



MONDAY REPORT

A weekly report from the National Steeplechase Association

Monday, July 22, 2019

Naylor pair tops full Smithwick field

Leading owner Irv Naylor will field the formidable team of Bedrock and Sempre Medici on Thursday for Saratoga Race Course's \$150,000 A. P. Smithwick Memorial (Gr. 1), which attracted an oversubscribed field of 13.

Trained by Leslie Young, six-year-old Bedrock will be making his first start of the year and his American debut in the 2 1/16-mile Smithwick. He closed out the overseas phase of his career for trainer Iain Jardine with back-to-back stakes victories in Ireland. Sean McDermott will ride the Smithwick's 154-pound highweight.

Sempre Medici, trained by Cyril Murphy, has been chasing Rosbrian Farm's Optimus Prime, who was nominated to the Smithwick but will miss the remainder of the season due to a training injury. French-bred Sempre Medici finished second to Optimus Prime in the Virginia Gold Cup's David Semmes Memorial (Gr. 2) on May 4. Darren Nagle will ride.

Last year's Smithwick winner, Mark Buyck's Show Court, will be shooting for another upset victory. Now 10, Show Court won at 14.10-to-1 last year and will be seeking his first victory of the year. Trainer Arch Kingsley Jr. named Barry Foley to ride.

Jack Fisher, who is running away with the year's training titles by wins and purses, will take four shots at the Smithwick. Danny Mullins will ship in from Ireland to ride Gill Johnston's Peppay Le Pugh, a highly consistent eight-year-old who has two wins and three seconds in six starts this year in the U.K.

Another Fisher entrant, Vosne Romanee, also will be making his first U.S. start. Owned by the Foxtrot NH Racing Partnership, the eight-year-old won a handicap steeplechase stakes at Ascot last fall and has been competitive in stakes handicaps over the big fences this year. He will have his regular jockey, Sam Twiston-Davies, in the saddle.

Michael Mitchell, currently sporting a comfortable lead in the jockey standings, will be aboard Riverdee Stable's Gibralfaro, who won the Queen's Cup MPC 'Chase on April 27 but had little interest in the Calvin Houghland Iroquois (Gr. 1) and finished a distant sixth two weeks later.

Also representing Fisher will be Sonny Via's Hinterland, who most recently finished second in Fair Hill's Valentine Memorial. Willie McCa-



Tod Marks

No Wunder, in foreground, seized the lead from Hinterland in Fair Hill's Valentine Memorial.

rthy has the mount.

Owner Robert Kinsley will be represented by No Wunder, the Valentine winner, and Modem, whose most recently jumps start was a sixth to Show Court in last year's Smithwick. Kieran Norris will ride No Wunder, and Jack Doyle has the mount on Modem.

Both Kinsley starters are trained by Elizabeth Voss, who also entered The Fields Stable's Portrade, the Smithwick's also-eligible. Ross Geraghty was named on Portrade, winner of the 2016 New York Turf Writers Cup Handicap (Gr. 1) but winless since then.

Racing Hall of Fame trainer Jonathan Sheppard entered Buttonwood Stable's All the Way Jose and Hudson River Farms' Winston C. All the Way Jose is looking for his first win since the 2017 Lonesome Glory Handicap (Gr. 1) at Belmont Park, and Winston C finished a late-running third in the Iroquois Steeplechase's Marcellus Frost Champion Hurdle for novices

on May 11. Gerard Galligan rides All the Way Jose, and Thomas Garner has the mount on Winston C.

Completing the field is Belisarius, who finished ninth in the Frost and is also entered for Wednesday's Jonathan Kiser Novice Stakes. Trainer Kate Dalton named Geraghty to ride.

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Go Jump Racing!



Packed, talented field on tap for Kiser

The National Steeplechase Association's rising-stars division will be in the spotlight on Wednesday when a packed field of 11 lines up for Saratoga Race Course's \$75,000 Jonathan Kiser Novices Stakes.

The 2 1/16-mile race over National Fences will be Saratoga's first race, with a 12:50 p.m. first post time.

The Kiser will feature two starters who are making their U.S. debuts. Richard Valentine will saddle Jacqueline Ohrstrom's Arch My Boy, who arrives on American shores after two runaway victories over hurdles in England.

The five-year-old won a maiden hurdle by nine lengths in March and then devastated a low-level allowance hurdle by 30 lengths at Huntingdon Race Course in April. Kieran Norris will ride.

Sharon Sheppard's Redicean is trained by Leslie Young and will be break from the inside under Thomas Garner. The Medicean five-year-old most recently finished 11th in the Scottish Champion Hurdle at Ayr in April after five flat starts that included two victories.

Kate Dalton will send out Help From Heaven and Belisarius. Virginia Lazenby's Help From Heaven finished second by a neck in the Iroquois Steeplechase's Marcellus Frost Champion Hurdle for novices on May 11 and will be ridden by Ross Geraghty.

Owned by Gary Barber, Brous Stable, and Wachtel Stable, Belisarius opened the season with a good second in the Temple Gwathmey Handicap (Gr. 2) before a disinterested ninth in the Marcellus Frost. Coming in for the mount is English jump jockey Sam Twiston-Davies.

Also coming out of the Marcellus Frost is Carrington Holdings' Boss Man, the winner of a Saratoga allowance hurdle last summer. Trained by Arch Kingsley Jr., the Florida-bred also won



KMSN Stable's Sportswear, ridden by Gerard Galligan, jumped the last fence of the Iroquois Steeplechase's allowance hurdle and won by a half-length.

Belmont Park's William Entenmann Novice Stakes last fall. The English Channel gelding finished seventh in the Marcellus Frost and will have leading Irish jockey Danny Mullins in the saddle.

Leading trainer Jack Fisher will saddle a trio of starters for the Jonathan Kiser, including Storm Team, who was eighth in the Marcellus Frost for Sheila Williams and Northwoods Stable. Jack

Doyle will ride the Candy Ride five-year-old.

Also coming out of Fisher's powerhouse stable are Bruton Street-US's Lord Justice, four-length winner of a ratings handicap on the Iroquois card, and Rather Be Racing's Our Legend, who won a Fair Hill allowance hurdle on May 25. Michael Mitchell, currently leading the jockey standings, will ride Lord Justice, and Willie McCarthy has the call on Our Legend.

KMSN Stable's Sportswear will be attempting to extend his unbeaten streak over fences for Racing Hall of Fame trainer Jonathan Sheppard. The four-year-old by Frankel scored his maiden victory at Middleburg Spring in April and then prevailed over an experienced field in an Iroquois allowance hurdle. Gerard Galligan, who was aboard for both victories, will ride.

Making his first start over fences this year will be Irv Naylor's Elucidation, who also has no blemishes on his jumps record. He won at Shawan Downs last September and then scored in an International Gold Cup allowance hurdle. Darren Nagle, who rode the five-year-old Oasis Dream gelding in both victories, will ride.

Completing the field is Heather and Peter Austin's Corky Lemon, who comes into the Kiser from two victories. He won a maiden hurdle at the Queen's Cup for owner-trainer Nancy Ruch in April and then prevailed in a Radnor Hunt Races allowance hurdle for new trainer Mark Beecher. Sean McDermott has the mount.



Michael Mitchell drove Bruton Street-US's Lord Justice to the finish line and a four-length victory in the Iroquois Steeplechase's ratings handicap.

Tod Marks

Tod Marks

Cite wears down front-runner Repeat Repeat to win \$65,000 Saratoga allowance hurdle

Gill Johnston's Cite, always in good position in Sunday's \$65,000 allowance hurdle, wore down front-running Repeat Repeat through Saratoga Race Course's stretch and won by a half-length under Willie McCarthy.

Petticoats Loose Stable's Gaye Breeze, one of the 2 1/16-mile race's longshots at 15-to-1, made up ground on the final run down Saratoga's backstretch and seized third place, 2/4 lengths behind Repeat Repeat and 3 1/4 lengths clear of Roller Rolls On in fourth.

Zeppelin Ride finished fifth, and 9-to-10 favorite Markham finished sixth after an eventful trip.

Sunday's allowance hurdle had been postponed from Wednesday, when persistent rains led New York Racing Association officials to cancel the race. They decided immediately to add the jump race to Sunday's 13-race program, which included many races postponed from Saturday because of high temperatures and humidity.

Bon Nouvel Chasers' Repeat Repeat came away from the start in good order, and jockey Kieran Norris put him on an open-length lead with Lee Pokoik's Roller Rolls On and Cite in his immediate wake.

Ross Geraghty, aboard Rosbrian Farm's Markhan, took the inside route and had the Birdstone six-year-old well placed down the backstretch the first time.

Whitman's Poetry, owned by DASH Stable, was well back through the early fences and jumped the fifth fence, opposite Saratoga's grandstand, without problem. But within a few strides he clipped the heels of Markhan and dislodged jockey Michael Mitchell.

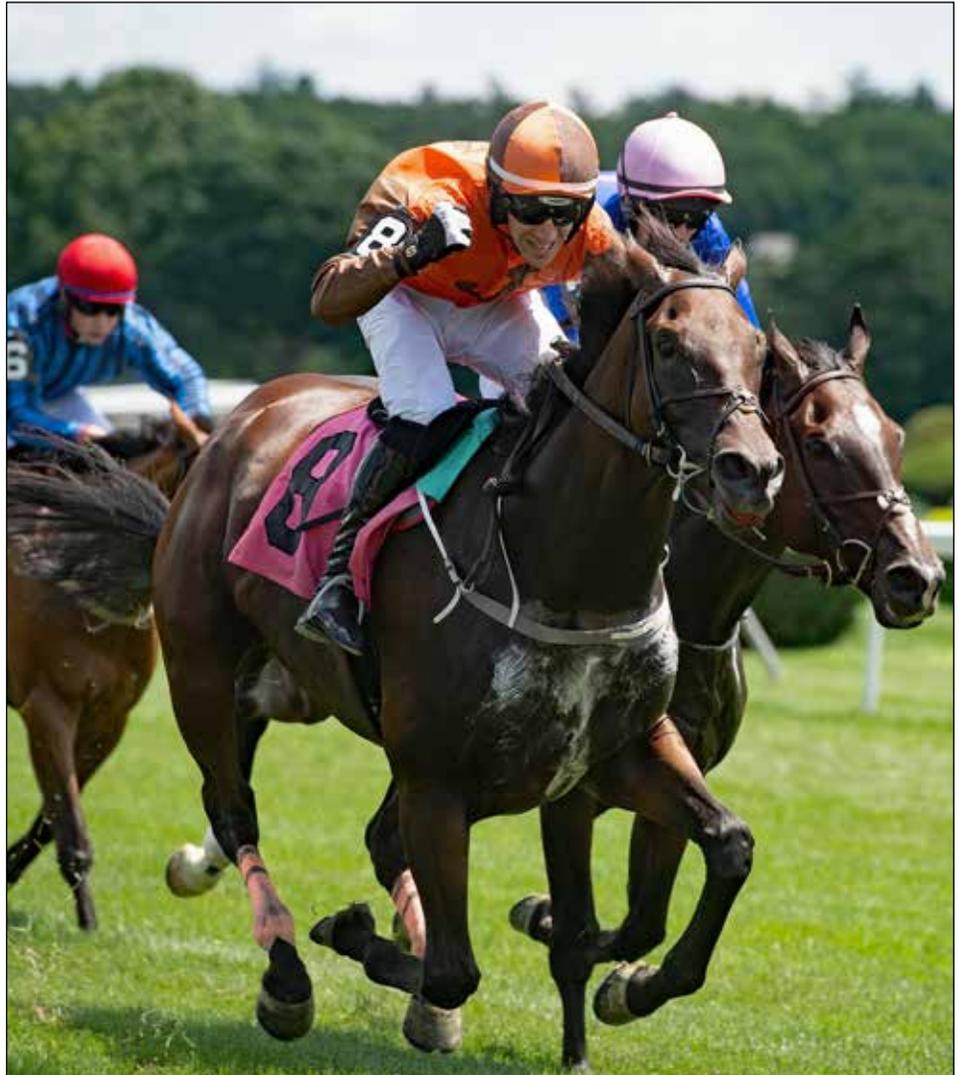
With Repeat Repeat maintaining his lead by a clear length, a riderless Whitman's Poetry continued to run with the field and again clipped the heels of Markhan at the seventh fence, the first on the backstretch run. Whitman's Poetry fell but quickly regained his feet and was caught by Saratoga's outriders.

The incidents appeared to take the run out of the normally explosive Markhan, who drifted to the back of the field.

After the final fence on the backstretch, Cite and McCarthy took aim on Repeat Repeat, who continued to run well on the front end and showed no sign of retreat. Under his rider's strong and insistent hand ride, Cite gradually overtook Repeat Repeat inside the furlong pole and edged away to the finish line.

Repeat Repeat, trained by Julie Gomena, never was threatened by Gaye Breeze, who is trained by Petticoats Loose owner Meriwether Morris.

Cite, sent off as the 6-to-1 third betting choice,



Willie McCarthy delivered a victory salute after Gill Johnston's Cite crossed the finish line a half-length ahead of Repeat Repeat in Saratoga's steeplechase opener.

ran the 2 1/16-mile distance in 3:51.52 on firm turf. He paid \$14 for a \$2 win bet.

Cite's victory was the 25th of the year for Jack Fisher, who is on the verge of sealing his eighth consecutive champion trainer title. His total for the season's first four months exceeds his total of 22 victories for all of last season.

Cite collected his first victory since a maiden win at the 2018 Iroquois Steeplechase. He made only one subsequent jumps start last year, in a division the Far Hills Races' Foxbrook Champion Hurdle for novices, and was pulled up.

He opened the 2019 campaign with fourth-place finishes in nonwinners-of-two allowance

hurdles at the Carolina Cup and Middleburg Spring before a fall at the last in a similar Iroquois allowance in which Whitman's Poetry finished second and Repeat Repeat was third.

The Blame six-year-old, bred by frequent partners Claiborne Farm and Adele Dilschneider, is no stranger to Saratoga. Before his jumps career, he was trained by Hall of Fame member Bill Mott. At four, he won a Saratoga turf allowance under Hall of Fame jockey John Velazquez.

Sunday's allowance victory increased Cite's 2019 earnings to \$42,400. Fisher's stable earnings for the year rose to \$843,450. McCarthy collected his fourth win of the season.

Book Signing at National Museum of Racing

An excerpt from *Racing Time*

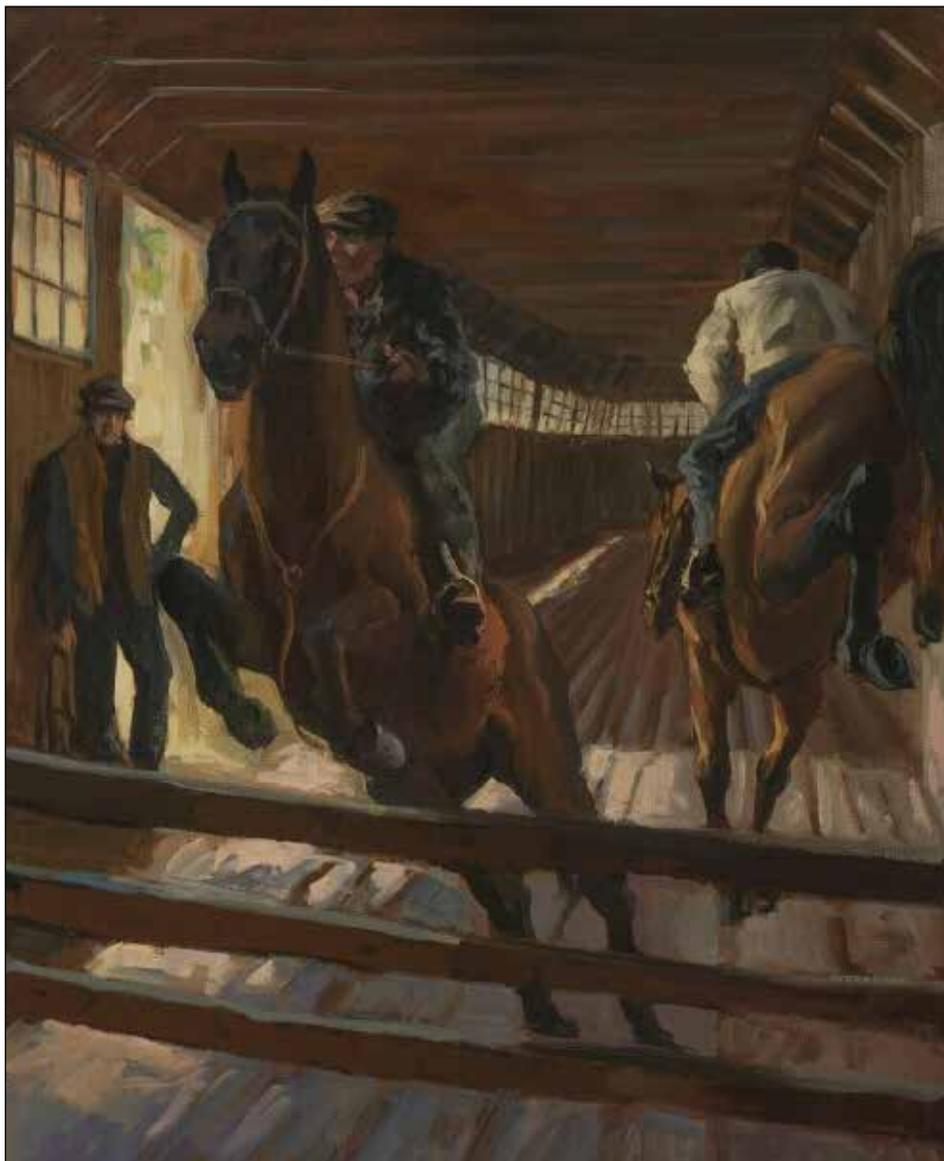
Author Patrick Smithwick will be signing copies of his most recent book, *Racing Time: A Memoir of Love, Loss and Liberation*, and reading an excerpt from the newly published work at the National Museum of Racing and Hall of Fame on Thursday, July 25.

The reception, co-sponsored by the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation, begins at 5:30 p.m., a few hours after the A. P. Smithwick Memorial (Gr. 1), named for the author's father, is scheduled to be run at Saratoga Race Course, across Union Avenue from the museum.

In part, *Racing Time* chronicles Patrick Smithwick's relationship with his best friend, Hall of Fame trainer Tom Voss. The following excerpt from *Racing Time* provides an insight into their relationship and Tom Voss' genius.

It's a cold, miserable, windy day in December. A few owners are coming. He wants to show them something. Celeste and I jog and canter around the indoor track. The wind bangs against the northwest wall of windows. Tom and Robert Cutler, who "rubs" the seven horses stabled in the new stalls inside the perimeter of the track, start wrestling with the twelve-foot tree limbs that lie in the dirt alongside the inside wall. They pull the limbs out and set them across, inserting the ends into the ladder of two-by-four slots in the walls. Two feet. We are on young horses. We jog around, jumping them. Three feet. We turn, go the other way, canter over them. The owners and Tom are standing up against the inside wall between two of the jumps. Tom enlists the help of one owner, who is no help, in setting the limbs apart from one another, forming a three-foot wide spread fence, and bringing the top limbs up to four feet. These are limbs six inches in diameter that do not break slid into slots made of two-by-fours hammered into the main support posts of the walls. Make a mistake and you're out of luck.

The indoor does not have a high ceiling. On its front side, running along the driveway and facing the "finish line field," the original builder made two sections in the roof beneath which fences could be set up. In those sections, the rafters do not go straight across from the top of the inside wall to the outside wall. Instead, two A-frames were built into the ceiling creating an extra three feet of overhead space so that your horse can jump high without tearing your head off. However, a decade ago, the back side had collapsed in a storm, and when it was rebuilt, no A-frame spaces were constructed. The two-by-six rafters go straight across. In short, I ride a little tall in the saddle, and as the fences went up, I did worry about my forehead catching a well buttressed two-by-six at a gallop, which



Sam Robinson

could've been the end of me, but I didn't bring this up.

"Patrick," Tom says. "You go this direction." He points to the right. "Celeste, you go the opposite, and I want you both to time it so you meet here at this fence and jump it at the same time." I stare at him as if he is crazy. Does he really mean it? Yes, he does. And there my potential owner stands beside him. He owns the timber horse I want to ride in the spring. Celeste notices my hesitation. "What's the matter, Patrick? You scared?" Her favorite means of relaxation on Sundays is to jump out of airplanes. Tom takes a pull of his Pall Mall. He is training me. He is showing this owner what I, an old tim-

er, can do. He has confidence in me. He takes another pull. Hands on hips, keeping his face directed toward the fences, squinting his eyes, he looks up at me, directly into my eyes, and holds it for a second.

I did it. First at a canter. Then at a gallop. On a young, but athletic, horse. Celeste was not even fazed. It took my breath away. Day after day, he pushed me beyond what I wanted to do, what I thought I could do, whether it was breezing horses, schooling over hurdles—fast!—or following him down the row of a just-cut corn field at a full gallop out foxhunting, sprinting up a steep hill, and then jumping out over a four and a half foot board fence.



Next Up

Spa race kicks off prime summer season

The National Steeplechase Association entered the heart of its summer racing program on Sunday with the \$65,000 Saratoga Race Course allowance hurdle that had been postponed because of weather conditions on Wednesday.

With more than \$100,000 already in the books at Parx Racing and Monmouth Park in July, the NSA's summer racing program will total nearly \$1.2-million. Ahead on the schedule are eight more races at Saratoga and 10 races at Colonial Downs in New Kent, Va.

The recently announced fall condition book contains 14 racing dates totaling \$2,630,000. Highlighting the fall lineup is the \$450,000 Grand National (Gr. 1) on a Far Hills program offering \$850,000 in purses on Oct. 19.

Taken together, the NSA's summer-fall program totals a record \$3,815,000.

"The National Steeplechase Association's

Board of Directors is committed to providing high-quality racing opportunities for our owners, trainers, and jockeys," said NSA President Guy J. Torsilieri. "Director of Racing Bill Gallo has worked closely with racetrack officials to develop summer racing opportunities for our horsemen, and the strong summer program reflects his efforts to showcase jump racing at major East Coast tracks."

Indeed, Sunday's race is a prime example of how the relationship between the NSA and the New York Racing Association has benefited steeplechase racing. "We are extremely grateful to NYRA for bringing back the allowance hurdle on Sunday," Gallo said.

"NYRA officials did not have to do that, and they had the additional complication of Saturday's card being canceled. But they showed their commitment to Saratoga's steeplechasing

program by scheduling our race at the start of a 13-race program on Sunday."

Gallo also praised the steeplechase horsemen for their understanding when Wednesday's race was canceled.

The NSA also maintains a close working relationship with Dr. Scott E. Palmer, the New York State Gaming Commission's equine medical director. "The NSA Board of Directors always has made the safety of horses and riders its first priority," Torsilieri said. "In 2012, the Board formalized our commitment by forming the Safety Committee under Dr. Reynolds Cowles.

"Through the ensuing years, Dr. Cowles and Dr. Palmer have consulted frequently, and Dr. Palmer has made several valuable recommendations to enhance safety," Torsilieri said. "We are most grateful for his input and his support of the NSA's safety initiatives."



STEEPLECHASE STANDINGS

 THROUGH JULY 16

OWNERS BY EARNINGS						JOCKEYS BY WINS					
	Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Earnings		Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Earnings
Bruton Street-US	26	5	6	5	\$285,250	Michael Mitchell	43	16	5	5	\$425,950
Mrs. S.K. Johnston Jr.	26	6	4	6	163,000	Sean McDermott	44	9	5	9	347,400
Riverdee Stable	10	2	2	2	145,700	Jack Doyle	43	7	4	5	245,150
Irvin S. Naylor	33	4	5	5	123,150	Richard Boucher	13	4	1	1	70,200
Rosbrian Farm	13	3	3	0	108,350	Ross Geraghty	28	3	6	3	152,450
Ballybristol Farm	8	2	2	1	91,250	Willie McCarthy	30	3	7	3	123,400
Irvin L. Crawford II	2	2	0	0	90,000	Hadden Frost	10	3	2	0	72,550
DASH Stable	5	2	2	1	65,900	Eddie Keating	16	3	1	5	74,100
KMSN Stable	7	2	0	1	51,950	Aaron Sinnott	13	3	1	0	52,000
Jonathan Sheppard	10	1	2	2	45,950	Gerard Galligan	26	2	5	3	106,350

TRAINERS BY WINS						HORSES BY EARNINGS					
	Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Earnings		Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Earnings
Jack Fisher	76	24	13	8	\$804,450	Senior Senator	2	2	0	0	\$90,000
Jonathan Sheppard	37	7	2	7	192,800	Scorpiancer (Ire)	2	1	0	0	90,000
Katherine Neilson	35	6	5	5	155,500	Andi'amu (Fr)	2	2	0	0	78,000
Ricky Hendriks	41	5	5	6	171,150	City Dreamer (Ire)	2	1	0	0	78,000
Leslie F. Young	21	4	4	4	129,500	Gibralfaro (Ire)	2	1	0	0	64,500
Lilith Boucher	9	4	1	1	67,900	Moscato (Fr)	2	1	0	1	60,000
Joseph G. Davies	16	2	2	1	114,700	Sportswear (GB)	2	2	0	0	48,000
Neil R. Morris	21	2	2	5	61,450	Corky Lemon	3	2	0	0	45,600
Mark Beecher	17	2	1	1	58,700	Optimus Prime (Fr)	1	1	0	0	45,000
Julie Gomena	32	1	6	3	73,950	Schoodic	3	3	0	0	42,000