

August 5, 2006

### **Zone 10 Jumper News Musings from Chairman Larry Langer**

The North American Young Riders' Championships are one of the most important and prestigious competitions our younger jumper riders can contest. I have been fortunate to be involved with NAYRC since its earliest days, and I continue to lend my support not only as a sponsor, but my wife and I volunteer as officials almost every year.

Of the three divisions – hunters, equitation and jumpers – it is only via the jumper division that a rider can represent his or her country and ride internationally. Therefore, jumper competitions that give horses and riders experience in an international format are very valuable for developing our future show jumping stars. Because of the success of the NAYRC, we are seeing various team and championship format competitions for U.S. riders. The Winter Equestrian Festival (Stadium Jumping at West Palm Beach) offers a team and individual competition for Junior Jumper riders. Spruce Meadows has added a week during its summer series for just junior and amateur riders. The entire competition is run under a similar format to that used at the World Equestrian Games. There are team competitions for Pony Jumpers (1.10 meters) through High Junior and Amateur Owner Jumpers (1.40 meters). The top four riders then ride one another's horses to determine an individual champion. Dale Harvey hosts a modified team competition at one of his Del Mar shows, and the USEF Pony Finals now hosts a Pony Jumper Championship complete with team and individual medals. Junior Jumper riders compete for a national championship at the Prix des States at the Pennsylvania National (Harrisburg).

All of these competitions are helping provide a strong foundation for the jumper sport in our country. I am proud that Zone 10 participates in many of these programs and consistently does so well. Not only does Zone 10 support the competition with strong teams, but a number of Californians are consistently involved with NAYRC. I have served as a member of the Ground Jury almost every year, and Charlotte Skinner is the "Voice of Show Jumping" and an FEI official as well. Linda Allen often designs courses, and Marnye Langer serves as the Official Scorekeeper.

This year Zone 10 fielded two strong teams at NAYRC. I am especially gratified that for the first time since it was offered, the competition for Junior riders (14-18) was designated as an official championship. That means that our Junior riders are awarded official medals and take part in the opening and closing ceremonies. This is particularly gratifying for me as I was among those who led the charge to include the Junior section at NAYRC and offered it for the first time when I managed the competition in 2000 (or was it at the 1998 version?) at the Colorado Horse Park.

Friday (August 4) was team day and this is one of the two most exciting days at this competition. All the teams and their supporters congregate in different parts of the stadium seats in the covered ring at the Virginia Horse Center (Lexington, VA). Teams display banners, flags and signs, and cheer wildly for their riders. In our highly individualistic sport, it is fun to have the team competition and see the camaraderie that develops.

The Junior teams took the stage first and competed over a technical 1.30-1.35 meter course designed by Linda Allen. Seven teams were vying for medals, and Zone 10 showed that they were contenders. Paris Sellon led the way with a clear round, and then her team mates Aurora Griffin and Erica Buie both posted fault free rounds. Hannah Selleck, riding in the high pressure anchor position, had just four faults and that served as the team's drop score. They went into the second round