

News Release



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MULTIPLE GRADED STAKES WINNER MAJOR DUDE HEADLINES FULL FIELD OF 12 IN GRADE III, \$700,000 JEFF RUBY STEAKS

FLORENCE, Ky. (Tuesday, March 21, 2023) – Spendthrift Farm’s multiple graded stakes winning 3-year-old **Major Dude** headlines a talented field of 12 colts and geldings that were entered in Saturday’s 52nd running of the \$700,000 Jeff Ruby Steaks (Grade III) at Turfway Park Racing & Gaming.

The Jeff Ruby Steaks, a Road to the Kentucky Derby Championship Series qualifier, will go as Race 12 of 13 with a post time of 6:25 p.m. (all times Eastern) First post for the stellar program will be 12:45 p.m. Along with the Jeff Ruby Steaks, stakes-laden card will also feature the 41st running of the \$300,000 Bourbonette Oaks; the 23rd running of the \$300,000 TwinSpires Kentucky Cup Classic (Listed); the 37th running of the \$250,000 Animal Kingdom Stakes; the 41st running of the \$250,000 Latonia Stakes; and the 36th running of the \$250,000 Rushaway.

The Jeff Ruby Steaks will offer the top 5 finishers points on a 100-40-30-20-10 scale towards a spot in the starting gate for the \$3 million Kentucky Derby presented by Woodford Reserve (GI).

Two-time graded stakes winner Major Dude will invade Turfway Park from his South Florida base for Hall of Fame trainer **Todd Pletcher**. The son of Bolt d’Oro tabbed his first stakes victory on Oct. 2 in the \$200,000 Pilgrim (GII) at the Belmont at Aqueduct meet. Following a disappointing ninth-place effort in the \$1 million Breeders’ Cup Juvenile Turf (GI), Major Dude made his 3-year-old debut in the \$100,000 Dania Beach at Gulfstream Park where he rallied for second and even-money. In his last start, Major Dude contested the \$175,000 Kitten’s Joy (GIII) and defeated seven rivals by 1 ½ lengths under **Irad Ortiz Jr.**

Ortiz will once again have the mount on Major Dude in the Jeff Ruby Steaks. Ortiz last rode at Turfway in 2020 when he won the Jeff Ruby Steaks aboard **Field Pass**. Ortiz and Major Dude will break from the rail as the morning line favorite at odds of 2-1.

Another talented 3-year-old that entered the Jeff Ruby Steaks is **Patricia’s Hope** and **Phillip Sagan’s** two-time stakes winner **Two Phil’s**. Trained by **Larry Rivelli**, Two Phil’s seven-race campaign has solely been over dirt and the Jeff Ruby will be his first test on Tapeta. The chestnut son of Hard Spun began his march to the Kentucky Derby after his dominant 5 ¼-length victory in the \$200,000 Street Sense (GIII) at Churchill Downs. Following that effort, Two Phil’s was the runner-up to **Instant Coffee** in the \$200,000 Lecomte (GIII) and third-place finisher to **Angel of Empire** and **Sun Thunder** in the \$400,000 Risen Star (GII). Four weeks ago, Rivelli opted to ship to the colt back from Fair Grounds to his base at Hawthorne to begin his preparation for the Jeff Ruby Steaks. Two Phil’s arrived at Turfway March 13 and has been training daily over the Florence oval.

Jockey **Jareth Loveberry**, who’s ridden Two Phil’s in his last six starts, will have the call in the Jeff Ruby Steaks from post 10 as the 7-2 second choice on **Mike Battaglia’s** morning line odds.

Among the other top competitors in the Jeff Ruby is **Tami Bobo** and **Lugamo Racing Stable’s** \$150,000 John Battaglia Memorial winner **Congruent**. Ridden by Kentucky Derby 148 winning jockey **Sonny Leon**, Congruent invaded Turfway from Gulfstream Park and scored an impressive 3 ½-length victory in the John Battaglia Memorial. The gray son of Tapit will attempt to duplicate that same effort from three weeks ago from post 8 and Leon in the irons. Congruent was tabbed at odds of 5-1 on the morning line.

One of the top local contenders entered in the Jeff Ruby Steaks is **Three Chimneys Farm’s Funtastic Again**. Trained by 2021 Jeff Ruby Steaks winning conditioner **Wesley Ward**, Funtastic Again has not returned to the races since his stout 3 ¾-length win in the \$125,000 Leonatus Stakes on Jan. 21 at Turfway. Prior to the Leonatus Stakes, Funtastic Again dazzled in a first-level allowance contest by 5 ½ lengths at Turfway.

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Jockey **Gerardo Corrales** will ride the son of Funtastic from post 4 at odds of 6-1.

Here is the complete field for the Jeff Ruby Steaks in order of post position (with jockey, trainer and morning line odds):

1. Major Dude (Ortiz, Pletcher, 2-1)
2. **Scoobie Quando** (Luan Machado, Ben Colebrook, 15-1)
3. **Event Detail** (Walter Rodriguez, Paulo Lobo, 20-1)
4. Funtastic Again (Corrales, Ward, 6-1)
5. **Maker's Candy** (Umberto Rispoli, Mike Maker, 12-1)
6. **Baby Billy** (Joe Talamo, Jack Sisterson, 30-1)
7. **Bluebirds Over** (Edgard Zayas, Saffie Joseph Jr., 12-1)
8. Congruent (Leon, Sano, 5-1)
9. **Escapologist** (Alex Achard, Kenny McPeck, 30-1)
10. Two Phil's (Loveberry, Rivelli, 7-2)
11. **Wadsworth** (Chris Landeros, Brad Cox, 8-1)
12. Point Proven (John Velazquez, Todd Pletcher, 15-1)

Starting at 6 p.m., fans can watch the Jeff Ruby Steaks on a special Road to the Kentucky Derby broadcast on CNBC. Wagering is available for every race from Turfway Park on www.TwinSpires.com, the official wagering provider of Churchill Downs Inc.

IMPRESSIVE CINCINNATI TROPHY STAKES WINNER BOTANICAL RETURNS IN BOURBONETTE OAKS – LNJ Foxwoods and Clearsky Farms' Botanical, the dazzling 6 ½-length winner of the \$150,000 Cincinnati Trophy Stakes three weeks ago, headlines a field of 11 3-year-old fillies that entered Saturday's \$300,000 Bourbonette Oaks (Listed) at Turfway Park Racing & Gaming.

The 1 1/16-mile Bourbonette Oaks will go as the 11th race on the stakes-laden 13-race program. First post is 12:45 p.m. and the Bourbonette Oaks has a scheduled post time of 5:43 p.m. The Bourbonette Oaks is one of six stakes events on the Jeff Ruby Steaks Day card from Turfway Park. The other stakes contests are the 52nd running of the \$700,000 Jeff Ruby Steaks (GIII), the 23rd running of the \$300,000 TwinSpires Kentucky Cup Classic (Listed); the 37th running of the \$250,000 Animal Kingdom Stakes; the 41st running of the \$250,000 Latonia Stakes; and the 36th running of the \$250,000 Rushaway.

The top 5 finishers in the Bourbonette Oaks will receive points on a 50-20-15-10-5 scale towards the \$1.25 million Longines Kentucky Oaks (GI).

Trained by **Brad Cox**, Botanical is undefeated in three starts over the Turfway Park Tapeta surface. The daughter of Medaglia d'Oro crushed a field of 11 on Nov. 30 to break her maiden by 10 ¾ lengths. Two starts ago, Botanical was tested against first-level allowance company and made quick work of her nine rivals by 4 ½ lengths. In the Cincinnati Trophy, Botanical sat nine lengths behind a runaway pacesetter and easily defeated her six rivals as the heavy 4-5 favorite. Jockey **Chris Landeros** will have the return call and break from post No. 5.

Chief among Botanical's top rivals in the Bourbonette Oaks is **Calvin Nguyen** and **Joey Tran's** California-shipper **Ag Bullet**. Trained by **George Papaprodromou**, Ag Bullet is scheduled to make her first start outside California in the Bourbonette Oaks. Based at Santa Anita, Ag Bullet tabbed her first stakes victory in her last start when she gamely held off **The Wild Grazer** by a neck in the \$100,000 Lady Shamrock Stakes. The gray daughter of Twirling Candy will break from post 11 with **Umberto Rispoli** in the saddle.

Another stakes winner that entered the Bourbonette Oaks is **D. J. Stable's Renegade Rebel**. Trained by **Mark Casse** and ridden by **Rafael Hernandez**, Renegade Rebel is slated to make her 3-year-old debut in the Bourbonette Oaks. As a 2-year-old, Renegade Rebel impressively broke her maiden by seven lengths at Woodbine and followed that victory one month later with a front-running score in the \$150,000 Mazzarine Stakes (GIII). Renegade Rebel will break from the rail.

Here is the complete field for the Bourbonette Oaks from the rail out (with jockey and trainer):

1. **Renegade Rebel** (Hernandez, Casse)
2. **Bolivie (IRE)** (Irada Ortiz Jr., Brendan Walsh)
3. **Olympic Prank** (Edgard Zayas, Saffie Joseph Jr.)
4. **Thirty Thou Kelvin** (Kazushi Kimura, John Terranova)
5. **Botanical** (Landeros, Cox)
6. **Always At Ease** (Kent Desormeaux, Keith Desormeaux)
7. **Miss New York** (Jose Morelos, Jorge Delgado)
8. **Flashy Gem** (John Velazquez, Brad Cox)
9. **Shewillghostu** (Sonny Leon, Eric Reed)
10. **Medaglia Forever** (Fernando De La Cruz, Rusty Arnold)
11. **Ag Bullet** (Rispoli, Papaprodromou)

MULTIPLE GRADE I WINNER SANTIN HEADLINES TWINSPIRES KENTUCKY CUP CLASSIC – Multiple Grade I winner Santin tops a full field of 12 older horses and two also-eligibles that entered Saturday's \$300,000 TwinSpires Kentucky Cup Classic (Listed) at Turfway Park.

The 1 1/8-mile Kentucky Cup Classic will go as Race 10 of 13 with a post time of 5:13 p.m. The thrilling day of racing at Turfway Park will feature a total of six stakes contests led by the 52nd running of the \$700,000 Jeff Ruby Steaks (GIII). The other stakes on the program are the 41st running of the \$300,000 Bourbonette Oaks; the 37th running of the \$250,000 Animal Kingdom Stakes; the 41st running of the \$250,000 Latonia Stakes; and the 36th running of the \$250,000 Rushaway.

Santin is set to begin his 5-year-old season on Saturday at Turfway with jockey Adam Beschizza in the saddle. Trained by **Brendan Walsh**, Santin had a solid 4-year-old campaign with victories in the \$1 million Old Forester Bourbon Turf Classic (GI) and \$1 million Arlington Million (GI) at Churchill Downs. The TwinSpires Kentucky Cup Classic will be Santin's first start over the Tapeta surface but the son of Distorted Humor has been preparing locally for this start with a series of five works at Turfway. Santin will break from post No. 9.

Last year's Kentucky Cup Classic winner **King Cause** was supplemented to this year's field and his connections hope he can record a repeat victory at Turfway. Owned by **Nice Guy Stables** and trained by **Mike Maker**, King Cause scored an upset 19-1 victory in last year's race when he led wire-to-wire under jockey **Manny Franco**. More recently, King Cause scored another upset victory in the Knickerbocker Stakes (GIII) at Belmont at Aqueduct and enters the TwinSpires Kentucky Cup Classic following a sixth-place effort in the \$1 million Pegasus World Cup Turf Invitational (GI). Jockey **Gerardo Corrales** has the mount from post 10.

King Cause is one of five Maker trainees in the body of the Kentucky Cup Classic field. The others are **Founder**, **Leblon**, **Fancy Liquor** and **Ocean Atlantique**. His sixth trainee, **Richiesgotgame**, drew post 14 on the also-eligibles.

Originally, Kentucky Derby 148 winner **Rich Strike** was scheduled to run in the Kentucky Cup Classic but his connections have opted to run elsewhere.

Here is the complete field for the TwinSpires Kentucky Cup Classic from the rail out (with jockey and trainer):

1. **Two Birds** (John McKee, Jeff Hiles)
2. **Founder** (Joe Ramos, Maker)
3. **Wentru** (Jack Gilligan, Will Walden)
4. **Leblon** (Umberto Rispoli, Maker)
5. **Wolfie's Dynaghost** (John Velazquez, Jonathan Thomas)
6. **Fancy Liquor** (Joe Talamo, Maker)
7. **Ready to Purrrform** (Fernando De La Cruz, Brad Cox)
8. **Ocean Atlantique** (Walter Rodriguez, Maker)
9. **Santin** (Beschizza, Walsh)
10. **King Cause** (Corrales, Maker)
11. **Abaan** (Irada Ortiz Jr., Todd Pletcher)
12. **Camp Hope** (Chris Landeros, Kenny McPeck)
- (AE) 13. **Verstappen** (Declan Cannon, Walsh)
- (AE) 14. **Richiesgotgame** (Edgard Zayas, Maker)

UNDEFEATED NEW YORK THUNDER SHIPS IN FROM FLORIDA FOR \$250,000 ANIMAL KINGDOM STAKES – **AMO Racing's** speedy **New York Thunder** will attempt to keep his perfect record in tact against a competitive field of eight 3-year-old sprinters in the 37th running of the \$250,000 Animal Kingdom Stakes.

The six-furlong Animal Kingdom is one of six stakes events on Jeff Ruby Steaks Day at Turfway Park Racing & Gaming. The Animal Kingdom will go as Race 7 of 13 with a post time of 3:43 p.m. First race will be 12:45 p.m. The \$700,000 Jeff Ruby Steaks (GIII) will headline the spectacular afternoon of racing. The other stakes events on Saturday are the \$300,000 Bourbonette Oaks (Listed); the \$300,000 TwinSpires Kentucky Cup Classic (Listed); the \$250,000 Latonia Stakes; and the \$250,000 Rushaway.

New York Thunder arrived last week to Turfway Park from his winter base at Gulfstream Park. Trained by **Jorge Delgado**, the fleet-footed son of Nyquist dominated his debut by 6 ½ lengths on Nov. 27 at Gulfstream Park. New York Thunder capped his abbreviated 2-year-old season with a 1 ¾-length first-level allowance victory. The Animal Kingdom Stakes will be New York Thunder's first start as a 3-year-old. He'll be ridden by Jose Morelos from post No. 7.

Another aspiring 3-year-old that's entered in the Animal Kingdom is **Westerberg Limited, John Magnier, Jonathan Poulin, Derrick Smith** and **Michael B. Tabor's** impressive Turfway maiden special weight winner **Eye Witness**. Trained by **Wesley Ward** and ridden by Hall of Famer **Kent Desormeaux**, Eye Witness won at second asking on New Year's Day at Turfway. Desormeaux travelled to Turfway from California for the mount on the speedy son of City of Light. Eye Witness and Desormeaux will break from post 4.

Here is the complete field for the Animal Kingdom from the rail out (with jockey and trainer):

1. **Libertango** (Jareth Loveberry, Wayne Catalano)
2. **Brazen Boy** (Chris Landeros, Jordan Blair)
3. **Olazabal** (Gerardo Corrales, Eric Foster)
4. Eye Witness (Desormeaux, Ward)
5. **Swirvin** (Edgard Zayas, Saffie Joseph Jr.)
6. **Moonstrike (GB)** (Adam Beschizza, Jeff Engler)
7. New York Thunder (Morelos, Delgado)
8. **Tiger Paw (IRE)** (Luan Machado, Anna Meah)

The Animal Kingdom Stakes is named in honor of the 2011 Kentucky Derby winner who rose to stardom following his victory in the Jeff Ruby Steaks (formerly known as the Spiral).

CANADIAN GRADE III WINNER IL MALOCCHIO TOPS \$250,000 LATONIA STAKES – **Franco Meli's** Grade III winner **Il Malocchio** is set to make her 2023 debut against a cast of 11 fillies and mares that entered Saturday's \$250,000 Latonia Stakes at Turfway Park Racing & Gaming.

Run at 1 1/16 miles, the Latonia Stakes was carded as the 9 race on the 13-race Jeff Ruby Steaks Day program. First post is 12:45 p.m. and the Latonia Stakes has a post time of 4:43 p.m. The Latonia is one of six stakes events Saturday at Turfway headlined by the \$700,000 Jeff Ruby Steaks (GIII). The supporting races are the \$300,000 Bourbonette Oaks (Listed); the \$300,000 TwinSpires Kentucky Cup Classic (Listed); the \$250,000 Animal Kingdom; and the \$250,000 Rushaway.

Trained by **Martin Drexler**, Il Malocchio spent her winter preparing for her 5-year-old campaign at Palm Meadows in South Florida. The Ontario-bred daughter of Souper Speedy capped her 2022 campaign with convincing victories in the \$150,000 Maple Leaf (GIII) and \$100,000 La Prevoyante Stakes at Woodbine. Prior to her wins in the Maple Leaf and La Prevoyante, Il Malocchio's resume includes wins in the \$100,000 Victorian Queen and \$250,000 Bison City. Hall of Famer John Velazquez will have the riding assignment in the Latonia Stakes from post No. 4.

Other accomplished fillies and mares that entered the Latonia include **Kaleem Shah's** multiple graded stakes placed **Bellamore**; **Dixiana Farms' \$125,000 Wintergreen Stakes** winner **Grand Ave Girl**; and **Juddmonte's** local allowance winner **Idiomantic**.

Here is the complete field for the Latonia Stakes from the rail out (with jockey and trainer):

1. Grand Ave Girl (Luan Machado, Kenny McPeek)
2. **Candy Raid** (Kent Desormeaux, Keith Desormeaux)
3. **Ready to Venture (GB)** (Kazushi Kimura, Mike Stidham)
4. Il Malochio (Velazquez, Drexler)
5. Idiomatic (Chris Landeros, Brad Cox)
6. **Purrfect** (Fernando De La Cruz, Stidham)
7. **Regal Realm** (Rafael Hernandez, Jonathan Thomas)
8. **Kate's Kingdom** (Irad Ortiz Jr., Will Walden)
9. **Vezpa (BRZ)** (Joe Ramos, Paulo Lobo)
10. **Bali Belle** (Gerardo Corrales, Gerardo Rodriguez)
11. Bellamore (Martin Garcia, Simon Callaghan)

IMPRESSIVE MAIDEN WINNER SANTORINI TOPS WIDE-OPEN RUSHAWAY STAKES – WinStar Farm and Siena Farm's impressive Gulfstream Park maiden special weight winner **Santorini** will lead a wide-open field of 12 3-year-olds plus two also-eligibles that entered the \$250,000 Rushaway Stakes Saturday at Turfway Park Racing & Gaming.

The Rushaway Stakes, run at 1 1/16 miles, was made the 8 race on the 13-race Jeff Ruby Steaks Day card. First post is 12:45 p.m. and the Rushaway field will head to post at 4:13 p.m.

Trained by **Todd Pletcher**, Santorini drew clear in a Jan. 21 maiden contest at Gulfstream Park by two lengths. The son of Twirling Candy enters the Rushaway following a troubled sixth-place finish in the Colonel Liam Stakes where he had to check in the late running of the one-mile turf contest. Originally, Santorini was under the care of **Rodolphe Brisset** and competed on Dec. 9 at Turfway in a maiden special weight contest when he was narrowly defeated by **Olazabal**. Jockey **Irad Ortiz Jr.** will have the mount from post No. 4.

Another intriguing prospect that entered the Rushaway Stakes is **Surfside Stables'** local maiden special weight winner **Midnight Rising**. Trained by **Jordan Blair**, the talented son of Mendelssohn impressively drew clear by 2 1/2 lengths in his March 2 debut under jockey **Luan Machado**. In his lone start, Midnight Rising was stuck behind several horses but Machado was able to find room at the head of the stretch and drew off in hand late at odds of 10-1. Machado will be back aboard for the Rushaway from post 9.

Here is the complete field for the Rushaway from the rail out (with jockey and trainer):

1. **Itzos** (Gerardo Corrales, Paulo Lobo)
2. **Roja Redemption** (Joe Ramos, Lobo)
3. **Worthington** (Umberto Rispoli, Mike Maker)
4. Santorini (Ortiz, Pletcher)
5. **Quadra Island** (Fernando De La Cruz, Brad Cox)
6. **Stonemount Reunion** (Sammy Bermudez, David Rider)
7. **Ocean Pointe** (Orlando Mojica, Richard Estvanko)
8. **Reckoning Force** (Adam Beschizza, Brendan Walsh)
9. Midnight Rising (Machado, Blair)
10. **Ironsides** (Declan Cannon, Vicki Oliver)
11. **Rarified Flair** (Chris Landeros, Kenny McPeek)
12. **Moon Landing** (John Velazquez, Michael McCarthy)
- (AE) 13. **Unified Weekend** (Sonny Leon Antonio Sano)
- (AE) 14. **Movisitor** (Declan Cannon, Ed Vaughan)