

## **NSA Stewards Advisory Committee Order**

In recent years, the NSA has been increasingly vigilant regarding the health, safety and welfare of horses competing in steeplechase races, the safety and welfare of the riders, and conduct of its licensees that is deemed to be detrimental to the sport and not in the best interests of racing. The NSA adopted a Code of Conduct that states: "As a condition of license, all NSA licensees are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the best interests of racing. Any conduct deemed to be detrimental to the sport, the NSA, or the individual race meets and their representatives will subject the offender to a fine or suspension, or both, in accordance with the NSA Rules of Racing.

In this regard, the NSA Stewards Advisory Committee held a hearing on May 25, 2022 for Jockey Graham Watters the rider of CITY DREAMER to review his actions during the running of the 4th race at the Virginia Gold Cup on May 7, 2022, and in response to a Complaint filed by trainer Keri Brion on behalf of Metahorse Racing, CFC Stables, Blue Streak Racing LLC, and The International Venture, whose horse GOING COUNTRY was forced from the course by Mr. Watters.

Having heard the testimony of both jockeys in the race, and after extensive review of the video replay, the Stewards Advisory Committee has determined that there was a serious violation of the NSA Code of Conduct in that Mr. Watters engaged in reckless and dangerous riding that could have caused serious injury to horses and riders competing in the race, actions that were particularly concerning in light of the NSA's commitment to protecting the health, safety and welfare of horses and riders. Mr. Watters' actions during the running of the race were deemed unnecessary, with great impact to the result of the race, when he forced the horse on his inside "off course," which subsequently caused his horse to go "off course" as well.

Accordingly, by order of the Stewards Advisory Committee, jockey Graham Watters is hereby fined \$2,500 and suspended for two (2) steeplechase days (July 11 and July 18) for breach of the NSA Code of Conduct by riding in an reckless and dangerous manner in the 4<sup>th</sup> race at the Virginia Gold Cup on Saturday, May 7, 2022.

NSA Stewards Advisory Committee  
Jack Sanford, Chairman  
Dwight Hall  
Duncan Patterson

May 27, 2022