

Old Dominion Hounds Point to Point 4-9-2022

The Old Dominion Hounds Point to Point at Ben Venue, Virginia is always well attended with hillside viewing and a popular race course. Entries were heavy without competition from a sanctioned meet this weekend, and the steeplechase sport could not have been better.

The amateur/novice hurdle race was the first to be run, and it was exciting. Merriebelle Stable LLC's Beat Le Bon (Connor Hankin) made the early pace, but he dropped back to settle for third as PathFinder Racing's Knockholt (Parker Hendriks) and Irvin S. Naylor's stakes winner, Amschel (Dylan McDonagh) made this a two horse race. They battled to the finish where Knockholt won by a head. Neil Morris trained the winner.

Twenty four horses arrived to run in the maiden hurdle race, which necessitated a three way split. In the first division Woodslane Farm's Lunaire (Graham Watters) raced with Buttonwood Farm's Caughtmeoncamera (Parker Hendriks) on the front end. When Lunaire dropped back, Caughtmetoncamera was joined by Mrs. George L. Ohrstrom's Connagh's Quay (Barry Foley). These two arrived at the finish together with Connagh's Quay best by 3/4 length. The International Venture's L Jay (Mikey Hamill) was third. Richard Valentine was the winning trainer, and Keri Brian saddled the second and third place finishers.

Barry Foley also rode the winner of the second division, Irvin S. Naylor's Turbo Drive for trainer, Cyril Murphy. Turbo Drive led from the drop of the starters' flag with Hard Game (Skylar McKenna) close behind. With a quarter mile to run, Hard Game jumped a beacon and lost his rider leaving Turbo Drive alone to win by 4 ½ lengths. Metahorse Racing's Kicking Myself (Parker Hendrik) and Signal Hill Farm's Peace Nickle rallied from far back to be second and third but were not threats to the winner.

The third division went to Bruton Street-US' Agravain (Thomas Garner) by a short head over Bourke Racing's Economic Policy (Gerard Galligan). Agravain was always within striking distance and vied for the lead with Economic Policy from the last fence to the wire. This was a driving finish with neither horse or rider giving an inch. Riverdee Stable's Potus (Graham Watters) was third. Todd Wyatt trained the winner as well as the winner of the open timber race.

In that race Four Virginia Gents' First Friday (Barry Foley) set the pace with Adlestrop Hill's Paddy's Crown (Harrison Beswick) and Riverdee Stable's Lonely Weekend (Thomas Garner) right behind the leaders in a tightly bunched five horse field. Lonely Weekend took the lead with three furlongs to run and held off Paddy's Crown to win by 1 ½ lengths. First Friday was third.

Todd Wyatt just missed a third win when Mrs. S. K. Johnston, Jr.'s State of Affair finished second to Del Rio Chasers LLC's Razoul who was ridden by Bernard Dalton, the husband of trainer, Kate Dalton. State of Affair (Thomas Garner) set the pace holding a comfortable lead. At the last hurdle he was still on top, but Razoul was closing fast. Razoul's momentum carried him past State of Affair to win by ¾ length. Irvin S. Naylor's How Ya Bud (Parker Hendriks) was third.

Five horses went to the start in the amateur/novice rider timber race. WD Racing's Broken Force (Jamie Neild) raced to a commanding lead the first time around. That lead diminished the last time around leaving Broken Force helpless to hold off The Hundred Acre Field's Cracker Factory (Brett Owings) when he rallied and won going away by 9 lengths. Adlestrop Hill's Cocodimama (Chloe Hannum) finished third. Mark Beecher was the winning trainer.

Irvin S. Naylor's French Light (Parker Hendriks) was always within striking distance in the novice rider flat race. He went to the front in the final furlong and won handily by 3 lengths. Charles C. Fenwick, Jr.'s Royal Ruse (Skylar McKenna) made a late charge for second and Bon Nouvel Chasers LLC's Sudden

Victory (Sam Cockburn) held on for third. The winning rider, Parker Hendriks joined Barry Foley and Thomas Garner with two wins on the card. Keri Brian trained the winner.

The best horse doesn't always win, and that was certainly the case when Bruce Collette's Eryx (Forest Stone) romped home alone ahead of Over Creek Stables LLC's Post War (Ross Geraghty) in the Virginia Bred, Sired or Certified flat race. Unfortunately, Eryx cut a beacon and had to be disqualified. This made Post War the winner over Valvo Racing LLC's Lorinska (Barry Foley) by 9 ½ lengths. Post War was trained by Julie Gomena.