

American Endurance Ride Conference  
Board of Directors Meeting – Teleconference Call  
December 1, 2008

Call to Order: 6:05 pm Pacific Standard Time

Roll Call: Mike Maul, Connie Caudill, Jan Stevens, Patti Pizzo, Michael Campbell, Monica Chapman, Susan Schomburg, Sandy Terp, Tom Noll, Gail Williams, Terry Woolley Howe, Susan Kasemeyer, Joe Schoech, Roger Taylor, Jeff Trinkle, Maryben Stover, Dianna Chapek, John Crandell III, Randy Eiland, Laura Hayes, Robert Ribley, Heidi Smith DVM, C. Mike Tomlinson DVM, and Bruce Weary

Also in attendance was Kathleen Henkel, Executive Director of AERC, and Melissa Ribley, DVM, representing the AERC Veterinary Committee.

Absent from this meeting were Joyce Mocilan and John Parke (joined later in the call)

Committee reports were received (attached below) from AERC International, Veterinary Committee, and Welfare of the Horse. They were voted on and approved unanimously by the BOD.

Kathleen Henkel reported on the current state of AERC

Membership as of 11/28/07 – 6920  
11/30/08 – 6884

Rider fees as of 11/30/07 - \$114,134.94  
11/30/08 - \$100,429.40

Sanction fees as of 11/30/07 - \$15,469.67  
11/30/08 - \$15,295.00

New members as of 11/28/07 – 1194

New members as of 11/30/08 – 1023

As of November 30, 2008, 203 3-year memberships have been received with more waiting to be entered in the office.

Kathleen also reported that the invoice for the AERC Ride Liability insurance was received by the office and paid. The amount was \$62,517.88. This insurance includes all rides sanctioned by AERC, Clinics held at endurance rides, and approved Trail Master Courses.

Special Sanctioning committee chair, Susan Kasemeyer, briefed the BOD on a Pioneer Ride sanctioning request from Lif Strand for the Continental Divide Ride in the SW region on May 21-24, 2009. Roger Taylor as the SW Sanctioning Director approves this ride as does the Special Sanctioning Committee. The motion was made to approve the ride with all members of the BOD voting to in favor with one abstention from John Parke, as he had just joined the call.

#### New Business

Mike Tomlinson reported for AERC International on their need to repopulate the USEF Endurance Technical Committee. Members of the USEF Endurance Technical Committee serve for four years and the need to repopulate the committee has a deadline of December 31, 2008. AERC-I will be meeting tomorrow (Tuesday December 2, 2008) to create the list that they want to put forward for the repopulation. Mike Tomlinson motioned to approve that the AERC BOD grant the AERC Executive committee the power to vote on the recommendations put forth from AERC-I for the USEF Endurance Technical Committee. The motion passed unanimously.

AERC-I has also requested that the BOD approve Dinah Rojek as the East Zone Representative to AERC-I, replacing Lynn Kenelly as the zone representative (Lynn has moved into the Vice Chair position of AERC-I). The motion passed unanimously.

Jan Stevens reported on the revision of the AERC Policy and Procedures (Committee Charters etc). Jan indicated to the BOD that she is unprepared to take on the revision by herself. Roger Taylor has offered to help, as has John Parke. Jan feels that since this revision is so large and will affect the entire BOD representing the AERC Membership that more of the BOD needs to be involved. John Parke suggested that a meeting be set-up at the convention on Friday or Saturday for members of the BOD to create a plan of action to make this revision happen in a more timely and organized manner. Those at the meeting will then make a presentation to the BOD on Sunday at the regular meeting.

Kathleen then reported to the BOD on the recent problems with the Director At Large (DAL) election. Kathleen reported that the ballots were due out to the membership the first week of November according to our bylaws. The ballots were mailed on time, though it was realized that the mailing labels for the family memberships were not included in the printing of the labels and therefore the family ballots were subsequently not mailed until the week of November 10, 2008. It was also noted that by mistake that ballots were sent out to AERC Youth members who turned 18 in 2008 instead of 18 in 2007 – this caused 64 Youth members to receive ballots. It is noted that although all the ballots were mailed by November 14, 2008 – some of our membership were still receiving the ballots as late as November 29, 2008.

If we were to cancel the election and rerun it there are several problems that could arise:

- We would only be sending new ballots to the current members of AERC – those who have paid by December 1, 2008 for the 2009 membership year. This would be roughly 2300 members out of the roughly 6800 members we currently have. We would be excluding the majority of our membership from voting.
- Those 64 Youth members would now receive ballots – assuming that they have paid their memberships.
- The cost to hold another election would be in the several thousands of dollars.
- Members who received a second ballot might not vote, thinking it was a mistake.

It was determined by the BOD that it would be pointless and not cost effective to run another election. It was suggested that we extend the election to December 31, 2008. This would allow those who have had ballots arrive late the ability to vote. It was also determined that some members who received their ballots late may have thrown their ballots away, figuring that they would not be received by the original November 30, 2008 deadline. It was suggested that those members who may have destroyed their ballots could contact the office to receive another one. John Parke made the motion with Laura Hayes seconding it to extend the election to December 31, 2008. The motion passed unanimously. Mike Maul will send out email notices to all the membership with email addresses of the extension. He will also send an email to the AERC Members Forum and Ridecamp notifying the people on those email lists of the extension. John Parke will write-up the notice explaining the problems with the DAL Election and the reason for the extension.

Further discussion of this election problem indicated that every election has had some type of problem, though generally not of this magnitude. It was suggested that we create (in association with the Elections Committee) a checklist for the office on how to handle elections – this would take into account current and previous problems. It was also mentioned that generally the percentage of the membership that votes is between 20-25%. This is enough for a quorum of our membership according to our bylaws. The question of what determines the AERC membership figure from where the quorum is calculated was asked. It was determined that the AERC membership figure comes from the number of members on the date of the ballots' mailing.

Patti Pizzo, AERC Treasurer, reported on the Income Allotments. They currently stand at \$85,000 for 2007. Patti is looking for input from the BOD concerning how these funds should be dispersed between the agreed upon accounts of Education, Research and Rainy Day Funds. John Parke suggested that this decision be tabled until the next meeting so that the BOD could consider these ideas. Roger Taylor indicated they are anticipating a deficit of \$30,000-50,000 for 2008.

John Parke then spoke to the BOD concerning the plan for setting up an Endowment Fund. He indicated that there are several steps that will need to be taken to create a supporting organization and costs involved to do that. He noted that he has spoken with an individual who is a possible donor who has supplied him with some ideas (seed money for permanent trails through leases and land purchasing was one idea). John will send an email to the BOD list so that the BOD can read it over and discuss it at the January meeting. John also indicated that one of the Hot Topics at the AERC Convention in 2009 will cover permanent trails.

Discussion was then held on the RFD-TV program on endurance. Troy Smith (AERC Media Chair) indicated that the Marketing and Media Committee doesn't have the funding to pay for such a program. She suggested that we look to finding a sponsor or alternate funding through AERC. The cost would be \$3000 and ½ page color ad in Endurance News for 6 months and an ad on the website for 6 months. Bruce Weary reported that we would own the show after it was aired and that it could produce endless promotion for AERC and the sport of endurance. Bruce questioned whether or not we can sell our own commercial time on the show and requested to see a copy of the contract. Other BOD members indicated that they would like to find out the demographics of the viewers and make sure that the content of the show presents AERC and endurance riding in a positive light. Bruce will go over the contract with Troy to see that the verbiage is positive and that we are portrayed correctly and positively. Tom Noll suggested that we should request that they agree to buy 6 months of advertising in EN after the 6 months that they could receive for free.

Melissa Ribley, DVM, Chair of the Veterinary Committee reported to the BOD that she has sent out a survey to the veterinarians of AERC to see what their response would be to the offering of the Medical Malpractice Insurance.

Melissa also reported that the proposal of using USEF as our official drug testers is a good program, however we will see the fees go up for their usage. It is anticipated that it could go from \$1/horse to \$3/horse. Testing would start in 2009 if the BOD agreed to use USEF.

With there being no further business, John Parke motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:33pm (PST) with Susan Kasemeyer seconding the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Submitted by Jan Stevens

AERC International

Minutes

AERC-I Conference Call

Tuesday, September 2, 2008

9:00 p.m. Eastern (6:00 p.m. Pacific, 7:00 p.m., Mountain, 8:00 p.m. Central)

Attendance: Carol Giles, Chair  
Betty Baker, Treasurer  
Kirsten Kimbler, USEF Youth Council Representative  
Jan Stevens, Junior Committee  
Mike Tomlinson, USEF Technical Committee  
Joe Mattingly, USEF High Performance  
Jeremy Olson – Central  
Grace Ramsey – Central  
Lynn Kenelly – East  
Cia Reis - East  
Holly Ulyate - Mountain  
Martha McMurray – Mountain  
Hal Hall – Pac North  
Teresa Cross – Pac South  
Absent: Kathy Brunjes, Advisor  
Carolyn Hock – Pac South  
Vonita Bowers, USEF Endurance Director (excused)  
Michele Roush – Pac North

Agenda

- Jeremy moved to approve the agenda for the September 2, 2008 meeting. Cia seconded the motion, which was then approved unanimously.

§ Minutes

- Hal moved to approve the August minutes as corrected. Cia seconded the motion, which was then approved unanimously.

Treasurer's Report – Betty Baker

Betty reported that the FEI loan funds approved by the committee have been paid and received by the ride managers.

Kirstin has forwarded the monies received by the youth fund raising efforts. These funds have not yet been added to the youth budget. The AERC-I 2009 budget was sent to the board. We have not received any indication that the board had questions or concerns regarding the budget.

AERC-I currently has \$13,650 in its checking accounts plus the \$25,000 in its CDs. We are showing a profit of approximately \$300 to date this year.

USEF Update

- Technical committee – Mike Tomlinson
- Plans are being made to determine what types of officials' classes are needed and to schedule and plan those classes.
- International High Performance – Joe Mattingly
- There is a training session scheduled in Florida for those riders nominated for Malaysia. The final horse/rider combinations will leave from Florida.
- USEF will send out new ballots as some eligible individuals were inadvertently left off the lists.
- Work continues on the North American Championship. They will submit an application for the ride soon. It is hoped that it will be combined with the WEG prerule in Kentucky on September 27, 2008.
- The IHP is working on selection procedures for the North American Championship, the Pan Am and the WEG. It hopes to have these competed by this fall.
- Active Athletes – Julie Bullock - absent
- Endurance Director's Report – Vonita Bowers – absent
- IHP Developing Rider Program – Mike, Michele, Lynn, Hal
- Hal reports that the committee is working to move the project forward and he anticipates that it will make a more substantive report next month.

## Zone Elections

Not required until 2009. Carol listed those zone reps whose terms will expire at that time.

## AERC Competition Committee Liaison – Michele - absent

### Youth Sportsman Nomination

- The committee reviewed the submitted nomination materials. After discussion, Grace moved to nominate Jennifer Stevens as the AERC nominee for the USEF Youth Sportsman Award. Martha seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

### USEF Youth Council Rep – Kirstin Kimbler

- Kirstin reports that she has been working closely with Vonita to get lots of publicity on the recent the NAYRC.
- The Youth Council is busy planning the upcoming convention. Several excellent seminars are planned.
- Kirstin is working on a coloring book featuring all the various breed and equestrian disciplines available. The hope is that this will ultimately be published. The Youth Council is also starting a line of clothing that will be available for purchase.
- Kirstin asked all the zone reps to actively encourage youth in their region to attend the USEF Youth convention. Joe commented on the very worthwhile activities planned.

### Vice Chair Position

- Carol reported that Lynn has agreed to accept the Vice Chair position. It is anticipated that Dinah Rojak will agree to take over Lynn's zone rep position. Carol will follow up with Dinah.

### Goals/Activities/Directions from AERC Board to AERC-I

- None

### Report From Zone Reps

The zone reps reported on various rides in their regions and what type of rider response has been observed.

Zone reps asked when we can expect to see the new FEI rules. Joe indicated that the new rules were supposed to have been issued the 1<sup>st</sup> of September, so he hopes to receive and distribute them as soon as possible.

### Reception 2010 WEG

- Carol will try to talk with Emmett regarding the idea that AERC-I host an endurance reception at the WEG.

### Revision of AERC-I procedure booklet

- It was agreed that AERC-I and the USEF IHP Committee need to work together to decide what mission AERC-I should serve. It was decided to wait to undertake this until we see what the new FEI rules.

### Open Discussion

- Carol asked that zone reps start thinking about topics for convention.

## Veterinary Committee Report from November

Submitted by Melissa Ribley DVM

November, 2008

1) The speakers for the 2009 AERC Veterinary CE in Louisville have been arranged:  
Mr. Ray Martin (attorney) - Reducing Liability Exposure for the Endurance Veterinarian  
Dr. Victoria Maxwell from Luitpold – Joint Health in the Endurance Horse  
Dr. Ken Marcella – Hematuria in the Endurance Horse  
Dr. Meg Sleeper – Common Cardiology Conditions in the Endurance Horse

2) The AERC Veterinary Committee is pleased to announce that Luitpold will be the sponsor for the 2009 AERC Veterinary CE.

3) Discussions have continued with USEF for outsourcing our drug testing program.

They are interested in a testing contract with AERC. This will improve the quality of our testing program but will result in a budget increase for the testing program which would be passed onto riders in the form of an increase in drug testing fees. This proposal is

being put before the membership in the Vet Forum, December issue of Endurance News. Attached is the Vet Forum article along with the most recent correspondence from USEF.

4) The committee has been working with the office staff to update areas of the rule book and Riders Handbook that pertain to the Control Judge.

5) We are continuing to work on updating the AERC Veterinary (Control Judge) Handbook and anticipate having it completed by January, 2009.

Letter to Melissa Ribley from USEF

October 21, 2008

Melissa Ribley, DVM  
Chair  
AERC Veterinary Committee  
P.O. Box 6027  
Auburn, CA 95604

Dear Melissa:

Thank you for AERC's interest in our program. The United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) is the National Governing Body for Equestrian Sport and is a member of the U.S. Olympic Committee. The USEF is responsible for enforcing the rules of 27 Breeds and Disciplines. Formerly this organization was known as the American Horse Shows Association (AHSA).

The USEF's Equine Drugs and Medications Program's task is to enforce the drugs and medications rules for the Federation. Since 1970, the Equine Drugs and Medications Program has worked to protect the welfare of equine athletes and ensure the balance of competition. The program utilizes veterinarians and technicians around the country to collect blood and urine samples from horses competing at USEF events.

The USEF also contracts with a variety of associations to collect and analyze equine blood and urine samples. These contracts include the American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA), the Ohio Quarter Horse Association (OQHA), the Confepaso (International Paso Fino Federation), and various state and local organizations.

Additionally, the USEF is responsible for testing competitions throughout the U.S. that are held under the rules of the Federation Equestre Internationale (FEI), the International Governing Body of Equestrian Sport headquartered in Lausanne, Switzerland. The USEF is continually approached by organizations to implement drug testing programs; we tend to decline more than we accept. Most important in the decision is the need for similar philosophies regarding the use of drugs and medications used in horses while in competition.

In 2007, almost 17,000 blood and urine samples were collected and analyzed by the program; representing nearly 13,000 horses randomly selected for testing. Since 1995, the USEF has operated its own Equine Drug Testing and Research Laboratory (EDTRL) in Ithaca, New York, and is the largest sport horse laboratory in the world today. The EDTRL is one of four FEI laboratories worldwide and the only one in the western hemisphere. Our EDTRL analyzes samples collected from Argentina to Canada under FEI rules.

Currently, we operate two separate methods for Quality Assurance. The EDTRL is enrolled in an equine proficiency lab testing program operated by Iowa State University, and we maintain a separate program through the New York State Racing Laboratory that routinely sends double blind samples through our laboratory.

We appreciate your interest in our program and welcome further discussions with the AERC to explore the possibility of a testing agreement between the USEF and AERC. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

Stephen A. Schumacher, DVM  
Administrator

SAS/djt

Outsourcing the AERC Drug Testing Program  
Melissa Ribley, DVM  
Chair, AERC Veterinary Committee

The AERC drug testing program has been in existence for over ten years. There are important reasons for AERC to have a drug testing program including:

- 1) To help protect the safety and welfare of the horses by deterring owners/riders from competing on horses that are under the influence of substances/medications that mask an impending injury or illness.
- 2) To provide a level field of competition by not allowing horses to compete under the influence of substances/medications that may affect their ability to perform or otherwise enhance their performance.
- 3) To demonstrate to outside agencies that may have us under scrutiny that we do regulate and monitor foreign substances in our endurance horses and that we in fact have low levels of detected positives. Without looking for prohibited substances with a drug testing program, we as an organization cannot say with credibility that our sport is drug free.

The AERC drug testing program is a worthwhile program for the protection not only of our horses welfare but also of the integrity of our sport. We have historically kept costs for the program very low by 1) relying on volunteers to run the program, 2) using veterinarians within our organization to do the testing and 3) using a budget testing laboratory. However, for it to continue to be an effective program, there needs to be a budget increase to support this important program:

AERC's drug testing program is run primarily by volunteer members of the Veterinary Committee with assistance from the AERC office. There is much involved in the administration of a drug testing program including budgeting for the program, scheduling rides to be tested, making arrangements with the laboratory, ensuring testing kits have been sent out to the correct testing vets in a timely manner, recruiting testing veterinarians, advising/training testing veterinarians, scheduling testing veterinarians, communicating with the lab on testing results, evaluating positive cases and sending on recommendations to the Protest and Grievance Committee. As you can see, there are many tasks involved in the administration of a drug testing program and there are clearly many more than should be relied upon to be done by volunteers. Relying on volunteers means administration of the program will often not be a priority and it may often not get the time and work dedicated to it that it takes to get rides and horses tested.

We currently rely on a small pool of veterinarians within AERC to do our testing, and these veterinarians often may have a conflict of interest at the ride they are testing; clients, friends, family members, etc. of the testing veterinarian may be competing in the ride and this can easily lead to a perception of conflict of interest. Additionally, AERC does not provide professional liability insurance for these testing veterinarians who therefore may be taking a very real professional liability risk if they are not insured on their own.

The laboratory AERC currently uses to do its testing is utilizing outdated, insensitive testing methodology. Credibility is vital with any testing program that relies on deterrence as its main method of preventing medicated horses from competing and the use of sensitive testing procedures is key.

Outsourcing our drug testing program to an entity whose purpose and expertise is solely in administering drug testing programs would ensure that AERC has a quality testing program that does not rely on volunteers and would therefore help ensure a consistent testing presence at rides. After almost two years of discussion with various drug testing organizations, the AERC Veterinary Committee is recommending we outsource our drug testing program to the USEF (United States Equestrian Federation, Inc.). The USEF is responsible for enforcing the drug rules of 27 equine breeds and disciplines. (Formerly this organization was known as the American Horse Shows Association or AHSA). Since 1970, the USEF Equine Drugs and Medications Program has worked to test equine competitions throughout the U.S. The USEF contracts with a variety of associations to collect and analyze equine blood and urine samples including the American Quarter Horse Association, the Ohio Quarter Horse Association, the International Paso Fino Federation and various state and local organizations. In 2007, almost 17,000 blood and urine samples were collected and analyzed by the program representing nearly 13,000 horses randomly selected for testing. Since 1995, the USEF has operated its own Equine Drug Testing and Research Laboratory and is the largest sport horse laboratory in the world today. The USEF currently operates two separate methods for Quality Assurance within their laboratory. Their lab is enrolled in an equine proficiency laboratory testing program operated by Iowa State University and they maintain a separate program through the New York State Racing Laboratory that routinely sends double blind samples through their laboratory. The USEF Equine Drugs and Medications Program is continually approached by organizations to implement drug testing programs and they tend to decline more than they accept. After almost two years of discussion with the USEF, they have expressed interest in a testing agreement with AERC.

Following are the benefits to outsourcing our drug testing program to the USEF:

- 1) The credibility and quality of our drug testing program will be increased by outsourcing it to an entity that is exclusively dedicated to administrating drug testing programs. By not relying on volunteers to administer the program, there will be a more consistent presence of testing at a variety of rides.
- 2) Using outside, uninterested parties to do the testing decreases the perception of conflict of interest. AERC is a small organization and we rely on a small pool of testing vets who will usually have some relationship to the competitors. Additionally, USEF provides training for their testers so we will be assured we have adequately trained and experienced testers providing the testing.
- 3) The USEF laboratories use modern testing methodology. Our current laboratory uses insensitive testing methodology and if we do nothing else, we need to use a different laboratory than our current lab which will undoubtedly raise the laboratory testing fees. When we are not getting positives on samples where the riders have knowingly admitted to using prohibited substances, we lose credibility in our testing program.
- 4) The USEF drug testing program is one of the leading programs in the United States.
- 5) USEF provides their testers with professional liability insurance which AERC does not. We are asking a lot of our testing vets who may not have insurance to go out and draw blood on horses.

Of course with these benefits comes an increased cost to the drug testing program. The AERC drug testing program is funded by rider fees of \$1.00 per starting rider. Unlike all other costs associated with endurance riding and life in general, this fee has not been increased since the inception of the program over a decade ago. To put this in perspective, the drug testing fees for endurance riders in California is \$5.00. (California runs its own drug testing program separate from the AERC drug testing program and AERC relies on this program for testing in California.) The drug testing fee in California has been slowly increased over time to keep up with the increase in costs associated with running the program, and this increase in fees has not apparently negatively impacted rider attendance nor the number of rides in California. The increase in testing fees has been passed onto the riders who are willing to pay this for the presence of a quality drug testing program.

In order to contract with the USEF to administer our drug testing program, an increase in drug testing fees would need to be made to a \$3.00/starting rider fee. As USEF is a non-profit organization their intent is not to make money, but to cover their costs in terms of collection, analysis, insurance, administration, etc. If the costs for them to provide the testing runs above this, they will absorb their loss. If their costs do not reach the quoted annual amount then an adjustment in billing to us will be made to reflect this decrease in the billed amount. For this fee the USEF would provide the following:

- 1) Sample collection. One veterinarian and one technician will be sent to rides to collect both blood and urine samples. The budget is based upon testing 20 to 25 rides annually and collecting up to 8 samples per ride. USEF will not be testing events in California or Canada. We will continue to rely on the state run California drug testing program in California and we will need to continue to do our own testing in Canada. We historically have tested approximately 1 – 2 rides annually in Canada so this should not provide a hardship.
- 2) Sample analysis. Results will be sent directly to the AERC office.
- 3) Program administration. Scheduling of rides and testers will be done by USEF with input from AERC. If AERC asks that a particular ride such as the AERC National Championship be tested, USEF will make every effort to do so.

What the USEF will not provide:

- 1) Judication. They will be providing us with the results and will leave it up to AERC as to how to proceed with any positives. We have a policy in place to address positive results and this policy would remain in place in terms of a Veterinary Committee review and then turning it over to the Protest and grievance Committee. Any legal fees and court costs that result from a positive case will be paid for by AERC.

The AERC drug testing program is a very valuable and worthwhile program within AERC to protect the welfare of our equine athletes and to ensure the balance of competition. Outsourcing this program does come at an increase in cost to riders but does as well come with many distinct benefits that will help ensure both the quality of the program and increase the continued presence of testers at rides across the country. Please let the AERC Veterinary Committee and AERC Board of Directors know your thoughts on this.

Submitted by Melissa Ribley DVM  
December, 2008

6) The speakers for the 2009 AERC Veterinary CE in Louisville have been arranged:  
Mr. Ray Martin (attorney) - Reducing Liability Exposure for the Endurance Veterinarian  
Dr. Victoria Maxwell from Luitpold – Joint Health in the Endurance Horse  
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9) The committee has been working with the office staff to update areas of the rule book and Riders Handbook that pertain to the Control Judge.

10) The AERC Guidelines for Judging Endurance Rides (vet handbook) has been updated and revised.

Welfare of the Horse Fatality Report October 2006

Submitted by Laura Hayes

11/08

The horse and rider team which are the subject of this report recorded approximately 6,000 miles between them. The horse was a 13-year-old Arabian gelding. His rider is accomplished in other equestrian sports and is known to be an outstanding rider. The pair completed 980 miles as a team; 600 of those miles came in 1-day 100s, and included trails such as the Tevis and Californios. The pair generally finished their rides in the middle of the pack and a review of the records shows that the two times they finished in the top 10, they were approximately two hours behind the first place finisher.

The rider was reluctant to speak about the events of October, 2006 and had no desire to go over the tragic details of that day. The rider pointed the interviewer back to the statements given to the Veterinary Committee, therefore this report is drafted solely from that report, which includes information from the surgical case summary, also from the ride card and from the ride records of both horse and rider. It is understandable that the rider has no wish to relive the events of that day, and this statement is in no way meant to impugn the rider's reputation, however the report writer feels it important for a reader to understand that this report is limited in its scope.

The rider states that he made no changes in his horse's daily regimen, however, the ride site required horses to be stalled one day before the ride and the gelding, which was used to pasture and turnout, was not accustomed to that arrangement. The rider felt the horse was going well down the trail that day. He did not eat or drink on the first loop but once in camp he ate and drank well and the ride card indicates that he pulsed down to 48 bpm within two minutes of arriving in camp. The gelding ate and drank well on the second loop and gave his rider no indication that he was in any distress, pulsing down to 60 bpm three minutes into the check. At the third vet check the horse pulsed down to 56 bpm within seven minutes. At this time the rider noticed that the horse was in distress, acting itchy and trying to roll. By the time the horse was untacked, he was violently painful.

The rider immediately presented the horse to the ride veterinarians and he was taken to the ride grounds barn area for treatment. The horse went down upon his arrival and the treatment vet administered pain medications and a sedative. A nasogastric tube was inserted and the treatment vet obtained a moderate amount of reflux (stomach fluid).

The treatment vet also placed catheters in each of the horse's jugular veins and quickly administered fluids with medication and electrolytes. The horse was again given pain medication. When the horse regained his feet, the treatment vet performed a rectal exam with indeterminate results. The horse remained quiet but still exhibited crampiness, and his owner made the decision to ship the horse to a veterinary medical and surgical center which was approximately 3 hours away. The catheters were removed and the horse was given additional medication to ensure his comfort during the trailer ride.

Upon arrival at the referral hospital, the horse's heart rate was 48 bpm, respiratory rate was 21 and his temperature was normal. The horse had gut sounds in all four quadrants and his blood electrolytes were within normal limits but his mucous membranes were pale and his bloodwork showed a mild reduction in lymphocytes. A rectal examination revealed a tight small intestinal distention, small firm fecal balls in the small colon and a dry rectum containing two dry hard fecal balls. An abdominal ultrasound confirmed the small intestine distention, dilated non-motile loops of small intestine (some of which contained settled ingesta) and empty small intestine with thickened walls. Only one moving loop of small intestine was seen. The large colon was within normal limits and the stomach full and not distended. No further reflux was obtained from the nasogastric tube. A belly tap revealed a normal white blood cell count and protein levels. The gelding was placed in a stall with intravenous fluids. He became very uncomfortable immediately, dropping and rolling, and his heart rate rose.

The rider made the decision for surgery. In surgery it was discovered that the horse had approximately ten feet of dead small intestine, a non-strangulating 720 degree twist of the small intestine around its mesenteric root and a second strangulating twist that affected the dead small intestine.



Based on the poor prognosis, the rider made the humane decision to euthanize the gelding while he was still under general anesthesia.

There appear to be no real answers to the question of what led to the strangulated intestine which caused the death of this horse. The rider presented the horse for treatment immediately and made the decision to ship the horse for further treatment immediately when it became apparent that he would not recover at the ride site. Total time from presentation for treatment to shipment was three hours.

Sometimes an owner does all that they can and still the situation is unavoidable and results are disastrous. Pre existing conditions, or just the luck of the day may have played a part in the death of this horse. The members of the Horse Welfare Committee offer their sincerest condolences to the rider on the loss of his trail partner and hope he will return to the sport.

Respectively Submitted,

Welfare of the Horse Committee