



***Longtime California competitor steps into leading role amid COVID-complicated competition calendar changes.***

Asia Vedder is a familiar face on the West Coast eventing scene. She trained and rode professionally for a while, is now a top amateur competitor and served as the volunteer coordinator for the Twin Rivers Ranch competitions for several years.

Asia stepped down from the Twin Rivers post last year and agreed to join U.S Eventing Association's Area VI as secretary when asked last November. In March of this year, Lisa Sabo resigned as Area VI chair and Asia agreed to step into the lead role.

---

"Becoming chair was not on my radar at all," says Asia, who lives in Santa Barbara County's Carpinteria. "But when I was asked, I said, 'I think I can handle this.' My father was on the USEA Board of Governors in the 90s, so being involved in the management side of the sport is not a foreign concept."

Asia took on the larger Area VI role just before the COVID-19 pandemic added extra complexities. Managing the competition calendar is a big part of Area VI's work under normal

Written by CRM  
Thursday, 28 May 2020 03:27

---

circumstances and coping with cancellations and hoped-for rescheduling adds intensity to that ongoing process.

“The organizers have been really good and the Council is trying to respond to their requests, although it’s tough when so much is still up in the air.” At presstime, USEF and USEA suspension of their branded events was to end May 31.



A big question is whether The Event at Rebecca Farm will run July 22-26 in Montana. It was “a go” as of early May, with a final decision expected in early June.

If The Event happens, that ups the urgency for Area VI organizers to stage opportunities for horses and riders to prepare. As of May 8, there were two upper level events slated for late June and July, at Galway Downs in Temecula and Twin Rivers in Paso Robles. (Update: The Galway Downs show has since been cancelled.)

If state or regional activity restrictions extend through June, it’s unlikely that anybody could get ready for Rebecca Farm. “Then we’re looking at horses who’ve had over a three-month break from competition,” Asia explains of one of several possible contingencies for which Area VI has plans. “Early in the pandemic, we were one of only a few USEA Areas to have submitted a coherent plan.”



## Membership & Championship Growth

In addition to helping refigure the competition calendar around ever-changing realities, Area VI has plenty of priorities, its new leader says. Growing participation in the sport is a long-standing priority that will likely be even more important with the pandemic's expected effect on the economy. Streamlining and upping the impact of Area VI's digital presence and communication, getting more kids into the North American Young Riders pipeline and continuing Area VI's strong tradition with Young Rider and Adult Camps are additional points of focus.

Another focus for Area VI is boosting the Area Championships. They are being held at Copper Meadows in September this year. "Copper Meadow's Taren Atkinson has hosted them in the past and done a great job, so I'm looking forward to what she will do this year," Asia explains.

"Taking the pandemic into consideration, qualifications have been relaxed. The championships are tough, and don't always have great attendance. Loosening qualifications is something we had been discussing already, and in light of the suspension of competition, it only made sense to really open things up."

Along with eventing at a high level, Asia helps manage her family's 100-acre organic lemon and avocado farm in Carpinteria. She keeps and trains her horses there, including Isi, who debuted and excelled at the 3\* level last year, and a new young horse. She's also rehabbing from a long-needed hip replacement surgery in January.

"I hadn't planned to be back showing until May anyway," she says. "I've been getting my strength back and trying to unlearn some bad habits I developed from compensating for my bad hip for several years. Getting to know my new horse," she continues. "And there is always homework to be done, and things to focus on to take advantage of this down time between shows."