



Chasing

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

Record purses set for '18 spring season; Gwathmey to Grade 2

The National Steeplechase Association's condition book for the 2018 spring season is out, and the lineup promises record-smashing purses and the launch of the new Georgia Steeplechase meet.

The program developed by NSA Director of Racing Bill Gallo Jr. will offer \$2,870,000 in purses, up from the record \$2,780,400 in 2017.

Heading the spring program is the Iroquois Steeplechase on Saturday, May 12, at Nashville's Percy Warner Park. The NSA's premier Midwest meet will offer \$525,000 in purses, headed by the \$200,000 Calvin Houghland Iroquois (Gr. 1) and the \$100,000 Marcellus Frost Champion Hurdle for novices.

The Virginia Gold Cup meet a week earlier at Great Meadow Race Course in The Plains will offer \$425,000 in purses. With attendance of approximately 70,000, the meet will be headlined by the \$100,000 Virginia Gold Cup for timber horses and the \$75,000 David Semmes Memorial (Gr. 2) for hurdle competitors.

After the season kicks off on March 24 at the Aiken Spring Races, the action moves to Camden, S.C., for the Carolina Cup meet, which this year will be headlined by the \$150,000 Marion duPont Scott Colonial Cup (Gr. 1) and the \$75,000 Carolina Cup for novices. Purses for the 86th Carolina Cup meet are projected at \$325,000.

The historic Temple Gwathmey Handicap at the Middleburg Spring Races on April 21 will receive a \$25,000 purse increase, to \$75,000, and will move up the ladder to Grade 2 status from Grade 3. In all, the meet at Middleburg's Glenwood Park will offer \$200,000 in purses.

Completing the spring's graded stakes schedule is the \$50,000 National Hunt Cup (Gr. 3) at the Radnor Hunt Races in Malvern, Pa., on May 19.

2018 NSA Spring Racing Schedule

RACE MEET	LOCATION	DATE
AIKEN SPRING STEEPLECHASE	Aiken, SC	Saturday, March 24
CAROLINA CUP	Camden, SC	Saturday, March 31
GEORGIA STEEPLECHASE	Kingston, GA	Saturday, April 7
TRYON BLOCK HOUSE RACES	Columbus, NC	Saturday, April 14
MY LADY'S MANOR	Monkton, MD	Saturday, April 14
GRAND NATIONAL	Butler, MD	Saturday, April 21
MIDDLEBURG SPRING RACES	Middleburg, VA	Saturday, April 21
FOXFIELD SPRING RACES	Charlottesville, VA	Saturday, April 28
MARYLAND HUNT CUP	Glyndon, MD	Saturday, April 28
QUEEN'S CUP STEEPLECHASE	Mineral Springs, NC	Saturday, April 28
VIRGINIA GOLD CUP	The Plains, VA	Saturday, May 5
WINTERTHUR RACES	Winterthur, DE	Sunday, May 6
IROQUOIS STEEPLECHASE	Nashville, TN	Saturday, May 12
WILLOWDALE STEEPLECHASE	Kennett Square, PA	Sunday, May 13
RADNOR HUNT RACES	Malvern, PA	Saturday, May 19
FAIR HILL RACES	Fair Hill, MD	Saturday, May 26

Also on the Radnor program will be the \$30,000 Radnor Hunt Cup over timber fences.

Two reconstituted meets, the Georgia Steeplechase and the Tryon Block House Races, will occupy the respective first two Saturdays in April. The inaugural Georgia Steeplechase succeeds the Atlanta Steeplechase, which closed its doors last spring.

The new meet will be run at Kingston Downs, located northwest of Atlanta, and will offer \$100,000 in purses on April 7.

The Tryon Block House meet on April 14 will be staged at the new Green Creek Race Course in Columbus, N.C. The meet will pay out \$150,000 in purses and will be headlined by the \$40,000

Block House hurdle handicap.

A third spring opportunity for novices—horses in their first seasons of racing over fences—will be the \$75,000 Queen's Cup MPC 'Chase at the Queen's Cup Steeplechase near Charlotte, N.C., on April 28. The Queen's Cup meet, now in its 23rd year, will offer \$150,000 in purse money.

The Maryland timber triple crown races will occupy their usual places on the spring calendar. My Lady's Manor kicks off the historic series on April 14 in Monkton, and the Grand National follows a week later at its Butler course. The series culminates with the 122nd running of the \$100,000 Maryland Hunt Cup over its four-mile course in Glyndon on April 28.



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Scorpiancer tops Theoretical at 158

Bruton Street-US's Scorpiancer made only two starts in 2017, but they were sufficiently impressive to earn him the 158-pound highweight in the National Steeplechase Association's Theoretical Handicap for 2017.

The Irish-bred, then an eight-year-old and trained by Jack Fisher, won Middleburg Spring's Temple Gwathmey (Gr. 3) in April and the Calvin Houghland Iroquois (Gr. 1), the latter by 16 lengths in May.

Next on the 2017 list at 148 pounds were the top three finishers in Far Hills' Grand National (Gr. 1): winner Mr. Hot Stuff, second-place Modem, and third-place All the Way Jose, who were noses apart at the wire. Novice champion Moscato was rated at 146 pounds, and two-time novice stakes winner Zanzabeel was rated at 144 pounds with seven others.

NSA Director of Racing Bill Gallo Jr., who created the Theoretical in 1992, evaluated all 29 horses who placed in NSA open and novice stakes races in 2017. Scorpiancer's rating was four pounds below the 162-pound average of annual highweights. Lonesome Glory set the standard with a 170-pound highweight in 1995, and fellow Racing Hall of Fame members McDynamo and Good Night Shirt were rated at 168.



From left, Mr. Hot Stuff, Modem, and All the Way Jose jumped the last fence of the Grand National (Gr. 1), and they finished noses apart in that order at the Far Hills Races in October. Each was rated at 148 pounds in the 2017 Theoretical Handicap.

TOD MARKS PHOTO

2017 Theoretical Handicap Weights

Scorpiancer.....	158	Special Skills.....	144	Mutasaawy.....	138
Mr. Hot Stuff.....	148	Swansea Mile.....	144	Simenon.....	138
Modem.....	148	Portrade.....	144	Cul Baire.....	138
All the Way Jose.....	148	Diplomat.....	142	Surprising Soul	138
Moscato.....	146	Ice It.....	142	Macnicholson.....	138
Jamarjo.....	144	New Member.....	142	Kensington Court.....	136
Zanzabeel.....	144	Charminster.....	140	Castle Hill.....	134
Hinterland.....	144	My Afleet.....	140	Curve of Stones.....	130
Balance the Budget.....	144	Schoodic.....	140	Willow U.....	130
Show Court.....	144	Andi'amu.....	140		

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