



PRESS RELEASE - AJAX DOWNS

Drama-filled Alex Picov Memorial Championship Leads to Dead Heat in 50th edition Quarter Horse classic



Valiant Chick Insnow (left) and Had to Be Relentless dead-heated for second in the Alex Picov Memorial Championship but were placed first through disqualification - New Image Media/Clive Cohen photos

AJAX DOWNS, OCTOBER 9, 2023 - On a cool and windy afternoon, racing fans flocked to Ajax Downs for its annual Thanksgiving Monday afternoon of Quarter Horse racing which included Race for the United Way Day and a pumpkin giveaway. A bustling and action-packed day culminated with a drama-filled, 50th edition of the Alex Picov Memorial Championship worth \$48,870 which saw the 3-year-old filly **VALIANT CHICK INSNOW** dead-heat with 5-year-old gelding **HAD TO BE RELENTLESS** for second-place only to be moved up to first through the disqualification of SNOW MOOSE.

The Championship pitted the year's top 3-year-olds Snow Moose, a 2-time stakes winner this year for Milena Kwiecien of Burlington and trainer Jason Pascoe and Picov Derby winner Sour Candy, trained by Lauren Spada for Craig Spada and Rick Crispi against four others tackling the extended 440-yard distance.

Snow Moose broke sharply under his newest rider JB Botello and was quickly in front while stablemate Valiant Chick Insnow flashed speed from the rail and Sour Candy, the race favourite, chased Snow Moose from the outside. Snow Moose shifted slightly to the right in mid-race but was clear on the lead while Had to Be Relentless was steadied behind the front runner. A claim of foul by Josh Scott, the jockey of Had to Be Relentless led to a lengthy inquiry before the stewards judged Snow Moose guilty of interference.

Since Valiant Chick Insnow, ridden by Diego Benitez and also owned by Kwiecien and trained by Pascoe, landed in a tie for second with Carol and Jaime Robertson's big gelding Had to Be Relentless. the pair were



moved up to the win. They raced the 440-yards in 22.010 seconds for a 96 speed index. Sour Candy finished fourth.

"We were coming up to him and just as we were coming up. [Snow Moose] moved over, so it kind of broke his momentum," said Bryn Robertson, trainer of Had to Be Relentless, owned by his wife Carol and daughter-in-law, Jaime. "It's no way to win a race, I would have rather have won it fair and square."

Had to Be Relentless, an Ontario-bred half brother to 2-time Horse of the Year Had to Be Ivory, is now 7 for 26 in his career and this was his first stakes win. Valiant Chick Insnow, bred in Oklahoma, has 5 wins from 18 races.

*There are **two racing dates remaining in the 2023** season at Ajax Downs, October 18 and 25. Both dates feature finals of stakes races. Post time on Oct. 18 and 25 is 12:55 p.m. The **jockey race** continues to be a tight one with Brian Bell on top by wins at 25 over Ramiro Castillo, who has 22, and JB Botello who has 20.

Picov Championship Video replay: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZdoLw4qQ1Ag>



Ajax Downs, Oct 9, 2023, Race 7
[www.youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZdoLw4qQ1Ag)

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