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The Inside Track | Issue #160 | Friday, November 30, 2024

**DINING****BET NOW****140 VLTs****ASD Hours**

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

Assiniboia Downs is Open-Year Round

- 140 VLTs open daily from 10 a.m. to 1 a.m. Free games for cash prizes!
- Free Draws for \$200 cash every Friday, Saturday & Sunday at 9 p.m.
- Wagering on top tracks from North America, Europe & Australia
- Daily Happy Hour, \$11.95 lunch specials, evening specials and full dining menu
- Facility rentals
- Special events

Go to [ASDowns.com](https://www.asdowns.com) for a complete list of upcoming events and specials.

In this edition . . .

- What's happening at the Downs?
- Draws in the VLT Lounge every Friday, Saturday & Sunday
- There's always a Deal at ASD!
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- New Year's Eve Dinner and Dance
- Doug Evans wins Player's Choice Tourney by a Nose
- AI Handicapping Test #3. Turf. Hollywood Derby
- Looking For a Special Photo?
- TravyFootball Week 13

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- A Snapshot in Time: Gary Danelson's 1,200th Win
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Do the Downs!



140 VLTs

More VLTs = More Jackpots! See our recent Jackpot Wins below:

Nov. 27 - Big City 5's - \$1,005

Nov. 27 - Wild Life - \$1,148

Nov. 26 - Fudai Panda - \$1,250

Nov. 25 - Big City 5's - \$1,060

Nov. 25 - 5 Times - \$1,003

Nov. 24 - 5 Times - \$1,060

Open daily from 10 a.m. to 1 a.m.



Cash Draws!

Spin the Cash Wheel every Friday, Saturday & Sunday: Enter for a chance to spin the lucky Cash Wheel to win up to \$100 cash. Draws from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Draws for \$200 Cash every Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Join us in the VLT Lounge every Friday, Saturday and Sunday for a chance to win \$200 cash. The draw for \$200 cash will take place at 9 p.m.

Dinner specials, drink specials and a chance to win some cash! It doesn't get any better than that!

ASD is the place to be every Friday, Saturday & Sunday night! A Free Draw for \$200 Cash plus a chance to Spin the Lucky Wheel to win up to \$100!



12 Days of Christmas Cash!

Saturday, Dec. 14 through Thursday, Dec. 26. Enter for a chance to pick an ornament off the Christmas Tree to win up to \$100 cash. Draws will be made during the afternoon and evening plus complimentary snacks.

There's Always a Deal at ASD!

New! \$11.95 Daily Lunch Specials

Daily from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Each day of the week will feature a daily food item as outlined below.

- **Mondays:** Jalapeno Chicken Parm Sandwich
- **Tuesdays:** Downs Burger
- **Wednesdays:** Grilled Cheese with Bacon and Tomato
- **Thursdays:** Taco Salad
- **Fridays:** Crispy Chicken Ranch Wrap
- **Saturdays:** Western Omelette
- **Sundays:** Hot Beef Sandwich



Happy Hour

Daily from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. and 9 p.m. to close.

Drink Specials

- 6 oz. House Wine - \$5.50
- House Spirits - \$5.50
- Domestic Beer - \$5.50
- House Lager Pint - \$6.00
- Downs Caesar - \$7.00

Appetizer Specials

- Sweet Potato Fries - \$8.95
- Chicken Fingers - \$8.95
- Cheese Nachos - \$8.95
- Pot Stickers - \$8.95



Spirit Hour

Nightly from 11 p.m. to Midnight

- House Vodka - \$4
- Rye - \$4
- Gin - \$4
- Rum - \$4
- Spiced Rum - \$4

Evening Chef's Specials

Daily from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. - Reservations are not required.

- **Mondays: Chicken Finger Dinner \$14.95** - Crispy breaded chicken tenders served with our famous honey dill dip. Served with fries and coleslaw.
- **Tuesdays: 20% Off** all regular priced food items.
- **Wednesdays: Pizza \$15.95** - 12-inch thin crust pizza. Ham & Pineapple, Pepperoni & Mushroom or Vegetarian (tomatoes, onions, peppers, black olives & mushrooms).
- **Thursdays: Chipotle Mozza Burger \$15.95** - Our signature chuck patty and crispy bacon smothered in melted mozzarella. Topped with fresh sliced tomato, fried onion rings, chipotle mayo and sweet bold barbecue sauce.
- **Fridays: Steak & Suds \$29.95** - 8 oz. NY Striploin 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.**
- **Saturdays: Prime Rib & Wine \$29.95** - 8 oz. Certified Angus Prime Rib. 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.**

- **Sundays: Fish & Chips \$16.95** - Two pieces of beer battered cod with tartar sauce and lemon. Served with french fries and coleslaw.

As a special bonus, everyone who orders one of the evening specials will receive a game card to play "Pick to Win" in our Club West Gaming Lounge. Pick the green poker chip and you can spin our cash wheel to win up to \$100 cash!



Christmas Buffet - Sunday, Dec. 22

Let us do all the work for you! Indulge in a mouthwatering array of traditional Christmas favourites including roast turkey with gravy, baked ham & more. See full menu [here](#).

Adults: \$39.95, Seniors (65+): \$35.95, Youth (6 to 12): \$29.95, Kids (5 & under): \$16.95. Prices are subject to applicable taxes.

**Limited seating is available.
Call 204-885-3330 today!**



NYE Dinner & Dance - Tuesday, Dec. 31

Ring in 2025 in style at our New Year's Eve Dinner & Dance! Join us for an unforgettable evening featuring our renowned Certified Angus Prime Rib Buffet, followed by dancing until 1 a.m. See details and full menu [here](#).



Tickets may be purchased from the General Office at Assiniboia Downs during regular office hours (Monday to Friday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.) - OR - call 204-885-3330 to order your tickets by phone.

This event sells out every year so get your tickets now!

Experience and Strategy Pays Off in Player's Choice

Doug Evans holds on to defeat Free Press handicapper George Williams by a nose

Doug Evans (pictured right) has been handicapping horse races since he was 16 years old, starting at tracks in Toronto and Orangeville. His decades of experience paid off in last Saturday's Player's Choice Handicapping Tournament, as he hit a longshot on his first bet and held on late to defeat Winnipeg Free Press handicapper George Williams by the slimmest of margins.

The 77-year-old retired pharmaceutical sales regional manager built his bankroll to \$104.00, just enough to nose out Williams (\$102.50) in what turned out to be a tough day for longshot players. Kathleen Buckoski (\$99.00) finished third, followed by Cecelia Liebrecht (\$95.00) and Ron Phelps (\$90.10).



"I didn't think I was going to win it," Evans said, despite getting off to a blazing start with 15-1 longshot Venezuelan Triumph in the first race at Tampa Bay. "I knew I had over a hundred bucks, but I thought, well, I hope I get in the top five."

Evans' victory was built on a methodical approach he's developed over his six decades of handicapping. His strategy for tournament play is distinct: attack the first five races looking for longshots, then adjust based on results. In this case, his approach paid immediate dividends when his first selection returned \$33.30, \$13.50 and \$8.10 across the board.

"The very first one got me right in there," Evans recalled. "When that hit, I thought, 'gee, I better get serious here.'" That initial score proved crucial, as Evans went on to cash tickets on each of his first five selections before cooling off slightly in the latter half of the tournament.

While some handicappers pore over speed figures and pace scenarios, Evans has developed his own approach focused primarily on board betting - watching the odds movements in the minutes leading up to post time. "You know, the horse is going to be like 20-1 and all of a sudden he's going down, down, down to 10-1," said Evans. "And then there's two minutes left and he drops again. You're thinking, 'Somebody's knowledgeable money is being bet on that horse.'"

Evans also maintains strict criteria for the types of races he'll play. He likes to play races with seven horses or less. "I don't want 12 horses in a race, it's easier to pick one out of seven," said Evans, applying the same analytical mindset that served him well during his career managing pharmaceutical sales teams.

This isn't Evans' first tournament success. He's previously won two other handicapping tournaments at Assiniboia Downs, including one that earned him a trip to Las Vegas for the Orleans World Series of Handicapping. Competing against roughly 700 players in Vegas, he actually led the tournament after day one. And that's extremely difficult to do!

Despite his success, Evans maintains a modest approach to the game. "I'm not a big bettor. I mean, I'm a two and five-dollar bettor, that's it," he said, crediting much of his development as a handicapper to his friend and mentor Larry Liebrecht, noting that while

they often land on the same horses, they frequently arrive there through different handicapping angles.

Evans has also been a horse owner, having been part of Hardball Stable years ago, but it's the socializing aspect of the game and the intellectual challenge of handicapping that keeps him engaged with the sport. He continues to study and evolve his approach, watching handicapping videos on YouTube and reading classic handicapping texts like Steve Davidowitz's "Betting Thoroughbreds," which he's read multiple times.

The tournament victory earned Evans \$1,000 and a trophy, which he plans to turn into Christmas money for his grandkids. While the victory was sweet, he's quick to emphasize that he approaches horse playing primarily as entertainment. "If I lose, I lose. It's not going to hurt me. I've got my pension. I'm not spending my kids' inheritance," he chuckled.

Evans, who has been playing at Assiniboia Downs for over 20 years since moving to Manitoba from Ontario, had nothing but praise for our local track and its management. "I think Assiniboia Downs is a great track," he said. "Sheri (Glendinning) does a phenomenal job. I hope she's there for a long time." He particularly appreciates how Sheri looks after the handicappers, noting her thoughtfulness in sending out tournament forms ahead of time.

Meanwhile, the race for Handicapper of the Year remains tight heading into the final Player's Choice tournament of the year on December 28. Randy Premachuk, who finished seventh in Saturday's tourney, currently leads the standings with 269 points, followed by Darcy Penner (255), Alan Hampton (241), Trevor Phelps (241), and Nicole Baker (228). With \$3,500 and year-end bragging rights on the line, the competition promises to be fierce in the final tourney.

For Evans, who now lives in Selkirk and makes the drive to Assiniboia Downs regularly during the live meet, the victory validates his systematic approach to tournament play. "I look at it for the fun aspect," he said, but his methodical strategy and years of experience suggest he's having fun, precisely because he's figured out what works.

Congratulations Doug! Well done!

Handicapping: Fun With Artificial Intelligence (AI)

AI Test #3. Hollywood Derby on the Turf



Horse handicapping. With AI.

HOLLYWOOD DERBY (G1) ADVANCE

Race 9, Del Mar, Saturday, November 30, 2024
1 1/8 Miles (Turf) | Purse: \$300,000

Hollywood Derby Picks

1. Formidable Man
2. Rothschild
3. Donegal Momentum
4. Carson's Run

Value Plays

Carson's Run
Attilan

Saturday's Hollywood Derby shapes up as a fascinating test featuring unbeaten local star Formidable Man against a deep cast of challengers. With Del Mar turf form and proven graded stakes ability scattered throughout the field, the race offers compelling wagering opportunities.

Formidable Man brings a perfect 3-for-3 local record and enters off consecutive stakes wins over this course and distance. The McCarthy trainee showed his class defeating several of today's rivals in the Del Mar Derby, and his tactical versatility under Rispoli is a major asset. The 75-day freshening raises slight concerns at 4-1 on the morning line.

Rothschild enters having shown particular affinity for the Del Mar turf course, with strong performances in both the Cecil B. DeMille and Oceanside Stakes. The Tim Yakteen trainee gets a significant rider upgrade to Flavien Prat and has been training forwardly since his subpar effort in the Twilight Derby. His tactical style should put him in an ideal position behind what projects as honest fractions. While still seeking his first turf victory, his closing kick over this course makes him dangerous at fair odds.

Donegal Momentum ships west with impressive momentum after back-to-back New York victories. The Uncle Mo colt keeps Castellano aboard and brings strong closing fractions from his recent wins. While facing tougher here, his development pattern suggests another forward move is possible.

Carson's Run adds intrigue while dropping back in distance for Clement. The Grade 1 winner at longer trips has shown consistent improvement and retains Davis for this shorter test. His late pace in longer races suggests he could be dangerous if the pace develops honestly.

The Hollywood Derby presents compelling value opportunities in a deep and competitive field. Rothschild's affinity for the Del Mar turf course, rider upgrade, and tactical ability make him the key play at attractive odds. Formidable Man's perfect local record demands respect, while several proven graded stakes performers create opportunities for prices throughout the vertical exotics.

Multiple overlay situations exist across all pools. Our main strategy focuses on capitalizing on Rothschild's value while using logical contenders underneath. The presence of both tactical types and proven closers provides coverage against various pace scenarios over the nine-furlong distance.

Good Luck!

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



Gee I'm Foxy and her connections in the winner's circle after her victory in the Debutante Stakes on July 23 at ASD for trainer Jared Brown and owner Railside Stable. (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 😊

Top NFL Picks by TravyFootball Week 13

Ravens over Eagles (Sunday afternoon): In a possible Super Bowl matchup, depending on who you ask, the Eagles will take their seven-game win streak into Baltimore to face the leading MVP candidate Lamar Jackson and the Ravens. The Eagles mopped the floor with the Rams last week and Saquon Barkley had himself another great day. 255 yards and two touchdowns later, Barkley showed how dominant he can be when he's on a good team, as opposed to a poor team like the Giants, where he was last year. But having said that, it's really hard to bet against the Ravens right now, who have their own beast at running back in Derek Henry. Although he didn't score a touchdown, he still ran over the Chargers last Monday night for 140 yards. Because Baltimore will have the hometown crowd with them, I'm picking them to get the win here.



Bengals over Steelers (Sunday noon): Despite their 4-7 record, the Bengals now look like the team they did to begin the season. If you take a look at Joe Burrows stats (27 touchdowns and 4 interceptions) you'd think they would have more than four wins, but even in their losses, six of them were by seven points or less. Every game is a must win now if they hope to make a late push into the playoffs. The Steelers are coming off a disappointing loss to the Browns last week in which their defense did not play up to their usual standards. It was Russell Wilson's first loss since he became the starter and now Pittsburgh finds themselves tied with the Ravens for the division lead, both with eight wins a piece.

Bills over Niners (Sunday night): It once again pains me to pick against the 49ers, but I have to call it like it is. It was one thing for the offense to look terrible against Green Bay, they were essentially playing a third string quarterback in Brandon Allen, and also missing their all-pro left tackle Trent Williams, but the Packers also were able to march up and down the field all over San Fran's defense with ease. If it wasn't for a couple of dropped passes by the Packers receivers, the score could have been much worse. Even the return of Christian McCaffrey hasn't really helped boost San Fran's offensive woes. I'm not sure if Purdy will be back for this one, but taking a trip to Buffalo in December is never fun for a team from California. The Niners playoffs chances are still alive because of the play in the NFC West, where only one game separates the first-place team from the last place team. The Bills should be well rested after having a week off, not to mention they still might be riding the high of ending the Chiefs undefeated season. The forecast is calling for some not-so-great weather (expect to see snow!)

**Last week 2-1
Season overall 24-12**

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? Watch and wager at HPIbet.com or one of our off-track betting locations listed below.



Can't make it to the track to wager?

Vist 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

Be sure to stop by the Canad Inns Windsor Park, Green Brier Inn and Quest Inn every Saturday afternoon. A draw will be held at each location for \$25 in wagering vouchers!

Carryover Watch

- Churchill (November 29) - Jackpot Pick 6 carryover \$201,174
- Woodbine (November 29) - Jackpot Pick 6 carryover \$84,404

Click [here](#) for more carryovers.

Player Rewards & Cash Back Program

Earn Points: Earn points for all your wagering when you swipe your HPI card or wager on HPIbet.com. Click [here](#) for more information.

Earn Cash Bonuses: Betting bonus cash is earned at four different wagering levels in addition to regular HPIbet rewards points earned. Bonus calculations are available on payouts of \$2.20 and above. Maximum weekly bonus deposit \$1,000. Click [here](#) for more information.



Handicapping Tournaments

Player's Choice Tournaments

- Player's Choice – Saturday, December 28

\$1,750 up for grabs! Entry fee \$25. Entrants pick 10 races from any thoroughbred, harness or quarter horse track that is racing on the contest day. A \$2 WPS wager is placed on one horse from each race. The entrant with the highest bankroll is the winner. Click [here](#) to see a list of the 2024 tournament winners.



"I Won Bigg" Wagering Group

The "I Won Bigg" wagering group will be meeting every Saturday at 10:30 a.m. on the plaza in the Clubhouse. This week's featured tracks will be Tampa Bay, Woodbine and Del Mar. Everyone is welcome. If you would like more information please email [Larry](#).

A Snapshot in Time by Track Historian Bob Gates



In our third and final Gary Danelson memory, we revisit August 12, 2017. It was the night Gary scored his 1200th career win at the Downs with Mystery Cat. As of the end of the 2024 season, the Downs All-Time Leading Trainer has 1255 wins to his name, and they were all registered right here at the Downs.

While Gary continues to threaten retirement, a little bird has tweeted a rumour that the man from Scobey, Montana purchased a horse in the October 2024 Kentucky yearling sale. Could this be true? (Jason Halstead photo)

2024 Clark Stakes at a Glance

Hit Show is the horse to beat in 10-horse field after three straight stakes wins

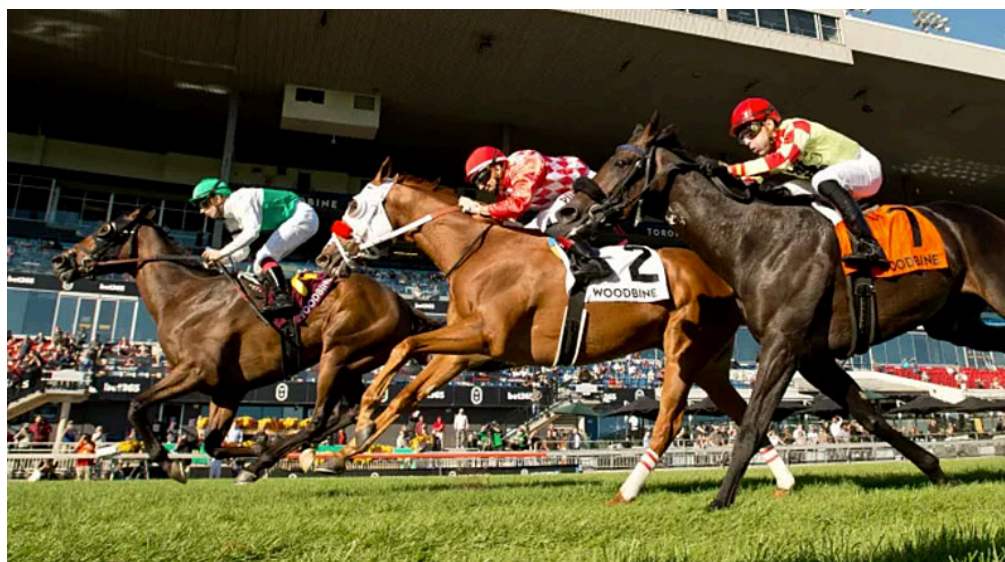


The field for the 2019 Clark Stakes settles into early position prior to reaching the first turn at Churchill Downs. (Coady Media)

The handicap division for older horses will offer one of its last 2024 opportunities for taking down a hefty purse when the Grade 2 Clark Stakes Presented by Norton Healthcare is contested Friday at Churchill Downs. The Grade 2 stakes, which serves as a nice option for horses who skipped the Breeders' Cup, drew a field of 10 for what should be a competitive and intriguing betting race. More from *America's Best Racing* [here](#).

Field Of 10 Takes On Friday's Hollywood Turf Cup At Del Mar

Favourite Truly Quality, competing at his seventh different track in last seven starts



Truly Quality earns his first graded stakes victory in the G3 Singpiel. (Michael Burns / Woodbine photo)

Ten marathon-running racehorses will match leg and lung capacity at the seaside oval Friday in the 43rd edition of the Hollywood Turf Cup going a mile and one half on the Jimmy Durante Turf Course. The demanding test carries a purse of \$200,000 and Grade 2 status. The horse who proves best in this longest part of Del Mar's Turf Festival will add \$120,000 to his bankroll. More from the *Paulick Report* [here](#).

Saturday Stakes Plays at Gulfstream Park

Stunner, Rated by Merit, favourites to beat, exactors could be the better play



Gulfstream Park (Photo by Coglianese Photos)

The In Reality and My Dear Girl stakes headline a stellar card this Saturday at Gulfstream Park. Stunner looks like the filly to beat in the My Dear Girl, while Rated by Merit is the horse to beat in the In Reality, but TwinSpires handicapper John Mucciolo also has a few insights into who might complete the exactors. More from *TwinSpires* [here](#).

The Best of Bob

by ASD Historian Bob Gates



From June 2, 2023: Memories of Hall of Famer Irwin Driedger

On Saturday May 20, 2023 we lost one of the most successful jockeys in the history of Assiniboia Downs, Irwin Driedger. Irwin was one of the good guys of racing, both during and after his career on the track. Bob shares some memories of the Hall of Fame jockey, the "kid with the golden locks" from Russell, Manitoba, in his [tribute here](#).

Upcoming events at ASD

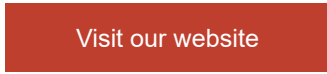
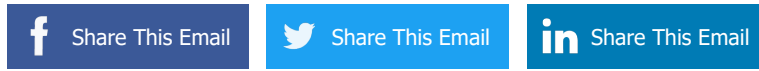
- Every Friday Night in November - Enter for a chance to spin the lucky Cash Wheel starting at 6 p.m. A draw for \$200 cash will also take place - [more info](#)
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ThFeedback & Inside Track Archives

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

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