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## **PRESS RELEASE - AJAX DOWNS**

### **Ajax Downs Set For First Full Quarter Horse Racing Season in Two Years**



*Come and experience the speed and beauty of Ontario's Quarter Horses at Ajax Downs. Opening day is May 11 with a 1:30 p.m. post time. Laurie Overton photo*

**AJAX DOWNS, MONDAY, MAY 9, 2022** - Hold on to your hats, the Quarter Horses are back. The fastest breed of horse returns to Ajax Downs on May 11, post time 1:30 p.m., for the opening day of its 25-day season, the 53rd in the track's history. It will be the first time since 2019 that the track will have a full racing meet after the COVID-19 pandemic delayed the last two seasons.

"We are excited and looking forward to our first full race season in two years," said Emilio Trotta, general manager at Ajax Downs. "It will be great to see the large crowds again, in particular on our special event Sundays."

Ajax Downs will race on Wednesdays throughout the season but will have one Sunday card of racing each month (post times for Sundays, 12:55 p.m.) and will race on Thanksgiving Monday, October 10.

The **special event Sundays**, which begins May 22 with a Fan Appreciation Day also include a Father's Day celebration, the very popular Family Fun Day and more.

There are 18 stakes races scheduled for the season highlighted by the \$75,000 Alex Picov Memorial Futurity, the \$60,000 Ontario Bred Futurity, and the \$50,000 Princess Stakes Derby.



New to the racing schedule will be **'hook' races**, longer distance dashes around one turn of the Ajax track. The first-ever 'hook' race held at Ajax Downs, a 770-yard dash, was a non-betting affair late last season and had the crowd on its feet.

Racing fans can also look forward to many of the top Quarter Horses in Ontario returning in 2022 including past Horses of the Year **COUNTRY BOY 123**, **HAD TO BE IVORY**, and **FIESTY ICON**. Last year's Horse of the Year, the Ontario sired and bred 2-year-old colt **FIRST COLD WAVE** is pointing to the Picov Derby in June.

Three of the country's **top women Quarter Horse Jockeys**, Helen Vanek, Cassandra Jeschke, and Rachael Issacs will look to topple last year's competitive male riders including Ismael Mosquiera, Brian Bell, Ramiro Castillo, and 2021 champion Cory Spataro.

Ajax Downs' opening day card has lured last year's Alex Picov Championship winner **MARYLAND MAGIC**, who will start in the 110-yard Gridiron Gallop for 2021's leading owner Milena Kwiecien of Burlington and the year's leading trainer, Jason Pascoe who hails from Pontypool.

The forecast for opening day, May 11, is for mainly sunny skies and a spring-like temperature of 16 degrees Celsius.

Keep up to date on the goings-on at Ajax Downs by following us on social media, Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook (@ajaxdowns) and at our website [www.ajaxdowns.com](http://www.ajaxdowns.com). For information on how to join a racing syndicate and be a part-owner of a Quarter Horse, contact the Quarter Racing Owners of Ontario, Inc. at [www.grooi.com](http://www.grooi.com).

The full racing schedule is attached to this e-mail.

**Live Like The Gates Just Opened**

Live Quarter Horse Racing May to October  
Wednesdays & One Sunday a Month &  
Thanksgiving Monday

Watch our website for all this seasons events [www.ajaxdowns.com](http://www.ajaxdowns.com)