Executive Committee Meeting Minutes – April 2, 2018

Members Participating: Mary Babick, John Bahret, Shelley Campf, David Distler, Margie Engle, Dianne Johnson, Anne Kursinski, Charlotte Skinner-Robson, Larry Langer, Britt McCormick, Cheryl Rubenstein

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Marianne, Kutner, Kevin Price, Katlynn Sacco (USEF), Leslie Mangan

I. Roll Call
Roll call was conducted and a quorum was met.

II. Adoption of Amended Agenda
Ms. Babick requested amending the agenda to add an update related to additional referred rule change proposals to item VI of the agenda.
A motion was made and seconded to adopt the amended agenda. The motion was unanimously approved.

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes
A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the March 5, 2018 Executive Committee meeting, as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

VI. Consideration of Mileage Exemption Requests
A motion was made and seconded to place all mileage exemption requests on the floor for discussion and vote. The motion was unanimously approved.

World Equestrian Fall Series I (“Applicant Competition”) vs. Split Rock Jumping Tour: Columbus International I & Chagrin Valley Farms (“Priority Competitions”)

No conflicts of interest on the part of any of the Executive Committee members in attendance were identified with respect to this request.

The committee considered the following in its review:

- The committee noted the radial mileage between the Applicant and the Priority Competitions is 76.14 miles (Split Rock) and 189.30 miles (Chagrin Valley Farms), with a mileage boundary of 250 miles for each.
- The committee noted from the materials provided that the Priority Competition (Chagrin Valley Farms) granted permission to the Applicant to run in 2018.
- The committee noted from the materials provided that the Applicant Competition was unable to meet the minimum horse count requirement at the Premier/Level 3 rating in its first year running.
• The committee’s opinion is that adding another event within the mileage of an existing event at the same or similar ratings almost always reduces the number of competitors attending the Priority Competition(s), thus reducing the number of competitors in specific classes and sections, and diluting the level of competition.

• The committee’s opinion (which is supported by the Federation-provided horse entry number information for all competitions involved in this request) is that there are likely not sufficient competitors in this geographic area at this time of year to adequately support and sustain a competition at the Applicant’s requested ratings. The committee feels that despite the Priority Competition (Chagrin Valley) providing its permission, it is not in the best interest of the sport to grant approval for this mileage exemption request.

• The committee noted from the materials provided that the Applicant is citing that their competitions are geared toward a “middle market” constituency, however the committee questions how offering a competition at the Premier Hunter and Jumper Level 4 rating would accomplish this desired objective.

• The committee noted from the provided materials that the Applicant Competition can run without conflict at a Regional I Hunter and Jumper Level 2 rating and feels this Hunter and Jumper rating would more correctly meet the Applicant’s documented objective of providing competitive opportunities to its targeted middle market constituency. As a result, the committee recommends the Applicant pursue that option.

A motion was made and seconded to recommend disapproval of the Applicant’s request to conduct its 2018 competition (September 26-30, 2018) at the Premier Hunter and Jumper Level 4 ratings. The motion was unanimously approved.

David Distler and Larry Langer both identified conflicts of interest with the next three mileage exemption requests, recused themselves, and left the meeting prior to discussion and vote.

World Equestrian Fall II (“Applicant Competition”) vs. Brave Horse VII, Split Rock Jumping Tour: Columbus International II & Gallop in the Glen II (“Priority Competitions”)

The committee considered the following in its review:

• The committee noted the radial mileage between the Applicant and the Priority Competitions is 76.14 miles (Brave Horse VII and Split Rock Jumping Tour) and 229.13 miles (Gallop in the Glen II) with a mileage boundary of 250 miles.

• The committee noted from the provided materials that the Priority Competition (Gallop in the Glen II) granted permission to the Applicant to run in 2018.

• The committee’s opinion is that adding another event within the mileage of an existing event at the same or similar ratings almost always reduces the number of competitors attending the Priority Competition(s), thus reducing the number of competitors in specific classes and sections, and diluting the level of competition.

• The committee’s opinion (which is supported by the Federation-provided horse entry number information for all competitions involved in this request) is that there are likely not sufficient competitors in this geographic area at this time of year to adequately support and sustain a new competition entering into the environment at the Applicant’s requested ratings.

• The committee noted from the materials provided that the Applicant is citing that their competitions are geared toward a “middle market” constituency, however the committee
questions how offering a competition at the Premier Hunter and Jumper Level 4 rating would accomplish this desired objective.

- The committee noted from the provided materials that the Applicant Competition can run without conflict at a Regional II Hunter and Jumper Level 2 rating and feels this Hunter and Jumper rating would more correctly meet the Applicant’s documented objective of providing competitive opportunities to its targeted middle market constituency. As a result, the committee recommends the Applicant pursue that option.

A motion was made and seconded to recommend *disapproval* of the Applicant’s request to conduct its 2018 competition (October 3-7, 2018) at the Premier Hunter and Level 4 Jumper ratings. The motion was unanimously approved.

Tryon Fall 2 (“Applicant Competition”) vs. Fall in the Hills, North Carolina State Fair H-J and Gallop in the Glen II (“Priority Competitions”)

The committee considered the following in its review:

- The committee noted the radial mileage between the Applicant and the Priority Competitions is 246.58 miles (Fall in the Hills), 191.90 miles (North Carolina State Fair H-J) and 105.50 miles (Gallop in the Glen II) with a mileage boundary of 250 miles.
- The committee noted from the provided materials that the Applicant applied for a mileage exemption in 2015, but was denied. The Applicant ran at a Regional I Hunter rating and Level 3 Jumper without conflict in 2015 and 2016, then upgraded to Premier Hunter and Level 6 Jumper in 2017 with permission.
- The committee noted from the provided materials that the Priority Competitions (North Carolina State Fair H-J and Gallop in the Glen II) both provided permission to the Applicant to run in 2018.
- The committee noted that the Licensee for both the Priority Competition (Gallop in the Glen II) and the Applicant are the same competition management company which was taken into consideration upon review of this request.
- The committee also noted from the provided materials that the Priority Competition (Fall in the Hills) did not provide its response within the timeframe specified by the Federation.
- Despite the fact that the Priority Competition (Fall in the Hills) did not submit a timely response, the committee feels it is in the best interest of the sport to support a new competition with Priority Competition status, especially in its first year.
- The Committee feels it is generally not in the best interest of the sport to approve an Applicant Premier-rated competition that would be held over the same dates as existing Priority National-rated and/or Regional-rated competitions, especially when one of those Priority Competitions is in its first year.
- Despite the permission provided to the Applicant by the Priority Competitions (North Carolina State Fair H-J & Gallop in the Glen II), the committee questions whether approving this request might inadvertently contribute to the creation of a unilateral competition effect. The Executive Committee discussed that the license may be being used to protect the priority date holder’s mileage.
- The committee noted from the provided materials that the Applicant Competition can run without conflict at the Regional I Hunter/Level 4 Jumper rating, as it has in prior years, and recommends the Applicant pursue that option.
A motion was made and seconded to recommend disapproval of the Applicant’s request to conduct its 2018 competition (October 3-7, 2018) at the Premier Hunter and Level 6 Jumper ratings. The motion was unanimously approved.

Tryon Fall Festival I (“Applicant Competition”) vs. Atlanta in the Fall & Alltech National Horse Show (“Priority Competitions”)

The committee considered the following in its review:

- The committee noted the radial mileage between the Applicant and the Priority Competitions is 187.97 miles (Atlanta in the Fall) and 240.34 (National Horse Show) with a mileage boundary of 250 miles.
- The committee noted from the provided materials that the Applicant Competition was approved to run in 2017 at the Regional I Hunter and Level 3 Jumper with no conflict, but cancelled. The Applicant is now requesting a rating upgrade in 2018.
- The committee’s opinion is that the Priority Competition (National Horse Show), because it is a year-end final that requires qualification, would likely not be negatively impacted by the Applicant competition, however the Priority Competition (Atlanta in the Fall), whose horse entry numbers are trending downward, could be negatively impacted if this mileage exemption is granted.
- The Committee feels it is generally not in the best interest of the sport to approve an Applicant Premier-rated competition that would be held over the same dates as existing Priority National-rated and/or Regional-rated competitions.
- The committee noted from the provided materials that the Applicant Competition can run without conflict at the Regional I Hunter/Level 3 Jumper rating and recommends the Applicant pursue that option.

A motion was made and seconded to recommend disapproval of the Applicant’s request to conduct its 2018 competitions (October 31 – November 4, 2018) at the Premier Hunter and Level 4 Jumper ratings. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Distler and Mr. Langer rejoined the meeting.

V. Consideration of Mandatory Fee Collection & Heritage Status Request

A motion was made and seconded to place the Mandatory Fee Collection and USEF Heritage Status requests on the floor for discussion and vote. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mandatory Fee Collection Request – Orange County Horse Shows Association

A recommendation made during the February, 2018 Executive Committee meeting was repeated that called for the formation of a small group to investigate the advisability of having all of the organizations that request permission to collect these mandatory participation fees gradually phase out of the practice over time (perhaps by decreasing the amount collected by $1 per year). It was noted again that the small pool of California-based associations are the only affiliate organizations utilizing these practices to raise funding and the suggestion was made that it might be prudent to thoroughly investigate the overall practice to determine whether alternative fundraising techniques should be implemented that don’t have the potential to unduly burden competitors who are not from the area and are not members of the Association.
A motion was made and seconded to recommend approval of the Orange County Horse Show Association request to collect $3 per exhibitor and $5 per OCHSA Medal rider at its sanctioned competitions in 2018. The motion was unanimously approved.

Heritage Status – Charleston Summer Classic I & II
Charlotte Skinner-Robson identified a conflict of interest with respect to this agenda item, recused herself and left the meeting prior to discussion and vote.

Hearing no discussion, the Executive Committee voted unanimously to recommended approval of granting USEF Heritage Competition status to the Charleston Summer Classic I & II horse shows.

Ms. Skinner-Robson rejoined the meeting.

VI. Consideration of Amended/Referred Rule Change Proposals
A motion was made and seconded to place consideration of amended Rule Change Proposals on the floor for discussion and vote. The motion was unanimously approved.

GR309 (#339-17 – Draft 2) & Special Competition Application Guidelines Draft
The committee reviewed draft #2 of the Special Competition definition rule change proposal,(RCP) as well as the companion Special Competition Application Guidelines document that were referred from the USEF March Board meeting. Several questions and concerns were raised regarding the RCP and the guidelines document. Specifically, the listing of certain types of competitions were removed from both the RCP and the guidelines document, and how those types of competitions would be treated/handled going forward if the RCP was approved. Additionally, concerns were raised about granting multi-year approval for events as well as for leagues/series. Under the spirit of the original Special Competition rule, annually repeated competitions were never intended to be able to utilize the Special Competition rule in order to be licensed. However, the current environment has evolved to the extent that there currently exists the potential for competition organizers to completely circumvent the mileage rule and be provided a license year after year for their annually repeated event by utilizing the Special Competition rule. Some Board members feel this poses a potentially dangerous situation.

While some Board members agreed, in concept, with what the revised RCP was attempting to accomplish, they felt that the current version is not fully formulated enough to deliver on its intent. The Board recommends this RCP be withdrawn at this time and suggests fully engaging all the affiliates in detailed discussion about this rule and work through all the questions and concerns prior to submitting a new and more fully formulated RCP in the next rule change cycle.

A motion was made and seconded to recommend disapproval of the rule change proposal #339-17 (GR309) and its companion “Special Competition Application Guidelines” document. The motion was unanimously approved.

The USHJA provided the following comment to the Federation with its recommendation for disapproval of the RCP:

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USHJA feels this current draft and its companion guidelines document are not yet fully formulated and do not adequately accommodate and address the needs of the current competition environment, while still protecting the integrity of the Federation’s licensing process and its application of the mileage rules. Specifically, USHJA is not in favor of granting Special Competition licenses on a multi-year basis, especially when such events are not subject to application of the mileage rule. USHJA also feels that removing (from both the rule and the guidelines document) “Federation National Finals, Federation National Championships and Recognized Affiliate national championships” from the list of event types than can be considered Special Competitions needs to be addressed. Additionally, USHJA feels that while unique annually repeated events that can’t meet regular licensing criteria (e.g., standalone International Hunter Derby competitions) likely do not fall under the true or intended definition of a Special Competition, they should nonetheless be specifically addressed within or alongside this rule change proposal. USHJA strongly recommends disapproving this RCP at this time and fully engaging all the affiliates in discussion of this topic prior to submitting a new RCP in the next rule change cycle.

**JP104 (#169-17 – Proposed Draft 5) – Bonus Money**

The committee reviewed a proposed new draft of the USHJA RCP #169-17 (JP104) concerning bonus money. The new draft proposes adding the following sentence to the existing rule change proposal:

> “Leading Rider and other series awards which require participation in multiple competitions are exempt from this rule.”

One additional necessary edit was noted which called for striking the words “total amount,” from JP108.5:

> “For add-back classes the total amount, base prize money (or money guaranteed by management) for a class plus any bonus money, if offered, is used to determine the requirements for that class…”

Hearing no additional discussion, the Executive Committee voted unanimously to approve the proposed changes to #169-17 (JP104), as amended on the floor, the updated draft of which will be sent forward to the USEF Board for final approval during their mid-year meeting.

**HU133.0 (#189-17) & GR1113.2 (#349-17) – Definition of Compete and Half-Points**

Ms. Babick provided the Board with an update that these two referred RCPs will be going forward to the USEF Board for consideration at the mid-year meeting with an amendment to their effective date. Changing the effective date on both RCPs from December 1, 2018 to December 1, 2019 will allow developers adequate time to make appropriate modifications to their competition management software in order to comply with the new rule.

**VII. Consideration of Zone & Sport Program Requests**

A motion was made and seconded to place all Sport Program requests on the floor for discussion and vote. The motion was unanimously approved.

- **2019 Pony Hunter Derby Specification Analysis**

The committee reviewed the current specifications taking into consideration the recommendations made by the Pony Task Force to adjust the point structure by adding
one point per pony entered to the base points already being awarded. Additionally, the task force noted that there appears to be a contradiction within the current specifications concerning the minimum number of ponies required to compete for points to count. Upon review of the language (Section II.B.4 & .5 and Section II.G.1), the committee agreed that such a contradiction exists. Ms. Babick agreed to review and correct the language as well as make the adjustment to the point allocation. Once that process is complete, the specifications will be redistributed to the committee for final review/approval.

A motion was made and seconded to table vote on the 2019 USHJA Pony Hunter Derby Specifications until amendments could be made to correct the conflict language and modify the point allocation chart. The motion was unanimously approved.

- **2019 USHJA Pony Hunter Derby Championship Locations**
  The committee reviewed the Pony Task Force recommendation to place the Pony Hunter Derby Championships in an east and west location, and specifically to hold them in conjunction with the two USEF Junior Hunter National Championships. Mary Babick reported that USEF is not in favor of this proposal. Alternative time lines and locations were discussed, along with possible qualifying time lines. At the end of discussion, the committee agreed that conducting both an East and a West Championship at some point during the summer months likely offered the greatest participation opportunities for members across the country. The group also discussed placing the championships (but only in the initial year) to ensure the proper timing and venue quality to support the events in their start-up year. The host venues for subsequent events will be selected utilizing an application process. The consensus of the group was that the Kentucky Horse Park was the preferred venue for the east, and one of the Blenheim shows would be the preferred location for the west (pending competition management agreement). Should the requested competitions not be available to host the class(es), an expedited application process would be opened for the 2019 Championships. Mary Babick agreed to reach out to Hugh Kincannon and Stephaine Wheeler to determine their willingness to host the classes at one of their summer competitions.

A motion was made and seconded mandating that the USHJA Pony Hunter Derby Championship be held at an east and a west location, and the two championship event host sites be selected by USHJA in 2019, but will transition to an application process beginning in 2020. Furthermore, the 2019 East Championship is to be placed at a suitable Kentucky Horse Park competition, and the 2019 West Championship is to be placed at a suitable Blenheim competition (pending competition management agreement). The motion was unanimously approved.
• **2018 USHJA Jumping Seat Medal Final Host Locations**
  
  The committee reviewed the Equitation Task Force’s recommendation, which was approved by the Jumper Working Group, for hosting the 2018 USHJA Jumping Seat Medal Finals at the following locations:
  
  o  East – Capital Challenge Equitation Horse Show, September 28-30, 2018
  
  o  West – Blenheim International Jumping Festival, September 21-23, 2018

  Hearing no discussion, the Executive Committee voted unanimously to approve the 2018 USHJA Jumping Seat Medal Final Host locations, as presented.

• **2018 WCHR Member Event Calendar Modification**
  
  The committee reviewed two requests to modify the 2018 WCHR Member Event Calendar. Both requests had been approved by the WCHR Task Force Chair, Hunter Working Group Chair, and USHJA President. The first request calls for the addition of Summer in the Rockies V (July 4-8, 2018) in the Central Mountain Region due to the cancellation of the originally approved GO Show (slated for July 11-15). The cancellation caused the total number of WCHR shows offered in the Central Mountain Region to fall below the minimum number of six.

  Hearing no discussion, the Executive Committee voted unanimously to add Summer in the Rockies V (July 4-8) to the 2018 WCHR Member Event Calendar for the Central Region, as requested.

  The second request involved removing the Skidmore College Saratoga Classic I from the Northeast Region WCHR Member Event Calendar for 2018 due to the fact that the competition has recently moved to a new venue which has not yet hosted a USEF competition. Both competition management and the WCHR Task Force and Hunter Working Group Chairs feel it is in the best interest of the WCHR program, and its participants to remove Skidmore from the calendar of member events in 2018 and let the competition establish itself at the new venue prior to hosting a WCHR event in a future year. It was clarified that removing this competition from the calendar will not negatively impact the Northeast region since there are still six other WCHR competitions being held within the region in 2018.

  *A motion was made and seconded to approve removing the Skidmore College Saratoga Classic I from the Northeast Region WCHR Member Event Calendar for 2018. The motion was unanimously approved.*

• **Request for 2018 International Hunter Derby Date Change**
  
  The committee reviewed a request submitted by a competition manager to move an approved International Hunter Derby (IHD) from an April competition to a July competition, with the caveat that the July competition would require a license modification in order to make it eligible to host an International Hunter Derby. The manager is requesting permission to change the date of the already approved IHD rather than cancel, but if permission to change the date is not granted, the manager will cancel and then reapply for a new IHD on the July date. After brief discussion, the committee agreed that the competition manager should not be granted permission to...
change the date of the already approved IHD, nor should the manager be granted any refund of the original host fee. The individual is free to apply to host an IHD at the July competition, but approval is contingent upon license modification being granted by USEF as well as payment of the full host fee.

A motion was made and seconded to deny the competition manager’s request to change the date of the already approved International Hunter Derby and further, no refund will be issued for cancellation of said Derby. The competition manager is free to apply to host an International Hunter Derby at the July competition, but approval is contingent on USEF license modification and payment of the full host fee. The motion was unanimously approved.

VIII. Old Business
None

IX. New Business
None

X. Adjournment
There being no further business, Mr. Langer made a motion to adjourn, and the meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m. EDT.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:
Larry Langer, Secretary