



**Weekly Horseplaying Report and Fun Stuff**

Vol. 11 No. 6 (Issue #524)

Thursday, February 25, 2016

By Ivan Bigg

**QUICKLY, GO TO HPIbet:** Races from Dubai begin at 9 a.m. including California Chrome. Get program pages and race-by-race analysis [here](#).

**Here they come!  
Tomorrow is move-in day!**

ASD assistant racing director **Derek Corbel** expects at least six trainers to be moving in their horses tomorrow as the Assiniboia Downs backstretch opens for the 2016 live racing season. The backstretch diner opens tomorrow as well. The training track and Equi-cizer open on Mar. 1 (Tuesday).

Among trainers expected to arrive tomorrow with horses are **Elton Dickey, Tanya Lindsay, Shelley Brown, Cole Bennett, Lorna Gray and Tom Gardipy, Jr.**

The 50-day season begins Mother's Day, May 8. See schedule [here](#). More Sunday night racing and an evening post time of 7:30 p.m., 30 minutes later than last year, are the main changes.



This will be the scene tomorrow (Michael Burns photo of horses moving in at Woodbine)

**Bullet briefs . . .**

- **What [bonus money](#) will be added to your HPI account tomorrow?**
- **Rainbow 6 continues to grow. Today it's \$1.7 million! (Win it!)**
- **Player's Choice tourney goes this Saturday. Sign up!**
- **Balooga Bull is back in action; worked out at Fonner Tuesday**
- **"I want to win the trainer title." -- 18-year-old ASD trainer**
- **Say it ain't so! Northlands' last day is Aug. 27**
- **"I won big" group gets slammed; retaliates by winning**
- **Another Nova Scotia ticket wins giant Woodbine jackpot**

FEBRUARY 2016			
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Click for schedule

**DO THE DOWNS**

Carryovers



The Downs makes a great Caesar salad. Try it!

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<b>21</b> Gulfstream 11:35 AM -\$10 SHAVED PRIME RIB	<b>22</b> Monticello 11:25 AM Mahoning 11:45 AM Sam Houston 1 PM Turf Paradise 1:40 PM Woodbine (H) 6:30 PM	<b>23</b> Monticello 11:25 AM Mahoning 11:45 AM Sam Houston 1 PM Turf Paradise 1:40 PM	<b>24</b> Monticello 11:25 AM Gulfstream 11:35 AM Tampa 11:35 AM	<b>25</b> Monticello 11:25 AM Gulf, Tampa 11:35 AM Aqueduct 12:20 PM Prime rib buffet with pasta bar at 7:30 PM	<b>26</b> Freehold 11:30 AM Gulfstream 11:35 AM Aqueduct 12:20 PM FONNER OPENS 2 PM -\$10 RIB DINNER -\$5 Alive thoroughbred 7 PM -\$10 buy-in poker 7:30 PM -Free VLT tourney 8 PM	<b>27</b> "I won big" 10:30 AM Plaza Player's Choice Tourney DERBY PREP: Fountain of Youth (GP) Gulfstream Stakes at 2 PM -\$10 MEATLOAF DINNER -\$5 Alive harness 7 PM -\$10 buy-in poker 7:30 PM -Free VLT tourney 8 PM
<b>28</b> Parx 11:25 AM Gulfstream 11:35 AM Fonner 1:30 PM -\$10 SHAVED PRIME RIB	<b>29</b> Parx 11:25 AM Sam Houston 1 PM Turf Paradise 1:40 PM Woodbine (H) 6:30 PM	<b>1</b> Parx 11:25 AM Sam Houston 1 PM Turf Paradise 1:40 PM Sunland 2:30 PM	<b>2</b> Gulfstream 11:35 AM Delta 5:40 PM	<b>3</b> Freehold 11:30 AM Gulfstream 11:35 AM Prime rib buffet with pasta bar at 7:30 PM	<b>4</b> Freehold 11:30 AM Gulfstream 11:35 AM Aqueduct 12:20 PM Fonner 2 PM -\$10 RIB DINNER -\$5 Alive thoroughbred 7 PM -\$10 buy-in poker 7:30 PM -Free VLT tourney 8 PM	<b>5</b> "I won big" 10:30 AM Plaza Mahoning 11:15 AM DERBY PREP: Gotham (Aqu) \$500,000 GP Handicap at 6 PM -\$10 MEATLOAF DINNER -\$5 Alive harness 7 PM -\$10 buy-in poker 7:30 PM -Free VLT tourney 8 PM

8 PM - MIDNIGHT: \$6 OFF Peller Estates wine • \$3 OFF nachos, wings • \$2 OFF chicken fingers, skins • \$1 OFF beer, shots

CLICK HERE TO ENLARGE

**IT'S A BIG DEAL -- REALLY -- SO SPREAD THE**

**WORD:** When ASD bartender **Cory O'Grodnik** saw something lacking in the wedding services field, he decided to jump into the gap -- spectacularly -- by organizing the Big Deal Wedding Expo this Saturday (10 a.m. to 6 p.m.) and Sunday (10 a.m. to 5 p.m.) at the Downs. Includes many exhibitors, one-on-one professional wedding help, a fashion show, entertainment, prize draws and more. Be sure to see what Cory has developed and, by all means, spread the word to those who are, or may eventually be, tying the knot. Admission \$15. See their website [here](#).



Official stations of horse racing.  
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# LOVE THE CHUTZPAH!

## Teen trainer shoots for the moon

*"I want to be leading trainer," says 18-year-old Cole Bennett*

When the Downs' stables open tomorrow, 18-year-old trainer **Cole Bennett** says he'll be moving in 20 horses. "So you want to be leading trainer in only your second year of training?" I asked. "You're damn right!" he replied.

Love the chutzpah! But, then again, Cole said he has been dreaming of pursuing this career "since I was six or seven" and he dropped out of high school to make it happen.



POWERFUL DUO: Cole Bennett and Dr. Betty Hughes (Winnipeg Free Press photo)

And what a beginning he made last year. He won his first race last June, just six days after his 18th birthday on May 30. He did it with a 3-year-old Manitoba-bred gelding named -- fittingly -- **Super Me**. He chalked up another first on Manitoba Derby weekend, a one-two finish with **Sailor de Mer** and **Notable Magic**. In all, he logged a remarkable 25 per cent wins (24-6-8-4). He has mainly partnered with owner/breeder **Dr. Betty Hughes**, a veterinarian at the St. Francis Xavier Animal Hospital.

How many wins will he need to earn the title? Last year's top trainers, **Tanya Lindsay** and **Tom Gardipy, Jr.**, tied for 30 in the 50-day meet. To achieve that number, Cole will need a win every two days plus a few more. At a 20 per cent win clip, he'd need to enter two or three horses a day -- a tall order to be sure. But I wouldn't bet against it. Would you?

## "I won big" gets slammed

Group retaliates by winning pick-6, pick-5 and pick-4s

You gotta love the irony. Just as I was heading to the Clubhouse plaza last Saturday morning to host the weekly "I won big" group discussion, a race track regular in the Race Book suddenly lashed out at me for the group's spotty performance he had been reading about in *The Insider*. He pulled from his pocket what he said was \$1,000 and challenged me to beat him in a head-to-head handicapping match, likely expecting to prove I am unworthy of hosting the workshops.



Bad timing. He likely couldn't have imagined this subsequently happening:

A Gulfstream Rainbow 6 ticket I had constructed for the group the night before--in my bathtub, of course--**earned the group \$2,178 for its \$100 outlay**. And the group's analysis of the last five races at Tampa resulted in pick-5 winnings of **\$908** (the payoff for \$1.20) and pick-4 winnings of **\$875** (the payoff for \$6.60). So, in all, **the group picked up \$3,961 for putting up \$440**.

"The good lord must have been looking out for us," said a member of the group who had witnessed the heated exchange between the naysayer and yours truly. Others said something about "karma." My view is that the racing gods have a certain disdain for hubris. But all that matters now is celebrating this nice win with a big platter of extra-crispy bacon this Saturday at 10:30 a.m. when we'll play the usual pick-5 at Tampa and attempt to nail the fat Rainbow jackpot at Gulfstream. And, oh yah, if the naysayer would like to join in, no hard feelings.



Breakfast of champions

## THE WEEK THAT WAS

**BALOOGA BULL WORKS OUT AT FONNER:** Three-time Assiniboia Downs *Horse of the Year* **Balooqa Bull**, who hasn't raced at the Downs since winning the Gold Cup in 2014 and hasn't raced at all anywhere since last April, worked out at Fonner Park in Nebraska Tuesday, posting a time of 49.4 for 4f, the third-fastest of 26 horses.

After leaving the Downs in September, 2014, the 7-year-old raced in three stakes races at Turf Paradise and two at Fonner Park, finishing out of the money in all of them. Racing begins at Fonner Park tomorrow and the meet ends May 7, the day before live racing begins at Assiniboia Downs.

**NOVA SCOTIA TICKET WINS ANOTHER JACKPOT HI 5:** Woodbine reports that, for the second time, a ticket purchased by a Nova Scotian won last Thursday's Jackpot Hi 5 of \$189,000 on the last race of the harness card. A Nova Scotian (the same person?) won the previous jackpot of \$119,000 on Jan. 11 as well. Thursday's 20-cent wheeled ticket looked like this: 4/1-3,6,8-9/1-3,6,8-9/1-3,5-10/1-3,5-10 for a total of \$252. The Jackpot Hi-5 wager continues tonight, Friday, Saturday and Monday at 6:30 p.m. central.

**SAY IT AIN'T SO! NORTHLANDS FINAL DAY IS AUG. 27:** The Canadian Derby will be run at Northlands Park on Saturday, Aug. 20, then, a week later, the Edmonton track will run its very last race. That's because the track area will be turned into an urban festival site as part of re-development that includes Rexall Place which the Oilers will vacate after this season. The thoroughbreds will then move to Century Downs near Calgary where they are scheduled to race from September thru November.



It's farewell forever on Aug. 27

Then what? The future of racing in general in Alberta is up in the air because an agreement Horse Racing Alberta has with the province--to receive \$20 million in slots revenue--expires next month. Will the cash-strapped NDP government continue to funnel slots revenue into racing? And, if so, how much?

**ROSARIO'S HELMET SPLITS IN SCARY ACCIDENT:** Gulfstream jockey **Rafael Hernandez** (237-27-23-23) will be sidelined indefinitely after his kidney was removed and his collarbone fractured and ribs broken in a scary accident in the 11th race at Gulfstream Saturday, the Melody of Colours turf stakes for 3-year-old fillies, that also had **Joel Rosario's**

helmet splitting in half and his wrist broken. Rosario, fourth in the jockey standings (197-35-37-28) is likely to be unable to ride for four to five weeks.

A chain reaction of spills affecting four horses began when Hernandez' horse, **Brandy's Girl**, was bumped by pace-setting **More Royalty** at the top of the stretch. Rosario's mount, **Kandoo** (7-2-2-1), had to be euthanized after tripping over the downed Brandy's Girl.

**UNCERTAIN TIMES IN TEXAS:** A dispute between the Texas Racing Commission and the state legislature over "historical racing" terminals threatens to halt racing in Texas. The commission supports Sam Houston's making money from betting terminals that allow players to bet on races held many years ago. The legislature says that's a new form of gambling that can only be sanctioned by the state -- which it has not.

**SANTA ANITA TO REPLACE TURF COURSE:** Santa Anita will use the time between the end of its spring/summer meet on July 10 and the beginning of the fall Breeders' Cup meet on Sept. 29, to replace its Bermuda and rye grass turf track with 100 per cent Bermuda. Excessive kickback and divots have been an issue at the southern California track.

**GOOD TIMING:** Last year's *Handicapper of the Year*, **Wayne Misko**, joined Saturday's "I won big" group for the first time, turning his \$20 share into \$176. Great timing or what? Did he bring some luck with him, too? There's no stopping us now if he continues to attend. How lucky is he? You may recall he shared in a progressive jackpot at McPhillips Station Casino five years ago that netted him \$288,000.



Wayne Misko  
*Brings luck*

**JUST THINKING:** Wouldn't it be more appropriate for the stats on Canadian NHL teams be removed from the sports pages and placed with the comic strips or the obituaries? The only team among seven that has a winning record is the Ottawa Senators -- and barely so.

## Where are they now?

by Rob MacLennan

### ***Will Witt Six warm things up at Delta tonight for Gourneau?***

Trainer **Jerry Gourneau**, looking to return to his winning ways at Delta and Sam Houston, is hoping his **Witt Six**, the 4-year-old Manitoba Derby runner-up, will turn things around tonight for him at Delta in the sixth race. He also has three horses entered Saturday at Sam Houston. His best recent result was a third place finish by the 3-year-old **Lift Me Up** at Delta.

Next week, watch for **Charlie Smith's** horses at Sam Houston: 3-year-old filly **Sedona Sky** in race 1 Monday and the 6-year-old **Royal Mocha** in race 6 on Tuesday. Charlie's talented 4-year-old colt, **Spider's Alibi**, ran third in his 2016 debut, closing well. He should move forward off that race.

**IT WAS WIN, WIN, WIN, WIN AT TURF PARADISE:** It was a different story in the desert for ASD connections. They had four recent wins at Turf Paradise. **Don Schnell's Runaway Cal** won the first leg of the turf marathon Tuesday (\$11.40) and on Monday the 4-year-old gelding **Calex** went wire to wire to win a conditioned claiming event (\$12.20). Watch for the first lifetime start this Saturday of 3-year-old gelding **Papow** in the fifth. **Jared Brown**, who has two starters this Saturday, won with the speedy 6-year-old **Horse Feldhaus** (\$4). His 8-year-old gelding, **Two Bucks to Win**, ran a very close second in the other half of the first leg of the turf marathon.

The fourth win at Turf Paradise came from **Dals Pal**, the 10-year-old North Dakota-bred gelding, who won his second race of the year for **Dan and Debbie Hansen** (\$6.40). They also won with 5-year-old gelding **Beach Fever** (\$4.60) who had spent part of his summer at ASD but was scratched the only time he was entered.

### **SAYLER WORKS BALOGGA AND OTHERS AT FONNER:**

Moving north, the Fonner Park season gets underway tomorrow in Grand Island, Nebraska. Racing goes every Friday through Sunday until May 7 when some of them will likely head to the Downs. The **Ardell Saylor** barn had a number of workers on Tuesday including the three-time Manitoba

*Horse of the Year* **Balooga Bull** as well as a number of other quality horses including **Da Hoot**, **Tuff Brit** and **Zaccheus**. Look for those runners to start rolling in mid-march and beyond.

### WILL MOHAYMEN MEET HIS MATCH IN FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH?

The Kentucky Derby prep race, the Fountain of Youth Stakes, is a highlight on Gulfstream's card Saturday which features eight stakes races. The undefeated **Mohaymen** who won the Holy Bull and the Remsen Stakes impressively faces his stiffest test from **Todd Pletcher's** colt, **Zulu**, and the stakes winners **Awesome Speed** and **Awesome Banner**.



Ardell Sayler  
Works Balooga

**GOOD CARD THIS MORNING FROM DUBAI:** **California Chrome** makes his 2016 debut in the sixth race at Meydan Race Course in Dubai, a likely prep for the \$10 million World Cup in four weeks where he is likely to face **Frosted**, **Keen Ice** and other classy international runners. The rest of the Meydan card is good as well. The third race features **Kiaran McLaughlin's** 4-year-old colt **Marking** who ran fourth in the 2015 Malibu Stakes at Santa Anita. The fourth race is a prep for the Group 1 Dubai Turf on World Cup night. The card starts 9 a.m. this morning to enjoy with your coffee.



## "TIPS 'N' TRICKS"

with Marshall Posner



### Q. How do I easily access the tracks I play the most?

**A.** Simply click on the **TRACKS** tab in the top left corner of the screen. This will bring up a list of tracks that are (a) currently running, (b) available later or (c) completed for the date that is selected at the top of the menu (view image [here](#)). Changing this date will result in the display of different tracks. You can also display the menu of tracks by using the sort filters found along the top of the menu. Choose from Thoroughbred tracks, Standardbred tracks, **Favourites** and/or geography (North American, International) (view image [here](#)).

To display **Favourites** only, you have to first select the tracks. To create a new favourite track, simply click on the star icon to the left of the track's name. The star will turn yellow and this track will now be included among your **Favourites**. You can add as many **Favourites** as you like. To de-list a **Favourite**, simply unclick the yellow star (view image [here](#)). You can now click on the **Favourites** filter to only display your favourite tracks running for that day.

Got a question for Marshall? Email [theinsider@ASDowns.com](mailto:theinsider@ASDowns.com)  
Review previous questions and answers [here](#).

## HISTORY ON THE HOOF: The best of Bob

**Did you know . . .** the 1967 Gold Cup winner **Pool to Market** ran the closest thing to a perfect race, equalling or bettering the track record at every point-of-call en route to setting the track record for 11/8 miles? Read "**Pool to Market and Bobby Stewart, magic in the 1967 Gold Cup**" [here](#).



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