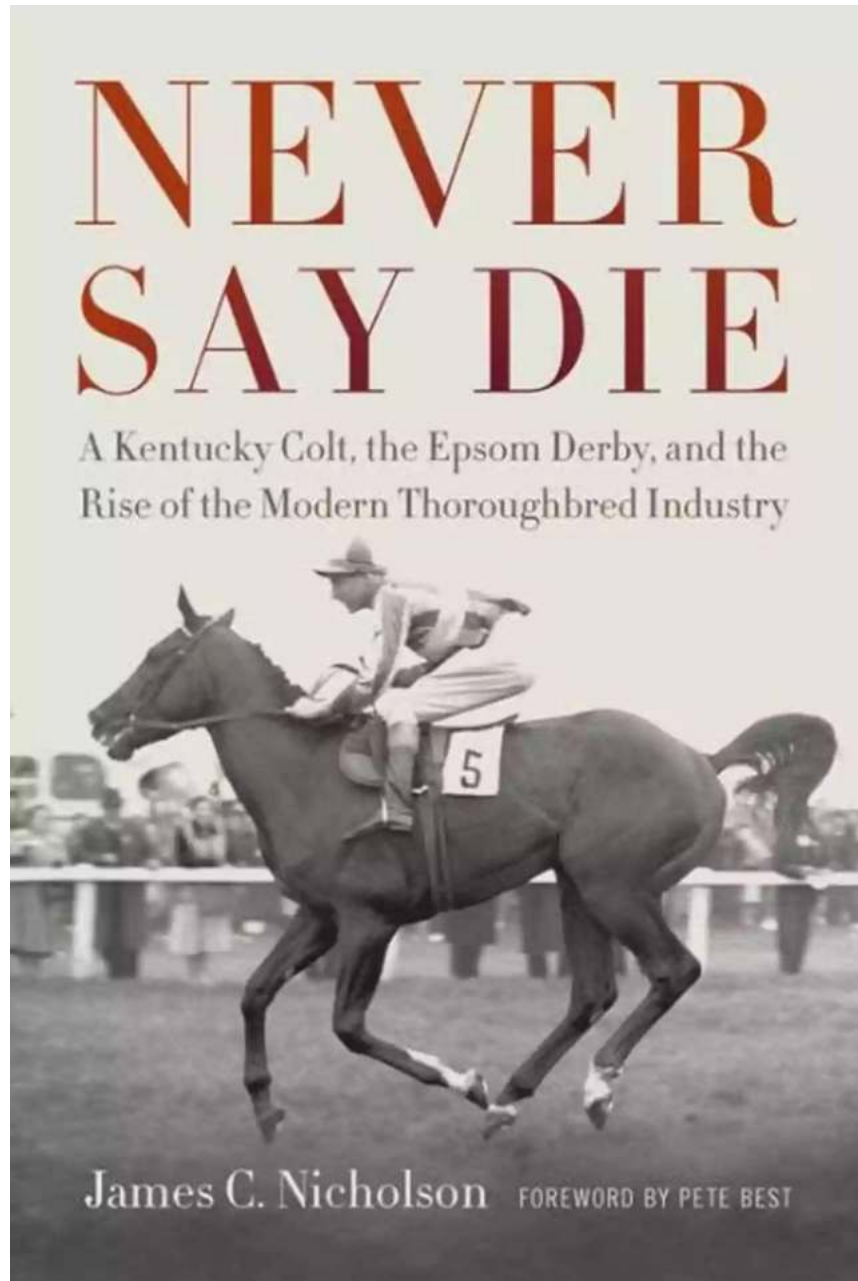


# Kentucky Colt: The Epsom Derby And The Rise Of The Modern Thoroughbred Industry

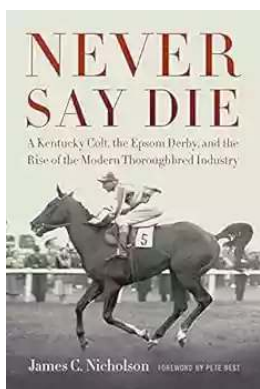


The Epsom Derby, one of the most prestigious horse racing events in the world, has played a significant role in the history and development of the modern thoroughbred industry. This renowned race, held annually at Epsom Downs

Racecourse in Surrey, England, has captivated enthusiasts, breeders, and spectators alike since its inception in 1780.

## Origins of the Epsom Derby

The Epsom Derby owes its existence to the vision and passion of its founder, Edward "The Brewer" Smith-Stanley, the 12th Earl of Derby. Inspired by the excitement of horse racing and the success of the Oaks Stakes, Lord Derby challenged his friends to develop a race that would surpass the Oaks and attract the best horses in England.



### 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



The inaugural Epsom Derby, named after Lord Derby, took place on May 4, 1780. The race covered a distance of one mile, four furlongs, and ten yards. Diomed, owned by Sir Charles Bunbury, emerged victorious, becoming the first winner of the prestigious event.

## The Impact on Thoroughbred Breeding

The Epsom Derby quickly became a benchmark for breeding excellence. The race became an influential platform for showcasing the finest thoroughbred specimens, leading breeders and horse enthusiasts to sustain their pursuit of excellence and advancements in breeding techniques.

Many winners of the Epsom Derby went on to have successful stud careers, further enhancing the reputation of the race. The likes of Ormonde, Bay Middleton, and Galileo contributed significantly to the development of the modern thoroughbred industry.

The prestige associated with the Epsom Derby prompted breeders around the world to focus on raising horses with the potential to compete and triumph at this prestigious event. The Kentucky Colt, from the United States, emerged as a significant player in the growing global thoroughbred industry.

## **The Rise of the Kentucky Colt**

The Kentucky Colt, known for its agility, strength, and speed, soon gained recognition as a prominent contender in the international racing scene. The successful American-bred horse, Spendthrift, made history in 1879 by winning the Epsom Derby, making a pivotal moment for the Kentucky thoroughbred industry.

Spendthrift's victory generated immense interest and excitement, leading to an influx of American investors and breeders in the United Kingdom. This marked the beginning of a new era for the Kentucky Colt and further fortified the strong ties between the American and British thoroughbred industries.

The success of Kentucky Colts, such as Nashua, Northern Dancer, and Secretariat, further cemented their prominence in the global racing landscape. These exceptional horses contributed to the evolution of breeding techniques and

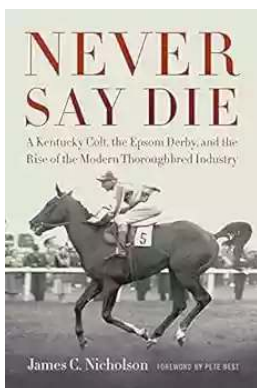
the establishment of successful bloodlines that dominate the thoroughbred industry today.

## The Legacy of the Epsom Derby

The Epsom Derby's impact on the modern thoroughbred industry is undeniable. This legendary race has not only contributed to the development of breeding techniques and bloodlines but has also served as an inspiration for countless breeders and racing enthusiasts.

Today, the Epsom Derby continues to be a pinnacle event in the racing calendar, attracting top-quality horses from around the world. It remains a testament to the enduring legacy of the Kentucky Colt and the ever-evolving thoroughbred industry.

, the Epsom Derby and the rise of the modern thoroughbred industry are intricately connected. This historic race has shaped the breeding practices, worldwide interest, and success of the Kentucky Colt and other thoroughbred horses. The lasting legacy of this race serves as a testament to the enduring passion and dedication of breeders, owners, and racing enthusiasts who continue to push the boundaries of excellence in the thoroughbred industry.



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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.

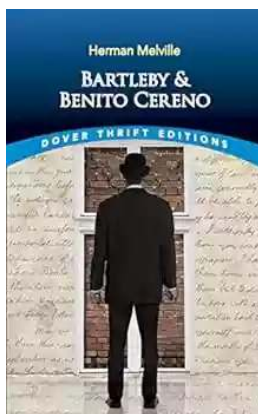
Featuring a foreword by the original drummer for the Beatles, Pete Best, this remarkable book reveals how an underdog's surprise victory played a part in the formation of the most successful and influential rock band in history and made the Bluegrass region of Kentucky the center of the international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