



# INTERNATIONAL MOUNTED GAMES ASSOCIATION



## Agenda: IMGA Meeting at World Team Championships, Arezzo, Italy and Online

Saturday 20 July 2024

14:00 – 16:00 CET

Meeting convened: 14:09

### Attendance:

Rachel Lechner (V)		Austria
Jemima Gardiner (V)		Australia
Robin Donnay (V)		Belgium
Michelle Cruikshanks (V)		Canada
Elijah Zhangxiaotian (V) For Leo Liang		China
Elaine Trevor Jones (V)		England
Stéphane Tardif (V)		France
Mats Hensel (V)	For Volker Baasch	Germany
Chris Wheeler		IMGA Chairperson
Mark Crowe		IMGA Chief Referee
Conor O'Leary (V)		Ireland
Sue Robertson (V)		New Zealand
Nick Sloane (V)		South Africa
Quentin Voeltzel (V)	Joined in progress	Sweden
Quentin Gargallo (V)		Switzerland
Carol Jones (V)	For Paul Greiling	United States
Jonathon Marion	Guest	France
Sharon Daly	Guest	New Zealand
Margaret Welsby	Guest	New Zealand
Tanya Menhinick	Guest	South Africa
Johan Dahlin	Guest	Sweden
Ulrika Voeltzel	Guest	Sweden

### Apologies:

Jens Holm	Apologies	Denmark
Jens Martin	Apologies	IMGA Finance and Administration
Eleanor Wheeler	Apologies	IMGA Communication
Andrea Piazza	Returning as available	Italy
Alun Whitney	Apologies	Wales

Convened: 14:09h

### **Chairperson's Opening Comments-**

Welcome to those attending in person and remotely. We're hoping to be brief – just finished the World Team Championships an hour ago. Italy won the U18 Championship and France won it for the Open – the outcome came down to the last race!!!

We'll be going through our agenda briefly as there is much sorting out of horse papers, etc. to be done here, and bearing in mind that we have our AGM coming up in November in Dublin.

On today's agenda, we have one voting item – but no technology for online polling – general agreement to proceed with voting by a show of hands, including a show of hands for the online participants as noted by the recording secretary.

- **Item 1** Proposal to organise a video competition - The Worldwide Games – Chris Wheeler  
Please see attached PDF document: Worldwide Games – **Vote on this item.**

In discussion with multiple people regarding this concept, Chris discovered that Johan – Chairperson of Mounted Games Sweden - had come up with an App that might work for the Worldwide games:

#### Background Information –

- Johan has had this concept in mind for awhile with specific applicability to Sweden's - Chris introduced the idea of Worldwide games which added impetus to the idea for an App which allows video challenges between participants – has a timing feature and chat function connected to Facebook
- Johan sees this as a great tool for introducing new riders to games as it includes instruction for games play, equipment required, and setup, etc.
- Eventual goal is to get the App into Swedish riding schools that don't yet feature Mounted Games instruction
- Johannes concludes that this is relatively inexpensive \$8-10K to develop - he is in discussions with Mats about continued development
- Chris clarifies that the technology piece is an add-on to the original concept of a video-based global games challenge.
  - Initial conversation with Quentin two years ago was based on general idea of increasing participation in games for riders worldwide, particularly those without the means to send competitors to championships. Those riders would have the option of competing in timed riding challenges across borders using simple video technology with an emphasis on fun and skill development.

#### Discussion/Comments–

- Concern that we are premature in voting on adopting the proposal of WWG without the App in place to control the integrity of the video riding challenges.
- Idea expressed that the App and technology development can progress independently of the mounted games challenges; note that Australia has a timing app which they successfully use for video recording and sharing.
- Consider also that the potential exists for gathering extensive data about mounted games play around the world and for generating revenue for IMGA. Like European football, could 'build' teams based on fastest times, and also make data available for people developing with IMGA.

#### **Voting Representatives – Fourteen (14):**

On site – Seven (7) International Representatives vote in favour of continuing development of the proposal.

On-line – Seven (7) International Representatives vote in favour.

**Voting Result –** The motion is passed.

**Action Item:** Chris will continue development of this concept with a view to presenting a full and final proposal at the IMGA Annual General Meeting.

➤ **Item 2** European Charity Day – Stéphane (France)

**Update** – The European Championship Charity Day this year will support the charitable organization ‘Pied d’Argile’ which is well-established in France. This is a charity that targets prevention of sexual abuse in all sports, having as its roots the case of a rugby player who had been subject to sexual abuse as a young player.

Discussion/Questions –

- Q: How do you go about contributing? A: Additional information will be available.
- Looking forward to receiving details and to supporting this worthwhile cause at Lamotte.

➤ **Item 3** 2024 Championships – Updates for WIC, WPC, Europeans, and Nations -

**Nations Team Championship – Taupo, New Zealand**

- Sue (NZ) notes that NZMGA Secretary Sharon Daly is on site in Arezzo so will provide the update:
  - The competition information is now out to all of the teams.
    - The New Zealand Sporty page features all of the relevant information under ‘Nations 2024’
- There will be a United Nations combined team featuring two riders from Canada, and one each from Australia, the United States, and New Zealand.
- Full teams competing are two from host New Zealand, and one each from Australia, South Africa, and the USA.
- Practice sessions are to take place at Turangi, followed by a rest day then the competitive sessions beginning at Equifest in Taupo on Friday.
  - Expected attendance is 25,000 – 30,000.
  - The organising committee is working efficiently, and all aspects of the competition are proceeding according to plan.
  - Additional note that the Nations Countries’ Committee has been meeting regularly since the last IMGA AGM, so involved countries are well-informed, current, and following procedures and protocols as discussed and adopted by the member countries.

**World Individual Championship – La Scuderia, Italy**

- Chief Referee Mark Crowe has seen a draft of the timetable which shows a 6:00 a.m. start on Wednesday morning.

**World Pairs Championship – La Bonde, France**

- Quentin Voeltzel indicates that the organisers are looking forward to hosting you all and provides a summary update of entries:
  - U12 is somewhat lagging in entries
  - U15 – 25 Pairs
  - U18 – 23 Pairs
  - Open – 48 Pairs with a waiting list. Consideration is being given to increasing the number of pairs to 56
- Additionally, they are looking forward to making sure that the automatic watering system is fully functional – no more water truck.

### **European Team and Individual Championship – Lamotte, France**

- Stéphane reports that there are thirty-three (33) teams and 117 Individuals entered with competition taking place in three arenas.
- Please note that if anyone wishes to purchase tickets for the Gala dinner, they should do so immediately – there are currently more than 600 reservations for the Gala.

### Discussion/Questions-

- Q: regarding a logistical issue – the competition finishes at La Bonde on Sunday: Do the ponies need to be moved on to transitional housing or may they stay on? A: They can stay on.
  - Note that Quentin is in fact shipping the English team to Europeans.
- Q: The Competitor versus Supporter 'hookup' prices were confusing for Europeans – could this be clarified for future competitions? A: Yes, and please note that food is available all week long from breakfast to dinner.
- Q: Is there a timetable yet? A: Quentin – for Johnathon/Stéphane - A final for Individuals is Friday; Teams finals on Saturday.
- Q: Stabling? A: There is fixed/permanent stabling
- Q: Is MG Scoreboard being used for the draws? This needs to be confirmed to Mark.

**Action Item:** Organisers to confirm with the Chief Referee that MG Scoreboard is being used for the draws.

### ➤ **Item 4 – 2025 Championships and Provisional Dates –**

### **World Team Championship – Ghlin, Belgium**

- From August 11 – 17, 2025, in Ghlin.
- Non-European countries all have been sent an email request by Sean Bource to advise of their plans to send teams and of their need for pool ponies.

### Discussion/Questions-

#### **Pool Pony Availability**

- Q: Please ask organizers to note the need for reserve ponies for the non-European teams. Further clarified that this includes ponies assigned for travelling reserve riders.
- Discussion included that decisions about taking the reserve rider are impacted by availability of a pony for that rider. A: Robin will send information on to the organizers.
- Chief Referee Mark reminds that there is a system for pool pony approval which must be followed.
  - Robin and Mark to discuss steps required to ensure that the pool pony process is followed; this was not done in Italy resulting in a shortage of ponies
- Pony fees of €900 per pony such as encountered at WTC might become cost prohibitive for attendees with the opinion that this is taking away from what mounted games is all about.
  - Neighbouring France felt that they could have contributed ponies at the generally accepted rate of €500, eased the burden, and increased the number of suitable pony/rider matches

#### **Extreme Weather Conditions WBGT**

- Additional discussion centred on questions and suggestions related to weather conditions:
  - Consider scheduled formalized watering breaks.
  - For temperatures of 25-28C, additional WBGT-based mandatory procedures could easily be added, need for research-based approaches e.g. confirm that the most effective cooling measures are used.
- Need to formalize and schedule measures for extreme weather conditions – WTC are a high priority event so all contingencies should be planned in advance.

- Viewpoint of one country – extreme temperature situation should have been a high priority discussion item on site; didn't see that happen
- Their inquiries on this matter much earlier in the year went unanswered at the same time as this northern climate country was trying to encourage riders to attend.
  - Ponies not acclimatized to 35+ temperatures resulted in undue pressure on them; an overall positive experience and good time had significant 'lessons learned'.
- Note that this is not new information; consider seeking results of WGBT use in other equestrian sports i.e. need to ensure that warm climate countries will be able to bid.
  - Hot climate countries consider running sessions from 8 – 11 p.m. under lights for enhanced atmosphere and possibly more spectators; significant cost is a factor.
  - Additional considerations – plan races to avoid consecutive multi-turn races e.g. Founders and Three Mug.
  - Chief Referee Mark - consider a lower threshold for the temperature at the start of a session e.g. some finals in Italy started at 28 or 29 degrees and the temperature rose
  - Space races with lengthy equipment setup to provide an additional break
  - Consider running concurrent heats to allow ponies to cool down between races – the pony is out for a longer total time, but the breaks are built in.
- Continue to provide water, buckets, and sponges – ensure that these are used.
- Session starts scheduled for cool time of the day should start on time to ensure maximum benefit.
- Scheduling of Championships during northern hemisphere hot months of July and August has been due to school and work vacations
- Note that only one horse had to be excused at WTC
- Opinion shared that generally there is a need for enhanced monitoring and check-ins as a country progresses in its planning of IMGA championships.
  - Make use of the hosting document.
  - Note that one country has broken the tasks down as a checklist with assigned responsibilities and regular progress meetings.

### **Chairperson's Comments – Chris**

- Lots of discussion on the above items and gathering of impressions regarding people's preferences for e.g. pulling kids out of school outside of July and August, and the impacts.

**Action Item:** There will be an item on the November AGM agenda in this regard.

Many lessons to be learned from the extreme weather conditions in Italy and much discussion to be had.

**Action Item:** Please send your comments, concerns, suggestions regarding the heat to the Health and Safety Committee – Conor O'Leary.

**Action Item:** Robin (BEL) will transfer the above information and input to their WTC organizers to ensure that these extreme weather condition and pool pony procurement issues are considered in their planning.

Note that there are AGM discussion items among these action items.

### **2025 – World Individuals – La Bonde, France**

- Thanks were extended by Chairperson Chris to Quentin for stepping in to take over hosting this Championship.
- Quentin is very happy to do so and asks that we consider dates outside of July and August so that competitions are more spread around – maybe the weekend before or after the Champions League Championship – will have more information soon.

Note: WIC Subsequently scheduled for May 1 – 5, May 8 – 12 (Open).

### **2025 European Team and Individuals – Millstreet, Ireland**

- Likely dates are 28/29 July –back to Millstreet.
- Automatic showers available but it shouldn't be too hot. Conor does remind the group of 33C temperatures in 2013.

### **2025 – Nations Team Championship – Northam Equestrian Park - near Perth, West Australia**

- September 8 – 14; temperatures should be about 20C.
- Organizers are working on sourcing pool ponies and will need to hear from eligible countries of their intent to send a team – South Africa confirms that they are definitely sending a team.

### **2025 World Pairs – Corne, France**

- Dates: August 19 – 23
- The arena construction is now completely finished with a trial run having taken place in March, another competition next week. All of the other facilities are onsite.

- **Item 5** – Reminders for all international representatives to check with their riders – Chris

#### Height/Weight Rider Check

This is a regular feature of meeting agendas. Q: Can rider weight be declared on the entry? There are those that include this as an automatic feature of their country's entry procedure. Since riders have to declare, this should be something that they are thinking about.

#### Assistant Referee Qualification

- Continue to encourage your membership to qualify, especially well in advance of Championships – verification of successful completion and eligibility to assistant referee requires time.

#### Discussion/Questions-

- Q.: Age verification for Under 18? A: it is the obligation of the home country to verify riders' age; this is also verified by Finance and Administration Officer Jens.
- Mats described system being developed for entry control – every rider is checked at start of the year and then six months later.
  - The Referee will receive warning notification of rider height/weight potential infractions and for any rider undue roughness on a pony – a very digitalized system exists for Germany
- Reminder that proposals for the AGM need to be submitted to Chairperson Chris by mid-October.

- **Item 6** – Proposal: New countries to have free membership. For brief discussion (full discussion at our AGM in November) – Chris

1. New countries pay no affiliation fee
2. Free membership until that country has five riders participating at an IMGA competition. As soon as their sixth rider competes, then that country will need to pay our affiliation fee.
3. A new country may pay our affiliation fee if it wishes to vote
4. A new country will receive a welcome pack of four sword rings, four bank numbers, one pony express mail bag, four pony express letters, one Hi-Lo net, one Rulebook
5. To which countries might this apply? Pakistan, Mexico, Nigeria, Czech Republic Finland?
6. Update our Constitution to include the terms **Full Members** (which pay our affiliation fee) and **Associate Members** (which do not pay our affiliation fee).

### Discussion/Comments-

- Currently, new countries tend to disappear because they can't afford to pay i.e. they may only have 12 riders -and can't possibly afford the £300.
- Chairperson Chris asks International Reps. to consider the proposal for the creation of an Associate Member category to encourage new countries to stay on – their participation is free until such time as they have five riders competing at an IMGA Championship.
- This proposal presented as a suggestion to encourage sustained participation of new countries.

**Action Item:** Email Chris with thoughts and related suggestions e.g. one country's casual membership available for a very reduced rate for a specific weekend or competition.

- **Item 7** – Reminder: Costs for riders of competitions to be given at time of bidding as in host document – Chris

*An application **must** include:*

- *First cost estimates (including a £5 fee for each rider which **must** be collected by the host country and later paid over to IMGA – except for U12's)*

*At the IMGA meeting of the year prior to the event:*

- *Detailed costs, entry fees for competitors, costs for supporters (supporter packages), cost of stabling, accommodation, etc.*

**Action Item:** The Hosting document has a requirement for costs to riders to be clear and submitted at the time of bid – two years prior. Detailed costs are required the year prior to the competition – **please tighten this up so that the information is not provided just three months in advance.** Include the price of hay, price of hookup etc. Chris notes that this is essential and only fair to parents and supporters.

**Action Item:** Hosting document currently being overhauled. Chris, Mark, Michelle and Jens to continue this process expected to be ready by the AGM.

- **Item 8** – Reminder: Accounts of our competitions – Chris

Keeping accounts for the competition is essential and **should** cover everything from the initial application to IMGA to host the competition, through the event itself, and the subsequent settlement and accounting of all outstanding receipts and payments.

This is a way of helping future organisers plan for their Championships.

- Reminder of accounting reports as required by Hosting document – Chris quotes the summary in the document.

**Action Item:** Sharing your accounting is helpful to others and although recently we haven't been asking, please increase the priority on submitting your reports, with thanks.

- **Item 9** – For discussion at our November AGM: How can we get more teams to participate in our Championships? Should we reconsider having the option of a country entering two teams in an age group? Other ideas welcome!

### Discussion/Comments –

Note: This will be a discussion item at the AGM.

- Opinion expressed that holding Championships every other year would be helpful to draw people.

- Opinion expressed that Championships continue to be held every year since competitions draw everyone together.
- Pool pony organisation is a very significant matter to ensure that the costs are controlled and encourage participation – suggestion made to have a maximum amount or to spread the combined cost of pool ponies across users. As an organiser, Quentin sought sponsorship from all levels of private business and government to specifically support the pony procurement.
- Concern expressed and shared by several reps. that financial ability is dictating participation rather than selection of the best team.
- Available competition choices are the basis for family decisions about entering – opinion expressed that we are no longer in a situation worldwide that team numbers will increase
- Observation made that the ‘Alternate year’ proposal has been put forward by Ireland three times and defeated on each occasion so Chief Referee Mark feels that a different approach is needed i.e. spread the Championship competitions out over the season – the current condensed grouping is not viable.
- New country rep. relates that they need information to sort out their budget by October; they hold some fundraising activities and complete financial planning well in advance.
- Another example provided of a country which historically had things lined up a full year in advance; this worked well for all involved.

#### Championship scheduling

- Q.: How is this (schedule) blocked out? Is it a roundtable discussion?
- Opinion shared that the host country has to have some say but not all in establishing competition dates.
- Example given of numerous countries’ practice of setting national championship dates first, etc., etc. before finalizing any regional/branch dates
- Chairperson Chris notes that the setting of the competition calendar is a major challenge, with the added challenge when we increasingly opt for fantastic arenas rather than fields. Q.: Maybe we should go back to fields?

**Action Item:** 2027 Bids need to be in by mid-October so that they can be considered by International Reps. and country organizations ahead of the AGM. All proposals to be early.

- **Item 10** – Venue for the 2024 November AGM is Roganstown Hotel, Swords, near Dublin, Ireland.

Dates: Saturday, November 16, and Sunday, November 17, 2024.

- Single two nights B&B plus one dinner - €293
- Twin two nights B&B plus one dinner - €348
- **Contact: Oana Ursu**, Wedding and Events Manager  
Roganstown Hotel and Country Club | Swords | Co. Dublin | K67 P2E4

Note: If you are coming to the AGM in Dublin, the airport is near the hotel about an hour away – please let Mark (IRE) know for transportation arrangements.

#### **Chairperson’s Closing Remarks – Chris**

Thanks to everyone online and to the team in the room here who have shared Chris’ phone. Those on site are off to prepare for the Gala.

**Adjournment** - 15:50h 9:50 -