

USIHC – Board Of Directors 10/14/14 MEETING MINUTES

Board Members:

Present: Doug Smith, Sara Lyter, Ásta Covert, Anne Elwell, Andrea Barber
Lori Cretney, Kari Pietsch-Wangard, Juli Cole, Katrin Sheehan

Excused: None.

Observers: Steve Cole, Sverrir Bjartmarz

Meeting Called to Order at 8:05PM (Eastern) [Sara Lyter]

Secretary's Report (Doug Smith)

Membership status as of October 10: 477 households – five more than September.

Treasurer's Report (Kari Pietsch-Wangard)

The monthly financial statements now include a detailed breakdown of the cash owned by the Congress. The key figures from the breakdown are:

<u>Combined bank account balances as of 9/30/14:</u>	<u>\$155,249.49</u>
<u>Unrestricted funds as of 9/30/14:</u>	<u>\$142,035.09</u>
<u>Net increase (decrease) since 8/31/14:</u>	<u>(\$3,589.58)</u>

Standing Committee Reports

- Breeding Committee (Andrea Barber)
See attached report and two letters to FEIF.

Email Voting

- None.

Old Business

- 2014 Board Election (Sara Lyter / Doug Smith)

MOTION [Sara Lyter] Suspend the election as we have had no new candidates nominated and all sitting board members are willing to continue. Approved: Unanimously.

- Standard Blood Profile (Andrea Barber)
No activity because of the volume of critical issues with the Breeding Committee.
- Breyer Icelandic Horse Model Drawing (Juli Cole)
The Board provided some feedback on the draft of the ad / form for the *Quarterly*. Juli will forward a revised draft before it is submitted to the *Quarterly* for publication.
- Promotional Event Funding (Juli Cole)
No activity because of the Breyer drawing issue.

New Business

- New Ohio Valley Regional Club (Katrin Sheehan)

MOTION [Doug Smith] Approve the new regional club. Approved: Unanimously.

- NEIHC Young Horse Evaluation Funding (Andrea Barber)
See attached Breeding Report (end) for details.

Issue referred to Executive Session.

- Annual Meeting (Sara Lyter)

Deb Cook has suggested a number of opportunities for enhancing the agenda with some educational topics. The Board fully supports the idea and hopes it will help draw members to attend. Sara will communicate with Deb on the matter.

- Budget Meeting (Kari Pietsch-Wangard)

Kari reminds the Board we have discussed having the budget meeting in December so the 2015 budget is in place before the start of the fiscal/calendar year. The committee chairs will need to have their budget plans to Kari by **December 1, 2014**.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:55PM (Eastern)

Executive Session 8:55PM (Eastern) - 9:20PM (Eastern)

The Board considered the communications from the NEIHC. Based on the request for the event to be considered private and the standing policy to not fund private events, the Board denies the request for funding. Juli Cole abstains. Sara will communicate the decision to the NEIHC.

Next Meeting November 11, 2014

Following Meeting (BUDGET) December 9, 2014

USIHC General Membership Funds

<u>8/31/14</u>		<u>9/30/14</u>
\$ 16,983.08	Checking	\$ 13,408.50
\$ 131,758.37	Money Market	\$ 131,758.37
\$ 10,082.62	CDs	\$ 10,082.62
\$ 158,824.07	subtotal	\$ 155,249.49
\$ (4,410.96)	Youth Fund	\$ (4,420.96)
\$ (7,000.00)	Int. Judges Fund	\$ (7,000.00)
\$ (1,788.44)	World Champ. Team Fund	\$ (1,793.44)
\$ 145,624.67	USIHC General Membership Funds	\$ 142,035.09

Net Increase from previous report
(\$3,589.58)

10/10/14

United States Icelandic Horse Congress Inc.
Balance Sheet Standard
As of September 30, 2014

	<u>Sep 30, '14</u>
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
Associated Checking acct.	13,408.50
Associated Money Market Acct.	131,758.37
Total Checking/Savings	<u>145,166.87</u>
Other Current Assets	
CD ownd by USIHC matures 4/7/13	3,000.00
CDs for Judge Scholarship Fund	
CD-matures 10/5/17	3,052.05
CD-matures 10/5/15	3,027.06
CD-matures 9/29/16	1,003.51
Total CDs for Judge Scholarship ...	<u>7,082.62</u>
Total Other Current Assets	<u>10,082.62</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>155,249.49</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>155,249.49</u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Other Current Liabilities	
Unexpended Judge Schlshp. Fund	7,000.00
Unexpended World Champshp F...	1,793.44
Unexpended Youth Funds	4,420.96
Total Other Current Liabilities	<u>13,214.40</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>13,214.40</u>
Total Liabilities	13,214.40
Equity	
Opening Bal Equity	96,926.56
Retained Earnings	48,224.44
Net Income	-3,115.91
Total Equity	<u>142,035.09</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u>155,249.49</u>

United States Icelandic Horse Congress Inc.
Income and Expense Report
January through September 2014
Page 1

<u>Income</u>		<u>Expense</u>	
Breeding Committee Income		Breeding Committee Exp.	
Breeding Evaluation Reimb.	0.00	FEIF Evaluation fees	124.86
Evaluation-FEIF fees	400.00	Elwell Breeding Award	81.30
Total Breeding Committee Income	<u>400.00</u>	Breeding Committee Exp. - Other	<u>1,295.00</u>
		Total Breeding Committee Exp.	<u>1,501.16</u>
		Competition Comm. Expense	
		FEIF World Ranking Comp. fee	340.54
		National Ranking Award Expense	711.70
		World Championship Expenses	
		WC 2013 Berlin Expenses	<u>409.73</u>
Competition Inc.		Total World Championship Expenses	<u>409.73</u>
Sanction Competition fee	175.00	Total Competition Comm. Expense	<u>1,461.97</u>
Total Competition Inc.	<u>175.00</u>		
		FEIF Conference exp.	
		FEIF Conf. exp. to be reimbursed	902.06
		FEIF 2014 Conference exp.	<u>1,702.13</u>
FEIF Conference Reimbsmt.	875.30	Total FEIF Conference exp.	<u>2,604.19</u>
Interest Income	175.95	Flagship Event - Evaluation	1,000.00
		Flagship Event - Sanction Show	3,000.00
		Grant Expense	180.00
Membership Related Income		Membership Related Expenses	
Farm Listing		Administration	
2014 Farm Listing	2,731.72	Mbshp. Postage	530.76
Total Farm Listing	<u>2,731.72</u>	Office/Supplies Exp.	103.22
Membership Dues		Tax. Prep. Services	<u>350.00</u>
2014 Membership dues		Total Administration	<u>983.98</u>
2014 Foreign Friend	65.97		
2014 Youth membership	70.00	Annual Meeting Exp.	
2014 Family Mbshp	4,682.98	2015 Annual Meeting exp.	250.00
2014 Individual Mbshp	<u>11,139.45</u>	2014 Annual Meeting expense	<u>3,994.95</u>
Total 2014 Membership dues	<u>15,958.40</u>	Total Annual Meeting Exp.	<u>4,244.95</u>
Total Membership Dues	<u>15,958.40</u>		
		FEIF related expenses	
		FEIF Mbshp fees	<u>1,642.89</u>
		Total FEIF related expenses	<u>1,642.89</u>

United States Icelandic Horse Congress Inc.
Income and Expense Report
January through September 2014
Page 2

Income		Expense	
		Insurance	1,248.00
		Quarterly Expenses	
Quarterly Inc.		Graphics	3,000.00
Quarterly Adv. Inc.	4,286.38	postage for Quarterly	1,808.38
Quarterly back issue sales	138.35	Quarterly Printing	8,029.42
Total Quarterly Inc.	4,424.73	Quarterly Expenses - Other	226.00
		Total Quarterly Expenses	13,063.80
		Toll Free line	116.55
Website Inc.		Website	181.40
Stallion listing	9.71	Total Membership Related Expenses	21,481.57
Website Ad Inc.	813.62		
Total Website Inc.	823.33	Pleasure Rider Program Exp.	
Total Membership Related Income	23,938.18	2013 PRP Award exp.	551.50
		Total Pleasure Rider Program Exp.	551.50
		Promotional Exp.	
		Display booth shipping	116.69
		Equine Affair Exp.	1,700.00
		Other Booth rental Expense	350.00
		Promotional postage expenses	507.39
		Promotional Exp. - Other	2.12
		Total Promotional Exp.	2,676.20
		Registry Expenses	
Registry Income		Clerical for registry	3,026.00
Duplicate Registration fees	386.60	Printing & reproduction-Regist.	379.88
Late Stallion Report fees	3,380.80	Registry Office supplies	64.23
Registration fees	5,514.05	Registry Postage	242.35
Transfer fees	2,321.58	Total Registry Expenses	3,712.46
Total Registry Income	11,603.03		
USIHC Non-Member fees	369.02	Youth Committee Exp.	
		Youth Cup Exp.	
Youth Committee Inc.		2014 Youth Cup expense	5,816.89
FEIF Youth Cup Reimbursement	2,583.55	Total Youth Cup Exp.	5,816.89
Youth Cup Tryout Fees	750.00	Total Youth Committee Exp.	5,816.89
Total Youth Committee Inc.	3,333.55	Total Expense	43,985.94
Total Income	40,870.03		

Net Income (Loss): (3,115.91)

**United States Icelandic Horse Congress Inc.
Income & Expense Report
September 2014**

Income		Expense	
Interest Income	3.77	Breeding Committee Exp.	1,295.00
		Grant Expense	180.00
Membership Related Income		Membership Related Expenses	
Membership Dues		Insurance	715.00
2014 Membership dues			
2014 Youth membership	35.00		
2014 Family Mbshp	125.62		
2014 Individual Mbshp	435.51		
Total 2014 Membership dues	596.13		
Total Membership Dues	596.13		
		Quarterly Expenses	
Quarterly Inc.		postage for Quarterly	565.83
Quarterly Adv. Inc.	150.00	Quarterly Printing	2,618.18
Quarterly back issue sales	10.00	Total Quarterly Expenses	3,184.01
Total Quarterly Inc.	160.00		
		Toll Free line	12.95
Total Membership Related Income	756.13	Total Membership Related Expenses	3,911.96
		Promotional Exp.	
		Promotional postage expenses	75.18
Registry Income		Total Promotional Exp.	75.18
Duplicate Registration fees	96.50		
Registration fees	1,218.10	Registry Expenses	
Transfer fees	337.78	Clerical for registry	614.00
Total Registry Income	1,652.38	Total Registry Expenses	614.00
USIHC Non-Member fees	74.28		
Total Income	2,486.56	Total Expense	6,076.14

Net Income (Loss): (3,589.58)

Breeding Report

October 2014

Submitted by Andrea Barber

2014 Young Horse Evaluations

- ❖ September 19, 2014 – Thor Icelandics, Claverack, NY (please see detail on this event below)
- ❖ October 19, 2014 – Simmons Equestrian Center, Negley, OH

Additional dates are still available. Please contact me at toltstar@yahoo.com if you are interested in hosting an event.

2015 Breeding Evaluations

- ❖ Winterhorse Park in Eagle, WI is planning to have a breeding evaluation – and possible young horse evaluation and sport show - in late May of 2015. I am currently working on securing judges for them for this event.

FEIF Breeding Judges Committee Meeting

- ❖ I have sent two proposals for this meeting which is being held at the end of October. The letters are attached. In addition, Barbara Frische, who is a member of the FEIF Breeding Judges committee, will also advocate for us.

FEIF Breeding Judges Committee Meeting

- ❖ Sussie Lindberg, member of the FEIF Breeding Committee, sent us a short survey on “New and New-old markets for the Icelandic horse”. I’ve asked members of our Breeding Committee for their input and the response has been so great that I am going to send on all the responses directly to FEIF.

NEIHC Young Horse Evaluation Issue

Originally planned as both a full breeding evaluation and young horse evaluation, shortly before the event date the breeding evaluation was cancelled (due to lack of participation) and the organizers decided to salvage the young horse evaluation. Thus one of the original judges that was booked for the full event, FEIF International Breeding Judge Sigbjörn Björnsson, was asked to still come and just do the young horse evaluation – which he did.

However, shortly after the evaluation was completed I received the following from Martina Gates (as forwarded to the USIHC Breeding Committee:

Dear breeding committee,

An issue arose this past weekend at the Young Horse Judgements in New York.

We had hired our breeding judges to judge at our breed evaluations and then had to sadly cancel due to lack of horses. To try and save at least some of the event we decided to have a young horse judgement instead as the judges and their tickets had already been purchased.

We cancelled one of the judges, asked our breed leader if we could hold a young horse judgement instead and informed her of the judge we would be using. It was not brought to our attention that the judge was not versed in young horse judgements and did not have any previous knowledge of the young horse score sheets either that were developed by Barbara Frische. During the judgements no comments were made to any owners and the scores were entered. When we asked to see the scores we were surprised at the scoring.

Nearly every horse had a 1 for tolt beat and suppleness as well as pace ability (which is the lowest score possible, he would have probably given a 0 if he had the option). It basically reflected that nearly every horse had little to no tolt or pace ability. The judge was under the impression that he could not give a score for gaits not shown. However he did say that he thought all horses would have good tolt and/or pace but he could not score what he did not see.

This is a very different approach to the scoring Barbara Frische had done previously. We have had her score for us several times and she always emphasized that the scoring was meant to project the abilities within the horse. This way there was a direct correlation between the young horse scoring and the future breed evaluation. Two of the young horses had previously been scored by Barbara Frische and had completely different scores.

In light of this these breeders therefor chose to not include their scores this year. This option has been also been excersized by another breeder earlier in the year. I was informed by our breed leader that this was not an option for the past young horse show and that we had to include our scores... Being that the young horse judgements and the new score sheets are a completely novel thing, it seems wrong to me that the breeders of these horses should be forced to include this skewed scoring.

Instead we would like to ask that the USIHC compile a list of qualified young horse judges that are familiar with the new judging sheets so that we can pick from one of them to judge our

horses in the future. As much as I believe in judging our young horses, I also believe that they all should be judged on the same system.

*Thank you,
Martina Gates*

This was followed later by a more formal letter from the NEIHC as follows:

To the USIHC breeding leader Andrea Barber, the USIHC board and the breeding committee

Dear Andrea, dear USIHC board, and committee,

We are writing to you while you are deciding the implications of the young horse evaluation held at Thor Icelandics on September 19, 2014, judged by Sigbjörn Björnsson, so you are aware of our position.

The NEIHC had planned to hold a full breed evaluation in September with judges Sigbjörn Björnsson and Thorvaldur Kristjansson. At the last minute almost all of the confirmed participants cancelled. In order not to let down the few members who wanted their horses judged for conformation only, we decided to hold a day of informal judging together with a Young Horse Evaluation, to which Sigbjörn graciously agreed to come and judge. This was approved by our breeding leader Andrea Barber.

After the young horse evaluation was held, during which there were zero comments, the owners were invited to view the percentage scores and have them explained by the judge. It was immediately apparent that the judging standard for the gait portion was not the same they had seen applied before by international breeding judge Barbara Frische. Sigbjörn explained he only judged the gaits he had seen. A phone call to our former breeding leaders Barbara Frische and Katrin Sheehan confirmed that the new FEIF YHE standard was not applied correctly. Although Sigbjörn was a highly qualified breeding judge and capable in general of assessing young horses, he was not familiar with the new YHE percentage judging and scoring. The club was not aware that in fact none of the judges in Iceland had taken any educational courses to be familiar with the new YH judging.

The percentage scores, however, had already been submitted to the USIHC breeding leader. The breeders/owners have asked our breeding leader to not include the percentage scores into this years Caryn Cantella award due to the unqualified judging making a fair comparison impossible. After discussing this issue on the breeding committee it was clear that except for two members,

everyone agreed that the percentage scores should not stand nationally. It would add insult to injury to let the results stand. You cannot enter apples and oranges into a competition for the best orange. We are not complaining about our percentage scores. We are asking that all young horses entered get judged to the same scoring standard by an officially qualified judge. Otherwise, the award is meaningless.

We were informed that FEIF is currently viewing the YHE in an experimental phase through the end of 2015, and no percentage scores are official nor are they entered as official into World Fengur. This will give judges time to get official qualification to judge according to the new standards. It is unfortunate that we did not get this information before the event from the USIHC breeding leader, whom we trusted to be up to date on this issue. Both breeders/owners and the NEIHC have incurred expenses which have not only resulted in a loss but the percentage scores given are useless as well. (Expense account included below). It is therefore meaningless to wait until the next FEIF breeders meeting as we are dealing with a national issue.

Breeders and owners expect the breeding leader to support the standards and to help create a healthy environment in which our horses will be judged fairly. The four breeders/owners whose horse judgements are in question here will not tolerate a decision that puts their horses in an unfair light. A decision by the breeding leader to include these percentage scores will have great impact not only on the horses shown but also on any future young horse evaluations. The trust in the system will be severely damaged and it is doubtful if any young horses in our club or any other club will be officially judged in the future. We ask the breeding leader to please declare this young horse evaluation as informal and private and take the results off the record.

The NEIHC board of directors (Martina Gates, Leslie Chambers, Nicki Esdorn, Jana Meyer, Heleen Heyning, Jess Haynsworth, Brigit Huwyler)

Horse Owners.breeders

Martina Gates

Shannon Fitzgerald

Kristjan Kristjansson

Nicki Esdorn

After taking the time to have multiple conversations with Former US Breeding Leader Anne Elwell, FEIF International Breeding Judge and Former US Breeding Leader Barbara Frische, and FEIF Vice-President and Director of Breeding Marlise Grimm and to thoroughly research the issues I sent the following decision to the USIHC Breeding Committee with a similar copy to all the owners/breeders of the horses involved:

First of all, I would like to thank everyone for their patience while I have been researching the whole young horse evaluation situation. Once I delved into this a little further by talking to Barbara Frische, Marlise Grimm and others it turned out to be more complex than it first appeared. Let me try to explain –

*The young horse evaluation system that we here in the US are familiar with (the Linear System) was developed in Germany – by Barbara Frische and others – over the course of many years. So in this sense it has a lot of established history and testing. This is the system that FEIF has now *somewhat* “accepted” in that the materials and rules/guidelines are up on the FEIF website. However, it has, to date, been up to the individual countries to decide if and how if they wanted to adopt this system, in whole or in part.*

As such judges’ experience with the Linear System varies widely. While all may be somewhat familiar with it – their actual training and experience in judging horses under this system is widely variable. So while judges may be extremely experienced breeding judges that also have lots of experience judging young horses – they may not have the specific experience we would like to see to judge young horses under the Linear System. To make matters even more tricky, as there is no formal training or testing required by FEIF or any other body, there is currently no way to know, save for the judge’s own representations and word of mouth (notoriously unreliable) which judges have this intimate familiarity with the system, and which do not. Add to this the fact that there is a lot of long-standing political tension between some of the more established countries – Iceland, Germany, etc. and the waters become muddied even further.

So where does all this leave us –

- My decision on the present situation with the NEIHC event is that although Sigbjörn Björnsson, FEIF International Judge and member of the FEIF Breeding Judge’s Committee, is an extremely experienced and well respected judge he did not have the level of experience in the Linear System to judge an official Young horse and Foal Assessment as we would like to see here in the US. Therefore the scores are not valid and will be set aside. This also means, unfortunately, the event is not eligible for either the new Caryn Cantella Award or the USIHC’s young horse evaluation funding program for this year. I will contact all the individual owners with this information.*
- I am currently working with both Barbara Frische and former US Breeding Leader Anne Elwell finalizing a draft to the FEIF Breeding Judges Committee asking them to establish a training and certification system for the Linear System – or any other system of similar*

depth and value – and to display a listing of those judges that have been certified on the FEIF website. Martina Gates and Katrin Sheehan have also provided draft proposals and I thank them for their efforts. This letter needs to be carefully crafted as to not in any way potentially insult or blame (keeping in mind the judge in this situation is a very well-respected breeding judge and a member of the very committee we are writing to), and with awareness of the overall political situation on this topic within FEIF. However, as important as I believe us making this request is, I have already been warned by Marlise Grimm that because of the current political climate we are unlikely to see movement in this direction anytime soon.

- *So, in the meantime we need to ensure that we only using judges that are well educated in the system that we wish to use – the Linear System. Therefore, going forward all judges for “official” Young Horse and Foal Assessments will need to be approved, in writing, by the US Breeding Leader as appropriately experienced with this system (including scoring, technology, etc.). This will make it the responsibility of the US Breeding Leader to approve only suitable judges. As I said in an earlier e-mail this should not be much of an issue for this year as so far there is only one more event planned with Barbara Frische as the judge – so that event can be considered approved. For next year I will work on creating a more formal form and process for “sanctioning” these events similar to what we have for our breeding and sport shows.*

Although the situation with the NEIHC event was unfortunate, it has provided us – and hopefully FEIF too – with a great learning experience and catalyst for continued improvement going forward.

Andrea

*US Breeding Leader
breeding@icelandics.org
www.icelandics.org*

After receiving this letter Martina Gates replied that she was happy with most of the decision, but the club still felt they should be eligible for the 2014 Young Horse Evaluation funding and asked that an exception be made. I told her that I would take the issue to the board. So, this is an open item that must be decided upon. Note that many in the Breeding Committee have commented on this and support funding the NEIHC’s event despite the fact that it did not meet the requirements of the funding program.

As of 10/8/14 I have issued a letter to FEIF proposing to the FEIF Breeding Judges Committee that FEIF judges be trained and certified as to prevent this situation in the future. A copy of the letter is attached. Barbara Frische who is a member of the FEIF Breeding Judges Committee will also advocate for us.



United States Icelandic Horse Congress

www.icelandics.org

FEIF Breeding Judges Committee
c/o FEIF Office
office@feif.org

September 29, 2014

Re: Certification of Judges for Young Horse and Foal Assessments

Dear Members of the Breeding Judges Committee,

I am writing today to inform you of a concern with Young Horse and Foal Assessments, and to respectfully request that you provide guidance and clarification for all FEIF member countries. This is of particular urgency in the developing countries, such as the United States.

To provide you with some background, over the last few years the United States Icelandic Horse Congress has been strongly encouraging breeders to participate in Foal and Young Horse Assessments, and also strongly encouraging spectators to attend. Educational opportunities in this developing country are few and far between and we need to foster all that we can to continue to promote the upward growth of the Icelandic horse in the US. However, as we only have a limited knowledge base in this country we have been careful to adopt the Linear System for Young Horse and Foal Assessments as this system is the most well-developed, tested, and clear at this time.

Therefore, we need to be 100% certain for our Young Horse Assessments that we are only hiring breeding judges that are not only certified as FEIF International Breeding Judges, but also judges that have been "...especially educated for young horse and foal evaluations", as stated in the FEIF *General Rules for Young Horse and Foal Assessments*. Currently, other than relying on the representations of the particular judge that he/she has the training and word of mouth (notoriously unreliable) there is no way for us to make a confident selection.

In fact, recently in the US we had a Young Horse and Foal Assessment held that proved the urgency of this issue. While the organizers hired a very well-respected FEIF International Breeding Judge that had lots of knowledge of young horses, he did not have a lot of experience with the Linear system – its processes, procedures, technology (the iPad app), etc. This caused a lot of confusion for both the owners/breeders and spectators and produced results that could

not compare to other Young Horse and Foal Assessments that had been held in other parts of the country.

Therefore, we ask that the FEIF Breeding Judges Committee act swiftly to improve this situation as follows:

- **Establish a standardized method of training and testing to certify judges for Foal and Young Horse Assessments. It should be rigorous and encompass all aspects of the assessments from the rules, to the actual evaluation, to the forms/technology that should be used, etc.**
- **Display clearly on FEIF website's listing of breeding judges which judges have been specifically certified to judge Foal and Young Horse Assessments. This would be similar to the way FEIF Riding Judges are identified now.**

Without the FEIF Breeding Judges Committee's attention to this situation we fear that there will only be more confusion, which could potentially damage the important educational aspect of these events – especially in developing countries like the United States.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this topic. As always, your leadership and guidance is greatly appreciated. If you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,
Andrea S. Barber, Esq.
US Breeding Leader

Cc: Marlise Grimm, FEIF Vice-President and Director of Breeding
Barbara Frische, FEIF International Breeding Judge
USIHC Board of Directors
USIHC Breeding Committee



United States Icelandic Horse Congress

www.icelandics.org

FEIF Breeding Judges Committee
c/o FEIF Office
office@feif.org

September 29, 2014

Re: Judge's Comments during Breeding Evaluations

Dear Members of the Breeding Judges Committee,

I am writing to express the United States' disappointment in your decision not to allow the announcing of scores and comments during the ridden portion of breeding evaluations. This rule stifles the educational value of such events which are so critically important to developing nations such as the United States. We propose a solution to preserve this key educational element without diluting the original intent of your rule.

Currently in the United States breeding evaluations serve not only as important events for breeders, but also for sport and leisure riders, as well as the general public that attend these events to learn more about the Icelandic horse. Comments and scores given by the judges directly after the horse has performed a specific gait have enormous educational value to us as spectators can then learn to train their eye to the different gaits and qualities of movement. In contrast, by restricting the announcing of comments until after the entire performance is complete and the horse has left the track, that gift of instantaneous reinforcement is gone as the spectators have long forgotten what they have seen.

We of course understand that we are still behind many of the other more established countries in terms of our development and that such rules may be very important for the more established countries. This is why **we are not asking for you to change this rule, but rather you simply grant an exception for developing countries like the United States.** It is my understanding that this has been done in the past for other situations.

By allowing this exception you will be preserving what you consider to be a critical rule for the more established and experienced countries, while still allowing an important educational benefit for the developing countries to continue. It will be a win-win for all involved.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this topic. As always, your leadership and guidance is greatly appreciated. If you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,
Andrea S. Barber, Esq.
US Breeding Leader

Cc: Marlise Grimm, FEIF Vice-President and Director of Breeding
Barbara Frische, FEIF International Breeding Judge
USIHC Board of Directors
USIHC Breeding Committee