



NATIONAL STEEPLECHASE ASSOCIATION

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STEWARDS' REPORT

RACE MEETING: Middleburg Spring

DATE: June 13, 2020

WEATHER: Clear

COURSE CONDITION: Good

Compaction: 116

Moisture: 8

CLERK OF SCALES: Bill Hair

STARTER: Sterling Young

STEWARDS: Larry Curtis
Cook Edens
Tad Zimmerman (presiding)

Rug Howard (safety)

OFFICIAL ACTIONS:

Race 1:

SECRET PIC was selected at random for pre-race testing.

There was a Steward's Inquiry. *PONY UP*, ridden by Sara Garland, and *ZANZI WIN*, who finished second, ridden by McLane Hendricks, went off the prescribed course. They honored a beacon early in the race that was only to be honored on the way to the finish. *CONQUEST FALCON*, ridden by Teddy Davies, and *OUT OF THE FIRE*, ridden by Daisy Fenwick, followed them off course and all four finished the race. *ARKADAG*, ridden by Willie McCarthy, was carried off course and promptly pulled up.

The four horses who went off course and continued in the race were disqualified. The Stewards met with the young riders individually and emphasized the risks of going off course and continuing in a race. The riders clearly understood the potential gravity of their errors and were contrite and apologetic. As this was a training flat race and the culprits young and relatively new to racing under rules, no fines were assessed in the expectation that important lessons were learned. Willie McCarthy's was held blameless.

Race 2:

STOOSHIE, *MOTIVATIONAL*, *EVE'S CITY*, and *LAST SHANI* were pulled up and reported to have tired. *LAST SHANI* collapsed and died on his way from the race course to his stable tent. Blood was

drawn and no medications were administered by the Course Veterinarian on the scene. The evidence appeared to suggest a ruptured aorta and the Stewards requested that a necropsy be performed to confirm that suspicion.

Race 3:

Post race samples were collected from the first and second place finishers.

NEW MEMBER and *ZANJABEEL* were pulled up and reported to have tired.

AMSCHEL fell at the third last fence. His rider, Graham Watters was examined by the course physicians. The Stewards asked for confirmation that a concussion screening had been conducted. It had not been and the Stewards made clear that it was essential. The Course Physicians promptly conducted a concussion screening and Graham Watters was cleared to ride.

The Stewards took note of Gerard Galligan's use of the whip on fourth place finisher *IRANISTAN* and asked that he meet with the Stewards at the end of the day.

Race 4:

SHINOBI was pulled up and vanned off the course.

Race 5:

TELEGRAM was pulled up and reported to have tired. *CHETZERON* were pulled up after the incident described below.

STATE OF AFFAIR, *ANOTHER TRY*, and *CHETZERON* were traveling in tight company approaching the apex of the turn towards the last fence. Daren Nagle, aboard *ANOTHER TRY*, had moved up the inside and had established position approaching the beacon. Willie McCarthy, on *STATE OF AFFAIR*, initially had his horse's head to the outside of *CHETZERON*'s quarters approaching the beacon. He had room to his outside, but moved to the inside, which by now was fully occupied by *ANOTHER TRY*. In contact with *ANOTHER TRY* to his inside, *STATE OF AFFAIR* bumped *CHETZERON* from behind, knocking *CHETZERON*'s quarters sideways, and nearly bringing him down. It did not appear that *ANOTHER TRY* had moved out significantly or had any room to spare to his inside. In fact, he brushed the beacon. As a result of the bumping and tight quarters, *STATE OF AFFAIR* lost his footing and fell.

There was a Steward's Inquiry. The Stewards spoke with Daren Nagle, who was to the inside on *ANOTHER TRY*, and Michael Mitchell who was trailing and had a good vantage point. Willie McCarthy was in no condition to give testimony. The Stewards were unable to affix blame for the incident and the race was declared official. After repeated viewings of the video, the Stewards concluded that there was not sufficient evidence to find Daren Nagle guilty of careless or dangerous riding.

Willie McCarthy was unconscious when he was reached by the medical personnel. He regained consciousness and was transported to the Reston Hospital, having suffered a serious concussion. He had significant abrasions on his neck and a cervical collar was used for transport.

Race 6:

SHACKLETON was pulled up and reported to have tired.

Race 7:

THAKAA, *INSIDE THE BOX*, and *SUMMER VOW* were pulled up and reported to have tired.

Race 8:

AWESOME TRACKER, *TWO TO GO*, and *SCHERZO* were pulled up and reported to have tired.

NEVADA fell three fences from home with Graham Watters aboard. Graham Watters was examined by the Course Physicians and cleared to ride.

Race 9:

KEONI and LUCKY SOUL were pulled up and reported to have tired.

IMPOSSIBLE MISSION fell at the last fence with Eric Poretz aboard. He was examined by the Course Physicians and cleared to ride.

Race 10:

HIGHWAY PRINCE, with Graham Watters up missed a beacon and pulled up. The Stewards confirmed with Graham Watters that his horse was rank and his having gone off course was accidental.

RED LIGHT DISTRICT and *MASQUERADER* were pulled up and reported to have tired.

ROYAL DRUMLEE was pulled up lame at the finish and vanned off.

Race 11:

LEMONY BAY, *KATNAP*, and *SOME RESPONSE* were pulled up and reported to have tired.

OFFICIAL COMMENTS:

The lengths that were gone to, and the effort put forth to make the races possible, cannot be overstated. There was strict compliance with the onerous social distancing requirements imposed by the Governor and everyone did their part to pull it off. The President of the NSA collecting the health questionnaires at the front gate check point set the tone for the day.

The race course itself was perfect and the weather was as good as it gets in mid-June.

Despite best efforts to run at 30-minute intervals we fell behind schedule as the day progressed.

The Stewards were made aware of a verbal altercation in the jockey's tent prior to the first race. Tom Foley came to the Steward's after the first race and claimed that he had been threatened by Sean McDermott and that Eric Poretz had been a witness.

After the second race the Stewards met with Tom Foley, Sean McDermott, and Eric Poretz together. Tom Foley repeated his claim that he had been threatened. Sean McDermott stated that Tom Foley had invaded his space in the jockey's tent and denied having threatened him. Eric Poretz testified that he had not heard anything. Apparently the genesis of the dispute has to do with a commercial transaction between Foley and McDermott regarding immigration services.

Tom Foley had contacted the Middleburg Police Department immediately after the incident. At the insistence of Tom Foley, a police report was filed with the Loudoun County Deputy Sheriff who was in attendance and has jurisdiction. She took statements from Foley and Mc Dermott. No action will be taken and her reaction to being asked to take a report was patient bemusement.

The Stewards meet with Gerard Galligan after the last race and reviewed the video of his run from the last fence to the finish in the third race. It was a constructive conversation and he made the point that he was riding for the difference between third and fourth in a race with a significant purse. He correctly noted that a number of the strikes were underhanded and he never double tapped the horse. He acknowledged that perhaps he should not have persisted as long as he had when it became clear that he was not going to improve his position. He made the point that he had never been called up for misuse of the whip and indicated his appreciation for the importance of public perception in not appearing to misuse the whip. No action taken.

Rug Howard reported that Ted Thompson had been late to the paddock for the second race. The Stewards contacted Ted Thompson who was apologetic. He indicated he was making his best effort but had only very inexperienced help to assist in saddling his horse. The Stewards made it clear that it was his responsibility to have the help necessary to get to the paddock on time. He apologized and indicated that it would not happen again. No action taken.

Rug Howard reported that Willie Dowling was not in attendance when the vet arrived to treat his horse for the ninth race. The Steward's Secretary was able to reach him later in the evening and he apologized. The groom who he had instructed to attend to it was green and had failed to follow his direction. He indicated that he would make sure that it would not happen again. No action taken.

Tad Zimmerman