

Globeform's Kentucky Derby Special '25

Previews and ratings by Geir Stabell



Is he a worthy Kentucky Derby favorite? Who else should it be?

Kentucky Derby | Journalism in focus

JOURNALISM is the horse to beat in this year's Kentucky Derby. This imposing son of Curlin has been impressing more with each run through his five straight wins. His San Felipe success two starts back stamped him as the top 3yo around and his Santa Anita Derby performance, where he overcame trouble in running to get the job done, gave him much needed education. The one thing that may count against him at Churchill Downs is that only once has he had more than four rivals. That's a far cry from taking part in a 20-runner field in front of the Twin Spires on the first Saturday in May. Santa Anita day was well attended so he did get some experience with the crowds as well on that occasion but this horse is mentally strong and well balanced; a 150,000 may not be a negative factor. There are so many other things that can be, however, and it's often being said that the Kentucky Derby isn't won by the best horse, it is won by the horse that gets the best trip. Well, I'm not so sure that is absolutely right; if trip really is *everything* then it's a bit funny to think back on how the Kentucky Derby winner has very often been the best horse. Bad trips can make horses that should have won lose but good trips hardly ever make horses that lack class win, at least at the top level. It happens, but rarely and more often in pace-less turf events than in route races on the dirt.

Journalism hasn't lost a race since he ran third when making his first start in a 6-furlong maiden at Santa Anita on October 27 last year. That's a conservatively late racecourse debut. When he ran for the first time, Breeders' Cup Juvenile winner Citizen Bull, Arkansas Derby winner Sandman and Louisiana Derby winner Tiztastic had all been to the races three times already. A big colt, Journalism was never going to be particularly precocious - but when he began to roll he was rolling in a serious way. He broke his maiden covering a mile at Del Mar a month after his debut and four weeks after that he took the 8.5-furlong Los Alamitos Futurity by 3 1/2 lengths, simply bushing Getaway Car aside like he was a run of the mill allowance horse. Getaway Car was exiting good efforts behind Citizen Bull in the American Pharoah Stakes (second) and the Breeders' Cup Juvenile (fourth) and Gaming, who ran third at Los Alamitos, was runner-up to Citizen Bull at the Breeders' Cup. Journalism beat smart - and above all - precocious horses in his stakes debut and he beat them with ease.

His 3yo debut came in the 8.5-furlong San Felipe Stakes on March 1. Barnes, who had been most impressive in the San Vicente eight weeks earlier, was the 2/5 favorite and he looked good for the win as they went around the bend, but Journalism was beginning to find his stride and making up ground. Coming with a run reminiscent of the legendary Easy Goer, he got to Barnes half a furlong out, went by him and won the race convincingly by 1 3/4 lengths. **RODRIGUEZ** was third, beaten all of 11 1/4 lengths. Journalism improved to **Globeform 122p** in the San Felipe. He did not reproduce that high rating when following up in the 9-furlong Santa Anita Derby just over a month further into the spring - but he probably would have if given a clean run. He had anything but, and what happened in this event brings us back to racing trips. He had a difficult trip in the Santa Anita Derby. Again the field counted just five runners but small fields do not guarantee plenty of room for everyone at all stages of the contest. Breaking from post one, Journalism was sticking to the rail and held up in what was a compact field. He was checked badly as they went into the home turn, dropping back to about five lengths off the pace, set by Citizen Bull who had pressure from Baeza's pacemaker Westwood. Baeza moved up from the back, going wide; he joined Citizen Bull and put the early leader away early in the straight but could not withstand a late run from Journalism. The Michael McCarthy trained favorite got up to win by three parts of a length - obviously being value for more than the bare margin. Both he and Baeza, who was lugging in and looked a bit green when taking the lead away from Citizen Bull, galloped out well after passing the wire. That the maiden Westwood was 8 1/2 lengths behind Baezin wasn't a surprise but it was a bit baffling to see him beating Citizen Bull for third. Citizen Bull had nothing give coming down the late, retreating ominously. Either way, the Santa Anita Derby was turned into a two-horse affair and those two are both very talented runners. >>>

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Journalism has always performed like a runner that will improve when he stretches out and he has the physique of a horse that's likely to improve as he gets older. Out of the Uncle Mo mare Mopotism, he is already the best horse in his family. Not that the pedigree page was too shabby before his career began; his dam won the La Canada Stakes, ran second in the Las Virgenes Stakes, Summertime Oaks, Santa Maria Stakes and Indiana Oaks and third in four G1 events, proving efficient from 7 to 9 furlongs. Her dam Peppy Rafaela was a half-sister to G2 winning sprinter Songster.

Journalism / Santa Anita Derby: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ninMzUKI-rc>
2nd Baeza 4th Citizen Bull

Journalism / San Felipe Stakes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bO0tZLNFF8g>
3rd Rodriguez

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