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## **RACING RETURNS TO CHURCHILL DOWNS THURSDAY AT 5 P.M. FOR ACTION-PACKED 14-DAY SEPTEMBER MEET**

**LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Monday, Sept. 12, 2022)** – Horse racing on the Kentucky circuit shifts to Churchill Downs on Thursday, Sept. 15 with the first of three **Twilight Thursday** programs at 5 p.m. (all times Eastern) as the famed Louisville racetrack opens its 10<sup>th</sup> annual **September Meet** for an action-packed 14-date run through Sunday, Oct. 2.

Thursday's eight-race opener lured 93 entries (87 in the body plus six also eligible runners) for an average of 10.9 horses per race. A field of 10 older horses was entered for the featured seventh race, a \$141,000 second-level allowance/optional claiming event at seven furlongs. Familiar entries include the regally-bred **Gun It**, the well-backed **Hidden Scroll** and 2020 Kentucky Derby participant **Major Fed**.

The opening day program also has a \$134,000 second-level allowance/optional claimer for fillies and mares at one mile (Race 2); a first-level allowance/optional claimer for 2-year-old fillies at seven furlongs (Race 6); and a \$120,000 maiden special weight for 2-year-olds at one mile (Race 5) headlined by the **Todd Pletcher**-trained **Summonyourcourage**, who finished second to impressive maiden winner **Echo Again** last month at Saratoga.

Each of the September Meet's 135 scheduled races will be contested on the main dirt track to allow the new Bermuda-hybrid turf course to continue to mature to its ultimate potential. Turf racing is projected to return for the Fall Meet (Oct. 30-Nov. 27).

Horsemen will compete for a record \$13.791 million (all purses include prize money from the **Kentucky Thoroughbred Development Fund**) offered in Vice President of Racing **Ben Huffman**'s September Meet condition book, including an 11-race stakes schedule cumulatively worth \$3.36 million.

Average daily purses are \$985,071. Maiden special weight races have a \$120,000 purse while allowance races range from \$127,000 to \$141,000.

Both barn areas – Churchill Downs (1,325 stalls) and Trackside Louisville (490 stalls) – are at full capacity, according to Huffman. New additions to the Trackside Louisville barn area include trainers **Ricky Courville**, **Kelsey Danner**, **Carlos Santamaria** and **Carlo Vaccarezza**.

Five stakes races, including two important fixtures for juveniles that could produce starters in this year's Breeders' Cup and next spring's Kentucky Derby presented by Woodford Reserve (Grade I) and the Longines Kentucky Oaks (GI), will be showcased Saturday afternoon.

The \$300,000 Iroquois (GIII) kicks off the Road to the Kentucky Derby series, while the \$300,000 Pocahontas (GIII) starts the Road to the Kentucky Oaks.

Meanwhile Distaff and Filly & Mare Sprint prospects may surface in a pair of Saturday stakes for fillies and mares, the \$400,000 Locust Grove (GIII) over 1 1/16 miles and the \$300,000 Open Mind (Listed) at six furlongs.

The \$275,000 Louisville Thoroughbred Society, an open sprint for 3-year-olds and up at six furlongs, wraps the stakes-laden program.

Entries for Saturday's 11-race card will be taken Wednesday morning.

Other marquee events during the September Meet include a stakes quartet in primetime under the light for the final Downs After Dark of the year on Saturday, Sept. 24: the \$275,000 Dogwood (GIII) for 3-year-old fillies at seven furlongs; \$275,000 Bourbon Trail for 3-year-olds at 1 3/16 miles; \$275,000 Harrods Creek for 3-year-olds at seven furlongs; and \$160,000 Seneca Overnight Stakes for 3-year-old fillies at 1 1/16 miles.

### ***Match-Up of Kentucky Derby Winners?***

Closing weekend is anchored by the \$400,000 Lukas Classic (GII) for 3-year-olds and up at 1 1/8 miles on Saturday, Oct. 1 and honors Hall of Fame trainer **D. Wayne Lukas**, the iconic four-time winner of the Kentucky Derby and Kentucky Oaks and conditioner of 26 Eclipse Award-winning champions who has been based at Churchill Downs' Barn 44 since 1989.

The Lukas Classic, which serves as a prep for the Breeders' Cup's \$6 million Longines Classic five weeks in advance of the Nov. 5 race at Keeneland, could provide the first meeting of two Kentucky Derby winners in 31 years. This year's surprise 80-1 Kentucky Derby winner **Rich Strike**, who is perfect in two starts beneath the Twin Spires, could face elders **Mandaloun** and **Hot Rod Charlie**, who were promoted to first and second in the 2021 Kentucky Derby.

Winners of the Kentucky Derby have faced each other 43 times but only twice at Churchill Downs: **Whiskery** (2<sup>nd</sup>) vs. **Clyde Van Dusen** (10<sup>th</sup>) in the 1930 Shady Brook Farm Handicap and **Unbridled** (3<sup>rd</sup>) vs. **Strike the Gold** (5<sup>th</sup>) in the Breeders' Cup Classic (GI) on Nov. 2, 1991 – the last time Kentucky Derby winners have been pitted against one another.

Also run on Oct. 1 is the \$300,000 Ack Ack (GIII) for 3-year-olds and up at one mile – a Breeders' Cup "Win and You're In" race for the Nov. 5 Dirt Mile at Keeneland.

### ***Five-Day Racing Weeks***

Churchill Downs' 14-day meet will be staged over three weekends through Sunday, Oct. 2 with racing on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. Outside of the three Twilight Thursdays (5 p.m.) and the lone Downs After Dark on Sept. 24 (6 p.m.), the first race for all other race days will be 12:45 p.m. (admission gates open at 11:30 a.m.). Nine races are scheduled on Wednesdays, eight races are scheduled on Thursdays with 10-race programs on Fridays and Sundays. Eleven races will be showcased each Saturday.

### ***Ideal Weather: Mostly Sunny Skies, Mid 80s***

Opening weekend weather in Louisville will be ideal, according to the **National Weather Service**, with a forecast of sunny skies and temperatures in the mid-80s Thursday through Sunday.

**2022 Churchill Downs September Meet Stakes Schedule**

Date	Running	Grade	Purse	Race	Conditions	Distance	Surface
Saturday, Sept. 17	38 <sup>th</sup>	III	\$400,000	Locust Grove	3&cup, f&m	1 1/16 M	Dirt
Saturday, Sept. 17	41 <sup>st</sup>	III	\$300,000	Iroquois	2yo	1 1/16 M	Dirt
Saturday, Sept. 17	54 <sup>th</sup>	III	\$300,000	Pocahontas	2yo f	1 1/16 M	Dirt
Saturday, Sept. 17	13 <sup>th</sup>	Listed	\$300,000	Open Mind	3&cup, f&m	6 F	Dirt
Saturday, Sept. 17	2 <sup>nd</sup>		\$275,000	Louisville Thoroughbred Society	3&cup	6 F	Dirt
Saturday, Sept. 24	47 <sup>th</sup>	III	\$275,000	Dogwood	3yo f	7 F	Dirt
Saturday, Sept. 24	2 <sup>nd</sup>		\$275,000	Bourbon Trail	3yo	1 3/16 M	Dirt
Saturday, Sept. 24	2 <sup>nd</sup>		\$275,000	Harrods Creek	3yo	7 F	Dirt
Saturday, Sept. 24	2 <sup>nd</sup>		\$160,000	Seneca Overnight Stakes	3yo f	1 1/16 M	Dirt
Saturday, Oct. 1	9 <sup>th</sup>	II	\$500,000	Lukas Classic	3&cup	1 1/8 M	Dirt
Saturday, Oct. 1	30 <sup>th</sup>	III	\$300,000	Ack Ack	3&cup	1 M	Dirt

\* All purses include prize money from the Kentucky Thoroughbred Development Fund

**Possible Stakes Entries According to Assistant Racing Secretary and Stakes Coordinator Dan Bork**

**Locust Grove:** Crazy Beautiful (Kenny McPeek); Envoutante (McPeek); Gold Spirit (CHI) (Todd Pletcher); and Played Hard (Phil Bauer).

**Iroquois:** Confidence Game (Keith Desormeaux); Echo Again (Steve Asmussen); Hayes Strike (Kenny McPeek); Honed (McPeek); Jace's Road (Brad Cox); Jin Tong (Doug O'Neill); and Zaici (Ricky Courville).

**Pocahontas:** Devious Dame (Norm Casse); Friendlypersuasion (Michael McCarthy); Fun and Feisty (Kenny McPeek); Justa Warrior (John Ortiz); Naughty Gal (Wayne Lukas); Need Some Money (Sarah Hamilton); Outofnothingatall (Ricky Courville); and Southlawn (Casse).

**Open Mind:** Bell's the One (Neil Pessin) and Sconsin (Greg Foley).

**Louisville Thoroughbred Society:** Bagboss (Brendan Walsh); Gagetown (Mark Simms Jr.); Isolate (Tom Amoss); Miles Ahead (Paul McGee); Special Reserve (Mike Maker); and Top Gunner (John Ortiz).

**Popular 5 p.m. 'Twilight Thursdays' Return With \$2 Beer, Live Music, Food Trucks**

The three **Twilight Thursdays** in Churchill Downs' Plaza from 5-8 p.m. will feature \$2 select domestic can beer, live music (**Piper Madison** on Sept. 15; **Braden Baugh Trio** on Sept. 22; and **Hot Brown Smackdown** on Sept. 29) and food trucks.

**Downs After Dark: Fiesta Under the Spires on Saturday, Sept. 24**

The final **Downs After Dark** of the year will take place Saturday, Sept. 24 as Churchill Downs presents a night full of thrilling horse racing and a Latin-inspired celebration of live music, dance and art for "**Fiesta Under the Spires.**"

Event highlights include music from **DJ Robertson** (5:30-8 p.m.) and **Kentucky Salsa Allstars** (8:30-11:20 p.m.); salsa lessons in the Plaza from **Louisville Salsa Underground** (6:45-7:40 p.m.); strolling mariachi performances by **Mariachi Alegre**; and a showcase of Latin artists including **Claudia Hernandez, Mercedes Harn** and **Andy Perez**.

Admission gates will open at 5 p.m. and the 11-race program will be conducted between 6-11:10 p.m.

General admission to Downs After Dark is \$14 and includes an official program. Guests under the age of 18 will only be admitted to the track if accompanied by a parent or adult guardian. Limited premium dining packages are available starting at \$82 per person. Outdoor-third floor box seats are on sale for \$17 per person. Reserved seating can be purchased online at [www.ChurchillDowns.com/Tickets](http://www.ChurchillDowns.com/Tickets).

### ***Betting Menu Features 20-Cent Derby City 6 Jackpot***

The betting menu will be the same as recent meets and includes the 20-cent minimum “**Derby City 6**” jackpot, which is offered on the last six races each day with a low 15-percent takeout. The Derby City 6 jackpot will be paid only if there is a single winning wager with six winners placed at the required minimum bet value. If there are multiple winning wagers with six winners in the six-race sequence, 90 percent of the net money wagering into the pool will be paid, and the remaining 10 percent will carry to the Derby City 6 jackpot. If there are no tickets with all six winners, 100 percent of the pool will carry to the Derby City 6 jackpot. There will be a mandatory payout on closing day.

The daily betting menu also features 50-cent Pick 5s with a low 15% takeout and 50-cent Pick 4s. Win, Place, Show, Exacta, 50-cent Trifecta, 10-cent Superfecta, Daily Double and 50-cent Pick 3 wagers will be offered every race (on all races that qualify under Kentucky statutes for minimum field size) and the \$1 Super Hi-5 will be offered in the last race daily.

### ***Gaffalione, McPeck Defend September Titles***

**Tyler Gaffalione**, who won his eighth Churchill Downs riding title with 62 wins during the Spring Meet, had the hot hand during last year’s September Meet with 16 wins, one more than **Brian Hernandez Jr.**

**Kenny McPeck** was last September’s champion trainer with 10 wins, two more than Hall of Fame conditioner **Steve Asmussen**, who collected his 26<sup>th</sup> Churchill Downs training crown with 25 wins during the Spring Meet.

### ***General Admission, Reserved Seating Options***

General admission to Churchill Downs is \$7 (\$14 for Downs After Dark on Saturday, Sept. 24). Reserved box seats are \$10 (\$17 for Downs After Dark) and indoor dining options are \$42 (\$82 for Downs After Dark). Children 12 and under are admitted free when accompanied by an adult (Downs After Dark policy: no one under the age of 18 will be admitted to the track unless they are accompanied by a parent or responsible adult). Tickets can be purchased online at [www.ChurchillDowns.com/Tickets](http://www.ChurchillDowns.com/Tickets) or by calling (502) 636-4400.

### ***Odds and Ends***

**Travis Stone** will describe the racing action throughout the September Meet for the eighth straight year. Veteran odds maker **Mike Battaglia** has morning line odds duty for the 48<sup>th</sup> consecutive year.

### ***‘Churchill Downs Today’ Airs One-Hour Before First Race***

**Joe Kristufek** is Churchill Downs’ on-track and simulcast host and **Scott Shapiro** is the chief analyst. Additional race-by-race analysis will be provided by **Kaitlin Free**, **James Scully** and **Brandon Stauble**.

“Churchill Downs Today,” the track’s daily racing preview program, will air one hour before the first race of the day and can be seen on-track and online at [www.TwinSpires.com](http://www.TwinSpires.com). The **Churchill Downs LIVE** app is available free of charge on streaming services such as Amazon, Apple TV and Roku. Fans can download the Churchill Downs LIVE app for full access to a free HD live stream of the Churchill Downs simulcast signal.

Also, horseplayers can visit <https://www.churchilldowns.com/racing-wagering/handicapping/expert-picks> for daily expert selections.

### ***Churchill Downs Racing Televised on ‘America’s Day at the Races’***

The racing action from Churchill Downs throughout the September Meet will be broadcast on FOX Sports’ “**America’s Day at the Races**,” which will air every race day on either **FS2** or **FS1**.

### ***Wager on Churchill Downs Racing via TwinSpires.com***

Racing fans are encouraged to wager on racing from Churchill Downs via [www.TwinSpires.com](http://www.TwinSpires.com), the official advance-deposit wagering service for Churchill Downs Incorporated and its family of racetracks. TwinSpires.com boasts an improved wagering experience and mobile app combining the latest technology with the ability to wager on virtually every quarter, harness and thoroughbred horse race from venues across the globe. The app provides users with smoother and more intuitive navigation, enhanced live-streaming capabilities allowing players to watch races while searching for their next wager, and all the best bonus offers, free bets, and promotions that TwinSpires.com is known for. TwinSpires.com also offers access to unmatched insight and analysis from our horse racing experts, handicappers, insiders, educators and Bloodstock Research Information Services (Brisnet).

### ***Additional Information***

For more information, call (502) 636-4400 or visit [www.churchilldowns.com](http://www.churchilldowns.com).

### **ABOUT CHURCHILL DOWNS RACETRACK**

Churchill Downs Racetrack (“CDRT”), the world’s most legendary racetrack, has been the home of The Kentucky Derby, the longest continually held annual sporting event in the United States, since 1875. Located in Louisville, CDRT features a series of themed race days during Derby Week, including the Kentucky Oaks, and conducts Thoroughbred horse racing during three race meets in the Spring, September, and the Fall. CDRT is located on 175 acres and has a one-mile dirt track, a 7/8-mile turf track, a stabling area, and provides seating for approximately 60,000 guests. The saddling paddock and the stable area has barns sufficient to accommodate 1,400 horses and a 114-room dormitory for backstretch personnel. CDRT also has a year-round simulcast wagering facility. [www.ChurchillDowns.com](http://www.ChurchillDowns.com).

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