



# MONDAY REPORT

A weekly report from the National Steeplechase Association

Monday, September 30, 2019

## Codrington College graduates with victory in Shawan's Legacy Chase

Hudson River Farms' Codrington College took the inside route around Shawan Downs, made a strong move to the lead two fences from home, and held off Dolly Fisher's Schoodic to win the \$25,000 Brown Advisory Legacy Chase by a neck on Saturday.

Armata Stables' Grand Manan, who had alternated with owner-trainer Billy Meister's Dr. K'eogh on the lead for much of the Legacy Chase, finished third, six lengths farther back, in the featured timber race of the 19th annual Shawan Downs Races at Hunt Valley, Md.

Trained by Jonathan Sheppard and ridden by Jack Doyle, Irish-bred Codrington College ran the Legacy Chase's three miles over 17 fences in 6:13 2/5 on firm turf.

Doyle placed Codrington College on the inside and toward the back of the field as Archie Macauley took Meister-trained Grand Manan to the lead at the break, with Dr. K'eogh right behind him and Schoodic moving well in third.

Dr. K'eogh and rider John Brophy took the lead spot as the field passed the finish post for the first time and held that position until he began to tire in the late stages of the timber race. Grand Manan resumed his place at the front of the field, and Schoodic advanced into second position under Hadden Frost.

Codrington College made his move inside the final quarter-mile and hurtled to the lead over the next to last fence. Schoodic continued gamely after the final fence and was gaining ground through the final yards.

### Doyle sweeps Foxfield jump races

Jack Doyle continued his relentless climb up the 2019 jockey standings when he won Foxfield Fall's three hurdle races on Sunday and raised his weekend total to five victories.

Doyle had opened the racing program at Charlottesville, Va., with a victory aboard Gill Johnston's Be Counted in a \$15,000 maiden claiming hurdle for trainer Todd Wyatt.

He then rode KMSN Stable's Inverness to a victory in the \$20,000 maiden hurdle for fillies and mares. Keri Brion trained that winner.



Douglas Lees

*Codrington College jumped to a victory in Shawan Downs' Legacy Chase.*

Doyle pressed his mount to the finish line, and Codrington College held on stubbornly for the narrow victory.

The second-place finish was Schoodic's first defeat over timber fences, and in the Iroquois Steeplechase's Mason Houghland Memorial he

had easily defeated Codrington College, who was third on May 11.

A maiden-claiming winner over hurdles, Codrington College had easily won his maiden start over timber fences at the 2018 Queen's Cup.

### On the inside

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**Go Jump Racing!**



## Races at Shawan Downs

# Pik Em picks off opponents to win ratings handicap

Michael Mitchell, shut out over the summer, returned to the winner's circle on Saturday with a come-from-behind victory aboard Woodslane Farm's Pik Em in Shawan Downs' \$30,000 ratings handicap.

Jack Fisher trained the winner and, combined with Elfitz's victory in the three-year-old hurdle, raised his victory total to 30 for the year, which exceeded his highest annual total of 28 in 2015. The last trainer to win 30 or more races in a season was Sanna Neilson, who had 32 wins in 2005.

Woodslane's Other Cheek set the pace for most of the two-mile race before tiring over the final fences. Owner-trainer Jonathan Sheppard's Hepcat struck to the front before the last, but Pik Em and Mitchell closed stoutly from the outside to grab the victory by a neck over Willow Oaks Stables' Iconic Artist with Jack Doyle in the irons. Hepcat was third, a length farther back.

A five-year-old Tapit gelding, Pik Em ran the ratings handicap's two miles in 3:39 on firm turf.

Pik Em was coming off two disappointing performances at Colonial Downs. He was a well-beaten third in an Aug. 10 ratings handicap as the 9-to-10 favorite and then was sixth at the same level two weeks later.

Mitchell recorded his 17th win of the 2019 season, but he lost ground to Doyle, who had a hot hand over the summer and scored two



Douglas Lees

*Pik Em burst toward the lead past Iconic Artist in Shawan Downs' ratings handicap.*

doubles at Colonial Downs. He doubled again at Shawan with two timber victories.

He won the featured Browning Advisory Legacy Chase aboard Hudson River Farms' Codrington College, and he also rode Ballybristol Farm's Mercoeur to an 11-length win in the maiden timber for trainer Leslie

Young. Young earlier had won the \$30,000 Sport of Kings maiden hurdle with Sharon Sheppard's Khafayya, who set much of the pace under Thomas Garner and drew clear to a seven-length victory.

Young currently is third in the trainer standings with nine wins for the season.

## Schoodic's half brother wins 3-year-old maiden

Six years ago, Edith Dixon's homebred Schoodic reigned as the National Steeplechase Association's champion three-year-old. He went on to become a Grade 2 stakes winner, was Grade 1-placed, and now has transitioned to a successful career over timber fences.

His three-year-old half brother, Elfitz, is now looking to make a name for himself over fences. Making his first jump start for trainer Jack Fisher, Elfitz—also bred by Mrs. Dixon and racing in her silks—set all the pace under Willie McCarthy and won the \$20,000 maiden hurdle for steeplechase racing's youngest competitors by 2¼ lengths.

The owner-breeder is the widow of Fitz Eugene Dixon, the prominent owner and breeder who was the longtime chairman of the Pennsylvania Horse Racing Commission.

Like his older half brother, Elfitz is a strapping and striking-looking competitor. "He's taken well to steeplechasing," McCarthy said.

Elfitz made little impact on the flat for trainer



Douglas Lees

*Edith Dixon's three-year-old Elfitz flew over a fence in his front-running maiden victory.*

Michael Matz. The Congrats gelding out of Aunt Henny, by Hennessy, finished fourth in a Gulfstream Park maiden claimer.

He broke alertly under McCarthy and quickly opened daylight on the remainder of the field. His opponents made up some ground over the

last fences, but he held them safe for a confident victory. He ran the two-mile distance in 3:43 2/5 on firm turf.

Leipers Ford Steeplechasers' Thomas Cubitt made a late run to claim second money, and Debra Kachel's Cotton House was third.

## Steeplechase retirees take on new careers

Quinn Scala led Gill Johnston's Mr. Hot Stuff to the winner's circle after he won the biggest steeplechase race of his career in 2017, and she has continued her relationship with the distinguished Thoroughbred as his trainer for the 2019 Thoroughbred Makeover at the Kentucky Horse Park in Lexington Oct. 2-5.

It takes a special horse to make the transition from the flat tracks to steeplechase racing, and it's certainly a further accomplishment to take up a third career in the show ring or the hunting field.

Among approximately 450 Thoroughbreds transitioning into new competitive careers at the Thoroughbred Makeover are three notable steeplechase competitors: Mr. Hot Stuff, 2015 Eclipse Award winner Dawalan, and Diplomat, also a Grade 1 race winner.

The Thoroughbred Makeover, now in its fifth year in its current format, is a creation of the Retired Racehorse Project, a nonprofit charitable organization that showcases off-track Thoroughbreds who have found new avenues for their talents.

The Thoroughbred Makeover is sponsored by Thoroughbred Charities of America and also includes educational seminars on strategies for helping Thoroughbreds make the transition from the track to new endeavors.

Ten different categories of competition are offered, with horses competing in one or two—Mr. Hot Stuff is entered as a show jumper, Dawalan as a show hunter and dressage competitor, and Diplomat as a show hunter and field hunter. The horses must be in training for their new disciplines.

Champions are selected in each discipline, and then fans vote by text for the overall champion, who is crowned America's Most Wanted Thoroughbred.

Rules for the competition require that the horses raced or had a workout after mid-2017 and began preparations for their new careers no earlier than last December 1.

Multiple careers for steeplechase horses are by no means a new development. Most were on their second careers when racing over fences, and an informal NSA survey in 2016 found that three-quarters of more than 400 retirees were involved in some other sporting activity, led by hunting.

The remaining 23% were retired to pasture. Steeplechase horses train in the country, and they often retire on the same farms where they were trained.

What is novel about the Thoroughbred Makeover is that three winners at the top level of steeplechase racing are competing in new disciplines at the same venue.

Mr. Hot Stuff's greatest moment as a racehorse came on Oct. 21, 2017, when he closed relentlessly after the final fence of the Grand



*Quinn Scala wiped away a tear of joy as she led Gill Johnston's Mr. Hot Stuff and jockey Danny Mullins to the winner's circle after their 2017 Grand National (Gr. 1) victory.*

National (Gr. 1) at the Far Hills Races in New Jersey and prevailed by a nose to win the \$240,000 first-place purse. At age 11, he was the oldest horse in a top-shelf international field.

That big payday lifted him to the National Steeplechase Association's Lonesome Glory Award as the year's leading earner. Trained by Jack Fisher, he raced twice in 2018, concluding with a fourth-place finish in the Calvin Houghland Iroquois (Gr. 1) in Nashville before Mrs. Johnston decided to retire her veteran.

Before his jump-racing career, Mr. Hot Stuff had been competitive enough in flat racing to finish third in the 2009 Santa Anita Derby (Gr. 1) and then run in two of the year's three-year-old classics. He finished 15th in the Kentucky Derby (Gr. 1) and eighth in the Belmont Stakes (Gr. 1) for owner-breeder WinStar Farm.

Acquired by Mrs. Johnston and sent to Fisher in 2011, he turned out to be hot stuff over fences. He won at the top level of competition in 2013 when he traveled to Saratoga Race Course and was victorious in the A. P. Smithwick Memorial (Gr. 1).

He missed the 2014 season to injury, won the 2015 Temple Gwathmey Handicap (Gr. 3), and missed the 2016 season before returning to top form at just the right time for his Grand National victory.

For the latter years of his racing career, his exercise rider was Scala, who also took care of him in Fisher's barn. She transitioned to his trainer over show fences, and they have been competing and learning together this year.

She will be in the saddle when Mr. Hot Stuff undertakes his third competitive career in Lexington. "I'm very excited for Kentucky and am just hoping to go down there and have fun with him," she said. "He's been trying very hard but can still be too excited at times.

"No matter what, he tries his best and usually gets things done when it comes down to competition time, so fingers crossed!" said Scala, who also is a steeplechase jockey and won a race earlier this year.

Like Mr. Hot Stuff, Dawalan won the Grand National. He was imported in mid-2015 by prominent owner Irvin S. Naylor and scored his first U.S. victory in the New Jersey race. Trained by Cyril Murphy, he won the Marion duPont Scott Colonial Cup (Gr. 1) in his next start and was voted the year's Eclipse Award as North America's champion steeplechase horse.

He missed two racing seasons to injury and was retired after a comeback try in 2018. He is in the care of trainer Rosie Allen for his new career at the Thoroughbred Makeover.

Sara Katz, a steeplechase jockey like Scala, is the trainer for Diplomat, who secured his top-level victory with a 17.70-to-1 upset in the 2017 New York Turf Writers Cup Handicap (Gr. 1) at Saratoga.

Then owned by Richard and Adam Newman, Diplomat was trained by Kate Dalton and ridden by Bernie Dalton.

Learn more about the Thoroughbred Makeover and the Retired Racehorse Project at [tbmakeover.org](http://tbmakeover.org).



## Next Up Trials at Shawan

Entries for the Fall Horseman's Invitational Steeplechase Trials will remain open until 5 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 1. The trials, sponsored by the Temple Gwathmey Steeplechase Foundation and Shawan Downs, will be held next Saturday, Oct. 5, at the racecourse in Cockeysville, Md. First post time will be noon.

The day's events will include a hurdle school, and amateur apprentice flat trial, a lat trial, an open flat trial, and a junior flat trial.

Full details of the races and their conditions as well as an online entry form and release forms are available on the Shawan Downs website, [shawandowns.org](http://shawandowns.org).

The trials are supported by a grant from the Maryland Horse Industry Board.



Douglas Lees

Here it comes! Skylar McKenna prepares for the traditional drenching after winning her first race over fences in Shawan Downs' amateur apprentice timber allowance aboard Sally Reed's *It's Nothing*, who is trained by the rider's mother, Kathy Neilson.



# STEEPLECHASE STANDINGS

THROUGH SEPT. 30



OWNERS BY EARNINGS					
	Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Earnings
Bruton Street-US	31	7	6	5	\$379,000
Riverdee Stable	19	4	5	2	247,350
Mrs. S.K. Johnston Jr.	38	9	5	7	242,500
Hudson River Farms	12	4	0	4	241,300
Rosbrian Farm	16	4	3	0	149,300
Irvin S. Naylor	46	4	5	8	145,000
Wendy Hendriks	5	1	2	1	126,900
Sharon E. Sheppard	15	4	3	3	119,050
Ballybristol Farm	12	3	3	1	107,850
Beverly R. Steinman	26	2	3	4	98,500

JOCKEYS BY WINS					
	Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Earnings
Michael Mitchell	63	17	10	6	\$530,150
Jack Doyle	66	16	7	8	433,800
Sean McDermott	57	9	5	10	370,050
Willie McCarthy	42	8	8	5	308,300
Thomas Garner	47	7	4	6	374,000
Ross Geraghty	44	5	7	5	305,650
Richard Boucher	18	5	1	2	93,800
Gerard Galligan	45	4	7	7	198,550
Barry Foley	48	3	5	9	144,950
Hadden Frost	11	3	3	0	77,050

TRAINERS BY WINS					
	Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Earnings
Jack Fisher	110	30	20	11	\$1,137,200
Jonathan Sheppard	68	13	5	11	526,350
Leslie F. Young	37	9	8	4	261,200
Ricky Hendriks	57	7	7	8	329,950
Katherine Neilson	43	7	5	5	167,750
Lilith Boucher	13	5	1	2	90,500
Julie Gomena	42	2	7	5	110,750
Todd Wyatt	20	2	4	4	58,250
Doug Fout	38	2	3	7	123,450
Elizabeth Voss	32	2	3	2	95,250

HORSES BY EARNINGS					
	Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Earnings
Winston C	4	2	0	1	\$197,500
Surprising Soul	3	1	1	0	119,500
Snap Decision	5	3	2	0	116,700
Gibralfaro (Ire)	4	1	1	0	99,000
Scorpiancer (Ire)	3	1	0	0	96,000
Senior Senator	2	2	0	0	90,000
And'amu (Fr)	2	2	0	0	78,000
City Dreamer (Ire)	2	1	0	0	65,000
Hinterland (Fr)	6	0	2	1	62,450
Teodoro (Ire)	3	2	1	0	62,400