

Off The Racquet

The Official
Publication
Of the
American
Polocrosse
Association

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www.americanpolocrosse.org

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President's Letter

Kellee Campbell

Today I had a call from a woman who runs the lab I use for any microbiological cultures I collect from my patients. She was chatty and friendly as usual, but phone calls from her are so rare (I'm usually haranguing her for results as anxious owners beg me for answers) that I had to wonder what was behind this first-ever (in 25 years!) reach out and touch effort. As it turns out, she was afraid that I had changed labs because she had noted a strong down-tick in the number of samples submitted by my clinic. Further questioning on my part about the state of veterinary medicine in the Austin area as reflected by the need for laboratory services revealed that she was dealing with a 10-25% reduction in her work volume. The phone call and friendly visit was an effort on her part to ward off further erosion of her client base and income by re-establishing a good relationship. In short, when the need to deal with a money crunch and income loss hit her, this determined business owner stepped out of her comfort zone and stretched to find ways to meet her financial needs.

Many of us are in the same boat with Betty, struggling to find ways to balance our wants and needs as polocrosse players with an increasingly harsh economic reality. Like Betty, with planning and perhaps some compromise, we can find creative ways to indulge our need for horses while staying within our budgets.

If you are finding the costs of maintaining your horse to be more than you can support by yourself, consider splitting those expenses with someone else by leasing your mount to another player. The lease can be short or long term and can involve full or part-time use of the horse, but the details regarding care and financial responsibilities should be covered in contract form and clearly understood by all parties involved in the arrangement.

If money is too tight to purchase a horse of your own, look around for someone who might need help with a horse that they own, but may not have the time to exercise. Free labor -cleaning stalls and tack, feeding and/or working the horse on a regular basis- can be a very effective bargaining chip. An agreement can be made for you to contribute routine care or leg the horse up in exchange for the right to play it on some agreed upon dates. Again, make sure everyone knows what they are expected to do or contribute, and get it in writing before starting.

On those weekends that you don't have access to a horse of your own, offer to goal tend or umpire for others. Umpiring at least gets you on a horse, and firing off a long ball return to the umpire while goal tending is a great chance to practice your racquet skills. And who knows, in the end, if you practice those ball skills enough you may be offered a horse to play with teams looking for a "hired gun".

While there is nothing like playing your own horse in polocrosse, being able to play at all, even on someone else's horse, runs a close second. Don't let a tight budget force you to give up the thrill of our sport. Utilize the web to search for and network with others in the polocrosse community or the horse-owning public in general. Let people know about your needs, skills and availability. With determination and a flexible attitude you can find your way around some pretty big road blocks and onto the playing field!

See you there— and be safe!

Kellee

IT IS APA ELECTION TIME: SEE PAGE 8

Now is the time for you to help the APA. Run for office and work to build the sport of polocrosse. The offices of Vice President, Secretary to the Board, 2 Board At Large positions, Mountain Zone Representative and Western Zone Representative are up for election. Terms are 2 years long. Details are on the last page of this newsletter.



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BOARD NEWS

BOARD TELECONFERENCE

August 5, 2009

Present: Kellee Campbell, Jim Byrd, Erica Vallee, Laura Humphreys, Kiki Pantaze, Jessica Lovelace, John Jameson, Donna Ellis, Deb Zito, Betsy Lovelace, Wayne Cooper

Chairs Present: Amy Keith, Victoria Prince

Past Minutes

The minutes from April 7, 2009 were approved, with the addition of Victoria Prince's name to those present.

Treasurer's Report

Erica Vallee has been greatly frustrated with Wachovia Bank. She feels she is second in the chain of information, and is behind the motion when she is asked questions because recording and deposits are done elsewhere. The wire transfer for IPC dues was not able to happen after many tries, and the reasoning is still unclear. Debit cards were another place where Wachovia failed. Erica suggests that the APA change banks and January 2010 may be a good time.

Kellee Campbell asked if there had been a notable drop in membership. Erica Vallee and Laura Humphreys both felt that there has been in comparison to other years. In early August of 2008, we had \$14,000 income from membership. In early August of 2009 there was \$10,000; a 25% drop. But cap fees are up from sanctioned tournaments.

Nationals Report

Laura Humphreys went over the latest Nationals news and budget. There was a discussion on the difficulty of planning without knowing more definite numbers. Laura had an idea that required players to sign up in late spring with a non-refundable amount that would make the balance easier for players to pay off before the event. It was decided that without a sizeable discount as an incentive, it would be too hard of an idea to sell and we could not afford to discount much.

Numbers were discussed; and it seems like there will be a fair amount at the event. The question was raised about rental horses. (*Liz Gleeson has suggested after this meeting that it is doubtful that any polo horses would be for rent.*) There was a discussion that Masters should still be treated as a regular division. Kellee Campbell said the 3 day event would be more leisurely, and we can be done by 2 or 3 PM on Sunday; games would be on the hour. We could have an exhibition with Simon Nike, who has bred the premier ASH stallion in Australia.

Gregg Veit's email was discussed. He could not keep his kids out of school as long as it would take to travel to Nationals and back, and could not afford airline tickets for them to shorten the trip either. He had often heard that the future of the sport was our youth, yet Nationals 2009 is during school, making them take at least one day off. A discussion followed. Jim Byrd felt it should be a 2 day tournament and sometimes one day can make a difference. Kiki Pantaze said that 2 days puts more stress on the umpires and schedules.

Amy Keith brought up that, as Chief Umpire, she wants every team to bring a good quality umpire horse and be responsible for providing for that umpire horse. Kellee Campbell stated that the APA has always comped the stay of umpire horses, but the APA now cannot carry that cost. It has to be considered an expense of teams, because nobody can play the sport without umpires and umpire horses. Erica Vallee pointed out that it will be difficult for players because now we are dealing with a site that does not have a local club in the area and many players will already have a full trailer. Laura Humphreys asked what Pony Club does for its Nationals. Donna Ellis said that they pay for gas for those horses to come. She felt we should reach out to the local community for umpire horses and we could give a clinic for local PCer's. As it stands, when umpire horses are brought, a club can arrange for its use at Nationals. The question was asked that if got rental horses, who would pay? The club should pay. Kellee Campbell said the message is that everyone has to pitch in and will be expected to cover some of the expense.

Amy Keith also asked Board Members to remind players about the new helmet rule. Jim Byrd asked that since the New Derby seemed to be a popular helmet, if it was 'legal' with or without the face mask. Amy said that it is legal with or without it at this time.

International Polocrosse Council

John Jameson attended the meeting and Amy Keith attended the umpire meeting. Some recommendations were made on some international rules that were accepted. There were a wide variety of viewpoints. They reviewed financial statements of the IPC; no money has been spent, so there is a decent amount in the bank. For World Cup 2011, the UK group had selected a great site and have a good way to run it. They are still working on horses, and have cut a deal with the Irish for 20 + horses. There will also be a full tournament running during World Cup, as it was a main way to get people there. Countries competing will be: UK, US, AU, IR, NZ, SA, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The entry fee will be \$2,000 pounds per team.

International Umpire Meeting

Amy Keith said that besides the World Cup, the most important thing the IPC does is deal with the international rules, as they influence rules in each country. She felt the APA must continue to be active in its presence in the IPC; that our Chief Umpire needs to continue to contribute. One thing that will change is the international rule where the # 1 is positioned on a missed goal. The old rule is that the # 3 must follow on the # 1's horses hip. The new rule is that the # 3 must *follow behind* (coming from the area) and be no closer than 10 yards.

The other new thing the IPC wants to incorporate is that it will be illegal to reach across the center line of the opposing players' horse. That will include picking up a ball off the ground and hitting a racquet. These were the major changes, others were minor. There was some discussion of every country adopting the international rules.

John Jameson also said that they watched a test match

BOARD NEWS *(continued)*

between the UK and South Africa. The women's game was great to watch; it was very clean. The men's game was out of control and the umpires didn't control the game well. This is something we experience here.

Foreign Player Policy

The current foreign player policy states that "each team from the US may allow only 1 non-resident player per team, that player to come in as they are rated at or above their home country rating."

John Jameson made a motion to change the current foreign player policy to allow more than one foreign player on a team, stating that the basis for the change was that the UK did this years ago and found that the level of play was better due to foreign players and that the Board must make sure that Nationals is financially viable. By allowing more foreign players, we would increase the number of participants and help insure that Nationals covers tournament costs and hopefully make a reasonable profit. He felt we are too small of an organization to limit a group of players from participating. He also said his son was planning on playing with a team that would have 2 foreign players this year. If Canada wanted to send a team with 6 players, they should be eligible to win. He thought the APA should try this for three years, and then assess the impact. He said it did improve the play in the UK. They should be required to pay dues, and come with a letter of good standing, showing their rating. We have rated incoming players as high as possible in the past, so if they were not rated with the APA, they would come in as a 20, since we are on a 20 point scale now. This would most likely place a team with foreign players in an upper division. The Board discussed this email prior to the teleconference, so they could contact APA members.

Kellee Campbell told the Board that this issue arose every year when she was on the Board. She sees the positives as bringing better players in for social networking (clinics etc.), we'd get better play at tournaments and it would then raise our level of play. The negative reactions to this change seem to be based on fear by reasoning that it would damage the sport, a non-American would win a buckle and APA players would be dissatisfied. Many do say that the American Nationals needs to be won by an American. It seems that those most affected would be the A and B level teams.

Deb Zito said that in talking to Eastern Zone club presidents, the main thoughts were that there'd be a lot of dissent if ringers were brought in; that we'd need to make the playing field even and should give every club the chance to bring in more than one foreign player and it was too close to Nationals to change the rule. She said members wanted a definition of what a foreign player was. *(It is a non-resident, as stated in our current policy)* Some are concerned that others could afford great players. Betsy Lovelace said she spent a lot of time on the phone with members of her zone. Only 3 thought the policy should stay the same. The rest had no problem with, say, 4 out of 6 foreign players on a team, but not 6 out of 6. There were thoughts

that the foreign player should be in the country 30 days prior to play in a tournament, but they realized that Canadians can't do this. Benefits would be coaching. Wayne Cooper said that this was a big deal, a big change. Canada could be allowed in for this year, but we should do a general election next year. We should let the members decide.

Laura Humphreys told the Board that the motion was a concern because it was so close to Nationals this year. Kellee Campbell reminded everyone that no Nationals information had gone out yet (planned to go out the next morning) so everyone will get the information at the same time.

Jim Byrd suggested John's motion be amended to allow foreign players for one year instead of three. Erica Vallee stated that if you looked at other US Championships in other sports, a US player is the winner. She felt the timing of this was off. John Jameson said that there are plenty of sports where the winner does not have to be a US citizen.

The amended motion reads that the Board change the current foreign player policy to allow unlimited number of foreign players on a Nationals team and be eligible to win the event. Foreign players must be in good standing with their home country's polocrosse association in order to participate and will be required to pay full APA membership fees. The new policy will be in effect for one year.

Board voting:

Jim Byrd: yes

Erica Vallee: no

Kiki Pantaze: yes

Jessica Lovelace: yes

John Jameson: yes

Donna Ellis: yes

Wayne Cooper: no

Betsy Lovelace: yes

Deb Zito: no

Alli Venne: not present

Laura Humphreys: no

Motion passes.

Jim Byrd said we needed to buy a permanent place for the APA, or build a kitty to do so. We could use it and lease it all year. It'd be a good way to get sponsor money. Kellee Campbell said we still had to get people to a central location.

Membership Dues Reminder for 2010

Starting in 2010, the Family rate will be \$105 for checks sent in and \$110 for credit card payment (there are credit card costs to the APA). The Individual Senior rate will be \$65 for checks sent in and \$70 for credit card payment.

The Junior rate will be \$35 for checks sent in and \$40 for credit card payment.

A late fee of 20% will be in effect after 1.31.09.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Former APA President Turns Author

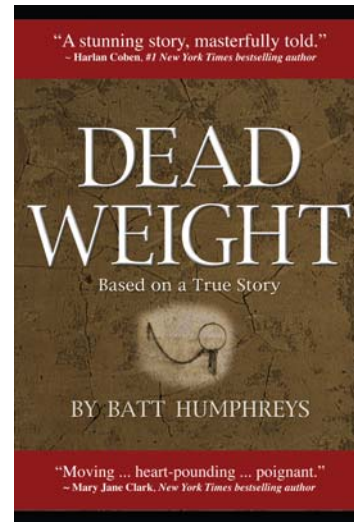
Many of you remember Batt Humphreys, who was the APA President from 1999 through 2002. In 2007, he ended a successful and eventful career of 25 years in the news business; 15 of them spent as a Senior Producer in network news at CBS in New York City. He managed the coverage of many of the events that have shaped our lives over the past quarter century, including September 11, 2001, several wars, elections and hurricanes, executions and more murders than he cares to remember.

The intent was to slow down and return to the southern area where he and his wife, Laura, first met over polo horses. The dream of writing a book had been in the background of his mind for years, but he did not really think it would come to pass. But the 'coincidence' of networking brought him to a century old headline story. Most of the research had been done, but this true story needed a rewrite. Here was his chance to write a novel where he could tell the facts through characters. The place is Charleston, South Carolina; a place where characters and history abound. The year is 1910. It's title is *Dead Weight*, a reference to how hangings were done.

Did Batt put parallels of his life in the book? Well, a fictional reporter narrates the tale from an interesting viewpoint (Batt was a reporter early in his career). If you know Batt and Laura, you will also recognize some names put to a few characters. Hal Hinson is a northerner coming to a southern city with a northern viewpoint. The beauty of the city and surrounding area is there, but so is ugly racial divide. A young, hard working black man is in the wrong place at the wrong time and is convicted of murder on the eve of his wedding. He becomes the last man hanged in South Carolina and he was innocent. The story involves much more than the court struggle, and what life was like in 1910. There are love stories told, entertaining characters, humor and adventure. There are plantations, horses, crisis and news to be told. There is also a hurricane that really happened.

Walking into a new industry, the process of publishing a book has been an adventure in itself. While it took about 4 months to write in spare time, there were many months of editing, galleys (a type of book printed to see how it all looks that you send to people for opinions), more editing, teeth gnashing (what's the cover going to look like...a zillion things on it or plain and simple?) and then the real fun begins. Once it is published as a 'real' book, there are appearances, interviews (newspaper, radio, TV) and book signings to do. Bookstores begin to buy books after interest has been sparked.

Now, this may sound somewhat glamorous, but Batt can tell you of appearing in mall bookstores with an Elvis impersonator performing down the hall (he sold a book to him later), doing luncheons with 60 women who were all over 60 (just a different atmosphere for a hard news guy), going to small town bookstores where the 'town walker' comes in to talk about sci-fi. He's had to be a salesman and get the



book into hands of buyers. He said it feels a little like being a politician, just an odd thing to hawk your own book. Can a wife go along? Not really, someone just hanging around can scare off potential customers. The wife can go shopping, though; but mostly stays at home to take care of the animals.

All authors have to do this, even the established ones. And, on the other hand, it's been exhilarating to have everyone he's talked to say how much they like the book. There's been a wonderful publicist get him into great key places in the south, and the book is about to have a national launch over the AP wires. He's been humbled that nationally respected authors (remember the galleys?) have given quotes about how good the book is and some appear on the cover. He just spent a weekend at a booksellers convention meeting a lot of established writers. He is thrilled to be cast in that lot.

From time to time, Batt talks about returning to polocrosse. At the moment, his horses are enjoying a more laid back life as he plans his second book. Go visit him on the website, www.deadweight.us If you want to read it, the book is currently sold there and also at Amazon.com.



Batt Humphreys, APA Past President

TOURNAMENT NEWS

Spring Valley, August 2009

A Grade

1st Place: Charlie Horse: Jamie Zito, Deb Zito, Greg Russell
2nd Place: Spring Valley: Jeff Thompson, Stef Freundlich, Tess Oberdick
Best Player: Tess Oberdick
Best Horse: Pistol, Greg Russell

B Grade

1st Place: Orange County: David Brooks, Shannon Molsky, Alan Hale
2nd Place: Sugarloaf/Spring Valley: Adam Fay, Lizzie Cook, Peter Balogh
Best Player: Peter Balogh
Best Horse: Shannon Molsky

C Grade

1st Place: Spring Valley: Nick Moebius, Lynn Thompson, Dawn Oberdick
2nd Place: Orange County: Chris Wolf, Kevin Scott, Mark Hauser
Best Player: Chris Wolf
Best Horse: Heguy, Chris Wolf

D Grade

1st Place: Bucks 1: Cheri Brown, Bonnie Shriner, Zach Weldon
2nd Place: Sugarloaf: Audra Campbell, Angela Campbell
Best Player: Audra Campbell
Best Horse: Audra Campbell

TOURNAMENT DATES

October 2-4, 2009

S • Nationals • Busch Family Polo Grounds, St. Louis Missouri •
Laura Humphreys • (914) 475-5117

October 24-25, 2009

S - Eastern Zone Championships Tournament • Crooked Creek Farm, Hurdle Mills, NC
Debbie Zito • (352) 266-9326 • dycharliehorse@yahoo.com

Comments: A, B, C, D, Juniors and Pee Wee. Divisions will be sectionals
(depending on number of entries-six man teams may apply).

Pee Wee division will play one game each day.

Juniors division will be limited to novice level players (total team rating of 7 or less).

All other juniors should play in the regular divisions.

Closing Date: Friday, October 9th, 2009.

ELECTION NOTICE

For Senior APA Members:

It is time to begin the process of nominating for board positions that are up for election this year. This year offers openings for the following positions: President, Treasurer, Board Position 3, Board Position 4, Central Zone Representative, and Eastern Zone Representative.

We need to elect the following positions:

Vice President----(now held by Jim Byrd)
Secretary----(now held by Laura Humphreys)
Board at Large----(now held by Jessica Lovelace)
Board at Large----(now held by Kiki Pantaze)
Mountain Zone Representative----(now held by Betsy Lovelace)
Western Zone Representative----(now held by Wayne Cooper)

APA Senior members may nominate themselves, or any other Senior member in good standing.

- Nominations will close November 2nd, 2009
- Ballots will be mailed to Senior members on November 15th, 2009
- Ballots will be accepted no later than December 15th, 2009

The Nominating Committee is:

Kellee Campbell kelleekc@aol.com
Kathleen Balogh rkbalogh@comcast.net
Renee Thompson hornranch@yahoo.com

Please send your nominations to one of the committee members above.



American Polocrosse Association
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