

## ASSINIBOIA DOWNS



The Inside Track | Issue #9 | Jan. 6, 2022



DINING



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*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?
- Favourite Performances of 2021
- A Snapshot in Time
- Photo of The Week
- Trainer of Triple Crown winner dies
- Prat kicks off 2021 with 6-win day
- NFL Week 18 with TravyFootball
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## Do the Downs!

### FRIDAY & SATURDAY DINNER SPECIALS!

- **FRIDAYS:** 8 oz. top Sirloin steak charbroiled and seasoned with our smoky dry rub. Served with vegetables and choice of mashed potatoes or french fries. Every Friday from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. \$24.95. Reservations are not required.

- **NEW! SATURDAYS:** Smoky charbroiled St. Louis ribs with our signature BBQ sauce. Served with vegetables and choice of mashed potatoes or french fries. Every Saturday from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. \$24.95. Reservations are not required.



**MONDAY MADNESS IN JANUARY** - 5% cash back on all eligible wagering on Parx, Turf Paradise and Mohawk every Monday in January. Minimum wagered \$100 (each Monday). Maximum deposit \$25 (each Monday). Wagers must be placed on HPI account to qualify. (\$2.10 payoffs not included).



**PLAYER REWARDS POINTS EXTENDED** - You now have until February 28, 2022 to use up your old Player Rewards points. Points can be used for program and DRF purchases from the kiosks, food and beverage purchases or entry into monthly handicapping contests.

## At The Post with G.S. Thompson

### Favourite Performances of 2021 at ASD And a message from a fan about a horse we missed



Plentiful wins trainer Murray Duncan his first Gold Cup. Stanley Chadee Jr. up. Jason Halstead photo.

Last week we covered the winners of the 2021 Manitoba-bred stakes at Assiniboia Downs. This week we'll look back at our favourite performers in open company, but before that we have to address an email from a fan saying we missed the boat in our last issue with a horse that deserved mention.

Well, we know someone is reading!

"Great reading about all the Manitoba-breds," wrote Roger Jones. "But having no mention of the best one on the grounds, currently, is an oversight. McKague is well trained and very well managed but once again appears to be the Rodney Dangerfield of the locals."

McKague was indeed one of the best Manitoba-breds on the grounds Roger. The only reason we didn't mention him was because he didn't win a stakes race in 2021. The 2020 J. W. Sifton Stakes winner was thwarted in the same race in 2021 by fellow Manitoba-bred Langara, but it certainly wasn't for lack of trying. The big bay gelding by Secret Circle-Northern Cotton by High Cotton gave everything he had in the Sifton and was inching ever closer to Langara late in the race, but just couldn't quite get there.

Owned and bred by Nearco Ltd. and superbly conditioned by trainer Carl Anderson,

McKague compiled a record of 2-2-2 from six starts in 2021, improving his lifetime record to 4-4-5 from 14 starts and earnings of \$57,354. We don't have a current photo of McKague, but his big effort in the 2021 Sifton is etched clearly into our memory banks, and we're a sucker for heart. Thanks Roger!

Now back to our favourite performances in open company.



Miss Imperial wins the 2021 Polynesian Kitty Stakes. Stanley Chadee Jr. up. Jason Halstead photo.

Miss Imperial rattled off four straight stakes wins in 2021 for trainer Murray Duncan and ownership partner the Estate of Garryle B. Stewart. She finished third in the Astral Moon Overnight Stakes in her first start of the year behind Manitoba-bred Purrersistent, who was perfectly prepared for her seasonal debut by trainer Devon Gittens, but after that it was all HER show.

The big bay 5-year-old mare was better than ever after a winter off in the snows of Manitoba and went on a win streak that included victories in the La Verendrye, Canada Day, Escape Clause and Polynesian Kitty Stakes.

After two years and eight stakes wins at Assiniboia Downs, Miss Imperial travelled back to her old stomping grounds at Oaklawn Park (where trainer Murray Duncan had originally claimed her for \$25,000), and she was immediately claimed out of her first start for \$50,000. As far as profit goes, it doesn't get any better than that, but we're sure going to miss her.



St. Louie Guy with Jennifer Tourangeau after winning the Free Press Stakes. George Williams photo.

Next up were the performances of St. Louie Guy and Plentiful. St. Louie Guy was unbeatable early in the season for trainer Jerry Gourneau and owner Henry S. Witt Jr., winning three stakes in a row including the One Night Lover, Free Press and R. J. Speers, before finishing second to Plentiful in the Manitoba Mile.

Plentiful got better and better for trainer Murray Duncan and the Estate of Garryle B. Stewart as the season progressed and finally won Murray Duncan his first Gold Cup after six decades as a trainer.

In the 3-year-old division, Uncharacteristic shipped in to win the \$100,000 Manitoba Derby for trainer Robert VanOvershot and owner Adam Isfeld and went on to win the Canadian Derby (G3) at Century Mile, but it was local horse Flash of Glory that caught our eye for his ability to win close photos.



Flash of Glory (#3) gets up just in time to win the Derby Trial. Stanley Chadee Jr. up. George Williams

photo.

Flash of Glory won the Derby Trial by a hard-charging neck at 11-1 for trainer Mike Nault and owner True North Thoroughbreds, and after finishing fifth in the Derby he came back to win two allowance races in the same game fashion, one by three-quarters of a length and the other by a head. Good horses have a nose for the wire.

Trainer Nault was also at the helm for undefeated 2-year-old Diamond Digger, a son of Cash Call Futurity (G1) winner Violence who won all four of his starts for The Young and The Rest Of Us Stable, including the Graduation and Osiris Stakes and the Winnipeg Futurity.



Diamond Digger with Hanna Dilts and Stanley Chadee Jr. after winning the Winnipeg Futurity. Jason Halstead photo.

And finally we have to mention Mark Ye Well, who entertained us all with his big come-from-behind runs to win five of eight starts at Assiniboia Downs in 2021 and finish second twice.

The classy 8-year-old made some gorgeous morning appearances on the track in the spring and ran to his looks for owner/trainer Jared Brown, winning first at the \$5,000 claiming level and later in optional claiming races.

Class lives everywhere in the horse racing game.

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**A Snapshot in Time**



In the 1960s Assiniboia Downs held a Derby Breakfast at the [St. Charles Golf & Country Club](#). This week's "Snapshot in Time" is from 1965 and features outriders Vic Clare and John Regan (with Clare on the white steed). Many a good time was had at St. Charles and in '65 Clare and Regan stood guard as guests arrived for the Derby festivities. The winner of the 1965 Manitoba Derby was Flyalong. Photo courtesy of ASD Historian Bob Gates.

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## Photo of the Week



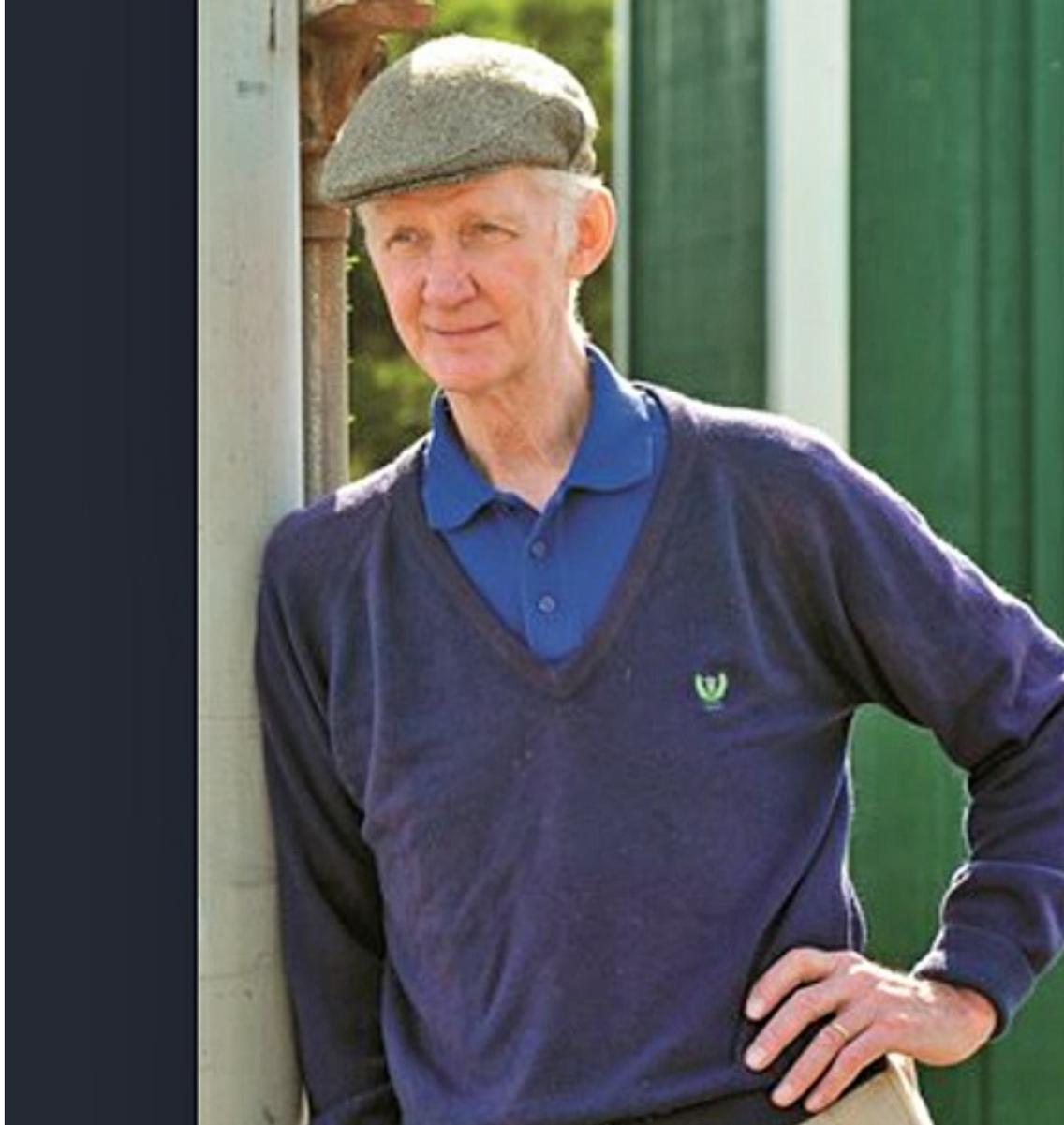
Former ASD winner Papa Al is now a winner in the show ring too! CanterClix photo.

Former ASD winner Papa Al made his final start in 2019 and was adopted through Manitoba's [Final Furlong](#) by Kierra Funk. Under the guidance of professional trainer Jody Busch, Papa Al won the 2021 Freestyle at the [Retired Racehorse Project Thoroughbred Makeover](#). Jody and Papa Al also placed 8th in the 2021 Ranch Work. Additionally, the talented pair competed in the Off-Track Thoroughbred Challenge at the Saskatchewan Equine Expo and won both of their classes! Kierra says that she is really excited to see what this handsome gelding will accomplish in 2022. We are too! Thanks to [The Western Thoroughbred](#) for showcasing Papa Al on their Facebook page. And congratulations!

**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).**

## In The News

**[Billy Turner, Trainer of Seattle Slew, Dies at 81](#)**



Trainer Billy Turner. Blood Horse / Rick Samuels Photo.

Thoroughbred racing lost a true legend Dec. 31 when William "Billy" H. Turner Jr., the trainer of 1977 Triple Crown winner Seattle Slew, died peacefully in cancer hospice care at his home in Reddick, Fla. He was 81. [More from the Blood Horse here](#). Related: Excellent [story on Seattle Slew](#) by [Steve Haskin](#). Full [Seattle Slew Documentary on YouTube](#).

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**[Flavien Prat Kicks Off New Year With Six-Win Day At Santa Anita](#)**



Benoit photo

Flavien Prat celebrates 6-win day at Santa Anita on January 1. Paulick Report/Benoit photo.

Nothing short of outstanding would describe Flavien Prat's day at Santa Anita on Jan. 1. His record for the 10-race card was six wins and four seconds which resulted in being voted Jockey of the Week for Dec. 27 through Jan. 2. The honor, which is voted on by a panel of racing experts, is for jockeys who are members of the [Jockeys' Guild](#), the organization which represents more than 1050 active, retired and permanently disabled jockeys in the United States. [More from the Paulick Report here.](#)

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## Road to the Kentucky Derby 2022

- **Jan. 21, 22 & 23** - KD Future Wager
- **Jan. 22** - Lecomte - Fair Grounds
- **Jan. 29** - Southwest - Oaklawn
- **Feb. 5** - Holy Bull - Gulfstream
- **Feb. 5** - Sam F. Davis - Tampa
- **Feb. 5** - Withers - Aqueduct
- **Feb. 6** - Robert B. Lewis - Santa Anita



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

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## Carryover Watch & Programs

- [Gulfstream](#) (Jan. 6) Pick 6 Jackpot - \$860,155
- [Santa Anita](#) (Jan. 7) Pick 6 Jackpot - \$248,819
- See all carryovers [here](#)

**Mandatory Payout Alert:** There will be a mandatory payout of the Jackpot Pick 6 at Gulfstream this Saturday. First race post time 11:05 a.m.

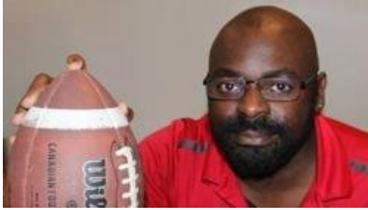
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## "I Won Bigg" Betting Group

The "I Won Bigg" is back at it this Saturday at 10:30 a.m. in the Clubhouse. The group will be playing Santa Anita again this week. Want a share? \$20 gets you in! Email Larry at [larry@ampereelectric.ca](mailto:larry@ampereelectric.ca).

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### NFL Week 18 regular season finale with TravyFootball



**49ers over Rams (Sunday afternoon):** It's do or die time for the 49ers as they control their own path to the playoffs. It's very simple, if they win, they're in, and it won't matter what happens with the rest of the games. If they lose, then they have to hope the Falcons beat the Saints. Luckily for them they are playing the Rams, who they have beaten five straight times. 49ers rookie QB Trey Lance will most likely make his third start of the season, but this will definitely be the most important one.

**Cowboys over Eagles (Saturday night):** Both of these teams have locked up playoff spots already, it's just a matter of where they will finish in the standings. This game means more to the Cowboys, as they still have a chance to move into 2nd place in the NFC, but they would have to win plus get some help from other teams. I could see the Eagles resting most of their starters for this matchup, not wanting to risk any injuries.

**Falcons over Saints (Sunday afternoon):** I'm secretly hoping the Saints lose this game (49ers would get into the playoffs if they did), but I doubt my feelings will be considered when they take the field on Sunday. I honestly don't think either of these teams are very good, but it will probably come down to a last second field goal like it did the first time they played in week nine when the Falcons won 27-25.

### **BONUS COLLEGE FOOTBALL COVERAGE**

**Alabama over Georgia (Monday night):** Alabama head coach Nick Saban will look to make history on Monday night as he tries to win his 8th National Championship. Standing in his way are the Georgia Bulldogs, who punched their ticket to the finals by dismantling the number two ranked Michigan Wolverines. These two teams faced off in the SEC Championship a few months back and Alabama won 41-24. Georgia head coach Kirby Smart is 0-4 against his former team, and mentor Nick Saban, and after Monday will most likely be 0-5.

**LAST WEEK'S PICKS:** 2-1

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### **The Best of Bob**

by *ASD Historian Bob Gates*

Have you read Jim Coleman's *A Hoofprint on My Heart*? My take on this book just might have you searching for this out-of-print keeper. Click [here](#) for my special "review" of this Canadian classic. (From June 2018)



### **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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