



## June 2008 Newsletter

### President's message:

Greetings fellow event enthusiasts, June is upon us and it looks like we have had a very good first cutting of hay. Please take advantage of the forums to share hay suppliers with each other. Our next meeting will be July 10<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. at The Rockville Library. Our speaker will be Dr. Dan Slovis from Three Oaks Equine clinic, and the topic will be Lameness. Those of you who missed the last meeting at Wendy Schmitt's house with Dawn Cooper really missed a good time and lots of great information. Also, on Saturday, June 7<sup>th</sup>, we had our first XC clinic with Joselyn Kriss at Oakdale Farm in Powhatan. It went well and was a great deal of fun. We have her scheduled for a second clinic on September 27<sup>th</sup> as well. If you have not already signed up and want to see if there is room, please call Wendy Schmitt for information. In addition to the XC clinic, Laurie Dowling-McIntire and I headed out to the USEA Safety Summit in Lexington, Ky. Look for an update from us about our experiences there in this newsletter. Lastly, there are a number of *Coffee & Crossrails* activities and trail rides planned for the next month or two, so please check out the website frequently for updates and activities. (This Sat., June 21, 8 – 10 am C & C at my house in Gum Springs.)

Sincerely,  
Hollyn

### Penmerryl update:

Hello. Below you will find a quick update on the CVACTA Penmerryl Trip. If you are definitely interested in attending, please let me know by this Friday, June 20, 2008. If all arrangements are confirmed, deposits will be due by next Friday, June 27, 2008. Thank you.

What? CVACTA Penmerryl Farm Trip

When? Friday, October 17-20, 2008

Cost? \$250 per person/horse combination (Price based upon 6 members attending.)

Trip includes lodging, stabling, and three 1 or 2 hour lessons with Debbie Rodriguez (one dressage, one stadium, and one cross country). Debbie will provide 6 hours of instruction, and it will be up to the group to determine how that time is utilized.

Thanks again,  
Gina Sybert  
Vice President - CVACTA  
[gina.sybert@earthlink.net](mailto:gina.sybert@earthlink.net)

## **Club news:**

We have a new fall horseshow chairwoman, Megan Holt. She is looking to organize two fall events: one at Tuckahoe Plantation, and one at Aria Farm. Megan will be presenting her plan and budget at the July meeting so please be there to vote on the activities and budgets. She has also put a survey up on the website to get feedback from the last show, please go to the web and complete this so that she will be able to work to make our shows even better.

The bylaws committee will be presenting their recommendations to the board this month, and the board will make them available for club review and approval this summer.

## **USEF/USEA Safety Summit:**

On Friday June 6, 2008 I headed out to the safety summit in Lexington, Kentucky not exactly sure what to expect. "Wow" is all I can say. There were about 250 people in attendance, and we had the gamut of attendees. Bruce and Buck Davidson, Kim Severson, Dorothy Crowell (who is awesome!), Sally, David and Karen O'Connor, Kevin Baumgartner, Captain Mark Phillips, a representative from the AAEP, The HSUS and everyone in between from BN riders to event organizers and technical delegates. There were a number of people who wear multiple hats, such as Gretchen Butts, and everyone got to participate and voice their opinions. There were lots of perspectives; each one carried its own validity, but the main reason for the summit, as David stated right from the beginning, was to find ways to prevent horse falls. It was intense to say the least, but everyone stayed civil, and hopefully, we came out of it with some groundwork for changes.

I am including the summit notes published by Duncan MacRae, Area 2 Chair.

### **Lexington Safety Summit...Notes**

**By: Duncan MacRae, Area II Chairman**

**Posted: June 9, 2008**

\*\*\*\*\*Important Disclaimer\*\*\*\*\*

The synopsis that follows is my own paraphrase of what was discussed at the summit. It is by no means comprehensive. What I report here is likely colored by my own personal bias and experience, despite my best efforts to report the facts and remain objective. (Except for the long format \*, which I am shamelessly in favor of!!!!)

### **Some introductory discussion**

David O'Connor. Opening remarks. 2% of rider falls result in injury. Few of those are serious. 50% of horse falls result in serious rider/horse injury. Plainly, reducing horse falls will go a long way to reducing catastrophic injury for both horses and riders.

The focus of the summit should be on how to reduce horse falls.

Kevin Baumgardner: Praised Jimmy Wofford and Danny Warrington's editorial pieces. Expressed a need for us all to unite and become "evangelists" for safety.

## **Frangible Pins**

Only 4% of jumps are built with frangible pins. Frangible fences are only useful to the horse and rider who are already in deep trouble! When the question was put to the group; "Should all fences be frangible?" the answer was a resounding NO! (There was some confusion about whether the 4% number was for US or UK courses. I think the end result was that since the UK mandates all fences that fit the frangible guidelines use frangible pins, the 4% refers to UK. I think that the US has far less than 4% frangible fences.)

The question was raised would the riders ride less carefully if they knew that the fences would fall/deform. No answer was found. CMP noted that British research found that a 2 foot diameter log, suspended in free space, theoretically has enough mass to cause a rotational fall. (He did not specify how long that 2' diameter log would be!)

## **Limiting Elements v. Distance**

The topic of number of jumping elements v. distance. The proposed standard is one jumping element per commenced 100m. Currently, FEI courses average: 1\* 1/135, 2\* 1/145, 3 & 4\* 1/160-178m. It was deemed more important that the ratio would prevent having max # of fences in min distance rather than a specific distance between fences.

## **Speeds on course**

CMP made the point that it is a uniquely US phenomenon that riders feel they should make the time. Not so in other countries.

Watches for the lower levels. A fairly strong sentiment against but that was tempered a bit. (Ed. If the LL are using a watch, it would seem to me that they should HAVE to wheel the course and find minute markers. Otherwise they ride blindly and look at their watch at the end and slow way down to avoid speed faults. Teaches nothing about pace.)

Current study by John Staples identified a BN rider going 500 MPM and a 4\* rider doing 900 MPM. His technology has the ability to track a horse and rider over an entire course and plot their speed on a google map. Can also see speed at any given point as well as averages. Useful data for CDs.

## **Technical difficulty of courses**

Dorothy Crowell noted that after a 10 year absence from 4\* level, she felt that the courses had not changed much at that level. Courses at lower levels have changed significantly.

Sally O'Connor strongly pitched a return to 2002 and before course specs. Ease the Training courses and make them friendly and inviting for the horses. They are too much like "mini prelim" courses and not good, safe, inviting courses. Scare developing horses. CMP and Tremaine Cooper both voiced the opinion that size needs to be at or near max on the majority of fences. (softer at more difficult questions is OK.)

USEA is working on an online addition to each events Omnibus listing which will list specifics about the particular course to help Comps evaluate if the course is what they are looking for. (NOT course ratings! Just info about your course to get away from the old "Average for horses with some experience at the level" useless bit of info.

There was a renewed call for course advisor checks of training and prelim courses.

## **Qualifications 2009**

(As best I understood the conversation.)

Prelim: 4 qualifying results as follows: Dr. <50 PP// XC zero jump PP & < 90 secs over OT// Stadium Not more than 16 Jumping PP. Within 2 years.

Intermediate and advanced: As above but ONE XC score with 20 jump PP allowed.

Danny Warrington noted that some pairs could be well prepared for the next level with 3 qualifying results, other pairs might not be ready with 20. This began a long discussion of qualifying criteria, without any real resolution, other than that the group was basically in favor of the above as a good starting point. This was also a trigger for the discussion about prepared vs. qualified. We should be chasing education, not qualifying scores!!

Others suggested that coaches and trainers should also be licensed. (ICP???) Many agreed that they have all had to look away from some of the things they see going on in warm-up. Shelley Lambert noted that the students of one trainer produced virtually all of the injuries at her spring event.

Rider licensing was discussed at length. It seems like a pretty good solution but there is currently no plan on when or how to implement. Consensus was to start by licensing 4\* riders and go from there.

Another suggestion was to deal with those that have stood on the sidelines and thought they were watching "An accident looking for a place to happen" kind of rides. In UK, there is an informal but pretty effective method to get word to a rider that they are...not at their best, shall we say????? Also a watch list of riders who bear greater scrutiny from the GJ and TD. NOT PUBLIC INFO.

There was a discussion of yellow and red flags and their meaning. As I got it, today a red flag means pull up. Rider is eliminated. Several said that they (or students) had been eliminated but never received an explanation as to why. This does not benefit the sport.

Rider licensing/eligibility was hot topic, as expected. The best solution I heard was one where riders accrued positive points for good rides and lost points for faults, eliminations and falls. A certain number of points would be required to compete at a certain level. If one fell below that number of points, you would have to move back a level.

N.B.; NOT A FIRM IDEA YET. UNDER DEVELOPMENT!!!!!!

Malcolm Hook suggested a program which only dealt with the 5-15% of riders who are a problem. Not essential to involve the majority who are not having problems. The idea of "Style Points/Awards" is not dead.

## **Dangerous Riding**

Some riders who have been pulled off course have not received an explanation as to why they were removed. Unacceptable.

Gretchen Butts noted that at a recent FEI conference in Sweden, of the FEI officials in attendance, NONE had issued a DR penalty.

## **Officials**

There were a disturbing number of riders who felt that their concerns regarding a XC course were not being duly considered, much less addressed. Rider Reps need to have more impact, and respect from, competition management, ground jury and TD.

There was strong support for paid, professional TDs to be employed by USEF. Orgs might be given a choice of 3 to select their TD. These TDs would work at least 40 events per year and so, would theoretically be more up on what's happening. Better practiced.

They would also be more objective since they would not have to worry about pleasing Orgs. Perhaps TD reports might be more useful. Malcolm noted that current reports are less than ideal.

Funding must also be found for education of officials and trainers. Tim Holekamp and others are supporting ICP development. More needs to be done. There are now about 160 ICP certified instructors. A goal of 500 in two years was set.

## **Equine Cardio System**

There was a lot of consideration given to research on EIPH. Kent Allen is developing criteria for the research with Catherine Kohn.

There is a need to identify sources of funding. AAEP may be willing to help.

Catherine Kohn said we may be approaching the physical limits of the equine cardio vascular and pulmonary capability. (Ed. Consider Jimmy Wofford's article about the Grand National. 4.5 miles at race speed. We are asking our 4\* horses to do 11+ minutes of XC where the speeds between fences are high, then slow down, jump, then accelerate. It takes a great deal more energy to accelerate than it does to maintain speed. With about 30 numbered elements on a 4\* course, the horse must accelerate from 350-400 MPM back to 800 MPM MANY times.)

## **Summary**

At the end, it was apparent that there was no great call to change the sport to something different. Eventing will remain the sport that we all know and love.

"We need to preserve what we have but make room for change." John Long

"Change won't happen overnight" Kevin Baumgardner.

There was a pervasive theme of education for riders especially, but also for horses. "Our basics are not good enough." David O'Connor

Howard Simpson asked what we do in the event of another serious accident before we have the opportunity to implement change.

David answered that we need to be willing to place blame where it belongs. Much like the NTSB will call a plane crash pilot error if that is the case. If the accident was caused by "pilot" error, we need to be willing to state that.

The same goes for other possible contributing factors. He used course building as an example. If I build a jump to test a particular question and it does not get the desired result, I need to be willing to admit I was wrong and learn from the experience. Not repeat the error.

CMP warned that it is difficult from a human POV to lay guilt on a rider who may be recovering from serious injury. We need to be compassionate and considerate.

USEA and USEF will be supplying frangible pins, no charge, on request. Effective immediately.

We need to improve our data collection and analysis.

We need to have accident data delivered and analyzed more quickly. All data to be collected at a central point. Causal data to be disseminated broadly. There are issues with HIPPA and liability that must be addressed.

The addition of a level between Training and Prelim was met with very strong negative sentiment. Also, a two track system was similarly dismissed. The group felt that the offering of a range of speeds at a level met the need. Also, T/P and P/I divisions are viewed as helping to ease the transition.

Riders coming into the sport have a different background than those of the past. They are less likely to have fox hunting or steeplechase racing experience. How do we replace that knowledge? Through education. What that education consists of has not been well defined.

Heather Bailey pressed for continuation of the long format. I supported that with a statement of how important that first one star is to the development of the relationship between horse and rider as well as the epiphany that takes place for the rider. (At least for me!) David was "indirectly" in support as he mentioned, several times, the VA CCI\* and the lack of participation.

Philip Dutton said that he felt that 2 or 3 steeplechase rides did little to educate the horse, but I disagreed with him because of what I said above.

Please take the above as one person's view of what was important and what was said. I am not a reporter and my judgment has been known to be clouded before. I had to leave before they wrapped up the session this morning, so I missed the last few minutes. On the whole I think this was a productive meeting. It has raised a great many questions and hopefully provided a few answers at the same time. This is a long term process so don't be disappointed if you don't see immediate results. Results will take some time. No matter what else, the USEA and USEF are to be congratulated on taking the initiative to host such a meeting. Make sure you support them in this process.

Sincerely,

Duncan MacRae  
USEA Area II chair  
610.346.7057 908.413.2927

If you want to go and listen to the actual audio of the summit, you can go to this link [https://www.usef.org/\\_AUAIFrames/SafetySummit/webCastlogin.aspx](https://www.usef.org/_AUAIFrames/SafetySummit/webCastlogin.aspx)

# May Meeting Minutes:

## CVACTA Membership Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 8, 2008

- 7:25 PM – Meeting brought to order by President Hollyn Mangione
- Treasurer Megan Proffitt reported that the current club account has approximately \$1975.00 and that there has been little treasury activity.
- President Mangione mentioned the possibility of a club-sponsored show for the fall and the need for a show committee. Show to possibly be held at Tuckahoe Plantation.
- Vice President Gina Sybert discussed upcoming members-only mock horse trials and the need for more volunteers – especially ring stewards. Sybert also mentioned that works were underway for a trip to Penmerryl Farm possibly in the fall.
- President Mangione appointed Gigi Carillo as trail committee chairperson with Sybert working in conjunction with her.
- A decision was made to resend the email requesting entries for the club-sponsored dressage clinic to be held at Glamorgan Farm.
- President Mangione, along with member Kristine Slovis, introduced speaker Eric Bull of ETB Equine Construction. Eric Bull proceeded to give an interesting and informative discussion on the design and construction of cross-country jumps.
- 9:25 PM – Meeting adjourned.



**Congratulations to Kristine Slovis and Athena on their win at Novice at Rubicon!!!!**

Which reminds me..... **SEND in your competition scores!** Forms are available on our website.

# June meeting minutes:

## CVACTA Membership Meeting Minutes

Thursday, June 12, 2008

The June general meeting for CVACTA was held at the beautiful Ashland home of member Wendy Schmidt. The meeting was called to order by Hollyn Mangione.

### Old Business:

- Discussion about the Jocelyn Kriss cross country schooling clinic – Six members attended and seemed to enjoy and learn from her as an instructor. The club will be having another schooling opportunity in the fall with Jocelyn at Oakdale Farm.
- Bylaw committee represented by Molly Armentrout stated the process is starting to move forward with the computers being up and running.
- Penmerryl Trip – Debbie Rodriguez available on two weekends: one in September and one in October. Cost for the instructor is going to be \$560.00 + lodging and food. Available to club members will be 8 – 45 minute schooling sessions on Saturday. Reservations with deposits will be necessary to secure Debbie Rodriguez. Information and reservation requests will be sent out.
- Treasurers report – The club bank balance is \$2,198.25

### New Business:

- Discussion for two, fundraiser horse shows for the fall. The farm locations being considered are Aria Farm and Tuckahoe Plantation. One date is the second Saturday in October.
- July meeting to be held at Rockville Library at 7 p.m. The topic will be on lameness and will be presented by Dr. Dan Slovis of Three Oaks Equine.
- August meeting to be a potluck picnic and tack sale with families invited at the Deep Run Hunt Club clubhouse. We will have access to the pool. ☺
- The USEF/USEA safety summit was recently held and attended by CVACTA members. Information from the summit will be forthcoming in a report.
- Coffee and Cross rails- Hollyn to plan one for her home on Saturday, June 21<sup>st</sup> 8-10 a.m.
- Trail ride for Saturday in Petersburg unable to be attended by host members. Other members are still encouraged to ride.
- Survey going out soon on horse show: how it went for planning of future shows.
- Elizabeth Schooley has volunteered to chair a members' only event. She will be contacting Hollyn, and Hollyn will send out a questionnaire to club members with suggestions of activities.

Meeting commenced with very interesting info from Dawn Cooper of Total Balance.