



April 11, 2024

**VIA EMAIL**

Mr. David S. Beck, President & CEO, Kentucky Venues ([david.beck@kyvenues.com](mailto:david.beck@kyvenues.com))

Re: 2023 World's Championship Horse Show – Class 52

Dear David:

It has come to USEF's attention that there is a need to clarify the actions of USEF related to Class #52 at the 2023 Kentucky State Fair. We believe it is in the best interest of the community to provide the facts surrounding the situation.

After the pinning of the class, a USEF-licensed competition steward received a complaint that the trainer of the winner violated a rule on the field of play. After watching the video footage from the class, the Steward concluded that a violation occurred and demanded forfeiture of the ribbon and disqualification of the entry.

The issue was first brought to the attention of the USEF by the Steward in question and another USEF-licensed Steward officiating at the same competition. Following that communication, and since the rules clearly state that USEF Stewards "have no authority in connection with the...judging of a competition" (GR1034.2.f), and they are not empowered to disqualify entries, USEF determined that the disqualification was improper due to the manner in which it was executed. Following the call with the stewards, USEF received inquiries as to whether a steward was empowered to disqualify an entry and if so, whether the decision could be appealed.

At all times, USEF maintained the position that stewards are not empowered to disqualify entries. In reviewing the issue, the Steward who disqualified the entry could not cite any USEF rule that authorized her to disqualify the entry or rely on video for disqualification (no such rule exists). Following the conclusion of the competition, USEF reviewed the entire matter and determined that by disqualifying the entry, the Steward acted outside the scope of her authority and that she was not authorized to take such action. As a resolution to the matter of the Steward acting outside of the scope of her authority, she voluntarily relinquished her USEF license and agreed not to seek licensure or serve in any official capacity again.

In evaluating whether a rule violation did indeed occur, USEF determined that under its Bylaws, the placing by the judges is not reviewable even if a mistake is made, except in narrow

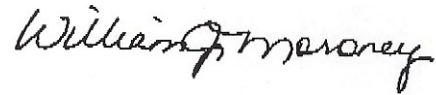


circumstances such as decisions that are the product of fraud or corruption. This is no different than a referee who may miss a foul or other technical infraction on the field of play, which a player cannot protest after the game. No allegations were reported involving any misconduct by the judges. As such, the pinning of the class was final after it occurred, and USEF did not pursue disciplinary action against the trainer in question.

Like many sports, field of play concerns in equestrian, including mistakes and missing an infraction, are not reviewable unless it involves misconduct of the person making the decision.

We consider this matter closed.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William J. Moroney". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

William J. Moroney  
Chief Executive Officer

cc: Mr. Allen Bosworth, ASHBA President  
Mr. David Mount, ASHBA Executive Director  
Ms. Sonja Keating, USEF Chief Operations Officer & General Counsel