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ASSINIBOIA DOWNS



The Inside Track | Issue #116 | January 26, 2024



DINING



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140 VLTS

ASD Hours

- Open daily from 10 a.m. to 1 a.m.
- VLT machines are sanitized between use

In this edition . . .

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Do the Downs!

Upcoming Handicapping Tournaments

Player's Choice Tournaments:

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



Tournament Winners:

- Player's Choice - Saturday, January 20 - Winner: Ron Phelps

Club West Gaming Lounge



140 VLTs are available daily in our spacious Club West Gaming Lounge from 10 a.m. through 1 a.m. Enjoy complimentary coffee or tea. We also have fantastic deals on [daily drink specials](#), [happy hour specials](#), [daily lunch](#) and [nightly food features](#). Please note that our VLTs are sanitized between play.

Free daily draws take place for your chance to win cash!

- **Break Open Bonanza!** Draws to win \$10 plus 20 break-open tickets! Monday through Friday from 1 p.m. until 5 p.m.

- **Lucky Spins!** Draws for \$20 in FREE VLT Spins Friday, Saturday & Sunday from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m.

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!

At The Post with G.S. Thompson

Ron Phelps wins Player's Choice Tourney

Two-time Handicapper of the Year's top harness pick makes Secretariat move



Longshot Nasty Reputation (#7) made a bullet move at 32-1 to win the first race at Flamboro Downs last Saturday and propelled Ron Phelps to the top in the Player's Choice Handicapping Tournament.

The first thing that came to mind when we watched Nasty Reputation's race last Saturday was Secretariat's move in the 1973 Preakness, but this wasn't a thoroughbred, it was a standardbred. And it won two-time Handicapper of the Year Ron Phelps the Player's Choice Handicapping Tournament.

Nasty Reputation made a bullet move after half a mile in the first race at Flamboro Downs, went by most of the field like they were standing still, caught the heavily favoured leader into the final turn, dueled that one into submission by mid stretch, and held off the second choice late to win a magnifying glass photo.

He was 32-1.

Phelps followed that big winner up with 9/5 winner Sea Dancer in the seventh race at Santa Anita, and added one more second place finish and three third place finishes to win the tourney with a bankroll of \$106.40, defeating runner-up Nicole Baker by an uncharacteristically large margin of \$20.10. Baker built her bankroll of \$86.30, followed by Chris Trubyk (\$79.40), Stan Stewin (\$79.30) and 2023 Handicapper of the Year Glen Gray (\$77.80).

It was a tough day to find longshots after racing was cancelled at several tracks due to severe weather, but that didn't stop Phelps, who was very pleased to win his first tournament in years.

"I can't remember the last time I won," said Phelps. "But it's been quite awhile. I've finished in the money, but just haven't won lately. These tournaments are not easy to win. We've got a lot of good handicappers here. If you don't get one good horse home, you don't have a hope in hell. I just got lucky on this. The amount that I ended up with, to be honest, I didn't think that that would be enough to win. I figured I'd be in top five, but I didn't think it would be enough to win."



Phelps couldn't resist playing his longshot winner when it went off as a huge overlay. "I looked at this horse and at 6-1, I figured, well, that's pretty generous," said Phelps. "He was going back to the original driver and he'd already run against the morning-line favourite. But they bet that horse down to 1-5. I looked at the program, and when my horse started going up and up and up in the odds, I thought what the hell, what am I missing here? I looked at the program again and I still liked the horse."

Nasty Reputation paid \$67.50 to win, \$29.20 to place, and an incredible \$45.70 to show when the favourite ran out of the money, and although the longshot payoffs were capped based on tournament rules, they were still enough to win Phelps the tourney.



Player's Choice tournament winner Ron Phelps has owned horses with fellow tourney player Larry Liebrecht and trainer Marvin Buffalo and his wife Deb (shown here with One and Only Overnight Stakes winner Spitten Kitten) for a number of years now. (Ruth Bonneville / Winnipeg Free Press photo)

Now retired from Manitoba Hydro, the 69-year-old has been playing the horses for over 30 years. He's also owned horses for about the same length of time.

"I've still got a horse, Wait a Sec, with Marvin and Deb (Buffalo)," said Phelps. "They went to Tampa Bay this winter. So she's run once there and we're trying to get her in another race. I've been with them a number of years now. Larry Liebrecht (also a regular tourney player) is a partner with us. They're great horse people and they're good friends as well, so I was sure glad I got hooked up with them. It was one of the best moves I ever made."

Phelps is primarily a pace and speed handicapper, and says you can use the same handicapping techniques to play both thoroughbred and standardbred racing, which he did on Saturday.

"My grandson had a hockey game in the afternoon and I wanted to watch that and then the NFL playoffs," said Phelps. "So I thought I'd just play the later tracks in the evening and just take the day off because I wanted to do all this. And then a couple tracks

canceled and there wasn't a lot to choose from. So I played a few from Santa Anita and Delta Downs and the rest on harness, and I got lucky with one."

Phelps said it had been at least three years since he won and was surprised that his bankroll was high enough.

"We have some good handicappers here," said Phelps. "And that makes it fun. Everyone thinks it's easy, but it really isn't."

Is handicapping good for the mind?

"Absolutely," said Phelps. "I mean, you've got to have something. That's why we do it. I think it's good for you. Well, at least that's what I keep telling Kathy (wife of 47 years). She plays in the tournaments too. She didn't go in the last one, but every once in a while, she beats me. And she certainly lets me know about it. You have to have something you enjoy. And I'll enjoy this until the day I die, that's for sure."

Phelps first got involved with horses through the honorary horse program, where you could be involved with a horse while not actually owning it, and learn everything about owning a racehorse.

"I had an honorary horse with Lorna (Gray), and I don't even remember what year that was," said Phelps. "That's got to be 40 years ago now, but it got me hooked. Lorna was great. The year after that, I got into horse ownership. I bought a chunk of a horse, and it all started there. So it's been a long time. We've had all kinds of wins, but every horse is different. If you can break even or make a little bit of money, everything's great. I've had a lot of pretty good years, and it didn't cost me much."

One of Phelps' favourite things about owning a horse is just going to the barns in the mornings, watching the workouts, and just being involved with the horse people.

"They're genuine people," said Phelps. "I enjoy going to the barns. Seeing the horses. Watching the workouts. I've got some physical issues now, so it's harder for me getting around. But you do what you got to do. And I still enjoy going to the backstretch and having coffee with Marvin and Deb in the mornings. And that's what it's all about as well. They're good friends, and I'm sure happy to be with them. Marvin knows his horses and we've picked out some pretty good ones."

You've got to be good to be lucky.

2024 SHIPPING INCENTIVE PROGRAM

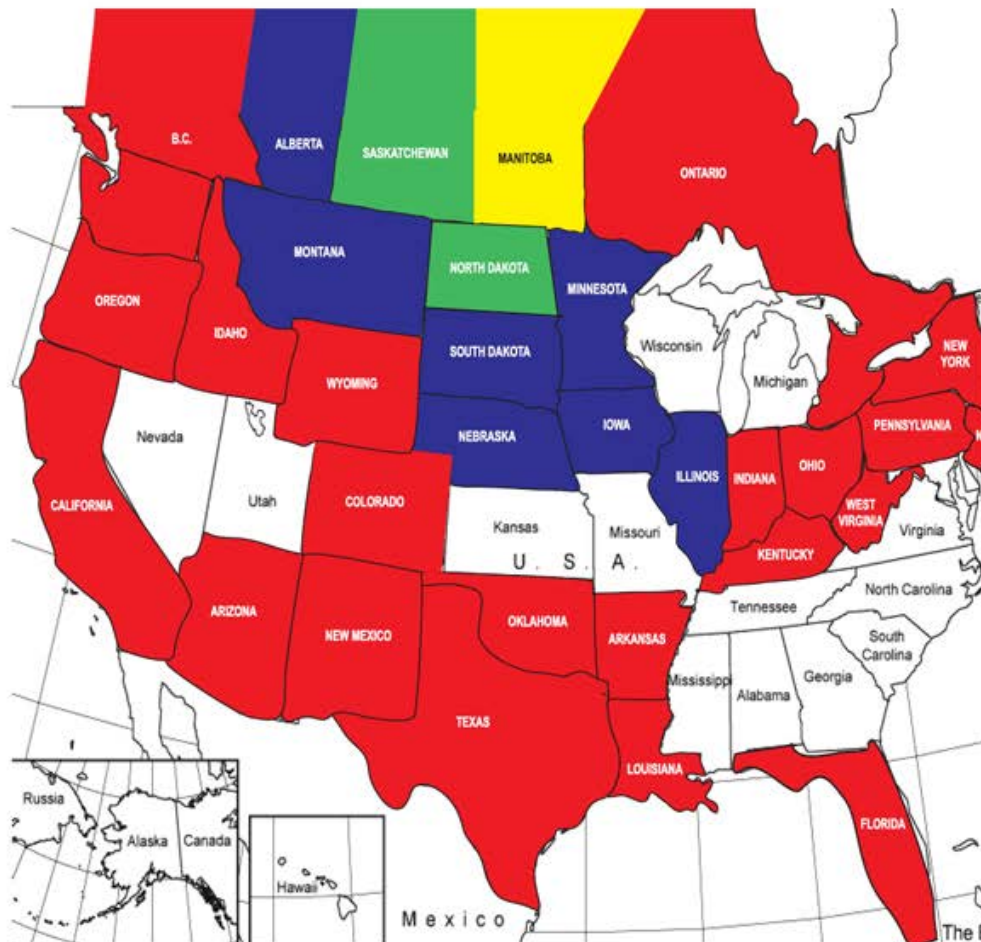
A one time credit per horse is automatically put in the horse owner's account by the racing bookkeeper after the horse has completed one start.

Zone 1 - \$250 per horse

Zone 2 - \$350 per horse

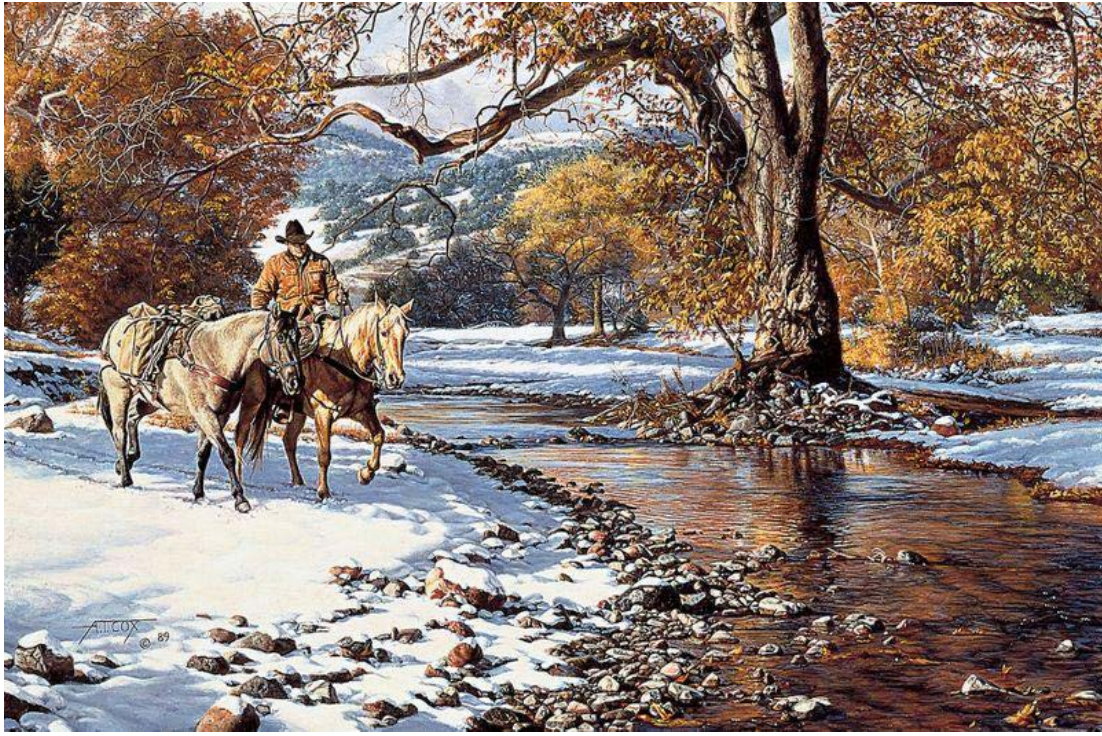
Zone 3 - \$500 per horse

Zone 4 \$1,000 per horse



Seasons Change

Original painting by Tim Cox



"The season changes remind us of the ever-changing nature of life and the importance of embracing it." - Anonymous. See more original paintings from Tim Cox [here](#).

WRESTLING FOR A CAUSE



A FUNDRAISING EVENT YOU DON'T
WANT TO MISS! THIS SATURDAY AT
ASSINIBOIA DOWNS!

7PM - 10PM JANUARY 27TH



Join us this Saturday at Assiniboia Downs to support The Dream Factory, featuring Winnipeg's very own Wrestling for a Cause!

Doors open at 6 p.m. and the bell sounds at 7 p.m. for a wrestling match you won't soon forget. Tickets are \$20 (available at the door.)

Top NFL Picks by TravyFootball: Conference Championships

Niners over Lions (Sunday night): Even though the Green Bay Packers outplayed San Francisco for a majority of the game last week, a masterful drive by Brock Purdy at the end led to the go-ahead touchdown with a minute left on the clock. Linebacker Dre Greenlaw sealed the game with an interception and sent the 49ers to the NFC Championship for the fourth time in five years. But Brock Purdy can ill afford to have another shaky game like that, or he and the rest of the team will find themselves going home instead of going to Vegas for the Super Bowl. The other half of the equation is the Detroit Lions, who beat the Tampa Bay Bucs in a game that was closer than people expected. When the Lions play games on their own home field, they look unstoppable, but once they go on the road, they definitely



look a lot more vulnerable. The key to San Fran winning this game will be stopping the run, getting pressure on Jared Goff, and attacking the Lions very weak secondary.

Chiefs over Ravens (Sunday afternoon): To quote the Nature Boy Ric Flair, "To be the man, you got to beat the man" and right now the man is Patrick Mahomes. Some people thought he would struggle last week considering it was the first time he had to play a playoff game on the road, but it didn't look like it phased him one bit. Despite a marvellous effort by Josh Allen, a dropped pass by Stefon Diggs, a missed pass in the end-zone, and the dreaded "wide right" field goal by Tyler Bass sealed Buffalo's fate and sent the Chiefs to yet another AFC Championship. Standing in their way, the number one seed Baltimore Ravens. Lamar Jackson didn't have the greatest first half against the Texans last week, but in the second half it was a totally different story. The Ravens ripped off 24 unanswered points and sent Houston packing. Until someone actually knocks off Mahomes, it's really hard to bet against the guy. He shows Tom Brady-like qualities when it comes to getting it done, despite not having the best weapons around him.

Last week: 3-0

Overall Playoff record: 5-1

Road to the Kentucky Derby

- Southwest (OP) - Saturday, Feb. 3 (20 points)
- Holy Bull (GP) - Saturday, Feb. 3 (20 points)
- Robert B. Lewis (SA) - Saturday, Feb. 3 (20 points)
- Withers (Aqu) - Saturday, Feb. 3 (20 points)



Valentine's Dinner & Dance

We invite you to join us for our Valentine's Dinner & Dance featuring our renowned Certified Angus Prime Rib Buffet. Savour the exquisite taste of our prime rib buffet, specially prepared for this special occasion. [Menu](#).

After dinner dancing will be available or simply relax and listen to the music. We have something for everyone. Don't have a date? You can still enjoy this special evening with family or friends!

Tickets are \$54.95 per person and available by calling Samantha at 204-885-3330. We look forward to seeing you!



Hurry! Special offer expires soon!

Purchase your tickets by January 31 and receive a complimentary 6 oz. glass of wine.

Call Samantha at 204-885-3330.
Use promo code **VAL2024**.



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



Groom Charlotte Johnston leads Delvecchio into the winner's circle after his victory in the \$40,000 Phil Kives Stakes for owners A2 Thoroughbreds and trainer Mike Nault. Damario Bynoe in the saddle. (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. Prices are excellent! Almost as good as his photos 😊

Wager on Top Tracks



Watch and wager on world class racing from the comfort of your private carrel in our race book located on the 2nd level of the grandstand. The race book is open daily at 10 a.m. Can't make it to the track? Visit one of our partner locations listed below or wager at HPIbet.com. Click [here](#) for a list of tracks to wager on during the month of January.

Carryover Watch

- Gulfstream Park (January 26) - Jackpot Pick 6 carryover \$669,930. **Mandatory payout on Sunday, January 28.**

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



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- 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.

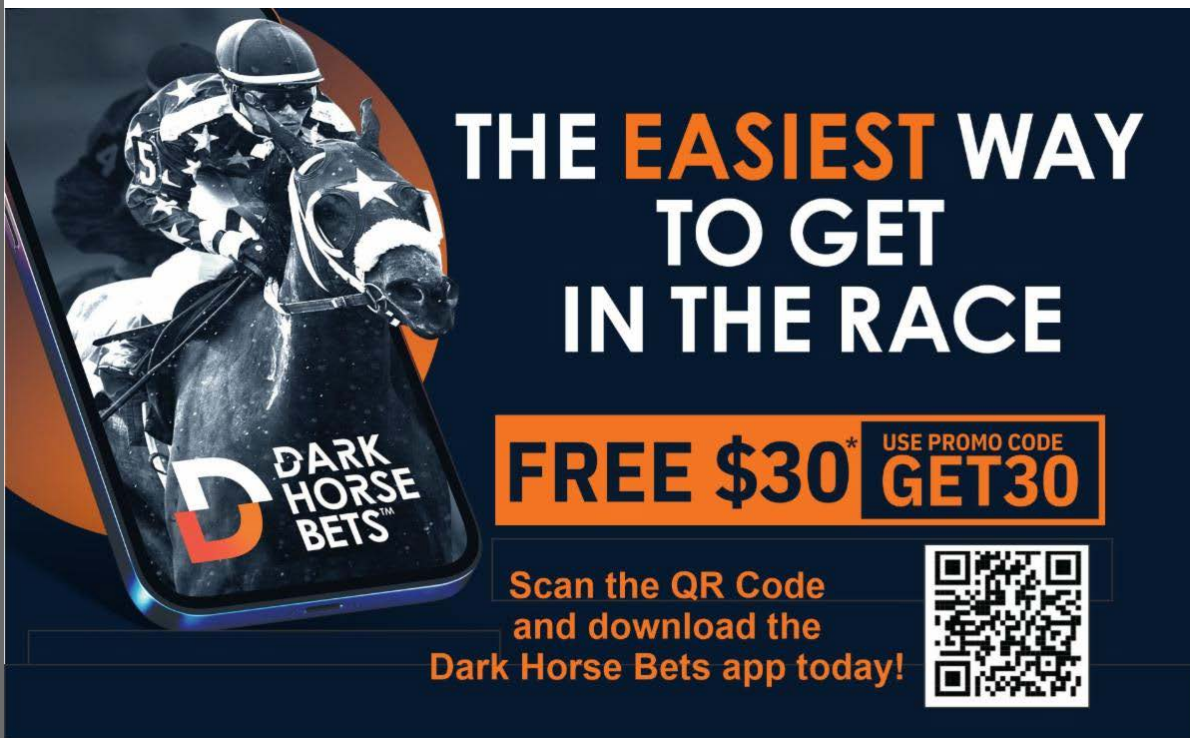
"I Won Bigg" Wagering Group Saturday at 10:30 a.m. (2nd floor plaza)

The "I Won Bigg" wagering group is on a break for the month of January. Group wagering sessions start up again next Saturday, February 3.

A Snapshot in Time by Track Historian Bob Gates



Thirty years ago, on May 5, 1994, Chime Time won the first race on opening day for owners Aaron and Ardell Sayler. Why was this race so memorable? Well, it just happened to be the inaugural running of the Don Gray Memorial. The late, great trainer, passed on Christmas Day 1993. The 2024 running of the race to honour his memory will be the 31st edition. (Gerry Hart photo)



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DARK HORSE BETS

2024 Pegasus World Cup Cheat Sheet

\$3 Million Pegasus World Cup highlight of six stakes at Gulfstream Park Saturday



National Treasure (left) and First Mission are two contenders in a competitive 12-horse field for the Pegasus World Cup Invitational Stakes, set for Jan. 27 at Gulfstream Park.

The first marquee race of the 2024 North American racing calendar is coming up this Saturday, Jan. 27, as Gulfstream Park hosts the eighth edition of the \$3 million, Grade 1 Pegasus World Cup Invitational Stakes Presented by Baccarat. The Pegasus is also the anchor race of a card that features six other graded stakes races including the \$1 million, Grade 1 1/ST Bet Pegasus World Cup Turf Invitational Stakes and the \$500,000, Grade 3

Pegasus Filly and Mare Turf Invitational Stakes Presented by TAA. More from *America's Best Racing* [here](#).

Please note that ASD opens at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, January 27. First race post time for Gulfstream is 10:00 a.m.

Warm Heart Headlines Pegasus Turf, 'Shirl' Draws Post 10

Previews of the two supporting Pegasus stakes races at Gulfstream Park, one of which includes Canadian-owned and trained Shirl's Speight



Warm Heart during morning workouts at Santa Anita Park in Arcadia, California on October 31, 2023, as horses prepare for the 2023 Breeders' Cup World Championships. (Alex Evers/Eclipse Sportswire/Breeders' Cup photo)

Irish-bred millionaire Warm Heart, a Group 1-winning filly in England and France that is also Grade 1-placed in the U.S. and Hong Kong, will wrap up her world tour as the favourite for one final start in the \$1 million Pegasus World Cup Turf (G1) Invitational Saturday, January, 27 at Gulfstream Park. Canadian-owned and trained Shirl's Speight is also in the race. More from the *Canadian Thoroughbred* [here](#).

Derby Dozen by Steve Haskin

Kentucky Derby Rankings, January 22, 2024 – Week 1



2024 Kentucky Derby favourite Fierceness wins the Breeders' Cup Juvenile (G1) at Santa Anita. (Breeders' Cup photo)

"It's hard to believe it's been a whole year since we embarked on the Derby trail raving about a Breeders' Cup Juvenile winner trained by Todd Pletcher and owned by Mike Repole. Well, here we go again, only this time it appears as if we may have a freaky version of Forte in Fierceness, who has sent all speed ratings through the roof. Join us each week as we follow his progress, as well as the fate of the Bob Baffert horses, which includes two other potential freaks. So, we're off on what could be a wild ride." ~ Steve Haskin. Read more on [Secretariat.com](#) [here](#).

Best of Bob

by ASD Historian Bob Gates

Who remembers a horse called Best of Two? How about Beausejour Boy? Or Par Excellence? They were all owned by Big Boy Stables – except for Par Excellence – she was owned in partnership with Knightsbridge Stables. Can anyone come up with the big personality who was the Master of Big Boy Stables? Click [here](#) to see the answers to these questions and memories from 1976 to 1980 (From August 11, 2021).





Upcoming events at ASD

- Break Open Bonanza - Draws for Break-Open tickets - Monday to Friday - [more info](#)
- Lucky Spins - Draws for \$20 in free VLT Spins - Friday to Sunday - [more info](#)
- Wrestling For A Cause - Saturday, January 27 - [more info](#)
- Prairie Stride's Annual Flea Market - Saturday, February 3 & Sunday, February 4 - [more info](#)
- Manitoba Tattoo Expo - Friday, February 9 to Sunday, February 11 - [more info](#)
- Valentine's Dinner & Dance - Wednesday, February 14 - [more info](#)
- Player's Choice Handicapping Tournament - Saturday, February 17 - [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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Ron Phelps wins Player's Choice. Pegasus World Cup Cheat Sheet.

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