



# MONDAY REPORT

A weekly report from the National Steeplechase Association

Monday, July 29, 2019

## Winston C makes big jump in class to score A. P. Smithwick (Gr. 1) win

To say that Thomas Garner had a fabulous week at Saratoga Race Course may be something of an understatement. It was huge, totally over the top.

He started out on July 24 by winning Saratoga Race Course's \$75,000 Jonathan Kiser Novice Stakes aboard new arrival Redicean for owner Sharon Sheppard and trainer Leslie Young. More about that on Page 3.

The most delicious victory came a day later with Hudson River Farms' Winston C in Saratoga's \$150,000 A. P. Smithwick Memorial (Gr. 1) for Racing Hall of Fame trainer Jonathan Sheppard. Not only was the 28-year-old Gloucestershire native in the saddle for his first Grade 1 victory, but he and now-retired rider Noel Fehily also had shopped the five-year-old Rip Van Winkle gelding to the Sheppard barn.

Thus, Garner had two Grade 1 triumphs in less than four minutes: first one ridden in the U.S. and his first sale of a Grade 1 winner. Making a huge jump in class, Winston C fought past fellow newcomer Vosne Romanee and won going away by 3½ lengths.

The Smithwick marked the culmination of Winston C's rapid rise in the hurdle ranks. He won his maiden victory over fences at Wincanton in January with Fehily in the saddle. He then took down a midlevel novice hurdle at Sandown in February and jumped to victory in a good-quality handicap at Kelso in March. Then trained by Harry Fry, he departed England with a fifth-place finish in an Aintree novice stakes on Grand National weekend in April.



Thomas Garner gives victory salute after Winston C's triumph in the A. P. Smithwick.

Tom Marks

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Garner contacted Sheppard's assistant, Keri Brion, and suggested Winston C as an American jumps prospect. Brion then approached longtime Sheppard owner Edward Swyer, who races as Hudson River Farms. Swyer agreed, and Winston C arrived in May.

He flashed talent immediately in finishing third, beaten three-quarters of a length, in the Iroquois Steeplechase's Marcellus Frost Champion Hurdle for novices on May 11.

The Irish-bred lagged behind through the first

mile, suddenly awakened on the final turn, but then hung after the final fence while still running gamely to the wire.

Brion and Sheppard's crew in Pennsylvania went to work on Winston C, and he was bursting with shiny good health when he shipped to Saratoga. Sheppard said he believed Winston C had made enough progress to jump into Grade 1 company. "He ran well in his last start at Iro-

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**Go Jump Racing!**



# Winston C scores Smithwick victory

*Continued from Page 1*

quois in Tennessee, and I thought he was well enough to come back and enter here, and he showed it today," Sheppard said.

He was deservedly 6-to-1 in Saratoga's program betting line, but bettors—mindful of Sheppard's magic at the New York Racing Association track and 47 consecutive years of at least one winner at Saratoga through 2015—bet Winston C down to 3.35-to-1, only a few dollars less than favored newcomer Bedrock, also at 3.35-to-1.

As in the Nashville race, Winston C took up a position at the back of the field early as Irv Naylor's *Sempre Medici* laid down the pace with a multiple-length early lead, followed by Sheppard-trained Grade 1 winner *All the Way Jose* and Riverdee Stable's *Gibralfaro*.

Racing in midpack early were Foxtrot NH Racing Partnership's *Vosne Romanee* and jockey Sam Twiston-Davies, who had been the eight-year-old's regular partner in most of his recent starts, including a victory in an Ascot handicap steeplechase stakes last November.

Keeping Winston C and Garner company at the back of the field was Naylor's recent acquisition *Bedrock*.

The rearward position was not what Sheppard and Garner had planned for Winston C. "We had it planned in our head that we were going to line up halfway down the field," the jockey said. "It didn't go quite to plan. We didn't get the best of starts and went at a really, really quick gallop for the first mile. My lad didn't go as well as I hoped. He wasn't jumping."



*Hudson River Farms' Winston C drew away from Vosne Romanee in Saratoga's stretch.*

Garner made a quick adjustment to the game plan and took Winston C to a more comfortable position at the back of the field. "I just wanted to get him in rhythm and make sure he was doing his job properly, so I put a pull on him," Garner said. "I got his confidence going and got him back jumping."

*Bedrock*, ridden by Sean McDermott, made the first move on the final run down Saratoga's backstretch, followed by *Vosne Romanee* and

then Winston C. *Sempre Medici* led over the last fence and ran on into the final turn before beginning to tire.

With four horses across the turf course approaching the lane, Winston C and Garner were on the outside while making headway on his opponents. "He went four- or five-wide because I had no choice," Garner said. "I swung into the stretch, and he just kept going."

Winston C and *Vosne Romanee* began to separate themselves from the rest of the field in mid-stretch, with Winston C battling past *Vosne Romanee* to gain a length lead at the furlong pole and *Vosne Romanee* up by two lengths over *Bedrock*. Through the final 200 yards, Winston C proved to have the superior speed, much to trainer Sheppard's delight.

"I'm not going to say I expected that flat run from him, but I hoped for it. He's a little quicker than the average European steeplechase type," he said.

*Bedrock* tired through the final furlong to finish sixth in a full field of 12 for the Smithwick. Sonny Via's *Hinterland* again ran well in a supporting role and finished third, three-quarters of a length behind *Vosne Romanee*. *Gibralfaro* finished fourth. Leading trainer Jack Fisher trained the second, third, and fourth finishers.

Winston C popped to the top of the year's earnings list with \$100,000 in the bank. He ran the Smithwick's 2 1/16 miles in 3:45.99 on firm turf an hour and a half before a sudden storm swept through Saratoga Springs, swamped the track, and forced the cancellation of racing after the fourth race.



*Hudson River Farms owner Edward Swyer embraced Sheppard assistant Keri Brion in the winner's circle after Winston C's score in the A. P. Smithwick Memorial.*

Tod Marks

Tod Marks



Tod Marks

Sharon Sheppard's Redicean (1) held on gamely to secure Jonathan Kiser victory in his first American start.

## Recent arrival Redicean repels Arch My Boy to win Spa's Jonathan Kiser Novice Stakes

Sharon Sheppard's Redicean, a recent arrival in the United States, launched a sustained drive in Saratoga Race Course's stretch that carried him to a three-quarter-length victory over another newcomer, Jacqueline Ohrstrom's Arch My Boy, in the \$75,000 Jonathan Kiser Novice Stakes on July 24.

The target of some late money, Redicean went off as the Kiser's 3.25-to-1 favorite in a field of eight members of the National Steeplechase Association's rising-stars division and paid \$8.50 to win after drifting down from 7-to-1 as the horses entered Saratoga's inner turf course.

Trained by Leslie Young, the five-year-old

Great Britain-bred gelding ran the Kiser's 2 1/16 miles in 3:48.05 under Thomas Garner.

Arch My Boy was followed to the finish line by Virginia Lazenby's Help From Heaven, who finished third, 4 1/2 lengths behind Arch My Boy and 1 1/2 lengths ahead of Bruton Street-US's Lord Justice in fourth.

Carrington Holdings' Boss Man, ridden by top Irish jockey Danny Mullins, went to the lead immediately and set a sensible pace over the first 1 1/4 miles. The Florida-bred approached the last fence with a short lead, but Sheila Williams' and Northwoods Stable's Storm Team quickly stormed to the front at the last fence, located at the end of Saratoga's backstretch.

Redicean also was positioned to make a run, with Garner advancing him into the fourth spot after jumping the last fence.

Arch My Boy made a sharp move on the turn under Kieran Norris and grabbed the lead early in the stretch. Help From Heaven, who like Storm Team had shadowed Boss Man, also loomed as the furlong pole approached.

Under steady pressure from Garner, Redicean eased to the front at the furlong pole and held off a dead-game Arch My Boy before gaining a clear advantage in the final sixteenth and scoring his first hurdle win in 17 months.

Young, who acquired Redicean in May for owner Sheppard, said she was confident that the newcomer's flat speed would serve him well on Saratoga's turf. In addition to three straight wins in juvenile hurdles in the 2017-2018 overseas season, he had won two flat handicaps last December on artificial surfaces at Wolverhampton and Lingfield.



Tod Marks

Leslie Young assistant Brianne Slater escorted Redicean and jockey Thomas Garner to the Saratoga winner's circle after their hard-fought victory in the Jonathan Kiser.



## Next Up

# August offers racing at Colonial, Saratoga

August will offer a bumper crop of steeplechase racing with a variety of hurdle races on the schedule at Saratoga Race Course and Colonial Downs.

First up on Wednesday, Aug. 7, will be the Mrs. Ogden Phipps Stakes for fillies and mares. The 2 1/16-mile race will offer a \$75,000 purse for its eighth running.

Colonial kicks off its inaugural season under new ownership on Thursday, Aug. 8, and jump racing will be a mainstay of the Virginia track's Saturday programs for the five-week meet. Scheduled for Saturday, Aug. 10, will be a \$30,000 Sport of Kings maiden hurdle and a \$25,000 ratings handicap for horses ranked at 115 or lower.

Like all steeplechase races at Colonial, those races will be run at 2¼ miles on the Secretariat turf course.

The jump-racing action swings back to Saratoga on Wednesday, Aug. 14, for an allowance hurdle for horses who have not won two races. That race will be run at 2 1/16 miles, and a similar allowance hurdle on Wednesday, Aug. 28, will be run at 2 3/8 miles.

Colonial continues its steeplechase schedule on Saturday, Aug. 17, with a \$30,000 maiden hurdle for fillies and mares and a \$20,000 ratings handicap for horses at 110 or lower.

The following week will offer four racing opportunities. Saratoga will feature the \$75,000 Michael G. Walsh Novice Stakes for the sport's rising-star division at 2 3/8 miles on Wednesday, Aug. 21. The 75th running of \$150,000 New York Turf Writers Cup Handicap (Gr. 1) on Aug. 22 is Saratoga's signature steeplechase race and attracts the cream of the championship division. Colonial's jump-racing schedule continues

through August and into September. The Saturday, Aug. 24 program feature a \$30,000 Sport of Kings maiden hurdle and a \$25,000 handicap for horses rated at 115 or less.

The New Kent track, located midway between Richmond and Williamsburg, will have its richest races, the \$250,000 Virginia Derby (Gr. 3) and the \$150,000 Virginia Oaks, on Saturday, Aug. 31, and steeplechase racing will be a part of that program. A \$30,000 Sport of Kings maiden hurdle and a \$20,000 ratings handicap have been scheduled.

Colonial's closing weekend will feature the \$50,000 Randolph D. Rouse Handicap for fillies and mares and a \$30,000 Sport of Kings maiden hurdle on Saturday, Sept. 7. Colonial will operate on a Thursday-through-Saturday schedule with a 5 p.m. first post time for each of its 15 racing dates.



# STEEPLECHASE STANDINGS

THROUGH JULY 26



OWNERS BY EARNINGS						JOCKEYS BY WINS					
	Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Earnings		Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Earnings
Bruton Street-US	27	5	6	5	\$289,000	Michael Mitchell	46	16	5	5	\$437,200
Mrs. S.K. Johnston Jr.	28	7	4	6	202,000	Sean McDermott	47	9	5	9	355,150
Riverdee Stable	11	2	2	2	153,200	Jack Doyle	45	7	4	5	248,150
Irvin S. Naylor	36	4	5	5	127,650	Thomas Garner	36	4	3	6	234,700
Rosbrian Farm	14	3	3	0	110,300	Willie McCarthy	30	3	7	3	123,400
Hudson River Farms	7	1	0	4	109,000	Richard Boucher	13	4	1	1	70,200
Ballybristol Farm	8	2	2	1	91,250	Ross Geraghty	31	3	6	4	161,900
Irvin L. Crawford II	2	2	0	0	90,000	Hadden Frost	10	3	2	0	72,550
Sharon E. Sheppard	10	2	2	3	76,150	Eddie Keating	16	3	1	5	74,100
DASH Stable	5	2	2	1	65,900	Aaron Sinnott	13	3	1	0	52,000

  

TRAINERS BY WINS						HORSES BY EARNINGS					
	Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Earnings		Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Earnings
Jack Fisher	85	25	14	9	\$899,700	Winston C	2	1	0	1	\$100,000
Jonathan Sheppard	40	8	2	7	291,400	Senior Senator	2	2	0	0	90,000
Katherine Neilson	35	6	5	5	155,500	Scorpiancer (Ire)	2	1	0	0	90,000
Leslie F. Young	23	5	4	4	179,000	Andi'amu (Fr)	2	2	0	0	78,000
Ricky Hendriks	42	5	5	6	173,100	Gibralfaro (Ire)	3	1	0	0	72,000
Lilith Boucher	9	4	1	1	67,900	City Dreamer (Ire)	2	1	0	0	65,000
Joseph G. Davies	16	2	2	1	114,700	Moscato (Fr)	2	1	0	1	60,000
Neil R. Morris	21	2	2	5	61,450	Sportswear (GB)	2	2	0	0	48,000
Mark Beecher	18	2	1	1	58,700	Corky Lemon	3	2	0	0	45,600
Julie Gomena	33	1	7	3	85,650	Optimus Prime (Fr)	1	1	0	0	45,000