

American Paint Horse Convention  
September 28<sup>th</sup>- October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011  
Vancouver, Washington

The American Paint Horse Association National Convention was held in Vancouver, Washington September 28<sup>th</sup> –October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011. Being convention was close to home this year; it was great to see a large Northwest turnout!

The General Membership meeting was held Thursday, September 29th. At this time Executive Director, Lex Smurthwaite, presented the state of the Association. Overall, most of the tracked APHA statistics are down. Membership, show entries, and Breeders Trust tracked lower than in past years, but considering the equine herpes virus and the state of the economy, APHA remains financially stable.

The American Paint Horse Association has decided to end the Gelding Plus Program and now roll those funds into the Regional Club Program. Details on the Regional Club Program have not been disclosed, but watch the APHA website for details or contact your local club secretary about this program.

The American Paint Horse Association will be using UC Davis in California to accommodate all genetic testing. At the conclusion of the meeting, Executive Director Lex Smurthwaite announced he will be stepping down from his duties at the Association and also it was announced a search for a replacement will begin.

The Board of Directors convened on Friday, September 30<sup>th</sup> with roll call and announcements. Directors then voted on rule changes/updates. I have listed a few of the show/contest ones for anyone's interest. For a complete list, please contact me and I will be happy to forward. All changes will be published in the Paint Horse Journal and will be printed in the 2012 APHA Official Rule Book. Approved rule proposals include a single exhibitor is now allowed to ride five horses in individual events. The Cowboy Mounted Shooting rules were also approved. The Lounge Line class will now fall in line with NSBA to match the wording, scoring and description. The professional rodeo card holder issue has been addressed with a matrix of earnings and guidelines what qualifies as an amateur and a pro in these events. Also updated were equation specifics and the wording in the showmanship to be better assimilated with other breeds.

Amateur Committee met to discuss various aspects of what is working in the amateur division. One of the housekeeping issues we addressed was the Walk-Trot clarification of holding a card for all year and the "policing" of other breeds if an exhibitor rides in a lope class at another breed show. We also had a tremendous discussion about show participation and what works/doesn't work for exhibitors across the United States. The promotion of the Amateur/Novice Amateur continues to be a high priority of the association and we as a committee are open to any suggestions.

Respectfully submitted,  
Michele Simmelink