



NEWS

December 2003

Editorial

Here it is – the Christmas edition of the newsletter, and I hope you enjoy reading it and will pass it on to all the gamers in your address book.

The IMGA annual meeting held in Belgium on 22 November proved to be productive and a new constitution was accepted as well as a new management committee. And that brings me to introduce myself as Communication Officer – a position that gives me the privilege of being your new editor.

To introduce myself, I live close to Johannesburg, South Africa and have ridden all my life. With the help of the Canadian Mounted Games Association I was instrumental in bringing mounted games as a discipline to South Africa – although I was already running mounted games for Pony Club here at the time. When I was younger I show jumped and rode gymkhana. I have my own communications business and I am also DC to the Irene/Midrand Pony Club. I am looking forward to working with you all and hearing all your news – so don't forget to let me know what's happening in your neck of the woods.



Happy Christmas from South Africa!

It is wonderful that IMGA has grown so much in the past few years, and it is amazing to think that some of us are shivering and riding indoors – whilst the Southern Hemisphere countries are gearing up for summer holidays and sweltering in the heat! This diversity should make for interesting contributions. And this diversity is responsible for the most exciting story in this newsletter – the bid for Olympic recognition!

Have a merry Christmas and best wishes for the New Year!

Jill

IMGA Annual Meeting

This was held in Overijse, Belgium on Saturday, 22 November. 10 member countries were present with the remaining seven being represented by proxy. There is a short informal report of the meeting at the Mounted Games website. *"The official minutes of the meeting will be available early in the New Year when the document has received the approval of all who were present."*
Keith Martin

New Committee

Keith Martin is our new Chairman – and you can find contact and portfolio details of the new committee members at the base of the members list attached.

Competitions 2004

The 2004 World Championship will be hosted by France and held at a high-visibility location in the town centre of Saumur in the Loire Valley. This is designed to bring in more spectators to watch and enjoy our exciting sport – and hopefully to make some more converts.

Many countries have plans for international competitions in 2004 and these will be listed on the "Coming Soon" page of the Mounted Games Website - let us have your details!



Communication



Communication

As Keith Martin pointed out at the AGM, the membership of IMGA now spans four continents and 22 time zones! If we all want to keep in touch and *au fait* with new developments, news of competitions and clinics, etc., we all need to make full use of our wonderful electronic media as well as fax.

I hear that video-conferencing is also on the cards for the near future! This will be a boon to those countries that are isolated by distance or financial considerations and enable us all to really interact positively. Remember – communication is a two-way street.

Newsletter

This is your newsletter and to make it interesting you need to contribute to it. Have you any ideas about what you would like to read or share on these pages? Please let me know. You don't have to be a budding journalist in order to contribute to the newsletter, and I don't expect you to write articles – unless you want to. If there is a story out there just email me with the basic details – who, what, where, when and how? And I will get back to you to find out more, it's as simple as that.

Name?

Do you think the newsletter needs a name? I think it would be great to have a short snappy name that would identify this as our international mouthpiece. What do you think? Have you any ideas for a name?

Official IMGA Website

Watch out for the new IMGA website that will be run alongside the existing Mounted Games Website.



Olympic presentation

“It’s all very much up to us”

IMGA is attempting to gain recognition for Mounted Games at the Olympics. The Canadian Equestrian Federation and the Olympic Committee have asked us to submit a proposal to have Mounted Games accepted initially as a "spectator" sport. A spectator sport is one that is considered a 'new' sport and is usually displayed between two other recognised disciplines as a sort of 'filler'. Essentially, this is the very first step to acceptance. In view of the shake ups going on within the Olympic disciplines, i.e. the possibility of another equine sport getting cancelled as a discipline and several others either getting added or changed, Mounted Games has a very strong chance of getting accepted. It's all up to us.

For example, Eventing is an equine sport that requires an extremely large budget, creating the cross-country course alone requires massive resources. The extensive layout of the course also creates difficulties for spectators to be able to see more than a small part of the action.

The most exciting spectator sport in the equine world!

Contrast this with Mounted Games which requires a small and inexpensive arena and provides very high levels of spectator access and interest. We are an equine team sport played by both genders and most of all.....we represent the most exciting spectator sport in the equine world!

The initial presentation will be given to the Olympic committee this coming May, exact date still to be announced. The presentation itself will be in three parts.....Portfolio presentation (who we are, what we are, where we came from, where we are going, etc, etc.); A verbal presentation supported by a video presentation. We have approximately two hours to do it in. The success of this endeavour will reflect what we are prepared to put into it. It's all up to us.

Pan American Games

Another very exciting development that has taken place is that we have also been asked to put together a presentation for IMGA to take part in the Pan American Games!!!! I personally view acceptance into the Pan American Games as a precursor to Olympic acceptance. One will give us the other. I flew down to Kentucky to meet with Paul Greiling of the USA and an American cinematographer recently to share an exchange of ideas. Our group came up with some wonderful ideas on how to sell a sport to the Olympic Committee that most people, when they hear or see us say "mounted what??".

Tough road ahead

Needless to say, the road ahead of us is going to be a very tough one, with several legal requirements to be met. We elected to leave the bulk of the planning until after the Xmas holidays. Then we can all put our thoughts together collectively and come up with the best game plan. Canada and the USA will be organising the initial presentation here in North America. If we get through the first phase, the next step will be to host a mounted games display for the committee. My idea is for each country to nominate their very best rider with the host country filling out the balance. Four teams: red, white, blue and yellow, complete with country flags, comes to mind...

Jim Dunn

President, Canadian Mounted Games Association

International Roundup

New Zealand

Keiron O'Hanlon from IRELAND has been in New Zealand training for a number of months and Amanda Dunn from CANADA is in New Zealand on holiday, both competed in the NZMGA pairs and teams competition held in conjunction with the Puhinui 3 Day Event. They ran some demos in the main arena and the event organisers want the NZMGA to become a regular feature of this prestigious event. (you know how good NZ Eventers are!) They had a team from Australia come over to compete. The Pairs Open was won by Nancy Te Whata and Dee Cherrington and their team also won the Team event – full results are on The Grapevine.

"We are now looking forward to our next big event in March 2004 at the biggest equestrian event in NZ. For this we have teams coming from Norway and Australia, also Alex Jones and Boo from Wales and Amanda Dunn, and hopefully Keiron will still be here. So for us who are at the other end of the world it is fantastic that these countries and riders want to travel so far and compete with us. It can only help to improve our riders competing against other Internationals"

Bill Fogarty

Canada/USA

Noel Stansfield from Coventry, England (Central Warwickshire MGA) recently spent 10 days in Canada and the USA where he put on an amazing pony training clinic on 7th December, even though it was minus 7 degrees (even in the indoor arena!). He gave four clinics to CMGA and USMGA on "training of ponies" as well as focusing in on problem areas within the field of play. Noel attended the CMGA AGM on 6th December, as well as the annual awards banquet and then accompanied Jim Dunn to Lexington, Kentucky, USA and gave another super clinic at the Kentucky Horse Park. Jim said that Noel got the opportunity to experience snow – lots of it! Both in Canada and Kentucky!

Ellen Cordell from Edmonton, Alberta attended the AGM and was hoping to boost membership and participation in the Alberta region. CMGA has lots of shows planned for 2004.

England

Vicki Ward and Darren Williams (both long time MGA riders and trainers) have recently had a baby girl – Ellysee Ward-Williams. Congratulations!



South Africa

Mandé Siderfin is looking for sponsorship to send two very under-privileged black children to the 2004 World Pairs Championship to be held in Germany next year.



Prince Mataboge is 13 and both his parents are unemployed. Prince is a typical boy with boundless energy who is dedicated to his pony and riding.

William Mahlangu is 12 years old, his father is on pension and his mom is a hospital worker. William excels at equitation and dressage, as well as mounted games. He loves the horses and works very hard at achieving his goals.

These boys will need kitting out from top to toe in riding as well as leisure wear as they just don't own these things.

If anyone can assist these two riders in reaching their dream of going to Germany, please contact either myself or Mandé southafrica@mounted-games.org

Norway

"Hest.no" is an on-line equestrian magazine which seems to have taken up the cause of Mounted Games in Norway. We've heard a lot recently about raising the public awareness of Mounted Games, well, Hest.no is doing exactly that. In the last few months they've published several lengthy articles on Mounted Games, and now they have an interview with the Norway trainer, Jens Martin, the guy who, according to them, has "skikkelig kuule shades".

Take a look at:

http://www.hest.no/news/?func=show_news&news_id=1371. For those of us who aren't exactly fluent in Norwegian, perhaps someone could volunteer as a translator ????

Chairman's Page

A message to all readers of this newsletter

In the immortal words of Bob Dylan, "IMGA, it is a-changing". The last annual meeting of the International Mounted Games Association in Brussels in November was one of the most interesting and productive ever. By now you should all be aware of the important decisions taken, but I'd like to take this opportunity to comment on some of them and to give you an idea of what you can expect from IMGA in 2004.

IMGA now has a Constitution, approved by 15 of the 17 members (the two abstentions were based on linguistic difficulties, but a French version of the constitution document is currently being produced to alleviate this problem). This isn't an end in its own right, in fact, it's just a beginning, but a new beginning. For the first time, IMGA now has a clear statement of what it is, why it exists, and what it aims to do.

It also has a management structure put in place to make sure that steady progress is made towards turning these aims into reality. It's only a few weeks since the new team took up their positions, but already things are starting to happen.

A new Rule Book will be printed and available to every MGA member in every country before the start of the 2004 playing season (my apologies to Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, who are of course already well into their season). This will be followed one year later by a completely revised and substantially improved Rule Book. But one thing which won't change is the handy fits-nicely-in-your-pocket format.

Financial control will be tightened up, and administrative expenses substantially reduced, so you're going to get more bang for your buck from the new IMGA. This will include an official IMGA website and regular newsletters like this one.

And the really exciting news is that Jim Dunn (Canada MGA) is setting up a presentation to pitch to the Olympic authorities with the aim of getting Mounted Games included as a demonstration sport. The road to full Olympic participation is a long one, and there are a lot of other sports out there with the same dream, but Mounted Games has what it takes, and Jim is starting us off firmly in the right direction. He'll get the full and active support of IMGA. (Read all about it elsewhere in this newsletter! - Ed)

Finally, but perhaps most importantly, I want to wish everyone a very happy holiday over Christmas and New Year, and a successful continuation of their many and varied Mounted Games activities in 2004.

Keith Martin

Chairman, International Mounted Games Association

Any Other Business

The Champions

Jens Martin is on a quest to remember all our champions and sent us all a spreadsheet asking us to fill in the gaps – here's another reminder – let's help in this worthwhile project.

There is no central record of all the national and international champions in Mounted Games.

I would like to keep a central database of those names and store it on the web site. There is only so much I can remember though but with all of our combined memories, it should be possible to fill this. I sent everyone a spreadsheet recently but have not had much response. The first tab on the spreadsheet is simply a list of all the competing teams at every world team championships to date. The other tabs are the various winners of championships competitions in team, pairs and individuals. Please help fill in the gaps!

Jens

Next Edition

If you enjoyed reading the news here, or even if you didn't, please think seriously about distributing copies to your members. After all, you are their representative and as such you should be the pipeline between them and IMGA.

If you want to contribute to the newsletter, please send your contribution for the next edition to [Jill Masterton](#).

The next edition will be published at the end of March 2004 – deadline for copy is 15th March 2004. I am looking forward to hearing from you all – there must be loads of stories out there!

Updated Members List

It is now my duty to keep the members list updated and to effect any changes that need to be made in future.

Thank you to everyone that responded to my last message on this subject and thanks to Burkhard, Mandé and Jens who just let me know that all was well with their contact details.

Please Note: Changes were made to **England** (Sheila), **New Zealand** (Bill) and **Sweden** (Nisse).

There is an updated version of the members list with this newsletter, and I shall be sending out the most recent version with every newsletter.

Newsletters

This newsletter will be a quarterly publication for 2004. Please try to get your contributions to me before the 15th day of the month of issue. *Photographic contributions must please be reduced to a suitable size and be in a compressed format.*

Publication Dates for 2004:

31st March
30th June
30th September
23rd December

If you produce a newsletter, please post it to me, or if it is available on a web site – please email me with details – it will give me ideas and also help me to get to know everyone better! It's not just New Zealand that's a bit isolated – at the bottom of Africa we too, are a bit like an island at the end of the world!

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Jim and Rose Dunn (Canada), Bill Fogarty (New Zealand), Jens Martin (Norway), Keith Martin (International), Mandé Siderfin (South Africa)

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