

My big takeaways from the USDF Lexington Convention

## **Region 2 News**

Ken is not going to rerun for Region 2 director, after 9 years he is going to concentrate on his horses and students. So that being said they have started already looking for a new one. If you think you have what it takes, or know of someone who does apply.

As you can see from the budget that I passed around, there has been an increase mostly from an FBI Junior fundraising event, it has increased the account approximately \$3,000.

They are going to be creating an education protocol document that will be filled out like a Dressage Foundation profit and loss statement. This would come out of the education account for GMOs to use for education purposes.

Region 2 is doing well and GMO growth is increasing there is a new GMO in Louisville Kentucky. According to Ken they are very education focused so if you are looking to attend an interesting education-based Clinic we should turn our eyes towards them. They already have their very first Clinic organized for the second weekend in February: Making strides with movements and collective remarks. Megan Car (sp) is the organizer.

Majestic Farm is having a program for Jr Young Riders its \$200 for the weekend but they do need to commit to the whole weekend. The complete information up on the USDF website.

Region 2 is leading the way in Western dressage! All the members are also USDF members.

Regional championships are going to be in Kentucky in 2018 as always they need more volunteers. That being said I volunteered to be on the committee for picking the 2019 Regional championship venue. We will be given score sheets to review the application for venues that submit applications. New places that should be considered are Balmoral, Brave Horse, World Equestrian Center.

In a brief discussion there were suggestions for improvement for 2018 such as better lunging areas for all competitors, later hours to be able to school horses for people traveling and have schooling hours put directly into the prize list. The dates for the Championships at Kentucky Horse Park are October 11th through October 14th 2018. All Championship rides will occur in the Rolex ring or in the Stoney Claiborne (sp) or Mary Murphy (sp) arenas.

In addition to volunteering as a check-in for 3 of the break-out sessions I also attended a few of the session's, one of them being the membership, nominating, and Regional championships committees meeting. We did learn that qualifying scores in the freestyle are going to increase from 63% to 65% and Prix Saint George, I1 and I2 are going to increase from 60% to 62% all other scores are going to stay the same.

There is a new rule in both the USDF and USEF memberships for horse ownership.

Please visit the rulebook if you or your firm/farm co-owns a competitive horse, there has been some changes.

The qualifying fee for a championship class has gone up to \$15.

There was a conversation in regards to award ceremonies whether there should be mounted and unmounted people in the same ring and if you did not show up for your award ceremony what type of penalty should be awarded to you. It was a very hot topic that had no clear vote either way.

There is a National Education initiative and it encompasses prepackaged education and it's free to all GMOs, it's fairly easy to find. If you go to the website and then underneath the GMO guide look for members and horses, then GMO, the GMO guide and then you'll see the free education. I'm happy to show anybody how to find it as I had to have someone help me when I was at the convention.

They are tax changes for non-profit organizations, currently there are three forms this is changing to four forms. It was suggested to have a CPA look over our books to make sure they are in Ship Shape.

There are also ads on the website that we can use for our own GMOs.

### **Breakaway session for Judges, L program and the Freestyle**

Some interesting topics that were discussed were the right to dispute through a technical delegate.

If you're riding a freestyle and your music fails you have the right to complete it, always have a backup CD that is in the appropriate format- Wave file. The sound system used at sound check should be the one used during your test.

From the judge's perspective they want to see you be creative in your freestyle and if you are a little ahead or behind the music, find a way to catch up to your music and it was stressed to always end with the music. A tip from Maryal Barnett was to stand in the judge's box to get the judge's perspective of the music during your sound check. It could mean a world of difference on their impression of your music.

Another great suggestion was to audit the L program to improve your understanding of what the judges want to see, it was brought up that judges really don't want to see when a horse is unable to perform at the level that they are showing. It is also suggested you also should know the rule book, and the technical delegate is an advisor while the judge is there to manage the show ring that he or she is in.

We were told that some of the new ergonomic bridles are actually not approved to show in. For example one of the PS Sweden bridles doesn't have a throat lash. There are photographs that show legal equipment in the rulebook. So if you currently have or are planning on investing in a new bridle make sure it is legal.

Here are 6 quick ways to get eliminated: leave your boots and bandages on, blood anywhere on the horse, not having your correct number, receiving help from the outside of the ring, fall of the horse or rider, and my personal favorite upside down spurs.

### **GMO Roundtable discussion**

There was much discussion on how to bring not only new faces but youth on board because our GMOs are aging and we need to encourage participation from fresh young faces with new ideas. Ideas were 4-H, Hunter jumper and Pony Club members.

There was also discussion on awards for current members or new members and there was discussion from Cuyahoga dressage on how they have changed their award Focus from riders to volunteers. This has increased volunteership in many aspects of their organization. As well as increased their membership. On a side note here it was a member of Cuyahoga dressage that won our GMO basket.

### **Breakout session membership to leadership with Lisa and Korin**

Studies have shown that being a good leader is broken up into 70% Natural Talent 20% mentorship and 10% Training. One of the speakers mentioning having a job description for leaders and also to have training to set them up for success. Instead of having a vice president they have a president elect whose is to job shadows the president for a year so they know what is expected of them. There was also mention of an organizational chart within a GMO so that members knew who to contact and what their resources were. Example: Like showing members where to find past meeting minutes or the GMO member guide. Or using LinkedIn as a resource for talent within the GMO, this is how they found their treasurer.

Lisa and Korin also mentioned having a policies and procedures or use the one for USDF.

Sharing success stories also helps to recruit new leaders because people can then relate or envision themselves in that role. We need to remember that new leaders have a ton of energy and we need to respect to their new ideas and energy levels what may have been tried 10 years ago and didn't succeed may now be possible. *Remember that old adage ~what was old is new again.*

### **Bylaws committee**

It was suggested that our bylaws be Revisited every two to three years and that as many people as possible look at the bylaws for typos, conflicts Etc. One of the helpful hints that he gave was make sure that our bylaws are at USDF, and if we use electronic voting make sure that it doesn't say paper ballot somewhere in the by-laws.

### **BOG**

The USE and USDF to sign a memorandum of understanding also known as a mou. One of the biggest takeaways is that the USDF will now be taking on the education of officials used at the national level while the USE will still govern FEI levels.

The president's wish list for 2018 is that we have an instructor program for the FEI levels. We need growth in the GMOs and a mou with USE is completed. When this is signed it will be the first time ever that the role of the United States Dressage Federation will be acknowledged on paper that it is the expert on dressage.

Membership is holding stable though it was mentioned if you do renew by 12-31-17 apparently you get a \$25 gift card from Smart pack for being a participating member. The 2018 convention is in Salt Lake City Utah, and the 2019 convention is in Savannah Georgia.

Robert Dover was a guest speaker on the state of the sport. The name of his speech was Road map to the top, and it is available online in its entirety.

USEF membership has grown by 28%. Their mission is to bring the Joy of Horse Sports to as many people as possible and want everyone to be on the lookout for their Joy advertisements.

Please visit the website to look for educational videos and the launch of their 'competition light' campaign. This is a supposed to be a stepping stone between schooling shows and rated competitions. They also want members to be aware of discounts found at the USEF website. There will be a new building at the Kentucky Horse Park in the long run this will save approximately \$700,000 a year in expenses.

Sue McEwen is the new at-large director by a landslide vote. She is from Region 8 and is herself and adult amateur.

There was a motion to have a United States Dressage Finals committee by Peter Rothschild. This would be part of the planning or oversight committee. After much discussion and some wording changes of the motion it was passed. I just noticed that there is an extensive article on it in the Chronical of the Horse.

Respectfully submitted 12/8/17

Dawn Main  
Southern Chapter President