



### ***US Eventing Annual Meeting & Convention a big hit in Long Beach.***

Carol Kozlowski called to order the final Board of Governors meeting that concluded the 2017 USEA Annual Meeting and Convention on Sunday morning, Dec. 10, in Long Beach. “[Convention] seems to have evolved into a very positive experience this weekend. To be able to gather and to keep the momentum going forward in a cohesive fashion, we’re lucky have such good people in the places that we have them in this sport, and I appreciate everyone here and what you all do to make decisions [for our sport].”

### **Robin Walker Reports on the ICP Young Horse and Future Event Horse Programs**

Robin Walker was invited to speak to the Board of Governors on the ICP Young Horse and Future Event Horse (FEH) programs. “We were approached by the YEH Committee a couple of years ago with one simple goal: to bridge the gap between the breeders and the production process of young horses. This, I’m happy to report, is well underway.”

Walker went on to detail how the ICP committee has established content and standards as well as examinations and workshops to educate and certify the YEH Instructor and YEH Professional Trainer. He reported that the first workshops and assessment were a success and that there has been a lot of interest shown in the program by those that have attended

workshops and the assessment so far. “The simple act of holding a young horse workshop and what that entails has brought out of a lot of new interested people into the mix,” Walker commented.

“This year was, again, a successful year,” said Walker of the Future Event Horse program. Attendance is holding steady on the West Coast and this year the East Coast hosted a record number of starters. Scheduling and safety efforts have both shown improvement, as it has become much more smooth and efficient to anticipate potential issues and plan for them in advance. Not only is the quality of the competition improving, but depth is improving as well. “Breeders are clearly making better choices now. The top horses this year would hold their own anywhere, whether it be here or in Europe. As a committee, we’re encouraged by that,” stated Walker. He also commented on the success of the new 4-year-old FEH class which was new this year.

Walker then moved on to discuss items that will be a focus of the program in 2018. In 2018, the Future Event Horse Championships will host a third Central Championships in addition to the East and West Coast Championships at Texas Rose Horse Park in Tyler, Texas. Klaus and Shengver and his team from High Point Hanoverians will be providing professional horse handling services in the jump chute at all three Championships in 2018. He acknowledged the concerns that have been brought forward about the consistency of judging at FEH competitions and detailed the plan to address that in 2018, which includes an apprenticing program, compulsory seminars, standardizes teaching materials, and online educational materials. These ideas will be fleshed out at the 2018 Educational Symposium in Ocala in February.

Walker also mentioned that the Committee would like to see a place on the USEA website where breeders and farms could register. This would give breeders a platform to register their farm, list what services they provide, and connect with professionals who work with young horses. He also mentioned the potential development of 6-/7-year old classes, late in the season, that would provide a similar opportunity for those that can’t make the trip to Le Lion de Angers.

### **Board of Governors Motions to Endorse Strategic Plan Draft**

The Board of Governors approved a motion to endorse the draft document of the new strategic plan. In June of 2017, the Strategic Planning Committee met with members of the USEA Foundation to begin work on a new strategic plan, modeled on the framework from previous strategic plans. This first draft was put forward to the Board of Governors for comments and

then went back to the Foundation for revisions and has now returned again to the Board. This will continue to be a living document that can be revised to address changes to the field of play. The Committees will be encouraged to keep the spirit of the strategic plan in mind as they make decisions.

### **2017 USEA Annual Meeting and Convention Is a Success!**

Senior Director of Member Services Jennifer Hardwick reported the following statistics on the 2017 USEA Annual Meeting and Convention:

361 members attended this year's Convention, with full participation at the Board of Governors Reception at the Aquarium of the Pacific on Thursday and at the Annual Meeting of Members Luncheon on Saturday.

330 attendees also came to the Year End Awards Dinner on Saturday evening.

The Livestream was a great success, with over 1,400 unique views on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. Approximately 50% of those users watched the open stream and the other 50% watched one of the two member streams.

The 2018 USEA Annual Meeting and Convention will take place in New Orleans and the 2019 USEA Annual Meeting and Convention will be held in Boston. 2018 is a Hall of Fame year and 2019 is the celebration of the USEA's 60th anniversary.

### **Education and Safety Grants Being Put to Good Use**

The Board was presented with an update on the Education and Safety Grants which were awarded earlier this year. The Board called for proposals and the three programs chosen were: the LandSafe area grants, US Equestrian Frangible program and the production of the jump judge training video. Each of the projects is already underway with several Areas taking advantage of the grant money for the LandSafe clinics and many events requesting grants for frangible devices. A teaser of the jump judge training video was shown and it looks to be headed in a great direction.

In 2009, Dr. Reed Ayers and John Staples conducted a speed study and all of the results were shared with the USEA and some changes to the sport came out of it. Since the sport and technology has changed a lot in the last eight years, Ayers and Staples have proposed revisiting the study. The updated study would look at several areas including additional factors of weather, horse/rider experience, course design, course distances, footing, topology, fence location, etc. The Board agreed to move forward with finding a way to fund this new study.

### **Updates from the USEA Committees**

Area Affairs has created a task force to look into Area boundaries. “There is not an immediate need to have a policy on this, but we need to see what would happen if a state wanted to move to a different Area or if an Area dissolved all together,” explained Debra Dealcuaz, Vice President of Area Affairs. “We have identified some questions that need to be explored.”

Kate Lokey reported on both the Volunteers Committee and Young Rider Committee. She said that the first year of the Volunteer Incentive Leaderboard was a great success, but we need to work on encouraging more organizers to use the system since only 74 events used it in 2017. The committee is also working on a certificate program to recognize volunteers when they reach a certain threshold. When she switched to her Young Riders hat, Lokey thanked Rebecca Farm once again for “saving” the eventing portion of the 2017 North American Junior/Young Rider Championships and looks forward to them hosting it for the next couple years.

Jonathan Elliott, Vice President of Competitions said that his committees have been focused on the calendar review process. Elliott proposed a new policy for the calendar process. “The policy that we currently have in place doesn’t allow changes after July 15, but we do receive quite a bit of requests. My hope is to allow for some common sense changes which might need to take place,” explained Elliott. The motion passed and will go on to the USEF Eventing Sport Committee for further review. Elliott has also been involved in the joint USEF/USEA calendar process meetings, which is looking at completely revamping the calendaring process starting for 2020. “In theory it will be a more fluid process, but it will be a different process.” explained Kozlowski. “It makes sure that changes with an impact on the calendar will be under substantial impact.” More will be coming down the pike as the meetings continue and the process is firmed up.

Elliott also reported that the Organizers Committee has had a “fairly quiet year. We have issued

many complimentary letters to organizers this year, but we still have had to send letters to events that need to improve. Luckily this year has been more happy than nastygrams. We all strive to do the best we can and seems to be going pretty well.”

Jerry Schurink’s report as Vice President of Education was brief. He remarked on the continued push to license more officials, but 2017 was a positive year with 14 candidates passing their final exam and 22 prospects for 2018. He did say that the committee is working to look into the challenge of encouraging organizers to hire more “r” judges so they can receive the training needed to continue up the ranks.

A motion was made during Dawn Robbins’ report for the Adult Riders that the requirements for the rider divisions at the USEA American Eventing Championships (AEC) be brought in line with the national definition of rider divisions. The motion passed and will be implemented for the 2019 AEC.

### **USEA Moving Forward with Event Management System**

Robert Winter, the USEA’s Director of IT reported on behalf of the IT Committee about the progress for the creation of the Event Management System. The need for this software arose out of the concern of the rising cost of the current systems. “We are a small sport so those costs get deferred to fewer people causing high per organizer cost,” added Kozlowski. A task force was started and they released a request for proposals for which they received 23 interested companies and a total of three complete and viable proposals. The Task Force is now working to go through the proposals to make a selection, develop a budget and a timeline.

### **Diarm Byrne Presents Update on EquiRatings Quality Index**

The final presentation of the Board of Governors meeting was from Diarm Byrne of EquiRatings. Byrne updated the Board on where the company is in developing EquiRatings Quality Indexes (ERQIs) for the USEA. “The ERQI is a tool which tracks the cross-country form of a combination at national and international levels,” explained Byrne. “The purpose of the ERQI is to provide information that can minimize risk and efficiently reduce horse falls.

Same horse will have multiple ERQIs at different levels. If two horses on the same day are

Written by CRM

Thursday, 28 December 2017 05:48

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jumping the same fence one will have more of a risk than the other.” So far EquiRatings has analyzed 119,171 cross-country runs across all levels from 2015 to 2017. In 2018, the ERQI will just be used for risk awareness as each horse will be assigned a letter A through F that matches their ERQI score of 0 to 1. The USEA and EquiRatings continue to develop their relationship and are working to release the project fully.

*Report provided by the USEA. For more information, visit [www.useventing.com](http://www.useventing.com) . See Area VI News and the Winners Circle, page 36 and 58, for more regional news from the convention.*