

On The Job

I Am Not A Policeman

by Fred Moretti

I am the other licensed official known as the steward. After twenty plus years as a steward I will admit, I still get aggravated when an exhibitor or judge comes over to me and says "why did you allow an exhibitor to enter the ring with some kind of violation?"

A steward is not required to be at the in-gate. He should keep himself available to judges, exhibitors and management at all times to clarify the application of rules and investigate any situation where the rules are not upheld. Other duties of a steward shall be but are not limited to the following.

1. To protect the interest of exhibitors, judges and management.
2. To investigate and act upon any alleged rule violation
3. To protect the interest of the horse.
4. To ascertain that all judges are licensed or that the competition has a guest card for the judge.

To a great extent the steward has to decide how active and involved he wants to be. As those of you who have worked with me know, I am totally immersed. A typical day at a show for me may be of interest to you and goes like this. Long before the show date I check the prize list (ad) to insure the class schedule is in accordance with our rules and all judges are licensed or guest cards are requested and granted. I note the presence or lack of the paragraph, which enables management to combine and or cancel classes. The day of the show, when I arrive I go to the show office to answer any questions the secretary or management may have. At this time I make inquiry about the trail class, horsemanship and silver medal patterns. After reviewing same I ensure they are posted. From the office I proceed to the fino board.

A walk up and down determines it's structural integrity and that it is ground level or backfilled at the edges. The starting time of the show is noted.

I always start the show at the in-gate to establish a rapport with the gatekeeper and exhibitor. The duration of the open gate, exhibitor attire and proper tack is checked at this time. The lay out of the facility and holding area dictate how well the tack can be checked. I have become an authority on attire and tack and enforce the rules.

Reflective material is removed, full-length jackets versus bolero length are corrected and illegal tack is changed. Foremost in my mind is fairness and promotion of competition. Clips on reins and head stalls are the most common offenses. Attire offenses most frequent are, hats, reflective material and lack of approved head gear.

As the classes progress I listen to the class procedures being called out by the announcer. A common reoccurring error is for the judge to omit the halt in equitation classes, not going both ways with the required procedure, illegal test and improper placements with work offs. If I observe any of the above, I enter the ring and bring the violation to the judge's attention to ensure the class is validated. When two or more judges are working together giving individual opinion, I ensure there is no conferring.

Some time is spent in the show office checking paper work. Each show entry form is viewed to see that the rider owner and trainer have signed the form, and membership numbers are noted. Common problems are with A/O cards, multiply ownership signatures, gelding papers and youth rider signatures. At this time I receive the required numbers and information for submission to PFHA and USA-E. During the show, management is observed to see that gate people, ringmaster, ribbon people and announcer are doing their jobs. Suggestions are offered when required to make the show run smoother. The time the show



PFHA Senior Certified, and USAE Registered, Steward Mr. Fred Moretti. Photo by Lynn Gallup.

ends is noted.

All licensed officials need to be mindful that they work for management. It is very difficult for me to accept that thought and then if circumstance require write a charge against the management people who hired me, or against my fellow licensed official.

You know, maybe on second thought stewards who do their job ARE policemen.

Post Script — My pet peeve. Exhibitors who speak to the judge with out making an appointment and the judge who speaks back.

Fred is quick to say, almost all exhibitors cooperate fully and willingly when advised they have a violation. Sometimes when show management gets a fine they retaliate against the steward and will not hire him again, it goes with the job. Fred stewards approximately fifty days per year. One most memorable show is the Arabian youth nationals held in Albuquerque N.M., nine hundred youth riders participated.

Fred has filed more charges than all of the other stewards combined.

“Everything will be per the rule on his watch”

PFHW

