

Steeplechase On April 5th

By Sally Walker

Seasoned champions, fresh faces, and national record-holders will be heading the race card on April 5 for the Block House Steeplechase, held on the N.C.-S.C. border in Tryon.

Jonathan Sheppard, National Trainer of the Year for the past seven years, will be attempting to use Tryon's races to add points toward an all-time record of eight straight trainer championships. As of this year, Sheppard is in a deadlock with D. M. Smithwick, who ran off with seven straight trainers' titles beginning in 1964.

Sheppard has said he "lives to see what his horses can do over the Block House course." Tryon's rugged all-natural jumps and terrain are unique in Dixie Circuit competition, a five-week Southern string of race meets with points and monies toward national honors. Last year Sheppard-trained Underhanded, a striking chestnut gelding owned by George Strawbridge's Augustin Stables, galloped easily to a sparkling victory in the Doncaster Race, the first hurdle event of the day. "Jonathan Sheppard always comes to Tryon with well-prepared, well turned-out race horses," says Steeplechase Co-Chairman Timothy Brannon, "and he leaves with at least one big trophy and check for all his efforts."

Up for grabs this year, however, are the riding honors. With champion jock Jerry Fishback in another one of his retirements and champ Tom Skiffington only riding part-time, up-and-comers like Al Quanback and Michael Walsh will be trying to whip each other for current top rider standings. Walsh a 20-year-old freckle-faced kid who rides for his esteemed grandfather and

namesake, waltzed off with three big Block House wins last year. Quanback, who is currently president of the Jockeys' Association, is expected to give Walsh a tough time in early meets, such as the Block House.

Post Time at the Block House is 2 p.m., with picnic areas opening at 10 a.m. Infield parking spaces may be reserved at the Tryon Riding & Hunt Club, 704-859-6109. According to an ad tickets are on sale at Ivey's in Greenville, D&D Sports World in Greenville and Spartanburg, Jack Wood, Ltd. in Charlotte and Boyd Pontiac-Cadiillac in Hendersonville.

Polk Central Wins Conference Meet

The Polk Central track team won the Appalachian Conference meet held Wednesday at Cherokee. The Patriots were first with 134 points. Other team totals were Cherokee 119, Edneyville 116, NCSA 69, Tryon 44 and Rosman 11.

Leading the Patriots to their win was Jeff Kelly with 36 individual points, followed by Doug Heun with 22½ points and Mack Simpson with 21 points. The local winners were as follows:

Shot Putt: 2nd Mack Simpson, 5th Doug Heun, 6th Perry Price, all of Polk Central.

Discus: 1st. Doug Heun (PC) 116-3.

High Jump: 1st. Jeff Kelly (PC) 6-0 (a Polk Central School record); 3rd. Warren Moore of Tryon.

Long Jump: 1st. Jeff Kelly (PC) 19-2; 2nd. Doug Heun (PC), 3rd. Warren Moore (T)

Triple Jump: 1st. Jeff Kelly (PC) 40½; 4th, Warren Moore (T)

100 Yd. Dash: 1st. Mack Simpson (PC), 3rd. Gerald Whitmire (PC).

120 Yd. High Hurdles: 4th Randy McDaniel (PC), 6th Eddie Ruff (PC).

Mile Run: 1st John Janulus (T) 4:54.4; 4th Mark Edwards (PC), 6th Glenn Wallace (PC)

180 Yd. Low Hurdles: 3rd. Jeff Kelly (PC), 5th Randy McDaniel (PC).

220 Yd. Dash: 4th Randy McDaniel (PC), 6th, Allen Price (PC).

880 Yd. Run: 2nd. Aaron Gilmore (PC), 4th Bruce Owens (PC).

2 Mile Run: 1st. John Janulus

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(T) 10:40.0, 6th Gerald Petty Central 47.6; 4th Tryon- (PC).
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