

The *Times*

*Steeplechase
& Eventing*

Complimentary

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Georgia Cup winner Good Night Shirt



Royal Chase winner Sovereign Duty



The Best in the Game

*Steeplechase champion Good Night Shirt
returns with Atlanta win*

Sovereign Duty catches up at Keeneland

Connaught goes for gold at Rolex



Inside

- ◆ Rolex Kentucky Three-Day Event preview
- ◆ Rolex rookie Blair King all set to give it a go
- ◆ Steeplechase star Sur La Tete retired
- ◆ Planets Aligned scores in 2008 debut at Middleburg
- ◆ Hot Springs, Private Attack jump start timber scene

Entries

What's Happening and Where To Find It

Here's your newspaper. Number three on the season. The eventers are at Rolex – like Far Hills to you steeplechase fans out there – gunning for a gold watch (and the Olympics). Steeplechasing loses a star in Sur La Tete but continues to revel in the thrills provided by Good Night Shirt while also welcoming new shooter Sovereign Duty. Planets Aligned looked good (again) and the timber scene hit full boil. Next!



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Got The Time?

The Rolex Kentucky Three Day Event gets ready to jump off at the Kentucky Horse Park. Contenders lurk all over the entry list.



PAGES 10-12

Same Planet

Last year's novice champion Planets Aligned gets back to work with a stylish score in the Temple Gwathmey; Allimac knocks off formerly unbeaten timber champs.



PAGES 18-19

The Shirt Still Fits

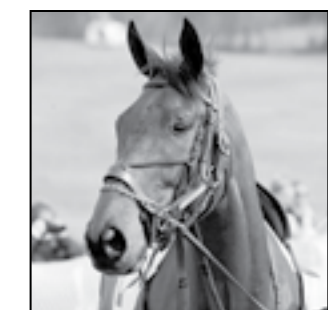
Good Night Shirt overcame a sloppy last fence – again – to win the Grade I Georgia Cup at Atlanta.



PAGES 20-21

Duty Bound

Jonathan Sheppard goes 1-2 in the Grade I Royal Chase at Keeneland as Sovereign Duty and Sweet Shani take the first two spots in a thriller.



PAGES 26-27

Next Chapter

Kinross Farm star Sur La Tete closes the book on a stellar steeplechase career after more than \$600,000 in earnings.



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On the Cover

Three horses grace the cover. Steeplechasers Good Night Shirt (top left) and Sovereign Duty (top right) looked sharp in Grade I wins. Eventer Connaught is one of several major players at Rolex this weekend.

Photos: Tod Marks(2)
and Anthony Trollope



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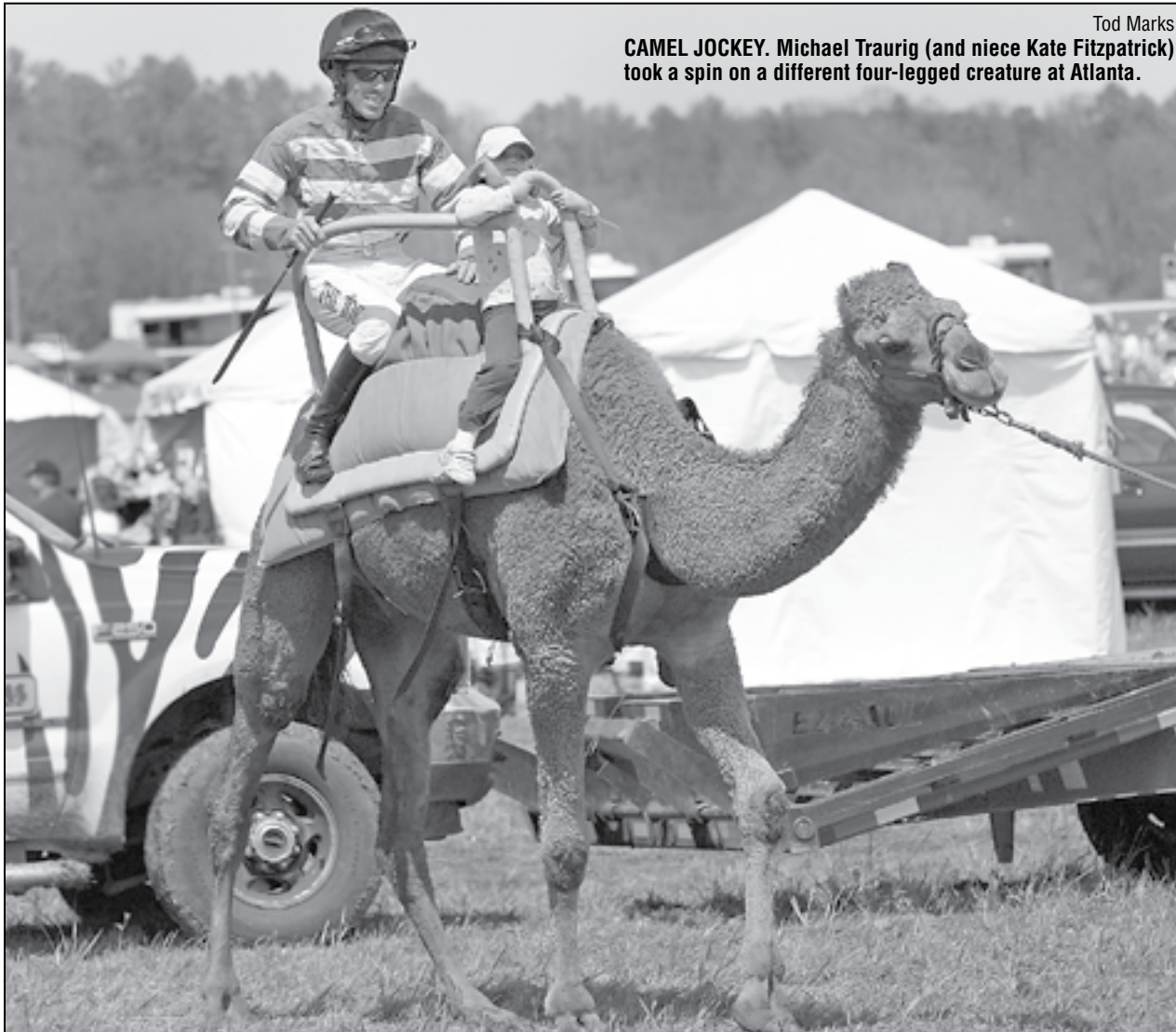
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News and Notes from around the circuit

FOR STARTERS



CAMEL JOCKEY. Michael Traurig (and niece Kate Fitzpatrick) took a spin on a different four-legged creature at Atlanta.

Tod Marks

Worth Repeating

"He is worse than a woman, that horse. He's high maintenance!"
Bruce Miller, to fellow trainer Regina Welsh, who drove Bug River four hours roundtrip nearly every day this spring to swim at Maui Meadow Farm in Pennsylvania

"How dumb am I? The course is from here to the top of that hill from my house. I've won the race four times – four in a row I think – and I haven't seen one of them. I've always been here."

Trainer Tom Voss on attending Atlanta rather than My Lady's Manor

"They paid us a whole lot of money."

Owner Jim Ryan, on naming his horse Ravens Fan in honor of the Baltimore NFL team

"I think I bought him just to get Tom Foley to stop calling me."

Trainer Jonathan Sheppard, on buying Sovereign Duty from the persistent Irishman

Take A Number

\$508,973: Lifetime steeplechase earnings of Good Night Shirt, the 12th American steeplechaser to pass the \$500,000 mark.

63: Combined margin of Irish jockey Shane Burke's two career NSA scores.

20: Inches taller Aintree's famous Becher's Brook fence is than American steeplechase owner Cary Jackson.

But This Is OTR

In the race program, Atlanta labels its infield owner/trainer/rider hospitality tent the OTR Tent. Unfortunately for a few confused racegoers, Atlanta also sells a sponsorship to local company OTR (Over The Road, Inc. or some such name). Several OTR employees tried without success to gain access to the other OTR tent but – facing a long walk to their tent on the far turn – were turned away. Sorry.

End of an Era

Just a few years ago, steeplechase fans talked about the joy of seeing superstars McDynamo, Hirapour and Sur La Tete compete at the same time. Combined, they won 30 races and earned more than \$2.5 million while making NSA starts from 2001-2007.

And now none of them are active.

Hirapour retired at the end of the 2006 season with an Eclipse Award and \$583,722 earned in four seasons.

McDynamo went one more year, racing through 2007 and finishing with three Eclipse Awards and more than \$1.3 million earned.

And now Sur La Tete (see page 26) joins his former rivals in retirement. The Kinross Farm colorbearer never won an Eclipse, but did take the 2003 NSA novice crown and the 2004 earnings title. He pocketed \$664,528 after being purchased for just \$10,000 as a barely broken 3-year-old.

They squared off in the same race just three times with victories going to McDynamo in the 2004 Breeders' Cup, Hirapour in the 2004 Colonial Cup and Hirapour again in the 2005 Royal Chase. In two of those meetings, they finished 1-2-3.

One-on-one, Sur La Tete defeated Hirapour in the 2005 Carolina Cup and McDynamo in the 2005 Iroquois and 2006 Royal Chase.

One person was lucky enough to ride all three Grade I stars in a race – Matt McCarron. He won on McDynamo in the horse's second start (2002 at Strawberry Hill), guided Sur La Tete to a 2004 score in a novice stakes at Atlanta and was Hirapour's regular rider through most of that horse's career.

First impressions?

"Wow, wow and wow," said McCarron. "I don't think I could choose between the three if I had to. They were that good at what they did."

And for specifics?

"McDynamo was really impressive. He was a bit keen early and didn't jump as well as he could until I was able to drop his head and let him go the speed he wanted. He was unleashed. I got off and thought they had a really, really nice horse."

"Sur La Tete toyed with those horses at Atlanta. I looked around several times going down the backside and the horses I was worried about were working. I was just sitting there."

"Hirapour was the hardest competitor and was the fastest of them if things set up for him. He had an amazing turn of foot, where the other two just wore horses down with their galloping and jumping."

Americans at Aintree

Owners Ann and Cary Jackson realized a steeplechase dream by attending the English Grand National at Aintree Race Course in Liverpool, England in early April.

The Marylanders purchased the trip at a charity auction benefiting the Countryside Alliance in England, and were treated to a course walk, lunch with course chairman Lord Daresbury's party and a day at the races in the chairman's box on the fifth floor of the Earl of Derby Stand as Comply Or Die won the historic race for owner David Johnson, trainer David Pipe and jockey Timmy Murphy.

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Rolex Eve

Top eventers all set for 'Super Bowl'

BY SEAN CLANCY

ROLEX KENTUCKY PREVIEW

April 24-27

And finally it's Rolex.

Forty-two horses will make the long, anxious walk from the barns to the dressage rings Thursday and Friday at the Kentucky Horse Park. Most of them will intrepidly set off for the cross-country course Saturday. Fewer still will head to the show ring Sunday.

In the balance lies the Rolex title as well as a nearly guaranteed birth for the Olympics in Hong Kong this summer. This year, Rolex Kentucky CCI****, presented by Farnam, serves as the U.S. Equestrian Federation's eventing selection trial for the Olympics.

As leading rider Phillip Dutton says, "It's all about the Olympics in 2008."

Well, for this weekend, it's all about Rolex.

For three riders, the initial presentation on Wednesday caused a pang in their guts. The ground jury (Martin Plewa of Germany, Nick Burton of Great Britain and Jo Young of Canada) held three of the 44 horses presented during the first horse inspection. The jury accepted Neville Bardos, ridden by Boyd Martin of Australia, and Dun To A T, ridden by Jonathan Holling of Ocala, Fla. when re-presented. Will Faudree, of Southern Pines, N.C., withdrew his

veteran Antigua instead of presenting him for the second time.

The defection of Antigua left the starting lineup at a healthy 42 horses – Olympic hopefuls, diehard amateurs, rookies and sheer stabbers. Three countries in addition to the U.S. will be represented, with six horses carrying the Canadian flag, three hailing from Australia and one from Great Britain.

Most Rolex conversations begin and end with Dutton. The Australian turned American dominates year-end standings but has yet to win at Rolex. He's ridden well and teetered on the winner's podium – finishing second in 2007, 2005, 2004 and 2001. This year the two-time Olympic gold medalist comes with a two-bullet attack of veteran Connaught and upstart Woodburn. Dutton scratched arguably his best horse, Tru Luck, when he was told his Rolex performance wouldn't affect his chances of an Olympic berth.

"He's fine. The selectors said he didn't have to run and we're here to get to the Olympics," Dutton said. "Unfortunately for him, he doesn't get to run, but it makes my life easier. It's a lot of risk



Shannon Brinkman

Connaught and Phillip Dutton return to Rolex, where they were second in 2007.

coming to a big event like this anyway. It's going to be a long summer and it'll be good to have a nice fresh horse going into Hong Kong if he gets to go."

Last year's USEF CCI**** Championship winner Connaught has "been here, done that" stamped on his passport while Woodburn burst through with energetic efforts last year and tries his first four-star competition at Rolex.

"The two horses couldn't be more different," Dutton said. "Connaught is a big jumping, Irish horse. Woodburn is a lot faster galloping, a New Zealand

Thoroughbred. He reacts a lot quicker and is sharper. That kind. At the end of the day, they need to be good in all phases, if you ever get a horse that's good in all three, you better look after them. They just need to put their best foot forward, they're both good enough to do it."

Dutton owns two Olympic gold medals and has confidence in his horses. But you don't win Rolex by discounting your competitors or looking past the cross-country course. Like other riders,

See **ROLEX** page 6 ►

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2-Time Olympic Gold Medalist
Phillip Dutton Riding TRU LUCK
USEA 2006 Horse of the Year

Rolex —

■ Continued from page 5

he will walk the course five or six times — concentrating on foot so it won't come as fast when he's on horseback.

"You need to know the course really well. It always changes, it's a bit different each year," Dutton said. "You don't get to see anybody go, but you prepare. A lot of the jumps and a lot of the areas you need to get to know very well so when you're galloping at speed, you know exactly where you are. It would be great to win. Especially being here in the country's biggest event. But everybody has a chance. All the nice horses are here."

Karen O'Connor, Kim Severson and Stephen Bradley comprise the small but select list of riders in this year's event to have already won at Rolex. Their winning mounts have long since retired, but the three riders are here to try and duplicate the achievement.

O'Connor won the individual gold medal at the 2007 Pan Am Games on Theodore "Teddy" O'Connor — the wunderkind pony who finished third at Rolex last year and aims to go one better this year. O'Connor will also partner Hugh Knows, who makes his first attempt at a four-star competition.

"It's not just about pointing the horse and getting a good stride, it's about making it easy on their joints when you land by your position, by how much you slip your reins, I dissect all that with these big horses and try to be as accurate as I can with Teddy," O'Connor said. "It's a fun challenge. What a story, though.



Anthony Trollope

Northern Spy and Heidi White-Carty come off a win at The Fork in April, and were fourth at Rolex in 2007.

He's amazing. He continues to impress me, I have such respect for him."

Severson enjoyed tremendous Rolex success with the great Winsome Adante and will try to emulate that performance with Tipperary Liadhnan, who finished third in the advanced division at Southern Pines and 10th in the CIC***-W at The Fork.

Bradley takes aim with two horses, From and Brandenburg's Joshua. From

finished second at Jersey Fresh last spring and 13th in the Pan Am Games while Brandenburg's Joshua most recently placed 14th at The Fork.

Polly Stockton left her compatriots at home and will be the only European rider to compete at Rolex this year. She rides the massive and ultra-talented Tangleman.

Bonnie Mosser and Merloch won Jersey Fresh CCI*** last year and will attempt their first four-star competition.

"I'm looking forward to all three days," Mosser said. "He performs well in all three phases it is just a matter of putting them all together this weekend."

Veterans and youngsters alike will take their shots at Rolex, but Canadian Waylon Roberts and American Bonner Carpenter are the only two riders who are not legal to drink alcohol.

Boyd Martin of Australia trains with Dutton and comes with his own two-pronged attack of Yin Yang Yo and Neville Bardos.

"Yin Yang Yo is a tough Australian Thoroughbred horse and Neville Bardos is definitely a Thoroughbred's Thor-

oughbred," Martin said. "He's a little younger, a little greener. He felt like an experienced horse for the first time in his career at Fair Hill last fall."

No horse enters in better form — or with more seasoned Rolex miles — as Northern Spy. The gallant Thoroughbred recently won the CIC***-W at The Fork. Ridden by Heidi White-Carty, Northern Spy finished second at Rolex two years ago and was fourth last year.

Dutton has a way of putting the sport (and Rolex) into perfect perspective.

"It's the prestige and the pressure of it," Dutton said. "It's a big track. A special event, no matter what, but the fences are here every week."

• • •

Dressage begins Thursday with the test ride at 9:30 a.m. Theodore O'Connor kicks off the competition at 10 a.m. Dressage goes from 10 to noon and 2 to 4 both days. Cross country begins at 10 a.m. Saturday, and the show jumping phase takes place Sunday.

With additional reporting by Joe Clancy and some information from press releases.

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Shannon Brinkman

Theodore O'Connor returns to Rolex, where he placed third in 2007.

Rolex Kentucky Entries

Dressage	No.	Horse	Rider	Country	Cross-Country
THURSDAY					SATURDAY
10:00	1	Theodore O'Connor	Karen O'Connor	USA	10:00
10:08	2	Woodburn	Phillip Dutton	USA	10:05
10:16	3	Mazetto	Laine Ashker	USA	10:10
10:24	4	Neville Bardos	Boyd Martin	AUS	10:15
10:32	6	Brandenburg's Joshua	Stephen Bradley	USA	10:20
10:40	9	Kingpin	Mike Winter	CAN	10:25
11:10	11	Mr. Big	Julia Steinberg	USA	10:30
11:18	12	Dun To A T	Jonathan Holling	USA	10:35
11:26	14	Esker Riada	Cayla Kitayama	USA	10:40
11:34	15	Acapulco Jazz	Bonner Carpenter (YR)	USA	10:45
11:42	17	Madison Park	Kyle Carter	CAN	10:50
2:00	18	Lion Display	Dornin Anne North	USA	10:55
2:08	20	Courageous Comet	Becky Holder	USA	11:00
2:16	21	Hollywood	Kelly Sult	USA	11:05
2:24	22	Critical Decision	Missy Ransehausen	USA	11:10
2:32	23	Radio Flyer	Dorothy Crowell	USA	11:15
2:40	24	Oz	Mikki Kuchta	USA	11:20
2:48	25	Kirby Park Irish Jamie	Cammy O'Rourke	AUS	11:25
3:18	26	UN	Jane Sleeper	USA	11:30
3:26	30	Dunraths Alto	Lauren O'Brien	USA	11:35
FRIDAY					SATURDAY
10:00	31	Tipperary Liadhnan	Kim Severson	USA	2:00
10:08	32	Buenos Aires	Sandra Donnelly	CAN	2:05
10:16	33	Northern Spy	Heidi White-Carty	USA	2:10
10:24	36	No It Tissant	Lynn Symansky	USA	2:15
10:32	37	McKinlaigh	Gina Miles	USA	2:20
10:40	38	Livingstone	Hawley Bennett	CAN	2:25
11:10	39	The Quiet Man	Sarah Hansel	USA	2:30
11:18	40	Charles Owen Tangleman	Polly Stockton	GBR	2:35
11:26	41	Paleface	Waylon Robert	CAN	2:40
11:34	42	Arthur	Allison Springer	USA	2:45
11:42	47	Dobbin	Corinne Ashton	USA	2:50
2:00	48	Merloch	Bonnie Mosser	USA	2:55
2:08	49	King's Whisper	Blair King	USA	3:00
2:16	50	The Good Witch	Jennifer Wooton	USA	3:05
2:24	51	Cahir	Emilee Libby (YR)	USA	3:10
2:32	52	Buckingham Place	Tara Ziegler	USA	3:15
2:40	53	Colombo	Selena O'Hanlon	CAN	3:20
2:48	54	Hugh Knows	Karen O'Connor	USA	3:25
3:18	55	Frodo Baggins	Laine Ashker	USA	3:30
3:26	56	Ying Yang Yo	Boyd Martin	AUS	3:35
3:34	57	From	Stephen Bradley	USA	3:40
3:42	58	Connaught	Phillip Dutton	USA	3:45

Note: Show jumping to start Sunday at 1 p.m. Awards ceremony Sunday at 3 p.m.

Severson, Byyny host Rolex course walk

Fans will have the opportunity to walk the only four-star cross-country course in America with two of the country's top event riders Friday, April 25. Kim Severson and Jan Byyny host the SmartPak Course Walk at the event. For Severson this will be her third year leading the popular walk and for Byyny, her second. Both will address their strategies in riding the challenging cross-country course from start box to finish. The course walk is free and all are welcome to attend. Attendees are welcome to participate and ask questions.

Severson is a 2004 Individual Olympic silver medalist as well as a Team Olympic bronze medalist. She is the winner of the 1999, 2002, 2004 and 2005 Rolex. The USEA named her their leading lady rider in 2002, 2004 and 2005. Her famous partner of previous years, Winsome Adante, was named the 2002, 2004 and 2005 Horse of the Year by the USEA making him the second-highest scoring horse in U.S. eventing.

Jan Byyny's highlights include Team gold medalist and Individual bronze medalist at the 2003 Pan Am Games; 2006 reserve champion at Fair Hill International; sixth at the 2005 Rolex Kentucky CCI and 2004 team alternate for Athens Olympics.

Attendees should stop by the SmartPak tent in sponsor village to check-in or sign-up.

Wofford to give Rolex course walk

Ever wonder what goes through a rider's mind when he or she is galloping down to a four-star cross-country fence? You can find out when you join eventing legend Jim Wofford for a cross-country course walk during the Rolex Kentucky Three-Day Event Friday, April 25.

Wofford will discuss the highlights of the course and an in-depth look at how the course designer tests horses and riders, and why. To participate, meet Wofford at the cross-country start box 30 minutes after the final dressage ride April 25. Plan to spend at least two hours on course.

NBC to broadcast Rolex once again

For the fifth year, highlights from the Rolex Kentucky Three-Day Event will be broadcast on NBC. The "Rolex Equestrian Championships" will air in a one-hour special produced by Carr-Hughes Productions Sunday, May 4 from 5-6 p.m.

Rolex gets pay-per-view webcast

Fans will be able to watch the 2008 Rolex Kentucky Three-Day Event, live as it happens via an exclusive pay-per-view webcast. Live webcasts of all three phases (dressage Thursday and Friday, cross country Saturday and show jumping Sunday) will be available via a link on the official Rolex Kentucky Three-Day Event website (www.rk3de.org) for \$12.99 for an all-access four-day pass.

Winsome Adante to be retired at Rolex

Plain Dealing Farm's Winsome Adante, the only three-time and back-to-back winner of the Rolex Kentucky CCI**** and an Olympic Individual silver medalist, will be formally retired in a ceremony just prior to the final day's jumping test Sunday, April 27.

Plumb gets Olympic Hall of Fame nod

Eight-time Olympic event rider Mike Plumb joins a distinguished class of 2008 inducted into the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame. The induction ceremony will take place June 19 in Chicago.

Plumb has marched in more Olympic Opening Ceremonies than any other U.S. Olympic athlete. His Olympic career began with the 1960 Olympic Games in Rome and he was named to every Olympic three-day team through 1984. His final appearance came at the Barcelona 1992 Olympic Games. He tallied six Olympic medals, including team gold in 1976 and 1984, team silver in 1964, 1968 and 1972 and an individual silver in 1976. He won his first Olympic medal competing on a horse he had never ridden in competition before – an unprecedented feat. His international career also spanned several World Championships, including team and individual silver medals in 1974, and team bronze in 1978 and 1982. He is the first equestrian to be inducted into the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame.

Along with Plumb, the new Hall of Famers include volleyball player Karch Kiraly, wrestler Bruce Baumgartner, marathoner Joan Benoit, figure skater Brian Boitano, boxer Oscar de La Hoya, basketball player David Robinson, swimmer Amy Van Dyken, shooter Lones W. Wigger Jr., Paralympic swimmer John Morgan, figure-skating coach Carlo Fassi, figure skater Carol Heiss Jenkins and the members of the 1996 Women's Gymnastics Team.

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FF-260 (0408)

King set to test 1st Rolex

BY KATY CARTER

Turning ex-racehorses into successful sport horses is commonplace in three-day eventing. Professionals and amateurs alike buy horses off the track with the intention of selling the animal for a profit, similar to the practice of pinhooking in racing.

Blair King just happens to be involved in both.

In addition to her lifelong involvement in eventing, King has some excellent experience in the racing industry and has been involved in several successful pinhooking ventures.

"I worked for a vet at the Keeneland sales and thought I'd give it a try," she said. "I became involved in pinhooking, mostly with 2-year-olds in training, and it went really well. I actually have one racing in Tampa right now."

The 22-year-old Ann Arbor, Mich. native makes her four-star debut at Rolex Kentucky 2008 aboard her Thoroughbred King's Whisper. Purchased as a 3-year-old off the racetrack in Detroit, King's Whisper has been pursuing a new career for 10 years.

"We've been together quite a long time now," said King. "I ended up in a barn that evented, and as kids, we all took a field trip to Rolex. Like so many young kids, once I saw Rolex, I knew I wanted to ride there one day."

Riding in Michigan with trainer Cathy Henderson gave King a solid foundation, but she knew geography would prove challenging. When the opportunity to travel south for the winter arose four years ago, King took advantage.

She spent the winter focusing on dressage with Frank Burnett, as well as working on show jumping with Grand Prix show jumper Aaron Vale and other professional riders and trainers.

"There are not too many professionals to ride with in Michigan," she said. "I rode on my own a lot and moved King up myself. But I've been able to spend the last four winters in Ocala, and had opportunities to ride."

King cites her access to people such as Barnett and Vale as integral in preparation for her first four-star competition.

"King is a little hot tempered and gets excited in crowds," she said. "He is a bit difficult in the dressage. And of course, his rideability in dressage affects his rideability in show jumping, but on the other hand, he has a really good attitude."

Their partnership of 10 years also plays an important role in their success.

"We know each other well," said King. "We had our share of problems at first, but he knows his job, and can get strong on cross country because he likes to run and jump."

King and King have competed at the advanced level for several seasons, with Kentucky as their goal, and finished second in the 2006 Virginia Three Day Event and completed the 2006 Jersey Fresh CCI*** (20th) and last fall's Fair Hill International CCI*** (17th).

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Lined Up

Planets Aligned makes easy work of Gwathmey

BY JOE CLANCY

MIDDLEBURG, Va. – Tom Voss said he came to his senses, but it might not have mattered if he didn't. Planets Aligned looked that good.

"I was thinking about Keeneland and then I got to thinking again," said the trainer. "I didn't see any sense in doing it if I was going to be the highweight, which I would have been as it turned out. First time in open company, I don't care what you think of your horse, it's a step up."

In choosing a race for 2007 novice champion Planets Aligned, Voss contemplated the Royal Chase at Keeneland April 17. The open Grade I, worth \$150,000, lured a small field and Planets Aligned figured – even if he would give away experience and weight in the handicap. Two days later, an easier spot loomed in the form of the \$75,000 Temple Gwathmey for second-season novices. Voss eventually acted sensibly.

And Planets Aligned did his part, looking as good as he did last year. The Fox Ridge Farm homebred sat second behind Dr. Bloomer early and emerged from a tight pack approaching the last fence. Planets Aligned (Padge Whelan) kicked away from Imagina (Jody Petty) and Dr. Bloomer (Robbie Walsh) at the last and won by 3 1/4 lengths in 4:26 2/5 for the 2 1/4 miles.

"We didn't go that fast, I was put there to be shot at



Tod Marks

Planets Aligned (Padge Whelan) leads Imagina early in the Temple Gwathmey.

and we were queuing up before the last," said Whelan. "Luckily my horse has a bit of class and I was always going to win. If anything I felt I may have gotten there a bit too soon. He's a nice horse. I've only just come over here so I don't know the depth of the race. I'm sure there are some good horses in there. All he can do is win and he did it well."

That's getting to be a habit. After a rough start to his rookie season in 2007, Planets Aligned finished the year with three wins, a second, a third and \$142,600 in earnings. A touch behind the other novice contenders this year, he stayed home for the Carolina Cup, which Imagina won easily. A tightener on the flat at

Stoneybrook sent the son of Gold Fever to Middleburg and he scored for the fourth time in nine career jumps starts. While proving his trainer's good sense.

• When two undefeated horses enter the same race, one of them goes home with his first loss. Make that both of them.

Irish Prince (4-for-4 as timber champion of 2007) and Miles Ahead (8-for-8 lifetime, timber champion of 2005) clashed in the \$20,000 Middleburg Hunt Cup open timber. Late in the race they appeared poised for a half-mile sprint to the finish – only to come up short

See **MIDDLEBURG** page 12 ►

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Tod Marks

Allimac (right, Willie Dowling) leads Miles Ahead across the finish line in the open timber.

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Middleburg —

■ Continued from page 10

as pacesetter Allimac held sway for Irv Naylor and trainer Desmond Fogarty.

Allimac (Willie Dowling) went to the front, but had company from an erratic Fiery Legacy early as Miles Ahead settled off the pace in fourth with Irish Prince a length behind in fifth. After a little more than 2 miles, the two unbeaten launched identical bids toward the front. Paying little attention to reputations, Allimac answered the challenge. Irish Prince faltered first, dropping out of the fight up front as Miles Ahead pressed. Allimac saved plenty for the stretch and won by 1 3/4 lengths over Miles Ahead in 6:44 2/5 for the 3 1/4 miles. Genghis took third with Irish Prince a well-beaten fourth.

Fogarty expected a big effort from his 11-year-old Irish import.

"I didn't know if we were going to beat Irish Prince or Miles Ahead, they're both very good horses, but I knew our horse was going to run a real good race," the trainer said. "No doubt in my mind. He was acting great at home. I couldn't say there was one thing wrong with him. If he was going to get beaten today it was just going to be by a better horse."

Even they couldn't do it. Allimac won two timber races, including the stakes at Nashville, for Sanna Hendriks in 2006 but started just once last season for Fogarty, finishing fourth in the International Gold Cup after opening a large lead. He prepped for Middleburg with a point-to-point win at Marlborough.

• Orpington joined owner Gil Johnston's racing stable as a 2-year-old in 2003. Since then, the son of Cozzene has bounced through flat conditions with Graham Motion and now steeplechasing with Jack Fisher.

But he's still part of the team, especially after taking a \$25,000 allowance hurdle at Middleburg.

"As long as they're happy and want to keep doing it, I get a kick out of keeping them," said Johnston, whose horses often come home to her Tennessee farm in the off-season and go on to careers as foxhunters or polo ponies. "He's a fun horse to watch."

Orpington (Xavier Aizpuru) charged up the inside of Gigger (Whelan) at the last fence, scooted around the stretch corner and won by a neck over fast-



Tod Marks

Spy In The Sky (Liam McVicar) jumps to a win in Middleburg's maiden hurdle.

closing The Price Of Love (Danielle Hodsdon) in 4:06 4/5 for the 2 1/8 miles. Delacroix (Darren Nagle) finished third.

• At the Carolina Cup, Spy In The Sky's owner Jim Carter joked that he hoped his horse could finish with his jockey and his shoes for the first time. The 4-year-old son of Thunder Gulch placed third that day (with his jockey) but sported only two shoes afterward.

Three weeks later at Middleburg, Spy In The Sky brought home four shoes and a win — rallying from just off the pace to take a \$25,000 maiden hurdle for Randleston Farm (Carter and wife, Melinda) and trainer Jimmy Day. Spy In The Sky (Liam McVicar) reeled in Chislehurst and Sword Of Dubai across the back and drew off late to win by 11 1/2 lengths in 4:04 3/5 for the 2 1/8 miles. Run The Light (Chris Read) came on for second with News Flash (Whelan) third.

Day, who led the rambunctious gelding to the paddock and back afterward, liked what he saw.

"At Camden he was beaten by two horses that had been training down there and I think they just handled the turf better. And he did lose the shoes," Day said. "He loves jumping and you could really see that today. He just jumped his way to the front when the speed stopped. He's holding his weight better this year and could turn out to be a useful horse, we'll see."

• Paying strict attention to his jockey no matter what happened, Ordered To Listen jumped the seventh fence in Middleburg's \$15,000 maiden claiming hurdle as loose horse Waracha took Ravens Fan, Dr. Kinsolving and Dixie Cheer off the course.

Ordered To Listen kept on running. The 4-year-old son of Eastern Echo passed Mornin' Eddie late and held off Closertoyourheart (Dowling) to win by a half-length in 4:07 1/5 for the 2 1/8 miles. Owned and trained by Sanna Hendriks, the horse stayed true to his name.

"I had both hands on the right rein and I was like 'please, just jump this' and he did," said Petty. "For my horse to let the other horse (Dixie Cheer) cut him off and still jump the fence nicely was pretty honest. He got to the front and was looking around a little, but he had just enough. It was a great effort."

A half-brother to multiple winner Noble Bob, Ordered To Listen was claimed by Kinross Farm for \$20,000.

• Run this year in memory of Paul and Eve Fout, the Alfred Hunt Steeplechase produced a touching story when Hidden Key raced across the finish line first. Or seemed to.

The homebred once raced in the silks of both Fouts, and is trained by their son Doug for owner Al Griffin. Unfortunately, the 8-year-old son of Corridor Key went to the wrong side of a beacon just before the hairpin turn on the backside of the course and was disqualified. Hidden Key (Matt McCarron) and Thegooddieyoung (Read) set the pace throughout the 2 5/8-mile race over varied obstacles and looked to have total command as the others dropped well back four fences from home.

The leaders sped to the wrong side of the beacon, as did followers Te Akau Five, Run Up The Flag and Straight Path. The latter three realized their mis-

See MIDDLEBURG page 13 ►

Middleburg Spring Races.

Middleburg, Va. Saturday, April 19. Turf: Firm.

1st. \$25,000. SOK mdn. hurdle. 2 1/8 miles.

1. SPY IN THE SKY	L 139	McVicar
2. RUN THE LIGHT	L 154	Read
3. NEWS FLASH	L 144	Whelan
4. DUBAI SUNDAY (JPN)	L 149	Nagle
5. SURPRIZER PHEW (NZ)	L 154	McCormack
6. SWORD OF DUBAI	L 154	Rafter
7. CHISLEHURST	L 149	Mackenzie
8. BONE DRY	L 154	McCarron
9. DELTA PARK	L 144	Aizpuru

Mgn: 11 1/2. Time: 4:04 3/5.

O: Randleston Farm. T: Jimmy Day.
Ch. g. 4, Thunder Gulch-Monaassabaat, Zilzal.
Bred by Gainsborough Farm (FL).

2nd. \$25,000. Opt. clm. hurdle. 2 1/8 miles.

NW1X/NW2; or \$20,000 claiming price.

1. ORPINGTON	L 144	Aizpuru
2. THE PRICE OF LOVE	L 156	Hodsdon
3. DELACROIX	L 139	Nagle
4. GIGGER	L 156	Whelan
5. FOUR SCHOOLS (IRE)	L 144	McWade
6. ZHUKOV (NZ)	L 144	McCarron
7. KIRIMBAI	L 144	Walsh
LR THE COBBLERS SON	L 142	Williams

Mgn: Neck. Time: 4:06 4/5.

O: Gil Johnston. T: Jack Fisher.

B. g. 7 Cozzene-Tina Fleet, Afleet.

Bred by Lambholm (FL).

3rd. \$75,000. SOK Novice hurdle. 2 1/4 miles.

NW prior to March 1, 2007.

The Temple Gwathmey Stakes (Grade II)

1. PLANETS ALIGNED	L 154	Whelan
2. IMAGINA (CHI)	L 149	Petty
3. DR. BLOOMER	L 148	Walsh
4. IRISH EMBASSY	L 148	C. Miller
F. SWAGGER STICK	L 148	Aizpuru

Mgn: 3 1/4. Time: 4:26 2/5.

O: Fox Ridge Farm. T: Tom Voss.

Ch. g. 7 Gold Fever-Flying Minister, Deputy Minister. Bred by Fox Ridge Farm (KY).

4th. \$20,000. Open timber. 3 1/4 miles.

1. ALLIMAC (IRE)	L 155	Dowling
2. MILES AHEAD	L 160	Read
3. GENGHIS	L 145	Carter
4. IRISH PRINCE (NZ)	L 165	Petty
5. BULAWAYO	L 150	Walsh
F. FIERY LEGACY	L 140	Roberts
*R. HALL OF ANGELS	L 155	McCormack

*-Refused to start

Mgn: 1 3/4. Time: 6:44 2/5.

O: Irv Naylor. T: Desmond Fogarty.

B. g. 11 Alhabatim-Firewood (IRE), Brush Aside. Bred by J.P.N. Parker (IRE).

5th. \$15,000. Mdn. clm. hurdle. 2 1/8 miles.

\$20,000-\$15,000 claiming price.

*1. ORDERED TO LISTEN	L 146	Petty
2. CLOSETOYOURHEART	L 156	Dowling
3. MORNIN' EDDIE	L 156	Read
4. FROSTY TO GO	L 156	McWade
5. MIDSIDE MAGGIE	L 142	Walsh
LR. WARACHA	L 146	Whelan
*OC. DIXIE CHEER	L 145	Madden
*OC. DR. KINSOLVING	L 156	McCarron
*OC. RAVENS FAN	L 146	Hodsdon

*Claimed by Kinross Farm for \$20,000.

†-Forced off course by loose horse.

Mgn: 1/2. Time: 4:07 1/5.

O: Sanna Hendriks. T: Sanna Hendriks.

Dk. B./Br. g. 4, Eastern Echo-Scythia, Believe The Queen. Bred by Jeffrey Franz (MD).

6th. \$15,000. Open timber. 2 5/8 miles.

Alfred Hunt Course.

1. TE AKAU FIVE (NZ)	L 155	J. Murphy
2. RUN UP THE FLAG	L 155	Nagle
3. STRAIGHT PATH	L 160	Rafter
4. GHOST BAR	L 150	Roberts
*DQ. HIDDEN KEY	L 160	McCarron
*DQ. THEGOODDIEYOUNG	L 160	Read

*-From first for following improper course.

†-From second for following improper course.

Mgn: 3. Time: 5:24.

O: Hound's Cry Farm. T: Teddy Mulligan.

Ch. g. 13 Grosvenor (NZ)-Elle Taine (NZ), Centaine (AUS). Bred by G.J. Chittick (NZ).

Middleburg —

Continued from page 12

takes, however, and were going slow enough to stop and retrace their steps. In what looked like two separate races, Hidden Key defeated Thegooddieyoung up front and Te Akau Five (Jeff Murphy) and Run Up The Flag (Nagle) bumped and banged each other a good distance behind. Te Akau Five won that one, and the foul claim by Nagle, as the stewards disqualified the top pair.

Owned by Hounds Cry Farm, Te Akau Five gave trainer Teddy Mulligan his first NSA victory and delighted Murphy with a stout effort — no matter how the win occurred.

"I'll take it," said the jockey. "He was a great ride, just relaxed about it all and I let him run off with me down the hills and things."

Murphy, who went off course in the steeplechase at Great Meadow last spring, knows how McCarron and Read (who received \$400 fines) feel.

"It's a small mistake really. We went off as well, but we were lucky enough that we were able to stop and get it right," Murphy said. "It's always the stupid jockey's fault, but there's more to it than that. There's a beacon, that's all, and you have to make a decision. It's our responsibility, but those guys know their way around there — they rode a straight line and it just didn't line up right or something."



Tod Marks

Orpington (right, Xavier Aizpuru) skims the wing to challenge Gigger in the allowance hurdle.



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Saturday, April 19

On Notice

Private Attack goes public with timber stakes romp

BY JAMIE SANTO

BUTLER, Md. – Not bad for a maiden polo pony. Facing a field that included two former timber champions, Sportsman Hall's Private Attack – winless in 16 NSA jump races – put forth a display worthy of Ralph Lauren, outhustling, outjumping and outshining seven rivals to score an emphatic victory in the \$35,000 Grand National timber stakes April 19.

"He was spectacular, wasn't he?" asked trainer Alicia Murphy afterward.

"Pretty much of a powerhouse today, wasn't he?" asked jockey Billy Santoro.

You'd be hard-pressed to find someone who disagreed. After racing on or near the lead throughout the 3 1/4-mile circuit, Private Attack took a slight advantage into the uphill homestretch and the final fence. Santoro had one thing on his mind as he approached the last.

"Get over. That's usually what I think," he joked. "But no, I knew I still had a bunch of horse, and Private sees his fences from way out and we were running, so I thought, 'Well, he's locked on pretty much, let's do it.'"

Private Attack soared like Dominique Wilkins and cleared the fence with aplomb, a dramatic exclamation point to punctuate his 4-length win. Askim (Charlie Fenwick III) and Bubble Economy (Jack Fisher), the 2006 and 2004 timber champs, respectively, finished second and third.

After the race, Murphy was asked if she anticipated such a string showing.

"You can't, not against the horses he was running against. But I did expect a good performance. That doesn't always happen," she said. "So am I totally amazed at the result? No. But wow. He's just shown us more and more lately. And he obviously loves it. It's fun to get these horses who are nothing – he started out as a polo pony. Very briefly, but that was his intended vocation for a little while."

Private Attack took some time to find himself. He tried four hurdle races a 4-year-old way back in 2003. The two times he finished, he lost by a combined 77 1/4 lengths. He experienced modest success after switching to timber, winning two point-to-points in 2005. But there was still something missing.

"You didn't know whether he was going to be a big-timer, but he was a lovely jumper," Santoro said. "And Alicia always believed that there was something there."

Private Attack had talent, but he also had fitness issues.

"We had some real health problems for probably going on two years. He tied up all the time, and just couldn't make it up a hill without kind of," said Murphy, who blew a raspberry to end her description. "We just couldn't figure anything out. Finally my vet said 'let's send a hair sample off,' so we yanked a bunch of hair out of his mane and sent it to this woman in Texas who got back to us months later and said that he was highly acidic and we had to change his diet. It took awhile, but it's worked."

Nowadays, Private Attack relishes hills and is full of run. Still, that doesn't mean Murphy was excited to see him racing out front.

"I knew he could do it, because he did it the week or two before (at Elkridge-Harford point-to-point), but it wasn't the ideal place to have him," she said. "I'd see him settle back and I'd go, 'Yes, someone else is on the lead!' and then the freak jumped himself into the lead again. But the way he was doing it . . . he was pretty peppy."

Santoro summed up the horse's progress.

"He got better last year and he's a monster right now."



Doug Lees

Private Attack (center, Billy Santoro) shows the way over Foiled Again (left) and Mr. Liberator in the Grand National.

• Those in attendance at the Elkridge-Harford Hunt's race meeting April 5 carried some heady knowledge into the second race at the Grand National. Private Attack had finished first in that outing two weeks ago – but so had Incomplete. After matching him in that dead heat at Monkton, Bob Kinsley's Incomplete put forth a similar showing at Butler.

A field of 10 greeted the starter for the 3 1/4-mile timber allowance, and Battle Op (Brooks Durkee) made straight for the front. After leading by as many as 6 lengths, Battle Op still held a slight advantage with a half-mile to go. Twill Do (Santoro) sat second with Incomplete (Fenwick) third. With three fences remaining, Fenwick faced a tough decision.

"Going into the home fence I was going to say, 'Well, I can either go moderately and be three-abreast, or let him run and get the lead over the second-last.' And that's what I did, and it worked out well."

Incomplete seized the lead, put in a massive jump over the last and won by 3 1/4 lengths for trainer Ann Stewart. Twill Do and Battle Op stayed on to finish second and third.

"He jumped the last fence good. I was long, and I said 'I might as well go.' I had a fun, great trip," Fenwick said. "Mom's done a great job with him. I was just sort of along for the ride."

• Kathy McKenna and Shane Burke partnered for a lopsided victory in the amateur heavyweight timber at My Lady's Manor with Haddix. One week later, trainer and rider did it again, as Crest View Farm's Western Fling rolled home 40 lengths to the good.

Bred by McKenna's step-father George Strawbridge, the son of Gone West faced nine rivals in the 3-mile affair. Voler Bar Nuit (Meister) did the early running, with Riderwood (Patrick Smithwick) and Western Fling keeping company. The trio entered the final leg in contention, when Western Fling began to pull away. His two companions fell at the second-last, and



Doug Lees

Incomplete (Charlie Fenwick) wings toward victory.

Western Fling strolled to the finish. Professor Maxwell (George Hundt) and Comanche Station (Durkee) eventually arrived to fill out the leaderboard.

"He was going too easy all the way," Burke said. "When I turned in at the bottom, I actually had to take a hold. I thought he was going to get there too soon – he was taking a length out of the field at each jump. He was awesome. I couldn't believe going down to the second-last how well he was still travelling."

Burke collected his second NSA victory since coming over from Ireland one month ago. His mother was the first person he phoned after the first win a week earlier.

"I have to call her now shortly again," Burke said. "She'll be saying a rosary for me at home."

Grand National Steeplechase.

Butler, Md. Saturday, April 19. Turf: Firm.

1st. \$35,000. Timber stakes. Amateur jockeys. 3 1/4 miles. The Grand National

1. PRIVATE ATTACK	L	165	Santoro
2. ASKIM (NZ)	L	165	Fenwick
3. BUBBLE ECONOMY	L	165	Fisher
4. MR LIBERATOR	L	165	Meister
5. COAL DUST	L	165	Slater
F. FOILED AGAIN	L	165	McKnight
F. CAN'T FIND MY KEYS (IRE)	L	165	Stierhoff
PU. EARMARK	L	165	Durkee
Mgn: 4. Time: 6:17 1/5. O: Sportsmans Hall. T: Alicia Murphy.			
Dk. B./Br. g. 9 Private Interview-Ruby Sunset, Red Attack.			
Bred by Colonial Farms (NJ).			

2nd. \$15,000. Allowance (NW2) timber. 3 1/4 miles. Amateur jockeys.

1. INCOMPLETE	L	170	Fenwick
2. TWILL DO	L	162	Santoro
3. BATTLE OP	L	162	Durkee
4. J. ALFRED PRUFROCK	L	170	Somers
5. ROYAL'S QUEST	L	170	Meister
6. LEAR CHARM	L	162	Curry
7. VINNIE BOY (IRE)	L	162	Slater
8. MAGNITUDE	L	164	Worrall
F. MOVE WEST	L	173	Strawbridge
LR. TRUSTED COMRAD (IRE) ..	L	170	McKenna
Mgn: 3 1/4. Time: 6:16 2/5. O: Bob Kinsley. T: Ann Stewart.			
B. g. 7 Press Card-Sioux Lady, Poker.			
Bred by Hugo Procopio (MD).			

3rd. \$5,000. Highweight allowance timber. 3 miles. NW \$9,000 once in 2007-08. Amateur jockeys.

1. WESTERN FLING	L	170	Burke
2. PROFESSOR MAXWELL	L	180	Hundt
3. COMANCHE STATION	L	170	Durkee
4. MICKIE BLUE (IRE)	L	170	Slater
*DQ. BEQUEATHED	L	170	Worrall
F. VOLER BAR NUIT	L	170	Meister
F. RIDERWOOD	L	170	Smithwick
F. MESSOMANIA	L	183	Griswold
LR. PLEASE RUN	L	170	Chalfin
OC. FIRE FOOT	L	170	Batoff
*-DQ for failure to weigh in.			
Mgn: 40. Time: 6:30. O: Crestview Farm. T: Kathy McKenna.			
Dk. B./Br. g. 8 Gone West-Silver Fling, The Minstrel.			
Bred by George Strawbridge (KY).			

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 **EQUIERY**



COUNTY SADDLERY

Brute Force

Haynes/Berryman horse wins again in stretch battle with Underbidder

BY BRIAN NADEAU

BLOCK HOUSE RACES

Saturday, April 19

Mike Berryman headed to Tryon, N.C., with Anne Haynes' Classy Brute April 19 hoping to see an effort that would provide the 5-year-old with the experience necessary to handle seasoned open-division horses.

"Going in we had hoped for a good showing and that he ran decent," Berryman said. "We would have been happy with second or third."

The trainer left Block House with a far different perspective after Classy Brute outran veteran Underbidder by a head in the \$25,000 allowance hurdle feature.

"I have a really nice horse on my hands and that's not at all bad," Berryman said.

Building on a maiden win four weeks earlier at Aiken, Classy Brute stepped up in class and stepped out of the shadow of anonymity with a resounding victory over an accomplished field of allowance runners when he out-gamed Underbidder to the line in the feature, an allowance for horses that had not won \$18,000 twice in 2007-08 other than maiden, claiming or starter.

Though Classy Brute went winless in five hurdle starts last year, the son of Classy Prospector never failed to hit the board. Classy Brute entered 2008 on the verge of making a name for himself. Aiken was a start, as Classy Brute toyed with a maiden field. At Block House, the water got deeper. And murkier.

His rivals carried impressive credentials. A veteran of numerous stakes wars, Underbidder finished second in the Grade I New York Turf Writers last season and hailed from the powerful barn of trainer Jonathan Sheppard. Fellow entrant Mon Villez, a three-time winner of the Noel Laing Stakes, had finished second to McDynamo in the Grade I Colonial Cup in 2006 for Bruce Miller.

Not that Classy Brute cared.

The plan was to settle into a nice rhythm and keep an eye on Underbidder, but when Classy Brute broke alertly and showed some early interest jockey Will Haynes put him into the race. They found themselves in front of Underbid-



Tod Marks

Classy Brute and his team – owner Anne Haynes (right), trainer Mike Berryman and jockey Will Haynes – in the winner's circle at Aiken. The horse returned to score at Block House.

der as the field traveled down the backstretch.

"Going in I thought Underbidder was the horse to beat and I was going to keep my eye on him but Brute was keen and we were closer up than I thought we would be," Haynes said.

Turning for home, Richard Boucher produced Underbidder and Classy Brute looked relegated to second best. Underbidder put a head in front, but Classy Brute refused to be denied and the two battled through the stretch. Classy Brute put his head in front on the line,

with Pals Pride (Bernie Dalton) back in third. Not bad for a horse who was still eligible for an entry-level allowance.

"There weren't many races and we thought, 'If we have to run over our head why not do it in our backyard?'" Haynes said of the relatively short ship from Bristol, Tenn., to Tryon. "When Underbidder went by us I thought we weren't going to win but he kept digging in and wouldn't lose. It was close, but I thought we had it."

For Berryman, the win was another

See **BLOCK HOUSE** page 17 ►

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Block House —

■ Continued from page 16

act to the script being written to honor his best friend Bruce Haynes (Will's father and Classy Brute's former trainer who died this winter at 46). Heading to April 26 racing, Haynes and Berryman are both tied for the lead in their respective divisions of the NSA standings with four wins apiece.

"He's really starting to turn into the horse we always thought he was. We felt he was that type of horse all along and he's now living up to our expectations," Berryman said. "There's nothing I can put my finger on that's helped him turn the corner. I think more than anything it's been the seasoning and that Will has been more confident riding him. It's been a combination of the two. This was his best effort to date. When he poked his head in front I was really excited."

• Haynes started off a riding double in the third, a \$15,000 conditioned claiming hurdle, with a less stressful finish. Aboard Linda Klein's Fabi's Legacy, he scored by an easy 6 3/4 lengths over Junood (Dalton) and Gather No Moss (Michael Traurig). Though the finish may have lacked drama, Fabi's Legacy's pre-race antics provided plenty of it.

"He was feeling good early on; he dropped me before the start. He ran a lap around the track," Haynes said. "When they dropped the flag I wasn't planning on being on the lead but he broke well and I didn't want to stop him. The third time up the hill I thought he was going

to get tired but he kept going. The key was that he was able to handle the final turn, as horses were slipping and sliding there all day, but he handled it well."

• Remy Christine took the opener for trainer Lilith Boucher and Why Not Stable. Ridden by Boucher's husband, Richard, Remy Christine took the \$15,000 maiden hurdle by 2 lengths over Cuse (Haynes) with Frosted Face (Dalton) third.

After running on the flat for Boucher in 2006 and 2007, the 4-year-old daughter of Turkoman made the transition to hurdles earlier this season, pulling up at Aiken and fourth at Atlanta. Steeplechasing has been in the plans for a while.

"She's really progressed right along. I always like to buy a yearling I like to be a steeplechase horse," Lilith Boucher

said. "She was a mediocre flat horse who we had pointed to steeplechase racing all along. She had a slow start but I hadn't lost faith in her."

After falling short in a 2-mile race at Atlanta, Remy Christine enjoyed the extended 2 3/8-mile test, and the hills, at Block House.

The winner settled into stride and remained clear of Cuse, who came in off a second at Aiken and a third at Stoneybrook.

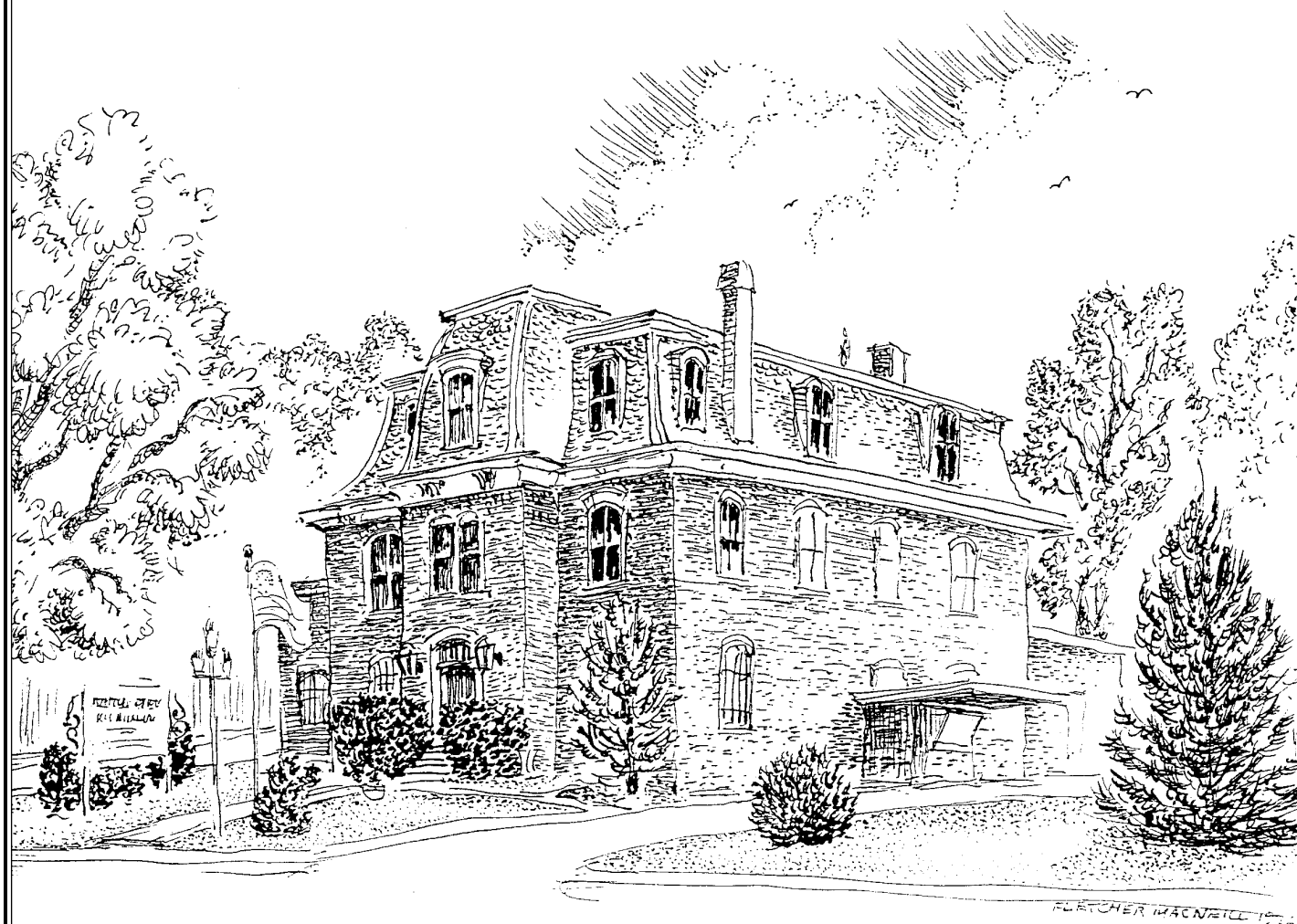
"She's a good galloping horse and 2 miles at Atlanta was just too short for her as she doesn't have a lot of speed. She gets a little more interested when she has success and it builds her confidence. She really is a great jumper and got a lot of confidence at Atlanta," Boucher said. "I really have to thank (NSA director of racing Bill Gallo) as he called me up and told me the race might be coming up a

little light. Richard and I really love to train fillies and it's nice to see the division starting to get some interest."

• Berryman also scored in the second, a \$10,000 maiden claiming hurdle, with Homer Osborne's Dromineer. After showing promise last fall, he disappointed in his first start of 2008, finishing sixth at Aiken. Dromineer (Traurig) went right to the front and was never threatened, galloping to a 26 1/4-length win over Reigning Count (Haynes) and Roseland (Dalton).

"He was impressive in the fall and then backed off in the spring because I think I asked too much of him; I ran him two weeks in a row last fall," Berryman said. "Saturday he got his form back and he was ready to rock and roll. We put him back in front and he said 'This is where I want to be.'"

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E.O.E.

Block House Races.

Tryon, N.C. Saturday, April 19. Turf: Firm.

1st. \$15,000. Maiden hurdle. 2 3/8 miles.

1. REMY CHRISTINE	L 134	Boucher
2. CUSE	L 149	W. Haynes
3. FROSTED FACE	L 146	Dalton
4. SEFA PLAYER	150	Traurig
PU. I'LLTELLYOUOLIES	154	Ryan

Mgn: 2. Time: 4:44 1/5.

O: Why Not Stable. T: Lilith Boucher.

Ch. f. 4, Turkoman-Heather Bean, Southern Halo. Bred by Daffodil Hill Farm (KY).

2nd. \$10,000. Mdn. clm. hurdle. 2 3/8 miles. \$15,000-\$5,000 claiming price.

1. DROMINEER	L 148	Traurig
2. REIGNING COUNT	L 145	W. Haynes
3. ROSELAND	L 148	Dalton
4. LET'S LINDY	L 140	Boucher

Mgn: 26 1/4. Time: 4:33.

O: Homer Osborne. T: Mike Berryman.

B. g. 7, Prospect Bay-Northern Swava, Northern Baby. Bred by John O'Meara (KY).

3rd. \$15,000. Con. clm. hurdle. 2 3/8 miles. NW 3. \$20,000-\$15,000 claiming price.

1. FABI'S LEGACY	L 141	W. Haynes
2. JUNOOD	150	Dalton
3. GATHER NO MOSS	L 150	Traurig
4. IN PURSUIT OF LOVE	L 158	Boucher
5. PLEASANT PICK	L 155	Ryan

Mgn: 6 3/4. Time: 4:38.

O/T: Linda Klein.

B. g. 7, Prime Legacy-Little Cathy, Kalphard. Bred by Charles Rabon (FL).

4th. \$25,000. Allow. hurdle. 2 1/2 miles. NW \$18,000 twice OTMCS in 2007-2008.

1. CLASSY BRUTE	L 139	W. Haynes
2. UNDERBIDDER	L 148	Boucher
3. PALS PRIDE	L 148	Dalton
4. MON VILLEZ (FR)	L 157	Ryan
5. REGAL AGAIN	L 148	Traurig

Mgn: Head. Time: 4:45.

O: Anne Haynes. T: Mike Berryman.

Dk. B./Br. g. 5 Classy Prospector-Repeating Star, Manastash Ridge.

Bred by Royal Ten Racing (IND).

Saturday, April 12

Shirt Full of Heart

Champion returns to catch Hip Hop late

BY JOE CLANCY

KINGSTON, Ga. – Trainer Jack Fisher tried to sum up his thoughts on the success of Good Night Shirt in one sentence and needed four.

“He’s got heart. He’s got heart. A lot of horses are better than him probably, but they don’t try like he does. It’s like your father told you – if you try hard, you’ll make something of yourself.”

Nobody knows whether Good Night Shirt’s sire Concern imparted any wisdom to his son – the chances are slim – but the 2007 steeplechase champion sure got the message.

Sonny Via’s chestnut powerhouse opened 2008 with a gutsy stretch run to win the W Hotel/Irongate Capital Georgia Cup (Gr. I) at Atlanta April 12. Facing five foes at just 2 miles on a course made slick by rain the previous day, Good Night Shirt (Willie Dowling) ran down Hip Hop (Padge Whelan) in the stretch to score by 1 1/2 lengths in 3:45 4/5. Mixed Up (Danielle Hodsdon) settled for third.

Coming into Atlanta, which bumped its featured purse to \$100,000 this year, Good Night Shirt looked somewhat vulnerable. Without benefit of a prep race, he faced a distance far shorter than his best and two solid opponents. Hip Hop came off a second to Pre-emptive Strike at Aiken and a win at Little Everglades. Mixed Up handed the champion an early-season loss in 2007 and was a proven commodity at 2 miles.

Good Night Shirt broke sharply as usual and tugged Dowling to the front over the first two fences. Hip Hop took over at the third, when Good Night Shirt slipped on takeoff and lost ground, and Mixed Up rated just behind in third. Past the wire with a circuit to go, Mixed Up tugged Hodsdon toward the front and Good Night Shirt backed up to third.

Still in behind two horses on the final turn, the winner slid into the 10th and lost momentum – though it had little effect. By the 11th, he took aim at Hip Hop and landed on even terms while looking on the verge of a rout. Until the last. Much like he did at the Iroquois and the Lonesome Glory (both wins), Good Night Shirt blasted over the final fence with an untidy leap. Hip Hop flew it and landed with a 2-length lead,



Tod Marks

Good Night Shirt (left, Willie Dowling) digs in to run down Hip Hop after the last fence in the Georgia Cup.

only to see the winner rev up his freight-train engine and power past in the final 10 strides.

“He doesn’t know when he’s beat,” said Dowling. “A lot of horses if they made a mistake like he did at the third fence, on this ground when it’s slippery, that kills their heart, their try. This horse seems to have a lot of heart and maybe that’s what makes him champion. It’s a great privilege for me to be able to ride a horse like that.”

Asked what went wrong at the last, Dowling studied the giant-screen replay and blamed himself.

“I look like a bag of (potatoes),” he said. “It’s from me not helping, to be honest. I got down to the last and I was just sitting there. I need to get better. Look how quick he gets back to running – he just runs right past the other horse.”



Tod Marks

Good Night Shirt jumps a fence early in the Georgia Cup.

Indeed, despite not getting the lead until the final yards Good Night Shirt drew off at the finish line.

Fisher opted for Atlanta after he looked at the weights for the Royal Chase.

Run five days later under handicap conditions, the \$150,000 Grade I called for Good Night Shirt to tote 162 pounds – 20 more than some others including eventual winner Sovereign Duty.

“I would much rather go to Keeneland,” said the trainer, while leading Mark The Shark around the Atlanta paddock one race after the feature. “He does deserve that weight but I can’t give 20 pounds away and feel confident – not to a horse (Sovereign Duty) who was third to him at equal weights at Camden. With the Atlanta race here, at allowances, I have to come here. If it’s not here, we go to Keeneland anyway. I have to run before Nashville.”

Ah, Nashville. Last year, Good Night Shirt went to the 3-mile Iroquois an underdog to stars McDynamo and Sur La Tete – and thumped them both. This time, Good Night Shirt plays the leading man. He comes in the favorite and carries a perfect 2-for-2 mark over the Nashville course.

“The race today did not set up for him at all, nothing went his way, and he still won,” said Fisher. “There, it’s 3 miles. He loves 3 miles. I’m glad he’s in my barn. If I was anybody else I’d be scared of him.”

• Hello, cover boy. The 2008 NSA spring condition book features a photo of the last fence of the 2007 Georgia Cup with Seafaring Man and Bow Strada battling on even terms. Bow Strada settled for second that day, but remembered the place.

Dropping into the claiming ranks, Calvin Houghland’s English import rallied from off the pace to win a \$25,000 open claiming hurdle for trainer Bruce Miller. Bow Strada (Carl Rafter) tucked away on the inside

See ATLANTA page 19 ►



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Atlanta —

■ Continued from page 18

early and dropped back to fifth as the field headed up the backstretch the final time.

"I thought he was beat going down the backside," said Miller. "They kind of got away from him for a minute."

In control despite his trainer's worries, Bow Strada charged past Motel Affair (Xavier Aizpuru) late and won by 4 1/2 lengths with Gryffindor (Richard Boucher) third in 3:50 for the 2 miles.

With English form that included nine wins for trainer Phillip Hobbs, Bow Strada came to the United States with high hopes. He won his first start in 2005 and finished third to Sur La Tete in the Iroquois that year, before falling on hard times with five consecutive double-digit defeats. He won an amateur hurdle at 3 miles in 2006, and appreciated another drop in class at Atlanta.

"He's a real professional, it's just a claimer so that made a difference but he's had his day," said Miller. "He's on the front of the condition book in the stake here so there's some quality there. He looked great in the paddock and he got a great ride."

- Miller and Rafter teamed up to win one race earlier with Sally Radcliffe's Jellyberry. The 6-year-old mare dealt – somewhat unhappily – with a slow pace early and outran Awaiting Justice (Bernie Dalton) over the final two fences to win by 1 3/4 lengths in 4:04 1/5 for the 2 miles. Let's Lindy (Hodsdon) finished third.

With a second and third from three starts last year, Jellyberry figured, but she bounced around in a crowded field and cleared the first fence by a good margin with feet to spare.

"She jumped very, very well," said



Tod Marks

Mecklenburg (right, Will Haynes) leads Dreadnaught at the last fence in the Atlanta maiden.

Rafter. "I think could have jumped a couple of the wings. Those two in front (Let's Lindy and Remy Christine) had been schooling together and wouldn't go on with it. We went half a stride slow for me, you know?"

Miller knows.

"They didn't go fast enough for her," said the trainer. "She's got a huge gallop and a huge jump. I've got big plans for her, but she's so nervous, so nervous. She needs to run against tougher company and that's what she's going to get from now on."

- Merrifield Farm's Jazzitupgeorge looked like a promising hurdler when he started in 2005, but hit the skids by missing all of 2006 and going win-

less in three tries last year. Trainer Tom Voss foxhunted the horse all winter and thought about timber, until he tried it at the Green Spring Valley Point-to-Point March 29.

"He's a beautiful hunter – once a week, twice a week, whatever you want he'd do it," said Voss. "I put a bug boy on him to run over timber and he ran off with the guy and he pulled him up."

So back to hurdles he went in Atlanta's \$25,000 allowance hurdle for non-winners of \$15,000 twice. Jazzitupgeorge (Whelan) pressed the pace early,

got in front at the top of the stretch and denied Fra Diavolo (Hodsdon) through the stretch to score by a half-length in 3:51 3/5. Dark Equation (Rafter) settled for third, 6 lengths behind the winner.

"I've always liked the horse," said Voss. "This was the first time he didn't run off. He ran off with everybody else."

- Nobody told Mecklenburg who that was bearing down on him like a hawk after a rabbit, but it might not have mattered.

Anne Haynes' 4-year-old homebred (with zero wins and \$3,800 earned lifetime) dodged 8-year-old veteran Dreadnaught (six, \$677,373) through the stretch to win a \$25,000 maiden hurdle by three-quarters of a length.

Mecklenburg (Will Haynes) sat third behind Meadow Larking and Witsand Bay early and was still third – behind Meadow Larking and a rapidly accelerating Dreadnaught on the final turn. Taking the lead in the stretch and getting quickly over his fences, the winner dug in over the final 100 yards to prevail in 3:54 3/5 for the 2 miles. Coupe de Ville (Hodsdon) got up for third.

Trainer Bruce Haynes, Anne's husband and Will's father, died in January at age 46 – leaving the family reeling and the horse business in doubt.

Longtime family friend Mike Berryman stepped in as the program trainer – though Anne and sons Will, Russell and Aaron do more than their share – and the operation is off to a quick start with wins by the first three starters in Anne's name (Classy Brute at Aiken, Mecklenburg at Atlanta and then Classy Brute again at Block House April 19).

Atlanta Steeplechase		
Kingston, Ga. Saturday, April 12. Turf: Firm.		
1st. \$25,000. Allowance hurdle. 2 miles.		
NW \$15,000 twice.		
1. JAZZITUPGEORGE	L 144	Whelan
2. FRA DIAVOLO (ARG)	L 144	Hodsdon
3. DARK EQUATION	156	Rafter
4. LUONGO	L 156	Dowling
5. RED LETTER DAY	L 148	Dalton
PU. THURMCAPI	L 137	Aizpuru
Mgn: 1/2. Time: 3:51 3/5.		
O: Merrieffield Farm. T: Tom Voss.		
Ch. g. 7 Sword Dance (IRE)-Wakan Tanka, Nodouble. Bred by Gilbert Campbell (FL).		
2nd. \$100,000. Hurdle stakes. 2 miles.		
The Georgia Cup (Grade I).		
1. GOOD NIGHT SHIRT	L 158	Dowling
2. HIP HOP	142	Whelan
3. MIXED UP	L 158	Hodsdon
4. SOUND BLASTER (IRE)	L 142	Aizpuru
5. MON VILLEZ (FR)	L 150	Rafter
6. DUKE OF EARL (IRE)	L 142	Boucher
Mgn: 1 1/2. Time: 3:45 4/5.		
O: Sonny Via. T: Jack Fisher.		
Ch. g. 7 Concern-Hot Story, Two Punch. Bred by Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Bowman (MD).		
3rd. \$25,000. SOK mdn. hurdle. 2 miles.		
1. MECKLENBURG	L 139	W. Haynes
2. DREADNAUGHT	L 154	Whelan
3. COUPE DE VILLE	L 144	Hodsdon
4. MEADOW LARKING	L 154	Aizpuru
PU. PLUM BRUSH	L 154	Boucher
PU. NIGHT RUCKUS	144	Dalton
PU. WITSAND BAY	L 154	Rafter
Mgn: 3/4. Time: 3:54 3/5.		
O: Anne Haynes. T: Mike Berryman.		
B. g. 4 Mecke-Northwest Key, Northrop. Bred by Anne Haynes (VA).		
4th. \$20,000. SOQ F&M mdn. hurdle. 2 miles.		
1. JELLYBERRY	L 153	Rafter
2. AWAITING JUSTICE	153	Dalton
3. LET'S LINDY	L 153	Hodsdon
4. REMY CHRISTINE	L 143	Boucher
5. ADELE LUCILLE	L 148	W. Haynes
PU. STORMING ANGEL	153	Whelan
Mgn: 1 3/4. Time: 4:04 1/5.		
O: Sally Radcliffe. T: Bruce Miller.		
Gr./Ro. m. 6 With Approval-Strawberry Angel, Red Attack. Bred by the estate of Walter Jeffords Jr. (KY).		
5th. \$25,000. SOK clm. hurdle. 2 miles.		
\$15,000 min. clm. price		
1. BOW STRADA (GB)	L 155	Rafter
2. MOTEL AFFAIR	L 155	Aizpuru
3. GRYFFINDOR	L 155	Boucher
4. MARK THE SHARK	L 145	Dowling
5. GATHER NO MOSS	L 148	Traurig
6. NAJJM	L 145	W. Haynes
Mgn: 4 1/2. Time: 3:50.		
O: Calvin Houghland. T: Bruce Miller.		
Ch. g. 11 Rainbow Quest-La Strada (GB), Ninski. Bred by K. Rausing (GB).		
6th. Training flat. 1 1/8 miles.		
1. HOURIGAN (IRE)	L 155	Dowling
2. SAY WHAT YOU SEE (IRE)	L 155	Dalton
3. CHESS BOARD (GB)	L 155	Rafter
4. CLASS CRASH	145	Boucher
5. CHARISMIC AMERICAN	L 155	Hodsdon
6. ART LOVER	L 155	Traurig
*R. WON WILD BIRD	L 150	W. Haynes
* Won Wild Bird refused at the start.		
Mgn: 3/4. Time: 2:07.		
O: Bear Creek Stable. T: Jack Fisher.		
Gr. g. 5, Beauchamp King-Top Dove, Top Ville. Bred in Ireland.		

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Paying Duty

Keeneland yearling sales graduate
Sovereign Duty gets Gr. I victory

BY JOE CLANCY

ROYAL CHASE AT KEENELAND

Thursday, April 17

LEXINGTON, Ky. – Welcome back.

Nearly five years ago Sovereign Duty walked into the Keeneland sales ring with all the promise of a future star. A son of Kingmambo, a grandson of Nijinsky II, bred by Will Farish, the bay with the wide blaze could write his ticket. And did, for \$425,000, signed by Overbrook Farm at the September sale.

And then the plan went awry.

Sovereign Duty, whose dam Duty Dance won the Diana (then a Grade II) and finished second in the Man o' War (Gr. I), could not keep up on the flat. He made three starts for Jeff Thornbury – once losing for a \$25,000 claiming price at River Downs and looking no closer to the Keeneland winner's circle than a shetland pony.

Until he found steeplechasing, or steeplechasing found him. Less than two years into a steeplechase career, Sovereign Duty charged through the stretch – passing two horses in the final sixteenth – to win the \$160,125 Royal Chase (Gr. I) April 17. Now owned by Hudson River Farm, Sovereign Duty caught Jonathan Sheppard-trained

barnmate Sweet Shani in the final steps to win by a neck, with Best Attack third. The time for 2 1/2 miles and 13 fences was 4:58.13.

With the scratch of favorite and likely pacemaker Preemptive Strike, the Royal Chase changed dramatically before it ever started. Sweet Shani galloped to an easy early lead – opening 10 lengths on the field as Sovereign Duty, Orison and Best Attack settled in formation through a slow pace. On the final run down the backside, Best Attack went after the leader, doing the dirty work to get within 2 lengths at the top of the stretch. Still almost 5 lengths behind at that point, Sovereign Duty flew the second-last fence and launched a rally. Shifting to the inside, he passed Best Attack just after the last and went after the leader. An 8-year-old mare, Sweet Shani dug in when challenged but could not deny the winner.

"Having two fences in the stretch (rather than just one as at most race-tracks) makes a difference," said Hods-



Matt Goins

Sovereign Duty (right, Danielle Hodsdon) catches Sweet Shani just before the finish line.

don. "You can't just turn the corner and ride for one fence. He gave me a huge second-last, it was so long . . . the last one was just a perfect spot and I knew he was going to get there – whether he was going to get there in time or not I wasn't sure."

The winner picked up \$96,075 for his fourth victory in 13 jump starts and pushed his career earnings to \$208,249 (all but about \$2,000 in steeplechases). Obviously suited to turf and the distance involved, Sovereign Duty looks

like another potential star for Sheppard, having posted three consecutive quality efforts dating to October 2007. Last fall, the Kentucky-bred finished third (beaten 3 lengths) to eventual Eclipse Award winner Good Night Shirt in the Colonial Cup. In his first start this year, Sovereign Duty produced a last-fence rally to win a second-level allowance.

Then came the return to Keeneland. Bred to win Grade I stakes at historic

See **ROYAL CHASE** page 21 ►



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Keeneland Race Course.

Lexington, Ky. Thursday, April 17. Turf: Firm.

\$160,125. SOK hurdle stakes. 2 1/2 miles.

The Royal Chase (Grade I)

1. SOVEREIGN DUTY L 142 Hodsdon
2. SWEET SHANI (NZ) L 141 Aizpuru
3. BEST ATTACK L 146 Rafter
\$7.20, \$3.40, \$2.40; \$3.60, \$2.60; \$3.00.
Exacta (3-7) \$18.00. Trifecta (3-7-2) \$56.00.
4. ORISON L 144 McCarron
5. SWIMMING RIVER L 138 Walsh
6. FEELING SO PRETTY L 135 Boucher
Mgn: Neck. Time: 4:58.

O: Hudson River Farm. T: Jonathan Sheppard.
B. g. 6 Kingmambo-Duty Dance, Nijinsky II.
Bred by Will Farish (KY).

Royal Chase —

■ Continued from page 20

tracks, Sovereign Duty got one — in a different way. Former jump jockey Tom Foley bought the horse from Overbrook, ran him once on the flat in August 2005 and sold him to Sheppard.

The hurdle career started slowly in 2006 with a fourth in his debut (at Block House), a photo-finish loss in his second start and then a maiden win at Colonial Downs in late June. He won a Saratoga allowance that summer and went winless in 2007 despite several good efforts and \$40,000 in earnings.

"It's just another example, here's a horse who's bred in the purple and was basically a complete flop," said Sheppard. "He was getting beaten for maiden \$25,000 at River Downs. It wasn't an immediate turnaround — it was a slow, uphill battle. He had some temperament issues and just didn't seem to have it all together. He lacked confidence. As time has gone by, he's gotten more confidence in himself and he's put it all together."

NOTES: Trainer Sanna Hendriks scratched Preemptive Strike due to a tendon injury discovered two days before the race. The chestnut front-runner could miss the rest of the season, though Hendriks left open the chance of an autumn return . . . Sovereign Duty is the second Keeneland sales graduate to win the Royal Chase, following 2003 winner McDynamo.



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Springy

Naylor, Fogarty horse takes stakes via DQ

BY JAMIE SANTO

MONKTON, Md. – As the year's first stakes, the \$30,000 My Lady's Manor provides an opportunity to announce one's presence on the timber scene. Irv Naylor's Hot Springs (Darren Nagle) made fine use of the situation, surfacing from the back of the pack to get the nod for trainer Desmond Fogarty.

A seven-horse field that included former timber champion Bubble Economy (Brooks Durkee) and last year's race winner Fappa Fire (Blake Curry) assembled for the 3-mile test April 12. J. Alfred Prufrock, a winner over the course in 2007, took the early lead under owner/trainer Conrad Somers, with Erin Go Bragh (Paddy Young) and Make Your Own (Charlie Fenwick III) keeping close company. Royal's Quest (Billy Meister) earned himself a small lead after the second-last, when Hot Springs, sitting fifth, began to boil.

Erin Go Bragh came over and cut him off at the last, and the two set out together down the stretch.

Though the public-address system cut in-and-out, it wasn't hard to see there was a major battle in progress – you don't need Michael Buffer to know that two heavy hitters are slugging it out in the ring. At the wire, Erin Go Bragh scored by a head, but a claim of foul sent the decision to the stewards. The officials agreed that Hot Springs had indeed been interfered with at the final fence, and moved him up, placing Erin Go Bragh second. Bubble Economy stayed third.

"Paddy came over on him and kind of cut him off as my horse was coming up the inner. It was fairly blatant on the video, anyway. It's just one of those things, really. It wasn't Paddy's fault," said Fogarty. "I think barring the interference, he would have won – I don't think he would have won easy at any stage, but he would have won nicely, you know."

Fogarty and Hot Springs have ascended the ranks together. A gray son of Wekiva Springs, Hot Springs won a maiden hurdle at Foxfield in the spring of 2006 for Sanna Hendriks. Transferred to Fogarty's care, he took to timber last season, finishing second in a pair of amateur highweight events before breaking through with an 11-length score at Winterthur in



Doug Lees
Flying Contraption (right, Brooks Durkee) stalks Western Fling early in the maiden timber.



Doug Lees
Hot Springs (right) and Erin Go Bragh (center) battle through the stretch along with Bubble Economy (behind Erin Go Bragh) and J. Alfred Prufrock in the Manor. Hot Springs got the decision after a claim of foul by jockey Darren Nagle.

Delaware. That day in the First State marked plenty of firsts – Hot Springs' first timber win, Fogarty's first sanctioned training victory, as well as his first win as a jockey. Since then, Hot Springs has risen steadily, taking a Morven Park allowance last fall and running a game second to timber champion Irish Prince in the \$50,000 New Jersey Hunt Cup.

"He gets down and digs deep. He's a very honest and talented horse," the trainer said. "He's very straightforward, there's no quirks. Very easy train."

As for the future, Fogarty will wait and see, though he did mention the \$100,000 Virginia Gold Cup as a possible goal.

When a reporter suggested that Naylor wouldn't mind winning the Gold Cup, the trainer agreed.

"I wouldn't mind it either."

My Lady's Manor.

Monkton, Md. Saturday, April 12. Turf: Good.

1st. \$30,000. Timber stakes. 3 miles. My Lady's Manor.

1. HOT SPRINGS.....L 165 Nagle
- *2. ERIN GO BRAGH (NZ)L 165 Young
3. BUBBLE ECONOMY.....L 165 Durkee
4. J. ALFRED PRUFROCK.....L 167 Somers
5. ROYAL'S QUEST.....L 165 Meister
6. FAPPA FIRE.....L 165 Curry
7. MAKE YOUR OWNL 165 Fenwick

*DQ from first for interference at the final fence.

Mgn: Head. Time: 7:07 1/5. O: Irv Naylor. T: Desmond Fogarty. Gr./Ro. g. 7 Wekiva Springs-Hard Evidence, Alleged. Bred by Dolphus Morrison (KY).

2nd. \$15,000. Maiden timber. 3 miles. Amateur jockeys.

1. FLYING CONTRAPTION (IRE)...L 165 Durkee
2. WESTERN FLINGL 165 Ryan
3. SOUTH MONARCH.....L 155 Burke
4. WHY NOT BABY.....L 165 Meister
5. IRISH LADDIE.....L 160 Nagle
6. RIDERWOODL 160 Smithwick
7. TACLOBANL 155 Elmore
8. HANKO (GER).....L 160 Santoro

PU. MAGNITUDE.....L 165 Worrall
Mgn: 1/2. Time: 6:42 1/5. O: Augustin Stable. T: Bruce Miller. B. g. 11 Phardante (FR)-Flying Silver (IRE), Master Buck (GB). Bred by Mrs. B.D. Byrne (IRE).

3rd. \$5,000. Highweight allowance timber. 3 miles.

- NW \$9,000 once in 2007-08. Amateur jockeys.
1. HADDIX.....L 160 Burke
 2. MOVE WESTL 180 Strawbridge
 3. HOTSPURL 180 Ryan
 4. MEET AT ELEVEN (IRE).....L 166 McKenna
 5. CLASSIC CALL 170 Meister
 6. MICHELE MARIESCHI (GB)L 175 Hundt
 7. BLACKCHESTERS (GB).....L 182 Griswold
 - PU. TAKIN INVENTORY.....L 170 Worrall
- Mgn: 23. Time: 6:18 3/5. O: Perry Bolton. T: Kathy McKenna. Dk. B./Br. g. 6 Deputy Commander-Dysham, Dynaformer. Bred by Hidden Point Farm (FL).

• Brooks Durkee last rode an NSA race in 2004. In his second race back, Durkee returned to the winner's circle, piloting Augustin Stable's Flying Contraption to a half-length score in the \$15,000 maiden timber.

Durkee got together with the 11-year-old Bruce Miller trainee after being named aboard Bubble Economy in the feature.

"I've got a good agent working for me, (trainer) Regina Welsh, she hustled me the ride for Bruce Miller. She put the bug in his ear that I was looking for a mount in the maiden race here after riding Bubbles. He said, 'Oh, well, that's a good idea, let's see how he schools.' We had a great school. When you're riding for Bruce Miller and George Strawbridge, you know – it's like Superman putting on his cape. You can go out and just have a lot of confidence."

Durkee, who now lives in South Florida, has been busy since he left the circuit.

"I work as a counselor, a behavioral-health tech in the field of addictions treatment," he said. "It's a far cry from this . . . I fly up and ride Friday, Saturday, Sunday, as much as I can. I swim in the ocean to get fit, when there aren't sharks, surf when there's surf, and spin and lift weights and ride bikes."

Why Not Baby (Meister) made the early running, with Western Fling (Gregg Ryan) joining the game at the midpoint. Flying Contraption bided his time, moved up steadily and came on when it counted.

"He settled great and enjoyed picking off horses," Durkee said. "There was speed and I probably got to the front a little – well, I didn't get to the front until the last – but I could have waited and it would have worked out. He was the best horse on the day."

Western Fling held on for second, with South Monarch (Shane Burke) third.

• That third was Irishman Shane Burke's introduction to the NSA. He proved a quick study, and returned to win the next race, an amateur highweight timber, aboard Perry Bolton's Haddix.

Trained by Kathy McKenna, Haddix destroyed the eight-horse field, taking command with a mile to go and arriving home 23 lengths ahead of Move West (Stewart Strawbridge). Burke, who's father breaks horses at the family farm outside Dublin, arrived in the United States less than a month ago and has been working for trainer Sanna Hendriks.

"I came over on vacation last year, rode out for Sanna and just fell in love with the place," he said. "I wanted to come back ever since. We've got a lot of young horses and pre-trainers at home, and when we got quiet I kind of got a chance to come back over."

Burke had a couple of mounts at the Brandywine point-to-point, a useful refresher for the jockey.

"I hadn't had many (races) lately," he said. "The work for my dad, I was more kind of concentrating on that."

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New Leader

Sheppard horse blossoms in time to take allowance hurdle feature

BY BRIAN NADEAU

STRAWBERRY HILL RACES

Saturday, April 12

Lead Us Not gave his Hall of Fame trainer Jonathan Sheppard reason for optimism in his final start of 2007 – a second behind novice champion Planets Aligned in the Grade I AFLAC U.S. Championship at Callaway Gardens in November. Five months later, the optimism came through when Lead Us Not scored a 1-length win over Rainiero in the \$25,000 allowance hurdle feature April 12 at Strawberry Hill.

A Sheppard/Bill Pape homebred, Lead Us Not broke his maiden at Callaway in 2006. After lumbering up on the flat early in 2007, the son of Royal Anthem progressed nicely last summer and fall, placing third at Saratoga and then second at Philadelphia Park in stiffer tests.

With options limited and the AFLAC field looking a little light, Sheppard rolled the dice and sent Lead Us Not against a pair of seasoned novice runners in Planets Aligned and his own Divine Fortune. After settling early, Lead Us Not made a bid turning for home and held off everyone but soon-to-be champion Planets Aligned, while finish-

ing 2 1/4 lengths clear of third. Sheppard called the AFLAC a breakthrough.

“He ran a great race last year at Callaway. It looked like the field was coming up short and we decided to take a stab and it worked out great,” Sheppard said. “Planets Aligned was a tough horse and to run second in there really pleased us.”

More pleasure was in store at Strawberry Hill, once again held at Colonial Downs racetrack in New Kent, Va.

Lead Us Not (James Slater) contentedly trailed the six-horse field through the first eight fences, though less than 4 lengths separated the group. American Toga and King Hoss made the early running while Rainiero (Jody Petty) kept a measured length ahead of Lead Us Not. Rainiero assumed command turning for home and Slater gave Lead Us Not his cue. He engaged Rainiero in mid-stretch, drew off over the last and spurred clear for the win. Humdinger (Matt McCarron) was 12 lengths farther back in third.



Betsy Parker

Lead Us Not (right, James Slater) battles Suntara early in the feature at Strawberry Hill.

“I wasn’t there but from what I have heard he ran a tremendous race and beat a nice horse in doing so. That was his first time out on the year so it was a good starting point,” Sheppard said. “He’s not extremely fast but he’s a very solid horse, a stayer and a good jumper. He’s really filled out over the winter and gotten bigger and stronger. It gets a little tougher now though, as he’s not

a novice anymore and it’s tough to find allowances races for them.”

• Desmond Fogarty thought Tax Ruling was an intriguing steeplechase prospect all along, and a fifth last fall at Montpelier did little to dissuade the trainer. Irv Naylor’s Tax Ruling re-

See **STRAWBERRY HILL** page 25 ►



Photo by Mark Zerof

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Strawberry Hill —

■ Continued from page 24

warded Fogarty's faith at Strawberry Hill when the son of Dynaformer easily won a \$15,000 maiden hurdle. Tax Ruling (Calvin McCormack) scored by a widening 3 3/4 lengths over Rainbows For Luck (Robbie Walsh).

"I was delighted with him. It was only the second time I had run him over hurdles, so he jumped very well," Fogarty said. "He's a real handy sort who likes to be up front, he's the staying type. He likes the flat tracks, as they suit his galloping style. He wants to be up near the front and carry them along and he'll sulk if he gets in behind horses."

That was never an issue at Strawberry Hill.

Tax Ruling sat close to early leader Native Run down the backside and the pair traveled comfortably during the early stages. As Native Run wilted, Tax Ruling broke the race open — charging to the lead in the upper stretch cruising home. Rainbows For Luck was more than 17 lengths clear of Auction Watch (Petty) in third.

"He's always impressed me right along. We got some experience into him last year at Montpelier where we just wanted to sit him in mid-pack and learn a bit," Fogarty said. "After that race it was obvious he was a nice horse. He's a Dynaformer and they all seem to be tough over hurdles."

- Matt McCarron thought he was headed south to ride at Atlanta. A phone call from trainer Doug Fout changed the travel log, and gave McCarron a double.

"I wasn't sure I was going," McCarron said. "I thought I had a couple of good rides at Atlanta, but then decided on Strawberry Hill when Dougie wanted me to go there. Hey, I'll take a double



Betsy Parker

G'day G'day (right, Matt McCarron) leads Fogcutter early in a maiden hurdle.

any time."

McCarron got his first winner in the opener when he guided Magalen Bryant's Sussex County to a victory in the \$10,000 maiden claiming hurdle. Sussex County kept tabs on Guerrero Don's early pace for the first 2 miles and inherited the lead when Guerrero Don backed out of it turning for home. After turning away Back In The Day (Slater), who would finish third, Sussex County fought off the hard-charging Strathspey Kino (Petty) through the stretch to win by a neck.

"He was perfect, off the bridle early and made a run when I needed him to. There was no hanging, no lugging like he can do," McCarron said. "I was blowing as hard as he was, but we got the job done."

Things were a little easier in the third, a \$15,000 maiden, when McCarron pi-

loted G'day G'day to victory, again for Bryant and Fout. The homebred son of Eastern Echo sat fifth early while McCallum and Lujan sparred on the lead. McCarron drew closer to the leaders approaching the final turn but was still 4 1/2 lengths behind McCallum and Zozimus (Petty), who had moved to second. Lujan fell at the second-last and McCarron had his chance. Drawing a bead on Zozimus as they headed to the final hurdle, G'day G'day took the lead and drew off under the line.

"On the turn, I thought I'd be lucky to be third," McCarron said. "The horse really kept running."



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Strawberry Hill Races.

New Kent, Va. Saturday, April 12. Turf. Firm.

1st. \$10,000. Mdn. clm. hurdle. 2 1/4 miles. \$10,000-\$5,000 claiming price.

1. SUSSEX COUNTY	L 156 McCarron
2. STRATHSPEY KINO (GB)	L 144 Petty
3. BACK IN THE DAY	L 156 Slater
4. SIR CHIP	L 151 Mackenzie
5. HEY DOCTOR	L 156 Read
6. COZY LANE	L 151 J. Murphy
PU. GUERRERO DON (ARG)	L 156 McCormack

Mgn: 1/4. Time: 4:27 4/5.
O: Magalen Bryant. T: Doug Fout
B. g. 6 Thunder Gulch-Gail's Brush, Broad Brush.
Bred by Willmott Stable (KY).

2nd. \$15,000. Maiden hurdle. 2 1/4 miles.

1. TAX RULING	L 154 McCormack
2. RAINBOWS FOR LUCK	L 154 Walsh
3. AUCTION WATCH	L 154 Petty
4. NATIVE RUN	L 154 McCarron
5. ANOTHER LOOK	L 149 McVicar
PU. MIDSIDE MAGGIE	146 Slater
PU. GRAND HERITAGE	L 149 J. Murphy

Mgn: 3 3/4. Time: 4:27 1/5.
O: Irv Naylor. T: Desmond Fogarty.
Dk. B./Br. g. 5 Dynaformer-Fantastic Find, Mr. Prospector. Bred by Phipps Stable (KY).

3rd. \$15,000. Maiden hurdle. 2 1/4 miles.

1. G'DAY G'DAY	L 154 McCarron
2. ZOZIMUS	L 154 Petty
3. FOGCUTTER	L 154 Slater
4. MCCALLUM	L 149 J. Murphy
F. LUJAN	149 Carter
PU. SEEKING NO MORE	L 142 Walsh

Mgn: 1 1/2. Time: 4:22 4/5.
O: Magalen Bryant. T: Doug Fout.
B. g. 5 Eastern Echo-Say Farewell, Second Bar.
Bred by Magalen Bryant (MD).

4th. \$25,000. Allowance hurdle. 2 1/4 miles. NW1X or 2.

1. LEAD US NOT	L 144 Slater
2. RAINIERO (CHI)	L 152 Petty
3. HUMDINGER	L 148 McCarron
4. SUNTARA	L 131 Dowdall
PU. KING HOSS	L 153 McCormack
PU. AMERICAN TOGA	139 McVicar

Mgn: 1. Time: 4:18 4/5.
O: Bill Pape. T: Jonathan Sheppard.
Ch. g. 6 Royal Anthem-Sultress, Gallant Romeo.
Bred by Bill Pape & Jonathan Sheppard (PA).

5th. Training flat. 1 1/4 miles.

1. POPLAR GROVE	L 155 Read
2. PLAY BINGO	L 155 O'Callaghan
3. KILBRIDE RD	L 155 McCarron
4. SAILAWAY POPS	L 145 J. Murphy
5. RAMAZUTTI	L 155 McVicar
6. HIGHLAND BOWL	L 155 Petty
7. STRATEGIC BATTLE	L 145 Dowdall
PU. MATTSSUTTERRUN	L 155 Slater

Mgn: 1 1/2. Time: 2:19 2/5.
O: Kinross Farm. T: Neil Morris.
Dk. B./Br. g. 4, Albert The Great-Cactus Belle,
Gone West. Bred by Tracy Farmer (KY).

6th. Training flat. 1 1/4 miles.

1. MORNIN' EDDIE	L 155 Read
2. BEECH CAY	L 155 Petty
3. DISCREET CHARMER	L 155 McCarron
4. DELTA PARK	L 155 O'Callaghan
5. POLITE SPEED	L 155 Doran
6. LOT ONE (IRE)	L 155 Mackenzie
7. LOOKS GOOD JUNIC	L 155 Slater
8. LUCKY SPRINKLES	L 163 Donnelly

Mgn: 1/2. Time: 2:19 1/5.
O: Kinross Farm. T: Neil Morris.
B. g. 5, Regal Classic-Tina Pond, Super Moment.

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Close the Book

Stellar career ends for Sur La Tete

BY JOE CLANCY

When his father finishes a book at bedtime, Wright Morris says "The End" and calls it a day. Neil Morris, the dad reading the book, did much the same recently when he decided the racing career of steeplechase star Sur La Tete was over.

Owned by Kinross Farm, Sur La Tete leaves steeplechasing with \$664,050 in career earnings (No. 4 all-time) and nine victories including six Grade I scores. The 10-year-old son of Sky Classic struggled to put together back-to-back starts over the past few seasons due to soundness issues, and joins the foxhunter band at Zohar and Lisa Ben-Dov's Kinross Farm outside Middleburg, Va.

"For me as a trainer it was kind of simple," Morris said of the retirement choice. "Making the phone call to sell the decision to the owner was the hard part, but he took it well too. I'm happy that the horse is sound. I was relieved afterward, it's what I wanted for the horse."

Sur La Tete raced just once in 2007, a second to eventual champion Good Night Shirt in the Iroquois, and was on the comeback trail to a start in the 2008 race. In a sign of his readiness, the Kentucky-bred won a point-to-point start at Old Dominion April 5, but an

old injury began to resurface again. For several years, Sur La Tete has dealt with a troublesome XYZ ligament below an ankle – hence the abbreviated campaigns of 2007 (one start), 2006 (two) and 2005 (three).

"He won nicely at Old Dominion, but I need to have him fitter than that to win Grade I stakes," said Morris. "I don't think I want to get him fitter. He's showed some intolerances in the past. What do we need, another picture on the wall? And at what cost? I'd rather have a sound horse to retire."

Bred by Herman Greenberg's Rutledge Farm, Sur La Tete washed out of flat racing due some bad behavior and was languishing in a field as an unraced 3-year-old when Kinross purchased him for \$10,000 in 2001. He made the first start of his life at Great Meadow in October 2002, and easily won a maiden hurdle only to be disqualified when rookie jockey Chris Read forgot to weigh in afterward. In their next start, Read and Sur La Tete parted company at the second fence.

The 2002 season a distant memory, Sur La Tete finished worse than third just once in his steeplechase career. He broke his maiden at Great Meadow in May 2003, won on the flat at Laurel

See **SUR LA TETE** page 27 ►



Doug Lees

Multiple Grade I winner and \$600,000 earner Sur La Tete retires to a life of foxhunting.

Legendary race horses from Billy Barton to Seabiscuit trot into the Maryland Historical Society this spring when Brown Advisory presents,

The Voss Family

Artists of American Sporting Life

April 11-July 27, 2008

Created by the National Museum of Racing and Hall of Fame, the exhibition celebrates Maryland's Voss family. Franklin B. Voss (1880-1953) was the leading American equestrian artist of his day. Premier racing families—among them the Whitneys,

Vanderbilts, and Mellons—commissioned him to paint their famous thoroughbreds. Oil paintings, watercolors, pastels, prints, and sculptures by Franklin and other members of the family capture the mystique of horses and the thrills of equine sports.



The Maryland Historical Society

201 W. Monument Street, Baltimore, MD 21201

Hours: Wednesday-Sunday, 10 a.m. -5 p.m.

Admission: \$3-4. Free First Thursday of each month.

Call 410-685-3750 or visit www.mdhs.org



Seabiscuit, Red Pollard up

Franklin B. Voss, 1937, Courtesy of the National Museum of Racing and Hall of Fame, Saratoga Springs

Sur La Tete

B. g. 1998, Sky Classic-Rutledge Place, Caro.
Bred by Rutledge Farm (KY).

Career Steeplechase Record

Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Earnings
20	9	5	3	\$664,050

Major Wins

Iroquois (2005, 2006), Royal Chase (2006),
Carolina Cup (2005), Metcalf Memorial (2004),
Meadow Brook Novice (2004), Georgia Cup
Novice (2004), Foxbrook Novice (2003).

Major Accomplishments

No. 4 on career earnings list, Leading NSA
earner of 2004, Champion Novice of 2003.

Sur La Tete —

Continued from page 26

that summer, and dominated the Foxbrook Novice Stakes at Far Hills (the day McDynamo won the first of his five Breeders' Cups) in October.

In 2004, Sur La Tete won two-thirds of the Steeplechase Triple Crown — scoring at Atlanta and Belmont Park. By that fall, he moved into open company and hammered stakes veteran Tres Touche at Monmouth Park. He closed that season with thirds behind McDynamo and Hirapour in the Breeders' Cup and Hirapour and Preemptive Strike in the Colonial Cup, and won the Lonesome Glory Award as the leading earner with \$207,060.

Sur La Tete finished first or second in his next six starts — the final runs of his career — spaced over three seasons. In 2005, he won the Carolina Cup (then an open stakes) in a thriller over Hirapour, then finished second to that rival in the Royal Chase at Keeneland. In the Iroquois three weeks later, Sur La Tete defeated McDynamo — clearly loving the 3-mile distance. The nagging ligament cost Sur La Tete the fall season, and a chance at an Eclipse Award.

He returned in 2006 with his best two races — thrashing the Royal Chase field by 10 lengths and returning to take a second consecutive Iroquois in another romp. Morris called those his favorite moments.

"When he accelerated to the last fence at Keeneland, that was beautiful to watch," said the trainer. "All we did after that was hack him around until Iroquois and he came back there and did it again. He was that good. He really impressed me with those two races."

Soundness concerns again cost Sur La Tete a fall campaign, and an Eclipse Award push, but he returned in 2007 for a try at the Iroquois off the lengthy layoff. He tested Good Night Shirt, but flattened out in the stretch to finish 5 1/4 lengths behind the champion. Bidding for a return to action in the 2008 Iroquois, Morris foxhunted Sur La Tete and trained him up to the Old Dominion start. The horse won that open hurdle race easily, but the ligament injury emerged once again, and Morris made the call.

Shoes pulled and mane growing longer by the day, Sur La Tete headed to the field the way so many human retirees head for Florida.

"He's in a 40-acre field with 11 other foxhunters — he's number 12," said Morris. "His abdomen dropped as soon as we put him him out there. He looks fat, dirty and happy."

The End.



Haynes



McCarron



Rafter

NSA Standings

TOP 10 THROUGH APRIL 25

Jockeys (Races Won)

	Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Money	Win%
Will Haynes.....	11	4	4	1	\$58,650	.36
Matt McCarron.....	16	4	1	1	44,706	.25
Carl Rafter.....	16	4	0	4	96,963	.25
Jody Petty.....	14	3	6	1	95,500	.21
Danielle Hodsdon.....	13	3	4	3	165,975	.23
Padge Whelan.....	10	3	2	1	95,250	.30
Xavier Aizpuru.....	13	2	3	1	75,372	.15
Richard Boucher.....	15	2	1	1	40,303	.13
Willie Dowling.....	5	2	1	0	77,200	.40
Shane Burke.....	3	2	0	1	7,500	.67

Trainers (Races Won)

	Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Money	Win%
Jonathan Sheppard.....	17	4	6	2	\$217,747	.24
Mike Berryman.....	9	4	0	2	51,100	.44
Sanna Hendriks.....	13	3	4	2	106,600	.23
Tom Voss.....	16	3	3	3	94,500	.18
Kathy McKenna.....	12	3	1	2	28,650	.25
Desmond Fogarty.....	7	3	1	1	46,050	.43
Jack Fisher.....	15	3	0	3	108,300	.20
Bruce Miller.....	6	3	0	1	57,263	.50
Doug Fout.....	23	2	3	4	53,406	.09
Dave Washer.....	5	2	1	2	17,700	.40

Owners (Money Won)

	Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Money	Win%
Hudson River Farm.....	2	2	0	0	\$114,075	1.00
Calvin Houghland.....	10	2	3	1	83,422	.20
Augustin Stable.....	10	2	3	2	76,900	.20
Sonny Via.....	1	1	0	0	60,000	1.00
Irv Naylor.....	10	3	2	1	53,100	.30
Fox Ridge Farm.....	2	1	0	1	46,500	.50
Bill Pape.....	4	2	1	1	44,500	.50
Anne Haynes.....	3	3	0	0	39,000	1.00
Sally Radcliffe.....	2	1	0	1	28,013	.50
Polaris Stable.....	1	1	0	0	27,000	1.00

Horses (Money Won)

	Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Money	Win%
Sovereign Duty.....	2	2	0	0	\$114,075	1.00
Good Night Shirt.....	1	1	0	0	60,000	1.00
Imagina.....	2	1	1	0	58,500	.50
Planets Aligned.....	1	1	0	0	45,000	1.00
Sweet Shani.....	1	0	1	0	28,822	.00
Preemptive Strike.....	1	1	0	0	27,000	1.00
Hip Hop.....	2	0	2	0	26,100	.00
Classy Brute.....	2	2	0	0	24,000	1.00
Private Attack.....	1	1	0	0	21,000	1.00
The Price Of Love.....	2	1	1	0	19,500	.50

2008 NSA Spring Schedule

Saturday, April 26..... Foxfield Spring
Charlottesville, Va. www.foxfieldraces.com

Sunday, May 11..... Willowdale
Kennett Square, Pa. www.willowdale.org

Saturday, April 26..... Maryland Hunt Cup
Glyndon, Md. www.marylandsteeplechasing.com

Saturday, May 17..... Radnor Hunt Races
Malvern, Pa. www.radnorhuntraces.org

Saturday, May 3..... Virginia Gold Cup
The Plains, Va. www.vagoldcup.com

Sunday, May 18..... High Hope
Lexington, Ky. www.highhopesteeplechase.com

Sunday, May 4..... Winterthur
Winterthur, Del. www.winterthur.org

Saturday, May 24..... Fair Hill
Fair Hill, Md. www.fairhillraces.org

Saturday, May 10..... Iroquois
Nashville, Tenn. www.iroquoissteeplechase.org

See www.steeplechasetimes.com for updates.

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News from the NSF

The National Steeplechase Foundation is dedicated to the preservation and advancement of American steeplechasing through programs that promote safety, education, fairness, and the spirit of amateurism.



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Learning from the Experts II



For the second consecutive year, the National Steeplechase Foundation sent Barry Watson, National Steeplechase Association starter and safety advisor, to England for a fact-finding trip aimed at seeing what can be learned from British jump racing and what can be brought home for use in the United States. During his 10-day visit in December, Watson visited the Sandown, Warwick, Chepstow and Cheltenham race courses and talked to everyone from Jockey Club officials to fence builders. He also spent time at the start during each racing day. In short, the trip proved valuable in many areas – course safety, course maintenance, starting procedures and the strengthening of contacts with various English racing officials.

The first installment of Watson's day-by-day report follows, and will appear in the next few Foundation advertising placements.

...

I spent the day with The Jockey Club's Senior Inspector of Courses, Richard Linley, while the rest of the group went south to visit Paul Keane's yard. Richard and I headed northeast to Chepstow for a course inspection, but first we stopped by Willis Bros. Course Builders to tour the facility that produces all the fences on Cheltenham's cross-country steeplechase course, as well as many hurdle and chase fences throughout much of England. Willis Bros. also designs and constructs fixed and portable cross-country jumps for three-day events, including the Olympic course in Atlanta and the Badminton Horse Trials. They are a highly regarded company, headed by four brothers that have over 30 years of experience. We looked at several examples of jumps, hurdles, chase fences and warning gate/fencing. Then we discussed the implementation of artificial materials and different design possibilities of portable fences. There were a number of detailed photos exhibiting artificial materials, a few artificial fences and a 36-foot artificial portable fence in use at Haydock. There were also two different aspects of an artificial-hurdle design Richard has been developing at home that show promise. A visit like this stirs the imagination and gets the creative juices flowing. Richard expressed interest in seeing photos and specifications of the NSA "National Fence," which we'll provide.

As we made our way to Chepstow the conversation covered many different problems – and possible solutions to – issues often encountered in steeplechasing. The standing water at Warwick's September meet was the first of many. Richard expressed his desire to have been present for the meeting that took place. He believed he could have proposed a suitable alternative by going just wide of the standing water. His simple idea was sound and made a lot of sense, and I believe the rest would have come to the same conclusion.

Next, we discussed our portable timber fences, as related to the second-to-last chase fence on the "old" course at Cheltenham, where Granit Jack was tragically lost at the November meet. This fence has been looked at very carefully in the past, and there had been a number of enhancements in an effort to reduce the possibility of injury. The data gathered over the past few years indicate a significant reduction in the number of falls. Many of the jockeys feel it is just one of the nuances at Cheltenham that needs to be navigated in the later stages of the race. Exploring ways to make our sport as safe as possible should be on our minds at all times.

Some concerns in the process of starting were also brought up as we made our way to Wales. The main concern appears to be a "snowballing" effect that can occur when the field is making its way onto the course during the final approach. In many cases, particularly when the stakes are high and the pressure thick, the field gathers momentum during this time, from walk to jig, from jig to jog, from jog to canter. The field can resemble a runaway train and can get strung out and look a bit untidy before the starter engages the mechanism. The concern is with the biggest days of racing, especially days like the Grand National and the Cheltenham Festival. On a typical day of racing the system works very well. It seems natural that the pressure of the biggest days of racing would stress any system to its limit.

The National Steeplechase Foundation supports various initiatives to aid the growth of American steeplechase racing.

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Doug Lees

Western Fling (Shane Burke) flies away from the field in the amateur highweight timber at the Grand National.

STEEPLECHASE 'Pick Six' FANTASY STABLE GAME

Presented by The Whip Tavern

And They're Off

Nepotism, nepotism, nepotism! Yeah, yeah, we know. Nolan Clancy, the 6-year-old son of ST editor/publisher Joe Clancy tops the most crowded Pick Six game in history with 170 players. Nolan jumped out on top thanks to early season leader Sovereign Duty and 2007 champion Good Night Shirt – plus the savvy picking of dual winner Classy Brute. Nolan's First Base Stable (named after his position on the Minor B White Sox of the Elkton Little League) holds a narrow lead on Dr. Charles Reid's Dukester with the Rolling Thunder stable of Bob Lunny third.

Prize Report: The most creative stable name as judged by the office is Small Ponies R Evil, which belongs to Missy Zielinski of Chase, Md. Everybody knows small ponies are truly evil. Zielinski receives a \$50 gift certificate to the ST advertiser of her choice. Other stable names we liked: Picture This Stable (owned by photographer Tod Marks), the classic steeplechase references of Inkslinger/Ben Nevis Stable (Paul Peterson) and Hurler Was The King! (Bradley Johnson) and the shopaholic Irunforshoes Farm (Diana Rowland). Nolan's older brother Ryan came up with El Coche de Agua Stable, which is Spanish for The Car of Water. Ever resourceful, Ryan used that phrase to identify a photo of a boat (barco) on a high-school Spanish test. Not quite right, but creative.

The top 31 stables are listed here. See www.st-publishing.com for full standings.

First Base Stable..... Nolan Clancy	
Sovereign Duty	\$114,075
Good Night Shirt	\$60,000
Imagina	\$58,500
Preemptive Strike.....	\$27,000
Classy Brute	\$24,000
Coal Dust	\$1,400
.....	\$284,975
Dukester..... Dr. Charles Reid	
Sovereign Duty	\$114,075
Good Night Shirt	\$60,000
Imagina	\$58,500
The Price Of Love.....	\$19,500
Irish Prince	\$1,000
Orsay	\$0
.....	\$253,075
Rolling Thunder..... Bob Lunny	
Sovereign Duty	\$114,075
Imagina	\$58,500
Preemptive Strike.....	\$27,000
Meneef	\$15,000
Monte Bianco	\$12,000
Dreadnaught	\$4,500
.....	\$231,075
Pocketful of Moths..... Peter Hitchen	
Sovereign Duty	\$114,075
Planets Aligned	\$45,000
Sweet Shani	\$28,822
Hip Hop	\$26,100
Gigger	\$10,850
Straight Gin	\$0
.....	\$224,847

Cheese In The Trap Stable..... Adrienne Hall	
Sovereign Duty	\$114,075
Good Night Shirt	\$60,000
Sweet Shani	\$28,822
Mixed Up	\$10,000
Dreadnaught	\$4,500
Straight Gin	\$0
.....	\$217,397
Up and Over Stable..... John Tower	
Sovereign Duty	\$114,075
Good Night Shirt	\$60,000
Sweet Shani	\$28,822
Mixed Up	\$10,000
Dreadnaught	\$4,500
Toughkenamon	\$0
.....	\$217,397
Genesee Valley Racers..... Gail McGuire	
Good Night Shirt	\$60,000
Imagina	\$58,500
Preemptive Strike.....	\$27,000
Hip Hop	\$26,100
Classy Brute	\$24,000
Private Attack	\$21,000
.....	\$216,600
First Last Best Guess..... Susan Haldeman	
Good Night Shirt	\$60,000
Imagina	\$58,500
Planets Aligned	\$45,000
Preemptive Strike.....	\$27,000
The Price Of Love.....	\$19,500
Miles Ahead	\$3,600
.....	\$213,600

Plum Creek Farms	Cathy Fowler
Good Night Shirt	\$60,000
Imagina	\$58,500
Planets Aligned	\$45,000
Sweet Shani	\$28,822
Gigger	\$10,850
Bubble Economy	\$6,500
.....	\$209,672
Dadoffthree Stable	Joe Clancy
Sovereign Duty	\$114,075
Imagina	\$58,500
Best Attack	\$16,013
Mixed Up.....	\$10,000
Erin Go Bragh.....	\$5,400
Dreadnaught	\$4,500
.....	\$208,488
Block House Farms	Chuck Ross
Good Night Shirt	\$60,000
Imagina	\$58,500
Planets Aligned	\$45,000
Preemptive Strike.....	\$27,000
Gigger	\$10,850
Miles Ahead	\$3,600
.....	\$204,950
Geraldal Stable	Allison Janezic
Good Night Shirt	\$60,000
Imagina	\$58,500
Planets Aligned	\$45,000
Preemptive Strike.....	\$27,000
Bubble Economy	\$6,500
Bee Charmer	\$0
.....	\$197,000
PonyUp Stable	Ashley Monroe
Good Night Shirt	\$60,000
Imagina	\$58,500
Planets Aligned	\$45,000
Preemptive Strike.....	\$27,000
Bubble Economy	\$6,500
Bee Charmer	\$0
.....	\$197,000
Cheltenham Invasion	Richard Hutchinson
Good Night Shirt	\$60,000
Imagina	\$58,500
Planets Aligned	\$45,000
The Price Of Love.....	\$19,500
Mixed Up.....	\$10,000
Miles Ahead	\$3,600
.....	\$196,600
PedaltodaMetal	Bob Rush
Good Night Shirt	\$60,000
Imagina	\$58,500
Planets Aligned	\$45,000
Preemptive Strike.....	\$27,000
Fogcutter.....	\$1,500
Irish Prince	\$1,000
.....	\$193,000
Firethorn	Winfield Sapp
Good Night Shirt	\$60,000
Imagina	\$58,500
Planets Aligned	\$45,000
Preemptive Strike.....	\$27,000
Irish Prince	\$1,000
Two Terms	\$0
.....	\$191,500
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Good Night Shirt	\$60,000
Imagina	\$58,500
Planets Aligned	\$45,000
The Price Of Love.....	\$19,500
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Good Night Shirt	\$60,000
Imagina	\$58,500
Planets Aligned	\$45,000
The Price Of Love.....	\$19,500
Miles Ahead	\$3,600
Sur La Tete	\$0
.....	\$186,600
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Good Night Shirt	\$60,000
Imagina	\$58,500
Planets Aligned	\$45,000
The Price Of Love.....	\$19,500
Miles Ahead	\$3,600
Divine Fortune	\$0
.....	\$186,600
Mrs. Rodddd	Erin Ray
Good Night Shirt	\$60,000
Imagina	\$58,500
Planets Aligned	\$45,000
Best Attack	\$16,013
Run The Light	\$4,500
Coal Dust	\$1,400
.....	\$185,413

Kfar Tapuakh Stable	Howard Newstadt
Good Night Shirt	\$60,000
Imagina	\$58,500
Planets Aligned	\$45,000
Best Attack	\$16,013
Dreadnaught	\$4,500
Irish Prince	\$1,000
.....	\$185,013
Wu Farm	Jeremy Baskin
Good Night Shirt	\$60,000
Imagina	\$58,500
Planets Aligned	\$45,000
The Price Of Love.....	\$19,500
Irish Prince	\$1,000
Divine Fortune	\$0
.....	\$184,000
Broken Sound Farm	Marianne Vishno
Good Night Shirt	\$60,000
Imagina	\$58,500
Planets Aligned	\$45,000
The Price Of Love.....	\$19,500
Irish Prince	\$1,000
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Imagina	\$58,500
Planets Aligned	\$45,000
G'day G'day	\$10,500
Gliding	\$4,500
Miles Ahead	\$3,600
.....	\$182,100
Champagne Taste	Lisa McLane
Good Night Shirt	\$60,000
Imagina	\$58,500
Preemptive Strike.....	\$27,000
The Price Of Love.....	\$19,500
Mixed Up.....	\$10,000
Bubble Economy	\$6,500
.....	\$181,500

Flag Is Up Farm	Tiffany Webb
Good Night Shirt	\$60,000
Imagina	\$58,500
Planets Aligned	\$45,000
Gigger	\$10,850
Miles Ahead	\$3,600
Sur La Tete	\$0
.....	\$177,950
Wishlownedthesix Stable	Jeff Murphy
Good Night Shirt	\$60,000
Imagina	\$58,500
Planets Aligned	\$45,000
Mixed Up.....	\$10,000
Miles Ahead	\$3,600
Bee Charmer	\$0
.....	\$177,100
Occupational Therapy	Elizabeth Newstadt
Good Night Shirt	\$60,000
Imagina	\$58,500
Planets Aligned	\$45,000
Jellyberry	\$12,000
Irish Prince	\$1,000
Diego Cao	\$0
.....	\$176,500
Hayfield High Farm	Jessica Schwab
Good Night Shirt	\$60,000
Imagina	\$58,500
Planets Aligned	\$45,000
Mixed Up.....	\$10,000
Auction Watch.....	\$1,500
Irish Prince	\$1,000
.....	\$176,000
MVP Stable	Ernie Moulos
Good Night Shirt	\$60,000
Imagina	\$58,500
Preemptive Strike.....	\$27,000
The Price Of Love.....	\$19,500
Mixed Up.....	\$10,000
Irish Prince	\$1,000
.....	\$176,000
Steeplestakes.com	Van Cushny
Good Night Shirt	\$60,000
Imagina	\$58,500
Preemptive Strike.....	\$27,000
The Price Of Love.....	\$19,500
Mixed Up.....	\$10,000
Irish Prince	\$1,000
.....	\$176,000

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Not Smooth

U.S. hopeful Gliding banged up in try at rich Japanese steeplechase

BY BRIAN NADEAU

Gliding's hopes of gaining international acclaim ended with a ninth-place finish behind Japan's Maruka Rascal in the \$1.5 million Nakayama Grand Jump April 19 in Tokyo.

Trained by Doug Fout for Edgar Cato's Brigadoon Stable, Gliding was the only American representative in the Grand Jump, the world's richest steeplechase race.

Gliding was content to lag at the back of the 10-horse field and things only got worse from there.

Oto Zeus fell after the seventh fence and Gliding (Paddy Young) clipped heels while attempting to avoid the fallen runner, all but ending the American hopes of a high finish.

"He got hurt after the horse in front of him fell and his left ankle blew up like a football," Fout said. "It was all over after that. He wasn't going to win it but I thought he could have been third or fourth if he hadn't been clipped, which would have been the best finish for an American runner."

The Grand Jump was in stark contrast to Gliding's pre-race prepara-

tions. Leading up to the race little went wrong as he legged-up in a point-to-point at Rappahannock and then finished third behind Preemptive Strike in the Imperial Cup at Aiken.

"He came up to the race perfect and was great in the paddock. It was just bad racing luck," Fout said. "The horse is still in quarantine right now and when we get him back we'll check him out, see how he is, and figure things out from there."

Should Fout be fortunate to get back to Tokyo for the Grand Jump he's already plotting a different path and strategy. The trainer elected to pass on the local prep for the Grand Jump, the Pegasus Jump Stakes, but hinted he would reconsider.

"I'd do it again in heartbeat but next time I'd run in the prep too. It's a tough course and I think you need to run in the Pegasus Stakes to have a shot to win the big one," Fout said. "I'd also take over a different kind of horse. You need a sharp horse with a lot of speed, almost a half-runaway type like Preemptive Strike. You need a front-runner because the horses over there are very fast. The course got six



Tod Marks

Gliding and Paddy Young in action at Aiken last month. They finished ninth in Japan.

inches of rain Saturday morning and even then Gliding got run off his feet. It cooked him when it got that deep."

Disappointed but hardly defeated, Fout returned from Tokyo with a great appreciation for the culture, the people and the experience.

"The people couldn't have been nicer and the course was immaculate. They catered to us like we were God,"

Fout said. "We went out and had dinner with them and went to a barbecue. The track was just beautiful as well, it was just an immaculate course."

Maruka Rascal claimed the first prize of roughly \$780,000 as horses from the host country swept the first five places.

French horse Alarm Call finished a well-beaten sixth.

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Hail to Chief

Winnetou, owner/rider Odenkirk make for good intermediate team

BY KATY CARTER

Nineteen years is a long time to wait between horses, but Sharon Odenkirk has made every moment count. Odenkirk and Winnetou II, aka "Chief", a big, strapping 1990 model Oldenburg gelding, have indeed reignited each other to blazing proportions, by forging a partnership built on trust and a true appreciation of each other.

Oh, they've also garnered multiple top placings through preliminary and have made the move to intermediate, in spite of Chief's potentially career-threatening 2006 fractured coffin bone.

"When I was 16, my first horse died in an accident. I will never forget it," said Odenkirk, an adult amateur rider from Vienna, Va. "I came home from school and my dad was home. I thought I was in trouble, but when my parents told me what happened, I broke down in tears."

Odenkirk began her equine sabbatical thereafter, delving into "regular" teenage pursuits, going onto college and establishing her career in high technology sales. Ironically, it was another sense of loss (and one very encouraging spouse) that sent her back down the yellow brick road to the barn.

"For seven years, my husband and I tried to have children," she explained. "When we got to the end of that, he suggested that I start riding again to help heal my soul."

Starting back was easier and more fun than Odenkirk expected. She was happily taking lessons with Joseph Keusch in Middleburg, Va., as well as participating in local hunter shows, when a sale horse arrived at Paper Chase Farm. Then a cranky 10-year-old dressage reject, Chief defied Keusch's attempt to introduce him to foxhunting.

"Not a lot of people could ride him," Odenkirk said. "He had terrorized his owner and hated his job. I was riding a lot of different horses at the time and Joseph put me on him. At the time, he'd never been out of the ring except for a hunt trail ride."

EVENTING FEATURE

A horseless Odenkirk and a very motivated seller proved inspirational to husband John, who happened to be at the barn the day they learned Chief's sticker price had been significantly reduced.

"John said to me, 'Buy this horse. He will make you happy,'" she said. "I was afraid, though. The possibility of losing a best friend again – that fear of loss I still held from when I was a kid – scared me. But we vetted him anyway. His expected use was pleasure riding."

It took Odenkirk two years to teach Chief to ride out, but her diligence paid off. Now he can't be stopped.

"I don't really remember how I got into eventing," said Odenkirk. "Living in Virginia, you're just exposed to it. Showing was not appealing to me, but I love to ride out, go fast and jump, and Chief knew dressage, so we gave it a go."

Odenkirk began taking lessons with Carolyn Daughters, who with husband Bob Rush, owns and operates Pinecroft Sport Horses in Orlean, Va. Odenkirk credits Daughters with getting she and Chief solidly through the preliminary level.

"Carolyn was recommended to me by a friend," she said. "I needed major dressage help. I was an ex-hunter rider with a dressage horse. It was a struggle to keep a canter around the ring, I didn't have a seat, and Chief didn't have a clue what I was asking him. Carolyn is exceptional at really seeing what you



GRC Photo

Winnetou II and Sharon Odenkirk clear a fence at Middleburg.

are doing and the articulating what you should be doing."

In addition to Daughters, Odenkirk also trains with Jimmy Wofford, whom she credits with fine tuning her show jumping skills and lending a fresh perspective to their overall performance.

"I am thrilled that Jimmy agreed to teach me," she said. "Having access to his wealth of knowledge has made an unbelievable difference in our jumping."

In 2006, Chief suffered a fractured hind cannon bone, and Odenkirk was again flooded with feelings of fear and apprehension.

"Sometimes as horse people, we go through tragic experiences. Those feel-

ings came back when Chief was hurt, but once my vet, Dr. John Nolan, went over everything with me, it came into perspective," she said. "Worst case, Chief would be retired."

Although her husband insists that she was "not a normal person" during Chief's four months of lay up, Odenkirk maintained a positive outlook on the gelding's potential to return to work.

Near Christmas that year, Chief was given the green light.

"I have never been so happy just sitting on him," Odenkirk said, clearly delighted. "I have always been grateful for every second I have with him, but I am especially so after the injury. Every moment is a gift."

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On the Move

Upstate New York-based pair Take Time, Kozlowski find success

BY KATY CARTER

EVENTING FEATURE

Weak ankles led to the demise of Carol Kozlowski's blossoming career in the ballet.

Not that she's complaining.

The lifelong resident of Geneseo, N.Y., a small enclave of foxhunting and steeplechasing in western New York, holds an important place in the hearts and riding careers of the small band of eventers that populate the area along the New York State Thruway.

"Western New York is difficult for eventing," she laughed. "People here have virtually no access to instruction, so I travel throughout the state teaching and giving clinics."

Kozlowski blames, of course, the notoriously infamous winters (nearby Syracuse receives the largest annual amount of snowfall in the entire state) and economics.

"It's extremely hard to run a business in New York State," she said, citing high tax rates and the fact that western New York is to the extreme west of the eventing pockets of Area I and II.

Then why does she stay?

"My family has deep roots in west-

ern New York," she said. "My family is here, my husband's family is here, and I'm pretty sure my clients would kidnap me if I ever left."

While based most of the year out of her Mothersfield Farm, Kozlowski does spend two months in Aiken, S.C. each winter where she trains with Mara Dean.

"My husband and I really like Aiken," she said. "We get a break from the winter weather at home and I'm able to get out and compete, teach and train."

Kozlowski has had her share of bad luck, with several of her top competition horses out of training due to injury, but she has found a surprise star in Take Time, a 17-hand Connemara/Thoroughbred cross by her legendary former partner, Erin Go Bragh.

"I never expected it," Kozlowski laughed. "I broke him and then Lynn Blades, his owner, competed him. He was just sailing along, enjoying life as a novice horse when my advanced horse, Gaelic Holiday, had to stop competing. Lynn offered me the ride on Take Time and we went from there."

Nobody asked Take Time what he



Anthony Trollope

Take Time and Carol Kozlowski clear a fence at Morven Park in 2007.

thought of the matter, but he wasn't shy in communicating his initial distaste for his new job.

"He did not appreciate the promotion, to say the least," she said. "But, he's turned out to be fabulous."

Kozlowski took her mount's name to heart and took her time developing the feisty gelding, whom she describes as "big, yet ponyish." After establishing a solid competitive record at preliminary, including placings at the Virginia and MidSouth one stars, the pair began running intermediate two years ago, bringing home ribbons in horse trials and finishing fourth at Bromont CCI** before bumping up to advanced level competition this spring.

"He takes it up a notch," said Kozlowski of the leggy bay, with whom she was victorious in their intermediate run at the Morven Park Spring Horse Trials at the end of March.

"We weren't going to go to Morven because he was good in the advanced at Southern Pines," she said. "But we went, and he was great."

Echoing the thoughts of many of her competitors, Kozlowski was impressed with the quality of the footing at Morven Park.

"The footing was the best I'd ever seen," she exclaimed. "It was the first time this year we went fast – only three horses made the cross-country time, and he was one of them."



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