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## PRESS RELEASE - AJAX DOWNS

# Horse of the Year Had to Be Ivory Stretches Winning Streak to Seven



*Ontario-bred Had to Be Ivory has his ears pricked as he easily wins the \$30,375 Norman Picov Maturity on May 17. (Clive Cohen/New Image Media photo)*

**AJAX DOWNS, MAY 18, 2023** - Making his 8-year-old debut, reigning Horse of the Year **HAD TO BE IVORY** showed no signs of slowing down as he romped to an easy 1 1/4 length win in the \$30,375 Norman Picov Maturity at Ajax Downs on Wednesday. This was the fourth time Had to Be Ivory, owned and bred by Carol and Jaime Robertson of Hillsburgh, ON, has won the Maturity, the first stakes race of the Quarter Horse season.

"It's incredible," said jockey Josh Scott to Ajax Downs' guest interviewer **Terry Johnson**, the popular host of the morning show on CKDO Durham radio. "The energy he has, he just keeps getting better."

Trained by Bryn Robertson, Had to Be Ivory was bet down to 2 to 5 in the seven-horse field which included a pair of champions half his age: 2021 Horse of the Year First Cold Wave and the champion 3-year-old filly of 2022, Eye Live for Candy, both trained by Jason Pascoe.

After breaking quickly from post position two, Had to be Ivory was quickly in front of his rivals and never challenged. First Cold Wave finished second for owner Robert Bailey and Eye Live for Candy finished fast for third. The time for 300 yards was 15.364 for a 97 speed index.



It was the seventh straight victory for Had to Be Ivory dating back to his undefeated 2022 campaign. The son of Ivory James - Had to Be Fandango has won 23 of 29 career races and his earnings are over \$376,000, making him one of the richest Ontario bred Quarter Horses in history.

"He's never been worse than fourth in his career," said Bryn Robertson. "He's just a sweetheart at the barn and easy to handle. He just does everything right."

\*The combination of owner Milena Kwiecien, trainer Jason Pascoe and jockey JB Botello won **two races** on the May 17 card. SW Snowmagicallykool, a daughter of Kwiecien's stallion Maryland Magic (who still races), won race 2 while Spy for the Senate, who doubles as a stallion and racehorse, won the fourth-race allowance event for his 13th career victory.

\*Racing continues at Ajax Downs next **Wednesday, May 24** with the final of the Open Derby for 3-year-olds. First race post time is 1:30 p.m. Don't forget to check out all our race dates and special events at [www.ajaxdowns.com](http://www.ajaxdowns.com) and follow us on social media, @AjaxDowns.

**Norman Picov Maturity Replay** - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1aFld50K8l4>

*(Photo below) Jockey Josh Scott takes a victorious leap off Had to Be Ivory (Clive Cohen photo)*

