

February 2012

With the first show of the season nearing, we try to look ahead into 2012 wondering what it will bring. It's become clear that the horse industry in general including the cutting horse industry is contracting for possibly a couple of reasons. Sometimes when an industry gets too rich, horse prices, show expenses and all related costs take a down turn in order to correct the unsustainable inflation. The quarter horse industry experienced such a correction in the late 1970's, early 1980's. Couple a correction with a struggling economy and it all translates to what we hope is a temporarily shrinking market.

Look at the cutting horse industry as a pyramid. At the top are the hugely rich national events where massive amounts of money are spent. The top of the pyramid is where values become overly inflated. Travel down the pyramid until you reach the base which is composed of national affiliates and grassroots clubs like BMC. Although the top can falter under its own weight, if the base erodes it certainly can collapse. Many at the national level fail to acknowledge the importance of the base which is so obviously the foundation. Ok, so what does this really mean to us? It means that even though BMC is solid, we need to be proactive to keep the base healthy by providing our members good quality shows with affordable entry fees. It also means reaching out to the cutting horse community and the local community to help us fund incentive programs to those who show up, pay an entry fee and show their horse.

BMC has reacted proactively to this challenge. A small group of ambitious members have been very busy securing sponsorships for the 2012 season. These sponsors have responded with generous cash and corporate sponsors are making product donations to help us make the 2012 season a lot of fun. Thanks to the cash donations, we're able to implement circuit series awards for the Bonina shows and the Sartin shows; 2 series, 2 sets of circuit awards. To be eligible, you must show in your class at each show in the series and in each class those with the highest combined score will be the recipient of a very nice award. At possibly all shows, the product donations will allow us to give product and promotional awards to class winners. Other programs are presently being explored and if a concept can be shaped into an idea and an idea can be implemented into a program and a program can be funded, then we stand a reasonable chance of offering new & exciting things to members. There are endless reasons to leave

this sport but there are very compelling reasons to stay. People stay because they are dedicated to cutting in many ways and to have fun. It is our goal to give cutters every reason to stay.

And too that same end, BMC is a 2012 sponsor of NCHA Area 1 affiliate Cascade Cow Cutters. Many BMC members are also members of CCC and actively show in both organizations. To demonstrate BMC's commitment to promote cutting, a cash contribution to CCC was accepted by CCC Vice President and BMC member, Jason Schaper. It's in the best interest of both organizations that both clubs flourish and what better way to do it than through a cooperative effort to work with each other. Mutual support can be advantageous to both organizations so we are exploring other programs to stimulate entry level cutting at both clubs.

For those not yet aware, BMC has changed the show day from Sunday to Saturday with the exception of the Ukiah show. There were valid pros & cons both ways but the general membership voted to make this change in an attempt to meet the needs of the majority of the cutters. Please take a minute to read the minutes from the annual general membership meeting to keep current with the input & decisions of your fellow members. Complete minutes are published on this web site.

The first show of the season is coming at us fast. It's being held Saturday, March 17<sup>th</sup> at Pete Sartin's arena and show details have been posted. Please look at the entire 2012 show schedule and mark your calendars accordingly. Sometimes the first show of the season can be one of the most entertaining since some of us show up with winterized horses still working out the kinks as we jump into the new season. That first show is sometimes where brand new cutters and/or brand new members make an appearance. See someone you don't know? Step up and introduce yourself. See someone looking lost, confused or unsure? Take a minute and see if there's something you can do to help or put them more at ease. It can be an intimidating experience and we've all been there and a friendly face can mean a lot and those are the experiences they remember for decades.

To old & new members alike, welcome to the 2012 BMC season. Let's rock!