

ZABEEL CHAMPION CLAIMS THE CALVIN HOUGHLAND IROQUOIS AT THE 85TH IROQUOIS STEEPLECHASE

NASHVILLE , TN, UNITED STATES, May 10, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In front of a record-breaking crowd of than 35,000 spectators, ZABEEL CHAMPION, owned by Sean Clancy of Riverdee Stable, ridden by jockey Freddie Proctor and trained by Jack Fisher, surged to victory in The Calvin Houghland Iroquois, the featured race of the 85th [Iroquois Steeplechase](#), sponsored by Bank of America, at Percy Warner Park on Saturday.



The win secured the lion's share, \$250,000, of the record-setting \$730,000 total purse, further establishing the Iroquois Steeplechase as one of the premier events and wealthiest on the National Steeplechase Association circuit.

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Sean Clancy, owner of ZABEEL CHAMPION

“My dad won the Iroquois Steeplechase as a trainer in the 70's, so that's how long this race has been in my mind and in my life," said Sean Clancy, a two-time Iroquois-winning jockey and owner of ZABEEL CHAMPION. "I have been chasing it a long time and I got to win it twice as a jockey and now to win it as an owner is the biggest thrill you can have in this sport. I'm a purist and I've been doing this forever, so it just means everything. I'm so proud of the amazing team we have.”

It was quite the day for Clancy's team at Riverdee Stable, who also won The Marcellus Frost (Sport of Kings Novice Hurdle Stakes) race along with Ten Strike Racing.

Acclaimed trainer Jack Fisher delivered an impressive performance, capturing major wins with

The Marcellus Frost and The Calvin Houghland Iroquois solidifying his reputation as one of the sport's premier trainers.

As winner of the Grade 1 Calvin Houghland Iroquois Stakes, ZABEEL CHAMPION is now invited to compete in the Paddy Power Stayers' Hurdle at the 2027 Cheltenham Festival in Gloucestershire, England next March, aligning two of the most prestigious racing organizations in the world of jump racing. With a purse of approximately €350,000 (\$381,000), the race offers a global stage for steeplechase excellence.

The invitation includes travel expenses and is made possible through the support of The Jockey Club U.K. and local sponsorship by TVV Capital and Andrew Byrd, Founder and CEO. No horse has yet claimed victories at both the Cheltenham Festival and the Iroquois, a feat that remains one of the sport's elusive milestones.

"This might have been the best Iroquois Steeplechase yet," said Dwight Hall, Chairman of the Iroquois Steeplechase. "It doesn't get any better than the action we saw on the course today, with ZABEEL CHAMPION winning by inches — that's what it's all about. We had an incredible, record-breaking day and we're proud to continue the tradition of the Iroquois Steeplechase. This event is about much more than racing. It's about community, philanthropy and preserving an experience that generations of families have enjoyed together."

The day was filled with world-class racing, charitable giving, memorable fashion and Southern tradition. Guests also enjoyed live performances on The Big 98 Stage featuring FILMORE, Highway Home, Lauren Gottshall and Alannah McCready, along with the annual Style Contest, Tailgating Contest, Stick Pony Races and Mells Parade of Hounds.



Zabeel Champion: Winner of The Calvin Houghland Iroquois Photo Credit: Terry Wyatt



Riverdee Stable team is presented with The Calvin Houghland Iroquois trophy at the 85th Iroquois Steeplechase Photo Credit: Terry Wyatt

Since 1981, the Iroquois Steeplechase has raised more than \$12 million for Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt, helping support pediatric health care and programs for children and families across the region.

The 86th running of the Iroquois Steeplechase is scheduled for Saturday, May 8, 2027. Organizers invite racegoers to mark their calendars for another day of elite racing, philanthropy and Nashville tradition.

Additionally, the Iroquois Steeplechase has also launched a capital campaign - Race for the Chase, a multi-year fundraising effort focused on preserving and improving the historic racecourse infrastructure originally built in the late 1930s through the Works Progress Administration. The organization will host an inaugural golf tournament on Monday, October 19, 2026.

[See Race Results:](#) Complete results and race info are available at www.NationalSteeplechase.com.

For more information, visit www.IroquoisSteeplechase.org.

About Iroquois Steeplechase

The Iroquois Steeplechase is a full day of racing at Percy Warner Park in Nashville, Tennessee. The mission of the Iroquois Steeplechase is to manage and produce an annual world-class horse race that benefits Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt and other local community nonprofits, while also promoting the sport of steeplechasing. To learn more, visit www.IroquoisSteeplechase.org.



FILMORE headlines The Big 98 Stage at the 85th Iroquois Steeplechase Photo Credit: Nick Tavares NTP Photography



Child Ambassador, Judge Colvin, rings the bell at the opening of the 85th Iroquois Steeplechase Photo Credit: Nick Tavares NTP Photography

About [Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt](#)

Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt is one of the nation's leading children's hospitals, treating and helping to prevent a full range of pediatric health issues from colds and broken bones to complex heart diseases and cancer. In 2025, Monroe Carell was again named among the nation's "Best Children's Hospitals" for the 19th consecutive year by U.S. News & World Report. Additionally, the hospital earned the distinction as the No. 1 pediatric hospital in Tennessee and shares first place in the Southeast region for the fifth consecutive year.

Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt, a nonprofit organization, opened in 2004, expanded its physical space in 2012 and in 2016 began construction to add four new floors encompassing 160,000 total square feet. The expansion helps advance the size and scope of the hospital's mission. To learn more, visit www.ChildrensHospitalVanderbilt.org.

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