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NATIONAL STEEPLCHASE ASSOCIATION | 400 FAIR HILL DRIVE, ELKTON, MD 21921

New race meet, Steeplechase of Charleston, joins spring lineup

A new race meet, The Steeplechase of Charleston at Stono Ferry, will join the National Steeplechase Association's 2017 spring racing schedule. Tickets went on sale Jan. 6.

The Steeplechase of Charleston at Stono Ferry, to be run at Hollywood, S.C., on Saturday, April 8, and a companion meet in November will be under the management of the Bruno Event Team, an internationally recognized leader in sports marketing and event management.

Among other events, the Birmingham, Ala.-based Bruno Event Team manages U.S. Senior Open Championships, PGA TOUR tournaments, LPGA events, an INDYCAR race, the upcoming Davis Cup – USA vs Switzerland and gameday activities at the University of Alabama.

"We are honored to have the opportunity to manage The Steeplechase of Charleston at Stono Ferry," stated Gene Hallman, president and CEO of Bruno Event Team. "This is an exciting and new opportunity for our company, and we are thrilled to host this Steeplechase event."



Additionally, Hallman is a South Carolina native and received a Bachelor of Science in Economics from the College of Charleston and his MBA from the University of South Carolina.

"The Board of Directors and I welcome The Steeplechase of Charleston at Stono Ferry and the Bruno Event Team to the NSA family," said President Guy J. Torsilieri. "We are excited to have a new race meet for the spring, and we look forward enthusiastically to working with the Bruno Event Team staff."

"On many Saturdays in the spring and fall, steeplechase races attract the biggest crowds in Thoroughbred racing. With the Bruno Event Team's well-established expertise in event management and marketing, we hope to work together to leverage our popularity into a successful meet at Charleston and growth for all of steeplechase racing."

The Steeplechase of Charleston at Stono Ferry will be the first race meet sponsored and managed by a professional event marketer. "With Bruno Event Team's proven experience in so many endeavors, we see opportunities for growth in new markets. Moreover, Bruno Event Team will be able to provide the benefits of its experience to existing race meets that want to

expand their markets," Torsilieri said.

The Bruno Event Team has worked closely with the NSA and the Stono Ferry Homeowners Association to prepare for the new spring meet. "We are most grateful for the efforts of Bruno Executive Vice President John Bochnak and Donald Rhea, president of the Stono Ferry Homeowners Association, to bring this event to fruition in a short period of time," Torsilieri said.

The Charleston meet, on the same race course formerly utilized by the Charleston Cup, is tentatively scheduled to have five races, four over National Fences, with purses totaling \$75,000. It assumes the date formerly held by the Stoneybrook Steeplechase.

The fall meet tentatively will be held on the Sunday preceding the season-ending Marion duPont Scott Colonial Cup in mid-November.

"This new race meet will be a tremendous opportunity for our horsemen," said NSA Director of Racing Bill Gallo Jr. "It will be the third consecutive meet in South Carolina to kick off the 2017 spring season, and it will offer competitive purses. The November meet also will continue our growth in the fall season." The NSA had record purses for its spring and fall seasons in 2016.

Want more information on jump racing?

For more information on jump racing and owning steeplechase horses, visit www.nationalsteeplechase.com, where you will find all the latest headlines, race entries, and statistics.

Information on the National Steeplechase Foundation is at www.nationalsteeplechasefoundation.org.



Go Jump Racing!





Rouse honored with Clark Award

Randolph D. Rouse, a Virginia horseman who guided the National Steeplechase Association through some of its most challenging days in the 1970s and inaugurated one of the sport's most important innovations, has been awarded the F. Ambrose Clark Award, American jump racing's leading honor.

Rouse, who continues to establish racing records as he celebrated his 100th birthday in December, is the 26th recipient of the F. Ambrose Clark Award. Created in 1965, the award recognizes those individuals who have done the most to promote, improve, and encourage the growth and welfare of American Steeplechasing.

"Randy Rouse is a most deserving recipient of the F. Ambrose Clark Award," said NSA President Guy J. Torsilieri. "He has been a leader of the sport in his native Virginia and nationally, and he is an inspiration to those who have followed him."

He and his wife, Michele, reside in Arlington, Va., and have a farm in Aldie.

Randy Rouse is all but synonymous with jump racing and hunting in Northern Virginia. Born in Smithfield, Va., and raised in Newport News, he settled in Northern Virginia after graduating from Washington and Lee University in 1939 and serving in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He founded Randolph D. Rouse Enterprises, a construction and investment firm, in 1947.

His interest in hunting and racing blossomed after being invited to participate in the Fairfax Hunt. In time, he became master of foxhounds for the Fairfax Hunt and held that position for several decades. He also helped to launch the Fairfax Races and served as its chairman for more than three decades.

He was elected the NSA's president in 1971,



Randy Rouse at the races.

DOUGLAS LEES PHOTO

just as New York racing was adopting off-track betting and simultaneously de-emphasizing jump racing. Rouse, who was steeped in the tradition of country racing, began the process of changing the focus of the sport to its race meets.

Today, the NSA pays record purses, with roughly three-quarters of all purses raised and paid by its race meets. Moreover, the sport's richest races are run at meets that maintain open space close to large metropolitan areas. Randy Rouse was at the forefront of beginning that four-decade-long transition.

At the same time, all meets in the early 1970s were confronting the cost of maintaining natural

fences for hurdle races. With NSA Executive Vice President John E. Cooper, Rouse explored the idea of a manmade fence that would be moved from meet to meet. The result was the National Fence, which was inaugurated in 1974, Rouse's final year as NSA president.

As a horseman and race-meet official, Rouse intimately understood the needs and concerns of owners, trainers, and jockeys. He was an accomplished amateur jockey and won 10 races without a defeat with his top horse, Cinzano, in point-to-points in the 1980s.

The subject of a widely publicized horse-identity swap, Uruguay-bred champion Cinzano had been stripped of his Jockey Club registration and could not compete in sanctioned races. Rouse then purchased him as a point-to-point prospect.

"He was the best horse I ever had," Rouse once said in an interview. "Once the flag dropped, he took off in front. All you had to do was steer."

Rouse continues to be active in the sport. He still trains, and his Hishi Soar put him in the record books when the hurdler won the Daniel Van Clief Memorial at the Foxfield Spring Steeplechase in Charlottesville last April.

With the victory, Rouse became the oldest trainer ever to saddle a Thoroughbred winner in North America. He broke the record he had set in November 2014 when Hishi Soar won a claiming hurdle at the Montpelier Hunt Races. Rouse was 97 at the time and eclipsed the record of California-based trainer Noble Threewit, who won a race at age 95 in 2006.

"I will never retire," Rouse said in a 1998 *Washington Post* interview. "I may wear out, but I won't rust out." He has been true to his word, and the F. Ambrose Clark Award honors his distinguished career in steeplechase racing.

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