

The Kentucky Derby

The Greatest Two Minutes in Sports



Kentucky is famous for two things: bluegrass and horse racing. Kentucky is called the bluegrass state because it has rich soil and pastures covered in bluegrass. Bluegrass is a kind of grass that horses love to eat.

Kentucky has a lot of farms that raise racehorses. The state is home to one of the most famous horse races: the Kentucky Derby. The racetrack is located in Louisville, Kentucky's largest city. The race, which takes place each year on the first Saturday in May, is filled with fun events and traditions

The Kentucky Derby is called "The Greatest Two Minutes in Sports." That's because it only takes the horses two minutes to run around the track. But the festivities that go along with the Kentucky Derby last much longer than the race does.

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The Kentucky Derby Festival begins two weeks before the race with the Thunder over Louisville. The Thunder is one of the largest fireworks displays in the country. It is also one of the loudest.

Next is the Great Balloon Race. Hundreds of hot air balloons take flight for this colorful event. Many say that the balloon race is one of their favorite events.

There is also the Great Steamboat Race. The race takes place on the Ohio River between two or three boats. It always features the *Belle of Louisville*, a steamboat built and operated since 1914.

Other events follow. Most notable is the Pegasus parade, which is one of the country's largest parades.



Race day is always lively and full of tradition. 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 is led to the winner's circle. They put a blanket of roses around its neck. The blanket is made from more than 500 roses and is why the Kentucky Derby is often called "The Run for the Roses."



The Kentucky Derby is an important horse race. It is the first race in the Triple Crown. The Triple Crown is a contest that consists of three races. The winning horse must come in first in all three. The first is in Kentucky. The second is the Preakness, which is in Maryland. The third is the Belmont, which is in New York. Very few horses have won the Triple Crown. In fact, only 12 horses have won the title since the contest began in 1875.

