AERC Board of Directors

MOTION PROPOSAL

Motion Name: Temporary Suspension of Concurrent FEI events

Proposing Committee: SPONSORSHIP

Date of Motion: JANUARY, 2014 BOD CC MEETING

Classification of Motion: NEW

Proposed Motion:

Proposed Motion: FEI will begin equal, fair and transparent enforcement of its Endurance rules, including those related to equine abuse, drug violations, and cheating, to the satisfaction of the American Endurance Ride Conference Board of Directors (AERC-BOD) by or before December 31, 2014. AERC-International (AERC-I) will be tasked to evaluate the progress of enforcement. If FEI has not met the requirements of this Motion by December 31, 2014, then on January 1, 2015, and continuing for an indefinite period, AERC will decline or remove sanctioning of AERC rides that include a concurrent FEI event. The suspension of concurrent AERC-FEI rides by AERC will be rescinded when FEI satisfies the requirements of this Motion. AERC will continue its membership in USEF. AERC will assist AERC-I and USEF to encourage FEI to adopt the objectives outlined in Exhibit “A”.

EXHIBIT “A”

• Commitment to change: Change of leadership within FEI, and especially within the endurance leadership of FEI to demonstrate and symbolize FEI’s dedication towards correcting the increasing international perception of compromised integrity within FEI.

• Transparency of fatality and fracture summary data: This information should be publicly accessible via the FEI website and sufficiently detailed that rates of fatalities and fractures that occur during or are directly related to endurance competitions can be measured. Variables such as distance of the ride, region of the world, and year of competition should be included for scientific evaluation.

• Major penalties for responsible individuals: FEI will not exclude rider, veterinarian, trainer, owner and stable for infractions of FEI rules and FEI code of conduct. The results of all disciplinary hearings, sanctions and penalties will be made public. Prize money and placing will be forfeited as a mandatory result of rule infraction, and fines will be levied that significantly exceed prize monies.
• **Extensive drug testing at major competitions:** Increased and extensive drug testing at any FEI ride which is 2* or above, as well as any FEI rides involving substantial prize money

• **Limited competitors per team:** FEI will repeal the rule change that allows more horses per team. It will be replaced with a rule that limits a team to a maximum of four riders, of which the top three members will count towards a team score, and all four stand on the podium if medaling.

• **Certificate of Capability:** Requirements to qualify for a COC will be a reflection of the technical difficulty of the individual course, as opposed to a set and immobile time for distance, regardless of terrain. COC requirements will include and emphasize more technical courses, including the practices that allow successful and safe negotiation of difficult terrain.

• **Disciplinary action:** FEI officials are obligated to promptly investigate and respond to reported rule infractions occurring at events. Officials failing to do so will be severely sanctioned, suspended and/or otherwise removed from officiating duties and opportunities.

• **Crewing from moving vehicles:** Horses may not be assisted or accompanied in any manner during competition by one or more moving vehicles. Crews violating this rule will result in the immediate disqualification of the horse and rider with which they are associated.

• **Sponsorship Entities:** Providing significant financial support to an event will constitute a conflict of interest and Sponsors will not be provided with special privileges or allowances as a result of their sponsorship. No VIP passes may be given that allow an unfair advantage to the associated team, or otherwise interferes with the assurance of a level playing field for all participants.

**Background, analysis and benefit:**

FEI has jeopardized the sport of endurance riding in the United States and Canada as practiced and governed by AERC because of the lack of enforcement of its own FEI endurance rules and policies. FEI Endurance has not taken effective action to enforce existing rules related to equine welfare, fairness at its events, enforcement of drug rules, and other violations that are detrimental to the sanctity of AERC and endurance riding in the United States and Canada. The international publicity generated by FEI’s inaction has the potential for loss of trails on federal and state managed lands thus causing irreparable harm to AERC. The public relations damage may have a negative impact on Sponsorships and the good will and influence AERC has worked hard to develop over the years. The action of suspending concurrently held FEI events will encourage FEI to consider the seriousness of AERC’s concern with the above issues. It will also document that AERC is taking a strong stand in favor of welfare, fairness, enforcement
of rules, and the promotion and encouragement of the “sport and pastime of endurance riding” as outlined in the AERC ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION (1972).

**Budget effect/impact:**

There may be a minor impact on AERC with the possible loss of some rides. At the same time, the positive impact with our AERC Membership, by the BOD taking a concrete action that supports our welfare concerns, may help increase membership growth. This action may also help attract more Sponsors because we will have concrete action that supports our concern for equine welfare and the value of fairness. This action will counter arguments and actions by animal rights groups who are unable to differentiate between FEI Endurance Racing and AERC Endurance Riding. It also helps the AERC argument that we are different than FEI and counters negative publicity. If AERC is forced to take this action it will support our position on equine welfare, fairness, and transparency with land managers who might be influenced by the bad publicity and not understand the difference between AERC and FEI. In all aspects this Motion puts AERC in the position of taking a strong stand that separates it from FEI.

**Impact on AERC Office (Work load, budget):** There will be no impact on the AERC Office. The will be no impact on our Insurance or Drug Testing because our membership in USEF will continue

**Supporting materials:**

See the following articles as a start

http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sport/article-2472492/MARTIN-SAMUEL-Sport-driving-horses-deaths.html


http://www.horsenation.com/2013/10/30/fei-eff-up-posterchild-for-endurance-doping-featured-on-weg-poster/

**Supporting approvals:** (proposing committee, participating committees)