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ISSUE #189 - JUNE 20, 2025



Jockey Prayven Badrie returns aboard Sharp Likeness after winning the fifth race on Tuesday for trainer Jason Gourneau. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)

Bynoe and Badrie in Heated Battle for Top Spot, Gourneau and Nault Score Hat Tricks

Jockeys Prayven Badrie and Damario Bynoe stole the show this week at ASD! Badrie won four races on Tuesday and Bynoe battled back with four wins on Wednesday to take a one-win lead over last year's leading rider.

Trainers Jason Gourneau and Mike Nault scored hat tricks, and Steve Keplin, Jr. won a pair of races to maintain his lead in the standings, as both wagering and live crowds continued to be strong.

CLICK HERE to read more.



Live Racing this Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday at 7:30 p.m.

Live racing is in full stride every Tuesday and Wednesday evening—with this Monday, June 23, being one of our special Monday night cards! Additional Monday dates include July 14, August 4, August 25, and September 15. Post time is 7:30 p.m.—and as always, admission and parking are free! New to racing or need a refresher on how to bet? Visit Shannon and Brad at the Fan Education Centre on the main level—they're happy to help and answer all your questions.

CLICK HERE for schedule



Canada Day at Assiniboia Downs

Join us on Canada Day, Tuesday, July 1st at Assiniboia Downs for an unforgettable evening! Live racing kicks off at 7:30 p.m., with free family fun activities, followed by a spectacular fireworks display presented by CanFire Pyrotechnics.

After the fireworks, stick around and enjoy some great music to keep the celebration going! Admission is free for everyone, and please note there will be a \$10 parking charge after 8 p.m.

Celebrate Canada Day with thrilling races and a dazzling show in the sky!



ASD Player Portal

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Live Racing Prime Rib Buffet

Get ready to indulge in the ultimate dining experience at the track. Savour melt-in-your-mouth Certified Angus Prime Rib carved to perfection, plus a delicious variety of chicken and seafood dishes, rotating entrée selections, and so much more! Adults: \$59.95, Seniors (65+): \$54.95, Kids (6–12): \$34.95, Kids (5 & under): \$22.95. **Call 204-885-3330 to reserve your table .**



Mike Nault's assistant trainer Brittany Bergen greets Manitoba-bred Twolefttoload and jockey Damario Bynoe after winning the fifth race on Wednesday at ASD for ownership partners A2 Thoroughbreds and True North Thoroughbreds. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo). Click photo to enlarge.

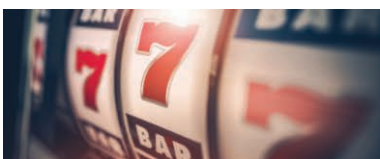
Looking for a Special Photo?

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

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 😊



- #1 Spot in Winnipeg for VLT Jackpots!
- Free \$500 Cash Draw after every live race night
- Free \$200 Cash Draw plus draws to Spin the Lucky Cash Wheel every Friday, Saturday & Sunday starting at 6 pm



Click photo to enlarge

A Snapshot in Time by Bob Gates

The star of this week's Snapshot in Time is an oldie but a goodie—an undated photo of Polo Park Racetrack. It's one of the finest images you're likely to see of the historic track, which once stood where Polo Park Shopping Centre is now located. The racing oval was laid out in a north-south pattern, with the grandstand, clubhouse, paddock, and stable area on the west side of the grounds. The grandstand was a majestic sight, offering seating for 4,500 patrons, while the lawn in front could accommodate another 15,000. Polo Park was known for its gleaming white buildings with maroon roofs, and the words "Polo Park" painted in huge white letters atop the grandstand. (Meyer's Photography, Winnipeg)



- \$13.95 Daily Lunch Special
- Happy Hour (3 to 5pm & 9pm to close)
- Crazy Hour after Live Racing! Beer, Shots & Wine \$5 plus 25% off all appetizers





Horses jump out of the starting gate on Ohio Derby day in 2024 at Thistledown, which hosts the \$500,000 Ohio Derby June 21. (Coglianese photos)

Noel's Weekend Winners: Nice Profit Opportunity on Ohio Derby Day

This Saturday is the biggest day of the year in Ohio racing as Thistledown hosts Ohio Derby day, a day of five stakes races including the Grade 3 \$500,000 Ohio Derby.

For this weekend's winners, Noel Michaels takes a closer look at the featured race plus the headline event on the undercard, the \$250,000 Lady Jacqueline Stakes for fillies and mares. As the final two races on the 12-race card, these two races will be the lynchpins for any type of profitable day for handicappers.

-- [America's Best Racing](#)

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



Trawlerman wins the Gold Cup at Ascot Racecourse. (Mathea Kelley)

Trawlerman Sets Course Record in Ascot Gold Cup

The staying king, Kyprios, is no longer around, long live the king. Trawlerman gave everything during his losing Gold Cup (G1) battle with Kyprios last year at Ascot Racecourse and, with the dual winner now retired, Godolphin's ironclad warhorse broke his rivals on the wheel of a sustained gallop June 20 which swept away the track record, as well as any semblance of mercy.

-- [BloodHorse](#)

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Craving food from Assiniboia Downs?
Get our delicious food delivered straight to your door.
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Sovereignty vaulted his sire into some very exclusive company after winning the Belmont Stakes. (Walter Wlodarczyk / NYRA)

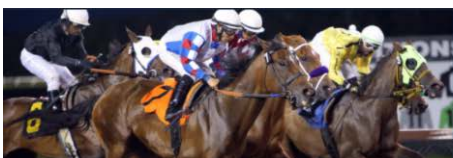
Bloodlines Presented By Walmac Farm: Sovereignty Boosts Into Mischief Into Increasingly Rare Company

With a definitive victory in the Grade 1 Belmont Stakes at Saratoga, Sovereignty (Into Mischief) elevated his sire into a tie as the living stallion with the most Triple Crown wins (four) alongside Tapit (Pulpit).

They stand one victory ahead of Curlin (Smart Strike), who has three classic wins: two Preakness victors (Exaggerator and Journalism), and one Belmont winner (Palace Malice).

-- [Paulick Report](#)

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Bob's Blog 95 Years of the Winnipeg Futurity

The two-year-old, a.k.a. the "Baby" season, will be upon us soon enough. To mark the occasion, the History Guy has compiled a collection of photos from 95 years of the Winnipeg Futurity. Click [here](#) to see what Bob has selected as some of the finest two-year-olds in local racing history.

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.



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Bynoe and Badrie in Heated Battle for Top Spot, Gourneau and Nault Score Hat Tricks

Jun 19, 2025 | [News](#), [The Inside Track](#)



Jockey Prayven Badrie returns aboard Sharp Likeness after winning the fifth race on Tuesday for trainer Jason Gourneau. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)

by G.S. Thompson

Jockeys Prayven Badrie and Damario Bynoe stole the show this week at ASD! Badrie won four races on Tuesday and Bynoe battled back with four wins on Wednesday to take a one-win lead over last year's leading rider.

Badrie won the first race on Wednesday with Highlander Honey (\$2.80) for trainer Jason Gourneau, the fourth aboard Bee La Soul (\$3.20) for leading trainer Steve Keplin, Jr., the fifth with Sharp Likeness (\$2.50) for Gourneau, and the sixth race on Freed by Magic (\$8.60) for trainer Lorne Fraser (\$8.60).

95 Years of the Winnipeg Futurity – In Pictures

Jun 19, 2025 | [ASD History, The Inside Track](#)

MANITOBA FREE PRESS

MARCH 19, 1928

Local Jockey Clubs Announce Inauguration of New Events

Winnipeg Futurity for Two-Year-Olds, and Manitoba Stakes for Three-Year-Olds Will Be Run for First Time During Fall of 1930—Rich Prizes Will Be Donated, With View to Encouraging Breeding.

The definite relationship between horse racing and the breeding industry is again demonstrated in the announcement by R. James Speers of the inauguration of the Winnipeg Futurity and the Manitoba Stakes to be run at Polo and Whittier tracks in the fall of 1930.

These events, open to two and three-year-old western Canadian breeds of that date, are being sponsored by the Manitoba Jockey club and the Winnipeg Jockey club, and they are offered as a direct contribution to the encouragement of the thoroughbred horse industry west of the Great Lakes, at the same time indicating the clubs' recognition of the success that breeders have so far attained.

Breeding Encouraged

With the growth of public interest in racing that has developed during the past few years the breeding of thoroughbred and light horses has, simultaneously, come into prominence and the status of the industry is very much higher at the present time than formerly.

This announcement has created considerable interest in breeding circles; it is probably the most interesting since the formation of the Prairie Thoroughbred Breeders and Racing association four years ago and it is evident that this body, having achieved its aim to improve racing conditions in the west, is making rapid strides to accomplish its great-

er purpose of developing breeding throughout the prairie provinces.

The substantial sum of two thousand dollars has been donated by each club, which, with fees added make the purses two of the most valuable ever offered in the west, and the interest of the breeders is properly recognized in the provision that \$250 shall be paid to the breeder of the winner out of each purse.

In the Winnipeg Futurity five dollars is payable upon nomination of the mare before April 2, 1928, further fees of five dollars being payable on the first of January, 1929 and 1930, unless the produce of such mare has been struck out.

In the Manitoba stakes similar fees are payable at the time of nomination of the colt and upon the first of January in 1929 and 1930, unless struck out.

Six furlongs will be the distance of the futurity and one mile in the stakes.

Entry blanks are available at the office of R. James Speers, 402 Scott block, Winnipeg, and nominations should be filed with him before April 2, 1928.

It is intended that these two features shall be annual events in the Winnipeg racing programme and entries in 1929 and future years will close during the first days of January.

Winnipeg Futurity Announcement – Manitoba Free Press, March 19, 1928.

by Track Historian Bob Gates

As the end of June isn't far off, we can look forward to seeing the "babies" (two-year-olds) make their way to the races. The stakes races for the youngsters include the Debutante, Graduation, Osiris, Buffalo, CTHS Sale Stakes and of course the Winnipeg Futurity.

The Futurity is the oldest continuously run race in western Canada. The race was inaugurated in 1930 by Robert James Speers for two-year-olds bred in western Canada. From 1936 to 1985 the race was opened to two-year-olds foaled in Canada. In 1986 the Canadian breeding restriction was removed, and the race became an open event. Over the years the Futurity has showcased the finest young horses and nine decades later it remains a highlight on the racing calendar.

This week lets take a pictorial trip back in time to review highlights from the 95 years of the race. Trying to select photos to adequately represent the race was a challenge. Here, for your viewing enjoyment is a photographic sampling of the history of the Winnipeg Futurity.



Hot Whittier, September 11, 1930. (Wpg Tribune photo)

Hot Whittier of the Winnipeg Stable owns the bragging rights as the winner of the inaugural running of the Winnipeg Futurity. The bay gelding, bred by Jim Speers' Whittier Park Stock Farm, was sent postward as the prohibitive favourite. The second and third place finishers also happened to be "Whittier" horses, Lauretta Whittier and Book Whittier with the latter being ridden by one of racing's early iconic jockeys, Johnny Longden.



1942 Omar's Gift Winnipeg Futurity. (Kennedy Family photo)

The 13th running of the Futurity proved to be a lucky one for a young A. G. "Scotty" Kennedy. Kennedy had purchased the filly earlier that spring from Jim Speers "for all of the money he had in his pocket". The story goes that Kennedy had been in an all-night craps game and all he was carrying that morning was 37-cents. Speers knew all too well what he was doing and desperately wanted Scotty in racing and what better way to achieve that goal than to "sell" him a young and talented Omar's Gift.



ASSINIBOIA DOWNS WESTERN CANADA'S FINEST RACETRACK

BOB BARNES
PHOTOGRAPHER

WINNER <u>NEW FLAG</u>		
FEATURE <u>Winnipeg Futurity</u>	PURSE <u>10000 ADDED</u>	DATE <u>AUG 14/65</u>
DISTANCE <u>7 FURLONGS</u>	TIME <u>1:28.3</u>	JOCKEY <u>D. ARMSTRONG</u>
2ND <u>FORT ROUGE</u>	OWNER <u>GOLDEN WEST FARMS</u>	
3RD <u>STRAYED INN</u>	TRAINER <u>A. FRASER</u>	

New Flag, Winnipeg Futurity, August 14, 1965. (Bob Barnes photo)

In 1965 Max Bell's Golden West Farms, New Flag won the 36th running of the Winnipeg Futurity. New Flag was the only filly in the race and was ridden by Dickie Armstrong who would win four Downs' leading jockey titles (1962, 64, 65 and 67).



GERRY HART
PHOTOGRAPHER

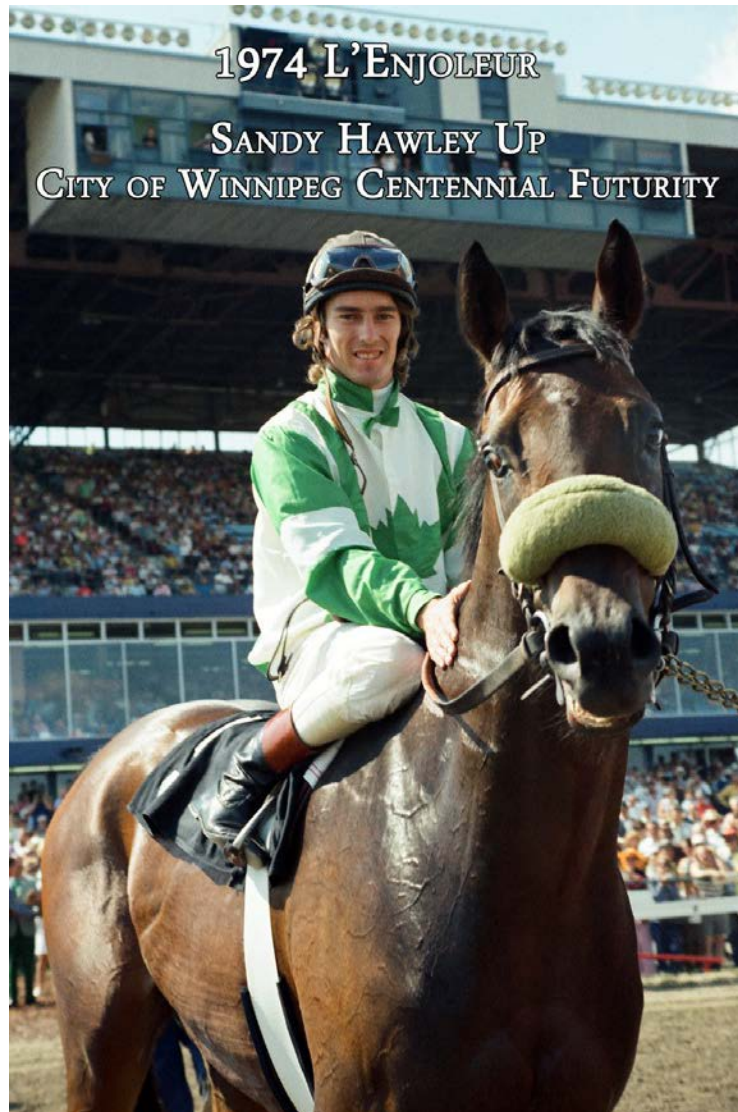
ASSINIBOIA DOWNS

WESTERN CANADA'S FINEST RACETRACK

Winner	<u>RULING LARK</u>		Date	<u>AUG. 17/68</u>
Feature	<u>W.P. FUTURITY STAKES</u>	Purse	<u>\$10,000 ADDED</u>	Jockey
Distance	<u>6 FURLONGS</u>	Time	<u>1:14.2</u>	<u>B. DIMMA</u>
2nd	<u>SCREEN OR DRAW</u>	Owner	<u>P. ORESTES & M. KAPLAN</u>	
3rd	<u>WAR LUCK</u>	Trainer	<u>G. V. HOWELL</u>	

Ruling Lark, Winnipeg Futurity, August 17, 1968. (Gerry Hart photo)

Ruling Lark, known as the "Flying Filly" was the fleet-footed darling two-year-old champion of 1968. She was a \$3,700 yearling who was purchased by veteran trainer George Howell for the partnership of Morris Kaplan and Parry Orestes. Following the filly's win in the 39th Futurity an evening of celebration took place at Orestes' Paddock Restaurant where Ruling Lark and jockey Bobbie Dimma were the stars of the evening.



1974 Winnipeg Futurity winner, L'Enjoleur with Sandy Hawley up. (Gerry Hart photo)

The City of Winnipeg turned 100 years old in 1974, and Assiniboia Downs paid tribute to the city by naming the 45th renewal of the race the Winnipeg Centennial Futurity. The runaway winner of the race, L'Enjoleur was truly one of racing's royalty. The bay colt was the son of Buckpasser, out of Fanfreluche, who was by Northern Dancer. The overwhelming favourite thrashed his opponents, winning by 12-lengths. Sandy Hawley, who rode the Johnny Starr-trained blue blood, described L'Enjoleur as one of the best two-year-olds he had ever ridden.



King Midas, Winnipeg Futurity, August 22, 1982. (Gerry Hart photo)

King Midas won the 53rd edition of the Futurity and deserved full marks for his performance in the 1982 race. However, the bay colt had to share the limelight with his rider, Flavio Martinez. Martinez lost a stirrup out of the gate and was forced to navigate most of the race with only one stirrup.

In an effort to gain some degree of balance, he kicked his other foot free and rode "sitting loose." In spite of the highly undesirable riding style King Midas and Martinez bettered race favourite One and Only by 1½ lengths.



Baloooga Bull, Winnipeg Futurity, September 10, 2011. (Gerry Hart photo)

Baloooga Bull went undefeated in his two-year-old season, but you could tell there was something special about his win in the 82nd running of the Futurity. The \$2,000 bargain yearling covered the six panels in a sharp 1:10 3/5. You'd be hard-pressed to find any sub 1:11 six-furlong time during the Bull's "hay-day," and he was only a two-year-old!

The Ardeell Sayler-trained champion would go on to win the Manitoba Derby and Gold Cup at three. At four and five he repeated as Gold Cup winner, making him the only horse to win the distinguished Cup three times, not to mention that his wins were consecutive!



First Cavalry and Laura with the Winnipeg Futurity trophy.

We will conclude our time travel tour of the Futurity with 2006 winner, First Cavalry. When Cav's time of the track was done, he found a second career on the racetrack. He became a fine pony horse. Together with Laura McIvor, the pair took the thoroughbreds to the starting gate for many years, and did their best to ensure the safety of all horses and riders. Cav is seen here in 2019 with his old friend, the historic Winnipeg Futurity trophy.

Have we missed a few photos, for sure! If only there was room for all 95 winners!



*Prayven Badrie wins the sixth race on Tuesday aboard Freed by Magic for trainer Lorne Fraser.
(Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)*

Gourneau scored a hat trick on Tuesday, also winning the seventh race with longshot Big Walk (\$31.60) and jockey Renaldo Cumberbatch, while Bynoe kept within striking range of Badrie at the top of the rider standings with a win in the second race aboard Casually Classy (\$11.30) for trainer Lise Pruitt.

On Wednesday evening, it was Bynoe's turn to shine. He won the second race aboard Load Abroad (\$2.30) for trainer Mike Nault, the fourth on Red Road Runner (\$7.30) again for Mike Nault, and the fifth aboard Twolefttoload (\$5.00) to give Nault the hat trick. He then won the sixth race aboard Diamond Concerto (\$24.90) for trainer Wendy Anderson and almost won the last race when he finished second aboard Designated Hitter for trainer Carl Anderson.



Trainer Mike Nault gives assistant trainer Brittany Bergen a hug after winning the fifth race on Tuesday with Twolefttoload. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)

Bynoe's five wins on the week brought his total for the season to 15, one ahead of Badrie (14), followed by Sven Balroop (13), Antonio Whitehall (11), and Rachaad Knights (9).

Leading trainer Steve Keplin, Jr. increased his lead in the standings with a pair of wins on the week, the first with Bee La Soul on Tuesday and the second with Blackteca (\$4.20) in the final race on Wednesday. While Nault and Gourneau each had a hat trick, Keplin's two victories kept him on top of the standings with 13 wins, five more than Nault (8), followed by Tom Gardipy, Jr. (7), Lise Pruit (7) and Wendy Anderson (6).



Damario Bynoe (#8) gets his fifth winner of the week aboard Diamond Concerto for trainer Wendy Anderson in the sixth race on Wednesday. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)

Jason Gourneau's hat trick gave him five victories on the season, and his uncle, five-time leading trainer Jerry Gourneau was in town to see them all. Jerry is still conditioning a string of 32 horses at Lone Star Park in Texas, but he will now also be taking over the stable here from Jason. Can the 63-year-old Chippewa from Belcourt, North Dakota win a sixth training title?



Groom Jaydean Lamothe leads Diamond Concerto back to the barn after their win in the sixth race on Wednesday for trainer Wendy Anderson. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)

Wagering remained strong with total handles coming in at \$1,652,584 on Tuesday and \$1,763, 097 on Wednesday, both bolstered by huge Pick 4 pools of \$181,834 and \$170,414, respectively. And the on-track summer crowds continued to grow and show...

That Manitobans and tourists from far and wide love their live horse racing!