



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## *The Gold Cup gets rocked!*



**Rock'n USA rocks the \$75,000 Gold Cup (Gerry Hart photo)**

It was said that Rock'n USA, last year's Sprinter of the Year, could not carry the distance required for the \$75,000 Gold Cup, the biggest race for older horses. There are now many people eating those words as "the Rock" rolled over the competition Saturday night.

As expected, Rock'n USA, trained by Tanya Lindsay, took control of the race early with pressure from the outside by the other front-runner, Brinello. Those two, examples of opposite body types – the long-striding Brinello was matched every step of the way by the smaller compact build of Rock'n USA.

The battle continued through the backstretch and well into the final turn. At the top of the stretch, Rock'n USA finally disposed of Brinello, the only Manitoba-bred in the race, and continued to stride out to the finish.

"This horse has a trigger," said jockey Alan Cuthbertson, "and when we turned for home I pulled it and he had tons of horse left. It was going to take a great horse to run him down."

And no one did.

No Reply, trained by Emile Corbel for K5 Stable, came from the back of the pack to finish second. Brinello was able to hang on for third.

## ***Cuthbertson pays for his plane ticket!***

Alan Cuthbertson had decided a couple of weeks ago to close the door on the Assiniboia Downs season and head for his old stomping ground of Hastings Park in Vancouver.

But the smell of big money and talented horses in what was originally scheduled to be the last weekend of the ASD live season drew him back.

The three-time leading rider garnered mounts in all three stakes races. Tanika in the Matron, Honorable Lady in the Winnipeg Futurity, and Rock'n USA in the Gold Cup, it looked like it was going to be a good weekend. But it turned out to be a great weekend.



Alan Cuthbertson's trip back was well worth it (Rob Bye photo)

Wins with Tanika and Rock'n USA in the two biggest races and a second with Honorable Lady capped off what could be assessed as an okay 2009 season for Cuthbertson.

Early hopes of a fourth straight riding title were dashed as young up-start Larren Delorme continued to find the winner's circle over and over again. But this \$10,000 plus weekend (his earnings from the three stakes races) will definitely make the year more pleasant for Cuthbertson, the oldest jockey in the business.

## ***Tanika wins back to back Matrons***



**Tanika captures second straight Matron (Gerry Hart photo)**

Tanika invaded Assiniboia Downs from Northlands Park in Edmonton again to capture her second \$75,000 Matron Stakes in row. Tanika, the overwhelming favourite, flew past Morsel in mid-stretch to capture the biggest race of the year for fillies and mares.

Tanika, trained Barry Brown for Calmar Stables and Ranch, now with winnings of more than \$500,000, was also an enticement for three-time leading rider Alan Cuthbertson to return to the Downs from Vancouver for the \$200,000 in stakes races over the weekend.

After being strung three-wide around the first turn for the early lead, Tanika and Cuthbertson stalked the early leaders Britannia Road and Morsel down the backstretch.

Morsel began to move going into the far turn and, not wanting her to get too far in front, Cuthbertson sent Tanika after the local favourite in mid-turn.

Turning for home, Tanika clearly had Morsel in her sights and ran her down in mid-stretch. She then drew off to win by more than three lengths.

“She’s a beautiful mare to work with, she does everything right,” said Brown, “but she’s a tough little mare for her size.”

Morsel, trained by Texan Charlie Smith, did everything right in the race. She sat just to the outside of Britannia Road down the backstretch then pulled in front going into the turn.

Heading into the homestretch, the Jack Hardy Memorial winner looked to be home free, except for a fast closing Tanika. She succumbed to the leader in mid-stretch and was an easy second.

Game Shy, trained by Mel Davis, saved ground around the first turn and sat in the back of the pack down the backstretch. She then rallied to finish third.

## ***Winnipeg Futurity: Been there, done that!***



**Ruby's Big Band gets her third stakes victory at ASD (Gerry Hart photo)**

The \$50,000 Winnipeg Futurity was a carbon copy of both the Debutante Stakes and the Osiris Stakes for 2-year-olds.

The two fillies, Ruby's Big Band and Honorable Lady, beat the boys in Saturday's Winnipeg Futurity, with Charlie Smith's Ruby's Big Band getting the best of local favourite and Graduation Stakes winner Honorable Lady.

Charlie Smith, based in Canterbury Park in Minneapolis, has dominated the 2-year-old stakes scene this year, winning yet another one in the Winnipeg Futurity. Ruby's Big Band, winner of this year's Debutante Stakes and Osiris Stakes, pulled away in late stretch to win the season finale for 2-year-olds.

Taking command of the race from the start, Ruby's Big Band, an impressive chestnut filly, set quick fractions of 23.4, 46.4 and 59.6 with slight pressure from Meen Miner on the outside.

Turning for home, Honorable Lady took direct aim at Ruby, but Ruby had a lot more to say and drew off to win easily.

"Seeing Honorable Lady at her hip was all it took," said jockey Mark Anderson. "She just found another gear and away she went."

Honorable Lady, trained by Clayton Gray, stalked the pace along the rail and challenged at the top of the stretch but came up second best.

A \$3,000 purchase in Kentucky, Honorable Lady has finished no worse than second in five starts and has won more than \$40,000 for owner Wendy Anderson. This includes a stakes win in the Graduation and three seconds in three stakes races to Ruby's Big Band.

Mankato Strike, the other Charlie Smith charge, was the first boy to cross the line finishing third.