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As I write this letter for the next issue of Take the Reins I am on the precipice of a new role in the IEA. I’ve held many positions in the organization over the last 10 plus years. I am one of the founders of the association and had many years as a coach and volunteer. I’ve held positions as National Steward, Treasurer, Board President, National Finals Coordinator and Executive Director. But, my new role is the most exciting! I will now be the parent of an IEA rider!

As the IEA turns to its 11th year of competitions, my own daughter also turns 11, moves into 6th grade and is finally eligible to participate! She has been diligently taking lessons in both hunt seat and western disciplines, and we have purchased all of the appropriate attire. Now we await the first show.

I’m assuming there is probably a common prayer that IEA parents recite on the morning of that first show that may go something like this:

“Please don’t let my child get bucked off, have a refusal, spook in the corner, forget her course/pattern, pick up the wrong lead, forget her diagonals, lose her stirrup, get a “no score,” or any of those other things that can happen in an IEA show (or any other horse show).

Please help me to remember to put all of the right clothes in the car. (Not like that show where I left the helmet in the trunk of the other car, and I had to sneak around and borrow one before she found out I had forgotten it.)

Help me find this barn in the boondocks at 5 a.m., and please let there be a Starbucks, McDonalds, or Dunkin Donuts that is close to the show. Please let us finish at a reasonable hour so that we don’t have to eat at Starbucks, McDonalds or Dunkin Donuts for all three of our meals today.

I pray that the weather is perfect, and I can comfortably work on my tan today. Or that the show is indoors with a cozy viewing area. And, in case it is not, please help me remember the rain suits, fleece jackets, down jackets, warm gloves, change-of clothes, towels, mud boots and all of the other potential items we may need for any kind of possible weather. And please give me some help when it is time to carry everything back into the house and do all the laundry.

But, all requests aside, thank you for the wonderful opportunity for my daughter. Thank you for her caring coach, enthusiastic teammates, dependable school horses and the generosity of the show hosts. Thank you for the zillions of lessons that my daughter will learn through this IEA experience; lessons about horses, competition, team dynamics, communicating, winning and losing and life in general. Thank you so much for letting us share this experience together.”

My personal thanks go out to all the supportive IEA parents out there. I am honored to be joining you along the rail this year! I hope that you and your family will have a great year full of lessons, stories and memories that will last a lifetime!

Sincerely,

Roxane Lawrence
If you have started the college process of determining where you want to go and what major you want to take, you have likely heard over and over “its all about the academics!” After all, it is important to pick a major that will help you find a job and start your career after college. But what happens once you arrive at your dream school? College now becomes more about expanding your horizons, finding new passions, and maybe learning just a bit more about yourself. This in itself is the true purpose of college!

Our high school riders will profess that they can’t imagine their life without horses and often start their college search with institutions that offer riding teams, clubs, or academic degrees. But because of academic priorities it is not uncommon that students may have to choose a school that doesn’t have the equestrian discipline they are familiar with or doesn’t have a team at all.

Don’t panic you will find you still have a range of options from starting your own team, to bringing a horse to school, riding at a local facility or trying a new discipline! There are nearly 500 Universities that offer equestrian opportunities on their campuses. They range from participating on an equestrian team, being part of a club, participating in a physical education class, and taking academic courses.

You might use this time in college to “expand your horizons” and try another discipline. For example it is not uncommon to hear that western riders will try English, jumpers and three day eventers trying polo or dressage riders trying western. Beyond the love of the horses, there are personality and skill similarities across equestrian sports. Keep an open mind, consider this an opportunity to try something new and you will likely find that you will become a more well-rounded rider and learn something new about yourself.

Interscholastic Equestrian Association (IEA) riders are generally familiar with associations such as the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association (IHSA) and the NCAA’s National Collegiate Equestrian Association (NCEA) which both host English and Western team competitions and the Intercollegiate Saddle Seat Association (ISSA) for saddle seat riders. However, when it comes to opportunities and options there are many more to consider.

No matter which discipline or opportunity you try you will find that there are various types of teams within each association. Some teams will emphasize competition while others promote participation and learning. If you find prior to attending college that riding in your discipline will not be an option then consider taking a few lessons...
to see if you might be interested in trying something new.

Remember there are always options. If you have your heart set on riding at college but the school doesn’t have your discipline, you might be the starting member of a team. Each association has information on their website about how to get started. With this material in hand, visit the institution’s Recreation or Student Affairs Department to find out how to get university support and assistance. If you know this will be your intention when you are applying, tell the admissions counselor about your plans, they will likely be impressed by your leadership skills, which will only be an asset to the application process.

More information on these associations as well as the college riding process can be found at www.collegeriding101.com.

**National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association (NIRA)**
NIRA sanctions more than 100 college rodeos representing over 3,500 student athletes attending more than 135 member colleges and universities in both team and individual events. From beginner to more advanced levels there are opportunities to compete in saddle bronc, bareback, bull riding, calf roping, steer wrestling, team roping, barrel racing, tie-down roping, breakaway roping, and goat tying.

collegero.com

**The United States International Riding Team (ISRO)**
The ISRO is the United States organization that supports World University Equestrian Federation (AIEC), which organizes Student Rider Nations Cup competitions all throughout Europe and North America. Riders must be between ages 18 and 28, a US citizen and be comfortable jumping either 1.2m or riding at least 2nd level in dressage. This is an opportunity to ride in addition to your regular riding program. Hosting teams provide the horses in a multi phase elimination round.

studentridersusa.webs.com

**Intercollegiate Dressage Association (IDA)**
The IDA is a national organization that offers Introductory, Lower Training, Upper Training and First Level tests in both individual and team categories. Teams consist of four riders - one at each level who earn points that count towards the team total to determine placing. The host school generally provides horses.

teamdressage.com

**American National Riding Commission (ANRC)**
ANRC offers a rider certification program, instructional clinics, and local and national competitions in hunt seat equitation at various universities. There are three riding phases: Dressage Sportif, Hunter Seat Equitation Medal Phase and Hunter Trials Equitation, plus a written test on riding theory and stable management. Riders can compete on a college-owned or privately owned horse. The ANRC’s goal is to promote forward riding that shows smooth movement on the flat and over fences.
anrc.org

**United States Polo Association (USPA)**
Intercollegiate polo is played in an indoor arena using the USPA Official Arena Rules with modified conditions for college programs. The home school generally provides the horses using a “split string,” which is meant to create a fair opportunity for both teams to play the same horses under the same conditions while reducing the expense by not transporting horses for games.

us-polo.org

**United States Eventing Association Intercollegiate Division (USEA)**
Currently no nationally recognized intercollegiate eventing association exists for Three Day and Combined Training riders. However, there is an “intercollegiate division” and a West Coast Collegiate Eventing League (WCCEL). Riders compete individually or as part of their university team in recognized events to have their scores recorded for an intercollegiate division.

useventing.com
“In the short time I have been involved with horses, I have learned valuable lessons and become a better person. The biggest influence horses have had on my life and my future is in my decision to become a veterinarian.

I had been thinking about it for a while, but soon realized it was the direction in life that I wanted to take. I have always loved animals but never had an opportunity to be involved with horses. Soon it became obvious: I wanted to become a veterinarian and care for animals the rest of my life.

In addition to clarifying my career choice, my work with horses has taught me the lessons of hard work, responsibility and dedication. I have learned through working in the barn cleaning stalls, feeding, and stacking hay the importance of a good work ethic. I learned responsibility when asked to be in charge of a trainer’s horse and stalls over weekends while he went to horse shows. I learned dedication as I worked extremely hard to improve my riding skills to become the JV beginner point rider for my IEA team.

All three of these lessons will continue to impact me every day and help me to become a better person, and also lead me toward my goals in the future.”

— Zac Brown
The Interscholastic Equestrian Association (IEA), in conjunction with the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association (IHSA), awards a student-rider the National Sportsmanship Award annually. In 2013, the award will be announced and presented at the IEA Western National Finals in June.

The national award winner will be selected from the group of riders who earned a Sportsmanship Award at a local, regional or zone IEA show during the school year. These Sportsmanship Award winners will receive an IEA Sportsmanship patch and will be invited to submit an application for the National Sportsmanship Award.

The first-place applicant will receive a $500 scholarship award from IEA, a lifetime membership in IEA, and they will be nominated by the IEA in affiliate sportsmanship award programs. Such programs as United States Hunter Jumper Association (USHJA) Affiliate Sportsmanship Award Program, United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) Youth Sportsman’s Award, and other similar programs, where applicable.

His or her essay and a photo will appear in the summer issue of Take the Reins magazine.

In addition to the IEA awards, the IHSA will donate a perpetual trophy to be engraved from year to year with the names of first-place winners, and a keeper trophy from the IHSA will be awarded to the recipient. The IHSA will also give a $500 scholarship to the highest-placing senior sportsman. And, if that senior attends a college or university with an IHSA equestrian team the scholarship will be doubled to $1,000.

Application Specifications

- Equine-related activities and memberships: include any year-end or extraordinary awards
- School-related activities including clubs, sports, leadership positions and any awards or honors
- Community activities including volunteer organizations, community service, leadership positions and any awards or honors
- An official school transcript that demonstrates a minimum 3.0 GPA
- 250-word essay explaining how horses and/or equestrian competitions have influenced his/her life
- Three recommendations: one from an equine professional, one from a teacher or school advisor and one from an additional person of candidates choice

Judging Criteria

- Active equestrian participant
- Scholastic and extracurricular involvement
- Characteristics that exemplify good sportsmanship and positive peer role model
- Academic record of 3.0 or above
In Oklahoma City as the 2011 Morgan Grand National and World Championship Horse Show was underway, nearby in Norman, Oklahoma, a Morgan gelding was peacefully grazing in a pasture. 16-year-old exhibitor Veronica Llewellyn of Wadsworth, Ohio, and Gulfwind Wild Finale, were about to be introduced.

Veronica and her 12-year-old Morgan gelding, Twelve Oaks Intrepid (Rebel), had traveled 1,100 miles to find out that competition for this pair was not to be. A veterinarian told Veronica and her family that Rebel was not up to par. This type of news is always the true test of an athlete. Rebel and Veronica were not new to this level of competition. Their

by Holly Robinson
dedication was always present from the time they began competing in Oklahoma in 2009.

Veronica’s coach, Holly Parks Robinson of HPR Show Stables, had just heard the devastating news. As this news continued to spread, the owners of Majic Stables, sisters Mary Shappee and Gert Shuckhart, came with the possibility that they might be able to help.

Shappee and Shuckhart are known for their dedication to young riders. They continue to mold the next generation while earning their share of top honors in Oklahoma from 2001 to the present.

Robinson and Veronica were stopped by a young lady named Courtney Townsend who informed them that she owned a Morgan with her grandparents, Ed and Betty Edwards.

“My trainer, Mary Shappee, called me and told me about your predicament. I would like to help. My horse is at Majic Stables and you can make arrangements with Mary to try him out tonight. I still have to ask my grandparents but I think it will be fine,” she said.

At 8:30 p.m., Veronica, her parents, Mike and Andrea and Robinson went to Majic Stables in Norman, Oklahoma. By this time Gulfwind was in his stall bedded down for the night, or so he thought.

After a test ride, trainers Shappee and Robinson both saw the “click” and connection between horse and rider and agreed it was a go. Veronica Llewellyn was going to reach for the stars after all, because of the generosity and ‘majic’ of the Majic Stables’ family. Shappee and Shuckhart graciously offered to bring Gulfwind Wild Finale to the fairgrounds by 6:30 the next morning.

The newly-formed partnership; Holly, Veronica and Gulfwind began a journey at 11:30 a.m., with a 20-minute schooling session for the Low Working Hunter Division.

Holly said, “I basically went through a trainer’s short course with my rider, as one would do when coaching for interscholastic riding. Never did I imagine we would be faced with trying to pull together a strange horse and rider team that met the night before. You train all year on your own horse for a competition of this caliber and magnitude.

For 35 years, the Grand National and World Championship Morgan Horse Show has topped the charts as it awards more than $300,000 in prize money to more than 1,100 horses and exhibitors from 45 states and three nations.

Robinson said, “It was last minute and the only thing I could turn to was my IEA experience. As the HPR Ashwood Farm Team coach for the last five years I learned to do a quick read of my rider and the mount that they had just drawn.”

The Challenge

“The challenge is to take the talents of both horse and rider, and in a short time, brief the rider on how to use their individual skills to hopefully create a bond. If you can do that, then you can maybe get that click or feel. For me it’s understanding the inside of my rider, and in the IEA arena I usually have just met the horse. It’s a quick study.

“After 30 years as a professional trainer at top shows across the country, the IEA arena has been the most unique learning experience and challenge for me,” said Robinson.

“I am humbled by the unassuming jumping pony to the long-strided Warmblood that struts and packs our riders around the ring. IEA has become an essential tool for me and my riders who show in and outside of IEA.”

Over the past five years, Llewellyn has gained many experiences on a vast array of horses and ponies that have taught her volumes as she competed on her coach’s Hunt Seat Team and newly-formed Saddle Seat Team. These IEA equines played the key role in her ability to perform on a strange horse at the last minute in top-shelf company.

Gulfwind Wild Finale and Llewellyn found that click as they captured the Low Working Hunter Reserve World championship title.

That wasn’t enough; they decided to ride to win the Grand National Hunt Seat Equitation 17 & Under class, the Over Fences class, and finished third after a call back in the AMHA (American Morgan Horse Association) Over Fences Gold Medal class. Llewellyn in the winners’ circle beamed down at her trainer and quipped, “Great draw!”

Llewellyn is now a senior. After battling high temperatures during her lesson, she told her trainer, “I want to show all three seats in IEA this year! It’s my last year! As other HPR/Ashwood riders want more experiences as well, recruiting more Saddle Seat riders and now Western are top priority.”

Veronica and Twelve Oaks Intrepid are happy to report they are both 150 percent back in training and were heading to the 2012 Grand National and World Championship Morgan Horse Show, but only if she could compete in IEA too!

IEA is the ultimate challenge, keep it in your hip pocket, you never know when you just might need to use it!
When Roxane Lawrence approached me to provide an article about the EQUUS Foundation for Take the Reins, I immediately felt a connection to you: the IEA student riders who have to balance their passion for horses and equestrian sport with the demands of their personal life, especially coping with school. So I thought the simplest way to communicate who we are and what we do is to show you why we do what we do.

“A Picture Is Worth a Thousand Words,” so the saying goes. The stories behind the collage of the three photographs we used for our participation in the Animal Planet Reach Out Act Respond (ROAR) campaign sums up our mission. EQUUS Foundation was selected by Animal Planet as one of seven leading animal welfare organizations to participate in its ROAR campaign from Sept. 1 to Oct. 31, 2012. The campaign goal is to inspire people like you to make the world a better place for animals – and in our case – horses!

Royal came to Days End Farm Horse Rescue in Woodbine, Maryland, in April of 2011. He had been locked in a stall in Prince George County, Maryland, surrounded by three feet of urine-soaked manure. Thanks to Days End, there is now hope that Royal may be lightly ridden some day. Royal continues to recover while he awaits his adoption to his forever home.

Eliza and Blueberry

Eliza came to Hoofbeats Therapeutic Riding Center in Lexington, Virginia, more than 10 years ago. She came with Down Syndrome and started the program with someone leading her horse while two walkers flanked her sides as she rode.

Eliza was immediately drawn to Blueberry when he arrived in 2005. Blueberry was not in need of a new home, but instead, was donated by a Board member because he was the perfect type of horse for the program.

Once Eliza and Blueberry started working together, they both progressed at an amazing rate. Blueberry is now a specialist for riders with hyperactivity and panic disorders. Eliza is riding independently and debuted her competitive spirit at the Special Olympics Equestrian Games hosted by the Virginia Military Institute (VMI), Virginia Horse Center, and Hoofbeats.

Eliza now has her eye on jumping and competing in open shows that offer classes for disabled riders. The accompanying photo of Eliza and Blueberry was taken by Katy Baron, a former rider with Hoofbeats. Eliza had just performed her musical freestyle for Katy. After halting on the center line, you can see the joy in her body language.

Days End and Hoofbeats are both grant recipients of the EQUUS Foundation, which has awarded over $2 million in grants to horse charities across the United States to improve the quality of life of horses and foster the use of horses therapeutically for those with special needs.

EQUUS Foundation also formed an alliance with equestrian sport organizations like IEA in recognition of the horse’s athletic ability and the careers that equestrian sport offers to horses. EQUUS Foundation celebrates the extraordinary talent of horses and the magical bond between horses and people. Because of horses, men and women compete in sport side-by-side, age is not
a determinant of success, first words are spoken and crutches are set aside.

While $2 million is an impressive number, the amount of unwanted horses has reached an epidemic level in the US, estimated at 170,000. Tragically, many are slaughtered. Instead, they can be rescued and retrained and re-homed in equine therapy programs. Many horses can also have second careers as therapy horses when their competitive careers are over.

For the thousands of equine and equestrian charities across the United States - “Time is Money!” You can help by volunteering your time! Locate equine organizations in your area by using our carrots4acause network at www.equusfoundation.org/carrots4acause. Carrots4acause was established as a free service to bring together interested individuals with equestrian and horse-related organizations across America.

CHAMPIONS

Finding the time with your busy schedules will be your most difficult challenge, but we want to help you. We established the CHAMPIONS program this year to do that. CHAMPIONS is our incentive-based equine service volunteer program that recognizes and rewards individuals and organizations on its carrots4acause network.

Champion benefits are continuing to become available (see benefits box for details). Becoming a Champion is easy. All you need to do is volunteer a minimum of 24 hours during 2012 for an equine organization on the EQUUS Foundation carrots4acause network. There's still plenty of time. Volunteer hours can be backdated to Jan. 1, 2012.

To participate as an individual, visit the EQUUS Foundation website, sign up for the carrots4acause program and begin logging your volunteer hours. Sign up at www.equusfoundation.org/signup.

Get your IEA team to sign up as an organization on the carrots4acause network at www.equusfoundation.org/iea so that you can log your IEA volunteer hours.

Learn more about the CHAMPIONS program at www.equusfoundation.org/champions.

Champion Benefits

- You will be entered in a drawing to win a grant for the Interscholastic Equestrian Association (IEA).
- You will be eligible to win one of four $500 IEA riding scholarships!
- You will also be eligible for the $1,000 EQUUS Foundation academic scholarships!
In IEA we ask judges to look at riders in a unique way. Riders on unfamiliar horses know what is expected of them and of the horses. What do the judges expect? Especially in this unique situation, how do the judges expectations vary. We asked four judges what they look for at an IEA show. Asking one judge to breakdown the perspective of an IEA class for Reining, Equitation Over Fences, Horsemanship, and Equitation on the flat.
IEA Horsemanship Classes by Lori Gordon

Judging the IEA Western horsemanship class holds a different set of criteria than judging an AQHA Western horsemanship class or judging horsemanship at a breed-sanctioned show.

At an AQHA or breed show, horse and rider suitability, pattern execution, and of course proper equitation are a must. Since this horse the exhibitor either owns or chooses to show, they have probably had months and possibly years of practice time and lessons.

At IEA, I am more inclined to look for how this rider properly maneuvers this particular mount through the tests involved since the rider is matched randomly to the horse the day of the horse show.

I am looking for the rider to adjust to the mount they have drawn and present the horse to their ability. Because this is not their own horse or a horse they have bought or chosen to show, they must be able to adapt and enhance the positives and downplay the negatives of this particular horse immediately to get a favorable ride in their class. Transitions should be smooth and subtle with speed and control in check.

I like to see a balanced seat with an imaginary line starting at their ear and continuing down through the middle of the shoulder, elbow, hip, and heel. The heels should operate as an anchor with the rider’s weight pressing down into the heel to steady their body motion.

Heels should always be lower than the toes with the ball of the foot contacting with the stirrup. Never put the foot all the way in the stirrup. This is an unsafe practice and heavily penalized since if the rider falls their feet may catch in the stirrup.

The rider should use their four natural aids—hands, legs, seat and voice to present their horse on the rail as well as in individual pattern tests. I like to see the hands soft with light contact, and within four inches of the pommel parallel with each other.

Reins should not be excessively drapey or too taunt, but be at a suitable length for contact, control and maneuvering rail and pattern work. There should be a 45 degree angle or diagonal line from the rider’s elbow to the corner of the horse’s mouth.

Seat and legs should adhere to the horse and the rider should determine how much or little contact with the hands, legs and seat this horse needs to be presented in a positive fashion. Voice aids should be low and soft and only loud enough to communicate with the animal.

The ideal picture should be a rider sitting quietly, tall and steady with light but supportive hands having control and contact with the horse’s mouth. The stellar rider should be able to “feel” how much give and take and ebb and flow is needed with their hands, seat, legs, and voice to maneuver that particular horse on that particular day through that particular pattern.

The rider is always being judged “at that moment.” Next time there will be another pattern, another judge, and another horse to master just moments before the class.

Lori Gordon holds 10 judges’ cards including AQHA, NSBA, and APHA. She has been judging for 25 years. She resides in Washington, Pennsylvania, and has operated Post Quarter Horses, a horse marketing and training business since 1986.

Her students have been top ten at the All American Quarter Horse Congress and AQHA World Championship Shows. Gordon has judged World Shows for APHA, NSBA, PHBA, ApHC, PiHA, IBHA, ATRA, POA, and has judged and given clinics abroad. She was also a Finalist in Performance Halter Mares at the 2011 AQHA World Championship Show.

Judging Flat Classes at Interschool Horse Shows by Jo-Ann Shaudies

When I am judging interschool competitions my considerations vary from those shows where most everyone is riding their own or a very familiar horse. Interschool exhibitors are required to ride school horses they are unfamiliar with. And they cannot practice or ride in their own saddle.

Riders will be required to show their skills and capabilities without the luxury of knowing and having confidence in their mount. Usually management will inform me of any issues that horses have (sticky leads changes, difficulty with a lead, slight unsoundness, kicking, etc). I take all these things into consideration. I will give a rider the benefit of doubt if a considerable effort is made.

Good horsemanship is essential. I like to see an overall sense of balance in my first impression, regardless of the rider’s body type. It is important not to be distracted by size and suitability because these riders generally draw their mounts out of a hat.

A flat, relaxed back and shoulder with lines from the shoulder to the hip and hip to heel even on a short legged rider show me balance and stability in the position.

The foot should be properly placed in the stirrup, heel down and flexion in
the ankle. The angle at the knee should stay constant telling me that the rider is using the calf and lower leg. The stirrups should be the proper length for the size of the horse as well as the rider. A tall rider on a short horse may require a shorter stirrup as a short rider on a wide horse may want a longer one.

Many times the riders do not fit perfectly on the horses they have to ride. I want to see effectiveness and ability. I am thoughtful in regard to the handicap of riding a horse they have never sat on before and is perhaps not the ideal fit.

Consistency in the performance will impress me. Smooth steady posting at the trot on the correct diagonal is essential. In novice classes I will accept acknowledgement of a wrong diagonal if the rider notices quickly and changes it. I will usually not count it as a mistake.

In more advanced levels, I would expect them to be on the correct diagonal. At the sitting trot, I want to see the rider sitting into the rhythm not bouncing on the saddle. In the canter a light seat as well as a deeper seat, it is acceptable as long as the leg is still.

I want to see use of the calf and correct position of the stirrup on the foot. A loose leg will cause the stirrup to slide towards the heel or fly off the end of the toe. The hands should be soft and carried forward following the horses mouth in a quiet subtle manner.

The rider should be dressed in typical hunt seat attire. They should be wearing breeches and boots or jodphurs and paddock boots if appropriate (younger riders). Half chaps are not acceptable for equitation. There are many acceptable colors of shirts and coats. I am fine with most. Gloves, approved helmets and conservative breeches should be worn. Hair should be neat and tidy and worn appropriately for the age of the rider. I do not like big bows.

I feel that interschool competitions at all levels are a test of skills. It is always a challenge to ride a strange horse versus one that you are used to and have confidence in. Most of the horses are good solid citizens that allow riders to easily exhibit their skills. All things considered, this type of showing, I feel, is a real test of proficiency and talent.

Jo-Ann Schaudies, owner of Surmont LLC, in Poolesville, Maryland has been a registered ‘r’ USEF jumper/equitation and hunter judge since 1986.

She was recently licensed by Open Horse Show Association (OHSA) and has judged numerous local, state, and zone finals throughout the US. She has been training and showing horses in the mid Atlantic area for over 30 years.

Jo-Ann was the Chairman of Up County Horses Shows Association (‘UpCo’ Montgomery Co MD) from 1991-2007. She headed the task force that developed the “Clinic in A Box Program” for the promotion of USHJA-sanctioned clinics across the country.

She’s an active USHJA volunteer as well as a member of the Maryland and Virginia Horse Show associations. She’s an advocate and supporter of the USHJA outreach program and educating riders at the grass roots level.

**Equitation Over Fences** by Linda Radigan

An IEA show gives me, as a judge, the opportunity to focus solely on the rider’s basics, position and patience. When judging any equitation class, I expect basics to be solid: hands correct and following, legs still and heels down, seat in the correct position, eyes up, and sitting up straight.

At any show, the rider needs to enter with confidence and ready to work from the minute they walk into the ring until the second they walk out. Confidence grabs the judge’s attention and sets you apart from the rest of your competitors.

The wonderful thing about judging IEA is that I have the ability to focus solely on the rider.

At a regular member show, I expect the horse and rider to be a well-oiled machine and their round should be bolder than a rider coming in on an unknown horse.

In IEA competition over fences, I want the rider to show me they are confident in themselves and use their solid riding basics and equitation to successfully navigate a new horse around the course. The IEA competitor needs to focus on executing the proper skills that make up a solid course.

Where I expect the regular horse show competitor to have a boulder pace and specific striding, distances and flying lead changes, I want the IEA competitor to ride the consistent pace of the horse they have drawn.

This means not getting ahead of themselves and riding exactly what is happening underneath them every step of the way. Focus should be on the rhythm of the canter and the patience to let the jump come to them.

Some of the horses will have a slow pace and will be more comfortable leaving closer to the jump. If the rider stays focused on the rhythm of the horse and the whole course is consistent, that, to me, is successful.
Judging Reining at IEA
by Bonnie Miller

Judging a Western horsemanship class at an IEA competition is challenging. One of the biggest challenges is minimizing the amount of influence that the horse has on the evaluation of the rider. I take into consideration that the rider is unfamiliar with the horse that they have drawn. I do my best to evaluate how the rider is coping with riding an unfamiliar horse.

I really want to reward the rider who rides effectively. By effectively, I mean that I want to see a rider who rides with confidence and control, without intimidation.

An effective rider will sense and react to the feedback they are getting from their horse and adjust to the situation. I want to see soft and light contact. I evaluate whether or not the rider is utilizing their seat and legs, as well as their hands, to control their horse. I will reward a rider who portrays “feel” – the rider who gives-and-takes with their horse.

In an AQHA show, I would heavily penalize a rider who has a messy transition to the lope or misses a lead on pattern or on the rail. In IEA competition, I will watch each rider on the transitions. As a horseman, I realize that some horses will anticipate the loud speaker and others will evade taking the correct lead.

I take all of this into consideration when evaluating a performance. The rider who has trouble with a transition but handles it well will get credit from me. I like to say that I am a “sympathetic observer.”

I also credit the rider who uses the arena to their advantage. They transition to a new gait when called for and ride deep into the corners. They rate their horses and maintain proper equitation position at all gaits. I want a rider who rides with contact through their seat and legs and shows flexibility through their ankles with their heels properly lower than their toes.

I allow the toe to be turned slightly out as this allows most riders to maintain correct leg contact. I do not want to see a rider’s leg behind the vertical. When viewed from the side, the stirrup should be vertical, not drawn back or pushed forward. The rider’s body position needs to be balanced, functional and correct.

The American Quarter Horse Association Rulebook is available online and also as a free application for smartphones. The AQHA rulebook has great narrative on proper body position and should be required reading for any exhibitor!

Bonnie has been involved in the horse industry her entire life as a trainer, coach, clinician, exhibitor and judge. She is currently the Equine Department Chair at Morrisville State College in Morrisville, New York.

Morrisville State College offers 2 and 4 year Equine degrees in Western, Hunt Seat, Breeding, Draft, Rehabilitation, Business, Standardbred Racing and Thoroughbred Racing with over 350 students and a similar number of horses on campus. Bonnie is a carded judge with AQHA, NRHA, NRCHA, APHA, ApHC, PHBA and PtHA.
Meet the IEA Office

Barbara Buggy
Title: Membership Office Zone 5 Representative
Years with IEA: 2 years
Favorite Food: Pasta
Favorite Color: Purple
Favorite Movie: Dirty Dancing
Favorite Song: “I Gotta Feeling” Black-Eyed Peas
Favorite IEA Memory: Having a special staff lunch when Roxane visited the Membership Office.

Mira Clark
Title: Membership Representative
Years with IEA: 8 years
Favorite Food: Nutella
Favorite Color: Purple
Favorite Movie: Finding Nemo
Favorite Song: Anything by Tori Amos
Favorite IEA Memory: Standing at the parade of teams at the 10 year anniversary nationals in Syracuse, remembering the inaugural “Interscholastic Invitational” at the “Andrews School.”

Jenn Eaton
Title: Membership Secretary
Years with IEA: 4 years
Favorite Food: Greek salads
Favorite Color: Navy blue
Favorite Movie: Four Rooms
Favorite Song: “American Girl” by Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers
Favorite IEA Memory: Sitting with my team at the 2008 IEA Naitonals. For the first time I listened to my riders discuss the horses in warm up and they sounded like trainers. It made me feel like I had done my job.
Carolyn Licata
Title: IEA Membership Office Representative - Zones 2 & 3
Years with IEA: 2 years
Favorite Food: My husband's cooking. He used to be a chef in N.Y.C.
Favorite Color: Green
Favorite Movie: The Shawshank Redemption
Favorite Song: “Wild Horses” by The Rolling Stones
Favorite IEA Memory: Working at the 2011 - 2012 Western Nationals in O.K.C. It was 107 degrees, yet we still had a blast!

Michele Maure
Title: IEA Membership Office Zone 4 Fairy Godmother
Years with IEA: 5 years
Favorite Food: Carrots and Apples
Favorite Color: Chestnut
Favorite Movie: National Velvet
Favorite Book: Misty of Chincoteague
Favorite Song: “Pony Boy”
Favorite IEA Memory: Carrying the Zone 4 Banner in the Parade of Teams at Hunt Seat Nationals 2012.

Kathryn Quinlan
Title: Board Secretary and Membership Office Manager
Years with IEA: 4 years as a coach, 3 years as a Zone Chair and 6 years in the Membership Office
Favorite Food: A LARGE pumpkin latte' with an extra espresso shot!
Favorite Color: Blue (and not just for horse show ribbons!)
Favorite Movie: The Blind Side
Favorite Song: “Black Horse and the Cherry Tree” by KT Turnstall
Favorite IEA Memory: The 2007 Nationals, which was the first that I attended with our Rising Star Equestrian Team was really special.
After taking the East Coast by storm, the IEA is hitting the road. They have picked up their banners and brochures, and have headed west to Wisconsin, Texas, Oklahoma, and Arizona.

They have met young riders, equestrian advocates, trainers, and horse show managers in, what Jason Aldean calls, those amazing “Fly Over States.”

The western states are not completely new to the IEA. California and Colorado have been participating for several years. In fact, the Fountain Valley School team in Fountain, Colorado won the IEA National Hunt Seat Finals in 2010.

There are a lot of riders and land between those two states though, and the IEA’s message is just beginning to spread.

In the 2012-2013 season, new teams from seven areas will join the IEA and become part of the western zones (IEA West). These new areas will include San Diego, California; Kenosha, Wisconsin; Antioch, Illinois and Arlington, Houston, and Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas. This means a new Zone 6 and a more developed Zone 7.

Trainer Shannon Flanagan, from Silent Knight Stables in Krum, Texas, said, “As a trainer and equestrian facility owner, it is my responsibility to provide my clients with this type of education, door opening, and sportsmanship-building opportunities.”

Keep your eyes open this season for some spectacular new riders from lesser-known areas. You may be hearing about riders from Kenosha, Amarillo, or Loveland at this year’s National Finals.
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Riders in grades 6-12 can compete with teams in the Interscholastic Equestrian Association (IEA). School-age children with various levels of experience compete in Hunt Seat, Western and Saddle Seat divisions throughout the school year. Riders not only compete for individual points, but for their team as well.

It's fun and challenging—and there is no need to own a horse! Horses are provided to each rider at every event. All mounts are selected by a draw. Moms and dads really like that the IEA provides an affordable format for their child, as they build their equestrian skills. Many of the IEA senior championship riders receive college scholarships based upon their winning performance at the IEA National Finals, too.

Founded in 2002, the IEA has over 7,000 members across the United States. For additional information about the IEA or answers to questions concerning team organization, please contact Carol Sterrett, IEA President-Elect and Membership Marketing Coordinator at: 404-931-1149 phone; 404-963-0525 fax or visit either of these websites: www.rideiea.org, www.ieawest.com.