



**Minutes of the ESNZ Endurance Forum  
Held from 2:13pm on 9th May 2020  
Zoom Meeting**

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**Present:** Pip Mutch, Jenny Weston, Murray & Andrea Smith. Sue Reid, Wendy Farnell. Ron Guest, Jane Ferguson, Marie Wakeling, Rachel Stocks, Sue Billigheimer, Joanne Loveridge, Danielle McKenzie, Lisa Simpson, Daryl Owen, Mike Bragg, Ursula Keenan, Chris Enstrom, Heidi Bulfin, Sylvia Ireland, Dana Kirkpatrick, Elfi Menpes, Ana & Vicky Whitehead, Carla Barakat, Ian Gray, Sean Trafford, Vicky Copland, Hannah Ballantyne, Helen Graham, Jess Kennedy, Ainsley King, Andrea Rigby, Paula Adams, Susie Latta, Louise Holmes, Deirdre Bartlett, Shane Dougan

**Apologies** None

**In Attendance:** Jo Lankow – Endurance Administrator & Minute Taker

**Welcome**

Forum opened with Jenny advising everyone that the forum was being recorded for the purpose of taking minutes.

Marie welcomed everyone and thanked them for taking the time to join in for ESNZ Endurance's first online forum. Marie also welcomed Dane Kirkpatrick, ESNZ CEO, to the forum.

Marie asked that all attendees follow the meeting guidelines that were sent out and to be mindful of others wishing to speak and not to monopolise the floor for a lengthy period. As this was our first online forum, Marie asked if everyone could please be patient if there were any delays, as we come to grips with things.

Marie advised the first item on the agenda is the membership proposal.

**Membership Proposal**

Before the proposal could be sent out to the members the Board first had to get it approved by the ESNZ Board. It was approved and then sent out to all members. She also thanked Jo and Sue for their work on the proposal.

Marie asked that if anyone has any question to raise their hand on the screen or type them in the chat box and then she handed over to Sue.

Sue checked to see if everyone had read the proposal. It had been sent out to all club secretaries to forward to members but sometimes there is a delay with the members' receiving the emails.

Sue advised the main objective with putting this proposal forward to the ESNZ Board was to see what we could do as the Endurance Board are continually getting feedback from the members saying the registration costs were too expensive compared to what other disciplines were doing.

Now riders will be able to ride up to 79km on an unregistered horse but it does mean their kilometres won't be recorded on the database. That is the easiest way to sum it up without going on for a bit.

During the CTR meeting this morning, it became apparent that the documents we put together were perhaps not 100% easy to follow, more for CTR rather than endurance, but we will sort them out along with the rules which still need to be updated to match the proposal.

Sue then asked for any questions.

*Ursula:*

The database says the flexi fee can't be used for championship classes.

*Sue:*

Yes, that is something we will check up on.

*Jane Ferguson:*

One thing we clarified this morning if I got it right, is that series season award kms would count for introductory riders, just not lifetime kms.

*Sue:*

Correct, the lifetime kms will not be recorded on the database

*Jane Ferguson:*

Just because on the PDF flow chart it says the kilometres are not recorded, I wanted to clarify that was the lifetime kilometres but that they could compete in the Series.

*Sue:*

That's the intention and as we were advised this morning, the chart needs a little bit of clarification and we will get that done in the next day or so to make it clearer for everyone.

*Jane Ferguson:*

From my perspective I think it looks really positive. Thank you for all your hard work and thanks to the ESNZ Board for being willing to consider it. You do get riders that want to just come along and ride 40 kms and you do get some that might want to ride 60 km without fully registering and this is a vehicle for enabling that. Thank you.

*Sue:*

Thanks Jane. ESNZ have been incredibly helpful in assisting with this.

*Marie:*

Has anybody else got any questions they would like to ask with regards to this? If not we will move on to the rules.

*Sue:*

If you feel like you haven't quite got your head around the changes or if you have any questions feel free to talk to me. You can always PM me on Facebook or email or phone.

*Murray Smith:*

I'm just wondering how that model changes Endurance's contribution to ESNZ. Has that been factored in?

Sue:

Yes it has. The negative impact was part of our proposal that went to the ESNZ Board. But there was also the possibility of a negative impact if riders left the sport.

Murray Smith:

OK so if we move to this they are expecting less money from Endurance.

Sue:

That's why the proposal had to go to the ESNZ Board first so they could consider how it was going to affect ESNZ. We had to get endorsement from them before it could go out to the members.

Pip Mutch:

So will we be making up that cost elsewhere?

Sue:

Not planning on doing that

Daryl:

If we go with this the ESNZ Board are going to lose money. Are they then going to be in the same position as last time and put everything else up? That is something we need to watch out for. I think we are small potatoes when factoring in the other disciplines and it won't make much difference but that is what they said last time.

Dana Kirkpatrick:

I think the difference this time is that when we cut the membership and registration fees the previous time at least half of the membership were competing for free, but it is a completely different system now so that's not the case any longer.

My understanding from the Board's initial conversations is that there is no plan to increase service fees for disciplines or membership and registration costs this year.

Ursula:

Will the Introductory members need to be full members to compete at championship level as that is what the form suggests but when discussed earlier we didn't think that was the case. You actually have to be a full member to compete at championships and to qualify for championships.

Dana Kirkpatrick:

My understanding is that depends what classes you're entering. And there is the dispensation Endurance has had for the last two years for casual and introductory riders to compete at championship events, but I think from memory to compete in the main classes you had to be a full member. But there is definitely a dispensation because those riders couldn't even compete at championships.

Sue:

Being able to compete at championship events is the dispensation we have had for two years. Competing in a championship class is something we have to ask for dispensation for and we haven't as yet. But as it stands at the moment you have to be a full member and the horse registered to compete in a championship class.

Dana Kirkpatrick:

As you get further down the track we can work through those things. We can have a look at those other bits and pieces later on if needed

Ursula:

I think it's a pretty substantial part of the proposal understanding the championships part, particularly for CTR. We need to know how the championships look going forward to know if this is a viable proposal. I think we probably need to know that sort of information before it is implemented.

Sue:

Yes we understand that.

Marie:

We can continue to work on it. This is a process to go through to make sure we have all our bases covered.

Jane Ferguson:

It wouldn't only apply to CTR. It applies to endurance Intermediate 60km as well

Marie:

The membership benefits document was also sent to the secretaries so perhaps that hasn't been sent around either. Jenny. Are you able to put that up so we can see it?

Marie:

The first part is taken from the ESNZ Constitution and sets out what the discipline is and what it means to be part of the discipline. And just to note there that ESNZ Endurance is legally part of ESNZ.

We get feedback from members saying that it was very confusing to know exactly where the money they are paying went. So we have done a breakdown of that.

Membership fees and horse registrations go to ESNZ Central.

The annual and flexi start fees, ride levies and affiliation fees go to ESNZ Endurance.

Then there is a breakdown of Endurance Membership costs which as you see pays for Sports administrator costs, grants to OC's to assist with running the champs events, FEI fees paid on behalf of the clubs hosting FEI events, Board meetings and accounting fees including the annual audit.

Then there is the ESNZ cost structure table showing how your membership and registration fees are allocated which once GST is included brings it up to just under \$140.

The next part is about understanding what it is to be part of ESNZ and ESNZ Endurance:

- A sporting body that has equine welfare as the paramount concern

- Connection to a known National & International Brand

- Trained officials and coherent rules that protect horse welfare and the integrity of the competition

- Values-based sporting environment that provides integrity and honesty

- ESNZ Endurance is a National Sport not just a club so you can potentially compete throughout NZ at events organised by ESNZ Endurance affiliated clubs

- Start a journey to test/recognise and develop your horsemanship skills and develop a strong relationship with your horse

- An encouraging environment to achieve your goals

From here we talk about the support from our National Body.

ESNZ have put a lot of effort into supporting our sport. For the past three years we have had input from the CEO, Finance Manager and admin staff that far outstrips the dollar value we pay.

This support is mostly unseen or unrecognised by the general membership as you only become aware of these mechanisms when you are interacting with them directly at Discipline Board level.

Most recently ESNZ Central together with members of the ESNZ Endurance Board have developed and agreed a proposal to assist and support ESNZ Endurance to retain and encourage membership.

Being part of a national sporting organization gives access to other benefits e.g. Sports NZ Community Resilience Fund.

And then we have the question can we (ESNZ Endurance) leave ESNZ?

Individual members may leave ESNZ at any time.

ESNZ Endurance is part of ESNZ.

We [ESNZ Endurance] cannot separate from ESNZ and retain our assets or brand any more than an employee is able to take part of a business and set up on their own.

The ESNZ Endurance Board members have delegated authority to act in the interests of ESNZ and each Board member signs a code of conduct in acceptance of this authority.

So has anybody got any questions, relative to that?

Ursula:

I just have a question around the ESNZ relationship with Endurance NZ. And in particular with what happened with the voting just recently with what was said by the person who was voting on our behalf. So going back up to the document we say we are provided with an internationally recognised voice.

The vote was on behalf of the whole discipline and it was completely against what we wanted and asked for.

From my point of view, I think that really damaged the relationship. It is sort of not being talked about but I feel it is still quite damaging to some of the members so just interested in possibly what discussions have been had around it.

Marie:

So are you talking about what discussions have been held at Endurance Board level or at ESNZ?

Ursula:

Either really to try and address what happened.

Jenny Weston:

Well I'm not on the ESNZ Board so I can't speak for them, but I'm sure that they are very aware of our unhappiness.

We had some things we were flexible on and didn't mind and there were some non-negotiable things and one that was non-negotiable was around the qualification process and we said that was not something we supported

Sue:

I would like to add, as the endurance representative on the ESNZ Board it has been brought up with the board members in no uncertain terms. And we have possibly not helped ourselves in that we didn't issue a statement on that at the time. We can't turn back the clock, it has happened and how Vicki spoke of it and raised that was perhaps not the best way of doing it. I

totally understand what you're saying about the relationship doesn't seem to be there but it has been brought up at ESNZ Board level.

Dana Kirkpatrick:

If I can just add to that Marie if it's okay. I didn't want to just sit here and say nothing, because you'll wonder why I did that.

The Secretary General role reports directly to the ESNZ board, they don't report to me so I am unable to comment largely on the discussion I'm afraid, but I can concur with Sue that it was raised at board level and discussions held around that. I think that what happened at that particular meeting is regrettable and we understand it but I also think that the relationship with Equestrian Sport NZ is far greater than that one incident in that our relationship with Endurance is valued. We've done what we can to support when we possibly can.

Sue:

And the ESNZ board are very aware of how the members and Endurance feel about that one incident.

## Rules

Sean Trafford:

How is Endurance NZ going to retain our membership when our fees are more expensive in comparison to DRNZ? If we vote to leave FEI what are we offering that is different to DRNZ?

Jenny Weston:

I'm not sure that we voted to leave FEI.

If our rules don't align then we'll go back to the difficult position of people who want to ride FEI needing to make sure that they follow stand downs and the way they qualify meets the FEI criteria.

It is still up for discussion whether the championships are going to be CEN or if any other classes will be available.

Marie:

Previously we have aligned our rules to reflect the FEI requirements so that we didn't get those people falling through the gaps and doing things that they shouldn't be doing if they wanted to ride FEI. But due to the rule changes and quite strong feedback from the membership to say that these rules we're not going to be suitable for moving our sport forward or even continuing within our environment, we've decided to produce a new set of national rules.

I think if people are going to want to do the FEI pathway then it will be up to them to manage that.

New members when they come into the sport will need to be advised this is something that could be of interest to them and that they might need to be aware of. They will need to manage so they adhere to all the rules required.

Sylvia Ireland:

I believe that if anyone wants to ride FEI it's up to them to make sure that they know how to work the pathway.

Jenny Weston:

So this is all just about meeting the FEI criteria for qualification and what the standards are and everything like that. So that if you want to you can, this is not about whether or not there are FEI rides.

Sean Trafford:

So just going back to my original question it's not about whether we have FEI or not. What are we offering when our fees are more expensive than DRNZ, if FEI is no longer viable for us? How are you going to retain membership?

Marie:

So this is what the membership proposal is about, it's about bringing in new members, creating a stronger platform, a stronger membership and at this point in time ESNZ are looking at people being able to spread the registration costs throughout the year. Do you want to answer to this Dana or are you happy with that?

Dana Kirkpatrick:

I'm happy with it. There's not an awful lot more I can say about that. But we're doing the numbers and doing the work around what it would take and what it means for us from a cash flow perspective to let members spread the payments across the 12 months of the year, rather than lump sum payments which we understand can be a barrier for some.

Jenny Weston:

There's always going to be much more cost when you're affiliated with a large national organisation that has overheads. I don't know much about DRNZ but they sort of just seem like a single club so they don't have an office and they don't have the backing of being a recognized sport in New Zealand.

Jane Ferguson:

Just want to say there are a lot of people that have ridden endurance for many years and enjoy and follow the FEI pathway. I'm obviously small potatoes, but I competed for a lot of years without doing FEI and really enjoyed it but I did love my FEI experience.

Louise Holmes:

How different are our fees compared to DRNZ?

Sue:

I can answer that Louise. Their membership is I think \$60 a year for a rider and \$30 lifetime for the horse.

Jess:

\$90 vs \$290 at an open level.

Jane Ferguson:

But probably not so different in cost at an intro level.

Andrea Smith:

A major drawback we have is the integrity of our results and the fairness of competition with using trained officials.

Sue:

The membership proposal that we put forward with up to 79km being able to ride as an Introductory rider is possibly fairly similar. But for 80km it's \$140 for Rider membership, \$90 a year for horse plus our start fee.

So it is a little bit different. But as I think, Andrea said, a major factor is that you have integrity of our results on the database.

Sylvia Ireland:

So would those introductory riders' kms count towards lifetime kms?

Marie:

Rides count towards lifetime kms.

Jenny Weston:

Results are always recorded and published on the website. All the results are published from all the different classes so everyone will be listed there. But it is a matter of whether or not the results are recorded on the database and perhaps that is a bit confusing on the flowchart so we will update these and circulate.

But if people want to fully register they still can. And if you want to fully register then your results will be on the database.

Mike Bragg;

I know of two or three officials that have been asked by DRNZ to officiate for them and they are registered FEI officials.

Heidi:

Are you saying that FEI officials have done those roles?

Mike Bragg;

Well I think I am, or am I just an ESNZ official, but yes I have been asked to officiate for them What's the thinking of ESNZ, what can we do about it? I know some of them refuse.

Marie:

It comes down to the people themselves. Obviously we would like to think that anybody that's gone through our official pathway with us would stay loyal to our sport.

But there's probably very little we can do if they decide to go and officiate at an event with another sports body

Mike Bragg:

I personally don't think barring them from doing anything else other than endurance is going to do any good.

Sue:

I think the best thing we can do is concentrate on our rides and on what we're doing and not worry about what they're doing.

Sylvia Ireland:

From my point of view we are not officials trained for them. They have a different set of rules and we would not be trained in them.

Sue:

You just can't keep looking to the side. I mean, yes, you've got to be aware of what's going on, but the very best thing that we can do is hold decent rides that people can get to and that are friendly and welcoming and people enjoy coming to. That's the best we can do. We need to stop looking over our shoulders.

Louise Holmes:

Agreed Sue



Mike Bragg:

Greet them and be friendly.

Marie:

I think we can do better that way.

Wendy:

I would just like to say that, in my opinion, I think it is time that we accept that DRNZ is there, it's not going to go away and we should be concentrating on finding a way of sitting around a table with them and working out how the two groups could work together to cross reference between the two. We've all been at fault. It's time that what went down two years ago was put to bed. And we move on from there and start working together with them.

Marie:

I don't think that this is the forum is the right format for discussing this. We've heard what you've had to say Wendy and it's an opinion that you have. But this forum is about moving our sport forward and the rules between our discipline and DRNZ are different. People have the opportunity to go and do DRNZ rides if that is what they want to do but what we're doing here today is trying to move our sport forward.

Ron Guest:

Is there a plan going forward for the sport that's viewable somewhere. We have had them in the past, but I haven't kept up to date.

Marie:

It's on our website.

Sue:

To be fair, I think going forward things are going to be a little bit different from next year because of what's going on in the whole world, it's not even just Endurance New Zealand, so I would imagine that that we will have to change a bit and move forward. But we might cover that in one of the subjects lower down.

Marie:

So unless we've got any other questions we'll move forward now to the topic of rules. I'm hoping everybody has had the chance to go through the endurance rules. At this point I would like to thank Jenny and the TC and Board who have all worked together on these rules. It is no mean task, so well done to everybody. This forum is opportunity for feedback and input from our members right now and we want to get something that works and isn't over complicated but keeps everybody happy and safe doing the sport they all love. I'm going to hand you over to Jenny now.

Jenny Weston:

Does anyone have any comments on any particular sections of the rules?  
Because there are many pages of rules we don't just want to scroll through them all.

Jane Ferguson:

The biggest changes I thought are around the stand downs and around elevators. We do get people that want to come along and do 20 kms one day and 20 kms the next day and it's always just been crazy that they haven't been able to. So that's a shift from a club perspective for encouraging local riders. I feel that is really positive. I also like the ability for an open horse do a 40km one day and 60km or something the next day especially if preparing a horse for a longer distance.

Jenny Weston:

We want to try and balance horse welfare. Some people will want to be able to do back to back rides over a weekend so if they're ungraded they can go up to 30 kms and then ride again the next day, but no more than that. We have got to protect the welfare of the horse and some of these distances might need to be changed so the distances are aligned with the membership proposal.

So Open horses could go to 99 kms with no stand down and horses that are graded novice or intermediate to 79 kms with no stand down and then they'll be out for a bit and be able to compete in a fortnight. Those are just the routine ones for distance. Obviously, if the horses are eliminated for lateness, metabolics or something they are going to get additional stand downs. If it was zero days because of the distance then they are going to get some days

For immediate invasive treatment they get 21 days but very few of the treatments that we give to horses at a ride are in the category of requiring immediate invasive. Most of them are yes I could leave your horse and not treat it. And it will probably still get better; it won't deteriorate rapidly within an hour, so it's very uncommon that a horse is in the position of needing immediate invasive treatment.

Andrea & Murray Smith:

We completely disagree with including elevator rides up to 160km

Susan Reid:

We agree, totally disagree with elevator open rides

Jenny Weston:

When these rules were first put together they were only for novice classes and not open classes. We've had a range of feedback on whether there should be options for open or not. And comments that people wanted to ride in an elevator rather than an open class.

This means clubs can choose to run what rides they want. There is no requirement for them to run the elevator rides or if they run elevator rides they can run novice elevator rides and open elevator rides.

But if there is strong feeling from a lot of members about any of these rules they can be restored to what there were before.

Pip Mutch:

So in the hold you can make your decision to pull out and then go and vet and you can't get vetted out? How's it going to stop people that can see that something's happening to their horse and they're like, whoa, I can still claim on my kms but I'm not going to get vetted out even though my horse is going downhill rapidly.

Jenny Weston:

They can only choose to not elevate after they've gone through the vetting for that loop. And you'd hope that horses would get identified and either be given a re-inspection or vet out at that point.

It's trying to balance horse welfare and also giving people the flexibility to progress if they want to do this and step up using elevated competitions.

It does get very complicated for both open and novice in that each loop will have to have minimum and/or maximum times as appropriate calculated because if you were riding novice you would have to do novice time on each loop.

I don't know if that addresses your comment.

Whatever they've done they've done it, they choose not to elevate to do the next 40 km after they have passed a vet check. Now the horse is crashing and they get to keep their kms. I think most people if they end up with a horse that crashes and needs treatment never look back on it as a success whether the horse qualified or not.

There have been horses that have completely finished rides and pass the final vet check then deteriorate and need treatment.

I think it is a move in the right direction from when we used to have the whole two hour thing and as long as your horse stays okay for two hours after it's finished you get to keep the qualification. There were occasions when people would just hide the horse behind a truck until the two hours were up and then they would present the horse for treatment.

Susan Reid:

Another reason for not doing it. This one succeeds in an elevator.

Louise Holmes:

I really like the idea as a way to encourage people to try a bigger distance.

Susan Reid:

I can understand wanting to elevate up to learn whether they can go up, but not every level. You know when your horse is ready to step up.

And it's another division that you're putting on and splitting the field again.

I'm assuming if we can have elevated ones they could be a championship.

Jenny Weston:

I don't think it would be a championship class. This would be a separate class.

Susie Latta:

We disagree with elevator 160km

Ursula:

It does say at the start of the rule that elevator competitions may be run as novice and open classes. So it's quite clear it certainly doesn't have to be run, it's an option.

Hannah Ballantyne:

As a rider hoping to eventually step up from 80 to 120km it is quite a daunting. The elevator option makes it more inviting even if the kms were only awarded as novice kms.

Pip Mutch:

I feel the bigger rides are not novice competitions

Sylvia Ireland:

Agree Pip

Sue:

This has come up at forums for the last two years and the North Island riders don't seem to want it and most of the South Island riders do want it.

Murray Smith:

How do you justify the inclusion of open elevators, going back to the opening statement of all our rules? The opening statement says it's managing a horse over distance and leaving it fit to continue, whereas any elevator options don't do that. If you're open, you've got options of

100km and 120km before doing a 160. And you can see how your horse is going in those, but the opening statement and the intent of endurance riding is managing your horse and leaving it fit to continue and the open elevator, particularly open, does not address that.

It's also very hard if you're at the competitive end of the field. It's actually hard to know who you are competing against as some maybe have no intention of completing the whole distance. So they may be riding a shorter distance faster.

It's also costs, you're entering the longest distance and you're taking money out of people that may not choose to finish. You're taking maximum money out of them. There's no punishment for overriding. If you're lucky to get your horse through in shall we say a semi exhausted state and still be able to get your kilometres, you actually have had no punishment for errors in judgment.

It's just a few thoughts on it.

Sean Trafford:

Elevators should only be novice. The challenge of endurance is completing the full distance

Daryl:

Another possible factor with elevator rides is that people would possibly be more likely to retire mid distance if they could still keep their kms rather than pushing on because there's only 40km to go and you might just make it

Vicky Copland:

Disagree with 160km elevator. I know of at least 4 in our club against it

Sylvia Ireland:

If the rules come into effect where you can ride both days with an open horse you can ride an open 40km on the 1st day and then opt to do a novice elevator ride on the 2nd day and if you feel your horse or yourself are not up to the extra kms then you get your kms but you took the decision of riding novice

Marie:

This may be something that we will need to vote on. It has been brought up at the forums for the last few years and most of the South Island riders seem to want it as an option. We are putting on rides to attract riders. Maybe it's something that we need to look at

Ursula:

I think that probably the wording you you've used Marie as an option is a really important part of this and I know there are a lot of people who don't agree with that which is fine. And given that it is just an optional class anyway and the horse has been through the novice rides as well.

Is it worthwhile exploring maybe a more robust situation for the open elevator? Is it just that people disagree with it as a 160 km? Does it need to come back to 100 km to be a viable option? Sometimes we've got a whole field of open horses that are competing in a novice ride because for whatever reason, It could be a rider, it could be the horse, it could be around stand downs but because this is an optional class is that worth considering? You don't have to run it if you don't want to but if you feel it is beneficial to your club members you can.

Wendy:

If the combination is retired because the rider isn't well why should the horse be penalised by losing all the kilometres successfully completed to that distance? If it encourages riders to step up to longer distance, why not have the option for clubs?

Daryl:

Mike says he disagrees with a 160km elevator.

Susan Reid:

Disagree with elevator as an open event

Jenny Weston:

Is it necessary to have 160km, what if the maximum open elevator was 120 would that cover the people who you think want these kinds of rides? Clubs won't put them on unless they have members who want them.

Sue:

I also think that from what I'm hearing is that as a championship class that might be something that people are objecting to now. I don't think we have many 120 kms outside the of the championship classes. I don't how you get around that.

Jane Ferguson:

What if the 160km was novice not open?

Louise Holmes:

Yes, up to 120 be good option.

Jess:

I agree with Louise. And Ainsley agrees.

Daryl:

Mike would agree with the option of up to 120km elevator. 160km is our pinnacle distance

Sylvia Ireland:

If we do go this route I would not like to see any higher than 100.

Jane Ferguson:

But open there'd be no speed restriction per loop?

Vicky Copland:

Agree with Sylvia

Susie Latta:

Rachel Stocks and Susie agree with Sylvia

Jo:

It couldn't be a championship class due to the speed requirements per loop

Marie:

Here's what we should do. Following the forum, we put a poll out to get some feedback on this rule is to help move forward with it because obviously we've got disagreement or alternate opinions. If we do that then maybe it will help to move forward.

OK so moving on to the other rules. Anybody got anything else? We did ask for people to send in their questions or comments as It just makes it easier for us to find them.

Is everybody happy with everything else?

Ursula:

I just have a question around the championship structure and the rule 7.1. How is it going to be defined? Is it to what the host club wants? How is it going defined and at what point is the competitor going to understand what that ride looks like so they can qualify for that. For example, if it was going to be FEI at South Island championships in January, we don't know that at this point we've got no idea what it is. How do we as riders plan the season around the championship?

Jenny Weston:

Well, I don't have all the answers but a championship event will include these classes. We've had a period of three years, of trialling the combined classes. If our national rules no longer align with the FEI it can't be a combined class and then it will become a decision for whoever's hosting these events if they're offering a 3\* 160 and a CEN 160 or not. The criteria to qualify for CEN 160 are laid out in the rules and the criteria for 3\* 160 are laid out in the FEI rules and they are quite different. So people will have the options if the rides are available.

Ursula:

It almost needs to be a 12 month kind of notification period so competitors know what the qualifying is so they can actually compete and what classes and if they don't know what classes are going to be held how do they know what path to follow.

Sylvia Ireland:

It would require clubs to make a decision when they put their bid into the national body to state what rides they would be offering.

Jenny Weston:

I would agree that it would be good to have at least 12 months warning because we know who the host clubs are for these events 12 months out or at least what classes it is planning to hold.

Marie:

And just with regards to if there are any rides, I'm not sure if anyone is saying at the moment. Information came through from FEI with regards to holding them and they did make a statement that they are aware of how everything is affected and very much the smaller nations with the rule changes. So there is opportunity to apply for exemptions around Officials appointments and things like that. So that could be something that's considered when people are applying to hold FEI events. But we're open to what the membership think.

Jenny Weston:

The other thing that was announced was a six month extension on the timeframe where you've got 24 months for your qualifications to stand or 24 months to get through the novice qualifying procedure; those have both been extended up to 30 months, given that people have lost chunks of seasons in different parts of the world.

Ursula:

We're happy to say you can select what you like for a championship event and you'll find out as soon as possible.

Jenny Weston:

If you're hosting a championship you have to offer these classes and whether they've got FEI as well. That will need to be decided as it is reasonable to a rider that a statement of what the classes will be must be notified at least 12 months ahead of the event. We have enough difficulty getting clubs to host these events without putting in more requirements.

Ursula:

So what you are saying is it must include CEN championship classes and, whether or not any FEI portion is added is up to the clubs.

Jenny Weston:

Chris, I hadn't thought of not having CEN classes.

Ursula:

But at the moment you could read those rules in terms of FEI and the championship.

Jenny Weston:

I don't think any OC would take the gamble because they would stand to lose a lot of money so it could be expanded to say that it will definitely include those as CEN classes and FEI is optional.

Ursula:

And if FEI was optional would we be using CEN in qualification criteria for those events or would we be expecting their classes to be combined, or will we not know that until the Clubs decide what they'd like to run?

Jenny Weston:

My feeling is, as our rules don't align, it becomes impossible to run a combined class. We've looked at changing our rules because of the difficulties with what's required with the FEI endurance rules. To ride in a combined class would have to be the same. And given that we are saying CEN 160 or 120 or whatever is going to have our own qualification system it couldn't be combined.

Daryl:

Can I just point out the Board has not intended for these rules to be a fait accompli. This isn't necessarily the rules that are coming in. This is up to the membership to vote on whether we want these rules or whether we want to stay with the existing rules. So these rules are not passed. This is for the AGM so if you want them you want them. If you don't, you don't

Jenny Weston:

And there is a small window of time now to make changes to them because we can't go to the AGM and vote on them clause by clause. We need to get them to something that most people are reasonably happy with and either stick with the old which are aligned to FEI endurance or that we have our own system.

Marie:

And this is why we circulated the rules so that we can get feedback from people and obviously change the rules to suit the majority of what the feedback was

Sue:

Can I just kind of try to back up to what I think Ursula is saying?  
That as a rider unless we actually batten down that there has to be a CEN championship as opposed to a combined one you have no idea what you have to qualify for. So we do actually need to have this in no doubt prior to voting for the rules and it may be something that we have to do as a survey to members again before we actually vote or have this part the same as the elevator and have a separate vote.

Marie:

I think rather than getting feedback again about the rules as a whole there are a few points on a few rules that people have queries about if we type those rules up and get feedback from the membership just on those points so that when we get to the AGM it's just a question of voting for the complete rules I think that is the better option..

Jenny Weston:

I just reiterate, I assumed, and you know what they say about assuming, when these were put together that this year they would be CEN classes for these championship distances and that CEI would be options and if they ran, they would be separate classes because you just can't combine them anymore if our rules are different.

Deirdre:

Would FEI and CEN events be able to run concurrently?

Sue:

Therefore have a non- combined but both rides counting

Marie:

As I said, we probably need to put that out to the membership to get this feedback. And there are a few other comments, sort of getting swamped with more now I can't keep up with them.

Can everyone see these comments Jenny or is it just me?

Jenny Weston:

Probably everyone can. I just can't because I'm sharing my screen. I will stop sharing and that might help.

Sylvia Ireland:

So we have to decide that the championship classes would be for the national title and those wanting to run as FEI would have their own elite trophy?

Sean Trafford:

Did rule re stallions required to be vetted in a bit get changed. e.g. up to OC on day?

Jenny Weston:

I'd have to check the exact wording but I don't think so because we know they generally behave themselves. (Checked later and no requirement for stallions to be vetted in a bit))

Jane Ferguson:

Are any clubs planning on hosting FEI events this season outside of championship rides?

Louise Holmes:

What is the minimum time frame prior to an FEI event to apply to hold one? Surely that will lock in the notice time?

Marie:

I think they've extended that because it's normally September

Jess:

Why is the fit to continue 16km? Rather than what we have had just "fit to continue". How can you judge if a horse could do another 16kms and 16km at what speed?



Jenny Weston:

The distance of 16 kms was put in because fit to continue for another hundred metres or 40km? And we ended up with 16 kms being a minimum distance loop. Not necessarily at high speed, but you know the minimum speed which would be 10 k's an hour. The distance could be taken out.

Sylvia Ireland:

I don't think we need the distance.

Rachel Stocks:

Do not agree with the 16km distance.

Susan Reid:

We need to remember that there are still riders who would like to represent NZ overseas including our junior riders so we need to keep CEI events happening.

Marie:

Yes, we do. And need to get those events happening but will need clubs to hold them.

Andrea Rigby:

Do we know how many CEI riders we have nationally and from what locations they come from?

Jenny Weston:

We probably do. I don't know if Jo can type the answer to the actual number.

Jo:

I could work it out.

Sylvia Ireland:

With CEI there are some families that haven't done FEI recently due to age of horses, as they have started new horses etc. but who might be back for the next FEI season so we can't discount FEI on just numbers from one season

Marie:

There are no more comments.

Jenny, do you have anything else you'd like to add or if anybody's got any other questions with regards to the rules.

Susan Reid:

I'd like to ask about the Board approving other weight classes e.g. lightweight

So how would that happen? I mean introducing another class with the fields small anyway. And how far out from a ride are we're going to change the classes to lightweight?

Sue:

I think that the idea was that we would allow clubs to hold them if that was what the club's wanted to do. I don't think we were talking about changing it for championships or anything like that. But some clubs are saying that they have riders that it is a barrier for to them weigh up.

Jenny Weston:

And it is an option. Again, it was one of the most controversial with 50% wanting the weight dropped or lightweight classes available and 50% to leave as is so it will probably come down to what clubs want to do if they feel there is a demand for it. But we do have small classes.

Daryl:

We had lightweight classes but in those days, if you wanted to get to where you are now you had to change. You could only do the lightweight and there was no lightweight 160 km. It was up to 120 and no further.

Susan Reid:

I used to ride lightweight and you would be treated as a second class citizen as a lightweight rider.

Jessica Kennedy:

We have had light weight in the past and only had 1 or 2 riders competing.

Jane Ferguson:

If they want to ride catch weight nothing to stop them riding novice?

Ursula:

So if lightweight classes were to be approved to be added to a schedule for a club how would that work for a lightweight rider for their qualification for a championship?

Sylvia Ireland:

It would not count towards the CEI/CEN rides as it states that the combination has to qualify under the same criteria for the combined ride

Jenny Weston:

Good question, I guess if they've done the distance, they've done the distance, but then they'd have to weigh up for the championship class.

Susan Reid:

That's exactly what happened to me. I'd ridden lightweight all season then to do the nationals had to weigh up for that one. That was many years ago.

Ursula:

I think there's a lot of those rules that have been really progressive but possibly the chain reaction of what happens when they are able to be used is a little bit more confusing. And again, it comes back to the initial conversation around the membership structure. We've already got a lot of confusion with our members, particularly the lower level ones.

And I know we've got a few lightweight riders in the South Island coming out of novice and they probably are at that level where they think, Okay, that's cool. So I'll do that right now then, get more serious and then they'll get to a championship and aren't qualified and all of a sudden having to put 10 kilos of weight on the horse. Is that a really beneficial kind of concept for us for a very small amount of competitors?

Jenny Weston:

If there's a demand and they want lightweight classes at club level, then they can be run, but we can't at championship level split the classes any smaller by having different weight categories. They'll have to choose to ride at the weight all season if they want to get used to it or they go through what Sue had to go through

So many things around making it clear what applies just at club rides and what might apply to a championship classes so we can try and improve the wording and add in these details of things you don't really think about

Marie:

That's where it's good to have this forum. Is there anything else to do with the rules?  
OK so from here the Board and committee have a little bit to do.  
And so our next topic is about Champs Hosting.

## **Champs Hosting**

Marie:

The Board was sent a discussion document from Canterbury Club which was shared with the membership to gain feedback.  
Canterbury then contacted the Board and asked for a meeting with the key members of the club as they felt the document had been misunderstood. So I'll ask Ursula and Andrea to explain the document.

Ursula:

It was definitely a proposal. It was never meant to be taken as hard and fast that this is what we think absolutely has to happen. I really hoped that it would be a positive discussion document. I guess we've talked over a bit more of it and naturally I would have brought it up in the rules regarding the championship events and just getting a better understanding of how our sport is going to progress forward with the maximum amount of competitors. What probably first drove me to look really hard at this is that why did we have 30, 40, 50 competitors in a 160 not very long ago and now we are lucky to get 20 and then when you start looking at the 100 and 120km rides they dwindle off a lot more

And now that the FEI qualifications are a lot higher that's going to be more adversely affected, which is what drove us to this proposal. It's absolutely not discounting the FEI component as we need that to keep us on the world stage, and I think that was touched on as well but possibly not well enough. And when we talked a week or so ago I said can we combine our classes.

And the only way I can see it happening through this proposal is by the FEI riders saying, yep we are happy to just have a ride so we can qualify which from my point of view that's what, if I understand it right, it to be now for the FEI riders as a qualification ride to ride to be able to ride internationally, it's not really anything other than that, but please correct me if I've got this really wrong. And so in that case, they've chosen is to follow that pathway when they start the sport or when they are progressing through the sport, the qualification would remain as an FEI qualification, but could we take the rules on the day of the CEN competition, making sure that we have our timings right, to incorporate an FEI rider in a 160km and 120km class just to give them a tick in the box. I don't know if it's feasible but that was the way that I kind of looked at trying to make this proposal more robust

Otherwise, the more I read it, the more I myself and I know when I talked to Andrea about it, we feel that it's a pretty good structure to start with but certainly needs the country's input into it so hopefully that explains it well.

That's kind of it, it's really about our competitors knowing where they're coming from and having the most ability to qualify for classes when they can so we can get the most competitors to each event and at championship rides and we can get those numbers back up

to something pretty substantial and enjoyable for our sponsors and stakeholders and those sorts of people

Marie:

Thanks.

Rachel Stocks:

It's very difficult to comment on the CEI/CEN as individual vs combined rides without having further time to consider all the implications for doing this, in particular the financial aspects of offering each option, as this increases the number of championship classes that we have to offer. (This is even before the consideration of Elevator/Novice/Lightweight classes!) Without knowing what other FEI rides will be available throughout the upcoming season, how can we specify 12 months in advance what we will offer.

Sylvia Ireland:

So if the FEI rider was first past the post would they not win?

Susan Reid:

So are you saying that an FEI rider should only be qualifying not competing at a championships event?

Ursula:

I don't think that's what I am saying, if they are first they are first but it's just that they would then be competing against other competitors who have qualified under a different set of rules. So for example you do your 1 x 80, 1 x 100, 1 x 120 or whatever and as a CEN rider we know that if you are an FEI rider the pathway isn't going to look the same.

But is it acceptable for us to all sit on the start line of the same competition under the same rules on that day and say we're all happy to compete together, or is it not acceptable? That's what I'm not sure about. But I do believe it's possibly a way to drive it forward.

Sean Trafford:

No don't agree. There are different pathways to the qualification, makes the competition unfair.

Jo:

You can't start CEI and CEN at same time unless it is a combined class.

Jenny Weston:

We can't have a class start within 15 minutes of a CEI which is why we have the juniors and seniors starting at different times. So they'd have to start separately if it was CEI 160 and CEN 160.

Ursula:

So I guess that then takes the proposal back to pretty much what it was initially. To be honest, I don't think there's any need to add any more about the FEI, we really support it. We think it needs perhaps a bit more of a drive from the HP program and perhaps ESNZ and also the competitors who need it as part of their career.

And also it needs a rethink on what the FEI qualifications actually gives these competitors who do not want to ride at World Championship level, there's very little that it possibly offers over and above what our current CEN structure offers our riders.

Jenny Weston:

If you don't know there's going to be one star and two star classes in the season leading up to a champs it's hard to know what your options are. Although now you will have to qualify multiple one stars and multiple two stars to progress.

Jane Ferguson:

Plus would we come back to the issue of officials and vets requirements for FEI - would this be the same for CEN? But might not need foreign judge and foreign vet if CEN only.

Jenny Weston:

So I think even just CEN only champs event we'd still want reasonable numbers of highly qualified officials and vets to police it. I don't think you want to end up with a championship event with only two vets present and only two ground jury members and things like that. But the FEI requirement for foreign officials and foreign vets does make it even more expensive, although we may be able to get exemption and particularly while there are quarantine and border restrictions so we couldn't get a foreign official even if we wanted to. So that might be an opportunity to put on a whole bunch of FEI events in the short term and get some qualifications before they lift the restrictions at the border.

Ursula:

You know I say the proposal has a lot more detailed information on how a championship might look rather than the draft rules which don't have a lot of that quite critical information.

Jenny Weston:

That can be covered in the Champs hosting agreement with clubs rather than necessarily going into the rules.

Sue:

I think it's in the supplementary roles but Jo can comment on that.

Jo:

Yes it is.

Jenny Weston:

Another thing is if we have very few FEI events it's going to be impossible for officials and vets to maintain their status unless they travel overseas to get those rides and probably Australia is going to be in the same boat. So you're not even going to just be able to slip across the Tasman to get that so it is a whole bunch of people potentially affected.

Ursula:

So with Covid being a real implication I would say for the majority of next season, if not the whole of next season should we be saying, okay, we really can only run CEN rides so everyone knows what playing field we're on.

Sue:

I actually think we've covered that and the FEI would actually give us quite a lot of exemptions to run FEI rides if that's what we wanted to do. And my feeling is that the riders are going to have to be the ones to choose it.

Jenny Weston:

I'd say it's the best time to do it.

Susan Reid:

Is it possible to put a CEI ride on this year as we were having Nationals and now we are not and our ride date has changed to this year? We couldn't afford to be stung with extra fees to put one on this year.

Heidi:

If only a 1\* or 2\* there are no extra fees. It's only a 3\* there is a late fee for.

Susan Reid:

Would probably only be a 1\* or maybe a 2\* also.

Jenny Weston:

So there are opportunities for clubs to hold 1\* and 2\* rides without having to pay late fees.

Marie:

Is there anything else that we want to discuss here?  
So that leads us to our last topic which is the future.

## **The Future**

Marie:

This is the portion of the forum that we're going to talk about the future of ESNZ Endurance and call for support from the members. So we wish to give you the heads up on the fact that all but one of our board members intend to either resign or not stand at this year's AGM. As was referred to in The Distance a new charge of energy and ideas will set the board a great platform for the upcoming year.

As a board member you have the chance to make things happen, being on the board gives you an opportunity to learn more about the sport and no one comes onto the board with a full knowledge of how things are done.

A desire or passion to transfer your ideas into workable realities and the ability to share the workload as a team member is a great start and keeping the end goal of assisting and supporting your sport to the best of your abilities is all that can be expected.

So having struggled with communication flow from the coalface or the club's to the board and in relevant and timely manner is something that the board has recognised and we've discussed a concept of including a club representative or liaison officer from each club to be involved in meetings with the board.

One thing that lockdown has taught our world is the ease of meeting and communicating via zoom or other electronic means. So this is now part of our future. Obviously this will be up to the new board to put in place and to manage if they feel that would be a value but we just wanted to get some feedback on potentially if that is something workable.

Jenny Weston:

Don't want to cut you off in your speech, but there are a couple comments and questions in the chat going back to the previous item. Jane's asked Ron if he has anything to contribute from an FEI perspective.

Jenny Weston:

The floor is yours. And you'll need to unmute yourself.

Ron Guest:

I have been fairly active at FEI and to some extent I haven't kept track with a lot of the discussion that's going on in the country regarding the FEI rules and I'm watching the discussion today. It's interesting that we are effectively taking our national champs to a CEN event. And there's a whole lot of advantages and disadvantages of doing that. But in doing that you really bring into question what's the benefit of retaining the FEI. I can see that's for the International Sport connection for those riders who choose to take that as their goals and we need to be able to ensure that we keep that connection for those riders that want to do it.

And my other thoughts going forward would be that we then need to look at the plan that we have in future to include and determine what the FEI connection is going into the future and that they're there for you. I am not speaking as an FEI representative here but from what I see the FEI is facing major challenges around the world because we have a very strong European base all be it with support from the UAE but we also have a lot of rides outside of the European base and I think really in a case like New Zealand we need to start deciding what we need from the FEI and what FEI rules will enable us to keep the connection running.

The reality in New Zealand has now changed. We have DRNZ and others such as RADRS and WATRC and others out there so that the whole business that we're operating in now has changed quite considerably. But I think FEI would be very receptive if we put up a case to show that in this country we need these things to retain an FEI connection then they would be foolish to not take some recognition of that and maybe give us some concessions for countries like New Zealand so that we can retain that FEI connection..

That's my thoughts, any questions or comments?

Ursula:

Ron when you say that you think the FEI would be very receptive to what I guess you're talking about is dispensation. It's a word that's been thrown around probably since 2003 when we first affiliated with ESNZ that we would get dispensation with the FEI. I understand now with Covid that it is a little bit different. And it's a worldwide thing and the world might get some dispensation.

But where are we in a position, particularly when we agreed with the rules that we're going to ask for dispensation for a different structure now to support our country.

Ron Guest:

I think we have to go to some extent the vote that we made at the last AGA in Moscow hasn't helped us because we went out and agreed to a bunch of rules which we didn't really want and isn't helping us at all in this country. So now we go to the new director, whoever that may be and say we want exceptions to the rules of course their comeback is going to be you've just voted for them. So how can you now ask for dispensation? But I think we've got to put that aside and go back and say, look we need this set of rules to apply and as, Jenny alluded to earlier, things like foreign judges and foreign vets. And given the number of horses we have and the standards that we run our rides at do we need all those additional costs. And that's the question that we've got to be putting up. But when we put it up, we've got to put up a convincing case which has alternatives and here's exactly what we're asking.

Sue:

And I'll just add on to that. There was a meeting with ESNZ and Jack Huang who is the Chair of Group 8 and also a vice president of the FEI. Firstly let me address the issue of the voting. It wasn't registered as us voting for it, it was just a bunch of cards and our card went up as they kind of went past. So they haven't written down that New Zealand voted for the rules, which is

the first thing. The second thing is when we spoke to Jack and said about what is happening and the FEI had spoken about maybe looking at dispensations for smaller countries, not just New Zealand. And what he said was that until we have the endurance director as Manu not doing that job now, when we have the new one, which obviously got put back a bit because of Covid then we'll be in a position to move forward and I agree with Ron that what we need to do is put forward a strong case, given that we have a very good history of horse welfare, officials and things like that. So I don't think we've completely lost being able to put that forward.

Jenny Weston:

I think the dispensations we'll be going for is that North Island is foreign to South Island, which is what we had for quite some time. And that will help with some of the overseas officials and costs and particularly with Covid it is an even stronger argument. I don't think we're going to get exemption on the qualifying process to get from 1\* to 2\* to 3\* and for us that was probably one of the biggest killers. Or we need financial dispensation for putting on FEI rides to be able to run more so that people have opportunities to qualify.

Jenny Weston:

Sorry, I have just seen there is a question from Sean.

Sean Trafford:

Ron will they give us a dispensation for less rides to meet the star qualification system. In NZ we don't run enough FEI rides and clubs can't afford to run the necessary number of FEI rides to meet the new qualification criteria.

Ron Guest:

Correct.

Jenny Weston:

Yes, I, I can't see that being given.

Ron Guest:

I'm agreeing with Jenny. It's going to be a difficult argument. But I think it needs to be part of the package you put up to say, here's the whole proposal that we want to do and what it will need to keep you alive in this country.

Ursula:

Given that we've just heard that all bar one of our Board are stepping down this year is this perhaps the discussion that's going to need to be had with the future board because we've got a couple of months now until the AGM.

Sue:

You're correct. Because until they appoint the new director we can't do anything.

Ron Guest:

In the meantime you can certainly do the homework on getting your proposal together. So when the new director is appointed whoever that would be and whenever it will be you can hit them straight up. I wouldn't not prepare the case simply because we waiting for a new director

Daryl:



The start of putting a case forward of what we want is the new set of rules is what we have actually written up as a new set of rules that Jenny and the tech committee put together is the way we want to ask for New Zealand to be run. Is that not the case?

Ron Guest:

Yes certainly. That could be the foundation of your proposal.

Ursula:

That is totally different qualifying procedure and which we've already discussed that before and aren't really going to be received very leniently.

Heidi:

They are not interested in a new set of rules, Australia, do that, a lot of countries do that. They are concerned with their rules and how they apply to the ride. The only leniency we may get is around foreign officials that would be the only thing we're probably going to get and will have to be applied for on a case by case basis. Because of Covid there's an opportunity to maybe run some rides and say, look, we can't use foreign officials so you need to let us not use them and there were no issues at the ride. So it is an opportunity maybe we should take. But I wouldn't be applying to them for anything else until things are back to normal with Covid.

Ursula:

Yeah. And if we kind of run off with a proposal, we'd love this, that, and the next thing are they're going to say not likely. But what dispensation do we need to ask for to make FEI a sustainable concept within New Zealand. Now I get that this year it might be really sustainable because we might be able to get a lot of dispensations. But going forward you need a five year plan for HP and everything else that goes to make it sustainable for the 30 members that are currently registered to ride in New Zealand.

Marie:

So when you are talking to the members about what the view is on what FEI roadblocks are, they say it is around the cost of overseas officials, cost running the events, with overseas officials and vets and such. It's not so much because you're putting on the event. Those costs are still there anyway. It's the extras that you need to pay for that is what has been the stumbling block. So if we can run some events using North Island/ South Island as foreign officials which we have done in the past and we've run very good events. So I think that is the basis of where we start

Jenny Weston:

So the rules currently do allow for countries to have somebody from a different time zone to be foreign so within Australia, you can get somebody from WA as foreign for the east coast. So it might not necessarily just be for Covid on the basis of our pretty good horse welfare history. If we were to be able to get North Island/South Island reinstated as foreign to each other and then that might be achievable as a long term thing and not just related to the quarantine issues with Covid. And the FEI fees to put the rides on and I don't know whether the fact that we've just got such a small number of riders if that would be a sufficient argument for them to help reduce the costs.

Jenny Weston:

Louise has commented some time ago

Louise Holmes:

When are we going to thrash out whether we continue with FEI as many decisions on rules, champs etc. seem critical to this decision?

Jenny Weston:

I guess there's a number of issues that we've talked about today, one being Elevator rides, one being weight divisions and then this as well as that. It's quite a small portion of our membership that wants some of these things. And that if you come down to just a straight vote on them the majority can take away an opportunity for a small number of riders. And so I think it needs to be very carefully thought about on how we would make these decisions. Because again, you can't have 90% of riders subsidising the activities of a small number, but it is difficult and there are flow on effects if there aren't five CEI events across the country in the season it does make it very difficult for people to even ride FEI in a championship.

Louise Holmes:

Should we be developing different rules that will make FEI very difficult to run?

Jenny Weston:

We can't influence the FEI rules. We had an opportunity to try and do so but the vote was overwhelmingly to take the FEI rules on so we're not going to change that.

Jane Ferguson:

And if we try to align our national rules to the new FEI rules we would lose a lot of the riders because who wants to have to go through seven levels or whatever to be able to get to do a 160

Marie:

And that brings us to where we are.

Ursula:

We've already gone from about 300 riders in 2007 to 146 now. So we've really got to do something about encouraging the riders. We've got a very small group that's costing a lot of money.

Marie:

Again just reiterating on what Jenny was saying before, it's about providing options. I mean, obviously there are people that are very passionate about the FEI and following that pathway. And if there are OC's and clubs that are willing to put on the FEI rides I don't think it's up to us or the rest of the sport to say that they can't do it. They are the ones that have just got to work through making it happen. And it's up to the OC to actually plan and fund. And yes, I think we should be applying for dispensation for North Island/South Island to be foreign and that would be a huge step towards making holding FEI rides a lot easier in New Zealand.

Jenny Weston:

Because we also have the joy of being three hours on a plane minimum from anywhere else, as opposed to most other countries that have international neighbours where you just hop in your car and drive for a couple of hours to get there. So even regardless of Covid it's a lot harder for us and a few other countries as well to get these foreign officials.

Marie:

Okay. Have we got anybody else wanting to make comments on anything?

Murray Smith:

I think we've just got to remember the benefits from being an FEI sport regardless of whether you ride FEI or not. In some ways, yes they have made things difficult but in other ways they have increased our horse welfare and knowledge and, even if you've never ridden FEI, even at the lowest level you have had officials that have been trained to a high standard including the

vets there. And anybody that has sold horse in the last 15 years has had a benefit from the FEI being involved.

I'm just wondering what people see as a major cost savings in not having FEI because we can go back to having a championship event with no ground jury and one local vet and save a heap of costs, but I don't think people want to go back to those standards that were there perhaps 20 years ago. And if we still want a full vet panel, a treatment and officials actually how much money does get saved?

You've got FEI fees granted, but often in the past, I don't know what it's going to be like now, it has been just as cheap to get overseas or Australian Officials as it has to be transferring them between islands. There seems to be a major perception out there that we're going to save a fortune by not having FEI rides but I'm just wondering what people are prepared to change from what we've got now to make the major cost savings that people seem to be expecting.

Sue:

I understand that Murray. I don't think it's just the cost savings. It's also the fact that if you have a combined class you have to qualify under the same criteria, not everybody wants to be able to do that. So yes, we're not looking at getting rid of 3 vets or anything like that and yes sometimes it's cheaper or as cheap to get foreign officials but there is probably still a \$2-3000 saving if it's not an FEI event.

Ursula:

I think one of the biggest costs coming into this will be the fact that we need a lot more qualifying rides to enable our competitors to compete at a higher level which gets the entries up at those competitions. So I guess from my perspective it's not so much the cost of a ride but the number that will now be required, possibly four in each Island to get enough competitors qualified so they can compete at that level. And then there's also the individual additional costs that is harder to get members to pay when they are newer into the sport and thinking, do we do FEI or do we do CEN. They have to pay a higher rate to do FEI so it has become a little bit harder to encourage them through that pathway when they're not really interested in competing internationally.

Sean Trafford:

Can NZ clubs run enough FEI rides to enable us to meet the new star qualification criteria and retain them?

Jane Ferguson:

Noting that we won't be able to have riders from outside regions until we're Level 1 anyway.

Jenny Weston:

Well if we were able to get some dispensation then perhaps but even without the changes to the FEI rules we're depending on the number of entries. You need multiple foreign vets and all sorts of things and that's been pretty tough to do. I think when people are discussing this we're all kind of thinking there's the 30 or whatever FEI registered riders at the moment, but there's probably a whole bunch of people at a lower level in the sport that have never thought that they would end up wanting to do FEI rides.

Susan Reid:

And they get one good horse and then suddenly they want to do it. And dare I say it but what happens when the UAE decide they want to pay for things again and then everybody is going to want to be doing it.

Jenny Weston:

There are people who potentially will vote no but who don't really know what they might be missing out on and that they might want to do a few years down the track.

Marie:

Yes I don't think there's any one easy answer around this; it's a very complex and complicated situation really. None of us have got a crystal ball and Jane's comments from earlier that we won't be able to have riders from outside regions until Alert level 1 anyway and when's that going happen?

Sue:

Actually they changed rules on that during the week Jane. The government changed the rules and now you are allowed to travel inter regionally. If we do get to that point, and they are talking about a level 2.5, who knows between now and then what they might do at that level now. But they have taken away the restriction travel between regions.

Louise Holmes:

Is the compromise to continuing to be able to run FEI classes keeping them as combined classes and not being so anal about the like for like qualification needed when it will be the FEI riders/horses that have had to do extra qualifications rather than the CEN horses and maybe those FEI riders are happy with this if it enables FEI to be viable to continue.

Rachel Stocks:

I think that's a good idea if we are able to do that.

Jenny Weston:

The FEI riders and horses that have had to do extra qualifications than the CEN riders and horses and maybe those FEI riders are happy with those if that enables FEI I to be viable to continue. I think that the stumbling block here is we're not allowed to run a class starting at the same time unless it's been an approved combined class and for it to be an approved combined class thing everything has to be like for like.

Sue: I think that's open to interpretation. Jenny. I actually agree with Louise. And I think if you read the FEI rules about combined classes it doesn't say anything about qualifications.

Heidi:

I think you're right and that's definitely how Australia runs them. So they still run them combined on the day but definitely they haven't used the same rules or anything to get there.

Jo:

We could just take out the requirement to have the same qualification.

Jane Ferguson:

Definitely if it makes it still viable.

Sylvia Ireland:

Agree Jo

Sue:

Seems to me about three or four people will agree with that.

Marie:

So that's obviously food for thought as well.

Susan Reid:

Where will the AGM be held this year?

Marie:

So obviously we're reliant on what the government is going to do with regards to the Levels and the ability for people to move within the country. We've also been considering having an online AGM. The board has discussed either way what we would do. And so we have got a timeline for the AGM which we will be held on July 25th. But whether that is going to be a physical AGM or an online AGM hasn't been confirmed as yet.

Jenny Weston:

There was some discussion about a location if it was a physical AGM. I saw Air New Zealand are opening up to fly into a few more airports than what they've been doing and they will do and at level two. But at the moment, the cost of flights, given that they're sort of only having planes half full, there are no cheap flights and so places like Auckland or Wellington or Christchurch, although it is a North Island turn, are probably going to be cheaper to get to, if we're trying to get somewhere physically. But there's also a thought we might get a greater attendance via an online AGM such as this. That doesn't have some of the benefits, but it does make it more accessible if you don't actually have to spend a day or a weekend traveling to get somewhere. So I guess feedback on whether this would be okay for an AGM would be helpful. And the date of 25<sup>th</sup> July is the date for the AGM.

Sylvia Ireland:

I would vote for online AGM.

Jenny Weston:

And I guess potentially as well if we're aiming for something that's a physical AGM and make some bookings and everything that could all end up getting thrown up in the air if the Levels change again and we shut down if it gets worse. So, at least if we made a decision for online, it would have a better solution to around it. But I know not everyone is able to use the technology or has poor internet.

Marie:

We had 43 people I think register for this forum and I think I've seen the numbers go up to 31. And if we were to hold an online AGM and we still need to have a quorum, which is 30 people.

Jenny Weston:

I think we've had a maximum of 33 and some of the logins as multiple people like Daryl and Mike, Murray and Andrea. So we've got kind of got 35 at least attending at various times.

Marie:

So an online AGM would probably be more acceptable for a lot of people. I haven't had any feedback from anyone saying that they felt they couldn't attend because it was online. You guys are all here. So obviously, you could, but have you had feedback from any other members feeling that their internet wasn't good enough or they felt they couldn't get to somewhere where it would be good enough?

Jenny Weston:

We had Shane planning to be here and struggled and couldn't get on but he's managed to attend other board zoom meetings that we've had. So I'm not quite sure, maybe where he was is a worse connection.

Susan Reid:

Could we not hold a physical meeting and have zoom available for those who cannot make it?

Jenny Weston:

Yeah, I think that's definitely a possibility, but it doesn't work as well if you've got like 20 people in a room. It requires special setups of cameras and sound recordings and things for conveying what's happening in the main meeting room to be able to go out to the people who are more remote. And I don't have access to that. So if you're not in the physical meeting you feel very much like a lost and lonely soul on the outside. It's hard to work but it's a possibility. But to make it work properly you need to pretty good technology.

Marie:

Is there anything else that anybody would like to bring to the meeting before we go?

Daryl:

We just want you to know that it was in The Distance, and Marie said earlier on, that Board members want to stand down and really need to take a break and recharge their batteries. So if any of you want to make a difference then do consider standing for the Board. You don't need to travel to physical meetings and that makes it easier. So do give a thought to actually stepping forward to these positions.

Marie:

I think at this point we'll just wrap this up. And I'd just like to again say thank you to everybody for attending and it's really good to get feedback. And I know as I've mentioned earlier that I personally think that throughout the year having that direct communication straight with the club's when the information is relevant and it's made at the right times obviously will help give the board support and directing the sport in a way that all the clubs agree. Well, maybe not. But certainly with support it would make things easier for the board and for the clubs themselves as well.

Okay, so I think that is us for the day and hopefully we'll see you physically at the AGM but otherwise we'll catch you in cyberspace you again. Thanks for coming Ron and for your input.

Ron Guest:

Thanks for the opportunity.

Marie:

Okay. Well, everybody, have a good rest of the weekend. And also thank you to Dana for coming on and joining our forum.

So unless anyone has anything else they want to say I will declare the meeting closed at 4.25pm.