

Dear club chairs,

I hope this helps with the discussion with your club committee and your members.

Please realise whilst giving a first hand account, some of the comments are personal and are not intended to influence your information passed on to you members

To give some explanation of the diary of the day's events behind the e mail from the BRC office.

On Tuesday 13th October, I attended a competitions meeting of the National Executive together with six other representatives. This is a sub committee which organises all the competitions together with rules, tests etc. This meeting is held three times per year.

At the onset of the meeting, we were addressed by Sarah Phillips Director of Participation, concerning the 2* competition, formally known as Rural Riders.

As part of BHS we have to run funding for any events through the trustees, and in March of 2015 we had asked the trustees if they would match or increase the funding which they had given to RR in the last three years, and also to the Area grants.

Sarah told us that they would not be increasing or giving any funding to this particular event, although they would continue to give each area the amount of training grant of £435.00, they (the trustees, Lyn Peterson and Sarah) had discussed the question of this particular competition, and decided that they would not allow British Riding Clubs to continue to have any participation in this event, either running, entering or funding.

The question was asked that we self fund it, so it would be able to continue, the answer was no and British Eventing were to take this over as a grass roots competition for their riders.

At this point she left, and we were very shell shocked. No consultation with our Chairman, no consultation with the trainer, who has trained this particular competitions since 1990.

We discussed possible ways and means of continuing, and Andrew our Chairman decided to enquire with British Eventing how this would involve our riders. With an answer to come back the following week at the National Executive Committee (NEC) meeting where it was an item on the agenda.

The question was discussed that whether BE could actually send a BRC team as this was a riding club event held on the continent, which we had been invited to in the late 1980's and was solely for riding clubs members.

We continued the meeting which lasts over two days, formatting rules, points that people have put forward, and generally the general well running of our competitions.

Minutes are provided for the NEC which always runs the following week, when all rules, etc are verified by the NEC. These minutes were circulated for the meeting on the following Tuesday by email on the Friday.

On Tuesday 20th October, national reps met for the NEC meeting which was held at Equestrian House, Stoneleigh, we were told there was an audit going on in the building which is shared with British Eventing and also BEF and so we could not speak to any members of staff either BHS, BRC.

We arrived for the meeting for 10.30.am, the chairmen of the various committees, competitions, training, and our chairman were invited into a meeting with the Chairman of BHS and the Director of BRC which is sometimes happens prior to national meetings.

The rest of us met in the conference room, at 11.a.m. the those people invited into meet Trustees etc, came back in, accompanied by three trustees, a communication officer, Sarah Phillips and Lyn Pederson. Sarah Phillips addressed the meeting, with the news that with the trustees, they wanted the BRC national committee to be disbanded, all area reps were no longer NEC members and that they were to be appointed six advisory members taken from national representatives to meet occasionally to keep others posted, and to be available for any work that needed doing. We would be expected to have area representatives for each area to organise and also to do all the necessary work, with no in put apart from a conference once or twice a year where we could talk for an hour. No expenses would be given for this, this would be on the area's funding. We would have no chairman or vice chairman, although the training would have a lead person with a small committee. All communication for this would be done through emails.

The email informing all riding club members of this would be given out in 25 minutes. Various objections to this were forthcoming, the trustees and Director 'of RC had been planning this for the last 9 months, no communication had been received from them concerning this, the first the chairman or committee knew was when we were told. Eventually we got a postponement of the email going out until after 1.p.m. and we asked if we could have a talk between ourselves without any BHS staff or trustees present, they left us until 1.p.m. and came back with the same answers and informed us that the communication would be going out at 4.p.m. We asked for an email to go with it, informing the members that none of the NEC knew anything of this prior to today, which is part of the email that was circulated to all BRC members, although I understand from talking to members that not everyone received it.

They left and we tried to tackle some of the points of the agenda, the only item we did manage was the rules update for 2016. Both Laura and Rachael were the only BRC members of staff present and were showing signs of uncomfortableness, they told us later that they did not know anything of this until 6 weeks ago, and were sworn to secrecy. Both Laura and Rachael, told us that the logo and name were to be disbanded too, but they fought for these to remain, for how long we do not know.

Although we were given an advisors application form to apply for any of the six posts, we have later learnt that these posts are not open for any person apart from whom they have already earmarked.

Not a very democratic system, I understand that some members are bitterly disappointed and feel that all trust has gone, but as the email from the office says, the majority of day to day running of BRC will remain the same.

I would like you to go back to your clubs and members and ask the same questions.

