

Affirmed exhibit on display

The Kentucky Horse Park lays out the red carpet in memory of Affirmed.

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The Kentucky Horse Park's International Museum of the Horse in Lexington unveiled a new permanent exhibition on June 6 featuring the great Triple Crown winner, Affirmed. The exhibition was made possible through the horse's owners, Louis and Patrice Wolfson.

In 1978, Affirmed won the Triple Crown, and no horse since has done the same. His duels with Calumet Farm's Alydar stand as perhaps the greatest rivalry in the history of American horse racing.

The exhibition includes an interactive audio element featuring interviews with the Affirmed team, including trainers, grooms and handlers, and a specially created video highlighting Affirmed's march to the Triple Crown. It also features his entire racing trophy collection, including his Triple Crown trophies, his racing silks, blanket, halter and numerous photos.

Bred, owned and raced at the Wolfson's Harbor View Farm, Affirmed won 14 grade I victories during his career. He was voted a champion at 2, 3 and 4 years of age, and was named Horse of the Year in 1978 and 1979. He also established the record for annual earnings and became the first \$2-million money-earner in the history of Thoroughbred racing.

Trained by Laz Barrera, at age 2 Affirmed finished ahead of his arch-rival Alydar in four of their six meetings, winning the Youthful and Hopeful Stakes and Belmont and Laurel Futurities. As a 3-year-old, Affirmed won eight consecutive races including the Triple Crown. With Steve Cauthen, Affirmed beat Alydar by one-and-a-half lengths in the Kentucky Derby, by a neck in the Preakness, and by a head in the Belmont. At age 4, Affirmed, ridden by Hall of Fame jockey Laffit Pincay, Jr. concluded his great career by winning his last seven races, culminating with a scintillating victory in the Jockey Club Gold Cup over Spectacular Bid and Belmont winner, Coastal. At stud, Affirmed sired 12 champions before his death in 2001. Pincay said of Affirmed, "If you had to pick the five greatest horses in history, Affirmed would be right there with them."