



MONDAY REPORT

A weekly report from the National Steeplechase Association

Monday, August 26, 2019

Winston C rules N.Y. Turf Writers Cup

Hudson River Farms' Winston C won Saratoga Race Course's \$150,000 New York Turf Writers Cup Handicap (Gr. 1) on Aug. 22 and, following his victory in the \$150,000 A. P. Smithwick Memorial (Gr. 1), became the first horse to sweep Saratoga's top steeplechase races in two decades.

That feat was last accomplished in 1999 by Greg Hawkins' Campanile, and the two events are connected. In the beaten field of both 1999 races was Hudson River Farms' Ninepins, second by a neck in the Smithwick and fourth in the New York Turf Writers.

Ninepins, then 12, would be the year's leading earner after Grade 1 victories in the Grand National and Colonial Cup.

The following year, Campanile won the Smithwick but was denied in the New York Turf Writers by Ninepins. Nineteen years later, Hudson River Farms owner Edward P. Swyer was back in the Turf Writers winner's circle with a large group of friends.

The Albany, N.Y., area developer lives in Saratoga Springs, and he loves to run his horses at the town's historic racetrack. "Saratoga is special, and winning a race at Saratoga is very special," he said. "That photo, with my friends in the winner's circle, was very special."

Winston C, trained by Jonathan Sheppard and ridden by Thomas Garner, duplicated his 3½-length victory in the 2 1/16-mile Smithwick and widened his winning margin to 8¾ lengths in the 2 3/8-mile New York Turf Writers.

Swyer had acquired Winston C in the spring after he was shopped to the Sheppard team by Garner and his bloodstock partner, Noel Fehily. When he bought Winston C, Swyer was thinking that maybe this would be his Saratoga horse.

Winston C had finished third in his first U.S. start, the Iroquois Steeplechase's Marcellus Frost Champion Hurdle for novices in May, before the Sheppard crew in Pennsylvania applied the spit and polish to him for the Smithwick and New York Turf Writers.

Even though Winston C was conceding at least eight pounds to more experienced competitors, he had beaten all seven of them in the Smithwick and was pulling away from them at the line. Saratoga's bettors liked him a lot, too, almost at 1-2, and he paid \$3.10 to win. He ran the 2 3/8 miles in 4:36.16 on yielding turf.



Tod Marks

Winston C and trainer Jonathan Sheppard on the morning after the New York Turf Writers Cup.

Unlike the Smithwick, Winston C was closer to the early pace, roughly six lengths behind Buttonwood Farm's pacesetter All the Way Jose, bred and trained by Sheppard.

Garner tipped Winston C to the outside on the final run down the backstretch and allowed his smooth-jumping mount to draw closer to the leaders as the field jumped the final fence.

Harold A. "Sonny" Via's Hinterland, who had been third in the Smithwick for trainer Jack Fisher, struck to the lead a few strides past the last fence with Winston C to his outside. The five-year-old's superior speed kicked in on the far turn, and Winston C swept past Hinterland approaching the stretch.

As Hinterland tired, Riverdee Stable's Gibralfaro and Belisarius hooked up early in the lane. Neither would call it quits, and they were still going at each other as they flashed by the finish line. Fisher-trained Gibralfaro never allowed Belisarius to get past him and prevailed by a nose.

The New York Turf Writers' \$90,000 first-place purse raised Winston C's National Steeplechase Association earnings to \$190,000 from three Stateside starts. Swyer indicated that his ultimate goal for Winston C is the \$450,000 Grand National (Gr. 1) at the Far Hills Races in New Jersey on Oct. 19.

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Go Jump Racing!





Kensington Court holds on for handicap win

Oakwood Stable's Kensington Court opened a yawning lead for much of Colonial Downs' \$25,000 ratings handicap and held on in deep stretch to win by a nose over newly imported Query Horse on Aug. 24.

Robert A. Kinsley's Al, half of a 7-to-5 favored entry, closed ground in the stretch to finish third, two lengths farther back. Mark Buyck's Aydoun checked in fourth in a field of eight horses rated at 115 or lower.

Trained by Julie Gomena, Kensington Court ran the handicap's 2¼ miles in 4:01.75 on firm turf. The seven-year-old by Giant's Causeway went off at 9.90-to-1 and paid \$21.80 to win.

Kensington Court, ridden by Kieran Norris, grabbed the lead at the drop of the starter's flag and went on cruise-control well ahead of his opponents while maintaining a steady gallop. He led by 10 going into the final run down the backstretch and was up by 15 entering the final turn.

His pace slackened on the final turn, and Leipers Fork Steeplechasers' Query Horse gradually cut into the leader's margin. The French-bred newcomer, ridden by Gavin Sheehan, was only 2½ lengths back at the furlong pole and gaining a bit of ground with every stride.

Al and jockey Jack Doyle closed from the back of the field, but their bid sputtered near the sixteenth pole as 7.90-to-1 Query Horse drew onto Kensington Court's withers. Norris went to work to keep his mount moving forward, and they reached the finish line with a couple inches to spare.

In the evening's opener, Why Not Racing's Jump Ship sailed to the lead in midstretch and won the \$30,000 maiden hurdle by 2¼ lengths.

Trained by Lilith Boucher and ridden by her husband, Richard Boucher, Jump Ship went off as the 3.30-to-1 second betting pick behind Sherry Fenwick's Anticipating, who finished second.



Kensington Court, inside, held off Query Horse at the finish of the ratings handicap.

Coady Photography

Nervous at the start, Jump Ship was well back early as Convivial and then All Out of Aces set the pace with 5-to-2 Anticipating right behind them. Anticipating grabbed the lead on the final turn, but Jump Ship made steady progress on the turn and took the lead before the furlong pole.

The seven-year-old Virginia-bred ran the 2¼-mile distance in 4:04.28 and paid \$8.60 to win.

Gill Johnston's Lost Story finished third, and jockey Jack Doyle claimed foul against Anticipating and Darren Nagle. Lost Story was on the inside entering the stretch, and Anticipating lugged in slightly despite Nagle's left-handed whip.

Doyle pulled Lost Story out of the tight spot and finished 2¼ lengths behind Anticipating. Colonial's stewards disallowed the foul claim.

The coming week's jump races at Colonial will be run on Friday rather than Saturday as originally scheduled. On tap are a \$30,000 maiden hurdle for three- and four-year-olds and a \$20,000 ratings handicap for horses pegged at 110 or lower.

Query Horse returns in the handicap with Doyle to ride. He carries the 158-pound highweight with Taking the Lead Stable's Lead Investor, who is trained by Jonathan Sheppard and ridden by Gerard Galligan.

Lead Investor finished second in an Aug. 17 ratings handicap at this level, and also coming out of that race are Irv Naylor's Av A Word, third; Turks Head Turf's Brooklyn Speights, fourth; Beverly Steinman's Shamsaan, sixth; and Morning Star Farm's Shoreline, seventh.

Competitive field for Saratoga's finale

Saratoga Race Course concludes its 2019 steeplechase season with Wednesday's \$65,000 allowance hurdle. Post time is 12:50 p.m.

Wednesday's allowance hurdle at 2 3/8 miles attracted the second-, third-, and fourth-place finishers from an allowance hurdle dominated by Snap Decision on Aug. 14.

Eve Ledyard's Go Get the Basil, making his first start for Racing Hall of Fame trainer Jonathan Sheppard, finished a game second in the 2 1/16-mile race, a neck in front of Lee Pokoik's homebred Roller Rolls On, who is trained by Doug Fout. Jack Doyle takes over the mount on Go Get the Basil, and Kieran Norris returns aboard Roller Rolls On.

Finishing fourth, 3¼ lengths farther back, was Armata Stables' Zanzi Win, who was making his first U.S. start. The four-year-old is trained by Ricky Hendriks and will be ridden by Michael Mitchell, who remains atop the jockey standings as the summer season nears its conclusion.

Hendriks also will saddle Rosbrian Farm's Teodoro, a 14-length maiden winner at the Fair Hill Races on May 25 in his second U.S. start. He had led in his American debut at Middleburg Spring but jumped erratically before being caught in the stretch and finishing second.

Ross Geraghty returns aboard Teodoro, a five-year-old Irish-bred who won Haydock Park's

Rose of Lancaster Stakes (Eng-Gr. 3) last August.

Sheppard also will be represented by his Hepcat, a maiden winner at Colonial Downs on Aug. 10. Gerard Galligan will ride.

Completing the field are two contenders trained by Kathy Neilson. Gill Johnston's Set to Music finished fifth in a Colonial Downs ratings handicap on Aug. 10, and the trainer's Soluble has strung together three straight second-place finishes over fences after a maiden victory at Aiken Spring on March 23.

Sean McDermott will ride Set to Music, and Graham Watters has the mount on Soluble.



Looking ahead

13 nominated to Colonial's Rouse Stakes

A champion, her winning full sister, and four stakes winners are among the 13 nominees to Colonial Downs' \$50,000 Randolph D. Rouse Stakes on Saturday, Sept. 7.

The 2¼-mile race honors the memory of Virginia horseman Randy Rouse, who was awarded the National Steeplechase Association's F. Ambrose Clark Award for lifetime achievement in 2016 and died the following year at the age of 100.

Owner-trainer F. Hill Parker's Get Ready Set Goes, the novice and female champion in 2016, would be making her first start of the year. She most recently finished fourth in the Iroquois Steeplechase's 2018 Margaret Currey Henley Stakes in May 2018.

Her full sister, Riverdee Stable's four-year-old Snowie Hill, won Colonial's maiden hurdle for fillies and mares on Aug. 17, nosing out KMSN Stable's Inverness, who also was nominated to the Rouse.

Parker trains Snowie Hill, who is named for his late mother, Frances Snowden "Snowie" Hill Myers, the breeder of Get Ready Set Goes. Inverness is trained by Keri Brion.

Carrying the highest NSA rating into the Rouse is The Fields Stable's Sarah Joyce, winner of the 2018 Henley and most recently second in the Fair Hill Races' Iris Coggins Memorial for trainer Elizabeth Voss.

Finishing third in the Coggins on May 25 was Mavourneen, who is owned, trained, and ridden by Bethany Baumgardner.

The Fields Stable's Dawn Wall, another Rouse nominee trained by Voss, won the 2018 Coggins Memorial and was fourth this year.

The top three finishers from Saratoga Race Course's Mrs. Ogden Phipps Stakes on Aug. 7 were nominated to the Rouse. Beverly Steinman's Market Alley won by 3¼ lengths over Joseph Fowler's Down Royal. Miss Steinman's homebred Bullet Star, also trained by Doug

Fout, finished third. Kate Dalton trains Down Royal.

Market Alley had competed in this year's Henley and finished fifth.

Owner-trainer Jonathan Sheppard's Wigwam Baby, winner of this year's Henley by 1¼ lengths over Down Royal, lost her rider when she landed awkwardly in the Mrs. Phipps.

The Racing Hall of Fame trainer also nominated Sherry Fenwick's Forgiving, who finished fourth behind Snowie Hill in the Colonial maiden hurdle.

Irv Naylor's Bercasa was nominated to make her U.S. debut in the Rouse. Now trained by Kathy Neilson, she has three victories in Ireland this year. She won a Galway stakes race, the Tote Account EBF Hurdle, on July 31 with leading jockey Danny Mullins in the saddle.

Ricky Hendriks nominated Debra Kachel's That's That, who finished fifth to Snowie Hill in Colonial's maiden hurdle on Aug. 17.



STEEPLECHASE STANDINGS

THROUGH AUGUST 23



OWNERS BY EARNINGS

	Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Earnings
Bruton Street-US	28	6	6	5	\$328,000
Riverdee Stable	14	3	4	2	204,800
Mrs. S.K. Johnston Jr.	31	7	4	6	204,000
Hudson River Farms	8	2	0	4	199,000
Irvin S. Naylor	38	4	5	6	131,050
Rosbrian Farm	14	3	3	0	110,300
Ballybristol Farm	9	2	2	1	92,250
Sharon E. Sheppard	11	3	2	3	91,150
Irvin L. Crawford II	2	2	0	0	90,000
Beverly R. Steinmsn	20	2	2	3	89,400

JOCKEYS BY WINS

	Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Earnings
Michael Mitchell	53	16	8	5	\$479,600
Sean McDermott	48	9	5	9	356,150
Jack Doyle	51	9	4	5	287,600
Thomas Garner	41	6	3	6	344,300
Willie McCarthy	37	5	7	5	226,900
Richard Boucher	15	4	1	2	73,800
Ross Geraghty	34	3	6	4	167,150
Gerard Galligan	36	3	7	3	157,050
Barry Foley	40	3	4	8	131,850
Hadden Frost	10	3	2	0	72,550

TRAINERS BY WINS

	Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Earnings
Jack Fisher	93	26	16	10	\$983,800
Jonathan Sheppard	49	10	4	7	425,300
Leslie F. Young	27	7	4	4	209,600
Katherine Neilson	37	6	5	5	157,500
Ricky Hendriks	45	5	5	6	178,350
Lilith Boucher	11	4	1	2	72,500
Joseph G. Davies	16	2	2	1	114,700
Doug Fout	26	2	2	5	105,700
Neil R. Morris	22	2	2	5	63,250
Mark Beecher	18	2	1	1	58,700

HORSES BY EARNINGS

	Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Earnings
Winston C	3	2	0	1	\$190,000
Gibralfaro (Ire)	4	1	1	0	99,000
Senior Senator	2	2	0	0	90,000
Scorpiancer (Ire)	2	1	0	0	90,000
Andi'amu (Fr)	2	2	0	0	78,000
Snap Decision	4	2	2	0	71,400
City Dreamer (Ire)	2	1	0	0	65,000
Market Alley	4	2	0	0	60,000
Moscato (Fr)	2	1	0	1	60,000
Sportswear (GB)	3	2	0	0	48,000