

# Chasing

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

## Rawnaq's stirring Iroquois victory lifts Naylor to spring purses mark

As Irv Naylor's Rawnaq headed back to the barn after his stirring win in the \$200,000 Calvin Houghland Iroquois (Gr. 1) on May 14, one question was left unanswered. Will he or won't he?

The subject of the question was the Brown Advisory Cheltenham-Iroquois Challenge, a \$500,000 prize to any horse able to win the Calvin Houghland Iroquois (Gr. 1) and the Cheltenham Festival's Ryanair World Hurdle (Gr. 1) in a 12-month period.

Trainer Cyril Murphy, who had watched the epic battle on the Iroquois Steeplechase's giant matrix board, accurately pointed out that the three-mile World Hurdle was 10 months distant, and a lot can happen in that time. How well he knew. Naylor's 2015 Eclipse Award champion, Dawalan, went to the sidelines for the year after an early-spring injury.

Naylor, who shattered his own earnings record last year, offered a subtle and definitive answer to the big question on that shining afternoon in Nashville. With wife Diane beside him, Naylor said: "I think this horse will represent the United States well in England next year."

It was a memorable quote at the conclusion of a memorable race that capped a memorable spring season. When the spring session concluded two weeks later at the Fair Hill Races in Maryland, Naylor had established yet another record.

For the first time ever, an owner had cracked the half-million-dollar mark in spring National Steeplechase Association races. By sweeping the two stakes races at the Virginia Gold Cup and two of Iroquois' four stakes races, the Butler, Md., horseman and philanthropist had achieved stable earnings of \$513,200.

To provide perspective to that mark, only two other owners have earned more than \$500,000 in entire racing seasons. George Strawbridge Jr.'s



The historic Iroquois trophy adorned leading owner Irv Naylor after Rawnaq's victory.

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Augustin Stables did it twice, in 2000 (\$596,991, then the record) and 2001 (\$541,417). Bill Pape, the champion owner in 2013, had purse earnings of \$551,710 that year.

Murphy, who began training for Naylor two years earlier, had a big share of the purse earnings, \$426,200, which placed him atop the trainers'

earnings board. Reigning champion trainer Jack Fisher led by wins, 13 to Murphy's 12.

The Naylor stable won early and often. The stable had three wins on April 9 at Stoneybrook, and the following weekend won the My Lady's Manor with Ebanour. Two weeks later, Rawnaq

*Continued on following page*



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## Three Grade 1 races highlight NSA's summer schedule of pari-mutuel racing

Three Grade 1 races highlight a National Steeplechase Association summer pari-mutuel racing season at five East Coast racetracks. In all, the summer schedule offers more than \$1.5-million in purses.

All three top-rated races will be offered at New York Racing Association tracks, with the first two—the \$125,000 A. P. Smithwick Memorial and the \$150,000 New York Turf Writers Cup Handicap—at historic Saratoga Race Course. The third Grade 1 race, the \$150,000 Lonesome Glory Handicap, will be staged at Belmont Park on Sept. 22.

The Smithwick Memorial will be run at 2 1/16 miles on Aug. 4, and the New York Turf Writers will be at 2 3/8 miles on Aug. 25.

The Saratoga schedule, with scheduled purses of almost \$1-million, begins July 27, and jump races will be staged every Wednesday and Thursday of America's premier summer race meet.

The Saratoga schedule also includes two novice stakes, the Jonathan Kiser on July 28 and Michael G. Walsh on Aug. 18, and two



Jump racing again will be featured at Saratoga, America's premier summer race meet.

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stakes races for fillies and mares, the Mrs. Ogden Phipps on Aug. 11 and the Mrs. Walter M. Jeffords on Sept. 1. Each stakes race carries a \$75,000 purse.

The summer schedule kicked off June 17 at Monmouth Park in Oceanport, N.J.

The next stop on the pari-mutuel program was Parx Racing in suburban Philadelphia for two programs, on July 10 and 12. The first date, a Sunday, will feature flat races for hurdlers, and the July 12 card will highlight horses racing over fences.

Jump racing will make three visits to Suffolk Downs in East Boston, Mass., on July 9, Aug. 6, and Sept. 3. Steeplechase racing was a part of the return of racing to the historic New England track last summer.

The \$75,000 William Entenmann Memorial Novice Stakes will be run on the program with the Lonesome Glory Handicap on Thursday, Sept. 22.

## Naylor sets spring earnings mark

Continued from preceding page

gave a jaw-dropping performance in the Temple Gwathmey (Gr. 3) at the Middleburg Spring Races.

The first big haul occurred on May 7 at the Virginia Gold Cup, where Charminster delivered a victory in the \$75,000 David Semmes Memorial (Gr. 2) and Ebanour won the \$100,000 Virginia Gold Cup over timber. A week later at Iroquois, the Naylor team also

accounted for the Margaret Currey Henley with One Lucky Lady.

Naylor's record-setting spring season influenced the jockey standings, too. Jack Doyle, who rode Rawnaq, led the rider standings by earnings. Ross Geraghty, who rode One Lucky Lady, was tied in the win column with 2015 champion apprentice Connor Hankin and was third by purse earnings. Fourth on the money list was Gus Dahl, Ebanour's regular rider.

## National Steeplechase Association

400 Fair Hill Drive  
Elkton, Md. 21921

Phone: (410) 392-0700  
Fax: (410) 392-0706

Website: [www.nationalsteeplechase.com](http://www.nationalsteeplechase.com)  
E-mail: [info@nationalsteeplechase.com](mailto:info@nationalsteeplechase.com)

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