



August 23, 2007

Dear NRHA Board of Directors

I am writing on behalf of the Reining Alberta Board of Directors. We are a long standing NRHA Affiliate and the largest affiliate in Western Canada with over 450 members. Reining Alberta has been running NRHA approved classes for at least a decade. Our continued support of the NRHA is evidenced by the tremendous success of our two NRHA Classic shows, by our introduction of a third NRHA Classic show, and by the expansion of our NRHA affiliate show circuit. Many U.S. competitors make the trip up to our classic shows.

However, our membership wants to rein within a fiscally responsible organization that promotes clear communication through all levels of the decision making process that pertain to all aspects of their reining. Our membership wants an organization that they can trust is operating for its membership. Reining Alberta believes in governance that is based on transparency, communication, and accountability to members. The NRHA does not appear to be embracing that governance approach of late and its actions are alienating NRHA members throughout North America.

On behalf of our Reining Alberta members, the Board of Directors of Reining Alberta emphatically voices our opposition to the proposed NRHA membership fee increases and medication policy. The membership of the NRHA was not consulted about or involved in the decision to present these two rule changes. However, both rules dramatically affect the interests of all NRHA members

We have reviewed most of the letters currently posted on Whoazone from other NRHA affiliates. The Board of Reining Alberta supports and adopts the comments and positions in letters like the ones from the WRHA, the MRHA and from Shawn Flarida, just to mention a few. We fully support the request to either drop these two rules entirely or at least table them until there has been full consultation and discussion with the membership.

For the reasons already noted by other affiliates and the reasons noted below, the Board of Reining Alberta does not feel these rule changes are in the best interests of our members. We also feel that passing these rule changes will only result in greater controversy and division within the NRHA. Now is a time for the NRHA to focus on serving its members' needs and seeking positive change. We do not need any more damage to the sport of reining because of ill considered or poorly thought out proposals.

We do not consider the medications policy to be an effective solution to the concerns the NRHA indicates it is trying to address. The proposed medication policy has been opposed by reiners from entry level through to open NRHA reiners. Our membership has mandated that we as a board be fiscally responsible. The tremendous monetary costs incurred to gather unclear data with no clear purpose, format, or consequence to its collection is deemed to be highly irresponsible to our board. Just as the NRHA has recently resolved that it will have rule changes that overburden NRHA staff withdrawn, Reining Alberta will not support or implement rule changes that overburden our staff, show committees or administrative resources.

The proposed membership fee increase can only serve to reduce the membership numbers for Reining Alberta and the NRHA. You are already aware that our membership was confronted by mandatory dual membership last year. That change had the effect of more than doubling a Reining Alberta member's costs to compete in NRHA approved events. Now, less than a year later, the NRHA wants to double the membership fees again. Mandatory imposing of such things as "participation dues", subscription to the Reiner magazine, and "dual membership fees" in Canada offer no freedom of choice for the NRHA member and little or no direct return back to the NRHA member.

Entering the 2007 reining year with many political reining issues at the forefront, the board of directors for Reining Alberta have worked diligently to provide a year of reining shows and programs that meet the needs of ALL of our membership. We must also consider our members' desire to keep costs realistic. The NRHA's proposed fee increase would create a situation where costs have increased for our reiners at an unprecedented pace. Such a change is certain to create even more dissatisfaction with the NRHA and costs associated with reining and likely to result in lower membership numbers for both Reining Alberta and the NRHA.

In conclusion, the Reining Alberta Board of Directors strongly oppose the proposed 2008 membership fee increases and the proposed medication policy. We urge you to table both of these issues until clear investigation of all aspects of the proposals can be facilitated as they impact all levels of the NRHA membership

Sincerely,

Trish Rasmussen  
Reining Alberta President  
2007 Reining Alberta Board of Directors