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ASSINIBOIA DOWNS



The Inside Track | Issue #102 | October 20, 2023



DINING



BET NOW



140 VLTs

- Open daily from 10 a.m. to 1 a.m.
- VLTs, Race Carrels and Tables are sanitized between customer use.

In this edition . . .

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Do the Downs!

2023 Player's Choice Online Tournaments

- Saturday, November 11
- Saturday, December 16



PRIZES: 1st place: \$1,000 (plus a trophy), 2nd place: \$400, 3rd place: \$200, 4th place: \$100, 5th place: \$50

Entry fee is \$25. \$2 WPS on one horse in any 10 races (harness, thoroughbred or quarter horse) from any North American track on the contest day. Click here for full [rules](#).

2023 TOURNAMENT WINNERS:

Player's Choice Tournaments

- Saturday, January 21 - Randy Premachuk
- Saturday, February 18 - Steve Holborn
- Saturday, March 18 - Nicole Baker
- Saturday, April 15 - Barry Mymko
- Saturday, May 13 - Brad Ostrove

Las Vegas Challenge Tournaments

- Monday, June 19 - Ron Zurba
- Monday, July 10 - Murray Chaban
- Monday, July 31 - Tanis Atras
- Monday, August 21 - Brian McKellar
- Monday, September 18 - David Blake

Player's Choice Tournaments

- Saturday, October 14 - George Williams

Breeders' Cup from Santa Anita

Friday, November 3 at 1:30 p.m.

Saturday, November 4 at 12:10 p.m.



- 3% cash back bonus on Friday, November 3 and Saturday, November 4. Wager \$1,000 or more on your HPI account on Friday, November 3 and Saturday, November 4 and receive 3% cash back to a maximum of \$100. (\$2.10 wagers are not eligible). All wagers must be placed on your HPI account to qualify.
- Special Breeders' Cup Handicapping Show with ASD Live's Kirt & Stretch
- Free Breeders' Cup programs and DRF at all locations (except casinos). The free programs and DRF will be available at all locations by 5 p.m. on Wednesday, November 1
- Breeders' Cup merchandise draws at all locations (except casinos)
- The Terrace Dining Room will be open for seating. If you would like to reserve a table please call 204-885-3330. The Club West menu will be available along with the daily food specials.

Club West Gaming Lounge

140 VLTs available daily in our spacious Club West Gaming Lounge from 10 a.m. through 1 a.m. Please note that our VLTs are sanitized between play. Click [here](#) for a full list of games available at ASD.

Win CA\$H Every Day!

- Draws to win up to \$100 cash on our lucky wheel Monday through Friday from noon until 5 p.m.
- Draws for \$20 in FREE VLT Spins Friday, Saturday & Sunday from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m.

**Dining at Assiniboia Downs****Club West Dining Room & Lounge
Open Daily**

Enjoy breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks plus Happy Hour food and beverage specials in our Club West Dining Room & Lounge! Open daily from 10 a.m. to 1 a.m.

- Club West Dining Room & Lounge [menu](#)
- Daily Happy Hour [specials](#)

**Chef's Weekend Specials**

Friday Steak & Suds \$24.95: 8 oz. Sirloin steak charbroiled and seasoned with our smoky dry rub. Served with fresh vegetables and a choice of mashed potatoes or french fries. **Plus a complimentary pint of ASD Lucky Lager.**

Saturday Prime & Wine \$29.95: Certified Angus Prime Rib (8 oz. cut.) Served with fresh vegetables and a choice of mashed potatoes or french fries, horseradish, and Yorkshire pudding au jus. **Plus a complimentary 6 oz. glass of house wine.**

Sunday Fish & Chips \$14.95: Two pieces of beer battered cod with tartar sauce and lemon. Served with french fries and coleslaw.



Add a starter Caesar salad, tossed salad or soup of the day to any of the above specials for \$3.95. Served from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. Reservations are not required.

At The Post with G.S. Thompson

Williams wins Player's Choice Tourney

Unlikely 60-1 longshot propels Winnipeg Free Press writer to victory



October Player's Choice Handicapping Tournament winner George Williams (left) with handicapping assistant Zeus.

What are the chances of winning a handicapping contest while reading the past performances from a golf cart? Probably better than hitting a cap horse making her first lifetime start in the mud at 60-1 in a stakes race from post 12.

Winnipeg Free Press horse racing writer George Williams somehow managed to do both last Saturday to win the October [Player's Choice Handicapping Contest](#).

Williams built his bankroll to \$106.20 to win the \$1,000 first prize and the trophy, finishing eight dollars ahead of runner-up Glen Gray (\$98.20), followed by Steve Holborn (\$89.10) Alan Twerdochlib (\$86.60) and David Smook (\$84.30).

"I really didn't expect to win," said Williams. "Usually you have to double your bankroll to \$120 to have a chance. The competition is always stiff in these contests, there are so many excellent handicappers. I was sure there would be four or five that finished ahead of me."

Williams hit his cap horse, Miss Harriett (60-1), in the 6th race at Laurel, and followed up with 5-1 Lifesbeengoodsofar in the 6th race at Century Mile, ridden by three-time ASD leading rider Antonio Whitehall. He also had another third-place finisher, which was the difference between winning and finishing second.

"I think we were on about the fifth hole at Breezy Bend when I told the guys I bet a 60-1 shot," said Williams. "I really didn't expect the horse to win, it was a total flyer, but the horse did have some angles going for it. She was a half-sister to eight winners including a stakes winner and some stakes-placed horses, and her sire and dam both had high percentages with first time starters."

Amidst repeated calls of "Hey, it's your shot!" Williams didn't even see the results until 15 minutes after the race, and didn't watch the video of the race until later in the evening.

"It was an incredible performance," said Williams. "She was making her first lifetime time start in the Maryland Million Lassie Stakes in the mud from the widest post. She was wide throughout, took the lead at the top of the stretch, and was passed by one of the favourites in deep stretch before digging in and coming back late to win by a neck. You have to see it to believe it. When you're playing these kinds of pedigree angles, they don't come through very often, but this was something special to watch."

Considering Williams has watched over 50,000 races through 33 years of charting and handicapping, the sixth race at Laurel last Saturday is probably worth a look on your HPI account.



Buck Domino wins the 1985 Gold Cup for trainer George Williams (far right) and BMW Stable. Tom Adkins up. (Jason Halstead photo)

Williams learned how to handicap from his father, former DRF chart caller and writer Bud Williams, who was making his own speed figures before the first Andy Beyer books were ever published. Like many others in the local handicapping set, he spent many nights with

his Dad and his uncle Johnny as a kid at Assiniboia Downs in the 1960s, scooping up tickets off the floor looking for winners.

Williams started out working as a groom in 1977 for trainer Don Gray, and went on to work for Hall of Famers Woody Stephens, Charlie Whittingham and H. Allen Jerkens in New York and California before returning to Assiniboia Downs as a trainer and winning the Gold Cup with Buck Domino.

The 64-year-old began his career writing about horse racing in 1990 with the *Daily Racing Form* and went on to write pieces for the *Thoroughbred Times*, *Blood Horse*, *Canadian Thoroughbred* and *Winnipeg Sun*, before moving to the *Winnipeg Free Press*, where he has been writing for the past 10 years.

Williams said the added horse and writing experience doesn't really provide an edge in the local handicapping contests. "The handicappers here are as good as you get anywhere," he said. "And you always need some racing luck."

The Player's Choice win was the second unexpected win for Williams this year. He also won his fifth Sovereign Award for writing this spring.

"Sometimes you just get lucky," he said.



George Williams receives his 5th Sovereign Award for Outstanding Writing from Dianne Denby of Horse Media Group at the 48th annual Sovereign Awards celebration this spring in Toronto. (Michael Burns photo)



19+ ADULT EXPO & MARKET

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 27
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28
AT ASSINIBOIA DOWNS

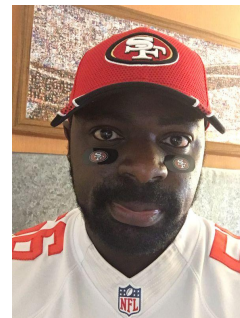
Taboo

- Tattoos on site
- Naughty Halloween Social (Friday)
- Demonstrations
- Performances
- Full Service Bar
- Themed Cocktails
- 80 Vendors & Food Trucks
- Adult Entertainment
- & so much more!

<http://www.wpgadultexpo.ca/>

Top NFL Picks by TravyFootball: Week 7

49ers over Vikings (Monday night): Originally, I had planned to attend this game live in Minneapolis, but plans fell through and I'm relegated to watching it at home. Well, my 49ers took it on the chin against the Browns last week, and it was bad across the board in all three phases of the game. The Cleveland defense made Brock Purdy look pretty pedestrian and he just didn't play well overall, the defense struggled to stop the run, and the special teams missed two costly field goals. Couple that with the loss of Deebo Samuel on the first play of the game, and Christian McCaffrey shortly after, it was just a recipe for



disaster. Despite losing two of their best players, their best lineman, and a couple of questionable calls by the refs, San Fran still had a chance to win the game at the end, but a missed field goal by rookie kicker Jake Moody squashed that. The good thing for San Fran is all those injuries seem to be minor and there's a solid chance that Deebo, McCaffrey, and Trent Williams won't miss any time and will suit up on Monday night. Even though the Vikings beat the Bears last week, Kirk Cousins looked very mediocre without the presence of Justin Jefferson, throwing for just 181 yards and one touchdown. Expect him to look even more mediocre against the Niners defense.

Lions over Ravens (Sunday noon): When the schedule came out, I didn't think this would be a marquee matchup heading into week seven. Detroit is taking their 5-1 record to Baltimore to take on the 4-2 Ravens in a battle of two teams atop their divisions. I don't think the Lions get talked about enough as one of the better teams in the league, but they really should be given more credit for what they are doing. They had a pretty easy outing against the Bucs last week, winning 20-6, although they did lose their leading rusher David Montgomery in the process, due to a rib injury. The Ravens have to figure out if they want to be a good team, or an average team. There's no consistency coming from them. One week they will look really good and win, the following week they will look really bad and lose. Even last week against the Titans, who aren't a very good football team, it's not like they blew the doors off of them. If the Ravens want to be taken seriously, they have to make a statement in this game.

Dolphins over Eagles (Sunday night): The Eagles suffered their first loss of the season at the hands of the New York Jets, of all teams. Jalen Hurts struggled, throwing three interceptions, and the Eagles offense never really got going. Not only that, I'm pretty sure every defensive back they have on their roster ended up getting hurt in that game. One thing that will make a really good team really bad, really quick, is injuries. The absolute worst team you want to have to play when all of you're defensive backs or hurt, is the Miami Dolphins, and that's who the Eagles have next. Dolphins receiver Tyreek Hill is already closing in on 1,000 yards for the season and we are only entering week seven. He may add another 200 yards to his total after this game is said and done. I just don't see how Philadelphia is going to be able to slow down Hill, or any other of the speedy receivers the Dolphins have.

Last week: 1-2

Overall: 12-6

Looking for a Special Photo of Your Big Horse?
Track Photographer Jason Halstead may have just what you're looking for



Burrow Down (inside) battles it out early with Evan Pandura on her way to victory in the Miss Sandy Dee Overnight Stakes for trainer Murray Duncan and owner Gerald Babchishin. Stanley Chadee, Jr. up. (Jason Halstead photo)

Looking for that extra-special photo of your big horse, one you might not find in your win pictures? Track photographer Jason Halstead takes numerous photos during the races, and not all of them can make it into the win photos. If you're looking for something frameable from your big race, or of your special horse, email Jason at jjhphoto@gmail.com. Prices are excellent! Almost as good as his photos 😊

Carryover Watch

- Woodbine (October 20) - Jackpot Hi-5 carryover \$117,067
- Los Alamitos (October 21) - Pick 6 carryover \$49,667
- Gulfstream (October 20) - Jackpot Pick 6 carryover \$43,974. **Mandatory payout on Saturday, October 21.**

See all carryovers [here](#).

Can't make it to the track to wager?

Watch and wager at one of our off-track betting locations:

- Canad Inns Windsor Park - [1034 Elizabeth Road](#)
- Green Brier Inn - [1611 Main Street](#)
- Rookies at Central Hotel - [201 Melrose Avenue East](#)
- Quest Inn - [367 Ellice Avenue](#)
- McPhillips Station Casino - [484 McPhillips Street](#)
- Club Regent Casino - [1425 Regent Ave W](#)

- **Nor-Villa Motor Hotel** - [1763 Henderson Hwy.](#)
 - **Club 3D** - [3317 Portage Avenue](#)
 - Wager 24/7 at HPIbet.com
-

"I Won Bigg" Wagering Group

The "I Won Bigg" wagering group will meet every Saturday at 10:30 p.m. on the plaza. This week the group will be playing Woodbine and Santa Anita. \$20 per share. Email Larry at larry@ampereelectric.ca for more information.

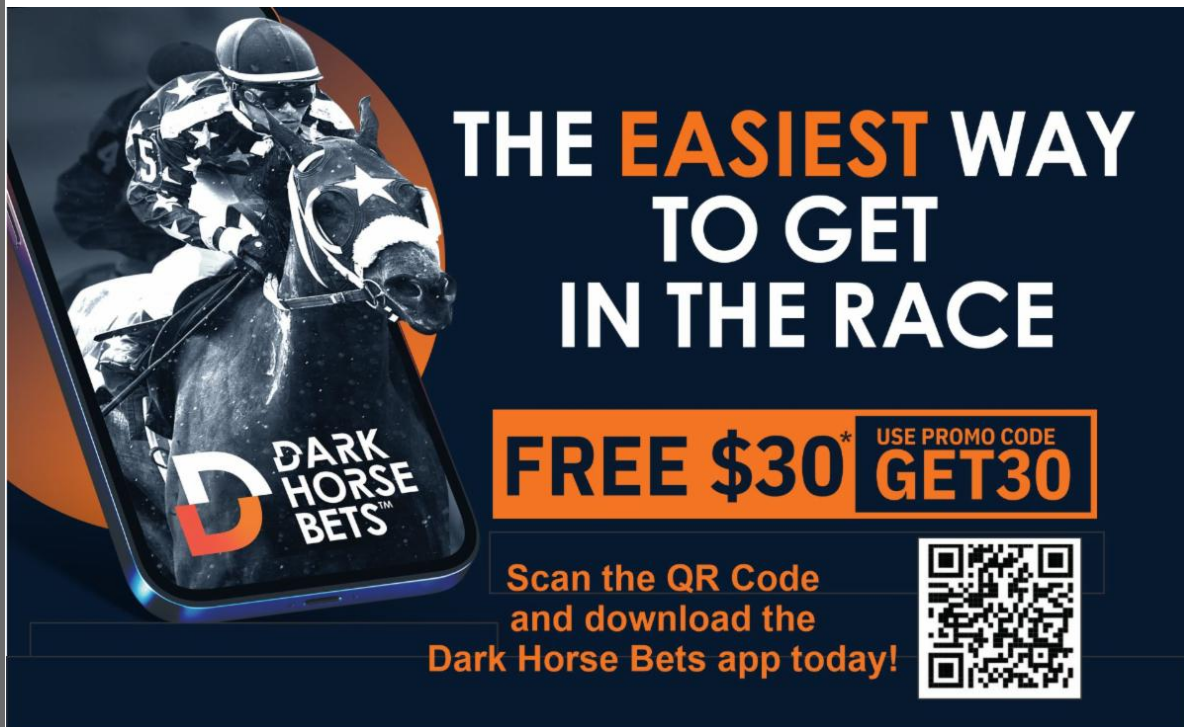
A Snapshot in Time

by Track Historian Bob Gates



You can't revisit Gold Cup winners of the past without paying homage to Phil Kives' Island Fling. Fling won the Gold Cup in 1977 and 1979, and just missed winning the 1978 Gold Cup by a head to Merry's Jay. This week's Snapshot in Time is one of the best "man and his horse" shots that you're ever going to find. This remarkable champion did his best


running in the fall and was one of the classiest horses to ever race at the Downs. (Kives Family photo)



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Husbands, Mathes, Schickedanz Win Fort Erie Titles

Just as it was a year ago, leading jockey, trainer and owner repeat



Former ASD leading rider Chris Husbands just won his his third straight riding title at Fort Erie. Congratuations Chris! (Fort Erie photo)

Fort Erie finished up its 2023 Thoroughbred season on October 17 with another \$1 million-plus wagering day and, from early reports, it appears the plucky border track had a banner season. Chris Husbands won this third straight riding title, Julie Mathes scored her fourth straight training title and Bruno Schickedanz won this third straight owner title. More from Jennifer Morrison at the *Canadian Thoroughbred* [here](#).

Early Breeders' Cup Classic Preview

Trio of ace handicappers offer some unique observations of this year's Classic



Arcangelo preps at Santa Anita for the Breeders' Cup Classic (Ernie Belmonte/Past The Wire)

The Breeders' Cup is rapidly approaching and it is never too early to start talking and thinking Breeders' Cup Classic. Dan Cronin, Ed De Rosa and Jon Stettin get together for a sit down on the Breeders' Cup Classic with their early thoughts on who they like, who they don't, who is on the fringes and what the projected pace looks like at this early juncture. More from *PastTheWire.com* [here](#).

Best of Bob

by ASD Historian Bob Gates

Pop quiz time... Do you know the name of the jockey who can boast of the following? "I came from Winnipeg's North End, 500 Magnus Avenue to be exact. I won three leading rider titles, and I won the Winnipeg Futurity three years in-a-row." Click [here](#) to reveal the icon from the early days of Assiniboia Downs. (From July 2021)





Upcoming events at ASD

- Spin to Win in the Club West Gaming Lounge - Monday to Friday - [more info](#)
- Lucky Spins - Draws for \$20 in free VLT Spins - Friday to Sunday - [more info](#)
- MICEC Monster Bingo - Saturday, October 21 - [more info](#)
- Naughty Halloween Social - Friday, October 27 - [more info](#)
- Wpg 19+ Adult Expo - Friday, October 27 & Saturday, October 28 - [more info](#)
- [Breeders' Cup](#) - Friday, November 3 & Saturday, November 4
- Player's Choice Handicapping Tournament - Saturday, November 11 - [more info](#)
- Inspirations Market - Saturday, November 11 & Sunday, November 12 - [more info](#)

Feedback

We would love to hear from you! Email your comments and/or suggestions to theinsidetrack@ASDowns.com.

The Inside Track Archives

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