

Chasing

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

Jump horses find new vocations

For horses possessing speed, stamina, and jumping ability, steeplechase racing often is the first second career for Thoroughbreds after their racetrack careers have concluded. But that is not the end of their activities.

After their jump-racing careers, these second-career horses often find third or fourth careers, and others spend the rest of their lives grazing on farms throughout the East and Midwest.

The National Steeplechase Association's Steeplechase Safety Committee conducted a voluntary survey of the sport's trainers to determine the current activities of their former charges. Of more than 400 horses, all have found new careers in the countryside where they were trained.

The survey findings confirm a tradition within jump racing to strive to leave no horse behind. From its very beginnings in the United States, steeplechasing has found new occupations for its participants or has provided them a retirement home in rural pastures. This tradition continues to today.

Steeplechase racing grew out of fox hunting, and it is hardly a surprise that a substantial number of former steeplechase horses are now hunting. Of 402 horses in the survey, 165 are engaged in hunting. The skill sets are very similar. The horse must be a dependable jumper and must possess the stamina to gallop for extended periods.

The show ring is the next career for slightly more than 10% of retired steeplechase horses in the survey (41 of 402). Three-day eventing also fits the skill set of retired jump-racing participants, and 32 were involved in the discipline that combines dressage, cross-country, and show jumping.

Others are destined for a quieter life. In all, 30 were described as pleasure horses, and 94 were at pasture. A life at ease is the traditional retirement for steeplechase horses, who often are turned out at their owners' or trainers' farms. For instance, Racing Hall of Fame member Flatterer spent a quarter-century in retirement at owner Bill Pape's

farm before his death at age 35 in 2014.

Steeplechase racing has a growing division of female competitors, and after their careers many are bred and become broodmares. In all, 31 former runners are now broodmares.

A few horses, six in all, have retired from racing but have not departed the training barn. They are

now working to accompany the horses in training to the locations where they will be galloping. Another has found work as a polo pony.

At least one former steeplechase horse is engaged in work helping humans as a therapy horse. While most steeplechase horses are geldings, one retiree is a stallion.



Trophies in hand, Skip and Vicki Crawford shared a kiss after their Senior Senator won the \$100,000 Maryland Hunt Cup on April 30. They are celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary. MOLLY WHITE PHOTO



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Carolina Cup featured in Ride TV show

A 30-minute documentary featuring the Carolina Cup—all its history, significance, and downright fun—has been released by Ride TV, a 24-hour, high-definition cable-television channel focused on the equestrian lifestyle.

The well-produced documentary with host Meg Drake takes viewers through the excitement of this year's race day and provides comment and commentary on why the spring steeplechase event is important to its home, Camden, S.C., and to the world of jump racing. It has evolved into a "Southern tradition," Carolina Cup CEO Nick Ellis said in an interview with Drake.

Among those interviewed was National Steeplechase Association Chairman Beverly R.



Steinman, who also is chairman of the Carolina Cup Racing Association. A long-time owner, she said the young people who turn out for the Carolina Cup and return year after year make the event so special.

Also among those interviewed were Racing Hall of Fame trainer Jonathan Sheppard, NSA President Guy J. Torsilieri, Carolina Cup-winning owner Sue Sensor, and jockey Willie McCarthy, who won the 2014 Carolina

Cup with Sensor's Top Striker for trainer Arch Kingsley Jr.

Drake's interview with Camden resident Kingsley—winner of the Carolina Cup twice as a trainer and twice as a jockey—evoked the essence of the sport and its participants. "Whether you are talking about the horse or the jockey, it takes an exceptional athlete to do this sport," he said.

The documentary focused on the 80-year history of the event with a visit to the National Steeplechase Museum, which is located at the edge of the Carolina Cup course, and featured an interview with museum Executive Director Catherine French.

Randy Rouse's historic victory

Randy Rouse, the well-known Virginia owner-trainer, made history again on April 30 with his Hishi Soar.

When Hishi Soar came home first in Foxfield Spring's Daniel Van Clief Memorial optional allowance hurdle, Rouse became the oldest trainer ever to saddle a winner in North America (and, very likely, the world). He celebrated his 99th birthday in December.

He broke his own record, set when Hishi Soar won at Monpelier in 2014. He broke the record set by California trainer Noble Threewit at age 95 in 2006.

At right, he rode his Cinzano at the Casanova Point-to-Point in the early 1980s.



DOUGLAS LEES PHOTO

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