



## NATIONAL STEEPLECHASE ASSOCIATION

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### STEWARDS' REPORT

**RACE MEETING:** Middleburg Fall

**DATE:** October 12, 2019

**WEATHER:** overcast

**COURSE CONDITION:** hard  
Compaction: 149  
Moisture: 5/10

**CLERK OF SCALES:** Bill Hair

**STARTER:** Graham Alcock

**STEWARDS:** Tad Zimmerman, Presiding  
Cook Edens  
Sterling Young  
Norm Fraley, Safety

**OFFICIAL ACTIONS:** The Stewards met with the riders at the advertised time.

**First Race:** *L'AIGLE ROYAL* unseated his rider, Alex Leventhal, at the first fence. *BROOKLYN SPEIGHTS* lost his rider, Michael Mitchell, at the sixth fence. Both riders were examined by the Course Physician and cleared to ride.

Darren Nagle, having won the race, did not pull his horse up before the natural brush fence as had been requested in the Jockeys meeting, nor did he make any visible effort to do so. He did remain to the outside of the course as had been directed in the Jockeys meeting. The Stewards called him up after the race and he said it was a very tough horse and suggested that the Stewards might want to try and ride the horse themselves as he was very difficult to hold.

Anne Finney, who was the Assistant Clerk of Scales at the Steward's Stand to weigh the winner, reported that Darren Nagle had to be told three times that the Stewards wished to see him at the top of the stand. She said she was taken aback by his attitude. His repeated response to her was that he had to ride the next race. Eva Smithwick, who was driving the golf cart in which he was seated did not move the golf cart and suggested he get out as the Stewards wanted to see him right away and he eventually presented himself to the Stewards.

After the Seventh Race the Stewards held a hearing with Mr. Nagle to review his behavior. The Stewards made it clear to him that it was not acceptable to ignore the direction of a racing official and that to do so constituted unprofessional behavior and was a violation of the NSA Code of Conduct. They also indicated that his demeanor in his initial interview with the Steward was likewise less than satisfactory. When the Stewards informed Mr. Nagle that he would be fined \$250 for his behavior he became somewhat belligerent, eventually requiring the intervention of the Steward's Secretary to help defuse the situation. The Steward's took note of the fact that this seems to be a repeated pattern of behavior. Having already decided to increase the amount of the fine from what

the Stewards at Foxfield had meted out the week before, the Stewards chose not to further increase the fine based on the continued demonstration of unprofessional behavior. This exercise of forbearance was taken in the expectation that the amount of the fines will continue to increase from week to week if this unprofessional behavior continues.

**Second Race:** *SIR LUCA RICHARD* pulled up two from home and was reported to have tired.

**Third Race:** *WITOR* was selected at random for pre-race testing.

**Fourth Race:** *VIRGINIA ENVY* was pulled up on the back side and was reported to have “run out of gas”.

*STAR GLITTER* was pulled up before the last and was reported to have tired.

*BE SOMEBODY* ducked into a beacon coming down the hill to the finish and unseated his rider, Bryan Cullinane. He was examined by the Course Physician and cleared to ride.

A Steward's Inquiry was announced. A review of the video showed that *BE SOMEBODY* had room to his outside and had ducked into the beacon without any interference or excuse.

**Fifth Race:** *APPOGGIATURA* was pulled up lame two from home and vanned off the course. He was reported to have sustained a low bow to his near fore.

**Sixth Race:** *OVERWHELMING* was pulled up lame after the finish and was vanned off with a reported suspensory injury. It required the intervention of one of the younger and faster moving Stewards as well as the Clerk of the Course, to halt the noticeably lame horse from being led past the crowd and back to the stables.

The Paddock Judges notified the Steward's Secretary that Sean McDermott, aboard *INVOCATION*, had ignored their request to put his horse in numerical order as they circled the paddock. Having gotten a first-hand report from the Paddock Judges, the Stewards held a hearing with Sean McDermott following the eighth race. Mr. McDermott explained that he was in fact able to maneuver himself into numerical order before leaving the paddock, but the horse was a little squirrely and tends to freeze, which he did after getting onto the course. He explained that he was doing the best he could to parade in order and was not able to explain the situation with his horse which is well known to the Starter. The Steward's accepted Mr. McDermott's reasoned explanation and appreciated his professional demeanor. No further action taken.

**Seventh Race:** The Stewards were informed that *SIDNEY'S SONG* was not tattooed or micro-chipped and had been positively identified by means of his physical description. The Horse Identifier informed the trainer, Douglas King, that his horse would need to be tattooed before he would be allowed to start again.

The Stewards were impressed with the performance of Sophie Heinlius, who was riding in her first race under rules.

**Eighth Race:** Prior to the running of the eighth race the Stewards were informed that the seat of Gerard Galligan's breeches was in tatters. They contacted the Clerk of Scales and asked that Mr. Galligan be directed to find a new pair of breeches to wear if he wanted to ride in the last race. Mr. Galligan was able to borrow a pair of breeches and complete his riding assignment.

At some time during the day the Safety Steward had observed a dose syringe in a tack trunk in the stable area. He informed the Stewards, confronted the trainer, and turned the syringe over to the Stewards.

The Stewards met with the trainer, Doug Fout, after the last race. He was apologetic and quick to acknowledge that he understood that a dose syringe was considered contraband and did not belong in the stable area. It did not appear that the dose syringe had been used that day and he indicated that it had been left in the trunk by mistake. He had already spoken to his employee who had packed the trunk and indicated that the mistake would not be repeated. No further action taken.

**OFFICIAL COMMENTS:** The course was in remarkably good condition considering the lack of rain in recent weeks. The year-round planning and effort that goes into putting on this race meet is evident.

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Tad Zimmerman