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## PRESS RELEASE - AJAX DOWNS

### Night Leader Shows the Way in \$50,130 Ontario Sired Stakes Derby



*Night Leader and jockey Carly Furlonger hold off First Cold Wave and Brian Bell to win the \$50,130 Ontario Sired Stakes Derby at Ajax Downs on October 19. New Image Media photo*

**AJAX DOWNS, OCTOBER 19, 2022 - NIGHT LEADER**, John Wilson and Scott Reid's plucky little 3-year-old gelding, held on to win an exciting renewal of the \$50,130 Ontario Sired Stakes Derby over his rival First Cold Wave at Ajax Downs on October 19.

Trained by Reid and ridden by Carly Furlonger, Night Leader quickly grabbed a short lead in the 350-yard dash and held off the rush of First Cold Wave and jockey Brian Bell to win by a nose in a sharp time of 17.721 for a 96 speed index. Favoured First Cold Wave, the 2021 Horse of the Year for owner and breeder Robert Bailey and trainer Jason Pascoe was a length ahead of Kold Kinda Star who finished third for owner Milena Kwiecien.

The Derby was the second time in 2022 that Night Leader and First Cold Wave had met with First Cold Wave winning the Ontario Bred Derby by a neck on July 27.

A quick start from the gate by Night Leader seemed to be the difference in Wednesday's race.

"He was leaning a bit in the gate before the start," said Furlonger. "But he always leaves hard and loves his job. I had no idea if I won but I saw Brian (on First Cold Wave) and just put my head down and rode as hard as possible."



Furlonger won two races on the afternoon to boost her total to 15, putting her in a tie for fourth leading rider by wins with Ismael Mosquera.

Reid had carefully mapped out a plan for Night Leader this season and had guided the son of El Night Shift to three wins in five races this season coming into the Derby.

"Since the beginning of August I was pointing him to this race," said Reid. "He was the better horse today, but those two horses have been back and forth a lot in the last two years."

Wilson, who is from New Liskeard, purchased Night Leader from breeder Edith Slater as a yearling. "He's a great little guy. Scott and Carly have always loved him. He's just got one of those big hearts and he loves to run."

The Derby victory was the fifth win from 12 starts for Night Leader who pushed his earnings to over \$105,000.

\*The final day of the Ajax Downs' 2022 season is **Wednesday, October 26** headlined by the final of the \$70,000 Alex Picov Memorial Futurity for 2-year-olds. To keep up to date on entries and post times for Ajax Downs, be sure to visit [www.ajaxdowns.com](http://www.ajaxdowns.com) and follow us on social media @AjaxDowns.

Video replay of the Ontario Sired Stakes Derby: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1B\\_WyNSg-n8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1B_WyNSg-n8)

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