



MONDAY REPORT

A weekly report from the National Steeplechase Association

Monday, October 21, 2019

Brain Power powers away in stretch to capture Grand National (Gr. 1) win

On a postcard-perfect autumn Saturday in central New Jersey, east battled west at the Far Hills Race Meeting, the international crossroads where the best of America are challenged by contenders from Ireland, England, and Europe.

For the second straight year, the invaders took home the principal prize, the \$450,000 Grand National (Gr. 1), when Michael Buckley's Brain Power broke loose in Far Hills' stretch and won by 15 lengths.

The American contingent was not by any means shut out, neither in the Grand National nor in Far Hills' other six stakes races, five over fences and one on the flat.

Bruton Street-US, the year's leading owner, had two victories on the afternoon and campaigned the Grand National's second- and third-place finishers, 2017 Eclipse Award winner Scorpiancer and 2017 novice champion Moscato.

While Ireland-based horses were expected to make the biggest splash at Far Hills, England took top honors with Brain Power, who is trained near Lambourn by five-time National Hunt champion trainer Nicky Henderson.

The Kalanisi gelding was coming off National Hunt's traditional summer break in England and arrived in New Jersey as a fresh but not overly eager horse. He had opened his 2018-2019 season with a promising victory in Cheltenham's Unibet International Hurdle in December, but he was pulled up in his two spring starts, the Unibet Champion Hurdle at the Cheltenham Festival and the Scottish Champion Hurdle at Ayr in April.

Despite those results, Brain Power was well supported as the 5.50-to-1 third betting choice behind 17-to-10 Wicklow Brave and 3.60-to-1 Jury Duty, the 2018 Grand National victor.

Hudson River Farms' Iranistan, last year's champion novice but idle since a third-place finish in the 2018 New York Turf Writers Cup (Gr. 1), immediately took up the running under Darren Nagle and led while pressed by Wicklow Brave and Surprising Soul, with Brain Power and jockey Nico de Boinville close behind them.



Tod Marks

Owner Michael Buckley went to the winner's circle with Brain Power and Nico de Boinville.

In midrace, Brain Power supplanted Wendy Hendriks' Lonesome Glory Handicap (Gr. 1) winner Surprising Soul in third, and Iranistan began to tire on the final turn. Wicklow Brave, a top-level winner on the flat and over hurdles, took the lead on the turn, with Brain Power moving up to challenge for the lead.

Wicklow Brave had a clear lead going to the last, but he struck the fence and fell. With no challengers, Brain Power opened an insurmountable lead and widened his advantage to the finish line. Scorpiancer, who scored his second Calvin Houghland Iroquois (Gr. 1) victory in May, held off Moscato by a neck for the place.

De Boinville said that Brain Power moved well over the Far Hills course while completing the Grand National's 2 5/8 miles in 4:55 3/5.

"He jumped very well. He ran very well," De Boinville said. Brain Power paid \$13 to win for a \$2 bet and collected a \$270,000 first-place check.

Wicklow Brave sustained a fracture of his right shoulder and was euthanized.

On the inside

- Jack Fisher sets earnings record with Far Hills haul.....2
- Snap Decision dominates Fox-brook Champion Hurdle.....2
- Timber title on the line in International Gold Cup.....4

Go Jump Racing!





Fisher sets purse record with Far Hills haul

When Bruton Street-US's Scorpiancer and Moscato finished a neck apart in the \$450,000 Grand National (Gr. 1), leading National Steeplechase Association trainer Jack Fisher made history.

Two years earlier, he had broken his single-season earnings record when Gill Johnston's Mr. Hot Stuff won the Grand National. He went on to rack up purses of \$1,321,150 in the 2017 season.

At Saturday's Far Hills Races, he shattered his former record when Scorpiancer and Moscato reached the finish line in second- and third-

place, respectively. Their combined \$126,000 in earnings moved Fisher past his former mark with four weeks of racing remaining in 2019.

Going into the International Gold Cup and Aiken Fall meets next Saturday, Fisher's 2019 purses are just short of \$1.4-million. He is the only trainer to win single-year purses of \$1-million or more, and has done so five times.

Just for good measure, Fisher won the Far Hills nightcap, the \$50,000 Appleton ratings handicap, with Woodslane Farm's Pik Em, who certainly was not the pari-mutuel pick and went off at 24.30-to-1, the longest price on the board.

Fisher's horses rarely go off at such long prices, and Pik Em was coming into the Far Hills race from a victory in a Shawan Downs ratings handicap on Sept. 28.

Michael Mitchell, vying to regain a tie for the 2019 jockey leadership, placed Pik Em at the back of the 12-horse field early before launching a strong drive on the final turn and rolling past the field to win by 3½ lengths over Querry House. Stooshie finished third, three lengths farther back.

Pik Em ran the Appleton's 2 5/8 miles in 5:02 1/5 and paid \$50.60 to win.

Snap Decision pulls away to Foxbrook victory

by Alex Orr, Jr.

As the 2019 racing season began, Bruton Street-US's Snap Decision was a jump-racing newcomer with a substantial pedigree and a less than glorious career on the flat for Hall of Fame trainer Shug McGaughey.

In the homestretch of the 2019 season, the Phipps Stable-bred is fourth on the earnings list after scoring his fourth straight victory in the Far Hills Races' \$100,000 Foxbrook Champion Hurdle on Saturday.

Trained by Jack Fisher and ridden by Willie McCarthy, Snap Decision made a sharp move on Far Hills' final bend, survived a stumble at the last fence, and won by 4¾ lengths over Colvin G. Ryan's Days Without End.

Sheila Williams' and Northwoods Stable's Storm Team, also trained by Fisher, set all the pace in company with Days Without End and finished third, 7¼ lengths farther back.

Sent off as the 2.20-to-1 second betting choice behind 2.10-to-1 Markhan, Snap Decision paid \$6.40 to win after completing the Foxbrook's 2½ miles in 4:42 1/5.

A five-year-old Tapit gelding out of Salute, by Unbridled, Snap Decision had two flat wins for McGaughey and was racing in optional claimers last year. While picking up purse checks, he was unable to win, and it was time for a new career.

He finished second in maiden hurdles before showing that he had mastered the game with a 4½-length victory at Monmouth Park on July 4.

Fisher sent him into an entry-level allowance hurdle at Saratoga Race Course on Aug. 14, and Snap Decision roared to a 38½-length romp under McCarthy. He graduated to the next level with a two-length victory in Belmont Park's William Entenmann Memorial Novice Stakes on Sept. 18.



Bruton Street-US's Pravalaguna and jockey Paul Townend jumped the Peapack's last fence well ahead of Hudson River Farms' Ciboure.

Tod Marks

Pravalaguna dominates Peapack

Bruton Street-US and trainer Willie Mullins decided to scratch Pravalaguna from the Grand National (Gr. 1) and instead ran her in Far Hills' \$75,000 Peapack Stakes for fillies and mares. That move with the dual-entered Pravalaguna was bad news for the eight remaining hopefuls in the 2 1/8-mile Peapack.

Ridden by Paul Townend, the French-bred Pravalaguna briefly ran with Beverly Steinman's Bullet Star and then asserted her dominance on the Far Hills course.

The seven-year-old flowed over the fences effortlessly, turned back a brief challenge from Hudson River Farms' Ciboure, and surged away to an eight-length victory in 3:59 4/5. She went

off as the 9-to-10 favorite and paid \$3.80 to win.

Jonathan Sheppard-trained Ciboure, making her first start in exactly two years, run on well to be second, 3¾ lengths ahead of KMSN Stable's Inverness. Irv Naylor's Bercasa finished fourth, another two lengths back.

Bruton Street-US partner Michael Hankin said Pravalaguna will remain in the United States following her Far Hills victory.

She had shown ability over both hurdles and steeplechase fences in Ireland. In August, she won an allowance hurdle and then came back in September to finish fifth in Listowel's €200,000 Guinness Kerry National Handicap Steeplechase.

Zanzi Win surprises in Harry E. Harris

Before champion Zanjabeel and near-champion Optimus Prime came along, trainer Ricky Hendriks' horses often won at a price.

Sometimes, the price was justified, sometimes not. But the Hendriks horses certainly enriched their backers, especially in big-time races. Rosbrian Farm's Swansea Mile went off at 28.50-to-1 in the 2017 A. P. Smithwick Memorial (Gr. 1) and paid \$59 to win.

As recently as Sept. 19, Wendy Hendriks' Surprising Soul got away at 17.60-to-1 in Belmont Park's Lonesome Glory Handicap (Gr. 1) and paid \$37.20 for a \$2 win bet.

The lesson is that trainer Hendriks' horses can't be ignored, especially when they show up in the paddock shining like a freshly minted half-dollar.

That particular lesson was not learned at the Far Hills Races, where Armata Stables' Zanzi Win went off at 13.50-to-1 in the Harry E. Harris for four-year-olds on Saturday and won by a half-length on the strength of a crafty ride by Jack Doyle. Rosbrian Farm's Caldbeck, also trained by Hendriks, finished second, and Irish invader Emerald Rocket finished third. Zanzi Win ran the Harris' 2 1/8 miles in 4:04 and paid \$29 to win.

Zanzi Win was the fourth betting choice as Gordon Elliott-trained Lethal Steps drained the pari-mutuel pool at even money. Caldbeck, last year's three-year-old champion who had been running on the flat this year, was second choice at 4-to-1.

Zanzi Win came into the Harris from an entry-level Saratoga Race Course allowance hurdle in which he ran into a buzz saw, Teodoro, who won by 33/4 lengths for Rosbrian and trainer Hendriks.

Hudson River Farms' Galway Kid, making his first sanctioned start in the Harris, jumped out to the lead under Darren Nagle, who strangled the pace and had a length lead with Jonathan Sheppard-trained Galway Kid after the first two miles.

Doyle placed Zanzi Win toward the back of the field early and asked for speed on the final turn. Zanzi Win sliced through the field and found the front in the final 50 yards. The blanket finish had the top five finishers separated by only 2 1/2 lengths. Lethal Steps showed little interest and finished eighth, albeit only 6 1/2 lengths behind Zanzi Win.

The Harris was Zanzi Win's third U.S. start. He had won a maiden hurdle for trainer Harry Whittington in England before his private purchase by Armata. Hendriks said Zanzi Win had continued to improve from his second-place finish at Saratoga on Aug. 28.

The Harris was one of two Far Hills races that assumed new structures in 2019. The Harris had been a maiden hurdle last year, the New



Zanzi Win, on right, takes aim on Bodes Well and Markhan (obscured) in Harry Harris.

Tod Marks

Jersey Hunt Cup previously was a timber race that became a \$50,000 stakes race on the flat for 2019.

Irv Naylor's Fearsome proved to be ferocious in the Hunt Cup and also at a price, 14.70-to-1. Trained by Cyril Murphy and ridden by Nagle, Fearsome broke out of the pack at the top of the stretch, led by two lengths at the furlong pole, and won by 1 1/4 lengths over Lael Stables' late-

running Surprise Twist, the 11-to-10 favorite. Beverly Steinman's Deposit finished third in a field of 11.

Fearsome was making his first U.S. start. He had been Group 3-placed at Sandown in August after winning three races on artificial surfaces over the winter. He ran the New Jersey Hunt Cup's 1 1/2 miles in 2:33 4/5 and paid \$31.40 to win.

Global Freedom wins Gladstone

by Alex Orr, Jr.

After shadowing the pacesetters for two miles over 11 fences, Irish jockey Robbie Power called on Rosbrian Farm's Global Freedom and got a winning response to take the \$50,000 Gladstone Stakes by 2 1/2 lengths over Irv Naylor's favored Must See The Doc.

Trained by leading Irish horseman Gordon Elliott, Global Freedom scored his maiden victory in the 2 1/8-mile race for three-year-olds.

Bred by the Niarchos family, Global Freedom was purchased four months ago by George and Mandy Mahoney's Rosbrian operation.

Well backed at 3.70-to-1 despite his winless record coming into Saturday's kickoff race for the 99th annual Fair Hill meet, Global Freedom paid \$9.40 to win. He ran the Gladstone distance in 4:08 1/5 on a course rated as good.

Edith Dixon's Elfitz, a winner at Shawan Downs in September, raced on the lead in company with Debra Katchel's Cotton House, with

Must See The Doc right behind them.

Power kept Global Freedom in midfield and, as he asked Global Freedom to run on the turn, found himself behind a wall of horses at the top of Far Hills' stretch. As Elfitz tired, Global Freedom found a seam, and Power threaded him through it. They corralled Must See The Doc at the final fence and drew clear in the run-in.

Ridden by Thomas Garner, Must See The Doc continued gamely to hold second, 1 1/2 lengths clear of Robert LaPenta's Fast Car.

George Mahoney said he purchased Global Freedom because "he's a smaller horse, and Gordon felt the ground here in America would suit him better than the heavier ground in Ireland."

Power agreed. "He handled the going very well over a course we would call in Ireland good-to-firm," he said. "It's a very safe course."

Global Freedom will now be based with trainer Ricky Hendriks, Mahoney said.



Timber title on line in International Gold Cup

The year's timber championship will be on the line Saturday in the \$75,000 International Gold Cup, the featured timber race at the 36th annual International Gold Cup meet at Great Meadow Race Course in The Plains, Va.

The program also will feature the \$75,000 David L. "Zeke" Ferguson Memorial (Gr. 2) over hurdles. Zanjabeel, the reigning Eclipse Award winner, was nominated to the 2 1/8-mile race.

Also on the program will be the \$40,000 Steeplethon over a course of mixed obstacles. First post time is noon.

The International Gold Cup nominations anticipated a clash between two top contenders for the timber title, Ballybristol Farm's Andi'amu and Dolly Fisher's Schoodic.

Andi'amu is undefeated in three starts this year and twice has triumphed over the Great Meadow course. He won the \$100,000 Virginia Gold Cup in May, and a year earlier he won the Virginia Gold Cup meet's steeplethon.

Trained by Leslie Young, French-bred Andi'amu prepared for the International Gold Cup with the easiest of victories in the National Sporting Library and Museum Cup on Oct. 12.

His regular jockey, Jack Doyle, barely moved his hands, and Andi'amu won by 7/4 lengths over Irv Naylor's Super Saturday, who also was nominated to the 3/2-mile International Gold Cup.

Schoodic, a Grade 2 winner over hurdles, began his timber career this spring with three straight wins, including the Iroquois Steeplechase's Mason Houghland Memorial by 16 3/4 lengths. Trained by Jack Fisher, he sustained his first timber loss in Shawan Downs' Brown Advisory Legacy Chase on Sept. 28 before bouncing back with a length victory in the Genesee Valley Hunt Cup on Oct. 12.

Andi'amu currently leads the timber standings with \$102,000 in 2019 purses, and Schoodic is third with \$64,500. Between them is Senior Senator, the Maryland Hunt Cup winner.

Racing Hall of Fame trainer Jonathan Sheppard nominated Hudson River Farms' Codrington College, who defeated Schoodic by a neck in the Legacy Chase.

Michael A. Smith's Le Chevalier finished second in the Genesee Valley Hunt Cup after second-place finishes behind Andi'amu in the Vir-


ginia Gold Cup and Middleburg Hunt Cup. He was nominated to the International Gold Cup by trainer Julie Gomena.

Zanjabeel, who is owned by Rosbrian Farm and Meadow Run Farm, has been on the sidelines since winning Belmont Park's Lonesome Glory Handicap (Gr. 1) and sewing up the 2018 championship. He also won last year's Calvin Houghland Iroquois (Gr. 1).

The six-year-old was nominated to Far Hills Races' Grand National (Gr. 1), but trainer Ricky Hendriks decided to give his stable star another week before his first start in more than 13 months.


Jack Fisher, who has insurmountable leads in the trainer standings by wins (33) and earnings (a record of nearly \$1.4-million), nominated Riverdee Stable's Gibralfaro and Sonny Via's Hinterland. Gibralfaro finished second in Saratoga Race Course's New York Turf Writers Cup (Gr. 1) on Aug. 22, and Hinterland was second in the Lonesome Glory on Sept. 19.

Irv Naylor's Sempre Medici was nominated for another shot at the 2 1/8-mile Ferguson after finishing second last year.



STEEPLECHASE STANDINGS

THROUGH OCT. 21



OWNERS BY EARNINGS						JOCKEYS BY WINS					
	Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Earnings		Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Earnings
Bruton Street-US	36	9	7	6	\$610,000	Michael Mitchell	72	18	11	9	\$628,450
Michael Buckley	1	1	0	0	270,000	Jack Doyle	76	18	9	8	515,750
Hudson River Farms	16	4	1	4	259,800	Sean McDermott	65	9	7	10	464,150
Riverdee Stable	20	4	5	2	251,350	Willie McCarthy	49	9	8	5	372,800
Mrs. S.K. Johnston Jr.	41	9	5	7	245,550	Thomas Garner	51	7	5	6	404,750
Rosbrian Farm	22	5	4	1	200,800	Ross Geraghty	49	5	7	5	322,000
Irvin S. Naylor	55	4	9	8	180,050	Richard Boucher	20	5	1	2	93,800
Wendy Hendriks	6	1	2	1	140,400	Gerard Galligan	54	4	10	8	228,750
Sharon E. Sheppard	18	4	3	3	138,250	Barry Foley	54	4	5	9	158,450
Ballybristol Farm	15	4	3	1	133,300	Hadden Frost	12	4	3	0	95,050

TRAINERS BY WINS						HORSES BY EARNINGS					
	Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Earnings		Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Earnings
Jack Fisher	125	33	21	14	\$1,394,550	Brain Power (Ire)	1	1	0	0	\$270,000
Jonathan Sheppard	80	15	6	13	577,800	Winston C	4	2	0	1	197,500
Leslie F. Young	52	11	12	6	352,400	Scorpiancer (Ire)	4	1	1	0	177,000
Ricky Hendriks	67	8	8	8	406,550	Snap Decision	6	4	2	0	176,400
Katherine Neilson	49	7	6	5	180,500	Surprising Soul	4	1	1	0	133,000
Lilith Boucher	14	5	1	2	90,500	Moscato (GB)	4	1	0	2	105,000
Neil R. Morris	29	4	2	6	96,750	Andi'amu (Fr)	3	3	0	0	102,000
Mark Beecher	27	3	2	1	74,550	Gibralfaro (Ire)	4	1	1	0	99,000
Julie Gomena	48	2	8	6	118,450	Senior Senator	2	2	0	0	90,000
Doug Fout	46	2	3	7	131,900	City Dreamer (Ire)	4	1	0	0	72,750