

Meeting held on 5.12.21 on Zoom

6 RWG members present; ERA representative present; and one Scottish representative.

7.30-8.30pm

The meeting was held in direct response to the reaction to the newly proposed membership restructure. The group has received many emails not in favour of the unannounced changes and a meeting was requested with BE to share the collective feedback and seek resolution.

The Nov-Adv RWG had previously met with Helen, after three membership categories were released onto the website without further detail. The group then created a proposal, which was sent to BE on 24/11/21, recommending that membership was based on the number of horses each rider had. At that point, we were assured that nothing would be announced imminently and without further consideration.

Frustrations were aired about the lack of consultation with riders prior to publishing the new structure. The Scottish representative described and explained the limitations that it would have on the Scottish demographic.

As a result of the meeting, the RWG created a document of questions seeking clarification on a number of points (see questions below), which has been sent to Helen West. The group then also wished to request the following changes to the new proposal:

- 1) Base the rider membership on the number of horses to ensure fair use
- 2) Include intermediate and 3* into the standard membership
- 3) Remove the additional £30 rider membership from the PAYG scheme (Those on basic PAYG membership £30 alone would NOT be permitted to run FEI at any level but ALL BE Levels)

Questions seeking further clarification:

- 1) Why were our thoughts, concerns and proposals completely ignored? We offered to help.
- 2) How can you justify a £288 increase in rider membership to compete one horse at intermediate, for absolutely no additional gain? There is no saving, as promised and stated, here and will never be reclaimed from losing AIP.
- 3) Why can single horse riders be exempt from the premier price?
- 4) Can Intermediate be added to the standard membership price and then this would solve most problems?

- 5) What do you do if you're in the wrong category. e.g. think a horse will go Int but then something happens or are at Novice but realise your horse has potential to do more later on in the season?
- 6) Will PAYG have access to ballot stickers?
- 7) If it stays as it is and you pay a standard membership, then decide you want to go to Intermediate, it seems unreasonable to have to pay an additional £30 for rider membership without an extra horse membership. Please consider, therefore, removing the additional PAYG as most would be happy to keep the additional entry fee charge.
- 8) Are BE going to ensure that there will be more IN's, Novice and 2* availability as these classes are going to become a lot more popular. Even more importantly Open Novice.
- 9) What happens if your membership is due to renew in August, for example Will these riders be able to have a free for all until their renewal date?
- 10) Are BE trying to make the higher levels for the elite only? The top professionals can offset the increase as business expenses and thus get tax relief too which 'hobby' riders can't
- 11) As a premier member what benefits are there? Do you avoid ballot and have a guaranteed entry at any level in the case of ballots?
- 12) PAYG - will this be the first level to be balloted?
- 13) What happens to those who do not renew their membership until, for example, September 2022? Will they be subject to the different levels and how can this be policed?
- 14) Why should the middle tier fund the grassroots/unaff riders?
- 15) What is happening with owner membership?
- 16) What is happening with syndicate membership?
- 17) If you upgrade your membership part way through the season could you then only pay the higher rate for the proportionate part of the rest of the season?
- 18) Why are we being forced to pay by direct debit when bacs or credit card are preferable? Needs to vary year on year and never straight forward cancelling dd's. we pay our entries by cc why not membership? Many members will find dd, rather than credit cards, a major drawback financially.

19) Why are the higher grade horses' membership more expensive from 4 to 1?