

Written by Kathy

Sunday, 08 May 2022 03:44 - Last Updated Monday, 08 May 2023 08:56



Pictured are 2022 Kentucky Derby winner Rich Strike, who was ridden by jockey Sunny Leon, and the late Breonna Taylor, whom Louisville Metro police gunned down in March of 2020.

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By Kathy Wray Coleman, associate publisher, editor-in-chief

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CLEVELANDURBANNEWS.COM, LOUISVILLE, Kentucky-Ridden by veteran jockey Sunny Leon and with odds of 80-1, Rich Strike edged Epicenter and Zandon to win the 148th running of the Kentucky Derby on Saturday at Churchill Downs in Louisville, Kentucky.

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Unlike last year's Kentucky Derby, there were no major protests, or any at all for that matter, on behalf of Breonna Taylor, the 26-year-old Black woman who was arbitrarily gunned down by Metro-Louisville police in her apartment in 2020, a police shooting death that drew nationwide protests and a \$12 million negligence and wrongful death settlement from the city for Taylor's family.

Trained by Eric R. Reed, the longshot race horse finished the mile and one-quarter race in first place, though he had never run in a Grade I race, horse racing experts calling his win "the anatomy of an upset."

Leon was ecstatic about riding his horse to victory, saying it was "a crazy Derby," and Reed added that running a quality stable paid off. He said that Rich Strike was pampered, and that, in turn, he performed well and rose to the occasion to bring home his first Derby win.

"We don't go out and buy the big horses," Reed told Louisville's Courier Journal Newspaper, Kentucky's largest newspaper. "We just try to have a good, quality stable. We always perform well, our percentages are always good. We take care of the horse first, and the rest falls into place."

The unprecedented victory was the greatest upset since 1913 when 91-1 long shot Donerail won the coveted race. And what was the payout for Saturday's race?

Rich Strike paid \$163.60 to win with a \$2 bet and only Donerail in 1913 had a higher payout of \$184.90. A \$2 exacta with second-place finisher Epicenter paid \$4,101.20, a \$1 trifecta paid \$14,870.70, and the \$1 superfecta paid \$321,500.10. In addition to paying \$163.60 to win, Rich Strike paid \$163.60 to win, \$74.20 to place and \$29.40 to show. Second place finisher Epicenter paid \$7.40 to place and \$5.20 to show, and Zandon, who won third place, paid \$5.60 to show.

The purse was \$3 million, the same amount as last year and will be split between the top five finishers based upon ranking status. First place paid \$1.86 million, which Rich Strike will carry home, and Epicenter will take home \$600,000, followed by Zandon with \$300,000. The fourth and fifth place winners, namely Simplification and Mo Donegal, will get \$150,000 and \$90,000.□

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If Rich Strike wins the Preakness and Belmont Stakes, the second and third legs of the Triple Crown respectively, he will have won the Triple Crown.□

This year's derby was a far cry from the controversial event held last year at Churchill Downs when jockey John R. Velazquez teamed with trainer Bob Baffert for the second year in a row to win the Derby, only to have the purse money, and the victory, won by race horse Medina Spirit, snatched away for a doping violation

In spite of a still existing pandemic, Saturday's Derby brought Churchill Downs nearly back to full capacity of 150,000 like it had in 2019. Last year, only 52,000 Derby fans turned out.

And while last year's race drew protesters outside of Churchill Downs like in 2020, there were no protests this year in the Derby City as Louisville tries to repair its tainted image following national backlash from the March 13, 2020 Louisville Metro police killing of Taylor, who was unarmed and Black, and shot eight times in her apartment after police barged in via a no knock warrant and got in a shootout with her live-in boyfriend. No drugs were found on the premises

Around 50 protesters marched by the entrance of Churchill Downs on last year with signs that read, "We haven't forgotten Breonna."

Those protesters ended up at a Black Lives Matter march and at La Chasse restaurant where a confrontation with a man who allegedly pulled out a gun occurred, police said.

It remains unclear why the protesters at the Black Lives Matter march, two women and two men, and all of them Black, were arrested last year and taken into custody.

Taylor's shooting death, which drew some police reforms by the city, triggered local and countrywide protests, and riots, Taylor among a host of unarmed Blacks erroneously killed by White cops nationwide.

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Only one of the three White Louisville Metro police officers directly involved in Taylor's tragic shooting death, fired detective Brett Hankison, was criminally charged. A grand jury indicted him on Sept. 23 on three counts of felony wanton endangerment for allegedly firing errant bullets into Taylor's apartment that penetrated a wall and entered an occupied apartment next door to Taylor's residence. But a jury, in early March, acquitted him on all three counts.

By Kathy Wray Coleman, associate publisher, editor. Coleman is a seasoned Black Cleveland journalist who trained at the Call and Post Newspaper for 17 years and an experienced investigative and political reporter. She is the most read independent journalist in Ohio per Alexa.com

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(216) 659-0473. Email: editor@clevelandurbannews.com. We interviewed former president Barack Obama one-on-one when he was campaigning for president. As to the Obama interview

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