

DID YOU HEAR THE LATEST?

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

ISSUE #192 - JULY 11, 2025



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

Our next Monday night of live racing is coming up on July 14! Live racing continues every Tuesday and Wednesday evening, along with select Mondays: July 14, August 4, August 25, and September 15. Post time is 7:30 p.m.—and as always, admission and parking are free!

Free Family Fun activities every Tuesday in July and August plus Manitoba Derby Night, Monday, August 4. Free kids activities include face painting, bouncy castles and live entertainment. The fun starts at 6:30 p.m.

[CLICK HERE](#) for schedule



Nikkitysplit and Rachaad Knights are led into the winner's circle after their victory in the Hazel Wright Sire Stakes. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)

Nikkitysplit Wins Hazel Wright, Whitehall Stays Hot, Pruitt Gets Fifth Lifetime Win

Antonio Whitehall was the hot jockey for the second week in a row, trainer Jason Homer scored a hat trick and helped apprentice Ciera Pruitt score her fourth and fifth wins, and Ziprick Thoroughbred's finished 1-2-3 in the Hazel Wright Sire Stakes with daughters of their stallions.

Nikkitysplit won the 18th Running of the \$40,000 Hazel Wright Sire Stakes for Manitoba-sired 3-year-old fillies on Tuesday evening, as daughters of Manitoba Stallion Speculating finished 1-2.

[CLICK HERE](#) to read more.



Birthday Jackpot: McIvor Captures First ASD Handicapping Challenge Victory

Sometimes the stars just align for you. Just ask Dwayne McIvor, who celebrated his 45th birthday on July 8th by capturing his first ASD Handicapping Challenge victory in dominant fashion, turning his \$48 bankroll into a whopping \$104.40.

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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.

Reservations are filling up for the season so call 204-885-3330 today to reserve your table!



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 jihphoto@gmail.com.

Mechanic Susie and Antonio Whitehall won the first race on Wednesday with a thrilling rally for trainer Elton Dickey and ownership partners Tom Payne and Larry Falloon. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo) Click photo to enlarge.

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

Nifty was a multiple stakes winner trained by Downs patriarch A. E. "Bert" Blake. Bill Mitchell's Nifty won the Free Press and Speers Handicaps in 1986 and has the distinction of winning the Wheat City Stakes on three occasions. In addition to the victory mentioned above in 1987, he won the race in 1986 and 1989 and finished second in 1988. Does the young man on the far right at Nifty's haunches look familiar? He trained 1985 Gold Cup winner Buck Domino and would go on to write multiple Sovereign Award-winning articles. Yes, that's George Williams! (Gerry Hart photo)



- \$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



Webslinger has been listed at 7/2 for Saturday's Bowling Green Stakes at Saratoga. (Coady Media)

2025 Bowling Green Stakes at a Glance

This year's Bowling Green Stakes Saturday at Saratoga Race Course drew a main group of eight contenders plus three additional entrants entered for the main track only in the event rain forces the turf stakes onto the main track. Weather forecasts can change quickly, but the outlook for opening weekend of the summer meet at Saratoga looks mostly clear.

The Bowling Green was moved from Belmont Park to Saratoga Race Course in 2015, and this race has a rich history dating back to its first running in 1958. Highlights include a half-length victory in 1970 by Fort Marcy during his Horse of the Year campaign and With Approval setting a North American record for 1 3/8-miles in 2:10.26 in the 1990 Bowling Green, a record that stands today.

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

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



MANDATORY PAYOUT ALERT: Gulfstream Park will have a mandatory payout of the Jackpot Pick 6 on Sunday, July 13. Current carryover is \$60,521.

Betting a New York Invader to Win the Miss Disco Stakes

A competitive group of eight three-year-old fillies will sprint seven-eighths of a mile on the Colonial Downs dirt track in Saturday's \$125,000 Miss Disco



Fans cheer home the runners in a stakes race this spring at Colonial Downs, which kicks off its summer meeting this week. (Coady Media)

Stakes, one of the feature events on the first weekend of Colonial's 2025 meet.

The Miss Disco doesn't contain an abundance of pace on paper. That could lend an advantage to New York raider #4 Mila Candy, who has repeatedly shown tactical speed.

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

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Horses will break from the gate for Del Mar's 86th summer meeting on Friday, July 18. (Benoit Photo)

Del Mar Sets Betting Menu For 86th Summer Meet

The standard lineup of betting options – supplemented by a trio of “tweaks” – will be offered to racing fans as Del Mar readies for its Summer Season #86 starting on Friday, July 18, at the seaside track just north of San Diego, Calif.

The 31-day session will begin with a three-day weekend, then meld into its standard four-day format (Thursday through Sunday) going forward to an extra racing date on Labor Day Monday (Sept. 1) and a final three-day weekend (Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 5-7).

-- [Paulick Report](#)

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Bob's Blog

Queen's Cup and Other Historic Trophies

Have you ever seen the Queen's Cup trophy up close? How about the trophies for the Winnipeg Futurity, Gold Cup, or the R. J. Speers? Well, Bob is taking us on a personal tour where we get up close and personal with these pieces of historic hardware. Can you imagine the stories these trophies could tell? Click [here](#) for the History Guy's look at some of the finest historic trophies that Assiniboia Downs offers for annual

competition.

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?
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Nikkitysplit wins Hazel Wright, Whitehall stays hot, Pruitt gets fifth lifetime win

Jul 10, 2025 | Live Horse Racing, The Inside Track



*Mechanic Susie, one of four winners for jockey Antonio Whitehall this week.
(Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)*

By G.S. Thompson

Antonio Whitehall was the hot jockey for the second week in a row, trainer Jason Homer scored a hat trick and helped apprentice Ciera Pruitt score her fourth and fifth wins, and Ziprick Thoroughbreds finished 1-2-3 in the Hazel Wright Sire Stakes with daughters of their stallions.

Nikkitysplit won the 18th Running of the \$40,000 Hazel Wright Sire Stakes for Manitoba-sired 3-year-old fillies on Tuesday evening, and it wasn't close. Trained by Tom Gardipy, Jr. the daughter of Speculating opened up early under jockey Rachaad Knights and maintained her lead to the wire to win by 3 ½-lengths over Two Left To Load, also a daughter of Speculating. It was a

Nikkitysplit wins Hazel Wright, Whitehall stays hot, Pruitt gets fifth lifetime win - Assiniboia Downs further 6 ½-lengths back to third-place finisher Amplify, who is by Kentucky Bear, another stallion connected to Ziprick Thoroughbreds.



Nikkitysplit wins the \$40,000 Hazel Wright Sire Stakes on Tuesday evening at ASD. Rachaad Knights in the saddle for trainer Tom Gardipy, Jr. and owner-breeders Jerry Lambert and Lynn Mathews. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)

Nikkitysplit has won two of three starts for owner-breeders Jerry Lambert and Lynn Mathews and looks like she has a bright future ahead of her. The same might be said for apprentice Ciera Pruitt, who scored the fifth win of her career aboard Luka Grazie for trainer Jason Homer in the sixth race on Wednesday. Pruitt is now a five-pound apprentice instead of a ten-pound bug, and she continues to improve her skills with every mount.



Nikkitysplit and Rachaad Knights are led into the winner's circle after their victory in the Hazel Wright Sire Stakes. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)

Three-time leading ASD rider Antonio Whitehall won four races on the week to move into a tie at the top of the standings with Prayven Badrie. Both former leading ASD riders have 21 wins, followed by Sven Balroop and Damarion Bynoe with 18 wins apiece. Rachaad Knights rounds out the top five with 13 victories.

Leading trainer Steve Keplin, Jr. won a race on Tuesday to remain at the top of the standings with 18 wins, seven ahead of Mike Nault (11) followed by Tom Gardipy, Jr. (10), Wendy Anderson (9) and Lise Pruitt (8) and trainer Jason Homer scored a hat trick to climb into a tie with Lise Pruitt with eight wins.



Apprentice Ciera Pruitt was all smiles after scoring her fifth lifetime win aboard Luka Grazie for trainer Jason Homer in the sixth race on Wednesday. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)

Fans pounded the windows on Tuesday, wagering over \$2 million, including \$217,699 into a Pick 4 pool that resulted in a \$1 payoff of \$635.40. On Wednesday, punters wagered over \$1.4 million, including \$114,785 into the Pick 4 pool, and the \$1 Pick 4 paid \$3,046.45.



Proud parents. Trainer Lise Pruitt and former top ASD jockey Jerry Pruitt celebrate their daughter Ciera's fifth career win on Wednesday. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)

Wednesday's lucrative Pick 4 payoff entered potential boxcar territory when No Barb Wire (\$41.30) and jockey Shavon Belle came rolling home late in the fifth race to give trainer Marion Johnston her first win of the season. No Barb Wire was followed by Luka Grazie (\$10.00), East Coast Cowgirl (\$7.40), and Sneaky Situation (\$11.50) in races six, seven, and eight, to trigger the big Pick 4 payout.

Big things can happen when the favourites don't win.

Birthday Jackpot: McIvor Captures First ASD Handicapping Challenge Victory

Jul 10, 2025 | Live Horse Racing, The Inside Track



Dwayne McIvor and family having fun at ASD.

By G.S. Thompson

Sometimes the stars just align for you. Just ask Dwayne McIvor, who celebrated his 45th birthday on July 8th by capturing his first ASD Handicapping Challenge victory in dominant fashion, turning his \$60 bankroll into a whopping \$104.40.

And what a birthday present it was. McIvor didn't just edge out the competition, he demolished it, outdistancing second-place finisher Sue Mymko (\$83.20) by a decisive \$21.20. In a contest where victories are typically measured in nickels and dimes, McIvor's margin of victory was impressive. Rounding out the top five finishers were Nagel Delacruz (\$78.30), Ken Faulkner (\$70.10), and Roger Jones (\$68.10).

McIvor, who works for Platinum Promotions, has been testing the handicapping contest waters for less than a year, making his breakthrough victory even more exciting. "I think I entered a couple to end last year, and then sporadically over the winter," he said. "I've been trying to play in the contests at ASD whenever I can for basically about a year now."

But McIvor's connection to the track runs much deeper. Like many successful handicappers, his love affair with racing began in childhood. "I used to go to the track with my dad when I was a kid," he recalled. "I was probably ten years old. Dad would go there and say, 'Pick one. Pick a number.' And he'd play it for us."

The magic began early on Tuesday's card when McIvor nailed the first two races with Mineral Rights (\$14.60) and Coal Boy (\$14.20). "I got the first two races right," said McIvor. "I got lucky with the DQ in the first race because I had Mineral Rights, and then I got Coal Boy in the next race," he said. "That's when I told my daughter, 'I almost got my whole bankroll back in two races. I think I could do good today.'"

Coal Boy proved to be especially thrilling, providing the kind of dramatic finish that makes handicapping so much fun. The horse broke slow and dropped well back early, but rallied dramatically to win at solid odds. "You hear the announcer say slow start, and then your horse actually comes from behind and wins," said McIvor. "Coal Boy was the big surprise for me."

McIvor's hot streak continued in the fifth race with Meko Makee (\$17.90), his biggest payoff of the day. His handicapping method for that selection showed his evolving understanding of the game. "I noticed two races ago it won, and then it switched jockeys to Dane Dawkins, and it was his second time on the horse. I thought maybe he'd do a little better. Maybe he just needed that one race to get things going."

McIvor capped off his four-winner performance with Sumitup (\$6.70) in the sixth race, a horse he backed just minutes before post time. "I bet it at about four minutes to post, and it was 6-1," he said. "At post time it was the favourite but it still worked out."

McIvor's approach to handicapping is refreshingly honest and unpretentious. "It's a little bit of guessing right now," he admitted. "I'm not even well-versed in the program, truly. My buddy just tells me this is the speed, these are the workouts, this is where you look to see how they've done recently."

Despite his casual approach, McIvor demonstrated impressive skill, hitting four winners on the eight-race card. His strategy of looking for value over heavy favourites paid dividends. "If the third choice is paying 8-1 and he finishes first, that's a good thing," said McIvor.

The victory represents McIvor's biggest score to date, surpassing a \$1,400 Classic Hi-5 hit from a few years back. The \$3,500 prize will keep him in action for future tournaments, though he's keeping his feet firmly planted on the ground. "I'll leave some in there for the next tournament, because I'll keep playing the rest of the year, that's for sure."

Perhaps most endearing is how McIvor shares his passion with his family. His 15-year-old daughter and 10-year-old son were watching the races with him on his birthday, and they regularly accompany him to the track. "The kids love coming to the track with me," he said.

For McIvor, it was the perfect birthday gift, one that combined family, fun, and a healthy dose of handicapping instinct . . .

That proved anything but amateur.