



PRESS RELEASE

AJAX DOWNS' TOP 3-YEAR-OLD HAS BIG EFFORT IN CALIFORNIA

OCTOBER 30, 2016 - Ontario-based **Country Boy 123** came within one-length of catching top American 3-year-old Quarter Horse Jess Good Reason in Saturday night's \$200,000 Adequan Derby Challenge (G3) for 3-year-old Quarter Horses at Los Alamitos in Cypress, CA.

A multiple stakes winner at Ajax Downs in 2016, Country Boy 123 finished strongly to be fourth in his first race outside of Ontario.

Owned by **Ruth Barbour of Hillsburgh, ON** and trained by **Pontypool's Jason Pascoe**, Country Boy 123 broke well from post position five in the 11-horse field and the big gelding chased the eventual winner who started from the rail. Under replacement rider Ricky Ramirez, Country Boy 123 was always in contention and finished well to pick up a \$14,400 (US) share of the big purse. The winner's time for 400-yards was a sharp :19.731 and Country Boy 123 sped the distance in :19.859, one of his faster times for the distance this season.

Country Boy 123 was, at one time in the betting, the 8 to 5 favourite before going postward as the third choice at 5 to 1. Jess Good Reason, a California based filly, was coming off a second-place finish in a Grade 1 event and had earlier won a Grade 3 stakes race.

Country Boy 123 won six of his seven races at Ajax Downs this season and is a contender for the track's 2016 Horse of the Year. He was trained in Ontario by Bryn Robertson, also of Hillsburgh.

In the \$150,000 John Deere Juvenile Challenge (G2), another Pascoe trainee, **RPainted Pistol**, brushed the gate at the start and never got untracked in a ninth-place finish. The flashy brown gelding, winner of the John Deere Ajax Challenge in July, had battled illness following his trip from Ontario to California. He is owned by Burlington's Milena Kwiecien.

Ajax Downs would like to congratulate the interests of Country Boy 123 and RPainted Pistol for their sportsmanship in representing our track on the biggest stage of Quarter Horse racing in the United States.

The top horses and humans from the 2016 season at Ajax Downs will be recognized at a **dinner and ceremony on Nov. 26, 2016 at the Ajax Convention Centre.**