

**Briefing Note of the 35th Board Meeting of Horse Sport Ireland held on the
3rd February 2011**

The Chairman welcomed to the Board two new members, Belle Balding, who was replacing Alice Mernagh as the Irish Pony Club nominee to the Board and Anne Waistell who was replacing Ivan McDonagh as the Show Jumping Association of Ireland nominee to the Board.

Minutes of the 34th Board Meeting and Matters Arising

Arising from the minutes of the 34th Board meeting, Hugh McCusker commented that the discussion regarding the matter of non payment of affiliation subscription fees had been omitted. The Director of Finance and Operations said this matter had actually been discussed during the AGM, held prior to the 34th Board meeting, and was documented in those minutes. The draft AGM minutes would be sent to the Board following this meeting.

World Equestrian Games Review

The Chef de Mission for the games Colonel Ned Campion, the Show Jumping Team Manager Robert Splaine and the Eventing High Performance Manager Ginny Elliot and the Equestrian Sport Co-Ordinator Triona Connors joined the meeting for this item.

The CEO presented a comprehensive Private and Confidential written report on the World Equestrian Games to the Board. The report was presented under the headings:

Introduction

Flights for personnel

Horse flights

Accommodation

Transport in Kentucky

Accreditation

Transport in Kentucky Horse Park

Grooms

Veterinary issues

Feed

Catering

Other logistical matters

Show jumping

Eventing

Dressage

Para Equestrian.

The Board welcomed the report and the level of detail contained within it. They noted the huge additional organisational cost burden caused by the Games being held on another continent. While the Games being held in the US increased all costs, the cost of the transporting the horse was over €170,000 in itself.

The Chef de Mission Ned Campion said that he felt the report was a very accurate and detailed report of the games and the planning that went into it. He acknowledged the huge logistical challenge the Games were for Horse Sport Ireland. He thanked in particular Triona Connors for the hugely professional planning that went into Ireland's presence there. He acknowledged the work done by the Team Managers and all personnel and he said he would like to particularly acknowledge the outstanding contribution of Team Vet Marcus Swail and the assistance of the Irish stud farms Castleton Lyons and Ashford.

Disappointment was expressed in relation to the performances of the Show Jumping and Eventing teams at the Games as they had failed to secure qualification for the Olympic Games.

James Kernan asked a number of specific questions about the management of the Show Jumping team and these were answered by the Team Manager Robert Splaine. Questions were also raised about recent media statements by Show Jumping team member Denis Lynch. Board members expressed disappointment that a rider would make such comments in the media and stated that this was a breach of the rider Code of Conduct.

The Chairman said that this matter was being addressed and that the rider had been asked to attend a meeting with Horse Sport Ireland and he expected that this would happen in the near future.

Board members also expressed particular disappointment with the performance of the Eventing riders in the show jumping phase. Ginny Elliot outlined her views on this and said that it was being addressed. She pointed out that the competition was a 3 phase competition and the riders who had poor show jumping rounds had performed well in the other phases but that this had been overshadowed by the show jumping phase.

Norman Storey highlighted the strong performance by Para rider James O'Dwyer at the games. This was echoed by other Board members.

The Board emphasised the importance of both the Show Jumping and Eventing teams qualifying for the Olympic Games in London at their respective European championships in 2011 and thanked the Chef de Mission and Team Managers for attending. The CEO paid particular tribute to the Chef de Mission who he said had been an outstanding ambassador for Ireland at the games.

Finance Report

The Director of Finance and Operations gave a verbal update on the management accounts.

On the matter of the 2011 Budget, he said that discussions were in place regarding the rent at Millennium Park and he would revert to the Board with an update at the next Board meeting and that other key variables such as Departmental funding and high performance funding were expected to be confirmed over the coming weeks and that the Finance Committee would meet before the next Board meeting to consider the workings of the Budget.

Breeding Sub Board Report

The Director of Breeding and Programmes presented the Breeding Sub Board Report which was circulated to the Board. She drew attention to the last page in this report 'ISH Studbook 4 & 5 star rating criteria for the Olympic disciplines' and reviewed the minimum eligibility requirements for each rating type listed. A discussion took place regarding whether the top available star rating for Eventing stallions should be 4 star rather than 5 star to reflect the FEI star rating system for Eventing competitions. It was decided to leave the system as is for 2011 but to keep it under review.

There were concerns raised from some Board members regarding the number of unregistered horses in the country, the movement of horses and also regarding Smithfield market. The CEO said Horse Sport Ireland was working closely with the Department of Agriculture on welfare issues and on the matter of registrations and traceability of horses.

Sport Sub Board Report

The CEO presented the Sport Sub Board Report which was circulated to the Board

A.O.B

Para Equestrian Chef d'Equipe:

The Chairman confirmed that Naomi Donoghue had been appointed as Para Equestrian Chef d'Equipe. The 'Draft Terms of Reference' for a Para Equestrian High Performance Committee were circulated to the Board. The Board agreed the terms of reference.

HSI and Teagasc Sport Horse Sector Information Seminars:

The Director of Finance and Operations circulated an advertisement for the 2011 Sport Horse Sector Information Seminars to be held in venues across Ireland on 5 dates throughout February and March. The seminars would include presentations on rural development grants and other topics such as commercial rates. He thanked Teagasc for their co-operation in planning the joint seminars with Horse Sport Ireland.

Lt Col. Ronnie MacMahon:

The Board extended sympathy on the passing of Lt Col. Ronnie MacMahon and it was agreed that a letter of sympathy be sent to the MacMahon family on behalf of the Board.

Jessica Harrington requested that the matter of allocating a replacement for Lt. Col. Ronnie MacMahon as FEI Steward General for Ireland be acted upon as soon as possible. The CEO said correspondence with the Eventing Ireland Chairman had already been initiated on this matter.

Date of Next Meeting:

The Chairman thanked the board members for this meeting and the date for the next meeting was confirmed for **Thursday, March 31st 2011 at 2.00pm.**

ENDS