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## ASSINIBOIA DOWNS



The Inside Track | Issue #118 | February 9, 2024



DINING



BET NOW



140 VLTS

**ASD Hours**

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

**2024 Live Race Dates**

- Monday, May 20 to Tuesday, September 17 - click [here](#) for schedule

**In this edition . . .**

- What's happening at the Downs?
- Valentine's Dinner & Dance
- There's always a Deal at ASD!
- Owner Profile: Henry S. Witt, Jr.
- 2024 Shipping Incentive Program
- Tender Touch by Tim Cox
- TravyFootball Super Bowl
- Road to Kentucky Derby 150
- Looking For a Special Photo?

- Carryover Watch
- Off-Track Betting Locations
- "I Won Bigg" Wagering Group
- A Snapshot In Time: Brass Ruhler
- Dark Horse Bets Download
- Sovereign Awards Finalists Announced
- Sam F. Davis Stakes at a Glance
- Pletcher Facing Challenges on Road to Derby
- Steve Haskin's Kentucky Derby Rankings
- The Best of Bob - The Rivalry
- Upcoming Events

## 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.

### 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 & friends!

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

## 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

### Owner Profile: Henry S. Witt, Jr.

Six-time leading owner at Assiniboia Downs won Manitoba Derby in 2023



Six-time leading Assiniboia Downs owner Henry S. Witt, Jr. (left) and five-time leading trainer Jerry Gourneau celebrate after winning the 2023 Manitoba Derby with Mano Dura. (Jason Halstead photo)

Henry S. Witt, Jr. has been the leading owner at Assiniboia Downs for the past five years in a row, culminating with his first win in the prestigious Manitoba Derby in 2023 with longshot Mano Dura.

It's been a long journey from growing up on a farm in Texas to roaring car racing championships and on to the Assiniboia Downs winner's circle, and Witt has loved every

minute of it.

Born and raised on a farm in Axtell, Texas, Witt's early life was defined by hard work, from milking cows before dawn to hauling hay in the summers. This work ethic translated seamlessly into sports, where he excelled in football, basketball, and rodeo, and earned all-state honours at Hill College in Texas.

Witt always had a love for horses, but his enthusiasm for the four-legged runners would have to wait as he pursued his original passion of car racing while also building his business, Affiliated Auto Glass in Waco, Texas, which he started in 1983.

Transitioning from rodeo to race car driving, Witt quickly rose to prominence in the IMCA Modified racing scene, amassing an impressive record of wins and championships over a decade of dominance.

"I was racing cars when I first started the business," said Witt in a [Winnipeg Free Press article](#) after winning the Manitoba Derby. "I'd drive out to the track at night 4 1/2 or five hours away. I'd come back, drive over to the glass shop, park the truck, put a little pallet down on the floor in the office, sleep until about 6:30 and get up, get ready to open up."

"It's pretty lucrative now," said Witt. "I have depots in Waco, Temple, Copperas Cove and Gatesville, 14 trucks and 24 or 25 guys. We do 400 windshields a week. But it wasn't always like that."

Witt won multiple IMCA Modified championships from 1988 to 1997 and in 1998 he started driving for the 701 Racing Team and won more feature races in the shortest period of time than anyone in the history of IMCA racing. He won 258 features, eight consecutive regional championships, six consecutive state championships and one national championship. He retired from racing in 2007 after winning his final race.

"I quit racing cars on July 21, on my birthday," said Witt. "I was in a race and I got a lap down. I came back and I got back on the lead, and they tried to put me in first place, but I just said no. I knew I was a lap down."

After retiring from car racing in 2007, Witt ventured into the world of thoroughbred horse racing, a decision that would mark the beginning of another illustrious chapter in his life. He met trainer Jerry Gourneau in Nebraska, and the partnership they formed would lead to unprecedented success at Assiniboia Downs, where they have dominated for five consecutive seasons.

From 2019-2023, Witt teamed up with 5-time leading trainer Gourneau to compile a record of 180-175-177 from 1,014 starts for purse earnings of \$1,769,306. And that doesn't include the years from 2015-2018. Witt finished among the top three owners at Assiniboia Downs in 2015, 2017 and 2018, and also led the standings in 2016. Simply put...

He knows how to win.





ASD 2023 leading rider Antonio Whitehall celebrates aboard Mano Dura in the winner's circle after winning the \$125,000 Manitoba Derby for owner Henry S. Witt, Jr. and trainer Jerry Gourneau. (Jason Halstead photo)

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ASSINIBOIA DOWNS • WINNIPEG, MANITOBA • CANADA



## CONDITION BOOK #1

Monday, May 20 - Wednesday, June 19, 2024

Condition book #1 is now available. Click [here](#) or on the image above to download.



## 2024 SHIPPING INCENTIVE PROGRAM

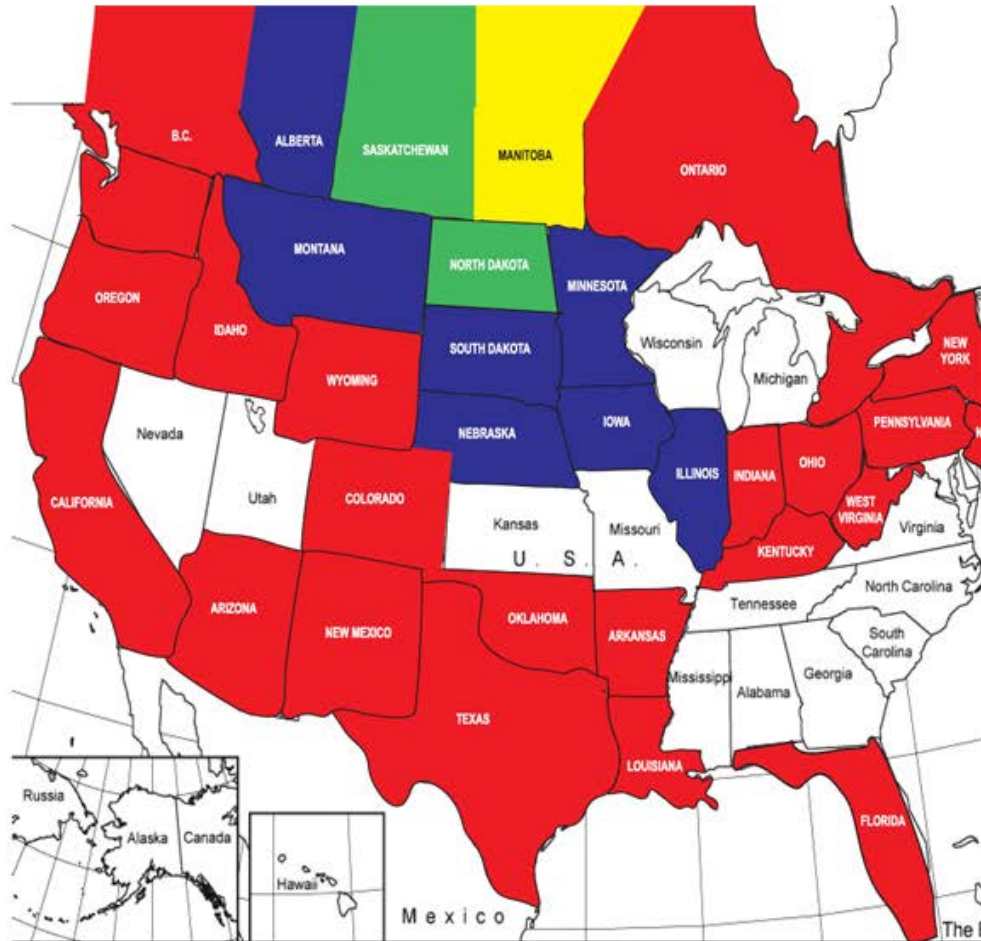
A one time credit per horse is automatically put in the horse owner's account by the racing bookkeeper after the horse has completed one start.

Zone 1 - \$250 per horse

Zone 2 - \$350 per horse

Zone 3 - \$500 per horse

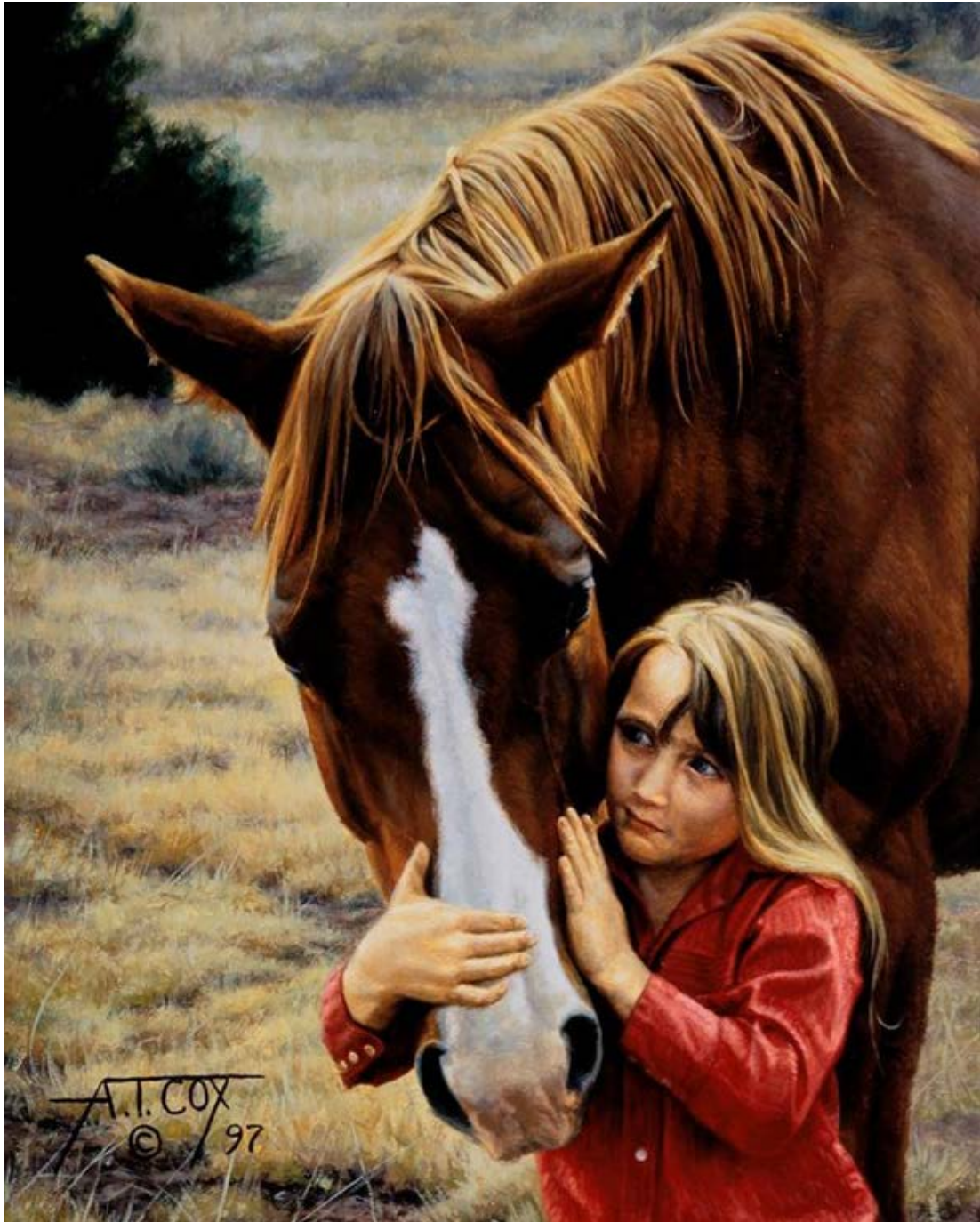
Zone 4 \$1,000 per horse



Tender Touch

Original painting by Tim Cox





"Every horse deserves, at least once in its life, to be loved by a little girl." ~ Unknown. See more original paintings from Tim Cox [here](#).

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## Top NFL Picks by TravyFootball: Super Bowl

**Niners over Chiefs:** Do I think San Fran can win this game? Yes. Do I think San Fran can just as easily lose this game? Also yes. But I can't in good faith pick against my own team. This really is a pick'em as I really don't feel strong one way or the other.

Kansas City definitely had the tougher route to get here, having to play the Dolphins in -35 degree weather, and then two tough road games against the Bills and Ravens, whereas the Niners had to come from behind twice against the Packers and Lions.





The argument can be made the Chiefs will face the most talented all-around offense that they've seen so far in the playoffs, but on the other side, the Niners haven't faced the entity known as Patrick Mahomes yet either. One thing I do know is the Niners cannot fall behind and start off slow like they did against Green Bay and Detroit otherwise this game will be over before they know it.

A healthy dose of Christian McCaffrey should help them control the clock and keep Mahomes on the sidelines. A lot is riding on this game for the Niners as an organization. A win will silence the criticisms of Kyle Shanahan not being able to win the big one, but another loss will have some people questioning whether he is the guy to get them over that hump.

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

- Sam F. Davis (Tampa Bay) - Feb. 10 - 20 points
- Risen Star (Fair Grounds) - Feb. 17 - 50 points
- Sunland Derby (Sunland) - Feb. 18 - 20 points
- Rebel (Oaklawn) - Feb. 24 - 50 points



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

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

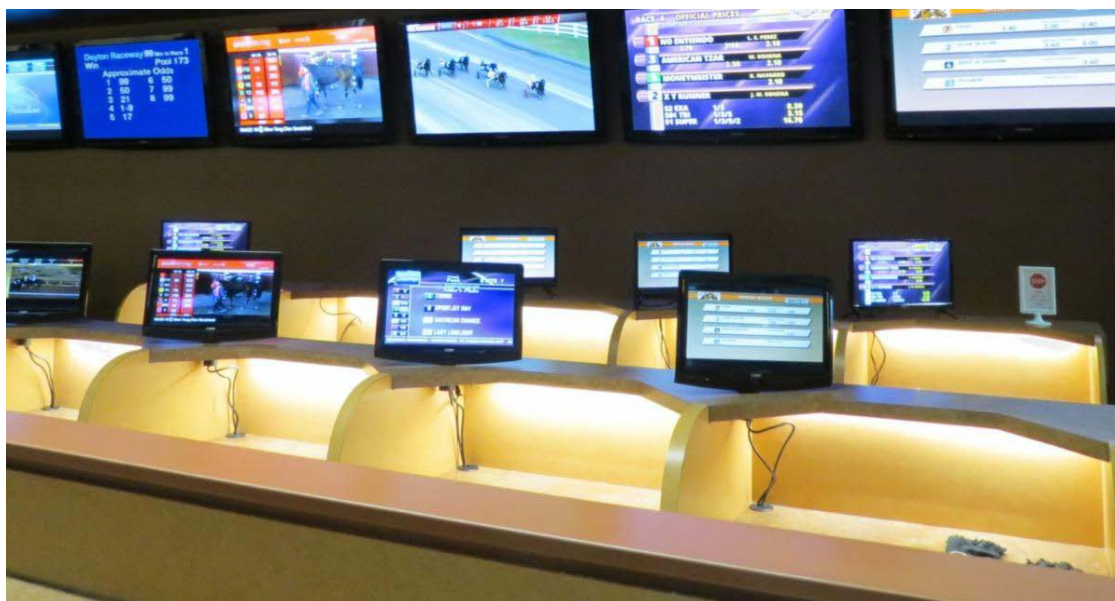


Apprentice jockey and 2023 Sovereign Award nominee Fraser Aebly receives congrats from trainer Elton Dickey after winning the 5th race aboard Shootin Money on July 18 at ASD. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)



**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 😊

## 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](http://HPIbet.com). Click [here](#) for a list of tracks to wager on during the month of February.

## Carryover Watch

- Tampa Bay (Feb. 9) - Jackpot Pick 6 carryover \$94,934
- Golden Gate (Feb. 9) - Jackpot Pick 6 carryover \$58,749

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](http://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.

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

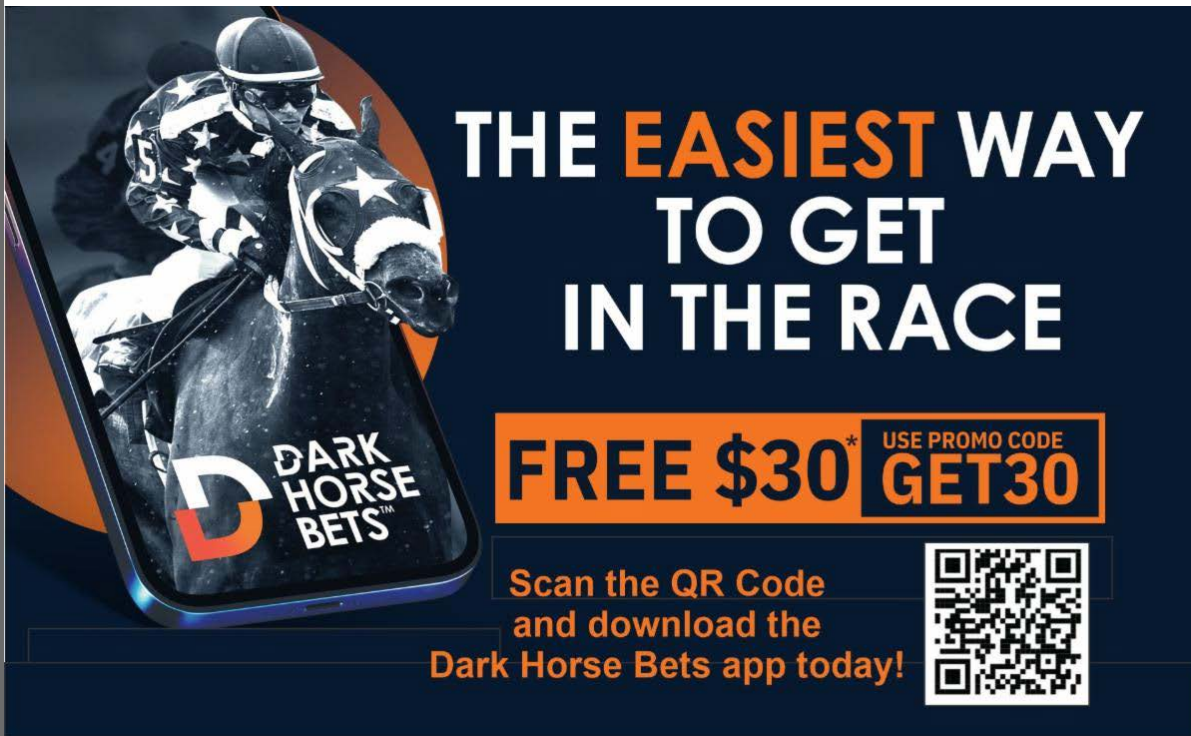
Join the "I Won Bigg" wagering group this Saturday at 10:30 a.m. The wagering group is open to everyone. This week they will be playing Tampa and Santa Anita. \$20 per share. If you would like more information please email [Larry](#).

### A Snapshot in Time by Track Historian Bob Gates





Brass Ruhler won a modest dozen races from 54 lifetime starts, but none was more important than his pace score 20 years ago on August 10, 2004. Ruhler's victory was trainer Gary Danelson's 1,000th win at the Downs. Gary is the Downs all-time leading trainer, and his 1,250 career wins has him light years ahead of his nearest active rival. His 1,250th win came last year on September 12th when his Kate's Princess overcame a bad break and pretty much won as she pleased over a field of \$10,000 claimers. (Gerry Hart photo)



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IN THE RACE**

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**GET30**

Scan the QR Code  
and download the  
Dark Horse Bets app today!

**DARK HORSE BETS**

A promotional graphic for the Dark Horse Bets app. It features a jockey on a horse, the app's logo, and a QR code. The text promotes the app as the easiest way to get in the race and offers a \$30 free bet using promo code GET30.

### 49th Sovereign Award Finalists Announced

Former ASD trainer Martin Drexler and jockey Fraser Aebly among finalists



Sovereign Award Trophy



The Jockey Club of Canada has announced the finalists for the 2023 Sovereign Awards honouring Canada's champions and recognizing their outstanding achievements in Canadian Thoroughbred Racing and Breeding, and former ASD trainer Martin Drexler and jockey Fraser Aebly are among the finalists! Well done! More from the *Canadian Thoroughbred* [here](#).

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### **2024 Sam F. Davis Stakes at a Glance**

**Change of Command (3-1) the pick for Hall of Fame trainer McGaughey**



Fans intently watch the action at Tampa Bay Downs. (Penelope P. Miller/America's Best Racing)

The Sam F. Davis Stakes this Saturday at Tampa Bay Downs may be a Kentucky Derby prep, but it also serves as a valuable stepping stone to the richer March 9 Lambholm South Tampa Bay Derby, which offers 50 qualifying points to the winner. Change of Command (3-1) is the pick from America's Best Racing in a packed field of 12. Full analysis [here](#).

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### **Kentucky Derby 2024**

**Pletcher has yet another case of prep hiccups**



Trainer Todd Pletcher is facing challenges on the road to the Kentucky Derby (Barbara D. Livingston)

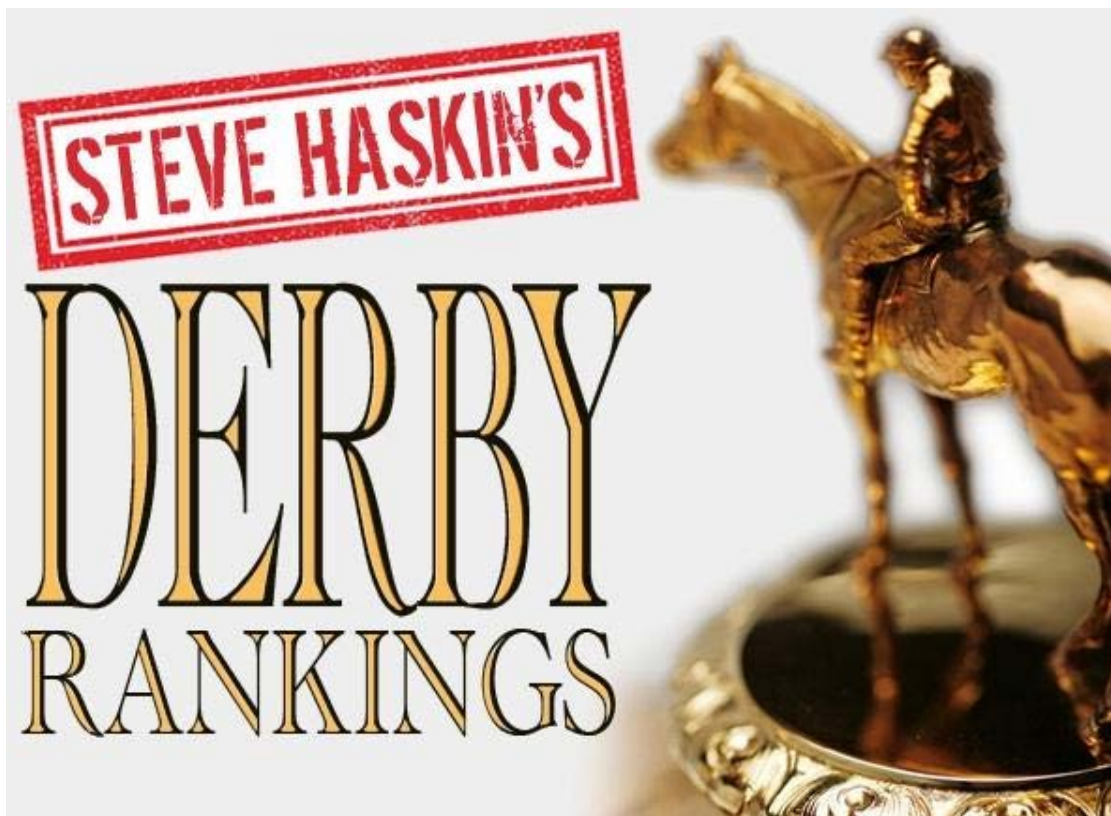
Having started more horses in the Kentucky Derby than any other trainer, and attempted to get even more to the race who didn't make it, Todd Pletcher knows the pitfalls of the Triple Crown trail as well, if not better, than most. This year, the perils of the Derby trail have developed early for Pletcher. More from the *Daily Racing Form* [here](#).

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### **Kentucky Derby Rankings by Steve Haskin**

**The Road to the Derby, February 5, 2024 – Week 3**





"It took about two minutes following the Holy Bull Stakes for it all to sink in. There is no No. 1! After giving it some thought I had no choice but to start psycho-analyzing Fierceness in order to keep him on top. Otherwise, where do you put him and who do you replace him with? Then I heard the news from owner Aron Wellman about Locked, and I started wondering if we still have a No. 2. Well, it's all been sorted out so sit back and enjoy the week we almost started the Rankings with No. 3." ~ Steve Haskin. Read more at [Secretariat.com](https://secretariat.com) [here](#).

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## **Best of Bob**

*by ASD Historian Bob Gates*

Bob recounts a rivalry from 1979 and 1980 when a pair of young ones challenged each other to the max. One was a copper bay gelding and the other was a grey. They put on a clinic in the Derby Trial where they ran one/two and in the Manitoba Derby they ran second and third. Who were they? Find out [here](#) (From June 25, 2017).

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### 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](#)
- 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](#)

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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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