

The NEOPHYTE'S GUIDE TO ORGANIZING A FOSH SANCTIONED HORSE SHOW

A horse show is no different from any other event. It must be realized from the beginning that not all elements can be controlled as variable factors enter the equation. In other words - expect the unexpected and roll with the punches.

The necessary elements are hard working and committed people, organization and structure, leadership, internal and external communication, and defined goals and objectives. There are 3 stages to every event – planning, executing and winding up or down. Although the event is the most visible stage, the planning stage sets the parameters for the event – what is done in planning shows in executing. The final stage is not only to finalize all details, but to examine every aspect of the event with a critical eye to determine what was good, what was bad, what could have been better etc.

Planning

The First Meeting – the Big Picture

This is the most important meeting as it provides the wide parameters for everything that follows.

- It is a big picture meeting not a detail meeting.
- It is a strategic planning session.
- All ideas are considered and discussed with open minds.
- Goals and objectives are discussed and determined.

The following should be considered:

- type of show
 - one breed
 - multi breed
 - by invitation
 - through alliances
 - schooling
 - local
 - championship
 - level of competition – experienced or inexperienced
 - type of exhibitor– what level
- to sanction or not to sanction
- approximate time (season or month)
- geographic location
- budgetary requirements
- form the show committee

The Horse Show Committee Members

- The make-up of the show committee is an important factor in the success of the show as these are the key people willing to take on the responsibility for the event. Obviously the size of the core group is determined by people willing to take responsibility for the event and not afraid of hard work. The core committee can be small (6 to 8 people) realizing that the committee may

expand closer to the event. The ideal show committee includes people of varied background and experience

- people with prior show committee experience
- experienced exhibitors
- new exhibitors
- people who have never shown
- people who do not plan to show

Chairman or Show Manager

Every group needs a leader – the committee chair. Usually the Committee chair is the Show Manager, but in some cases, the show manager's responsibilities do not include chairing the committee. Ideally the person chosen or appointed as Show Manager has some experience in organizing a horse show. In the real world prior experience is not always possible. The Show Manager must be a leader who is willing to work hard, can coordinate people and events and most importantly wants the challenge.

Members of the Show Committee

In some cases, 2 positions could be handled by one person. For other positions, the scope is so large it becomes a one person responsibility.

- Show Manager – person who coordinates everything
- Treasurer – takes care of the financial dealings, prepares the budget
- Recording Secretary – takes minutes at all meetings
- Show Secretary – receives all entries before and during the show
- Fundraising Chair – solicits sponsorships and awards
- Public Relations Chair – coordinates all advertising
- Alliance Chair – deal with other gaited horse groups

The First Show Committee Meeting

Time of the First Meeting

If the show has a long history, planning for the next year begins the day after the show. If the show is a new show, planning begins at least 6 to 8 months prior to the show.

Format of meetings

The structure and tone of the first meeting determines the structure and tone of subsequent meetings. Some groups function with a formal structure while others function better with an informal structure. No matter the structure, it is important that minutes be taken and distributed to members of the group. Minutes provide accuracy when memory fails and provide each member an awareness of responsibilities and deadlines.

- Minutes
 - specify people responsible for tasks
 - specify deadlines for tasks
 - define lines of communication
 - set the date of the next meeting
- Minutes are distributed within a week of the meeting

Decisions

While the following must be decided relatively soon in the process, they are not listed in any order. One is not more important than the other, but many are interrelated.

Name of Show

If the show has not already been named, it should be done at the first meeting of the show committee.

- easy to say and to remember.
- reflects the theme.
- use the name to market the show – a brand

Date

- Horses are an optional recreational activity and choices are made with economic considerations in mind.
- Chose a date that does not conflict with other shows for the same people.
- Be aware of other activities in the same vicinity at the same time. Piggy-backing on another event is only a good idea when there is an advantage for the exhibitor (travel or time or cost).
- Try not to plan a show on the weekend before or after another show for the same exhibitors.
- Be aware of seasonal weather trends and plan accordingly.

Type of show

Determine who you wish to attract to the show.

- Exhibitors have a variety of interest, experience and expertise.
- Exhibitors participate in different disciplines.
- Do you want to deal with only one level of Exhibitor? (eg. Beginner, expert etc)
- Do you want only one breed?
- Do you want more than one gaited breed?

Facility

View the facility – don't trust others

- Is the facility safe for horses and people?
- Is the facility appropriate to the exhibitors you attract?
- Do the owners/managers/staff appear agreeable?
- What is the period of rental?
- What is the rent for the facility?
- What is included in the rental fee?
 - Is it available the evening before the show?
 - Is it available the morning of the show?
 - Is lighting in the arena, barn and warm up ring included?
 - Are there extra charges for lights, arena watering, harrowing or raking?
 - Is equipment included? (trail, dressage, jumping etc)
 - Is there an extra charge for use of equipment?
 - Is watering included? How frequently?
 - Is there an extra charge for watering?
 - Is harrowing or raking included? How Frequently?
 - Is there an extra charge for harrowing or raking?
 - Are wash racks included?

- Is there an extra charge for the use of water in wash racks?
- Is waste removal included? (manure)
- Is there an extra charge for waste removal?
- Is there an office?
- Is there an extra charge for the use of an office?
- Are tables and chairs included?
- Is there an extra charge for tables and chairs?
- Is the sound system included?
- Is there an extra charge for the sound system?

Consider access from major roads

Consider access to motels and restaurants

What responsibility do you have for cleaning the facility?

Motorhomes/Campers

- What is the charge for hook-up?
- Where do they park?

Budget – can you afford it?

Stabling

Number of box stalls, tie stall or paddocks

What is the cost per box stall, tie stall, or paddock?

- Is bedding included in the cost of rental?
- What is the type of bedding?
- Who supplies the bedding?
- Is there an additional charge for bedding after the first day?
- Must all stalls be cleaned at the end of the event?
- What is the charge if stalls are not cleaned?
- How is water supplied to each stall?

Are there lights in the barn?

Are the stalls safe? (doors close, protruding nails etc)

Is the barn secure?

Is there a communication system to the barn area?

Arena

What do you need or want?

- Indoor
- Outdoor
- Indoor and Outdoor

Examine the footing

Is the size adequate?

DQP Area (if applicable)

- Where can it be located?
- Is it a secure area or could it be made secure?
- Is it indoors or outdoors?
- Is there a communication system to the area?
- Is there a place for a table and chairs?

Warm-up Area

- Where is it located?
- Is there a communication system to the area?

Entrance and Exit Gates or Gates

- Will you use the same gate for entry and exit?
- Are the gates wide enough to be safe?
- Do the gates open and close easily?

Equipment

- Where is the equipment located?
- Who moves the equipment to and from storage?
- Is the equipment safe and in good condition?

Announcer's Stand

- Is this a permanent location?
- Where can it be located?
- Is the sound system provided?
- Are Microphones fixed or wireless?

Food Concession

- Is there a permanent concession on site?
- Is there a place for a traveling concession?
- Who contacts the concession operator?
- Who sets the hours of operation for the concession?

Six Months prior to the show

Hire a Judge

As soon as you have a firm date and location, you should hire a judge. Contact judges early as many are hired months in advance.

- A current list of IJA Judges may be found on the FOSH web site at www.fosh.org.
- FOSH sanctioned shows may hire judges from outside the IJA program upon payment of a \$50 guest card fee. The guest judge must agree to use the IJA Rule Book and standards for evaluating gaited horses.
- A FOSH sanctioned show may not hire a guest judge who holds a license with another Tennessee Walking Horse, Spotted Saddle Horse, or Racking Horse judging Association.
- "AAA" OR "AA", or Regional Championship FOSH sanctioned shows must use an IJA judge.

The show committee discusses potential judges, but only one person contacts prospective judges. The cost of a judge will include transportation, accommodation, meals and a daily fee. What you feel you

can pay will perhaps influence the judges you contact. Assign the task to a person who will not show. Give this person the responsibility of interviewing and hiring the person who best suits the requirements and economics of your show.

This should be the only person who has any contact with the judge before the show and who arranges the travel and accommodation arrangements. Ideally this is the person who meets the judge upon arrival and transports the judge to and from the show. This person should keep the judge away from all exhibitors and owners during the lunch and dinner breaks.

It is sometimes cheaper and easier for the judge to make his own travel arrangements. If this is the case, arrange to reimburse him as soon as the ticket is booked and you are sent a copy of the itinerary.

BUDGET

Prizes, Ribbons, Trophies

- Order from where or who
- Ribbons to what place
- Logo on ribbon – FOSH or organization or generic
- (Fosh logo exclusively at Hodges)
- Person responsible
- Trophies – for which classes
- Any high Point awards

Sanctioning

It is important to notify FOSH early if you wish your show to be sanctioned. While there are few deadlines for sanctioning, there are other reasons for notifying FOSH early.

- Your show will be listed on the FOSH web site with a reciprocal link to your site
- your show will be listed in any advertising done by FOSH
- insurance is available you may attain insurance at a reduced cost

If you sanction a show with FOSH, you are required to:

- complete the Sanctioning Form
- use the IJA Rules as the standard of judging
- indicate on the show bill, prize list that the show is sanctioned by FOSH. Use the FOSH logo
- **Advertise on the show program that the show is sanctioned by FOSH**
- hire an IJA judge or an approved Guest judge. If you hire a guest judge, the judge may not be licensed by any other TWH licensing body.
- Submit a copy of your show bill (

Insurance

If your show is FOSH sanctioned, insurance is available through FOSH. Contact the FOSH Director of Show sanctioning.

Prize List or Premium List or Show Bill

- The Show Committee determines the classes that will be offered based upon the exhibitors they wish to attract.
- Each gaited breed in the IJA Rule book has a slightly different way of naming classes. Check the IJA Rule Book for guidelines.
- If your classes are named in a logical manner, there will be fewer questions and the rules for judging will be clearly understood.

Classes

The show committee determines the classes that will be presented.

Guidelines to naming classes:

- Identify the breed
- Name the class
- Indicate any limits or restrictions – 2 gait or 3 gait
- Indicate further limits or restrictions – ladies, amateur, youth, etc.

EXAMPLES of naming classes;

- TWH English Pleasure 2 gait Youth
- OGB Trail Pleasure 3 gait English or Western Open
- UMH Country Trail Pleasure Ladies to Ride
- MFT
- SSH
- Paso Fino
- Peruvian Paso
- Gaited Morgan

DQP –

The decision whether or not to employ a USDA approved HIO as an inspection program for compliance with the Horse Protection Act.

- If managers **do not employ an HIO**, the responsibility for the exhibition of any horse found to be in violation of the HPA by USDA personnel who might chose to attend the show rests solely with the show manager and/ or the sponsoring organization. FOSH suggests that show managers in at risk areas of the country seriously consider the employment of an approved HIO. The hiring of a veterinarian does not satisfy the definition of a USDA approved HIO.
- If managers affiliate with an HIO, all information including rules and regulations are provided by the HIO at the time of affiliation.
- **When show management employs an HIO** in order to be in compliance with the Horse Protection Act, they must provide a controlled area for horses that require complete DQP inspection.
 - Personnel must be provided to oversee the controlled area.
 - The area must be directly adjacent to the inspection area.
 - The area must be marked in a visible way and adequately lighted.
 - The horse, the rider and one handler are the only people allowed in the controlled area.
 - DQP must be provided a record keeper, table, chairs, traffic cones, shelter and adequate lighting if the show takes place in the evening.

Show Officials

Hire – judge and any of the following – determine and or hire prior to the show.

Ensure that no manager, secretary, announcer, ringmaster or any member of their immediate family compete at any show in which the manager, secretary, announcer or ringmaster receive compensation for their services at said show.

- confirm and establish Location of where they will be located
 - Photographer
 - Videographer
 - DQP and secretarial assistants (scribe)
 - Ribbon Presenter
 - Organist if applicable
 - Barn Manager
 - Announcer
 - Ring Steward
 - Equipment Steward
 - In Gate
 - Out Gate
 - Runners – to take class sheets to announcer, gate, DQP etc

Duties of Show Officials

Determine criteria for any Awards

- If there are high point awards, set the criteria and determine which classes will count towards the awards.
- Develop tracking system for the awards – who will record

Six Weeks Prior to the Show

- Mail or e-mail prize list or premium list or show bill
- Arrange for equitation patterns, trail pattern, over fences pattern, reining pattern etc
- Determine communication required
 - Center ring to announcer
 - Center ring to gate
 - Center ring to DQP
 - Announcer to Barn
 - Announcer to DQP
 - Office to center ring
 - Office to DQP
- Acquire Drug Testing Forms
- Acquire DQP forms
- Who will design the trail course, over fences course etc?
- Ask judges to design equitation patterns and bring to show with copies for the office.
- Will there be “goodie” bags for exhibitors? If so what will they contain and who is responsible?
- Will there be a barn party or exhibitor Dinner?

Two Weeks before the show

- confirm all officials including DQP’s
- confirm any partnership – other breeds etc.
- confirm facility

- confirm food concession and determine hours
- check all ribbons, trophies and awards
- confirm communication equipment

One Week before the show

- confirm all officials
- copy equitation patterns, trail pattern, over fences pattern, reining pattern
 - 4 copies at least – for judge, set-up, posting, office
- Assemble Office Supplies
- Confirm person to meet and transport judge and any out of town people
- Determine who controls the equipment for dressage, jumping etc.
 - Who will set up and take down any courses?
- Determine communication required between locations

Prepare Judges Cards

- Assign numbers to horses
- Prepare Class Sheets - this may be computer set-up ready to be entered
- Prepare stall assignments
 - at least 3 copies – 1 for each barn, one for office, 1 to be posted
- Put names on stalls

Office Supplies

- Cash box to hold all cash and cheques
- Tape
- Stapler and staples
- Tape – 2 inch, Duct, scotch
- Safety pins
- Clip Boards
- Pens
- Stop Watch or Watches
- Measuring tapes (for courses so at least 20 feet)
- Ruler
- Stapler and staples
- Tape – 2 inch, Duct, scotch
- Clip Boards
- Pens
- Stop Watch or Watches

THE NIGHT BEFORE THE SHOW

- Check sound system
- Confirm communication locations
- Charge all Walkie Talkies or other communication devices
- Confirm all equipment
- Confirm with facility staff
- Check barns

- Meet with show officials to go over assignments – give them a job description (See Forms)
- Provide all show officials with tools they need to operate – clip boards, etc
- Obtain open cheques
- Ensure waivers are signed
- How will you handle additions and deletions
- Post any cancelled or combine classes
- Post any added classes
- Post all patterns

SHOW DAY

Do one thing at a time

- Nobody knows the overall picture as well as the show manager
- Keep a copy of the IJA Rule Book in the office
- Who needs the class changes – additions and deletions – DQP, Gat
- Master list of numbers and horses for the Announcer and Show Secretary Announcer
- keep exhibitors informed if changes are made to the schedule, the fees, or any other published aspect of the show.
- The order of classes may not be changed at a competition without giving a minimum of two hours notice to exhibitors. This provision does not apply to classes cancelled for lack of entries.
- Provide either on site or on call ambulance service and qualified EMT personnel.
- Eliminate even if no protest has been filed, any horse, rider or entry that show management has reason to believe is ineligible for competition in a particular class.
- Provide access to a telephone at shows where horses are stabled overnight.
- Arrange for a veterinarian on call.
- Cooperate in whatever actions or activities may be requested by USDA personnel.
- Abide by all of the decisions made by either the judge(s) or the DQP (s).
- Arrange for the prompt payment of fees to DQP's and Judges as well as all other officials.

ADVICE:

When problems occur, take charge and fix them

How you treat people is vital to success

Warn people of changes in classes etc.

Be adaptable

A minute by minute roll with the punches

Delegate

Be prepared for the unexpected

AFTER THE SHOW

Pay all bills

- Pay for any and all expenses incurred for the benefit of the show, including but not limited to awards, ribbons, vendors and facility fees.
- Pay premiums and other show expenses, including refunds, in a timely manner, usually within 60 days of completion of the show.
- keep judges cards for one year
- **If a DQP was hired:** at the conclusion of the show provide the DQP a class sheet for each class, showing all entries with breed identified, winners identified and a copy of the show bill or premium.
- **If a DQP was not hired:** within 5 days after the conclusion of the show, forward to USDA the form included with the Show Sanctioning Package. **Federal Regulations (9CFR, Part 11, Section 11.24)** require management of any horse show, exhibition, sale or auction containing Tennessee Walking Horses or Racking Horses to file a report with the USDA.

Forward to IJA Director of Judges a completed IJA Judges Evaluation Form

Helpful Hints

Treat the show like a business and make decisions the way you would with a business

Get an employer number and keep track of all income and expenses. File an income tax report. (If necessary)

Be professional in all your dealings with exhibitors, sponsors and suppliers.

Always thank people for support and cooperation.

Do not try to hide a mistake.

When you are wrong apologize and move on.

Remember you can not please everyone.

Order ribbons or trophies early to take advantage of discounts or free shipping (see offers from company)

Delegate, or you will be in trouble. You can not do everything. People must know what is going on. Mutual trust between other workers and Show Manager is vital to success.