

April 15, 2009

## HULL PASSES KEENELAND RACE IN FAVOR OF DERBY TRIAL AT CHURCHILL



Unbeaten Hull is going to be scratched from Saturday's Grade 2 Coolmore Lexington Stakes, as his connections have decided not to run him from the outside stall in a field of 12.

Barry Irwin said "We think it would be asking too much of an unseasoned colt to make his first start around two turns from that post position against experienced colts."

Instead, the Holy Bull son will race a week later at Churchill Downs for the Derby Trial over 7 ½ furlongs around one turn for a purse of \$100,000 in a Grade 3 fixture. Miguel Mena, the third-leading rider at Keeneland, will retain the mount

"Sure, it's disappointing," Irwin said. "I know that a lot of our partners were really looking forward to seeing Hull race at Keeneland. Truth be told, we were somewhat reluctant to run the colt in the race because of the quick turn around, so when he got the outside post, the decision not to run was made for us.



"The next race is what I would call a normal race for him, because the distance is the perfect progression from 6 furlongs in his Fair Grounds debut, to 6 ½ last time at Turfway Park and now to another one-turn race going 7 ½ furlongs."

Irwin pointed that that Hull can walk right out of his own stall over to the paddock under the Twin Spires instead of having to van to a new surrounding. He will on a racing surface over which he has trained. He comes back in 24 instead of 17 days. That's important. And he remains around one turn."

The Derby Trial, which is carded as the feature race on opening day of the spring-summer meeting in Louisville, used to be run at a mile and there was a time about 40 years ago that it was actually used as a prep for the Kentucky Derby. Today it is a race for specialists around one turn, which fits right into Hull's plan as he steadily makes progress toward running around two turns in his next outing

Heiligbrodt Racing Stable, Team Valor International and Gary Barber's Hull has won both of his starts easily and ran a 5 ½ in his debut and a 6 ½ next time on the Ragozin Sheets for trainer Dale Romans.