

SPORTS

Kentucky Derby host welcomes Sports Illustrated-sponsored dining club

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Parent company Churchill Downs Incorporated is announcing the formation of a multiyear partnership with American publisher *Sports Illustrated*.
Image credit: Churchill Downs Racetrack

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

The next edition of the Kentucky Derby will feature a new luxury dining experience.

Parent company Churchill Downs Incorporated, which has hosted the event since 1875, is announcing the formation of a multiyear partnership with American publisher *Sports Illustrated*. The media giant will work with Kentucky Derby organizers to introduce "Club SI" as the live horse racing event celebrates its 150th anniversary.

"As we approach the 150th Kentucky Derby, we are thrilled to partner with a brand as iconic as *Sports Illustrated* to offer guests an enhanced way to enjoy this incredible anniversary event," said Mike Anderson, president of [Churchill Downs Racetrack](#), in a statement.

"Sports Illustrated shares our goal of combining exciting sports moments with upscale entertainment, and Club SI will provide the perfect space to achieve this."

Luxury dining at Kentucky Derby

A popular media giant is bringing an equine-focused concept to the historic entertainment site.

Those visiting the venue can head to the west side of the field to access immersive views and behind-the-scenes perks provided by *Sports Illustrated*.



Unveiling on the first night of Derby Week, Club SI will serve gourmet plates aside immersive views of the venue's all-new Paddock. Image credit: Churchill Downs Racetrack

Unveiling on the first night of Derby Week, Club SI will serve gourmet plates from the curated Chef's Table Buffet, as well as designated wagering windows, private bars and outdoor trackside viewing for live races.

The exclusive space accommodates parties of two, four, six or eight guests on premium race days.

Additionally, positioned just steps away from the club, a corner called the "SI Enclosure" places guests front row amid this year's Kentucky Derby, kicking off May 4, 2024.

It is here that SI Club attendees can take advantage of special Paddock and Paddock Runway views, both of which boast new digs, recently debuted as part of a renovation project costing \$200 million.

Throughout its installation at Churchill Downs Racetrack, the magazine's codes can be seen.



Throughout the installation, the magazine's codes can be seen. Image credit: Churchill Downs Racetrack

Memorable *Sports Illustrated* covers and stories highlighting previous competitions held at the racetrack remain on view inside of Club SI. The outlet's new vertical, entitled "SI Resorts," is also central to the exhibition.

Additionally, celebrity ambassadors are set to support. The sports industry VIPs will promote the launch, acting as guides during the Kentucky Derby and Kentucky Oaks.

The deal arrives during a pivotal programming year for the Churchill Downs Racetrack, home to the Kentucky Derby for more than a century.

It could breathe new life into the longest continually held annual sporting event in the United States, one with which luxury has long maintained close ties ([see story](#)).

"It is an honor to bring Club SI to Churchill Downs Racetrack, which has such a rich history that we've showcased through the pages of *Sports Illustrated* for decades," said Michael Sherman, SVP of media brands at Authentic Brands Group, owner of the *Sports Illustrated* brand, in a statement.

"Club SI will celebrate iconic elements of the brand, while hosting celebrity talent and offering guests gourmet cuisine and cocktails, a unique vantage point of the new Paddock, and a once-in-a-lifetime horse racing experience for Derby 150."

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