

# Chasing

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

## The Steeplechase Fund supports industry participants in need

Guided by National Steeplechase Association officers, The Steeplechase Fund continues to provide multiple layers of safety-net assistance to the sport's participants—as it has since the charitable fund's founding in 1953.

While benefits of The Steeplechase Fund are available to all present and former jump-racing participants, its resources largely have been directed to jockeys injured in NSA-sanctioned races in recent decades, and it is widely known as the injured jockeys fund. Since 1998, The Steeplechase Fund has covered nearly \$200,000 in medical expenses for jockeys.

In a letter to members and licensees, NSA President Guy J. Torsilieri emphasized the organization's commitment to its jockeys. "The NSA and The Steeplechase Fund are committed to the well-being of our jockeys. Period," he said. "Since 1953, The Steeplechase Fund has been providing assistance grants to all participants who hit hard times. But we have gone beyond the grants to providing comprehensive safety-net protection for our jockeys and their families."

The Steeplechase Fund and the NSA provide three layers of safety-net protection for the sport's jockeys. The first layer, initiated in 2011, is to require that all licensed jockeys carry health-care insurance. If the health-care policy does not cover some costs, including deductibles and co-pays, the jockey may submit those bills to The Steeplechase Fund for reimbursement.

The second layer also was initiated in 2011 when the NSA obtained blanket accident-insurance coverage for all jockeys in sanctioned races. The policy provides up to \$1-million in medical coverage and \$200 weekly disability payments for up to two years.

The NSA commits 60% of each jockey's annual



license fee to the blanket accident coverage. The remainder of the premium is paid by The Steeplechase Fund. The premium exceeds

\$25,000 annually, and The Steeplechase Fund picks up more than half of that expense.

Finally, The Steeplechase Fund provides assistance grants to injured jockeys and other industry participants who are unable to work. Those grants are considered on a case-by-case basis and have totaled more than \$75,000 since 2001.

The Steeplechase Fund is administered by a board of trustees comprising the NSA's president, vice president, and treasurer. It is sustained by its modest investment portfolio, by fines from jockey infractions, and by donations from concerned individuals. As a 501 (c) (3), charitable entity, all donations are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by the federal tax code.

To make a donation to The Steeplechase Fund, please contact the NSA office at (410) 392-0700.

## Fisher jumps out to big spring lead

Jack Fisher, the National Steeplechase Association's champion trainer for the last five years, jumped out to a sizable lead in the spring season, racking up 14 wins and 2017 purses of \$633,300 through the Fair Hill meet in late May.

His closest competitor by both wins and purses is Hall of Fame member Jonathan Sheppard, who had eight wins and \$199,050 in purses in the spring meet. Ricky Hendriks is in third position with seven wins and \$188,750 in purse earnings.

Fisher client Bruton Street-US led the owner table with six wins from 15 starts and earnings of \$275,400. A close second is reigning

champion owner Irv Naylor with \$268,700.

Bruton Street-US's Scorpiancer, trained by Fisher, topped the spring season with victories in the \$200,000 Calvin Houghland Iroquois (Gr. 1) and \$50,000 Temple Gwathmey (Gr. 3). His earnings were \$150,000. In the second spot with \$96,000 is Wendy Hendriks' Surprising Soul, trained by Ricky Hendriks.

Reigning champion jockey Kieran Norris, who was injured at the Radnor Hunt Races in May, led the spring riders table with eight wins, one more than Sean McDermott, Jack Doyle, Ross Geraghty, and Darren Nagle.



Go Jump Racing!





## Jump racing moves to race tracks; Saratoga offers strong program

Jump racing moves to the race tracks this month, with two afternoons of racing for steeplechase horses at Parx Racing outside Philadelphia and the start of Saratoga Race Course's rich program of races.

The summer action begins at Parx on Sunday, July 9, with a \$25,000 flat race that is limited to horses who have finished in the top three in a sanctioned steeplechase race. If sufficient entries are received on June 30, the race will be split into two divisions with \$25,000 pots in each.

Two days later, the National Fences will go up on the Bensalem, Pa., turf course for two jump races. An overnight handicap hurdle at 2 1/16 miles will carry a \$35,000 purse. That race is limited to horses with National Steeplechase Association ratings of 120 or lower. Also at 2 1/16 miles will be a \$30,000 Sport of Kings maiden hurdle.

Later in July, the action swings to Saratoga Race Course and the start of a 10-race schedule of jump races with scheduled purses of \$765,000. An early highlight of the program is the \$150,000 A. P. Smithwick Memorial (Gr. 1). The 2 1/16-mile Smithwick moves to the first full week of Saratoga's season and will be staged on Thursday, July 27.

The sport's leading horses return to Upstate New York on Thursday, Aug. 24, for the \$150,000 New York Turf Writers Cup (Gr. 1) at 2 3/8 miles. Like the Smithwick Memorial, handicap weights for the New York Turf Writers will be influenced by the NSA ratings for all winners currently in competition.



*The Fields Stable's Portrade led at every call and won the 2016 New York Turf Writers Cup (Gr. 1), one of two Grade 1 races on the Saratoga calendar.*

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The \$75,000 Jonathan Kiser Novice Stakes, also at 2 1/16 miles, kicks off the program a day earlier. Also on the schedule for the novices—horses in their first seasons of racing over fences—is the \$75,000 Michael G. Walsh Novice Stakes at 2 3/8 miles on Wednesday,

Aug. 23.

The NSA's filly and mare division has two scheduled races, the \$75,000 Mrs. Ogden Phipps at 2 1/16 miles on Thursday, Aug. 3, and the \$75,000 Mrs. Walter M. Jeffords at 2 3/8 miles on Thursday, Aug. 31.

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## Go Jump Racing!

