



World Brahman Congress – Final Report

The 2014 World Brahman Congress presented by the Brahman Breeders Society of SA was a resounding success! Planning, promoting and facilitating the Congress over the past 18 months were an enormous task but in retrospect the Congress Committee can truly relate to the popular saying “We love it when a plan comes together!”

Feedback reports from all over the country and overseas convey hearty congratulations and confirm that the recently held World Brahman Congress that took place in the country town of Parys in the Free State from 5 - 11 April 2014 was enthusiastically regarded as rewarding in every way. All the animal-related activities at the Afri- Dome, the dissemination of technical information at the technical Conference, the entertainment, the local day- and pre- and post- tours and the renowned South African hospitality were all appreciated and praised.

A total of over 500 persons, including 70 foreign and 80 SADEC visitors registered for the congress. The two venues, Khaya iBhubesi Conference Centre and the Afri- Dome Indoor Arena, selected for the Congress proved to be exactly what was required for such a prestigious event. The Afri -Dome Indoor Arena once again confirmed itself as a facility of choice for animal related activities, providing all the necessary structures to contribute to the success of this International event.

The World Brahman Federation meeting was held on Tuesday 8 April as well as an inaugural meeting of the International Brahman Breed Improvement Forum on Sunday 6 April. This was a historical event as Breed Societies /Associations present at the congress, along with a number of other role players were gathered around the table. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss international collaboration on a number of common interests including international genetic evaluations and the furthering of genomics on an international level.

The 2014 World Brahman Congress officially commenced with the Welcome Cocktail on Sunday evening 6 April where everybody were welcomed and treated on the outstanding catering from Khaya iBhubesi. The opening- and gala functions that also took places here were both presented with style and elegance regardless of the fact that evening functions had to be moved from the formal function venue into a marquee tent shortly before the congress started due to the large number of congress attendees. At the Afri Dome the services of Union Caterers for lunches and evening dinners did not disappoint at all, in fact the ability to serve every one of our 500 guests with a perfect fillet steak on the Wednesday evening was commented very positively.

Technical Conference

The Technical Conference took place on 7 & 8 April 2014 at Khaya iBhubesi with local and international speakers bringing the global scenario of beef production and the demand in 2014 and beyond with specific reference to role of the Brahman breed in developing countries to the table. Speakers at the conference were: Mr. Ernst Janovsky: Agricultural Economist from ABSA; Dr. Michael J Bradfield – SA Breedplan; Prof Michael Scholtz from the SA Animal Production –ARC; Dr. Joe Paschal: Professor and Livestock

Specialist, Texas; Mr. José Otávio Lemos, Brazil; Prof. Concepta McManus: Research professor Brazil; Prof. Frikkie Naser from University of the Free State; Prof Azwihangwisi (Norman)Maiwashe SA Agricultural Research Council; Dr. Michael D. MacNeil USA Consultant to ARC.

A successful panel discussion at the end of the 2-day conference confirmed that the overall objectives of the Congress to strengthen links between Brahman breeders, our partners in business and scientists in the industry who encourage the implementation of modern science techniques to promote Brahmans as a dominant breed in the global arena, were successfully obtained. With these valuable inputs the Congress reconfirmed links between Brahman breeders worldwide and offered a great opportunity not only for commercial enterprises but also allowed Southern Africa farmers to share the systems of production, cattle management and the value of genetic improvement to further grow the Brahman breed.

All papers presented at the Technical Conference are available on www.brahman.co.za

Brahman Show and Sale

Eight hundred and fifty Brahmans' were exhibited with judging taking place on 9 and 10 April. The judging of the non-halter trained Brahmans took place on Saturday 5 April in the 2014 Challenge.

The Supreme Champion bull and World Congress Champion HHM1024 was exhibited by Heinrich and Hugo Maree from Piet Retief and the Supreme Champion female WIL09209 by Willie Becker from Dendron

In the non-halter trained division the Supreme Champion bull OBS0970 was exhibited by Eugene Osterloh from Komga and the Supreme Champion female JVZ11199 by Jan van Zyl from Vryburg

On Tuesday 8 April, some of the best Brahmans ever to be on sale were under the hammer at the Congress sale, achieving a 92% sale with an average of R82 000 for bulls and females. During the Gala function 20 superior grey & red Heifers were on offer on the big screen selling at an average of R25 000.

Show and sale results are available on www.brahman.co.za

Opening Ceremony – Afri Dome

The official opening ceremony at the Afri Dome on Monday 7 April was planned and presented to reflect an authentic South African atmosphere whilst providing entertainment to visitors. The animal handlers dressed in their Congress wear provided by BKB and Allwear reflected confidence, commanding the respect of our visitors and confirming the impression of an organized, efficient industry and congress. Although we had to search far & wide for a cultural praise singer we eventually found and contracted one with the help of a local political leader. The praise singer, followed by the Congress judges contributed to an enjoyable event that will be remembered by all visitors. The National anthem by the Rainbow Tenors and the handing out of tokens of appreciation to exhibitors concluded the short ceremony.

A rehearsal session took place on Sunday 6 April with animal handlers.

18 Months Build-up

Planning started 18 months ago with a very modest document titled “2014 World Brahman Congress – Strategy & Action Plan” presented to the Congress Committee for implementation. As the months went by the enormity of the event surfaced and nothing of the initial document remained. It became a huge machine oiled operation addressing much needed and indispensable sponsorships from relevant business partners, handling of public relations, media liaison including TV coverage, invitations to local and international speakers, compilation of congress program including all relevant information, contracting of performing artists for evening entertainment and an endless search for service providers for services ranging from the smallest lapel pin to building material for the Brahman Stall.

During February 2013 the Congress was promoted to the International community at the Houston show and also during October 2013 in Ecuador at their Societies 60th celebrations.

During this period continuous contact was maintained with Brahman Clubs, our local and SADEC Breeders to arrange and encourage registrations, show and sale entries as well as acquiring of suites at the Afri-Dome.

Promotional and other printed material

The first priority was to get a logo designed and approved. Apart from an inviting message on the Brahman website several promotional publications, starting with a 4-page colour flyer, were printed and applied to meet promotional demands. Power point presentations were used at information meetings whilst printed publications were distributed where applicable.

Congress bag with required promotional material were acquired.

A printed corporate show and sale catalogue and congress program were made available during the Congress as well as high quality framed certificates for the non-halter trained competition.

Safety and Security

The process to obtain approval from the National and Provincial Police Departments in terms of safety and security legislation took months, days of report writing and many meetings with the District Police Cluster and a local security company to secure the safety en security grading required for the event.

Sponsorships

A dedicated sponsor liaison program were conducted continuously throughout the 18 months to keep our sponsors informed, ensure the much needed financial support and to further provide all sponsors with the necessary opportunities for exposure during the congress. Continued communication with our sponsors dealt with the allocation of floor space at both venues, assistance with receiving and safe guarding promotional material as well as clearly documented promotional guidelines to prevent any uncertainty in terms of promotional rights.

Congress Registration, Pre- & Post Tours and Accommodation

Pre- & Post Congress Tours were planned and documented with the assistance of the different provincial Brahman organisations and breeders country wide. All tours were offered on the Brahman website since January 2013. The services of a tour operator, Tailor Made Holidays owned by Hestie Crous-Beckett was commissioned to handled overseas congress- and tour registrations as well as accommodation bookings for international guests at pre-booked accommodation facilities. One pre-congress tour to the North West /Northern Cape and one post tour to Limpopo took place. On Sunday 6 April 60 plus foreign guests visited Bos-Blanco Brahmans. Comments, photos and reports on the success of these tours and visiting points are available on www.brahman.co.za

Local congress registrations were handled by the Brahman Office.

Local day tours

Local tourism facilities were visited to find interesting and recreational venues for alternate day tours. Three day excursions to The Dell Cheetah Centre, a river cruise on the Vaal River and the Vredefort Dome World Heritage site were finalised. On average 60 guests registered on the daily tours.

Leather Trophies for Show Competition Categories

The decision to replace ordinary trophies and rosettes for show competition winners with a leather product was original and exiting but proved to be quite a difficult assignment to carry out. Although many leather crafters throughout the country manufacture different leather products we could only find 2 who were prepared to take on the project. Due to the time consuming process to manufacture these hand crafted banners, the first orders were places as early as June 2013. The late order, during February 2014, for the non-halter trained show together with other production problems resulted in a nerve wrecking situation but the final products were impressive.

Congress Décor

Lumar Consultants was commissioned to design, produce and construct the Congress Décor which resulted in a very visible, festive and colourful corporate Congress identity.

The theme for the Congress Décor was approved by the Congress Committee during March 2013 and the process for the development and production of the promotional material was rolled out over the months to follow. Due to the size and height of the Afri Dome, construction of the décor was no easy task but thanks to a local contractor who made a cherry picker available nobody had to act as an acrobat or risk a life to reach the high columns of the Dome. All corporate décor and structures, excluding the Brahman booth, was constructed on 3 and 4 April 2014.

Brahman Booth

The request to provide a Brahman booth for the SA and International Brahman Associations that reflects a South African farm character and feeling was a different story - especially taking into account that specific rules and regulations, with regard to the building of structures, applied to the indoor arena at the Afri-Dome. The "farm stall" was planned, designed and building material was acquired, amongst others, from local street vendors! With the help of Frikkie Deysel from the Afri Dome the stall was build on the Sunday before the Congress started! Antique furniture and plant decorations were sourced and provided by local businesses.

Karin and her team attended the promotional booth for the duration of the Congress and was highly successful promoting the breed and with the selling of promotional items.

Sound Engineering

The services of Star Sound Ltd from Bloemfontein was commissioned for all sound, lighting, multimedia and production requirements at the Technical Conference as well as all activities at the Afri Dome including the provision of sound to performing artist at all the evening functions. The quality of services rendered to the Congress was exceptional throughout.

Shuttle Service

A shuttle service was compiled to coincide with the daily congress program in order to provide transport between accommodation and congress venues for international visitors. The bus service was contracted from Midway Busses in Vanderbiljpark.

Congress Logistics

Apart from the above tasks congress logistics further included the following:

- Provision of temporary structures and backdrop frames for a performing artist's stage, admin stage at the ring and a champion backdrop.

- Identification and temporary recruitment of general workers and students to assist with animal related activities and judges assistance.
- Payment of day allowances, provision of appropriate clothing, meals and accommodation arrangements for service providers, students and bus drivers.
- Identification tags for animal handlers for meals and access control
- Provision of 3 meals per day to 220 animal handlers and general workers
- Renting of tables/chairs & table cloths – continued replacement when needed
- Reception & assistance to performing artists –set up of sound equipment/ general assistance: Khaya iBhubesi & Afri Dome
- Setting up and maintaining of registration desk by Brahman personal

Financial and Administration Management

Putting a budget in place and controlling the administration and finances of the Congress were an enormous task. A special word of thanks to Bernadine and her team.

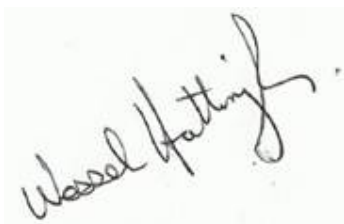
Apart from 9% contribution from the Society, the balance of the income was acquired from sponsorships, local and international registrations and entry fees

Cattle handling and management

From the outset the management of the AFRI-Dome was extremely helpful in contributing towards the success of the Congress by improving the infrastructure and by assisting the congress team where ever possible.

- Logistics
 - Numerous meetings with clubs to arrange stables and requirements
 - The building of a very functional show ring. Our sincere thanks to Eugene Marais from Chemvet
 - To obtain quotes for the supply, delivery and handling of 100ton shavings for bedding
 - To arrange and manage the erection of infrastructure for non-halter division
 - To attend to the arrival of the cattle and to ensure settling in.
 - To attend to weighing and measurement of the cattle and ensure handing in of required health certificates
 - To ensure smooth and prompt logistics during the judging

For and on behalf of the Congress team



WESSEL HATTINGH
CONVENER: WORLD CONGRESS COMMITTEE