

INITIAL REPORT

FROM THE VETERINARY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

ON IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

AT THE 2014 TENNESSEE WALKING

HORSE NATIONAL CELEBRATION

Date Submitted: September 15, 2014

Attachments to the First Report from the Veterinary Advisory Committee

EXHIBITS

- Exhibit A - Resume of Dr. Bruce Howard
- Exhibit B - Resume of Dr. Margaret Mitchell
- Exhibit C - Resume of Dr. Jennifer Miller
- Exhibit D. - Resume of Dr. John L. O'Brien, Jr.

APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 - Recommendations of the Veterinary Advisory Committee, 7/18/14
- Appendix 2 - Veterinary Advisory Committee List of Prohibited Substances & Drugs, 7/29/14
- Appendix 3 - Veterinary Advisory Committee Joint Statement, 8/29/14
- Appendix 4 - Report of Dr. John L. O'Brien, Jr., Show Veterinarian

September 15, 2014

To the Board of Directors of the Tennessee
Walking Horse National Celebration
Attention: Chairman David Howard

Dear Chairman Howard,

The Veterinary Advisory Committee (VAC) was charged with three tasks:

1. Develop for submission and adoption, recommendations for protocols, which was completed on July 18, 2014 (Appendix 1), and a list of prohibited drugs and substances (Appendix 2), which was submitted on July 29, 2014.
2. Implement the adopted recommendations by retaining necessary personnel and making all arrangements necessary to insure compliance with the prohibited substance list and the objective testing protocols at the 2014 Tennessee Walking Horse National Celebration.
3. Report the VAC findings as follows:
 - A. Initial Report of activities, objective testing and initial results from the 2014 Celebration.
 - B. Final report after the blood test results are received and analyzed, and the digital X-rays have been reviewed in detail.

The following is a general overview from the members of the VAC on the actions taken by the VAC and its staff at the 2014 Celebration pursuant to the recommendations submitted July 18, 2014 and adopted by the TWHNC Board.

GENERAL:

1. All horses entering the grounds were required to have proof of registration, negative Coggins test and current health certificate. All horses complied.
2. All horses entered in the World Grand Championship classes were stabled on the show grounds at least 48 hours prior to their performance. This was confirmed by show veterinarian, Dr. John O'Brien based on entry and stall information provided by the Celebration entry office.
3. The grounds and all show performances were monitored by appointed monitors, Show Veterinarian, Dr. John O'Brien, VAC Chairman, Jerry Johnson, and other persons selected by the VAC to observe and identify any activity or matter regarding compliance with all recommendations of the VAC and adopted by the Celebration effective July 18, 2014.

OBJECTIVE TESTING:

I. BLOOD:

1. Blood was drawn by Dr. Bruce Howard, DVM (resume attached as Exhibit A) and Dr. Margaret Mitchell, DVM (curriculum vitae attached as Exhibit 2). These doctors had extensive experience in the drawing of blood, handling and processing of blood to insure that the blood was submitted in the required condition for testing at the highest level of integrity.

2. All blood samples were taken and handled in accordance with strict security and chain of custody documentation and shipped pursuant to required protocol established by the laboratory. There were 407 horses which had blood drawn and 230 samples are being tested, including:

- A. The winners of all classes of the 2014 Celebration and random place winners had blood drawn. The exact places had been determined by the VAC, but were not announced until immediately prior to each performance class. The information was given to the entry official who saw that the announcements were made as to what entries were to report to the VAC for blood draws.
- B. The winner and second place winner of all World Grand Championship classes had blood drawn, with the exception of the Lead Line Pony World Grand Championship riders 6 years old and under.
- C. The Tennessee Walking Horse Breeders and Exhibitors Association held futurity classes on the Celebration grounds which were considered qualifying classes for the TWHNC World Grand Championship. Both the first and second place winners of each class had blood drawn.

3. Each horse identified above had 3 vials drawn. The vials were allowed to coagulate for approximately 15 minutes, after which a centrifuge was used to spin the blood for an additional 15 minutes. The blood was then chilled in accordance with all generally accepted professional protocols. The vials were bar coded and the name and identification of the horse was placed in a separate sealed envelope which will not be opened until the results are tested and analyzed, and any prohibited substances identified. All testing was done in accordance with specific instructions from LGC Sciences, Inc. laboratory and pursuant to generally accepted veterinarian medical principles. The chain of custody is monitored and enforced, and continues to be maintained.

4. Due to the large number of drugs for which testing is being conducted, the price negotiated did not include priority processing, in order that the greatest number of horses could be tested. The LGC Science laboratory testing results should be completed by October, 2014 for subsequent review by the VAC members. A final report of any substance violations will be submitted in writing along with specific information to the Celebration upon the completion of the VAC review.

II. DIGITAL X-RAY:

1. The second form of objective testing recommended by the Veterinarian Advisory Committee was conducted on the same horses as those horses chosen for blood testing, on the dates identified below when digital x-rays were conducted.

- A. It was not announced when digital x-rays would take place.
- B. Digital x-rays were taken Wednesday, August 20, including the TWHBEA Futurity classes which were held at the Celebration grounds and were qualifying classes for the Celebration World Grand Championship classes.
- C. Model horses, weanlings and yearlings were not subjected to digital x-ray.
- D. Digital x-rays were taken Saturday, August 23rd for the 6:30 p.m. performance, with place announcement being made immediately prior to said performance.
- E. Digital x-rays were taken for all classes beginning Thursday, August 28th, through and including Saturday, August 30th. During those particular performances (with the exception of Lead Line Ponies 54" & under, Class #158, riders 6 years old and under) the 1st and 2nd place winners (World Grand Champion and Reserve World Grand Champion) were digitally x-rayed.

2. All the digital x-rays were taken by Dr. Jennifer Miller (c/v attached hereto as Exhibit C) and reviewed by Dr. Miller, Dr. John O'Brien, Show Veterinarian, and Dr. Jerry Johnson, VAC Chairman. Additional review was made by Dr. Phillip Hammock on the evening of August 29th.

3. Digital x-rays were performed by Dr. Jennifer Miller using a state-of-the-art digital x-ray machine which provided instant screen images which cannot be altered. The VAC reports that the digital x-rays have been preserved.

4. The horses were prepared for digital x-ray by removing the bands to eliminate any obstruction to the view of the hoof, pad or shoe.

5. The sole was cleaned of any debris and observed, and the hoof walls were brushed and cleaned of any debris which may distort the clarity of the digital x-ray views.

Conclusion: The VAC confirms, as a result of the viewing and analysis of the digital x-rays which were instantaneously available on computer screen using multiple views, that there was no indication of any improper shoeing, foreign substances or any other indication of impropriety in shoeing.

III. SHOE REMOVAL:

On August 28, 2014 in a meeting with all VAC members present, the VAC determined that shoes would be removed and identified classes for which shoes would be removed for additional examination beyond digital x-ray (Joint Statement of the VAC attached as Appendix 3).

1. On Thursday evening, August 28th, shoes were removed and horses were examined in:

- A. Class #143, Western Park Pleasure Walking Horse World Grand Championship
- B. Class #152, Three Year Old World Grand Championship

- C. Classes 145 and 149 were examined by Dr. Johnson and observed by Dr. O'Brien and Dr. Miller. These horses did not have pads or shoes which exceeded 3/8" x 3/4" and it was deemed appropriate to examine these entries using generally accepted veterinarian medical techniques which were performed by Dr. Johnson and observed by Dr. O'Brien and Dr. Miller. The examinations determined that no violations existed.

2. On Friday evening, August 29th, shoes were removed and horses were examined in:

- A. Class #155, Western Lite Shod World Grand Championship
- B. Class #163, Lite Shod Four years old and under World Grand Championship
- C. Class #167, Four year old World Grand Championship.

3. On Saturday evening, August 30th, shoes were removed and horses were examined in:

- A. Class #171, Show Pleasure World Grand Championship
- B. Class #177, Two year old World Grand Championship
- C. Class #182, World Grand Championship.

In all these instances where shoes were removed, the examination consisted of examination of the hoof wall, sole and general condition of the hoof and sole in accordance with generally accepted veterinarian principles was conducted by Dr. Johnson and observed by Dr. Miller and Dr. O'Brien. These examinations were in addition to digital x-rays and confirmed the findings of the objective tests that no abnormalities were present.

4. Shoes were removed and/or examinations were performed on all specific show classes:

- A. Country Pleasure
- B. Trail Pleasure
- C. Lite Shod
- D. Park Pleasure
- E. Show Pleasure
- F. Performance

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

1. The Show Veterinarian received daily sign in sheets from private veterinarians and medication reports for any medications administered by private veterinarians on any entry on the Celebration.

2. All horses entering the grounds were required to have proof of registration, negative Coggins test and current health certificate. All horses complied.

3. All horses entered in the World Grand Championship classes were stabled on the show grounds at least 48 hours prior to their performance. This fact was confirmed by show veterinarian, Dr. John O'Brien, based upon entry and stall information provided by the Celebration entry office.

4. The grounds and all show performances were monitored by appointed monitors, Show Veterinarian, Dr. John O'Brien, VAC Chairman, Jerry Johnson and other persons selected by the VAC to report and identify any activity or problem, to insure compliance with all recommendations of the VAC and adopted by the Celebration effective July 18, 2014. The following issues were observed:

A. A yearling appeared sedated during competition and was, by VAC request, directed to the VAC station, was examined and blood testing was done.

B. An entry appeared lame coming out of the ring and was, by VAC request, directed to the VAC station, was examined and digital x-rays were taken. It was determined that a severe center crack had developed on one foot and a second center crack was developing, both shown on digital x-ray. There was no evidence of impropriety in shoeing or soreness, beyond the center cracks.

C. An entry appeared lame in the show performance. The horse was, by VAC request, directed to the VAC station for inspection. Upon physical exam by the Show Vet and the VAC Chairman, it was determined that there was no impropriety in the shoeing and that the horse had a swollen tendon in its foreleg.

D. A horse collapsed in the show ring. The entry was, by VAC request, directed to report to the VAC station and was examined by Show Veterinarian Dr. John O'Brien and VAC Director, Dr. Jerry Johnson. It was determined that this entry had been castrated in the past 10 days, and evidence of the recent surgery was confirmed. There were minor abrasions from the fall, but no abnormal rest. The blood was tested.

The Show Veterinarian's report to the Veterinary Advisory Committee is attached hereto and made a part of this report as Appendix 4, has been provided by Dr. John L. O'Brien, Jr. (resume attached as Exhibit D).

5. 131 digital x-rays were reviewed by at least three veterinarians, including the Chairman of the VAC and there was no finding of any improper shoeing techniques, foreign objects or other substances which would cause the horse to suffer pain. There was no evidence of any pressure shoeing of horses examined utilizing objective testing procedures and additionally confirmed by removal of shoes stated above.

6. Dr. Phillip Hammock attended the evening performance of the Celebration on August 29, 2014 and observed entries on the show grounds and in the ring, participated in the inspection procedures, observed the blood testing procedures and reviewed digital x-rays. He also met with Dr. Johnson and all members of the VAC team.

7. Other specialized veterinarians, VAC personnel, coordinators, monitors expended in excess of 1200 man hours in performance of the VAC's responsibilities to use all reasonable resources to enforce the recommendations for the welfare of all horses in the 2014 Celebration. This represents the additional professional time, testing, conducting and monitoring the objective testing, monitoring the grounds and show ring, all of which to comply with the overall commitment to insure the welfare of the horses.

The contractual obligation of the Veterinary Advisory Committee acting independently and without interference or input from any other body was fully and completely complied with. The remaining obligation of the VAC to the Tennessee Walking Horse National Celebration is to review the blood test reports when submitted by testing lab, LGC Science, Inc. and report all violations to the Celebration. In that these are the only additional activities of the VAC, it is recommended that Dr. Goble need not be replaced on the committee at this point. In the event that the VAC is requested to continue, Dr. Johnson and Dr. Hammock will suggest a replacement for Dr. Goble of someone with comparable status and credentials.

SUMMARY:

Based upon objective testing, no pressure shoeing or evidence of impropriety, foreign object or other issues were discovered in 131 entries examined using objective digital x-ray testing procedures

The removal of shoes and/or examination of ten entries, including inspection of the sole and hoof walls as mentioned above did not disclose any irregularities.

407 entries had blood drawn, the VAC has requested that LGC Sciences lab test all winners of each class in addition to the 1st and 2nd place winners in the World Grand Championship classes and the special identified horses, which will result in excess of 230 samples being tested. The remaining is being held by the testing laboratory pending the result of the initial samples tested.

The Veterinarian Advisory Committee is aware of the unfortunate existence of false and inaccurate reporting regarding its activities and that of its team. The VAC represents that its members, and individuals working directly on behalf of the VAC conducted themselves in the highest, unbiased and non-conflicted professional manner in completion of its responsibilities with the utmost diligence and integrity.

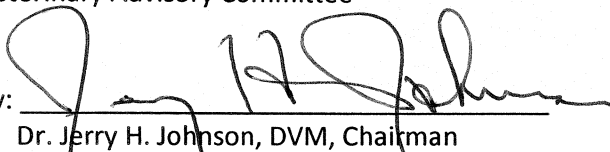
The VAC will submit a report upon the receipt and review of the blood test results.

The Veterinarian Advisory Committee respectfully requests that any questions, requests for clarification and other information be submitted to our representative, G. Thomas Blankenship for response.


Respectfully submitted,

Veterinary Advisory Committee

Dated: 9-12-14

By: 
Dr. Jerry H. Johnson, DVM, Chairman

Dated: 9-12-14

By: 
Dr. Phillip Hammock, VAC Member