



# National Office News Sheet - February 2004

As usual, we are "flat out like a lizard drinking". There is so much happening, and so much that should be done, that I almost forgot about this newsletter.

## E-Mailing List Increases

We updated the address list recently to include over 1,000 new members. A special welcome goes to wild\_angel, textile\_and\_lace, slicey\_babe, sparkplug, sexy\_babe, roxy\_chick, quicksilverhottie, naturallyequipped, love2hugU, funky\_podge & funky\_chic, dressagechic and drama\_queen. Hang in there! We are constantly reviewing our range of member services and hope that one day will have something to satisfy all your need.

Whilst we add names to the list all the time, we remove about 150 or so every month because they either ceased to function or have SPAM filters that stop this e-mail. One can, of course, set SPAM filters in a way that allows certain e-mail to get through but unfortunately this message will not get to those members who have such filters. One member asked to be removed from the mailing list because he received a virus alert that mentioned my/our address. This may well be so. However, the e-mail address list is not in an address book but in an Excel spreadsheet that is accessed by a mail merge program, so the source of the virus is not here. These viruses often show addresses randomly picked from infected address books so you may get infected mail from other members that have both your and our addresses in their address book. Also, our virus detection program checks for available virus definition updates every hour.

## Nominations, Nominations

Nominations for the **National Board** close Monday, 08 March 2004, and that's coming up fast. There are five Board vacancies for election by "shareholders" (Branches). If you are interested, please check out the material on our web at [http://www.efanational.com/content/the\\_efa/board\\_elections.htm](http://www.efanational.com/content/the_efa/board_elections.htm). The Shareholders will be looking for a mix of skills and experience, including some "all-rounders, I am sure.

We are also asking for expressions of interest for the honorary position of **National Medication Control Officer**. Details for this position are available through a link on our home page [www.efanational.com](http://www.efanational.com). Soon, we will also call for expressions of interest for the honorary position of Chief Medical Officer, so keep checking our web, and you don't have to be a medico to find something interesting there.

## National Squads

Details of our National Squads are becoming available and get posted to the web when they are publicly released. The addresses are:

Dressage: [http://www.efanational.com/content/sports/dressage\\_current.htm](http://www.efanational.com/content/sports/dressage_current.htm),

Eventing: <http://www.efanational.com/content/sports/eventing.htm> and

Jumping: <http://www.efanational.com/content/sports/jumping.htm> .

## National Committees

We have had a number of National Committees meet in recent weeks, the last one (Eventing) this Saturday. Notes from the Dressage meeting in January are published on our web at [http://www.efanational.com/content/sports/dressage\\_current.htm](http://www.efanational.com/content/sports/dressage_current.htm). Other Committees are, of course, free to do the same. I get the odd complaint that I have not mentioned a particular discipline or area. In general terms, unless I get prompted, I mention what I have come across and what I believe some of you might find to be of interest, and what people have asked me to include.

## Web Usage

I may not have mentioned this but our system keeps records of how our web is accessed. The average number of hits, visits, etc. has more than doubled over the last 18 months. January 2004 set an all-time record, with more than double the number of visits and an incredible amount of downloads. The Dressage Rule book and tests downloaded that month accounted for more than 3.5 Gigabytes, and this is not counting December and February when demand has also been strong. Until then, the Eventing Rulebook had been the leader in downloads. As far as visits are concerned, the previous peaks were during WEG 2002, the month when this e-mail newsletter came out, the Olympic qualifiers in August 2003 and the insurance renewals in September/October 2003.

## Australian Olympic Youth Festival

Equestrian is privileged to be included in the next Festival that is being organised by the Australian Olympic Committee for January 2005. This is a first for the sport as we have not been successful on previous occasions. Our participation is, however, restricted to Dressage and Jumping, something that will disappoint our young Eventing riders. If Equestrian "scores well" this time, we may be able to talk the AOC into including Eventing in 2007. There are still many things to be sorted out. Jenny Carroll (Dressage), Katrina Dukats (Jumping) and I will attend a seminar about the AYOF next Tuesday. In due course, we will add a special section to our web but for an overview, you can go to <http://www.olympics.com.au/?pg=youth&spg=main>

## Athens 2004 Olympic Games

Our National Coach Wayne Roycroft, our Olympic Team Manager Gareth McKeen and I attended the final Olympic team management meeting with the Australian Olympic Committee in February. All Olympic sports were represented. We received briefings on aspects of the Olympic preparation including security issues, travel policies, uniform and outfitting issues, athlete information collection, media services, Olympic village layout, venue updates etc etc. Having been the Competition Manager for Equestrian at the Sydney Olympic Games it brought back many memories (not all fond!) of the huge amount of issues that have to be addressed. The National Office and Gareth in particular will be very busy between now and August with fulfilling all the administrative requirements, implementing plans and liaising with the AOC and the Athens Organising Committee to ensure the needs of our team are met.

## High Performance and the Australian Sports Commission

The high performance area continues to move along and Gareth has advised me of a couple of new initiatives that have been put in place in the various programs. Examples of these include a greater emphasis on recognising the role of horse owners at the high performance end of the sport, taking a case management approach to the needs to riders and how the EFA can assist the riders within the high performance guidelines. There is also the

appointment of a medical officer and a more formal approach to running training clinics in the UK for the Eventers based there, to name but a few.

The government requirements and paperwork also continue to take up a significant part of our attention. Both Gareth and I have had separate meetings with the ASC in recent weeks, for different reasons. The \$1.2 million per year from the ASC for our high performance area requires significant work by the EFA to receive in the first place and then acquit financially. We continue to battle the perception that equestrian riders are all wealthy. Part of our challenge is to convince the funding agencies that not only is this perception largely incorrect but that Equestrian deserves to be included in the mainstream of Australian sports funding. We will continue to fight the good fight on behalf of our riders and members and with Athens around the corner the anticipation of another successful campaign should keep our motivation high.

## **EFA Coach Education Development**

**New Course** - 2003-04 has seen the exploration and development of new concepts within the NCAS scheme, particularly the idea of a 'NEW LOWER' coaching accreditation level that is aimed at coaching beginner riders. After significant consultation this concept has nearly come to fruition with a "Draft Level 1 Trainee" syllabus during 2003. This draft syllabus was endorsed by the EFA National NCAS Committee in February 2004.

**Long Term Planning** - At a meeting held recently, the National NCAS Committee discussed at great length the future of NCAS courses within the sport of Equestrian. Although this issue seems like a matter of 'simple planning', I can assure all members that it is not. Equestrian Coaching/Instructing pursuits are a fast-growing and highly regarded professional vocation within the Australian community. Therefore EFA coaching awards (issued under NCAS) are affected by issues that flow from the wider Australian Education Framework, namely the Vocational Education and Training Sector. In order to provide effective planning for further course development, the EFA NCAS Committee has started a process to establish a 4-6 year direction for EFA Courses and their relationship with other training sectors. This plan will be in line with the EFA's National Strategic Plan, for the future development of the sport.

**BTW, a new issue of *The Equestrian Coach* newsletter will go out next week**

## **EFA Management Conference**

Branch Managers from all States (except the NT) met with me in Hobart last week, to continue work on "harmonising" processes and procedures across the country. One result is that we developed a new set of member categories that will be put to the National Board in the first place and will if accepted lead to changes to Branch Constitutions. As a consequence of the EFA Governance Review, we will develop a Memorandum of Understanding of how the National organisation and the Branches will work together, to achieve the best possible outcome for Equestrian in this country.

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I was going to keep this short but now look what happened ....

Make it a good day.

**Franz Venhaus**