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## ASSINIBOIA DOWNS



The Inside Track | Issue #112 | December 29, 2023



DINING



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**ASD New Year's Schedule**

- New Year's Eve, Sunday, Dec. 31 - 10 a.m. to 1 a.m.
- New Year's Day, Monday, Jan. 1 - 10 a.m. to 1 a.m.
- Tuesday, Jan. 2 - 10 a.m. to 1 a.m.

**In this edition . . .**

- What's happening at the Downs?
- New Food & Drink Specials
- Handicapping Tournaments
- Dining Specials
- New Year's Eve Dinner & Dance
- 2023 in Photos. Smiles Everywhere!
- Good Times Bad Weather by Tim Cox
- TravyFootball Week 17
- Looking For a Special Photo?
- Carryover Watch
- Off-Track Betting Locations
- "I Won Bigg" Wagering Group
- A Snapshot In Time: Earl "Sandy" Graham

- Dark Horse Bets Download
- A Championship Gift Package
- New Year's Weekend Racing
- Industry Panel: Foal Crop Size
- The Best of Bob - Light Dust
- Upcoming Events

## Do the Downs!

### Upcoming Tournaments

#### Player's Choice Tournaments

- Saturday, January 20
- Saturday, February 17
- Saturday, March 16
- Saturday April 13
- Saturday, May 11



- 
- Draws for New Year's cash Friday, Dec. 29 through Monday, Jan. 1. Draws will take place from noon through 11 p.m. Win up to \$100 cash!
  - Earn 3% cash back on all eligible wagers made on Saturday, January 6 & Sunday, January 7. Minimum wagered \$50. Maximum deposit \$50. All tracks eligible. Opt-in at [HPIbet.com](https://HPIbet.com).
- 







# Player Rewards & Cash Bonus Programs!

## REWARDS FOR ALL WAGERING



## ONE CARD DOES IT ALL!

- Earn points for all your wagering when you swipe your card or wager on HPIbet.com
- Wager on your account on betting terminals
- Earn cash bonuses on wagering (see below)
- Convert your points to CASH
- Buy programs & DRF on HPIbet.com

## CASH BONUSES FOR WAGERING

PLATINUM BONUS LEVEL	GOLD BONUS LEVEL	SILVER BONUS LEVEL	BRONZE BONUS LEVEL
Bet \$5,000 or more in the week* and receive a cash back bonus of 4%	Bet \$4,000 or more in the week* and receive a cash back bonus of 3%	Bet \$3,000 or more in the week* and receive a cash back bonus of 2%	Bet \$2,000 or more in the week* and receive a cash back bonus of 1%



Wagers must be placed using your HPIbet Rewards Card. The week (\*) is designated as Monday through Sunday. Any bonus money earned during this period will be deposited to your HPI account on Wednesday by 5 p.m. Betting bonus cash is in addition to regular HPIbet rewards points earned. Assiniboia Downs reserves the right to alter or amend this promotion at any time. Bonus calculations are available on payouts of \$2.20 and above. Maximum weekly bonus deposit \$1,000.

## There's Always a Deal at ASD!

### \$11.95 Daily Lunch Specials

Enjoy breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks from our Club West Dining Room menu or try our ever changing \$11.95 lunch special.

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



## Daily Drink Features All Day Long

- Monday - Margarita \$6 (lime, peach or strawberry)
- Tuesday - Corona \$5
- Wednesday - Wine \$4.50 (6 oz. glass of house white or house red)
- Thursday - Beer \$4.75 (house pint of beer)
- Friday - Trifecta Tea \$6 (Absolut peach vodka, lemonade, sweet tea)
- Saturday - RazDerby Lemonade \$6 (Absolut raspberry vodka, lemonade)
- Sunday - Caesar \$6



## Daily Evening Chef's Specials

**Monday - BBQ Ribs \$19.95:** Smoky char-broiled ribs with our signature BBQ sauce. Served with french fries and coleslaw.



**Tuesday - Tacos \$9.95:** Two flour tortillas stuffed with taco beef, chicken or fish, lettuce, green onions, cheese and diced tomato. Served with a drizzle of avocado cilantro lime sauce and taco chips.



**Wednesday - Two Topping Pizza \$14.95:** Thin crust pizza with mozzarella and tomato sauce. Choose from pepperoni, bacon, ham, spicy beef, chicken, tomato, mushroom, peppers, black olives or onions.



**Thursday - Chipotle Mozza Burger \$14.95:** Our signature sirloin patty and crispy bacon smothered in melted mozzarella. Topped with fresh sliced tomato, fried onion rings, chipotle mayo and sweet bold barbeque sauce.



**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.



**Reservations are not required. The above specials are available from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. daily.**

**Everyone who purchases one of the above specials will receive a coupon to play our free "Pick to Win" game in the VLT lounge for a chance to spin our lucky cash wheel where you can win up to \$100 cash!**

### **New Year's Eve Dinner & Dance - SOLD OUT** **Sunday, December 31**

- Prime Rib buffet served from 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.
- Late lunch served
- Dancing until 1:00 a.m.
- Door prizes
- Free coat check
- Huge dance floor
- Party favours
- Free VLT Game for a chance to win a share of \$2,024!
- DJ Music & Lights
- Hosted by Kathy Kennedy
- \$79.95 plus taxes & gratuities



## **At The Post with G.S. Thompson**

### **2023 at ASD in Photos. Smiles Everywhere!**

**Wagering was fabulous, horses were fast, and everyone seemed to be winning!**



Groom Olive Johnston gives Commandoslastdance a kiss after victory with Chavion Chow up in the 61st running of the Buffalo Stakes on Sept. 18, 2023. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)

Fans from around the world and on-track wagered over \$60 million on Assiniboia Downs in 2023, average wagering per race was up almost 10% over the previous season, the horses were classier, trainers had their horses ready, and an excellent jockey colony gave fans their money's worth every night.

Leading trainer Jerry Gourneau won his record fourth straight training title and fifth overall, and capped the season off with his first ever win in the \$125,000 Manitoba Derby with Mano Dura for Henry S. Witt, Jr., who led the owner standings for the fifth consecutive year. The win was also the highlight of the year for jockey Antonio Whitehall, who won his third jockey title at the Downs in 2023 with 56 wins.

The prize money was widely distributed among owners, trainers and breeders in 2023, the Manitoba Yearling Sale average was up again, and breeders continued to bolster their broodmare bands with better mares. There seemed to be more smiles than ever in 2023 on the faces of grooms, jockeys, owners and trainers, and track photographer Jason Halstead captured many of them in the photos below. Thanks Jason!

It won't be long now until spring training arrives and the horses are back in action carrying the hopes and dreams of the people who love them.

Wishing everyone the very best for 2024, we'll see you soon!





Pony riders pass a rainbow looming in the eastern sky after Race 2 on May 29, 2023. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)





Renaldo Cumberbatch aboard Finalize (#9) narrowly defeats 2023 leading rider Antonio Whitehall on Lollipop Kid for the place in Race 7 on May 30, 2023. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)



A fox runs across the track just before the horses leave the starting gate for Race 2 on June 7, 2023. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)





Jockey Sven Balroop reacts after winning Race 2 on June 7, 2023, aboard Cordillera. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)





Trainer Carl Anderson reacts after winning Race 4 on June 21, 2023, with Not Afraid. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)



Trainer Mike Taphorn and jockey Ronald Ali aboard My Noah pose in the winner's circle on June 21, 2023, under a spectacular Prairie sunset. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)





Trainer Marvin Buffalo reacts as he heads into the Winner's Circle after his victory with Spitten Kitten in the 30th running of the Jack Hardy Stakes on July 10, 2023. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)



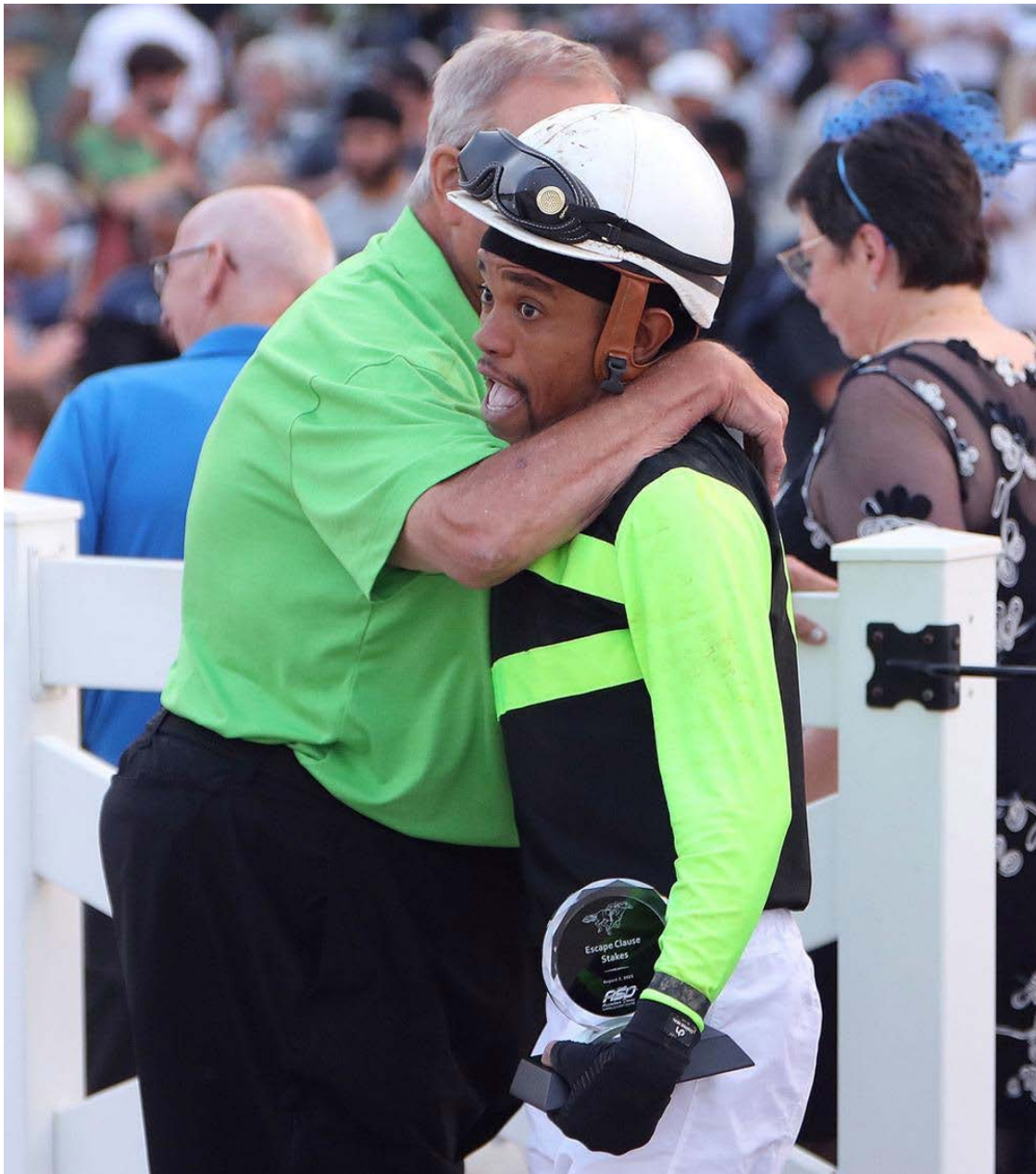


Trainer Wendy Anderson beams after winning the 29th running of the Derby Trial Stakes with Saxon Saga on July 17, 2023. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)



Trainer Michael Nault smiles after Commandoslastdance, with Chavion Chow up, won the 34th running of the Debutante Stakes on July 25, 2023. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)





Jockey Chavion Chow gets a hug after riding Big Stretch to victory in the 4th running of the Escape Clause Stakes on Aug. 7, 2023. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)





Carl Anderson's groom has a moment with Not Afraid after their victory in Race 5 on Aug. 7, 2023. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)





Pony rider Joanie Hamilton-Johnson had her horse well decorated as she led Rico Walcott and Heroic Move to the starting gate for the 75th running of the Manitoba Derby on Aug. 7, 2023. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)



Jockey Antonio Whitehall celebrates just after riding Mano Dura to victory in the 75th running of the Manitoba Derby on Aug. 7, 2023. (Danielle Langlois / Assiniboia Photo)





Trainer Jerry Gourneau (right) and owner Henry S. Witt, Jr., celebrate after jockey Antonio Whitehall rode Mano Dura to victory in the 75th running of the Manitoba Derby on Aug. 7, 2023. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)



Damario Bynoe aboard Chicago River (#7) makes the first pass in Race 3 on Aug. 22, 2023, stacked up with four other horses. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)





Burrow Down and jockey Stanley Chadee, Jr. won the Miss Sandy Dee Overnight Stakes on Aug. 28, 2023, but she didn't seem to like what they were seeing in the finish-line mirror. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)





Jockey Antonio Whitehall reacts after narrowly winning Race 3 on Aug. 30, 2023, aboard Warrior's Map. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)





Horses head for the first turn under a warm harvest moon in Race 4 on Aug. 30, 2023. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)



That winning feeling. Trainer Michael Nault's grooms celebrate in the winner's circle after winning Race 5 on Sept. 4, 2023 with Doublebarreldelite for A2 Thoroughbreds and True North Thoroughbreds. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)





Jockey Shavon Belle greets the drum group after victory aboard I've Got All Nite in the Gourneau Memorial Race on Sept. 20, 2023. (Danielle Langlois / Assiniboia Photo)



Trainer Jared Brown and Warrior's Map head back to the barn after winning the final race of the season on Sept. 20, 2023. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)

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**Good Times Bad Weather**  
Original painting by **Tim Cox**





"Christmas waves a magic wand over this world, and behold, everything is softer and more beautiful." ~ Norman Vincent Peale. See more original paintings from Tim Cox [here](#).

## Top NFL Picks by TravyFootball: Week 17

**Cowboys over Lions (Saturday night):** It's been a rough couple of weeks for "dem boys" as of late. Coming off back-to-back losses to the AFC East, Dallas will go back home to Jerry world and host the newly crowned NFC North champion Detroit Lions. It's funny how Dak Prescott went from MVP favourite, to people once again questioning if he's "the guy" to get Dallas over the hump. I do think they'll end their two-game losing streak here because DC Dan Quinn will most likely send a lot of pressure from his defense at Lions QB Jared Goff, who doesn't seem to handle it well. The Lions defense has played slightly better the last couple weeks, but I don't think they will be able to slow down the Dallas offense at all.



**Bears over Falcons (Sunday noon):** I continue to believe Atlanta is one of the fraudulent teams in the NFL. How they managed to pull off seven wins this season is beyond me. They have two bad quarterbacks, underutilized receivers, and a defense that isn't very good. Despite all that, they're only one game back of the division lead in the NFC south. They definitely play better at home indoor on the turf, so a trip to Chicago in December probably won't work out well for them. If the Bears could ever have gotten consistent play out of Justin Fields, they probably would've had a much better record than 6-9. Their defense has definitely stepped it up over the last month, not quite '85 Bears, but formidable enough to the point where they are averaging only 16 points against in their last three games.

**Giants over Rams (Sunday noon):** This would definitely be considered an upset if it goes the way I think it might. It looks like the era of Tommy DeVito is over as he was benched at halftime against the Eagles last week. Tyrod Taylor came in and provided a much-needed spark to the offense. I always feel that teams that play indoors, like the Rams, tend to struggle when playing outdoors in the cold elements. On paper Los Angeles



is the much superior team, but maybe the Giants' defense can force Stafford into a few errant throws that will keep this game closer than it should be.

Last week: 2-1

Overall: 31-17

## Road to the Kentucky Derby

- Smarty Jones (OP) - Monday, Jan. 1 (10 points)
- Jerome (Aqu) - Saturday, Jan. 6 (10 points)
- Sham (SA) - Sunday, Jan. 7 (10 points)
- Lecomte (FG) - Saturday, Jan. 20 (20 points)
- Southwest (OP) - Saturday, Jan. 27 (20 points)



## Looking for a Special Photo of Your Big Horse or...?

Track Photographer Jason Halstead may have just what you're looking for



Five-horse pace battle. Is your winner in there? (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia 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](mailto:jjhphoto@gmail.com). Prices are excellent! Almost as good as his photos 😊

## Carryover Watch

- Gulfstream Park (December 29) - Jackpot Pick 6 carryover \$73,772. **Mandatory payout on Saturday, December 30.**
- Golden Gate (December 29) - Pick 5 carryover \$59,767
- Fair Grounds (December 29) - Jackpot Pick 6 carryover \$54,675



**Please note that Aqueduct and Laurel will have mandatory payouts of all their carryover pools on Sunday, December 31.**

See all carryovers [here](#).

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## 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](#)

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## "I Won Bigg" Wagering Group

Saturday at 10:30 a.m. (2nd floor plaza)

There will be group play this Saturday followed by a break for the month of January.

- Saturday, December 30 - Tampa, Gulfstream & Santa Anita

Shares are \$20. Email Larry at [larry@ampereelectric.ca](mailto:larry@ampereelectric.ca) for more information.

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## A Snapshot in Time by Track Historian Bob Gates





It was 20 years ago, on September 21, 2003 that Assiniboia Downs unveiled a plaque in honour of Earl 'Sandy' Graham. Graham was a 16-year-old jockey who died in an on-track accident on September 10, 1927 at the old Polo Park racetrack. Pictured in the photo from left to right are Ken Lee (MJC Director), Paul Wiecek (Free Press), Rick Thain (City of Winnipeg Administrator of Cemeteries), Garry Stein (Jockey), and Harry Kube (Trainer). (Gerry Hart photo)


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### **A Championship Gift Package**

In preparation for the 2023 Eclipse Awards, Steve Haskin reveals some interesting fun facts you might not know about past champions





Christmas time in the world of horse racing that means it is time to start thinking about championships, and it's always fun to look back at past superstars. Steve Haskin provides some interesting facts about past champions, many of which you probably won't know. Test your knowledge! More from *Secretariat.com* [here](#).

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### **Where to Watch/Listen**

**Welcoming 2024 with a Holiday Weekend of Racing**





Horses break from the gate at Oaklawn Park. (Coady Photography)

The upcoming New Year's Day holiday weekend marks an uptick in horse racing coverage on TV and radio as several prominent tracks including Oaklawn Park showcase important races heading into 2024. More from *America's Best Racing* [here](#).

### **BH Survey: Industry Panel Discusses Foal Crop Size**

**Part two of BloodHorse's 2023 year-end survey. 30 panelists. Six key topics.**



In part two of BloodHorse's year-end survey, industry leaders share ideas on how to address the declining foal crop. (Skip Dickstein photo)



BloodHorse assembled a panel of about 30 industry participants to participate in the 2023 BH Year-End Survey, where they provided their thoughts on six key topics including foal-crop size, racing surfaces, racing calendar/field size, the Horseracing Integrity and Safety Authority, marketing, and wagering. More from the *BloodHorse* [here](#).

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## Best of Bob

*by ASD Historian Bob Gates*

Another old-timer from the Prairie Racing Circuit has worked his way into Bob's heart. This aged runner even raced at the Downs! Owned by Maxwell King Stables, he is the only horse to win the Western Canada Handicap on three occasions. Click [here](#) to learn more about the horse that Bob "Boo Boo" Watt said was the best he ever trained (from July 14, 2022).



## Upcoming events at ASD

- New Year's Cash Draws - Wednesday, December 27 through Monday, January 1
- New Year's Eve Dinner & Dance - Sunday, December 31 - **SOLD OUT**
- Player's Choice Handicapping Tournament - Saturday, January 20 - [more info](#)
- Manitoba Tattoo Expo - Friday, February 9 to Sunday, February 11 - [more info](#)

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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).

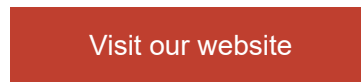
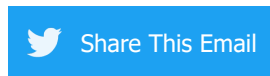
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## The Inside Track Archives

Did you know that past issues of The Inside Track are available on our website? Click [here](#) to read them now.







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