



Newsletter - May/June 2021

The first half of 2021 has been relatively kind to the Arabian horse community with Covid -19 lockdowns being less frequent and not lasting as long as we have endured previously. Many agricultural shows, breed and open shows were held throughout summer in Australia – giving us all some hope that things were starting to normalise (although being held under Covid -19 distancing rules etc).

The Australian Arabian National Championships were successfully held at Boneo after some concerns leading up to the event about border closures. The JOC conducted a judges meeting at Boneo. It was well attended and was a great way to become re-acquainted with fellow judges after many months of Covid -19 isolation.

A few weeks later and we had the East Coast Championships (ECC) in Sydney and that too was a great way for people to reconnect (particularly those from NSW). The JOC also held a judges meeting at the ECC and again it was great to see many familiar faces and some new at the meeting.

The heavy rains and flooding during and after the ECC impacted on many in the broader horse community. Our thoughts remain with those that suffered losses at that time and in the months ahead during the recovery process. There are a number of Facebook Groups and Horse Clubs that are taking donations of second hand horse tack and equipment to help those out that lost everything in the floods. If you can help please do so, your donations will be greatly appreciated.

Finally, many rural and regional areas are now being ravaged by the current mouse plague. Damage to crops, plant and equipment is already estimated at \$100 million and rising. Health experts are fearful for the mental health of farmers and those impacted by the long-term effects of the plague.

We have many judges and members of the AHS A that are farmers or have some connection to rural and regional Australia. Many throughout Australia are suffering – mostly in silence because of any number of stresses such as the previous drought, fires, floods, Covid -19 impacts and now a mouse plague.

Be kind to one another in these troubling times and if you can reach out to help - just having a friend available to talk or listen can make the world of difference.

Vale - Mark Wharton

Many in Australia and indeed around the world were shocked at the sudden and untimely passing of Mark.

Much has been written recently about Mark as a breeder, judge and simply being such a kind, genuine and approachable human being.

While Mark was not an AHS A judge he was very well known throughout the Arabian community and was highly respected as a consultant and judge. Mark judged at a number of our larger shows in Australia and also throughout the world.

He lived overseas for many years in Brazil and Kentucky running his stud farm, Peregrine Bloodstock, LLC, which has bred national halter and performance champions in 6 countries and owned USA and Australian National Champion Stallion Fairview Klassique, Brazilian National Champion Stallion Ninjah el Jamaal and Australian National Champion Mare Simeon Shari.



Mark was one of our best advocates overseas and was arguably one of our most respected ambassadors – his loss will be felt for a long time to come. Our sincere condolences Quentin Naylor, family and friends spread throughout the world.

AHSA WEBSITE – Judge’s Education Page

As judges should by now be aware the AHSA has recently announced the release of an Australian hosted website. Feedback to date has been very positive about the changes to the site and it generally being more user friendly. However, if you find any problems with the new site please email those suggestions through to Helen Dohan at secretary@ahsa.asn.au. We need your feedback to make the system the best it can be.

The JOC requested a separate educational page on the Judges link to allow training and educational material to be downloaded so that it is readily available for all levels of AHSA judges. If you have any material that you think could be of value to post on this site we would welcome a call from you – we are open to receiving any videos, interviews or written material that may benefit our judges.

As an introduction to the educational page Graham Smith has interviewed a number of internationally recognised judges from overseas on their personal experiences when judging. In particular Graham has asked the international judges to tailor their advice to new or probationary Australian judges. The interviews provide an insight into some of the different pressures judges may face judging domestically and internationally, ethical issues and considerations, trends in the industry and some common sense tips.

The JOC will continue to roll out similar interviews over the coming months on the Judge’s Educational page. We would encourage all levels of judges to take the time to watch them.

The first interview is with Janet Court, UK an international ECAHO judge and an A level DC. Janet is the show manager of the UKIAHS – the UK’s only A International Arabian Show and was previously the show manager of the prestigious Saudi Arabian PSAIAHF Show in Riyadh. Janet has judged at many high level shows throughout the UK, Europe, Middle East and Australia. Janet draws on her wealth of experiences as a judge, DC and show manager to provide insights and tips for our Australian judges.

The second interview is with Jonas Salzmann, Bait Al Arab Stud, Kuwait. A National judge from Kuwait Jonas has at a relatively young age gained the respect of his peers and show committees in many countries for his eye for a horse and his considered and ethical approach to judging. He offers a slightly younger perspective on some of the issues you may face when judging. Jonas visited Australia in 2019 to judge at the inaugural VADOBA show and made many friends during his visit.

The third interview in this series is from Jacquie Webby, New Zealand. Jacquie is a familiar face in Australia as she is often sought after to judge at our shows including our Australian Arabian National Championships. Jacquie has lived and worked overseas in many countries, visited many studs and shows and is a journalist by profession. She is the past president of the New Zealand Arab Horse Breeders Society and amongst many articles published is the co-author of Hoofprints in History published by the AHSA.

Jacquie’s interview focuses on what Australian judges may expect when they visit New Zealand for the first time to judge. International travel can be daunting for many judges but Jacquie’s common sense observations and approaches should help judges when visiting New Zealand.

The JOC will continue to provide a broad range of educational interviews in the coming months. We will focus on some traditional aspects such as Type, Conformation and Movement but also try to gain useful tips and lesson learnt from experienced Australian and International Judges.

AHSA Membership Renewals

Helen Dohan has recently sent reminders email/letters to members who have not paid their AHSA memberships fees and are therefore not currently financial. Judges are reminded that part of their obligation to maintain their judging status is that they **MUST** be a financial member of the AHSA.

Failure to renew your AHSA membership in a timely manner could see you lose your judging status. This is a friendly reminder to please ensure that your membership is current each year or you risk losing your judging status – you cannot judge any AHSA shows unless you are a financial member.

Judges Training – Opportunities for shadow judging and ringside critiquing with National Panel and International Judges.

As advised in previous newsletters the JOC is trialling with the support of Affiliate and Non-Affiliate shows opportunities to shadow judge (pending the agreement of the respective show committee and judge). In addition, we are providing probationers and upgrade candidates the opportunity to sit ringside (in a relatively isolated area) with National and International Panel judges to critique horses and discuss how the respective classes are run and managed from a judge’s perspective.

While Covid-19 has limited the number of shows available to the JOC the feedback from both the candidates and judges involved has been overwhelmingly positive. The JOC sees this form of training as only one element in a broad range of tools to help AHSA judges – we aim to continue trialling this approach for the coming months.

Please speak directly to your State JOC representative about specific details of this scheme and for upcoming show dates etc. Listed below are some Key Dates where shadow judging and critiquing will be available. If you know of any other shows where it may be possible to assist with this type of training please let the JOC know.

The JOC is also very appreciative of the large number of show committees and judges who have to date given their time to provide shadow judging opportunities. While we are still trialling this approach the feedback and support has been very positive and most importantly provides opportunities for our probationer and trainee judges.

Recently the AHAQ Autumn Classic Show Committee and judges - Sharyn Hungerford and Mark Lilley agreed to support shadow judging opportunities for candidates at the show held on the 22nd May at Laidley Showgrounds.

Doug and Colleen Rutherford were both instrumental in coordinating and also assisting on the day. Most importantly we acknowledge shadow judges Natasha Whiteman and Lauren Sharpe for participating in a most successful day.



Natasha Whiteman, Mark Lilley, Doug Rutherford, Lauren Sharpe and Sharyn Hungerford enjoying the recent AHAQ Autumn Classic at Laidley.

Key Dates

29th - 30th May 2021 – Western Australian Jackpot Show (AHSA not affiliated event).

The APAHO show organisers have kindly agreed to allow training opportunities for eligible candidates. Doug and Colleen Rutherford will be available for shadow judging opportunities at the show. Please contact Doug or Colleen on 0428117750 to discuss.

30th May – VADOBA Youth and Non Pro Show. (Werribee Park). (AHSA not affiliated event).

The VADOBA committee have kindly agreed to Kerry Rogers providing shadow judging opportunities at this show. Please contact Kerry Rogers directly on 0435920638 to discuss.

19th - 20th June – Young Stars of the Future Show, Hawkesbury Showground. (AHSA not affiliated event).

The committee of the Arabian Horse Connection inc. have kindly agreed to Debbie Taylor-Thies providing shadow judging opportunities at this show. Please contact Debbie Taylor-Thies on 0412940393 to discuss.

10th July – Equitana, Melbourne. (AHSA not affiliated event).

There may be some limited opportunities available for sideline critiquing at the Arabian Horse Breeders Alliance Show. Contact Colleen Rutherford to discuss any opportunities 0429871115.

11th July – NSW All Breeds Foal, Youngstock, Hack and Hunter Show Hawkesbury Showground. (AHSA not affiliated event).

The committee of the Welsh Pony and Cob Association have kindly agreed to Sue Oberg providing shadow judging opportunities at this show. Contact Sue on 0413586824 to discuss.

Rule Book – Processes for Amendments and Changes

The JOC receives formal feedback from time to time from judges and members of the AHSA about anomalies or inconsistencies on specific rules or their application in the show ring. If rule amendments are necessary because of safety or animal welfare issues they are generally reviewed straight away.

However, for non-urgent Rule Book amendments these are considered during a yearly review by both the JOC and AHSA Board. Any suggestions need to be forwarded to Helen Dohan via the rule amendment form which can be accessed on the AHSA website.

As background for judges the JOC has this year either dealt with or is currently considering rules around the type of Australian stock saddles specified in our Rule Book; the use of side saddles in open classes; junior judging; safety helmet requirements; fundamental changes to the way we judge halter classes; show halters (and the use of throat latches and bits); Hunter Class rules concerning plaiting/pulling of tails; and a review of the Ridden Arabian/Arabian Derivative Scorecard to reduce complexity.

The work of the JOC covers a wide range of issues and as you can see just from the examples above dealing with Rule Book suggestions there is always a broad mixture of proposals put forward that take time and effort to work through by both the JOC and AHSA Board.

Meet the Judges



Michele Lando

National Panel Judge, Glenburn, Victoria.

Michelle has been involved with Arabian horses for over 30 years but her passion and love of horses started much earlier as a child.

Michelle has since gone on to breed, produce and train horses to the highest levels throughout Australia. Michelle also subsequently gained her National Panel judging qualifications and thoroughly enjoys the opportunities it has provided her to judge throughout Australia and New Zealand.

Michelle is passionate about horses that are correct and possess true Arabian type both in her breeding program and what she looks for as a judge.

Following many years success in the show ring Michelle has now focussed herself more on her own company – LP Designs and Equestrian Attire and also judging.

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