



National
Steeplechase
Foundation

First Call

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The Newsletter for the Community of Supporters

Advancing American Jump Racing through Opportunity

Appreciation Abounds for the Generosity that Supports Jockey Safety

Recently the National Steeplechase Foundation (NSF) Helmet Replacement Program received an enthusiastic boost, thanks to a generous gift from Elizabeth Carey Gregory, a new member of the NSF Board of Trustees.

With Elizabeth Carey Gregory's 2016 contribution, more jockeys will have assistance with replacing their helmets this year.

"As a new member, I wanted to actively do something, and I chose to tackle the small but important helmet replacement program as my first step. We all know that even if the outside of a helmet looks fine after a fall, hairline fractures or areas of compression occur regularly, which compromise the helmet's future ability to absorb some of the impact from a fall," said Gregory.

While no helmet is concussion-proof, it can help safeguard a jockey from a serious head injury. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) equestrian helmet fact sheet, it is designed "to help protect the rider's brain and head from one serious impact, such as a single fall from a horse." The interior foam crushes on impact but once the foam is compromised, it can no longer shield the head from another impact.

For the first time since the National Steeplechase Association (NSA) made licensed jockeys aware of the NSF Helmet Replacement Program, jockey Willie McCarthy decided to participate this year.

"I would like to thank the NSF for providing this funding. They are looking after us and it's important for us to look after our brains. Helmets are an expensive piece of equipment but the price of a helmet is slight compared to suffering a brain injury," said McCarthy.

A jockey's helmet costs no less than \$225. When he became a professional jockey around 2006, McCarthy made a pact with himself to always find a way to replace his helmet annually and always immediately after incurring a fall from a horse. As McCarthy put it, wear and tear on the helmet is part of the job but a scratch could also

It's a no-brainer to replace your helmet.

head so you need to take care of it.

mean something more serious is simmering inside the helmet.

"You have one



Tod Marks

Willie McCarthy aboard Absolum at the 2016 Middleburg Spring Races

For those who don't replace their helmets when needed, I encourage them to do so," said McCarthy. "The fact that the NSF covers the cost is huge."

An initiative that provides such a tangible benefit to the men and women in the irons is one that needs to be supported year after year. Please consider making a donation to the NSF Helmet Replacement Program for the equivalent of the cost of at least one helmet. Donations are accepted online or by mail.

Together, this is one way supporters provide the means that enable the NSF to help improve safety in American jump racing.

ImPACT Testing

As a donor, you are making it possible for jump racing to be at the forefront of advancing safety.

In recent years professional and amateur sports have woken up to the realities of concussion recognition and treatment. Technology has been the game-changer and thanks to your on-going financial support to the NSF, it has helped jump racing to be a leader in USA horse racing in general.

Head-trauma treatment is more informed due, in part, to ImPACT (Immediate Post-Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing), which measures cognitive function and creates a baseline for future use.

Baseline profiles for jockeys first became a requirement of NSA licensing in 2013, with the NSF paying for each ImPACT test. It may very well improve the treatment jockeys receive after an accident on or off the racecourse and it has likely been the impetus for improving educational outreach.

ImPACT does not diagnose concussion. Instead, through a 25-minute web-based computerized test that the NSA provides remotely at various locations in the USA, a jockey is measured in areas such as attention span, working memory, non-verbal problem

solving and reaction time.

Should a jockey be suspected of having a concussion, the report will be used for comparison. This will help medical personnel prescribe more accurate treatment and gauge the jockey's healing response. Only after a post-concussion physical exam as well as a post-injury ImPACT test that shows no significant change from the baseline report will a jockey be cleared to ride in NSA races.

ImPACT is part of a new health protocol in American jump racing that became possible due to the commitment of former jump jockey and current NSA steward, Gregg Morris, past SOTA President, Kate Dalton, NSA President, Guy Torsilieri, and the entire NSA staff. They credit the incredible guidance they received from Dr. Craig Ferrell who championed head-trauma mitigation in his role as FEI (International Equestrian Federation) medical Chairman and US Equestrian Team physician before his passing in 2011.

ImPACT is used by the NHL, NFL, MLB, WWE, and by some military units and thousands of schools, colleges and universities.



Tod Marks

Robbie Walsh led the rider panel at the recent Jockey Health & Safety Conference

Jockey Inspired

This spring the NSF provided support to the NSA for the 2016 Jockey Health and Safety Conference that took place at the NSA's Fair Hill headquarters in Maryland. All NSA-licensed jockeys were required to attend.

Inspired by the vital role that jockeys play in steeplechase racing, it was time for an event to go beyond race results and touch on the areas that help jockeys to broaden their knowledge, voice and outreach.

The key presentation was by Dr. Vincent Schaller, an ImPACT Certified Physician since 2012 who formed the Mid-Atlantic Concussion Alliance in 2011. The jockey's panel allowed seasoned jockeys to share ideas on communication, remuneration, equipment and appropriate dress and behavior. Other topics included finances and insurance, a stewards panel, video replays and the new Steeplechase Jockeys Association of America.

Details of the conference can be found at www.nationalsteeplechasefoundation.org.

How You Can Make a Difference

A little or a lot can go a long way. Please consider making regular donations and planned gifts so that you and the NSF can take care of the things that guarantee American jump racing's future.

National Steeplechase Foundation (NSF)

400 Fair Hill Drive, Elkton, MD 21921

Donate online at www.nationalsteeplechasefoundation.org

Celebrating Up-and-Comers

Pony races, educational trips, point-to-points, team chases, amateur races and sanctioned race opportunities for less experienced jockeys – these are some of the steps that help riders develop, and quite possibly may help reverse the decline of jockeys and trainers in jump racing.

The NSF is committed to supporting opportunities that help youth and amateurs learn the required skills of the sport but with your help more could be done to create a pathway from pony riding to professionals.

This year donor-specific funds will enable steeplechase trips in the U.S. and Ireland for a handful of young riders. This spring NSF provided amateur purse supplements at My Lady's Manor, Grand National Steeplechase, Winterthur Races and Willowdale Steeplechase and grants to the Maryland Junior Hunt Cup, Amateur Riders Club of America (ARCA) and the Virginia Point-to-Point Association.



Regina Welsh



Robert Keller



Robert Keller

Clockwise from top left:

Riding out in Ireland, 2015 NSF International Young Rider Trip participants

2011 Domestic Young Rider Trip participant Eric Poretz won the 2016 Maryland Hunt Cup with Senior Senator



Tod Marks



Tod Marks

2009 Domestic Young Rider Trip participant Gustav Dahl won this year's Virginia Gold Cup aboard Ebanour

2007 Domestic Young Rider Trip participant McLane Hendriks won the 2016 Middletown Cup Amateur Training Flat at Winterthur Races with Tempt Me Alex

ARCA alum Annie Yeager won the 2015 Vicmead Plate Amateur Apprentice Timber at Winterthur

Pony racing at this year's Green Spring Point-to-Point, held at Shawan Downs, Maryland



Tod Marks

Steeplechase Symposium and Auction Held to Benefit the NSF



The National Steeplechase Symposium and Auction was held April 10 at Great Meadow Racecourse in northern Virginia with

the purpose of helping grow horse and human participation in American jump racing.

The symposium portion featured a panel discussion that was geared towards newcomers. The auction sold seven horses with the novice stakes winner, Selection Sunday, topping the sale at \$44,000.

It was the second held by the National Steeplechase Association (NSA) Promotion & Growth Committee, which is chaired by Al Griffin.

Although a beneficiary of this year's event, the NSF provides financial support to many of the committee's activities. It will host the "Go Jump Racing Tent" in the Saratoga Paddock in August with the purpose of promoting steeplechase racing to the flat community attending the Saratoga meet.

The NSF provides other funding support to the NSA, primarily in the area of safety. It will fund this year's portion of Virginia Tech's steeplechase safety study as well as the drug testing of horses at NSA-sanctioned race meets.

For more information about the NSA, visit www.gojump racing.com.

Tod Marks



Rawnag's Big Win

Both in the U.S. to contest the big race, Shanshill and Nichols Canyon were edged out by Rawnag in the \$200,000 Calvin Houghland Iroquois in Tennessee recently. It qualified him to compete for the \$500,000 Brown Advisory Cheltenham-Iroquois Challenge bonus awarded to a horse who wins the Iroquois and the Ryanair World Hurdle in a 12-month period. "I think this horse will represent the United States well in England next year," said owner Irv Naylor after the win.

A horse gallops with his lungs, perseveres with his heart, and wins with his character. - *Tesio*



James Piper shows his pride in Dreamin Fool after a win at the Aiken Spring Races

Thank you for helping preserve the enjoyment and all of the good that American jump racing gives back to its participants and to all of the communities and causes that benefit. The NSF works to ensure the sport's longevity by raising and allocating funding for initiatives that focus on safety, education, amateurism and promotion.

Tod Marks

Give now Give later Fundraise Volunteer

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Donate by mail or online at www.nationalsteeplechasefoundation.org

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