

2009 USDF Convention Report

Submitted by Marsha Murray 1/9/10

USDF

Sam Barish retired from his position as president of USDF after many years of service to the organization. His vice president, George Williams, was groomed for the position of president and ran unopposed for that position. An interim vice president will serve for a year; a new VP will be elected next year.

USDF is changing their organizational structure in order to “add more transparency” to the organization in response to criticism about the many closed meetings. It was proposed that 2 “at large” directors would be elected by USDF committee chairs. The committee chairs are appointed by the Executive Board. Regional Directors will continue to represent their regions’ GMOs and participating members. At large members would represent the volunteer staff of USDF.

An educational membership category was added for those members who do not ride but want access to the USDF online educational offerings. After concerns from the GMOs were voiced that such memberships may take away from GMO membership, Sam Barish stated he did not believe that would happen. GMOs are free to charge educational members for their club sponsored activities. The educational members would not receive any competition discounts. Education membership benefits include: online subscription to USDF Connection, discount on USDF merchandise, discount on educational content sponsored by Dressage Clinic.com and Dressage Training on Line.com, discount and access to USDF sponsored live education offerings (Adult Clinics, FEI Jr/YR clinics and Symposium), access to USDF on line education programs and University credit. The adult fee is \$35 and youth \$10 effective 12/1/10.

Effective 2011, GMO dues memberships dues increase to \$20/member (from \$17) and \$10 for family members. USDF year begins 12/1/10. GMO rosters and dues are due then. Non-member competition fees, horse ID, lifetime horse registration fees were raised \$10 each.

Barbara Funk retired as secretary. A forensic accountant, Schubert, was elected. An independent audit firm was hired to audit the books.

Bylaw changes:

A GMOs delegate serves for a term of not less than one year.

All USDF GMO family members are counted towards the GMOs voting strength.

The intercollegiate/interscholastic membership was eliminated.

GMO membership to USDF terminates at the end of the USDF’s membership year (11/30) of each year. Must send in rosters and dues by 12/1 of each year.

USDF will go to an electronic ballot only.

Region 9

The Omnibus order form is available on the Region 9 website. The omnibus is available in print form, on line, flash drive or CD. On the online version, the ads show up and links to vendors, etc are available. Last year, the Omnibus made a \$8-9000 profit for the region. The profits funds: adult educational grants, youth educational grants, FEI Jr/YR expenses, travel funds for small GMO (TSDS), continuing education for Region 9 judges (open to all members), participating delegates for convention expenses, regional website, convention sponsorship,

The region has educational grants for adult education or junior education. Grant applications may be found on the Region 9 website.

It was recommended to start a fund to send 2 adult amateurs to the convention.

USDF hired a tax attorney who stated the GMOs don't have to submit articles of incorporation or tax information to the USDF. Each GMO must send a GMO affidavit yearly. GMOs must file a IRS 990 form and submit to IRS; send updates to the state on officer updates to maintain state incorporation.

The region made proposals to the Board of Governors (BOG) against USDF staff bonuses and raises, against at large members appointed by committee chairs and against the educational memberships.

The Regional Championships will be held 11/4-7/10 in Houston. Entry forms are available in PDF format on line.

The adult education clinic will be held on 3/20-21/10 in Hernando, MS with Charlotte Baker Bredahl. Contact Evie Tumlin for information.

The next Region 9 meeting will be held 2/20-21/10 in conjunction with the judges' continuing education forum in Austin, TX. The summer meeting will be in New Orleans; date to be announced.

Region 9 Teaching Excellence award went to Marie Morgan. Horseperson of the Year was Lyndon Rife.

Awards Committee

For Breed awards, the breeder must choose one breed in which to compete; there is a fee to change breed recognition.

The committee is working on new standards for awards. Now the USET competitions will count towards USDF awards.

Freestyle award criteria was changed such that a rider must have two current year scores to count towards the award. A rider must have 2 non-freestyle scores of 60% of the highest test of the

level before competing in a freestyle for that competition year. The rationale is that the Rider must meet a technical competency during the same year the freestyle is ridden.

Australia is interested in adopting the USDF awards program.

Test Writing Committee

2011 is the year of the new tests. Currently the test writing committee (Axel Steiner, Hilda Gurney, Janet Foy, Hilary Clayton, George Williams) are writing and riding the new tests to be certain no mistakes are written into the tests as have occurred in years past. This committee makes the test changes as recommendations to the USEF Dressage Committee which either approves or disapproves the changes. USEF is official publisher of the dressage tests. The focus of the new tests is to demonstrate the correct training of the horse and rider and design tests which are appropriate to the level of training. There will be more differences between the levels and within the level.

It was requested by upper level competitors that the tests be shorter.

Most of the tests at each level are only 6 minutes long.

There will only be 3 tests per level in training through third.

Tests were rewritten to decrease the time of movements at C away from the judge.

All qualifying tests are ridden in the large arena.

Training Level changes:

Training tests may be ridden in a small arena.

There will be more movements at A.

A stretching circle was added.

Transitions are made at different locations.

Training level tests may be printed on white paper.

First & Second Level changes:

Rising trot is appropriate through first level.

No drastic changes made.

More counter canter in Second III test.

Transitions are between the letters.

In First level the scores for walk transitions were reduced.

A turn on the haunches away from the rail was added to second level as well as an earlier placed stretchy circle.

Third Level

Little change.

The scores for transitions were reduced.

Transitions are to be made at the letter.

Fourth Level

Fourth level has been reworked such that Fourth 3 is not harder than Prix St. George.

The whole level was reworked so that it is easier to ride.

Flying changes: 3 on the diagonal; no stride counting.

Only a schooling pirouette required.

Collected canter on a straight line to the schooling pirouette; not a “roll back”.

A snaffle bit may be used though fourth level except for FEI classes.

Collective marks

A suggestion was made to score each gait on submission, impulsion and rider technique.

More emphasis is made on impulsion and correct training and less on flashy gaits.

More directives were written against front to back transitions.

Competition Management

USEF now rates dressage shows similarly to hunter-jumper shows. There are different levels of recognized shows as well as different competition requirements. The competition levels information may be downloaded from the USEF website.

Level I shows are geared towards new riders.

Level II shows are what most nationally recognized shows are categorized.

Level III shows must have qualifying classes and are geared to be high performance shows. Show managers and secretaries must meet USEF criteria.

Level IV & V shows must have a vet on the grounds, a safety coordinator, a accident preparedness plan.

Arenas:

Level III-IV: there must be 5 meters between arenas and the public.

Level I&II : there must be 2 meters between arenas and the public.

High performance and regional championship shows: one arena per covered arena.

If any arena opening is located at any place other than A, that opening must be closed during the ridden test.

In recognized shows, lunging may not be done in the same arena as a mounted rider.

Scribes must not be an owner, trainer or family member of any horse in their ring.

The council is working on a pamphlet on how to properly prepare and submit show entries, developing a Master Verification system (“Save a Tree and the Show Secretary’s Sanity”), and revising sections of Show Biz.

Competitors Council

This council/committee reviews the competition evaluation forms for concerns regarding judges, officials and shows and conveys those concerns to the USEF Federation Representative program. No serious issues were brought up.

GMO Committee

This committee will disband at end of year (part of USDF reorganization).

Each GMO’s historical records may be archived at the USDF. Send an affiliate form to verify membership.

GMO marketing ideas:

Hand out “Spectators Guide to Dressage” pamphlet. It is available for free at USDF, contact Rose Creech.

Organizing high school dressage programs with assistance from USDF.

Having demonstrations at state fairs and festivals.

Offer ride a test shows.

Offering combined training tests with jumping classes.

Encourage trainers to attend training seminars; add their names to GMO roster with a free ad in newsletter.

Some GMOs add a fee to cover non-members’ membership at the first show. For example: a non-member could be charged a non-member fee of \$35 to show in our schooling shows. The fee would go towards their membership.

Offer GMO logo merchandise (we’ve had polo shirts in the past). Some GMOs have logo socks for \$3.

Horse simulator seminars: mechanical “horse” simulator is available for seating seminars. Well received by other GMOs.

Getting volunteers: contact the local military units, agricultural colleges, Boy/Girl Scouts and fire departments.

Offering volunteer medals for service of incremental hours and are cumulative over the years.

Making a GMO calendar with pictures of officers or members of GMO with their horses.

USEF Open Forum

The USEF Dressage Committee is appointed by the USDF; athletes also nominate other members.

George Williams discussed a proposed CDI for Junior/Young Riders. A pilot program with youth clinics is planned.

Janet Foy reported that sponsors were retained for three Developing Horse program selection trials to be held in the Midwest.

Axel Steiner reviewed the proposed test changes. USEF will have to approve the changes at their next convention in January, 2010. See Test Writing Committee for details.

Marianne Ludwig of the Judges Committee reported that efforts would be made to identify “Santa Clause” and evil judges as both were bad for the sport. Competitors were encouraged to fill out judges’ evaluation forms.

Janine Malone reported that there was no current mileage rule in dressage as the hunter jumpers have. There may be changes to this relative to the new levels of competitions.

Arena modification was a hot topic. It was clarified that the rules in the past regarding arena modifications were not enforced. This is now incorporated in the levels of competitions. Allowances are made due to extreme weather. The levels of competitions form will specify which competitions may modify arena sizes.

AQHA

The AQHA has approved dressage as a recognized discipline for AQHA points. AQHA classes may be incorporated starting with Training Level. There is a \$50 competition approval fee sanctioned 60 days in advance. USDF/USEF judges must be members of AQHA (many shows are paying judges’ memberships of \$40). Judges must abide by AQHA rule 438: must wear a western hat. The rider must be an AQHA member and the horse registered. Recognized USDF shows are eligible.