

The October 26-28, 2007 meeting of the USPC Board of Governors was held at the USPC National Office at the Kentucky Horse Park in Lexington, KY. It was preceded by committee meetings (each board member is required to serve on two committees) and the Program Advisory Council (PAC) meeting. PAC is comprised of USPC Directors and their respective volunteer partners: Entrekin, Executive Director/Kramer, President; Pierson/Ambrosiano, Communications; Wilson/Amos, Regional Administration; Quarles/Clader, Activities; Miles/Byers, Instruction; Wahlgren/Murphy, Development; Winn/Strotsky, Finance. Also included on PAC are the VP of Festival, Margo Leithead, and First VP, Tom Adams.

Before regular Board business was begun, advisor Pat Maykuth of Research Design Associates, Inc. led a workshop on strategic planning and visioning to assist future planning.

Paper Reduction: Working toward all-electronic renewals of memberships, although new memberships will start out on paper. Look for less paperwork at a future date!

Medical Armbands: For the 2008 Championships (not regional requirement for 2008), medical release for treatment forms will be carried in an armband worn for all mounted disciplines. Quiz will have them in the name-badge. Tetrathlon will wear them while riding and shooting. This new requirement will go in all rulebooks and will carry forward to the regional competitions in 2009.

Jump Warm-ups: Discussed was held about allowing moderate jump warm-up during pre-rally check in period when normal hacking is permitted. It was approved for supervised jump warm-up to be held at Championships. Supervision will be arranged by the jumping disciplines. More information will be provided in the 2008 Gold Book.

Vets at jog-outs: Discussed that for rally jog-outs, use of a veterinarian will be “highly recommended” instead of a required member of the inspection panel. This is being taken to legal counsel to comment on and will be discussed further at the annual meeting.

Polocrosse Proposals:

- A new Advanced Pony Division and adding Novice level (12 and D-3 minimum) was approved and will be added to the Spring Newsletter.
- A proposal to allow Australian stock saddles for C-3 and above was sent back to the Committee for further discussion.

Tetrathlon Proposals:

- Changing Senior fire to timed fire of 5 shots in 3 minutes was approved.
- Intermediate shooting, change to one-handed only – approved. Both will be added to the Spring newsletter plus addenda to the rulebook.

- Second Jumping round – While the concept was favorable, clarification of scoring and horse use needs to be brought back to the Programs Advisory Committee (PAC) at the annual meeting. The request was for this to be a 2009 rule change and tested at 2008 Champs. The logistics of arena space and jump equipment for organizers is also still to be fully considered.

International Games: This will return to an every-year exchange, and US will host every 4th year rather than every Festival year as we have done in the past.

Quiz: A new award of a \$200 USPC Bookstore Gift certificate to the winning Senior C/B team at Championships (\$50 for each team member) was approved.

USPC/USDF Dressage Recognition Awards program: Modeled after the Eventing Recognition Awards program, this was approved to start in 2008. Final approval pending from USDF following their annual meeting.

American Saddlebred Awards: A new performance award for USPC members riding registered Saddlebred or ½ Saddlebreds. Points are given for completing ratings as well as participation in Rallies and Championships. The award will be administered by the American Saddlebred office and awards presented at the USPC annual meeting. This was approved to start in 2008.

Examiner Handbooks: A new and improved Examiners Handbook will be online and in the USPC Bookstore this fall. Should clarify planning, goals and procedures for DCs, instructors and examiners. This is a wonderful resource for all levels of examiners D-1 through A!

The FEI World Equestrian Games 2010 will join with USPC in a selection of collectable pins, the first model to be on sale at the 2008 Boston Annual Meeting. USPC is an “Official Equine Partner Organization” of the Games.

“Back to the Barn:” Larry Byers, VP for Instruction and former USPC President, noted the need for a horse management initiative he’s calling “Back to the Barn.” Sees, in the reduction in overnight rallies and full-time horse-care opportunities for the kids, a need to emphasize hands-on horse care right from the first D levels.

Specialty ratings: Most went well in 2007. H-B and B were very good. 34 candidates, C-3 through A, took specialty ratings and 18 passed their respective tests. For a comparison, 53 percent rate is average pass rate for the Traditional B. Important to note that the specialty rating expectation is not a cutout component of the traditional rating, but is significantly more challenging in its single area of mounted focus. The H-B pass rate so far is 83 percent.

Regional vs national administration of C-3/H-B tests: In 2007 this was an option for the regions, but opinions are divided on whether this will continue, go back to the regions, or move entirely to administration from the national office. Discussion will continue within Regional Administration and Instruction.

Member Services: We have at the moment 603 active clubs, 27 centers, 9 satellite clubs, 22 Horsemasters groups. There are 11,155 participating USPC youth members (330 are in centers).

Financial matters: “Pony Club is in good shape financially,” due to both rental income from the new building and a profit from the successful 2007 Festival. Membership dues for 2007 did not change, but a membership fee increase of \$5 will be implemented for 2009. Also increasing alumni and corporate dues \$10 for 2009. Membership renewal forms for 2009 will reflect these figures.

Bylaws updates: A review of the by-laws to add reference to Horsemasters and Centers will be conducted, and a proposed change to the bylaws relating to club sponsors should come before the BoG in January.

Nominating committee: The planned reduction in BoG numbers is proceeding, with the 3 new positions for those rotating off bringing the Board to 21. Attrition will provide a BoG size of 18, the goal established in a vote last year. Margo Leithead says that while new members are not needed at the moment, the committee is always happy to accept recommendations for openings in 2009.

Fundraising: The concept of a culture of giving was discussed, as we teach our members the value of supporting valuable programs. USPC Annual Fund supports a wide range of programs across the organization (Int'l exchanges, Youth Congress, etc) and even a small donation, from many people, helps tremendously. For Festival \$4,000 in volunteer expenses was donated back to Pony Club and \$30,000 in sponsorships was given.

Virtual Pony Club: The committee has explored technical issues and options to the point that they're ready to engage members at Annual Meeting and in focus groups.

Advanced Games issue: BoG reviewed written, photographic and telephone testimony at length, discussed issue of the unplanned gallop versus normal victory laps, legal impact of potential for injury to unmounted volunteers, and supported the Executive Committee's recommendation of a 1-year suspension of the division for Championships East in 2008. Regional rallies may still offer this division in 2008. Frank Horne, respected and admired Games Committee chair, asked to step down and is to be replaced by former USPC President and past Games Committee chair Jim Ligon.