

MRC already had regulations related to claiming races that stated, “a claim is voidable at the sole direction of the new owner for a period of one hour after a race is made official for any horse that is vanned off the track after the race at the discretion of the State Veterinarian.” The updated language adds, “a claim can be voided for a period of one hour after a race is made official if a horse is sent to the Detention Barn and observed to be lame by the State Veterinarian.”

The new regulations are part of an ongoing effort in Maryland and neighboring states to increase the focus on equine health, safety and welfare.

New Technology at EMC

The Marion duPont Scott Equine Medical Center in Leesburg, Virginia, recently announced the addition of a Medical Imagine Electronics nuclear scintigraphy equine scanner to its list of diagnostic equipment. In addition, they have also added a GE Vivid iq Vet ultrasound, a state-of-the-art cardiac ultrasound that allows for precise analysis and evaluation of abnormalities in the equine heart.

Construction for the new Steven and Jane Hale Indoor Arena complex has begun with the hopes the facility will be open later this year.

RRP Trainers Announced!

The Retired Racehorse Project (RRP) an-

nounced last month that 480 trainers and teams have been accepted to the class of 2021 for this year's Thoroughbred Makeover and National Symposium. These trainers will join 332 trainers from the 2020 Makeover, which was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Maryland is well represented with nearly 70 entries. To follow the progress of each trainer on the road to the Makeover, see TBMakeover.org.

Kudos to...

...St. Margaret's Pony Club in the Maryland Region on receiving a 50-Year Club Milestone Award from USPC at its virtual awards ceremony held last month.

Susser Symposium Report *by Pam Link*



I am a Marylander who likes to spend spring, summer and fall in Maryland, but I love Florida in the winter. After spending the last 20 winters in Wellington, my husband and I decided to go to Ocala this winter instead and who should we find living just down the road, Dr. Jenny Susser and Mette Larsen.

To my absolute delight, they were hosting a symposium on Energy for Confidence and Connection in Horsewomen this winter. If you aren't familiar with these ladies let me fill you in.

Dr. Jenny Susser has a doctoral degree in Clinical Health Psychology, specializing in sport and Performance Psychology. She is a Certified Mental Performance Consultant with the Association for Applied Sports Psychology and a member of the USOC Olympic Registry. Dr. Susser was the USET Sport Psychologist for the United States Dressage team for the 2012 Olympics. She has worked with athletes, elite, professional, amateur and corporations as a Performance Trainer.

Mette Larsen came up through the United States Pony Club and was accepted into Morven Park International Equestrian Institute as a young adult. As a teenager, she rode with Katherine Worthy and Lt. Col. Mark Darnley, among others. Larson has won numerous regional and national Dressage competitions. Larson believes that no two horses and no two riders are the same, so her training methods are specific to each horse and rider.

In addition, event rider Sinead Halpin Maynard was a guest speaker. Maynard has ridden to the Advanced and five-star levels all over the world as an international competitor and trainer. She has worked with eventing legends such as David O'Connor, Captain Mark Phillips and William Fox-Pitt and continues to make education a priority.

I am having a difficult time putting into words what this two day symposium has meant to me and to the 49 other women who attended. It was not like any clinic or symposium I have attended to date. Yes there were beautiful horses and riders but the riders consisted of a four-star event rider, a para rider, a woman new to riding, and a nervous unconfi-

dent rider. What they had in common was a lack of confidence.

This lack of confidence could have been from a fall, serious health issue, from a vivid imagination that something will happen, or having control over your life at home or at work and now have to have to trust an animal. All had a varying degree of loss of confidence in themselves and some with a loss of trust with their horse. As you know horses are our mirrors. I could write pages about the experience over this weekend but I will try to be short.

So how can you gain confidence? Confidence is an emotion and a by product of a successful event. To have a successful event you must be prepared, really prepared. Do not think of past failures (I know this takes a lot of work). Dr. Jenny gave us a good visual. Do you drive your car with your hands on the rear view mirror? No, your hands are on the steering wheel looking forward. So, when you are on your horse and these thoughts from the past jump into your head connect with your horse. Shift your thoughts from the negative and allow yourself and your horse not to be perfect.

This may be as simple as walking the horse in a small circle. Maybe moving him out with your inside leg. When you can breathe again you can trot in a small circle. Give yourself permission to go to the walk whenever you want. If things are going well, you can even give yourself permission to do whatever you want. Stop and get off or continue at a trot. This will then help you with connection but not control. Sometimes you will be the maestro and sometimes you will be the orchestra. Meaning you may be passive or active in your conduction of energy to create connection.

To help with confidence riders need to be prepared. Have a plan for your ride. A good plan can boost your confidence. Assess your horse before you get on and during the warm-up. Keep in mind your plan may not be in symphony with what your equine partner is able to do. Connection has to be worked on all the time. You will have it, then lose it, then get it again. That's ok, it happens to everyone!

Be present with your horse. Try not to worry. Worrying is like a rocking chair. Lots of expended energy that goes nowhere.

Each of us as riders have emotional baggage. We have to work so it won't own us. Maybe it is being able to compartmentalize. The important thing is to be in the moment with your horse. Go slow, give yourself permission to end your ride for that day or go on with it. Each ride that is positive for you and your horse will bring you closer to connecting to each other.

I was blown away by how many of us have confidence issues. Sad to think how many riders and horses may have been treated badly in the past and therefore never reached their potential.

If you are interested in learning more, the video of this symposium is on Horse and Country's website. Check it out, it just may change your world!

To submit your stories to *The Equiry*, email editor@equiry.com!