United States Hunter Jumper Association

USHJA Joint Amateurs Task Force Meeting Minutes

September 30, 2019 – 4:30 pm ET via Teleconference

Joint Amateurs Task Force Members Participating: Tracey Weinberg (Chair), Penelope Ayers (Vice Chair), Wendy Chapot Nunn, Courtney Cummings, Adele Einhorn, Karen Freywald, Martha Hall, Rachel Howell, Yvetta Rechler-Newman (9)

Joint Amateurs Task Force Members Not Present: Susan McKinley, Ariane Stiegler (2)

Also Present: Christina Schlusemeyer (USHJA HWG Junior Task Force Chair), Jennifer Osterman (USHJA Assistant Managing Director of Sport Programs) (2)

I. Welcome and roll call
Ms. Weinberg called the meeting to order and Ms. Osterman performed the roll call; with nine (9) Task Force members present, a quorum was met.

II. Approval of meeting minutes from September 9, 2019
Ms. Einhorn made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from September 9, 2019; Ms. Ayers seconded and the motion was passed without further discussion.

III. Discussion of Amateur Age Splits
Ms. Weinberg began the call introducing Ms. Schlusemeyer as the USHJA Junior Task Force representative to discuss the ongoing conversation regarding equalizing the number of entries by adjusting the age splits in hunter classes only. There are two ideas on the table; increasing the Junior age from 18 to 21 years old, and adjusting to a three way split in the Amateur Owner Hunters. Ms. Schlusemeyer spoke about moving the Junior age to 21 is just at the very beginning stages. She mentions that the association and federation always want to encourage members to continue in the sport, and this may help that cause in time. The three way split had become unpopular because at the older age splits the same people would always win. Ms. Ayers referenced the 3’ Adult Amateur division is successful with three splits, so it might be possible to work for the Amateur Owners as well. These splits would also influence competition managers because adding sections would be more money, and the 3’ and 3’3” are bigger in numbers than the 3’6”.
Ms. Rechler Newman discussed the numbers within the sections being heavy on the young and older ages, but the middle age is weak. So it would be beneficial to restructure based on the distribution. It may be possible that the age splits are not the only cause of decrease in numbers. Ms. Ayers provided feedback from Amateur riders at Capital Challenge that many people are in favor of changing the splits. Ms. Schlusemeyer said that increasing the Junior age is just at the very beginning of discussion, and it
would be a very big change for the sport. There are a few medals and finals that are for riders 21 and younger, but majority is still at 18 years old. She asked the Task Force if they would prefer the Junior Task Force to develop more conversation on increasing the Junior age, or for them to stay focused on the Amateur splits at this time. Ms. Weinberg provided her ideas that it would make sense from a training perspective to keep young riders in the sport as Junior until they are 21. Currently, there are multiple finals that a young rider can work towards, but it can get confusing with some being 18 and under while others are 21 and under. There is also the Young Rider category which is under 25 years old in the Jumper divisions. Another Task Force suggested that there could eventually be a Young Rider hunter section, as well as the Young Rider jumper sections. Ms. Weinberg proposed that the Amateur changes would come easier and be more attainable; however, it might be beneficial to discuss amongst both Task Forces at the USHJA Annual Meeting. She suggested that Task Force members attend each other’s meetings to continue the conversation between groups. It would also be beneficial to survey the Junior membership in addition to the Amateur memberships to get more direct feedback. Ms. Schlusemeyer agrees that this would be a great idea, and we are always working toward making our sport more current.

IV. Amateur Jumper Rule Change
This item of the agenda was tabled until another call or Annual Meeting.

V. Amateur Social Media Influencers
Ms. Ayers opened the topic to the Task Force’s thoughts on the letter sent from two members that act as Social Media Influencers. Ms. Rechler Newman is in disagreement with the members who wrote the letter about remaining amateurs. It was suggested that the magazine reference is not a great example, but there is compensation through advertisement. Ms. Weinberg believes that this compensation is against the Amateur rules. The Task Force discussed the use of logos and banners for marketing purposes. Ms. Howell brought forward the difference between using logos for promotional and compensation purposes versus using them as self-expression. There is a difference between accepting remuneration, at any amount, and accepting anything over $300 as a gift. Both are under the rules as not acceptable to be classified as an Amateur. Anything over $300 gift would be considered as sponsorship. The USEF Rulebook GR1306 speaks to the amateur rule. It was previously noted that the Task Force will work toward re-working and tightening up the language around marketing and brand ambassadorship. Ms. Howell offered language that she drafted previously to help with this project.
Ms. Weinberg brought the Task Force back to the Social Media Influencers and to discuss how they should respond. She suggested that there should be assistance from the legal teams to formulate a response, and the Task Force was in agreement.

VI. Old business
No old business was discussed.

VII. New business
Ms. Weinberg and Ms. Ayers will work toward the agenda for Annual Meeting in December.
VIII. Adjournment

Ms. Chapot Nunn made a motion to adjourn, and Ms. Howell seconded the motion. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:23 pm (EST).

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Osterman
USHJA Assistant Managing Director of Sport Programs