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## **JEFF RUBY STEAKS CONTENDERS POSTER, CALIFORNIA BURRITO FINALIZE PREPARATION FOR TURFWAY PARK'S RICHEST RACE**

**FLORENCE, Ky. (Thursday, March 20, 2025)** – Several of Turfway Park's top contenders for Saturday's \$777,000 Jeff Ruby Steaks (Grade III) are making their final preparations for the Road to the Kentucky Derby Championship Series event, including **Godolphin's** 3-1 morning-line favorite **Poster** and **Aaron and Victoria Haberman's California Burrito** (7-2), who schooled in the paddock Wednesday night.

Poster, winner of the Remsen Stakes (GII) as a 2-year-old, has been based at Turfway Park for most of his career under the care of trainer **Eoin Harty**. The chestnut son of Munnings enters the Jeff Ruby Steaks off a third-place finish in the Sam F. Davis Stakes at Tampa Bay Downs. He schooled alongside two stablemates in Race 2 on Wednesday.

"I think this is a sneaky good race overall on Saturday," Harty said. "He's coming into the race as good as we could ask of him. He's still growing into that 3-year-old frame. He's a big, good-looking horse. He was that way as a 2-year-old and has already filled out some this year."

On Thursday morning, Poster galloped about a mile with retired jockey **Francisco Torres** in the saddle.

One race before Poster schooled, trainer **Tommy Drury Jr.** oversaw the schooling sessions of John Battaglia Memorial winner California Burrito and his stablemate, **Claiborne Farm's Admit**, who will run in the \$300,000 Bourbonette Oaks (Listed) on the undercard of the Jeff Ruby Steaks.

"I don't expect the pace to be nearly as slow as it was in the Battaglia or his start prior winning an allowance," Drury said of California Burrito. "We'll leave it up to (jockey) **Irving (Moncada)** to see where he's placed early in the race. We'll bounce out of there pretty good but Irving knows the horse well and can sit off horses if need be."

Moncada, who didn't ride until Race 4 Wednesday night, joined Drury in the paddock for the schooling sessions.

"Both horses are doing great and look great here tonight," Moncada said. "I've worked both horses and I'm really thankful to Tommy and the team for allowing me to ride them Saturday afternoon."

The Jeff Ruby Steaks and Bourbonette Oaks are key stops on the Road to the Kentucky Derby and Longines Kentucky Oaks. The Jeff Ruby Steaks will award qualifying points to the top five finishers on a 100-50-25-15-10 scale toward the May 3, \$5 million Kentucky Derby presented by Woodford Reserve (GI). The Bourbonette Oaks offers points on a 50-25-15-10-5 scale toward the May 2, \$1.5 million Longines Kentucky Oaks (GI).

The Jeff Ruby Steaks, carded as Race 12 on the 13-race program, will go to post at 6:25 p.m., with the Bourbonette Oaks as Race 11 at 5:43 p.m. First post is 12:45 p.m.

The Jeff Ruby Steaks field from the rail out (with jockey and trainer):

- **Calling Card** (Adam Beschizza, Mike Maker, 20-1)
- **Charlie's to Blame** (Hernandez, Eurton, 15-1)
- California Burrito (Moncada, Drury, 7-2)
- **Final Gambit** (Luan Machado, Brad Cox, 6-1)
- **Flying Mohawk** (Joe Ramos, Whit Beckman, 15-1)
- **Baby Max** (Abel Cedillo, Kelsey Danner, 5-1)
- **Giocoso** (Jaime Torres, Keith Desormeaux, 30-1)
- **Innovator** (Nik Juarez, Wayne Lukas 30-1)
- Poster (John Velazquez, Harty, 3-1)
- **Maximum Promise** (Frankie Dettori, Kenny McPeek, 5-1)
- **Curvino** (Gerardo Corrales, Peter Miller 20)
- **He's Not Joking** (Rafael Hernandez, Josie Carroll, 15-1)
- AE: **Candytown** (Velazquez, Pletcher, 30-1)

The field for the Bourbonette Oaks from the rail out (with jockey and trainer):

- **Resolve** (Umberto Rispoli, Leonard Powell)
- **Somethinaboutther** (Declan Cannon, Brendan Walsh)
- Admit (Moncada, Drury)
- **Zealous Moon** (Jaime Torres, Riley Mott)
- **Bless the Broken** (John Velazquez, Will Walden)
- **Getting After It** (Juan Hernandez, Michael Puhich)
- **As Catch Can** (Frankie Dettori, Jonathan Thomas)
- **Golden Sunshine** (Vincent Cheminaud, Eoin Harty)
- **Fixin to Bee** (Corey Lanerie, Rusty Arnold II)
- **Just Ruthless** (Gabe Saez, Destin Heath)
- **White Rocks** (Victor Carrasco, Arnaud Delacour)
- **Will Then** (Gerardo Corrales, Jonathan Thomas)
- AE: **Bracelet** (Luan Machado, Brad Cox)
- AE: **Classic Appeal** (Albin Jiminez, John Hancock)

**DANNER ADDS BLINKERS ON BABY MAX FOR JEFF RUBY STEAKS** – Trainer **Kelsey Danner** is set for a busy Saturday at Turfway Park with seven horses entered on the Jeff Ruby Steaks Day program, including **J S Stables' Baby Max**, who will add blinkers in the \$777,000 Jeff Ruby Steaks (Grade III).

"I think he'll run a lot more comfortably in the Ruby than in the Battaglia," Danner said. "He was a little green down the lane in the late stages of the race, and I think he'll be more settled with blinkers."

Baby Max emerged as one of the top local 3-year-olds after his Jan. 18 Leonatus Stakes victory, where he defeated eventual Risen Star (GII) runner-up **Chunk of Gold** by 2 ½ lengths under jockey **Abel Cedillo**.

In his most recent start, the John Battaglia Memorial, Baby Max tracked just behind early leader **California Burrito** but finished second by a half-length as the 2-1 favorite under jockey **Luis Saez**.

Cedillo will regain the mount in the Jeff Ruby Steaks and break from post 6.

**LATE PICK 5 CARRYOVER OF \$91,584 THURSDAY** – Horseplayers will have the perfect opportunity to build their Jeff Ruby Steaks Day bankroll on Thursday, with a \$91,584 carryover up for grabs in the Late Pick 5 after no one correctly selected all five winners in Wednesday night's early sequence.

Thursday's Late Pick 5 begins in Race 4 at 7:25 p.m. (all times Eastern) and features competitive fields across the five-race sequence.

Races 4 and 5 are \$5,000 claiming events for non-winners of two races, each drawing a field of nine horses at one mile.

The sequence continues in Race 6 with a \$7,500 conditioned claiming event for non-winners of three races, featuring a field of eight fillies and mares.

The night's featured event is Race 7, where eight fillies and mares will take center stage in a conditioned allowance.

The Late Pick 5 wraps up in Race 8, which drew 11 fillies and mares in a \$15,000 claiming contest for non-winners of two races.

Thursday's eight-race program begins at 5:55 p.m.

For more information, visit [www.turfway.com](http://www.turfway.com).

**TURFWAY PARK, FAIR GROUNDS TEAM UP FOR BAYOU BLUEGRASS 5** – Fair Grounds Race Course and Turfway Park are teaming up Saturday to offer bettors a special \$1 Pick 5 featuring an all-stakes lineup anchored by the \$1 million TwinSpires.com Louisiana Derby (GII) and the \$777,000 Jeff Ruby Steaks (GIII).

Dubbed the "Bayou Bluegrass 5," this cross-track wager will have a \$1 minimum and an industry-friendly 15% takeout, with a mandatory payout at the end of the sequence.

The action-packed sequence kicks off at 5:04 p.m. (all times Eastern) at Fair Grounds with the \$500,000 New Orleans Classic presented by Relyne GI by Hagyard (GII), featuring a field of 10 headlined by the return of champion **Sierra Leone**. The second leg shifts to Turfway Park at 5:43 p.m. for the \$300,000 Bourbonette Oaks (Listed), which drew an oversubscribed field of 3-year-old fillies led by Cincinnati Trophy Stakes winner **White Rocks**.

The third leg returns to Fair Grounds at 6:08 p.m. for the \$400,000 Fasig-Tipton Fair Grounds Oaks (GII), where nine 3-year-old fillies will square off, led by undefeated **Good Cheer**. The Jeff Ruby Steaks (GIII) follows at 6:25 p.m., boasting another oversubscribed field led by Remsen (GII) winner **Poster** and John Battaglia Memorial hero **California Burrito**. The sequence culminates at 6:42 p.m. at Fair Grounds with the wide-open Louisiana Derby (GII), where 10 3-year-olds are led by Sam Davis Stakes winner **John Hancock**.

Bettors can take part in the Bayou Bluegrass 5 at wagering outlets across the country, including [www.TwinSpires.com](http://www.TwinSpires.com), the official wagering provider of Churchill Downs Incorporated.

**FINAL FLORENCE FURLONG – BC Stables Innovator** arrived at Turfway Park Wednesday afternoon from his Oaklawn base. The son of Authentic was accompanied on his journey by trainer **D. Wayne Lukas**' chief assistant **“Bas” Nicholl**. He had an easy 1 1/8-mile gallop Thursday morning.

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