



Italian Reining Horse Association

Parma, 04 September 2022

Dear President Rick Clark and NRHA Board
Dear President Rosanne Stenberg and NRHA European Board
Dear NRHA European Affiliates and worldwide
To Whom it May Concern in the World Reining Community

After the exit of the Reining discipline from FEI and the recent approval of the NRHA Animal Welfare & Medication Policy Regulation, as IRHA Board and as your partner in Europe, we would like to underline that today, and in particular in Europe, we need to follow the same line of action with the U.S. and with the rest of the world under NRHA.

This is to create one regulatory system on an international level: Complete, clear, legal, and that protects the rights of horses, Professionals, Non Pro riders and their rankings, and consequently the principles of Sport and Animal Welfare, sponsors, and investors in the discipline worldwide taking into account all the different laws applied and reiterating the concept under a single association which is NRHA.

We understand the difficulty in making everyone comprehend both the importance of Doping and its importance, in particular regarding breeding; the classification and differences between *prohibited* substances (all that is prohibited in competition), *banned* substances (doping substances) and *controlled medications* (commonly used medicines that are not allowed in competitions).

However, this is part of who we are and what we represent as an Association as a Sport and above all it is necessary, because, as leaders in the reining industry, we cannot afford to have doubts regarding the integrity and legality of our competitions in 2022 toward our members, our sponsors, and anyone who invests in the sport of reining and, above all, we reaffirm the concept of Animal Welfare & Medication Policy.

The show conditions and the NRHA Handbook, in the General Rules and Regulations Chapter "E" specifies that: "The Executive Committee may accept disciplinary rulings pertaining to cruel or inhumane treatment and medication violations of horses from other recognized equine related associations, states, provinces, or countries"

This does not suffice anymore. We now need unambiguous and transparent rules that guarantee disqualification for riders in a serious manner in all NRHA approved shows, reported in all countries and with a worldwide disqualification. We need univocal doping control applied equally and recognized worldwide as in FEI and International Trotting and Galloping Competitions.

In Italy, as for many other countries, the rules of Animal Welfare, Medication Policy and Doping in general are dictated directly by Italian State laws and applied to Sports through the C.O.N.I. The consequences are not only of sporting nature but also civil and criminal.

Reining and NRHA are and must on the same level as all top-tier equestrian sports but to get there we must equal all world-class sports. In athletics, for example, an athlete has the same doping control whether they compete in Europe or in the U.S., and the same



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disqualifications are applied, which are obviously established by International and Olympic parameters.

The work of the IRHA Board both in the past and in particular now, together with the sponsors of the breeding programs, has guaranteed over 4,500,000 Euros in prize money in the 2017-2020 four-year period exclusively in NRHA approved shows in Italy and is working intensively with the aim of increasing its bond with NRHA, as done in 2021 and is planned for 2022.

For 2023, together with our IRHA President and NRHA Hall of Famer Eleuterio Arcese, we have guaranteed \$250,000 on top of the nomination money for the NRHA European Futurity.

We have always managed to do achieve the above, both in Italy and in Europe, thanks to the credibility and legality of our sport and competitions. This thanks to the Doping rules dictated by the FEI which—to date—have been the only ones we have had that were regulated and recognized on a worldwide basis thus guaranteeing transparency and legality to our sponsors, supporters and competitors. Without these we are no longer so sure of being able to achieve these goals.

We ask you to please take into consideration our suggestions and our concerns in the hope of a serious and immediate solution during 2022 in order to be able to continue planning 2023 all the more united and growing together with the aim of achieving our common goals.

The IRHA Board



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