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PRESQUE ISLE DOWNS & CASINO
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Grounded Hopes to Topple Encino in Mile Rematch

If there was ever a horse that loves racing over the Tapeta surface at Presque Isle Downs, it is Grounded. The eight-year-old son of Medaglia d'oro out of the Empire Maker mare, Home Rule has won 16 of 28 efforts over the track. Last year, he won the \$100,000 Whisman Memorial at Presque Isle and was second to Encino in the \$150,000 Presque Isle Mile. For 2025, he won three of seven races in all, banking just over \$141,000.

Thus far in 2026, Grounded has been raced a bit lighter. After a fourth-place finish at Tampa Bay Downs in an allowance race in February, trainer Scooter Davis elected to give his charge a four-month rest between races, making the comeback at Presque Isle in June in an allowance race. He won the event by a head in a field of seven.

His next effort came one month later, also against allowance foes at Presque Isle Downs. The results were much the same where he went to the lead, and never looked back wiring the field, this time by a length.

Grounded has been freshened for three months since that race. He has been working very strong in the mornings, including a bullet workout of 46.40 seconds breezing on September 4 over the Presque Isle strip.

"I'm very happy with the way he has been training and is ready to go," said trainer Scooter Davis.

He now waits to face his nemesis Encino in Friday night's 17th Running of the \$150,000 guaranteed Presque Isle Mile at one and 1/16 mile, the eighth race of ten on Master's

night. Grounded is owned by Long Shot Racing Stables, LLC with his regular rider Rosario Montanez named as the jockey.

Since capturing last year's Presque Isle Mile, Encino has two wins, both stakes. He won the Prairie Bayou in December at Turfway over their tapeta surface, and again at Presque Isle Downs in his last race in August, the Whisman Memorial at one mile and 70 yards, defeating a field of six that day. Overall, the five-year-old gelded son of Nyquist out of the Bernadini mare Glittering Jewel has eight tries over synthetic surfaces with five wins and two second place finishes. Brad Cox trains for Godolphin, LLC. Alex Concepcion is slated to ride on Friday.

The horse that finished second to Encino in the Whisman Memorial, Britain's Kitten, will start between Encino and Grounded. Locally trained by Adam Rice, the seven-year-old gelded son of Big Blue Kitten out of the English Channel mare Dram Girl has yet to win in four tries this year. The last time he visited the winner's circle was at Tampa Bay Downs in an allowance race December 24th, 2025, at one mile.

"He's been working well, poking around. He's been good since his last start," said trainer Adam Rice.

Other local entrants in the Mile include Fortune Seller, He's A Mess, and Jimmy the Hat. Trainer Kevin Rice's Fortune Seller comes into the race off a third-place finish in an allowance race last month behind trainer Scooter Davis's He's A Mess. Fortune Seller's last win was in a claimer at Saratoga over a sloppy dirt surface in a claimer at one mile in July. He is a five-year-old Kitten's Joy gelding out of the Unbridled's Song mare Violinist. Gaddiel Martinez will be the jockey. Bella Mia Stables., LLC own.

Meanwhile, He's a Mess last won in an optional allowance in June by a head over Britian's Kitten going one mile and seventy yards. His trainer owns him and has Antonio Gallardo as his jockey. He is an eight-year-old gelded Pennsylvania-bred son of Damedy out of the Kitalpha mare Nightfury.

"I was going to enter him in a stakes race last time, but he was just a little off, but I am really happy with his workouts coming into this race. I think the race might set up well for him," said trainer Davis.

Jimmy the Hat has gone winless since capturing a starter condition race last October at Presque Isle Downs. Although recent efforts have been as a sprinter, he does have a win going the race's distance of one and 1/16 miles. Brendan Gilmartin owns and trains the five-year-old gelded son of Jimmy Creed out of the Malibu Moon mare Vocal.

The other invader that entered the Mile is Neoequos. Saffie Joseph, Jr. trains the four-year-old Neolithic colt out of the Birdstone mare Bold Birdie. His resume this year includes a win in the Sunshine Turf on Sunshine millions day at Gulfstream Park in

January, a third place finish in the Oaklawn Mile (G3) in Arkansas in March, and a second place effort in the Steve Sexton Mile (G2) at Lone Star Park in Texas in May. Last month he was third in the West Virginia Governor's Cup at Mountaineer Park last month. Paco Lopez comes in to ride for owners C2 Racing, Ian Parsand, Shining Stables, LLC, Stefania Farms, LLC, Ken T. Reimer, Paul Braveman, and Timothy Pinch.

The race will be part of a two-day Pick Four wager with the \$300,000 guaranteed Grade 2 Master's Stakes for three-year-old fillies and mares at six and a half furlongs carded as Race 9, and the Pennsylvania Derby and Cotillion Stakes at PARX on Saturday.

The field for the 17th Running of the \$150,000 guaranteed Presque Isle Mile for three-year-olds and upward at one and 1/16 miles:

<u>#</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Jockey</u>	<u>Trainer</u>	<u>Morning Line</u>
1	Encino	Axel Concepcion	Brad Cox	8-5
2	Britian's Kitten	Israel Rodriguez	Adam Rice	4-1
3	Grounded	Rosario Montanez	Scooter Davis	9-2
4	Mackenzie's Novva	Ciera Pruitt	Ralph Baez	20-1
5	He's A Mess	Antonia Gallardo	Scooter Davis	7-1
6	Jimmy the Hat	Walber Alencar	Brendan Gilmartin	10-1
7	Fortune Seller	Gaddiel Martinez	Kevin Rice	6-1
8	Neoequos	Paco Lopez	Saffie A Joseph, Jr.	5-2

Post Time Friday is 5PM. In addition to the featured Masters and Presque Isle Mile, there are three other stakes: the 15th running of the \$100,000 Presque Isle Debutante for two-year-old fillies at six and a half furlongs (Race 3), the inaugural \$75,000 Power By Far Stakes at six and a half furlongs for Registered Pennsylvania bred three-year-olds and upward (Race 5), and the 19th running of the \$100,000 Fitz Dixon Memorial for two-year-olds at six and a half furlongs (Race 7).

A fundraiser for injured jockey Ronnie Allen, Jr. will take place. There will be places to donate to the cause in the mutuels area and on the patio.

There will be pop-up giveaways from the mutuel machines for shirts and hats. There will be three food trucks and carts including the Erie Hot Dog Cart, Waffle Miricle, and Cousins Maine Lobster truck. There are ten races programmed.

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