

MARCH 2016

Chasing

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

Iroquois Increases to \$200,000; Md. Hunt Cup, Va. Gold Cup at \$100,000

Coming off a record-breaking season, the National Steeplechase Association launches its 2016 campaign in late March, and the spring meets will offer \$2.6-million in purses, an increase of nearly 6% over 2015 actual payments to horse owners.

Highlighting the spring season will be the \$200,000 Calvin Houghland Iroquois (Gr. 1), whose purse was increased \$50,000 from 2015. The three-mile feature of Nashville's Iroquois Steeplechase is the spring's only Grade 1 race and annually attracts the sport's top competitors.

The Calvin Houghland Iroquois will be the American leg of the Brown Advisory Cheltenham-Iroquois Challenge, which offers a \$500,000 bonus to any horse that can win the Nashville race and the Ladbrokes World Hurdle within 12 months. The Ladbrokes World Hurdle is a feature of the Cheltenham Festival and will be run on March 17.

Two highlights of the timber-racing season will reach new heights when both the Maryland Hunt Cup and the Virginia Gold Cup will offer record \$100,000 purses. The Virginia Gold Cup meet on May 7 also will feature the \$75,000 David Semmes Memorial (Gr. 2) and a \$50,000 turf stakes race, the Secretariat, on a card with \$445,000 in purses.

The historic Hunt Cup will be increased by \$25,000 for its 120th running on April 30. The testing four-mile race caps the Maryland timber triple crown, which begins April 16 with the \$30,000 My Lady's Manor in Monkton and continues the following week with the \$30,000 Grand National at Butler.

The season begins March 26 with the traditional kickoff at the Aiken Spring Steeplechase.

The National Steeplechase Association inaugurated a popular new race in 2015, the Ratings Handicap, and the South Carolina meet will include a two-mile Ratings Handicap.

A week later, the sport's rising stars will be on display in the \$75,000 Carolina Cup for novices, or horses in their first seasons of racing over fences. One of the most popular stops on the NSA circuit, the Carolina Cup regularly attracts crowds exceeding 60,000.

Other novice stakes on the spring schedule are the \$75,000 Queen's Cup MPC Chase at the Queen's Cup Steeplechase near Charlotte, N.C., and the \$75,000 Marcellus Frost Novice Stakes at Iroquois. The Nashville meet on May 14

features the spring's richest purses at \$450,000 and also will offer the \$50,000 Margaret Currey Henley for fillies and mares.

On tap for the spring season are two Grade 3 races, the \$50,000 Temple Gwathmey at the Middleburg Spring Races on April 23 and the \$50,000 National Hunt Cup at the Radnor Hunt Races in Pennsylvania on May 21.

The spring schedule wraps up a week later at the popular Fair Hill Races in northern Maryland. Fair Hill will offer a \$45,000 Ratings Handicap, the Valentine Memorial. Also offering Ratings Handicaps are the Stonybrook Steeplechase on April 9, Middleburg Spring, the Queen's Cup on April 30, and Radnor.



Francis Abbott, right, a member of the NSA Stewards Advisory Committee, presented the Official of the Year Award to Reese "Rug" Howard at the Stewards Seminar on Jan. 21.



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Dawalan heads 2015 Theoretical

Irv Naylor's Dawalan, winner of the Grand National (Gr. 1) and Marion duPont Scott Colonial Cup (Gr. 1) in his three U.S. starts in 2015, topped the 24th annual National Steeplechase Association Theoretical Handicap with a rating of 160 pounds.

Trained by Cyril Murphy and ridden by Ross Geraghty, Dawalan was honored with the Eclipse Award as 2015's champion steeplechase horse in January and was the NSA's Lonesome Glory Champions Award winner as 2015's leading earner.

Ranked second at 156 pounds is Jacqueline Ohrstrom's Demonstrative, the 2014 Eclipse winner and NSA Theoretical highweight who won the 2015 Calvin Houghland Iroquois (Gr. 1) and finished third in the Colonial Cup.

NSA Director of Racing Bill Gallo Jr., who created the Theoretical in 1992, evaluated all 32 horses who placed in NSA open and novice stakes races in 2015.

Dawalan made his first U.S. start in the Lonesome Glory Handicap (Gr. 1) and finished third behind New York Turf Writers Cup (Gr. 1) winner Bob Le Beau, who was rated at 150 pounds. Third in the weights at 154 were Eshtiaal, second in the Grand National, and Temple Gwathmey (Gr. 3) winner Mr. Hot Stuff.



Irv Naylor's Colonial Cup winner Dawalan led the NSA Theoretical Handicap at 160 pounds.

TOD MARKS PHOTO

2015 NSA Theoretical Handicap

Horse	Weight	Horse	Weight	Horse	Weight
Dawalan.....	160	Decoy Daddy.....	142	Scorpiancer.....	136
Demonstrative.....	156	Dr. Skip.....	142	Jack Frost.....	134
Eshtiaal.....	154	Able Deputy.....	142	Staying On.....	134
Mr. Hot Stuff.....	154	Diplomat.....	142	Broxbourne.....	134
Rawnaq.....	152	Martini Brother.....	140	Syros.....	134
Bob Le Beau.....	150	All Together.....	138	Balance the Budget.....	132
Parker's Project.....	146	Charminster.....	138	Mandola.....	132
Barnstorming.....	144	Overwhelming.....	138	Absolum.....	132
Gustavian.....	144	African Oil.....	138	Fog Island.....	130
Hinterland.....	142	Selection Sunday.....	138	Street Fight.....	130
Choral Society.....	142	Schoodic.....	136		

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