

## **Oregon High School Equestrian Teams State Board Meeting – Sunday June 26, 2011**

### **In Attendance** (underline denotes voting):

Jan Harer, Scott Chauncey, Donna Espelien (NW), Pam Steinke, Anne Geser (C), Mandi Hanson (SV), Emily Bernards, Wendy Bernards, Denise John (W), Phil Armstrong (NE), Karen Bragg (Rules), Karren Cholewinski (Treasurer), Don Pack (NV), Candi Bothum (Chair), Karissa Dishon (Vice Chair), Debi Ferrer (Secretary)

**Judges Training** - Candi asked if there is anything in particular that we want to see covered in the training.

- Judges need to be respectful at all times to athletes. Usually that is the case, but there have been a few instances in which judges have been very disrespectful.
- Sometimes the judges don't know the patterns very well and have to be constantly looking at the pattern during the event. This should be a part of their preparation when they come to a meet.
- Sometimes judges are looking at what scribe is writing so that they aren't paying as much attention to the athlete on pattern. They need to be comfortable asking for a new scribe if the scribe needs too much help.
- Some photos from the meets showed a certain judge turned around several times during times when athletes were on course.
- There's a perception that judges are unfriendly because they are not supposed to interact with athletes, but that doesn't mean they can't ever say anything like "nice ride" or "good job" to athletes.
- There needs to be some middle ground between not interacting at all with athletes and too much interaction.
- What can apprentices do and what can they not do?
- Have a training specifically for timing the timed events to possibly develop certified timers.

**Minutes from State Championships Meetings** – There were no corrections. It was moved and seconded to accept the minutes and approved unanimously.

### **Treasurer's Report** –

- Karren sent out two reports, one showing all the activity of our accounts over the past fiscal year, and one that shows the activity for the State Championships.
- She asked that every district close their books at the end of each fiscal year and send her their reports ASAP.
- If schools have their own accounts, they need to send a report showing what they took in and what they spent, and how much it cost to their district treasurers and that can be sent on to the State Treasurer.
- We don't have a budget completed yet, but we're in a good cash position.
- \$1256 was raised for Tough Enough to Wear Pink and donated to a local (Redmond) breast cancer charity.

### Debriefing from State Meet –

- \$5900 brought in from vendors. Kathy did a great job. She was efficient and very pleasant to work with. This was a lot more money than we've earned in the past. Kathy did an evaluation and almost every vendor was very happy. The only concern was that there was a lot of duplication and some vendors wanted us to manage that a little better. The consensus was that we don't want to do any management, but leave it open to whichever vendors want to participate. We can provide potential vendors with a list of what other vendors will be there to help them with their decision-making.
- Everything seemed to go well with camping. Marty did a great job organizing. One improvement we'd like to make is to have camping passes that must be displayed.
- Can something be done about the feral cats? They do serve a purpose on the fairgrounds. At least one of them ran through the arena during events, and it disturbed some horses. Candi said she'll check on this. Apparently, they live in some of the barns that don't get used until the state meet.
- Some of the stalls in the horse barn weren't completely cleaned.
- Lots of hate mail came regarding the EHV-1 situation, and the fact that we held the meet anyway. Candi and Karissa attended a meeting in Central Oregon for facilities owners and managers. Many of the participants were uninformed of the true risk factors. Many veterinarians said things like "the safest thing you can do is keep your horse at home." This is always true. But people still attend events. Some vets apparently wanted to help the emotional uproar to die down by encouraging people to stay home and wait for all threats to pass. Also, they were protecting their own liability. Many events were cancelled because of economic reasons, with all the emotion, people weren't going to attend the events anyway, so it was better to postpone or cancel the events. We followed the recommendation of the state veterinarian who was quite confident that the virus outbreak had been encapsulated. The decision, made unanimously by the board, was based on science, not on emotion, and other than the all the hate mail and negative spamming of the OHSET Facebook page, the meet went really well.
- 65 athletes (about 12%) chose not to come, but many of those spots were filled by others, so the classes were mostly full.
- Karren thanked Candi for dealing with this very difficult situation so professionally, and with the best interests of the organization in mind.
- Don Hanson (state vet) said a show our size should have a vet on the grounds at all times. So, this is something we need to plan for next year.
- We didn't have enough of some equipment, due to running two courses for all the gaming events. Also, some districts didn't know where all the equipment was. Districts can bring equipment to make sure we have enough.
- There were some cases of teams setting up practice equipment and monopolizing it.
- There was some abuse of the rules for using the golf carts.
- Dogs were an issue, still. Karissa said she spent a great deal of the time asking people to keep their dogs out of the horse areas. Maybe we need a few people who wear "Dog

Police” badges who are willing to patrol and possibly hand out “citations” that explain the official OHSET position and rationale regarding dogs, and possibly the requirements for a service dog on the back. Our insurance absolutely does not allow dogs near the horses. Could we ask that anyone who has a service dog check in at the office to provide their documentation? Signs up at doors “Service Dogs Must Check in at Show Office.”

### **Points Program**

- Scott said they’d like to have been up on the concourse so they could be more visible and also watch the events. This year, we wanted to maximize vendor space but the consensus was that it would be better to have office people up on the concourse in some of the vendor spaces.
- Candi would like to see the points program provide a media report and an awards report for each district and the state meet. Don said they can do that.
- Everybody was happy with the program. They didn’t find any errors during the state meet. All went well.

### **Awards**

- Everything has been mailed out so far except the banners which will be here but will be mailed out to schools very soon.
- There were some concerns about the team participants not getting something to take home, like all the individual winners.
- This is the first year we’ve had all our awards paid for. So possibly in the future, we can afford to do something for team winners, too.
- Karissa asked if someone would be willing to step up to organize the awards. No volunteers did so at the time, but perhaps someone who is not currently on the board would be willing to help with this. Let Karissa know if you have someone in mind.

### **Cost**

- Total Income for 2010 State Meet \$69,364.36
- Total Expense for 2010 State Meet \$87,094.59
  
- Total Income for 2011 State Meet \$62,251.50
- Total Expense for 2011 State Meet \$92,713.55

**Thanks!** Much appreciation was expressed for Karissa’s parents who volunteered their time and energy in so many ways for the entire meet and beyond.

**Taxes are in the mail**

## Insurance

- Our medical insurance policy cost us \$2/athlete or coach/advisor. We had about \$10,000 in claims against our policy. Candi said that's more than she's paid out in all the 16 years of 4H that she's been using a similar policy. Candi expressed concerns about so many injuries and accidents.
- Don pointed out that in 4H, kids have their own project horse which they have to work in more of an educational setting.
- Candi said most of the accidents she could recall involved athletes on their own horses.
- Sometimes our coaches are intimidated to say no to kids riding about certain events or using certain horses because parents and even athletes can be very demanding and winning is sometimes more important than safety.
- We need to make sure coaches know it is their responsibility to make sure kids are in appropriate events on appropriate horses. It is also a judges' responsibility to dismiss a rider if there is an unsafe horses.
- Karen said judges will be very hesitant to do this because they don't know the history of the athlete and rider, and the rider may be able to manage a spooking episode.
- A lot of parents and athletes haven't been involved in school team events so they don't understand that a coach/advisor of an OHSET team gets to select teams for team events for the benefit of the entire school team.
- Idea – have a walk-trot event or two that is JV, district only.
- As district chairs, you have to step in and help empower your coaches to help them develop team rules and other ways of ensuring kids are qualified for their events. The reality is we have inexperienced riders participating in varsity sports. It's in our mission to include everyone.
- Can we structure or teams differently so that one person is the "head coach" who has the overall responsibility to make decisions about participation. Some teams have a lot of different coaches for each different event. Coaches have to be able help kids decide they need to walk/trot event. It's in our rules that every team must have a registered head coach, but teams don't always operate that way.
- Do we need to consider starting our season earlier so teams have more practice time during better weather? Can teams and districts be running clinics during that time? Teams can hold clinics at any time during the year, as long as it is open to riders besides the team members. Districts can hold clinics as long as they're open to all district athletes.
- In summary, we have to implement mandatory training for coaches, and advisors.

## Refunds

- Refunds for camping and stalls for people who chose not to come due to EHV-1 would cost us \$3000-\$3500. Candi suggested that we consider refunding at least something this year due to the circumstances.
- Scott said we might consider refunding for expenses that we didn't have to pay (for instance camping), but not for things we had to pay for (like stalls).

- Wendi moved to refund camping fees and \$30 for stall fees. Don seconded.
- Discussion:
  - We'll have to check with districts to make sure people actually paid for these things.
  - Donna said she doesn't feel we should refund the money because those folks that didn't come made a personal choice not to come, and in many cases, their decisions impacted their teams very negatively.
  - Candi said, she recognizes that, but that at least in some cases, the kids didn't have any say in the decision. The barns where they board their horses wouldn't let them come back.
  - Karissa said we should consider the PR and let people know that we understand they had a difficult decision not to come. Refunding at least part would be a gesture of goodwill.
  - Scott said refunding the camping fees would be a gesture of goodwill.
- Phil moved to amend the motion to pay for camping only (not stall fees). Mandi seconded it.
- Discussion:
  - Does refunding the money suggest that we regret our decision to hold the show?
  - Some athletes had to line up other places for their horses to come back to after the meet, and they made the decision to come to the meet, regardless of hardships.
- Vote on amendment: In favor – 7, Opposed – 3, Abstentions – 0.
- Vote on original motion: In favor 10, Opposed – 0, Abstentions – 0.
- So, refunds will be given for camping only, as OHSET did not have to pay for camping cancellations.
- Candi will send a memo out to district chairs indicating how much people have requested, asking district chairs to determine if they paid that amount, then refunds will be sent to districts to be sent back to individuals.

**Equipment Needs** – Karissa would like an upgrade of SmartDraw (about \$100) used to draw the patterns. Scott and Donna would like a copy of Adobe Acrobat Professional for Points and Scholarship files. Karren will check into costs and try to find best deal. Denise moved to spend up to \$300 for needed software, Phil seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

**District Boundaries –**

- Harrisburg is shown as being in SV with our but it co-oped with a Willamette team this year. Apparently, it co-oped with a SV team in the past. Karissa will get the maps re-drawn to show it is in Willamette.
- We need to have a meeting every year to review the boundaries and numbers and make sure we don't have any surprises.

**SOGs** – Our Standard Operating Guidelines are going to be in our “Competition Handbook” with a disclaimer that they are subject to change, and for a most up-to-date version, see website. At end of rules sections, there will be a reference to any SOGs that apply to that particular event.

## **WHO**

- Tom Delker expressed concerns that OHSET is trying to move away from WHO.
- Candi explained that our rules will basically be the same as WHO, but may include some clarification, and any changes we make will be made with a thorough discussion of people like Phil or Tom.
- Tom also said that WHO judges have told him a number of times that stewardship committees have changed judges’ decisions. Candi said she doesn’t think that is happening, but if it is, remember – Judges’ decisions absolutely ARE final.
- Another concern Tom had was that we are pushing out WHO judges who might be our most experienced gaming judges. Our SOGs indicate that OHSET judges have to meet certain criteria in order to judge OHSET events.
- Candi tried to emphasize to Tom that OHSET has grown to the point that it needs to be responsible for its own rules.
- Karissa said that her concern is that sometimes WHO judges are WHO judges first. We do have some different rules, so it’s important that when someone comes to judge an OHSET event, they are OHSET judges. It’s not our intention to change patterns or foundational rules, but just clarify for OHSET purposes. When OHSET began, it didn’t have ANY of its own rules and gradually, it has adopted, modified, augmented the rules of other longer-running organizations to best fit our needs. Our handbook is not just for our judges, it’s for our athletes, parents, and coaches. They need more clarification.
- Phil said that one of the things that WHO judges were unhappy about was that in the past, WHO judges had a workshop at their WHO conference where they were taught about the differences between OHSET and WHO events, which qualified as an OHSET judges’ training, but about three years ago, we stopped allowing that to count. Phil added that they have seen some OHSET gaming judges that were very unqualified to judge gaming.
- Karen pointed out that this is not only an issue in gaming, but also in dressage and reining and team penning, for example. Our rules are a little different because our organization is uniquely a high school sport with team events. Phil said that the testing we do for gaming isn’t rigorous enough. Karen said that JoAnn has raised the standards for judges considerably, and asks apprentices to get more work in certain areas when she sees some weaknesses.
- In conclusion, Candi acknowledged that our judges aren’t perfect. We have some bad ones, but we also have some very good ones, and we’re getting better every year. Our judges’ training is getting better. The coolest thing about OHSET is the diversity of events. The biggest challenge of OHSET is the diversity of events.

**Coaching/Advisor Training** – Willamette would be willing to host this again. Candi suggested having it the first Saturday of November and annual meeting first Saturday of December. It was suggested that we try to make it more OHSET-sponsored as opposed to Willamette-sponsored.

Possible topics were suggested –

- Team rules
- Evaluating athletes for horse they are riding, selecting teams, for strategy and safety
- Dealing with challenging people – when to say NO.
- Athlete reg., eligibility and co-op
- Coaches and advisors roles and responsibilities, roles of team
- Open session, round table, Q&A
- Create an online registration and ask participants what they want to learn about
- Mandatory reporters
- Fundraising
- Recruiting
- Head trauma and other injuries

#### **District Chairs Retreat Potential Topics**

- At what point does a district chair step in when they see a problem in coaching?
- Donna suggested that we need to continue to work toward more consistency between districts.
- What is the policy on changing events during meets? Some districts don't allow any changes, some allow unlimited changes.
- Stewardship
- Meeting facilitation
- Is it possible to have this retreat before Coaches training in order to incorporate whatever we discuss at state board retreat?
- Process for selecting and dismissing coaches, advisors. Some schools are handling this, but other schools are hands-off.
- Can we combine it with state board meeting? Will try for weekend of Nov. 5-6.
- How to get our alumni involved in judging, coaching, etc.
- How to deal with people who get involved in OHSET for personal gain (barn-owners, trainers, etc.)
- Ethics

#### **Nominations Opened**

- At our May meeting, Candi and Karissa were both nominated to continue serving as State Chair and Vice Chair respectfully, and they accepted the nominations.
- No further nominations were put forward, so nominations were closed.
- Denise moved to elect Candi as Chair and Karissa as Vice Chair. Motion was seconded. Vote – unanimous.

### **Upcoming Important Dates**

- July 26, 2011 – Deadline for Rule Change submissions to Karen Bragg
- Saturday August 13 – State Board Meeting, Lebanon Hospital (9:30 am)
- Saturday August 27 – Rules Committee Meeting #1 (9:30 am, location TBA)
- September 9-11 – Judges' Training, Deschutes County Fairgrounds, Redmond
- Sunday September 25 – State Board Meeting followed by Rules Committee Meeting #2 (9:30 am, Gateway Mall)
- November 5-6 – District Chair Work Session (Sat 9:30 am – Sun 2 pm)
- Saturday November 19 – Advisor/Coaches' Training, Lebanon Hospital (9:00 am)
- Saturday December 3 – Annual Meeting