

International Mounted Games Association

Minutes of Online IMGA International Representatives' Meeting - February 5, 2022

Held by remote participation using RingCentral Meeting on Saturday, February 5, 2022

Meeting opened by the Chairperson, Chris Wheeler, at 08:05 CET

All participants were informed that the proceedings were being recorded

Michelle Cruikshanks was thanked for taking notes

Participants - IMGA Officials:

Chris Wheeler	IMGA Chair and Chair Strategic Planning sub-committee	
Keith Martin	IMGA Vice Chair and Chair Compliance sub-committee	
Jens Martin	Finance and Administration, and Chair Technology sub-committee and Rules Committee	
Megan Tutt	Communication	Not present
Pierre-Luc Portron	Development	Not present
Alun Whitney	Chief Referee	

Participants - International Representatives:

Warwick Slade	Australia	
Rachel Lechner	Austria	
Robin Donnay	Belgium	
Michelle Cruikshanks	Canada	
Alžbeta Mašková	Czech Republic	Not present
Signe Sehested	Denmark	
Elaine Trevor Jones	England	
Stéphane Tardif	France	Represented by Jonathan Marion
Volker Baasch	Germany	
Conor O'Leary	Ireland	
Andrea Piazza	Italy	
Lizzy Franck	Luxembourg	
Jesús Nájera	Mexico	Not present
Sue Robertson	New Zealand	
Kabir Ali	Nigeria	Not present
Wilson McCoubery	Northern Ireland	Represented by Gilly Tougher
Inga Daler	Norway	Not present
Muhammad Irfan Zafar	Pakistan	Not present
Veronica Dodds	Scotland	
Kersley Vinay	South Africa	Represented by Nicholas Sloane
Caroline Claeson	Sweden	
Caroline Parmelin	Switzerland	Not present
Paul Greiling	United States of America	
Iain Hopkins	Wales	

Welcome – Chris Wheeler

- ❖ Hoping that all are well yet again, considering that it was two years ago when this (COVID pandemic) first started
- ❖ Notes that Australia and New Zealand are enjoying their season
- ❖ England is enjoying weather which allows all year-round gaming
- ❖ Relates very favourable impressions of December indoor competition at Lamotte in France – infrastructure and features were excellent. Larger size arena than even outdoor rings

Voting for 2024 IMGA Championships hosts – Chris Wheeler

- ❖ Chairperson reviews background regarding competition bid submission deadline and requests that future bids be received by IMGA at least one month in advance of the AGM. This will be most helpful to the selection process
- ❖ Note that many good venues are on offer

Discussion/Questions/Voting

- Re: Belgium – confirmation requested that no pool ponies will be available; self-sourcing only – correct
- Re: Italy – confirm Italy’s preference for WPC or WIC accompanying their bid for WTC? Italy confirms a preference for WIC
- Re: Belgium – if only self-sourcing is available for WTC, is that acceptable?
 - Question is then whether this should have been included in the original bid; if this is new information, it is very impactful and is prohibitive to those riders from outside of Europe
 - **Note:** “Hosting an IMGA Sanctioned Competition” document – confirm that provision of pool ponies is required – borrowed or rented; what are the terms of the requirement for pool ponies?
 - Number of ponies specified for WTC?
 - Origin of ponies? – i.e., ponies don’t necessarily need to come from the host country but from surrounding countries, too
 - Point made that the organization of provision of pool ponies is in fact the responsibility of the host country
 - Point made that Belgium’s bid should have included provision for ponies - Is Belgium’s bid still viable?
- ❖ **Proposal:** That Belgium may continue with their bid for the 2024 WTC
 - Number of votes: 16 votes – corrected to 17
 - **Vote:** Result – Yes: 41% No: 59%
 - **Decision:** The bid by Belgium is disqualified and we will proceed with voting based on bids from two countries
- ❖ **World Team Championship 2024 Bids:**
 - France (at La Bode)
 - Italy (at Arezzo)
 - Number of votes: 17
 - **Vote:** Result - Italy 65% France 35%
 - **Decision:** Congratulations, Italy, as the host of WTC 2024
 - Andrea assures the group that ponies will be found for every country that wants to attend
 - “Sorry” to Belgium and to France but again, “Congratulations” to Italy

❖ **World Pairs Championship 2024 Bids:**

- France (at La Bonde)
- Italy (at La Scuderia)
 - Based on the previously stated preference by Italy for World Individuals, could we vote on that first? Andrea confirms Italy's preference for Individuals – Chris confirms that the first vote will be for WPC.
- Number of votes: 17
- **Vote:** Result – La Bonde 59% Italy 41%
- **Decision:** Congratulations to France on their hosting of WPC in 2024

❖ **World Individual Championship 2024 Bids:**

- France (at Corné)
- Italy (at La Scuderia)
 - Confirmation sought regarding the arena size at Corné which appears to be able to host a maximum of five lanes; Any information from France to confirm? Corné apparently did not have a presentation to offer when requested by Chairperson, Chris. Google Earth measurements show that arena size is nowhere near what we would expect
- Number of votes: 18
- **Vote:** Result - Italy 84% France 16%
- **Decision:** Italy is selected as the host for WIC 2024

❖ Chairperson's comments:

- Thank you all for your voting
- Congratulations to all bidders and particularly to Italy
- Hopefully you will all bid again for hosting of Championships 2025 in October 2022 for consideration at the November 2022 AGM
- Remember to get your bids in a month ahead of time so that they may be considered by the voting nations

Breathalyser update – Chris Wheeler

- ❖ Trial run went well so should we as a community expand the practice to include testing for U15's and U12's?

Discussion/Questions/Voting

- Confirmation sought and provided - we are voting today versus putting forward a motion to vote on the proposal at a future meeting; discussion occurred previously
- Brief review - history of implementation of breathalyser testing at trial competitions
- Currently – should we require that every U15 take a breathalyser test?
- Chairperson notes: Doesn't know what discussions have occurred regarding parental responsibility for U15 riders and about parental permission for testing of minor children – U15
 - Concern expressed re: impact and handling of positive test results – child welfare concern as a broader issue.
 - Who is responsible for sanctions? Proposed that it would be up to parent country to sanction
 - Permission for testing would be included in the entry package and information

- Chairperson confirms that this testing would be for sanctioned competitions
 - Discussion re: legality of drinking by minors per country laws; riders would need to be aware of local laws
 - brief comparison of variety of existing alcohol consumption legislation e.g.:
 - UK - drinking permitted at any age if parent provides permission
 - AUS – drinking by minors permitted at home with permission of parent
 - CAN - drinking not permitted by minors <19; illegal to provide alcohol to minors
 - Confirmation sought and provided that the Chief Referee may require breathalyser testing of any rider at any time during the day
- ❖ **Proposal:** That we should Breathalyse test U15s
 - Number of votes: 18
 - **Vote:** Result - Yes 50% No 44% Abstain 6%
 - **The proposal is accepted.**
 - Continued discussion:
 - Concern about negative visuals of this decision, potential disincentive to participation if IMGA projects view that there is enough of a drinking problem in our sport that we are breathalysing children
 - The length of time and complexity of paperwork for testing at Individuals is significant and requires a very patient person or persons to be engaged for the task
 - Negative impact on filling other competition responsibilities is notable when one key individual is engaged full time in breathalyzer testing
 - e.g., announcer or other key role is lost to testing duties
 - Travel time and expense is significant; not sustainable
 - Actual testing on site is time-consuming - at least half day
- ❖ **Proposal:** That we should Breathalyse test U12s
 - Number of votes: 18
 - **Vote:** Results - Yes 17% No 83%
 - **The Proposal is defeated.**
- ❖ Request made by P. Greiling to revisit the first vote re: U15 Breathalyser testing based on the discussion after that vote; formal proposal put forward:
- ❖ **Proposal:** P. Greiling (USA) officially proposes that we review the vote re: U15 breathalyser testing having heard additional opinions from the gathered representatives
 - **Seconded** by W. Slade (AUS)
 - Number of votes: 18
 - **Vote:** Result – Yes 61% No 28% Abstain 11%
 - **The proposal is accepted.**
- ❖ Reconsidering the recent vote regarding U15 Breathalyser testing, additional comment, opinions, and questions were invited:
 - Testing of U18 and Open riders is appropriate
 - In general, the amount of work for testing heavily outweighs the degree of the problem
 - Note that the Referee has the right to request a test at any time; this is good enough

- In some countries e.g., New Zealand - testing has been done as a matter of course for a period of time with parental permission – U15's are then accustomed to the system and know what to expect moving ahead through to the U18 division; e.g. Scotland - all age groups of Scottish riders are tested at International competitions; e.g. Wales – all riders have been tested in the past
- IMGA will, for the moment, take on the responsibility of finding volunteers to staff the Breathalyser testing
- ❖ **Proposal:** That we complete breathalyser testing for U15s
 - Number of votes: 18
 - **Vote:** Result - Yes 44% No 50% Abstain 6%
 - **The Proposal is rejected.**
- ❖ Chairperson's comments: The proposal to revote was accepted and now the decision percentages have been reversed. This is open to re-examination at the AGM; Chris reiterates that the Referee may require a test.
- ❖ **Should the current requirement for testing at the beginning of the first session be changed to occur at the beginning of each riding session?** – Chris Wheeler

Discussion/Questions/Voting:

- Staffing versus safety is a key question relative to this vote
- Review of incidents of failed breathalyser tests in 2021:
 - WTC - one
 - WPC - two who initially failed with passing results after 30-minute delay
 - WIC - five trainers tested positive at the first session of the day; they subsequently trained from outside of the arena (for 'd', 'e', or 'f' finals)
 - New Zealand tests before first session then relies on Referee; they have it down to a pretty good system
- High numbers of riders e.g., 400 riders at Europeans create practical problems for completion of testing at every session
- Reminder that testing is for '0' reading – highest standard - and only one positive test occurred last year; testing at each session would create a negative environment
- Evening sessions may present an opportunity for slipups; any chance of selecting a random sample for evening sessions in addition to first session testing for all riders?
- Although the time required is minimal @ 20 secs. per rider, a tester is required to be on hand for the entire day all sessions; potential of slowing down the competition as randomly selected riders for each evening session are called
- The first session results in all riders being tested; anyone may raise a concern which will be addressed – this is good enough
- ❖ **Proposal:** That we require Breathalyser testing for U18 and Open riders, Trainers, Referees, and Assistant Referees for every session they ride/train/officiate (and not just the first session as we do now).
 - Number of votes – 18
 - **Vote:** Result - Yes 18 % No 82%
 - **The motion is rejected.**

- ❖ Chairperson's Comments: Thank you everybody – different opinions are interesting and valuable from around the world.
- ❖ **Updates from hosts for 2022 International Championships: 3:34**
 - **World Team Championship – La Bonde, France - July 20-23**
 - Overseas riders please contact Quentin at La Bonde with your pony requirements as soon as your rider numbers are known – selection is based on height and size of riders
 - Planned welcome and gala could be extraordinary based on Quentin's plans
 - Repeat: Please think about numbers of ponies that you may need to borrow for this Championship
 - **World Pairs Championship – Ireland - July 29-31**
 - No exact details at this meeting
 - Entries open this month
 - Ponies will be available
 - **Note:** To be confirmed - availability of ponies for other than just non-European countries?
 - **European Team and Individual Championship - David Broome Centre, Wales – August 3 - 9**
 - Entries are open for teams until month's end
 - Planning is going along
 - Any non-UK teams can ship in on Monday night at the David Broome Centre
 - UK teams may ship in on Tuesday
 - Team finals start on Friday, Saturday and continue until Monday
 - Organizers are on board re: the Charity Day
 - Individual entries are also open:
 - Individuals start on Wednesday
 - Finals are on all the way until Monday
 - Full timetable available once entries are in
 - **Note:** Will short arena games rules be going to the Rules Committee or going straight into the Rulebook? Teams will require an update on that
 - Jens responds for Rules Committee – will be proceeding and providing update to Organizers
 - Chris requests posting of arrival dates for the information of the international Mounted Games community e.g., people arranging their holidays
 - Chris thanks Wales for their usual superb organization
 - **World Individual Championship - England - August 25-29**
 - Elaine Trevor Jones reports no recent information update:
 - Looking at Aston as the field once again as the other venue was grass and not suitable
 - Currently a bit behind in their planning but now going with a committee approach to implementation so good progress expected
 - Arena size of second arena is not compliant so based on previous experience, the U12s and U15s would be the divisions best suited for this asymmetrical

space i.e., run with six short lanes rather than five that fit, compromising all six lanes so that they are in effect, all equally disadvantaged

- **Note:** Details about which arena, etc. are still in the planning phase with additional discussion expected among MGAGB, Alun Whitney, and Chris Wheeler

○ **World Team Championship 2023 – Australia**

- Reminder from Warwick Slade to contact him as soon as possible via email with your pony requirements – he needs this information for pony planning
- Warwick had noted that several countries were holding their AGM early in the year – he is waiting on their expression of interest and would be grateful to receive this
- Also let Warwick know if you are going to be self-sourcing and if so, from whom

○ **Nations Team Championship – Kentucky, USA – September 19-25**

- Given challenges of current pandemic situation, their first opportunity to link with a major equestrian event was lost; planning continues
- Invitations are coming out this week and USMGA is looking forward to seeing everyone

❖ **Assistant referee course - How many of your members have now passed?** – Chris Wheeler

- More and more people are completing the course
- Warwick is getting numbers in
- Keep reminding your members to complete the qualification
- Good feedback from the people who are taking it
- Warwick is looking into a concern that the program is not entirely providing the percentage complete
- Haven't had new Referees trained recently - a virtual meeting of interested Referees will be held to establish a pool of Referee trainers
 - Need to control how the training of Referees rolls out
 - Training protocol needed for consistency and quality
 - Hoping to have this underway by March

❖ **Sponsorship and Promotion Sub-Committee** – Chris Wheeler

- Committee is lingering in limbo – any ideas, please contact Chris

❖ **Sub-committee updates:**

- **Rules Committee** – Alun Whitney for Chairperson Jens Martin
 - Recent Zoom weekend meeting resulted in fast-tracking of Rule Change Requests, so the table is clear of all requests from last year. Well Done!
- **Compliance Sub-committee** – Keith Martin
 - duties ongoing to check into the compliance of each country
 - Compliance Checklist document and request for completion went out in October and had only one response by December
 - Twenty-one out of twenty-four countries have now responded; two countries are silent.

- **Health and Safety and Risk Management Sub-committee** – Conor O’Leary
 - Report in brief – personnel needed to complete pony doping testing
 - Conor has spoken with Irish equestrian organization and a local vet; result is that maybe testing for Butazone would be enough, cheaper, and less complicated
 - Chris reviews this information and queries whether ‘Bute only’ testing could/should be a starting place for an anti-doping procedure as the acknowledged “drug of choice” for masking pony injury.
 - **Note:** Conor requests confirmation that we be looking into rider drug testing

- **Technology Sub-committee** - Jens Martin
 - Livestream of competitions is the focus of an upcoming meeting that Jens is coordinating

- **Training and Qualifications Sub-committee** - Mark Crowe – absent
 - No report

- **Strategic Planning Sub-committee** – Chris Wheeler
 - Committee is currently on hiatus but restarting in the next couple of weeks

- ❖ **Referees’ expenses** – Alun Whitney
 - Alun will contact Mark Crowe re: specifics of his submission for reimbursement; there was a change in the eligible expenses and in what amount
 - Alun sees a need for a review of the combined transportation/accommodation expenses due to inequity
 - This is a proposal to be discussed at the April Meeting
 - Alun to please flesh out the details of this proposal in preparation for the meeting

- ❖ **Next Meeting:**
 - The proposed April date falls in the busy competition time for weekends therefore Chris proposes a weekday evening meeting (Southern Hemisphere -early Thursday a.m.). There fore mid-week April date will come to us.
 - Thanks to everyone for the time, patience, continued support and work that you do

- ❖ **Adjournment:** 21:09 CET