

Briefing Note for the 26th Board Meeting of Horse Sport Ireland held on 29th October 2009

Management Accounts

The Chairman informed that Board that the Finance Committee had met on 20th October to consider the accounts and other finance matters. The Finance Director provided a review of the September Management accounts.

Irish Sports Council Application Process

The Finance Director informed the Board that HSI as the NGB was required to submit its 2010 Core Grant Application to the Board of the Irish Sports Council by 6th November 2009. In order to consider funding requests from affiliates, the Board was requested to note that affiliates had been circulated with application forms for submission to HSI by 5th November.

The CEO emphasised that matters were not looking promising on the funding front. The so called An Bord Snip Report had recommended a cut of almost 30% in funding to the Irish Sports Council. He said that while the Irish Sports Council were hopeful that the cut would not be as much as this, it was likely that we would be facing funding reductions. This would mean that difficult decisions would be required for 2010.

Presentation by Senior Show Jumping Team Manager Robert Splaine.

Robert Splaine gave a detailed presentation summarising the Irish Show Jumping team's performances in the previous two years. He outlined the planning process he goes through each year and emphasised the importance of riders co-operating fully with the planning process.

Overall he felt that the team had performed quite well during 2009 with a fifth place finish in the Meydan series and a win in the Meydan series Nation's Cup in Falsterbo in Sweden. Ireland's first win in the top level series since 2004. He also highlighted the individual successes of Denis Lynch in the Grand Prix at Aachen, Billy Twomey in the Grand Prix in St. Gallen and Cameron Hanley's fourth place in the European Championships in Windsor. The major disappointment for the year was the performance of the team in the Aga Khan in Dublin. Ireland's chances of a team medal at the European Championships, where the team finished a close up seventh, had been hindered by injuries particularly the loss of Lantinus at the last minute.

As well as competition matters he stated that he was keenly aware that Ireland could not afford anymore medication or anti doping control issues and indicated that the logbook system which Horse Sport Ireland had been piloted for Dublin and used at the European Championships this year had operated well.

He also flagged the issue of the lack of Irish bred horses competing at the highest level in World show Jumping and that almost all the team riders were relying on foreign horses, with the exception of the Army Equitation School who he acknowledged were extremely supportive of the Irish team.

In conclusion, he highlighted the priority for 2010 as being the World Equestrian Games in Kentucky and in particular qualifying a team for London 2012 which he said was the long term priority.

He concluded by thanking all of the riders and owners for supporting the team as well as the committee and the support staff in Horse Sport Ireland. He said he was hopeful for the future and that there could be some very strong combinations available to the team for 2010.

He also acknowledged that the co-operation of the riders and the fact that any issues were now being dealt with within Horse Sport Ireland, rather than being played out in the media, which he said was important for the stability of the team and the credibility of the sport.

Breeding Sub Board Report

Director of Breeding and Programmes gave a presentation on the report of the World-Class Irish Bred Show Jumpers Taskforce. She was assisted in this by Lt Col. Gerry O' Gorman, James Kernan and Paul Duffy who were members of the Taskforce which was Chaired by Colonel Ned Campion.

Michael Duignan (Irish Draught Taskforce Chairman) and Director of Breeding and Programmes verbally presented the Draft Report of the Irish Draught Horse Taskforce. The report will be considered further at the next meeting of the Breeding Sub Board with a view to having the new policy in place for January 1st, 2010.

Sport Sub Board

A report of the most recent Sport Sub Board meeting was presented by the CEO.

The proposed new FEI rules in relation to Medication and Anti-Doping were presented to the Board. These will be voted on at the FEI General Assembly. Any comments from Board members would be welcome in the lead up to the FEI General Assembly, Copenhagen 15-20 November 2009.

The CEO reiterated that HSI are still in discussions with ISC in relation to the operation of the Anti-Doping and Medication Control Programmes at national level as discussed at the previous Board meeting.

Horse Welfare

The Chairman advised he had met with the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Mr. Brendan Smith TD on Wednesday 17th to discuss the issue of Horse Welfare. The Irish Horse Welfare Trust and the ISPCA were also present at the meeting. The meeting was constructive and Horse Sport Ireland had stressed the concerns raised by Board members at the last meeting in relation to potential welfare problems.

A further meeting with between the Department of Agriculture, Horse Racing Ireland and Horse Sport Ireland had taken place subsequently. It is anticipated that such meetings will happen on a more regular basis.

Horse Sport Ireland Rule Book

Following discussion and a number of amendments being agreed, the HSI Rule Book was unanimously approved.

The Chairman said that he was pleased that this matter had now been concluded at Board level and thanked the Board for their work on the rules over the previous six months.

An EGM will shortly be convened to formally adopt the rules.

Joint Oireachtas Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

The Chairman updated the Board on Horse Sport Ireland's recent presentation to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Agriculture Fisheries and Food. He said that the meeting had been dominated by queries relating to the Irish Draught Horse dispute.

The Board agreed that the briefing note which is circulated to the affiliates after each Board meeting should be put up on the HSI website.

CAS Appeal

The CEO reported that this matter had now been resolved and that the appeal against the selection of the Pony Show Jumping team would not now be going ahead.

26.10 AOB

World Driving Championships

Charles Powell reported that having finished in individual 12th place at the 2009 World Championships in Hungary Barry Capstick was stranded at the Belgian border as he had not been provided with the correct papers for his horses by the organizing committee in Hungary. He acknowledged the role played by Horse Sport Ireland in resolving the matter but he said that this was unacceptable and that the matter should be raised with the FEI again to ensure that there was no repeat of the situation.

Next Meeting

The next meeting was set for **Thursday, December 17th at 2pm.**

ENDS

This is a briefing note prepared by the CEO at the request of the Board. It has not been approved by the Board of Horse Sport Ireland.