

# A.J.O.



## *Alliance of Jumping Organisers*

April 4, 2017

Dear Colleagues, members, and associates

The IEOA and AJO are very enthused about participating in the upcoming FEI Sports Forum. Our genuine hope is that the forum provides an atmosphere and audience to allow for progressive, realistic and purposeful discussion that can then be taken under advisement and consideration by the FEI and contribute to the evolution of our sport. In advance of the FEI Sports Forum next week, the IEOA and the AJO are pleased to have been invited to bring our considerable experience and perspective for inclusion in the agenda and discussions

In light of the invitation rules unanimously voted in at the 2016 General Assembly we understand that it is imperative to analyze every aspect of the CSI/CSIO requirements in order to best serve Athletes, Organizers, Owners, Breeders, Officials, Fans, Media, Sponsors and our sport's International and National Federations

The IEOA and AJO further understand that the Jumping Committee and the FEI recognize that the rules for invitations will cause change for many stakeholders. This rule was passed unanimously and primarily to answer what stakeholders have requested for some time. That is, to provide fair opportunity for as many athletes as possible, from a variety of economic strata and regions, increased opportunities to assist in growing our sport.

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Of course we MUST examine and discuss the consequences to ALL and reach a mutually beneficial solution through the CSI/CSIO requirements and invitation protocols going forward.

At the invitation of the FEI Jumping Committee Chair, and in response to a December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016 correspondence and request from the FEI Director of Jumping, a working committee of the IEOA/AJO has spent considerable time and effort over the last 4 months inviting input and recommendations from our worldwide membership and community of jumping organizers, as well as from other important stakeholders in our sport. Our goal was to consider and arrive at a more standardized and harmonized set of requirements to be used by organizers of FEI CSI/CSIO events and specifically as they relate to invitations and fees (FEI Annex V and Annex VI) .

The recommendations and requirements we have arrived at and look forward to discussing at the Sports Forum - we believe- bring an added degree of harmonization, while also addressing and respecting the FEI's stated goals and preferences in the areas of invitations and fees, as well as trying to rid the sport of unregulated wild/pay cards. Important considerations during our deliberations were given to the pending introduction of the long anticipated Event Classification System (ECS), the FEI Jumping Committee's stated respect for the free market and a desire by the FEI to decrease the amount of regulation without negatively impacting the sport or its ongoing sustainability.

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The very important matter of invitations, particularly as they apply to OCs that must limit entries, and remain viable, generated significant interest, especially amongst organizer interests' at the CSI 2\* and 3\* event levels.

Our committee, which had representation of CSIO 4-5\*, CSI 3-5\*, and WEL WC organizers from Europe, North America and Asia had a great knowledge of the sport, organization, sustainability challenges and a desire to take the long term considered approach. It's believed we presented this and framed it up accordingly when we submitted our recommendations for discussion to the FEI early in February. Since that time we have also undertaken a rather in depth analysis of what the real costs are to compete in Europe, as opposed to what people perceive and purport them to be.

It is our genuine hope to present, engage and discuss our findings and recommendation in a proper forum during the FEI Sports Forum in April. Unfortunately, through advance availability of some of our content and recommendations, it seems the topic is now the subject of widespread discussion, debate, unfounded speculation and opinion on a number of platforms without a real understanding of what the IEOA/AJO were invited and tasked to do OR how we structured our recommendations to be flexible to all stakeholders. Indeed, when we have had the opportunity to outline in detail our proposal it has been met with understanding and support by the NFs, riders, and media we have reviewed it with.

We look forward to a successful and progressive FEI Sports Forum next week.

On behalf of the IEOA and AJO we are your sincerely,

Kind regards,

Peter Bollen

Ian Allison

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