



PRESS RELEASE - AJAX DOWNS

Jessaprimadonna Struts Her Stuff in \$51,660 Princess Derby at Ajax Downs



JESSAPRIMADONNA won the Princess Derby by a nose for co-owner and trainer Craig Spada (white shirt), jockey Cory Spataro and assistants Lauren Spada and Matt Storms. Isaak Fehr from Alberta also owns. New image Media photo

AJAX DOWNS, JULY 14, 2021 - In a thrilling renewal of the \$51,660 Princess Derby for 3-year-old Quarter Horse fillies, **JESSAPRIMADONNA** won the 350-yard dash by a neck over stakes winner Streakinlilwagon for owners Craig Spada of Ridgeway, ON and Isaak Fehr of Taber, AB. Craig Spada trains the Louisiana-bred daughter of One Sweet Jess and Cory Spataro rode.

There were a few anxious moments for Jessaprimadonna before the race as one of the stirrups on Spataro's saddle broke in the pre-race warm-up and the filly had to return to the saddling enclosure to be re-saddled. Once Spataro was back aboard Jessaprimadonna, the pair broke fast from post position six and set their sights on Streakinlilwagon, who grabbed a short lead. A couple of strides before the finish, Jessaprimadonna surged to win in the rapid time of 17.683 for an impressive 97 speed index rating.

"Right in the post parade my (stirrup broke) and I had to go back and get another saddle," said Spataro. "It was a little nerve-wracking. But we kept her calm and once she went to the gate she settled right down."

Jessaprimadonna, who won one of the two Trials for the Princess Derby despite stumbling at the start, was claimed by Spada for \$10,000 (US) from a race at Evangeline Downs in December 2020. She has two wins in three starts for Spada and picked up \$20,665 for winning the Princess Derby.



"She sure ran a good race today,' said Spada. "I think maybe it was from my NHL hockey refereeing days that I learned to deal with pressure situations like this, having to change her saddle. You learn in horse racing every day and today we learned to stay calm and that's what you do around horses."

Streakinlilwagon, owned and trained by Jason Pascoe of Pontypool, was one length ahead of Rick Crispi's Jessies Good Candy while another Spada filly, Rosie Perry, finished fourth. Race favourite Ice Cream Cartel broke a step slowly and then lost her path to other rivals and wound up eighth.

Spada, who trains his horses at Fort Erie racetrack with the help of his assistant Matt Storms and daughter Lauren Spada, won three races at Ajax on July 14 for a total of eight wins after just five days of racing, second in the trainer standings to Pascoe who has 10 wins.

The 10-race card at Ajax Downs realized \$141,378 in wagering, the highest single day of betting since 2013.

Racing continues **Wednesday, July 21** with a first race post time of 1:30 p.m. Fans who would like to attend the races can register on-line at www.ajaxdowns.com.

Follow Quarter Horse racing at Ajax Downs on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook (@AjaxDowns) You can watch the entire card of racing from the live stream on the Ajax Downs Facebook page.

July 14 card of racing live stream video

- <https://www.facebook.com/ajaxdownsracetrack/videos/808516216455689>