

Maryland Horse

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D.M. Smithwick: A study in determination

*Steeplechase rider, trainer and mentor is
"Maryland Horseman of Year"*

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by Laurel Scott Duncan

Each year the Maryland Horse Council recognizes a professional who has had an outstanding career in the Maryland horse industry. Presented at the annual Maryland Horsemen's Party (a fundraiser for the Maryland 4-H Foundation and the Maryland Horse Council), the recognition is designed to inspire young people to wed their love of horses with their career choice—that it can be done.

He's been called a master of style and technique, and a trainer of both horses and men. Indeed, after 50-odd years in the business, D.M. (Mikey) Smithwick—Maryland's Horseman of the Year—is a hard act to follow.

Long before steeplechasing was a lucrative endeavor, this remarkable man made the sport his livelihood and greatness his goal. He also took the time to mentor countless equestrians—many of whom have gone on to greatness of

continued on page 2



Mikey Smithwick's charm and charisma are captured at a glance in photographer Skip Ball's classic portrait from the '70s.

SKIP BALL

their own. And he's done it all with a charisma and a devilish sense of humor that are hard to resist.

"He was a hero to a whole lot of us [as children]," said Pennsylvanian Louis (Paddy) Neilson III, a timber rider-turned-trainer with three Maryland Hunt Cup victories to his credit. "And the images that were formed so many, many years ago haven't been tarnished."

Joe Gillet, who won the Hunt Cup in 1998 and 2000, agrees wholeheartedly. "He is generous to a fault, and will hire any kid willing to work," Gillet noted. "And he will give his absolute all to train any horse—from an old timber horse with three bows to a former graded stakes winner—giving every person and horse he comes in contact with the benefit of all his incredible experience and talent."

He got it honest

Since time immemorial, Marylanders have assembled on hillsides to watch horse races over brush and timber. As organized foxhunting grew, so did the popularity of steeplechasing. Yet for years, a steeplechaser's only reward was a silver trophy and a moment's glory on this "pots and pans" circuit.

Enter Daniel Michael Smithwick who, like many career horsemen, "got it honest." Mikey's Irish-born father Alfred hunted hounds for the Elkridge-Harford, while his mother, the former Emma Warner of Baltimore, was an avid equestrienne. Riding came as naturally as breathing for Mikey and his older brother, Alfred Patrick (Paddy). And there was never any doubt that horses would be their life's work.

"But it wasn't pushed on us at all," Mikey Smithwick said. "And that's probably why we did it."

By the time Mikey was 12, his family had moved to a small farm near Hydes that would later become the nucleus of his training establishment.

It was a romantic era in equestrian sport—an era of great patrons, dashing young horsemen, and high-society balls—and the racing bug bit both Smithwick boys early. As a youngster, Mikey watched local steeplechases from a vantage point calculated to yield the most thrills.

"Peter Winants, Eddie Voss and my brother and I would go to the races and stand where we thought they'd fall. It might even be an older friend of ours [who fell there]. Can you imagine?" he said, laughing.

When Paddy started riding races at the old Bel Air track, the die was cast, and little brother Mikey followed suit.

Hunt Cup to Hall of Fame

One of the most influential operations in the history of steeplechasing, Smithwick Stables started with two brothers, a handful of horses and the family farm. Thanks to their father, Paddy and Mikey were already experienced at training equines of all sorts—even draft horses for local farmers. "For friends, we'd take a pony that was stopping or something, and he'd watch us and help us," Mikey said. "So we just picked it up."

Blessed with heavenly hands and a lighter build than Mikey, Paddy became a top steeplechase rider who won five national titles between 1950 and 1962. Though he died in 1973, the elder Smithwick brother is memorialized in racing's Hall of Fame, and still ranks second on the all-time leading riders list. Today, one of the most important steeplechases at New York's Saratoga Race Course carries his name.

Mikey rode his share of races, too, specializing in timber as he got older because the weights were more forgiving. Unlike many of his contemporaries, he escaped serious injury while competing between the flags. And, with mounts such as Pine Pep, he became the country's top amateur rider "over the sticks."



JAYSZMANSKI



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From top: A pre-race strategy-planning session with rider Joe Aitcheson; conference with a major client, Mrs. Ogden Phipps (1974); some words of wisdom for son Speedy; leading Bon Nouvel through the gates at Auteuil race course in 1968.



SKIP BALL



NEENA EWING

Mikey in action, clockwise from top left: Schooling over a simulated water jump; with champion Top Bid on lunge line; taking multiple stakes winner Uncle Edwin out for a spin; aboard a lead pony at the 1980 Howard County point-to-point races.

Noted for his keen eye, cool head and razor-sharp instincts, Mikey also became the foremost authority on the timber race to end all timber races, the grueling Maryland Hunt Cup. He won the Hunt Cup six times—a record that stands to this day.

"It was a challenge, those bigger [Hunt Cup] fences; you've got to know what you're doing," he said. "If you had a horse that you knew well, and was well-schooled—and if you could coordinate everything—it was fun."

Mikey considered all the variables, whether it was a dip in the ground or a low-hanging tree bough. He always had a plan, and saving ground was key.

He remembers walking the Hunt Cup course with his good friend Benjamin (Lad-

die) Murray, a Korean War hero who won the 1955 Hunt Cup aboard Land's Corner. Together, the two of them would hash out the best route.

"We'd fight and argue about it—whether we wanted to stay out here at this fence and then come in, or things like that," he recalled.

By 1960, the Hunt Cup was almost routine for Mikey. So no one was surprised when he emerged from semi-retirement to ride Fluctuate in that year's event. He did it largely as a favor to his old pupil Crompton (Tommy) Smith Jr., who had ridden Fluctuate to victory in the 1959 Hunt Cup—upsetting Mikey and his own mount, Golden Fly. Injury had prevented Smith from attempting a double, so his mentor came to mind.

The result was Mikey's final Hunt Cup win as a rider.

"I had stopped riding [races], but it was like an afternoon off for me," he remembered.

"Bobby Fenwick was training, so I didn't have to worry about going to the barn and telling them to bring the horses, or any of that. . . I just went over, rode and had a good time! Fluctuate was a good horse, and a good horse makes it feel good," he explained.

There was nothing in the world like the Smithwick style. As Mikey's lifelong friend Peter Winants observed in his book *Steeplechasing: A Complete History of the Sport in North America*: "To me, there was no greater thrill in racing than to see Mikey place a horse into the huge third fence in the Maryland Hunt Cup. What timing, what skill. . ."

But the constant need to reduce was difficult for some-

one of Mikey's physical stature. Eventually, he was forced to hang up his tack and hang out his shingle as a public trainer.

Today, Mikey recalls his early years as a trainer with a certain wistfulness. "For four or five years, we only had four or five horses," he remarked. "But they got so they were winning, and that's how we got going. . . with lesser horses and smaller purses.

"But we'd been winning; and people noticed it."

With Paddy riding for him, all things seemed possible—even with nondescript race track rejects. "Horses that weren't any good on the flat—sometimes if you jump them, they might go well," he explained. "The distance and the grass would make a difference, you see."

By the late 1950s, Mikey had attracted good owners such as Mrs. A.C. Randolph of Virginia and Mrs. Ogden Phipps of New York. "I had the BEST owners," he reflected.

With good owners came good horses—the likes of Neji, Ancestor, Bon Nouvel, Mako, Top Bid and Straight and True—all horses of the year at least once.

During his halcyon years, Mikey collected 10 "races-won" titles and a dozen "money-won" championships. Three of his most celebrated trainees—Neji, Bon Nouvel and Jay Trump—ended up in racing's Hall of Fame. In 1971, Mikey was inducted into the Hall of Fame as a steeplechase trainer. Today, he ranks fifth in all-time career earnings behind trainers Jonathan Sheppard, Janet Elliot, F. Bruce Miller and Burley Cocks.

Passing it on

It is often said that in American steeplechasing, "all roads lead back" to the late W. Burling (Burley) Cocks, the dean of American steeplechasing and a member of racing's Hall of Fame. From his home base near Unionville, Pa., Cocks influenced not only the Smithwick brothers, but top steeplechase trainer Jonathan

Sheppard, trainers Thomas Skiffington Jr. and Billy Turner (of Seattle Slew fame), Willard C. (Mike) Freeman, trainer of two-time champion mare Shuvee, and noted jockeys Doug Small Jr., Charlie and John Cushman, Ricky Hendriks and James (Chuck) Lawrence II.

Today, much the same can be said of Mikey Smithwick.

What he didn't learn from his family, the astute young horseman gleaned from Joseph Flanagan, who bred Hall of Fame steeplechaser Elkridge; and his "idol," Sidney Watters Jr., who found both Smithwicks "... a lot of rides." But Mikey was first and foremost a "Burley" protégé. "My first association with Burley was a mare, and she fell," he recalled. "But he taught me a lot. He was very fair; he'd take time with you and help you. He was riding himself in those days, and he'd say, 'Here, I'll show you.'

"It was fun; you felt like you were getting something done. And every horse, he always tried to make it better."

Mikey has continued that gracious tradition, passing a lifetime of lessons on to future generations. The list of people who have benefited from his teachings would fill a book, and includes some notable professionals who dedicated their lives to horses.

Crompton (Tommy) Smith Jr. perfected his race-riding technique under Smithwick. Besides winning five Hunt Cups of his own, he and Jay Trump—his mount in three of those victorious trips—became the first American pair to win the English Grand National in 1965. Then there was hard-knocking Joe Aitcheson Jr., who jump-started his professional career under "Team Smithwick" and became steeplechasing's all-time leading rider. And two-time champion Tommy Walsh, whom Mikey called "... my type of rider, a very intriguing and inspiring rider."

The late show jumping star Frances Rowe was a "Smithwick scholar." So was the amazing Kathy Kusner (the first woman to ride in the

Maryland Hunt Cup, Kusner mounted a successful legal case in 1968 to become the country's first licensed female jockey). She was also a noted USET Olympic rider who is now, like Rowe, in the Show Jumping Hall of Fame.

The list goes on to include Hunt Cup celebrities Gene Weymouth, Turney McKnight, Paddy Neilson, Billy Meister, Jack Fisher, Patrick Worrall, Joe Gillet and Michael Elmore.

Alicia Murphy, trainer of the 1990 and 2001 timber champions, reportedly worked for Mikey at one time. The late Jonathan Kiser, a two-time champion jump jockey, frequented the Smithwick farm as a child. And there are countless more—like leading steeplechase trainer Tom Voss and top Irish rider Paul Carberry (a cousin of Mikey's)—who spent quality time with the master.

Mikey's two sons with Dorothy Smithwick, an accomplished trainer in her own right, are further proof of their father's talent. D. Michael (Speedy) Smithwick Jr. is a noted flat trainer in Kentucky, while Roger works at Maryland's Fair Hill Training Center. And Mikey's nephew, A. Patrick Smithwick Jr., recently returned to steeplechasing after years away from the sport.

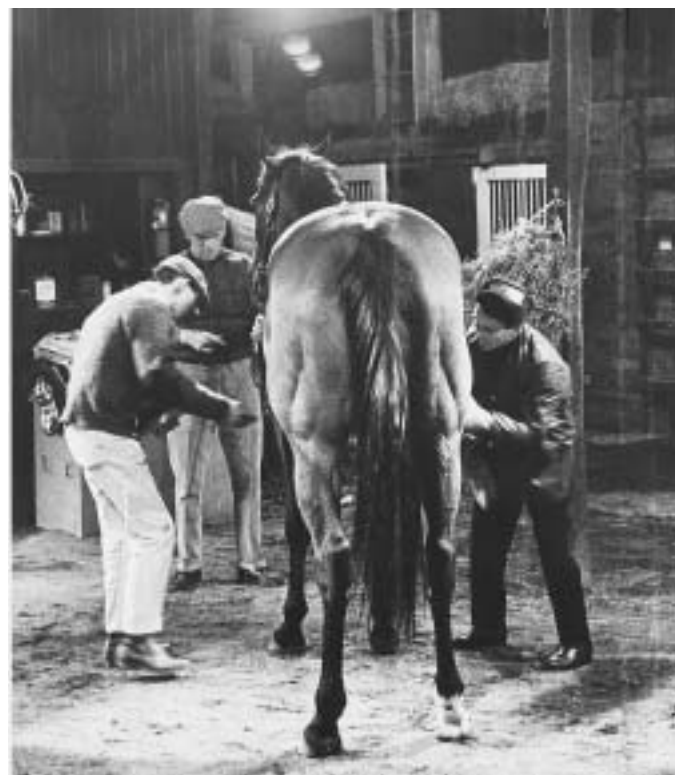
Mikey remembers each of his pupils with fondness. He considers Mike Elmore and Joe Gillet particularly adept at riding big fences. "There's an art to it," he explained. Billy Meister he calls "fearless," while Paddy Neilson he praised as a "good guy, with beautiful form; a good rider."

Young Turney McKnight's perseverance with one particularly tricky project still makes Mikey chuckle. "He went up the hill, went about a sixteenth of a mile, and the horse shied, whirled and got Turney off. Now, Turney had seen this all year. . . he'd do it and then he wouldn't do it, if the rider could keep him straight.

"So he comes back into the barn a little mad, and gets back on him, goes up the hill to the same spot, and the



WINANTIS BROS.



WINANTIS BROS.

The Smithwick farm in Hydes, Md., has been a spawning ground for champions, both equine and human. Grooms (on either side) receive instructions on the care of Jay Trump.

horse does it again—two times in a day! But he turned into a real good hunter for him."

A cheering section for life

Mikey's students paint a vivid picture of his talent and compassion.

As a child, Paddy Neilson rode ponies for Mikey prior to competing in junior races. "Mikey was always very interested in that kind of stuff with the kids," he said. "And there were about 10 of us who

carried tack for him at the Maryland races.

"In those days, you had to have a paddock pass, and they wouldn't let little kids in. So [the oldest boy] would be in charge of Mikey's tack bag, and he would portion out a saddle, a stick, a girth, another girth, and a lead pad to all of us. We would all walk though, following Mikey with a piece of tack. . . and then we'd be in the paddock, and we'd formed a cheering section for life!



In classic Smithwick style, clockwise from top left: Leading a horse to the post in the 1970s or '80s; seated atop a Hunt Cup fence, describing the intricacies of the course (1978); schooling before a crowd (1968).

"As we grew up, a lot of us—including Jay Griswold and myself—would work for Mikey from time to time. That was always the highlight of our year. He helped form the basic frame of reference for a ton of people. . . there are things he taught me to do, like school horses, that are now second nature."

California businessman Joe Gillet grew up in Maryland hunt country, and remembers Mikey well. "Mikey was always an inspiration to me," he recalled. "I remember when I was a kid out hunting on my little common pony, Boodles, Mikey would circle around behind me and anyone else who had trouble getting over a fence and crack a whip to get us over it. If necessary, he'd get on your horse."

In later years, Mikey helped Gillet prepare for bigger things. "He always took

the time to help young riders with fascinating clarity," he continued. "He told me before I rode in my first Maryland Hunt Cup exactly how to ride every fence. Things like 'You gotta ride aggressively at the 12th to get set up for the 13th. If you take back going to the 12th, you can count on a very bad fence at 13, which would likely end you up on the floor, see.'

"I only disregarded his advice one time, and sure enough, I ended up on the floor over 13!"

Steeplechase riders aren't Mikey's only fans. Just ask USET veteran show jumper Lynn Little of Maryland, who worked for Mikey after college.

"Those three years were the most influential time in my career," she said. "He really helped make my career what it is today."

She remembers everything from Mikey's attention to legs ("He can keep an old horse going until they're practically dead of old age") to his capacity for work ("He is THE hardest worker—bar none—that I've ever known in my life!")

"People who work and ride with him all come away with so much," she continued. "Where they want to go with it is their own decision, but they come away being better horsemen."

Although she rode a few flat races, Little always knew she'd make her living with show jumpers. "Mikey has a huge part in everything I think in a day, with all the horses that I both buy and train," she said.

"Like knowing when a horse is going a little off, and instinctively knowing when to let up on them.

"Mikey even gave me a horse named Midsprite, who became my first grand-prix horse, Port. He'd gotten hurt, and was pretty much done with his racing career. I won five grand-prixes on him."

Over the years, Little has sent Mikey "truckloads" of homebred babies to break. "The man is an absolute genius; it was such a privilege to spend that time with him," she reflected. "[Fellow jumper rider] Frances Rowe once said there was no greater horseman than Mike Smithwick, and I have to agree with her."

Mikey's love for children continues to this day. He can often be found on his trademark pony, judging youngsters in a mock show or lining them up for an impromptu race. Son Speedy's two children are their grandfather's pride and joy. And a friend's 3-year-old granddaughter is taking lessons from him this year. "You never know; one of them might make a rider!" he said, laughing.

More owners; more horses

Mikey's work ethic is as legendary as his way with horses. At 72, he still rises at 5 every morning and works until dark, even breaking numer-

ous yearlings. A perfectionist with a strong sense of discipline, he doesn't have the word "vacation" in his vocabulary. But he doesn't ask any more of his help than he does of himself—and his dedication puts even the most ardent "bug boy" to shame.

Located in Elkridge-Harford territory, the Smithwick farm is nearly 200 acres worth of rolling fields and trail-laced woods, with a comfortable barn and schooling fences as far as the eye can see. "We used to have to go somewhere else and school over people's fences, but I got tired of that," Mikey explained. "So once we started buying more land, we started building jumps. . . and I've been doing that for 50 years!"

At a time when many 'chase folk trained primarily on the track, Mikey spearheaded a shift towards more "natural" methods. He advocates lots of turnout, as well as cross-country work up and down hills, over logs and through the woods. Add a few trips to the track, and the result is a well-balanced steeplechaser. Today, every top 'chaser trainer uses these methods—right down to the portable paddocks they haul to the race track.

The motivation behind such methods was simple. "We used to get a lot of crazy horses, and we spent a lot of time trying to make them relax," Mikey explained. "We even hunted the hurdle horses a bit; it's all right, if you're careful."

Mikey has also mastered the business side of training. At the moment, a stable that once boasted some 40-odd horses houses 25 or so, somewhat more than his break-even figure. But maintaining a steady supply of horses is a perennial challenge, and one that every trainer faces periodically.

"You have to get owners to send you more horses, and that keeps you going," he explained. "You might be able to do better with 20 horses than with 40, but we've had all sorts—and some might not be



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Legions of children have learned from Mikey. Even today, the master can often be found on his trademark pony, judging youngsters in a mock show or lining them up for an impromptu race.

able to run for a year, while you're fooling with them."

The worst times are when a horse ". . . doesn't run any good," or comes up lame. But Mikey never lets adversity get him down. "Whereas another trainer might say, 'Well, the heck with it!' and walk away, Mikey just keeps on going and works harder," said his long-time assistant Alex White. "He's sort of unflappable that way. . . and that's probably one of the reasons that he's been around as long as he has."

Hope springs eternal

What keeps this amazing man coming back for more? The memory of a good horse, he said, and the hope of finding another.

Mrs. Randolph's Bon Nouvel was possibly the best he's ever trained. A three-time steeplechase champion, the homebred was easy enough to work with but virtually unrateable in a race. "He was big, and so fast—he'd go to the front going to the first fence, open up by 20, and just stay there; they couldn't get to him," Mikey said. "Everybody thought he was going to stop, but he never did. That was quite a thrill, and he was breaking track records each time."

Mrs. Ogden Phipps's Neji was another class act. A full brother to Mongo, he set a new earnings record and won the 1957 Temple Gwathmey

and the 1958 Grand National carrying an unheard-of 173 pounds. He was also a three-time national champion, winning two of those honors while trained by Mikey.

And who can forget the immortal Jay Trump, the former Charles Town "rogue" who rose to international prominence under Tommy Smith? Though started by Smith and Bobby Fenwick, he was trained by Mikey in 1964, the year he swept Maryland's Triple Crown of timber racing; and in 1966, when he won his third Hunt Cup.

And there are many others, for example the filly Princess Pout. Though she'd shown little in the past, she blossomed under Mikey. Her crowning achievement came in 1971, when she won the \$106,400 Benjamin F. Lindheimer at Chicago's Arlington Park. As her trainer noted, "She was the only filly in the race!"

As a broodmare, Princess Pout produced European classic champion Alleged.

But the veteran trainer is hard pressed to name a favorite. "There have been so many—and every one of them I liked," he said. "I don't like anybody to ever say, 'That horse is no account.' Maybe it's something you're doing wrong, you know? And we've had so many who [started as] nothing, but turned out to be good horses."

Mikey undertakes such challenges with relish, using a

quiet and gentle approach. "When we'd get a rogue—a horse that would run out at a fence or something like that—we'd get him straightened out, and that was always a thrill, if he'd get good and win," he said.

No one knows this more than Joe Gillet. "Mikey's passion to make each and every horse the best it could ever be always kept him from monetizing his talents," he said. "[He] would happily spend a whole year making a \$5,000 rogue hunter into a \$10,000 ladies' conveyance."

One incident in particular sticks in Gillet's mind: "I can remember him schooling a horse for my parents that had gotten sour and wouldn't jump a cross pole. After one week, Mikey had that horse jumping a five-foot iron gate back and forth off of Hutchins Mill Road," he said.

"The whole time, Mikey—always in a soft tweed cap with a cigarette hanging out of the side of his mouth—would be chatting away as though completing this Herculean act was no more difficult than walking down the road."

Lynn Little agrees. "Mikey thinks like a horse!" she said. "By the time they're done, the horses WANT to do it. They start to think they can do it, and they start to enjoy their jobs. . . that's an incredible asset."

"He also starts all his 2-year-olds over little jumps, so

they learn to think, and they learn to listen. So by the time they get to the races, you have a lot more control over the situation.

"In this day and age, people want fast results and quick fixes," she continued. "Mikey might choose not to run or use a 2-year-old as much [as another trainer], and maybe they don't get those quick results, but they'll have a horse that will continually produce for a long time. That kind of horseman they don't make anymore."

The future

Like many veteran sportsmen, Mikey feels that steeplechasing is not as friendly as it used to be. "Years ago, you knew everybody running horses; and you were glad to see the other guy win if you didn't win. I think they were a little bit better sports then," he reflected.

One thing never changes, however: the quest for riders, owners and horses who will keep the tradition alive. There's no easy solution to this problem, and Mikey bemoans the loss of potential horsemen to other, less labor-

Maryland's top 20 earners in 2002

(through March 2)

1. Magic Weisner . . . \$81,000
2. Paloma Parilla . . . 61,200
3. For Love and Honor . 55,200
4. Rosthern 48,000
5. Case of the Blues . . 45,000
6. Montelena 42,000
7. Fair Count 38,140
8. My Request 38,000
9. Beware Avalanche . 36,000
- Bronze Abe 36,000
11. Root With Style . . . 34,080
12. Ready 33,660
13. Crossing Denali . . . 33,630
- The White Sun 33,630
15. Lightning Paces . . . 32,520
16. Deer Run 30,780
- Hunter B. 30,780
18. Really Irish 30,000
19. Pickupspeed 29,610
20. First Amendment . . 29,580

intensive sports such as motorbike racing.

Yet the incentive is greater than ever. "Steeplechasing has come a long way—they're putting up good money now," he noted. "But there's still a shortage of horses. Owners won't buy them, and I don't know why.

"It's those people in the cars watching the races; if every fifth one would buy a horse, it would help the game—the purses would be bigger, and there would be more racing."

His advice for the aspiring trainer: acquire and cultivate good owners.

"You have to break through and win a couple of races, and they'll get to know you," he said. "But it's very hard getting started that way. . . and if trainers don't want to deal with the owners, they'll just go somewhere else."

People find Mikey charming, and the "Smithwick mystique" has no doubt helped attract owners. "He can communicate with horses, but he's

very good with people too," Paddy Neilson pointed out. "Every day I've spent training race horses, I look in awe at what he's been able to get done. Just trying to make a living training race horses is a daunting task, and he's been able to do it for years and years."

That charm may well be in the blood. Consider Mikey's son Speedy, who broke into the business as a steeplechase rider but eventually turned to training. Like any other new

trainer, he had to start somewhere. "There were a couple of owners that I'd had who'd gotten out of the game, and he talked them into coming back," Mikey recalled with pride.

Not many people have followed their heart's desire with such success.

Indeed, Mikey has enjoyed his life with horses and has no plans to retire.

"I've had plenty of failures, but I have no real regrets, and I'd do it again," he said. ♣

"Reunion" for winning Hunt Cup riders



CAPPY JACKSON

It was one of the most remarkable meets in Maryland foxhunting history: 14 winning Maryland Hunt Cup riders and four of the nation's leading timber horses took to the field for the annual Green Spring Valley-Elkridge Harford joint meet on December 15 at Andor Farm.

Famed participants included 1995 and '97 Hunt Cup winner Buck Jakes, ridden by

five-time Hunt Cup winner Charlie Fenwick; 2000 Hunt Cup winner Swayo, with Joe Gillet aboard; Saluter, six-time winner of the Virginia Gold Cup, with regular pilot Jack Fisher; and 1999 Hunt Cup winner Welter Weight, ridden by his owner Ben Griswold.

The "reunion" celebrated, among other things, steeplechasing's close connection with foxhunting. ♣

Winning Maryland Hunt Cup riders (with years of victory): John R.S. Fisher ('69, '71), Frank A. Bonsal Jr. ('56), Russell B. Jones Jr. ('75), Charles C. Fenwick Jr. ('77, '78, '79, '83, '87), H. Turney McKnight ('82), D. Michael Smithwick ('48, '49, '50, '52, '54, '60), J.W.Y. Martin Jr. ('72), Joseph D. Gillet ('98, '00), Elizabeth P. McKnight ('86), John M. Bosley ('85), Jack Fisher ('94), William Meister ('88, '90, '96), Green Spring whipper-in Stephen Farrin, Michael Elmore ('99), Louis Neilson III ('74, '89), Green Spring huntsman John Tabachka.

Benders named Breeder of Year; Illeria, Allen's Prospect also honored

Breeder of the year

Represented as breeders by a remarkable six stakes winners (the most for any Maryland breeder in 2001), Sondra and Howard M. Bender were named Maryland's breeder of the year.

The Benders, residents of Bethesda and co-owners of Glade Valley Farms near Frederick, had a banner season as the breeders of Buenos Dias (Pennsylvania Governor's Cup H), Cruise Along (Navajo Princess S), He's a Knockout (Sonny Hine S), La Reine's Terms (Bald Eagle Breeders' Cup H, Find H), Media Access (Miss Liberty S) and Pickup-speed (Fort McHenry H). All but one, He's a Knockout,

raced as homebreds for the Benders and their trainer Lawrence E. (Larry) Murray.

La Reine's Terms ranked as the stable's leading earner for the season, with \$133,950. Runners bred by the Benders amassed a total of \$1,296,100, with 45 wins, 41 seconds and 37 thirds from 262 starts.

Broodmare of the year

Illeria, dam of 2001 Maryland-bred horse of the year Include, earned honors as Maryland's broodmare of the year.

Purchased by her owner Robert E. Meyerhoff of Fitzhugh Farm in Phoenix for \$350,000, carrying her first foal, by Affirmed, at the 1994 Keeneland November sale, Il-

leria (1987, Stop the Music—Baldski's Holiday, by Baldski) was herself a graded stakes winner of \$392,692.

With the exception of her Affirmed filly, Illeria has produced 100 percent stakes horses for Meyerhoff.

From her first mating with Broad Brush, Illeria produced for Meyerhoff the 1998 Maryland-bred 2-year-old filly champion Magic Broad (\$216,120, Selima S-G3, Maryland Juvenile Filly Championship S, etc.).

Then came Include. Include, also by Broad Brush, won five stakes as a 4-year-old last season, including the Pimlico Special-G1 and New Orleans and Massachusetts Handicaps (both Grade 2). Include's 2001 earnings of \$1,435,400 boosted his lifetime total to \$1,532,560.

Illeria's two youngest foals of racing age are the colts Loaded Brush (1998, by Broad Brush) and Invent (1999, by Concern), both of whom were stakes-placed in 2001. Loaded Brush finished second in the Draft Card Stakes at Delaware Park and third in Laurel's Northern Dancer Stakes, and has lifetime earnings of \$133,350. Invent was second in the Maryland Juvenile Championship Stakes.

Illeria has a 2-year-old colt named Implicit, by Broad Brush, and a yearling filly by Coronado's Quest. She was due to foal in mid-March to Broad Brush and is booked back to him.

Stallion of the year

Allen's Prospect, Maryland's all-time leading sire, continued to reach new heights in 2001.

The 20-year-old son of Mr. Prospector—Change Water, by Swaps, set a new record for Maryland (and Mid-Atlantic) sires with progeny earnings of \$4,932,110, easily eclipsing his record of the year before.

He was 12th-ranked nationally by earnings, and was the leading sire in the nation by number of winners (132) for the fifth time, following up on 1995, '98, '99 and 2000.


Allen's Prospect was represented in 2001 by 10 stakes winners—Final Table, Friona, Gigi's Magic, In C C's Honor, Just Allen, Longfield Star, Presidio Heights, Square Cut Diamond, Somerset and Your Out, plus an additional seven stakes-placed runners.


Allen's Prospect has stood throughout his career at the Pons family's Country Life Farm in Bel Air, Md.



MARYLAND FUND STAKES RECAPS

Magic Weisner

 **Goss L. Stryker Stakes**
\$60,000-guaranteed, 7 fur., registered Maryland-bred 3-year-olds. Laurel Park, Feb. 9.

 **Deputed Testamony Stakes**
\$75,000-guaranteed, 1 1/16 mi., registered Maryland-bred 3-year-olds. Laurel Park, March 2.

B.g., 1999, by Ameri Valay—Jazema, by Bold Forbes. Bred, owned and trained

by Nancy H. Alberts. Foaled at Shamrock Farms, Woodbine, Md.

	Lifetime				
starts	1st	2nd	3rd	earnings	
8	5 (3)	1	0	\$178,110	(through March 2)

2001: 1st \$100,000 **Maryland Juvenile Championship S**, 1 1/8 mi., registered Md.-bred 2-year-olds, Laurel, Dec. 31. **2002:** 1st \$60,000 **Goss L. Stryker S**, 7 fur., registered Md.-bred 3-year-olds, Laurel, Feb. 9; \$75,000 **Deputed Testamony S**, 1 1/16 mi., registered Md.-bred 3-year-olds, Laurel, March 2.

Magic Weisner, champion Maryland-bred 2-year-old male of 2001, is undefeated in his first two starts at 3, having won back-to-back Maryland Fund stakes in February and March.

The gelding bred, owned and trained by Nancy Alberts has now won three stakes in a row at Laurel Park, having launched his streak in the Maryland Juvenile Championship on December 31. (See Newsmaker on page 70.)

The Goss L. Stryker Stakes on February 9 proved an easy challenge for Alberts's gelding, who rallied to score by two lengths, leaving in his wake Majestic Sir, Radio One, The Sewickley Kid (the 7-5 favorite), Star Slugger and Captain Chessie. Third choice in the field of six, Magic Weisner

paid a remarkably hefty \$9.40 to win, and stopped the timer in 1:24.92 for the seven furlongs.

Those who abandoned faith in Magic Weisner for the mile and a sixteenth Deputed Testamony Stakes on March 2, and put their money on his female counterpart, last year's champion Maryland-bred 2-year-old filly, the classy but recently ill-fated Touch Love, ended up paying the price. Magic Weisner cruised, under a hand ride, to a length and three-quarter victory, defeating (in order of finish) Invent, Root With Style, Majestic Sir and Touch Love, who gave way to finish last as odds-on favorite. Winning mutuel tickets were worth \$6.20; the final time was 1:44.81.