

**Dear TRHC Member and Steeplechase Ticket Purchaser,**

I am very sad to inform you that the 73rd Tryon Block House Races steeplechase, postponed from April and rescheduled for October 5, 2019, has again been cancelled by the Tryon International Equestrian Center (TIEC) in consultation with the National Steeplechase Association, which sanctions the Tryon Block House Races. The next Tryon Block House race will now take place on its usual Spring date of April 11, 2020.

The reasons are much the same as in April, that is, the ultimate safety of the horses and riders due to an incomplete track surface. While there will be grass growing and well-rooted on the course by October, TIEC cannot guarantee that the turf will reach the 6 in to 7in grass height to ensure that NSA will sanction the course. The Green Creek course has had an incredible amount of effort put into it by race organizers at TIEC, but there has not been enough time for the grass to fully develop to NSA standards. Essentially, the grass will be too short to safely run the races, even assuming perfect weather and growing conditions, and we all know how likely that is to turn out.

Tickets to the cancelled October event can be rolled over to the April 11, 2020 date or a refund can be requested by contacting [tickets@tryon.com](mailto:tickets@tryon.com). If ticket holders want to transfer their tickets to the 2020 date, no further action is necessary and the tickets will be automatically rolled over. If any ticket holder has questions, please contact [tickets@tryon.com](mailto:tickets@tryon.com) or call 828-863-1002.

TIEC wanted me to let all of you know they are fully committed to making this course one of the best on the steeplechase circuit. They have spent significant resources this summer to install irrigation around the entire track, work 5,000 tons of sand into the turf, re-grade and, importantly, level the parking surfaces for the entire TRHC parking area, and dramatically expand the lake to supply water for irrigation. A photo of the irrigation system in operation and the re-graded TRHC tailgate section are attached.

The following are comments on the cancellation and state of the track by some of the key experts:

**Sharon Decker, COO of Tryon Equestrian Partners:**

“TIEC has made a significant investment of time and resources into the completion of the Green Creek Race Course, and while we are incredibly disappointed to cancel the event, we cannot risk horse or rider welfare. Our goal is to offer one of the nation’s most state-of-the-art steeplechase tracks and while we are making great progress on that goal, our timeline did not evolve as we had planned. There is potential to get the course ready by October, but it would be heavily dependent on perfect weather and with September being prone to hurricanes, it is not worth the risk. We believe it is better to cancel now with notice and focus on the spring 2020 race.”

**NSA President Guy Torsilieri:**

“The safety of our horses and jockeys is our number-one priority, and TIEC made the proper decision. While we are understandably disappointed that our owners and trainers will not have the opportunity to race at Tryon this year, safety is always the first consideration. TIEC acted promptly so that our horsemen have adequate time to adjust their training schedules. TIEC’s investment into the Green Creek Race Course demonstrates their commitment to the sport. I applaud TIEC for what they are doing to improve the track and am excited for the 2020 race.”

**TIEC Race Director Toby Edwards:**

“With the current condition of the course, it is not worth risking horse and rider safety,” emphasized Edwards, a well-respected and nationally known course director who participated for many years as a jockey in the Block House Races. “Ultimately, the horsemen will have a race course that they can come back to year after year. The 2020 race will feature a first-class track that horsemen will greatly appreciate.”

We at the Tryon Riding & Hunt Club are also incredibly disappointed in this year’s series of events for our beloved Tryon Block House Races. We feel however, there is no other possible course of action than to support the incredible effort from TIEC to make this course and this Race one of the best on the circuit. I am confident we will all get through this and once again be proud of this historic and traditional Tryon event. We hope you hang with us and the Race through these issues.

Feel free to contact me or the office if you have any questions and we will do our best to answer them.

Note that we are in discussions with TIEC about having an event of some sort on October 5<sup>th</sup> at the course to give everyone a chance to see the progress. Stay tuned for more information on that.

**Terry Lynch**

Club President

Personal Cell: [513-314-1146](tel:513-314-1146)

[lynchrt53@gmail.com](mailto:lynchrt53@gmail.com)

**Tryon Riding & Hunt Club**

6985 S. NC Hwy 9

Columbus, NC 28722

Office Phone: 828-863-0480

Office Fax: 828-863-0482

Email: [office@trhc1925.org](mailto:office@trhc1925.org)





Finish Line TIEC



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