

# News Release



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## **FULLEFFORT UNLEASHES LATE RALLY TO WIN \$777,000 JEFF RUBY STEAKS**

**FLORENCE, Ky. (Saturday, March 21, 2026)** – **St. Elias Stable and Starlight Racing's Fulleffort** surged down the center of Turfway Park Racing & Gaming's stretch to win Saturday's 55<sup>th</sup> running of the \$777,000 Jeff Ruby Steaks (Grade III), on the Road to the Kentucky Derby Championship Series.

Ridden by **Irad Ortiz Jr.** and trained by **Brad Cox**, Fulleffort completed 1 1/8 miles in 1:49.94 while earning 100 qualifying points and a spot in the starting gate for the \$5 million Kentucky Derby presented by Woodford Reserve (GI).

It was a good start to the Jeff Ruby Steaks with California-invader Medici going directly to the front while setting an opening quarter-mile in a sharp :23.18. He carved an uncontested half-mile in :47.16 and maintained that lead going into the far turn where Stark Contrast made a bold, three-wide move along with Fulleffort unleashing his best stride.

In mid-stretch, Fulleffort surged down the middle of the track and powered past Stark Contrast and pacesetter Medici for a 2 1/2-length victory.

"He has a strong closing kick," Ortiz said. "I knew he'd come with his best run and he handled stretching out in distance really well. I think he's continuing to improve."

"He's a hard-knocking horse that continues to improve," assistant trainer **Trace Messina** said. "He does everything we ask of him and trained really well into this race. We'll talk it over with Brad and the team to decide next steps, but we're very happy for everyone involved to get the job done today."

Sent off as the 9-5 favorite, Fulleffort returned his backers \$5.82

**Stop the Car** finished fourth, followed by **Argos, Brave Force, Two Out Hero, Black Hornet, Turf Star, Maximus Prime, Baytown Dreamer**. Chaos Agent was pulled up around the far turn and walked back to his barn.

Fulleffort is a gray or roan colt by Liam's Map out of the Awesome Again mare Callmethesqueeze. He was bred in Kentucky by Athens Woods.

With his victory in the Jeff Ruby Steaks, Fulleffort earned his connections \$449,700 while improving his overall record to 6-3-2-1.

The Jeff Ruby Steaks awards the top five finishers qualifying points on a 100-50-25-15-10 scale toward a spot in the starting gate in the \$5 million Kentucky Derby presented by Woodford Reserve (GI).

**LORELEI LEE GOES GATE-TO-WIRE TO WIN \$300,000 BOURBONETTE OAKS** – **Skychai Racing's Lorelei Lee** appears on her way to the Longines Kentucky Oaks (Grade I) after going gate-to-wire in Saturday's \$300,000 Bourbonette Oaks (Listed) at Turfway Park Racing & Gaming.

Ridden by **Fernando De La Cruz** and trained by **Mike Maker**, Lorelei Lee completed 1 1/16 miles in 1:44.81, her first start going two turns.

Lorelei Lee broke sharply and outdueled Resplendence into the first turn through an opening quarter-mile in :24.07. She maintained her advantage through a half-mile fraction of :49.77 and three-quarters of a mile in 1:13.89 as the field began to tighten approaching the far turn.

Around the turn, **Resist** ranged up to challenge while **Lovely Grey** launched a wide rally from the outside. In the stretch, Lorelei Lee dug in and held firm, drawing clear late to win by 1 3/4 lengths.

"Ownership has already made a management decision, she'll be nominated to the Kentucky Oaks," Maker said. "I thought stretching out she'd show some natural speed. We lost some training this winter because of the weather. We ran her short and she was able to handle that and win. We knew she'd get better going long."

Lovely Grey finished second with Resist in third. The leading trio was followed in order by **La Ville Lumiere, Bless Her, Resplendence, Scratch It, Beara Peninsula** and **Wonzee Weather**.

Lorelei Lee rewarded her backers by returning \$23.98.

Lorelei Lee is a bay filly by Nyquist out of the Tapit mare Marilyn Monroan. She was bred in Kentucky by **Cathy Shircliff's Hot Pink Stables**.

The Bourbonette Oaks awards the top five finishers qualifying points on a 50-25-15-10-5 scale toward a spot in the starting gate in the \$1.5 million Longines Kentucky Oaks on Friday, May 1, at Churchill Downs.

**WILLY D'S OUTFINISHES MERCANTE IN TWINSPIRES KENTUCKY CUP CLASSIC – Paradise Farms Corp.'s Willy D's** out finished defending champion **Mercante** to win Saturday's \$295,000 TwinSpires Kentucky Cup Classic (Grade III) at Turfway Park Racing & Gaming.

Ridden by **John Velazquez** and trained by **Mike Maker**, Willy D's completed 1 1/8 miles in 1:50.88.

It was a good start to the TwinSpires Kentucky Cup Classic with the fleet-footed **Tickled Quist** and **Mercante** dueling into the first turn through a sharp opening quarter-mile in :22.87. As the duo sped around the turn, Willy D's advanced from third to make a three-wide bid for the lead. The trio settled down for a half-mile in :47.51.

Around the far turn, Willy D's continued to do battle with Mercante and proved best late by three-quarters of a length. f

"I knew there was a lot of speed in the race and I wanted to let him settle," Velazquez said. "I kept after him to stay in the race, and every time I asked him he gave me more."

Honor Marie closed late to finish third, followed by Naptown, Wadsworth, Tapit Shoes, Endlessly, Tickled Quist and **Utah Beach**.

With his victory in Saturday's race, Willy D's banked \$179,040 in purse earnings to boost his overall mark to \$757,008. The six-time winner was bred in Kentucky by Beau Lane.

**STYLISH SUE GOES GATE TO WIRE IN \$250,000 LATONIA – Highlander Training Center's Stylish Sue** went straight to the front and never looked back, kicking clear in the stretch to win Saturday's \$248,000 Latonia Stakes (Listed) at Turfway Park Racing & Gaming.

Ridden by **Irad Ortiz Jr.** and trained by **Joe Sharp**, Stylish Sue completed 1 1/16 miles in 1:44.10.

Stylish Sue broke sharply and went immediately to the lead, tracked closely by **Devassa** while the 1-2 favorite **Literate** sat just off them in third.

Stylish Sue set moderate fractions of :24.89 and :49.18 before **Five a Side** made a bold move around the far turn to challenge for the lead. At the top of the stretch, Stylish Sue got the better of her rival and kicked clear by 4 1/4 lengths.

"She broke really sharp and traveled strong on the lead," Ortiz said. "I had plenty of horse the whole way and when I asked her to go, she responded great."

Five a Side finished second, followed by **Warming**, **Literate**, **Hello Hello Hello** and **Devassa**.

Sent off at odds of 8-1, Stylish Sue returned \$19.24.

Stylish Sue is a chestnut mare by Nyquist out of Maria Maria, by Curlin, bred in Kentucky by Curtis C. Green.

**BULL BY THE HORNS RALLIES FROM LAST TO WIN \$250,000 RUSHAWAY – Peachtree Stable and Mark Corrado's Bull by the Horns** rallied from last to first to win Saturday's \$245,000 Rushaway Stakes at Turfway Park Racing & Gaming.

Ridden by **John Velazquez** and trained by **Saffie Joseph Jr.**, Bull by the Horns completed 1 1/16 miles in 1:45.76.

**JJ Grey**, the 3-2 favorite, broke to the lead and was joined by **East Village** into the first turn as the pair dueled through an opening quarter-mile in :23.57. The two continued to trade blows down the backside, posting a half-mile in :48.02, as the field bunched up entering the far turn.

**Rhythm Lady** made a three-wide move around the far turn and took command at the quarter pole, while **Bull by the Horns** began to unwind a rally from the back of the pack. In the stretch, Bull by the Horns surged down the middle of the track and edged past a closing **Steel Imperium** at the wire.

An objection was lodged by jockey Vincent Cheminaud, rider of Steel Imperium, against Velazquez and Bull by the Horns. Following a stewards review, the claim was disallowed.

Trendsetter in third followed by Tartabull, Rhythm Lady, JJ Grey and East Village.

Bull by the Horns is a gray or roan colt by Essential Quality out of No Sweat, by Blame, bred in Kentucky by Ashview Farm & Colts Neck Stables.

**OUTFIELDER LEADS ALL THE WAY IN ANIMAL KINGDOM – Amo Racing USA, Wesley Ward and Jayson Werth's Outfielder** made his 3-year-old debut a winning one when he led every step of the way in Saturday's \$250,000 Animal Kingdom Stakes at Turfway Park Racing & Gaming.

Ridden by Hall of Famer **John Velazquez** and trained by Ward, Outfielder completed six furlongs in a swift 1:10.65.

Outfielder broke sharply and went to the lead, while being slightly pressured early by Hometown Bound through a blistering opening quarter-mile of :21.46

In the stretch, **Small Town** made a sustained move and ranged alongside but Outfielder found more late and drew clear for a 4 1/2-length victory as the heavy 1-2 favorite.

**Gnome** completed the trifecta, followed by **Mom's Spaghetti** and Hometown Bound.

Ward stated after the race that his goal is to run Outfielder at this year's Royal Ascot meeting.

Outfielder is a bay colt by Speightstown out of the Medaglia d'oro mare Notte d'Oro. She was bred in Kentucky by SF Bloodstock LLC.

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