

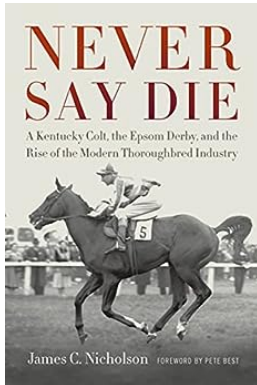
The Kentucky Colt: The Epsom Derby and the Rise of the Modern Thoroughbred Industry



In the world of horse racing, one event stands above the rest - the Epsom Derby. This prestigious race has not only produced some of the greatest champions of all time but has also played a significant role in shaping the modern thoroughbred industry. From its humble beginnings in the 18th century, the Kentucky colt has evolved into a symbol of power, speed, and elegance. Let's dive into the rich history of the Epsom Derby and explore its profound impact on the world of horse racing.

The Birth of the Epsom Derby

The Epsom Derby traces its origins back to the year 1780 when Edward Smith Stanley, the 12th Earl of Derby, initiated the concept of a horse race open to three-year-old colts and fillies. The race was named after the Earl, who lived near Epsom Downs, an area known for its challenging course and lush meadows.



Never Say Die: A Kentucky Colt, the Epsom Derby, and the Rise of the Modern Thoroughbred

Industry by James C. Nicholson (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 5814 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 181 pages
Lending : Enabled



Initially, the Epsom Derby was just another local event, but it quickly gained popularity among aristocrats and horse enthusiasts. The race became a platform to showcase the finest thoroughbreds in the breeding industry, attracting wealthy breeders and ambitious jockeys seeking fame and fortune.

The Rise of the Kentucky Colt

As the Epsom Derby grew in prominence, its influence reached far beyond the borders of England. One place where its impact was particularly profound was Kentucky, a state in the United States known for its rich horse breeding heritage.

The Kentucky colt, known for its exceptional speed, endurance, and elegance, owes much of its development to the bloodlines of Epsom Derby winners. Breeding farms in Kentucky imported stallions and mares from Europe, carefully selecting those with successful racing careers or proven lineage to produce the next generation of champions.

Thoroughbreds born and raised in Kentucky became highly sought-after, attracting buyers from around the world. The Kentucky colt became synonymous with greatness, and the state emerged as a dominant force in the modern thoroughbred industry.

The Modern Thoroughbred Industry

Thanks to the influence of the Epsom Derby and the rise of the Kentucky colt, the thoroughbred industry has undergone a dramatic transformation. Today, horse racing is a multi-billion dollar industry, and the demand for champion bloodlines continues to grow.

With advancements in technology, horse breeding techniques have become more precise, enabling breeders to select for specific traits such as speed, stamina, and conformation. The Epsom Derby remains a crucial reference point for breeders and buyers, as the success of a horse in this prestigious race often translates into success on the international stage.

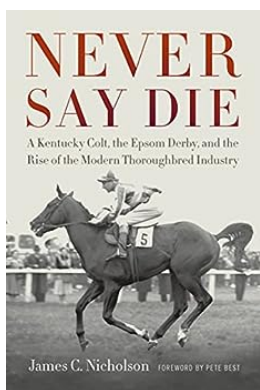
Moreover, the popularity of the Epsom Derby and the Kentucky colt has encouraged the development of other prestigious races around the world. These races, modeled after the Derby, attract top-class horses and offer substantial prize money, drawing further attention to the industry.

The Legacy of the Epsom Derby

The Epsom Derby continues to captivate audiences and set the standard for excellence in horse racing. As the descendants of previous Derby winners take the center stage, the legacy of these great champions lives on.

Furthermore, the Kentucky colt has become a global ambassador for the thoroughbred industry, carrying the torch of its prestigious lineage. Each year, the Kentucky Derby held at Churchill Downs, Louisville, pays homage to its English predecessor, reminding us of the indelible connection between the two events and their influence on the modern racing world.

In , the Epsom Derby and the rise of the Kentucky colt have shaped the modern thoroughbred industry in extraordinary ways. As the sport of horse racing continues to evolve, we must acknowledge the significant contributions of these events and the continued impact they have on breeding practices, racecourses, and the global fascination with these magnificent animals.



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A history of the American horse that won Britain's greatest race and changed the Thoroughbred racing world.

A quarter of a million people braved miserable conditions at Epsom Downs on June 2, 1954, to see the 175th running of the prestigious Derby Stakes. Queen Elizabeth II and Sir Winston Churchill were in attendance, along with thousands of Britons who were all convinced of the unfailing superiority of English bloodstock and eager to see a British colt take the victory. They were shocked when a Kentucky-born chestnut named Never Say Die galloped to a two-length triumph at odds of 33–1, winning Britain's greatest race and beginning an important shift in the world of Thoroughbred racing.

Never Say Die traces the history of this extraordinary colt, beginning with his foaling in Lexington, Kentucky, as well as the stories of the influential individuals brought together by the horse and his victory—from the heir to the Singer sewing machine fortune to the Aga Khan. Most fascinating is the tale of Mona Best of Liverpool, England, whose well-placed bet on the long-shot Derby contender allowed her to open the Casbah Coffee Club. There, her son met musicians John Lennon, Paul McCartney, and George Harrison, later joining their band.

Featuring a foreword by the original drummer for the Beatles, Pete Best, this remarkable book reveals how an underdog's surprise victory played a part in the formation of the most successful and influential rock band in history and made the Bluegrass region of Kentucky the center of the international Thoroughbred industry.

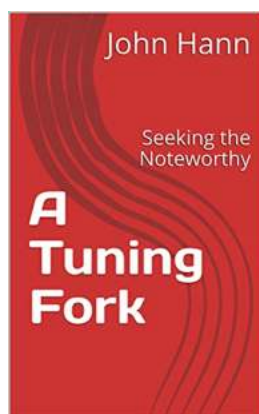
Praise for Never Say Die

“Nicholson has done a very fine job of placing the unique role of Never Say Die in perspective within the specific confines of Thoroughbred racing history, while at

the same time explaining how this horse was touched by a vivid array of characters in other social and historical contexts. Who would have imagined that a racehorse would link such diverse institutions as the Singer sewing machine company, the Epsom Derby, and the Beatles?” —Edward L. Bowen, author of *The Lucky Thirteen*

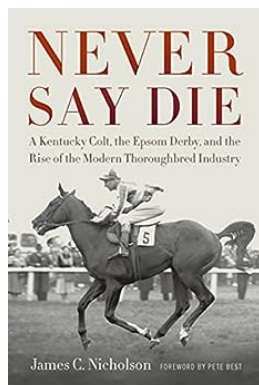
“As a reader, I was left with a clear understanding of how the breeding industry has gone global, and importantly, how it will always follow the money. Racing enthusiasts will enjoy how the author sews together this unusual patchwork of characters into a narrative.” —John Eisenberg, author of *The Great Match Race: When North Met South in America’s First Sports Spectacle*

“[E]nlightening and entertaining. . .Nicholson’s tale of close connections and global links is a yarn worth following.” —Wall Street Journal



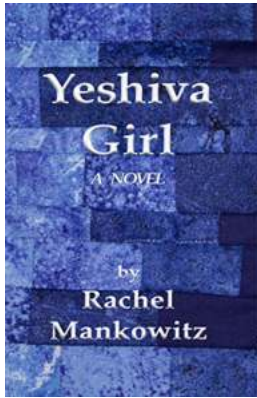
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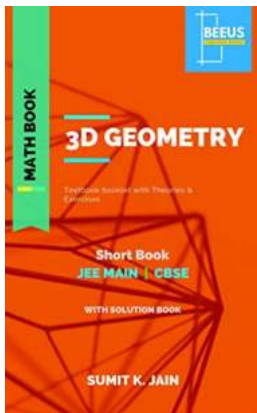
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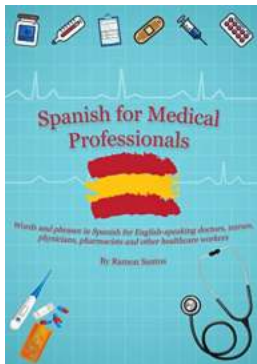
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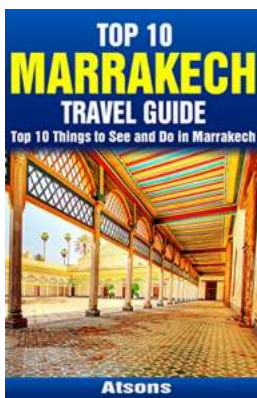
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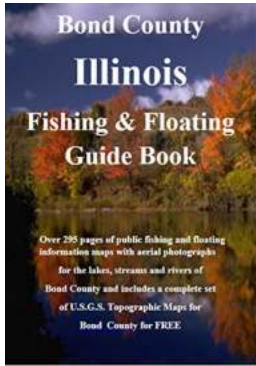
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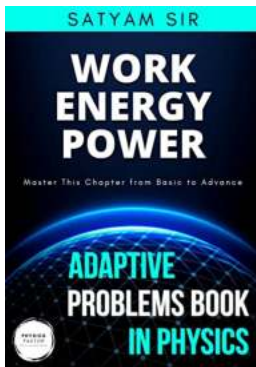
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