher's winning four of the final six major Derby preps was an incredible feat even for him. Arkansas Derby winner MAGNUM MOON has never lost and none of the races has been close. AUDIBLE lost his debut at 6 furlongs, but has won his four route starts by a combined 20 lengths. VINO ROSSO gave a career-best effort in winning the Wood Memorial. Louisiana Derby winner NOBLE INDY has never been dazzling, but always has been solid. Blue Grass winner GOOD MAGIC had real pop when he won the BC Juvenile, but has not shown that same flair so far in 2018.

Value Plays: If this race is run like I think it is going to be, and JUSTIFY eventually discourages all the other speed or quasi-speed horses, I am looking for closers to fill out the superfecta, preferably long-odds closers like LONE SAILOR, who made a dramatic improvement when second in the Louisiana Derby. HOFBURG also fits that style off his runner-up in the Xpressbet Florida Derby.

\$100 Wagering Strategy:

- \$100 Exacta: JUSTIFY over LONE SAILOR (\$100)



Stats & Trends

Winter/Spring Homes of Winners

Year	Horse	State
2017	Always Dreaming	Florida
2016	Nyquist	California/Florida
2015	American Pharoah	California/Arkansas
2014	California Chrome	California
2013	Orb	Florida
2012	I'll Have Another	California
2011	Animal Kingdom	Florida/Kentucky
2010	Super Saver	Florida/Arkansas
2009	Mine That Bird	New Mexico
2008	Big Brown	Florida
2007	Street Sense	Florida/Kentucky
2006	Barbaro	Florida
2005	Giacomo	California
2004	Smarty Jones	Arkansas
2003	Funny Cide	Florida/New York
2002	War Emblem	Louisiana/Illinois

Wire-to-Wire Derby Winners

(Last 50 Years)

Year	Horse	Choice	Field	Half
2002	War Emblem	9th	18	47
1988	Winning Colors	2nd	17	46 4/5
1985	Spend A Buck	2nd	13	45 4/5
1976	Bold Forbes	2nd	9	45 4/5
1972	Riva Ridge	Fav.	16	47 3/5

Fastest Derbies

Time	Horse	Year
1:59 2/5	Secretariat	1973
1:59 4/5	Monarchos	2001
2:00	Northern Dancer	1964
2:00 1/5	Spend A Buck	1985
2:00 2/5	Decidedly	1962

? Know This

Successful Springboards: Always Dreaming was the seventh straight Derby winner to exit a prep victory. The last to wear roses following a loss was Super Saver in 2010, second in the Arkansas Derby.

Dick's Picks

1. JUSTIFY
2. LONE SAILOR
3. HOFBURG
4. SOLOMINI

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Justify Meets Expectations

By Steve Byk, At the Races (SiriusXM)

@Steve_Byk

Analysis: We arrive in Louisville with a strong cast of credentialed sophomores and JUSTIFY as another short-priced candidate to embrace or avoid. Pros? Baffert, Smith and sustainable speed that's led to 3 powerful 100+ Beyer efforts. Cons? Unraced at 2 and by a sire (Scat Daddy) whose progeny have repeatedly failed classic tests. But beyond the long-running Derby hoodoos, JUSTIFY has an important edge with a running style that fits the race flow. Remember the scenarios that the opening three quarters establish: 1:10 or less sets up the closers; 1:10-1:11 gives mid-pack stalkers their best chance; 1:11 or more provides near-the-lead types their best opportunity.

Main Contenders: Beyond JUSTIFY, juvenile stars GOOD MAGIC and BOLT D'ORO come to Kentucky set in third-off-the-layoff efforts. It's rare that 2YO Eclipse finalists would provide Derby value, but the pair will be no better than 4th and 5th choices in the \$15-\$20 range! Those prices will be available because of the compelling presence of Beholder/Into Mischief sibling MENDELSSOHN and Todd Pletcher's Derby winners AUDIBLE (Florida) and MAGNUM MOON (Arkansas). MENDELSSOHN gives Aidan O'Brien his best rose-sniffing chance yet, but has many saying 'if he wins, I lose.' AUDIBLE is jockey Javier Castellano's best chance in this event since Bellamy Road. He's 11: 0-0-0.

Value Plays: Reminiscent of Shackleford, tough-to-pass FLAMEAWAY (30-1) will be with the leaders at the eighth pole. SOLOMINI (20-1) has never been off the board and is the kind of grinding runner whose :24+ quarters play well. Classic-bred ENTICED (20-1) should excel at 10f and will be completely overlooked. FREE DROP BILLY (20-1) has been unfairly labeled a disappointment, but is 'running out of his own stall' and should appreciate a 10th furlong.

\$100 Wagering Strategy:

- \$2 Trifecta Part-Wheel: JUSTIFY with GOOD MAGIC, BOLT D'ORO with GOOD MAGIC, BOLT D'ORO, SOLOMINI, FLAMEAWAY, ENTICED, AUDIBLE, MENDELSSOHN, NOBLE INDY, FREE DROP BILLY, HOFBURG, VINO ROSSO (\$40)
- \$2 Trifecta, Part Wheel: GOOD MAGIC, BOLT D'ORO with JUSTIFY with GOOD MAGIC, BOLT D'ORO, SOLOMINI, FLAMEAWAY, ENTICED, AUDIBLE, MENDELSSOHN, NOBLE INDY, FREE DROP BILLY, HOFBURG, VINO ROSSO (\$40)
- \$10 Exacta Box: GOOD MAGIC and BOLT D'ORO (\$20)

Steve's Picks

1. JUSTIFY
2. GOOD MAGIC
3. BOLT D'ORO
4. FLAMEAWAY



Stats & Trends

Career High Pre-Derby Beyer Fig (Last 10 years)

Year	Horse	Beyer	Fin.
2017	Classic Empire	102	4th
	J Boys Echo	102	15th
2016	Exaggerator	103	2nd
2015	Materiality	110	6th
2014	California Chrome	108	1st
2013	Verrazano	105	14th
	Goldencents	105	17th
2012	Bodemeister	108	2nd
2011	Soldat	103	11th
2010	Devil May Care	100	10th
	Sidney's Candy	100	17th
2009	Dunkirk	108	11th
2008	Bob Black Jack	109	16th

Active Jockeys Most Derby Mounts

Mounts	Jockey
23	Mike Smith
22	Gary Stevens
21	Kent Desormeaux
19	John Velazquez
18	Corey Nakatani
14	Robby Albarado
12	Calvin Borel

Note: Record is Bill Shoemaker with 26.

Active Jockeys Most Derby Wins

Wins	Jockey
3	Calvin Borel
3	Kent Desormeaux
3	Victor Espinoza
3	Gary Stevens
2	Mario Gutierrez
2	John Velazquez

? Know This

Favorite Times: If the starting favorite wins the Kentucky Derby it will be the sixth consecutive tally for the public choice in the world's most famous horse race. That hasn't happened since 1896!