

NBC Sports Group Media Conference

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Mike Tirico

Lindsay Schanzer

Jerry Bailey

Randy Moss

Eddie Olczyk

Donna Brothers

Larry Collmus

Kentucky Derby Media Conference

THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon, everybody. Welcome to today's call to preview The 150th Kentucky Derby. NBC SPORTS will present 12 1/2 hours of coverage this Friday and Saturday across NBC, USA Network, and Peacock, highlighted by the Kentucky Derby show at 2:30 p.m. Eastern on Saturday on NBC and Peacock.

Joining on today's call are Mike Tirico, who hosts his eighth Kentucky Derby for NBC SPORTS; analyst Randy Moss, who is covering the Derby for the 44th time; analyst Jerry Bailey, Hall of Fame jockey and two-time Derby winner, participating in his 31st Run for the Roses, 13th with NBC SPORTS; the handicapper Eddie Olczyk, in his 10th Derby with NBC SPORTS; reporter Donna Brothers, who has covered all 24 Kentucky Derbys for NBC SPORTS; the race caller Larry Collmus in his 14th Derby with NBC SPORTS; and our senior producer, Lindsay Schanzer, working her 13th Derby for NBC SPORTS and leading our production team for the third time.

With that, we'll start with our senior producer, Lindsay Schanzer.

LINDSAY SCHANZER: Thanks, Dan. Hi, everyone. Thanks so much for joining us today.

I just want to start off by saying I and our whole team at NBC absolutely adores covering this event. Every Derby is really special to us. It's just a singular event in American sports and really Americana at large. It's rare in sports



television to be part of --

THE MODERATOR: Did we lose Lindsay? Give us one second.

Mike, we'll get back to Lindsay when she's on.

MIKE TIRICO: And Randy and Jerry, they're all there at Churchill together. I'll get us started. Good morning. Thanks for your patience, everyone.

I'll kind of pick up what Lindsay was saying. It's funny, we didn't pre-discuss our remarks, but I was of a similar vein. This is such a great event. For those who have never been to the Derby, it's aspirational. You'd love to go. For those who have been, they can't wait to get there again.

For this 150th Kentucky Derby, the facelift of Churchill Downs that has transpired over the last three years and a spectacular new paddock that we'll be visiting with some of our show. I'll give you this quick anecdote. Every year during the race, Larry Collmus has this incredible race call, and we're watching very intently because you're on right after they cross the finish line. But I turn around with my iPhone, and I take a picture of the horses coming into the twin spires, all 20 of them, from our spot on turn 1. It's one of those great moments in sports that I love going back through my camera reel and checking out that picture. Look forward to doing it one more time this year.

I did want to make a comment about Jerry and Randy. For those of us who are hosts, there's nothing like having analysts who can handle any question, any thought, without even blinking an eye. You don't have to say, can I say this to Jerry or Randy?

Those two have not only been an incredible team, but they've worked with so many of us as hosts. I just wanted to spend my moment here in comments with an appreciation for their talent, their ability, their friendship. I love getting to sit next to those guys, especially on Derby day. Look forward to that, and I'll be happy to answer any questions as we go to that portion of it.

LINDSAY SCHANZER: I'm back, Mike. Sorry about that, everybody.

MIKE TIRICO: Here's my producer pal. Go ahead.



LINDSAY SCHANZER: Fingers crossed for no drop again. I'll try to keep going. I was just talking about how rare it is for NBC to be part of such a rare milestone as this. This one is so rare that no other sporting event in American history has run this long uninterrupted.

The Derby is a thrill and an honor to put on every year, but we expect this to be bigger and better than ever. There's a lot more excitement.

THE MODERATOR: I think we had another drop-off there. Let's go to Eddie Olczyk, working his 10th Derby.

EDDIE OLCZYK: Let's get all the kinks out now before we get to Friday and Saturday.

It is great to be a part of the best team and best horse racing team there is anywhere. Hard to believe personally that this is my 10th opportunity to be a part of this team, and I'm just thrilled and looking forward to seeing a lot of familiar faces who are as talented with what they do as anywhere in any sport.

When you have Lindsay in command and her team and when you have Mike Tirico as our captain and getting us all around on Derby Day, we, his teammates, are in good hands. We just can't wait to get there later today, myself, and be able to celebrate the 150th running. Hopefully we can -- with my job of working with Matt Bernier, and hopefully give people an opportunity to make a few bucks as well and enjoying the entire day.

It's just great to be back and great to be back with our team.

THE MODERATOR: Let's go to Donna Brothers.

DONNA BROTHERS: Hi, thanks for having me. It's truly an honor and a pleasure.

The only thing that I'd like to say is that I grew up in horse racing. My mother was a jockey. I was a jockey. My brother and sister were both jockeys. I came to the coverage of horse racing with NBC SPORTS thinking that I knew everything you needed to know about horse racing, and then NBC finds new angles and new stories and new ways to present the sport to people every year.

I feel like the longer I've been part of the NBC team and the longer I've been involved with horse racing, the less I know because there's always some new story, some new angle. NBC always finds a way to pull that story out of the trenches and bring it home to the viewers. It's really been a great pleasure to be part of such an amazing team.

The other thing is that I think my first show is a two-hour show in 2001, and we covered the Kentucky Derby, two hours to cover a two-minute race. Now we're up to two days, 7 1/2 hours on Derby Day. I think we're on for five or six hours on Oaks, and we still aren't able to tell all the stories because there's so many great stories to tell.

Really it's a pleasure to be part of this wonderful team and watch the whole entire broadcast evolve into not the coverage of a race, but the coverage of truly a huge event.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, Donna. Let's go to Larry.

LARRY COLLMUS: I'm certainly looking forward to calling the Kentucky Derby for the 14th time. I have a hard time believing it's been that long since my first one calling Animal Kingdom back in 2011. I can't wait to get together with this team one more time.

I'm at Churchill Downs now. I'm actually sitting in a little shack right by the clubhouse turn here at the track, and I'm looking forward to heading over and seeing all the folks I'm going to work with all week long.

I'm going to be calling 14 races. I believe it's 5 and 9; 5 on Oaks Day, 9 on Derby Day. Looking forward to doing that and getting tuned up for the big one coming up just before 7:00 on Saturday. It's going to be great.

I also understand, and Lindsay will probably talk more about this, but I am told that I'm going to be teaching the great Andres Cantor how to call a horse race. I'm looking forward to meeting him and doing that, and hopefully they'll let me say "Goooooal." Let's get this thing going, Dan.

THE MODERATOR: Hopefully Lindsay is back with us.

LINDSAY SCHANZER: I'm back and fingers crossed. Larry is right, we do have that feed up. We're really excited to welcome Andres here. That's should be a piece. Yeah, just one of many, many stories we're excited about telling. Happy to answer questions about them.

One of the main things, talking about the new paddock, one of the plans we have to showcase it is a brand-new SkyCam. We've got a four-point cable system that will be over the new paddock. We're excited about that. A couple of other production adds we have this year as well that we're looking forward to integrating. All part of our five hours of network coverage and beyond to do Derby 150 justice.

With that, Mr. Randy Moss?



RANDY MOSS: Sorry for the technical difficulties. We tried a new phone. Thanks to Mike Tirico for the kind words.

If you notice when you watch our shows, I am always sitting in the middle, and Jerry Bailey is always sitting on the end, which gives me the flexibility that, if I get a question I can't handle, I can just turn my head and look at Jerry and put all the pressure on Jerry.

We're really looking forward on many levels, not just the Derby being Derby 150 and not just the Derby and the Oaks itself, every year it seems like the undercard races at Churchill Downs get better and better. It's like a mini Breeders' Cup. This year the undercard races are the best from top to bottom that I can ever remember.

We've already been out there this morning, Jerry and I, in a golf cart touring around, talking to as many trainers as we can. We'll do that on the phone as well, Jerry behind the wheel. Not surprisingly, he's a pretty good driver of the golf cart. I know that won't shock anybody.

We're looking forward to it. It's hard work, so many races, but it's passion for all of us, and we have a whole helluva lot of fun doing it. Mr. Bailey?

JERRY BAILEY: Thanks. This is my 35th Derby, actually, either riding or broadcasting. I rode in 17th, and it's my 18th either doing radio or broadcasting on television. It doesn't seem like that long actually.

For those of you out there who don't know how the, quote/unquote, sausage is made out here, it's quite a scene with Mike and Randy and I and Lindsay and the whole crew in this production trailer because a lot of information is bounced back and forth, and Mike is privy to hearing what Randy and I say, and we kind of touch on a lot of points, which comes in handy because invariably with so much information, there's things that I'll forget that we research and we know, but we forget to say in the moment maybe. And Mike, having heard it in here, can then tee us up on those very points that we had made a couple or three days earlier.

So it's great to have a guy like Mike participate in the putting together of all this information that we present to the public on Friday and Saturday, and it works well because he's in the middle of it. Mike, thanks to that. Great host and looking forward to another great Derby.

RANDY MOSS: In many cases, Mike already knows the stuff before Jerry and I talk about it anyway.

JERRY BAILEY: That's it.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, guys. We'll open it up to questions.

Q. Lindsay, you obviously mentioned some of the technologies that will be used. Kind of going beyond the race, whether it's the new set you guys have, just being part of the 150th race of this iconic event, just go a little deeper about what it means to someone like you and working with the guys on this team and what it means for the network at large.

LINDSAY SCHANZER: I love this event every year. I can't believe that I'm lucky enough to have just sort of fallen into my producing responsibilities that happened to roll over Derby 150. It's a great stroke of luck that I'm honored to be at the helm for.

As you can tell by the comments that everybody made here so far, we love working together. This is the greatest group. We are great friends. We're great colleagues. Everybody works really hard for the year between Kentucky Derbys. We call a lot of racing otherwise, but there's just a really deep dive all year-round in making sure we know the stories and we get to this point and we're really prepared.

It's just a fun event, and we do our best to cover every aspect of it. I would just say that I hope it's not cliché, but I really do feel honored to be a part of it and to get to bring this spectacle to audiences around the country and hopefully amplify it with great stories and give people a look at every element of the race, this iconic venue, and the great traditions that make this such a memorable event.

Q. The morning line favorite, Fierceness, appears to be the fastest horse in the race. He's had a good race, bad race, good race pattern. Jerry, as a jockey, what did you try to do when you're on a horse that has a sort of in-and-out pattern? And a question to the handicappers. What do you do when handicapping a horse like Fierceness?

JERRY BAILEY: If you're riding a horse that's like an every-other-race horse, you try to figure out what's been going wrong in the races that he doesn't run well in. Randy and I in our research this morning, we asked trainer Todd Pletcher that very thing. Why does he not run well? We know it's because he doesn't break real well on those occasions, but what makes him not break well? He's kind of at a loss to tell us.

Like many things in horse racing, we don't really know. These horses can't talk, so we don't know the definitive



answer, but it seems like this horse has done everything right since his last win, and by all metrics, we believe, based upon the way he's trained, that he will be able to put two races together.

Of course we don't know that. We won't know that until after the race is won. The answer to your question, what can we do as a jockey? There's not a whole lot you can do as a jockey to keep a horse from running poorly if that's what he's intended to do that day. It's really basically up to the horse.

Q. For the handicappers, what do you do to handicap a horse like this? Randy or Eddie?

RANDY MOSS: In this case, in the case of Fierceness, there are some explanations for the poor efforts really. If you look at the Champagne in particular, which was his first poor effort as a 2-year-old, not only did he break sluggishly, but he got knocked around a little bit. It was a sloppy racetrack. He never had dirt in his face. He not only gets dirt in his face, he gets a wall of water kicked in his face, only his second lifetime start.

So you can kind of give a horse a pass when he's put in a situation like that that he's never experienced before. Then in the Holy Bull, he got bounced around again from side to side leaving the starting gate. I think the term in the Racing Forum was he got pin-balled, which is a pretty accurate description. Does that completely explain the way he ran? No, he placed third. It's not like he ran terribly.

So at least there were some things that happened during the race that you can look at and you can say, okay, this might have had something to do with why he ran so poorly.

EDDIE OLCZYK: This is Eddie. From the gambling point of view, there certainly are questions imposed by gamblers. Are you willing to back a horse? You heard Jerry and Randy talk about Fierceness since the large win the last time, are you willing to back a horse that looks like he's going to be the favorite come post time? It's all part of the puzzle in how you see the race playing out.

That's the greatest challenge of a field that is going to be 20 right now. A lot of things can happen. When you do see horses that maybe have had some tough trips and maybe haven't fought through the adversity as much as we would all like, then maybe you knock that horse down a notch or two but maybe still have that incredible ability to be able to finish and hit the boards.

It's an amazing puzzle when you are trying to handicap a race full of 20 equine athletes. Certainly some questions to

ponder, at least for me, with the in-and-out type of form when you look at it on paper. As Randy perfectly described, when you visually watch and see all what happened, it's okay, well, great horses seem to be able to make their own trips, and nobody could speak to that better than Jerry.

I will be listening very intently all weekend to my pal and his sidekick in Randy.

Q. I just wanted to ask one follow-up to the entire group. In the last five years, we've had two disqualifications, a Derby run in September, a crazy 80-1 longshot, all the scratches last year. It's Derby 150. Is this the craziest five-year stretch in Derby history?

JERRY BAILEY: I'm not sure about that because, unlike what Randy will tell you that I was around in the '30s, they had two jockeys fighting on their horses as they came down to the wire, John Mead being one of them. I don't know if it's one of these years that's been the craziest, but as a collection, in my memory, yeah, this is probably the weirdest five-year period.

RANDY MOSS: You rode in that race, right?

JERRY BAILEY: Yeah, right, Randy.

RANDY MOSS: It's been pretty wild, it has been. It's been crazy. Derby history goes back a helluva long way. It's hard for us to say it's been the craziest five years in the history of race.

LINDSAY SCHANZER: I'd say that every year looking into this, we say, oh, is this the year it's going to be a normal Derby? I'm not really sure what that looks like anymore. It's going to be whatever it's going to be. We'll be ready for it.

Q. How about the producer's perspective?

DONNA BROTHERS: First of all, I think we need to blame that on Nick Luck. Ever since he joined the broadcast, all this madness has been happening. He brought it with him from England. Hopefully he doesn't bring any more madness this year.

It's been a little crazy. With the year that I wasn't able to interview the winning jockey, when Rich Strike won the Kentucky Derby, that was peculiar. That has never happened to me in the course of covering races at any point ever because Rich Strike was really wound up after the race and just really not very, very calm. So we weren't able to approach him.

Then in the case with Maximum Security, when I interviewed the winning jockey, we didn't know yet there was going to be any sort of an inquiry for an objection. So we wouldn't have been able to talk to the jockey had we known that already.

Hopefully we have -- Larry Collmus is pretty much my beacon in the night because I just listen to the call of the race from horseback. I can't really watch the race at the same time. So I'm hoping that I don't hear Larry Collmus say too close to call at the end and that we have a clear winner and that there are no objections, inquiries, or other crazy aftermaths.

LARRY COLLMUS: I was just going to say being part of the last five years has been absolutely nuts with the different things that have gone on. A lot of that on my end hasn't necessarily been that crazy, except for maybe Rich Strike. I just remember when he came off of the wire and watching in the booth with my hands on my head in total disbelief because he'd actually won the race. I remember saying to people I don't think he should have been 80-to-1, he should have been 800-to-1.

It's been a wild few years. We'll see what this year has in store for us.

MIKE TIRICO: I think this continues to enhance the event. There's a great unknown here. Then you add the human drama that's been on top of this over the last five years.

It's a day that's unique. It's a day that is massive. It's a day that you know, when you leave the hotel in the darkness of the morning, you're going to see something that you probably haven't seen before and may not see again. That makes it fun to get to Derby Day. It makes the buildup all the more enjoyable.

Then we usually walk off the set at 7:30 and just shake our heads and go, Did that really happen? That's fun. That's why sports is the best drama going, and the Derby has delivered it in spades the last five years. The magic words in TV are "stay tuned," and the Derby has defined stay tuned the last five years. So let's do it again.

Q. For Jerry, Randy, and Edzo, just with Fierceness, how tough is it to do the juvenile Derby double? It's been only two times in 40 years. Is it a jinx, or is it just because of the Derby past, there's such attrition in trying to pull off the double?

JERRY BAILEY: I think a lot of it is, as a 2-year-old, maybe the ones that win the juvenile championship are more developed at that time. Six months later, these

3-year-olds are like high school and college kids. They develop and get mature and get better so quickly from month to month to month it's a different set of horses that mature and reach to the top of the class than it was back in November of the previous year.

These horses develop at such a rapid rate, a lot of the times it's just different horses that are more mature and more talented for the Derby than they were back in November for the Breeders' Cup.

RANDY MOSS: I'm not a big believer in jinxes especially as it applies to the Kentucky Derby. There were always for years all of these rules, you have to run as a 2-year-old, all of these different things that have fallen by the wayside.

To Jerry's point, with human athletes, we all know going through middle school and high school, there are guys that are big and beefy and better athletes than women, better athletes than anybody else, and by the time you get older, others have caught up to them, and suddenly they're not as dominant anymore as they used to be.

It's the same thing in horse racing. A lot of the early maturing horses are the ones that win the Breeders' Cup juvenile, and in today's horse racing world, horses are running less often, and they're getting started a little bit later in their 2-year-old season.

If you look at Justify, who swept the Triple Crown in 2018, he had never even started when they ran the Breeders' Cup Juvenile. You get the same this year with horses that just weren't ready to run it. There's a lot of factors that go into it.

EDDIE OLCZYK: This is Edzo. I would say from the gambling aspect of it, unless a horse has had success at Churchill Downs and trying to accomplish something that hadn't been done in 40 years and what have you, and obviously that's not the case with Fierceness with the juvenile, but I would more look at -- me, personally, I think most handicappers would look at just recency, just the most recent race and the working and the pattern of getting to the Kentucky Derby.

At some point, as Randy alluded to, you're going to have things that happen that haven't happened before just because times are different and training methods are different. We're going to get an opportunity to see some special equine athletes here and see if we can continue to add to those numbers here if Fierceness is able to accomplish that daily double.

Q. Just as a follow-up, Randy mentioned the great undercard races, Edzo. Is there one in particular for a

handicapper that you're focused on? It looks like the La Troienne especially is pretty packed this year.

EDDIE OLCZYK: Yeah, I am navigating and stick-handling my way through a lot of the races. I would agree with Randy, I'm going to take the Fifth here specifically on one. But a couple of the grass races over the course of two days -- I don't know if Randy and Jerry would agree -- but it's almost Breeders' Cup-like, where you can plop these races, a couple of the turf races, into November and you'd say, wow, this is a helluva Breeders' Cup race. A lot of things can happen, maybe some horses aren't here and have been shipped into Churchill Downs.

But a couple of the grass races to me, you can go both five or six different directions. I've got a pretty good chance, Jerry, if I pick five or six horses on the show for one race, I've got a pretty good chance. You can for sure bust my chops on at least I got the winner with picking five or six.

JERRY BAILEY: Listen, Edzo. We all know how hard it is to pick winners with all these great horses. It's terrifically hard to do.

But one thing I wanted to mention is this is the only time any of us, once a year, are asked to watch 20 horses. Even if it's 18 with scratches, and try and pick out every horse in the race so that we can tell the audience intelligently when it's over where does this horse come from? Where is this horse early in the race? What happened to this horse? It's really hard.

I've got to tip my hat to Larry Collmus because he does it without any help. We've got Amy Zimmerman in our ear, and she watches these races as good as anybody, and what we might miss -- I can only watch about 6 horses of the 18 or 20. What we miss, she'll pick up. So it's a big help in our ears, having a third person watch this race so closely and be able to tell us things that we might have missed. So it's a team effort.

Again, my hat's off to Larry for being able to do this flawlessly.

LARRY COLLMUS: This gives me an idea. We need to get together. I'll pick six to watch, you pick six to watch, and he can pick six to watch, and we can bypass a couple of the huge long shots and hope they don't win.

EDDIE OLCZYK: As you know -- it's Edzo -- I'm just watching one horse, the horse I'm going to pick. You guys are on your own (laughter).

Q. Curious how much internal discussion you guys have had about how to approach the controversy

surrounding Bob Baffert not being here once again, and the fact that there's a horse named Moose who might well have been the favorite had he been allowed to run who is kind of waiting in the wings for the Preakness. Both from a telecast standpoint and personal standpoint, how do some of you feel about the way this has played out around the larger Derby conversation this year?

LINDSAY SCHANZER: I can take that to start, and I'd love Mike to chime in as well. I'll just say, while the story is a big one, absolutely, and Moose certainly would have been a contender, I don't know he would have been a favorite in the race. I should say that.

The story itself is one we'll acknowledge but not linger on, and the reason for that is because he's not in the race and the horse isn't in the race. It's our job to inform the audience about the horses that are in the race and what they should be paying attention to when their Derby actually happens. From a production perspective, that's what we'll be focused on.

As with the Baffert situation, as any news emerges, we'll cover it as we always have, but our biggest focus will be the horses in the race and all the pageantry associated with Derby 150.

Mike, I don't know if you had anything to add.

MIKE TIRICO: Sure. Look, we have spent hours upon hours over the last two-plus years on all of our racing shows discussing these various situations, whether it's the incidents that have happened, the legal followings, how that has played out in the judicial process, our thoughts on the decisions, the state of horse racing, all of that.

If there's new ground to cover, then it makes sense. At this point, we've covered most of that ground on these many shows. Certainly, as Lindsay said, there's a place and a right point to mention it, to explain what's happened, but to sit there and spend another five or six minutes on an issue we've gone over the last three years really -- and it's not just the Derby show, it's all the shows -- I don't know that's the best use of our time at this point. Unless something new happens over the next three or four days, which has happened over the last few years, and we've adjusted.

We've adjusted on the fly. Go back and watch last year and we make some very direct and pointed comments on the sport, the state of the sport, and candidly nothing has changed. I'll stand on my statement last year that, if the people who are the major stakeholders don't get their act together, this sport is not going to continue to grow. It's seen stunted growth over the last few years that will only

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

continue.

To say that again, I don't think really anything has happened that causes us to have to do that right now, but stay tuned. Like I said before, if something happens that we need to be on top of, we will be.

Q. This is for Randy and Jerry. This being Eddie's 10th year, when did he evolve, in your eyes, from a hockey guy to a horse racing handicapper, and what has he brought to the broadcasts?

RANDY MOSS: I can start off with this one. I have been told by many people going back before Edzo started doing horse racing for NBC, you've got to meet this guy. This guy is a huge horse racing guy, big horse racing fan. At some point you need to meet him.

I was in Sochi, Russia, and was talked by friends of mine into going to one of the hockey games for the Olympics. I looked down, and there's Eddie Olczyk down with Doc Emrick, and after the first period, Eddie comes up and introduces himself and sits down next to me. The guys I was with, I told them I know nothing about hockey, and they were aghast that Eddie would come up and sit down to me.

All we talked about was horses, not hockey. After the second period, he came back up and sat down again, and all we talked about was horses and not hockey. It was very obvious at that point that Eddie Olczyk was not just a hockey guy. He was a -- knew a lot about horse racing, very knowledgeable about horse racing.

Fortunately after that, NBC made a decision to put him on the horse racing telecast as well as his hockey duties, and he's been a fantastic addition.

JERRY BAILEY: For me, it gives me somebody to go back and forth with and make fun of. Love you, Edzo.

Q. Lindsay, you had mentioned the SkyCam for the paddock, but I was hoping you might expand on the impact of the new paddock on the production. How will the broadcast be different this year with that new paddock in play?

LINDSAY SCHANZER: Part of it is just the visuals. It does look drastically different. It's kind of similar to some of the paddocks you might see over in Europe. It's really sprawling. It's a bit of a coliseum-like environment. The coolest thing about it is it used to be you would walk through the gates of Churchill Downs, and you were immediately met with the back of a box style paddock. Maybe you can see the twin spires sort of peeking out over

the top.

Now you walk in, and it's this sprawling horseshoe-shaped behemoth with the twin spires sort of front and center, and the horse stalls in a horseshoe fashion beneath them. So it really gives you that breathtaking, jaw-dropping experience when you first walk in.

A lot of that will help build the drama of it. We'll showcase it throughout the event. The SkyCam will give us the best opportunity to do that from a visual standpoint. Our show will start -- I don't know if Dan mentioned this at the beginning because we dropped a few times obviously -- but our show will start in a new studio we have overlooking the paddock, so our desk, Jerry, Randy, Mike, and Ahmed, before the network coverage begins, we'll start in that paddock set, so we'll really have that as the backdrop to begin things.

Beyond that, it's just a matter of how it plays out, if anything's different. We haven't experienced it here at Churchill. We've been watching racing that happened today, everything that happened on Saturday, it seems like everything is working really well. We'll keep an eye out to see if it changes the timing of anything or how the horses behave. We're expecting all smooth things. We're excited to see it in play for Derby Day.

Q. Just a really quick follow-up, you did drop out on that earlier on the call when you must have mentioned that it would start in the studio above the paddock. Was there any consideration or discussion about relocating that desk for the entire broadcast?

LINDSAY SCHANZER: It wasn't in the plans. We'll move our group out to our first turn set, which also has a pretty iconic backdrop with the grandstand of 150,000-fold, also includes the infield and the twin spires behind them and the track. It lends itself well to the anticipation that builds towards the race, and of course the walkover that is a really dramatic moment in the coverage when all the Derby connections and the horses themselves make their way over from the barn to the front side. They pass right by our desk.

I think it gives the guys at the desk a feeling of being right in the middle of it. They're able to see the horses. I think the move from the paddock to the front side at that point works very well with the crescendo of the day.

MIKE TIRICO: I'm not getting cheated out of my picture of the horses coming by the spires either. We'll be out at turn 1 for the race. We did the paddock a few years ago. This is going to be even better.

It's much like the Super Bowl, and this is like a Super Bowl event in terms of TV coverage. So often Super Bowl, I think of L.A. and Super Bowl LVI we did, we started outside of SoFi Stadium, and we're on the field before the game. This is the exact same model networks have done for the last few years.

It just makes sense. It gives you a change of scenery for these multiple hours. When Lindsay told me we were going to do the show out at the paddock to start with and then move inside, that that option was on the plate, I thought it was a great idea by her to give you a little feel for the new Churchill Downs but then take you back to the classic before the classic race starts.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you for joining us today, everybody. We look forward to seeing you this weekend for our coverage at Churchill Downs.

As a reminder to the media, we'll have a transcript of this call later this afternoon at our new [NBCsports.com/pressbox](https://www.nbcsports.com/pressbox) website.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports