



## NATIONAL STEEPLECHASE ASSOCIATION

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### STEWARDS' REPORT

**RACE MEETING:** Middleburg Fall

**DATE:** October 10, 2020

**WEATHER:** Overcast

**COURSE CONDITION:** Firm

Compaction: 127

Moisture: 7

**CLERK OF SCALES:** Bill Hair

**STARTER:** Graham Alcock

**STEWARDS:** Larry Curtis  
Beale Payne  
Tad Zimmerman

**Sterling Young** (safety)

#### OFFICIAL ACTIONS:

**Race 1:** *ERYX*, ridden by Daren Nagle, did not leave the start.

*OVERDRAWN* was pulled up and reported to have tired.

After the race, Starter Graham Alcock reported to the Stewards that he was partially to blame for a miscommunication that caused Darren Nagle to be unprepared for the start. He was saying "no, no, no" shortly before dropping the flag. The entire field was well positioned to start at the drop of the flag. The Assistant Starter was positioned slightly down the course from the starting point and dropped his flag immediately after the starter dropped his flag. Darren Nagle indicated that he expected a false start and therefore did not break his horse off. There was some discussion of the position of the recall flag relative to the starter not having been sufficiently down the course, and whether the Assistant Starter was expected to exercise independent judgement and ignore the drop of the starter's flag.

The Stewards made it clear to Darren Nagle that he was well positioned and should have started his horse. However, in light of the Starter's testimony, no action was taken.

**Race 2:** *YOU'RE NO BETTER* was pulled up and reported to have tired.

After the race Graham Alcock reported that the riders had requested that the procedure for the recall flag be altered. The recall flag was to remain down, unless the Assistant Starter determined there was a false start, in which case it was to be raised. The Steward's were not comfortable with a

mid-day change in procedure and asked the Starter to start the rest of the races without a recall flag. The Steward's felt that this eliminated possible confusion about who was the ultimate decision maker of whether the race had been started and would help ensure that the riders did not pass the Starter before seeing his flag drop.

**Race 3:** *JUMP SHIP* balked at the start, causing a false start.

*CORKY LEMON* and *NOTJUDGINJUSTSAYIN* were pulled up and reported to have tired.

Ross Geraghty, the rider of second place finisher *REPEAT REAPEAT*, claimed foul against the winner, *BRIANBAKESCOOKIES* for interference on the final turn. The Stewards interviewed both riders and the Patrol Judge in the vicinity. After review of the video the stewards disallowed the claim of foul.

**Race 4:** *ROYAL RUSE* was selected at random for pre-race testing.

*CODRINGTON COTTAGE* lost his rider, Darren Nagle, at the fourth fence.

*STORM TEAM*, with Michael Mitchell aboard, fell at the ninth fence. He was vanned of the course.

The Course Physician examined both riders and cleared them to ride.

**Race 5:** *TELEGRAM* was pulled up and reported to have tired.

There was a Steward's inquiry into an incident going into the final turn. Darren Nagle, aboard second placed *ANOTHER TRY*, and Thomas Garner, the rider of the third placed *RAMBALDI*, both claimed foul against the winner *BICKLEY*, ridden by Michael Mitchell.

The Steward's interviewed the riders and the Patrol Judge in the vicinity. After review of the video, the Steward's found that *BICKLEY* had interfered with *ANOTHER TRY* and *RAMBALDI*, and that this interference had affected the outcome of the race. The Steward's upheld both claims of foul and disqualified Bickley from first and second place. *ANOTHER TRY* was declared the winner, *RAMBALDI* second, and *BICKLEY* third.

Michael Mitchell had testified that this was *BICKLEY*'s first start over fences and that he was still a little green, which showed itself in his having brushed the other horses. The Steward's considered the interference to have been accidental and no penalty was assessed.

**Race 6:** *HAJAJAY*, ridden by Chris Gracie, went over a beacon at the top of the turn on the far side, going off course. The horse was pulled up promptly.

*BRIDGE BUILDER*, and *FULL TIME PARTY* were pulled up and reported to have tired. *JEFFERY G.* was pulled up and reported to have been jumping poorly.

There was a Steward's Inquiry into an incident that occurred at the last fence. The third-place finisher, *MR FINE THREADS*, ridden by Gerard Galligan, collided with the fourth-place finisher, *SATISH*, ridden by Thomas Garner. The Stewards determined that, although *MR. FINE THREADS* had interfered with *SATISH*, it did not affect the order of finish, given the 5¼ lengths that separated the two horses at the finish.

The Steward's interviewed Chris Gracie. Although he reported pressure from his outside, he was a bit uncertain about whether he had room to remain on course. A review of the video was inconclusive. No action taken.

**Race 7:** *WINNER MASSAGOT* was pulled up and reported to have tired.

*SPOILER ALERT*, with Archie Macauley up, fell at the water jump.

Archie Macauley was examined by the course physician and cleared to ride.

**Race 8:** *STAND DOWN*, and *IT'S NOTHING* were pulled up and reported to have tired.

**OFFICIAL COMMENTS:** The course was in wonderful shape. The races ran smoothly and on time. The commitment of the race committee was everywhere evident and they were rewarding with a great day of racing.

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Tad Zimmerman