

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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LEADING RIDER RODRIGUEZ READIES FOR NEXT STEP

FLORENCE, Ky. (Friday, March 24, 2023) – Apprentice rider **Walter Rodriguez** has been nothing short of dominant throughout the Winter/Spring Meet tallying 44 victories through 42 days of racing. Now, the El Salvador-native not only has his sights on Saturday's \$700,000 Jeff Ruby Steaks (Grade III) but the future beyond his stellar meet at Turfway.

Rodriguez confidently rose the Turfway Park rider standings this meet tabbing victories in the \$125,000 Dust Commander Stakes and \$125,000 Wishing Well Stakes. Now, with five days remaining at the meet, Rodriguez looks ahead to riding at Keeneland and Churchill Downs.

"It's been an absolute blessing to have this much success this winter," Rodriguez said following his opening double Thursday night. "It's been a lot of hard work to get here but I'm really blessed and looking forward to riding at Keeneland and Churchill after we're done here."

Rodriguez, a now five-pound apprentice, began his career in 2022 at Laurel Park where he tallied 11 victories. He added 11 other victories between Penn National, Pimlico and Timonium before shifting his tack to Kentucky in December.

Represented by **Cliff Collier**, who also books the mounts for **Gerardo Corrales**, Rodriguez has now amassed 73-career victories from 477 mounts.

Rodriguez' success at the meet also led him to a mount aboard **Event Detail** in Saturday's Jeff Ruby Steaks. Event Detail, a 15-1 longshot in the Jeff Ruby Steaks, broke his maiden by 2 ¾ lengths at Turfway on Jan. 27 and will add blinkers for Saturday's race.

Aside from his mount in the Jeff Ruby Steaks, Rodriguez will also have the call on **Ocean Atlantique** in the \$300,000 TwinSpires Kentucky Cup Classic. Rodriguez was aboard Ocean Atlantique in his last start at Turfway when he cruised by 5 ¼ lengths in the Dust Commander Stakes.

Even though Rodriguez sat atop the Turfway rider standings, he hasn't quite clinched the title. Corrales was second in the standings with 39 victories followed by **Fernando De La Cruz** (34 wins), **Luan Machado** (29) and **Joe Ramos** (24).

Racing from Turfway will continue Friday with a first post of 5:55 p.m. (all times Eastern). Saturday's Jeff Ruby Steaks program will get underway at 12:45 p.m.

The Winter/Spring season at Turfway will close Saturday, April 1.

For more information about racing and gaming from Turfway Park, visit www.Turfway.com.

FAIR GROUNDS, TURFWAY HANDICAPPERS MAKE SUGGESTED BAYOU BLUEGRASS 5 TICKETS – Expert handicappers from both Fair Grounds and Turfway Park have joined together to post their suggested tickets for Saturday's special Bayou Bluegrass 5 wager.

The multi-track 50-cent Pick 5 sequence will begin at Fair Grounds in Race 9 for the \$500,000 New Orleans Classic presented by Relyne GI by Hagyard (GII) at 5:04 p.m. (all times Eastern). The second leg will switch to Turfway Park for the \$300,000 Bourbonette Oaks with a scheduled post time of 5:43 p.m. Then, the third leg will go back to Fair Grounds and feature the \$400,000 Fair Grounds Oaks presented by Fasig-Tipton (GII) at 6:12 p.m. The Jeff Ruby Steaks will be the penultimate leg of the bet at 6:25 p.m. and it will close at Fair Grounds for the Louisiana Derby at 6:46 p.m.

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Here are the experts' suggested tickets:

Joe Kristufek (Senior Producer and Racing Analyst): Instant Coffee can certainly win the TwinSpires.com Louisiana Derby and Art Collector is the horse to beat in the New Orleans Classic. However, there are others with upset potential and a few of those will offer double-digit odds. I'm all in on Hoosier Philly in the Fair Grounds Oaks. If she loses, so do I. In a five-horse field, with 3 ½ logical contenders, it only makes sense to ride with one of them. I like the two Cox fillies in the Bourbonette Oaks and I'll add longshot Event Detail and the square-priced Wadsworth to the logical Two Phil's on my ticket.

Suggested Play: (\$72)

New Orleans Classic: 2, 6, 7, 9
Bourbonette Oaks: 5, 8
Fair Grounds Oaks: 5
Jeff Ruby Steaks: 3, 10, 11
TwinSpires.com Louisiana Derby: 2, 5, 7, 8, 11, 12

Scott Shapiro (Senior Racing Analyst): With the public likely to lean on Pretty Mischievous and Hoosier Philly in the Fair Grounds Oaks, I am going to hope to create separation in the sequence by leaning on Southlawn. The Norm Casse trainee took a big step forward in her first start as a 3-year-old and has reportedly been training extremely well leading into her second try off the layoff. I respect the class of the two favorites but do not trust them at their likely prices.

Suggested Play: (\$48)

New Orleans Classic: 2, 3, 6
Bourbonette Oaks: 5, 7
Fair Grounds Oaks: 1
Jeff Ruby Steaks: 1, 4, 10, 11
TwinSpires.com Louisiana Derby: 2, 5, 6, 7

Kaitlin Free (Racing Analyst): I'm strongly relying on my top 2 from my most recent Longines Kentucky Oaks top 10 list – Hoosier Philly and Botanical. Hoosier Philly, per trainer Tom Amoss, seems to be back to her old self and Botanical is very versatile and looks shoulder above this group in the Bourbonette Oaks. My big stance is against the 2-1 morning line favorite in the Jeff Ruby Steaks Major Dude. It will be his first time over the surface that both his trainer and jockey aren't as familiar with and don't ship too often. Plus, buried down on the rail, as of late, has not been the place to be.

Suggested Play: (\$48)

New Orleans Classic: 2, 3, 6, 8
Bourbonette Oaks: 5
Fair Grounds Oaks: 5
Jeff Ruby Steaks: 2, 4, 7, 8, 10, 11
TwinSpires.com Louisiana Derby: 2, 5, 6, 7

Kevin Kilroy (Publicity Specialist): By singling in both the Fair Grounds Oaks and Bourbonette Oaks, where my two strongest opinions lie, I structured my Bayou Bluegrass 5 ticket to open up to chaos in the New Orleans Classic, Jeff Ruby Steaks and Louisiana Derby. I included the favorites in the Louisiana Derby and New Orleans Classic, who I believe will run well but I am fading the favorite in the Jeff Ruby Steaks who I believe had a perfect setup last time out. Two legs with logical singles, one leg fading the favorite plus wide nets cast in the two other legs in hopes one or both races bring home a price.

Suggested Play: (\$87.50)

New Orleans Classic: 1, 2, 3, 6, 8
Bourbonette Oaks: 5
Fair Grounds Oaks: 3
Jeff Ruby Steaks: 2, 3, 5, 8, 10
TwinSpires.com Louisiana Derby: 2, 4, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12

Fans can download free Brisnet.com past performances for the Bayou Bluegrass 5 here: <http://www.brisnet.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/BayouBluegrass23.pdf>

Wagering on the Bayou Bluegrass 5 is available at racetracks and ADW's throughout the country including www.twinspires.com, the official wagering provider of Churchill Downs Incorporated and the Kentucky Derby.

DOWN THE STRETCH – Brisnet.com is offering bettors free past performances for the Jeff Ruby Steaks. Past performances can be downloaded here: <http://www.brisnet.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Ruby23.pdf>. ... Trainer **Wayne Catalano** reported to the Turfway racing office that **Libertango** would scratch from the \$225,000 Animal Kingdom Stakes. ... Trainer **Todd Pletcher** reported to the Turfway racing office that **Abaan** would scratch from the TwinSpires Kentucky Cup Classic. ... For more information about racing from Turfway Park visit www.turfway.com.

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