



MONDAY REPORT

A weekly report from the National Steeplechase Association

Monday, April 22, 2019

Moscato, returning in top form, surges to Temple Gwathmey win

Bruton Street-US's Moscato, a dominant novice champion in 2017, returned to the races in top form and drew away to an emphatic victory in Saturday's \$75,000 Temple Gwathmey Handicap (Gr. 2), the featured hurdle race of the 99th annual Middleburg Spring Races.

Belisarius finished second, 3½ lengths behind Moscato, and Jaleo was third, another seven lengths farther back, in a star-studded field of 10. Ridden by Michael Mitchell, Moscato ran the Temple Gwathmey's 2½ miles in 5:57 1/5 on turf rated as soft.

Moscato, an eight-year-old Hernando gelding, was making his first start since winning Belmont Park's 2017 William Entenmann Memorial Novice Stakes. Trained by Jack Fisher, Moscato locked up the year's novice championship with that victory, and he was nominated to the Grand National (Gr. 1).

He went to the sidelines before the Far Hills hurdle classic and recuperated through the 2018 season. He returned against a Grade 1-quality field and showed no signs of rust. Indeed, he retained a quick turn of foot that overtook Belisarius in the race's closing stages.



Tod Marks

Moscato, left, takes aim on Belisarius at the last fence of the Temple Gwathmey Handicap (Gr. 2).

Fisher saddled three Temple Gwathmey contenders for Bruton Street: Moscato, Jaleo, and 2017 Eclipse Award winner Scorpiancer, who also had missed the 2018 season.

Clarcam went to the lead early, with the Bruton

Street triumvirate several lengths behind him. Clarcam ceded the lead to Jaleo at the 11th fence with Scorpiancer second and Moscato shuffled back toward the back of the field.

Belisarius, winner of a division of Far Hills' Foxbrook Champion Hurdle last fall, took the lead before the last and set sail for the finish line under Bernie Dalton.

Moscato, steered to the outside by Mitchell, jumped the last fence with Jaleo with two lengths to make up. He overtook Belisarius before the turn into Middleburg Spring's home-stretch and was drawing away to the finish line.



Douglas Lees

Irvin "Skip" Crawford's Senior Senator retired the Grand National Challenge Cup with his third straight victory in the middle jewel of the Maryland Timber Triple Crown. Story on Page 3.

On the inside

Ballybristol Farm's Andi'amu, always prominent, swept to victory in the Middleburg Hunt Cup.....2

Jack Fisher continued his break-away season with two victories to go with the Temple Gwathmey (Gr. 2) score.2

Go Jump Racing!





Andi'amu scores in Middleburg Hunt Cup

Ballybristol Farm's Andi'amu proved his mettle over mixed obstacles last year with two Virginia victories, and he successfully tackled traditional timber fences Saturday in the \$30,000 Middleburg Hunt Cup.

Trained by Leslie Young and ridden by Jack Doyle, the French-bred took command at the 15th fence from a tiring Grand Manan and fought off a challenge from Le Chevalier at the last to win the 3 1/4-mile race by 5 3/4 lengths in 7:00 3/5 on soft turf.

Racing under clearing skies and seasonably warm temperatures, Andi'amu was never far behind the pace of habitual front-runner Grand Manan, who set a solid pace ahead of his seven opponents. Michael A. Smith's Le Chevalier was at the back of the field, which remained tightly bunched for much of the distance.

Bruton Street-US's Two's Company, the 2016 timber champion and winner of the New Jersey Hunt Cup last fall, held the inside position in third under Sean McDermott as the field entered the final mile over the Middleburg Spring course.

As Grand Manan gave way, Doyle and Andi'amu inherited the lead at the 15th fence. Le Chevalier, still at the back of the field, put in a cursory jump and quickly made headway on the leaders. Kieran Norris guided Le Chevalier to the outside, and they jumped the last in stride with Andi'amu.

After the fence and as they began the run to the finish line, Andi'amu and Le Chevalier bounced off each other without any effect on either. On the turn into Middleburg Spring's brief stretch, Andi'amu began to pull away and widened to



Tod Marks

Andi'amu, right, and Le Chevalier duel over the last in the Middleburg Hunt Cup.

the finish line.

Two's Company finished third, another eight lengths farther back, and Irv Naylor's Super Saturday, last year's Middleburg Hunt Cup winner, finished fourth. Le Chevalier, trained by Julie Gomena, had finished second in the 2018 Middleburg Hunt Cup.

A few hours after that race, Andi'amu won

the Alfred M. Hunt Steeplechase over mixed obstacles, and two weeks later he won the Virginia Gold Cup's Steeplethon Stakes, his final start of the year. Before taking on the bigger fences, Andi'amu was Grade 1-placed over hurdles with a second in the 2016 New York Turf Writers Cup Handicap and third in the 2017 Calvin Houghland Iroquois.

Fisher continues heady early season with hat trick

The 2019 National Steeplechase Association is barely a month old, and Jack Fisher is making a shambles of the trainer standings. He collected his sixth, seventh, and eighth victories of the season with a Middleburg Spring hat trick. He has twice as many wins as Kathy Neilson and is far in front by earnings.

The Maryland-based trainer is now pursuing his eighth straight title by wins, and the big hit was the \$75,000 Temple Gwathmey Handicap (Gr. 2), the first graded victory by Moscato, Bruton Street-US's 2017 novice champion. Fisher bookended the meet with Bruton Street's Special Relation in the \$35,000 allowance hurdle that opened the popular meet, and he brought down the curtain with Gil Johnston's Days of Heaven in the Alfred M. Hunt Steeplechase over mixed obstacles.

Michael Mitchell rode all three of Fisher's winners and moved into second place by wins and purses behind Jack Doyle, who was aboard two winners for trainer Leslie Young.

Toward the back of the field early going,

Special Relation made his move in the latter phases of the allowance hurdle and took the lead in the stretch to win by 1 1/4 lengths over Renown in 4:34 4/5 for 2 1/8 miles. Set to Music finished third.

Days of Heaven, who had finished sixth in last year's Grand National (Gr. 1), took well to the mixed obstacles.

Sportswear wins VEA maiden hurdle

Teodoro's jumping was erratic and giving jockey Ross Geraghty some anxious moments, but Rosbrian Farm's talented newcomer appeared to have the \$30,000 Sport of Kings maiden hurdle under control after putting away challenger Khafayya in the stretch.

But KMSN Stable's Sportswear came flying after the last fence in the 2 1/8-mile race sponsored by the Virginia Equine Alliance. Ridden by Gerard Galligan, Sportswear swept past the speedy but spent Teodoro to win by 2 1/4 lengths in 4:37 on soft turf.

Trained by Jonathan Sheppard, Sportswear

made his first start over fences in Saturday's maiden hurdle at the Middleburg Spring Races. Khafayya finished third in a full field of 10. Geraghty, trainer Ricky Hendriks, and Rosbrian's Mandy and George Mahoney went to the winner's circle two races later when 2019 Grade 1 winner Optimus Prime waltzed away to an 11 1/4-length victory in the training flat race.

Leslie Young secured her second Middleburg Spring win when Sharon Sheppard's Moorland scored a hard-fought half-length victory over Brooklyn Speights in a \$20,000 maiden claiming hurdle.

Grand National Steeplechase



Douglas Lees

Skip Crawford raised the Grand National Challenge Cup after Senior Senator's victory and then took home the trophy after his stable star's third consecutive win.

Senior Senator retires trophy with third Grand National win

Irvin "Skip" Crawford's Senior Senator answered the challenge of the Grand National Challenge Cup on Saturday and retired the trophy for his owner with a dominating victory in the 117th running of the historic middle jewel of the Maryland Timber Triple Crown.

Ridden by 23-year-old amateur Eric Poretz, his regular jockey throughout his timber-racing career, Senior Senator retired the Challenge Cup with his third straight victory in the Butler timber classic. The stylish victory set him up for an assault on a third win in the Maryland Hunt Cup next Saturday in Glyndon.

The nine-year-old lost his last serious challenger at the last fence of the \$50,000 Grand National when Black and Blue Stable's Monstaleur stumbled on landing and trainer-jockey Forrest Kelly was unable to remain in the saddle. Armata Stables' Joshua G., second in last year's Hunt Cup, finished second, 30 lengths behind Senior Senator, in a field of 12.

Trained in nearby Monkton by Joe Davies, Senior Senator ran the Grand National's 3¼ miles

in 6:11 2/5 on turf rated as good.

Raven's Choice, the 2015 Hunt Cup winner by disqualification for owner Ann Jackson and second to Senior Senator in last year's Grand National, finished third, three-quarters of a length behind Joshua G. Drift Society was fourth.

Raven's Choice set the pace for the Grand National's first 2½ miles under Paul O'Neill before Drift Society, third in last year's Hunt Cup, moved forward to challenge three fences out.

Senior Senator, always in striking position and ridden confidently by Poretz, took the lead two out and galloped home to an easy victory when Monstaleur unseated his rider, who nearly managed to remain in the saddle.

Senior Senator won the Maryland Hunt Cup in 2016 after being disqualified from a Grand National allowance-race victory, and he sustained a broken neck in the 2017 Hunt Cup when he fell at the tall third fence on the Glyndon course. After surgery at the University of Pennsylvania's New Bolton Center, he returned to win last year's Hunt Cup by five lengths.

Aquies surges to victory in Murray Memorial

The Equibase notes on Aquies' start in the My Lady's Manor on April 13 was that he lacked a rally while finishing fourth. A week later, Irv Naylor's Artie Schiller gelding had plenty of rally as he swept to a 2¼-length victory over Vintage Vinnie in the Grand National's \$20,000 Benjamin H. Murray Memorial.

Trained by Kathy Neilson and ridden by Eddie Keating, Aquies uncorked a big move after the final fence of the 3¼-mile Murray Memorial and was continuing to pull away as he passed under the finish line on Saturday. He reached the line in 6:14 on a course rated as good. Riverdee Stable's Biedermeier finished third.

Kiplin Hall's Renegade River set the early pace in the timber allowance, with Biedermeier in second position over the first several fences. Eric Poretz zoomed Armata Stables' Vintage Vinnie to the lead before the race's midpoint, and they opened a gaping lead over the field.

Even as his advantage grew smaller over the final fences, Vintage Vinnie appeared to be in charge and headed to the winner's circle. But Aquies had other ideas. He found another gear after the last, overtook Vintage Vinnie in Middleburg Spring's stretch, and drew off.

Although winless last year, Aquies had two seconds and two thirds during the spring season before a fall in the Pennsylvania Hunt Cup.

Aquies' victory kept Neilson in second place in the trainer standings by wins behind Jack Fisher. From 15 starts, she has four victories.

Flaming Sword wins Western Run Plate

Fat Chance Farm's Flaming Sword, making his first career start, jumped to the lead of the \$10,000 Western Run Plate after the first several fences, opened a daylight advantage, and sauntered home to a 6¾-length victory in the three-mile race for amateur apprentice jockeys.

Keystone Thoroughbreds' The Duck, prominent in the early going, finished second in a field of six. Hudson River Farms' Codrington College finished third, and Rollforward took fourth.

Ridden by Aaron Sinnott, Flaming Sword capped a successful day for trainer Leslie Young, who notched two victories at the Middleburg Spring Races, with Andi'amu in the Middleburg Hunt Cup and Moorland in a maiden claiming hurdle. The Pennsylvania-based trainer now has won three of nine 2019 starts.

Flaming Sword is a five-year-old by Gold Well and was bred in Ireland.



Next Up

Tripleheader on tap for coming weekend

Steeplechase action will be spread over the East Coast on Saturday, with the 24th Queen's Cup Steeplechase offering a record \$200,000 in purses, the 123rd running of the \$100,000 Maryland Hunt Cup on tap in suburban Baltimore, and the 42nd annual Foxfield Spring Races kicking off in Charlottesville, Va.

The Queen's Cup will be run in memory of Midge and Jim Price, whose steadfast support allowed their son Bill to create a steeplechase race for the Charlotte, N.C., area. The Queen's Cup has grown steadily at its emerald Brooklandwood Race Course and now is one of the premier spring events in North Carolina's largest city.

Highlight of the afternoon will be the \$100,000 Queen's Cup MPC 'Chase for novices, or horses in their first seasons of racing over fences. The year's first novice stakes, the 2 3/8-mile

hurdle race attracted a strong list of nominees.

Among them is Carrington Holdings' Boss Man, who won Belmont Park's 2018 William Entenmann Memorial Novice Stakes for Queen's Cup co-chairs Carrington and Bill Price. The hulking Florida-bred is trained by Arch Kingsley Jr.

Jack Fisher, who has been on a tear through the spring season, nominated four contenders: Gibralfaro and City Dreamer, both owned by Riverdee Stable; Bruton Street-US's Lord Justice, who is seeking his first U.S. win; and Storm Team, a Carolina Cup allowance winner owned by Sheila Williams and Northwoods Stable. Gibralfaro won last spring's Tryon Block House and was second in two late-season novice stakes, the Foxbrook Champion Hurdle and the Aflac Supreme Hurdle.

The last Saturday in April, at exactly 4 p.m., is

a hallowed time in Maryland, when a large field of timber specialists start in one of the world's storied horse races, the Maryland Hunt Cup. The horses will be tested over four miles and tall fences on the Glyndon course.

For those who race horses over timber, the Maryland Hunt Cup is the ultimate achievement, and 26 contenders were nominated to the classic race. Chief among them is Skip Crawford's Senior Senator, who retired the Grand National Challenge Cup last Saturday and would be seeking a third victory in the Hunt Cup.

At the Foxfield Race Course in Charlottesville, the feature race will be the \$25,000 Daniel Van Clief Memorial, a ratings handicap for horses ranked at 115 or lower. The program also will include a \$20,000 maiden hurdle for fillies and mares that is sponsored by the Virginia Equine Alliance.



STEEPLECHASE STANDINGS THROUGH APRIL 20

OWNERS BY EARNINGS						JOCKEYS BY WINS					
	Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Earnings		Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Earnings
Bruton Street-US	10	2	1	3	\$88,600	Jack Doyle	17	5	2	2	\$115,700
Irvin S. Naylor	12	3	0	0	52,000	Sean McDermott	15	4	2	4	87,600
Mrs. S.K. Johnston Jr.	7	2	0	2	33,500	Michael Mitchell	15	4	2	3	109,750
DASH Stable	2	1	0	1	33,500	Richard Boucher	5	2	1	0	27,200
Irvin L. Crawford II	1	1	0	0	30,000	Hadden Frost	4	2	0	0	26,500
Upland Partners	2	1	0	0	30,000	Eric Poretz	6	1	3	1	46,900
Katherine S. Neilson	2	1	1	0	24,300	Kieran Norris	12	1	3	1	33,050
Ballybristol Farm	2	1	1	0	21,600	Eddie Keating	7	1	1	2	27,800
Sheila J. Williams	2	1	0	0	21,000	Gerard Galligan	8	1	1	1	27,500
KMSN Stable	2	1	0	1	20,000	Mark Beecher	4	1	0	1	32,000

TRAINERS BY WINS						HORSES BY EARNINGS					
	Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Earnings		Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Earnings
Jack Fisher	23	8	1	4	\$197,500	Moscato	1	1	0	0	\$45,000
Katherine S. Neilson	15	4	2	2	86,400	Ice It	1	1	0	0	30,000
Leslie F. Young	9	3	2	2	50,700	Senior Senator	1	1	0	0	30,000
Jonathan Sheppard	12	2	1	3	46,500	Mystic Strike	1	1	0	0	30,000
Lilith Boucher	4	2	1	0	26,400	Soluble (Ger)	2	1	1	0	24,300
Ricky Hendriks	19	1	3	1	45,500	Storm Team	1	1	0	0	21,000
Julie Gomena	11	1	3	0	32,050	Special Relation (Ire)	1	1	0	0	21,000
Joseph G. Davies	8	1	2	1	42,500	Indigo Heart	1	1	0	0	18,000
Todd Wyatt	5	1	1	2	23,000	Aggressive (Ire)	1	1	0	0	18,000
Todd McKenna	5	1	1	0	32,700	Andi'amu (Fr)	1	0	0	0	18,000