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

Fall Championship Season soars to record \$2.58-million purses

The National Steeplechase Association's Fall Championship Season kicks off later this month, and what a season it will be. The schedule of 14 race meets between September and November features record purses of \$2,580,000.

That's an increase of more than \$300,000 over record NSA purses last fall and includes a new race meet, the Tryon International Equestrian Center Races in Mill Spring, N.C. The inaugural running will be Sunday, Oct. 2, and is scheduled to offer \$150,000 in purses.

A sizable portion of the fall increase is provided by the Far Hills Race Association, which will offer \$700,000 in purses, a \$100,000 boost over last year. Highlighting the Oct. 15 event is the \$350,000 Grand National (Gr. 1), the richest race on the NSA schedule and boasting a \$50,000 increase above the 2015 record level.

The New Jersey meet also will add \$25,000 to the Gladstone for three-year-olds as well as boosting the purses of the Sport of Kings maiden hurdle and the Ratings Handicap. Far Hills' secondary feature, the Foxbrook Champion Hurdle for novices, remains at \$100,000 for its 2016 renewal.

The International Gold Cup meet in The Plains, Va., a week later on Oct. 22, will offer \$410,000 in purses and will again offer pari-mutuel wagering. The International Gold Cup will carry a \$90,000 purse, a \$15,000 increase over last year, and is the fall's richest timber race.

Also in the program is the \$75,000 David L. "Zeke" Ferguson Memorial, which receives a \$25,000 purse increase and a boost to Grade 2 status.

The Marion duPont Scott Colonial Cup on Nov. 19 closes out the season, and the Camden, S.C., meet often decides one or more championships. Last year, the Marion duPont Scott Colonial Cup



Dawalan prevailed over Eshtiaal, left, in the 2015 Grand National (Gr. 1). The richest race on the National Steeplechase Association schedule increases to \$350,000 for its 2016 running on Oct. 15.

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(Gr. 1), won by Irv Naylor's Dawalan, decided the earnings title and ultimately the Eclipse Award for 2015.

The Colonial Cup meet will increase its purses by \$60,000 this year, with most of the increase going into the Colonial Cup itself, which will offer a \$150,000 purse, up from \$100,000 in 2015.

The Fall Championship Season begins Thursday, Sept. 22, at Belmont Park for two stakes

races, the \$150,000 Lonesome Glory Handicap (Gr. 1) and the \$75,000 William Entenmann Memorial Novice Stakes. Two days later, the action shifts to Maryland for the Shawan Downs meet on Saturday, Sept. 24, and the following afternoon is the Foxfield Fall meet in Charlottesville.

The Tryon meet will feature a \$35,000 allowance hurdle and a \$30,000 Ratings Handicap for its inaugural running.



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Champion Demonstrative is retired

Owner Jacqueline Ohrstrom and trainer Richard Valentine have decided to retire Demonstrative, whose distinguished seven-year racing career over fences yielded an Eclipse Award in 2014 and National Steeplechase Association purses exceeding \$900,000.

At his best, the tall, dark, handsome son of Elusive Quality dominated the race course and his opponents. He won a total of seven Grade 1 races, including duplicate victories in the New York Turf Writers Cup and the Calvin Houghland Iroquois.

Team Demonstrative—Mrs. Ohrstrom, Valentine, assistant trainer Laird George, and regular jockey Robbie Walsh—went to all the tough spots, and Demonstrative won Grade 1 races in four racing seasons.

Bred in Kentucky by Gainsborough Farm, he was shipped off to England, where he won on the flat for Dubai's Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashid al Maktoum. He was sold from the high-profile stable at the 2010 Tattersalls July mixed sale, where Valentine picked him out for slightly less than \$40,000 for his owner.

Immediately introduced to jump racing, Demonstrative won twice and was the champion three-year-old of 2010 despite being hampered in Far Hill's Gladstone and losing his rider. That was one of only two incidents in which he unseated his jockey. In 35 starts over fences, he had no falls.

At four, he won a novice stakes, the William Entenmann Memorial at Belmont Park and then came into his own in 2012, when he won the New York Turf Writers against a battle-hardened field.

That November in the Marion duPont Scott Colonial Cup (Gr. 1), he demonstrated his talent and competitiveness. At the last of the Colonial Cup, he was last in a quality field of 10 but charged through the stretch and won by



Demonstrative led the field over the last fence in the 2014 Grand National (Gr. 1) at Far Hills.

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a length going away.

He won his first start of 2013, his first win in the Calvin Houghland Iroquois, but the remainder of that season was compromised by an entrapped epiglottis, which was surgically repaired at the end of that year.

His 2014 season was a whirlwind of outstanding performances through the summer and fall. He was short of full fitness when he finished unplaced in the Iroquois but was at his best for the rest of the season. He was barely beaten in the A. P. Smithwick Memorial (Gr. 1) and then won in succession the New York Turf Writers, the Lonesome Glory Handicap (Gr. 1), and the Grand National (Gr. 1).

That season, which featured three wins,

a second, and a third in six starts, produced an NSA-leading total of \$362,500 in purses and the Eclipse Award as 2014's champion steeplechase horse.

His 2015 season started with promise, a second victory in the Calvin Houghland Iroquois, but his summer performances were affected by a deep-seated lung infection. He returned to form with a third in the Colonial Cup.

He retires with total NSA earnings of \$940,300, which places him third on the all-time earnings list.

"Demonstrative gave Mrs. Ohrstrom, Laird, Robbie, and me many fun days," Valentine said. "We will make sure he is well looked after in the years to come!"

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