



PRESS RELEASE - AJAX DOWNS

Come out to Ajax Downs' closing day, Oct. 25, to see Quarter Horses take on Thoroughbreds; plus the rich Alex Picov Memorial Futurity



The fast grey 2-year-old Eye Tempt You is one of the favourites for the \$76,680 Alex Picov Futurity on October 25. Clive Cohen/New Image Media photo

AJAX DOWNS, OCTOBER 24, 2023 - The 2023 Ajax Downs' Quarter Horse season is going out with a bang on Wednesday, October 25 with a huge 11-race card that includes the **\$76,680 Alex Picov Memorial Futurity**, the richest race for 2-year-olds in the country and the first-ever **BATTLE OF THE BREEDS** race at the track, pitting Quarter Horses against Thoroughbreds.

First race post time on Wednesday, the 25th and final day of what has been a very successful meeting, is 12:45 p.m. and the early forecast calls for a warm day at 19 degrees Celcius and overcast.

A field of 10 juveniles will race 400-yards in the 23rd running of the Futurity including Trial winners **EYE TEMPT YOU** owned and trained by Jason Pascoe of Pontypool, ON and **HAWKIN THE STRAW**, an Ontario bred for Erik and Joyce Lehtinen, also trained by Pascoe.

Eye Tempt You won his Trial on Oct. 4 in slightly faster time, 20.48, than Hawkin the Straw and won by an impressive 2 1/4 lengths despite racing greenly through the stretch. The grey gelding was 6 to 1 in that victory, upsetting heavily favoured Sugar N Pride, who finished fourth. The North Dakota bred will be ridden once again by Diego Benitez and they start from post 7.



Hawkin the Straw, post 10, and Ajax Downs' leading rider Brian Bell won their Trial by 1 1/4 lengths in 20.55, defeating the filly Fiesty Feebee and stakes winner General Skywalker.

The Alex Picov Memorial Futurity is race 8 on Wednesday.

***Race 2**, with a post time of 1:12 p.m. is the first-ever **Battle of the Breeds** at Ajax Downs, an 870-yard race (about four furlongs) around a turn matching two Quarter Horses against three Thoroughbreds.

"We had a few of these races about 10 years ago at Fort Erie racetrack," said Ajax Downs' General Manager Emilio Trotta. "We wanted to try and bring it back this year and hope to have one or two a month next year."

Owner and trainer **Ted Holder**, whose Thoroughbred colt Kaukokaipuu raced in the King's Plate at Woodbine this year and was second in the Prince of Wales Stakes at Fort Erie, has entered **MIAH SAID** in the Battle of the Breeds.

"He's very quick," said Holder. "We'll give it a shot. I'm happy to give Ajax Downs a little push for this race, it's exciting."

Thoroughbred trainers **Roy Agostino and Joe Humber** have entered Devil in Her Heart and Red Maple respectively. Ajax Downs' leading owner Milena Kwiecien has entered her stakes star MARYLAND MAGIC, a winner of a 770-yard, 'hook' race last fall. Magen Finnessey's AZURES ROYALTY, whose dam Royal Gate is a Thoroughbred, completes the field.

*The **title for champion jockey at Ajax Downs** will go down to the wire on closing day. **BRIAN BELL** leads by wins, 25, and QROOI points, 242. Hot on his heels is Ramiro Castillo with 22 wins and 235 points and JB Botello with 20 wins and 234 points.

*Admission and parking are always free at Ajax Downs which also has an expansive simulcast room for watching and wagering on tracks from around the world. For more information, visit www.ajaxdowns.com and follow us on social media, @AjaxDowns.



OCTOBER 25th
RACE 2



BATTLE OF THE BREEDS

IT'S ABOUT TIME!

Thoroughbreds competing against Quarter Horses
at Ajax Downs in a hook race around the turn!



FIRST RACE AT 12:45

www.ajaxdowns.com - 50 Alexander's Crossing

