

Hello and welcome to the IMGA Newsletter,

I'm sure as the mounted games season is in full swing everyone is busy competing, training and preparing for the World Team Championships, which take place next month in Sweden. Having taken part in four World Team Championships I'm sorry to be missing it but I know it will be a close competition.

Due to work commitments I'm unable to travel to Sweden and instead will ride in the international MGA competition at the Royal Welsh Show. Last year was a fantastic competition, with an amazing atmosphere and very appreciative crowds and the final result came right down to the last race. It is a pity that it clashes with the World Championships - I know, though, the standard of riding will be excellent and the Welsh region have to be congratulated for getting mounted games into such a quality show.

I'm sure too the Worlds in Sweden will be a first class competition and for the riders in the winning team savour the moment as it is a fantastic feeling and one to be remembered for a very long time!

*Melanie Scott*  
IMGA Communications Officer

## A few words from our Chairman

In the last newsletter I wrote that the programme for 2006 published on the IMGA website already showed 31 planned events, but now it's approaching 50 and still I'm sure that there are events we don't know about yet. Remember that the IMGA website is the ideal place to announce and advertise your competitions. Most of you have your own websites, but it doesn't hurt to also get your information published centrally.

It's interesting to see that Individuals and Pairs competitions seem to be more popular than ever before, with many IMGA member countries now running their own competitions, and the German Pairs celebrated its 10th anniversary with its biggest competition ever.

Scandinavian, another favourite event, saw Scotland off to a flying start for 2006, and this was followed up by a win for Lothian and Borders a few days later in Northern Ireland. Is Scotland the team to look out for this year at the World Championship?

Take a look at "Göteborg 2006" at <http://www.gymkhana.nu/VM2006/> and keep up-to-date with all the information on participating teams and planned activities.

See you all in Gothenburg!

Keith Martin

A few questions for all the member countries...

1. Since the last newsletter was published what has been happening within mounted games in your country?

Belgium: We held our national teams trials and there have been the first two competitions of the Peter Dale Challenge in France.

Canada: We held our team tryouts at our North America Cup Competition in Barrie. The team is Shawn Dunn, Allie Vieweg, Micheal Durward, Brent Couch and Jeff Couch.

Germany: We selected teams for the Worlds in Sweden and all the other international events for this year (Switzerland, NEC, AGRIA Cup). Before the season began, we elected a new chairman for MGA Germany. It is Philipp Andreas Preugel (you probably know him, he already attended a lot of international competitions because his daughter Pola rides for the German team). The season started with the international pairs competition and set a record with almost 100 attending pairs in Großenaspe and the first ranking competitions for the German Championship - almost every competition has about 30 teams attending.

Scotland: We sent a team from Scotland to Gothenburgh Horse Show and won. Two teams traveled to Ballywater Game Fair in Northern Ireland where Lothian and Borders won after an exciting final session. There was the Flower of Scotland Championships and the team for the Worlds was selected.

South Africa: Jim Dunn presented a mounted games international Coaches certification course where 19 people attended. Currently we are working on an interprovincial display at Equestria during December. Regional teams are currently selecting teams.

Wales: Very quite start to the season but it is now getting into full swing. Monmouth juniors have made a very good start to the season along with West Glamorgan and Mid Glamorgan, but senior teams have yet to hit true form.

2. With regard to the World Team Championships, has your country selected its team - and if yes who is riding? Do you have a plan for the World Team Championships - and if yes what is it?

Belgium: It is the national team of Anthony Henrotte, Edouard Carton, Céline Todorov, Bruno Demol and Nicolas Themistocleous.

Germany: The team was selected in February by the coach Gaby Makowski. The riders will be Mark Skubatz, Kerstin Striegler, Pola Preugel, Anna Wolf and Sarah Wuthenow. We are looking forward going to Sweden because we all know the Swedish people as very friendly hosts. The aim is to reach the A-final.

Scotland: The team is Louise Chorley, Lewis Jackson, Ruth Kerr, Sara McIntyre and Vicky Riva.

South Africa: We will not be sending a team to the World Team Championships this year.

USA: Leigh Montgomery, Haley Textor, Brandon Clevenger, Sara Greiling and Cassie Greiling. The coach will be Alex Jones.

Wales: Hannah and Katie Hopkins, Natasha Hopkins, Gareth Whitney and Hollie Rauch, the trainer is Alun Whitney.

3. Which countries will be first, second and third place at the World Team Championships?

Belgium: 1st Wales; 2nd England; 3rd Belgium.

Canada: Canada of course!!!!!!

Germany: 1st England; 2nd Wales; 3rd Sweden.

Luxembourg: I think Wales will make a come back this year and regain the title from England but I don't think they can afford to be complacent about it. It will not only be England breathing down their necks. Scotland has been getting off to a good start this season too! As for other countries' chances, well that is difficult to tell until we know who will be on their teams and so far very few teams have declared their riders.

Scotland: 1st Northern Ireland; 2nd England; 3rd Scotland.

South Africa; 1st Wales; 2nd England; 3rd Ireland.

Wales: 1st Sweden; 2nd Wales; 3rd England

With special thanks to Julie (Belgium), Philipp Andreas Preugel (Germany), Frie Martin (Luxembourg), Bruce Nicol (Scotland), Mande Louise Siderfinn (South Africa), Paul Greiling (USA) and Alun Whitney (Wales) for their answers.

## From Jim Dunn, Country Development

I have just returned from a 10-day development visit to South Africa. First, let me report that mounted games are alive and well on the African continent. Team Canada hosted a coaching certification clinic for 20 prospective coaches attending from all over South Africa, Namibia and Botswana. The actual course consisted of 20 hours of classroom theory and hands on lectures in the arena.

The South African Mounted Games Association has set itself up into three separate regions consisting of The Cape, Natal and the Northern Region. This will be the first time that MGASA will function as a regional body under the leadership of present president, Mande Siderfin. To make matters more exciting, the present governing board is taking steps to assume responsibility of the existing mounted games program that is presently being run by Pony Club. SA Pony Club has already started phasing out Pony Club games and has begun playing the IMGA games as per our rule book.

I am also in the process of welcoming Botswana as a new member country to the growing ranks of IMGA. Our new member country already has a member base of 20 riders and is presently in the process of setting up its constitution and its executive. Not lacking enthusiasm, our new African friends are sending their first International team to the North American Cup in Canada this coming mid-August. Plans are also well under way for Botswana hosting the first African Cup this coming fall, hosting teams from Botswana, South Africa, Namibia, Zaire, Kenya and Canada. Updates will follow.

## Tips for publicity...

One of the biggest problems in mounted games is we, as an association, are not very good at letting the rest of the equestrian world know just what mounted games is. When asked it's difficult to explain exactly what it is, and the vague answer of ponies relay racing and taking part in obstacle races just doesn't do the sport justice.

So, how can we raise the profile of mounted games? One of the best ways is to get in touch with your local equestrian magazine or newspaper or even a local newspaper to give them details of the sport and let them know what is happening in the country.

First of all it is probably best to delegate one person within your country to be the press officer. Speaking from a professional point of view it is easier to deal with one person rather than several people sending reports from the same shows. This person is responsible for sending reports, information and photographs to the magazines in time to be published. Find out the publishing deadlines for each magazine and keep to them.

The press officer should research how many equestrian magazines there are in your area and then spend some time contacting each editor, then introduce and explain exactly what mounted games is. Invite them to a competition or training night so they see for themselves what is involved.

If there is someone within your country who can take good action photographs then enlist them to help the press officer as quality pictures really enhance a report. If money is no object then make up a disc of images and send some detailed information on mounted games and the riders of your country to each magazine. Through my work one particular event sticks in my mind - in order to gain publicity they send a parcel through the post of lots of press release, a disc of images from previous shows, and several gifts... who says journalists can't be bribed - it certainly guaranteed that event exposure!

Local equestrian magazines are the best way to start; normally they will be keen for information as long as it is provided in time. National equestrian magazines are a different matter and more often than not will not have the space to cover it. However, still send them a report and results as they might use it if they have space.

With the World Team Championships coming up now is a perfect time to make friends with your local magazines. Send an email to them giving brief history of mounted games in your country with some facts and figures e.g., the number of years mounted games has been organised in your country, number of riders, best results to date, competition dates etc. Give a brief outline of each of the riders going to the World Team Championships -

include their age, number of years competing, occupation, competition history, team photo and pony details plus trainer and also some interesting facts (if there are any!). Then send to the magazine or newspaper - most prefer email with full contact details in case there is a problem.

The following day contact the magazine and check the information has been received and ask if it will be used. Don't be too pushy but do make sure and ask if it is likely to be published. If the magazine say they will not use it, ask the reasons why and if there is anything that could be changed in order for it to be accepted.

After the competitions write another report, giving the results and details of what happened and include a picture of the team and also any action photographs of the riders and send it to the various magazines. It is important this is done quickly after the event to be up-to date and is more likely to be used.

Finally, remember it is not the press officer's fault if magazines choose not to publish reports but what each rider and member can do is contact each magazine that doesn't give mounted games publicity and ask if they know what mounted games is and do they intend to cover mounted games. Remember don't be rude and over time they may come around, so keep sending press releases to each magazine.

This is intended to be a general help to countries who are struggling to get publicity. If your country would like some more help or advice then please get in touch...and I'll try to help as much as I can.

Melanie

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Don't forget, if your country has any news or ideas for the next newsletter please contact me at [communication@mounted-games.org](mailto:communication@mounted-games.org)