

## Justify Heading Home After Churchill Parade, Ceremony

By Dave Lukow

Justify, undefeated and just having won the Triple Crown, is returning to familiar turf.

Trained by Bob Baffert, Justify resumed training June 14 at Churchill Downs. It was his first session since winning the Belmont Stakes in New York June 9. Ridden by exercise rider Humberto Gomez, Justify jogged a mile at the iconic Kentucky track. Baffert's assistant, Jimmy Barnes, riding stable pony, Sunny, accompanied the pairing for the run.

The horse is slated to parade in front of the clubhouse and grandstand at Churchill Downs June 16. Following the third race, Justify will go to the winner's circle for a special ceremony for those behind his development, including owners WinStar Farm, China Horse Club, Starlight Racing, and Head of Plains Partners. Baffert, jockey Mike Smith and breeder John Gunther will be honored as well. Members of the group will be presented Kentucky Derby trophies.

"He went back to the track today, jogged, and came out of it really well," Baffert said. "(Jimmy Barnes) said he was pretty happy, so we're going to take him back (on the track) tomorrow, go light with him, parade him Saturday at Churchill, and he'll be here at Santa Anita Sunday afternoon."

"It's special getting him back to Churchill Downs," Barnes said. "We know there are a lot of his fans here, and it's exciting for all of us involved."

Once back at his home base, Santa Anita Park, Justify will spend a few days out of the spotlight. He'll parade at the Arcadia, Calif., racetrack June 23.

Baffert, who also trained American Pharoah, the winner of the Triple Crown in 2015, is taking a wait-and-see approach regarding Justify's next race.

"We have no plans yet," he said. "We'll just get him here and go from there."

Horses trained by Baffert have won five Kentucky Derbies, seven Preakness Stakes, three Belmont Stakes and three Kentucky Oaks.