

International Mounted Games Association 21st Annual General Meeting – November 11 - 12, 2023

**Minutes of IMGA Annual General Meeting
Saturday, November 11, and Sunday, November 12, 2023**

**French Federation Headquarters, Lamotte-Beuvron, France.
Remote Participation with RingCentral Meetings**

Meeting convened by the Chairperson, Chris Wheeler, at 9:12 a.m. (CET)

1. Introduction – Chris Wheeler

Welcome by the Chairman – Thanks to Stéphane and the FFE for this meeting facility.

Guidelines for those using remote participation – please note sensitivity of remote camera and respect that ambient noise will draw the microphone

Michelle is kindly taking notes/minutes.

Thanks, Alun for taking up RingCentral, thanks Jens for verifying.

Participants - In attendance as of 9: 12 a.m. CET:

IMGA Officials:

Chris Wheeler	Chairperson	Present
Keith Martin	Vice Chairperson	Dependent on remote connectivity
Jens Martin	Finance/Administration	Remote
Eleanor Wheeler	Communication	Apologies
Pierre-Luc Portron	Development	Present
Alun Whitney	Chief Referee	Remote
Mark Crowe	Qualifications/Training	Present

International Representatives (V – Voting member):

Warwick Slade (V)	Australia	Remote
Rachel Lechner (V)	Austria	Remote
Robin Donnay (V)	Belgium	Present
Michelle Cruikshanks (V)	Canada	Present
Leo Liang	China	Apologies – commitments - Pony Club
Elijah Zhang	China	Remote
Alžbeta Mašková (V)	Czech Republic	Absent
Signe Sehested (V)	Denmark	Remote
Elaine Trevor Jones (V)	England	Peter Walters (V)-proxy
Stéphane Tardif (V)	France	Present
Jonathon Marion	France	Present as available-competing
Volker Baasch	Germany	Widukind Moorman (V)-proxy
Conor O’Leary (V)	Ireland	Present
Andrea Piazza (V)	Italy	Present as available-competing

Lizzy Franck (V)	Luxembourg	Present
Sue Robertson (V)	New Zealand	Remote
Allister Hamilton (V)	Northern Ireland	Present
Stian Hennie (V)	Norway	Remote
Veronica Dodds(V)	Scotland	Remote
Nick Sloane (V)	South Africa	Remote
Judith Porcel Follet (V)	Spain	Absent
Caroline Claeson	Sweden	Quentin Voeltzel (V)-proxy
Marino Kammeran (V)	Switzerland	Remote
Quentin Gargallo	Switzerland	Apologies – competition – checked in
Paul Greiling	USA	Remote – Carol Jones (V)-Proxy
Alun Whitney (V)	Wales	Remote

- **Guest(s):**

Martine Donnay	Belgium
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Total Voting Representatives: 20

Voting by Proxy:

- Carol for Paul (USA)
- Quentin V. for Caroline (SWE)
- Widukind for Volker (DEU)
- Pete for Elaine (ENG)

Votes submitted through Chair*: 0 (*Note – A. Whitney votes via chat to Michelle)

Voting: will be on RingCentral Meetings and by show of hands or paper ballot in person.

Proxies: confirmed as noted above.

Action Item: Jens will update list of Country Representatives who have changed since last update for the November 2022 AGM.

Schedule:

- A couple of short breaks – one a.m. and one afternoon
- Lunch break - 12 – 2 p.m.; host FFE has organized a grounds/facility tour conducted by Stéphane followed by lunch on site
- Note that presentations for 2026 hosting bids have shifted to Sunday morning agenda
- Expecting to adjourn the meeting by Sunday, approximately midday

2. Looking Back at 2023

2.1 Review of IMGA’s year

Presentation - Chris Wheeler

- Review of sanctioned competitions:
 - Denmark – Pairs- well done!

- France – Individuals - rain was significant throughout the entire week
 - The tremendous amount of work on the arena paid off to allow the competition to continue
 - The investment in the La Bonde arena was evident
- England – Europeans - went very well:
 - Sadie and the team gathered an excellent pool of loaned ponies e.g. 12-year-old winning on loaned pony in the U12 division
 - Video coverage - Clip My Horse – (German-based TV company which provided livestream coverage). The company seemed happy and would return; may need future guidance e.g. ensure coverage of key action; Well done, Pete.
- Australia – Teams – so well run throughout:
 - Ponies, caravans, equipment, venue, etc., were great
 - Amazing effort by Australia MGA for gathering 110 ponies including loaned ponies coming from great distances (4–5-day one way travel – enormous commitment by those loaning ponies)
- Great year all round with Nations wrapping things up in South Africa coming up in December
- Referees this year were really good
 - A year with few disputes/arguments - a huge improvement
 - Well done, Chief Referee Alun - referees have effectively coordinated for consistency of approach this year
- Volunteers – Chairperson Chris notes and thanks two types – those who contribute year in and year out who are cared over by the organizing groups and a second kind of volunteer who just ‘shows up’ to help. The latter need to be remembered as they aren’t official e.g. special mention to Brigitte from Scotland who has done so much to help with breathalyser testing – she and her family ran this smoothly and effectively behind the scenes this year.
- Great year of competition; Chris enjoyed a return to commentating in England
- Chris notes a couple of ‘not great’ happenings:
 - Generally, numbers of participants are down
 - Missing gear - remind riders to please not leave their gear around arenas because these items are disappearing; encourage trainers to remind riders – unfortunately a few coats, etc. went missing this season
 - Significant vandalism at Europeans in England – bricks were thrown through a lorry window– done by someone within the organization early on in the gala evening; this was a rider or supporter – very unfortunate; the investigation continues
- On the whole it was an amazing year – thanks to the hosts and organizers
- Nations coming up in December to wrap up a fabulous year
- Question – Rider numbers – can they be shared comparatively?
 - A.: Jens can draw that information from the rider fees for competitions over the past two to three years and provide the information to attendees – note: information slide was presented for review and discussion later in Saturday’s agenda. Thanks, Jens.

2.2 Rules Committee Report

Presentation - Jens Martin

Summary of activities during year to date:

- Continuing this year, the Committee had time to thoroughly discuss the few rule changes that were submitted - there was no backlog of requests
- A few points to note for this year –
 - An example: Association boxes and Bottles – the weight total to be specified
 - Lengthy discussion at the Committee level re: correcting errors, rewinding, and returning around the top pole in short arena modified games - little difference noted at the conclusion of discussion. Agreement between Alun and Mark as to the interpretation of ‘rewinding’ as ‘reversing the video’ including going back around the top pole. This is in place for 2024.
 - Another example of rule change - ‘Boot loss’ – a rider’s boot lost during a race must be retrieved and replaced from the place of loss
- Arena size took up the majority of the Committee’s debate; for many years discussion of venues included adaptation of arenas to fit the needs – big enough? Not big enough? After lengthy discussion, wording has been agreed upon for now - a formula to allow use of most existing arenas
- Question of incorporating the short arena rules into the Rulebook or not continues as a discussion within the Rules Committee

Additional discussion:

- Transparency by organizers regarding arena dimensions and equipment spacing is important i.e. actual measurements for both arena sizes and the distances between the equipment/poles etc. to be provided for the riders’ advance information and planning
 - should be part of the competition application process – distance between the poles and between the lanes –example provided where the adjustments were effectively made but not publicized for riders’ use ahead of time
 - Riders need to know the exact size/spacing to determine whether or not they will participate and to inform their training and preparation
 - Chief Referee Alun agrees with the idea of indicating arena dimensions as ranges for the Rulebook with sanctioned competitions having fixed minimum measurements
 - Example provided of 2014 WTC Championships where a massive investment was made to ensure arena compliance, yet now smaller arenas are being awarded
 - Two perspectives – 1) a big arena was established, requiring continued maintenance 2) arenas having much smaller distances at the ends are being used – ponies are having to adapt to shorter distances which impacts the speed of play and the preparation for competition
 - Alun/Jens – speaking to Quentin’s second arena rejected in 2014 note rule changes such that the arena in question would have likely been accepted now
 - Chief Referee Alun observes that the arena length of 126m was previously considered enough distance to stop ponies; concern over current de-emphasis on stopping and that advances in speed are such that shortening arenas is not advisable
 - La Bonde is an example where the distance adaptations between poles allowed the arena to be played well and safely even though officially too small
 - Main Italian arena as only 110m; World Individuals is on a field of 90m
 - Overall, given that pony and rider welfare are key, smaller arenas should have all distances adjusted proportionally to make things workable
 - Agility Aces as an example of another race suitable for modification – Committee is open to suggestions since general rider feedback viewed the vault coming home as not desirable

- Jens shares - Extensive Rules Committee discussion this year to develop wording that incorporates standards for arena size and to at the same time allow continued use of smaller historically successful arenas; note that those marking the arenas need to be mindful of altered proportions/spacing
 - Favourable view of the revised wording to date: arena length of 126m for grass; 110m for all-weather surface
- Jens – work of the Rule Committee starts again next weekend

Rulebook Sales/Status of Rule Book for 2024:

- Likelihood of new printer for next - there was too significant a publishing delay last year
- Rulebook reprint for 2024 – changes are mostly minor; no remaining in-stock 2023 rulebooks so ordering for 2024 version to be available in the new year.

2.3 Financial Report

Presentation - Jens Martin

Refer to Annex 2.3 for accounts

Current financial status as of November 2023:

- Publicized ahead of the meeting as requested at AGM 2022
- Currently showing a slight profit; still some outstanding payments e.g. remaining referee expenses - Nations
- Expecting slight loss by year end:
 - 2023 was highest expenditure year mostly due to payout of referee travel expenses
 - Note that referee expenses are actually funded by rider fees not IMGGA past revenues/reserves
- Camera equipment to be used in southern hemisphere was a major expenditure expected to pay off compared to shipping costs for equipment currently housed in UK/Europe
 - Note – video equipment which arrived in Denmark had sustained significant water damage
 - Travel case contained one inch of water, necessitating major re-purchase of equipment
 - No clues on source of the damage which required major effort by Signe and organizers to rectify
- Q.: Rider fees twice in financial report? A.: Second rider fee line reflects monies received after November 2022 AGM through to December 31 fiscal year end
- Rough estimate of the upcoming final 2023 expenses will allow determination of the rider fee for 2024
- Taxes had to be paid this year due to a law change which now has IMGGA in the tax assessable category, having income of approximately £200

Setting of IMGGA Affiliation fee for 2024

- Jens referred to visual of sliding scale of affiliation fees which have been unchanged since 2015
 - Jens has reviewed the figures and unless there is a significant change in expenditure i.e. adoption of proposal for funding of country development, then fees may reasonably remain unchanged

Discussion:

- New country phase-in stages, and inactive status measures reviewed – suggestion made that ‘cancelled’ should maybe be changed to ‘suspended’ in the case of non-payment of affiliation fees

- Example provided of a past case where cancellation for non-compliance or non-payment of fees allowed an alternate organization to take over operations in one country
- Jens notes that little distinction has been made between the two words but there has been no cause for cancellation on the basis of non-payment of fees
- All in agreement that the affiliation fee for 2024 remain unchanged at £315.

Action Item: The IMGA Affiliation fee for 2024 will remain at £315.

2.4 Other Reports from IMGA Officials

Vice Chairman (Keith Martin):

- Jens relates that Keith has conveyed regrets – currently experiencing technological difficulties so will try again later

Chief Referee (Alun Whitney):

Note: Presented first in order of reports with written report submitted to the Chairperson

- Significant development through his term – rollout of referee training across countries and the introductions and training of twenty-five country liaisons for Assistant Referee and Referee training; reviews the status of referee numbers at various levels of qualification
 - Needed to speed up asst. ref. training due to requirement of as ref at each comp.; courses developed for online – currently 129 qualified assistant referees
 - Improvements on video referee assistant – three IMGA owned cam systems which have enhanced call correctness; compliance of riders with rulings have improved which was one of his
 - See two major safety issues which have crept in over time:
 - oversize ponies being used – difficult to address/measure on site; significant expenditure has occurred by the time that rider and pony arrive at competition
 - lack of control of riders after the pony crosses the line – this has become a major safety decrease as all gallop into the security box end.
 - See also Item 4.15.1 introduced Sunday, November 12

Action Item: Each country to take responsibility for verifying rider/pony weight ratio compliance ahead of departure for a competition

Development Officer (Pierre-Luc Portron):

- Most recent country to join IMGA is China
 - After taking on the development role, Pierre-Luc noted that this is a role difficult to complete alone
 - Has been assisted by Chris and Jens with administrative tasks
 - Technical training on site by Warwick – both in China and with Chinese visitors to Australia
- Pierre-Luc notes that moving forward this year, the objective should be to establish a “toolbox” of resources to facilitate countries’ joining IMGA
 - To feature sharing of administrative and technical aspects
 - An IMGA internal team would best facilitate development not only for new countries but to support growth among existing countries facing a variety of challenges

- specific country examples provided which highlighted potential negative impact of key internal personnel's relationship with a country's official equestrian sport organization
- Caution - ensure that a toolkit or resource package allows country autonomy and recognition of local culture, circumstances, and established practices; the 'toolbox' must allow flexibility.
 - Attempts to transplant exact replicas of one excellent system to another setting have not generally been successful
- Chairperson Chris thanks Pierre-Luc for his report and Quentin for translating
- Warwick relates details of China visit:
 - Took two riders and his wife to train the Chinese trainers (numerous trainers on staff in China)
 - Notes challenge of making equipment purchases and encourages countries replacing older equipment to pass their old items to new countries
- IMGA returning to China to train and certify Chinese coaches to expand their own professional training of riders
 - The Chinese will be seeking foreign trainers for 2-3 week up to 2 – 3-month placements
- Development Officer Pierre-Luc suggests that coaching training kits/resources provide standardized and consistent competencies in coaching
 - Would be useful for both new and existing countries in development
 - Continued development is important rather than strictly seeking additional countries
 - Consider challenges to newly joined countries
 - Structure a calendar of activities and locations that allows for participation by the maximum of existing countries – essentially increase accessibility

Discussion:

- Opinions expressed:
 - current lack of A and B finals has a significant impact on the type of competition that new riders experience
 - we are losing riders due to lack of a quality competition atmosphere that encourages long term commitment
 - information about costs associated with competition travel need to be transparent and timely; new countries benefit from guidance to arrive at a clear picture, in advance, of the costs associated with participating
 - focus on money generation for championship competitions has caused deemphasis on running the full range of competitions even with small margins
 - first require a team to be filled and actively competing, then allow riders from that country to compete in Individuals
 - Variety of points made regarding limitations within countries to putting forward a competition-ready team
 - Consider countries that are not yet able to fill a team as being potentially able to enter a Pair or Individual as a positive step

Break – 11:05 CET

Reconvene – 11:33 CET

Communication Officer (Eleanor Wheeler - acting):

Presentation - Chris Wheeler on behalf of Eleanor

- Brief discussion re: Communication Officer role as continuing open with Eleanor currently filling in – Chris encourages Reps. to inform/encourage potential candidates for this role

- ClipMyHorse.TV as a livestreaming company was well-received and has potential for excellent coverage at additional competitions – Chris intends to follow up in this regard
 - Alun suggests broadening the collaboration and clearly defining routes of communication i.e. broadcasters would have benefitted from direction about key action to capture for enhancing their coverage
- Suggestion for sharing Communication Officer Eleanor’s Instagram posts through LinkedIn to extend reach to individual country’s membership i.e. International Representative posts to LinkedIn

Vice-Chairperson Report (Keith Martin):

- Keith reports through Jens that he is experiencing continued computer difficulty – Chris suggests pursuing his report as part of the February International Rep. meeting
- **Note:** Agenda Item 2.1 IMGA’s Year in Review
 - Jens shared a chart of comparative entry numbers for IMGA sanctioned competitions as previously discussed
 - Trend of decreasing entries over the past number of years

2.5 Reports on 2023 Championships

- **World Team Championship Australia** {Mark Crowe – Referee (IRE)} Written report provided
 - WTC was held October 8 – 15, 2023
 - Fantastic all round – organization, supply of pool and self-sourced ponies over 110 provided of exceptional quality
 - Communication throughout was the responsibility of the team hosts which was an area that could be refined going forward
 - Tack check all done on the Monday – local folk
 - Grass arenas were full size and ran well throughout; one arena was shifted 9m
 - Many teams self-sourced their ponies so the allocation of pool ponies did not go according to Chief Referee Alun’s plan; Referees had to assess ponies as they arrived since assessments had not all been completed in advance; impractical given geographical distances
 - For the draw for pool ponies, countries needing five pool ponies went first: then those needing four ponies and on down – fairest approach
 - Open division - twelve teams which allowed for A and B finals
 - U18 division – eight teams so points were cumulative
 - Not enough ponies remained in the pool for the ‘Sixth Rider’ session to go ahead
 - Two 50 minutes practice sessions provided for teams using pool ponies – going forward, note that more practice opportunities are needed
 - Equipment – was thoroughly reviewed however swords, in particular, proved to be not fit for purpose – breakage – such that the race was unfortunately removed; wind was an issue
 - 24/7 veterinary coverage was provided and essential, especially for that number of ponies organizers fortunate in having a veterinarian within their membership
 - Volunteers Bridgitte and Duncan ran the breathalyser testing, which was great
 - New eight camera system worked really well and was a huge improvement in clarity – due to monitor quality
 - Livestream was provided through one of the referee video systems
 - Congratulations to Australia, it was a fantastic championship and really well done!

Questions:

- Chief Referee Alun comments that the high video quality compared to the system currently used in UK/Europe is due to the improved monitors being used with the cameras
 - The specs on the cameras are the same but monitors lack adequate capacity
 - Note: Ideally monitors should be housed in a box i.e. fold out - to eliminate glare on monitor screen while reviewing footage
 - Comment that GoPro cameras will provide images, but the cables are flimsy/unreliable
- Brief discussion regarding the deviation from the pool pony allocation system?
 - Earlier plan to select ponies from bags graded A, B, C, D was not possible given that only about twenty pool ponies were left – five groups of four were included in the parade
 - Some ponies came in later to replace injured ponies
 - Goal of the system had been to eliminate variability of allocation
 - general recognition that it was difficult to implement
 - Chief Referee Alun noted the importance of maintaining the grading system and the difficulty of doing so if/when ponies arrive ungraded
- Noted that the sixth rider competition did not go ahead as had been hoped with frustration and disappointment for sixth riders in attendance:
 - Note that Australian organizers had been clear from the outset that pony numbers would determine viability of running sixth rider competition
- Observation made that a number of ponies fell on the grass top turn
 - Opinion expressed that wet grass is a cause of falls whenever grass footing is used
- Referee Mark Crowe verifies that incident of broken foot involved the rider, not the pony - pony fell on the rider

➤ **Denmark – World Pairs Championship** (Alun Whitney – **IMGA Chief Referee**) Written report provided

- Competition went well
- Tack checks were conducted before each session
- IMGA breathalyser testing was completed
- Written report lists referees; referees and shadow refs conducted queuing up of video for reviews and meetings
- Referees rotated; daily referee meetings conducted to confer and maintain consistency
- Open - Four heats; U18 one heat; one each for U15 and U12
- Medical coverage provided
- Camera system arrived damaged – required replacement
- Video used to advantage by Referees, emphasis on continuing play as much as possible without undue video search delays
- Additional note that dust was a negative factor; allergies and pony respiration impacted. If we return, watering the warmup area should be a condition; Chief Referee Alun concurs

Question:

- Behaviour of one rider toward pony included roughness in the warmup area and competition arena – action(s) taken?
 - A.: Chief Referee Alun clarifies, noting that the trainer was spoken to on two occasions; the rider was being monitored from that point on would have been issued a red card for any subsequent incident

- Further monitoring and referral to the rider's own country federation should be the follow-up in the event of issuance of a red card

➤ **European Team and Individual Championships (Alun Whitney – IMGA Chief Referee)** Written report provided

- Competitions held at Onley Grounds, Warwickshire, England – spacious all-weather arena
- Safety was a priority – additional tape used to move arena
- 100m length - played short arena modified games
- Small arena was used for lower levels but didn't meet size criteria
- Equipment inspected ahead and found to be good
 - During competition, litter canes needed replacing
 - Joust boards were problematic during competition
 - Alun recommends suspension of Joust as a game at sanctioned competitions until the joust board equipment issues are resolved
- GamesPro – results were publicly displayed
- Tack checks conducted prior to each session
- Several Referees had been selected – some became unavailable such that just four Referees remained:
 - Luigi, Jerome, Alun, Anthony
- All age groups represented
- Teams – numbers lower – likely due to impact of Brexit finances; Italy and France particularly noted for their level of participation
 - First aid – competent
 - ClipMyHorse.TV – provided Livestream; cameras fine; iPads in place
 - Early starts and late finishes – schedules extended beyond published ours; need to establish a more realistic timetable reflecting actual time required to complete heats/sessions
 - Gala – subpar service with food shortages; several disciplinary incidents occurred, investigations of which are continuing – venue controlled all aspects of food and service, so deficiencies were unfortunately beyond control of organizers – how to handle for the future?
 - Investigations continue, particularly re: vandalism to lorry windscreen – brick thrown causing breakage
- Thanks particularly extended to France, Italy, Austria, and Ireland for sending riders; long days due to many teams and availability of only one arena
- Noted that change of date resulted in no U15, U12 teams at all; date conflict with Dublin show which is the final for pony clubbers and a 'must attend' event
- Chief Referee Alun notes that the calendar is a major item to address – back-to-back competitions twice over in July/August 2024 place a strain on rider, pony, referee availability

Break: for tour of FFE grounds including competition arena for 2024 – 12:30 p.m.

Reconvene: 2:00 p.m.

Stéphane – tour of the facility will be filmed and shared with online participants

➤ **World Individual Championship (Alun Whitney):**

- Hosted by La Bonde, France
- Arena used on several occasions

- Two all-weather surfaces used for the competition; depth of surface had been impacted by rain and organizers worked hard to remedy deficiencies due to erosion
- Equipment was moved due to scant footing and rain depletion of sand footing to ensure safety
- Second arena used for U15's only – six lanes
- Original entry numbers diminished
- Tack check completed ahead of competition
- Breathalyser protocol completed
- Referees – circumstances left only three referees and no reserves so two individuals were co-opted to help with qualifying heats; Referees were rotated through divisions
- Timing issues – no contingency plan for delays during sessions; realistically need to plan for longer sessions and provide the schedule in advance for the Referees and Officials
- First aid available and adequate for needs
- Camera system – IMGA equipment
- MGScoreboard – in place
- Gala was enjoyable (feedback by an attending individual to Alun)
- Organizer representative responds re: scheduling concerns, recognizing that the timeframe was tight; that the scoring table became too problematic and required establishment of a second scoring table; that drainage needed attention
 - Chief Referee Alun notes changeover area is depressed and gathers water; additionally noted that the amount of rain was exceptionally problematic; Alun notes that rain is significantly draining sand away from critical footing areas
 - Additional areas of improvement planned: prize presentations, make competition generally more memorable
 - Public display scoreboard was commendable and the effort to put that in place noted

2.6 IMGA Sub-Committees

Compliance (Keith Martin):

- 2023 is compliance survey completion year; Keith has sent out a reminder email with December 31, 2023, deadline; please complete at your earliest convenience to allow the start of processing - verifications and 'checking off' takes time

Health And Safety (Conor O'Leary): – deferred to Agenda Item 4.1

Technology (Jens Martin):

- one major point to announce is the final closure of GamesPro. Feel free to use MGScoreboards for not only scoring but draws
- Chief Referee Elect, Mark, notes that the draws need to be monitored; not truly random

Training and Qualifications (Mark Crowe):

- Updated all of the course materials; ran and will continue to update annually the Country Liaisons for Assistant Referee and Referee Training Liaisons; many courses have been held among member countries
- Mark delivered Assistant Referee courses in Switzerland, Northern Ireland, and Ireland
- Qualified Assistant Referee document shifted to Google docs - Mark can complete updates on a more regular basis than was previously the case; what should the update interval be? Annually? Semi-annually? Quarterly? Monthly?
 - Referee update – Alun completed – merged the two categories in the Google sheet

- Proposals have been made regarding the implementation of coaching qualifications as a direction for IMGGA moving forward; there is interest in the program used by Austria to qualify their coaches; the impetus for coaching training has been in Norway and Austria where coaches required qualifications internally; Coach qualifications to be like Referee qualifications – levelled/graduated?

Strategic Planning Sub-Committee (Chris Wheeler):

- Single motivator – “more”, particularly junior riders – whether to discuss reduced entry fees; generally, any ideas
- Suggestion made to establish system similar to that used in Italy and France – background history of implementation being researched
- In France - high level of participation in equestrian sports generally and training provided through the entire pony club system; pedagogic emphasis is on continuous development with trainers well-trained in all of the disciplines; even parents trained to be arena party members
 - All of their many, stables are linked to the same pedagogy even if the disciplines are different; there is a huge uptake and participation from an educational side –
 - The French Federation has 34 disciplines, e.g. provided of 45 trainers from non-pony games stables attending training so that they may start to offer games
 - Federally identified experts are part of a system for which development of trainers is ongoing – nothing left to one ‘expert’
 - Riding is also part of the farm structure – everyone is in the ‘production line’ for riding schools – coefficient of penetration into the population is high
 - In order to own a horse in France, one needs a license; even horse owners ride at riding schools rather than strictly on their own
- Development Officer Pierre-Luc sees the challenge as developing a model or ‘toolbox’ applicable across countries where culture and political structure, etc. differ
 - Belgium – same structure of stable-based mounted games development but currently challenged to find people to ‘train the trainers’ and encourage expansion
 - A country’s funding structure for riding is also an important element of developing equestrian sport including Mounted Games
 - German MGA is associated with the German Federation but not part of it, impeding expansion beyond a local level; struggle have a product in hand that would convince existing stables to change from the status quo when things are going well. How to get riding schools interested in mounted games when MGA is not part of the federation? Riding schools as the means to increase ridership
 - In the UK the link for new mounted games riders is through Pony Club
 - Denmark has hosted free clinics in riding schools for the past three years but at the base, many of the riding schools feel that the sport is too hard on the ponies
 - Canadian Pony Club as original source for Mounted Games riders in Canada; PC numbers generally decreasing; financial considerations impact
 - USA previously relied on Pony Club-based draw for riders and continues to try to encourage this; have linked with a variety of other opportunities to showcase the sport e.g. participate in major equine industry events
- Development Officer Pierre-Luc suggests surveying how this plays out in each country; note that a number of questions in this year’s Compliance Document provide information
 - moving forward could include additional related questions and for this year, request that the Compliance document be completed including additional detail regarding the country’s structure of mounted games rider and sport development

3. Looking Forward to 2024 and Beyond

3.1 Election of IMGA Officials for the next two-year period

- **Chairperson**

Candidates:

Chris Wheeler (England)

Supported by Sue Roberston (New Zealand)

Action Item: Note that Chris Wheeler is acclaimed to the position of Chairperson. Congratulations, Chris!

Discussion:

- use of 'Chairperson' versus 'Chairman' going forward - reflects current terminology in a number of countries; Jens notes that this is a relatively straightforward word alteration to be completed to the Constitution.

- **Officer for Development**

Candidates:

1. Pierre-Luc Portron (France)

Supported by Stéphane Tardif (France)

Member of the IMGA office in charge of international development for two terms, I would like to once again renew my candidacy for this position within our International Mounted Games Association. With my experience over the two previous mandates and my investment in various international competitions, which allows me to meet many professionals involved and/or interested in our discipline, I am convinced that my profile corresponds to the needs of our organization. In 2018, Nigeria joined us as the 23rd country integrating IMGA. Unfortunately, COVID and certain internal political elements in this country have not yet allowed them to join us on the international competition grounds, but their delegate remains in contact with us. Since February 2023, China has joined us, and I am hopeful that representatives of this new and great country will be able to - 4 - represent their nation in future international competitions. My in-depth knowledge of Mounted Games and the international equestrian ecosystem, I have worked in Italy, France, Spain, the Czech Republic, Switzerland, Denmark, etc. combined with my ability to establish fruitful relationships with various partners, allows me to position myself as an interesting candidate to contribute to the development of IMGA. I am particularly drawn to our organization's commitment to promoting equestrian sports on a global scale and its crucial role in the continued growth of the Mounted Games. My practical experience in designing and implementing development strategies, as well as my understanding of the specific issues facing equestrian sports, will allow me to contribute significantly to the pursuit of our objectives.

2. Andrea Piazza (Italy)

Supported by Rachel Lechner (Austria)

I wanted to express to all the reasons for my application for the officer development. Meanwhile I introduce myself, I am Piazza Andrea, IMGA Italy Representative and an active member in the

MG world for about 25 years. The reasons for my candidature arise from the fact that I am seeing fewer and fewer new generations entering our sport and I am worried about the future of our discipline. I see great historical states absent from the big events, I see the u12 and u15 much too empty being our nursery categories. Italy and France have developed a good nursery in recent years, and I would like to be able to be useful to IMGGA by bringing my direct knowledge.

Discussion:

- Possibility of accepting both candidates as co- development officers, drawing on their specific areas of focus (historically)?
- Benefits seen of having a chief reference person to whom inquiries are directed and then handled by one or the other of the co-officers
- Opinion expressed by several that development initiatives require a larger group whether for expanding to new countries or supporting development in existing countries
- Chairperson Chris requests that Jens provide details of any IMGGA Constitutional requirements: Jens - historically there was a development committee
- Each candidate took the opportunity to outline their candidature
- Voting by International Representatives: Voting results in favour of Andrea Piazza.

Action Item: Note that Andrea Piazza is elected as the Development Officer. Congratulations, Andrea! Thank you to Pierre-Luc for his work in the role and for his agreement to form part of a Development Committee. Interest in participating on a Development Committee was strong and included Alun and Quentin V.

○ **Chief Referee**

Chairperson Chris expresses deeply felt thanks and recognition of Retiring Chief Referee Alun Whitney's contributions over years. Alun continues as a member of the Rules Committee.

Candidates:

Mark Crowe (Ireland)

Supported by Warwick Slade (Australia)

Action Item: Congratulations to Mark as the newly acclaimed Chief Referee.

Action Item: Note that newly elected IMGGA Officials begin their term starting today, November 11, 2023.

- Mark reiterates his thanks to Alun and requests that Alun consider continuing to be involved
- Alun returns thanks and indicates his intention to stay involved while taking just a step back

3.2 Selection of Referees for 2024 IMGGA sanctioned competitions

Refer to Annex 3.2 for the list of candidates

Discussion:

- Note that voting for Referees for 2024 IMGGA sanctioned competitions was held both remotely and in-person

- Online attendees instructed to email their votes jointly to Chris Wheeler, Jens Martin, and Michelle Cruikshanks
- Confirmed by the Chairperson that only those representatives eligible to vote may do so – i.e. full country membership and full attendance at the AGM.

Voting Results- To be announced once verified by Chief Referee Mark Crowe, and the results shared with successful referees and candidates. The following are the competitions for which referees are required and for which applications have been received:

- World Team Championship 2024
- World Pairs Championship 2024
- World Individual Championship 2024
- European Team and Individual Championships 2024
- Nations Team Championship 2024

3.4 IMGA Sanctioned Championships for 2024 - Updates

- World Team Championship (Arezzo, Italy): July 15-20, 2024

Presentation – Andrea Piazza (ITA)

- next month will have an update from the facility owner – meeting next week; big arena will be used
- amazing video cameras – two sets of 10 cameras for each of two arenas; fast to use and easy with exceptional clarity e.g. able to see when the rider puts the tool in the box! Has reduced discussion and disputes!
- 24,000€ for two sets; very similar to the specs that Alun provided, using wires; – no need for IMGA cameras
- Question re: anticipated hot weather - Andrea is planning to schedule early morning and late evening riding; enough cooling and showers for ponies – one of the best
- Between the arenas there is extensive shopping
- All stabling is permanent covered – 4m x 4m stalls with water; July 15 – 20, 2024
- Is an amazing place; the owner has experience with organizing major international functions so it will be well done
- Verification of date clash with the royal welsh July
- Currently working on borrowed pony arrangements
- Quentin wishes to know verified 120m x 80m since Google maps shows 110m x 80m

- World Pairs Championship (La Bonde, France): August 5-10, 2024

Presentation – Quentin Voeltzel (FRA)

- Automatic watering system being installed to replace expensive tractor use for watering of arenas
- Looking for permanent stabling to be somewhat in place versus expensive portable stabling
- 2014 was first international competition on that site – continues in use and enjoying hosting IMGA competitions

- With demands on a range of services due to Olympics Paris 2024, organizers are mindful of securing e.g. first responders in a timely manner
 - Hotel will be bigger with twenty rooms replacing the nine previously available
 - Bar to be held in quieter venue - in the basement - away from the sleeping areas/campgrounds
 - Cost will be around 400€ per pair including IMGGA rider fee
 - Can a non-country rider participate as part of a mixed pair? Yes.
 - Will be happy to help provide ponies including for some overseas riders interested in riding in a couple of competitions; contact Quentin who will be trying to encourage overseas riders to attend
 - U15 and U12 riders will receive a discounted entry fee from the outset rather than a reduction post-entry; definitely encouraging U15 and U12 riders even when financial limitations are present – contact Quentin and he will try to help find ponies, especially for U12 who are the next generation to fill the ranks of IMGGA
 - Alun requests advance communication of timetables and scheduling so that Referees/Officials are informed and can plan
- World Individual Championship (La Scuderia, Italy): July 23-28, 2024
- European Team and Individual Championships (Lamotte-Beuvron, France): August 13-17, 2024
 - Any questions?
 - Excellent tour provided of the FFE facility featuring arenas, camping, parking, stabling, permanent washrooms/showers
 - **Note - stabling only, no corralling of ponies due to insurance requirements**
 - Q.: Any update on logistics of travelling with ponies to France?
 - Pete W. offers to assist UK travellers using their transport
 - Last year they brought their own lorries, and it was not so bad
 - Paperwork is extensive so Pete has been using Parkers for this – needs to be correct:
 - example provided of a team returning to France and being turned back because of errors in their paperwork, having to remain in England for an unplanned additional two weeks
 - Confirmation provided that the Olympics will have concluded by the time Europeans begins
- IMGGA Nations Team Championship (Lake Taupo, North Island, New Zealand): October 12-19, 2024

Presentation – Sue Robertson (NZL)

- Location of venue confirmed as central north Island in the Lake Taupo area
- Date necessitated by the facility's availability
- Additional information to be provided shortly

IMGGA Sanctioned Championships – Programme 2025 - updates

- World Team Championship (Ghlin, Belgium)

Presentation – Robin Donnay (BEL)

- Questions will be forwarded to the organizers
- Q.: Are there dates?
 - Robin will confirm with organizers and provide information

- World Pairs Championship (Corné, France)
- World Individual Championship (England)
- European Team and Individual Championships (Ireland)
- Nations Team Championship (Australia)

Presentation – Warwick Slade (AUS)

- Equestrian Park Northam, Western Australia is the venue
- First practice is September 9, 2025
- September 10 -12 for first sessions in an all-weather arena
- September 13 at Northam Equestrian showgrounds where there is a major equestrian event taking place
- Prices to follow closer to the date
- Expect to self-book RV's or caravans – hookups available
- Initiative put out to their members to bring in horse trucks to allow guests to stay

3.5 Selection of hosts for 2026 IMGA sanctioned competitions – Tabled to Sunday, November 12

See Annex 3.5 for bid presentations

- European Team and Individual Championships (All age classes)
- World Individual Championship (All age classes)
- World Open and U18 Team Championships
- World Pairs Championship (All age classes)
- Nations Open Team Championship

3.6 2024 International Representatives' Meetings

On-line meetings 2024 – dates to follow:

- February
- May
- July at WTC (Italy)
- September

- Annual General Meeting: November 16 and 17, 2024

Break – 4:30 p.m. CET

Reconvene 4:44 p.m. CET

4. Important Discussions and Decisions

4.1 Drugs Policy

Presentation - Conor O'Leary

For the attention of our Health, Safety and Risk Management Subcommittee: Creation of a policy document covering drug use in ponies and riders:

- Irish Harness Racing has a protocol based on fairness and horse welfare with large purses at stake and high temptation to enhance performance
- IMGGA would be testing on the basis of pony welfare as the cost is significant
 - Samples taken by the vet on site sent for analysis - results report will be subsequent to the competition
 - Testing for Bute 100€; full complement of tests 350€ quite apart from vet costs and courier, not to mention B testing
 - In the case of multiple random samples, perhaps could be done for 1000€ or less
 - Overall significant cost, the veterinary service portion of which has the possibility of being part of the vet on site.
- Example provided of Italy's current heavy focus on rider drug testing
- Do we apply such a protocol? How are the ponies selected?
 - Take one, two or three samples and likely send to Germany or France, receiving the results a period of time later e.g. France and Italy expect a delay of two months
- Q.: Conor – What would an IMGGA protocol look like?
 - How many ponies? At how many competitions? Do we select a couple of competitions?
 - Examples provided:
 - Italy's practice includes testing of top three finishers at selected competitions across disciplines
 - Austrian competitions are registered with the National Anti-drug Association
 - Inspectors just show up – if positive result, the rider is banned for two years and likewise the trainer (if involved)
 - Possibility to consider: Announce that completely random testing could occur at any competition which would be a significant deterrent.
 - In other systems, a rider can be randomly approached at some subsequent competition
- Impression shared that doping of especially top performers in Mounted Games is very common
 - Opinions expressed:
 - Full divisional testing of the Open division and/or A Finals of all age groups be conducted
 - Pairs should be included in testing protocol
 - All IMGGA sanctioned competitions to be subject to random testing
 - Q.: Who pays 350€ for full testing? A.: Perhaps publicize that random testing will occur; this becomes a huge deterrent
 - Q.: Should there be a budget provided for each of the competitions - organizers would test?
 - Budget for the year could be used at any point
- Testing measures reviewed including bio measures

- IMGGA would use FEI list of prohibited drugs
- Four out of five competitions 2024 are in France and Italy so are covered by the federal testing procedures there
 - Suggestion made that IMGGA would want to have its own protocol and measures in place
- Chairperson Chris summarizes:
 - Who pays – riders to pay through fees?
 - Countries already in testing programs to be considered covered?
 - £2000 is a suggested budget
 - Looking today at approving the concept: anyone disagree with that?

Additional Discussion:

- Need to have sanctions included with the protocol
- Issue raised of tampering with another's pony; this has happened.
- Committee to perhaps refine a protocol and return it to the table as a proposal
- Suggestion that higher level of publicity and strongest sanctions be applied in the case of tampering with another's pony
- Disciplinary committee – is another suggestion
- Suggestion made to refer to FEI drug testing protocol online:
<https://inside.fei.org/system/files/How%20Testing%20Works%202016%20version.pdf>
- Concerns in general regarding ensuring appropriate wording and sanctions etc.; general agreement with the concept of establishing a protocol

Concussion Protocol

Presentation - Conor O'Leary

- Summarizes differences between New Zealand and Irish documents provided to the Committee for review:
 - New Zealand calls for immediate removal of the rider from play and requires a written 'return to play' document from a physician
 - Irish document calls for removal and assessment on site by attending medical personnel with possibility of return to play after specific period of time symptom-free

Discussion:

- Comments regarding the range of legal positions possible, and the high probability of falls in our sport having a significant impact in the case of Mounted Games
- Sharing of personal experiences with concussion
- Reference to significant body of related research
- Summary of the matter:
 - IMGGA needs to have a protocol going forward
 - Issue at hand includes what the 'call' is and who can make it, recognizing country to country differences medically and legally
- Important to include each jurisdiction's policy/protocol in the competition entry process along with examples of particulars of the process to follow
- Need to establish name/title of person qualified... who "will provide direction" in the event of incident where concussion may have occurred

- Q.: Placement of Concussion Protocol among IMGA document locations? Where?

Action Item: The item is referred to the Rules Committee, including the wording established to date by the Health and Safety Committee, for finalization.

4.2 Assistant Referee Course

Presentation - Chris Wheeler.

- Chris provides example of someone unfamiliar with the existence of the online Assistant Referee course; International Reps, please continue your enthusiastic push for members, parents, supporters to go online and become qualified.

Note: Recording of meeting stopped at 6:16 p.m. CET

4.3 Short Arenas

Presentation - Chris Wheeler

- Any solutions for eliminating hand-offs at both ends of the arena and for potentially reducing the instances of full-out gallops to the finish line on the return stretch of short arena modified races, would be appreciated:
 - Send your ideas to Jens as we are looking to improve the short arena games
 - Consider proportionally shortening distances in small arenas to reduce overall speed – between poles, not just at the ends

4.4 Camera Systems

Presentation - Chris Wheeler

- “Well done”, once again to Alun for continued work with camera setup, and to others who have stepped up, e.g. Quentin V. setting up at World Individuals
- Italy is providing their own camera system
- Chris has cameras for Quentin V. for next year
- Q.: Will cables be lengthy enough to cover the distance in full size arenas – Stéphane indicates that they will complete a run-through next spring

4.5 Run and Ride

Presentation - Chris Wheeler

- Should we consider no longer having this race?
 - Option 1 Remove it from our games list.
 - Option 2 keep it for U15s and U12s

Discussion:

- Opinions shared include:
 - Not a fair game in Individuals – single male versus single female riders
 - Switzerland - playing this game in teams or pairs, not individuals
 - IMGA 'Hosting A Sanctioned Competition' document states that it is “strongly recommended” not to play Run and Ride in the semi-finals or finals after years of complaint
 - Straw vote held “Is Run and Ride a sexist race?” – inconclusive results; continued discussion
 - Nothing beyond a standing start should be allowed
 - Limits to fair participation in this may include disability i.e. not just gender differences
 - High rate of success for female riders observed
 - High prevalence of female riders compared to males as the source of this success

Action: Refer the matter of this race to the Rules Committee for discussion and a decision regarding its continued use and any restrictions.

4.6 Entry fee reduction

Presentation - Chris Wheeler

- Proposal that entry fees should not be reduced once entry fees have opened for purchase
 - General agreement that once the price is declared, it should not change before the competition, i.e. no entry fee reduction unless it is an overall reduction for all riders entered

Action Item: Entry fees, once posted, to remain unchanged across entries with no subsequent reductions unless provided for all riders entered in the competition.

4.7 Trot up

Presentation - Chris Wheeler

- Proposal that competitors trot up their pony before the competition starts with a lameness inspection completed by the vet on site plus one other official.

Discussion

- Difficult call to make on the basis of pony's age potentially resulting in 'strange gaits'
- Q.: When will there be time to complete this inspection?
 - Done at WEG? Can get complicated? Who to complete?
 - Done at French Championships; Stéphane and Pierre-Luc concur that about one minute per horse was required:
 - 15m distance up and back including the turn.
 - France – clarification - usually just ahead of the finals which may be after 3 -4 sessions
 - Swiss army completes weekly two vet, 70-minute inspection of its mounts
- Q.: What is the objective? A.: If completed at the outset of the competition, this would be with the goal of ensuring that no lame ponies enter the arena

- If completed while the on-duty vet is there this is an additional valuable contribution during times that the vet is not occupied by other duties
 - Logical time to do the trot-up is at the same time as tack check
 - Potential of completing an initial trot-up and then a supervised warmup before the finals
 - France uses a steward at the entry to the warmup ring
 - Europeans 2023 - there was a vet service/practice on site
- Q.: Vaccinations/passports check – when to complete? A.: Possible to establish an upload for vaccination documents to allow for advance examination of vax records by organizers? Riders then have the opportunity to address any deficiencies
 - Already an App where the passport is ‘read’ and flagged – possible to contact the App developer?
- General Agreement that ponies at IMGA competitions shall complete an initial trot-up on a suitable surface as determined by the attending veterinarian, and a subsequent trot-up in advance of the Finals

Action Item: IMGA shall have a pony trot-up at competitions as agreed upon by all present; details to follow/be included in the ‘Hosting an IMGA sanctioned Competition’ document.

4.8 Rider height/weight and pony height

Presentation - Chris Wheeler

- Reminder for riders to check before entering competitions.
- Website has documents available - it is the responsibility of the Rider/and their parents; reps. please remind your countries so that they do not invest entries and travel only to be flagged and rejected at a competition
- Suggestion that entry form include rider height and weight
- Chief Referee Alun observes that now that the ponies are generally taller, very large ponies are now evident and when involved in accidents, have the potential to be very damaging

Discussion:

- Who? What?
- Potential implications and previous history of full scale height verification having been completed at the outset of competitions
- Veterinary certificates attesting pony height as potentially incorrect
 - Example provided of height measurement of pony as requested and verified by the Referee for which the pony in question had an incorrect veterinary height certificate

Action Item: Representatives, please remind your riders to check and confirm their compliance with weight/height requirements ahead of departure for competition.

4.9 Bitless bridles

Presentation – Chris Wheeler for Margaret Welsby

Should we allow bitless bridles in IMGA?

Discussion:

- The science behind biting
- That bitless bridles can also inflict pain/injury if poorly adjusted
- Clarification provided that Margaret is referring to cases where, for medical reasons, a pony cannot use a bit (Note – morning of November 11, Margaret has verified that this is her intent)
- Observation that this has been previously discussed, many people have opinions and related experiences

Adjournment: 7:20 p.m. CET

Note: Sunday start time is 9:00 a.m. CET; there are just a few items and then the bid presentations for 2026 Hosts

Note: Referee 2024 voting

- Remote attendees please complete your referee voting overnight, email votes to Chris, Jens, and Michelle
- In-person meeting attendees, please complete your hard copy ballot ahead of departure this evening
- For World Teams, World Pairs, World Individuals: select referees,
- For Europeans – no need for voting based on number of European referee applicants in light of accepted proposal to use only European referees for Europeans Team and Individual Championships
- For Nations – only one applicant, so no vote is required

4.12 Nations Team Championships – (considered as final item ahead of adjournment November 11, 2023. Amended to Action item)

Presentation - Chris Wheeler

- Discussion has occurred regarding options to include more teams in the Nations Team Championship
 - Add U18 teams
 - Allow each country to send two teams
 - Develop composite 'United Nations' team
- Chairperson's note - this item was discussed at World Team Championship in Australia and will be the subject of an update to all Nations countries
 - Suggestion put forward for Zoom meeting format as previously used

Chairperson's Closing Remarks: Thanks to the online members for their attendance at a long day of meeting with, for them, a very early start; thanks to those who participated in-person.

Adjournment: Saturday, November 11 at 7:25 p.m. (CET)

International Mounted Games Association

21st Annual General Meeting 2023

Sunday, November 12.

Meeting convened by Chairperson Chris Wheeler at 9:08 a.m. (CET)

<https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/1484485315>

Participants:

IMGA Officials:

Chris Wheeler	Chairperson	Present
Keith Martin	Vice Chairperson	Apologies
Jens Martin	Finance/Administration	Remote
Eleanor Wheeler	Communication	Apologies
Pierre-Luc Portron	Development	Present
Alun Whitney	Technical Manager	Remote
Mark Crowe	Chief Referee	
	Chair – Qualifications/Training	Present

International Representatives (V – Voting member):

Warwick Slade (V)	Australia	Remote
Rachel Lechner (V)	Austria	Remote
Robin Donnay (V)	Belgium	Present
Michelle Cruikshanks (V)	Canada	Present
Leo Liang (V)	China	Apologies – Pony Club commitments
Elijah Zhang	China	Absent
Alžbeta Mašková (V)	Czech Republic	Absent
Signe Sehested (V)	Denmark	Remote
Elaine Trevor Jones (V)	England	Pete Walters (V) - proxy
Stephane Tardif (V)	France	Present
Jonathon Marion	France	Present as available - competition
Volker Baasch (V)	Germany	Widukind Moorman - proxy
Conor O’Leary (V)	Ireland	Present
Andrea Piazza (V)	Italy	Present as available - competition
Lizzy Franck (V)	Luxembourg	Present
Sue Robertson (V)	New Zealand	Remote
Allister Hamilton (V)	Northern Ireland	Present
Stian Hennie (V)	Norway	Remote
Veronica Dodds (V)	Scotland	Remote
Nick Sloane (V)	South Africa	Remote
Judith Porcel Follet (V)	Spain	Absent
Caroline Claeson (V)	Sweden	Quentin Voeltzel (V) proxy
Marino Kammeran (V)	Switzerland	Remote
Quentin Gargallo	Switzerland	Apologies – checking in as available
Paul Greiling (V)	USA	Remote – Carol Jones (V) Proxy
Alun Whitney (V)	Wales	Remote

Voting Representatives: 20

- **Guest(s):**

Martine Donnay

Belgium

Item 3.1 (continued from Saturday, November 11)

Development Officer Election

Additional Discussion:

- Q.: Better to have one chief development officer or co-officers? Ability to work together? A.: Goals to be established in common – view expressed that even the differing focus of each candidate is useful to achieving overall goals of Development
- Q.: A significant benefit of Development is getting Mounted Games accepted at more big venues and in high profile arenas. What is your view? A.: Andrea and Pierre-Luc - different visions are in fact complementary. Andrea coming from the training side, Pierre-Luc from referee side having seen different countries' foci and vision
- Opinion expressed that it is important to establish Development goals able to be quantified over time after setting goals in the first year; that's why it was beneficial to have the entry data from Jens
 - Avoid subjectivity
 - Pierre-Luc - work with countries in need that are already members
 - Based on actual numbers, need exists to work to ensure high quality and high level of participation in competitions

Voting Representatives: 20

Voting Results:

- Andrea Piazza - 70% (14 votes)
- Pierre-Luc Portron - 30% (6 votes)

Action Item: Congratulations are extended to Andrea Piazza (ITA) as the new IMGA Development Officer. Thanks to Pierre-Luc for his work in this role and for his willingness to work together with Andrea going forward.

Action Item: Alun and Quentin both indicate interest in committing to a Development team – Chairperson Chris notes that it's very exciting to see this interest.

3.5 Selection of hosts for 2026 IMGA sanctioned competitions – Tabled from Saturday, November 11

See Annex 3.5 for bid presentations

- European Team and Individual Championships (All age classes)
- World Individual Championship (All age classes)
- World Open and U18 Team Championships
- World Pairs Championship (All age classes)
- Nations Open Team Championship

➤ World Pairs Championship 2026 – Corné, France

Presentation – Sean Bource

- Competition arena - 76.5m x 126m; warmup 45m x 110m
- Amenities:
 - 100 permanent stables
 - Car park
 - Permanent washrooms
 - Restaurant serving all day long; outside bar with oysters
- Quite easy to get local accommodation within 20km of competition site
- Showground has hosted 27 multi-discipline competitions including World Pairs 2019 and 2021
 - They have organized a team competition with up to 80 teams
- Currently making the changes necessary to host 2025 competition and are applying for 2026 as presented by Sean for Ghislain
- Will be using their own equipment:
 - Only one year old and compliant with IMGA standards
 - Chief Referee Alun – notes an issue with numbers in bank – looked good and were rigorously tested by Alun in advance but one broke in competition
 - Adrian and Ghislain will confirm with supplier – same equipment being used at the French Indoor Championship here this weekend
 - Noted that 3D printer numbers used in 2021 were deemed not suitable; 2023 design was modified 3D which are much stronger than previously
 - In the end, all equipment at Corné will be verified as fit for purpose
- Q.: What is the area near Corné? A.: Ghislain – in the west of France in an area known for castles and vineyards
 - Access by road/train; note that airport is one hour away
 - 14km to all major motorway exits
 - Tourist area so nice to visit with nice climate.
- Q.: Will the expanded arena size will be ready for the competition in March? A.: Yes
-

➤ World Team Championship - Norway

Presentation – Stian Hennie (NOR)

- Venue selected for 2026 World Team Championship bid resulted from productive internal discussion in Norway
- This is their first hosting ever and organizers think the venue will meet requirements:
 - Infield of racetrack is fully available for the range of activities
 - Parking for 800 cars; 80 large trucks
 - Stabling – 62; each 3m x 4m
 - Restaurant seats 650 with separate pizza restaurant on lower level
 - Competition arena will be 115m long x 100m with all-weather footing - this is full length
 - Work being done such to ensure the full square ring
 - Four warmup areas of 20m x 80m being prepared with possibility of varying this size
 - Veterinary clinic on site

- Camping area on the exterior side of the track – grass
- Stable Inn – breakfast provided for riders daily
 - Restaurant oversees the racetrack infield and will house the gala
 - Pizza restaurant under main restaurant
 - Recreation room – pool tables, darts, tables
 - Organizers will add additional evening amusements
- Tunet is away from the camping area as a facility/ building for evening parties i.e. keep noise away from camping; site overview map provided
- Near Lillehammer – 22km away
- Expecting mid-July 2026 dates
- Entry fees of 3850€ – on the basis of six riders – to include shavings, veterinarian, five breakfasts and four evening meals, Gala for six and the trainer, six supporter packages
 - Supporter packages:
 - Bronze (basic amenities) 20€
 - Silver 140€
 - Gold 300€ (full amenities)
- Paddle steamer side trip being planned
 - Potentially Olympic ski jumping venue at Lillehammer and Olympic cavern hall
 - Open air museum Lillehammer Maihaugen
 - Hunderfossen Fairytale (amusement) Park is 35 minutes from venue – will try to have shuttle buses
- Communication of information to be via an App and Facebook; both to contain fully updated information

Discussion:

- Q.: Pool ponies to be made available? A.: Stian has spoken with three European countries that will bring ponies and since there is only one Norwegian team, there will be Norwegian ponies available
- Q.: Any possibility of providing pool ponies for European teams due to cost and complexity of shipping? A.: Ireland can provide all of the paperwork required for entry free as Ireland has a deal with Norway – complete the paperwork in advance for easy entry and leave paperwork at Swedish border
- Q.: Are there ferries to facilitate access to Norway and reduce driving distances overland? A.: Discussion within the group regarding options for access and travel routes including the complexities of exiting the UK
- Q.: How much daylight at that time of year? A.: Summer so there is daylight until 10ish in the evening with sunrise between 5 and 6 a.m.
- Q.: Is swimming permitted in the lake? A.: There is swimming access nearby and the possibility of providing boats for independent boat trips into the fjord
- Q.: Insurance in case of injured rider? A.: Is the same as European coverage
- Generally good enthusiasm for this proposal and for Norway's hosting of the 2026 World Team Championship
- World Individual Championship 2026 – Luhmuehlen, Germany
Presentation - Widukind Moormann (DEU)
- Historically, Germany hosted European Champs in 2016 and intended to host for 2022 - prevented by COVID-based uncertainty

- Now stepping forward personally and working with the association to relearn how to run such a competition:
 - In 2016, Livestreaming was of high quality
 - Local spectators numbered 2000
 - High standard arena and showground with robust infrastructure
 - Sufficient pony showers in the hot climate
 - Catering was very high standard at a reasonable price - 15€ for the Gala meal
 - In 2016, main ring used for teams with two other grass rings used for Individuals
 - Camping onsite; stabling was at some distance
- Hamburg airport only 30 minutes away
- Carefree package planned for non-European riders and supporters for 2026
- Note that ponies will be more extensively in use by German riders since this is Individuals
 - Expecting to provide 20 ponies for non-European riders:
 - Both Widu and organization will work to source ponies and also to establish a network for facilitating pony sourcing
- A main focus will be promoting the sport – locally by radio and through national television
 - Broadcast project planned for online content: promotion video for the people and the teams expected to start by next year
 - Seeking a reliable timetable for e.g. national TV and for the riders, too
 - This was a key learning from 2016: opening ceremonies and all finals will receive well-deserved attention
- In 2016 alcohol sales were key source of income; this is Individuals so that won't be the case
- Seeking to develop thirty-six Hall of Fame video presentations as part of evening entertainment with goal of expanding exposure
 - Mounted Games has the benefit of being relatively inexpensive within the equestrian disciplines
- For competition timing, Widu is in contact with Ghislain, noting that with the two competitions in France, and one each in Norway and Germany, the organizers will try to coordinate with timing that suits everyone, considering the needs of the ponies and riders for breaks between competitions
 - Views that four to five weeks solid of competition is not desirable
 - Scheduling the younger groups at the outset of the schedule should also provide a break for Open ponies and riders
- Q.: Anticipating using grass rings? A.: organizers have the capacity to expand from one ring to two and then to three
 - High standard grass ring which withstands rain will be extra seeded one year in advance to be prepared
 - Ring use will feature the same number of lanes for each to streamline flexibility and functionality between them
 - Rings needed will depend on entry
- General comments: Thank you to Widu for the fantastic presentation; looking forward to the opportunity for 2026 and really enjoyed 2016

- Nations Team Championship – no bids received
- **Note:** For Nations 2026, if there are no other candidates – USMGA would be happy to host

Action Item: USA thanked for their offer asked to make a bid presentation at one of the upcoming meetings of International Representatives.

➤ European Team and Individual Championship – La Bonde, France

Presentation - Quentin Voeltzel

- Historically, 2016 was great
 - In 2018 they had much more planning time, but the capacity of the amenities fell short of organizers' expectations due to unanticipated huge crowds
 - Highlighted the need for much more site preparation
- Working with neighbour farmers to allow expansion into fields for parking
 - Adjacent arenas are possible through this arrangement with one being grass
 - Neighbour farmer willing to plow and seed to grass to create an additional arena
- Supporter crowd is large at every competition; this is another opportunity to elevate the visibility of Mounted Games
- Borrowed ponies provided for U12 to encourage entries; clinics for them could be great added feature
- Entry fees: 2500€ teams and 400€ for Individuals; less for U12 and U15 divisions which will stay as originally posted
- Q.: – Is this an independent or FFE sanctioned competition? A.: Hoping to work strongly together with FFE
 - Chairperson Chris confirms that the FFE has validated each of the bids: Corné and La Bonde

Q.: Will there be water available in the secondary field? A.: Yes, they own the wedge of land between neighbour sites and have electrical and water infrastructure ready to set up there

Chairperson Chris thanks all presenters for their bids for IMGA Championship competitions 2026.

Break – 10:52 a.m. (CET)

Reconvene – 11:09 (CET)

4.10 Riders' Representative onto Rules Committee

Presentation - Chris Wheeler

Proposal that the voting system for the rules committee is amended so as to ensure that there is always an "active rider" on the committee.

- Chairperson Chris' background to the proposal:
 - Describes 'active rider' as someone who has been doing mounted games internationally and is an experienced rider
 - The rider must have certain attributes including having ridden in an International IMGA competition three times in the past three years which would result in the ability to comment on a variety of the current arenas
 - Has experienced playing a variety of formats – Teams, Pairs, Individuals

Discussion:

- Q.: How will this individual be selected? A.: Chairperson Chris will put the role description on the communication platform
- Q.: Confirming that this would be a spot reserved for an active rider?

- General agreement that it would be desirable to have even more active riders on the Committee
- Looking to ensure that the active rider position is separate rather than within the seven-member total
- Suggestion that it would be good in general for the Rules Committee to connect with the riders in some type of open forum for sharing of views
- Q.: What would be the age requirement? A.: Age to be over 18
- Jens – is confirming the components of the role as proposed
- Suggestion made that selection of the Riding member take place early in the New Year for a two-year term so that the election for this position remains offset from the election of the other six committee members
 - General agreement with this suggestion
 - General agreement that a rider would have to declare candidacy for the active rider position
- Q.: Should the Chief Ref be an appointed member of the committee?
 - Observation made that the Chief Referee has typically been a member of the Committee
 - A consideration: If the Rider position is to be a reserved spot on the Committee, should the Chief Referee also have a reserved position?

Action Item: The invitation to apply will go out to the International Representatives for candidates to step forward for approval/endorsement by the country organization or as endorsed by a country representative.

4.11 Breathalyser on practice days

Presentation - Chris Wheeler

If a rider fails the breathalyser on a practice day, are they subject to the consequences that are in place for when the competition starts?

- Chairperson Chris provided background to the proposal:
 - This scenario occurred during this season; since it was not a competition day, the sanctions for use during competition were not in place
 - It was felt that steps needed to be taken therefore an ‘on the spot’ approach and consequences were applied
 - Highlighted need for further refinement of the policy

Discussion:

- In the rules, the Competition officially starts at the drop of the flag; do we need to change that?
- These rules should be applicable from the start of the event
- Clarification provided that the first breathalyser is before 11 a.m. rather than earlier
- General query about the potential for riding after consuming alcohol but after having passed the first breathalyser
 - Note that breathalyser testing may be conducted on suspicion of alcohol consumption, not only at official breathalyser testing times
- Suggestion that breathalyser testing is most effectively done on entry to the arena and could be done in conjunction with tack check, for example
- Chief Referee Mark confirms from the policy that breathalyser sanctions apply to official practices

- Additional Discussion includes practicality of testing timelines and the logistics of applying the rules in ways that make sense and are consistent; variety of scenarios explored
- General agreement that the sanctions apply for the full extent of mounted activity
 - Differing opinions expressed regarding type, number, and severity of sanctions
 - Example: Consider sanction for infraction during practice session to be missing that practice
 - Example: Practice session as less structured and requiring full sobriety due to unstructured nature of the activity - deterrent needs to be full strength
 - Opinion expressed that practice session infraction(s) resulting in missed competition session(s) as a sanction seems a bit harsh
 - Opinion expressed that sobriety is required; inadvisable to differentiate sanctions based on the importance of the session – practice vs session
 - Suggestion that we need to breathalyse prior to practice sessions

Action Item: As international representatives – go back to countries and seek country opinion on the proposal which will be revisited at a subsequent International Representatives’ meeting.

4.12 – see notation November 11, 2023, regarding Action for this item.

**4.13 Development in new countries –
Presentation - Chris Wheeler**

Should IMGA fund development?

Action Item: 4.13 tabled to February International Representatives’ meeting with consideration given to the newly created Development team

**4.14 New races
Presentation - Chris Wheeler**

Do we need new games?

Action Item: Submit suggestions from your organizations to the Rules Committee, noting suggestion that Agility races are underrepresented at the moment.

**4.15 Official Clothing for IMGA Sanctioned Championship Referees
Presentation - Mark Crowe**

Should we provide our championship referees with official clothing?

- Came up in Australia in discussion
- Noted that host countries commonly provide referees with their clothing – Q.: Is a referee wearing the clothing of one country perceived as being biased against other countries?

Discussion:

- General agreement that we want Referees to have specific clothing for hygiene and proper fit as key reasons; include jacket in offering – all Referees able to order
- Treasurer Jens consulted re: financing to provide Championship Referees with Polo shirt(s)
- Suggestion to consider obtaining sponsors for clothing
- Consider offering range of clothing to riders and supporters e.g. online store
 - Observation made that we are now seeing other organizations' clothing at IMGA competitions due to no option for IMGA branded clothing
- As owner of a sports apparel company, Pete provides loose estimate of pricing:
 - Polo shirt - £20pounds
 - Soft-shell water-repellent jacket - £50

Action Item: Treasurer Jens and Pete W. will consult and develop a report to be shared at the February meeting.

4.15.1 – Added Item – Safety on the field of play

Past Chief Referee Alun suggests that we need to address the increasing practice of riders/trainers allowing and encouraging riders to let ponies run from the finish to the security box with no attempts at bringing the pony under control or reducing their speed.

Action Item: For the February International Representatives' meeting, Alun to develop a proposal for consideration. Alun concurs and invites contributions and ideas for the proposal.

4.16 Should we only use European Referees for the European Championships? * Note- this item considered Nov. 11, 2023.

Presentation - Stéphane Tardif (FRA)

In the interest of reducing costs, should we only use European based referees to officiate at the European Team and Individual Championships?

Background to the Proposal:

- Stéphane elaborates on the reason for the proposal which is financial especially in consideration of the 2024 Europeans
 - Goal is to formulate the budget reducing overall cost by minimizing referee expenses

Discussion:

- Recognition of the validity of this point; note that the rider fees support referee travel costs
- Sharing on behalf of riders in one country where there is a sentiment that part of fees going to support referee travel is unpalatable

- Going forward, an expansion in referee availability could be expected such that there is a body of expertise in each hemisphere
- Treasurer Jens supports the proposal from a budgetary point of view;
- Differing opinions expressed regarding the challenge of limiting specific competitions to specific referees
- Concern expressed that a referee in an given area for one competition would be prevented from applying to referee a second in close proximity
- Consider capping referee travel expenses as a reasonable approach to ensuring that three star referees have access to multi-referee competitions like Europeans to gain experience in order to become four star referees
- Mounted Games is a multi-country sport, so it is important for riders to experience a number of referees; makes people talk and requires the referees to work together - increasing divisiveness is not good
- Benefits derive from training and cross-training with other referees
- Opinion expressed that it is not feasible to request of referees to fund their own travel expenses
- Selection process could include this as a discussion point
- Reiteration of earlier point regarding a travel cap requested
 - Elaboration provided on the purposes and proposal for a set travel allowance amount to reflect the average reimbursement for a referee, referencing the importance of having the opportunity to gain important experience
- Treasurer Jens provides rider fee for 2023:
 - Individual - £20
 - Pair - £40
 - Team - £100
 - In 2022, £13.50 was the amount
 - In that year, the amount was estimated and as it turns out, fewer requests for referee expenses were submitted

Proposal 4.16 Voting

Voting Results: **Yes – 9** **No – 9** **Abstain - 1**

Split Vote – On further discussion it was noted that one voting Representative had yet to cast a vote and was expected to arrive at the meeting room in order to do so. On arrival of the Representative, Chairperson Chris advised them of the nature of the discussion and results of the vote to date. The Representative cast a ballot.

Final voting results: **Yes – 10** **No - 9** **Abstain - 1**

Action Item: The Proposal is passed.

Closing Remarks from the Chairperson – Chris Wheeler

Thanks to everyone for their participation with particular thanks to Alun for organizing the RingCentral Meeting and online voting and participation.

Amazing hospitality! Thanks to Stéphane and Jonathon for their work on behalf of the French Federation!

Many thanks to the online participants especially with the need for odd hours, and to the participants in the room.

Reminder that collating of referee selection is now starting - voting by eligible attendees only. Thank you.

From the participants: Many expressions of thanks to Chris for chairing the meeting.

Adjournment - 12:30 p.m. (CET)