



# INTERNATIONAL MOUNTED GAMES ASSOCIATION



## **Agenda: IMGA meeting Tuesday, August 12, 2025 13:00 CET – also online**

### **Attendance**

Australia- Jemima Gardiner

Austria – Rachel Lechner

Belgium - Robin Donnay

Canada – Michelle Cruikshanks - remotely

Denmark – Jens Holm

England – Pete Walters

France – Valentin V

Germany – Volker Baasch

Ireland – Conor O’Leary - remotely

Italy – Andrea Piazza - remotely

Norway – Anne Strom

Scotland – Veronica Dodds

South Africa – Nick Sloane - remotely

Sweden – Quentin Voeltzel - remotely

Switzerland - Quentin Gargallo

United States – Carol Jones

Wales – Nikki Beach

**Absent** – China, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, Luxembourg, Pakistan

### **IMGA**

Chris Wheeler – Chairperson

Quentin Voeltzel – Vice-Chairperson

Mark Crowe – Chief Referee

Andrea Piazza – Country Development – remotely

### **Guests**

Bridget Scott

Mats

**Meeting Convened** – 13:09 CET

## **Greetings From The Chairperson – Chris Wheeler**

Thank you all for coming including those who have travelled miles to attend WTC!

Thank you, Robin, and Belgium MGA for organising this meeting and giving up the time from your busy WTC tasks to do that.

Thanks, Michelle, for taking the minutes of this meeting.

This meeting is being held as per tradition at the World Team Championship; seem to be doing more and more at IMGA with quarterly meetings including the AGM.

This meeting is about catching up since last November's meeting and confirming the status and progress on remaining Actions Items from the 2024 AGM in Dublin.

India has made a formal application to join IMGA as a formal member with voting privileges. Quentin V. has been in touch with them recently and is working to set up some mounted games training, which is great.

## **Agenda Items**

### **Item 1 - Competition Updates For Remaining 2025 Competitions**

- **World Pairs Championship 2025 – Valentin (FRA)**

**Update** from France for WPC – 99 pairs have entered across all categories so that's good. There has been good discussion with Chief Referee Mark in regard to cameras, etc. to support great refereeing. From details provided on the competition Facebook page, note that there is a special meal every day as provided by different companies. Any questions, please just ask Valentin

Chairperson Chris seeks and receives confirmation that there are t-shirts for the semi-finalists and finalists.

- **Nations Team Championship – Jemima (AUS)**

**Update** – the Informational Facebook page and all aspects of planning have been up and running for months – please direct any questions to Jemima or the Western Australia organisers.

Chief Referee Mark briefly discusses some details related to the use of MGScoreboard with the single heat scoring system for Nations.

### **Item 2 – IMGA *Guidelines For Hosting A Sanctioned Competition* document**

**Update** – As noted at earlier 2025 International Representative meetings, the document has been updated and reduced in length. There is recognition of the need for ongoing updating – please contact Michelle and Mark about the changes made to date this year and anything that has been overlooked.

Chairperson's note – For years, the *Hosting* document was not updated. Four years ago Chairperson Chris reopened the task of reviewing and revising the document. At this time, International Representatives are asked to agree on its implementation, use and continued updating. General agreement – any questions, issues, concerns to be sent to Chief Referee Mark and Michelle (CAN) who completed this year's revisions.

**Question:** Expected to see a checklist – feels that the information is useful but not a checklist. Chief Referee Mark confirms that extensive checklists are located in the Annexes at the back of the document.

**Action Item:** Email any questions and suggestions to 2025 document editors Mark and Michelle.

### **Additional Discussion**

**MGScoreboard** - 2025 ETIC organiser observes that more technical support is needed to get this system fully integrated and functional with live-streaming . There is a need for some direct tech backup at competition time – as an example, at Europeans 2025, daily morning contact with Mats at his location to set up for success including livestream. This additional reliance on technological support highlights need for a backup system so competitions proceed without delays in case of tech problems e.g. draws.

The reliance on MGScoreboard is now seen as complete but the advertising on MGScoreboard generates no return to IMGGA and is not under IMGGA control. Opinion expressed that IMGGA obtain a more formalized contract with MGScoreboard going forward.

**Chairperson note** - Mats is in attendance at this meeting; Chris will follow up with him as to the possibilities and requirements going forward.

Chairperson concludes by summarizing details of this item including review of projection screen size in Ireland for Europeans. Display of scores, standings, and livestream were very effective.

**Action Item:** MGScoreboard is a discussion item appropriate for the upcoming AGM.

### **Item 3 - Bitless bridles – Chris (IMGGA)**

**Update** – Bitless bridles tried on a number of ponies at WIC – experiment seems to be positive. Some additional ponies at WTC are being ridden with Bitless bridles e.g. riders new to bitless bridles are using ponies used to the bitless bridles. E.g. pony being borrowed by Team USA has gone well in training/practice sessions. This will be monitored as the competition goes along.

Additional brief discussion includes that we are not using any of the more severe bitless bridles available.

### **Item 4 – IMGGA Annual General Meeting – Chris (IMGGA)**

Thanks to Austria for hosting the 2025 AGM. Details on location and all of the travel information are expected to be available by next week so that Reps. can begin booking hotels, etc. – please check the

IMGA Facebook page. Note that there is excellent transport with airport and train connections. Additionally, contact Rachel Lechner with questions.

## **Item 5 – Health and Safety Drug Testing – Chris (IMGA)**

Please consult with home country organisations/committees about the following Health and Safety discussion question:

*Would a saliva-based drug testing be accepted by your organizations?*

No discussion planned for the current meeting.

Additionally, *Is there a need? Who would pay?* Note: A single drug test costs £4 ; a five drug test is more expensive at £6 and likewise, a nine-drug test is £10.

**Action item:** Consult with home country organization and bring answer to drug testing question for sharing at November 2025 AGM

**Action item:** Email the Health and Safety Committee with your questions and comments. The committee has all of the information that Chairperson Chris researched and provided.

## **Item 6 – Outstanding Action Items From November 2024 AGM – Chris (IMGA)**

**Welfare Steward at Warmup** – Chris is noting improvements and that in the majority of cases, there is an additional person on duty at the warmup area to monitor pony welfare, observe for lameness, etc.. This is not yet universal so should continue as a focus.

**Action Item:** Organisers, continue efforts to build this feature into competition planning.

**Breathalyzer Testing** – Continuing potential for individuals tested as Assistant Referees at 8am having a different person showing up in the arena for duty – currently there is no way to definitively know if this is the same person. Assistant Referees are less familiar to testing personnel and there is no foolproof protocol for identification. Additionally, there are currently few personnel able to stay for the full day in the testing role/location.

**Comments** – We are counting on people and are basing this system for Assistant Referee breathalyzer testing on a level of trust. Several suggestions made regarding potential methods for verification of personal identification.

**Question** posed regarding the breathalyzer test failure rate at recent competitions. What is the risk? Judgement is altered. General agreement that the use of this system is a reasonably effective deterrent worth continuing. The process gives an opportunity for those administering the test to chat with the riders and officials – very positive feature of doing the testing.

**Return of cups/trophies** – this is going pretty well getting the reps to make sure that these are on site for presentation at the current year's competitions. Well done. That makes a big difference and is mostly working very well noting that there are thirty-three trophies

**World Wide games** – volunteers needed to get this into action.

**Action Item:** Contact Chairperson Chris to assist with progress of this idea.

**Rule changes** – Remind people that there is a process for submitting rule change requests; Chris had intended to include this in the recently published newsletter. International Referees and country representatives may submit change requests. All information is on the website.

**New Country Development and Training** -Continuing to seek opportunities and personnel to provide support and training to countries new to or developing Mounted Games Example - Peter McCarthy (Ireland) asked to consider going to Mexico to provide training since he is already in North America doing some clinics in the fall.

Quentin has been working on supporting India's games development.

**Action Item:** Anyone going to any of these countries, consider extending your time and including some training.

**School Year Calendar Submission** - Thanks to those who have submitted their school calendar dates to Chris – recently received from Belgium and Germany.

Note – Brief discussion re future consideration of climate change's impact on school year and competition calendars.

**Action Item:** Submit your school year calendar – breaks and holidays – to Chairperson

**Veterans competition** – needs somebody to bring forward a proposal at the AGM e.g. “We would host a competition” . There is good support for the idea that a competition be held for more senior riders and that it would be nice to invite everybody to a competition - likely pairs or Individuals. Would be great to have somebody step up with a solid proposal at the November AGM. Needs to be planned for dates not at the same time as the WPC or WIC, or other existing championships. There is general recognition that this competition would require borrowed ponies.

**Action Item:** Consider hosting a competition for Veteran riders and put forward proposal at the AGM.

**Sponsorship and Promotions Committee** (Note – audio connection difficulty: comments made by speaker Quentin V. not audible in the meeting room although clear for online attendees)

Quentin V., who is working to move this committee along, expresses frustration with process of establishing a committee and its mandate faced with many questions and perceived roadblocks from IMGA Officer involvement. Note: audio connection re-established – see continued item below

**Pony Welfare Commission** – please contact Stéphane Tardif, Jonathan Marion, Quentin V. , or Chris since we need to get something set up prior to the AGM. More work needed with this action e.g. establish limits to power and jurisdiction.

**Discussion/Questions:** Opinion expressed by Vice-Chair that there is difficulty with progress on Committee work since the bureaucracy of the IMGA poses many questions that impede the work of the committee: Feels that the Pony Welfare commission needs to function independently of the full IMGA Executive Officer group .

Chief Referee Mark volunteers to join the commission – this provides an IMGA Officer to the Commission.

**Action Item:** Please contact Stéphane Tardif, Jonathan Marion, or Quentin Voeltzel with your interest.

**Competition Update 2026 – European Team and Individuals – Quentin V.** (remote connection re-established)

European Individuals will take place during the spring – second weekend of May. European Teams will be held later in the summer.

### **Discussion/Questions**

The logistics of separating the two elements of Europeans were discussed including family's planning for the competition season and general travel arrangements. Several points of discussion, both positive and negative for each including travel for families with siblings riding in one or the other competitions, general travel costs, school year calendar, spreading competitions further apart on the calendar, competition viability and financial impacts.

General discussion in the room with reference to issues and positive aspects.

Mark notes that combined European Team and Individuals is what makes the competition viable for hosting by a country such as Ireland; if separated, this would end that country's ability to host the competition.

Chris summarizes that there are positive and negative comments on this interesting idea and that Quentin needs to put forth his proposal soon since the competition is next year.

**Action Item:** Quentin V. to confirm and send the dates with this proposal to representatives so that all members receive the proposal. There might be a need for a vote on this before November?

**Question:** Is there a date proposed for the European Teams? Answer: Quentin V. working with Germany to determine this since they are now trying to regroup given new planning for hosting WTC. Expecting that this would be sometime from the second to last week in July. Just want to make sure that this fits with the WIC in Germany and doesn't conflict with the dates for the German National Championship.

Suggestion from Chairperson Chris to continue this discussion, complete a proposal with dates, and share with all eligible countries.

### **Chairperson's Closing Comments**

Thank you all for participating. It was lovely to see everyone. Keep cool (reference to local temperature).

**Adjournment** - 14:15 CET