



# MONDAY REPORT

A weekly report from the National Steeplechase Association

Monday, April 29, 2019

## He did it! *Senior Senator takes third Hunt Cup*

Making history is never easy, and it certainly wasn't a canter in the park for Irvin N. "Skip" Crawford's Senior Senator, who inscribed his name in the annals of timber racing with his third victory in the \$100,000 Maryland Hunt Cup on Saturday.

For a while, it looked as though his third win in four years would be relatively easy. He was leading in the four-mile race's latter stages and jumping well.

Then adversity struck. But Senior Senator showed his mettle and his courage, all within the historic race's final six furlongs, and he drew away after the last to a four-length victory over Drift Society.

The victory retired the Hunt Cup's challenge trophy for owner Crawford, who has gone to the winner's stand the last two years and in 2016. The victory also established indelibly that Joseph G. Davies is the premier Hunt Cup trainer of his generation.

This year's Hunt Cup win was Davies' fourth straight; he won in 2017 with Gerry Brewster's Derwins Prospector, who ran in this year's Hunt Cup and finished sixth of nine starters. Senior Senator ran the Hunt Cup's four miles in 9:16 4/5 on turf rated as good.

With the victory, Senior Senator became the first three-time Hunt Cup winner since Joy Valentine's imported Cancottage in 1983. Seven others have won the race three times since its inception in 1894.

For a while, it appeared that Senior Senator would have no trouble securing that historic third win. He went to the lead at the break and jumped well over the first part of the course.

He appeared to make a modest mistake at the seventh fence and stumbled slightly on landing, but from that point he was jumping confidently and soaring over the Hunt Cup's testing fences.

Bruton Street-US's Drift Society, a true Hunt Cup horse with a second-place finish in 2017 and a third last year, had one trick up his sleeve. Jockey Hadden Frost asked for some speed at the 19th fence, and Drift Society quickly opened two lengths on Senior Senator.

Poretz certainly did not panic, but then disaster



*Eric Poretz let out a shout as Senior Senator scored his third Hunt Cup victory.*

Douglas Lees

nearly struck as they crossed the tanbark-covered road that bisects the course. Senior Senator slipped and slid as though he was on ice, and he nearly went crashing to the ground in a cloud of flying mulch.

Somehow—somehow—Senior Senator stayed on his feet despite going to his knees and Poretz stayed in the saddle. They still had Drift Society and Frost to contend with, however, and again neither horse nor jockey panicked.

Senior Senator took the next-to-last fence in stride, slashed Drift Society's advantage, and flew over the last to retake the lead. He quickly drew clear and held off the game Drift Society.

### On the inside

Riverdee Stable's Gibralfaro drew clear in Brooklandwood Race Course's stretch and won the \$100,000 Queen's Cup MPC 'Chase .....2  
Maccabee surged to victory in Foxfield Spring's Daniel Van Clief Memorial. ....3

**Go Jump Racing!**

