

DERBY QUOTES

What is it like to win the Kentucky Derby? Let's ask those who have:

You hear about the Kentucky Derby. You hear that it's the greatest race in the world. It's a fantasy. If you ask any rider in the country that hasn't won the Derby, 'What would you like to do best?' I guarantee you they are going to tell you they want to win the Kentucky Derby. [laughs] Oh yes."

Laffit Pincay, Jr.
Jockey of Swale, 1984 Derby Winner

"I tell you waiting for the Derby to start is the longest day of your life... It's just a unique time of thrill and tension and worry."

Penny Chenery of Meadow Stable
Owner of Riva Ridge, 1972 Derby Winner & Secretariat, 1973 Triple Crown Winner

"Come Derby Day, there's 4 years that have gone into the preparation of that horse. It's bred into them to run. The heart and determination is bred into them. Once the foal is on the ground, the next morning we put a halter on him, and really that's day one, the first day of preparing him for the rest of his life."

John Sosby, Former Manager of Claiborne Farm
Claiborne Farm bred & Owned Swale, 1984 Derby Winner
Claiborne Farm bred Johnstown, 1939 Derby Winner & Jet Pilot, 1947 Derby Winner

"A Thoroughbred racehorse can go from 0 to 40 in a matter of three strides. It's exhilarating the feeling of power underneath you is incredible. I love to learn what make a thoroughbred tick."

Chris McCarron
Jockey of Alysheba, 1987 Derby Winner & Go for Gin, 1994 Derby Winner

"I heard Sham's hooves disappear behind me... And then, there was nothing. All I could hear was Secretariat's breathing and his hooves hitting the ground. It was very quiet."

Ron Turcotte
Jockey of Riva Ridge, 1972 Derby Winner & Secretariat, 1973 Triple Crown Winner

"I don't know how anything could be bigger than the Kentucky Derby. If you hear of something, let me know..."

J. Paul Reddam of Reddam Racing LLC
Owner of I'll Have Another, 2012 Derby Winner, & Nyquist, 2016 Derby Winner

“I wanted to run. I wanted to fly. I was cryin’. I wanted to tell the whole world who he was and what we had done with him, you know, and he was our horse. Other than when my four children and my grandchild was born, I’ve never been happier. You want to see the greatest, and the greatest of all races is the Kentucky Derby. That is *the* race, the Kentucky Derby, the Run for the Roses.”

John Sosby, Former Manager of Claiborne Farm
Claiborne Farm bred & Owned Swale, 1984 Derby Winner
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“It’s an amazing horse. I’m sorry, but he’s just amazing. I keep telling everybody, but the first time I met him I knew he was the one. I knew he was good.”

Mario Gutierrez
Jockey of I’ll Have Another, 2012 Derby Winner

“We are there to guide the horse. You have to know the trainers. Those are the people who are going to be helping you. You have to learn how to ride against the jockeys, the competition. You have to learn how to the horses would like to be ridden. So now it’s about trying to read all those things at the same time. It happens so quickly, and even all the homework that you do and all the experience that you have, it doesn’t prepare you for the Derby. Sometimes you get a really great connection with the horse, and that’s what it takes.”

John Velazquez
Jockey of Animal Kingdom, 2011 Derby Winner

“It’s like a dream. I can’t- I mean... She’s incredible. She did it; I didn’t. I was just the passenger.”

Gary Stevens
Jockey of Derby Winners: Winning Colors (1988), Thunder Gulch (1995) & Silver Charm (1998)
Winning Colors is the last of only 3 fillies to ever win

“When you touch the dirt on the track you have the feeling, at that moment, that you are on the center stage of the universe.”

Steve Cauthen
Jockey of Affirmed, 1978 Triple Crown Winner

“Miracles were made to come true and it happened today for me.”

Chris Antley
Jockey of Strike the Gold, 1991 Derby Winner & Charismatic, 1999 Derby Winner

“If you’re going to be successful, you have to live and breathe this business.”

Bob Baffert
Trainer of Derby Winners:
Silver Charm (1997), Real Quiet (1998), War Emblem (2002) & American Pharoah (2015 Triple Crown Winner)

“It is very, very difficult to win. A horse is only three once. His opportunity is only going to occur once, when he sets foot into that gate and he is only going to have two minutes and a little bit of extra to pull it off.”

John Sosby
Former Manager of Claiborne Farm
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“I feel like the luckiest man alive.”

Kent Desormeaux
Jockey of Derby Winners: Real Quiet (1998), Fusaichi Pegasus (2000) & Big Brown (2008)

“I never thought I could get that nervous in my life.”

Angel Cordero Jr.
Jockey of Derby Winners: Cannonade (1974), Bold Forbes (1976) & Spend a Buck (1985)

“If you don’t dream of winning the Derby, you have no business training Thoroughbreds.”

Bennie “Chip” Woolley Jr.
Trainer of Mine That Bird, 2009 Derby Winner

“This is the greatest day of my life.”

Eddie Delahoussaye
Jockey of Gato Del Sol, 1982 Derby Winner & Sunny’s Halo, 1983 Derby Winner

“Coming down the stretch I was thinking: ‘Keep rollin’ big boy. Keep rollin’. This has to be the sweetest moment of my life.”

Art Sherman
Trainer of California Chrome, 2014 Derby Winner

“Hopefully you can catch that lightning in a bottle again. 44,000 registered foals and only 16 or 18 of them make it to the Derby.”

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