

Warrenton Hunt Point-to-Point

*79th Running Of The Races Featured Wins
By Developing Riders*

**Article Reprinted From The Temple Gwathmey
Steeplechase Foundation (TGSF) Newsletter,
Courtesy of Warrenton Hunt**



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In the first division of the Maiden Hurdle at the Warrenton races, Brevard Place on the left, (Gerard Galligan up) finished first; Gold Shield (Sean McDermott up) was third.

first win in the amateur/novice rider hurdle. “Sophie, who’s been working for me since (last) August, had her first hurdle ride, ... and won for fun,” said trainer Doug Fout, based a dozen miles north of the Airlie course. “She did a great job. I look for her to ride more (races) for me.”

Two Jonathan Sheppard homebreds took both divisions of the Maiden Hurdle, both piloted by jockey Gerard Galligan. Brevard Place took the first division going away, and the filly Penitence took the second division with ease.

“We were very pleased with all our runners,” said Sheppard assistant Keri Brion, who saddled the Hall of Famer’s 10 Warrenton runners. “It was especially great to have two homebreds running their first time over hurdles win so impressively. It was nice to end up leading trainer on the day.

“Also, I own Orchestra Leader, and I am so thrilled that he is now showing Mell (Boucher) the ropes of hurdle racing. He is a once in a lifetime horse and I am so happy to... share him.”

In the Open Timber division Richard Valentine brought out veteran timber horse Just Wait and See for his first race of the year.

Chris Gracie piloted the Kinross Farm gelding to an impressive easy victory. “For a few hours it was nice to have a distraction from this awful (coronavirus) situation,” Valentine said. “Thanks to all the Warrenton Hunt volunteers and members for providing a good day of racing.”

The Novice Timber featured a competitive field and an exciting finish. Welcome Here Farm’s Second Amendment, piloted by Skylar McKenna, got a nose across the wire first for trainer (and aunt) Sanna Neilson. “It was a wonderful day and very competitive racing,” said Neilson.

In the Amateur and Novice Rider Timber, Archie MacAuley had the ride on Meadow Run Farm’s Full Time Party for trainer Ricky Hendriks, who said, “I would like to thank race committee for giving us the opportunity to run. Course was is perfect shape - well done.”

Bernie Dalton piloted Gary Barber, Brous Stable & Wachtel

PHOTO COURTESY: DOUGLAS LEES



Mell Boucher got her first win in open company at the Warrenton Point-to-Point in March, riding veteran hurdler, Orchestra Leader in the Airlie Steeplechase Open Hurdle.

Warrenton Hunt squeaked in what may be the last racing for a while on Saturday, March 14 at the Airlie Race Course in Warrenton, Va. An impressive eleven races were run, with full fields in most races, on a sunny and pleasant afternoon.

2019 TGSF Developing Rider Series winner Mell Boucher got her first win in open company on Saturday, riding Team Ollie’s veteran hurdler, Orchestra Leader, to a win in the Airlie Steeplechase Open Hurdle. Mell was riding for her mom, Lilith Boucher. (Douglas Lees photo, left)

Lilith had nothing but good to say about the Boucher’s experience at Warrenton. “What a wonderful day Saturday was for us! Much credit to Keri Brion and Team Ollie for letting us use Orchestra Leader for Mell to learn on. She could not have had a better school master. In addition, Maggie Bryant and Richard Valentine gave us Paddy’s Crown for Mell to ride. She was a good third on him in the Novice flat.

Props to Mell for being poised and not feeling the pressure and giving both horses a slick ride.

I thought Saturday showcased how wonderful the steeplechase community is. So many journeyman jockeys came up to tell Richard and I how cool it was to see Mell, who they have seen grow up, go out and do that. Shows what a tight knit community we are!”

Another newcomer, Sophie Henelius, partnered Beverly Steinman’s Be Somebody for her

Stable’s Belisarius to a narrow victory in the Open Flat. “I thought it was a really fun day,” trainer Kate Dalton said. “The weather was perfect, the ground was great, there was a big turnout of horses and also of jockeys which was really nice to see. My horses are still smiling.”

Rosbrian Farm newcomer Drapers Guild easily took the Novice Rider Flat with Sara Gartland in the irons for trainer Ricky Hendriks, while Curve of Stones narrowly beat out Vincent Van Gogo in the first Virginia Bred, Sired or Certified Flat of the season. S. Rebecca Shepherd’s grey gelding was piloted by Gerard Galligan and trained by David M. Bourke.

The National Steeplechase Foundation (NSF) was created in 1995 with the objective of preserving steeplechase horse racing in the United States. In 2018, the National Steeplechase Foundation merged with the Temple Gwathmey Fund, forming the Temple Gwathmey Steeplechase Foundation (TGSF).



PHOTO COURTESY: DOUGLAS LEES

Three Jonathan Sheppard trainees ran in the second division of the Maiden Hurdle at Warrenton. Left to right: #23 - Canal Zone (Eddie Keating up); #25 - Penitence (Gerard Galligan up); Ant and Bee (Ross Geraghty up). Penitence took the win.