

Midyear Meeting Minutes, 10/8/11 – Denver, CO

Directors present: Connie Caudill, Jan Stevens, Susie Schomburg, Roger Taylor, Maryben Stover, Terry Woolley Howe, Susan Keil, Monica Chapman, Michael Campbell, Sue Keith, Mollie Krumlaw-Smith, Michael Maul, Gail Williams, Olin Balch, Randy Eiland, Sandy Terp, Patti Pizzo, Joe Schoech, Susan Kasemeyer, Leslie Anderson, John Parke.

Absent: Laura Hayes, Kevin Meyers, Lisa Schneider, Tom Noll, Forrest Tancer

Much discussion over blanket excusals but any action was deferred until next meeting.

Minutes from the June 13, 2011 conference call were approved and the agenda for this meeting was approved.

Susie Schomburg excused from the June 13, 2011, conference call.

Michael Campbell moved and Joe Schoech seconded to ratify Executive Committee action to add \$1,000 additional funding to the Lake Meredith trail grant.

Office report from Kathleen:

Membership as of 10/4/10	5679
Membership as of 10/6/11	5327
Rider fees as of 10/6/10	\$77,111
Rider fees as of 10/6/11	\$70,295
Sanction fees as of 10/6/10	\$16,275
Sanction fees as of 10/6/11	\$17,330
Fees 2012 to date	4,140
Fees 2011 to date last year	7,485
New members as of 10/4/10	616
New members as of 10/6/11	602

Treasurer Mollie Krumlaw-Smith gave her overall budget impressions and projections for next year. She explained Cash Flow and the Accrual Method to Board members who needed a refresher on how AERC does business. The month of September does show a loss. She gave a very conservative projection for 2012 and suggested many ways to reduce expenses including, Endurance News going online with folks wanting paper paying extra or cutting the number of issues; streamline awards, cutting credit card charges, ride managers paying part of their insurance costs. The Board accepted the treasurer's presentation with action items to go to the appropriate committees.

Sanctioning committee presented three rides requiring special sanctioning: City of Rocks Pioneer, Northwest Region; Prescott Chaparral Pioneer, Southwest Region, and a date rescheduling for the XP rides....for approval and all three were approved.

Board went into Executive Session.

John Parke will work on a revision of the drug-testing policy.

The International Committee advised through Jan Stevens the desire of the committee to have Mark Dial replace Fred Cluskey on the USEF Technical Committee. Approved by the Board.

Motion from the International Committee advising they would like to donate \$500 of their own funds in support of the US Young Rider Team that will compete in the 2012 North American Junior/Young Rider Championship. The committee requests a matching donation from AERC itself. Discussion ensued. Connie Caudill advised she received a donation and has been advised she can utilize the funds at her discretion. Connie advised the \$500 will be donated in support of the US Young Rider Team as they compete in the 2012 North American/Young Rider Championship. Approved by the Board.

Competition Committee brought a discussion on combining LD and Endurance miles for horses and riders for career mileage. Input will be solicited for a future discussion. Extra points for 75 and 100 mile rides was revisited and a motion made to change rule 8.6 back to previous number of bonus points for 100s and leaving the bonus for 75 milers the same. Motion passed with 18 for, 2 against and 2 abstaining.

Discussed how much AERC should get involved in ride management and Sanctioning Directors were reminded they have the ability to withhold or remove sanctioning of rides for major infractions detrimental to AERC.

Another Ad-hoc committee was formed to handle contracts with land owners or possible endowment donors to AERC. John Parke to chair with Sandy Terp, Mollie Krumlaw-Smith, Roger Taylor and Olin Balch to be members of the committee. John pointed out that some seed money must be found to facilitate this.

The Board voted No to a request from Canada to allow them to only send results for AERC members at their rides. Connie will send them a letter.

Kathleen passed out brand-new Policy and Procedures manuals.

A short discussion was held over "who owns rider cards" and releases ...tabled for another meeting.

This meeting adjourned.

Motions

AERC Board of Directors MOTION PROPOSAL

Motion Name Request for matching funds for US Young Rider Team support for 2012 North American Junior/Young Rider Championship

Proposing Committee AERC International

Date of Motion October 2011

Classification of Motion Request new

Proposed Motion The AERC International Committee would like to donate \$500 of their own funds in

support of the US Young Rider Team that will compete in the 2012 North American Junior/Young Rider Championship. The committee requests a matching donation from AERC itself.

Background, analysis and benefit Growing our sport has long been an important endeavor, and how better to accomplish this than by supporting our youth? This year was the first time that the North American Young Rider Championships, a multi-discipline event, included endurance as a fully recognized discipline. Our young riders were right there, in the mix of the event, competing on equal ground for the very first time. They received well-deserved recognition from riders and managers of other disciplines, as well as from USEF staff, for their excellent attitudes, fortitude, and horsemanship skills. Our young riders gained excellent exposure for the sport of endurance, because kids competing in other disciplines could meet and watch and learn from the endurance kids. Not only was our sport of endurance seen by many people from other areas of equestrian sport, it was represented in a skillful and professional manner. The parent organizations and USEF National Affiliates for other disciplines donated money to their young teams in order to support their competitive efforts, and the AERC International Committee feels that we of endurance would be remiss if we did not likewise support our young riders. AERC is the USEF National Affiliate organization for Endurance, and while our membership is smaller in outright numbers than some of the other affiliates, we should by no means be smaller in our commitment to our youth. If anything, we should be even more rock solid in our support of our riders, because we cannot afford to lose even one of them.

Budget effect/impact \$500 from AERC I dedicated funds, \$500 from AERC general funds

Benefit and/or Impact to Membership and/or the AERC Organization \$500 from each of the AERC International and the AERC coffers is a paltry amount to pay for the benefit that will be received from support of our Young Riders Team at international competitions. International competition is a highly effective venue for dissemination of information about and positive exposure of endurance competition to riders from other disciplines. The North American Junior and Young Riders Championship is such an event, and may be one of the best advertising opportunities out there for us, in terms of recruiting new members who have the potential to participate in our sport for many years to come.

Impact on AERC Office minimal

Committees consulted and/or affected AERC international

Implementation plan Total of \$1000 (\$500 from AERC International, with \$500 matching funds from AERC) to be donated to the US Young Riders Team for the NAJYRC in 2012, to directly support the athletes. This may take the form of paying for their uniforms or other supporting materials. AERC International Committee, along with the Chair of the AERC I Young Riders Sub-Committee to oversee fund distribution.

Supporting materials (List of any other documents and/or spreadsheets)

Supporting approvals September 6, 2011, AERC I meeting minutes to follow.

Committee Reports:

Competition Committee Report

Prepared by Terry Woolley Howe, Chairman

10/4/11 – Midyear Meeting

The competition committee was asked to evaluate three issues with respect to competition:

Young Rider Award Category

The Question: In an effort to generate interest and possibly keep more young riders (under 21 years of age) active in the sport, it has been suggested that a National Young Riders Award be established (similar to the Bill Stucky award) for the age group of age 14 (junior riders who are riding unsponsored in the senior division) and young riders up to 21 years of age. This would be a national award for the top ten riders that have the highest mileage, riding an unlimited number of horses. The view is that most other disciplines have a lot of members in this age group and the organizations do a lot for them because the opinion is that if you can keep them through these ages, that you will help them for life, which would in turn, could help our membership in the coming years.

The Consensus: It was unanimous that we should establish this award so long as we could find a sponsor who would pay for the awards so that there would be no cost to AERC. There would however be a minimal cost to write the program for the computer to track these riders.

An anonymous source volunteered to supply jackets for this award for the next five years.

Combining LD and Endurance Miles

The question: Riders have asked if we would consider combining overall miles for LD and endurance for horses and riders. You often have a horse that started out in LD's and did 250 miles and then went on and did endurance for 4,500 miles and then as he or the rider got older they went back to LD and got another 250 miles, and the horse's records would show 4500 endurance miles and 500 LD miles. Was there a reason not to combine the overall miles for total miles so that horse or rider would have their 5000 miles. We could still list the total LD miles as 500, still list the total endurance miles as 4,500 and then list the total overall miles as 5,000. If we did this, a horse who had reached the point in his career where he could no longer go the longer distances, could still accumulate miles and reach mileage awards. This would not in any way affect year end awards as it relates to the regional standings, but lifetime miles.

Consensus: As expected, the views from the Committee was mixed:

Of the eight members on the Committee, four were in favor of combining, three were against, and one didn't care.

This was the comment from Nalisa Bradley

"Which direction you choose to go does not matter unless you know where you are going". The AERC Mission statement gives us the answer to where we want to go. So how does this issue match up with the mission statement?

Will combining LD and endurance miles

- a) promote the sport for endurance? *I believe so.*
- b) encourage the safe use of horses in demonstrating their endurance? *Yes especially if a horse is close to a mileage mark and LD mileage would be in the best interest of the horse.*
- c) Maintain horse and rider records. *I believe one of the strong aspects of AERC is so many can compete and so many can be recognized for their competition, why not find another way to recognize horse and rider accomplishments. However recognize it for what it is a combination of LD, and endurance.*
- d) Goals of the horse must be meshed with the horses ability. *See b*

e) Attract and reward members who act to insure the highest priority for their horses immediate and long term physical and emotional health and well-being. *Again we can refer to the example that Terry Howe gave us about the 5000 mile horse.*

The fact of the matter is LD is part of AERC and hence, part of endurance. It has a place in our sport. Does the addition of this new way of tracking mileage take us closer to our mission statement or further away? That is the real question.

Comment from Committee Chair, Terry Woolley Howe. While the board will need to decide whether combining miles for the rider record is good or not, I think it would benefit the membership and the organization if horse miles were combined for the purpose of horse mileage awards. Mike Maul researched the records and determined that combining the miles for the horse mileage program would only have generated one more blanket a year. However, I feel that there are a lot of riders who would maintain their membership and participate in more LD rides as their horse ages if they knew that they could count those miles toward their horse's career miles.

Bonus Points for 100 Mile Rides

The Question: In 2010 the increase in the awarding of bonus points for the 75 and 100 mile rides The Board has asked this committee to give its opinion on whether it feels that the two times the bonus points (i.e., a 1st place 100 mile horse would get 600 points), should remain in place. If not, then the Committee needed to recommend on whether it should go back to the 1.5 times, or possibly even no added bonus points over and above what the other distances are awarded.

The Concensus: Amazingly, most of the members felt that the point award stay the same for now. I am enclosing comments from some of the members on their view, as well as Kim Fuess as she was Chair of the Competition Committee at the time this change came about and an advocate of the two times bonus points for 100's.

Kim Fuess: The recognition award, especially for recognizing 1st time 100 mile riders and horses, was done to promote and increase 100 mile participation. The purpose of awarding doubling bonus points for 100s and increased point value for 75s was never to increase participation but recognize the increased difficulty those events. I believe we had hoped that increased participation would be a secondary result. Most horses participating in 100 mile rides do fewer competitions overall than horses in single day events. Also the completion rate of 100s is much lower than that of other single day distances.

I don't recall anywhere (in committee or in the proposal) this being an experiment. Why is Mike using this language when it was not in the proposal (as I recall) or in any amendments when it was voted on? If the board and membership don't like the results from this being implemented so be it. But don't rewrite history calling this an "experiment"....

Michelle Rouch: I would like to see the increased points remain in place.

I think that both objectives are being met by the increased points value of 75-100 mile rides. ie

1. recognition of the increased difficulty of said distances an
2. increased motivation for riders to enter the increased distances.

While it may not seem to be meeting the #2 objective at this point, I think we need more time to evaluate the true impact of the program. Any time there is a change, it seems like there is an initial period of griping. Then people settle down and figure out how to make the new system work in their favor.

It could even be said that it takes time to condition a horse to be fit for a 100 miler, so we need to give the riders not only time to figure out how to make it higher in the end of the year points standings by utilizing the

extra points system, but also time to get their horses ready for 100 milers. Let's not be too hasty in abandoning this bonus point system.

For my part, I have heard no complaints about the bonus points. In looking at some of the standings, I see them more skewed by the Twenty Eleven XP than by the 100 mile bonus points. This is by no means a bad thing. It is simply how the cookie is crumbling this year.

Keven Waters: It is too early to evaluate because; there are several big rides coming up, this has been a bad year for endurance everywhere and at every distance. Maybe when the year is done Mike could check the percentages each distance is down , then we can evaluate?

Lisa Schneider: If you look at it strictly from an economic point of view, then the 100s are not bringing in as much money to AERC as the multi-days. Horses that do 100s generally need more time off, which also means less money. I don't see the increase in 100 mile riders that the extra points might have delivered. If you look at it from a rider satisfaction point of view, the point changes seem to please a very small number of riders. I think we should go back to the 1.5.

Robert Ribley: The increased point system for longer distance rides was recommended by this committee to both recognize the extraordinary efforts and dedication that it takes to compete in these longer distances and to increase participation in the longer distance rides. I think anyone who has ridden both 50 mile rides and 100 mile rides would agree that doubling the distance does not equal doubling the difficulty of completing the ride. The 100 mile ride is exponentially more difficult than a 50 mile ride or multi-day rides. The 100 mile ride is of historical significance to this organization and is the distance that the sport was founded on. We should make every effort to preserve that. As a ride manager of one of the few 100 mile rides remaining on the west coast and the only 100 mile ride remaining in the region in which it is held (PS), what I hear from the entrants in the 100 mile ride is that they appreciate the recognition of their extraordinary efforts in completing this long distance ride by way of the bonus points in place, and it in fact did motivate them to try the longer distance.

We asked Mike for the statistics. It is this committee's job to interpret and then comment on those numbers. The participation in 100 mile rides, according to Mike, was up in 2010. This is a good thing. Possibly the WEG, possibly the bonus point system and I do not think it is fair to speculate on which is or is not the contributing factor. 2011 is not yet over so it is not reasonable to speculate on 100 mile ride participation. The biggest 100 mile rides on the west coast have not yet even happened. When we have such small numbers to begin with, we need years of numbers to make it significant. A good example of this is the 100 mile ride I put on in the PS. We initially had more entrants this year than ever before. We then had the biggest winter snow storm of the year the week before the ride and the entrants dropped by 75%. We can't attribute this to the "program not working".

I recommend giving the program 5 years and then re-evaluate. In the mean time, the riders who are putting out extraordinary work, effort, grit and determination will be receiving the just rewards they deserve. Let's not drive a nail in the coffin of 100 mile rides.

Joe Long: I haven't replied yet, but I pretty much agree with what Robert writes here.

In a nutshell, to those who feel that the bonus points are skewing the point totals, well -- those who ride 100s get a lot of points because they earned a lot of points. Everyone has the opportunity to ride 100s, and when you factor in the lower completion rates of 100s and the fact that you can only do fewer of them than 50s in a given period of time, I'm not convinced at this point that the bonus points aren't fair. Also, if you feel that someone is getting ahead of you in points by riding 100s, then go and ride some 100s yourself. I expect some people will say that most of our members only do 50-mile rides, and should not have it made difficult for them to win a division. My answer to that is that our points competition is supposed to recognize and reward excellence and achievement, not to be made easy so that the "average" rider can win. I have no problem with a points system that makes it difficult to gain the highest number of points over the season without ever doing a single 100-mile ride. Especially since when you consider the longer time needed between rides, it isn't even that much more difficult

I don't know that we need another five years to evaluate, but we surely need more than the less-than-two we've had. At least two or three more before we consider going back or making adjustments.

Theresa Garrison: I feel the 100 mile riders deserve the extra points . They have put in the extra work and training to be able to ride those distances safely. It has been a hard year to judge any changes so I really feel it should be evaluated for another year at least.

2011 Membership Committee Report

Lisa Schneider, Chair

Committee Charter: To retain existing AERC members and actively recruit new members.

Responsibilities: Assess why AERC loses members; develop strategies to retain existing members; identify target markets for new members and ways to recruit them.

Members: Chair Lisa Schneider, Troy Smith, Keith Kibler, Daryl Downs, Forrest Tancer, Kevin Myers, Patrick Perkins, and Mike Maul.

Accomplishments:

A. Committee uses a free conference calling service (Rondee) which if timed properly enables use of the unlimited cell phone minutes for most of the committee. This is a saving for AERC's budget.

B. AERC has an online Facebook(FB) page with almost 2,000 members. Suggested by Daryl Downs to reach potential members in a younger audience. The page is supported by Troy. It's a very nice page and can be found from the search window in your Facebook account if you have one.

C. Troy has invested effort in reaching targeted groups of breed specific riders. Contact with breed specific FB groups has been initiated and articles targeted for their breed newsletters to encourage riders in those groups to try AERC. Explanation should be in the next EN in the renewal ad.

D. Presentations describing AERC to gaited horse meetings by Keith Kibler.

E. Contacted several gaited horse groups about adding awards to AERC members for specific breeds to encourage new members from targeted groups.

F. Survey of non-renewing members – about 265 responses, validated why we thought people weren't

renewing

In Progress:

A. To encourage members to renew (and renew earlier), Troy is generating a bulk email to existing members asking them to renew earlier and if they renew by Dec. 1, stating that they are eligible for a drawing for a significant prize.

B. Ads will be placed in many publications such as Trail Rider Magazine, BCHA, Missouri Foxtrotter Journal, Tennessee Walking Horse Journal, etc. about joining AERC. Troy will look into the ad rates for AHA's Modern Arabian Horse, BCHA and also the Horse Trader magazine. There is also an offer for a free information packet in addition to the 15% discount for new members. May try to include numbers of specific breeds involved in endurance with the targeted ad (data from Maul)

C. Focusing on the approximately 300 new members that haven't done a ride in 2011 and that we need to retain – Mike will get the list broken down by region and Lisa will email the respective directors asking them (or their delegates) to contact them and encourage them to renew for 2012.

D. A text box will be added in the online renewal form asking how people heard about AERC so the office can follow up with those sources for future advertising.

E. Need to make the dues for non-riding membership more understandable to members. There is a clear lack of understanding among our membership of the very small increase in cost of this membership class. Many members seem to believe that we raised the cost of family non-riding membership from \$15 to \$50. Explanation should be in the next EN in the renewal ad.

AERC Research Committee - 2011 Mid-year Report

Reported by Olin Balch, Research Committee Chair

Previous Research Activities

Mary Durando, Todd Holbrook, and Meg Sleeper's AERC-funded research project "Comparison of heart rate variability and echocardiographic measurements in elite and non-elite Arabian endurance horses: predictive value for performance ability and readiness to compete" is completed. Complimentary to a planned article for EN, the findings of the study will be submitted to a refereed veterinary journal for publication. Additionally, these findings will be presented at the 2012 AERC Veterinary CE seminar by one of the investigators.

Current Research Activities

100-mile questionnaires: Rides where 100-mile questionnaires were distributed included

Ride over the Rainbow '10, Tevis '10, National Championships '10, Goethe '10, Biltmore '11, Fort Howes '11, Old Dominion '11, Vermont '11, Sunriver '11, Outback Ironhorse '11, National Championship '11, NAETC '11, and Tevis '11 (planned for October 8).

While not strictly a Research Committee activity, members of the Research Committee submitted the complimentary research proposal "Welfare of 160 km Endurance Horses: Can Horse History and Veterinary Exam Findings Predict Subsequent Elimination and Can Transabdominal Ultrasonography Detect Ileus After Exercise" to the USEF for funding. While the project was critiqued as having "moderately high scientific merit," judged "highly relevant to one segment of the industry" and

investigators described as "high qualified," the project was not funded.

Publications

Two lay articles in EN: Describing 100-mile questionnaire study, the first invited the membership to participate and specifically approached Ride Managers for help. The second article, combined with a companion article from the Veterinary Committee, addressed the pathophysiology of gastric ulcers in competitive horses and specific issues of managing that disorder in competitive endurance horses. Portions of the second article were later adapted and appeared in the October '11 issue of *Equus*.

Refereed professional article in the August issue of the *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*: Risk factors for the elimination of endurance horses from competition authored by C. Langdon Fielding, DVM, DACVECC; Chloe A. Meier; Olin K. Balch, DVM, PhD; and Phillip H. Kass, DVM, PhD, DACVPM.

2011 Technical Committee Report

Midyear meeting

Prepared by Mike Maul, Chair

In an effort to keep costs low for the AERC budget, less chargeable work has been done in 2011 than previous years.

Work done from Convention to mid-year meeting Fixed problem with half Arabians leading 0 in registration number not linking to AHA pedigree. Picked up links for an additional 1,500 part-breds

Updated 2010 standings archive which had been run too early to reflect changes

Fixed several rare problems in online renewals

Fixed field size problem in online ride results where time in am/pm overflowed field.

Member horse change to deceased not providing response to member fixed - TC did update properly

Made recommendation on how to fix the office disk space problem.

Fixed TC problem where 2 members points were being doubled

Work done by convention meeting

AERC website

* Added *CAPTCHA* challenge response tests to ensure Spam isn't sent in our forms to the office

* Changed the online "Join AERC" and Horse Registrations to an improved credit card transaction site

* Made available endurance video for possible new members so they can see what endurance is about

TomCat

*Work in progress includes implementing Rule 6.2 so that finish pulse time is recorded in TC, displayed on the online calendar, and a part of the online sanctioning process.

* Fixed a bug in TC that happened when new AERC numbers exceeded a limit set in the original programming

Ride Results Input online/Online Sanctioning

* Fixed identified bugs on excel input

* Worked with office to add additional text to clarify options

* Made secure link information visible on all credit card payment links. Pages had been secure before but <https://> was not showing on all pages

Ride Management program to replace the EasyCare program Program is identified as ERIC. Program runs on laptop at ride site

* Worked with developer of program Eric Rueter to add features

* Provided debug assistance for early and present versions

* Provided Helpdesk support for program

* Provide monthly updates for members/horses for this program Member's Page

* Modified so that after April 1 - only current members have access

Online Services

· Provided Helpdesk services for all online services including

· Online ride results,

· Online Sanctioning

· Volunteer Hours Reporting

· Member's Page

Join/Renew Polls/Surveys

* Set-up and administered Membership Committee Survey

Veterinary Committee Report
AERC Mid-Year BoD Meeting
October 08, 2011

I. Accomplishments in 2011

- A. Have written 10 monthly Vet Forum articles for Endurance News
- B. Published 2 quarterly AERC Veterinary Newsletters
- C. Continued the AERC Veterinary Certification Program. A total of 251 veterinarians have been certified to date.
- D. Have drug tested 12 rides in 2011 (3 MT, 2 SW, 2 NW, 1 NE, 2 SE, 1 CT, 1 MW) – with one positive for prohibited substances.
- E. Have conducted two conference calls. Topics included discussions on applying staples to horses while in competition and the allowed use of “Flair” strips while in competition. No resolution on these issues was achieved.
- F. Have written 4 fatality reports, in the process of preparing two more fatality reports for a total in 2011 of 6 fatalities to date.
- G. Have discussed with the president and legal counsel issues with positive drug test and the “randomness” of our current drug testing policy. A change in wording to the drug testing procedure is being suggested to allow for true randomness in our drug testing procedures.
- H. Have worked on drafts of treatment resource designed to provide quick reference guide for all treatment vets.
- I. Have started the revision of the Post Ride Statistical Form.
- J. Provided a resource to riders, veterinarians and board members for questions and concerns regarding AERC veterinary matters.
- K. Reviewed articles for Endurance News that related to horse health.
- L. Updated the appendices to Rule 13, the AERC Drug Rule.
- M. Worked with USEF on the AERC drug testing program.

II. Future Goals

- A. Continue to work with involved committees to implement the voluntary use of a 30 minute completion criterion.
- B. Plan and implement the veterinary continuing education program for the 2011 convention. Plan to expand hours and course topics again in 2011. This includes obtaining sponsors.
- C. Discuss and consider again, design of treatment veterinarian certification test and system. Consider following model being implemented by FEI.
- D. Discuss and finalize suggested wording for a rule add in, or change, prohibiting control judges from working rides that have received a disciplinary action against them.