

# HIGH COUNTRY WORKING EQUITATION

[www.highcountryworkingequitation.com](http://www.highcountryworkingequitation.com)



## Letter from the Board

And then there were two . . . .

In November, in the world of Working Equitation, USA, the three national organizations (WEIAUSA, USFWE and WE United) came together to create a single set of rules, regulations and tests to govern Working Equitation in the United States. The discrepancies between the rules governing the Ease of Handling phase have been cleaned up, the dressage tests have been rewritten, and the performance levels have been expanded. Prior to the creation of the US Rules for Working Equitation there were five levels (Intro, Novice, Intermediate, Advanced and Master's) for WEIAUSA and WE United. After the consolidation, there are now seven levels (more in line with USFWE's original structure) with less of a jump in difficulty between them. This was a huge step forward for WE and the final product is very well-crafted.

This new set of rules was published as the governing rule set for the United States in November, 2016. There is one difference in the rules as published by WE United versus the other two organizations: they will allow a bilaterally blind horse to compete in WE United licensed shows. WEIAUSA and USFWE do not have that clause added to their published rules. Otherwise, the rules are the same.

At the end of November, there were still three national

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# RMHE & HCWE

## Working Equitation w/ Tarrin Warren March 8th – 12th

Once again, HCWE is joining up with Rocky Mountain Horse Expo in bringing Working Equitation to the National Western Event Center March 8<sup>th</sup> thru 12<sup>th</sup>. This is the second year RMHE and HCWE have offered a B-Rated Show the two days prior to the start of the Expo. The dressage show will start at 9 am on March 8<sup>th</sup>. The Ease of Handling and Speed trials will take place on March 9<sup>th</sup>, starting at 9 am. Everyone is welcome to come and watch the show free of charge.



*Clinic work at Expo 2016*

After the show, Tarrin will be offering clinics through the Ride With The Experts program during the Expo. During those clinics, Tarrin will be working with the riders who are signed up for her classes. Last year, the clinics were structured around working through the obstacles in a way that utilized the training the horses had in dressage and applying those principals to the obstacles. Riders also learned to handle the garrocha pole, which was very enlightening in identifying the holes in the horse's training.



*Helping a new-to-WE rider and her horse become more comfortable with the garrocha pole.*

The clinics are held for both the riders and the spectators and the clinicians are very good at communicating what they are seeing/teaching to the audience. Clinic attendance is free with Expo entry and we would encourage everyone to come down and watch Tarrin's sessions. The rules for Working Equitation in the United States changed this year, and some of the expectations for the obstacles have changed.

Additionally, in the barn will be a High Country Working Equitation display and a TNT Quarter Horse display. Trainers and board members from HCWE and Tarrin will be available off and on all weekend to talk horses, Working Equitation and answer any questions you might have. You can also walk through the barns and visit with other riders and all of the wonderful horses.

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# Rocky Mountain Horse Expo

## March 10th – 12th

The horse industry in the United States is a very large and important part of our national, state and local economies spread across a diverse platform: agriculture (hay, grain, pasture), sport (racing, reining, polo, shows) gaming (gambling), entertainment (rodeos, Cavalia) and recreation (most of us). Overall, there are 9.2 million horses in the United States used both commercially and for pleasure. Recreational use accounts for almost half of the horses in the U.S. In Colorado alone, there are at least 250 thousand horses, with over 70% of them involved in showing or recreation.

The Rocky Mountain Horse Expo is held at the National Western Show Complex and produced by the Colorado Horse Council. The CHC is a grass-roots, open breed, open discipline organization dedicated to protecting our common equine interests by acting as a liaison between the State of Colorado and the horse community. They have been instrumental in changing laws to protect the industry, have communicated important legislative issues to the horse community, work with localities to keep multi-use trails open to horses, and also produce the Rocky Mountain Horse Expo.

The Expo is part trade show (located in the hall of education), and part clinics, with well-known and less well-known clinicians offering clinics and information throughout the three days. RMHE offers a Ride with the Experts program, where equestrians can stay at the National Western Stock Show grounds and ride with various clinicians throughout the weekend. Part of the events this year will

include the Equine Comeback Challenge and the Colt Starting Challenge.

### **RMHE Clinicians for 2017:**

**Tarrin Warren:** Working Equitation

**Julie Goodnight:** Versatility Ranch Horse, horsemanship

**Frances Carbonnel:** Western Dressage

**Jason Patrick:** Reined Cowhorse, Ranch Horse Versatility, Reining, Cutting, and Ranch Horse Pleasure

**Cal Middleton:** Reining, Cowhorse, Western Dressage, Ranch Pleasure

**Lyn Ringrose:** Cowboy Dressage

**Melissa Pierce:** Equine Gestalt Coaching Method therapy method

**Cody Harrison:** Bio-mechanics, riding skills, relaxation, balance

**Anna Twinney:** Natural Horsemanship, Animal Communicator and Reiki Master

**Justin Dunn:** Mustang Makeovers, Mustang Horsemanship School

**Mike Brashear:** Ranch Horse Versatility, Foundation-To-Finished

**Steuart Pittman:** Retired Race Horse Project, Tai Chi

**Richard Shrake:** Resistance Free Riding and Training Methods

**Dan Craig:** Barefoot Farrier

# Rocky Mountain Horse Expo

## March 10th – 12th

**Sharon Bringleston:** Center for Horses and Healing

**Brent Winston:** Director of Dumb Friends League Harmony Equine Center, Cowboy Poet

**Ashara Morris:** Animal Communicator

**Dennis Kuehl:** Colorado Draft Horse Association

**Russell Beatty:** Colt Starting Challenge

**Nicole Collins:** Complete Equestrian Vaulters

**Travis Smith & Benjumen Denney:** Iron Sixes Horsemanship, Mounted Shooters

**Side Saddle Sisters of OK:** Sidesaddle,

**Cliff Swanson:** “Smart Start” colt starting, Western Dressage

**Carol Walker:** Horse photography

**Kris Garrett:** Videotaping/Photography

The Equine Comeback Challenge is a program designed to help rescue horses find a new job and a chance at a forever home. The horses are put into full-time training with trainers from all over the country for 120 days. This provides the trainers the opportunity to showcase the ability of rescue horses. The horse and trainer pairs compete in the 120 day transformation process which allows the horses to show their true ability as an equine partner.

There will be four classes where the teams show off their abilities during the Expo. There will be a Ranch Riding Class on 3/11 from 10am to 11am, a Working Cattle Class on 3/11 from 2pm to 4pm, a Ranch Trail Class on 3/12 from 8am to 10am, and finally the Top Ten Freestyle on 3/12 at 2pm. An auction to sell the horses showcased in this event will happen immediately following the Freestyle class.

Friday and Saturday nights, there is also the Mane Event. This is a show put on by clinicians and riders highlighting reining, racing, piaffe and playing. This show is ticketed separately.



*Chris Stanko on CO  
“Dance of the Garrocha”*

Regardless of the discipline, there is something for everyone to see, learn from or buy at the Expo. The cost for the Expo is \$10 a day or \$25 for a three-day pass. The money will be used to promote horse related legislation, to keep trails open and to ensure all equestrians will be able to enjoy horse activities into the future.

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# KICK-OFF PARTY

It was a pretty day for the High Country Working Equitation 2017 Kick-Off party, especially for the end of January. The party provided the perfect opportunity for us to reconnect after the long winter.



Many of our members, who are excited about Working Equitation, brought along friends who were new to the sport. It was exciting to see a few kids at the party; one of the goals for the board of HCWE this year is to develop a youth program with the local 4-H chapters.



*One of the youngsters riding a Stick Poneh*

Our hosts, Kitty and Gary McLaughlin, graciously provided access to Circle Star Arena even though they were off on a horse adventure of their own, taking their RV and horses for three weeks of riding in Arizona. Their beautiful arena provided us with plenty of space for nearly 60 guests to mingle and socialize with like-minded equestrians.



There was lots of good food to warm our bellies and energize us as some brave souls rode stick horses through the obstacle course set up in the arena and designed by Karen Burch.



The course consisted of a single and double slalom, gate, garrocha pole and bull, sidepass poles, jug, cloverleaf barrels and bell corridor.



Introductory level riders “trotted” their horses over the course while our novice and intermediate riders “cantered”.

# KICK-OFF PARTY



Instructors were on hand to provide an explanation for how to approach and ride the obstacles or simply answer questions about the sport. Chris Stanko led some discussion of the new structure of the national organizations and talked briefly about the new set of rules and tests that HCWE will be using this year for our competitions.

Karen Burch donated several, beautiful bridle charms and a customized, beaded browband to one lucky person.



Renewing members were given a beautiful patch with the High Country Working Equitation logo on it – perfect for a jacket, saddle pad, or other attire.



*Silja practicing her drums*

There were lots of prizes, including some private and group Working Equitation lessons, generously provided by our local instructors, Chris Stanko, Kitty McLaughlin, Keith Jacobson, Lauren Gueswel and Allison Mazurkiewicz.



The party was the stepping off point for this year's clinic and show season and seemed to generate the enthusiasm, camaraderie, and excitement we were all hoping for. We're looking forward to seeing many of you throughout the year. Thank you for coming!

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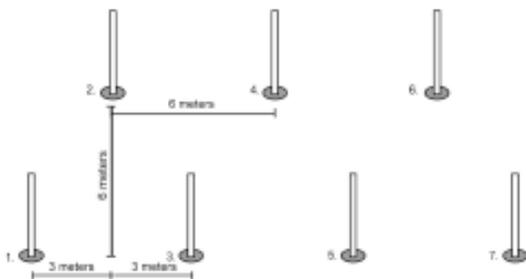
# OBSTACLE:

## SLALOM BETWEEN PARALLEL POLES

From the USA National Rulebook: 2017

### a. Description

This obstacle consists of an odd number of upright posts: minimum of five; seven recommended; minimum of seven for Advanced and Masters levels. Each post is approximately 2 m (6.5 ft) in height, with a base not secured to the ground. The posts are arranged in two staggered parallel lines, with a distance of 6 m (20 ft) between the parallel lines and between each post on the line. The posts are staggered such that the midpoint between the first two posts of the first line is directly opposite the first post of the second line.



### b. Execution

The horse will perform half loops or turns of consistent size around the posts, in the direction indicated by the flags. Changes of lead/bend are performed halfway between the posts and on the line between the successive posts. Children, Introductory (L1), and Novice A (L2) riders perform this obstacle at a trot. The horse's lead and bend should conform to the direction of the turn.

### c. Assessment Criteria (EOH)

The judge will evaluate the horse's calm, precise action; quality of gait; fluid and continuous movement; overall manner in performing this obstacle; and the quality of the lead changes or changes of bend. The judge should consider correctness and attitude during the change of lead and/or changes of bend through the horse's body, and the horse's bend around the posts. Failure to perform lead changes or changes of bend will result in a lower score. The shape, symmetry, and precision of the turns for this obstacle, and the horse's response to the rider's aids will be considered. A negative score will be given for knocking down any of the posts.

### Judging Guidelines for All Obstacles:

The following are some general judging guidelines. They are intended to provide guidance on the standards expected of upper level working equitation competitors, and how certain movements may be judged as either sufficient or insufficient.

### **Mark No Higher than Five**

- Horse is contracted
- No bend or incorrect bend in horse
- Horse is above or behind the bit
- Horse is resistant
- Irregular gait
- Tension
- Loss of diagonal in rein back or dragging feet in rein back

# OBSTACLE:

## SLALOM BETWEEN PARALLEL POLES

### Negative Mark (4 or below)

Step back during halt or transitions to halt  
Lateralized walk  
Lack of clear, 3-beat canter  
Back legs moving together in change of lead  
Refusal or knocking down an obstacle (EOH)

*As an added benefit for our readers, we asked Tarrin Warren to answer a few questions about the obstacle, in order to help clarify and elucidate the Judge's perspective.*

### Insight from Tarrin Warren:

#### ***As a judge, what would be your first criteria when riding the Slalom between Parallel posts?***

As with any obstacle, rhythm is very important. The beats of the gait should not change. The tempo should remain consistent through the entire obstacle. But changes of bend and changes of lead are paramount for the horse to be correctly balanced for the obstacle.

The engagement in the turns is essential to prepare the horse for the change of lead and the change of bend. If the horse is on the forehand in the turn, they will not be able to effectively perform the change of lead and will not be prepared for the next turn.

#### ***What would you expect to see improve between levels? For example, moving from L2 to L3.***

In between levels I would expect to see the collection increase and the balance in

the changes of bend/lead improve.

At L2, the slalom is performed at the trot. The horse must be showing balance and engagement in the turns. Without that, they will not be able to canter at L3, with changes through the trot. If the horse has been performing turns on the forehand, not showing engagement at the trot, they will not be able to canter the turns at L3 and will be on the forehand for the transitions to change lead. There is not enough time to rebalance a horse that turned on the forehand to prepare them for the transition. So if they lack engagement in the turn, they will not be successful at the other elements of the obstacle.

At L2, they must canter between obstacles. At L2, I expect to see some rough upward and downward transitions. By L3, I expect to see those transitions becoming more balanced and coming from the engine of the horse not from the horse's front end being stopped and the horse falling on the front end.

#### ***What would the impact be of a broken gait or missed change of lead at the L3 or L4 level?***

In both levels a break of gait or missed lead will be a negative score. How low the score will be depends on how quickly or if the error was fixed.

#### ***What guidance would you give riders when approaching this obstacle?***

Half halts are the rider's friend. If the horse is not balanced and collected approaching the obstacle, this will be a difficult obstacle. Straightness approaching and not turning too close to the pole will help

# OBSTACLE:

## SLALOM BETWEEN PARALLEL POLES

the horse and rider be successful.

***What does correctness and attitude mean from the judge's point of view?***

Correctness to me is whether or not the horse is performing this obstacle geometrically correctly, the horse's mechanics are correct, the rider is aiding the horse and not interfering.

Attitude means that the horse is willingly doing what the rider asks. There is no tension, wringing tail, chomping on the bit, pinning ears, etc. The horse is doing its job and looks pleasant to ride. If you have to work on that horse all day, are you still in a good mood when you get off or do you dread the next time you have to use that horse because of attitude. I ask myself "Is that attitude a horse problem or a symptom of the rider not using aids correctly?"

***There has been discussion about "ice cream cone" vs "hotdog" shaped pattern when riding this obstacle. Can you elaborate on your approach as a rider and what you look for as a judge?***

The ice cream cone is certainly an easier pattern to ride especially for novice riders and young horses. The issue I have as a trainer is that pattern tends to put the horse on the forehand, does not require engagement, and the horses tend to learn to lean into the turns. So how do I get from that pattern to the correct pattern? Why do I teach the ice cream cone in the first place? Or do I just start teaching the horse to step under with their

haunches from the beginning?

For me I like to teach the horses how to carry their body correctly from the beginning. It makes advancing easier. I won't allow the horse to turn until it steps under with the outside hind leg weighting the inside hind. We need to ride the horse back to front. So we need to initiate that turn from the motor before we allow the front end to go.

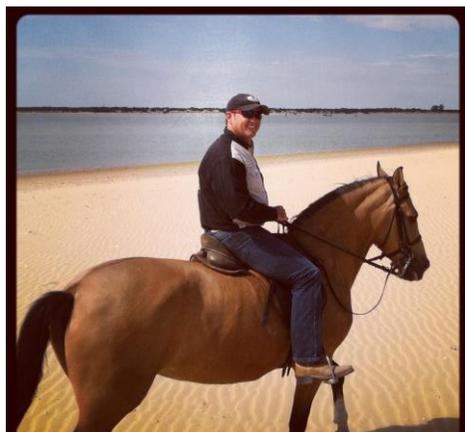
Once I initiate from the hind end, I have to free up the shoulders and rib cage to make the turn. That is a lot easier when the horse is carrying its weight over the haunches instead of on the forehand and pushing through the rib cage. My philosophy is that riding the pattern/turns incorrectly only teaches my horse to ride it incorrectly. So I ride the pattern as it is to be ridden at the highest level. But it means I start at the walk with one turn.

When we have one turn correct I add another. When I can consistently get the turn I want every time at the walk, we develop the trot and start with one correct turn and build on that turn. When the horse has the engagement I need and is through the back and free through the ribs and shoulder, they start offering me the canter out of the turns. Then I start adding in a canter.

As a judge, there is only one correct pattern. It does not matter the level. At the lower levels, the obstacle is performed at a slower gait to make allowances for the difficulty. So I won't reward a pattern that is done geometrically incorrectly because the horse is not being prepared for the next level.

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# SPOTLIGHT: PHILIP HIMAKA



**Tell us something about yourself that most people might not know.**

I spent part of my life in Spain. My family is from Granada in Andalucia. Since I was a kid the admiration and love for the Spanish horses have followed my dreams. Had some friends that practiced “Rejoneo” and also “La Pica”. This is a picture at San Lucar de Barrameda.

I am a full time hoof-care practitioner and I specialize in rehabilitating horses with all kinds of composite shoes and glues.

**What are some of your earliest memories of working with horses and riding?**

I worked and rode horses since I can remember. As a teen I exercised some racehorses and did some cross-country jumping. The different styles and disciplines always fascinated me. Listening as a kid of my family adventures going out in the field,

testing the bulls. “Toros Bravos” on horseback was always in my dreams.



*Riding from an early age*



*On real horses*

**How did you first learn about Working Equitation and what attracted you to the sport?**

I watched a video on FB, but later on a clinic with Keith Jacobson really caught my interest.

The versatility of the Spanish horse and the proficiency of handling different situations caught my attention. I have 2,585 miles

# SPOTLIGHT:

## PHILIP HIMAKA

recorded in endurance competitions and believe me there have been many times where I wished my horse had better training and handling difficult situations or environments. Smokey (in the picture) is a magnificent endurance horse, but in the arena loses his mind and cannot stand still so one of my goals is to get his mind in the present and handle stressful situations.



*Smokey*

**Prior to Working Equitation what riding disciplines were you, or are you still, interested in?**



I will always be interested in endurance but I did some jumping and some dressage. I am still interested in dressage and I think it will be a great complement for working equitation.

**What are some of your goals with Working Equitation (e.g. showing, improve your dressage, fun for you and/or your horse)?**

I understand that my Arabian horses are not easy to get into the Working Equitation mind, but I think that with consistency and hard work I will be able to get them in frame and improve their abilities not only in the arena but also in the trail.



**Tell us about your horse (e.g. breed, age, personality, training, how long you've had a partnership).**

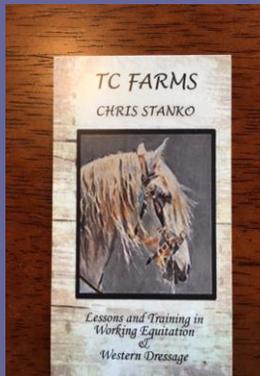
My horse is DH Aref +, he is an Egyptian Aikhamsa from the lineage of the Blue Star. He is 9 and I trained him as a Stallion and competed with him for plus a thousand miles before gelding him. We finished The Tevis Cup in 2012 and my goal is to accomplish a

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<b>JANUARY 2017</b>			
JANUARY 29, 2017	KICK OFF THE SEASON PARTY	CIRCLE STAR ARENA 11 AM – 2 PM	
<b>MARCH 2017</b>			
MARCH 8, 2017	RMHE/HCWE	B-RATED SHOW	NATIONAL WESTERN
MARCH 9, 2017	RMHE/HCWE	B-RATED SHOW	NATIONAL WESTERN
MARCH 10-12, 2017	RMHE/HCWE	RWTE – T WARREN	NATIONAL WESTERN
<b>JUNE 2017</b>			
JUNE 4, 2017	M MCATEER	SCHOOLING SHOW	CARBONDALE, CO
JUNE 24, 2017	HCWE	SCHOOLING SHOW	PLANE VIEW FARM
JUNE 25, 2017	HCWE	SCHOOLING SHOW	PLANE VIEW FARM
<b>JULY 2017</b>			
JULY 15, 2017	HCWE	SCHOOLING SHOW	CIRCLE STAR ARENA
JULY 16, 2017	HCWE	SCHOOLING SHOW	CIRCLE STAR ARENA
<b>AUGUST 2017</b>			
AUGUST 4, 2017	HCWE	B-RATED SHOW	ADAMS COUNTY FAIR GROUNDS
AUGUST 5, 2017	HCWE	B-RATED SHOW	ADAMS COUNTY FAIR GROUNDS
AUGUST 25, 2017	RMIHC	SCHOOLING SHOW	DOUGLAS COUNTY FAIR GROUNDS
AUGUST 26, 2017	RMIHC	SCHOOLING SHOW	DOUGLAS COUNTY FAIR GROUNDS
<b>SEPTEMBER 2017</b>			
SEPT 1–4, 2017	WE UNITED	NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP	EUGENE, OREGON
SEPT 20-23, 2017	USACWE	ANDALUSIAN WORLD CUP	LAS VEGAS, NEVADA
<b>OCTOBER 2017</b>			
OCT 14, 2017	HCWE	SCHOOLING SHOW	CIRCLE STAR ARENA
OCT 15, 2017	HCWE	SCHOOLING SHOW	CIRCLE STAR ARENA

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# High Country Working Equitation Trainers



## TC Farm Working Equitation Lessons

\$50/lesson at TC Farm  
\$65 to travel to your barn  
Work on Dressage or EOH  
Loveland, CO  
Contact: Chris Stanko  
[1chstanko@gmail.com](mailto:1chstanko@gmail.com)



Working Equitation  
Mini Clinics w/ 1, 2, or 3 Riders  
Flexible Scheduling  
\$75 for 1 rider for 90 minutes  
\$50 each for 2 riders for 2 hr  
\$50 each for 3 riders for 3 hours

Contact Keith Jacobson:  
970-391-1838

Cattle Clinics  
April 1<sup>st</sup>, May 6<sup>th</sup>, June 3<sup>rd</sup>  
July 29<sup>th</sup>, Sept 2<sup>nd</sup>, Oct 7<sup>th</sup>  
Cost: \$100  
Held at Circle Star Arena



Lauren Gueswel  
Trainer / Instructor  
4738 County Rd 5  
Erie, CO 80516  
303-532-9381  
[planeview@mesanetworks.net](mailto:planeview@mesanetworks.net)  
[www.PlaneViewFarm.com](http://www.PlaneViewFarm.com)

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1 hour Semi-Private: \$55/each  
1½ Hour Group Lesson: \$45/each  
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Classical Dressage for English and Western

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Ground Work/In Hand

Contact Allison Mazurkiewicz

970-556-1950



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... Letter from the Board continued

organizations: WE United, USFWE and WEIAUSA. WE United is a member-driven organization to which a rider can purchase a yearly membership. That yearly membership allows the rider to earn points toward a High Point award, or to earn scores toward their medal program. At that time, USFWE was a Group Member Organization (GMO) that offered memberships to groups throughout the United States, but they did not have any programs for individuals. HCWE was a member. WEIAUSA was a for-profit organization, known primarily for the Haras Cup, who offered rider memberships. They required riders in licensed shows to be members, although they did not have a medal or award program.

In early January, USFWE and WEIAUSA combined together under the name USA Confederation for Working Equitation (USACWE) as a registered non-profit organization in Texas. Under the umbrella of USACWE, there will continue to be two parallel organizations: the group member organization and an Individual member organization. This structure will provide opportunities for group member affiliates, of which High Country Working Equitation is one, to be a part of the USACWE without all of their members having to pay to be individual members. This benefits organizations that exist in an area where there are not enough rated shows in a season for the individual members to compete for High Point, but will allow the individuals to ride in any rated show without having to pay a non-member fee.

Any individual who is a member of High Country Working Equitation, who shows at a

rated show, licensed through USACWE, will not have to pay a non-member fee, since they will be covered under HCWE's GMO membership. However, any rider who wants to work toward earning their medal awards or have their scores count toward High Point Awards at the national level (this is independent of HCWE's High Point Award program) will need to purchase an individual membership with either WE United or USACWE. There is nothing to prevent a rider from holding an individual membership in both organizations and recording scores in both organizations, depending on who is licensing the rated show.

HCWE's first rated show in 2017, held during the Rocky Mountain Horse Expo week, will be a B-rated show licensed with both WE United and USACWE. Fees have been waived by both WE United and USACWE for non-members for this show so there is no need to purchase an individual membership unless an individual is interested in earning a medal.

HCWE's second rated show is the first weekend in August. The Board announced in November that the rated shows would be licensed under WE United. That means that any individual who rides in the show who is not a WE United member will be subject to a fifteen dollar non-member fee on top of their entry fee. Since the creation of USACWE, the Board is now considering double licensing the August show. Any HCWE member would be covered under our GMO membership with USACWE and would not be subject to a non-member fee. Any individual who is not a member of either of the national organizations or HCWE would have to pay two non-member fees with their entry.

It has been High Country Working Equitation's practice and policy to not align

.... Letter from the Board continued

ourselves with only one national organization. We made the decision back in November to license with WE United for the year since they offered the most individual rider benefits at that time. Since that decision, everything changed again. We now have two national organizations that both offer individual memberships, high point programs and medal award programs. HCWE is already a GMO with USACWE and will continue that relationship in the future. Based on our stated policy of not favoring one national organization over another, HCWE will be licensing the B-Rated show in August with both WE United and USACWE.

.... Spotlight: Philip Himanka continued

10-year partnership with him, at least in competition. His personality is so much calmer now that he is gelded and he can go strong in the trail or be mellow in the arena. I am working on collection and bending.

He is a loving horse and very smart. I started him under saddle when he was 4 and it only took me a couple of weeks before we were riding on the desert. He is a fast learner and his disposition can be phenomenal if he is not distracted.

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