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The **Times** *Steeplechase*



Again

Pierrot Lunaire adds Grand National, eyes championship

INSIDE: Looking Ahead to the Colonial Cup • Catching up with Rainiero, Won Wild Bird, more

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Man of the People.

Jockey Paddy Young (center) checks out the action from the other side of the rail at Aiken.

Tod Marks

Worth Repeating

"I would prefer not to go to Callaway, but if it's a short field, we'll go. I think a lot of those novice horses cooked themselves at Far Hills."

Trainer Jack Fisher, after Dahoud won at Far Hills and before he beat two rivals in the novice stakes at Callaway Gardens

"I just didn't want to hit the front too soon so I was saying, 'wait, wait, wait,' the whole time."

Trainer Brianne Slater, as she watched Top Man Michael win the Gladstone

"Not everybody can walk away from the lump sum."

Trainer Lilith Boucher, on the reasoning to sell Peapack winner Kiss N Run

"Arrakis in the allowance at Charleston."

Robert Bonnie, husband of Arrakis' trainer Julie Gomena, with voting advice (Arrakis won the feature at Charleston)

"I'm one of the few guys who remember how good a rider Harry E. Harris was."

Longtime steeplechase fan Dick Ogden, when seeing the Harry E. Harris maiden at Far Hills

"I remember when Leo looked like that."

Far Hills steward Ross Pearce, to Keith O'Brien (whose father Leo was a jump jockey, and leaned on the rail just like his son)

"She would have come, but I didn't want her here and she didn't want to be here either. I said 'no way, stay home.'"

Superstitious trainer Bruce Miller about superstitious daughter Blythe Davies staying away from Pierrot Lunaire's races (and wins)

"You wouldn't want to look at him coming at you straight."

Trainer Ann Stewart, about the conformation of timber champion Incomplete

"If that was Witham, would you have gotten back on?"

Trainer Tom Voss to jockey Paddy Young, who remounted Puller after a mishap in the paddock at Montpelier (Young said yes)

"Cat Feathers – pulling on a bell boot. You know how it is."

Jockey Bernie Dalton, on how his mobile phone screen cracked

"It's the horse that does the running, we're just sitting on their backs. You don't have to be young to do that."

Dalton, on how he and Matt McCarron deal with being called Grandad by their fellow jockeys

"I watched Mike Smith ride Royal Delta in the Breeders' Cup and he said 'if they pop out of the gate, stay out of their way.' I stayed out of his way."

Jockey Richard Boucher, after winning Montpelier's maiden hurdle with front-running Searubyrn

"I love grumpy old men like that. They're great."

Montpelier paddock volunteer Jamie Nichols, after meeting trainer Tom Voss

"I hope it doesn't rain too much."

Trainer Richard Valentine, two days before Far Hills

By the Numbers

7: Wins by jockey Ross Geraghty at Far Hills in the last four seasons (including doubles in 2009, 2011, 2012).

5: Consecutive zero Beyer numbers posted by Kiss N Run while running on the dirt.

2: Wins for trainer Jack Fisher at Callaway Gardens.

4: Rivals beaten by Fisher's two winners.

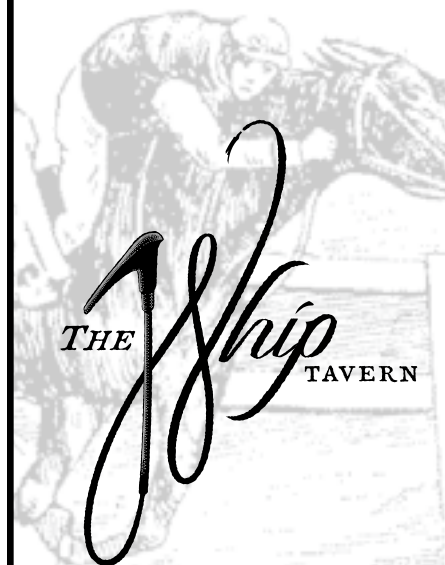
Names of the Month

Lillehammer. The 4-year-old filly is by North Light, and named after the town in Norway (way up north) that hosted the 1994 Winter Olympics. In the old Norse language, it means little rocky hill.

Will Kane. The Mimi Voss homebred is out of Call To Arms, and is named after the character played by Gary Cooper in the film High Noon. Kane was a town marshal, who faced down a killer alone.

Acela. Celtic Venture Stable's 4-year-old filly is by Silver Train.

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Entries

What's Happening and Where To Find It

Here's your newspaper. Been a wild month – racing, traveling, a hurricane. It's November and the season is nearing its winning post. Get caught up here as we cover the big stories from Far Hills to Callaway to the Pennsylvania Hunt Cup. The Colonial Cup wraps it all up Nov. 17 in Camden, S.C. See you there.



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Cup Time

The sport turns its attention to the historic, prestigious, relevant Colonial Cup. First run in 1970, the Springdale Race Course fixture has hosted the sport's greats since the beginning. This year is no different, though Pierrot Luneire will be missed.



PAGES 8-9

Repeat

Pierrot Luneire duplicated his winning effort in the Lonesome Glory with a hard-driving score in the Grand National – the year's richest race.



PAGES 10-14

Fog Lights

After falling at Belmont, Fog Island returns to win a \$75,000 novice stakes at Far Hills for Anne Pape, Richard Valentine and Matt McCarron. Other action at Far Hills included rising distaff star Kisser N Run, 3-year-old Top Man Michael and timber flash Straight To It.



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Heir Apparent

A timber rookie, Grinding Speed moves up to stakes winner with a triumph in the International Gold Cup at Great Meadow for Michael Wharton, Alicia Murphy and Mark Beecher.



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Fast Track

Dahoud wins a maiden at Far Hills, then steps up in class to take novice stakes at Callaway Gardens for Gill Johnston, Jack Fisher and Ross Geraghty.

The Steeplechase
Times

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On the Cover

Pierrot Luneire revs up his stretch rally to catch Divine Fortune in the Grand National at Far Hills.

**Photo by
Tod Marks**



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One Last Inch

Historic Gr. 1 puts cap on season

BY SEAN CLANCY

In a game known for distance, it comes down to inches.

The Eclipse Award still hangs in the balance as entries close for this year's Colonial Cup. The Grade 1 stakes, worth \$100,000, attracted 12 nominations for its 2 3/4 miles of pull-the-curtain finality Saturday, Nov. 17 at Springdale Race Course in Camden, S.C.

Two of those 12, Spy In The Sky and Demonstrative, still hold championship aspirations after splitting stakes at Saratoga and posting other big efforts during a parody-filled year. Earnings leader and if-you-voted-today champion Pierrot Lunaire, has been turned out for the year. If Spy In The Sky or Demonstrative dominate the Colonial Cup, it's a wait-for-the-Eclipse Awards dinner result.

That's what happens when it comes down to inches.

If Spy In The Sky happens to be on a different stride, he wins a nose decision

COLONIAL CUP PREVIEW

over Pierrot Lunaire in the Lonesome Glory at Belmont Park back in September and comes to the Colonial Cup as favorite for the honor. You can be sure, Pierrot Lunaire would be making the trip rather than playing it safe.

If the annual rain at Far Hills came Saturday night rather than Friday, trainer Jimmy Day runs Randleston Farm's Spy In The Sky at Far Hills and the three-way meeting of the Eclipse candidates takes place on the track instead of on paper. With an inch or two less water on the Far Hills turf, it could all be different.

If Divine Fortune fell a different way in the New York Turf Writers Cup, Spy In The Sky gets a clear run and perhaps makes it closer on Demonstrative. Of course, the latter cut his hind ankle in the melee. Inches. Inches. Inches.

"He's doing really, really well. He's



Tod Marks

Eclipse Award contenders Spy In The Sky (left) and Demonstrative (right), plus Divine Fortune, are three players in the Colonial Cup. Grand National winner Pierrot Lunaire skips the race.

training super," Day said of Spy In The Sky. "He's ready to run. I'm very happy with where I'm at, he's run well over that track every time. It would have made it better if Pierrot Lunaire ran, it would have given us a chance to step up

on good ground and have a go at him. I was looking forward to running against him again."

Day said bypassing Far Hills was frustrating to the humans around Spy

See **COLONIAL CUP** page 7 ►



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Colonial Cup —

■ Continued from page 6

In The Sky, but did little to the horse.

"It doesn't bother him a bit, when you're an 8-year-old, you just pick up and go on to the next one," the trainer said. "He's done a couple of brisk works at home and he's in good shape. It's wonderful to see him come back and enjoy it again."

If Bruce Miller or Blythe Miller or whomever is calling the shots on Mary Ann Houghland's Pierrot Luneire gave an inch, running the only two-time Grade 1 winner in the Colonial Cup, settling the championship on the race-track rather than the clubhouse, then the sport would have a definite answer. Instead, in a game known for distance, it comes down to inches. Pierrot Luneire piled two big wins at the end of his season, but double-digit losses in the Iroquois and Zeke Ferguson plus a loss in the Temple Gwathmey don't bolster his claims to the award. On the plus side, he beat Demonstrative in their two meetings and Spy In The Sky in the Lonesome Glory.

"He had two tough races, and we just wanted to stop with him," said Bruce Miller. "He came out of Far Hills well and is feeling well. We went back and forth for a while, but he hasn't got much more to prove. We didn't want to get greedy."

If Robbie Walsh lands an inch this way or an inch that way, perhaps he doesn't break his hip falling from Dr. Wheat at Belmont or if Matt McCaron slides an inch quicker after falling with Fog Island, perhaps he doesn't get knocked out in the same race. If for an inch, Demonstrative runs in the Lonesome Glory, on a track he relishes, on ground he cherishes and perhaps he comes to the Colonial Cup as the only two-time Grade 1 winner on the year, instead he scratched from the Lonesome Glory and audibled to Far Hills. Owned by Jacqueline Ohrstrom, Demonstrative enters off a gallant, albeit losing effort, in the Grand National.

"As everybody knows, I wanted to skip Far Hills and go to Belmont and Camden, he's won at Camden as a 3-year-old and I think he'll love the Colonial Cup. I don't have an issue with the distance over good ground," Valentine said. "The horse is well, we're looking forward to him running. The purse of the Colonial Cup is different and it might not mean anything for an Eclipse Award, but it's still a very historic race and means a lot on the calendar."

Now, if any of the other 10 nominees wins the Colonial Cup, Pierrot Luneire wins the award by a landslide, not an inchslide.

Remember, since its inception in 1970, the Colonial Cup represents a different test than any other race during the season. It's not the Iroquois, 3 miles of spring stamina. It's not the New York Turf Writers Cup, 2 3/8 miles of speed and step. It's not the Lonesome Glory, a 2 1/2-mile intersection of horses still standing after Saratoga and who skipped Saratoga. And it's certainly not the Grand National, 2 5/8 miles of slog and stealth. There are horses who wake up every year for the Colonial Cup and there are others who prove year after year that it's not their thing. Even if the Grand National has a bigger purse, the Iroquois has the mystique of 3 miles,

the Turf Writers is in front of the world and even without the traditional natural brush, it's still the race of the year. There is only one finale.

Demonstrative and Spy In The Sky hold the best chances of earning a bronze horse for the mantle of their connections but there are others in the classic who sport solid chances.

Brianne Slater nominated four imports for leading owner Irv Naylor. The good soldier, Decoy Daddy, finished second in the Noel Laing, his first jump start of the fall. Charminster ran hard against Demonstrative at Saratoga and Pierrot Luneire at Belmont but failed to land a blow in the Grand National. Jack Cool and You're The Top flopped in their domestic debuts in the Grand National but could still threaten on their best days.

Ken and Sarah Ramsey's Slip Away, champion in 2010, returned to the races in the Noel Laing, fading to fourth behind Rainiero, Decoy Daddy and Cornhusker. Did he need it? If he needed it and he is anything close to the same horse who toyed with eight rivals, winning the 2010 Colonial Cup by 26 lengths, then look out.

Hall of Fame trainer Jonathan Sheppard nominated veteran Divine Fortune and recent novice graduate History Boy. The former put everyone on the run in the Grand National, skipping over the soft turf like he was wearing roller blades down Sunset Strip. Bill Pape's seven-time winner owns just one win this year but when ridden forwardly, he's a factor against anybody. Timber Bay's History Boy found nothing in the deep ground at Far Hills and needs to recapture his summer form that netted an allowance race at Penn National and the Mickey Walsh novice stakes at Saratoga.

Leslie Young nominated Hickory Tree Stable's Gustavian, runner-up to Fog Island in the novice stakes at Far Hills and a winner of the novice stakes at Belmont Park in his previous start. Bernie Dalton, regular rider for Pierrot Luneire, picks up the ride.

Hall of Famer Janet Elliot nominated Greg Hawkins' Alajmal and Gene Weymouth's Wild For Gold. The former won an allowance race at Saratoga before a dull effort at Far Hills in soft ground. The duo ran 1-2 in the flat race at Charleston.

Two still dream about an Eclipse Award while 10 others simply dream of a Cup.



Douglas Lees
Slip Away and M.J. Kirwan eye a second win in the Colonial Cup.



Tod Marks photo

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Heart Breaker

Pierrot Lunaire catches Divine Fortune, history

BY JOE CLANCY

After 13 fences and 2 1/4 miles, the year's richest race came to this . . . Divine Fortune kicked away to further crank up the pressure on eight rivals he'd dragged around the Far Hills race course. Some had kept pace, many had cracked.

Surely, this would undo them all.

"I thought I could break their hearts," jockey Darren Nagle said of the race's surprise leader. He broke all but one. Brave, gallant, good, Divine Fortune put 3 quick lengths on the field leaving the final turn and headed up the rise to the last fence. This is where races are won at Far Hills. Control at the last almost always means control at the finish. Nagle and his horse left the ground in control, landed with energy, looked on their way to claim the \$250,000 Grand National Oct. 20. Then they didn't. Finally tired, Divine Fortune could push no more. He drifted out in mid-stretch and offered nothing when Pierrot Lunaire drew alongside in the final yards. Reborn this fall, Mary Ann Hough-



Tod Marks

Divine Fortune (left) leads over the last fence of the Grand National, as Pierrot Lunaire (far right) begins his winning move.

land's veteran swept past to win by three-quarters of a length – denying Divine Fortune and seizing control of the 2012 championship race with a \$150,000 payday and a second Grade 1 victory.

Like a hound on a fox, the winner locked on the leader – leaving the others behind, covering Divine Fortune's move on the turn and taking aim before the last fence. Aboard the 8-year-old son of War Chant, Bernie Dalton felt like he had a chance; then he didn't; then he did.

"I'll get that horse," he said to himself around the final bend. "Wait, he doesn't look like he's stopping. I

don't know if I'll get there."

Pierrot Lunaire responded to a slap from the whip, and filled the bridle once more – winning for the second time in as many starts this fall after losing nine in a row over three years.

"He just took off and I knew if I jumped the last well I had him," Dalton said. "It's a good feeling to get right about there. That's the horse that showed up in America three years ago. I don't know what happened to him and I don't know where they've been hiding the

See **GRAND NATIONAL** page 9 ►

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Tod Marks

Pierrot Lunaire (right) saves ground behind Jack Cool (left) and inside Royal Bonsai early in the Grand National.

Grand National —

■ Continued from page 8

key but I'm glad they found it."

If Bruce Miller and his daughter Blythe Davies — she's the program trainer, he's the sage conditioner of multiple champions over decades in the business — found the key, Dalton turned it.

The Irishman got aboard for the first time at Colonial Downs in June, and Pierrot Lunaire finished a middling fifth behind Via Galilei in the Zeke Ferguson. The performance looked like little more than another double-digit defeat, but told Dalton a little more. The horse was OK, coming around. He couldn't quicken with the leaders at Colonial Downs, but longer races and more demanding courses would help. Almost four months later, the jockey went to Belmont Park with some confidence in an improved effort. Pierrot Lunaire delivered, denying Spy In The Sky by a nose in the Grade 1 Lonesome Glory Sept. 27 — despite a 49-1 starting price.

"The reason I'm riding that horse is because he was running the way he was," Dalton said. "I get called up for the 50-1 shots that nobody else wants to ride and you want somebody with some experience. I'm fine with that, I enjoy those kinds of rides. I understand. At Belmont, I had him right down on the inside, hopping off the edge of wings, and he seemed to like it. I remembered."

Dalton put his horse on the wings again, once knocking a flag off an inside corner, and Pierrot Lunaire kept running and jumping. So did Divine Fortune. Changing his style, the seven-time winner ran freely up front, owning the tempo and ruling the pace. Jack Cool and History Boy pressed early and were still close running down the

backstretch the final time. Royal Bonsai kept up, Pierrot Lunaire drafted into position, Demonstrative rallied from the back. Nagle said go midway on the turn, which took everybody out of the race except Pierrot Lunaire.

"He got me out of trouble at the middle one down the back, I had him totally unsighted and he trashed it," Dalton said. "He took one breath after the fence and came right back on the bridle like 'I got it, no problem.' At that stage, a horse might have said he'd had enough."

Pierrot Lunaire found plenty. Royal Bonsai stayed for third, just ahead of Demonstrative.

"Bruce always says he's got a turn of foot, it's only a short turn of foot but he's got it," said Dalton. "He showed it at Belmont and he showed it again on this ground. The horse felt like he was a hand bigger today. He came out of Belmont with a bit of confidence, he had a good experience. It's often stupid to say that about animals but they know when they do well."

He did even better at Far Hills, extending a career turnaround that Miller and Davies engineered with a new mix. Pierrot Lunaire eats "13 different things" every day including apples, carrots and even sweet potatoes to calm his stomach. He trains harder than he used to, does faster works closer to his races, undergoes chiropractic and massage treatments. Much of the training gets done in Pennsylvania at Miller's farm, though the horse ships to Maryland for workouts under Davies.

"He is not the horse he was, Blythe works him now and that's made a difference, and we've just gotten him fitter, happier, better," said Miller. "He's feeling good, eating, everything's going his way now. He proved Belmont wasn't a fluke."

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Makeup

Fog Island erases Belmont sting with big effort in novice stakes

BY JOE CLANCY

Fog Island stepped into the seventh fence of the William Entenmann Novice Stakes at Belmont Park, and hit it so hard the steel frame shuddered. The 6-year-old horse fell, sent jockey Matt McCarron to the hospital, and touched off four more falls in the year's messiest race.

The incidents were unrelated, but impactful. Two horses died from their injuries. Jockey Robbie Walsh broke his hip. Favorite Demonstrative scratched from the next race. Though uninjured, Fog Island wound up the subject of a Saratoga newspaper column about the dangers of the sport to its equine participants.

But Fog Island doesn't read newspapers.

In his first start since the Belmont debacle, he rallied from well back to catch Gustavian at the last fence and win the \$75,000 Foxbrook Champion Hurdle for novices at Far Hills Oct. 20. Trained by Richard Valentine for Anne Pape, Fog Island (McCarron) won by 1 1/4 lengths over the favorite with Forgotten Man third. First and third respectively in the Entenmann, Gustavian and Forgotten Man were no match for Fog Island this time. Valentine and McCarron changed the horse's style, dropping back off the pace and aiming for relaxation and rhythm.

"I have no idea what he did at Belmont, I don't remember it," said McCarron. "At Far Hills, Richard said to give him a good safe trip and get around, try to give him a good experience. He jumped really well and the race started falling apart and he just started building his confidence. I kept reaching up and taking more hold to make him think he was toting me along. He started taking more and more hold of the bridle as he started passing horses."

FAR HILLS RACES – OCT. 20

For Valentine, the victory was vindication.

His client Clarke Ohrstrom bought Fog Island from owner/trainer Michele Sanger at the end of last season, then sold him to new client Pape. Fog Island finished sixth at Camden to start the year. He rebounded to win a Great Meadow allowance by a dozen lengths – only to be disqualified for a medication violation (for a muscle relaxant, which Valentine still can't figure out). The son of Rossini's next two starts, a 59-length defeat at Radnor and the Belmont fall, did little to inspire.

Then came Far Hills, where everything changed. Afterward, the trainer bounded off the hill, proud of his horse.

"He is not a bad horse, there is nothing wrong with him," the trainer said. "He works with (Grade 1 winner) Demonstrative all the time and I love him. He's just had bad things happen to him, it's been a stressful year. I stand by him though."

Fog Island broke his hurdle maiden for Sanger at the Iroquois in 2011, but lost his next nine while tackling the likes of Mr. Hot Stuff, All Together, Demonstrative, Lake Placid, Rainiero and Baltic Shore.

The Foxbrook win more than doubled the career bankroll to \$79,680 – and erased some memories.

"I was apprehensive, a little bit, after Belmont so I schooled him myself," said Valentine. "I thought he schooled great. I used to think he had to be close to the pace. I just wanted him to have a nice jumping trip and see if he could get a bit of confidence. I don't think (the fall) really backed him off. We rode him conservatively, that helped him, he liked the ground and he wants a trip like that. I have a lot of respect for the horse."



Tod Marks

Fog Island jumps the last en route to victory in the Foxbrook novice stakes at Far Hills.



Tod Marks

Owner Anne Pape meets Fog Island in the winner's circle after the Foxbrook.

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World Traveler

Top Man Michael puts Irish form to good use in 3-year-old stakes

BY SEAN CLANCY

It started at 5:45 p.m., Roscommon Racecourse, Ireland, Aug. 7.

Top Man Michael tossed his head and pulled jockey Davy Condon to the lead over the first fence, pecked at the second, before Condon cajoled him back to fourth. Once settled, the 3-year-old gelding jumped efficiently, skipped three wide on the final turn, before running out a 2-length win for trainer Noel Meade.

The Racing Post wrote: "Top Man Michael came in with the best flat credentials along with the reported 500 hurdles he had jumped and duly won with a bit in hand. After an early mistake when he was racing a bit keen, he gradually got into a rhythm with his jumping and was travelling like a winner from before the straight, eventually completing his task without too much fuss. He might not be too bad and this race has produced some reasonable horses in the past and time will tell how this race rates."

It continued at 2:20 p.m., Listowel Racecourse, Ireland, Sept. 16.

Top Man Michael tossed his head again for jockey Paul Carberry before settling into mid division. Carberry did what he does best, placing his shoulders ahead of his hands, settling Top Man Michael in fourth. When Carberry called on him, Top Man Michael made a run before settling for second over water-logged ground.

The Racing Post said: "Top Man Michael didn't lose much in defeat. His rider was able to find plenty of cover and produced him with every chance at the second last but the winner was just the better horse on the day. On this ground one would have to describe it as an excellent effort under his winner's penalty."

FAR HILLS RACES – OCT. 20

Next stop, 4:16 p.m., Far Hills Races, America, Oct. 20.

Purchased by Irv Naylor and turned over to trainer Brianne Slater, Top Man Michael landed in America seven days before Far Hills, spent two days in quarantine before bedding down at the Fair Hill Equine Therapy Center. Slater met him Tuesday, he hacked Wednesday, schooled with Ross Geraghty Thursday, relaxed Friday and became the first 3-year-old stakes winner of the year with a facile win in the \$25,000 Gladstone.

Geraghty watched the two races on the Internet Friday night and designed a plan which worked to perfection, finding a perfect spot in second behind More Tea Vicar and jockey Bernie Dalton.

"I studied his races. He'd run on soft, heavy ground in Ireland. I knew my biggest problem was getting him to settle," Geraghty said. "He'd schooled very well Thursday, I knew when I'd need him he'd be very brave and jump for me but my main concern was getting him to switch off. I was sitting third and couldn't get him to relax behind (Aweful Quiet). I went past and said 'Sit here.' He was 5-6 lengths off Bernie and I just got him to relax. Stayed out a bit, got him into a rhythm and just kept it."

Over ground he knew, against horses who were running on the flat when he made his hurdle debut, Top Man Michael relished the challenge, easing to More Tea Vicar at the last and winning comfortably by 2 lengths.

"You can't be on the bridle in that ground. I gave him a nice breather through the inside stretch. I let him pop the second-last and he just sort of scurried through it. He landed and I shook him up a bit and the next thing he just jumped into the bridle," Geraghty said.



Tod Marks

Top Man Michael clears the last with energy in the Gladstone Stakes for 3-year-olds.

"I knew I could go for him at the last because he was brave. Watching his races, he didn't strike me as a horse that would quicken all that much but I knew I could seal it with a jump at the last and that's what I done. His experience was a big advantage."

Accepting the job as Naylor's main trainer this summer, Slater searched for new stock and knew Top Man Michael fit.

"I thought he was a nice type, but he's not a horse that you go, 'wow,' when you see him. Riding him out, he's a little bit nervous and we didn't say wow until he jumped, when we took him down Thursday and schooled him, I was like, 'Wow, he's a nice horse.' He jumped with the two older horses and outjumped them, he impressed me as a 3-year-old, how game and professional he was with his jumping."

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Lined Up

New timber convert Straight To It triumphs in New Jersey Hunt Cup

BY SEAN CLANCY

FAR HILLS RACES – OCT. 20

It takes a lot to impress Jack Fisher. Straight To It ran his timber record to 2-for-2 (3-for-3 if you include point-to-points) with a promising effort in the New Jersey Hunt Cup at Far Hills Oct. 20. Unpolished but effective, the 6-year-old son of Giant's Causeway easily turned back Moonsox and Rainbows For Luck to capture the \$50,000 timber stakes for owners Sheila Williams and Andre Brewster and jockey Darren Nagle.

"He's undefeated," Fisher said, "but I'm not convinced yet."

Guess he would know.

Fisher has trained the likes of six-time Virginia Gold Cup winner Saluter and three-time timber champion Bubble Economy and has banked enough timber wins this year to clinch another trainer championship. He gets straight to it about Straight To It.

"I don't know if he's a good one or not, I'm not putting him down as a brilliant timber horse right now," Fisher said. "I don't think it was a particularly good race at Far Hills so I'll try to go to Camden instead of putting him away for the Gold Cup in the spring."

Triple Dip set a tepid pace while Rainbows For Luck, Lion's Double and Straight To It formed the vanguard and Moonsox rated in last throughout most of the journey. Good thing it was a tepid pace, as the field negotiated through a flock of wayward fans early in the journey. Pulling closer to the lead off and on, Straight To It looked comfortable while conserving energy with measured jumping, until making a blunder at the water jump and another mistake leaving the backside on the second circuit. Nagle, aboard for the first time, sat still as whiskey and Straight To It kept his composure, following stablemate Lion's Double around the final turn.

Fisher thought it was over.

"I thought Lion's Double was the better of the two but he broke," Fisher said. "He looked like a stone winner two from home."

Straight To It rallied between horses, jumping the second-last in a three-way line with Lion's Double and Moonsox who rallied around the outside. Nagle buckled down and Straight To It repelled Moonsox with an economic leap at the last before drifting out late while well clear. He won by 3 1/2 lengths over Moonsox who had 16 on Rainbows For Luck. Triple Dip faded to fourth while Lion's Double faded to fifth.

Fisher revolutionized the timber game, switching quality hurdle horses to second careers quicker than anybody had done it before him. Saluter started his timber career at 4, Bubble Economy, Gus's Boy, Dusty Corners switched when they were 5. Straight To It follows the Dr. Ramsey plan, switching at 6.

Straight To It went from second in last year's Zeke Ferguson to making his timber debut at Middleburg Point-to-Point this spring. Transferred back to hurdles for the 3-mile amateur hurdle at Nashville, he finished third behind Lake Placid and Humdinger before a long summer break. Returned to timber, he crushed Foyle by 10 lengths at Shawan Downs before winning his first stakes at Far Hills.

"We ran him at Middleburg Point-to-Point in the spring and he won nicely," Fisher said. "Then I thought that race at the Iroquois was going to come up pretty easy. It didn't work out that way. We thought we'd try to get everything out of his hurdle career before running over timber."

Part of the long line of well-bred horses from flat trainer Alan Goldberg to join Fisher, Straight To It failed to break his maiden on the flat in three starts before transferring to Fisher at the end of 2009. He broke his maiden over hurdles at Callaway Gardens in 2010, won an allowance at Strawberry Hill last spring before losing seven straight and finding a new career. The New Jersey Hunt Cup win pushed his jump earnings to nearly \$100,000.



Tod Marks

Straight To It (right) touches down ahead of Moonsox at the last fence of the New Jersey Hunt Cup.

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A goodbye, and a good buy

Kisser N Run gets stakes win in first start since purchase

BY SEAN CLANCY

Lilith Boucher does it every year. The Camden-based trainer spends the summer at Colonial Downs, running turf horses and trying to recruit new candidates for steeplechasing. Sometimes, people even listen.

This summer, Boucher offered the option to trainer Karen Godsey, who immediately mentioned a lanky daughter of Pleasant Tap.

"No one ever listens," Boucher said. "But Karen was across from us on and said, 'Well, you can have this filly. She's in tomorrow night. You can have her.' "

Kisser N Run duly won for a \$5,000 maiden claiming tag June 9, returned to win again for non-winners-of-two for \$5,000 before finishing fourth and fifth at the same level. Boucher, still interested, asked Godsey about her at the end of the meet. Godsey forwarded Boucher's phone number to owner Teddy Alexander, who asked what Boucher was going to do with the big-framed, stamina-pedigreed filly.

"Take her home, teach her to jump, she's going to win at Foxfield and I'm going to sell her to someone with a lot more money than me, then she'll win the stake at Far Hills," Boucher said.

Alexander never missed a beat.

"I'm in."

Kisser N Run never missed a beat either.

Making her debut for Boucher and Alexander, Kisser N Run won the filly and mare maiden at Foxfield over stablemate Class Launch. Boucher called Randy Rouse first, Richard Valentine second. The latter was in South Carolina Monday morning, checked out the filly and bought her for longtime client Clarke Ohrstrom. Three weeks after Foxfield, Kisser N Run made her second start over hurdles, her first in the traditional yellow and white striped Ohrstrom silks and picked up her first stakes win, dominating the Peapack at Far Hills Oct. 20.

Paddy Young, who rode her at Foxfield and gave Valentine the call while he was on the road from Camden, settled the 4-year-old filly in the back of the six-horse field before easily reeling in Lillehammer (whose saddle slipped) and Cordillera, who hung tough for second after opening a long lead. The veterans of the division struggled. Saratoga winner Cubist pulled up, Nashville winner Quiet Flaine finished well back in fourth and stakes winner Well Fashioned fell on the backside, injuring jockey Willie Dowling who will miss the rest of the year.

Boucher was disappointed in not getting the stakes win but not disappointed in the decision to sell. Subsequently, Alexander has reinvested

"After Foxfield, I called Teddy and



Kisser N Run (2) catches Cordillera near the wire in the \$75,000 Peapack Stakes for fillies and mares.

Tod Marks

FAR HILLS RACES – OCT. 20

asked him what he wanted to do, he was very pragmatic and said, 'What would you do?' I said, 'I'd sell because they can colic tomorrow.' I thought she would win at Far Hills, especially with the rain," Boucher said. "Teddy loves racing, he's part of some big racing syndicates and he just sent us a filly by Artie Schiller out of an Irish River mare. His attitude, like mine, is more business-like and he was delighted. Richard couldn't have been nicer and called Teddy to tell him how she ran. I'm glad for Richard Valentine, glad for Teddy and a little sad for me."

Kisser N Run took a circuitous route to steeplechasing. She made her debut for owners/breeders Charles Arlington and Michael Mareina at Gulfstream Park in March, 2011. She beat one and was claimed for \$35,000 by flat mogul Frank Calabrese and trainer Nick Canani. That partnership didn't last long, she made one start in April before turning up at Laurel in November for Alexander and trainer Pasquale Pane. Four dismal starts on the dirt during the winter led to another layoff before she turned up at Colonial where she earned \$10,000 and found another career.

For Valentine, it was an easy decision.

"Lilith called me Monday morning, I got in the car Monday afternoon, saw her Tuesday, vetted her Wednesday and picked her up the following Monday. I trimmed her ears and pulled her mane," Valentine said. "She's a frame of a horse, when she fills out in a couple of years, she's going to be a really attractive, big mare. She's got a kind eye, there's just something I liked and there's only improvement in her."

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On the Rise

Grinding Speed adds stakes in rookie season

BY JOE CLANCY

Michael Wharton will admit it. He's not too proud. It took awhile, but he checked the National Steeplechase Association's timber standings. And smiled.

Wharton's horse Grinding Speed won the \$50,000 International Gold Cup timber stakes Oct. 20 to place himself and Wharton second on the leaderboard behind Bob Kinsley and stable star Incomplete. The realization didn't happen for a few days, thanks to Wharton's travel schedule.

"My name has never been in the standings before," said the Maryland-based attorney. "I was in Phoenix taking depositions all that week, but at the airport I had to look at the standings. Wow."

Wharton and trainer Alicia Murphy have been saying that all year as their 6-year-old has blossomed into the country's top young timber horse. Grinding Speed started 2012 as a timber maiden. He finished with three wins and three seconds in six starts, a stakes win and a solid runner-up effort behind Incomplete in their



Grinding Speed (right) leads Aero in the International Gold Cup timber stakes.

Douglas Lees

only meeting. The veteran will get the championship, but his heir apparent is ready after a 2 1/2-length Gold Cup score.

Grinding Speed (Mark Beecher) sat fourth early as Hot Rize made the running in the 3 1/2-mile test. The winner launched his bid after almost 3 miles, flying the water jump and steaming down the backside to-

ward the final turn. Grinding Speed had plenty left for Aero (Chris Read), who ranged into contention in the stretch before settling for second with Monte Bianco (Willie McCarthy) third.

Bred in Maryland by Alan, Mark, Mitchell and

See **GOLD CUP** page 18 ►

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Gold Cup —

■ Continued from page 16

Madeline Kline, Grinding Speed was toiling on the flat at Penn National in 2009 when Wharton and Murphy saw him. The gray son of Grindstone and the Cozzene mare Cozelia won once in seven starts. He lost twice at the \$7,500 level for Renpher Stable and trainer David Lupo that summer, and was available.

Wharton and Murphy took the horse to Maryland on a trial. He never went back.

"My horse at the time (Airolo) had been a trouper but I was going to need something as a foxhunter and maybe have some fun with at the point-to-points or something," Wharton said.

"In general, he was going to be a project."

The owner rode his horse in the mornings, even foxhunted him once or twice, but the sights aimed considerably higher when Grinding Speed flashed some form over hurdles. He won at Potomac Point-to-Point in 2010 and added a maiden hurdle (over future stakes horse Gustavian) at Middleburg Spring the next year. He followed with a second in allowance company at Radnor. A dull fifth at Saratoga and a duller sixth at International Gold Cup in the fall, started the timber discussion and Grinding Speed backed up the opinion this year.

"I've always wanted a timber horse, especially one that might run over the Maryland fences someday," Wharton said. "We were still thinking he had some future over hurdles but his first race over timber (a fifth vs. open company at Cheshire Point-to-Point) was very good and we've been going that way ever since."

Grinding Speed won at Winterthur and Fair Hill in the spring and started the fall season with back-to-back seconds a week apart at Shawan Downs and Virginia Fall. In the Gold Cup, he quickened when asked.

"You can see Mark ask him at the fifth (fence) from home and he really goes up a couple of gears," said Wharton, who still gallops his horse regularly. "It was thrilling to witness."



Douglas Lees
Owner Michael Wharton

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Rainiero (9) jumps in front of Dr. Bloomer (1) and Cornhusker early in the Noel Laing.

Douglas Lees

High Stakes

Rainiero, Valentine connect in Noel Laing

BY JOE CLANCY

New York Turf Writers Cup. Maryland Hunt Cup. Fourteen wins in 2011. Ten so far this year. Firmly established as a trainer, Richard Valentine has seen plenty. He's not going to gush about any old horse, but he'll talk all day about Rainiero.

"He's not a Grade 1 horse, but he has a heart that . . . that if there was a grade higher than Grade 1 that's him. Physically he has so many ailments. Every time that horse runs I'm amazed. He's honest, he tries, he's classy, he's just that good."

Owned by George Strawbridge's Augustin Stable, the Chilean import deserved Valentine's praise after upsetting the \$35,000 Noel Laing Stakes at Montpelier Nov. 3. The late-season fixture honors tradition with its natural brush fences, a name honoring a legendary horseman and a past filled with champions and Hall of Famers dating to 1937. The 2012 edition lured former steeplechase champion and 2009 Laing winner Slip Away, two-time defending race winner Decoy Daddy, novice stakes winner Complete Zen and hard-knocking veteran The Price Of Love in a field of seven. They put on a show.

Making his first jump start since August 2011, Slip Away (Paddy Young) assumed his usual spot in the lead. Decoy Daddy (Jeff Murphy) pressed immediately

MONTPELIER HUNT RACES – NOV. 3

and set up just off the leader, followed by Complete Zen. The leaders never separated, never idled, never let up. Behind them aboard Rainiero, Matt McCarron liked what he saw.

"I was hoping for that kind of setup," he said. "We were going so quick, my only concern was whether he would be able to keep galloping the way he needed to. He was jumping so big, overjumping and I thought he might exhaust himself."

Four fences from home, Slip Away still led Decoy Daddy as Complete Zen inched even closer. Slip Away weakened slightly at the next and Complete Zen followed suit as Decoy Daddy shot past and headed down the hill and the final two fences. The quick-jumping chestnut threatened to run away and join Mon Villez as a three-time winner of the race. Behind him, Rainiero kept digging.

"After the second-last, Jeff got away from me and I saw him take a hold, and I felt like I wasn't going to be able to catch him – he still had more horse," said McCarron. "It wasn't until we made the final climb to the last fence where I thought 'maybe.' Jeff started riding again and my horse just flew the last. He's the coolest horse."

Rainiero left the ground in second over the final fence, but jumped it higher and better than the leader before drawing off to win by 6 lengths. Decoy Daddy stayed for second with Cornhusker a late-running third. The 10-year-old winner scored for the fifth time in six starts since October 2011. The streak includes four in a row (three last year, one this year), a third at Saratoga this summer and now the stakes win.

"I've had Greek Hero and some others I've won more races on, but I've never had success like I have with him," said McCarron, aboard for all six starts. "He produces every single time."

Rainiero completed a three-year circle of sorts. The son of African Dancer won twice over jumps for Sanna Hendriks in 2007-08, and joined Valentine's barn in 2009 – finishing second for a \$20,000 claiming tag and distant 10th behind Slip Away in the Noel Laing. Prepping for a spring campaign at Orange County Point-to-Point the next year, Rainiero bowed a ten-

don. He missed the rest of that season, and didn't return to the races until October 2011 – the start of the four-race winning streak. Along the way, he became something of a favorite with a willing attitude if a not-so-willing constitution.

"He has leg stuff, ankle stuff, suspensory stuff, tendons, we treated him for Lyme Disease, we put him on joint supplements, you name it," said the trainer. "George was there the day at Orange County when he bowed and said that he'd like to see if we could bring him back. When you think about it, the horse might have been given away. Thanks to my vets, the blacksmith and everybody at home he gets to come racing."



Douglas Lees

Rainiero looms behind Decoy Daddy at the last fence.

Da Machine

New Zealand import Dahoud impresses in maiden, novice stakes

BY SEAN CLANCY

Willie Dowling asked a simple question to one ST Handicapper, halfway through the card at Far Hills.

"Tell me one thing, why didn't you pick Dahoud in the maiden?" the jockey asked, disdainful and befuddled.

Dowling, in a sling after falling from Well Fashioned in the first, had missed the ride on Gill Johnston's runaway maiden winner at the sport's best venue. Ross Geraghty deputized, steering the 6-year-old New Zealand-bred to a facile score over Gawaarib and Manacor.

On closer look, Dowling had a point. Back class, check. Prep race, check. Quality connections, check. (Editor's note, the other ST Handicapper picked Dahoud).

Trained by Jack Fisher, Dahoud made soft ground look like a runway at LaGuardia, relaxing well off the pace set by Gawaarib before sauntering to a promising maiden win. Two weeks later, Dahoud took down a depleted field in the novice stakes at Callaway Gardens.

Obviously, he wasn't a secret.

"He's a machine," Dowling said.

"I'm not surprised, he's a nice horse," Fisher said.

FAR HILLS & CALLAWAY GDNS.

"He's the real deal," Geraghty said.

"He ran with the big boys in California," Johnston said.

Dahoud (also seen dancing on his hind legs on page three of the October edition) won once in New Zealand before being imported by Johnston in 2010. With Hall of Fame trainer Jerry Hollendorfer, he won a first-level allowance at Santa Anita in March 2011 before finishing second in the Grade 2 San Luis Rey, also at Santa Anita. Later last summer, he wired a tough second-level allowance at Hollywood before finishing second to Bourbon Bay in the Grade 3 Cougar at Del Mar. Johnston shipped the bay gelding east and he made two starts on the flat for Fisher, fading to last on yielding turf at Saratoga and failing to make any impact when eighth at Laurel in September. Fisher and Dowling choreographed an easy transition at Virginia Fall, finishing nearly 30 lengths behind Darkwatch.

Then they let the dog out.

"If you look at his form, he was a really nice horse before I trained him, he was much the class of this race," Fisher



Tod Marks

Dahoud flies the last at Far Hills. Two weeks later, he won a novice stakes at Callaway.

said. "He's got feet issues, I thought he could overcome the ground, I'm sure he's run on ground like that in New Zealand."

Fisher wasn't disappointed but underwhelmed when Dowling stepped into the ambulance.

"He's a great jumper, an easy ride, so I wasn't worried," Fisher said. "I almost pulled out the tack and rode him myself."

Geraghty, vying for his first championship, jumped at the opportunity.

"A big yard like that with two riders (Dowling and Xavier Aizpuru) you don't expect to get many rides from them, but I've gotten three winners out of there. Willie told me all about him, said I was on the best horse, just sit there and let him do it. Jack said give him a nice patient ride and make one run," Geraghty said. "My horse fell asleep a bit because I had to wind him up pretty good on the backstretch and he jumped the first two really well. He came into the bridle and I just sat there. He's a very, very nice horse. I wouldn't say he was in love with that ground, pure class won that race. He did everything I asked him to do."

Johnston has dabbled at importing horses from New Zealand through bloodstock agent Denny Boultinghouse.

"He's bought New Zealand horses

for a long time, I'm not quite sure how I got hooked up with him in the first place but somewhere along the line in my flat racing career, which is very limited, I got hooked up with him," Johnston said. "Dahoud is like Swagger Stick, Jack saw him running and said 'When he comes East, he's going in my barn.' Ross got off and said you've got a machine."

As did Dowling and both ST handicappers.

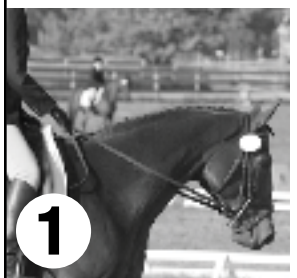


Tod Marks

Dahoud



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O'Keefe receives Bryce Wing Award

The Maryland Hunt Cup Association presented its S. Bryce Wing award to steeplechase announcer Will O'Keefe at Shewan Downs Sept. 29.

The award honors the memory of S. Bryce Wing, a member of the association from 1939 until his death at age 85 in 1975. He was secretary of the Maryland Hunt Cup from 1956-66 and also president of the National Steeplechase and Hunt Association from 1948-64. In addition Wing served as a member of The Jockey Club and as Master of Foxhounds at the Elkridge-Harford Hunt Club. Wing's devotion to horses, hounds, and racing was lifelong. The award is not given each year, but only when the committee feels it is genuinely merited.

O'Keefe fits the description. The Warrenton, Va. resident has been calling jump races in Virginia and Maryland for more than 30 years, most notably the Virginia Gold Cup and the Maryland Hunt Cup.

In addition to his work as an announcer, O'Keefe has been a race director (at Morven Park), president of the Virginia Steeplechase Association and chairman of the National Steeplechase Association's race chairmen's committee. His largest contribution to the sport may be the creation of the Central Entry Office, which coordinates point-to-point entries and results and maintains a database of American steeplechase information from point-to-point and sanctioned races.

O'Keefe was born into the Virginia horse family which produced 1966 Kentucky Derby and Preakness winner Kauai King, but chose to pursue a degree in history at the University of Virginia. His vocation soon turned back home where he managed Pine Brook, the family farm in Warrenton.

The recipient of such honors as the 2011 Yves Henry Lifetime Achievement Award and the 2010 VSA Special Recognition Award, O'Keefe was also one of the first people to be inducted into the Virginia Steeplechasing Hall of Fame in 2007.

"I was very surprised and tremendously honored to receive this award," O'Keefe said. "The history of the sport is extremely important to me, and I appreciate the magnitude of this honor. I have enjoyed every step along the way. As much as I love the Virginia Gold Cup, there is nothing like the Maryland Hunt Cup in the world."

The first Bryce Wing award was presented in 1976. In the following 36 years, the trophy has been awarded 26 times.



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Well Meant

Fout mare gets off deck from fall at Far Hills to win Crown Royal

BY SEAN CLANCY

Doug Fout stood at the paddock gate near the elbow of Glenwood Park and watched Well Fashioned gallop out after a flat prep at Virginia Fall Point-to-Point Oct. 7.

"I hope she can win another big one," Fout said. "She deserves one."

Two weeks later, Maggie Bryant's 5-year-old mare skidded on her belly in the Peapack at Far Hills, depositing Willie Dowling into the sodden turf. She certainly didn't deserve that.

"Willie said she couldn't get out of the mud, she literally got stuck," Fout said. "It wasn't a hard fall, she knuckled over on her side and slid for a 100 yards. She was fine after the fall, she never acted like it was a problem, never hesitated, never worried."

On Nov. 3, two weeks after Far Hills, the 5-year-old daughter of Cozzene returned to Callaway Gardens, home of her biggest career victory (last year's Crown Royal Stakes) and got exactly what she deserved, another stakes win to cap what had been a winless/luckless campaign in 2012.

Facing a jockey shortage due to injuries and a double-booked weekend,

CALLAWAY GARDENS – NOV. 3

Fout recruited James Slater to partner the Virginia-bred for the first time and Slater stepped in deftly, guiding the bay mare to her third career steeplechase win.

Slater settled Well Fashioned well off the pace of Lillehammer and Cordillera before skipping through on the inside of those rivals after Lillehammer made a mistake at the second-last.

Asked when the last time he won a hurdle race, Slater paused, laughed, thought about it and laughed again.

"... Yeah, that long," Slater said, (15 minutes after the conversation, Slater texted that it could have been Slip Away in the Noel Laing in 2009).

Well Fashioned compensated for any rustiness.

"She's been around there, she won there last year. She was very cool," Slater said. "My instructions were to be in front or handy but it didn't work out that way. I had (assistant) James Piper worried with a circuit to go, but she made up the ground easily, it was just a question of sitting and waiting for a gap. She traveled, jumped well and got



Tod Marks

Well Fashioned, with assistant James Piper, exited a fall at Far Hills to repeat in the stakes at Callaway Gardens.

a flyer at the second-to-last, that was all she wrote."

Originally purchased and prepped by Bernie and Kate Dalton, Well Fashioned transferred to Fout and Bryant after a private purchase last summer.

Since then, she's shown up and plied her trade at the sport's premier stops; Saratoga (second and third twice in four starts), Fair Hill (third), Iroquois (fourth), Camden (eighth), Far Hills (pulled up and fell), and Callaway Gardens (two wins).

Guess where she won't be going and where she will be going next year.

"I'll never go back to Far Hills with her," Fout said. "She loves Callaway, rock hard, turning the whole time, that's what she likes. It's a horse for course. She likes it fast, lean and mean."

With Dowling injured and jockeys tabbed for Callaway and Montpelier, Fout went on the recruiting trail, signing up Slater for Well Fashioned.

"I scratched Quiet Flaine because I couldn't find a rider, I wanted somebody with some experience and he sits damn good on a horse," Fout said. "I told James to trust her and let her run her race, turn her loose and let her rock

on. She's as honest as the day is long, she always pulls out one good one every year. If she was a woman, I'd marry her."

Assuming Fout's wife Beth wouldn't mind, they'd certainly honeymoon at Callaway Gardens.



Tod Marks

James Slater picked up a stakes win at Callaway Gardens with Well Fashioned.



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Still Flying

Veteran timber mare Won Wild Bird adds stakes win to long tale

BY JOE CLANCY

For the record, it's happened once before. Maybe more, it's difficult to tell. A mare ran and jumped her way to a victory in the Pennsylvania Hunt Cup timber stakes.

Won Wild Bird pulled a mild upset in the 4-mile classic for Wally Pinkard and trainer Regina Welsh at Unionville, Pa. Nov. 4. The win duplicated the 1974 feat of Perfect Cast and made plenty of people think about the past. Won Wild Bird was bred by Anne Haynes, whose husband Bruce trained the old gray mare's half-brother Rowdy Irishman. A hurdle star in 1990s, Rowdy Irishman earned more than \$600,000 over jumps after selling for \$1,500 off the racetrack. Universally called "Rowdy" around the circuit, he won the Iroquois twice, the Grand National twice, the Temple Gwathmey twice from the Haynes' family's base in Bristol, Tenn. If not for Hall of Famer Lonesome Glory, Rowdy would have won the Colonial Cup twice and probably been a champion twice too. He died, trying, in the 2001 Iroquois.

Little sister – conceived after Anne Haynes found and bought the Topsider mare Rowdy Bird, keeps the flag flying. The daughter of Wild Wonder has made 38 steeplechase starts (plus another 20 in point-to-points and NSA flat races) over eight seasons. She started at 3 over hurdles with Bruce in 2005 (who passed away at 46 in 2008) and is still battling as a timber horse at 10. She's won three NSA timber races, an allowance and two stakes.

The latest didn't look all that likely based on her two previous fall starts – a fifth at Genesee and a distant sixth in the International Gold Cup. Welsh called the efforts better than they appeared, however.

"Being a small stable and training by yourself it's hard to judge how fit they are," said the trainer. "At Genesee she was very game and I thought she could do 4 miles, even if she hadn't done it successfully before. The Pennsylvania Hunt Cup was always the goal."

Aboard for the fourth time, Mackenzie kept Won Wild Bird close to a mild pace with Sand Box Rules throughout and they were still in front coming to the last fence. Neither jumped what can be a tricky obstacle particularly well, but Sand Box Rules blasted it and left Won Wild Bird in command as Brands Hatch fell while rallying. The winner pulled away to score by 4 1/4 lengths over Sand Box Rules with Woodmont third.

For Pinkard, the victory was his first as a steeplechase owner – though he missed it on the advice of doctors.

"I had my hip replaced three weeks ago, and the orthopedic guys know what steeplechase events are so they said I had to stay away," he said. "It killed me not to be there, but I got a call right at the finish line telling me she won. It's very exciting."



Tod Marks

Won Wild Bird pulls away late in the Pennsylvania Hunt Cup – becoming the second mare to win the historic stakes.

Pinkard inherited some flat horses from his parents years ago and has been connected to jump racing for years through friends. His daughter Casey works for leading trainer Jack Fisher. Pinkard leased Won Wild Bird from Anne Haynes this winter, and made the full purchase this spring. Pinkard listened to a pitch from Welsh about buying the mare, talked it over with friend Michael Wharton (who owns International

Gold Cup winner Grinding Speed), but didn't get fully convinced until seeing her in person.

"I loved the way she jumped, wow," he said. "Michael's perspective was she'd get us around any course. He was a big fan. I'm not looking for a hot horse that can fly and is going to give me heartburn every time. I've known Regina for well over 10 years and I followed her direction too – you don't get into this industry and not follow your trainer."

Twice a Maryland Hunt Cup winner with Bug River, Welsh knows how to produce a good timber horse and was proud of her mare – though the trainer has cut back on her steeplechase involvement while working as the director of outreach at Oldfields School in Maryland. "It's all about her pace and whether she can hold it all together. She's not perfect, but she's a great jumper and if things go her way she can run a race like that. She deserved another one. I felt good for her."

Welsh also thought about a little history.

"She is what Bruce Haynes always trained," she said. "She's very gritty, determined, but easy to work around. She could easily train out of the field if you wanted her to."

NOTES: Bred, owned and trained by Audrey Riker, Perfect Cast was a top timber horse of the 1970s, pressing future Hall of Famer Ben Nevis with seconds around the Maryland Hunt Cup course in 1977 and 1978, and also winning the My Lady's Manor of 1978 . . . Foyle (Chris Read) won the maiden timber for Merriemfield Farm and trainer Dawn Williams while Dakota Slew (Darren Nagle) took the allowance timber for Maggie Bryant and Richard Valentine.



Tod Marks

Won Wild Bird (right) and Sand Box Rules battle early in the 4-mile timber stakes.

Champs

Division races nearly settled as season draws to close at Camden

Nearly there. With nothing left on the schedule but the Colonial Cup, the National Steeplechase Association's awards categories are almost all decided.

A quick look at the major divisions:
Owner: Irv Naylor. The Pennsylvanian will win his third consecutive crown with the circuit's largest stable. Thirteen wins and \$439,325 earned.

Trainer: Jack Fisher has clinched at least a share of the races-won title as he's five clear of Jonathan Sheppard (16-11). Richard Valentine is third with 10 wins. Five-time champion Fisher hasn't won since 2009. Sheppard leads the earnings race with \$530,150, more than \$80,000 ahead of Fisher.

Jockey: Still in play, though Ross Geraghty looks poised to take it. He's won 17, three more than Darren Nagle and four more than Brian Crowley. Would be first title for all three.

Horse: Pierrot Luneaire will win the Lonesome Glory Champions Trophy for earnings with \$253,000 as even a Colonial Cup win (worth \$60,000) won't push Demonstrative, Spy In The Sky or Divine Fortune over the top. With two Grade 1 wins, Pierrot Luneaire holds the best hand in the race for the Eclipse Award, determined by a national vote by turf writers and others in racing.

Novice: Alajmal leads at the moment with \$64,000 in earnings and should take the crown for Greg Hawkins and Janet Elliot.

Filly or Mare: The Life's Illusion trophy will go to Cat Feathers in a tight race. She earned \$58,500 for Kate and Bernie Dalton, just ahead of Cubist (\$57,600) and Kisser N Run (\$55,600). That's assuming none of them show up in the Colonial Cup.

Three-year-old: Top Man Michael won the stakes at Far Hills to pocket \$15,000 for Naylor and Brianne Slater.

STEEPLECHASE NEWS

With another \$15,000 to the winner at Camden, the crown could go another direction. Virginia Fall winner Orchestra Leader is second with \$7,000 with More Tea Vicar (\$6,300) third.

Claimer: Looks like You The Man gets it based on one start – a \$39,000 payday while racing for a \$30,000 tag at Saratoga for Riders Up Farm and trainer Todd Wyatt.

Timber: Incomplete closed this one with his third win in as many starts on the year, the International Gold Cup, last month. Bob Kinsley and Ann Stewart's charge earned \$84,000.

The NSA will present those and other awards at the annual awards dinner Saturday night, Nov. 17.

NSA forms task force to evaluate safety

The National Steeplechase Association board of directors announced on Nov. 9 the formation of a task force to evaluate all safety issues in American steeplechasing.

The Steeplechase Safety Task Force consists of steeplechase community members with areas of expertise in racing, veterinary science, and race administration. The Task Force will immediately begin its inquiry into events that occurred in the 2012 season and will strive to complete its work before the beginning of the 2013 season in March.

Members are:

Guy Torsilieri, president of the NSA and co-chairman of the Far Hills Races.

Dwight Hall, chairman of the NSA Stewards Advisory Committee and chairman of the Iroquois Steeplechase.

Reynolds Cowles, D.V.M., founder



Douglas Lees

Mischief heads for home with a win at Montpelier.

of Blue Ridge Equine Clinic and an authority on veterinary protocols for steeplechase race meets.

Bill Gallo, NSA director of racing.

Barry Watson, NSA safety advisor.

Kate Dalton, president of the Steeplechase Owners and Trainers Association.

Sean Clancy, former champion steeplechase jockey and Eclipse Award-winning journalist.

Richard Valentine, steeplechase trainer and National Steeplechase Foundation board of directors member.

Don Clippinger, NSA communications director, will serve as the secretary.

Out and About

The fall season showcased its usual mix of races – from stakes to maiden claimers. Fall highlights included:

- Mecklenburg won the Genesee Valley Hunt Cup timber stakes for Rosbrian Farm, Tara Elmore and Mark Beecher. The 8-year-old son of Mecke went 2-for-3 with a second in 2012.

- Allowance winners. Clorevia Farm's Extraextraordinary won the \$25,000 starter allowance at Great Meadow for Doug Fout and Willie McCarthy. The 5-year-old son of Giant's Causeway defeated a solid field and could be a novice to watch in 2013. Over Creek Farm's Arrakis graduated the maiden ranks at Foxfield in September and repeated the effort with a third against winners at Aiken and a win at Charleston for trainer Julie Gomena.

- Maidens, maidens, maidens. Promising newcomers this fall included Kinross Farm's Hulako, who won at Great Meadow for Neil Morris. Kentucky owner/trainer Bill Wofford scored at Callaway Gardens with Bold Adventure (Darren Nagle). The 7-year-old son of Harlan's Holiday won a \$25,000 maiden hurdle over Annawon, after prepping at Aiken. Rebecca Sheppard's Searubyrun (Richard Boucher) put on a front-running clinic at Montpelier for trainer Lilith Boucher. The Virginia-bred ousted nine others after finishing third at Great Meadow.

- Celtic Venture Stables Zulla Road survived another interesting rendition of the steeplethon at Great Meadow as the first three finishers were disqualified for going off course. The 8-year-old winner, ridden by Gus Dahl, galloped in fourth but collected the \$12,000 payday for trainer Charlie McCann.

- Silverton Hill Farm's Darkwatch won the Aiken allowance feature for trainer Leslie Young and jockey Bernie Dalton. The 4-year-old's year started with a fall back in March, but included back-to-back wins in October.

- Jockey Annie Yeager won her first NSA race aboard Mischief in the \$20,000 optional claimer at Montpelier. Trained by Don Yovanovich, Mischief took a clear lead into the stretch and drew off to win over former stakes horse Dynaski. A Virginia point-to-point stalwart, Mischief was making his 14th start (NSA and point-to-point) this year.



Douglas Lees

Extraextraordinary heads for home with a win at Great Meadow.

Part of the Team

Like many commuters to DuPont's Barley Mill Plaza office in Wilmington, Del., Lindsay Jones gets up early. An information technology buyer in the company's Sourcing and Logistics department, she helps the corporate giant working.

She also helps keep the country's top steeplechaser working. Jones, who lives in Rising Sun, Md., makes a detour on that daily commute to ride Pierrot Luneaire at trainer Bruce Miller's farm in Pennsylvania. She started in May and calls the 8-year-old her favorite.

"He's quiet to start out, but at the end of every gallop he takes off with me," she said. "I've learned to let him do it. There's no point in fighting him because he does it every day. He has the best personality – real goofy and playful in his stall."

An outrider at many of the spring point-to-points and NSA meets with Jimmy Paxson of the River Hills Foxhounds, Jones got the job after meeting Miller on the circuit. She's not surprised by Pierrot Luneaire's success this fall after more than three years of losing.

"I've only known him since May so I don't know the old Pierre," she said. "Everyone asks me what's different about him, what's changed, why he's running so well now. I don't know. He's the same horse he was in May."

Nothing like Twitter

Jockey Dougie Costello ventured from his base in England to ride three at Far Hills. Here are a few of his Tweets via @dougiecostello:

From the drive to the airport Friday evening: "Cheltenham to Heathrow, 1 hr 15. Sorry to the lad on M4, your wing mirror is about 250 yards up the road on left. Sorry."

Checking out the king-sized bed at Trump National: "America always go that bit bigger!"

A week after Far Hills, as he went to Aintree for less money: "This time last week was walking Far Hills race track in America for a 500k card! Hi ho off to Aintree we go."

TIMES EDITORIAL

Safety task force can be right vehicle

You want a reason why the National Steeplechase Association created a safety task force this month? Image, publicity, money, relevance, good intentions, our October editorial, survival as a sport . . . it's a long list.

Ultimately, there's one reason. It's got four legs, a mane, a tail, soft eyes, a willing spirit. The horse. In this case, a Thoroughbred racehorse. He (or she) depends on the humans to do the right thing, to minimize risk, to value safety along with competition, to be vigilant, to think forwardly, to compile data, to act with reason, to shelve personal gain for overall progress.

Want an example? Look no further than Fog Island. The veteran steeplechaser was the first horse to fall at Belmont, after clouting a fence so hard it shuddered. Fog Island is lucky. He got up, walked away, went home to Virginia on the van. Somehow, he recovered mentally and physically and 23 days later won a \$75,000 stakes at Far Hills. Jumped like a stag. You figure it out. If a horse can run that well after falling that hard one race earlier, then the humans can do more to help make his life safer and easier.

Committees are often, it's been said, "where good ideas go to die." But this can't be one of those committees. The good ideas must be nurtured, planted, created, empowered. And then enacted. Once it creates conclusions, the safety task force must act and push the rest of the sport to follow.

Admit that things really haven't changed. The sport is probably no less or more dangerous than it ever was. Maybe the horses run faster, which ultimately increases risk, but otherwise it's still running and jumping in races at speed. It's not a horse show, it's a horse race. Don't try to change that.

Realize that everything else has changed drastically. Racing gets held accountable for how it treats its animals – by the public, the media, sponsors, members, participants. Google "steeplechase horse falls" and you'll get 1,780,000 results in .43 seconds. You can read and watch and listen. The links are full of videos from all over the world, many from the United States, some from the 2012 season. There are photos, amateur videos, columns, news stories, studies. There are also dozens of uninformed comments to articles and videos. Strategies for taking control of the message must be a key components of the discussion and any plan going forward.

Pool resources. Other countries have gone through examinations of jump racing and its risk factors. Conclusions can be taken from those studies and applied to this country. Other equine sports, most notably eventing, have also invested considerably in the issue of horse safety and horsemen responsibilities. Get input and use that expertise.

Speak freely. A task force is supposed to worry about nothing but the task. Check your egos and friendships and loyalties at the door, members. Be prepared to express and defend your opinions vehemently, and be even more prepared to motivate the rest of the sport.

Put everything on the table. Fence construction, course set-up, horse eligibility, trainer and jockey licensing, field limits, distances, equipment changes, race conditions. Racetrack vs. race meet regulations. It all matters.

Ultimately, a safety task force was the right first step. It needed to happen. Nice job, NSA. Now get to work.



Tod Marks

Hay, Kids. Some young Far Hills fans put the tailgating hay bales to good use late in the day.

Just Asking

End of jump season always breeds questions

It's that time of year again, when one season ends, the Colonial Cup staging the final act, and another season hibernating, so far off in the distance. It's the time of year for questions. So many questions.

Goodbye 2012. Hello 2013. What changes, what stays the same?

Does the NSA's homemade task force on safety find anything useful, accomplish anything tangible, save a career for a jockey, a life of a horse?

Does Darren Nagle take over as Sheppard's first-call jockey?

Do injured jockeys Willie Dowling, Robbie Walsh and Carl Rafter come back for more?

Is it status quo from the NSA office and board?

How much more does three-time champion jockey Paddy Young have left in him?

Will there be another dominant horse, a Good Night Shirt or McDynamo that begins and ends all conversations when it comes to the open stakes division? Have we seen him yet?

Will there ever be another racetrack renaissance, a time when the sport takes its show on the road again to places like Keeneland, Churchill Downs, Pimlico and beyond?

Is there jump racing in New York in 2013?

Do purses go up, down or stay the same?

The Inside Rail

By Sean Clancy

Does jockey Matt McCarron, the active leader in wins, walk away once and for all?

Will there be another argument, over amateur racing at Nashville and beyond, or will it be fixed once and for all?

Does the sport lose more meets?

When does Richard Valentine break through and topple the Fisher/Sheppard/Voss gridlock at the top?

Will an owner take on Irv Naylor's hammerlock on the top of the division?

Who upsets the Maryland Hunt Cup in 2013?

Will there ever be another rocking party in steeplechasing?

Who's the next import who impacts the jockey colony?

Who will Naylor import next?

Who is elected to the NSA board and will it make any difference?

Will the sport get live video on the Internet so owners/trainers/fans could watch their horses run,

See **INSIDE** page 27 ►

■ Continued from page 26

live, in the moment? Will the video archives work without a hitch, someday, like a YouTube channel?

What color is next year's NSA hang tag, green on yellow, yellow on green, white with a yellow and green chevron? Or perhaps blue and gold in honor of Pierrot Lunaire and Mary Ann Houghland?

What will Peb draw for the cover of the steeplechase book?

How will Steeplechase Times change with the times?

Will an American horse go to Cheltenham, Aintree or somewhere and make an impact?

Does the Nakayama Grand Jump still happen? Will the Japanese ever invite another U.S. horse?

Will Far Hills and International Gold Cup agree to have separate dates? Will Montpelier and Callaway Gardens? Or any of the spring conflicts?

What ever happened to the football game Friday before the Colonial Cup?

Will there be more fillies and mares to catch up to the inflated purses offered in the distaff division?

Will Pierrot Lunaire come back at the same form as he left?

Can Demonstrative improve from 5 to 6?

What horses missed 2012 and are poised for 2013?

Any foreigners want to venture to America for big purses?

When will there be a Steeplechase app for the smart phone?

Who won the Woodville Award?

How will Sheppard replace his aging squad of stakes horses?

Will Cat Feathers lead the division next year?

Who won the Music City Getaway, the condo in Park City, the Irish Country Home on the NSF auction.

Did I get the Nationals tickets?

Who didn't check out www.steeplechase.dojiggy.com?

Any new owners, new trainers, new jockeys, new horses out there?

What will we do with the four months between the Colonial Cup in the fall and Aiken in the spring?



Tod Marks

OK, Coach. Owner Joe Davies offers some pointers to Brands Hatch before the Pennsylvania Hunt Cup. Davies forgot to remind him about the last fence as Brands Hatch fell while making a run.



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New Name at the Top

The only person to select leading earner Pierrot Lunaire, Stony Manierre jumped to the top with the horse's victory in the Grand National at Far Hills. The \$150,000 payday pushed Passport Stable into the lead over Jumangi. And now it's on to Camden for the Colonial Cup. Pierrot Lunaire will stay in the barn, opening the door (a little) for a push from others in the top five. Jumangi will be rooting for Demonstrative while third-place My Three Sons Stable needs a good day from Divine Fortune. The top 22 through Nov. 16 are listed. See www.st-publishing.com for complete standings.

Passport Stable	Stony Manierre
Pierrot Lunaire	\$253,000
Lake Placid	\$42,500
G'day G'day	\$29,500
Memorial Maniac	\$21,050
Sweet Shani	\$13,500
Bundestag	\$0
	\$359,550

Jumangi	Alix Michel
Demonstrative	\$149,000
Incomplete	\$84,000
Well Fashioned	\$45,500
Black Jack Blues	\$30,000
Duc De Savoie	\$24,450
Old Timer	\$12,700
	\$345,650

My Three Sons Stable	Sam Clancy
Demonstrative	\$149,000
Divine Fortune	\$95,500
Well Fashioned	\$45,500
Bodie Island	\$19,500
Hold Your Fire	\$10,500
Nadal	\$0
	\$320,000

Fancy Clancy Farm	Joe Clancy
Demonstrative	\$149,000
Incomplete	\$84,000
En Fuego	\$25,950
Sweet Shani	\$13,500
Total Command	\$12,000
Tax Ruling	\$7,500
	\$291,950

Lefty Stable	Nolan Clancy
Divine Fortune	\$95,500
History Boy	\$75,100
Cubist	\$57,600
G'day G'day	\$29,500
Bruno Frigerio	\$2,700
Seven In Heaven	\$0
	\$260,400

Waggs Stable	Keegan Shields
Demonstrative	\$149,000
Well Fashioned	\$45,500
Decoy Daddy	\$29,300
Memorial Maniac	\$21,050
Guts For Garters	\$10,700
Share Out	\$0
	\$255,550

Shannonigans	Shannon O'Lear
Demonstrative	\$149,000
Baltic Shore	\$55,500
Darkwatch	\$26,500
Dance Faster	\$15,150
Ptarmigan	\$9,000
Cherokee Speed	\$0
	\$255,150

Gone Away Stable	D. Alex Allison
Demonstrative	\$149,000
Quiet Flaine	\$42,750
Black Jack Blues	\$30,000
Memorial Maniac	\$21,050
Bon Caddo	\$10,500
Artic Cry	\$0
	\$253,300

JT Stables	Jonathan Thomas
Demonstrative	\$149,000
Black Jack Blues	\$30,000
Darkwatch	\$26,500
Duc De Savoie	\$24,450
Sweet Shani	\$13,500
Bubble Economy	\$9,150
	\$252,600

Pony Girl Stables	Elizabeth Watrous
Arcadius	\$90,000
Incomplete	\$84,000
Black Jack Blues	\$30,000
Duc De Savoie	\$24,450
Old Timer	\$12,700
Green Velvet	\$0
	\$241,150

Here's The Plan	Serelee Hefler
Incomplete	\$84,000
Well Fashioned	\$45,500
Almarmooq	\$33,900
Black Jack Blues	\$30,000
All Together	\$29,000
Alfarabi	\$11,700
	\$234,100

Achin' for Aiken Stable	Bill Matlack
Demonstrative	\$149,000
Well Fashioned	\$45,500
Black Quartz	\$27,000
Bubble Economy	\$9,150
Tropic Sea	\$600
Port Morsbey	\$0
	\$231,250



Douglas Lees

Zulla Road navigates the lake at Great Meadow on the way to his steeplethon win.

Bound & Leap Farm	Kate McCleary
Incomplete	\$84,000
Well Fashioned	\$45,500
Lake Placid	\$42,500
Black Jack Blues	\$30,000
En Fuego	\$25,950
Plattsburgh	\$1,250
	\$229,200

Cure All Stables	Susan E Quigley
Demonstrative	\$149,000
Quiet Flaine	\$42,750
Bodie Island	\$19,500
Bubble Economy	\$9,150
Tax Ruling	\$7,500
Plattsburgh	\$1,250
	\$229,150

Stupid for Steeplechasing	Lisa McLane
Incomplete	\$84,000
Cubist	\$57,600
Black Jack Blues	\$30,000
Pullyourfingerout	\$30,000
En Fuego	\$25,950
Nadal	\$0
	\$227,550

Jabberwocky Stables	Sarah Greenhalgh
Spy In The Sky	\$108,250
Quiet Flaine	\$42,750
Black Jack Blues	\$30,000
Duc De Savoie	\$24,450
Total Command	\$12,000
Bubble Economy	\$9,150
	\$226,600

Diversified Stable	Joe Clancy Sr.
Demonstrative	\$149,000
Black Jack Blues	\$30,000
Memorial Maniac	\$21,050
Opera Heroine	\$13,700
Bon Caddo	\$10,500
Share Out	\$0
	\$224,250

Sight Unseen	Brad Galyean
Incomplete	\$84,000
Well Fashioned	\$45,500
Black Jack Blues	\$30,000
Pullyourfingerout	\$30,000
Duc De Savoie	\$24,450
Classic Bridges	\$9,900
	\$223,850

Mrs. Wass Stable	Andrea Wasserman
Divine Fortune	\$95,500
Arcadius	\$90,000
Sweet Shani	\$13,500
Bubble Economy	\$9,150
Share Out	\$0
Brace	\$0
	\$208,150

BrownTrout Stable	Douglas Lees
Incomplete	\$84,000
Lake Placid	\$42,500
Black Jack Blues	\$30,000
En Fuego	\$25,950
Sweet Shani	\$13,500
Manacor	\$10,950
	\$206,900

Seabass Stable	Leslie Young
Incomplete	\$84,000
Cubist	\$57,600
Black Jack Blues	\$30,000
En Fuego	\$25,950
Tax Ruling	\$7,500
Mr. Universo	\$0
	\$205,050

Haras Suburbios de Capital	Jeremy Baskin
Incomplete	\$84,000
Baltic Shore	\$55,500
Well Fashioned	\$45,500
Classic Bridges	\$9,900
Tax Ruling	\$7,500
Double Eagle	\$2,000
	\$204,400

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