



INTERNATIONAL MOUNTED GAMES ASSOCIATION

Mid-year Meeting 2015

Final version (02 September 2015)

**Held at the Kentucky Horse Park
Lexington, USA
Friday July 10, 2015**

Recorded on the attendance list as present :

International Representatives :

Phil Logue	Australia
Quentin Voeltzel	Burkina Faso
Brent Couch	Canada
Signe Sehested	Denmark
Mark Devitt	Ireland
Margaret Welsby	New Zealand
Brian Kennedy	Northern Ireland
Younes Ahlbom	Sweden
Paul Greiling	USA
Roger Dawson	Wales

IMGA officials present :

Alun Whitney	IMGA
Pola Schal	IMGA
Peter Dale	IMGA

Others present :

Barry Pearson	Australia
Mary Worth	England
Jerome O'Connor	Ireland
Rob Lockyer	Scotland
Megan Marr	South Africa
Chris Kritringer	South Africa
??? Maury	Switzerland

This report has been prepared by Keith Martin from notes taken at the time by Pola Schal.

Nations Championship Report – New Zealand 2014

Presented by Margaret Welsby

See attached report

Nations Championship Presentation – Australia - November 2015

Presented by Phil Logue

Points to note :

- Will coincide with the U-17 World Team Championship in Florida
- Will be held as part of a larger equestrian event with Horseball, Reining, etc.
- Sand arena 120m (possibly 130m ?)
- Teams participating : South Africa, Australia, New Zealand (others ?)
- All ponies will be pooled (including Australia's) and rotated every 5 games
- There will be a marquee for riders. Meals provided.

European Championship – current problems

General discussion

- Agreement that it should stay in France and that dates should not change
- Quentin Voeltzel offered to host the championship
- It was thought that written agreement from FFE would be needed, and that it should be provided by Monday July 25 at the latest.

(NOTE : During the weekend July 23-24 this affair evolved very fast, and this requirement for agreement from FFE by Monday was overtaken by other events)

Trophies

Margaret Welsby requested that the World Team Championship trophy for the highest placed Southern Hemisphere team should be reinstated.

There was general agreement.

Height and Weight Restrictions

Peter Dale

Proposal for the next IMGA Annual Meeting :

Adjust the existing graphs by removing the current top line and adding a lower one.

Ranking of U-12 riders

Younes Ahlbom

MGA Sweden has been approached by the Swedish Equestrian Federation on this matter.

Possibly a problem for other countries in future ?

Arena Sizes

Signe Sehested

Some doubts about the arena size for the European Championship 2016

- To be checked with organisers
- Rules to be better defined and enforced in future

Who runs IMGGA Championships ?

- 100% compliance to IMGGA requirements is required, and this may not be the case when the organisation is sub-contracted
- A financial deposit refundable or not depending on the level of compliance ?

Specific Southern Hemisphere matters

Australia asked other SH countries if they would mind adapting the format of the Nations Championship 2016 in order to fit into the requirements of a host show.

There was a general request for SH Referee Training.



FIVE NATIONS CHAMPIONSHIP (NATIONS CHAMPIONSHIP) - 2014 REPORT TO IMGA – July 2015

The Five Nations Championship 2015 was held in Kaikohe, New Zealand during the first week of December. Kaikohe is a small town and this was the first international sporting event ever held in the locality. The district has had a strong background of MG since NZ joined the IMGA, having produced a number of international riders including World Champions Dee Cherrington and Nancy Te Whata and NZ Coach, Brenda Cross.

This is a brief report to IMGA from the Organising Committee (Northland Mounted Games) as requested in the IMGA Document “Organisation of an IMGA Competition” with the intention of assisting updates to the document. The following headings are suggested:

- Lessons learned
- Practical advice
- Do’s and don’ts

This report should be read in conjunction with the Minutes from the meeting that was held at the Five Nations Competition with representatives from each country present.

The Financial Report from the Five Nations Championships is also attached. This is not a final report as there are still a few items to wind up. Another report will be sent when accounts are finalized.

Overview

Judging from feedback from a range of parties, the event was a great success. The competitors and supporters, as well as the organisers and helpers all enjoyed themselves and spent a very happy and memorable week together. Feedback from the local community has also been positive. Spectators were amazed by the speed and skills of the international level competitors. Northland Mounted Games has recently been nominated for a Community Award, based on the positive involvement with the local community.

Kaikohe Showgrounds, in conjunction with the adjacent Golf Club facility, was a near perfect venue in terms of facilities. It has a large flat grassed area, horse yards, office space, commentary box and loudspeaker, a modern catering kitchen and a refurbished hall which was ideal as the dining room. The showgrounds also function as a campervan stopover, so there were plenty of powered sites for campervans and more than enough space for tents, as well as permanent showers and toilets. The Golf Clubrooms were used for the Gala Prizegiving Dinner. Having these facilities close to the homes of the Organising Committee members made our task much easier in many ways, through the planning and competition phases.

The local District Council agreed to underwrite the event if we did some professional level marketing and publicity and encouraged the public to attend. This made for extra work, but the promise of the financial backup did make us feel much more confident about our budget. We also had good sponsorship including Top Energy (a Power Supplier with a geothermal plant close to the Showgrounds) picking up the naming rights and playing an active role throughout the Championships.

Lessons learned

The short timeframe was one of our biggest problems

This was entirely of our own making as there had been indecision about the venue for some months prior to Kaikohe being chosen. This resulted in the OC having less than six months to plan and organise the event. This put a lot of pressure on and some things weren't done as well as we would have liked. We would recommend to others hosting this event, that the venue is confirmed at least a year prior, to give the OC a more comfortable time frame.

Small town, Small Committee, "can do"

The South Pacific Championship has been held in conjunction with some major events in the past which has some definite advantages and has worked well. Kaikohe is a quiet little country town and doubts were raised that that it might be too boring with not much happening and nothing for visitors to do. Also it's a long way for visitors to travel to the Far North of NZ, both from overseas and from other parts of NZ. The local Committee is very small and would face a big challenge. However it worked really well. They key ingredients were:

- Having a suitable venue.
- Having a few key local people with sufficient experience in Mounted Games to plan for this level of competition.
- Having local support in terms of practical help, funding/sponsorship and publicity.
- Being able to rely on national and international games people to help once they arrived.
- Dedication and pulling together as a Team to make it happen.
- Good support throughout from IMGA and NZMGA.

We would suggest that small places can run this level of event and should encouraged to host so that venues can be rotated within the host nation and also so that visitors get to see new places.

Practical advice

- For this particular competition, the majority of competitors will always have relatively high costs just to get there, in terms of international flights, car and camper hire etc. It is a challenge for the hosts to provide good low cost meals, camping and sightseeing trips.
- Everyone enjoyed that the indigenous Maori culture was strongly featured. NZ Team rider, Danny Kopa's family and other locals performed a Powhiri, a formal welcoming ceremony, which was "the real thing" as this is a very traditional Maori area. This included speeches, kapa haka (Maori action songs and haka) and a hangi meal which is cooked underground. We suggest that organisers try to include something indigenous or very special to the host area.
- Kaikohe is favourably located at an easy distance to a number of world famous tourist areas. Visitors were able to spend two half-days enjoying the beautiful coastline, rainforest and waterfront dining. The younger ones particularly enjoyed that there was some physical activity such as swimming and sand dune boarding, while others with less energy could simply relax and enjoy the surroundings. This balance of activity and relaxation, alongside learning something about the area, received good feedback.
- **The importance of good food.** Our volunteer catering staff was outstanding, led by Brenda's sister, Rose. Meals were very affordable at cost price and were all delicious, often featuring local ingredients and recipes. Everyone was made to feel welcome and the dining hall became a social hub. Casual meals were always available. We would suggest that if people are well fed, they are usually happy and it's a good foundation for everything else to run smoothly.

DO's and DON'T's

Do consider running an invitational individuals competition alongside the Nations Championship if you are not holding them in conjunction with another larger event. As a one heat competition, the Championship itself only takes up about 90 minutes of arena time.

We originally planned the Individuals as a time filler, and to give the reserve riders something to do.

However, we were surprised by the number of overseas riders wanting to compete. We ended up with two heats and seven nations represented and it was a very exciting competition. In addition, some of these riders arrived early to help prepare the loan ponies.

Do hold a Nations Championship meeting in conjunction, so that issues relating specifically to the event can be discussed and passed on to IMGA. This competition

has a number of very different challenges from the other IMGA events due to its smaller size and longer travel distances.

Don't have a repeat of the late withdrawal of two Teams from the competition. Everyone believed that there was a firm commitment to take part, hence the change of name to Five Nations. There was a good degree of excitement about their participation.

Canada apologetically withdrew soon after the formal invitation was sent out. USA did not communicate well and missed the deadlines for entries and payments. Informally we understood they were still coming, but sadly they eventually pulled out just before the Championship.

This caused a number of difficulties:

- Publicity, logo and naming of the event had already been designed around 5 Nations attending and was too late to change. The withdrawals risked the Event's credibility with sponsors, funders and with the general public.
- Knowing the number of teams is important in terms of space and equipment needed.
- Accurate numbers of riders needs to be known in good time for sourcing and training loan ponies to an international standard of performance and fitness.
- The effect on the budget through loss of entry fees.

Luckily the credibility of the event was saved when Australia and New Zealand were each able to send two teams, bringing numbers back up to five teams. Also, the fantastic international response to the Individuals competition meant that we had a total of seven nations competing, with English, Scottish, Irish and Danish riders taking part as well.

The recommendation is for nations who are eligible for a Championship to plan ahead for future events and be sure there are enough riders wanting to go. Also hosts should prepare a draft budget and give some idea of approximate costs well in advance. Good communication is essential.

Other important issues raised at the meeting to be brought up with IMGA are

- Changes to the Guidelines or addition of a dedicated Appendix with respect to special arrangements for the Nations Championship. Not being able to comply with Guidelines raises liability issues for organisers.
- To supply medical cover to the standard in the guidelines was impossible on the available budget. This was discussed with Keith Martin at the time and an affordable solution was reached. Each situation will be different, depending on local availability of emergency medical support.
- Cost of security fencing was very high per rider and would not have been covered by entry fees alone. But it was essential to fence off the camping

area from the public. It was also difficult to find enough helpers to supervise the security fence gates.

- The meeting has suggested that IMGGA prepare a protocol about lending ponies. Lending ponies was rare in the past, but is becoming more common as an increased number of international competitions are being hosted outside of Europe. There are issues such as liability and insurance and also the difficulty of sourcing the required number of suitable ponies. A lot of goodwill is needed for owners to lend their precious mounts. Some problems encountered are due to a difference in expectations between owners and riders about how the ponies are to be cared for and ridden throughout the week.

There is a growing concern about insurance issues and this may need discussion in terms of exposure to litigation and the risk of financial losses. While it us up to each host nation, some consistency would be helpful now so many MG people are travelling globally, including officials

- Not all travel insurance has medical cover for mounted games riders – it is often excluded in the small print. Are riders aware of this? Which companies do cover mounted games?
- Insurance for loan ponies – most companies will only cover one pony for a full year. Australia has found an insurer which will insure a group of nominated ponies for a shorter time period.
- Association insurance is a type of public liability cover which covers organisers and helpers for legal fees if there is any litigation against them.
- Event cancellation insurance. What are the financial repercussions for hosts, officials and visitors if an event is cancelled?

The 2014 Nations Championship Organising Committee would like to express its thanks to IMGGA, NZMGA Board and members, visiting riders, supporters and Officials, as well as to the local community of Kaikohe and the mid North, for their outstanding support for the event.

