



PRESS RELEASE - AJAX DOWNS

The Quarter Horses Are Back in Town!

AJAX DOWNS, WEDNESDAY JUNE 10, 2020 - The fastest horses in the country returned to Ajax Downs June 10 as the 51-year-old track welcomed back Quarter Horse racing for a 21-day season.

The beginning of the racing season had been delayed a month due to the COVID-19 pandemic which shut down businesses, entertainment and sports in March.

Horse racing was included in the Ontario government's Stage 1 of re-opening the economy but spectators are currently not allowed to attend. Racing fans were able to watch and wager on Ajax Downs through the Horseplayer Interactive simulcast wagering platform (www.hpibet.com) and watch a live stream on the track's website.

There were plenty of smiling faces among horsepeople (behind their mandated face masks) who finally had a chance to race their horses for the first time since the 50th anniversary season ended last October.

"It's just great to be back riding races," said jockey Regan Knowles, who orchestrated the biggest upset of the day when he guided Hanover Hill Chalsee to an 18 to 1 victory in Race 4. Hanover Hill Chalsee, owned by Picov Cattle Company, was one of two winners saddled by Rick Kennedy on the day.

Kennedy's own filly Shez Perry Fiesty won the first race of the season with Ed Walton riding.

Last year's top trainer **Jason Pascoe**, from Pontypool, ON sent out two winners and both were ridden by 'Hurricane' Helen Vanek who was returning to Ajax Downs for the first time in four years. Vanek, one of Canada's top female Thoroughbred riders, has been plying her trade at Fort Erie racetrack where she is a leading jockey.

Racing continues next **Wednesday, June 17** with some of the major contenders for the July 1 Picov Maturity scheduled to be in action including possibly three-time Horse of the Year **Country Boy 123** and 2019 Horse of the Year **Had to Be Ivory**.

Keep updated on news and handicapping at the Ajax Downs website and get a free program each racing day. Also, **follow us on Instagram and Twitter** (@AjaxDowns) and on Facebook. To find out more about the Quarter Racing Owners of Ontario's First Line Racing Syndicate and **how to buy your own** share in a Quarter Horse, visit www/qrooi.com.



PHOTOS - Shez Perry Fiesty with owner/trainer Rick Kennedy and jockey Ed Walton after winning the first race of the 2020 Ajax Downs season (Laurie Overton Photo) . And (right) jockey Ramiro Sanchez Castillo poses for the camera.

