

## ASSINIBOIA DOWNS



DINING



BET NOW



140 VLTS

The Inside Track | Volume 3 | Nov. 25, 2021

*Open daily from 10 a.m. to 1 a.m.  
Full immunization and government issued I.D. required to attend Assiniboia Downs.*

### In this edition . . .

- What's happening at the Downs?
- Handicapping Contest Strategy
- A Snapshot in Time
- Photo of The Week
- NFL Week 12 with TravyFootball
- A Famous Female Jockey from 50 Years Ago

## Do the Downs!

### This Saturday

- Saturday, Nov. 27 - \$1,750
- Saturday, Dec. 18 - \$1,750

### **SIGN UP FOR SATURDAY'S ONLINE PLAYER'S CHOICE TOURNAMENT BY 5 PM TOMORROW:**

This Saturday is your chance to share in \$1,750 in prize money in the Players' Choice handicapping tournament. More details [here](#). See who's in the lead for Handicapper of the Year [here](#).

**PLAYER'S  
CHOICE**  
*Horseplayer Tournaments*

### Sunday Markets

- **This Sunday, Nov. 28**
- Sunday, Dec. 5
- Sunday, Dec. 12
- Sunday, Dec. 19

Get a jump on your Christmas shopping while supporting more than 60 local vendors! This Sunday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. **Free admission and free parking.**



## Christmas Special

- Turkey
- Ham
- Mashed Potatoes
- Chef's Vegetables
- Stuffing
- Gravy
- Cranberry Sauce
- Dinner Roll & Butter
- \$21.95 per person

**Reservations are required. Call 204-885-3330.**



The plated special will be served Wednesday, Dec. 22 and Thursday, Dec. 23 from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. and Friday, Dec. 24 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

## New Year's Eve Gala

Join us on Friday, December 31 at ASD for our fabulous New Year's Eve Gala hosted by Jeff Molnar from QX104 FM (a variety of music will be played.) Enjoy a delicious buffet, prize draws, party favours, late night snack and free coat check. DJ music and dance lights. Tickets \$75. Call 204-885-3330.



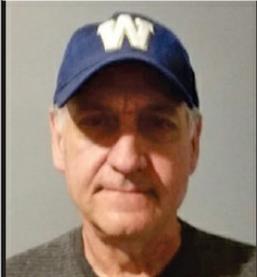
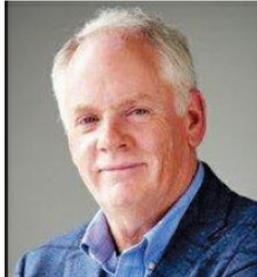
**Tickets are selling fast so get yours today!**

## At The Post with G.S. Thompson

### Handicapping Contest Strategy

**Luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity**

# 2021 TOURNAMENT WINNERS

<b>PLAYER'S</b> Saturday, January 30  <b>KEVIN PALMER</b> Bankroll \$132.10	<b>PLAYER'S</b> Saturday, February 27  <b>JEFF ROZMUS</b> Bankroll \$100.50	<b>PLAYER'S</b> Saturday, March 27  <b>STEWART HAYEK</b> Bankroll \$143.00	<b>PLAYER'S</b> Saturday, April 24  <b>GLEN GRAY</b> Bankroll \$117.10
<b>LAS VEGAS</b> Monday, June 14  <b>WAYNE KING</b> Bankroll \$96.90	<b>LAS VEGAS</b> Monday, July 5  <b>BRAD OSTROVE</b> Bankroll \$93.80	<b>LAS VEGAS</b> Monday, July 26  <b>ROB SOLMUNDSON</b> Bankroll \$70.40	<b>LAS VEGAS</b> Monday, August 16  <b>JEFF ROZMUS</b> Bankroll \$135.70
<b>LAS VEGAS</b> Saturday, September 13  <b>JAMES MCMULLIN</b> Bankroll \$60.50	<b>PLAYER'S</b> Saturday, October 2  <b>BRENT DAURIE</b> Bankroll \$154.60	<b>PLAYER'S</b> Saturday, October 30  <b>GEORGE WILLIAMS</b> Bankroll \$129.70	<b>YOU!</b>

2021 ASD Player's Choice Handicapping Contest Winners. Could you be next?

## How to be a Contender in the Player's Choice Handicapping Tournament

The monthly Player's Choice Handicapping Tournament takes place this Saturday, November 27. If you're a reasonably skilled handicapper and you follow the guidelines below, you'll have a better than average chance of being a contender. You might even win it all.

Tournament play is about handicapping. You have one goal. Figure out the best way to find more medium to high-priced winners than your competition and do the work. Luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity.

## 7 Steps to Handicapping Contest Success

### Know the rules

Every handicapping tournament has a different set of rules, tracks and required bets. Know the rules and use them to your advantage. Read the [ASD Player's Choice Handicapping Tournament Rules here](#).

### **Set your target**

Similar to most \$2 Win-Place-Show tournaments with a 20-1 CAP (maximum payout on winners), historical records from previous Player's Choice tournaments show that you generally need to double your bankroll to be a win contender. In this case that means you have to turn your \$60 starting bankroll into \$120. That's your target. Reaching it does not guarantee you'll win, but it will put you in contention.

### **Gather and organize your information**

Equibase programs and Daily Racing Forms are available a few days before the tournament starts. Print or download these programs as soon as they become available and gather/organize any other information that will help you in the handicapping process. This might include result charts, trip and track bias notes, trainer patterns, breeding information, video replays, and anything you might experiment with, such as [DRF Clocker Reports](#), [DRF Formulator](#) and customized PPS, software and handicapping data from [Brisnet.com](#).

### **Form a game plan based on your strengths**

The current format of the Player's Choice tournaments allows you to bet any race from any North American track, as long as it goes to post before 10 p.m. the day of the tournament. That means hundreds of races. Nobody can properly handicap that many races. You need a game plan based on your strengths.

What tracks have you had success with in the past? What are your favourite handicapping angles? What types of races do you play best? Are you better at handicapping turf, dirt or synthetic tracks? Everyone eventually finds a speciality, a favourite track, a handicapping style or angle that works better than anything else for them. Scan the races to determine where you might find the best plays based on your strengths. Perhaps focus primarily on races with large fields, where it's easier to find beatable favourites, logical overlays and longshots. Then start handicapping seriously.

### **Handicap early, decide late**

You're not going to win the Player's Choice tournament without advance preparation, although it does happen occasionally. You're also not going to win by betting favourites. You're looking for horses between 5-1 and 20-1 that have a handicapper's chance to win. You're also looking for beatable favourites. Go through your selected races, throw out horses you determine have no chance to win, and select your best three price horses from the remaining contenders.

**Tip #1:** Watch the replays of your contenders' past few races and any good performances further back. This will help you rank your contenders, and maybe even throw one or more out. If you're making your decisions based only on the racing lines, you're using the same information everyone else has. No edge there. If you're a trip handicapper playing horses with trouble lines, you need to know for sure whether the trouble actually affected the horse's performance. You will find many cases where it did not. Money saved.

**Tip #2:** Look where others don't. Most players base their handicapping decisions on a horse's last race. If a horse has poor recent form, take a closer look 2-5 races back. If a horse has run races good enough to win at today's class and distance before, they might do so again. These types of longshot winners are missed regularly. If you can find a reason for a horse to return to form, they might be worth a play, especially at big odds.

Construct a spreadsheet in post time order for each of your selected races, along with the track, the race number and your contenders. As post time approaches, check the odds on your contenders and decide which horse to play. If one of your contenders is an underlay (lower odds than it should be), your decision on which horse to play becomes easier. You're looking for overlays (horses at higher odds than you think they should be).

### **Separate yourself from the pack with CAP Horses**

Many tournaments have a "CAP" or maximum payout allowed on winners. This prevents lottery longshot players with no handicapping skills from beating you. In the Player's Choice tourney, the CAP payout on horses is 20-1 for a win, 10-1 for a horse that finishes second and 5-1 for a horse that finishes third. Regardless of the limits, if you hit a CAP horse you could collect up to \$76 (\$42 to win, \$22 to place and \$12 to show). One CAP horse can make you a contender. Two will make you very tough to beat!

**Tip #3:** Many tournament players will look for CAP horses, but if a horse's morning-line or post time odds are higher than the CAP limit, they will not play it. If a horse you like at 15-1 on the morning-line is 25-1 at post time, should you still play it? Definitely! Because most won't.

### **Stay the course – mental toughness**

In addition to being a test of handicapping skills, tournaments are also a test of mental toughness. Playing the wrong contender and watching your other horse win, horses getting into trouble, bad rides, lost photos -- all can influence your mental state. Additionally, if you're at the track, you might also have to watch rival players cheering on their winners. Don't let any of it rattle you.

Block out past losses and incorrect decisions, avoid distractions and stick to your game plan. Stay the course, trust your handicapping and play your picks with confidence. Who knows, you might just win the next three races in a row at 20-1, 15-1 and 29-1. And that...

Would make you a winner!

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## **A Snapshot in Time**



<b>OWNER</b>		<b>HARVEY WALLBANGER</b>	<b>MAY 21 1989</b>
<b>TRAINER</b>	T C THORSTENSON	THE GREAT BUFFALO RACE	
<b>JOCKEY</b>		<b>DIST 110 YDS PURSE \$ A BUNCH TIME 9 SEC. FAST</b>	<b>HART PHOTO 2ND LABATTS LITE 3RD PANCHO FILLA</b>



On May 21, 1989, Harvey Wallbanger, billed as the world's only racing buffalo, came to ASD with owner/rider T. C. Thorstenson to take on three quarter horses in a 110-yard sprint. Former Track Announcer Ken Miller described the event as a "trendsetting promotion" and of course Harvey won! In 1997, Thorstenson's wife died under suspicious circumstances described in [The Mystery of Bartlett Lake](#). Great read! Photo submitted by ASD Track Historian Bob Gates.

## Photo of the Week



Trainer Lise Pruitt in her happy place. Between Escape Clause's full-sister Reasonable Cause (left) and undefeated Manitoba-bred star Melisandre.

It was obvious that trainer Lise Pruitt was as close to heaven as she could get last Saturday, spending time with the horses she trains for owner Barry Arnason.

The 49-year-old trainer toiled in obscurity with cheaper horses for 20 years before getting her big break last year, when she was hired by Arnason, and she certainly proved herself.

Pruitt won at a 21% clip in 2021, compiling a record of 18-16-10 from 86 starts for purse earnings of \$245,122, while conditioning Manitoba-bred stars Melisandre, Langara, Hidden Grace and Impressive Sense to win seven stakes and helping Melisandre to her second straight undefeated four-stakes season.

Pruitt's horses often outran their odds over the past two decades, which is always the mark of a top trainer, but very few people noticed. She also spent most of her time in the barn with her horses, another attribute of the best trainers, but also one which made her even less noticeable. Until now.

"I just try to work hard," said Pruitt. "I really look forward to seeing the horses everyday. I mean, what could be better than this? It's amazing. I'm so thankful."

And you could see it in her smile.

**Do you have an interesting photo** you would like showcased in an upcoming newsletter? Email your photos to [theinsidetrack@ASDowns.com](mailto:theinsidetrack@ASDowns.com).

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**In The News**



Thanksgiving and jockey Eddie Arcaro after winning the 1938 Travers Stakes. Turf Pix/BloodHorse photo.

### **The Story of a Racehorse Named Thanksgiving**

Happy Thanksgiving to all our friends in the USA! And what better time for a story about a horse of the same name. Thanksgiving was trained by Max Hirsch to win the 1938 Travers Stakes, despite the fact that he had been struck by lightning and knocked out cold as a 2-year-old at Saratoga. He must have been one tough horse! Full story by David Hill writing for America's Best Racing [here](#).

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### **Road to the Kentucky Derby 2022**

- Nov. 27 - Kentucky Jockey Club - Churchill
- Dec. 4 - Remsen - Aqueduct
- Dec. 17 - Springboard Mile - Remington
- Dec. 18 - Los Alamitos Futurity
- Dec. 26 - Gun Runner - Fair Grounds



Full list of Kentucky Derby prep races [here](#)

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### **Carryover Watch**

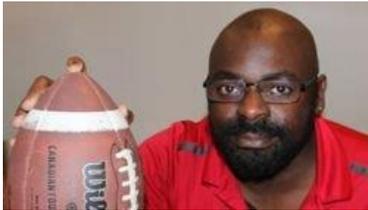
- Nov. 25 - Del Mar - Jackpot Pick 6 - \$418,673 - [program](#)
  - Nov. 25 - Churchill Downs - Jackpot Pick 6 - \$183,528 - [program](#)
  - Nov. 26 - Aqueduct - Pick 6 - \$73,574 - [program](#)
  - See all carryovers [here](#)
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### **"I Won Bigg" Betting Group - Saturdays at ASD**

The "I Won Bigg" betting group meets every Saturday at 10:30 a.m. in the ASD Clubhouse. Leading the discussions are veteran handicappers Ivan Bigg and Larry Liebrecht. This week the group will focus their efforts on Woodbine and Del Mar. \$20 buys you a share in Saturday's ticket. Email Larry at [larry@ampereelectric.ca](mailto:larry@ampereelectric.ca) for more information.

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## NFL Week 12 with TravyFootball



**49ers over Vikings (Sunday afternoon):** This might be the first time I've written about my 49ers this season. Honestly, they haven't given me a reason to until this point, but riding a two game winning streak, I figured now is as good a time as any. Coach Kyle Shanahan pulled out the 2019 playbook and decided to go back to doing what the 49ers do best, running the football. Even when their top

rusher Elijah Mitchell was ruled out with an injury, Shanahan got creative and had wide receiver Deebo Samuel line up multiple times in the backfield, and it paid off, as he racked up 79 yards and a touchdown. Hopefully they can continue the momentum and stick to that game plan. The Vikings won a back and forth thriller with the Packers, ending with a last second field goal by Greg Joseph. Wide receiver Justin Jefferson also had himself quite the day with a whopping 169 yards and two touchdowns.

**Packers over Rams (Sunday afternoon):** The Packers lost a heartbreaker to the Vikings in the last few seconds of the game. Now they're back home to face the Rams, who are coming off a well needed bye week. The Rams have lost their last two outings and people are starting to question if this team is as good on the field as they are on paper. The additions of Odell Beckham and Von Miller have had minimal impact so far but there's still plenty of time to get that on track. One thing to keep an eye on is the toe injury that Aaron Rodgers is currently dealing with. Apparently it's "worse than turf toe" which doesn't sound bad when you read it, but if you ask anyone that has ever experienced turf toe, it's one of the most painful injuries to deal with.

**Ravens over Browns (Sunday night):** Despite not having Lamar Jackson or Hollywood Brown last week, the Ravens still got the win over the lowly Chicago Bears. Starting in his very first career game, second year QB Tyler Huntley did just enough to get the job done. It wasn't pretty at times, but the only thing that matters in the end is what's on the scoreboard. The Browns once again decided to play QB Baker Mayfield last week against the Lions, knowing full well he is nursing a multitude of injuries, which are definitely affecting his ability to move the ball down the field. Even though they won the game against the pitiful 0-9-1 Detroit Lions, the home crowd still decided to boo him as he was walking off. That can't have felt good.

LAST WEEK'S PICKS: 1-2

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### **The Best of Bob**

*by ASD Historian Bob Gates*

Who was the first female jockey to receive a licence in North America, to score a victory on a recognized track in the U.S. and to win a race at a recognized pari-mutuel track in Canada? Hint: On May 16th, 53 years ago, she rode in the season-opening race at ASD. Bonus Question:

Does anyone remember the name of her horse? Click [here](#) for answers. (from May 2019)





Who is the history-making jockey above? And what was the name of the horse she won on at ASD?

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## Feedback

We would love to hear from you! Email your comments and/or suggestions to [theinsidetrack@ASDowns.com](mailto:theinsidetrack@ASDowns.com)

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