

Session 7 – FEI DRESSAGE JUDGING WORKING GROUP - FEEDBACK

Von: Stephen Clarke

Gesendet: Dienstag, 21. März 2017 16:27

An: Frank Kemperman; Bettina.DeRham@fei.org

Cc: Anna.Milne@fei.org

Betreff: Proposed Judging Systems

21 March 2017

Dear Frank, Dear Bettina,

I am concerned over recent developments where according to published information relating to the upcoming Sports Forum, the FEI Committee are considering adopting the code of points as suggested by IDRC. (Not that I have actually seen a full presentation of this proposed system, only the small example below, which I found very difficult to understand)

If the FEI Committee are seriously considering this idea, then I don't really see why you/Harald have tasked Mariette with forming a group, which includes Dieter Schule and myself, to begin the long and arduous task of reviewing the handbook.

To my mind it will form two very different sets of systems, or not?

Would it not be better to wait, before starting the work on the handbook, to have the 'code of points' that IDRC are proposing demonstrated/tested in a real life pilot scheme so that we could at least have an idea of the practical effect?

Has it ever been tried out anywhere in reality? When? Where? By whom? How often? How many horses?

Can the IDRC present any reliable results of the advantages?

To think about a system that would change our present judging system worldwide from the highest to the lowest national level would need thorough research, incl. a comparison of the systems in practice on the shows.

As the present 'Judge General', and presumably leader of our Course Directors, I would think it relevant that you keep me up to date?

Maybe we need to clarify the responsibilities of this position?

Then there is the work that our 'Judges education working party' is in the middle of (part 1 is completed)

Guidelines for Marking of Fundamental Mistakes in Dressage Movements.docx

Should we really continue with this under these circumstances?

particularly as work is already underway to develop the guidelines/code of points (part 2) on how the high level movements must be scored?

Also, as the majority of National Federations naturally follow FEI systems and rules, has the impact on the NFs been considered?

I find it hard to believe that the NFs would consider changing their judging systems and perform the necessary re-training all of their national judges....(For instance, GB has well over a 1,000 active national judges...can you imagine what it would take to re-train all these people to judge in a completely different/new way?)

23 March 2017

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The implications for both the Para and Eventing sports are also huge.

I am still very unclear about what direction the committee will take in the end...but I really think that those of us who are doing the work on these projects need to know that we have the support and confidence of the Committee before we continue.

Also, the Human element has to be taken into account!

It will still be the same group of people working as judges, with inevitably the same differences of opinion as they have now under our existing system.

I would suggest that the review of the 'Handbook' (re-name it Code of points if you like) is the way forwards, and that a more up to date and precise system of evaluating the marks to be awarded would naturally be developed within the new edition, but with the assessment of quality of the scales of training as the main priority.

My worry, with a rigid 'code of points' system, is that we risk producing future judges with a policeman like mentality to judge from a 'cooking recipe' using only a tape measure to guide them, rather than assessing the quality of the horse's way of going.

The result of this could be that the riders will produce horses in the future that are more like trained poodles, rather than the gymnastically trained dressage horses that show the suppleness, expression and elasticity that we see in today's sport.

Many of our colleagues and several top riders that I have spoken to feel exactly the same, and there is the opinion that IDRC does not genuinely reflect the views of the top riders. In fact many of them are not even members...

In my opinion, everyone's energy could be better spent thinking of ways to deliver more and consistent training to the judges Worldwide, rather than trying to re-invent the wheel.

I do hope that these issues can be resolved in the very near future so that we can all just get on with working for the sport.

Kind regards,

Stephen

On 22 Mar 2017, at 05:07, Bettina De Rham <Bettina.DeRham@fei.org> wrote:

Dear Stephen,

First of all we would like to thank you for your letter regarding judging issues. We understand your concerns but thought it may be good to give you further details and also remind you of the process.

As you know the FEI Bureau decided in April 2016 to create a Dressage Working Group on Judging, this was decided and introduced following negative reactions and articles in the media about judging in dressage.

The Group was tasked to evaluate the current dressage judging system in general and especially the measures introduced after the recommendation of the 2009 Task Force. It was also asked to create a

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benchmark of various subjectively sports and to define areas for improvement, to include new suggestions/options.

Now we have had a first meeting with the boards of the stakeholders (Organizers, Officials (judges), Trainers and Riders). The aim was for the first ideas of the Working Group to be discussed with the stakeholders, before they are presented at the FEI Sports Forum.

It was interesting to notice that the stakeholders' representatives present at the meeting had different opinions about the first ideas and that actually the judges were alone with the opinion that nothing has to be changed.

As next step, we will now wait for the reactions of the members the NF's at the Sports Forum, before we continue the discussions and make any decisions on the next steps which will of course first be discussed in the Dressage Committee and with you the General Judge.

In the meantime the work of the handbook reviewing has been stopped until we have a better view of the next steps. This of course also includes the project of Video handbook which is very closely related.

As mentioned, nothing is decided yet. Nobody wants a change if it does not make the system better. Everybody realizes that a system has first to be tested before it can possibly come in force. And last but not least, we are strongly asked to keep in mind that we need a system which is more transparent for the public and is fair for the riders.

And of course it has to be a system which is easy to use for the judges all over the world.

We think it is more than useful to spent the time for this issue and explore all possibilities. we owe it to our stakeholders in general.

With kind regards

Bettina & Frank

From: Stephen Clarke, Dressage Judge General

Sent: mercredi 22 mars 2017 16:53

To: Bettina De Rham <Bettina.DeRham@fei.org>

Cc: Frank Kemperman, FEI Dressage Committee Chair; Anna Milne <Anna.Milne@fei.org>

Subject: Re: Proposed Judging Systems

Dear Bettina and Frank,

Thank you for your response and explanation.

I will await further developments.

Best

Stephen