

## MARYLAND HORSE INDUSTRY BOARD SINGLES OUT GRAHAM MOTION TRAINER RECEIVES INAUGURAL TOUCH OF CLASS AWARD ON TUESDAY

In instituting an award “to recognize the outstanding achievements of Marylanders in the horse world,” the Maryland Horse Industry Board looked to none other than Kentucky Derby-winning trainer Graham Motion for its first recipient.

Motion was presented on Tuesday with the “Touch of Class Award,” named for a Maryland-bred mare who won two Olympic gold medals in show jumping. Motion is based at the Fair Hill Training Center in Elkton, Maryland.

“The equine industry is an integral part of Maryland's cultural and economic heritage,” said Maryland Agriculture Secretary Buddy Hance. “We commend Graham Motion for his extraordinary achievements and for his dedication to Maryland’s horse industry.”

According to a board press release, the new awards program will honor a Maryland horse, individual, team, organization or event who demonstrates the highest standard of excellence in the Maryland horse industry. The award will be given industry-wide, on a monthly basis, to recognize the many outstanding accomplishments of Marylanders in the horse world. Although the first recipient represents the horse racing segment of the industry, all aspects of equine disciplines will be considered and voted on for the honor.

“There are so many great horses, horse people and horse happenings in Maryland that we thought we should recognize and let people know about them on an ongoing basis,” MHIB chairman Jim Steele said. “This is a strong, dynamic industry with determined and adventurous people and horses, exhibiting the best qualities of horsemanship all over the world.”

Touch of Class holds the Olympic record for number of clean jumping rounds in an Olympic competition and is enshrined in the U.S. Show Jumping Hall of Fame. The mare's breeder, former jockey Jennifer Small, also attended the awards ceremony and gave her personal account of the mare's accomplishments.

Motion ranks fourth in North America with 2011 stable earnings of \$6,712,340 through September 6. His 18 stakes winners include six for Team Valor: Kentucky Derby and G3 Spiral Stakes winner Animal Kingdom, Crimson China (Lamplighter S. at Monmouth Park), Daveron (G3 Beaugay S. at Aqueduct, Dr. James Penny Memorial at Parx, and G2 Ballston Spa S. at Saratoga), Hasay (Omnibus S. at Monmouth), State of Play (G2 With Anticipation S. at Saratoga), and Summer Soiree (G1 Del Mar Oaks).



*Graham Motion accepted the award from the Maryland Horse Industry Board on Tuesday in Hunt Valley.*