

NARG

North American Riders Group Newsletter

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A Fresh Look on a Stagnant Situation: Canadian Federation limits their "mileage rule"

Recently the Jump Canada board implemented rule changes that significantly limit protections for licensed horse shows in Canada. Just over a year ago the Jump Canada board decided to create an independent committee to address tough issues confronting the Canadian Federation. The top issue the independent committee took on was the protections to horse shows the federation provided through licensing agreements. After considering how Federations worldwide handled this matter, they realized that only the US and Canada provided this protection to competitions. The work then began on negotiating an agreement that could be approved by the Jump Canada board. A compromise to complete abolition was crafted and submitted to the board. The compromise provided a maximum of two weeks exclusivity to show managers and three weeks for a particular venue as long as they met a minimum horses in competition requirement, which was also developed. The Jump Canada Board and lawyers agreed that show managers on the board must recuse themselves from voting on this matter due to their conflict of interest. The new rule passed and will be implemented in 2012.

Bob Henselwood, a primary force in this process is certain this new system will bring fresh ideas and new show managers to Canada show jumping and create an environment that benefits the Equestrian industry throughout Canada.

Craig Collins a show manager with multiple dates has a wait and see attitude. With or without protection he plans to continually improve his event and feels that if he produces a quality horseshow his business will continue to thrive under the new rule.

The Free market is the American way. NARG continues to believe that mileage protection impedes healthy competition and removes the motivation for horse shows to modernize and improve. The protections the USEF provides and is paid for discourages or impedes growth that would benefit enthusiasts locally, regionally and nationally.

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Apply for the NARG Riders Grant

The North American Riders Group is proud to announce a new program -The NARG Rider Grant.

As the result of a 5 year unrestricted grant, generously provided by Linda Heathcott and the Southern Family, the NARG board will award \$15,000 annually to an individual that exhibits the determination and capacity to excel in show jumping but, who is potentially held back by limited financial resources. Information and the application are available online at www.NARG.org.

The deadline for receipt of the application is December 30, 2011. Each application will be reviewed by the NARG board and the recipient will be announced at the NARG Annual meeting to be held in Wellington, Florida in February 2012. In cooperation with riders, trainers, show managers, vendors and generous contributions NARG hopes to grow the funding for this important effort to develop talented riders and improve our sport.

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Canadian Rule Change continued.

One example of a world-class venue wishing to expand but prohibited from doing so is Old Salem Farm. Old Salem Farm has made massive improvements to their renowned facility. They have improved this regional level venue to a world class standard with excellent footing, above average stabling facilities, a fantastic jumping field and superior location in a horse dense area. This facility would like to hold a 2 week AA show in July, a time period that meets the needs of the regional professionals as it lies between two other regional competitions, HITS Saugerties and Vermont Summer Festival. It would fill a void that local professionals feel is there. However, the area is also had a long standing density of one day competitions. In order for OSF to hold their two-week AA show they would need to get permission from every show within the mileage rule protections, approximately 22 shows in NY, CT and Long Island. Without permission of all 22 they will be denied. The other option is a waiver from the USEF. The waiver process which is rarely, if ever, successful. Though granting these dates to Old Salem would gain tremendous support from the horse community, the long entrenched and poorer quality venues will not relinquish their dates. The result is inadequate and substandard one day shows preventing our sport from improving. These limitations hurt competitors by constraining the choices available often forcing them to an inferior venue. Not good! Importantly, the Canadian rule modification would easily free up sufficient dates to solve this problem.

It is our hope that this Canadian model will open the dialog at the USEF as this really is a unique compromise. It still protects the little guy and historic shows, but it limits protection to the ever consolidating mega shows which are clearly anti competitive and monopolistic in nature. NARG has long shared its view that this trend towards mega shows putting a concentration of dates in the hands of a limited number of management teams has the ability to negatively and sometimes subtly affect the entire industry.

For example, this much power can allow undue influence on judges, stewards and course designers whose livelihood depends on being rehired. Likewise it can allow undue influence on riders who benefit from loyalty to a venue or management group through better stabling, advantageous decisions in the horse show office or access to Wild Card positions at the highest paying event in the US. Conversely, trainers and competitors fear reprisals if they "complain" and the "tow the line" attitude becomes ingrained throughout the show, the region and the country. Is this healthy? We argue it is not.

Even the USEF acknowledged this concern when it put the following statement in the Licensing section of the Rule book "USEF may consider concentration of dates in the control of a single License holder or group of related Licensees when determining the appropriateness of a sale or transfer of a License."

This rule was in the effect when the USEF agreed to the merger of Littlewood Fences and the Winter Equestrian Festival. It also allowed a rare waiver to WEF to run against Stadium Jumping's Tampa dates, effectively killing what was once the final leg of the Winter Equestrian Festival as run under Stadium Jumping. It could be argued that this process illustrates why shows need protection, however it illustrates even more the lopsided judgment of the USEF, skewed to the powerful lobby of large management groups.

What is understood is that manager's pay for this protection and the USEF financial structure depends on this revenue to exist. The Canadian Organizing body does not have the same financial relationship with Canadian horse shows and their protection. This financial dependence in the U.S. promises to keep in place this status quo well into the future and prevent even logical discussion of the mileage rule.

It is only through the active commitment and focused goals of trainers, riders and owners that we can create change within our governing body and force dialogue on this important topic. We must take the time to join committees, boards, and executive positions at the USEF. We must take the time to attend the annual meeting, despite the fact that it is held in direct conflict with our show schedules. We must make our voices heard so that the current rule making in the USEF is not one sided and biased. This is an important goal of NARG going forward. We are inspired by what our Canadian Partners have implemented. We challenge the USEF to study and learn from this change. We challenge ourselves to get more involved. We challenge horse show managers to openly evaluate this Canadian rule change. Let's not remain the only country left in the world with this monopolistic mileage rule. The Canadian rule is a good compromise. Let's work together to improve our sport.

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USEF push for developing “Young Riders” is good for the sport of Show Jumping:

Prior to the last few years, Young Riders in the United States was simply a single misunderstood competition held as a championship by the USEF. That championship was, and is, largely a competition of Junior Jumper riders stretching to compete at a higher level than they normally face in the Junior Jumper ranks. That is because most competitors at Young Riders strive to compete on the “A” team, the nickname for the Young Riders competition instead of the “B” team which follows traditional specs for Junior Jumpers. Most perceive the “A” team as a first string of sorts. What most of those riders don’t understand is that the Young Riders is actually an entirely different division that exists in FEI competition all around the world, except for the United States.



The Young Riders division is designed for those ambitious junior riders who are hoping to transition to the professional grand prix level. The specifications call for 16 to 21 year olds and jumps are set at 1.45 to 1.50 Meters, significantly bigger than the junior jumper ranks. The courses are also more difficult. You cannot compete in both the Junior Jumpers and the Young Rider division at the same FEI sanctioned horse show. As Young Riders is an FEI division, strict medication rules also apply. So simply said, Young Riders is the next step up from Juniors - call it the minor league of professional show jumping.

The recent expansion of programs to support Young Riders in America is a step in the right direction for the long term success of US show jumping on an international level. Beyond the Young Rider championships, the USEF has organized and partially funded the US European Young Riders Tour. This has been an incredible experience for those who have had the opportunity to participate. The members of these teams have had to experience the pressure of competing on Nations Cups teams, jump more difficult courses and consistently work through within the rules of FEI international show jumping. NARG can’t say enough about what a great initiative this is by the USEF. We truly believe it will help develop future stars in show jumping.

The only real downside of this initiative is that it is limited. Only a handful can be selected and also afford to participate. So NARG encourages organizers in America to join the USEF’s efforts to develop a full fledged Young Rider division here in the U.S. The Winter Equestrian Festival took a strong step in this direction this year with the Artisan Farms Young Rider Series. That was an excellent competition that raised the game for our up and coming stars. But, it should be noted these



were run as individual classes not as Young Riders divisions. This means horses were allowed to be medicated, were not required to be stabled on the grounds for the life of the event, and cross-entries with the Juniors were acceptable. We encourage WEF to be the first show in America horse show to actually offer a true Young Riders division. We encourage other FEI sanctioned horse shows to join the USEF and the Winter Equestrian Festival to, do the same. This is one example of a way to address the need for increased depth on the United States Show Jumping Team.



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Arrow Silk Screening Inc.

Phone 847.373.4439

Info@arrowsilkscreening.com

Hats:

Unconstructed 6 Panel Chino Brush Cap W/Sandwich. Khaki/Black With Velcro Closure. One Size Fits Most \$16.00 Plus Shipping and Handling

Jacket:

100% polyester stretch interlock shell bonded to polyester interlock with laminated film insert to repel water and wind.

With NARG Embroidered Left Chest

Ladies Sizes XS-2XL...Mens XS to 4XL

\$65.00 up to XL \$5.00 more for each XL after

Pricing does not include Shipping and Handling

Together we can improve our sport



NARG

North American Riders Group

Mail or Fax application to:

11924 Forest Hill Blvd
Suite 22 Box #117
Wellington, FL 33414

Thank you for joining the North American Riders Group. The purpose of the group is to improve the quality of competitive equestrian events. With your participation, the NARG will be recognized as the clear strong voice of North American riders and the supporting personnel directly involved with show jumping.

The mission of the North American Riders Group is to effectively represent the varied interests of active riders and all those associated trainers, coaches, horse owners and corporate sponsors and others involved in show jumping.

We hope you will consider making an additional contribution to help the organization. Membership fees cover a calendar year and are non refundable.

I acknowledge that I am in good standing with the National Federation that governs show jumping in my country.

Signature

Date

The NARG reserves the right to reject applications for membership, as written in the rules.

Contributing Membership Application for NARG

Please print clearly. We will confirm we have the proper information on file by sending a confirmation within 30 days.

| Contact Information | |
|---------------------|--|
| Name | |
| Street Address | |
| City, ST/ZIP | |
| Home Phone | |
| Cell Phone | |
| E-mail Address | |

Active participation offers you the opportunity to shape our organization and influence equestrian sport. We all know there is strength in numbers. Another way to participate is through providing financial support beyond the dues. We welcome both contributions and corporate sponsorships. We are gaining momentum but need your help. Join us now and help us grow by encouraging others to join and get involved.

| | | |
|----------------------------|--------|----|
| Senior Membership Initial | \$250 | \$ |
| Senior Membership Renewal | \$125 | \$ |
| Junior* Membership Initial | \$175 | \$ |
| Junior* Membership Renewal | \$ 75 | \$ |
| Founding Member | \$2500 | \$ |

Check or Credit Card Accepted

| Credit Card Information | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Name as it appears on the card | |
| Circle one Mastercard, Visa | |
| Expiration and code | |
| Billing Zip code | |
| Signature | |

* as stipulated by the USEF