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

ISSUE #244 - JULY 10, 2026



Live Racing every Tuesday and
Wednesday plus select Mondays

**Live Racing this Monday, Tuesday &
Wednesday**

- Live racing starts at 7:30 p.m.
- Enter for your chance to spin our \$10,000 Lucky Longshot wheel.
- Monday is Dollar Night. Dollar night specials plus Wiener Dog racing after race #3.
- Tuesdays feature free Family Fun with bouncy castles, face painting and live entertainment
- Wednesdays are Girls Night Out with drink specials, cash draws, line dancing and more!
- Reserve your table for our renowned all-you-can-eat Prime Rib Buffet which is available on Live Race Nights only.

Click [here](#) for full schedule.

Girls Night Out

WEDNESDAYS IN JULY & AUGUST

AT ASSINIBOIA DOWNS

STARTS JULY 8!

DRINK SPECIALS!

CASH DRAWS RACES 4 • 5 • 6 \$100 EACH!

FANCY HAT DRAW AFTER RACE 6 \$150 CASH!

CASH DRAWS RACES 4 • 5 • 6 \$100 EACH!

LINE DANCING AFTER RACES 2 & 4!

GREAT DRINKS GREAT TIMES

Good Friends ♥ Great Drinks ♥ Great Times

★ GIRLS, IT'S YOUR NIGHT! ★



Whitehall, Balroop battle for top spot, Gourneau keeps winning, Manitoba-Bred favoured in King's Plate

Jockeys Antonio Whitehall and Sven Balroop continued to battle it out for top spot in the jockey standings, and trainer Jerry Gourneau added yet another win to his runaway total.

The first Girls Night Out of 2026 was a hit, and for the first time in history, a Manitoba-bred became one of the favourites for the \$1 million King's Plate.

The summer crowds at ASD continue to grow. Girls Night Out every Wednesday in July and August! (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)

It was quite a week!

[Full story here](#)

10% CASH BACK

WHEN YOU WAGER \$100 OR MORE ON ASSINIBOIA DOWNS

MONDAY, JULY 13TH

YOU MUST OPT-IN AT [HPIBET.COM](https://hpiwet.com)

\$2.10 PAYOUTS NOT INCLUDED. MAXIMUM CASH BACK \$25.

Assiniboia Downs GAMING & EVENT CENTRE



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

Free \$500 Cash Draws after Live Racing plus free \$200 Cash Draws on the Weekends

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 \$500 cash draws — after every Live Race Night
- 🎰 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.



Jockey Damario Bynoe has a high five for trainer Mike Taphorn and groom Katie Morris after winning the 2nd race on Tuesday aboard No Show No Call. Click image for full size. (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

SS Pee Wee won the 1992 Harry Jeffrey handicap for owner Stan Ryan and trainer Tom Dodds. The \$15,000 Keenland purchase earned just over \$125,000 during his 5-year career which saw him race primarily at Assiniboia Downs. In 44 lifetime starts he had 13 wins, 5 seconds and 10 thirds. His resume boasted wins in the 1991 Osiris Plate Stakes, the 1992 Harry Jeffrey, the 1993 Manitoba Sprint Handicap and Wheat City Stakes, the 1994 Halter Handicap, and the 1995 Manitoba Sprint Championship. (Gerry Hart photo)



COUNTDOWN TO THE MANITOBA DERBY

EARN A BALLOT FOR EVERY
\$50 WAGERED
ON ASSINIBOIA DOWNS

FROM WEDNESDAY, JULY 1
— *through* —
WEDNESDAY, JULY 22

DRAW WILL BE MADE FOR
FIVE PEOPLE TO WIN:

\$500 HPI DEPOSIT	 INVITATION TO THE MANITOBA DERBY PRESS CONFERENCE	A TABLE FOR TWO IN THE TERRACE DINING ROOM ON MANITOBA DERBY NIGHT (INCLUDES THE PRIME RIB BUFFET FOR TWO)
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WAGERS MUST BE PLACED ON YOUR HPI ACCOUNT.

★ **OPT-IN AT HPIbet.com** ★



Manitoba-bred Brachetto (outside) and jockey Ryan Munger win the Marine Stakes (G3) at Woodbine. (Michael Burns / Woodbine Photo)

Manitoba-bred Brachetto stakes his claim as King's Plate favourite

For the first time in memory, a Manitoba-bred could be one of the favourites for Canada's most prestigious horse race, the \$1-million King's Plate for three-year-olds, to be run Aug. 15 at Woodbine in Ontario.

Brachetto, bred by longtime Manitoba owner-breeder Dr. Ross McKague, won the \$150,000 Marine Stakes (G3) as the longest shot on the board on June 27, beating two heavily favoured rivals and vaulting himself into the Plate favourite conversation for the mile-and-a-quarter classic.

Brachetto is currently ranked second among the King's Plate contenders. See the current rankings at the [Canadian Thoroughbred](#).

-- [Winnipeg Free Press](#)

CLICK FOR FULL STORY



Tip Top Thomas wins the 2025 Indiana Derby. (Coady Media)

A Trifecta Strategy for Betting the 2026 Indiana Derby

Trainer Brad Cox knows what it takes to win the \$300,00 Indiana Derby (G3) at Horseshoe Indianapolis. He's won three of the last six editions of the 1 1/16-mile race with Shared Sense (2020), Verifying (2023), and Dragoon Guard (2024).

This Saturday, Cox will seek a fourth win in the Indiana Derby with #8 Leading Change (5-1), a lightly raced son of 2017 Horse of the Year Gun Runner.

He'll be the key. On top.

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

CLICK FOR FULL STORY



Brant wins the 2025 Del Mar Futurity. (Benoit Photo)

Odds and Trends: Handicapping 2YOs at Del Mar, Saratoga

Summer is in full swing, which means 2-year-old racing at Del Mar and Saratoga Race Course is about to heat up.

Handicapping juvenile races isn't always easy. There's not much racing form to analyze, so bettors must rely on trainer statistics, workouts, pedigrees, and auction prices to determine the most likely winners.

Handicapper J. Keeler Johnson has the handicapping angles that stand out.

-- [BloodHorse](#)

CLICK FOR FULL STORY



Track Historian Bob Gates

Bob's Blog

On June 15, 2026 Dr. Joe Meek's Celebration of Life was held at Assiniboia Downs. The house was packed as friends and family gathered so say their final good-byes. Click [here](#) for Bob's story about the "Doc" who was a part of the fabric of the Downs for over 50 years. How many people do you know who retired at the age of 85?

Feedback & Inside Track Archives

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

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

Whitehall and Balroop Battle for top spot, Gourneau keeps winning, Manitoba-Bred Favoured in King's Plate

Jul 9, 2026 | The Inside Track



Antonio Whitehall wins the 6th race on Tuesday aboard the longshot of the week, Not True (\$64.80) for trainer Marion Johnston. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)

By G.S. Thompson

Jockeys Antonio Whitehall and Sven Balroop continued to battle it out for top spot in the jockey standings, trainer Jerry Gourneau added another win to his runaway total, the first Girls Night Out of 2026 was a hit, and for the first time in history, a Manitoba-bred is one of the favourites for the \$1 million King's Plate.

Whew! That's quite a week!

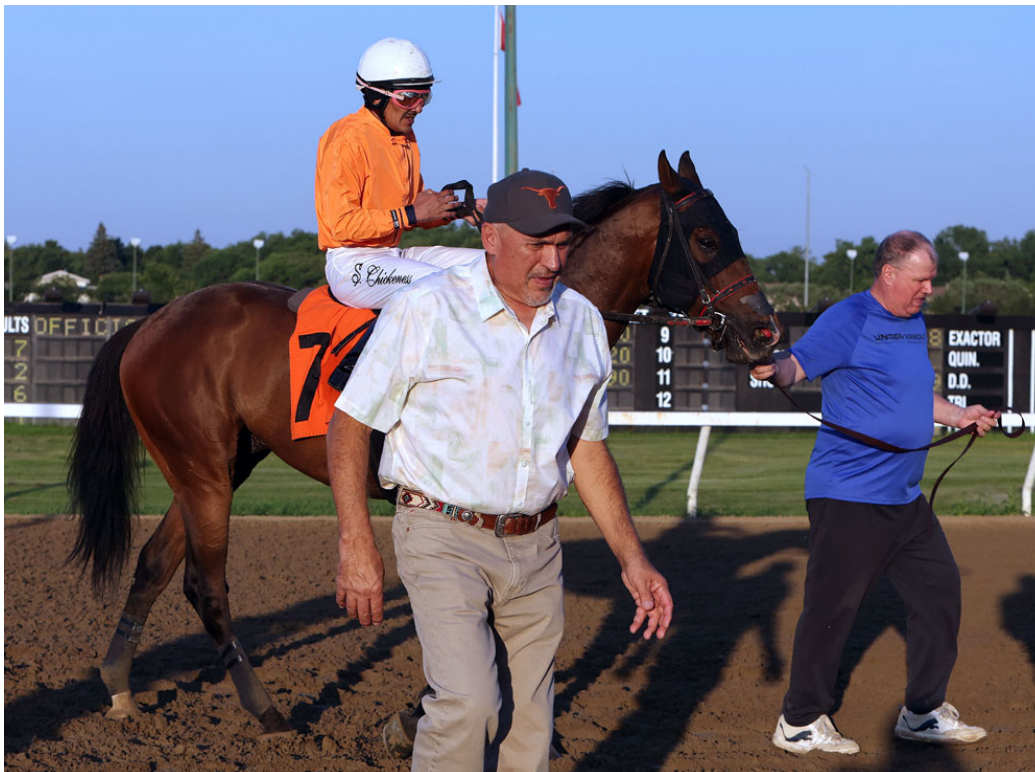
Whitehall won two races to move into a tie in the standings with Balroop with 17 wins each. His two winners included Regal Rumor (\$6.00) in the 4th race on Wednesday for trainer Mike Nault, and the longshot of the week, Not True (\$64.80), courtesy of a perfect ride, in the 6th race on Tuesday for trainer Marion Johnson. Balroop won the 7th race on Wednesday aboard You Vee Cee (\$3.90) for trainer Steve Keplin, Jr., who continues to win at a torrid 44 percent clip.



Trainer Steve Keplin, Jr. gets a high five from jockey Sven Balroop after winning the 7th race on Wednesday aboard You Vee Cee. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)

Keplin has 15 wins on the season now, which puts him comfortably in second place in the standings behind runaway leader Jerry Gourneau, who is going after his sixth leading trainer title at the Downs. Gourneau won the 3rd race on Wednesday with Main Dude (\$8.90), Sheldon Chickeness up, and now has 34 wins on the season. Gourneau is winning with 25 percent of his starters and he's not going to be caught.

Double winners on the week among the jockeys included Kerron Khelawan and Rachaad Knights. Khelawan won the 1st race aboard Golden Cheero (\$7.00) on Wednesday for trainer Carl Anderson, and the 5th race the same evening aboard Messi the Great (\$5.20) for trainer Wendy Anderson after an exciting stretch duel.



Trainer Jerry Gourneau upped his meet-leading total to 34 wins with his victory in the third race on Wednesday with Main Dude, Sheldon Chickeness up. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)

Knights won the 1st race on Tuesday with Wings of a Sparrow (\$8.70) for trainer Elton Dickey, and 7th race with a determined effort off the layoff aboard In Form (\$7.50) for trainer Monique Goulet. Both Knights and Khelawan continue to climb in the standings and now have nine wins apiece.

And for the first time we can remember, a Manitoba-bred is one of the favourites for the \$1 million King's Plate. Brachetto, bred by Dr. Ross McKague of Brandon Manitoba, won the \$150,000 Marine Stakes (G3) at Woodbine on June 27 and he's now first or second on anyone's list for the Plate, which takes place on August 15.

The [Canadian Thoroughbred](#) had him in second on their list of contenders this week, but if you watch the replay of his Marine Stakes (6th race on June 27) at [HPIBet.com](#) you might just move him into your top spot.



Manitoba-bred Brachetto wins the Marine Stakes (G3) at Woodbine for owner/breeder Dr. Ross McKague on June 27. (Michael Burns / Woodbine Photo)

McKague has bred horses for over 50 years. This is his first open graded stakes winner. Brachetto is a son of Vekoma, who stands for \$100,000 now, but McKague bred to him for just \$15,000 with his mare Colorino, before he got rolling in his stud career, and he's certainly hot now! [Full story in the Winnipeg Free Press here.](#)



The summer crowds continue to grow at ASD. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)

The same could be said for the weather, which is bringing out fans in droves for live racing. The crowds at ASD have been growing steadily for over a decade now for good reasons, and the first Girls Night Out on Wednesday just provided another. See you Monday for Dollar Night and Wiener Dog Racing! And Tuesday for free Family Fun Events . . .

And Wednesday!



Girls Night Out takes place every Wednesday at ASD through July and August. (Jason Halstead / Assiniboia Photo)