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## PRESS RELEASE - AJAX DOWNS

# SNOW MOOSE voted 2023 Ajax Downs' Horse of the Year at Quarter Racing Owners Banquet



**Milena Kwiecien's Snow Moose, top 3-year-old and Horse of the Year at Ajax Downs for 2023**

**AJAX DOWNS, FEBRUARY 26, 2024** - The popular grey Ontario-bred **SNOW MOOSE** took the highest honour, Horse of the Year, at the Quarter Racing Owners Of Ontario's annual Awards Banquet on February 24. The awards, celebrating the best of Ajax Downs racing in 2023, were held at the Ajax Convention Centre, and a large crowd included local Ajax MP Patrice Barnes, members of the Ontario Lottery and Gaming, and Ontario Racing.

Owned and bred by **Milena Kwiecien** of Burlington, ON, and trained by **Jason Pascoe** of Pontypool, Snow Moose won five of nine races as a 3-year-old in 2023 including the QROOI Derby and Ontario Bred Derby. The son of Separate Interest from the mare Favorite Pearl won two other races, one being the Alex Picov Championship, but he was disqualified from both. The Horse of the Year was voted on by the board of directors of the QROOI.

Snow Moose was also the year's High Point 3-year-old with 45 QROOI points, just one more than runner-up Sour Candy, who defeated Snow Moose in the Picov Derby.



Kwiecien began racing Quarter Horses nine years ago and her Snow Pony stable was the 2023 High Point owner and leading owner by wins for the third consecutive year. Pascoe, who trains the Kwiecien horses, won his fifth straight High Point Trainer Title.

Veteran rider **Brian Bell** was 2023's top jockey by QROOI points and wins and **Amanda McCormack** of Peterborough, won her first Owner/Trainer trophy. James Bogar of Cameron won his first High Point Breeder award as his homebreds won 18 races in 2023. Bogar raced his first Quarter Horse eight years ago and his first homebreds began racing in 2020.

Other award winners from the 2023 season included:

**GENERAL SKYWALKER** - High Point 2-year-old Male - Owned/bred by Marie Broadstock, tr - Bob Broadstock

**PRETTY MAGICALL** - High Point 2-year-old Filly - Owned by Milena Kwiecien, tr - Jason Pascoe

**HAD TO BE IVY / VALIANT CHICK INSNOW** (tie) - High Point 3-year-old Filly - Owners Carol and Jamie Robertson / Milena Kwiecien

**FIRST COLD WAVE** - High Point Aged Male - Owner/breeder Robert Bailey, tr - Jason Pascoe

**SW THE TEMPEST** - High Point Aged mare - Owned/trained by Chantelle Bourgeois

The 2024 Ajax Downs Quarter Horse Season is set to begin on May 8, 2024, the first of 25 race dates. For more information on Ajax Downs racing, visit [www.ajaxdowns.com](http://www.ajaxdowns.com), or to learn how to get involved in owning a Quarter Horse, visit [qrooi.com](http://qrooi.com).

*Photos: Jockey Brian Bell accepts his Top Jockey award from QROOI's Bob Broadstock and Chantelle Bourgeois. And at right, Snow Moose's owner Milena Kwiecien (turquoise) and her winning team - Photos by Jacob Cohen/New Image Media*

