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ockey John Velazquez enters his 26th Kentucky Derby, more than all the other 2024 Kentucky Derby jockeys. Velazquez, at 52 years old, will ride the favorite, Fierceness, in the 2024 Kentucky Derby on Saturday at Churchill Downs. Fierceness is the 5-2 favorite in the latest 2024 Kentucky Derby odds.



Velazquez also rode Fierceness in the Florida Derby, which the colt won by 13 1/2 lengths. With Velazquez at the helm, how confident should you feel using Fierceness in your 2024 Kentucky Derby predictions? If you'd rather not play the favorite, who are other top options among the 2024 Kentucky Derby horses? Sierra Leone (3-1) has the second-shortest Kentucky Derby odds 2024 after winning the Blue Grass Stakes. Catching Freedom (8-1), Just a Touch (10-1) and Forever Young (10-1) follow among the latest 2024 Kentucky Derby entries.

The 2024 Kentucky Derby post time is 6:57 p.m. ET. With the Kentucky Derby annually featuring the largest field in North American racing, you'll want to see what Santa Anita-based racing reporter and analyst Michelle Yu has to say before making any 2024 Kentucky Derby picks, considering the success she's had handicapping this race.

Few people in racing are as well-connected as Yu. An on-air host and reporter who has provided racing analysis for TVG, HRTV and the Breeders' Cup, Yu has spent a lifetime in racing. Prior to her television career, she worked for trainers Steve Asmussen and Ron Moquett. She also is married to Santa Anita-based trainer Ryan Hanson.

Yu also has tremendous handicapping chops. In a wide-open Kentucky Derby in 2021, she gave out Medina Spirit, who crossed the finish line first, as the winner at 12-1. In Pool 5 of the Kentucky Derby Future Wager two years ago, she suggested a play on All Other 3-Year-Olds, which cashed at a whopping 18-1 when Rich Strike won the Derby.

Yu enters this year's Kentucky Derby on a roll. She correctly called National Treasure to win the Pegasus World Cup. In the month leading up to the Kentucky Derby, she predicted Stronghold's upset win in the Santa Anita Derby and smashed the exacta in the Apple Blossom Handicap.

For the first leg of the Triple Crown, Yu has handicapped the 2024 Kentucky Derby lineup, made her picks and constructed her best bets. You can head to SportsLine now to see them.

### Top 2024 Kentucky Derby predictions

One surprise: Yu is fading Fierceness, even though he is the 5-2 Kentucky Derby favorite. That victory was one of the most dominant prep race performances of the last 25 years. It's the main reason why he is 5-2 on the morning line.

However, the race dynamics of the Florida Derby were much different than what is expected in the Kentucky Derby. In Florida, the other speed horse, Hades, failed to break cleanly from the starting gate, handing an easy lead to Fierceness. "I can't see him being a lonely leader again in the Derby, and he has thrown in the towel the two times someone eyeballed him," Yu told SportsLine. See who else to fade here.

Another curveball: Yu is high on Just a Touch, even though he's a longshot at 10-1 in the Kentucky Derby odds 2024. He's a target for anyone looking for a huge payday. Just a Touch is coming off a second-place finish in the Blue Grass Stakes and held a lead in the final stretch before being caught by Sierra Leone. Just a Touch had a 101 HRN speed in the Blue Grass Stakes, faster than any horse other than Sierra Leone.

Just a Touch will run from post No. 8, which produced Mage as the winner at last year's Kentucky Derby. Post No. 8 has featured nin fdtrt