



RACING AT KEENELAND – A TRADITION OF CHAMPIONS

Racing as It Was Meant to be

Seventy-five years ago, Keeneland's founders set the course for what was to become one of Thoroughbred racing's richest traditions. Their vision was to create two festival-like race meetings each year in the heart of Thoroughbred country — Kentucky's Bluegrass region.

These dreams are realized today, with Keeneland running three-week race meetings in April and October. With its ivy-covered walls, tree-lined paddock and picturesque grounds, Keeneland preserves the tradition, ambiance and vision established by its founders: to showcase all that is noble, fine and enjoyable about Thoroughbred racing.



A Day at the Races

From morning workouts to the finish line, Keeneland is a unique horse racing experience. The main track is open year-round, and the public is welcome to watch the horses train on the track from 6 to 10 a.m.

Keeneland's barn area is unlike any in America. Where other tracks require credentials for people to enter the barn area, Keeneland remains open to the public. Chinese elms stand tall between the barns, and maples and pin oaks are interspersed throughout the stable area.

After morning workouts, patrons can enjoy breakfast in the Track Kitchen, where they often dine next to a famous horse owner, trainer or jockey.

Story Idea

Let us take you behind the scenes for a day at the races—from the early morning workouts and a breakfast at the track kitchen to the race day pageantry of horses in the paddock and a view from the winner's circle.

Racing takes place in the afternoon at Keeneland. Before each race, horses are walked from the barn area to the paddock and saddled among the paddock's tall trees, including sugar maple, American hornbeam, dogwood, linden, white pine, crab apple, pin oak and a huge signature sycamore. Many race-goers take advantage of the tiered area and balconies located in the grandstand to watch this parade of horses. After being saddled, the horses are led to the walking ring where the jockeys mount up. The horses are then led onto the track for the post parade, and finally to the starting gate.



From the time visitors enter the arbored drive, Keeneland provides a clean, genteel, relaxing atmosphere — the quintessential Kentucky experience. The track’s polite patrons and staff and the outstanding quality of its Thoroughbred racing create an incomparable atmosphere.

Attracting the Best

Keeneland’s purse structure is among the highest of any track in North America — averaging about \$600,000 daily. The purse structure is anchored in the spring by the \$750,000 Toyota Blue Grass and the \$400,000 Central Bank Ashland, and in the fall by the \$600,000 Shadwell Turf Mile and four other grade one races — the Darley Alcibiades, Juddmonte Spinster, Dixiana Breeders’ Futurity and Queen Elizabeth II Challenge Cup. Racing at Keeneland affords horsemen outstanding opportunities to showcase a two-year-old, a veteran turf star or a contender for racing’s major events. Lucrative purses and competitive stakes attract the who’s who of Thoroughbred racing because horsemen understand the importance of racing at Keeneland. The track’s racing seasons have served as a springboard to success for many trainers in Triple Crown and Breeders’ Cup races. Over the years, many champions have graced Keeneland.

Story Idea
Tell the story about how Keeneland’s racing program is symbiotically tied to our role as the world’s largest Thoroughbred auction company—from fueling the racing purses to showcasing the best horse racing has to offer.

Keeneland not only attracts the best horses, but the finest jockeys in the business. Its jockey colony is one of the strongest in the sport, counting John Velazquez, Rafael Bejarano, Garrett Gomez, and Julien Leparoux among its riders. Many riding legends, including Eddie Arcaro, Bill Shoemaker, Angel Cordero, Jr., Pat Day, Don Brumfield, Gary Stevens and Jerry Bailey, have ridden at Keeneland.



Early symptoms of Derby fever are apparent at Keeneland each spring, as contenders from across the nation converge on the track for their final preparations prior to the Kentucky Derby. Keeneland’s Toyota Blue Grass is acknowledged as a premier Derby prep race.

Through the years, 26 horses have raced at Keeneland in the spring of their three-year-old seasons and gone on to capture the Kentucky Derby. Nineteen of those horses — including

Unbridled in 1990, Strike the Gold in 1991, Sea Hero in 1993, Thunder Gulch in 1995 and Street Sense in 2007 — have run in the Blue Grass at Keeneland and gone on to win the Kentucky Derby.



The fall meeting's stakes, meanwhile, have become a springboard for the Breeders' Cup World Championships. Twenty-nine horses have prepped in Keeneland's fall stakes on their way to victories in the Breeders' Cup.

Safety First

In September 2004, Keeneland unveiled a Polytrack surface on its five-furlong training track in the first use of the engineered surface at a public racing or training facility in North America. Developed in England, Polytrack is a unique blend of fibers, recycled rubber and silica sand that is covered with a wax coating. It has been proven to be safer for horses because of its unique cushioning effect. Additionally, the surface remains consistent despite weather conditions and decreases the potential for race day cancellations.

Keeneland furthered the mission of its founders in the summer of 2006 when it installed a Polytrack racing surface on the main track. Seven inches of Polytrack rests on 10 inches of porous macadam and stone that contains a vertical drainage system — another exclusive feature. Water drains through the material rather than horizontally across the surface.

Story Idea
Take a glimpse at how tradition-rich Keeneland has embraced innovation through the years—from being the first track to use a totalizator system in 1936 to installing a Polytrack surface in 2006.

Today, Keeneland joins Turfway Park in Northern Kentucky, Woodbine in Toronto, Arlington Park in the Chicago area and Del Mar near San Diego as the racetracks in North America with a Polytrack racing surface.

Keeneland's renovation in the summer of 2006 also included the reconfiguration of the racetrack to widen the turns, lengthen the stretch and create more viewing areas for fans. The main track now features four sweeping and symmetrical turns. Other new features include a redesigned winner's circle and state-of-the-art infield tote board.

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