

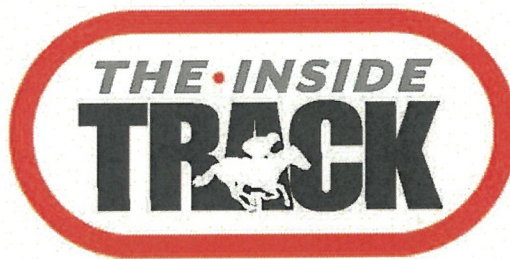
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DID YOU HEAR THE LATEST?

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

ISSUE #212 - NOVEMBER 28, 2025



John Whitehill won the November Player's Choice Handicapping Tourney at ASD with a stellar total of \$136.60. Congratulations John!

John Whitehill Wins Player's Choice Tournament on Big Day for Locals at Woodbine

Retired bricklayer John Whitehill outdistanced the field to win the November Player's Choice Handicapping Tournament at ASD last Saturday with a big winner at Woodbine, and he wasn't the only local to do some good at the Ontario track on contest day.

[Full story here.](#)

The top five Manitoba-bred earners will be featured in next week's edition.



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

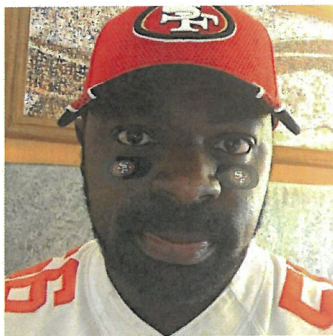
The fun never stops at Assiniboia Downs **Winnipeg's place to play and win!**

Did you know that Assiniboia Downs is Winnipeg's #1 Spot for VLT Jackpots? Play any of our 140 VLTs in the Club West Gaming Lounge for your chance to win!

🎰 Free Spin to Win draws — Friday, Saturday and Sunday starting at 6 p.m.

💎 Free \$200 cash draws — Friday, Saturday and Sunday at 9 p.m.

Click [here](#) to see our recent jackpots.



Travers Cummings

NFL Picks by TravyFootball **Week 13**

Happy Thanksgiving to any Americans reading! This week features some big storylines—from Houston trying to stay hot, to Minnesota's continued struggles at quarterback, to a Monday night matchup where one elite pass-rusher is chasing history. I break down what to watch in all three games as the playoff race tightens. Click [here](#) to see my week 13 picks.



Ropers N Wranglers (#1) on the lead and sticking her tongue out at her rivals while on her way to victory in the 5th race on July 16 for jockey Dario Dalrymple and trainer Bill Mooney. She paid \$104.10 to win! Click image for full-size photo. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)

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 😊



Click photo to enlarge

A Snapshot in Time by Bob Gates

1991 marked the last time the thoroughbreds raced in November at ASD. Here, In the Air, was one of few horses that could boast of winning on November 10th – the latest date ever for thoroughbred racing at Assiniboia Downs. The Mike Smith-trained filly was ridden by Jeff Linton. (Gerry Hart photo)



- \$13.95 Daily Lunch Special
- Happy Hour (3 to 5pm & 9pm to close)
- Daily Evening Specials
- Details at ASDowns.com



Dixie Law and jockey Rafael Hernandez winning the Mazarine Stakes on November 2, 2025. (Michael Burns Photo)

Rookies in the Spotlight in Princess Elizabeth, Coronation Futurity

Graded stakes-winning filly Dixie Law takes on the boys in the \$250,000 Coronation Futurity at Woodbine on Saturday, part of an 11-race card that also features the \$250,000 Princess Elizabeth Stakes.

The Coronation Futurity is a significant race on the road to the King's Plate, while the Princess Elizabeth is a key event on the path to the Woodbine Oaks Presented by Stella Artois.

-- [Canadian Thoroughbred](#)

CLICK FOR FULL STORY

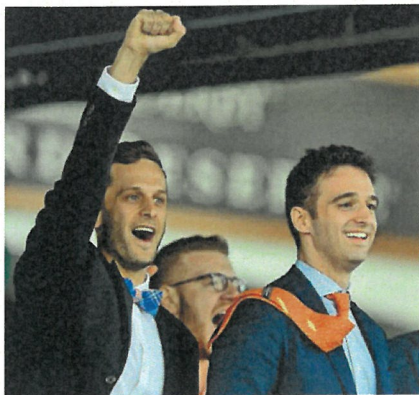


- Wager on Top Tracks
- Simulcast Schedule
- Off-Track Betting Locations



Mandatory Payout Alerts:

- **Saturday, November 29** - Gulfstream will have a mandatory payout of the Jackpot Pick 6. The current carryover is \$156,112.
- **Sunday, November 30** - Churchill Downs will have mandatory payout of all carryover pools including the Jackpot Pick 6. The current carryover is \$373,345.



Fans cheer home a winner at Churchill Downs. (Eclipse Sportswire)

Noel's Weekend Winners: Focus on Fillies Saturday at Churchill Downs

The Churchill Downs fall meet comes to a climax on Thanksgiving weekend with a blowout of the season's remaining stakes races before the end of the meet. Saturday's 12-race Churchill Downs card contains four stakes races headlined by the Kentucky Jockey Club Stakes (G2), but that race isn't the only game in town.

Handicapper Noel Michael's delves deeper into a pair of supporting stakes races on the card, the \$225,000 Fern Creek Stakes and the \$400,000 Golden Rod Stakes.

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

CLICK FOR FULL STORY



Jaipur (G1) winner Ag Bullet takes on nine rival fillies and mares in Sunday's Matriarch Stakes (G1) at Del Mar. (Chelsea Durand / NYRA)

Ag Bullet Tries Stretching Out Vs. Eastern Invaders In Closing-Day Matriarch at Del Mar

Locals Ag Bullet and Medoro are set to take on Eastern-based rivals In Our Time and Ozara in Sunday's \$300,000 Matriarch Stakes (G1) for fillies and mares going a mile on the turf at Del Mar on Sunday.

The Matriarch is part of the FanDuel Racing Turf Festival on closing day on a card that also features the \$100,000 Cecil B. Demille Stakes and the \$100,000 Bayakoa Stakes.

-- [*Paulick Report*](#)

CLICK FOR FULL STORY



- Earn Points for Wagering
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The Best of Bob

It's not that the story of the Downs CEO is tough to tell, says Bob, but rather the challenge centers on the fact that there's just so much to tell. From those early days on the backside to the ongoing struggle that horse racing faces in these sometimes-turbulent times.

[Click here](#) to learn just a little bit more about the "corner office" man who calls the shots at the Downs (From July 7, 2022).

Track Historian Bob Gates

Feedback & Inside Track Archives

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

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Whitehill Wins Player's Choice Tournament on Big Day for Locals at Woodbine

Nov 27, 2025 | Handicapping, The Inside Track



John Whitehill won the November Player's Choice Tourney at ASD with a huge bankroll of \$136.60!

By G.S. Thompson

Retired bricklayer John Whitehill outdistanced the field to win the November Player's Choice Handicapping Tournament at ASD last Saturday with a big winner at Woodbine, and he wasn't the only local to do some good at the Ontario track on contest day.

Whitehill built his \$60 bankroll to \$136.60 to take home the \$1,000 first prize, bragging rights and the trophy, and it wasn't the first time he's won the tourney. Both he and his long-time partner Bonnie Simmonds have won both the summer and winter handicapping tournaments more than once.

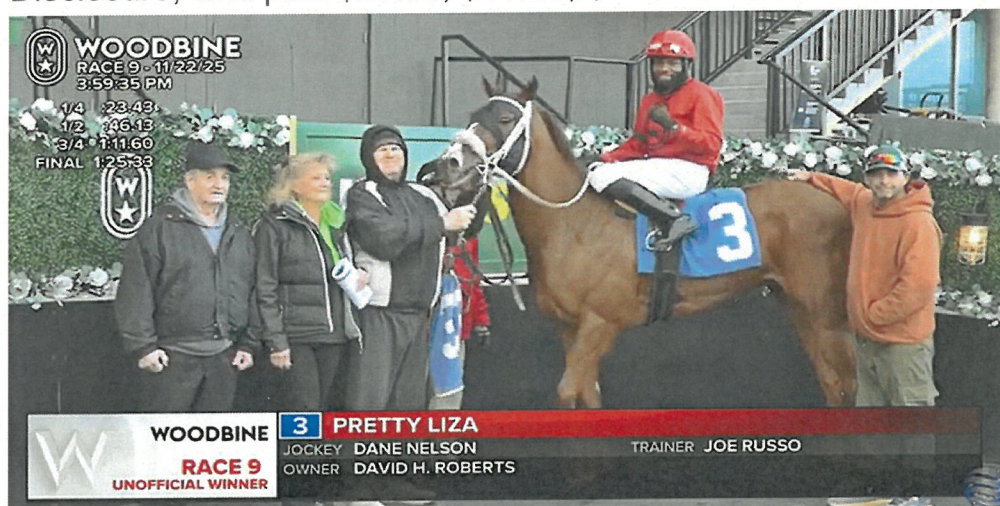
"Another trophy to dust off," he laughed, while also intimating that he hadn't won a tourney since before COVID. "But it's been a while."

The 75-year-old Winnipeg native has been playing the races for more than six decades. He and Simmonds, 77, have been together for over 30 years, forming one of the most successful handicapping partnerships in ASD tournament history. The duo has won the summer tournament multiple times, earning trips to Las Vegas for their efforts.

Whitehill finished \$24.10 in front of runner-up Earl Grantham (\$112.50), followed by Ken Stewin (\$104.80), Dave Giannotti (\$100.70), and Myron Fedoruk (\$95.20). "It's tough to win," said Whitehill. "There are some tough handicappers in the group."

His winning formula combined careful handicapping with what he calls "hunches," instinctive plays based on years of experience reading the form. "I kind of favour pace a little bit," said Whitehill. "And if I'm having trouble finding the speed in a race, I'll play a hunch."

Whitehill's biggest winner of the day came in Race 9 at Woodbine with Pretty Liza, ridden by former ASD rider Dane Nelson, who paid \$35.60, \$16.60, \$8.40 across the board. He also cashed nicely in Race 10 at Gulfstream Park with 12-1 shot Full Disclosure, who paid \$27.60, \$10.30, \$4.60.



Former ASD owner-trainer Joe Russo (far right) and ASD jockey Dane Nelson teamed up to win the ninth race at Woodbine on

tournament day with Pretty Liza (\$35.60), Whitehill's biggest winner of the day.

Another key score came earlier in the card when Whitehill backed Nelson aboard 20-1 longshot Daou in Race 7. Though the horse finished second, it returned \$15.40 to place. "He led all the way and I thought he had it won, but he gave it up late," said Whitehill. "But I still got about \$25 for the place and show."

Whitehill's approach to tournament play suits his style perfectly. "I take a little riskier chances," he said. "I'm not a favourite player. I'll take anything from 5 to 1 to 50 to 1." That willingness to play longshots paid off handsomely on Saturday, as his key winners all went off at generous odds.

The veteran horseplayer had high praise for the track and its management. "I'm liking how the tournaments are being run," he said. He particularly appreciates the current format that caps winning payoffs at 20-1, 10-1 and 5-1 for win, place and show respectively, preventing the contests from becoming pure longshot-flyer exercises.

"Years ago, if you played a horse and they paid \$120 to win, that's what you got," said Whitehill. "Everybody was just betting the longest shots on the board. When they put in that cap, I think that was the greatest idea. There's no handicapping when you're just betting the longest shots."

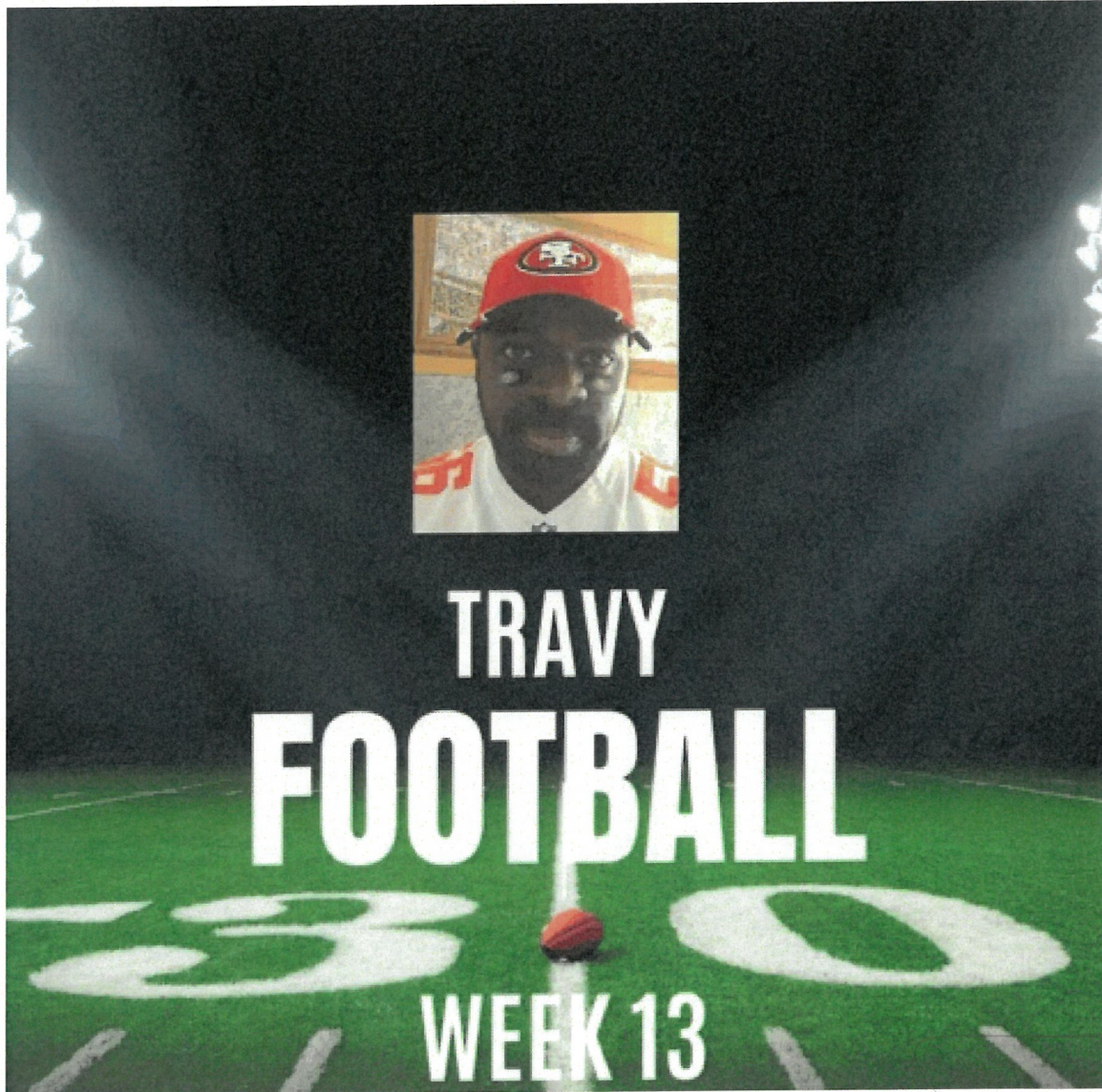
It was a huge day at Woodbine for former ASD owners, trainers and jockeys. Besides Dane Nelson's first and second-place finishes, trainer Marj Patterson won the first race with Mia Mitole (\$14.30), trainer Devon Gittens won the second race with Hyper Holiday (\$12.90), jockey Keveh Nicholls won the sixth race aboard Artful Diamond (\$9.40), jockey Juan Crawford won the eighth race with Ry Pie (\$12.80), and jockey Fraser Aebly won the eleventh race aboard Foresters Exec (\$58.00).

You could have just played the horses with ASD connections and won the tourney.

We're all winners here.

TravyFootball Week 13

Nov 26, 2025 | The Inside Track



Happy Thanksgiving to any Americans that happen to read this!

Texans over Colts (Sunday noon): The Houston Texans absolutely shut down Josh Allen and the Bills last Thursday. It was pure domination by the Texans' defense that had Allen confused and running for his life for the majority of the game. Backup quarterback Davis "Skills" Mills has filled in nicely for injured C.J. Stroud, who may or may not return for this one. Houston will take their three-game winning streak into Indy for the

first divisional meeting of the year between the two, hoping to gain a little bit of ground in the wildcard race. The Colts are coming off a loss to the Chiefs after blowing a 20-9 lead and now find themselves only one game up on the Jaguars for the lead in the AFC South. Jonathan Taylor had a pretty below-average game, rushing for only 58 yards and zero touchdowns. He's going to need a better performance against a much tougher defense so Daniel Jones isn't forced to throw more times than he should be.

Seahawks over Vikings (Sunday afternoon): Well, the JJ McCarthy era in Minnesota took another step backwards last week against the Packers. Going 12 of 17 for 87 yards and two interceptions is easily the worst stat line of his young career, and he just looked completely overwhelmed by the Green Bay defense. I've always believed that the best way for a young quarterback to get experience is to play in games and get game reps. I don't believe in the "sit and learn" approach, as no amount of watching from the sideline will mimic actual game action. Having said that, some quarterbacks just aren't good no matter how many reps they get, and McCarthy might be one of those guys. If things weren't bad enough for the young signal-caller, he's in the concussion protocol after experiencing symptoms on the plane ride home. Speaking of quarterbacks, Sam Darnold bounced back nicely against the Titans after a poor performance against the Rams two weeks ago, going for 244 yards and two touchdowns, but more importantly, zero interceptions.

Niners over Browns (Monday night): Never thought I'd be so interested in a Browns football game, but here we are. Brock Purdy made his second start in a row last week against the Panthers, and while the first drive of the game was great, what followed after definitely was not. Purdy threw three interceptions in the first half and didn't look sharp at all. He settled down more in the second half as they relied more on the run game with Christian McCaffrey. Now they have an absolute gargantuan task of taking on the Browns' defense and somehow finding a way to slow down Myles Garrett. Garrett has been terrorizing QBs all season as he leads the league in sacks with 18. He's also on pace to break the all-time single-season sack record (23), currently held by T.J. Watt of the Pittsburgh Steelers and retired Giants Hall of Famer Michael Strahan. If there was ever a game where the 49ers' offensive line REALLY needs to do their job, it's this one; otherwise, Purdy might be leaving the game in an ambulance. This will also be the second start for QB Shedeur Sanders, who looked okay against the Raiders. I hope Niners defensive coordinator Robert Saleh has some good schemes dialed up to throw at the young rookie.

Last week: 3-0
Season overall: 24-12