

DID YOU HEAR THE LATEST?

Stay up-to-date with the latest news from Assiniboia Downs.

ISSUE #178 - APRIL 4, 2025



"Longshot Les" Buzzell

"Longshot Les" Buzzell wins Player's Choice Tourney

"Longshot Les" Buzzell captured his second Player's Choice Handicapping Tournament title at Assiniboia Downs by a wide margin last Saturday, but if you think he did it by taking wild stabs in the dark, think again.

"Everybody thinks I just swing for the fences without looking, but I don't," said Buzzell, who built his \$60 bankroll to \$156.10 to take home the trophy and \$1,000 cash.

CLICK HERE to see how he did it.



Trainer Jared Brown enjoying a walk in the backstretch Thursday morning. (George Williams)

Jared Brown Back With Strong Stable

Trainer Jared Brown is back in action at Assiniboia Downs with 26 horses, and it appears he could be headed for another great year. Brown, who first arrived at Assiniboia Downs in 1999, has assembled a formidable stable for the 2025 season.

The 57-year-old Vancouver native, who spent years in Seattle before making Manitoba his racing home, is coming off an impressive campaign where he tied for second in the trainer standings with 24 wins. Last year, he won six stakes races. This year could be even better.

CLICK HERE to read more about Brown's stable for 2025.



New Board Directors Added

The Non-Profit Manitoba Jockey Club Inc., operators of Assiniboia Downs, announced the addition of five new members to the Board of Directors, bringing the total to 11. Click [here](#) to read more.



2025 Live Racing Season

- 2025 Live Race Dates - click [here](#)
- **NEW ENHANCED** Shipping Incentives - click [here](#)
- **REVISED** Condition Book #1 - click [here](#)
- Stakes Schedule - click [here](#)
- Stall Application - click [here](#)



Easter Brunch is SOLD OUT. Mother's Day tickets still available

Easter Brunch is now SOLD OUT but tickets are still available for Mother's Day Brunch. **Mother's Day Brunch sells out every year, so don't be disappointed and order your tickets today! 204-885-3330.**

- [Easter Brunch](#) - Sunday, April 20 - **SOLD OUT**
- [Mother's Day Brunch](#) - Sunday, May 11

Click the above links for menu details and ticket prices.



Live Racing Prime Rib Buffet

Reservations are now open for our live racing Certified Angus Prime Rib Buffet featuring succulent, melt-in-your-mouth prime rib prepared to perfection, seafood table, rotating entree selections and much more! Buffet prices: Adults \$59.95, Seniors (65+) \$54.95, Kids 12 & under \$34.95, Kids 5 & under \$22.95.

SPECIAL LIMITED OFFER: \$10 off per person for any race night in May. **Promotional reservations are limited and must be made before April 30th.**



- #1 Spot in Winnipeg for VLT Jackpots!
- Free Draw for \$200 Cash every Friday, Saturday & Sunday plus draws to Spin the Lucky Cash Wheel





A Snapshot in Time by Bob Gates

From a \$49 longshot to Hall of Fame glory—join us as we celebrate the unforgettable legacy of Irwin Driedger at Assiniboia Downs. Click [here](#) to read more.



- \$11.95 Daily Lunch Special
- Happy Hour (3 to 5pm & 9pm to close)
- \$4 Spirit Hour (11 pm to midnight)
- Daily Evening Specials



Captain Cook has been listed as the 7/2 second choice in Saturday's Wood Memorial. (Walter Włodarczyk / NYRA)

2025 Wood Memorial Cheat Sheet

Twelve rivals will go postward in the 100th running of the \$750,000 Wood Memorial (G2) at Aqueduct on Saturday led by morning-line favourites Rodriguez (5/2) and Captain Cook. None of the 12 entered has a secure spot in the Kentucky Derby yet, and several runners are making their stakes debut, meaning it's now or never for this group.

Triple Crown winners Gallant Fox (1930), Count Fleet (1943), Assault (1946), and Seattle Slew (1977) all won the Wood Memorial on their way to etching their names in the annals of Thoroughbred racing history. ~ [AmericasBestRacing.net](#)

CLICK FOR FULL STORY



- Wager on Top Tracks
- Simulcast Schedule
- Off-Track Betting Locations



Mandatory Payout Alert: Charles Town will be having a mandatory payout of their Jackpot Pick 6 on Saturday, April 5. Current carryover (as of Thursday, April 3) is \$91,649.



Steve Haskin's Kentucky Derby Rankings Week 10

There are two major Kentucky Derby preps this Saturday, the Wood Memorial (G2) at Aqueduct and the Santa Anita Derby (G1) at Santa Anita. There are major Derby players in both races including Citizen Bull, Journalism, and Captain Cook. And don't forget to watch Flood Zone in the U.A.E Derby (G2) on Saturday too.

Secretariat.com has been running Hall of Fame writer Steve Haskin's horse racing

Haskin takes a closer look at the big players and also analyzes the results of the Florida Derby and Arkansas

columns for years, and for good reason! Haskin spent decades in the backstretch learning his craft, and it shows!

Derby. Then we've got the Blue Grass Stakes (G1) at Keenland on April 8. ~ Secretariat.com

[CLICK FOR FULL STORY](#)



Forever Young, the world's top rated racehorse, will be favoured in the 29th running of the \$12 million Dubai World Cup on Saturday. (Dubai Racing Club)

Saturday: Forever Young in Dubai World

Cup, Flood Zone in U.A.E. Derby

Forever Young, the highest-rated horse in the world since his victory in the Saudi Cup (G1) last month, will attempt to become the first horse to win both the Saudi Cup and the Dubai World Cup (G1) on a blockbuster card at Meydan on Saturday.

The card also features Saudi Cup runner-up Romantic Warrior in the \$6 million Sheema Classic (G1) on turf, Gotham Stakes winner Flood Zone in the U.A.E. Derby (G2), and Breeders' Cup Sprint winner Straight No Chaser in the Golden Shaheen (G1) sprint. All races will be available on HPIBet.com. Post time is 12:30 p.m. CST. ~ CanadianThoroughbred.com

[CLICK FOR FULL STORY](#)



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- Wagering Bonuses
- HPIbet.com Wagering Promotions



The Best of Bob by Bob Gates

From July 17, 2020: I Dreamed of a Racetrack Heaven

And now for something completely different. This week our faithful track historian has taken a swing at song-writing and re-worked **Tex Ritter's** 1961 hit Hillbilly Heaven. Click [here](#) to listen to the Ritter hit then check out Bob's lyrics for his version of Racetrack Heaven [here](#).

Feedback & Inside Track Archives

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

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



“Longshot Les” Buzzell Wins Player’s Choice Tourney

Apr 3, 2025 | The Inside Track



by G. S. Thompson

“Longshot Les” Buzzell captured his second Player’s Choice Handicapping Tournament title at Assiniboia Downs last Saturday, but if you think he did it by taking wild stabs in the dark, think again.

The 61-year-old Montreal native, who owns a signals and communications company that works with CP and CN, employed specific longshot angles to build his \$60 bankroll to a tournament-best \$156.10, well clear of runner-up Eve Tilston-Jones (\$122.90), Bill Drew (\$117.50), Mackenzie Stewin (\$103.70), and Ron Phelps (\$101.30).

Buzzell, who only began seriously handicapping the races four years ago, took home the monthly trophy and \$1,000 for his efforts. It was the second time he’d won the tournament in the past three years, despite only entering three times.

“Everybody thinks I just swing for the fences without looking, but I don’t,” said Buzzell, who was first introduced to horse racing decades ago at Blue Bonnets

in Montreal.

Buzzell focuses on several specific longshot angles:

"I look for bad trouble lines, and also if they have finished fourth or fifth in their last race," said Buzzell. "Or if they've been bet three races in a row but are now at big odds."

The strategy paid off with two big winners last Saturday, including an 18-1 shot at Gulfstream Park and a 16-1 shot at Turfway Park.

Sherlock's Jewel won the eighth race at Gulfstream Park for Buzzell and paid \$39.70, \$16.90, \$10.20 across the board. Sant' Antimo won the third race at Turfway Park and returned \$34.30, \$16.00, \$12.70. The place and show prices were enhanced when the favourites in both races finished out of the top three spots. "Those big place and show prices are key," said Buzzell.

Turfway Park has become Buzzell's favourite hunting ground for longshots. "I just find that every horse has a chance there," he said. "Especially when their past races are from Keeneland and Churchill and they've finished eighth or worse. For some reason they do well at Turfway Park."

Another angle Buzzell employs involves morning line odds. "If you go back the last two or three years, you'll find the stats are amazing on horses that are 12-1 on the morning-line," he said. "How often they come in, not just win, but also place and show."

When you think about it, a 12-1 horse on the morning line would be a horse that the line maker thinks has some chance of winning, otherwise they would have it at higher odds. A 12-1 horse would have to be considered to have some kind of angle going for it, otherwise it would likely be 20-1 or higher on the morning-line.

Buzzell isn't a student of handicapping books or complex systems. He credits a single handicapping seminar and guidance from the late Ivan Bigg for teaching him how to read past performances. He has since developed his angles through observation.

"When I was handicapping a Pick 5 that I hit, I noticed trouble-line horses that had finished fourth or fifth, or that were bet heavily, tended to run a lot better in their next races," said Buzzell. "So I started playing them."

Buzzell's Pick 5 success hasn't been limited to small scores either. "I've hit a couple of Pick 5s in the \$20,000 range," he said. His approach to those multi-race wagers? "I usually use one favourite, the one I think will win, but that's it. All the other horses I use are longshots."

For those questioning his seemingly unconventional approach, Buzzell remains confident in his methods. "I like the way I do it," he said. "Everybody looks at me like, 'What? Didn't you see this?' If I miss a longshot, I didn't like him because he finished eighth or ninth. They've got to show me something." While the substantial paydays certainly haven't hurt, Buzzell expressed genuine appreciation for the atmosphere at Assiniboia Downs. "I've been to other off-track betting places and tracks," he said, "I just find Assiniboia Downs to be a lot friendlier for some reason. I like the people here and I enjoy the atmosphere."

The next Player's Choice Handicapping Tournament is scheduled for Saturday, April 26th, where Buzzell will undoubtedly be among the entrants to watch.

You'll find him in the trouble lines.

Trainer Jared Brown Has Another Strong Stable for 2025

Apr 3, 2025 | The Inside Track



Top ASD trainer Jared Brown enjoying a walk in the backstretch Thursday morning.

by G. S. Thompson

Trainer Jared Brown is back in action at Assiniboia Downs with a 26-horse stable, and it appears he could be heading for another great year.

Brown, who first arrived at Assiniboia Downs in 1999, has assembled another formidable stable heading into the 2025 season. The 57-year-old Vancouver native, who spent years in Seattle before making Manitoba his racing home, is coming off an impressive campaign where he tied for second in the trainer standings with 24 wins.

Last year Brown won six stakes races. This year could be even better.

Brown won stakes in 2024 with Gee I'm Foxy, She's My Niece, and Welcome to Hollywood. The latter won the Winnipeg Futurity as a 2-year-old and was looking dapper and happy as a 3-year-old with assistant trainer/groom Susan Crane in the barn on Thursday morning.

Brown had seven 2-year-olds last year including Gee I'm Foxy, who won three stakes including the Debutante, Graduation and Osiris Stakes. While Gee I'm

Foxy is now being conditioned by another trainer in Alberta, Brown's other 2-year-olds from last season are back as 3-year-olds, and he's added another seven 2-year-olds to his stable for 2025, including one by Omaha Beach for all-time leading ASD trainer Gary Danelson.

Danelson won't be training horses this year, but he does plan on coming to Assiniboia Downs to socialize with the many friends he's made here since first



Groom Dodie Chmilowsky with 2-year-old owned by Gary Danelson. (George Williams)

"I have a better 2-year-old crop than last year," Brown said. "Three were bought at the CTHS Manitoba Sale and four are from the Kentucky sales, including two New York-breds."

Brown was walking horses between the barns with assistant trainer Susan Crane when we caught up with him on Thursday morning, but manual labour does have its benefits. "I'm down 40 freaking pounds," said Brown, smiling. "I can't afford to lose any more."

With a solid core of proven stakes performers, promising young talent, great help including Crane and groom Dodie Chmilowsky, and the backing of established owners like Danelson, John Ganas, Violetta Adamczyk, Cam Ziprick and partners, and Kane Kachur, Brown's 26-year tenure at Assiniboia Downs appears poised for another successful chapter in 2025.

Good luck Jared!



*Susan Crane with 2024 Winnipeg Futurity winner Welcome to Hollywood.
(George Williams)*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Assiniboia Downs Adds New Board Directors

WINNIPEG, MB – April 2, 2025 — The Non-Profit Manitoba Jockey Club Inc., operators of Assiniboia Downs, announced the addition of five new members to the Board of Directors, bringing the total to 11.

“We are so pleased to welcome these new Directors to our Board. They provide a wealth of diversified business knowledge and senior management experience to our team. We are well positioned to continue to guide this important Manitoba industry forward” said Dr. Norm Elder, Board Chair of the MJC.

The Manitoba Jockey Club was incorporated in 1993 with a mandate to protect and promote live thoroughbred horse racing in Manitoba. Assiniboia Downs is part of the cultural fabric of the community and has been an “economic horse” for Manitoba since 1958 through substantial contributions to the agriculture and tourism sectors while also providing significant jobs and tax creation for the province.

See new Board Directors [here](#).

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For more information contact:

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Barry Arnason

As both a horse owner and breeder, Barry has been involved with racing at Assiniboia Downs his entire life. Exposed to racing as a child through his father, Frank Arnason, who in addition to being a former President of the Canadian Thoroughbred Horse Society and having a stakes race named in his honour, was also responsible for bringing the first Icelandic horses to Manitoba.

Notable horses either owned and/or bred by Barry, include Escape Clause, Hidden Grace, Melisandre, Magic D'Oro, Langara, and Zdeno in addition to many other stakes winners over his years in the sport.

On the business front, Barry owns Arnason Industries, a proud Manitoba based general contracting and engineering firm that specializes in water supply systems, sewage collection and disposal systems, and heavy equipment rentals and services the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta.

Pat Beavis

Pat Beavis has owned a share of thoroughbred racehorses at Assiniboia Downs for over 30 years and is typically at the track two to three times a week. He is passionate about thoroughbred horse racing and believes Assiniboia Downs is an important part of our economy and Manitoba history.

Pat is the President of DyTerra Corporation headquartered in Headingley, Manitoba. DyTerra specializes in selling fertilizer handling equipment in Western Canada. Pat founded DyTerra in 2000, sold it years later and continues to run it for the current owners.

Pat has been involved in the Western Canadian agriculture industry for 40 years and is committed to supporting our farming community.





Bill Drew

Bill Drew has been a lifelong fan of horse racing. His interest in the sport began when Northern Dancer won the 1964 Kentucky Derby. In 1988, he became a horse owner and has owned both individually and in partnership many thoroughbreds who have competed at Assiniboia Downs. He has also bred thoroughbred horses and served as a director of the Manitoba division of the Canadian Thoroughbred Horse Society. He enjoys handicapping horses races and has qualified for the National Handicapping Championship on two occasions.

Bill and his wife own a farm outside Winnipeg where they keep their horses and have raised Manitoba foals. They have provided a retirement home for thoroughbreds and believe that thoroughbred retirement is an important component of owning race horses.

Bill's goals as a Board Director is to help ensure that horse racing in Manitoba continues to provide the social and economic benefits to the region. This includes ensuring a safe racing environment for horses and a positive experience for owners, backstretch employees, local farms, Assiniboia Downs employees and fans.

Bill is originally from Thunder Bay and has lived in Manitoba for 40 years. Bill and his wife Shelley have two adult children and three grandchildren.

He has management experience primarily in the transportation and agricultural sectors and has also started and operated a successful business.

Lisa Osachoff

Lisa brings over two decades of experience in sales and human resource management. She spent a decade with Western Financial Group from 2012 to 2022, advancing through progressively senior roles up to the C-suite. In April 2022, Lisa joined Wawanesa Mutual Insurance as the SVP, Chief People & Culture Officer, bringing her extensive expertise to the role. She is dedicated to building a strong organizational culture aligned with purpose and values, recognizing that this alignment is essential to enhancing the overall member experience.

Lisa holds a bachelor's degree in Sociology from the University of Lethbridge and the Chartered Professional in Human Resources (CPHR) designation. Beyond her professional achievements, she is an International and Canadian national-level show jumping judge and a member of the Official's Committee for Equestrian Canada, focusing on developing education for hunter/jumper judges in Canada. She has been part of the judging team at Spruce Meadows, Calgary, Alberta, since 2006. Lisa frequently travels across North America for competitions. She and her husband, Ray, relocated from Calgary, Alberta to Winnipeg in July 2020.



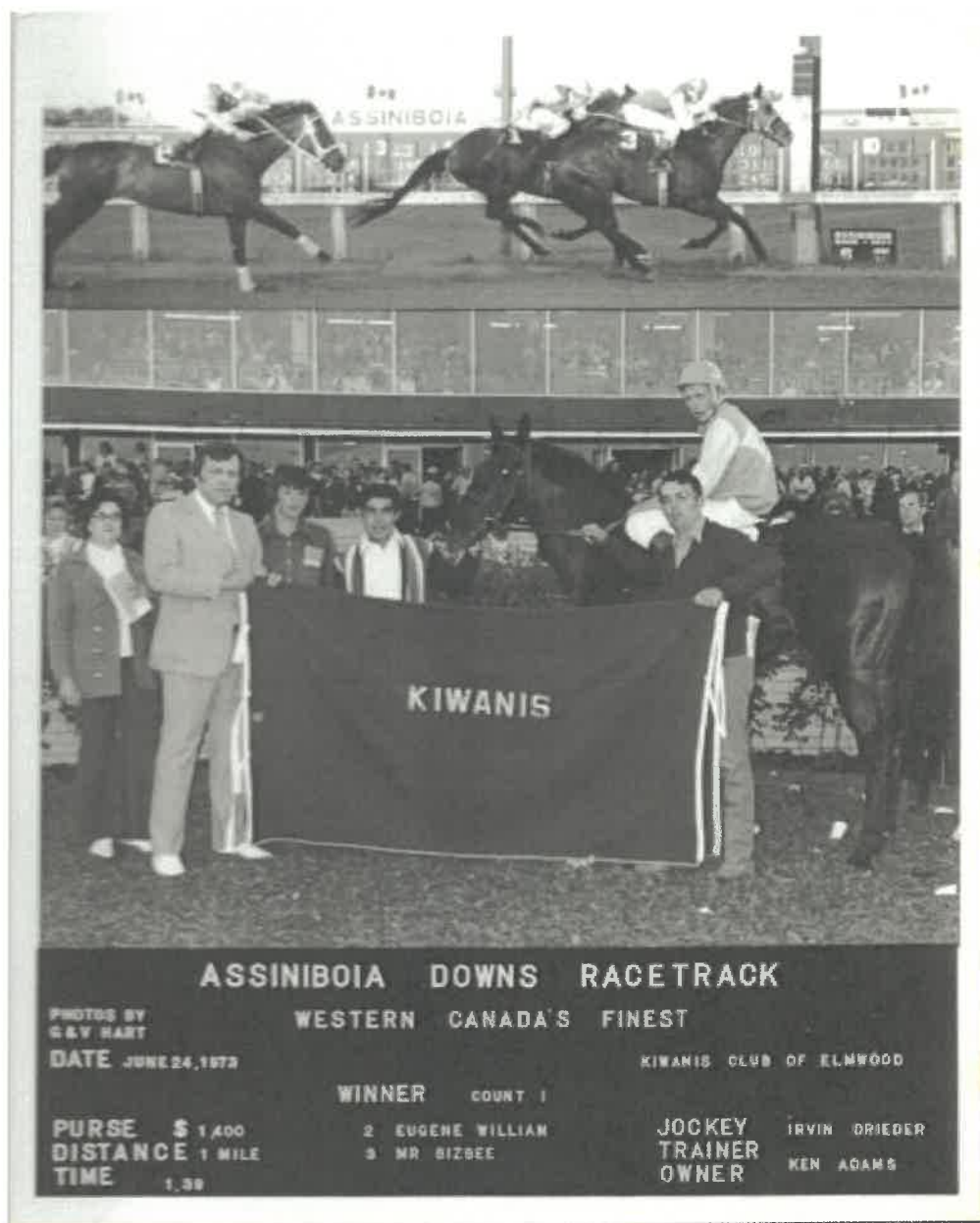


Larry Wandowich

Larry Wandowich is currently the Chief Administrative Officer of the Rural Municipality of Rosser and under direction of Council, oversees the implementation and delivery of programs and services in the municipality, which includes both rural lands and the CentrePort lands with the RM of Rosser. Larry has over 31 years management experience with 22 of those years at the executive level. As part of his past leadership journey, Larry was an executive member of Manitoba Lotteries, and subsequently Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries. His last position was Chief Community Relations & Marketing Officer where he managed portfolios overseeing the following areas: Community Relations, Partnerships, Marketing Campaigns & Loyalty Programs, and Casino Promotions, Player Development & Recognition. Larry also served on many governance committees; one key committee being the Corporate Social Responsibility Committee. Larry has also held executive positions overseeing Corporate Security, McPhillips Station Casino, a Business Improvement pilot program, and had worked on many strategic corporate projects. Having worked his way up through management, he has been exposed to many facets of the casino, gaming and liquor industries.

Larry has a BA from the University of Winnipeg (1990) and an MBA from the Asper School of Business, University of Manitoba (2010), with a specialization in Human Resources. He has also earned his CMMA through the University of Manitoba. Larry is a former University of Winnipeg Wesmen basketball player, a past Honorary President for BASA (Business Administration Students' Association) at the University of Winnipeg, and a past Chamber Ambassador with the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce.

Larry is happily married for 30 years and is a proud father of one daughter. Larry has served as a Board member for the following organizations: Habitat for Humanity Manitoba, St. Boniface Diocesan High School, and Board of Consultants for Manitoba Catholic Schools. Larry is a current member of the Associates, which is a network of more than 300 senior executives that fosters the development of University of Manitoba Asper School of Business students and education.



By Track Historian Bob Gates

On May 21, 2023, Canadian Hall of Fame jockey Irvin Driedger passed away following a long battle with cancer. Over the next four weeks, we will look back at some of Irvin's 969 wins and remember the man who spent eight full seasons riding at Assiniboia Downs.

On June 27, 1973, Irvin earned his first win at the Downs when he booted home Count I for Ken Adams, paying a tidy \$49.10, \$20.60, and \$7.60 across the board. A careful look at the photo reveals that trusted photographer Gerry Hart made one of his few "typos" on the date of the race. (Gerry Hart photo)