

STARTS – DID NOT RACE AT 2

Some horse racing pundits considered “having a race at 2” to be the last so-called Derby “rule” left standing. Retired *Daily Racing Form* columnist Steve Crist referred to this as “the granddaddy of Derby rules.”

Apollo, who won the 1882 Kentucky Derby, was the only Derby winner to win the “Run for the Roses” without racing as a 2-year-old for 136 years until Justify broke through in 2018. Five years later, Mage matched the feat.

The record of horses in the Derby without a race at 2 since 1937 is 75-2-3-5.

Apollo’s victory over a “muddy” track was one of the biggest upsets of that era. Runnymede, the odds-on favorite who finished a half-length back in second in his first start of the year, had a reputation for disliking a “muddy” track. Meanwhile, Apollo had raced three times in New Orleans prior to his victorious Kentucky Derby run at odds of 10-1.

Before Justify’s victory in 2018, the only other horses to finish in the Derby Top 3 without racing at 2 since 1937 were runner-ups Coaltown (1948), Strodes Creek (1994) and Bodemeister (2012) and third-place finishers Hampden (1946), Agitate (1974), Reinvested (1982), Curlin (2007) and Battle of Midway (2017).

Five were sent to post as the favorite (although two raced as a coupled entry): Justify (2.90-1 in 2018); Bodemeister (4.20-1 in 2012); Air Forbes Won (2.70-1 in 1982); Coaltown (0.40-1 as an entry with winner Citation in 1948); and Perfect Bahram (1.10-1 as an entry with Lord Boswell and Knockdown in 1946).

The following is a list of 75 horses from 1937 to present that started in the Kentucky Derby but did not race at the age of 2:

Horse	Year	Finish
T O Password (JPN)	2024	5 th
Just a Touch	2024	20 th
Mage	2023	1st
Kingsbarns	2023	14 th
Zozos	2022	10 th
Taiba	2022	12 th
Happy Jack	2022	14 th
Charge It	2022	17 th
Sainthood	2021	10 th
Rock Your World	2021	16 th
Soup and Sandwich	2021	18 th
Money Moves	2020	13 th
Justify*	2018	1st
Magnum Moom	2018	19 th
Battle of Midway	2017	3 rd
Patch	2017	14 th
Materiality	2015	6 th
Verrazano	2013	14 th
Bodemeister*	2012	2 nd
Midnight Interlude	2011	16 th
Summer Bird	2009	6 th
Dunkirk	2009	11 th
Curlin	2007	3 rd
Showing Up	2006	6 th
Greeley’s Galaxy	2005	11 th
Song of the Sword	2004	11 th
Atswhatimtalknbout	2003	4 th
Wheelaway	2000	5 th
Curule	2000	7 th
Trippi	2000	11 th
Desert Hero	1999	13 th
Valhol	1999	15 th
Pulpit	1997	4 th
Strodes Creek	1994	2 nd
Devil His Due	1992	12 th
Disposal	1992	18 th
Corporate Report	1991	9 th
Alydavid	1991	14 th
Pendleton Ridge	1990	13 th
Wheatly Hall	1986	6 th
Zabaleta	1986	12 th
Irish Fighter	1985	11 th
Majestic Shore	1984	DNF
Reinvested	1982	3 rd
Air Forbes Won*	1982	7 th
Wavering Monarch	1982	12 th

Horse	Year	Finish
Flying Nashua	1981	8 th
Great Redeemer	1979	10 th
Chief of Dixieland	1978	9 th
Affiliate	1977	9 th
Best Person	1977	15 th
Amano	1976	4 th
On the Sly	1976	5 th
Media	1975	5 th
Bold Chapeau	1975	8 th
Agitate	1974	3 rd
Confederate Yankee	1974	12 th
Forego	1973	4 th
Twice a Prince	1973	12 th
Big Spruce	1972	7 th
Kentuckian	1972	10 th
Dr. Neale	1972	15 th
Fourulla	1971	19 th
Gleaming Sword	1968	13 th
Our Dad	1959	15 th
Gone Fishin’	1958	8 th
No Regrets	1956	7 th
Fanfare	1951	5 th
Golden Birch	1951	19 th
Coaltown (e)*	1948	2 nd
Hampden	1946	3 rd
Perfect Bahram (e)*	1946	9 th
Rippey	1946	10 th
Bert G.	1945	14 th
Comenow	1944	12 th