

2013 APHA Convention Report – Shannon O’Dell (WA)
Feb. 21-24, 2014 – Fort Worth, TX

It was such a pleasure to represent Washington State at the 2014 APHA Convention again this year. Thank you to all of you who voted for me and allow me to do my best for you.

2013 was the first year that we moved to a single meeting per year and 2014 was our first Convention where we actually passed or defeated new rules. Our meeting February 2015 will be the first combined Workshop & Convention where we will meet in the first half in our committees to decide what rules we want to pass on to the floor for voting and then vote in the second half to move rules forward or defeat them. Please remember that things we voted on February 2014 will become effective January 1, 2015 (except for the couple of emergency items passed) and items we vote on February 2015 will become effective January 1, 2016. So as members we will be having things coming at us a long ways down the road. That being said, this also changes the rule change proposal procedure. So for those of you who would like to see rules added, deleted or amended, here is the 2014 schedule:

- August 1, 2014 = deadline for all rule change proposals to be postmarked to APHA (all proposals must be received by APHA no later than August 15, 2014 regardless of postmark date...it should be noted you can also email your rule change proposal). Rule change proposal form is on the APHA website under the rule book section.
- The rules committee will review all proposals in September and whatever they send forward will be published and sent to the appropriate committees by October 15, 2014. So you will want to start contacting your delegates and watching online for what is being proposed so that you can give your input to your delegate before we head to Texas in February.
- APHA Delegates will meet February 27 thru March 2, 2015 to discuss and vote on those rule change proposals. Whatever we pass becomes effective 1-1-2016.

The new format will be interesting and challenging. It was good to have this trial run so that we could offer feedback on how we all think the Convention can be scheduled to allow us time to mull over & network with fellow delegates or even get on social media and get input from our membership on rules passed out of committee before we vote them up or down. All of us delegates will have our work cut out for us in being as educated as we can be going to Convention and making sure that we network with others to try to make the best decisions. I welcome the challenge ☺

Day 1 started off with a huge bang. Unfortunately “The Game Plan” seminar was not on the original schedule when I made my flight arrangements so I missed the first hour or so. This was a video & discussion format with David Dellin, Dave Denniston & Rob Meneely where we got to see what the judges are being taught to be looking for when they are judging. We went well over our allotted time and lots of GREAT questions asked by those in attendance. For me personally it was extra exciting because David Dellin was coming to Boise the following weekend for an expanded version of this seminar for the Snake River Paint Horse Club, and I got to see a sneak preview and be prepared for what was coming in Boise. This information is a 12 part series in the Paint Horse Journal and for those of you on Facebook, you’ve probably seen the YouTube video snippets. Incredibly valuable information, and what an energetic way to set the tone for the days to come.

Friday night, a group from the NW grabbed the hotel shuttle and went to a local pit BBQ joint. The smells were incredible and hard to choose what to eat. Very glad everyone waited for me to come with!

Saturday morning kicked off with our General Membership meeting. It was reported that attendance for the 2014 Convention was one of the largest, which is a good sign. The hope is that by having the single meeting per year at a time of year that not a lot of horse shows are going on that more members will opt to attend and see how APHA functions as well as be a part of the discussion. I strongly encourage you to come – it can be very interesting & eye opening.

The trends of APHA are looking better while still in a decline. Since 2004, memberships are down 50,000 and registrations down about 50%. I think this is something we've all seen & felt as we know stallion owners are breeding less (or have gotten out of the business) and people are not renewing their memberships unless they are using them (personally, I use my membership regularly with the Xtras program and the savings more than pays for my membership – so even if you aren't showing or breeding, your membership still has a lot of value!). The good news is that in 2013 we had the smallest decline in memberships since 2004 – only 3.8%. Registrations were up 4.64% - this is not necessarily a reflection of increased breeding, etc. but rather a function of the improved efficiency in processing. Total show entries were down 4.5%. The new PBRIP program (Paint Barrel Racing Incentive Program) which rolled out mid-2013 enrolled 232 horse and 20 PBRIP approved events were held with a total payout of \$37,000 (I personally hosted 2 of those events I'm proud to say!). A PBRIP event was added to the Open/Amateur World show which generated 48 PBRIP entries. 5 new permanent APHF scholarships were established.

A point was made that all of us as Directors, members, horse owners, etc. can have an influence on the horse market by what we say, how we say it, and whom we say it to. We should be doing our absolute best to project positivity and excitement. Address problems but don't do it at the stalls or in the bleachers at a show – those who overheard are likely to think this horse thing is for the birds and go buy a boat. That doesn't serve our Association, those who make their livelihood through horses, nor encourage our exhibitors to continue to show up to the next show. No Association or Club is perfect – so be constructive in your criticism (or compliment) and do it at the right time in the right setting.

The AjPHA President Kaitlyn gave an update on her service project which was Bring It Home. Her project helped to finish one old scholarship & it will be issued to the first recipient in 2014. Meredith from Texas is the AjPHA President elect. She became active in APHA in late 2012 and wants to focus on leadership, sportsmanship & eliminating cyberbullying. She wants her fundraising to be directed to creating a sportsmanship award at the AjPHA World Show and continuing to endow scholarships.

Then we had a quick summary of the Task Force committees that were formed at Workshop. The task force assigned to look into participation licensing for colored horses that did not have papers for one reason or another ultimately felt that this was NOT something that APHA needed to do and would not be supported. Many of you may have seen the proposed language that was shared on Facebook in January & February, and it is through all of our combined efforts that proposal died (thank you!). The Governance Task Force of Craig Wood, Mike Short & Mary Parrott indicated that they wanted help from all of us in trying to improve our governance structure so that we can be nimble and able to respond more quickly to things that will keep us competitive. What do we need to add or take away or alter? Everything is on the table. The litmus test we should all be applying to our suggestions are (1) does this allow us to work quickly & efficiently? (2) does it give us a competitive advantage? (3) does it remove something that prevents us from achieving greatness? If yes, then tell this task force!

After adjourning from the General Membership meeting, there were 2 symposia offered for our members to attend. One was about equine legal issues which I would have loved to listen to given that I'm an insurance agent selling equine products, but I was honored to be asked to be on the panel about Creating Memorable Shows along with Mike Short, Karen Kennedy & Kim Evans. I do think our title didn't reflect what the real flavor of the symposia was about – which I felt was about creating more memorable grass roots shows & events. We talked about having a small 1 or 2 judge show on the same weekend as a large Paint-O-Rama so that the more novice exhibitors are likely to come & play knowing that the tough, regular competitors were at the big show. There are ways we can do those things and work together without damaging either show. The show that Mike Short did was a huge success with a ton of entries. We also talked about resurrecting a regional club show by reaching out and working with other regional clubs & shows (whether that be Paint or other breeds). We also talked about trying to do the little things that keep it fun for the exhibitors and keep them wanting to come back. I talked on hosting Special Events (which can be any class or combination of classes that APHA offers) as these can be done in a variety of ways. There are several events that you don't need to have an APHA judge at to get approved, or you can go in together with another breed or open show & bring in an APHA judge and get it approved without having to hold all the classes needed at a regular show. I am happy to help anyone interested in hosting a Special Event on how to do it as it is quite simple and can be done very inexpensively but is a great way to go to new sources of exhibitors. At this symposia we also got to hear from Ken Murray with NSBA on how easy it is to dual approve our Paint shows for NSBA points. This is something Snake River & Inland Northwest will be doing at their shows this year!

After lunch, we were treated to a phenomenal speaker in Dr. Rick Rigby who shared some very valuable ideas. His latest book "Lessons From A Third Grade Dropout" are all about things he learned from his father growing up (his father didn't get through 3rd grade). The lessons were powerful and something that all of us should use more of in our life today. Many members bought the book. I am very glad that APHA brought him in so we could be impacted by his ideas and then go out and hopefully make an impact on others!

The welcome reception was a lot of fun – some good food and always great to get to chat with new people about their impressions about the first 2 days. Anderson Bean Boot Company gave away some boots (and nope, I didn't win darn it) – and some of our other corporate sponsors were in attendance as well. I know I really appreciate all of our sponsors and what they do for our membership. Be sure you support them whenever you can. After the reception I headed to the Bar so I could catch the Gonzaga basketball game. Of course I didn't calculate the time change correctly so had to wait another 2 hours! I ultimately was the last one in the Bar before the game was over. And while the staff was awesome and was going to let me stay while they cleaned up, I decided to miss the end of a tight game (knowing all of my roommates were sound asleep!). Fortunately at the last minute I decided to go check to see if they gym had a TV and it did – so I got to watch the end of the game instead of checking the play-by-play on my phone. Needless to say, I got to bed quite late (of course it was a late game west coast time) and getting up Sunday morning was not an easy task. Sometimes it doesn't pay to be a fan!

Sunday we got down to the serious part of our business where we broke into our individual committees to roll up our sleeves and discuss the upcoming rule change proposals and any other business that needed to be addressed. Unfortunately, Show & Contest at times looked like a kindergarten room due to the 2014 Rule Book Supplement and some people who were not happy with the extent of the changes that were made without the full input of the committee. Our committee (and others) did give that task force the power to make those changes and I think for the most part it was just shock that had

people getting loud, but at the same time it was awesome to see the passion that some people had about our rules and that we Directors get to be instrumental in this process. At the end, it doesn't matter if we agree with those new rules or not because they are in place for 2014 & 2015 and can be amended through the rule change proposal. Most that were hard to take on the surface make more sense once I had a chance to get David Dellin to the side later in the day and discuss (I'll post more at the end of the report). One thing that we will be discussing further is whether World Show points should count for Honor Roll & other APHA year-end awards.

Show & Contest did decide to form 2 task forces to discuss issues and bring back to the committee. The first is regarding a concept that Billy Smith put forth about creating regional championship shows. The intent is to enhance existing Zone shows and they would be titled something like Northwest Championship, Midwest Championship, etc. The driving force is to try to bring new exhibitors to the table, so these championship shows would have a set of "limited" classes for the mid level exhibitor to excel (what that mid level exhibitor looks like needs to be defined). Terri Wirthlin will be chairing that task force for Show & Contest along with Bonnie Christensen, Barbara Brunner, Earnest Wilson, & Lynn ?. As a group we feel this idea might have some merit but we caution about trying to implement it in 2014 because we think that ideas need to be exchanged and whatever format comes about needs to be advertised well in advance. We also formed a task force to look at our show approval rules to see what we can change to try to create more opportunities for people to participate (particularly those entry level exhibitors). Within this we will also be discussing the mileage restriction between shows and the halter class requirements for special events. I am pleased to say I'm on this committee along with Jay Jordan, Tina Price, Cindy McGinnis & Ann Jones.

Our committee recommended to make Ranch Horse Pleasure, Novice & Limited Working Ranch Horse, and Novice & Limited Working Cow Horse rules an emergency change to be effective 4-1-2014.

Sunday night was the Hall of Fame induction dinner. The food was not as impressive this year (different hotel) but I was a huge fan of the dessert. But the food didn't matter because we got to hear some fantastic stories about people and horses that we inducted into our Hall of Fame. Lots of tears, lots of laughter, and lots of applause. 2013 was our inaugural year where we inducted 25 horses & 25 people. This year was 5 & 5. Horses are: Colonels Smokingun, Dixies War Drum, Indian Music, Sky Bar, and Sky Top Bar. The people are: Ray Graves, Walter Merrick, Ed Roberts, Viridin Royse, and Wanda Williams. I'm already looking forward to see who makes it in next year.

Monday was a busy morning. We received the financial report for 2013. We lost \$1.1M in operating results but this was a smaller loss than in 2012. Investment income had an improvement of just over \$23K over 2012. Some of the operating expenses included large acquisitions of merchandise for the General Store to be sold as well as improvements in technology to improve Association efficiency. Registration revenue increased due to the improved efficiency. Member service revenue (online access, membership renewal, etc.) was down about 7%. APHA ended the year with 51,000 memberships on the rolls. Publications revenue is up around \$100K over last year. World & Gift show revenue was slightly down, Performance Department revenues were up, Sponsorship revenues up (just over \$20K), and General Store revenue was up. At the end of the day, APHA is still a very healthy organization and our balance sheet is just over \$18M in the black.

The Youth World show lost money again but less than we lost in 2013. The gift show made money so that offset the loss. It should be noted that the Texas special event rebate money was about \$10,000

less in 2013 than it was in 2012. The Open & Amateur World show made just over \$163K (not including the sale). This even after the Texas special event rebate money was just shy of \$66K less than 2012.

Standing Committee Reports:

Amateur – have some concerns about leasing issues at the World show. They will send the Executive Committee their recommendations. The Regional Championship idea was well received but they want to task to Regional Clubs to flesh out ideas. They will be discussing whether World Show points should count towards Honor Roll and other year end awards.

Breed Integrity & Registration – closely following the AQHA cloning case as our rules mirrors AQHA so the outcome of that case may require us to take action. Recommending that APHA add the PSSM test to our membership disease panel test. They have asked APHA staff to check to see if there is a way to list the 5 panel test results on Breeders Trust stallions in the Journal or elsewhere and looking into maybe adding it onto the horse's papers. Discussed ways to increase Breeders Trust payouts (capping points, annual license, were just a few ideas). It was noted that 75% of the stallions in our Association are breeding 3 or less mares per year. So it is no wonder that our Breeders Trust revenue and participating stallions are down (those that are breeding 3 mares per year are giving up 1/3 of their breeding revenue just to nominate the stallion before they pay in any other fees – those owners that just breed 1 mare per year are losing money participating in B/T). This committee recognizes that shipped semen has had a huge impact on the small breeder.

Show & Contest – I covered above.

International – they reported that the International exhibitors are enthusiastic to show and they want to emphasize the importance of these exhibitors.

Judges – 5 judges retired in 2013 and 1 passed way. The 2014 exam will be held in April.

Long Range Planning – discussed ideas to add value to our Solid Bred horses. 90% of those horses never make it to the show pen and it is estimated 40% never even get registered. They are recommending to the Executive Committee that Solid Paint Bred horses be allowed to compete at the World Show in all non-point earning events (futures, challenges, etc.). Discussed ways to improve Breeders Trust payouts (ideas thrown around include capping points or minimum number of points before you can receive payouts). Also discussed various governance ideas regarding Directors and Executive Committee members. This committee is working to create a policy regarding animal welfare – this is an issue that we all need to be concerned about.

Membership Services – discussed some auto renewal options for membership. Want to look into being able to offer a physical membership card (like we get now). Are discussing ways to reach more 4-H & FFA members. Discussed the need to push the Xtras program (I'm not kidding – some FABULOUS savings for using that service and it's free with your APHA membership. So if you aren't using Xtras, you need to be!)

Racing – the Barrel Futurity of America program wants to add PBRIP to their December event (which is huge). They also discussed some racing changes at the track.

Recreational Riding – 10 regional club rides were held in 2013 – 5 within the US and 5 International. 2 APHA rides this year so far – Fort Robb (which I hear great things about) and McKee, KY. APHA now has an affiliation with Trail Rider Magazine. Also, this committee notes that they need to clarify some rules in the rule book on the Ride America program.

Regional Club – they want us to know the Gist affiliate reward checks can be re-applied for each year. Also, they had much discussion over the discontinuation of the regional club sponsorship money in favor of the regional championship idea. They want to be added to the Show & Contest task force so that they can add discussion about how this championship concept might impact regional clubs. They are sending a recommendation to the Executive Committee asking to immediately continue the club sponsorship program until the regional championship idea comes to realization. This committee will be setting up a closed Facebook group for committee members for additional discussion throughout the year.

Rules – do not recommend rule changes be passed by emergency vote as they are not truly emergency rule changes

Youth – discussed that there are not many 13 & under kids in our Association or that are showing. Also, the youth kids that were in attendance at the committee meeting felt that we are coddling the Novice Youth so they will create a focus group to look into this further. The youth members want to keep their committee meetings with the entire group in February (it had been discussed breaking it off separately so that the kids didn't have to miss school to attend).

There were a couple of committee reports that I missed for various reasons. The reports will eventually be on the APHA website in more detail so be sure to check there.

And now for the rule changes that passed. PLEASE NOTE – these rules are NOT in effect until JANUARY 1, 2015 unless otherwise noted:

- SC-075 – changing language that we will accept reciprocal suspension rulings from other association – PASSED
- SC-160 – deleting the rule that the names of horses or owners cannot be announced prior to them being judged – PASSED (but a lot of votes against)
- SC-160-3 (and related rules) – changing the rule that in order for a horse to be exhibited the exhibitor & owner must be a member (this changes the fact that before the owner didn't have to be a member unless you wanted to earn points & awards on the horse) – PASSED
- SC-193 (as amended) – 2 year old longeline – PASSED (several were opposed)
- SC-270 – dealing with western tack – DEFEATED (rule book supplement already addressed)
- SC-276 – altering Ranch Sorting rules – PASSED
- SC-284 – adding Timed Team Roping – PASSED
- SC-285 (amended) – changing how the heeling horse is judged in Team Roping – PASSED
- SC285-1 – adding rule for 60 & over women in Team Roping Heeling – PASSED
- SC-290-1 – changing the start line measurement for barrel racing – DEFEATED because the supplement changed the rest of the pattern and this rule would have been in conflict
- SC-302 – adding Ranch Horse Pleasure – PASSED EFFECTIVE 4-1-2014
- SC-312 – adding Competitive Trail Horse – PASSED
- SC-325 – requiring Grand & Reserve Solid Paint Bred – PASSED

- AM-020 vs AM-020-1 – both dealt with leasing but one was international only and one was Association wide – the rule allowing leasing for all APHA Amateurs PASSED
- AM-145 – adding Amateur & Youth Limited Working Ranch Horse – PASSED EFFECTIVE 4-1-14
- AM-205-3 – ability to regain Novice Amateur status based on points within the past 10 years – PASSED
- AM-255 – adding Novice Amateur & Novice Youth Working Ranch Horse – PASSED EFFECTIVE 4-1-14
- AM-300 – disallowing those in walk/trot showmanship to cross enter into Novice or Amateur showmanship – DEFEATED
- AM-300-2 – allowing walk/trot points to count for Top 10 & Zone awards – PASSED
- AM-300-3 – allowing a horse to be exhibited in Walk/Trot Amateur without the ownership requirements unless the exhibitor wants to earn points & titles – PASSED
- YP-015 vs YP-015-1 – both dealt with leasing but one was international only and one was Association wide – the rule allowing leasing for all APHA Youth PASSED
- YP-110 – allowing Youth Walk/Trot points to count for ROM, Superior & Zone awards – PASSED
- YP-152 & related – allowing Limited Working Cow points to count towards APHA awards. PASSED (note – the section related to Youth Working Cow passed effective 4-1-2014)
- YP-205 – clarifying youth who receive money for or solicit to train horses are not eligible for a Novice Youth card – PASSED
- YP-220 – novice youth awards language – PASSED
- YP-221 – creating a Novice Youth Superior – PASSED
- YP-224 – creating a Novice Youth Zone Award – PASSED
- YP-245 – allowing international Novice Youth to show in a snaffle or hackamore regardless of horse's age – PASSED
- YP-250 – creating Novice Youth Working Cow Horse – PASSED EFFECTIVE 4-1-104
- RA-000 – changing the Stakes Eligible language regarding solid bred to have more regular registry parentage – PASSED
- RA-060 – dealing with Racing awards & Honor Roll – PASSED

OK – as promised, here are some of the rules in the new 2014 supplement that I think you need to be especially aware of (if you are getting ready to go to a show, download a copy of that supplement & read it or contact APHA & get a copy sent to you as there are A LOT of rules that got changed or clarified in just about every class):

1 - The first deals with Western attire and will really mostly affect women: "In all Western events, speed events and halter, it is mandatory to wear appropriate Western attire including collared long sleeve shirt or blouse, a vest with a long sleeve shirt or blouse, or a jacket with a long sleeve shirt or blouse..." So women who have been wearing a non-collared shirt with nice jewelry under their blazer is no longer acceptable. If you are going to wear a jacket, your shirt must have a collar. The rule calls for a long sleeve shirt but I did verify that the judges are not going to be asking to see the sleeve under your jacket - so you could likely get away with a short sleeve or sleeveless shirt as long as it has a collar (tunic collar or regular collar).

2 - All horses will be judged immediately upon entering the arena and judging will cease when the judges' cards are handed in, unless covered by specific class rules." This means that as soon as you enter the pen (even when you are being pre-loaded while the other class is being placed ahead of you), the judges will be judging you - so don't 2 hand your horse, don't be banging on their face to get a

headset, don't be stopping & backing when you've been asked to enter at the walk, etc. When you are asked to pre-load a class, do as instructed (enter at the walk, jog, etc.) and even if being told to ride-at-will for a gate hold, etc. your performance is still judged for what you are doing. You will not be penalized for walking a small circle while the previous class is being excused, etc. but you will be penalized for 2 handing or the "schooling".

3 – in all the speed events, we now can roll over your time. So this means if you are entering Novice, Amateur & Open barrel racing you can compete in the Novice class and roll your time over to the other 2 classes and head back to your stall. You must declare your roll over in advance of competing in the class (you can't go run a smoking time and then say you want to roll it over) and likewise, once you've declared you cannot undeclared if you DQ or get a 5 second penalty. This is to help attract some of the barrel racers who are used to doing this in their competitions as well as to help out that all around horse who has shown all day and is gaming for the high point. You don't have to roll over your time. You could run the Novice and then come back for Amateur and say you want to roll your Amateur time over into Open. Or you can run in all 3 classes – totally up to you but be aware it must be done first and cannot be undone.

As you can see, we did a lot of business and had lots to discuss. I felt like I was busy the entire time in meetings or even in little conferences in the hall with various directors from around the country. Very invigorating. If any of you have questions about this report or about the new 2014 supplement rules or even about the rules we've passed to be effective for 2015, please feel free to contact me anytime. It has been a pleasure serving you these past 2 years and I look forward to hopefully more!

Respectfully,
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