

Resolution Report: AHA Convention 2011

As delegates and alternates we were presented with 16 resolutions at the beginning of convention. Four of the resolutions were withdrawn, nine were approved, two were disapproved, and one was referred to the AHA/USEF committee as well as the membership committee. Most of the resolutions were housekeeping items or did not cause much discussion. I will briefly list the resolutions that were withdrawn or were not controversial, and will give some details on the resolutions that we heatedly discussed.

First, the resolution that was referred to the AHA/USEF and membership committees. This resolution would change the AHA membership date to run on the calendar year. Currently our membership year does not follow USEF, USDF, AQHA, APHA and others, which causes additional work for show secretaries, trainers, owners, etc. If our membership date lines up with other breed organizations, it would create the possibility of a single joint membership card. It is estimated that this date change would positively affect 81% of AHA's members. There is quite a bit of work in IT if this were approved, but based on the information given to us at the convention it would appear to be a positive change for AHA. This resolution will come back to convention next year, after being reviewed by the above committees.

Following are the resolutions that were withdrawn: Resolution 3 - Annual convention to be held at Denver, Resolution 4 – Running martingales on three-year-old English pleasure horses, Resolution 10 – Add Arabian Breeders World Cup Score Card, Resolution 13 – Education/Evaluation commission modification. Re: Resolution 3: Discussion was later had regarding the convention being moved to Denver, CO. It was decided that beginning in 2014 – to continue for three consecutive years – the national convention will be in Denver, CO. The reason for this proposal was the cost involved with transporting supplies and staff from AHA offices in CO to convention, and the burden of cost for the hosting club(s). After three years, there will again be discussion regarding the convention location. AHA Convention for 2012 was already planned for Denver, and the following year is already being planned in Kentucky.

With the exception of one or two, all of these resolutions were approved unanimously with little discussion. The first approved resolution was Resolution 1 – Redefining age limits for youth. There was much discussion in the sub-committee meetings and general session regarding this resolution. The purpose of this resolution is to allow youth exhibitors who currently age out (because they turn 18 after December 1), to continue showing throughout their senior year. Statistics were stated showing that youth exhibitors who age out during their senior year do not go on to show as an amateur in that year. The point was made that numbers were down at Youth Nationals this year, and this would be a great way to possibly bring numbers back up. Also, even though there will much work that goes into changing the rule book and the structure of the classes, etc, this resolution ultimately affects the youth. Youth of the Year and AHYA Vice President, Hailey Harrington, spoke on behalf of this resolution. She explained that the youth are huge proponents of this bill, having drafted it themselves, and requested that we

honor their wishes and vote on their behalf. In spite of the controversial nature of this resolution, it was unanimously approved. The second approved resolution was Resolution 2 – Resolution submission date. This resolution will have minimal effect on the majority of AHA members. It allows members to submit their resolutions a little closer to convention. The third approved resolution was Resolution 5 – Updating Level Judges. This was a house-keeping item that will have no effect on AHA members. The fourth approved resolution was Resolution 6 – Ginger testing. This resolution passes the responsibility of ginger testing from the competition management to USEF. Also, this resolution raised the fine for violators to \$2,500. The fifth approved resolution was Resolution 7 – Bar Shoe resolution. This resolution was drafted because when the original rule was made regarding bar shoes, it was not imagined that certain people would get so creative with shoes. This resolution adds some further restrictions to ensure that the shoe does not become detrimental to the horse. The sixth approved resolution is Resolution 9 – Conform whip length in Sport Horse Under Saddle. This resolution is also more or less, house-keeping. It's purpose is to have the same whip length rules for sport horse and dressage. The seventh approved resolution is Resolution 12 – Hunter Seat Equitation Changes. This resolution was also drafted and approved by AHYA and applies to Hunt Seat Equitation Championship classes. It allows judges the option to request USEF/EC test #16 in a championship class. This test requires riders to switch mounts, which caused some controversy due to safety concerns. It was concluded that the judge will use his/her discretion when requesting this test and that exhibitors and their mounts should be “up for the challenge” if competing in a championship class. The eighth approved resolution is Resolution 14 – Education/Evaluation Commission Term Limits. This was passed unanimously, and the purpose is to impose a term limit of three consecutive terms. The ninth and last approved resolution is Resolution 15 – Refund of 9-90 Fee for a Vet-Out Horse. This resolution was passed unanimously and states that if your horse is vetted out of a show (in compliance with vet out policy) you will be refunded your 9-90 fee by show management.

The two disapproved resolutions are Resolution 8 – Add Arabian comparative judging system to AHA handbook and Resolution 11 – Amend Breeding and In-Hand Class requirements. These resolution both affect halter and in-hand classes only. The purpose of resolution 8 was to allow judges to use a comparative judging system if they choose, instead of the score card system. There was quite a bit of discussion regarding this resolution, and it was not disapproved unanimously, however it was disapproved. Resolution 11 would have changed the scoring system to be used at all regional and national championships, and was also disapproved.

Although we did not have as many resolutions as we have had in the past, some major changes were voted upon. The primary changes will be for the youth and we will also be looking at some big changes regarding the membership year. I'm sure I speak for all the delegates and alternates when I say that it is very rewarding to be a part of these improvements made to our great sport and AHA.