

The Kentucky Derby

Kentucky's Most Famous Horse Race



Kentucky is known for two things: bluegrass and horse racing. Kentucky is called the bluegrass state. Bluegrass is a kind of grass. It is good food for horses. It grows all over the state.

Kentucky has lots of horse farms. It also has the Kentucky Derby.

The Kentucky Derby is a horse race. It is famous. The track is in Louisville, Kentucky. The race is on the first Saturday in May. The race is filled with fun events.

The Kentucky Derby is called "The Greatest Two Minutes in Sports." That's because it only takes two minutes for the horses to run the race. The race is short. But the other events last much longer.

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The Kentucky Derby Festival starts two weeks before the race. It begins with fireworks. The event is called the Thunder Over Louisville.

Next is the Great Balloon Race. Hundreds of hot air balloons fly in the sky. It is very colorful. People love it.

Then there is The Great Steamboat Race. Two or three boats race each other along the Ohio River.

The Pegasus Parade is next. It is one of the country's largest parades.



Race day is lively. People dress up. Men wear suits. Ladies wear big, fancy hats. Some of the hats are pretty wild. People love to talk about the hats.

After the race, the winning horse gets a prize. They put a blanket of roses around its neck. The blanket is made from more than 500 roses. It is why the Kentucky Derby is often called "The Run for the Roses."



The Kentucky Derby is an important race. It is the first race in the Triple Crown. There are three races in the Triple Crown. To win the Triple Crown, you have to win all three races in one year. Very few horses win all three. In fact, only 12 horses ever have. The contest began in 1875.

