

The *Times*

*Steeplechase
& Eventing*

Complimentary

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**Good Night Shirt gets
it done in Colonial Cup**



2007 Championship Edition

Steeplechase

Good Night Shirt, Footlights, Planets Aligned,
C R's Deputy, Irish Prince, Sonny Via,
Jack Fisher, Xavier Aizpuru.

Eventing

Theodore O'Connor and Karen O'Connor (left),
Phillip Dutton, Corinne Ashton,
Tiana Courdray.

Plus: McDynamo retires, meet a racetrack super fan & more. . .

2007

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Tod Marks

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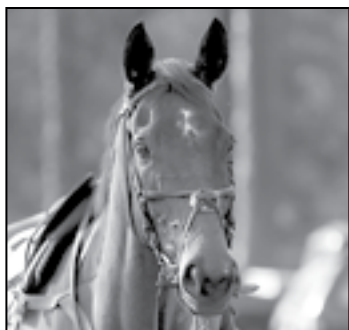
Here's your newspaper. Hope it doesn't leave a dent in your mailbox. The final edition of the year is always the largest, and this one follows suit with pages and pages of news, features, profiles, statistics and more. Have a seat by the fire, put your feet up and enjoy. Thanks for reading. Enjoy the holidays and we'll see you in 2008.



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The Shirt fits The Cup

Good Night Shirt powers away with Colonial Cup, and earnings title, on season's final day. Trainer Jack Fisher triples, jockey Xavier Aizpuru doubles – as does trainer Tom Voss.



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So long, Champ

Sixth in the Colonial Cup, three-time champion McDynamo bows out gracefully after superb steeplechase career.



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Spring season shuffle

Little Everglades and Queen's Cup race meets announce intentions to exit circuit; NSA, horsemen work to preserve schedule.



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Jump Champions

Profiles of the 2008 NSA individual champions from leading horse Good Night Shirt to champion jockey Xavier Aizpuru and champion trainer Jack Fisher.



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Eventing Champions

Profiles of the 2008 U.S. Eventing Association champions from leading rider Phillip Dutton to amateur Corinne Ashton.



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On the Cover

Good Night Shirt storms over the last fence in the Colonial Cup en route to a title-clinching victory over McDynamo and six others; Eventing Horse (and Pony) of the Year Theodore O'Connor.

Photo: Tod Marks and Shannon Brinkman.



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I PICKED UP THE TIMES AT:

FOR STARTERS

Worth Repeating

"No, they disintegrated."

Jockey Chip Miller, after hearing someone ask if jockey Paddy Young finally replaced his signature red riding gloves

"He looks like Jack Fisher on a horse."

Jockey Matt McCarron, not complimenting Laird George's riding style, while watching the training flat race at Camden

"I've got a new name for you – AM Radio. Because you're all talk, all the time."

Miller, to McCarron, in the jocks' room at Camden

Trainer No. 1: "How'd you do?"

Trainer No. 2: "You were right. That boy who rode him didn't listen."

Steeplechase fan after the first race at Camden: "Congratulations!"

Trainer Jonathan Sheppard (who finished second): "Maybe she thought I was Jack Fisher."

"He doesn't look anything like Wink. He's got no belly or anything."

Jockey Bernie Dalton, comparing the horse Also Known As Wink to namesake Winky Cocks

"I couldn't talk and I couldn't see. My voice went away and my eyes were full of water."

Owner Sonny Via, on his reaction to Good Night Shirt's Iroquois win

"He can't be gray – we've got Albermarle clay and it won't wash off."

Ann Via, who's in the market for a foxhunter

Take A Number

2:49: Finishing time of steeplechase announcer Tony Bentley in the 1980 New Orleans marathon.

14: Owners that earned at least \$100,000 in steeplechasing during 2007, up from 10 in 2006.

9: Horses that earned at least \$100,000 in steeplechasing during 2007, up from four in 2006.

71: Mounts by Xavier Aizpuru in 2007, the lowest total by a champion jockey since Craig Thornton needed just 69 in 1998.

32: Jockeys to win at least one NSA jump race in 2007.

22: Horses campaigned by Kinross Farm (tops on the circuit). Augustin Stable (19), Irv Naylor (18), Anne Haynes (17) and Calvin Houghland (12) completed the top five.

Not Comparison Shopping

Horses as good as McDynamo make people compare legends, but it's a little like a parent trying to pick a favorite child – you just can't do it. The discussion about McDynamo (horse of the 2000s) usually goes back to Lonesome Glory (horse of the 1990s) and Flatterer and Zaccio (horses of the 1980s).

"You can't compare them. It would sure be exciting to watch them all run together, but to compare them is an effort to take something away from one of them or some of them," said Sanna Hendriks, McDynamo's trainer. "You can't do that to any of them. They were that good. You have to give them all equal credit, whatever era they were in. McDynamo made more money, but he was 10 years later than Lonesome. Ten years from now, you might be talking about somebody else."

The fun part is wondering who's next. Good Night Shirt dazzled in 2007. Will he keep it rolling and join the others in the comparison? Nobody knows.

"There's got to be somebody coming," Hendriks said. "I hope there's somebody coming."

So do the rest of us.



Doug Lees

CHAMPS AT PLAY. Kinross Farm steeplechase stars Miles Ahead (left, Chris Read) and Sur La Tete (Neil Morris) get in a little foxhunting with the Orange County Hunt in Virginia Nov. 17.

A Car Guy

Steeplechase fans know all about Sonny Via's stable of horses. Headed by likely champion Good Night Shirt, the 2007 contingent also included maiden hurdle winner Fantorini and stakes-placed timber horse Mr Bombastic. At home, Via's stable leans toward horsepower of a different sort.

An antique car collector for decades, Via dragged a Model T out of a field before he was old enough to drive and now owns a dozen.

The stall list (in model-year order):

- 1912 Pierce Arrow.
- 1914 Model T Ford.
- 1926 Model T Farm Truck.
- 1930 Model A Ford (bought in 1959).
- 1934 Rolls Royce (Ann's car).
- 1936 Ford Phaeton.
- 1939 Ford convertible coupe.
- 1940 Packard convertible sedan.
- 1941 Cadillac sedan.
- 1942 Ford wood-bodied station wagon.
- 1950 Mercury convertible.
- 1950 GMC half-ton pickup truck.

Via started restoring cars as a teenager, and simply kept at it.

"The first car I had I dragged out of a field – a Model T Ford," he said. "We'd get them running when they hadn't been running for 20 years or more. The problem was we didn't have any money, number one. Number two, it was during the war and even if you had money you couldn't find tires. We'd take the best one out of the heap and cut up the other ones and fill the holes in the one we wanted to drive."

Oh, Brother

Recognize this little guy? Though he probably doesn't know and definitely doesn't care while lounging in the grass at Richland Hills Farm in Midway, Ky. he's the sibling of a famous steeplechaser.

The soon-to-be yearling son of Barkerville is a half-brother to steeplechase legend McDynamo, and in this photo taken this spring, has the look of a future star – or at least a pet.

Their dam Rondonia (now 23) is in foal to Andromeda's Hero for 2008 and will then most likely follow her most famous son into retirement.



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Good Night Shirt (center) powers away from the last fence – and the competition.

Tod Marks

Good Night for an Eclipse

Shirt surpasses legend, earnings mark to take crown for Via, Fisher

BY JOE CLANCY

CAMDEN, S.C. – The day before the Colonial Cup, trainer Jack Fisher and jockey Willie Dowling watched a video of the 2006 race.

“See McDynamo? See what Jody did? If Good Night Shirt does that, don’t fight him, just let him go to the front,” Fisher said. “If you’re not jumping well enough to be there, they’ll come pass you.”

Last year, Jody Petty let McDynamo ramble to leader Mon Villez and the great horse instantly settled, found a rhythm, won the race and clinched an Eclipse Award. This year, Dowling and Good Night Shirt did the same.

Rank early while resisting Dowling’s efforts at restraint, Good Night Shirt eased past three-time race winner McDynamo after four fences and never relinquished the lead in the \$150,000 Grade I stakes Nov. 18. The 6-year-old, owned by Sonny and Ann Via, turned aside several challenges from McDynamo and powered away from the rest in the stretch to win by 2 1/4 lengths over Three Carat (Danielle Hodsdon), with Sovereign Duty (Xavier Aizpuru) holding on for third. The winner covered the 2 3/4 miles in 5:19, and put a solid grip on the steeplechase Eclipse with three Grade I wins and a record \$314,163 earned this year.

Dowling was so impressed afterward, he could hardly speak.

COLONIAL CUP RACES

Sunday, November 18

“What a great horse,” the Irish-born jockey whispered. “I thought the Iroquois was the best day of my life, and now this. He went to the front and he looked at that fence and said ‘oh, I can slow down a bit now.’ He was much better in front than he was behind.”

Clearly. Winner of the Iroquois and Lonesome Glory, Good Night Shirt faded to fourth after stalking McDynamo through much of the Breeders’ Cup Grand National in soft turf Oct. 20. Four weeks later on the firm, dry ground at Camden, the Colonial Cup appeared eerily similar as McDynamo led an unsettled Good Night Shirt through a slow first mile. Approaching the stands the first time, Good Night Shirt took the lead – and never gave it back.

A shaky jumper at times, Good Night Shirt dove through the first on the long backstretch and looked vulnerable. Until he jumped the next, and looked like McDynamo – measuring his stride and soaring over the packed pine while gaining ground. From there, the son of Concern maintained control. He brought the field of eight into the stretch with a slight lead on McDynamo, followed closely by Sovereign Duty, Orison, Three Carat and Gliding. Six horses jumped the final two fences within 2 lengths of each other, but Good Night Shirt fought off Sovereign Duty, who was passed late by Three Carat for the place, while McDynamo faded late to finish sixth in the final start of his illustrious career.

“Turning for home, he still had loads left,” said Dowling. “I went down to those last two, he jumped those well and he galloped all the way to the line. He doesn’t get tired, but he was better on the ground today. The soft ground at Far Hills was tough on him.”

Beaten 8 lengths in New Jersey by McDynamo’s Breeders’ Cup tour de force, Good Night Shirt came into the Colonial Cup as the year’s leading earner – and an underdog. Meanwhile, the old champ, now 10, came to Camden as imposing as ever. A win would mean a fourth Colonial Cup, a fourth Eclipse Award and another dazzling chapter in the story of a superb steeplechaser.

Fisher managed to use that daunting reputation to help steady his jockey, who entered the race with just four wins this year.

“McDynamo’s beaten you and they’re all expecting him to do it again,” said the trainer.

“That helped a lot, and I was more relaxed,” Dowling said. “Going to Far

See **COLONIAL CUP** page 7 ►



Good Night Shirt (left) pulls away from Sovereign Duty (right) and the others in the stretch.

Tod Marks

Colonial Cup —

■ Continued from page 6

Hills, I felt the pressure because we had won back-to-back Grade I races.”

They won their third – OK, not back-to-back – in the Colonial Cup, delivering against the pressure and the competition. And giving someone a great video to watch next year.

• Three-year-old steeplechasers are like Agatha Christie novels – mysteries. Some (Flat Top, Zaccio, Leaping Frog, Warm Spell) find early success and go on to great things. Others (Addinson, Wetlands, Bannow Rambler) are more forgettable.

So how do trainers tell the difference?

“I can’t,” said Tom Voss. “You never know about 3-year-olds. But what are you going to do? You can keep them as maidens and run them next year, but you might not have them next year.”

Voss sent Alnoff Stable’s Be Certain to Far Hills in October and the lightly raced son of Thunder Gulch finished an easy third. At Camden, the result was different as Be Certain (Aizpuru) blazed away from Gladstone victor C R’s Deputy and six others to take the \$25,000 Raymond Woolfe Memorial. The winner seized the lead on the backside, but C R’s Deputy covered that move and they headed to the stretch together. Be Certain won the race to the last fence and scored by 1 1/4 lengths over C R’s Deputy (Chip Miller) with Multie Colored (Carl Rafter) third in 4:16 4/5 for the 2 miles.

“I got to the front far too early on him because he’s still very green,” said Aizpuru. “When he got to the front, he pricked his ears and paid attention which was good of him, and when horses came to him, he kept finding. It felt like I still had horse left.”

Sent to Voss by Roger Horgan, Be Certain changed after the Far Hills run.

“From one race to the other he was a muchly improved horse,” said Voss. “He’s still learning a little bit, but he was a good enough jumper that you could go on with him. He was a very good jumper from day one. I like to see them do it that way with their ears pricked like that. This race was easy for him, so there might be more improvement there.”

• Slew’s Peak refused to be passed in the late stages of the \$25,000 Sport of Queens filly/mare stakes, thwarting bids from a host of challengers to score for trainer Jonathan Sheppard. Second behind Northern Gale early, the Timber Bay Farm homebred took the lead on the final run down the backstretch and braced herself. Guelph got close. So did Imagina. Lair threatened – as did gallant former champion Feeling So Pretty.

At the finish, Slew’s Peak (Hodsdon) scored for the second time in five starts this year. She got the measure of Lair (James Slater) by 1 3/4 lengths with Feeling So Pretty (Rafter) a late-running third. The winner covered the 2 1/4 miles in 4:23 1/5, but pulled up lame in the process with a bowed tendon.

“She was so game, she just kept digging in,” said Hodsdon. “She had a great year and deserved another win.”

Slew’s Peak won a distaff allowance early in the year at Atlanta and finished

See **COLONIAL CUP** page 8 ►



Tod Marks

Be Certain leads late in the Raymond Woolfe Memorial at the Colonial Cup.

Colonial Cup

Camden, S.C. Sunday, November 18. Turf: Firm.

1st. \$25,000. Sport of Kings maiden hurdle. 2 1/4 miles.

1. FANTORINI.....	L.....	154.....	Aizpuru
2. THE PRICE OF LOVE.....	L.....	148.....	Hodsdon
3. GIGGER.....	L.....	154.....	C. Miller
4. MR. J. T. L.....	L.....	154.....	Slater
5. AREA LIMITS.....	L.....	154.....	Rafter
6. LOGARITIMO (ARG).....	L.....	154.....	Kingsley
7. FIVE PINES.....	L.....	148.....	Petty
8. CLOSTOYOURHEART.....	L.....	143.....	J. Murphy
9. G'DAY G'DAY.....	L.....	148.....	Dowling
10. RAINBOWS FOR LUCK.....	L.....	154.....	Young
11. POP THE PIRATE (NZ).....	L.....	148.....	McCarron
12. CUSE.....	L.....	149.....	McVicar
OC. PLUM BRUSH.....	L.....	148.....	Walsh
PU. MAESTRO MAGIC.....	L.....	154.....	Traurig
PU. ALSO KNOWN AS WINK.....	L.....	143.....	Zimmerman
PU. GOSSIPMONGER.....	L.....	154.....	Foley

Mgn: 2. Time: 4:26 4/5. O: Sonny Via. T: Jack Fisher.

B. g. 5 Theatrical (IRE)-Beyrouth, Alleged. Bred by George Strawbridge (PA).

2nd. \$25,000. Three-year-old hurdle stakes. 2 miles.

The Raymond G. Woolfe Memorial

1. BE CERTAIN.....	L.....	148.....	Aizpuru
2. C R'S DEPUTY.....	L.....	152.....	C. Miller
3. MULTIE COLORED.....	L.....	148.....	Rafter
4. COUPE DE VILLE.....	L.....	148.....	McCarron
5. MECKLENBURG.....	L.....	148.....	W. Haynes
6. HOT RIZE.....	L.....	148.....	Foley
7. TANK ZONE.....	L.....	148.....	R. Haynes

Mgn: 1 1/4. Time: 4:16 4/5. O: Alnoff Stable. T: Tom Voss.

Ch. g. 3 Thunder Gulch-Do Mountain Doo, Mountain Cat.

Bred by Sugar Maple Farm (NY).

3rd. \$25,000. Filly & mare hurdle stakes. 2 1/4 miles.

Sport of Queens

1. SLEW'S PEAK.....	L.....	148.....	Hodsdon
2. LAIR.....	L.....	148.....	Slater
3. FEELING SO PRETTY.....	L.....	144.....	Rafter
4. IMAGINA (CHI).....	L.....	152.....	Petty
5. SUNTARA.....	L.....	141.....	Young
6. GUELPH.....	L.....	144.....	Aizpuru
7. ORCHID PRINCESS.....	L.....	148.....	Zimmerman
PU. NORTHERN GALE.....	L.....	142.....	R. Haynes

Mgn: 1 3/4. Time: 4:23 1/5. O: Timber Bay Farm. T: Jonathan Sheppard.

Dk.B./Br. m. 5 Peaks and Valleys-Slew's Honour, Seattle Slew.

Bred by Timber Bay Farm (KY).

4th. \$20,000. Open timber. 3 1/2 miles.

1. BUBBLE ECONOMY.....	L.....	165.....	Young
2. WON WILD BIRD.....	L.....	131.....	W. Haynes
3. ACROSS THE SKY.....	L.....	155.....	Walsh
4. RAVENS ROCK.....	L.....	160.....	Petty

5. BERANI.....	L.....	140.....	Helders
F. BON FLEUR.....	L.....	160.....	J. Murphy
PU. NAVESINK VIEW.....	L.....	150.....	R. Haynes

Mgn: 14. Time: 6:56 4/5. O: Arcadia Stable. T: Jack Fisher.

B. g. 8 Rakeen-Buffels, Vaal Reef.

Bred by Dr. and Mrs. Timothy Gardner & Mr. and Mrs. Rick Abbott (PA).

5th. \$150,000. Hurdle stakes. 2 3/4 miles.

The Colonial Cup (Grade I). Colonial Cup course.

1. GOOD NIGHT SHIRT.....	L.....	156.....	Dowling
2. THREE CARAT.....	L.....	156.....	Hodsdon
3. SOVEREIGN DUTY.....	L.....	156.....	Aizpuru
4. GLIDING (NZ).....	L.....	156.....	Young
5. ORISON.....	L.....	156.....	McCarron
6. MCDYNAMO.....	L.....	156.....	Petty
7. UNDERBIDDER.....	L.....	156.....	Slater
8. LUONGO.....	L.....	156.....	C. Miller

Mgn: 2 1/4. Time: 5:19. O: Sonny Via. T: Jack Fisher.

Ch. g. 6 Concern-Hot Story, Two Punch.

Bred by Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Bowman (MD).

6th. \$20,100. Starter allowance hurdle. 2 1/4 miles.

Colonial Cup course.

1. MOTEL AFFAIR.....	L.....	151.....	C. Miller
2. SLATTERY.....	L.....	146.....	Petty
3. BIG IS BEST (NZ).....	L.....	146.....	Young
*4. PLEASANT PICK.....	L.....	146.....	Kingsley
5. BARZULU (NZ).....	L.....	142.....	McCarron
6. ORPINGTON.....	L.....	142.....	Walsh
7. FABI'S LEGACY.....	L.....	138.....	Zimmerman
F. IN PURSUIT OF LOVE.....	L.....	146.....	Slater
PU. DYN IN TEXAS.....	L.....	139.....	McVicar
PU. BARRINGTON.....	L.....	146.....	Aizpuru

*-DQ from 2nd for interference.

Mgn: 1 1/4. Time: 4:32 2/5. O: Blackwood Stable. T: Tom Voss.

Dk.B./Br. g. 7 Colonial Affair-Motel Queen, Bates Motel.

Bred by Larry Bowen (KY).

7th. Training flat. 1 1/2 miles. Amateur jockeys.

1. KILL DEVIL RUM.....	L.....	168.....	Price
2. MONSIEUR HENRI.....	L.....	168.....	Chalfin
3. ARTIST'S STROKE.....	L.....	168.....	Gillam
4. BAMCO DYNAMITE.....	L.....	170.....	Bordwell
5. WHISTLING DEPUTY.....	L.....	160.....	George
6. BOUNDING CAT.....	L.....	168.....	Boyce
7. JUNOOD.....	L.....	168.....	Washer
8. CLASS SHADOW.....	L.....	157.....	Corcoran
9. HIGHLAND STORM.....	L.....	168.....	Wyatt
10. HOWTOO.....	L.....	168.....	W. Haynes
11. DECISIVE PLAY.....	L.....	168.....	Slater
12. GREEN PRO.....	L.....	160.....	Dalton
PU. SAND MAN.....	L.....	168.....	Sankey

Mgn: 2. Time: 2:31 4/5. O: Carrington Racing Stable. T: Arch Kingsley.

B. g. 5 Devil's Bag-Hill Dance (GB), Danehill.

Bred by Oak Cliff Breeders (NY).

Colonial Cup —

■ Continued from page 7

second against geldings at Saratoga before chasing Imagina home at Far Hills. At Camden, she outran six stakes winners and three former division champions.

The daughter of Peaks And Valleys graduates to a career as a broodmare and could be bred to Artie Schiller, who raced for Timber Bay and Tommy and Denise Walsh.

- Aizpuru came to Camden with a commanding lead in the jockey standings, but left no doubt by taking the first two races — a maiden with Fantorini and the Woolfe with Be Certain. In the opener, the champion jockey dropped Fantorini to the back of a 16-horse field then passed the lot of them, giving the horse a victory in his eighth start of 2007.

Owned by Sonny and Ann Via, the winner cut the final corner to catch Mr. J. T. L., Five Pines, Gigger and The Price Of Love and take the lead late. The 5-year-old son of Theatrical scored by 2 lengths over The Price Of Love (Hodsdon) with Gigger (Miller) third in 4:26 4/5 for the 2 1/4 miles.

Trained by Jack Fisher, Fantorini discovered various ways to lose in his previous seven maiden attempts, most of them involving getting passed late and settling for minor shares.

“He’s been the bridesmaid a lot this year so we just decided that we should change the tactics on him and see what happened,” said Aizpuru. “The important thing was to try and get the horse finishing the race strongly. We’ve been riding him in the first five all year and from the last to the line he would just come up a little short. There were always little excuses so we decided it was time to try something different. It couldn’t have worked out any better.”

Bred by George Strawbridge, Fantorini raced on the flat for Dogwood Stable before being claimed by Via at Saratoga in 2006.

- Every time Paddy Young encouraged Bubble Economy to run faster, the veteran swished his tail — but he kept running and closed a tough year with a victory in the \$20,000 open timber at Camden. Owned by Arcadia Stable, the 2004 timber champion came into the season’s final day with a win in the Grand National, two seconds, a fall at the last in the Virginia Gold Cup, a pull-up at Far Hills and a refusal at the Pennsylvania Hunt Cup.

All was forgiven at Camden as Bubble Economy tracked leader Bon Fleur throughout and took control late to score by 14 lengths over mare Won Wild Bird (Russell Haynes) in 6:56 4/5 for the 3 1/2 miles, with Across The Sky (Robbie Walsh) well back in third.

“He’s the best timber horse in the country if you can get it out of him, and for some reason those days are few and far between now,” said Young. “He’s as good a horse as I’ve ridden over timber, but you can’t always trust him.”

Young rode Bubble Economy through much of his early timber career, but had given up the mount to amateur Diana Gillam this year. Under Gillam, the 8-year-old won a solid renewal of the Grand National



Tod Marks

Fantorini (center) rallies to take command from Mr. J.T.L. (right) and Gigger (left) in the maiden hurdle.

in April and fell at the last while in contention in the Gold Cup. This fall, he opened with a strong second to eventual timber champion Irish Prince at Shawan Downs, but basically pulled himself up at Far Hills and stopped at the first fence at the Pennsylvania Hunt Cup.

“He gets used to people and he gets cute,” said Young. “That’s why I got beat on him, he got used to me. When you get off him and get back on him again, it’s a fresh start. He was in great form today, he tugged away at me. It’s just a matter of keeping him thinking that he’s running away from you without telling him. He could have gone round again, that’s how easy it felt to me.”

Bubble Economy may be boom or bust, but he’s been a steady earner over the years — his career steeplechase bankroll now stands at \$194,200.

- The final jump race of the season, a \$20,100 starter allowance over the Colonial Cup fences, produced plenty of drama including two foul claims, a disqualification and one scary second-last fence.

On the final turn, the field of 10 blazed away with Slattery, Pleasant Pick and Big Is Best battling for control. Motel Affair kept up in fourth until he mangled the penultimate fence. He took off long, knifed through the brush and somehow landed running though he lost valuable space to the leaders.

Dropped to the inside exiting the turn, Motel Affair (Miller) made up ground and passed the three leaders in the final yards to win by 1 1/4 lengths over Pleasant Pick (Arch Kingsley) with Slattery (Petty) third in 4:32 2/5 for the 2 1/4 miles. Fourth on Big Is Best, Young claimed foul on Kingsley for interference at the last fence and the stewards agreed — demoting Pleasant Pick to fourth and elevating Slattery and Big Is Best one position. A second foul claim on Kingsley by Matt McCarron (fifth aboard Barzulu) was disallowed.

Owned by Blackwood Stable, Motel Affair closed the season with back-to-back wins for Voss — the first coming in a conditioned claimer at Montpelier two weeks earlier. Miller called the sloppy fence a case of



Tod Marks

Bubble Economy takes flight in his timber win.

survival.

“It was long — I saw another spot and he picked up,” said the jockey. “At these fences, that’s what usually brings you down. They pick up and don’t push off and they fall. But he was game. He just got on through it and started running again.”

Third in the maiden aboard Gigger and second in the Woolfe with C R’s Deputy, Miller did the near-misses one better in the finale.

“The difference between first and second is one fence or one small stretch and I could have improved both of those rides enough to win easily and that puts a sour taste in your mouth,” said Miller. “I made up for it with Motel Affair. It’s nice to win another race for Mr. Voss. We had a lot of fun together this year.”



Tod Marks

Slew's Peak edges away from Lair in the filly/mare stakes.



Tod Marks

Motel Affair (right) rallies to catch Pleasant Pick, Big Is Best and Slattery in the starter allowance.

WALKING AWAY

McDynamo retires with reputation, health

BY JOE CLANCY

Trainer Jonathan Sheppard ticked them off like a teacher taking the roll in homeroom.

"Flatterer broke down, Highland Bud broke down . . . I'm afraid I kept on going until they fell apart. They all go eventually, it's just a question of when."

And that's why owner Michael Moran and trainer Sanna Hendriks retired three-time steeplechase champion McDynamo after he finished sixth in the Colonial Cup Nov. 18. The 10-year-old gelding leaves with a gaudy resume, \$1,310,104 in total earnings and legions of impressed human beings. He lost the final race of his career, his fifth consecutive start in the Grade I Colonial Cup, but leaves no negative vibes on a sport he at once ruled and advertised.

"I wish he had run a more respectable race – for him – but I don't really care as long as he came back OK and we can take him home," said Moran. "I would feel greedy to try to do anything more with him. Better, younger, stronger horses are going to get their turns. He's been so good to us. That's enough."

More, really.

Moran spent \$82,000 to buy McDynamo as a yearling in 1998. The bay son of Dynafomer looked the part of a racehorse, albeit not a precocious one. He was big, long-legged, uncoordinated and – once Moran got him home – a stall-walking claustrophobe. Still, potential percolated through and covered up the quirks. McDynamo won twice on the flat for his owner/trainer, but embarked on the path of true greatness when he moved to Hendriks' barn and steeplechasing. He won his first hurdle start at Far Hills – now there's an omen – in 2001. Ever-patient, Moran and Hendriks raced their horse 24 more times in the six subsequent years (never more than six in a year) and built a career like no other.

"Why did it happen? Darned if I know," said Moran. "I've had plenty of horses that looked good but didn't do anything. You look for horses like that your whole life and you might not ever find one."

McDynamo dominated novices in 2002, winning an allowance at Strawberry Hill and stakes at Churchill Downs, Far Hills and Callaway Gardens. The next year, he truly blossomed – capturing the Royal Chase in April, the Breeders' Cup in October and the Colonial Cup in November. Eclipse Award No. 1 followed. Hock surgery delayed McDynamo's 2004 debut until the Breeders' Cup in October, but he thumped worthy rivals Hirapour and Sur La Tete anyway. Hirapour closed that season by winning the Colonial Cup and the Eclipse Award. Proving mortal, McDynamo lost his first four starts of 2005 (though he hit the board in each) then rebounded with triumphs in the Breeders' Cup and Colonial Cup to take yet another Eclipse. The big-finish trend continued in 2006: McDynamo flopped in the rain at Keeneland, only to reel off three consecutive stakes wins at season's end, claiming his third seasonal championship and reaching the top of the career earnings list with more than \$1 million in purse earnings. The 2007 schedule started slowly with a defeat in the Iroquois, but reached a crescendo with a fifth consecutive victory in the Breeders' Cup.

At Far Hills, McDynamo left witnesses speechless. They searched for ways to put their feelings into words, tried to compare the horse to legends, babbled through conversations, grasped at superlatives, wished for ways to feel part of it all. When McDynamo raced, he moved people.

"When people I've never seen or heard of come up and say 'oh, good luck today' it lets you know where he stands," said Hendriks before the Colonial Cup. "He's that good and people think about him. I know they're not rooting (maiden) Five Pines on when they say that. A horse like McDynamo brings it to a new level."

Like the observation deck of the Empire State Building, the heights he reached were staggering. He won five consecutive Breeders' Cups, went 7-for-7 over the Far Hills course, captured three Colonial Cups, scored 11 Grade I victories, took six stakes in a row during the 2002, 2003 and 2004 seasons. What's more, he crossed boundaries by winning at Churchill Downs, Keeneland and The Meadowlands. This year alone

The Blood-Horse, *Daily Racing Form* and England's *Racing Post* featured articles on McDynamo. *Racing Form* publisher Steve Crist, whose infrequent steeplechase references usually focus on gambling frustrations, gave the big horse big props for his Breeders' Cup score. Eclipse Award winner Jay Hovdey chronicled McDynamo's grand feats in a *Racing Form* column the week of the Colonial Cup.

"This last win at Far Hills really did it for some reason," said Hendriks. "Winning three was a lot, winning four was a lot, I guess five was really something special. He's 10 now, it's double digits and people are impressed. I think about him being 10 so I guess everyone else does too. I try not to think about it, but it's there. It takes a lot to make people pay attention (to steeplechasing)."

But McDynamo won that battle as well. The ride came to an end at Camden. He finished sixth, beaten more than a dozen lengths by Good Night Shirt. Walking back in the fading light of a Carolina afternoon, McDynamo looked beaten. Not broken. His people looked disappointed. Not let down.

"It's happy and sad," said Hendriks. "It's nice to retire him when he's walking back to the barn, not hurt somewhere. It's emotional to think that's

it, but it's also kind of fun to think that I'll be able to hunt him and hopefully bring him back to Far Hills and parade him around every year for a while. My biggest fear was that something bad would happen and we wouldn't get to retire him."

But they did. And that might someday be McDynamo's legacy, every bit as much as his layered collection of purple Breeders' Cup blankets. Like Sheppard's greats, McDynamo didn't win his final race and didn't go out with a championship. But four-time champion Flatterer pulled up lame in the 1987 Breeders' Cup and two-time Breeders' Cup winner Highland Bud pulled up in the 1993 Colonial Cup. McDynamo finished sixth, but he finished. And walked away with the 23rd paycheck of his 25-start career.

"It would have been nice to go out a winner, but if he won we would have been talking about running him next year and that might not have been the right decision," said Moran. "There were so many years we went to the races and we felt that degree of confidence. As the years have gone by, that's changed. It's not that you're not confident in the horse it's that you're not confident in the decision you're making. He can't tell us."

So they told him.

Two '08 meets drop NSA sanction

BY JOE CLANCY

Everybody's sad. Nobody really wants it to happen. But two National Steeplechase Association race meets will opt out of the circuit in 2008, choosing instead to race without sanction, unless a change of heart can be negotiated this winter.

Little Everglades in Dade City, Fla., and the Queen's Cup in Mineral Springs, N.C. informed the NSA this month of their intentions – subtracting \$207,300 and 12 races (using 2007 numbers) from the spring condition book. The decisions look and sound made, though the two sides have opened discussions.

"The door is still open. We will look at their requests as a board of 15 and see what we can do," said Franny Abbott, NSA president. "I don't believe they have closed the door either. I'm still hopeful. I have talked to the chairmen of both meets and we've had a good dialogue, a good beginning."

Little Everglades was slated to again open the season March 9. Though they didn't get specific, race founders Bob and Sharon Blanchard mentioned disagreements with the NSA and back-and-forth "heartburn" caused by both parties. Little Everglades sent Abbott a letter informing the NSA of the decision.

"We wish we didn't feel like we had to do it," said Bob Blanchard. "The pain/pleasure ratio is out of kilter. We're



From left: Bob Blanchard, Franny Abbott, Bill Price.

not trying to hurt anybody, but we just want to have some fun in the horse business. Maybe things will change and if enough things change maybe we'd consider coming back. But we have no intention of having this race in March under the auspices of the NSA."

Two days after Little Everglades, the Queen's Cup joined the list when race chairman Bill Price also informed the NSA in writing. Price gave credit to Little Everglades for the impetus, but has considered similar action in the past for his race meet, which has occupied the last Saturday in April date for several years. The 2008 meet is scheduled for April 26.

"It's about the direction of the NSA," said Price. "It's gotten to the point where I'm very frustrated and negative and I'm not a negative person by and large.

This is about the future of the sport, not about my race meet specifically."

In an emergency board meeting Dec. 14, the NSA crafted a strategy to broker an agreement. Abbott, board member Jonathan Sheppard and former NSA president George Strawbridge were scheduled to meet with both race meets. Abbott spoke with Price and Blanchard by telephone, and asked both to address their concerns in writing. As of Dec. 18, Abbott had received Price's letter and expected Blanchard's. From there, Abbott plans to discuss the situation further and schedule another NSA board meeting the last week of December to form a plan.

"There's a process and I'm all about the process," Abbott said. "For the president to make a knee-jerk reaction is wrong. The board members are there for a reason. It's a little like being in the stewards' stand for a race – you have to be together and make a decision."

Issues abound for both race meets, but Price's dissatisfaction centers (as Price said) on the NSA's path. Purses reached an all-time high of \$5.3 million in 2007, but participation numbers dropped. At a meeting with the board and patron members in November, the NSA executive committee presented a purse plan that set a goal of \$10 million in total annual purses to be achieved in five years. Also at that meeting, the NSA board discussed a proposed new meet at Palm Beach, Fla. for spring 2008. Both topics spurred reaction from Little Everglades, which sent a letter to race chairmen, and the boards of the NSA, the National Steeplechase Foundation and the Steeplechase Owners and Trainers Association. Though it did not men-

tion pulling out of the NSA, that letter expressed concern over the decisions and touched on course safety, purses, racetrack steeplechases and more. Unrelated to the Little Everglades/Queen's Cup matters, the Palm Beach meet has been shelved until 2009 at the earliest.

"We've seen purses continually rise and participation continually decline and the answer the board and management has is purse money," said Price. "Their answer is that we should double the purses and we'll get more owners. The fact is owners aren't having a good time, small trainers aren't having a good time, the pool of talented jockeys is too small and participants are frustrated."

Partners together in High Hope Stable, Price and the Blanchards are also steeplechase owners – and Price pointed to issues beyond the race meet. He talked about change, some of it sweeping but none of it poorly intentioned and touched on course safety, fence construction, new management, better communication, improved service for horsemen and more.

"As an owner, I've been mistreated by the office and it goes right up the line to the board of directors," Price said. "They don't look at the meets, the owners, the trainers, the jockeys as customers and until they realize that, this is the only way to get their attention. If I had walked away as an owner, it wouldn't have the impact of this."

He expects Little Everglades and the Queen's Cup to hold first-class racing with amenities, rules, policies, specifications and participation by the country's steeplechase horses and horsemen.

"The only thing with tangible benefit (to NSA sanction) are the rules and regulations and they have been well documented and it's pretty much what racing across the United States is built on," said Price, who expects to announce race conditions in January. "The standard from which racing should be conducted is there and it's not brain surgery. Our meet – from a stewarding standpoint, from a videography standpoint, from a patrol-judge standpoint, from a hurdle standpoint – will be every bit as safe as it was this year under NSA sanction."

Price hopes the two-meet revolution is the start of real change, and looks forward to a better American steeplechasing.

See **MEETS** page 51 ►

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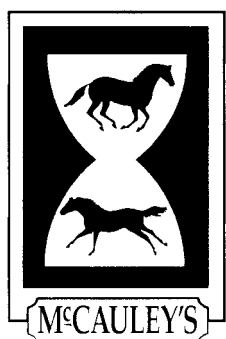


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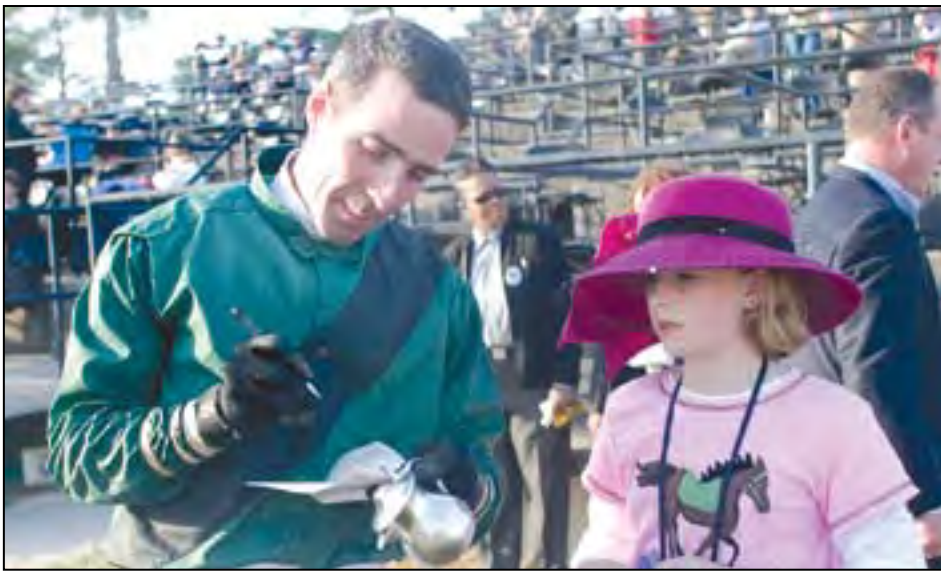
Jack Fisher Stable

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Champion steeplechase trainer of 2007, 2004 and 2003.
Trainer for two of the top four stables on NSA circuit.
(Sonny Via and Arcadia Stable)
Winner of the 2007 Colonial Cup, International Gold Cup, Lonesome Glory,
Radnor Hunt Cup, Iroquois, Marcellus Frost,
Virginia Gold Cup, Grand National Timber, Imperial Cup.





Tod Marks

Chip Miller (he of the 205 career wins) signs an autograph at the Colonial Cup.

Leading Horses

Top 30 steeplechase earners in North America through 2007 (North American earnings only; no bonus earnings):

Horse	Earnings
1. McDynamo*	\$1,310,104
2. Lonesome Glory	965,809
3. Victorian Hill	748,370
4. Sur La Tete*	664,050
5. Rowdy Irishman	644,528
6. Flat Top	592,306
7. Hirapour	583,722
8. Praise The Prince*	576,488
9. Tres Touche	573,670
10. Mistico	517,347
11. Ninepins	516,179
12. Al Skywalker	466,841
13. Warm Spell	457,964
14. Good Night Shirt*	448,973
15. Mixed Up*	445,230
16. Highland Bud	437,500
17. All Gong	435,989
18. Polar Pleasure	433,222
19. Saluter	429,489
20. Census	426,524
21. Flatterer	421,146
22. Double Bill	417,548
23. Steve Canyon	388,102
24. Romantic	379,102
25. Preemptive Strike*	358,356
26. Pompeyo	353,280
27. It's A Giggle	347,790
28. Summer Colony	347,422
29. Yaw	335,327
30. Master McGrath	331,355

Leading Owners

Steeplechase owners with \$1 million or more purses earned in North America through 2007:

Owner	Earnings
1. Augustin Stable*	\$8,405,612
2. Bill Lickle	3,226,421
3. Bill Pape*	2,911,964
4. Kinross Farm*	2,341,834
5. Arcadia Stable*	2,216,301
6. Lillian Phipps	2,016,353
7. John Griggs*	1,960,935
8. Timber Bay Farm*	1,923,374
9. Ann Stern*	1,698,203
10. Calvin Houghland*	1,558,253
11. Irv Naylor*	1,487,147
12. Kay Jeffords	1,477,669
13. Gillian Johnston*	1,432,374
14. Michael Moran*	1,346,204
15. Rokeby Stable	1,326,937
16. Montpelier	1,224,225
17. Joy Valentine	1,123,307
18. Hudson River Farm*	1,133,316
18. Virginia K. Payson	1,087,180

**-Active in 2007*

Leading Trainers

Steeplechase trainers with \$1 million or more purses earned in North America through 2007:

Trainer	Earnings
1. Jonathan Sheppard*	\$17,321,475
2. Janet Elliot*	7,483,414
3. Jack Fisher*	6,822,214
4. Bruce Miller*	6,542,933
5. Sanna Hendriks*	6,123,641
6. Tom Voss*	5,994,028
7. Burley Cocks	4,479,171
8. D.M. Smithwick	4,307,037
9. Charlie Fenwick*	3,874,652
10. Doug Fout*	3,002,112
11. Ricky Hendriks*	2,949,248
12. Neil Morris*	2,165,899
13. Kathy McKenna*	2,070,510
14. Mickey Walsh	1,993,881
15. John Griggs*	1,868,185
16. Sidney Watters Jr.	1,696,919
17. Bruce Haynes*	1,592,452
18. George Bostwick	1,481,588
19. Jimmy Day*	1,387,771
20. Alicia Murphy*	1,058,685
21. Morris Dixon	1,041,229

Leading Jockeys

Steeplechase jockeys with 100 wins or more in North America through 2007:

Jockey	Wins
1. Joe Aitcheson	440
2. Paddy Smithwick	398
3. Dooley Adams	301
Jerry Fishback	301
5. Thomas Walsh	253
6. Jeff Teter	231
7. Chip Miller*	205
8. Blythe Miller	202
9. James Murphy	185
10. Matt McCarron*	173
11. Craig Thornton	171
12. Robert McDonald	166
13. Sean Clancy	152
14. Doug Small Jr.	150
15. Albert Foot	149
16. Rigan McKinney	147
Colvin Ryan*	147
18. Robert Crawford	139
19. J. Dallet Byers	138
20. Leo O'Brien	137
21. Thomas Field	135
22. Ricky Hendriks	130
23. Arch Kingsley*	123
24. Gus Brown	122
Chuck Lawrence	122
26. John Cushman	116
27. Tom Skiffington	115
28. Ronald Armstrong	107
29. Flint Schulhofer	106
30. Charlie Fenwick	105
George Sloan	105
32. Gregg Morris	103
Jonathan Smart	103
34. Jody Petty*	102
34. Scott Riles	101

NSA Standings

FINAL TOP 15 OF 2007

Jockeys (Races Won)

	Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Money	Win%
Xavier Aizpuru	71	22	10	8	\$669,492	.31
Paddy Young	97	16	14	15	341,696	.16
Matt McCarron	90	14	15	11	464,005	.16
Carl Rafter	77	14	7	14	238,340	.18
Chip Miller	62	13	13	8	503,385	.21
Jody Petty	66	13	9	9	542,912	.20
Danielle Hodsdon	65	12	16	10	568,410	.18
James Slater	75	9	13	6	230,890	.12
Gregg Ryan	32	7	3	4	63,050	.22
Chris Read	14	6	1	0	108,550	.43
Willie Dowling	52	5	7	11	431,513	.10
Jeff Murphy	40	5	6	0	125,770	.13
Robbie Walsh	37	5	3	4	109,368	.14
Rylee Zimmerman	42	3	3	5	52,200	.07
Blake Curry	11	3	1	2	49,625	.27

Trainers (Races Won)

	Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Money	Win%
Jack Fisher	102	24	18	13	\$916,628	.24
Jonathan Sheppard	121	21	23	18	919,944	.17
Sanna Hendriks	69	18	11	8	615,770	.26
Tom Voss	84	17	10	15	496,263	.20
Doug Fout	93	15	16	12	504,080	.16
Kathy McKenna	63	11	7	10	172,040	.17
Neil Morris	38	7	7	1	145,950	.18
Ricky Hendriks	42	7	5	5	110,490	.17
Paul Rowland	49	6	3	5	110,610	.12
Arch Kingsley	29	4	4	4	100,161	.14
Bruce Miller	32	3	5	5	172,074	.09
Julie Gomena	20	3	0	3	28,050	.15
Bruce Haynes	98	2	9	18	114,600	.02
Desmond Fogarty	16	2	6	2	39,000	.13
Billy Meister	27	2	2	4	42,800	.07

Owners (Money Won)

	Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Money	Win%
Sonny Via	18	4	5	2	\$370,013	.22
Bill Pape	27	6	8	3	368,515	.22
Augustin Stable	41	14	4	4	275,750	.34
Arcadia Stable	20	7	3	1	269,780	.35
Brigadoon Stable	30	6	4	5	200,919	.20
Michael Moran	8	1	1	1	198,400	.13
Calvin Houghland	45	2	7	6	191,348	.04
Irv Naylor	50	6	8	5	168,900	.12
Fox Ridge Farm	11	4	1	2	162,600	.36
Kinross Farm	38	7	7	1	145,950	.18
Timber Bay Farm	24	4	4	1	140,010	.17
Hudson River Farm	14	4	1	5	139,875	.29
EMO Stable	17	3	2	0	128,701	.18
Armata Stable	23	4	4	6	103,137	.17
Move Up Stable	14	6	0	3	89,640	.43

Horses (Money Won)

	Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Money	Win%
Good Night Shirt	5	3	1	0	\$314,163	.60
McDynamo	3	1	0	0	192,000	.33
Mixed Up	5	2	0	0	159,215	.40
Footlights	4	2	0	1	143,780	.50
Planets Aligned	8	3	1	1	142,600	.38
Gliding	8	2	1	1	136,215	.25
Divine Fortune	7	3	2	0	127,540	.43
Orison	7	1	2	0	109,401	.14
Irish Prince	4	4	0	0	102,000	1.00
Rum Squall	6	3	1	0	81,600	.50
Best Attack	5	1	1	2	77,900	.20
Dark Equation	5	2	1	2	76,300	.40
Imagina	8	3	1	0	72,950	.38
Paradise's Boss	3	2	0	1	69,912	.67
Salmo	2	1	1	0	63,600	.50

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Record purses lead 2007 stats

BY JOE CLANCY

STEEPLECHASE NEWS

The National Steeplechase Association set a record with more than \$5.35 million in purses paid during the 2007 season. The number reflects a 10.5 percent increase from 2006 and breaks the previous mark of \$5.13 million set in 2001.

In addition, the average purse per race increased substantially to \$26,655 (more than \$4,000 above the 2006 mark).

"This was a very successful year," said Bill Gallo, NSA director of racing. "Our typical barometer is total purses, and they were at an all-time high. We hope to continue that trend in 2008 and reward our horsemen. There's a strong feeling by the NSA to increase purses again, so we are looking forward to 2008."

Tempering all that enthusiasm were decreases in participation indicators of licensed owners, trainers and jockeys plus decreases in horses raced, starters and individual races. Long term the healthy purse increases will address the participation dips, Gallo said.

"It's getting more expensive to train and care for horses so the purses must

increase accordingly," Gallo said. "We are working very hard at getting a greater influx of purses and a five-year plan would be to have purses over \$10 million. This would impact the game on many different levels, increase participation and interest, and continue the upward trend of purse increases that stagnated a bit from 1990-2000."

Several factors drove the 2007 purse resurgence including sizeable increases by race meets such as International Gold Cup, Far Hills, Fair Hill, Iroquois, Virginia Gold Cup, Queens Cup, Maryland Hunt Cup, Grand National, and My Lady's Manor. Each paid out at least \$10,000 more in 2007 than it did in 2006.

On the racetrack side, the New York Racing Association contributed nearly \$750,000 to the purse structure, including \$587,600 at Saratoga and a new race worth \$159,200 at Belmont Park. In addition, two jump races worth \$50,000 returned to the Saratoga Open House, while Philadelphia Park also stepped up its steeplechase commitment.

Participation decreases came because of a scaled-back program at Colonial



Tod Marks

Three horses (of 16 that ran) clear the last fence in the maiden hurdle at the Colonial Cup.

Downs (eight fewer races), the end of the Brookhill Steeplechase races, and smaller fields at several meets due to firm turf. Late in the year, Foxfield, Virginia Fall, Morven Park and International Gold Cup were hit hard by the lack of rain and their racing programs showed it.

The NSA's goal of \$10 million is designed as a building block toward increased participation. Purses quadrupled from \$1 million to \$4 million in the 1980s and participation peaked in the early 1990s.

"Clearly, purses are a barometer to how we're doing," Gallo said. "Be-

tween 1980 and 1990, we gathered a lot of momentum. Our purses leveled off over next 10 years and the participation numbers did too. It's somewhat ambitious to say \$10 million, but if you don't have goals and long-range plans you don't have much."

Looking Ahead

The NSA nearly picked up a new meet in March as the Palm Beach Steeplechase considered joining the 2008 schedule. Instead, the meet will aim for 2009 with a potential purse structure of

See **NUMBERS** page 15 ►

Thank You Whitewood Stable



Alex and George Hundt, Jr. send Special Thanks to Richard Valentine, Janet Elliot, Joe Cassidy and Gallop Girl

Numbers —

■ Continued from page 14

\$200,000. In 1984 and 1985, Palm Beach hosted steeplechase meets on a race course over the polo club's two polo fields. The course featured a permanent grandstand and was well-supported by horsemen, sponsors and meet organizers.

The Palm Beach course was (and still is) flat and fast, though it will be expanded in the meet's reincarnation. T

he NSA dispatched safety advisor Barry Watson to Florida to inspect the course and he approved it in terms of safety issues. Thirty-one horses started in four races at the 1984 meet with 29 turning out in 1985. There were no falls or lost jockeys at the first meet and four at the second.

"It will be a speed-oriented course but we have a lot of different race courses," said Gallo. "The turf is excellent. It was a successful meet when it ran and they are talking about a significant amount of purse money. They felt they were rushing it for 2008 and that 2009 was a more realistic goal."

• The Royal Chase (Gr. I) at Keeneland will be run a week later — moving to Thursday, April 24, on the final week of the track's spring meet.

The move squeezes the distance between the Royal Chase and the Iroquois to 16 days from 22, but was done to assist Keeneland's schedule.

"We like to do what Keeneland wants to do and it fits their schedule to be the last week of the meet," said Rob Banner, of International Steeplechase Group (the Royal Chase sponsor/organizer). "We both also wanted to capitalize on some of synergy with Rolex (three-day event) happening at the same time. There is also some international media in Lexington because of Rolex and maybe we can get some attention out of that as well."

All that means horses might be less likely to run in

NSA by the Numbers

	2007	2006	2005
Horses	516	543	580
Starters	1530	1659	1868
Races	201	215	234
Purses.....	\$5,357,645	\$4,846,762	\$5,120,875

the Royal Chase and the Iroquois, but only two horses did that double in 2007.

• Gallo said the NSA was re-evaluating its stakes program and expected to see potential changes presented at the January meetings with race chairmen. One change already in place will be an increase to the purse of the Atlanta feature (April 12). An open stakes, the Georgia Cup will now be worth \$100,000 (up from \$75,000 in 2007).

• Other potential developments include discussions with racetracks Kentucky Downs, Penn National, Philadelphia Park and Belmont/Saratoga, plus a proposed expansion of the Saratoga Open House meet.

NSA names new board members

The National Steeplechase Association gets three new members of its board of directors, while three key directors exit after serving back-to-back three-year terms. The new directors are owners Sally Radcliffe and Charley Strittmatter, and trainer Tom Voss. Radcliffe and Strittmatter are first-time board members while Voss was previously a part of the board 1997-2002. Edgar Cato and Frank Petramalo were each re-elected to a second three-year terms. The five begin their terms Jan. 1.

Guy Torsilieri, an officer (vice president and treasurer) for several years, leaves the board after serving six years. He is the co-chairman of the Far Hills Races,

and spearheaded several areas of reorganization during his tenure. Trainers Doug Fout (secretary in 2007) and Jack Fisher also exit the board.

A slate of new directors is presented by a nominating committee each year, and voted on by patron members.

ST sets publishing dates for 2008

Steeplechase and Eventing Times will publish 12 issues in 2008 with a schedule similar to recent years. Publishing dates are March 7 (season preview), March 28, April 18, May 9, May 23, June 6, July 18, Sept. 19, Oct. 10, Oct. 24, Nov. 14, Dec. 12.

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Maiden Timber Race (\$10,000 purse)

Open Timber Race (\$20,000 purse)

Amateur Highweight Timber Race (\$7,500 purse)

Amateur Riders Club of America Flat Race

Open Flat Race

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STEEPLECHASE 'Pick Six' FANTASY STABLE GAME

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And to all, a good game

If you're looking for a fantastic finish, see Earl Scheib. The 2007 fantasy game has been sealed for weeks. Winfield Sapp secured himself the checkered flag long before Barry Watson dropped his at Camden, and the Colonial Cup amounted to little more than a victory lap around Sapp's home state.

Powered by McDynamo, Holly Stable has been in front since Far Hills, courtesy of a timely triple by Irish Prince, Imagina and the aforementioned legend.

Sapp, not a horseman by trade, was quick to share the secret of his success.

"I must have spent too much time reading the *Steeplechase Times*," he admitted.

While the winner had already hit the proverbial wire, place and show were still up for grabs on the contest's last day. It might well have been the last day of school, the way Jack Clancy flew home. The sixth-grader charged from sixth place to second aboard Good Night Shirt, edging out Ernie Moulos by \$386. As every radio listener knows, employees and their family are not eligible for prizes. But Jack knows he topped his two brothers, father, grandfather, grandmother, cousins, aunt and Uncle Sean, which is reward enough.

Like a sheep dog on a large farm, the final standings ranged far and wide, with stable earnings coming up anywhere from \$22,000 to \$645,266. The Dream Team – Good Night Shirt, McDynamo, Mixed Up, Planets Aligned, Footlights and Irish Prince – would have put their owner in the Millionaire's Club, with \$53,758 to spare for tips.

The "There's No 'I' in Stable" award goes to Linda Cowasjee, who got solid contributions from her entire barn and had the highest earning anchorman, with Riddle bringing in nearly \$32,000.

The top 52 stables are listed here. See www.st-publishing.com for full standings.

– Jamie Santo

Previous winners of the Hoffberger Insurance Group Pick 6 Crown.

2006: Howard Newstadt

2005: Pauline Hutchinson

2004: Vivian Rall

2003: Employees of Opdyke Truck and Equipment (led by Becky Forry)

2002: Pauline Hutchinson

2001: Janet Hutson

2000: McLane Hendriks

1999: Kelly MacKinnon

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Holly	Winfield Sapp
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Mixed Up.....	\$159,215
Orison.....	\$109,401
Irish Prince.....	\$102,000
Imagina.....	\$72,950
Northern Gale.....	\$9,700
.....	\$645,266

Lacrosse Rules	Jack Clancy
Good Night Shirt.....	\$314,163
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Best Attack.....	\$77,900
Ghost Valley.....	\$22,000
Gold Mitten.....	\$5,400
Ten Cents A Shine.....	\$0
.....	\$611,463

MVP Stable	Ernie Moulos
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Mixed Up.....	\$159,215
Irish Prince.....	\$102,000
Imagina.....	\$72,950
Paradise's Boss.....	\$69,912
Pukka.....	\$15,000
.....	\$611,077

Twelfth Night Farm	Nicholas Schweizer
Good Night Shirt.....	\$314,163
Footlights.....	\$143,780
Paradise's Boss.....	\$69,912
Seeyouattheevent.....	\$63,500
Mark The Shark.....	\$9,250
Fiscal Storm.....	\$0
.....	\$600,605

Pony Up Stable	Ashley Monroe
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Orison.....	\$109,401
Irish Prince.....	\$102,000
Imagina.....	\$72,950
Paradise's Boss.....	\$69,912
Class Deputy.....	\$10,950
.....	\$557,213

The Dukester	Charles Reid
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Gliding.....	\$136,215
Orison.....	\$109,401
Imagina.....	\$72,950
Prep School.....	\$16,500
Miles Ahead.....	\$15,000
.....	\$542,066

Singapore Lions	Bill Hutchinson
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Mixed Up.....	\$159,215
Imagina.....	\$72,950
Paradise's Boss.....	\$69,912
Miles Ahead.....	\$15,000
Pukka.....	\$15,000
.....	\$524,077

Ms Demeanor	Linda Cowasjee
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Irish Prince.....	\$102,000
Imagina.....	\$72,950
Paradise's Boss.....	\$69,912
Swimming River.....	\$44,000
Riddle.....	\$31,956
.....	\$512,818

Try Again	Jim McVey
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Mixed Up.....	\$159,215
Imagina.....	\$72,950
Sur La Tete.....	\$27,000
Diego Cao.....	\$25,500
Sharp Face.....	\$23,100
.....	\$499,765

Jabberwocky Stables	Sarah Greenhalgh
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Orison.....	\$109,401
Imagina.....	\$72,950
Paradise's Boss.....	\$69,912
Mr Bombastic.....	\$29,450
Diego Cao.....	\$25,500
.....	\$499,213

Mr. McGuggles Inc.	Suzanna Lampton
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Mixed Up.....	\$159,215
Orison.....	\$109,401
Ghost Valley.....	\$22,000
Guelph.....	\$3,250
Haggard.....	\$2,500
.....	\$488,366

Boots & Bows	Delaney Shields
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Mixed Up.....	\$159,215
Preemptive Strike.....	\$52,702
Slew's Peak.....	\$50,740
Diego Cao.....	\$25,500
Rosbrian.....	\$0
.....	\$480,157

All4Fun&Fun4All	Lulu Verney
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Mixed Up.....	\$159,215
Swimming River.....	\$44,000
Orchid Princess.....	\$39,720
Big Is Best.....	\$17,460
Class Vantage.....	\$15,000
.....	\$467,395

Hunter's Rest	Betsy Parker
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Orison.....	\$109,401
Imagina.....	\$72,950
Paradise's Boss.....	\$69,912
Praise The Prince.....	\$9,000
Fershaw.....	\$8,700
.....	\$461,963

SeaBass Stable	Leslie Young
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Orison.....	\$109,401
Imagina.....	\$72,950
Paradise's Boss.....	\$69,912
Miles Ahead.....	\$15,000
Flyrock.....	\$0
.....	\$459,263

Living On A Prayer	Lisa McLane
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Orison.....	\$109,401
Imagina.....	\$72,950
Mr Bombastic.....	\$29,450
Chivite.....	\$28,374
Pukka.....	\$15,000
.....	\$447,175

Carglen Stable	Joe Clancy Sr.
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Orison.....	\$109,401
Lair.....	\$48,500
Swimming River.....	\$44,000
Rare Bush.....	\$27,000
Ghost Valley.....	\$22,000
.....	\$442,901

Can't Claim Prize Stable	Sean Clancy
Good Night Shirt.....	\$314,163
Best Attack.....	\$77,900
Rare Bush.....	\$27,000
When The Saints.....	\$15,000
Jellyberry.....	\$7,100
Straight Gin.....	\$0
.....	\$441,163

Dadofthree Stable	Joe Clancy
Planets Aligned.....	\$142,500
Orison.....	\$109,401
Best Attack.....	\$77,900
Imagina.....	\$72,950
Sur La Tete.....	\$27,000
Coal Dust.....	\$9,000
.....	\$438,751

Third Brother Stable	Nolan Clancy
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Gliding.....	\$136,215
Bubble Economy.....	\$44,400
Swimming River.....	\$44,000
Prep School.....	\$16,500
Gold Mitten.....	\$5,400
.....	\$438,515

Flying High Farm	Kathryn Rasch
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Mixed Up.....	\$159,215
Orchid Princess.....	\$39,720
Chivite.....	\$28,374
Erin Go Bragh.....	\$18,700
Alumni Hall.....	\$0
.....	\$438,009

Too Far Out Farm	Tiffany Webb
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Orison.....	\$109,401
Imagina.....	\$72,950
Sur La Tete.....	\$27,000
Miles Ahead.....	\$15,000
Pukka.....	\$15,000
.....	\$431,351

Cheltenham Invasion	Richard Hutchinson
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Orison.....	\$109,401
Imagina.....	\$72,950
Sur La Tete.....	\$27,000
Diego Cao.....	\$25,500
Askim.....	\$0
.....	\$426,851

WILCO	Tina Smith
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Orison.....	\$109,401
Paradise's Boss.....	\$69,912
Diego Cao.....	\$25,500
Miles Ahead.....	\$15,000
Gold Mitten.....	\$5,400
.....	\$417,213

McHistory	Owen Demare
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Orison	\$109,401
Imagina	\$72,950
Sur La Tete.....	\$27,000
Pukka	\$15,000
Askim.....	\$0
	\$416,351
Hodges' Arcade	Angela M. Benjamin
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Imagina	\$72,950
Seeyouattheevent.....	\$63,500
Preemptive Strike.....	\$52,702
Riddle.....	\$31,956
Dynamont	\$0
	\$413,108
Second Time Around	Jo Ann Sampson
Good Night Shirt	\$314,163
Mon Villez	\$27,500
Sur La Tete.....	\$27,000
Ghost Valley.....	\$22,000
Feeling So Pretty	\$20,365
Dynamont	\$0
	\$411,028
Northbrook Stable	Peggy Falini
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Footlights	\$143,780
Chivite	\$28,374
Sur La Tete.....	\$27,000
Miles Ahead	\$15,000
Flyrock	\$0
	\$406,154
PonyGirl Stables	Elizabeth Watrous
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Mixed Up.....	\$159,215
Sur La Tete.....	\$27,000
Class Deputy	\$10,950
Bug River	\$10,500
Guelph	\$3,250
	\$402,915
Stampede Farm	Jean Donnan
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Orison	\$109,401
River Bed	\$63,040
Across The Sky	\$23,750
Won Wild Bird.....	\$13,400
Askim.....	\$0
	\$401,591
Lucy's Lunging Leapers	Lucy Seginak
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Mixed Up.....	\$159,215
Feeling So Pretty	\$20,365
Angel Del Viento.....	\$15,000
Miles Ahead	\$15,000
Quem Se Atreve	\$0
	\$401,580
Gush Katif Farm	Howard Newstadt
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Paradise's Boss.....	\$69,912
Slew's Peak.....	\$50,740
The Bruce.....	\$46,750
Sur La Tete.....	\$27,000
Pukka	\$15,000
	\$401,402
Fancy Footwork Stable	Jared Marks
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Irish Prince	\$102,000
Paradise's Boss.....	\$69,912
Diego Cao	\$25,500
Meadow	\$4,500
Evidential	\$2,000
	\$395,912

Refuse To Lose Racing Stables	Gina Perri
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Planets Aligned	\$142,500
Gryffindor	\$26,300
Barrington.....	\$18,200
Coal Dust	\$9,000
Guelph	\$3,250
	\$391,250
Western Run Racing	Regina Welsh
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Best Attack.....	\$77,900
Bubble Economy.....	\$44,400
Swimming River	\$44,000
Sur La Tete.....	\$27,000
Guelph	\$3,250
	\$388,550
Thunder Road Farm	Diana Rowland
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Paradise's Boss.....	\$69,912
Swimming River	\$44,000
Orchid Princess.....	\$39,720
Sur La Tete.....	\$27,000
Miles Ahead	\$15,000
	\$387,632
Millstone Farm	James Watrous
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Orison	\$109,401
Orchid Princess.....	\$39,720
Sur La Tete.....	\$27,000
Pukka	\$15,000
Askim.....	\$0
	\$383,121
Irish Imports	Ann Morss
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Imagina	\$72,950
Paradise's Boss.....	\$69,912
Riddle.....	\$31,956
Pukka	\$15,000
Askim.....	\$0
	\$381,818
Overcoming All Hurdles	Debbie Pederson
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Footlights	\$143,780
Erin Go Bragh.....	\$18,700
Miles Ahead	\$15,000
Tenacious Rhythm	\$11,050
Bonfo	\$0
	\$380,530
Daring Daughter Stable	Pam Hodsdon
Mixed Up.....	\$159,215
Orison	\$109,401
Slew's Peak.....	\$50,740
Sur La Tete.....	\$27,000
Prep School	\$16,500
Miles Ahead	\$15,000
	\$377,856
Space Stable	Keegan Shields
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Orison	\$109,401
Preemptive Strike.....	\$52,702
Gigger.....	\$19,500
Mary Cat	\$3,000
Bulawayo	\$0
	\$376,603
Not A Clue	Jack McVey
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Paradise's Boss.....	\$69,912
Slew's Peak.....	\$50,740
Sur La Tete.....	\$27,000
Bold Turn	\$16,450
Miles Ahead	\$15,000
	\$371,102



Tod Marks
Northern Gale (8) was part of Winfield Sapp's winning Pick Six stable, while Lair (left) and Slew's Peak (right) also bolstered the fortunes of several stables.

Stupid Stunt Stables	Brian Malone
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Imagina	\$72,950
Preemptive Strike.....	\$52,702
Sur La Tete.....	\$27,000
Miles Ahead	\$15,000
Class Deputy	\$10,950
	\$370,602
Jacob's Jumpers	Jacob Benda
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Gliding	\$136,215
Orchid Princess.....	\$39,720
Askim.....	\$0
Cripple Creek.....	\$0
Quem Se Atreve	\$0
	\$367,935
Exeter Township	Sarah Hutchinson
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Orison	\$109,401
Sur La Tete.....	\$27,000
Miles Ahead	\$15,000
Pukka	\$15,000
Gold Mitten	\$5,400
	\$363,801
Lotta Errata	Jamie Santo
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Paradise's Boss.....	\$69,912
Mr Bombastic	\$29,450
Rare Bush	\$27,000
Diego Cao	\$25,500
Won Wild Bird.....	\$13,400
	\$357,262
Big Fat Tabby Cat	L.K. Thomas
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Paradise's Boss.....	\$69,912
Orchid Princess.....	\$39,720
Sur La Tete.....	\$27,000
Ghost Valley.....	\$22,000
Ninety Day Note	\$2,300
	\$352,932

Let The Band Play On	Caylin Haldeman
Planets Aligned	\$142,500
Imagina	\$72,950
Paradise's Boss.....	\$69,912
Preemptive Strike.....	\$52,702
Mark The Shark.....	\$9,250
Askim.....	\$0
	\$347,314
Hard Boot Stable	Clara Allison
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Paradise's Boss.....	\$69,912
Orchid Princess.....	\$39,720
Sur La Tete.....	\$27,000
Miles Ahead	\$15,000
Ten Cents A Shine	\$0
	\$343,632
Beulah Hill	Doris Green
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Paradise's Boss.....	\$69,912
Riddle.....	\$31,956
Diego Cao	\$25,500
Ghost Valley	\$22,000
Countess Avie	\$1,800
	\$343,168
Upper East Side Racing ...	Andrea Wasserman
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Orison	\$109,401
Sur La Tete.....	\$27,000
Jellyberry	\$7,100
Askim.....	\$0
Dynamont	\$0
	\$335,501
Horsey Horsey Farm	Nolan Wasserman
McDynamo.....	\$192,000
Orison	\$109,401
Orsay	\$28,047
Haggard	\$2,500
Flying Contraption.....	\$1,800
Sailmaker	\$0
	\$333,748

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Tom's Tracks

Thoroughbred race courses visited by Tom Miscannon with country and year visited:

1. Penn National	USA	1974
Philadelphia Park	USA	1979
Tampa Bay Downs	USA	1980
Ayr	UK	1983
Newmarket	UK	
Bath	UK	
Ascot	UK	
Sandown Park	UK	
Wolverhampton	UK	
Kelso	UK	
Catterick Bridge	UK	
Ludlow	UK	1984
Aintree	UK	
Enghien	FRA	
Munich	GER	
York	UK	
Lingfield Park	UK	
Warwick	UK	
Folkestone	UK	
Fontwell Park	UK	
Perth	UK	
Hamilton Park	UK	
Haydock Park	UK	
Pimlico	USA	1985
25. Epsom Downs	UK	
Windsor	UK	
Leicester	UK	
Great Yarmouth	UK	
Ripon	UK	
Pontefract	UK	
Redcar	UK	
Carlisle	UK	
Doncaster	UK	
Edinburgh	UK	
Stratford-on-Avon	UK	
Kempton Park	UK	
Newbury	UK	
Sunland Park	USA	1986
Turf Paradise	USA	
Agua Caliente	MEX	
Santa Anita	USA	
Atlantic City	USA	
Delaware Park	USA	
Charles Town	USA	
Timonium	USA	
Calder Race Course	USA	
Hialeah Park	USA	1987
Jefferson Downs	USA	
Louisiana Downs	USA	
50. Gulfstream Park	USA	1988
Monmouth Park	USA	
Garden State Park	USA	1989
Birmingham Race Course	USA	1990
Fair Grounds	USA	
Exmouth	AUS	
Ascot	AUS	
Dongara	AUS	1991
Carnarvon	AUS	
Hollywood Park	USA	
Solano	USA	
Longacres	USA	
Ak-Sar-Ben	USA	
Prarie Meadows	USA	
Arlington Park	USA	
Thistledown	USA	
Bay Meadows	USA	1992
Agnano	ITA	1993
Turfway Park	USA	
Beulah Park	USA	
Mountaineer Park	USA	
Fairfax	USA	
Keeneland	USA	1994
Laurel Park	USA	
Far Hills	USA	
75. The Meadowlands	USA	
Aqueduct	USA	
Sonsbeck	GER	1995
Neuss	GER	
Sterrebeek	BEL	
Dortmund	GER	
Frankfurt	GER	
Mulheim	GER	
St. Moritz	SWI	1996
Mannheim	GER	
Plumpton	UK	
Herxheim	GER	
Karlsruhe	GER	
Stromsholm	SWE	
Taby	SWE	
Jagersro	SWE	
Hannover	GER	
Ostende	BEL	
Bad Harzburg	GER	
Dusseldorf	GER	
Cologne	GER	
Saignelegier	SWI	
Dielsdorf	SWI	
Saarbrücken	GER	
Belmont Park	USA	
100. Gelsenkirchen	GER	
Bangor-on-Dee	UK	1997
Walldorf	GER	
Zweibrücken	GER	
Hassloch	GER	
Le Touquet	FRA	
Tipperary	IRE	
Chantilly	FRA	
Erbach	GER	
Duindigt	NTH	
Magdeburg	GER	
Baden-Baden	GER	
Waregem	BEL	

A World of Racing

Super fan spans the globe, one racetrack at a time

BY JAMIE SANTO

A thousand-mile journey begins with a single step. As a kid, Tom Miscannon used to make the trek from Harrisburg to Penn National. That was many miles and many tracks ago.

Since that first trip, he's been racing in 13 countries, seen horses run on a frozen lake in Saint Moritz and on the strand at Laytown. To date, Miscannon's visited 227 venues – from Aarau to Zweibrücken and just about everywhere in between (including seven National Steeplechase Association meets in 2007). And he's not done.

"It kind of turned into a quest," Miscannon said this fall. "I wanted to get to every race course in Britain, which was how it all kind of started out."

That was in 1982, when Miscannon – in the Navy and newly married – was sent to Scotland. He figured he'd have plenty of time for golf. But faced with 80-hour work weeks and less-than-lovely weather, there was little time to hit the links.

"I wanted to play every course in the British Isles – that wasn't going to happen," he recalled. "I said, 'If I can't get to every golf course in Great Britain, I'll try and get to all the race courses.'"

When Miscannon landed in Scotland for his three-year tour, he'd been to exactly three racetracks – Penn National, Philadelphia Park and Tampa Bay Downs. Soon, he was off to the races.

"My first track in Scotland was Ayr. That was close to where we were based, in what was called the Holy Loch, about 45 miles west of Glasgow," Miscannon said. "Wonderful race course, really nice. In those few years I think I got to about 30 of them, and that's what kind of was the impetus."

Join the Navy and see the world. Miscannon's initial goal (which is nearly complete) had expanded beyond the United Kingdom and gone global, though it didn't take off right away. After trading Scotland for Orlando, Fla., Miscannon made it to the races whenever possible, which wasn't often.

"When I came home from that tour of duty, the kids were little, I couldn't do a lot of tracks in those years, but we got to a few here and there – being in the Navy I got to travel a lot."

Stationed in Australia for a year, he hit a few tracks Down Under, and a few more upon returning to Florida. Then came his big break.

"They were closing the base and I said, 'Oh, why don't we try and get another duty assignment overseas?' I got stationed in Belgium. And from Belgium – Germany, France, Switzerland, Ireland. We were going racing like crazy."



Tod Marks

Tom Miscannon (right) and his brother, Stephen, at the Morven Park Races this fall.

Miscannon filled up his scorecard, hitting race meets all across Europe. Some countries are harder to cross off than others.

"I've been to all the Belgian tracks – which are five," he said. "That was easy. I've been to all the Dutch tracks, which is one."

While Miscannon would like to make it to every track in the world, his aim isn't just to compile a list. The bottom line is not the total, but the total experience.

"Most every place I've ever been, it's been a positive experience," he said. "I love racing in Sweden. We got treated like kings. When we went up to the Swedish National, we were the only Americans there. We got a proper introduction at the pre-race party and they invited us for champagne."

After 20 years of service, Miscannon retired from the Navy and returned to Orlando, where he works as an administrative assistant at the University of Central Florida. It's a great job, although not exactly located in the heart of horse country.

Miscannon doesn't come from a horse-racing family, but racing days are family affairs, as he's often joined by Elba, his wife of 25 years, and his brothers Stephen and Bernie.

While the trips are subject to race dates and logistics, Miscannon saves the big names for the big milestones.

"Number 200 was Great Meadow. I'm trying to make each century, if you will, a special track," he said. "Number 100 was Gelsenkirchen; they have the longest steeplechase race in

See **MISCANNON** page 19 ►

Lebach	GER	Southwell	UK	Del Mar	USA	200. Great Meadow	USA	2007
Honzrath	GER	Huntingdon	UK	Los Alamitos	USA	Winterthur	USA	
Groenendaal	BEL	Meissenheim	GER	Orange	AUS	2005	Canterbury Park	USA
Halle	GER	Aarau	SWI	Canterbury Park	AUS		Arapahoe Park	USA
Dresden	GER	Montier-en-Der	FRA	Newcastle	AUS		Flagstaff	USA
Newton Abbot	UK	Longchamp	FRA	Hawkesbury	AUS		SunRay Park	USA
Exeter	UK	Maisons-Laffitte	FRA	Yass	AUS		Fair Meadows	USA
Towcester	UK	Evreux	FRA	Wagga Wagga	AUS		Gillespie County Fair	USA
Nottingham	UK	150. Le Lion d'Angers	FRA	Queanbeyan	AUS		Lone Star Park	USA
Krefeld	GER	Saratoga Race Course	USA	Muswellbrook	AUS		Tralee	IRE
Leopardstown	IRE	Finger Lakes	USA	Wyong	AUS		Ballinrobe	IRE
Compiegne	FRA	Woodbine	CAN	Kembla Grange	AUS		Sligo	IRE
125. Grossenkneten	GER	Fort Erie	CAN	Randwick	AUS		Bellewstown	IRE
Chalons-en-Champagne	FRA	Fair Hill	USA	Shoalhaven	AUS		Down Royal	UK
Nancy-Brabois	FRA	AMIENS	FRA	Crookwell	AUS		The Curragh	IRE
Wissembourg	FRA	Sam Houston	USA	Warwick Farm	AUS		Roscommon	IRE
Herschberg	GER	Remington Park	USA	Goulburn	AUS		Clonmel	IRE
Dieppe	FRA	Oaklawn Park	USA	Bunbury	AUS		Laytown	IRE
Varese	ITA	Delta Downs	USA	Ghlin	BEL	2006	Kilbeggan	IRE
Deauville	FRA	River Downs	USA	Saint-Cloud	FRA		Cork	IRE
Worcester	UK	Colonial Downs	USA	Auteuil	FRA		Galway	IRE
Quakenbruck	GER	Fakenham	UK	Churchill Downs	USA		Shawan Downs	USA
Hereford	UK	175. Newcastle	UK	Great Lakes Downs	USA		Foxfield	USA
Beverley	UK	Sedgefield	UK	Indiana Downs	USA		Morven Park	USA
Chester	UK	Wetherby	UK	Hoosier Park	USA		Montpelier	USA
Goodwood	UK	Chepstow	UK	Ellis Park	USA		Pennsylvania Hunt Cup	USA
Strasbourg	FRA	Hexham	UK	Fairmount Park	USA		Golden Gate Fields	USA
Cheltenham	UK	Thirsk	UK	Suffolk Downs	USA		227. Portland Meadows	USA
Uttoxeter	UK	Market Rasen	UK	Hawthorne	USA			

Miscannon —

■ Continued from page 18

Germany . . . Number 1,000 is going to be the Melbourne Cup (in Australia). Hopefully I don't die before I get to that one. A thousand tracks, that's a long way to go still."

Racing around Europe presents the occasional obstacle, but Miscannon overcomes them with common sense and optimism.

"It's tricky — you can't read the form if you don't know the language," he said. "I haven't gotten to too many places where I couldn't even make out the form, and in most places they speak English. When I got to Sweden, there were people that spoke better English than me. I figure out how to make it work when I'm there."

Most of the time, things work fine.

"The only hiccup I ever had was one time in Naples, Italy. My ship made a port visit. It's hot — it's July in the Mediterranean, it's like 90 degrees — so I threw on a pair of shorts and a collared shirt. I got to the track and the guy said, 'You can't come in. You do not have a pair of slacks on. You cannot come in with shorts, men must be wearing trousers.' So he sent me away. Fortunately, the port visit was seven days and they raced three days later, so I got to go back. Make no mistake, I had slacks on that day."

Miscannon doesn't limit himself to Europe. He's travelled around the country, watching races at state fairs and Saratoga, long-shuttered tracks such as Ak-Sar-Ben and Hialeah. He just returned from a two-track West Coast swing to Golden Gate Fields and Portland Meadows. Tom enjoys the big tracks, but relishes the special feeling of a little meet too.

"I love tracks like Arlington, Saratoga, Cheltenham, Ascot, Deauville. My all-time favorite small track is this little place in Germany called Zweibrücken. It's a little figure 8, they run steeples as well as flat. In the States, I really enjoyed Flagstaff. That was a neat little place. The picnic races in Australia; I've been to two of

See Him Next Year

Tom Miscannon's racing goals for 2008:

Racetrack	Country
Ocala.....	United States
Little Everglades	United States
Camden	United States
Gem County.....	United States
Sun Downs	United States
Iroquois	United States
Willowdale	United States
Assiniboia Downs	Canada
Brown County Fair	United States
Lethbridge	Canada
Millarville	Canada
Evergreen Park	Canada
Northlands Park.....	Canada
Middleburg	United States
Aiken.....	United States
Downpatrick.....	Ireland
Thurles.....	Ireland
Dundalk	Ireland
Naas.....	Ireland
Navan.....	Ireland
Limerick.....	Ireland

those, Yass and the Crookwell District. Those are exciting. They're just one-time-a-year, they're browned out — as you go out into the scrub and the bush it's all dirt tracks — but those are great because it's just a farming community coming together to race their horses. They're a hoot, grass-roots racing at its best."

The racing is important — he doesn't visit on dark days — but variety counts as well.

"The beauty of golf is that you have 18 different holes," he said. "I rarely go back to the same track twice. I love racing at all levels. I'm done with the big tracks, we're doing a lot of smaller tracks now."

Steeplechasing is big on his radar, and Miscannon made seven stops on the NSA circuit in 2007, visiting the Virginia Gold Cup, Winterthur, Shawan Downs, Foxfield, Morven Park, Montpelier and the Pennsylvania Hunt Cup.

"I love my jump racing more than anything. The first time I saw a jump race was when I was in Britain. It grabbed me right away."

Combine that excitement with the beauty and individuality of steeplechase courses, and Miscannon is a happy man.

"This, to me, is delicious. It's something that you really enjoy," he said, "It's not white bread — this is different."

For Miscannon, the visits are a labor of love, but there's regular labor involved as well. To get to Morven Park, he flew up from Orlando in the morning, and flew back home the same night. And when he first hits the track, there's the business of getting a program.

"I save all my programs. One of these days I'm going to display them. There's a few tracks I don't have programs for — like in Belgium, they don't really issue programs, you just kind of get the newspaper."

He goes to lengths to make sure each one is mint, sometimes asking the vendor if he can open a fresh pack. All of his programs are in immaculate condition: crease-free, blemish-free, unread and unmarked — with one exception.

"There's only one program that I have that's written in and I don't know if I'll replace it only because I had a huge win that day. The Ayr Gold Cup, a 6-furlong race with like 30 horses, and I actually had the quinella. How do you get a quinella in a 6-furlong dash with 30 horses? A one-pound bet paid like 200, and I actually have those two horses circled."

Someday, the programs will make a great wall decoration; or a lasting tribute.

"If I don't display them, maybe one day I'll donate them — Tom Miscannon's contribution to racing. If I ever have a legacy, it will be the guy who was crazy enough to go to the most tracks."

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Amateur Timber Jockey – George Hundt Jr.

Restricted to amateur jockeys, the heavyweight timber division included seven races in 2007 – at My Lady's Manor, Grand National, Winterthur, Willowdale, Virginia Fall, Morven Park and Pennsylvania Hunt Cup. Hundt won two, scoring at Willowdale with Michele Marieschi and the Pennsylvania Hunt Cup with Professor Maxwell. Richard Valentine trained both horses.

Amateur Jockey – James Slater.

Repeat. The 2006 champion won nine races to hit the Top 10 once again. English native rode often for employer Jonathan Sheppard, but sealed the championship with a double at Callaway Gardens – including a stakes score with Lair for trainer Tom Voss. Veteran Gregg Ryan earned seven wins to take second in the category and reach 147 (tied with Rigan McKinney) for his career.

Apprentice Jockey – Jeff Murphy.

Irishman picked up five wins to lead all jockeys with fewer than 15 career victories. Murphy rode for a variety of trainers, but his unquestioned highlight came aboard the Doug Fout-trained Gliding in the Temple Gwathmey (second leg of the Steeplechase Triple Crown) at Middleburg – where Murphy also won aboard Bon Fleur.

Timber Jockey – Paddy Young.

Won aboard Bubble Economy at Camden in season's final timber event to seal the title. Young won six timber races with six different horses, including a double at Willowdale aboard Move West and Noble Bob.

Timber Trainer – Sanna Hendriks.

No contest. She won 10 races over timber – nearly 25 percent of the total offered by the NSA – including four stakes (three with Irish Prince and one with The Bruce).

Timber Owner – Augustin Stable.

Usually a powerhouse on the full circuit, Augustin soared over timber in 2007 with \$168,800 earned largely on the back of division champion Irish Prince (see below).

Claimer of the Year – Duke Of Earl.

Ch. g. 8, Ali Royal-Faye, Monsanto. Bred by Noel Finegan (Ireland). Owner: Kingfisher Farm. Trainer: Jack Fisher. Jockeys: Xavier Aizpuru, Robbie Walsh, Willie Dowling. In five starts for a tag, he won twice and earned \$33,100. Not bad considering he started for \$20,000 or less four times and was once offered for sale privately at \$1. Victories came at Colonial Downs and Philadelphia Park.

NSA AWARDS 2007

Timber Horse – Irish Prince.

B. g. 8, Prince Of Praise-Jane Irish, Take Your Partner. Bred by B.G. Keil (New Zealand). Owner: Augustin Stable. Trainer: Sanna Hendriks. Jockey: Jody Petty. Unbeaten in four starts, he clinched the championship with New Jersey Hunt Cup win at Far Hills and set a record with \$102,000 earned (topping Saluter's \$96,189 in 1995). Broke maiden at the Carolina Cup and won stakes at the Iroquois, Shawan Downs and Far Hills meets. Augustin's first timber champion since 1970, when For Bravery took the crown with owner George Strawbridge aboard.

Three-Year-Old Champion – C R's Deputy.

B. g., Deputy Commander-Splendid Victory, Atticus. Bred by Tracy Farmer (Kentucky). Owner: Barracuda Stable. Trainer: Ricky Hendriks. Jockeys: Paddy Young and Chip Miller. For the record, the horse has nearly as many owners as the Green Bay Packers – who are publicly traded. The group consists of: George and Sue Sensor; Wendy, Dickie and Ricky Hendriks; Ken and Debbie Kachel; Barbara Taggart and Jim Vicci; Fred and Barbara Davis; Jim and Connie Aikman. In three jump starts on the year, he picked up a maiden win at Virginia Fall, a stakes score in the Gladstone at Far Hills and a second in the Woolfe at Camden. Purchased for \$20,000 at Fasig-Tipton Midlantic.

Filly/Mare Champion – Footlights. (sponsored by Northview Stallion Station)

B. m. 7, Pleasant Tap-Magnificent Baby, Northern Baby. Bred by Al and Joyce Meek (Kentucky). Owner: Arcadia Stable. Trainers: Jack Fisher and Roger Horgan. Jockey: Xavier Aizpuru. She earned nearly twice what any other female steeplechaser did in 2007 thanks to history-making victory in the Grade I New York Turf Writers Cup at Saratoga. Just the second filly/mare to win the race (as far as research can tell), Footlights scored in a Saratoga allowance as well (also against males).

Novice Champion – Planets Aligned.

Ch. g. 6, Gold Fever-Flying Minister, Deputy Minister. Bred by Fox Ridge Farm (Kentucky). Owner: Fox Ridge Farm. Trainer: Tom Voss. Jockeys: Chip Miller, Rob Massey, Cyril Murphy. First-year hurdler started slowly with a fall and a 10th in first two starts. Broke his maiden at the Iroquois in May and added scores at Saratoga and the U.S. Championship at Callaway Gardens. Led all first-year novices (those who started the year as maidens) with \$142,600 earned.

Sport of Kings Novice – Gliding.

B. g. 7, Lord Ballina-Purring, Gold Carat. Bred by J.N. Wallace (New Zealand). Owner: Brigadoon Stable. Trainer: Doug Fout. Jockeys: Matt McCarron, Jeff Murphy, Chip Miller, Paddy Young. Topped all earners in the rich Sport of Kings program with \$114,375 on strength of two wins (the Temple Gwathmey and the Foxbrook). Came to America in 2006 shortly after breaking maiden over hurdles and enjoyed banner 2007 with \$136,215 earned overall.

Champion Owner – Sonny Via.

Via came flying on the final day, with wins by Good Night Shirt (the straw that stirred the drink all year, winning \$314,163 of \$370,013) and Fantorini to take the title by \$1,498 over Bill Pape. First championship for Virginia resident who campaigned his first steeplechaser in 1998 and has increased his earnings total in each of the past four seasons.

Champion Trainer – Jack Fisher (races); Jonathan Sheppard (earnings).

Fisher sealed the deal with a triple at the Colonial Cup, giving him 24 wins on the year, three more than Jonathan Sheppard. In the earnings race, Sheppard collected \$919,944 and held on to edge out Fisher by \$3,307. Fisher's season included major wins by Good Night Shirt, Footlights, Salmo and Paradise's Boss. Sheppard's stars were Mixed Up and Divine Fortune.

Champion Jockey – Xavier Aizpuru.

Came into season's final day with tidy leads in races-won and money-won standings . . . and taking the early double sure didn't hurt him any. Aizpuru won 22 races, six more than Paddy Young. English veteran rode first American race in 2004 (a win) and improved his victory total each season. Highlights of 2007 included stakes scores with Footlights and Paradise's Boss. A triple at Aiken helped salt away the crown.

Lonesome Glory Award – Good Night Shirt. (leading horse by earnings)

Ch. g. 6, Concern-Hot Story, Two Punch. Bred by Dr. and Mrs. Tom Bowman (Maryland). Owner: Sonny Via. Trainer: Jack Fisher. Jockey: Willie Dowling. A great example of how to progress through the ranks. He started as a maiden in 2005, won a stakes in 2006 and vaulted to Grade I winner in 2007. His win in the Colonial Cup sewed up the earnings lead, this honor and most likely the Eclipse Award as champion steeplechaser of 2007. Good Night Shirt also won the Iroquois and the Lonesome Glory – and came within a neck of taking the Royal Chase. Official champion will be named in Eclipse Award voting.

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Steeplechase 101

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**Informing The
 Reader About
 Steeplechasing
 Through The
 People On The
 Inside Of The Sport**

Q: Where is the Champion Jockey Trophy now that you've won it?



A: (from 2007 NSA jockey champion Xavier Aizpuru): "Well, I probably shouldn't tell you, but I think it's sitting on Robbie Walsh's mantlepiece (in Pennsylvania). It's a wonderful and beautiful trophy but I took so much stuff to Florida that I didn't have room for it, and I didn't think it would be a good idea to take it on the airplane with me and I didn't dare put it in my bag, so Robbie is watching it for me. But when I come back up north I'll be breaking down his door to get it."

Aizpuru will spend the winter in Florida, exercising horses for flat trainer Graham Motion, before heading north for the 2008 steeplechase season – and another crack at the that trophy.



Power Shirt

BY SEAN CLANCY

In the dead of winter at Fair Hill Training Center, Good Night Shirt stood out. Big, correct, placid, sound, steady, good eye, full of conviction – and for sale. He made you like him. Over-thought, he didn't make sense. An unraced 3-year-old by the banished stallion Concern, out of a mare by the sprinter-producing Two Punch; no siblings to note and he had never been much faster than an open gallop. But on instinct, he had to be bought.

At worst, he's a jumper. At best? A champion jumper. Call 2007 the best for Good Night Shirt.

Owned by Sonny Via and trained by Jack Fisher, the 6-year-old won three Grade I stakes in 2007 to lead all horses with a record \$314,163 in earnings. In three seasons of steeplechasing, Good Night Shirt collected \$448,973, good enough for 14th on the all-time earnings list.

Bred by Tom and Chris Bowman, broken by Suzanne Moscarelli and trained on the flat by Liz Merryman, Good Night Shirt made friends long before his championship run. Horses give vibes. The good ones naturally emit good vibes. He's a type of horse you want to be around. Big, long head evokes peace. Big, long body promises stamina. Big, long stride delivers it.

Traditionally, steeplechasing fills its horse inventory from the flat game. Sometimes it's like trying to make pottery from clay which has already been through the kiln. Good Night Shirt – like McDynamo, Sur La Tete, Mixed Up and a few others – came to steeplechasing ready to be formed.

Bowman bred and raised a nice foal. Moscarelli taught him right and gave him room as a 2-year-old. Merryman took her time, never injected a joint, never let him learn to be rank, won two races and delivered an unblemished product to jump racing. Fisher won a Sport of Kings maiden with him as a 4-year-old, an open stakes as a 5-year-old and a championship as a 6-year-old – and never over-faced him. Good Night Shirt has never run more than eight times in any of his four seasons.

The people made the decisions but the horse made it happen.

With Moscarelli's son, Vince, Good Night Shirt trained at Delaware Park as a 2-year-old, but was anything but precocious. He learned the basics but always looked like a longterm project. Put away for a few months, Good Night Shirt entered Merryman's barn at Fair Hill (where Moscarelli rented stalls) when he was purchased by Riverdee Stable with a goal of flat racing first and steeplechasing second.

Merryman unveiled Good Night Shirt at Pimlico in April 2004. Sprinting 6 furlongs, he finished sixth of 11, beaten 7 1/2 lengths. After two more dirt starts (never beaten more than 4 lengths), he switched to the



Tod Marks

The likely champion checks out the scene at the Colonial Cup in Camden, S.C.

turf, finishing third in a Colonial Downs maiden before winning two in a row over the Pimlico turf. He lost twice against second-level allowance company before being purchased by Via in early 2005.

Good Night Shirt made his steeplechase debut at Foxfield in 2005 – he opened up a long lead, stumbled and wound up third behind Noble Bob and Desert Swing. Fisher used that as tutorial and Good Night Shirt learned his lesson.

He captured a maiden at Nashville in his next start. Put away for the summer, he fell over another horse at Saratoga but rebounded to win an allowance in his next start. Two novice starts that fall yielded a second and a fourth.

In 2006, Good Night Shirt failed in all three legs of the Steeplechase Triple Crown, finishing third, second and fifth while never looking comfortable. He was rank in front, awkward behind.

"I just didn't think he was that good," Fisher said. "Before the first one (the Carolina Cup) he was lugging and we put a different bit in his mouth and he ran off. At Middleburg, he was just there, finished third and got moved up, that was a gift. Then he ran bad at Radnor and it was like, 'he's just not that caliber.' He was going to be a timber horse."

Luckily for the Shirt, there is no timber racing in the summer.

Under Xavier Aizpuru, Good Night Shirt snapped a six-race losing streak in the Zeke Ferguson when he finally got back on a flat, free-running course. At Saratoga, he finished a decent second to Hirapour in the A.P. Smithwick and then Fisher put him away until this spring.

"He didn't beat anybody in the Zeke Ferguson and then he ran well enough at Saratoga, but it wasn't that great a race. We put him away basically because I didn't think I could beat McDynamo and Hirapour at equal weights," Fisher said. "This spring, either he stepped up or he becomes a timber horse."

Good Night Shirt built a ladder.

The Maryland-bred son of Concern made his 2007 bow in the Royal Chase at Keeneland. Against a group lacking three-time champion McDynamo and 2006 winner Sur La Tete, Good Night Shirt struggled with his rhythm but rallied to finish second behind Mixed Up. One more stride and he wins. He didn't step up, he leapt up.

"I was surprised . . . I have no idea why he stepped up," Fisher said. "With (four-time timber champ) Saluter, I had no idea he was a good horse, but that's the way my thinking goes when I talk to my owners – I never try to build them up and tell them this is the

See **GOOD NIGHT SHIRT** page 23 ►

Good Night Shirt

Ch. g. 6 Concern-Hot Story, Two Punch.

Bred by Tom and Chris Bowman (MD).

Owner: Sonny Via. Trainer: Jack Fisher. Jockey: Willie Dowling.

Career Steeplechase Record

Year	Age	Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Earnings
2005	4	6	2	1	1	\$66,500
2006	5	5	1	2	1	68,310
2007	6	5	3	1	0	314,163
Totals		16	6	4	2	\$448,973

Good Night Shirt's 2007 take is an all-time high, breaking Gabriel's 1990 earnings mark of \$312,224 by \$1,939.

Good Night Shirt —

■ Continued from page 22

second coming. It works out better, you're not so disappointed when it doesn't work out."

In his second start, Good Night Shirt forced jockey Willie Dowling to drop his head and let him rumble along on the lead in the Iroquois. Never a fluid jumper, he nailed spots when he had to and put stamina to a test in the 3-mile classic. Divisional lumberjacks McDynamo and Sur La Tete couldn't run him down.

After a summer vacation, Good Night Shirt returned — rusty — in the Lonesome Glory at Belmont Park. He karate-chopped the first and last hurdles but picked himself up to win the inaugural running of the Grade I stakes — an impressive victory but against horses worn out from Saratoga.

Matched against McDynamo in an epic renewal of the Breeders' Cup Steeplechase at Far Hills, Good

Night Shirt jumped awkwardly at crucial moments and faltered in the laboring ground. He wound up fourth, spent from tracking McDynamo. Far Hills proved to be McDynamo's gig for the seventh consecutive year.

"When I got up there and the ground was soft, I knew where we were going to finish. I thought he made a good effort, but that ground is McDynamo's type of ground," Fisher said. "Going to Camden, I thought it was a two-horse race, I wasn't confident we were going to beat McDynamo, he runs around that course a lot of times like he runs around Far Hills."

Eclipse Award in the balance, Good Night Shirt squared off with McDynamo in the Colonial Cup. In the race that decides everything, this was young buck against old fox. And right there in front of the world — before the fifth fence — steeplechasing said goodbye to one champion and greeted another. Instead of wrestling Good Night Shirt behind McDynamo, Dowling released his grip and Good Night Shirt bowled to the lead of the 2 3/4-mile Colonial Cup. Sometimes, you just have to let the dogs out. Good Night Shirt relaxed, and never

looked back. In five minutes, 19 seconds McDynamo was retired and Good Night Shirt was champion.

"When he went to the lead at Camden I was confident," Fisher said. "I thought that might be the only way to beat McDynamo, to take it to him. That's what he did at Nashville and I figured he did it once, he could do it again. He's learned, his jumping wasn't brilliant and he still makes mistakes but he has learned, it took him a little longer to learn than other horses."

Now, about an encore?

"I asked Jack the same thing," Via said. "Now what? What's the Shirt going to do next year?" Jack said, 'The same thing.' In '06 he had a very good year and '05 too. He just progressed along. Nobody ever really pushed him hard. He just learned his job. He was humbled any number of times along the way, but he just kept digging. He's a hell of a horse, when you consider his size, some things just are not easy for him. He needs his space."

Save some space on the mantel, he'll be picking up his Eclipse Award in January.

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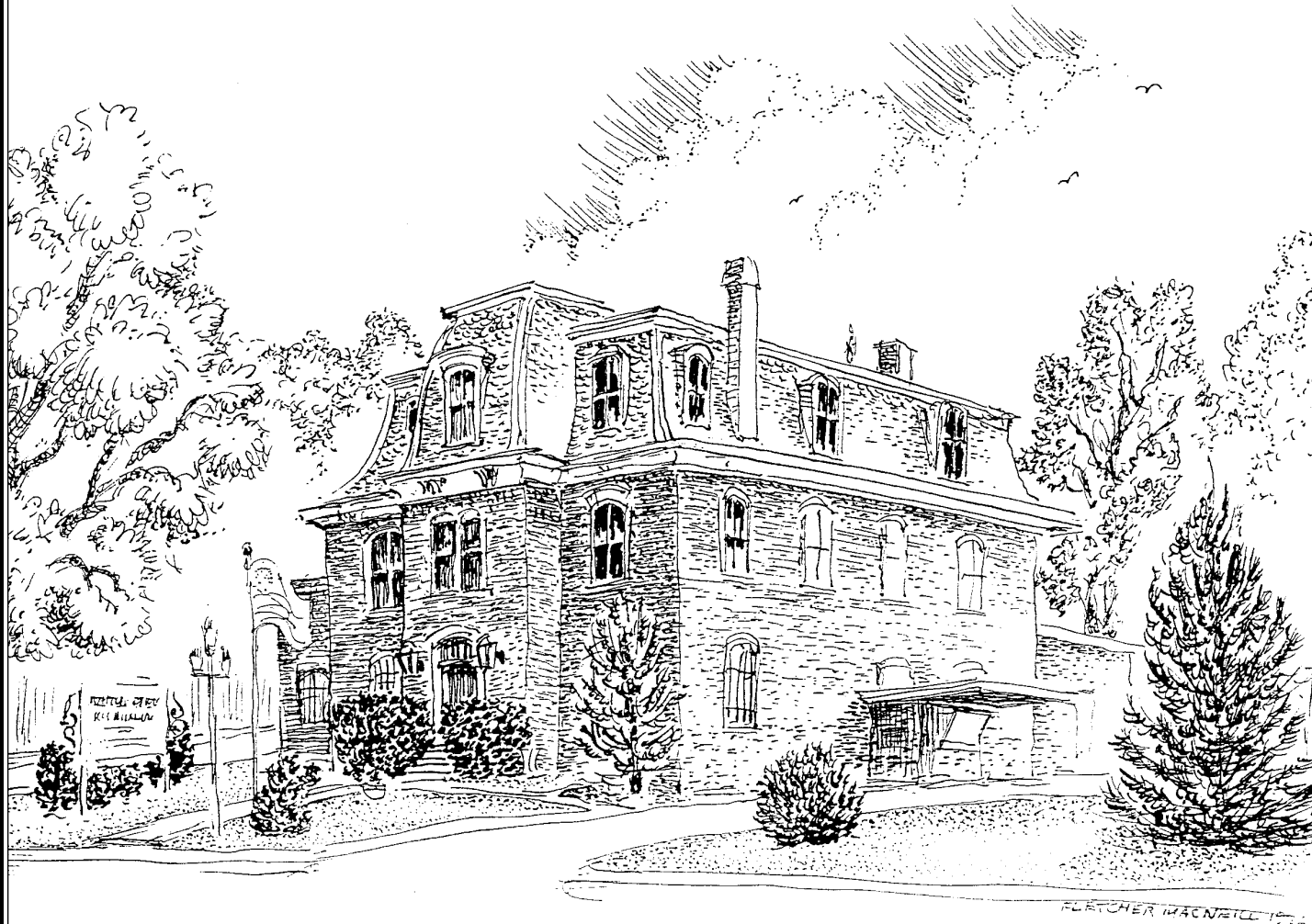
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Summer Spectacular

BY BRIAN NADEAU

John Hennig wiped his brow in the intense Saratoga sunshine and leafed through his program. He skimmed over the opener, a 2 1/16-mile allowance hurdle, and had begun wading into the rest of the July 26 card when he froze, like a man suddenly unsure of where he'd put his keys. He reflected for a moment, then rifled his way back until he found the first race. Breaking from the six-hole was a 7-year-old mare named Footlights. Hennig's thoughts carried him to 2001, when he purchased the daughter of Pleasant Tap.

"I looked up and saw her name and that was kind of shocking. We bought her as a yearling and she was just a beautiful filly. A big, stand-over-the-ground kind of Pleasant Tap filly," Hennig said. "At the time it looked like she might do well on the flat but it didn't really materialize and Arcadia Stable contacted us about buying her."

And now, to Hennig's amazement, she had materialized in the Saratoga paddock. Imagine his surprise had he known she was about to take Arcadia Stable and trainers Jack Fisher and Roger Horgan on a wild ride that featured a Grade I win, \$143,780 in earnings and the 2007 NSA Filly/Mare Championship.

Rags To Riches got the 2007 women's movement rolling with her win in the Belmont Stakes, and Footlights made sure it wasn't about to slow down, as she showed the boys her heels twice during her Saratoga summer vacation to take charge of the distaff division and coast to the title.

Footlights was just getting warmed up when she took the meet's first steeplechase by three-quarters of a length at 22-1. Her Aug. 30 encore would set the Spa turf on fire. Sent off at a generous 8-1 in the New York Turf Writers Cup, Footlights and jockey Xavier Aizpuru – carrying a feathery 133 pounds – toyed with the field on the far turn and bounded home by 11 1/2 lengths in one of the most impressive performances of the year.

"She won some good races for us and we thought it was a good time to take a shot at Saratoga," Fisher said. "The weight was a big reason why. We knew getting in that light would be a big advantage."

Talent doesn't hurt, either. Aizpuru had Footlights reserved off the early pace and decided to step up the pressure on the backstretch. Footlights took charge and Aizpuru had a choice to make – save something for the end or try to break the race wide open on the turn and hope his mare wouldn't be caught. He decided to make a break for it, and she escaped like Bonnie Parker. As it turned out, it was a championship move by both of them.

"I was worried that I got to the front too early going to the second to last, but at that point, carrying 133 pounds, I said to myself, 'I've got to send her home



Tod Marks

Footlights (Xavier Aizpuru) flies the last fence en route to her New York Turf Writers Cup victory.

and make these others catch her,' " Aizpuru said. "She was so comfortable, she was so focused and controlled about what she was doing."

Bred in Kentucky by Al and Joyce Meek, Footlights was purchased by Arcadia as a 4-year-old. She made her first start over jumps at the Queen's Cup in April 2004, running a distant third in an entry-level allowance, but picked up four wins before injury forced her to the sidelines the following June.

She made her return to the stage in May. Prior to her coming-out party at Saratoga, she finished third in her seasonal bow in the Henley at Nashville and then prepped for the Spa with a turf race at Colonial Downs. She closed out her championship campaign

and her career unplaced in the Peapack at Far Hills Oct. 20.

"She bowed her tendon at Far Hills and didn't get to run her race, so we retired her and we'll breed her next year, though we don't know to who yet," said Andre Brewster, who heads Arcadia and co-owns Footlights with longtime friends Skip Cochran and Minnie Watriss. "She was just spectacular this season. She bowed her tendon in 2005 too, so her race at Nashville was a great comeback. Then she was just brilliant this summer at Saratoga, which was obviously the highlight of the season. It was incredible; I can't believe how well she ran."

Nor could Hennig. In a long and successful training career, he has sent just two horses on to steeplechasing. The first wasn't too bad either.

"The only other horse I ever had that was sold to be a steeplechase horse was Rowdy Irishman, so I guess I'm 2-for-2 on the ones I've had. Now I'm going to the paddock looking for one. I'm not the kind of outfit that gets upset if someone buys a horse and does well with them, so I tried to follow her the best I could," Hennig said. "I looked up at Saratoga and saw her name in the program and it was pretty exciting, it brought back some memories. I put \$5 on her to win and then she came back and won the Turf Writers and that got some extra ice cream for me too. I don't know too much about the steeplechase game, but I knew she could amble along early and quicken up late."

The boys know it as well.

Footlights

B. m. 7 Pleasant Tap-Magnificent Baby, Northern Baby.

Bred by Al and Joyce Meek (KY). **Owner:** Arcadia Stable. **Trainers:** Jack Fisher and Roger Horgan. **Jockey:** Xavier Aizpuru.

Challenged – and beat – the boys twice at Saratoga. She collected \$96,480 (and the New York Turf Writers Cup) for that second victory, good enough to help her to fourth on the money list (regardless of gender). Retired to life as a broodmare and may take advantage of Northview Stallion Station's sponsorship of the filly/mare championship.

Top Five Fillies/Mares

Footlights	\$143,780
Imagina	72,950
Sweet Shani	61,774
Slew's Peak	50,740
Lair	48,500



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Back on Top

BY SEAN CLANCY

Jack Fisher needed a big day at Camden. Sparring at the top of the standings with 23-time champion Jonathan Sheppard, Fisher rolled into the Colonial Cup with a one-race lead over the Hall of Famer. Sheppard primed eight horses for the final card of six jump races. Fisher shipped five from his Maryland base.

The clash came quickly. At the last fence of the opener, a \$15,000 maiden hurdle, Fisher's Fantorini battled Sheppard's The Price Of Love. Finding something he couldn't muster in seven previous starts, Fantorini rallied past The Price Of Love to give Fisher a two-win cushion.

Both trainers sat out the 3-year-old stakes and then Sheppard earned one back when Slew's Peak took the filly and mare stakes. Fisher nudged his lead to two – with two races remaining – when the enigmatic Bubble Economy dominated the timber, a division Sheppard all but ignores.

Breathing room.

Then, exultation room. Good Night Shirt staved off a two-pronged Sheppard attack in the Colonial Cup to give Fisher his first victory in the historic race, likely first Eclipse Award winner and top hat for his third National Steeplechase Association title.

Fisher scratched barn mascot Duke Of Earl from the last, securing a prolific final day scoresheet of 3-for-4 and a yearly total of 24 wins from 102 starts. Fisher started fewer horses this year than in any of the previous six seasons.

Celebrating his 20th year as a trainer (Duke Of Earl gave Fisher win number 300 when he won this summer at Colonial Downs), Fisher won his first title since back-to-back runs in 2003-04. Many times quality and quantity don't mix but for Fisher in 2007, the feuding elements gelled like ice and cream.

Fisher won the Imperial Cup, Grand National, Virginia Gold Cup, Marcellus Frost, Iroquois, Radnor Hunt Cup, Lonesome Glory, International Gold Cup and Colonial Cup, plus features at Charlotte, Willowdale, Philadelphia Park and a rich allowance race at Saratoga. He even gave up the Saratoga-bound Footlights, who ran in Roger Horgan's name and won twice (including the Grade I New York Turf Writers Cup). With her, his horses earned over \$1 million – a figure no trainer has reached. Without her, they earned \$916,628 – \$3,316 behind the cash-register Sheppard who somehow increased his lifetime lead of purses earned. With a productive 2008, Fisher will move past Janet Elliot for second on the all-time list.

Good Night Shirt provided Fisher the highlight of 2007. The 6-year-old was one dull race away from becoming a timber horse at the beginning of the year. He won the Iroquois, Lonesome Glory and Colonial Cup, finished second in the Royal Chase and fourth in the Breeders' Cup. Timber is on hold.

"I'm most proud of Good Night Shirt, but his little brother Duke Of Earl is a close second," Fisher said, tongue in cheek like always. "Belmont was a surprise, I didn't think he was right – fitness-wise. I thought the horses coming out of Saratoga had an advantage



Tod Marks

Hard at work as usual, Jack Fisher leads Latino around the paddock at Winterthur.

because they all had a race and he hadn't had a race at all. I had him at Fair Hill for a little bit, we were shipping there to work, going to Pimlico to gallop, it just wasn't working out right."

Hard ground limited Fisher's starters this fall but he secured nine wins from some of the usual suspects and some that looked well over the top. Bubble Economy basically pulled himself up at Far Hills, then refused at the first fence in the Pennsylvania Hunt Cup. Fantorini had disappointed Fisher so many times, he ran him at the Meadowlands on the flat the night Good Night Shirt won at Belmont. Many trainers would have parked the car in the garage after those performances.

"I could forgive Bubble Economy at Far Hills with the ground, he didn't like it the year before. Pennsylvania Hunt Cup, I have a little bit harder time forgiving. Fantorini I was in the same boat, what else was I going to do with the horse?" Fisher said. "I'm glad I didn't load up at Camden, I had the amazing Duke Of Earl, but I didn't need him so I put him away, did get fined a hundred bucks for it. This year was fun, it's not the pressure of trying to win it the first time. The first time it meant a lot, this time it's nice but it's nothing like winning it the first time."

Fisher began training a couple of family horses in 1988. Call Louis streaked through the timber division the following year. Fisher broke out in 1994 when he won 30 races, but fell short to a Sheppard tour de force. The next season, Sheppard ran 11 horses on the final day, won twice and ousted Fisher by a single win. While Tom Voss, Sanna Hendriks and Bruce Miller took home their first championships, Fisher had to wait until 2003 to finally collect his.

The 44-year-old says he's learned a lot.

"The thing you learn is that it all perpetuates itself, you keep doing the same stuff with the same kind of

stock, you might have a bad year, but you keep doing it," Fisher said. "Maybe this year I learned a little bit, maybe I don't have to work them as hard. This fall, we were galloping real easily at Pimlico every other day, putting them on the treadmill, the works at Fair Hill weren't anything to speak about. Basically, just seeing what you have on race day."

In 2007, seeing what he had on race day meant 24 winners from 102 starters, an Eclipse Award, a training championship and a cadre of happy owners.

Fisher is no diplomat. His owners appreciate that – or they don't stick around.

"Gil Johnston has been with a lot of trainers and we get along great. She likes her horses to run, she doesn't like to mess around and run in 12 training flat races," Fisher said.

The trainer remembers their first conversation.

"Gil, this horse isn't any good," Fisher said.

"You're a little abrupt aren't you," responded Johnston.

Fisher: "That's what I believe."

Johnston: "Well, I would like to try."

Fisher: "That's fine, it's your money."

And off they went.

"Other trainers don't do that, and they hurt themselves," Fisher said. "I'm not making any money with a bad horse that's hanging around the barn."

As for next year, it's just like Fisher said, doing the same thing . . .

"I need more horses. I don't have Paradise's Boss, I don't have Footlights, maybe some other horses will step up, like Swagger Stick," Fisher said. "My timber group got demolished. No Salmo, no Seeyouat-theevent, no Mr Bombastic. But maybe I'll have Monte Bianco, Hello Jerry and Quem Se Atreve."

And the beat goes on.

Jack Fisher

Captured third championship in five years . . . Trained likely Eclipse Award winner Good Night Shirt . . . Trained five of the top 10 timber horses . . . Won three races on season's final day (Colonial Cup) to put wraps on title . . . Maryland-based trainer won 300th race and neared \$7 million in career earnings.

Starts	1st	2nd	3rd	Earnings
102	24	18	13	\$916,637

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♣ Filly/Mare Champion, Footlights.



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GOOD NIGHT SHIRT



FANTORINI



MR BOMBASTIC



ANN, SONNY, AND THE HORSES
(Good Night Shirt, Fantorini and Mr Bombastic)



Secret Formula

BY JOE CLANCY

Pretend you're on a game show called "Eight Words." The host tosses out a question or instruction and you've got 15 seconds to find the right words. Ready? Here we go.

"In eight words, describe the perfect steeplechaser."

The contestant, jockey Jody Petty, steps to the microphone.

"He gets into the air and lands quickly."

Ding-ding-ding. Correct answer. And eight great words.

Petty said that in late March, about five minutes after stepping off Irish Prince in the allowance timber at the Carolina Cup. The New Zealand import won his timber debut by 2 1/4 lengths for Augustin Stable and trainer Sanna Hendriks. Unknown to all, Irish Prince also took his first step toward the 2007 NSA timber championship. The 8-year-old won all four of his starts and set a record for timber earnings in a single season with \$102,000 – by getting into the air and landing quickly, over and over again.

Irish Prince started five times (winning once) on the flat in New Zealand and joined the Augustin/Hendriks team in 2003 as a hurdle prospect based in large part to his sire Prince Of Praise, also the father of Augustin hurdle star Praise The Prince. The new acquisition won a maiden hurdle at Colonial Downs in July 2004 and added an allowance score at Atlantic City in 2005. Twelfth in the Meadow Brook novice stakes at Belmont Park that spring, he spent 20 months away from the races with a tendon injury.

Put back to work with 2007 on the agenda, Irish Prince started off as a foxhunter – not necessarily a favorite foxhunter of his riders Petty and Paddy Young.

"We started riding him last fall, then hunting him and stuff just to get him going," said Hendriks. "He's kind of a ratty hunter. He does that rooting and is a little funny. Jody and Paddy hunted him a lot this past season, but they weren't fighting over him, let me tell you."

The timber career started with a maiden score at the Piedmont Point-to-Point March 24 with Young aboard. Out with an injury, Petty missed that ride but returned in time for the Camden mount. Irish Prince dusted six rivals, taking the lead halfway through and continuing on as he pleased.



Douglas Lees

Irish Prince (Jody Petty) snaps his knees while clearing a fence at Shawan Downs in September.

Fast-tracked to stakes company for the Iroquois and its \$75,000 Mason Houghland Memorial, Irish Prince did it again – getting into the air and landing quickly to win by almost 10 lengths in a field of 10. Often the first stakes start for timber horses, the Houghland gets overshadowed by the Virginia Gold Cup a week earlier and the Radnor Hunt Cup a week later. The better horses go to those places, usually, but the \$45,000 winner's payday helped fuel a rapidly improving timber horse with a knack for handling the stiffer fences in the style of a hurdler.

"He was a good, flat hurdler and he has taken that over to timber, only he's not touching the fences," said Petty after the Houghland. "He lands running and is very light on his feet. He outjumped the other horses at every fence."

With no timber racing in the summer, Irish Prince enjoyed his vacation and returned at Shawan Downs – for a proper timber stakes. The \$25,000 Ski Round-top attracted 2004 champion Bubble Economy, 2007 stakes winner Seeyouattheevent, 2006 stakes winner Mr Bombastic and four other veterans in addition to Irish Prince.

"We're going to find out what he's made of because it doesn't get any tougher than this," Hendriks said beforehand. "It's pretty fierce."

Again skipping over his fences, Irish Prince handled the step up in competition. He rated behind Mr Bombastic early and won a tussle with Bubble Economy through the stretch. The final margin was three-quarters of a length and signaled Irish Prince's true arrival at the top of the division.

"I think he's a pretty darn nice little horse," Hendriks said afterward. "He's not very big, so a lot of weight might get him but there isn't much else. It seems like he shows up and does it every time. He's

very workmanlike and that's how he is at home too. He goes out and does his job."

The scrappy bay gelding grabbed his hard hat and lunch pail one more time, and headed to Far Hills for the \$50,000 New Jersey Hunt Cup. Technically another step up the stakes ladder, the race attracted just five runners including Bubble Economy and Mr Bombastic once again, plus Shawan maiden winner Erin Go Bragh and Morven Park winner Hot Springs. Irish Prince went right to the front in the soft ground and again put on a jumping clinic while shrugging off rallies from Erin Go Bragh and Hot Springs late. Petty shut him down over the final yards and still won by 2 3/4 easy lengths to clinch the championship.

Hendriks beamed when considering her horse's development from maiden to star in a single season.

"He's a serious jumper, has great stamina and he can just quicken enough off of it," she said. "He was a nice enough hurdle horse, which helps him over timber. When he broke down, I thought about timber. He was always a really good jumper, he's 8 and what else was I going to do?"

Irish Prince would not fit the timber prototype of a tall, long-striding, distance-loving horse and does not fit the bill of a future Maryland Hunt Cup runner. Virginia Gold Cup, maybe, but he became the first timber horse to crack six figures without running in that race so maybe he won't have to prove himself at 4 miles.

"To look at him you wouldn't think timber horse," said Hendriks. "He's a little springy guy. He's a little bit of an overachiever, kind of like a plain, brown wrapper with a lot of heart. He tries hard and he wants to do the right thing. He's pretty professional when he comes right down to it."

Want eight more words? "Ladies and gentlemen, your timber champion Irish Prince."

Irish Prince

Owner: Augustin Stable.
Trainer: Sanna Hendriks.
Jockey: Jody Petty.



B. g. 8 Prince Of Praise-Jane Irish (NZ), Take Your Partner (AUS).
Bred by B.G. Keil (New Zealand).

Undefeated in four starts since switching to lumber. First timber horse to earn six figures in a single season. Broke Saluter's record of \$96,149, set in 1995.

Top 5 Timber Horses

Irish Prince	\$102,000
Salmo	63,600
Seeyouattheevent	63,500
The Bruce	46,750
Bubble Economy	44,400



A New Sphere

BY BRIAN NADEAU

Pull out those old *American Steeplechasing* year-books and try to find the champion who kicked off his campaign with a fall and a 10th-place finish. Still looking? You're going to have to wait for the 2007 edition.

Fox Ridge Farm's Planets Aligned charted a new course in 2007. The 6-year-old came around after those dismal efforts at Atlanta and Foxfield and ended up on top of his division.

The homebred started eight times over hurdles for trainer Tom Voss and finished with three wins, a second, a third – and a bankroll of \$142,600 to take the novice title, which goes to the runner who starts the year as a maiden and earns the most money by year's end. Fox Ridge owner Peter Schiff has enjoyed ample success on the flat, but this was his first champion over the jumps.

"Steeplechase racing is almost like giving a horse a second chance. Our primary objective is flat racing but Plan B is steeplechase racing," Schiff said. "When our horses are no longer appropriate for our flat-racing program we look to steeplechase racing. This can happen two different ways: when a horse is injured and can't come back to his best form, or when a horse has run out of conditions."

A four-time winner (and earner of \$140,718) on the flat when trained by Pat Kelly, Planets Aligned came to the Voss barn after an off-the-board finish in Aqueduct's Grade III Knickerbocker Handicap last November. Success would prove elusive – at first.

"It didn't start out as well as we thought it would with his first two efforts," Schiff said. "When Tom first got him he said, 'This is one of the best jumping horses I have ever had.' So we always had high hopes for him, but things didn't go like we expected at first. Tom kept working with him and he got better."

Voss, a four-time training champion, had his work cut out with the son of Gold Fever. Plagued by chronic back problems, Planets Aligned wasn't an overnight sensation.

"It took awhile for us to get him right," Voss said. "After the first few starts I called Pat and asked him if he wanted to take him back, but he said to give him one more try and we got through it, tried some acupuncture, and he got better and improved."

Improvement and jockey Chip Miller often go hand-in-hand. Planets Aligned was never better than sixth in three starts without Miller; with him, he's never been worse than third, picking up three wins in their five starts together.

Miller climbed aboard for the first time May 12 at Nashville, and Planets Aligned broke his maiden by 3 lengths over a yielding surface. Following an ill-fated return to the flat – he actually lost his rider in a Pimlico allowance – and a disappointing outing against fellow novices in a Saratoga stakes, he reunited with Miller. They notched their second victory in the Mickey Walsh (which also happened to be the jockey's 200th career score), finished second to Divine Fortune in the Grade II Somerset at The Meadowlands and a close third in the Grade I Foxbrook at Far Hills, where Miller made the lead only to be passed late by Gliding. The jockey dismounted with some unfinished business.

"I wasn't happy with the way I rode him at Far Hills, but the fact he was only beaten less than 3 lengths says he ran a big race," Miller said. "I made the front too soon and didn't save anything for the end. It was a painful lesson."

But a useful one, nonetheless. In Georgia two weeks later, Planets Aligned clinched the title with a convinc-



Tod Marks

Planets Aligned (right, Chip Miller) passes Dr. Bloomer in a maiden win at Iroquois in May.

ing win in the Grade I AFLAC U.S. Championship, rallying from 17 lengths behind to win going away.

Voss agreed, and the prospect of both horse and jockey on the same page has him looking forward to tackling tougher company in 2008.

"He was on the lead at Far Hills and that's not how he wants to run; he wants to take back and make a run," Voss said. "That horse improved every time he ran this year. His race at Callaway was his best race of the year. That's where it all came together, the rider and the horse."

And the championship.

Planets Aligned

Ch. g. 6 Gold Fever-Flying Minister, Deputy Minister.
Bred by Fox Ridge Farm (KY).

Owner: Fox Ridge Farm. **Trainer:** Tom Voss.
Jockeys: Chip Miller, Cyril Murphy, Rob Massey.

Homebred notched three wins in his rookie campaign, including a novice stakes at Saratoga and the Grade I AFLAC U.S. Supreme Championship Hurdle at Callaway. Jump earnings from eight 2007 races nearly identical to combined bankroll from three previous years on flat for Fox Ridge.

Top Five Novice Hurlers

(Horses which started 2007 as maidens)
Planets Aligned\$142,600
Divine Fortune127,540
Rum Squall81,600
Lair48,500
C R's Deputy40,500



Tod Marks

The novice champion laughs it up after one of his wins.

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Photo by Chip Riegel

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.

WHY SUPPORT THE NSF?

Formed in 1995, the National Steeplechase Foundation (N.S.F.) has raised and distributed over \$1.6 million on programs that promote safety, education, fairness and the spirit of amateurism throughout American steeplechasing. These funds made a significant impact on the sport, and also provided an indirect but invaluable bulwark for an industry that is a tremendous provider for charities in general.

Last year NSA meets contributed approximately \$5 million to charities: a remarkable total for a sport of this size, considering that American steeplechasing has only about 750 participants. These contributions to worthy causes are something supporters of the sport should be very proud of. At the same time, supporters should be determined to help the foundation and the race meets maintain and expand.

Almost all of these charitable contributions are raised by the race meets – but if there wasn't a sport that is *extremely family-friendly and accessible*, that brings in *high-end commercial sponsors* because of the type of spectators it attracts, that presents an *exciting yet relaxing way to spend a weekend afternoon* with little of the hassles involved in attending most big-time sporting events, then there would be no money donated to charity by these race meets. **In short, steeplechasing fuels these contributions.**

This is why support of the National Steeplechase Foundation is so critical. Among the programs we provide to the sport:

- ◆ Safe Courses-Sound Horses. The course inspection and assessment program has helped improve racecourse conditions and make racing much safer.
- ◆ Drug Testing at all NSA race meets.
- ◆ Promoting amateur racing. We have supplemented purses for amateur races, not only giving young riders an opportunity to grow in the sport, but providing a continuing involvement for non-professionals who may become horse owners and leaders of the sport in the future.
- ◆ Helping pay airtime and production costs for steeplechasing on ESPN. This is great exposure for the sport in general, and by appearing on some of the top flat-racing shows, we keep ourselves very much in the consciousness of the flat community.

In short, the Foundation does many things that help keep the sport we love healthy and vital, thus also providing invaluable support to its non-profit beneficiaries.

As the fall season begins, you will receive many requests from charities, all of them worthy of consideration. We hope our work of the last 12 years will inspire you to contribute to the National Steeplechase Foundation, thus continuing to make that work possible and helping our sport thrive.

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Pulling Together

BY BRIAN NADEAU

"I can't believe we won a championship."

Jim Aikman said it, but poll any of the 13 members of Barracuda Racing Stable and they'd tell you the same. The group caught a live one in C R's Deputy and together they reeled in the NSA 3-year-old championship for 2007.

A gelded son of Deputy Commander, C R's Deputy may have looked smooth over hurdles this season, but he was anything but when trainer Ricky Hendriks purchased him at the Fasig-Tipton Midlantic sale in June.

"I was with Ricky when we bought him and he was a mean, wild-eyed horse," said Barracuda member Ken Kachel, a partner along with his wife, Debbie. "He was the last horse in the sale and they didn't even want to take him out of his stall. He tried to bite us."

But Hendriks and Kachel got past C R's Deputy's cantankerous behavior and instead saw a colt with untapped ability.

"I looked at his form and saw that he was beaten only a few lengths in the Pilgrim Stakes as a 2-year-old on the flat, so I knew there was some talent there," Kachel said. "We also knew he was still a colt and had showed ability, so we thought that if we gelded him it would channel some of his energy. We decided to take a shot."

The hammer dropped at \$20,000 and C R's Deputy was gelded a few days later. He improved immediately and the rambunctious horse began to look like a bargain. But for who?

Hendriks had a few people in mind when he signed the ticket for C R's Deputy, and then branched out to get a few more interested. All told, a lucky 13 were assembled, including the trainer and his parents.

"I was a last-minute entry, but it sure worked out great," said Hendriks' mother, Wendy, who got in with her husband, Dickie.

"Ricky had a little picnic back at his stable after the Fair Hill meet and we were able to meet some of the people," said Aikman, who owns a share with his wife, Connie. "It was a neat story and they are all fun people. It was nice to see everyone come together like that."

With husband-and-wife teams Barbara Taggart and Jim Vicci, and Fred and Barbara Davis rounding out the group, Hendriks was looking for a spot to get C R's Deputy started. He chose a \$25,000 claimer on the flat at Delaware Park as a tightener for a fall hurdle campaign.

"It was a risk entering him because we knew people were looking at him but we had an advantage because some people heard he wouldn't train in the morning," Kachel said. "We felt that was the right spot to start him out. Every day after we gelded him he showed marked improvement and started concentrating on his job."

Whatever the reason, C R's Deputy won, there were no claim slips with his name on them and Hendriks had the perfect prep for a run over hurdles.

He made his debut over jumps at Virginia Fall Oct. 7, wiring a four-horse field under Paddy Young. The effort didn't necessarily stamp him as a future star, but it was encouraging, especially considering the summer drought that left most turf courses looking like dried river beds.

"He ran over that rock-hard ground like a trouper so I knew he could run," said Sue Sensor, who owns a piece along with her husband, George. "That was the first time I ever saw him. I had watched his replays and he reminded me of a horse I once owned, so I liked his looks."



Tod Marks

C R's Deputy (Chip Miller) handles a hurdle in style during the Gladstone at Far Hills.

Judgment day came at Far Hills in the \$50,000 Gladstone over the "deep, deep, deep ground," as Sensor termed it. Again C R's Deputy made the running, this time under Chip Miller, sparring on the lead with a pesky Coupe De Ville. Nat Grew made a race of it late but Miller had plenty in reserve to score by three-quarters of a length. The winner's purse of \$30,000 clinched the title.

C R's Deputy closed out his championship season at Camden with a second in the \$25,000 Woolfe Memorial. In three starts over hurdles he won twice, finished second once and earned \$40,500 for Barracuda. Not bad for a wild horse who didn't want to train earlier in the year.

"Far Hills was the first time we got to meet him up close and personal," Aikman said. "To win a championship was something we never dreamed of. It's a tough game but we've been having a lot of fun. My wife calls this our 'entertainment tax.'"

Miller, who has 205 career victories, knows the struggles 3-year-olds can have when they tackle winners the following season, but the veteran was guardedly optimistic about C R's Deputy chances.

"He's one of the better 3-year-olds I've sat on, so if there is one to overcome the disadvantages they have against winners, he could do it," Miller said. "You never know, but he's a very talented horse. Now it's just a question if he grows up sufficiently this winter mentally."



C R's Deputy

B. g. 3 Deputy Commander-Splendid Victory, Atticus. Bred by Tracy Farmer (KY).

Owner: Barracuda Racing Stable. **Trainer:** Ricky Hendriks.

Jockeys: Chip Miller, Paddy Young.

3 starts, 2 wins, 1 second, \$40,500.

Won first two starts – a maiden at Virginia Fall and \$50,000 Gladstone at Far Hills to take championship. Second in final run at the Colonial Cup . . . Purchased at Fasig-Tipton for \$20,000 in June . . . Thirteen people claim ownership to C R's Deputy (alphabetically): Connie Aikman, Jim Aikman, Barbara Davis, Fred Davis, Dickie Hendriks, Ricky Hendriks, Wendy Hendriks, Debbie Kachel, Ken Kachel, George Sensor, Sue Sensor, Barbara Taggart and Jim Vicci . . . Second 3-year-old champion for Kachels, who campaigned 2006 winner Jimmie Echo.

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Banjo Lessons

BY JOE CLANCY

In his third year as a steeplechase owner, Sonny Via presides over a hopeful contingent in a Saratoga box as Banjo Man lines up for a \$44,000 allowance hurdle. The 5-year-old looks live at 5-2 in a seven-horse field.

The flag drops, the field powers toward the first fence and Via's crew – which includes the horse's breeder Peggy Augustus – leans forward in anticipation. Banjo Man? He just stands there. Refuses to go, no matter what jockey Craig Thornton does.

And Team Via sits down, as deflated as kids with a lump of coal in their stockings. Via spoke for everyone when he turned to trainer Ricky Hendriks and said, "I'm really bummed out about that experience. Sell the horses, I'm going home to do something else."

Spur of the moment, a little uncalled for, but understandable given the circumstances, Via's mood carried over to the next morning at the barn. Via talked about giving up, about returning to his other hobby, antique cars, about anything but more steeplechase horses. Until Jonathan Sheppard heard him.

"Sonny, you don't really want to do that," said the Hall of Fame trainer. "You want to think about that. Give it some time."

Seven years, three months and eight days later, Via accepted the trophy as the National Steeplechase Association's champion owner. Led by likely Eclipse Award winner Good Night Shirt, Via's stable earned \$370,013 to edge Sheppard client Bill Pape by \$1,498.

"I changed my mind, but if it hadn't been for Jonathan talking to me way back in 2000 I probably wouldn't have been there," said Via. "He changed my way of thinking. You've got to look at things a little differently and work to not get hung up in the difference between the highs and the lows."

Via and his wife, Ann, live in Free Union, Va., on a property they call Hob Knob. He's retired from the insurance business. She's always been involved with horses. They have four children, seven grandchildren, a dozen classic automobiles and – in 2007, anyway – three steeplechase horses. Good Night Shirt won three Grade I stakes, defeated McDynamo twice and set a record for single-season earnings. Mr Bombastic finished second in the Virginia Gold Cup (by a nose) and the Radnor Hunt Cup over timber. Fantorini lost his first seven starts, but came through in the eighth to push the Vias past Pape on the season's final day.

"Maybe I'm no different from any other owner, but I love the horses," said Via, 77. "I love when my horses are successful enough to know it, that they're happy with themselves at whatever they do. Ann and I love being around the sport and being around horses. Doing this is a cut above the flat-track thing. It's a small community, you know almost everybody in the game and that's pretty special."

The Vias rode show horses and met in a barn. While at the University of Virginia during the Korean conflict, he enlisted in the Navy and drew an enviable assignment to the United States Auxiliary Air Station in Virginia Beach – while a friend wound up on an aircraft carrier. Via took a horse with him and boarded it at Cavalier Stables, where Ann (home from Sweet Briar College) was riding.

Via eventually spent time at sea during Korea, but returned in 1954 to Ann and an insurance career. In Baltimore and Richmond, he worked for Maryland Casualty. Later, he joined General Insurance Agency (which became Marshall McClellan) in Norfolk. He retired in 1984 and the couple moved to Free Union (northwest of Charlottesville) and returned to horses. Ann foxhunts – hilltopping mostly – with Farming-



Douglas Lees

Sonny and Ann Via accept the Colonial Cup on behalf of Good Night Shirt.

ton-Keswick and is in the market for a "little-old-lady horse" to ride. Sonny bought the gear, kept a horse at the Barracks Equestrian Center and rode – a little.

"I rode that first winter, but didn't use all that stuff I bought a half-dozen times," he said. "The distance to the ground got to be a long way and I decided I'd been there, done that."

They soon turned to owning racehorses, joining six couples in a syndicate headed by Jack Sanford and winning twice with So Eager in 1989 and 1990. From there, the model expanded to a solo stable with horses trained by Hendriks. Moccasin Run came first, and he won a training flat race in his debut at Strawberry Hill in 1998. Others good and bad followed and the stable peaked with \$74,716 earned (thanks in large part to Banjo Man) in 2000. After a \$28,000 year in 2002, Via moved his horses to the barn of Jack Fisher.

"Our parting with Ricky was above board and smooth as silk, but it was time to change," said Via. "We had five horses then and I think Jack got rid of

every one of them – overnight. He cleaned house, started over and it's been great."

With Fisher since the 2003 season, Via steadily climbed the ladder with earnings increasing each year. The owner appreciates the success, but also his trainer's work ethic, candor and attention to detail.

"With Jack, you know where you stand every step of the way, every minute of the day," said Via. "He's the most attentive trainer I know, he's on top of everything. When you sit down and think about what his job is – he does the scheduling, the hiring, the firing, the management, the training, the dealing with guys like me. It's some job description."

Unknowingly, Via bought a ticket to the top in 2004 when Good Night Shirt joined the stable. The powerful chestnut won a maiden hurdle at the Iroquois in 2005, made up for Banjo Man with a Saratoga victory that summer, added a stakes in 2006 and became a star in 2007 – with Grade I wins in the Iroquois, the Lonesome Glory and the Colonial Cup. He missed by a neck in his season debut, the Royal Chase at Keeneland, and finished a gallant fourth behind McDynamo in the Breeders' Cup.

Via credited his trainer, and a patient strategy. "We decided we would pick his races for him and let him get the job done if he could," said Via. "That's exactly what happened. We picked five races and the only one he was off on he was fourth to a superstar. He just progressed along. Nobody ever really pushed him hard. He just learned his job and got better and better."

Good Night Shirt finished with \$314,163, and vaulted to 14th on the career earnings list with nearly \$450,000. Over and over in 2007, he summoned big efforts and staggered his owner as much as the competition.

"I watch every step they take and I keep one eye on the horse and one eye on Jack if he's next to me, and he usually is," said Via. "At the Colonial Cup, I was in a box in the stands and when he actually won the race I was whipped – as if I had run the race myself. It was pretty emotional."

And a long way from Banjo Man at Saratoga.



Sonny Via

Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Earnings
18	4	5	2	\$370,013

First championship for Virginia resident, who campaigned first horse in 1998. Needed just three horses to reach the top. Good Night Shirt led the way, but maiden win by Fantorini on season's final day helped edge Bill Pape by less than \$1,500. Retired insurance executive owns a dozen antique/classic cars.

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X Man

BY SEAN CLANCY

It was a simple maiden race. Fantorini won it, earned a \$15,000 check for four minutes work. For Xavier Aizpuru, it was much more than that.

The piano off his back, Aizpuru walked across the jocks' room porch at Springdale Racecourse to shake Paddy Young's hand. With five jump races to go, Aizpuru led Young by six for the National Steeplechase Association jockey championship.

The two jockeys saluted each other – it had been a long year – and went back to business.

"Everybody's been congratulating me but until it was signed, sealed and delivered I wasn't expecting anything. I wasn't counting my chickens," Aizpuru said later that afternoon. "Paddy's a very good rider, he gets good rides. It would take some feat to ride five winners but it's been done before and he's capable enough if given the right horses. Fortunately for me, I was on the right horses in the right races today."

The right horses in the right races all year long.

On the final day, Aizpuru dropped anchor on the Jack Fisher-trained Fantorini and weaved from 16th – he went past Young and Rainbows For Luck somewhere in the last mile – to land the first. In the second, Aizpuru audibled with Be Certain and wound up on the lead to upset division leader C R's Deputy. The double completed a 22-win season for Aizpuru, good enough to clinch the title by six over Young.

Not that Aizpuru was counting – at least while aboard Fantorini.

"When you're out there you're just concerned with that race," Aizpuru said, "but it was quite a sweet feeling when I crossed the line and knew that was it. Done and dusted."

Aizpuru, 32, had completed a career overhaul. Following the leads of David Bentley, Rob Massey and other British-born jockeys who made it big in America after running aground in England, Aizpuru emigrated to the land of weekend warriors and firm turf in 2004. Massey had taken a job with Kathy McKenna, leaving an opening at Doug Fout's stable. Massey suggested it to Aizpuru. When Fout offered second call behind New Zealander Clayton Chipperfield, Aizpuru declined and wound up working for Janet Elliot in Camden.

"I decided if I was going to come over I was going to at least ride first call for someone," Aizpuru said. "I got introduced to Janet, rode out a little bit and she offered me a job. The one thing with working for Janet, even though she's got a small string, she's so well respected in the sport, that I thought if people just saw me riding for her, they'd think I was a decent enough rider."

Fisher wasn't sure Aizpuru could ride or not when he booked him for Sailmaker at Camden in 2004. Like most good decisions, Fisher had no choice. The trainer needed somebody light, remembered Elliot introducing him to some little English jockey with a funny name and went looking for him.

The jockey steered Sailmaker to victory that day and Aizpuru and Fisher have emulated Velazquez and Pletcher ever since.



Tod Marks

Champion jockey Xavier Aizpuru drives Paradise's Boss to the finish at Nashville in May.

"I just decided to go out there, relax, and ride like I ride," Aizpuru said. "I had ridden so many losers in England, I wasn't competitive after one jump, which is no good for man nor beast. When it's happening on that much of a regular basis on that many horses, you start to wonder if it's something you're doing. Then you come over, ride a horse here and it wins, it makes you realize it's not necessarily you, it's the horses you've been riding."

In four seasons, Aizpuru went from riding a maiden filly simply because he was light to riding first call for Fisher – picking up high-octane rides such as Paradise's Boss, Good Night Shirt, Footlights, Rum Squall. Beyond Fisher, Tom Voss and Jonathan Sheppard book Aizpuru to fill the gaps in their stables. That was not happening in England.

"I had a little bit of success early in my career, then the last year I was there, I was riding bad horses in bad races – you could have slipped my confidence under a snake's belly, that's how low it was," Aizpuru said. "I was going to quit, so career-wise, it was an easy decision. When I sat back and looked at it, what did I have to lose? You can always go home."

The only going home Aizpuru is doing these days is to update his green card, see the family and hurry back.

Aizpuru and Fisher doubled early with Paradise's Boss and Latino at Aiken and won eight races together in the spring, including Aizpuru's first timber score with Sharp Face at Charlotte. Nobody rode better at Saratoga where Aizpuru won three – including the New York Turf Writers Cup aboard Footlights – and only missed the board once in six rides. In between wins there, he picked up a spare on John Law to win the Flatterer at Philadelphia Park. To start the fall, Aiz-

puru doubled at Shawan Downs, talked Robbie Walsh off Duke Of Earl at Philadelphia Park and tripled for Voss at Aiken. Aizpuru's address book doesn't need to be deep, he won races for just three trainers in 2007.

"I must admit I got a little bit frustrated at the beginning of the fall. Shawan went really well but then I didn't ride at Middleburg, didn't ride at Morven (Park), didn't ride at Foxfield, got blanked at Far Hills," Aizpuru said. "I was trying to look at the horses I had to ride for Jack and his string was drying up like the ground was. Luckily for me, the door opened at Tom Voss' and he supplied me with five winners this fall, which was phenomenal."

Aizpuru holds a steady job in the morning, galloping for Graham Motion, and will spend the winter in Florida before trying to defend his crown.

"Now I feel like I could go home and ride with the same confidence, but I'd have to go back and ride the same sub-standard horses," Aizpuru said. "I'm very, very grateful to everybody over here that has helped me so much. It's given me back the belief in the whole sport."

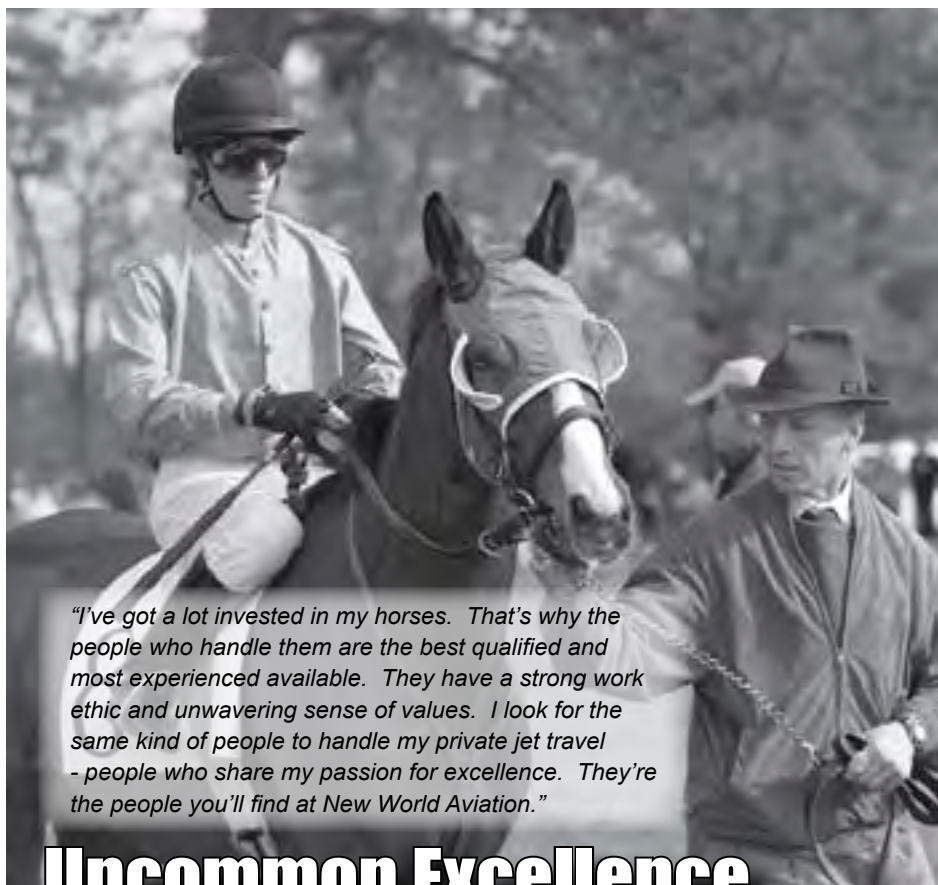
Affable off the racetrack and determined on it, Aizpuru has made a believer out of the sport as well.

"All my life, I've thought I'd like to be champion jockey, I just didn't know if it was ever going to happen," he said. "Coming over here gave me a fresh start, I had fallen out of love with the sport. I decided I had nothing to lose. First and foremost, I wanted to see if I could start to enjoy myself again. That obviously happened and I got to ride nice horses for good people and started to enjoy the sport again. Then I started to think I'd like to be champion jockey. Winning it the first time is really important to me, I wanted to prove it to myself that I could do it."

Xavier Aizpuru

Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Earnings
71	22	10	8	\$669,492

English native ran away with first championship in fourth season of American racing. Swept to top of standings with torrid summer/fall. Rode first-call for Jack Fisher, but picked up important late-season wins for Tom Voss.



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Brown honored with Clark award

BY JOE CLANCY

You're still your father's son.

After watching Austin Brown receive the F. Ambrose Clark Award Nov. 17, a witness marveled at Brown's heartfelt acceptance speech. "To hear an 80-year-old guy say he wished his father could have been there really hit home. It was pretty touching."

But that's the kind of guy Austin Brown is. Humble. Helpful. Real. And deserving. The longtime steeplechase promoter, enthusiast and executive received the Clark Award for a lifetime of contribution to the sport. National Steeplechase Association president Franny Abbott made the presentation, which goes periodically to a person who "promotes, improves and encourages the growth and welfare of American steeplechasing."

Clark did that during his time as a leader in the early 1900s, and the award was created in 1965 to honor one of the sport's true giants. Brown is the 24th recipient, and he fits the mold of all the others.

"I knew him," Brown said of Clark. "He was a great gentleman, an old warhorse. When the award came along, I remember thinking it was a perfect tribute."

He also recalls thinking he might – might – someday be considered worthy.

"Some awfully great people have won the award and it does cross your mind whether you would be of the quality," he said. "I'd say 'maybe someday, if I do a really good job . . .' but I'd really kind of forgotten about it."

Until Abbott called with the news this fall. Nominated by Carolina Cup Racing Association executive director Jeff Teter and the race meet's board of directors, Brown became a worthy choice based on decades of service.

He was an amateur jockey with Iroquois wins and Maryland Hunt Cup rides, an owner, a trainer, a steward, a course designer and a leader. Brown is chairman of the Carolina Cup board and president and driving force behind the National Steeplechase Museum. Other milestones include 15 years as a vice president/general manager/assistant general manager at Delaware Park racetrack (where he championed jump racing's cause), organization of the only jump races held at Santa Anita and Bay Meadows racetracks in California and more.

"He is the perfect choice," said Abbott. "His tenure in the sport is longer than just about anybody. He's an incredible individual, always willing to lend a hand, and has accomplished a great deal."



Tod Marks

Sally and Austin Brown, with the F. Ambrose Clark medallion.

Brown cultivated an interest in horses while growing up in Tryon, N.C. and merged over to steeplechase racing in the 1940s. He rode his first race at 16 in 1943 and won the Iroquois aboard Blush in 1947 and 1948. In 1954, Brown returned to the Iroquois winner's circle aboard Ginny Bug. He made three trips postward in the Maryland Hunt Cup, finishing second once and third twice. Brown trained horses until 1957 and later served on the NSA board of directors from 1962-72 and was chairman of the Hunts Committee for nine years. As testament to his depth in the sport, Brown was elected to the NSA board again in 2007 and also serves on the board of the National Steeplechase Foundation. He considers the steeplechase museum one of his best accomplishments, hatching the concept in 1997 and raising the funds for construction.

"The idea of a Carolina Cup museum came up, but if we were going to have a museum we had to have a national museum," said Brown. "My first call was to Paul Mellon and I asked for a lead gift if we could match it within six months. He said absolutely and within six days we had matched it. It was a lot of work, but we got it started and it's all been worth it."

Under the direction of Hope Cooper, whom Brown singled out at a champagne toast before the NSA awards dinner Nov. 18, the museum houses various educational exhibits on the sport,

maintains a detailed library of reference materials and spearheads efforts to preserve American steeplechasing's history.

No matter what title he held or project he tackled, Brown maintained a direct link to the sport – and served it well. He married a love of the horse with business acumen and an ability to convince people big ideas were worth pursuing.

Steeplechasing has taken Brown and his wife of nearly 60 years, Sally, all over the world. They saw Dawn Run win the Cheltenham Gold Cup in England, they saw the first Colonial Cup in 1970, they watched Flatterer, Lonesome Glory, McDynamo.

"I've been in this game all my life," Brown said. "From the time I was 2 years old when my father brought the family down to watch him ride at Springdale (in Camden), I've been going racing. It's had a great effect on my life. Being in steeplechasing got me to Delaware Park and that was a wonderful job. Steeplechasing has just always been there – it's always lived up to what it was supposed to be for me."

And for thinking of his father all these years later, Brown didn't apologize.

"He got me started in it so he gets the credit," Brown said. "I'm an emotional guy so it's been an emotional ride for me. I know one thing for sure: a lot of great people have won that award, but it never meant more to one of them than it does to me."

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Good Luck in 2008!

Photo by Equiscape Photography

Living Her Life

Eve Fout leaves behind long legacy of giving

When we started *Steeplechase Times* way back in 1994, I'm not sure I counted on doing so many obituaries. The newspaper would be fun, light, breezy, and focus on the horses, the racing, the drama, the sport, the competition.

THE OUTSIDE RAIL

By Joe Clancy

Somewhere, it became the record of all that passes. Time, mainly. And people. ST pages have included stories on the deaths of Burley Cocks, Paul Fout, Jonathan Kiser, Kay Jeffords, Mikey Smithwick, Trish Daniels... Eve Fout joined the list when she died Dec. 5 at age 78. Wife of veteran trainer Paul, who died in 2005, Mrs. Fout owned steeplechase horses, foxhunters, dogs and a special place in people's hearts.

Her son, Doug, recently said she lived the life of three people. Mother, grandmother, painter, sculptor, rider, owner, land preservationist, friend of Jackie Kennedy. That's eight, and still doesn't cover everything Fout did.

"It's amazing," said Doug. "She touched so many people and did stuff for so many people. She was always willing to help and give. When you're wrapped up in it and close to it, she's just your mother. You don't realize."

Eve Fout pursued land preservation near her hometown of Middleburg, Va., like it mattered before many of us figured it out. She raised three children, Doug (a steeplechase trainer), Nina (an Olympic three-day event rider) and Virginia (whose V Productions plans major events such as Elton John's AIDS Foundation Oscar parties). Eve Fout kept working at her art – sculpting

bronzes for two recent steeplechase trophies (the NSA filly/mare perpetual award and the Zeke Ferguson Memorial stakes). She also remained pretty stubborn in everything she did. She rode horses, drove herself around Middleburg, went to the races, talked politics, stated opinions.

As a child, Eve Prime moved to Warrenton, Va., and thrived in the area's rich equine community. She foxhunted, rode in horse shows and joined the steeplechase world with her husband. In 1964, they won the Virginia Gold Cup together with Moon Rock and carried on to bigger things with Paul's steeplechasers Life's Illusion, Bel Iman, Don Panta, Chrisaway and flat horses such as Colstar. Eve's dark blue and light blue silks graced jockeys' backs periodically through the years, most recently with Hidden Key (inherited from her husband), Fershaw and Lexington Ball.

She rode Moon Rock and Lexington Ball in the hunt field and spent precious moments on horseback. In October at Glenwood Park, she won the North American Field Hunter Championships with ex-racehorse Morning Pleasure. She attended the Montpelier Races Nov. 4, spending time in the paddock telling stories and no doubt convincing someone of something.

"Once she grabbed something, she went full force and poured her energy into it," said Doug.

Such as helping children. Like many in the community, Fout foxhunted with Orange County, but went a step further with the formation of the Middleburg-Orange County Beagles. The beagles hunt just like foxhounds, but obviously not as quickly and therefore create an ideal place for children to learn the sport.

See **FOUT** page 43 ►



Douglas Lees

Eve Fout, doing one of her favorite things.

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Fout —

■ Continued from page 41

Young riders actually hunt up front with the beagles. She also played a key role in the lives of many young riders through her involvement with the Middleburg Orange County Pony Club. Many in the beagle field became lifelong riders including jump jockeys Skip Brittle, Al Quanbeck, Tom Skiffington and her son. The beagles share a barn with Doug's racehorses and do everything little dogs do — bark, howl, chase things, make people laugh.

"They used to get out and chase the horses that were out in their paddocks," said Doug. "I'd call Mom and she'd tell me the beagles were there before my horses were. We teased her and had fun with her about it, but she loved it and it turned into something important for the community. We'll keep it going."

Beyond time spent on horseback, she trumpeted land preservation as the chairman of the Piedmont Environmental Council — cajoling land owners to preserve open space and diligently fighting development such as Disney's plans for a theme park near the Bull Run battlefield. She received an award from *National Geographic* for her efforts and is generally credited with keeping the Middleburg/Upperville/The Plains countryside, well, countryside.

What's more, Fout was an artist with few peers. She co-founded the American Academy of Equine Art and used multiple talents to draw, paint and sculpt horses, dogs, foxes in various forms. She studied with famed equine artists

Paul Brown, Richard Stone Reeves, Frank Voss and Else Tuckerman.

She created the National Steeplechase Association's Champion Jockey trophy (a hefty bronze mounted on a wooden base) and in 2006 finished the Life's Illusion bronze presented to the NSA filly/mare champion each year. The sculpture captures the 1975 steeplechase champion, trained by Paul Fout, in action over a fence. This year, Eve finished a sculpture of Leed's Don to honor the horse's owner Zeke Ferguson for the steeplechase stakes at Colonial Downs each summer. Her final

work, a dog-trial trophy commissioned by steeplechase owner Cary Jackson, depicts a Labrador Retriever going after a duck on the edge of a pond.

Independent probably to a fault, Fout was in a car accident while driving in August and weeks later was banged in the chest by a horse. In hindsight, the two incidents likely injured Fout's heart. In mid-November, she had a small seizure but bounced back well enough to go to California for Thanksgiving.

She had another seizure on the airplane and doctors at home in Virginia found fluid on her heart. More tests

found a tear in her aorta and she underwent immediate surgery at the University of Virginia Hospital in Charlottesville. Doctors successfully replaced her aorta, except Fout had a severe stroke during the surgery. She never regained consciousness, but — true to form — lived another five days.

Surrounded by her three children, she died peacefully in her sleep.

"It was a roller coaster for all of us," said Doug. "I never laughed and cried so many times in my life. In the end, we told her she had to go, that it was time to go. Finally, she went. The best part was how happy and gung-ho she was going to surgery. Our last moment with her was great. We hugged her, told her we loved her and that we'd see her soon."

In the past 2 1/2 years, the Fout children buried their mother and father — elevating a generation — and making them think.

As Doug said, "It's all part of growing up."

For families and newspapers.

• Eve Fout was preceded in death by her husband, Paul, and daughter, Karen. She is survived by three children, Doug Fout of The Plains, Va., Nina Fout, of Middleburg, Va., Virginia Wiley Fout of Los Angeles, Calif., brother Bill Prime of Warrenton, Va., two grandchildren, and her stepmother, Inga Prime.

A funeral was held Dec. 12 at the Trinity Episcopal Church in Upperville, Va. Donations in Eve Fout's memory may be made to: MOC Beagles, P.O. Box 346 Middleburg, Va. 20118, or the Piedmont Environmental Council, 45 Horner Street Warrenton, Va. 20186.

Obituary: Owner Lois Duffey, 96

Lois Duffey, whose Mr. Frisk won the English Grand National in record time, died Oct. 6. A longtime resident of Centreville, Md., she was 96.

The daughter of renowned owner and breeder Walter Salmon Sr., Duffey was involved with horses from an early age, hunting in Virginia and on Long Island and attending steeplechase meets. She liked the racing, and the riders — she married jump jockey and farmer Harry Duffey in 1935.

The Duffeys got back into the game years later, owning a small string of jumpers which they raced in England and America. Duffey's big coup came at Aintree in 1990, courtesy of Mr. Frisk. Under 25-year-old amateur rider Marcus Armytage, the 11-year-old chestnut defeated 37 rivals. Sent off at 16-1, Mr. Frisk clocked the first Grand National run under nine minutes, topping the old mark by more than 14 seconds. For an encore, he followed up with a win in the Whitbread Gold Cup at Sandown.

Two years later, Duffey tasted Stateside success with Talkin Butter. Trained by Charlie Fenwick and ridden by Victoria Schlesinger, the 6-year-old took the Temple Gwathmey at Middleburg and the \$60,000 Bolla Handicap at Hard Scuffle.

Her father's Mereworth Farm in Kentucky bred a number of notable runners, including Hall of Famer and 1935 Horse of the Year Discovery. When Salmon died in 1953, Duffey's brother, Walter Salmon Jr., took charge of the operation, and Duffey acquired an interest. Mereworth now is owned by her niece, Susan Donaldson. Duffey also had success on the flat with Secret Amie, a Mereworth homebred, who won three stakes in the 1980s.

She is survived by a son, Harry "Stoney" Duffey III, and daughter Amanda Rutledge, plus five grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

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Little Giant

Pony stands tall to claim top prize

BY SEAN CLANCY

It's not always the action that matters. It's the reaction.

Wynn Norman understands. About eight years ago, she watched a 4-year-old homebred smash through a one-stride combination. Jumping by braille – rider went one way, horse went another, rails went everywhere. That was the action.

The reaction – she'll never forget.

"We set a one-stride combination and he tried to bounce it; he crashed and rolled, the rider fell," Norman said. "He went back and corrected himself like nothing had happened. Dusted himself off and carried on."

All the way to champion horse – don't call him champion pony – for 2007.

Because of his size, Theodore O'Connor is officially a pony – even though he does things most horses can't do. Bred by Norman's Sportponies Unlimited, Theodore O'Connor is by Thoroughbred stallion Theodore (registered name Witty Boy) and out of 13-hand, half-Thoroughbred/quarter-Arabian/quarter-Shetland mare Chelsea's Melody. Being 14.1 hands classifies him as a pony. Rolling around Rolex to finish third, venturing to Brazil to win the Pan Am Games and cleaning up at The Fork and Seneca Valley classify him as a champion.

Owned by the Theodore O'Connor Syndicate and ridden by Karen O'Connor, Theodore O'Connor collected 204 points to out-pace Pan Am teammates McKinlaigh and Tru Luck. O'Connor soared to the leading lady rider title as well. Theodore O'Connor did much more than represent points on a leaderboard, he took over the sport and gave fans a feel-good "Rudy" story in 2007.

"What a story, huh?" O'Connor said. "He's amazing. He continues to impress me, I have such respect for him."

A pony going advanced makes a natural novelty act. But when a pony succeeds against the best in the world, it's much more than novelty. Theodore O'Connor has earned respect from

EVENTING AWARDS

Horse of the Year

O'Connor, Norman and anybody who's seen his conviction around a cross-country course, his poise in a dressage ring and his spring in a show ring.

Theodore O'Connor's show jumping round at Rolex elicited the biggest applause all year. O'Connor lengthened him when she needed, shortened him when he needed and turned a daunting task into a nothing more than a game of hopscotch.

"We were truly stunned with the Rolex cross country, amazed at how easy he made it look, the fences looked three feet, not four feet," Norman said. "The combination after the water jump at Rolex was a real test. He flew through it. After that, he was more confident than ever before. When he was a baby, maybe 4 years old, I thought perhaps he might be special."

That was after he learned to put a stride in the one stride.

"His talent wasn't evident until he learned to use himself properly. Once he learned to use himself, he really wanted to do it all," Norman said. "When riding out as a youngster, he was very alert, always looking to see what was next. Always looking for something to jump."

Originally campaigned by Nicolle Villers and then Christian Trainor, Theodore O'Connor was still a project when O'Connor took over the riding and training in 2005. They finished fourth at their first event, a preliminary trip around the Kentucky Classic Horse Trials and then used all of 2006 trying to get things right. They enjoyed decent moments, finishing second in the preliminary at Rocking Horse and second in the intermediate at Virginia Horse Trials. They also had bad days, finishing the year with a runout early on the cross-country course at Fair Hill. The trials and tribulations continued to start this year – they finished ninth, seventh, 17th while accumulating penalties on the cross-country stage.

"Even your technique, it's not just



Shannon Brinkman

Horse of the Year Theodore O'Connor and Leading Lady Rider Karen O'Connor.

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, it's all the little things. I dissect all that with these big horses and try to be as accurate as I can with him. It's a fun challenge."

A fifth at Poplar Place and a win at the Fork gave Theodore O'Connor momentum heading to Rolex. He rode that

momentum to a tremendous weekend.

Theodore O'Connor entered as the only pony in the competition. He finished as the only pony to place, finishing third and earning the fitness award. He scored a 55.7 in his dressage test, added 4.4 time penalties on the cross country and then zipped through one of just two double-clear show-jumping rounds. At

See **O'CONNOR** page 46 ►



Buck Davidson

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O'Connor —

■ Continued from page 44

that moment, the sport stopped and took notice — maybe he's more than a novelty.

"I knew he was good, I knew he was as cute as could be and I knew he was an incredible jumper for his size but where that was all going to go . . . nobody ever could believe he could be capable of putting the whole package together," O'Connor said. "Being settled enough to do the dressage, having enough training for the dressage to stay in there with the big horses, and he far exceeds a lot of the horses in his jumping talent. It's pretty unbelievable."

O'Connor credits the training, actually, the ability to handle the training,

for Theodore O'Connor's success.

"With any competitive horse, if they're a real sound individual, they get to practice a lot. The ones that break easy, they don't get to practice much so their skills aren't as honed as the others. This guy shows up for work every day," O'Connor said. "(Farrier) Paul Goodness says he could run barefoot, his feet are that good, his cannon bones are that short, his pasterns are that short, his joints are that clean. He gets to practice every day, a lot, and I think that speaks volumes for why he is where he is today."

Newman said it best.

"We strive to breed attitude and athleticism," Newman said. "It's not the size. It's the stride."

Additional reporting by Katy Carter.

Talking Teddy

— with Theodore O'Connor's breeder Wynn Norman

How much difference is there between Teddy and his siblings? "Tremendous — not all of them are talented. The boys are all good, the mares are usually (tough). I have a full-brother now that I'm excited about."

Does he like the attention? "Teddy loves attention. He used to be a shy and reserved gentleman, but his character has developed — he's pushy now. He needed individual attention to bring out his character. Human interaction is important to his continued development. His riders (Nicolle Villers, Christan Trainor, and Karen) appreciated him and he learned that he mattered — 'I'm somebody now!' (referencing Steve Martin in *The Jerk*)."

What was your experience with the Pan Am Games? "I didn't attend the Pan Ams, but Karen called every day. I got the time confused for show jumping and missed her call. I felt like they had already won after cross-country day, though. The Pan Ams were wonderful, but Rolex was the BEST."

— Katy Carter

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Sonny and Ann Via

The Vias completed a dream steeplechase season with two victories on the final day — from Good Night Shirt and Fantorini — to claim the National Steeplechase Association owner championship.

On Course

New team, same result for Dutton

BY SEAN CLANCY

Last year's headline for the Rider of the Year Award read, "Course Change." This year's could read, "Staying the Course," as Phillip Dutton won his eighth consecutive United States Eventing Association Rider of the Year title.

Dutton, 43, called 2006 a transition year while accumulating 799 points. He sold some horses, bought a farm and was about to change citizenship from Australia to the United States. For 2007, consider Dutton transitioned. He nearly notched four digits, settling for 946 points, far and away the best on the circuit. Karen O'Connor finished second with 583 and Sarah Cousins accumulated 492 to place third. Kim Severson, Darren Chiacchia, Buck Davidson, Boyd Martin, Bruce Davidson, Allison Springer and Bonnie Mosser rounded out the top 10.

An Australian native, Dutton rode for the U.S. for the first time in 2007. He represented his new country at the Pan Am Games, where he was a member of the gold medal-winning team and won an individual silver aboard Annie Jones and Susan Stimson's Tru Luck. Dutton dominated Fair Hill International, winning with Jones' The Foreman and finishing third with Acorn Hill Farm's Woodburn, a new convert to Dutton's program. Dutton's protege, Boyd Martin, finished second and fourth to give True Prospect Farm the grand slam of Fair Hill.

Woodburn won the World Championship Qualifier at Wits End CIC*** and also took the advanced at Five Points Horse Trials. Bruce Duchois's Connaught finished second at Rolex Kentucky CCI**** and seventh at the Fork CIC***W. Tru Luck produced a ninth at Rolex, an eighth at the Fork and a second at the Red Hills CIC3***W.

"It was a good year, but you always have your ups and downs. With The Foreman, I was fortunate to finish off the year well at Fair Hill but the first part was disappointing with a niggling injury," Dutton said. "Getting Woodburn was a great addition. Connaught had a great finish at Rolex. Boyd took over the riding on a lot of the up-and-coming rides, and he's done a good job. Overall, I'm pleased with the way it's going."

In 2007, Dutton continued to pepper the sport with horses – young and old, from Pine Top to Waredaca. Martin joined True Prospect at the beginning of the season and eased some of the burden. Having said that, Dutton still guided eight horses through the training, preliminary and advanced divisions at Plantation Field in September. None finished worse than 10th.

"It's working out well, I'm not phasing out by any means and in a way it might improve my riding because I can take a bit more time with each horse rather than trying to rush and get through all the horses," Dutton said. "Boyd and I get along great, we're on the same page in what we expect from the horses. There will come a time when he wants to go out on his own and I'll be there to try to help him and encourage him."

For now, Dutton and Martin will try to dominate together. Any talk of 2008

EVENTING AWARDS

Rider of the Year

starts and finishes with the Olympics.

"For 2008, you work backward from the Olympics," Dutton said. "That will be my main goal, then you try to decide what the best approach is for each horse. The main competition to get there will be Kentucky, it looks like there will be two versions, so you have to decide which one you want to go in, the shortened version or the four star."

Dutton enters 2008 with three potential Olympians – The Foreman, Tru Luck and Woodburn and another battalion of young horses for owners such as Nina Gardner and Acorn Hill Farm to fill the gaps.

"The Foreman is the most experienced and has a pretty good record," Dutton said. "Woodburn is on a very sharp learning curve and it will depend on how he goes in the spring. If he keeps on the same improvement, well, then he's potentially a very, very good horse. Tru Luck was a fraction overfaced at Kentucky in a four star, but then he went to Brazil and did a softer course really well. I've had him back in work for quite a while so I'm hoping he'll come out really strong in the spring."

Undoubtedly, changing citizenship made 2007 a year unto itself for Dutton.

"I guess the highlight was the Pan Am Games in Brazil with Tru Luck," Dutton said. "On a world stage, it wasn't a huge event but it was the first time for me to represent America. I was real pleased with the way the horse went and I'm glad I didn't screw up on my first time for America. It was a good result and a good experience for everybody involved."

With one horse and a little cash, Dutton came over from Australia about 15 years ago. He quickly collected owners, friends, horses and fans. He was accepted when he was riding for Australia. Here, this year was different.

"I think everybody encouraged me but there was a bit more intensity in it now that I'm representing America," Dutton said. "It was different and the same. It was a great group of dedicated people on the U.S. team, from the coaches to the farriers to the organizing staff. They virtually try to leave no stone unturned to make sure you get every point that is possible. It's great to work with people like that."

Dutton's teammates said the same thing when they joined him in a training session before venturing to Brazil. Karen O'Connor was anxious to watch Dutton and try to glean something from him. For the American team, it was like the Yankees signing Alex Rodriguez.

"My Australian coat is still hanging in my cupboard. Nobody told me I couldn't wear it but I rode in a black coat at Kentucky because I had changed my nationality just before Kentucky," Dutton said. "I hadn't represented America and hadn't been granted their pink coat so I rode in a black coat. Once I got selected to the Pan Am Games, I was given another pink coat."

One sure to stay out of the cupboard in 2008.



Shannon Brinkman

Phillip Dutton guides Tru Luck over a fence at Rolex.



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Easy Riders

New Englanders Dobbin, Ashton team up for long-distance success

BY KATY CARTER

"I like to get up in the morning and look out the window at my horses," Corinne Ashton said. "I've waited my whole life for this."

One of the five horses in residence at her small Princeton, Mass., farm is Dobbin – a 13-year-old bought out of the local paper and Ashton's partner in crime. Abetted by Dobbin, Ashton made off with the 2007 USEA Adult Amateur Rider of the Year title, more than doubling the points total of her nearest competitor.

"We have an arrangement," said Ashton. "He jumps clear and I give him a white pony to chew on. His favorite thing is to have flesh between his teeth."

Before 2007, Ashton and Dobbin had already amassed an impressive record at the advanced level, including wins at Groton House, Millbrook and the Virginia CCI**. They were long-listed for the U.S. Equestrian Team in 2002, named to the short list for the 2003 Pan American Games and finished 16th at the 2005 Rolex Kentucky CCI***.

The pair's 154 USEA points helped Ashton earn not only the Adult Amateur Rider of the Year, but also a 10th in the Leading Lady Rider title and 19th overall. Dobbin finished the 2007 season tied for eighth in the advanced horse division. Ashton, the mother of two teenage daughters, also had success at the training level with Pennuche and On The Town.

"He has always been good," Ashton said of Dobbin. "He gives me the chance to be up there with the best. He never stops trying and always does his very best."

The New Englanders started the year down south, claiming victories in the open intermediate at Pine Top and advanced at Southern Pines and Morven Park. They competed closer to home over the summer, with runner-up finishes in intermediate at Groton House and Stuart CIC**, and an advanced win at Millbrook. They closed their campaign with a fifth at Wits End CIC*** and a ninth at Fair Hill International CCI***.

But the "coup d'etat," as Ashton put it, was their victory in the advanced division at the Wellpride American Eventing Championships this September.

After adding only a rail in show jumping to their 32.5 penalty points in dressage, a foot perfect cross-country run landed them in first, ahead of Darren Chiacchia and his Olympic mount Windfall (38.4) and rising star Allison Springer and Arthur (40.7). Dobbin's consistency that weekend exemplified their tremendous performances throughout the year.

"We've established a new routine," she said. "I let him go ahead and jump. He's just glad this old bag has worked it out, and he's much happier."

Ashton and Dobbin's 2007 record on cross country alone is one that anyone, "old bag" or not, would love to approach. The pair's only cross-country jumping faults took place at Fair Hill

EVENTING AWARDS

Adult Amateur Rider

International, where they had a "drive by" resulting in 20 penalties. In spite of the error, they finished with the fastest time and ended up in ninth Sunday.

Though he's logged a good deal of miles, Dobbin doesn't particularly enjoy life on the road. But, with his owner's assistance, he's able to shake off the rigors of lengthy trailer rides.

"He absolutely hates to travel," said Ashton, who has bought – and sold – several trailers in an effort to make the horse of her dreams more comfortable. (She settled on swapping a slant-load for a straight-load.) "Once we're there, he's quite the party animal, but when he's in the trailer, he looks like I feel when I'm carsick."

At home, Dobbin is rewarded with quality turn-out time.

"He's a very sensitive creature and is bored easily, so he has lots of clothes and lives out," said Ashton.

Although his dream is to be turned out with the other horses on the farm, he is often "badly behaved" with them and is far too precious to his owner/rider to risk injury. Enter Ziggy, the aforementioned white pony.

"Dobbin's idea of sport is to bite the pony's ankles," said Ashton. "He gets very excited and tries to knock him over."

In the past, responsibilities at home have kept Ashton's winter competition schedule light, just a foray southward for a few weeks each year. This winter, she looks forward to spending a few months in South Carolina, away from the ice and snow of the Northeast.

"I promised Dobbin we'd go to Aiken," she said. "My husband, Mell, is not a horse person and can't understand the time and money that goes into this sport, but he continues to be very supportive. I couldn't do it without him."

Ashton grew up near Edinburgh, Scotland. Encouraged by her mother, an accomplished horsewoman, she spent her youth heavily involved in eventing, show jumping, pony club and gymkhanas before relocating to the United States 20 years ago. After escaping a career in accounting, she set her sights on returning to eventing, her true passion, and began a business buying, training and selling horses. Several years after the rebirth of her riding career, Ashton found Dobbin through a classified in a local newspaper.

Like many horses before, he was a resale project. But unlike many of those before him, Dobbin had the combination of intelligence, movement and pure athletic talent that secured him a permanent place in Ashton's life.

"I was very keen on getting back into it, and Dobbin turned out to be a bonus; he's better than most," she said. "There he was, standing in the field he was born in," she reflected. "We've been together 10 years now and we know each other well. And I'm not getting off him."



Shannon Brinkman

Dobbin and Corinne Ashton clear a show jump at Rolex Kentucky.

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West Coast Turnaround

Coudray shines from Calif. base

BY KATY CARTER

Tiana Coudray is one of those lucky few whose first horse is still with her, actively competing and leading a productive career. Of course, when your first horse is King Street, having it any other way would be ridiculous.

Coudray and her longtime partner (known as "Danny" around the barn) had plenty to celebrate in 2007, which culminated in the United States Eventing Association's Young Rider of the Year Award.

"This past year was incredible," said the 19-year-old native of Ojai, Calif. "Going to Rolex was definitely the high point. I have always wanted to get there, but to do so at age 18 was unreal. And winning the CIC three-star (at Galway Downs) was pretty special, too."

Although eliminated on cross country at Rolex, Coudray is able to reflect positively upon her first four-star experience.

"I think the most rewarding moment of the year was our dressage test at Rolex," she stated without hesitation. "Danny and I went in some pretty adverse weather conditions and I was very proud of him."

King Street and Coudray began their career together four years ago at the novice level, after Coudray purchased the now 12-year-old Irish Sport Horse from Peter Green in Virginia. According to Coudray, Danny was special from the beginning.

"He's very forgiving and has earned himself several sets of angel wings," she said. "We figured everything out mostly through trial and error, and he just went along and did his job."

Coudray began riding while enrolled at the Ojai Valley School.

"I was incredibly lucky that the school I went to had a riding program," she said. "I gave it a try for P.E. credit and was hooked." Several years and a North American Young Riders Championship silver medal later, she joined the Santa Rosa Valley Pony Club. "I joined pony club late, but it's been a great experience."

Coudray didn't have access to regular instruction in her hometown, and competed through the CCI* largely on her own.

"There isn't much going on where I am from, so I mostly rode on my own at home," she said. "We were going intermediate before we started getting regular help, and that made a huge improvement."

Since then, she has spent the last two years as a working student for Derek and Bea di Grazia at their farm in Carmel Valley.

"I feel so fortunate for the opportunities and the horses," said Coudray. "It's wonderful."

As to working with King Street, Coudray sees the partnership as a highly complementary one, their strengths and

EVENTING AWARDS

Young Rider of the Year

weaknesses balancing out.

"I have a pretty good dressage foundation, and dressage is hardest for Danny," Coudray said. "He's a worrier and tends to get flustered if he thinks he has made a mistake, where as I'm more of a cool competitor."

Despite his perfectionist tendencies, King Street's still a very funny horse.

"He really can't be bothered by unimportant things, such as putting his ears up for photos," she said. "He'd rather take a nap than be bothered by silly human beings."

Coudray is particularly excited that King Street has realized he is not just a babysitter but a true athlete.

"Danny's outlook on competition changed this year," she said. "Even going intermediate and advanced, he thought his job was to pack me around. But now he's realized what an athlete he really is, and has transitioned from packing me to respecting me as a rider."

Although King Street took most of the accolades, Coudray also had a bright 2007 with her 6-year-old Ringwood Magister, who won the Twin Rivers CCI* and the Galway Downs CCI*, finished second at Woodside Spring Horse Trials and placed third at Copper Meadows.

"He's a really talented horse and have big hopes for him," said Coudray. "He is incredibly playful and can get too hot in dressage, so I have to keep a lid on it. The challenge is to not push him, even though I know what he is capable of."

When asked if she has any plans to move east, the California girl was reflective.

"There are a lot of advantages to riding and competing on the West Coast," Coudray said, citing consistent footing, good courses and a virtually year-long season that doesn't force migration to more temperate climates. "Having to travel long distances to competitions is the huge disadvantage we have on the West Coast, and the lack of a CCI three-star is another. This has allowed me to become really good through the two-star level, though."

While the transcontinental move has crossed her mind more than once, it would require special circumstances.

"I think about it," said Coudray, "But to make it worthwhile, I'd have to have a string of top horses. The costs are a huge disadvantage for one or two horses."

Coudray wishes to put her past experiences and future endeavors to work in creating a professional career.

"Right now, I'm mostly doing my own thing, riding and working for Bea and Derek and trying to finish up school," she said. "I definitely want to pursue the horses full time and keep my sights set on a solid future in the sport."



Shannon Brinkman

Tiana Coudray and King Street fly a fence at Rolex in April.

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December 9, 2007

Mr. Francis H. Abbott, President
National Steeplechase Association
400 Fair Hill Drive
Elkton, Maryland 21921

Dear Franny,

Thank you for your letter of December 5th, your candor and the effort to answer concerns expressed in our letter of November 23rd. Your effort to outline NSA's position on various issues is appreciated.

Over the past several years, we have from time to time caused NSA's management some heartburn because of differing opinions on a number of issues. During the same time frame, NSA has caused us heartburn for the same reasons.

After considerable debate and discussions we have decided it's time to stop the heartburn. We will no longer ask the NSA to sanction or help manage the Little Everglades Steeplechase. New printed material will no longer indicate the event is sanctioned by the NSA.

We plan to support and be an active participant in the sport we love. OTRs will, as in the past, be invited and welcome at the Little Everglades Steeplechase that will be held on Sunday, March 9, 2008. We are planning the same fun OTR party the night before our races at no charge and will be sending out our race conditions to OTRs in January. Our purse structure, shipping bonuses and trainer/rider awards will remain the same. We hope to see many of the OTRs at our race meet in 2008.

If Tampa Bay Downs does consent to have a hurdle race following our meet in 2008, we would be happy to have the horses board at our facility and workout on our track after our race is concluded.

Good luck with your new endeavors and the challenges as president of the NSA. We wish you, your board and staff a very Merry Christmas.

Kindest regards,

Sharon & Bob Blanchard, Race Directors
Little Everglades Steeplechase

Meets —

■ Continued from page 10

“It’s a great opportunity,” he said. “We’re going to reinvent the sport in a year to 18 months. I would prefer it to be the NSA but they clearly can’t stand the change.”

Abbott doesn’t agree with that last part, and certainly doesn’t think race meets choosing to operate without sanction is the right answer.

“You run through all the emotions when you first hear about it,” he said. “You’re taken by surprise, shocked. Some of (Price’s ideas) we’ve heard before and some of them were new, at least new to me. Some of his ideas are revolutionary. Obviously if you pull out of an association you’ve got some ideas like that.”

Abbott also pointed to good signs during 2007, such as the record purse level, and the potential for new meets and new host racetracks.

“After such a good year where things seemed to be going well in my mind and in the board’s mind, this was tough,” he said. “Yes our numbers were down as far as horses and other things, but I truly think a lot of that can be attributed to the ground in the fall. The fall numbers were staggering from 2006 to 2007.”

Firm turf sent the numbers of starters at five fall meets down by 10 or more and, to support Abbott’s claim, the horse population was up through the spring season which ended in May. Through the spring, 395 individual horses had started in an NSA race – an increase of 8 percent from the same period in 2006.

For the year, the individual horse number decreased 5 percent.

Abbott wishes the decisions to run without sanction didn’t come before discussion with the NSA board – though he also sees some things the NSA could have done differently.

“If the letter writing hadn’t started in the beginning, we might have been able to work it out,” he said. “If we had sat down and at least talked, it would have made a difference. If we learn anything from the past four weeks, we should learn to communicate better between and among ourselves – as race meets, as horsemen and as an association. It’s key and I will admit we fell down on that part. We need to do a better job.”

“When we presented that five-year plan (at the patron-member meeting), I thought we made it clear that it was an outline, a starting point, a discussion point starter. People took it as an ultimatum or an expectation. We did not intend it to be that way. We thought we were starting a conversation. We should have presented it to the meets first rather than to the board and to the patron members.”

Still, Abbott strongly supports NSA sanction and hopes to continue to strengthen the circuit.

“Sanction means legitimacy to put it simply,” he said. “A lot goes along with that: rules and rules enforcement, licensing. It gives legitimacy to your event.”

- **History Lessons:** In 1981, the Iroquois Steeplechase raced without sanction after a disagreement with the NSA. The meet re-joined the association the following season . . . In the late 1960s,

2008 NSA Spring Schedule

Saturday, March 22.....**Aiken Spring**
Aiken, S.C. www.aikensteeplechase.com

Saturday, March 29.....**Carolina Cup**
Camden, S.C. www.carolina-cup.org

Saturday, April 5.....**Stoneybrook**
Raeford, N.C. www.carolinahorsepark.com

Saturday, April 12.....**Atlanta**
Kingston, Ga. www.atlantasteeplechase.org

Saturday, April 12.....**My Lady’s Manor**
Monkton, Md. www.marylandsteeplechasing.com

Saturday, April 12.....**Strawberry Hill**
New Kent, Va. www.strawberryhillraces.com

Saturday, April 19.....**Block House**
Tryon, N.C. www.trhcevents.com

Saturday, April 19.....**Grand National**
Butler, Md. www.marylandsteeplechasing.com

Saturday, April 19.....**Middleburg Spring**
Middleburg, Va. www.middleburgspringraces.com

Thursday, April 24.....**Keeneland**
Lexington, Ky. www.keeneland.com

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sunday, May 18.....**High Hope**
Lexington, Ky. www.highbopsteeplechase.com

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

At press time, Little Everglades (March 9) and the Queen’s Cup (April 26) had opted out of NSA sanction. See www.steeplechasetimes.com for updates.

two national steeplechase groups – the National Steeplechase and Hunt Association and the United Hunts Association – merged. The move ended years of separation and pushed the sport in one direction . . . Thoroughbred racing accepts the NSA as the official governing body of jump racing in North America, meaning races held without NSA sanction or recognition (technically, races held at racetracks are sanctioned by the host state’s racing commission because of pari-mutuel laws) do not count as

recognized victories. Many race meets run without NSA sanction (point-to-points in Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania for example), but offer little in the way of purses. Participants are typically amateurs or those using the races as stepping stones to NSA racing. Long-standing point-to-point Winterthur joined the NSA circuit in 2006 and Little Everglades raced as a point-to-point (with NSA assistance) in 2000 before joining the circuit as a full meet in 2001.

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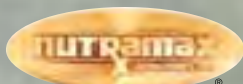
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Photograph by Anthony Trollope

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