Meeting Minutes  
State Horse Advisory Committee  
Corvallis, Oregon  
October 5, 2013

The comments and recommendations in these minutes are for your information and study. It must be understood that recommendations are not official at this time. Counties have sixty days in which to provide reactions. Final decisions will be made by the State 4-H Faculty in concert with the State 4-H Advisory Council. Comments, reactions and suggestions are sought on all recommendations, program items and contents.

Proposed changes to PNW 4-H Horse publications must be approved by the PNW Management Team.

Committee members present: Rose Hall, Carolyn Jones, Hope Flint, Beverly Quackenbush, Dani Decker, Sharon Zucker, Donna Randall, Karen Kublick, Shirley Haney, Randee Randall, Karissa Dishon, Julie Singer, Tabatha Bielemeyer

Resource members present: Roberta Lundeberg, Jan Harer, Andrea Watson

State 4-H website: http://oregon.4h.oregonstate.edu

State 4-H Horse Project website: http://oregon.4h.oregonstate.edu/horse-project-0

**State Fair**

There were 261 participants at State Fair, 144 intermediates and 117 seniors. This was down 11 from last year.

The committee spent a lot of time discussing the comments and suggestions from State Fair. By far, the majority of negative comments concerned facility issues, and they were mostly because of lack of staff.

- Many complaints about the condition and maintenance of the bathrooms.
- Issues with the dust in all arenas and problems with the water truck
- Stadium arena footing bad (most people agreed the covered outside arena was fine except for the dust)
- Issues with parking (needed to call in State Fair manager to deal with situation)

State 4-H staff will be meeting with the State Fairgrounds staff in the next month. All issues will be discussed and we will look for ways to work around the lack of staffing and the problems that causes. Several suggestions were made such as using DOC crews to clean things before fair starts and contracting with someone to prepare and work the arenas.

There were many positives to State Fair as well.

- Roberta reported this was an incredibly polite and kind group of youth and parents
- Office staff did a great job
- Schedule worked well
- Very positive comments about judges
- Many compliments on gaming
We then discussed several specific aspects of the horse state fair.

**Using two equitation judges**: To help reduce costs, we used two judges instead of three for equitation classes. No one reported any negatives for this, and several of the judges liked it better.

**Driving**: a suggestion was made to have both driving classes on the same day but to have contestants go straight from their reinsmanship pattern in the stadium arena to the precision driving class in the covered arena. Strong concerns were expressed about holding driving classes in the covered arena. Most felt the footing there was too deep for driving, especially precision driving. That would also eliminate the warm up arena for driving. We talked briefly about holding the class somewhere else on the fairgrounds, but no one could come up with a suitable location. Since this was the first year we had driving on two different days, the committee’s decision was to leave it as is for at least another year and see how it goes.

The suggestion was made to eliminate the requirement for having a blue ribbon in reinsmanship to qualify for precision driving. After discussion, it was decided to re-write the state fair eligibility requirements for precision driving to match those of reinsmanship.

**In-Hand Trail**: The question arose as to why helmets are required. This is a PNW rule so we cannot change it at this point. If Oregon decides to, we can submit this as a proposed change to the PNW Contest Guide. The current contest guide will be in effect until October, 2015.

There was some confusion last year about what animals could qualify for in-hand trail at state fair. We will change the wording in the fair book to clarify the committee’s intent. First, only non-ridden horses are eligible. Second, you must have qualified for state fair in driving or ground training and received a blue ribbon in in-hand trail. (This is the same as for trail, dressage, and hunt seat over fences.)

**Trail**: The suggestion was made to hold the trail medallion classes in the outside arena. The committee felt there was no room for spectators outside and that it would be too confusing to move back and forth. Medallion classes will stay in the stadium arena.

**Ground Training**: We will also clarify the wording in the fair book about the number of ground trainers a county can send. Counties can send a total of 8 ground trainers—4 seniors and 4 intermediates. It doesn’t matter whether the horses are yearlings or two-year olds.

Next was a discussion about what constitutes a pattern in ground training. Ground training is a series of individual steps, not a flowing pattern. Since this can be interpreted in various ways, the best thing might be for contestants to ask the judge if they want them to stop and make some sort of acknowledgement between steps.

Question was asked about whether gloves should be required for ground training. This is something we can discuss when it is time to revise the Contest Guide.

**Warm up arena**: Every year there are complaints about people mistreating horses or acting badly in the warm up arena. The committee decided the best way to handle this was to encourage people to note contestant numbers and bring them to the office. Someone from the office will then talk to the county chaperone and/or the youth involved.
If there are multiple complaints about the same person, disciplinary action would then be taken. For a variety of reasons, the committee did not feel like it would be helpful to have someone “police” the warm up arena.

**Schedule:** There were many new parents at state fair this year, and apparently, many had problems understanding the posted schedules (different rings going at the same time). Not sure what we can do to make this clearer, but we will try! There were also some issues with people knowing when breaks were and what the schedule was for the day. This may be mainly a problem with the PA system in the race barns. Schedules and breaks were announced at the beginning of each day, and several announcements were made throughout the day.

**Equitation:** A suggestion was made that contestants be allowed to leave the arena when they have completed their pattern. The committee’s response to this was a resounding “No.” This is 4-H and standing in line is part of the class. This helps them prepare for open showing as well. This would also cause many problems with handing out ribbons.

**Equipment:** Much of the trail and jump equipment needs to be repaired and painted. Since most of this equipment belongs to the fairgrounds and not to 4-H, Roberta will check with the state fair about what we can do. If there is a place we can store and keep our equipment separate (as we do for dressage and gaming), we may see what we can do about purchasing some new items. For now, we agreed to purchase new plastic jump cups (20 sets of 4-H green cups). We may try to have a painting/repair work day in August.

**Loss of horse:** A request was made to have exceptions that allow members to show a different horse at state fair if their horse dies. This happens every year, and while counties can make exceptions and let youth show at their county fairs, we do not allow it at state fair. (Most counties will let youth show, but state they cannot qualify for high point awards and they are told they will not qualify for state fair.) Not allowing members to switch project animals at the last minute is consistent across all animal projects, not just horse. Showing in 4-H is for project animals. That is what separates it from open showing. A guiding principle is that members must show the horse on which they qualified for state fair. It would not be fair to all the other contestants to deviate from this.

Sometimes life isn’t fair and is harsh, but this can also be used as a learning opportunity. Several youth in this situation have still come to state fair and helped other people in their county or with the event itself. It was also pointed out that there are many reasons a member might not be able to use the horse they qualified on at state fair and it wouldn’t be fair to grant exceptions only for a horse dying. Once you open the door, where do you draw the line?

**Fair Book:** Revisions to the state fair book will be made in November and sent to the committee to review. The final draft of the fair book should go online the first of January.

**Chairs:** Peggy Sue has agreed to continue as the gaming chair. Shirley Haney will continue as trail chair, Hope Flint as jumping chair, and Andrea Watson as barn manager. Karen DeLano has asked to retire from acting as Dressage Chair. Donna Randall volunteered to replace her. Karen has done a wonderful job for many years and we thank her very much.

**Spring Horse Classic**
Spring Horse Classic was held in Clackamas County last April. The facilities were wonderful and everything went quite well. Next year’s event will be co-hosted by Deschutes and Linn counties. It will be held in Redmond on April 25-27, 2014.

A host county is needed for 2015. Bev will check with Coos County leaders and Dani with Klamath leaders. Union county is also a possibility for the future. Jan will check about Washington and Yamhill co-hosting. It’s a good idea to have counties share this responsibility. Anyone interested should contact Roberta.

A proposal was made to allow 9th graders to compete on senior teams, and there was much discussion about this. In general, the committee thought this was a good idea, but we were unsure about policy. Some of the questions that were brought up:

- Should a 9th grader be able to bump a senior from the state team?
- Should counties only allow 9th graders to compete on the senior team if they don’t have enough seniors?
- If a senior dropped out after the county contest, could you bring up an intermediate to compete at state?
- If a senior dropped off of a nationals team, could that county bring up an intermediate to fill the nationals team?

The committee members mainly felt that an intermediate should never bump a senior, but that a 9th grader could be brought up to fill a senior team. Feedback on this would be appreciated!

We then discussed the classes that can be used for the judging contest. Currently, the rules state that in addition to showmanship, performance classes may be Saddle Seat equitation, Hunt Seat equitation, Western equitation, trail, hunt seat over fences, reinsmanship, precision driving, western pleasure, or English pleasure. The question was asked if we could add reining. This led to asking about adding gaited classes. The rationale for adding these was that our teams going to Nationals are not prepared for the variety of classes they see there. We need to expose our youth to more than they currently see.

Concerns about adding such classes were that there is little in our 4-H materials to teach members about how to judge these. Also, our 4-H judges are not trained to judge these. Some people also were concerned that the majority of the kids were not ready for this and that we were focusing too much on the few youth who qualify for nationals.

One suggestion was to do Working Ranch Horse instead of Reining since we do have material on this. However, many judges still are not comfortable judging Ranch Horse classes. It was also suggested that we could tell participants ahead of time if there was going to be a class like reining so they could study. This, however, can be problematic as information doesn’t always get to all youth and classes can change at the last minute.

Feedback on adding classes is welcome.

**Nationals Competition**

The Nationals teams are all ready to go to Kentucky in November. Karissa Dishon will be the official state chaperone.

Good luck to them all!

**Advancement Program**
The Horse Advancement Program has been reformatted and is now online both as an entire document and in individual sections. This way people can print out just the parts they need to complete. While the program looks a bit different, there are no real changes. No one needs to get a new one if they already have one started.

It is highly recommended that every member print out the completion check list and keep that in their records.

**Project Book**
The PNW Horse Project Book is in the final stages of revision. Like the Advancement Program, it will be put online in sections. There are a few changes and a few new sections. The old Colt Training manual has been incorporated into the Project Book. People will not need to buy a new book. Roberta will send out a list of the changes/additions that people can add to their old books. The new book should go online in another month or so.

**County Questions**
Once again, we had some discussion about the 90-day rule and who can ride a 4-H member’s project horse. Counties may need to talk to some ranch families about other family members using a working ranch horse. If there truly is only one horse that must be used for their livelihood, there can be some arrangements made. But no other person should be showing a member’s project horse.

Washington County reported they had 33 participants in Western Dressage and that it went very well. They also do driving dressage and wondered about adding that at state fair. State fair is fairly full at the moment and the management of the fair is in transition, so this is not a good time to do this. If state fair becomes more stable and there is time, we would talk about the various classes that could be added (bareback, ranch horse classes, etc.)

The question was raised about how much authority a judge has to stop a show if they feel the facility or conditions are not safe. Everyone agreed the judge’s decision was final. Several instances were shared where a judge refused to judge because of the conditions. This is the judge’s call. If the county is upset by this, they always have the option of not hiring that judge again.

**Next Meeting**
The next meeting will be Saturday, April 12, 2014 at OSU.