

19 October 2017

2018 DRESSAGE RULES –proposed modifications

Dressage Judging Working Group

Introduction

Please find below the Dressage Judging Working group proposals for changes and clarifications to the Dressage Rules.

Summarized feed-back from NFs, Association of Event organizers (AIDO), International Dressage Officials Club (IDOC), International Dressage Riders Club and International Dressage Trainers Club are included under each proposal.

The Dressage Judging Working Group will give a presentation at a session at the GA 2017 which will hopefully lead to an open discussion on the project.

Art. 434 Classification

HiLo Drop - DJWG

Recommendation: Adopt HiLoDrop scoring per movement for all FEI dressage competitions, with the exception of Young Horse events and for all juries with 3 judges

Dressage Judging working Group

In HiLoDrop the highest and lowest scores awarded by the judges for each movement in the test are not taken into account and the average score for that figure is formed from the remaining scores. The final score awarded to the rider and horse is formed by the coefficient weighted sum of this score for all the movements. Each judge's score sheet is unaffected by this process and the final scores per judges form part of the record of the event. Such a system is widely used in other Olympic judged disciplines and also in other equestrian judged sports.

Following a detailed analysis of almost 1000 competitions from 2017 it is shown that the average effect on final scores is a shift of +0.1% with a spread (standard deviation) of 0.2%. In fact only 3% of all GP/GPS results would change by more than 0.5% - in almost every case a small upwards change. The correlation of the HiLoDrop score and the score from the current system is perfectly linear. While the changes are almost invisible for the vast majority of cases in a few cases an important correction would be made; HiLoDrop ensures that the consensus view of the jury predominates in the final result and is not unduly influenced by one judge being exceptionally high or low for whatever reason. The DJWG recognizes that in some circumstances that judge may have been more correct were a detailed re-examination of each movement carried out, but believes that the consensus result is the one that should go forward to the eventual ranking. All movement scores from all judges will go forward to the official record and be communicated to the rider in the normal way.

IDOC

Against introducing the HiLo drop

As we understand the need to create a safety net, we feel that the proposal made by the former FEI Dressage Director to automatically apply the 5/6 % rule could be a valuable alternative to the HiLo drop system, even though it introduces a threshold effect that is not desirable.

IDRC

The IDRC supports the rule revisions regarding HiLoDrop and removing the Collective marks with the exception of the mark for the rider.

HiLoDrop is a sensible bandaid that will remove any outliers without substantively affecting normal variations between judges where the judges are in broad agreement. In essence, it has strong upsides and negligible downsides. We would like to see this tested as soon as practicable. As such, we believe this is a sensible proposal and should be adopted.

With the exception of the Collective mark for the rider, the other Collective marks are judged in each movement. Thus, it is not necessary, or desirable, to rejudge these again at the end of the test in a less accurate way. This was discussed at the two General Assemblies held by the IDRC at the European Championships and was generally thought to be a good and sensible idea.

IDTC

The IDTC Board supports all the Dressage Judging Working Group recommendations for Rules Amendments. The issue of hi/lo drop has been controversial.

However a majority of our Board decided to support based on:

1. Such an approach is widely used in other judged Olympic disciplines as well as judged equestrian sports
2. The conclusions of David Stickland's analyses which suggest that judge position is not a significant factor in explaining differences in scoring
3. An expression of confidence in our judges' integrity and ability to judge what they see regardless of implications. Hence we do not foresee this change to impact judging behaviour.

It is therefore appropriate to endorse the considered recommendations of the DJWG.

AIDEO

AIDEO is strictly against an implementation in 2017. We recommend a testing phase at CDIs in 2018 where everybody involved is aware of the HiLo Drop. We will support the tests and help to find OCs who are able to run a test.

EST NF

Regarding the HiLo drop scoring proposal – we feel that this proposal would not have a positive impact for the sport, at least not before thorough analysis and testing, and should not be instated as of 2018

LUX NF

Against introducing the HiLo drop

ARG NF

Against introducing the HiLo drop

The quality of judging and riding will suffer with this proposal.

Why should a judge give a high score if it will be taken off?

Why would riders take risks to get higher scores?

It is proved that dropping the HILO score does not change the scores significantly and therefore we don't believe we need that change.

<p>Not many countries have computers to run the scores and it will be a high cost to put computers for these countries. Manuel scoring in the judges huts is still in use in Latin America, Asia, Africa and Eastern Europe the gap between them and Western Europe/North America will become bigger and that should not happen.</p> <p>We are very opened minded for proposals but we will only stay as a Olympic Discipline if we stay global.</p> <p>Every point of view from the judges should be taken into consideration. The result of the test is an average of perspectives of every judge. Every opinion counts, the lower and higher could have seen something very relevant for the mark.</p> <p>In other hand to solve problems with judging we support the idea of a reviewed handbook, with images and films. And also that courses and seminars for judging could be done on line.</p> <p>Collective Marks.</p> <p>Our Federatin does not support this idea, there is no clear separation of submission and rider issues within the individual marks. The collective marks are a good chance to reward excellence and mark down overall issues in the test.</p> <p>Changing the system will cause confusion and probably a lot of money expent in new courses and re education.</p>
<p>MAS NF Against introducing the HiLo drop</p>
<p>GER NF GER NF is against the HiLo drop</p>
<p>SWE NF is against the HiLo drop. We suggest an annual trial (2018) with the proposed system with an evaluation afterwards, before FEI decides to change this Rule.</p>
<p>CAN NF The Canadian NF is not in support of this rule change for 2018. The NF strongly recommends that the FEI pilot the new HiLo Scoring System for a minimum of 1 year (ideally in an off year). During this pilot year the current scoring system should be used for final results however, the results under the HiLo Scoring System should also be collected for complete analysis. The complete analysis must then be shared with all NF's, athletes and officials, for review and discussion before any possible implementation. Analysis of the HiLo Scoring System should include the impacts on ordinate scores.</p>
<p>ITA NF Agrees with the HiLo drop. The adoption of this new tool is in accordance with the paramount principle that the judges panel are a TEAM and therefore the opinion of most of the team should always prevail even in the rare and theoretical case of one judge being right and all the others wrong.</p>
<p>SUI NF Against the HiLo drop</p>
<p>DEN NF We are open to any suggestion that would improve the current system, but don't feel that HiLo drop is the right answer. We think more focus on education and evaluation would improve our current system.</p>
<p>BRA NF Against the HiLo drop</p>
<p>IND NF Against the HiLo drop</p>

NZL NF

1. NF New Zealand does not support the HiLo proposal to be included in the rule changes to be voted on at the FEI AGA
2. NF New Zealand considers more work needs to be done identifying the root cause of significant differences in order that a better understanding of how to resolve the differences that are not considered within the natural bounds of subjective judging viewed from different arena points and angles
3. NF New Zealand supports ongoing accessible and affordable high quality education for judges
4. NF New Zealand requests that if in the future any any change is to be made to the current judging system that involves scoring, there must be a trial of the practical application. Adequate lead in time is essential to allow for IT changes etc, and consideration of the financial implications for smaller NF's and OC's, noting that 1st January changes are "mid-season" for the southern hemisphere.

GBR NF

If the whole judging system is in the process of being overhauled then we would be better to wait and consider all revisions at the same time. We also feel that this should not be rushed through, particularly half way through an Olympic cycle. 2018 will be a critical year for qualification for all nations, therefore introducing such changes at this point carries quite a risk, especially when a full trial or pilot scheme has not been conducted in advance in order to fully evaluate and analyse the potential impact this could have.

We would recommend that prior to any changes further investigation is required, allowing sufficient time for any new scoring system to be trialled fully in advance of implementation

Alternative Rule Change Proposal for Judge Scoring

In addition to the letter providing feedback on the Hi-Lo Drop proposals, British Dressage would like to formally support the proposals that have been put forward by former FEI Dressage Director Trond Asmyr, subsequently endorsed by Master Judge Stephen Clarke, as an alternative for consideration. We understand that this has also been formally proposed by the Norwegian Federation.

This is a solution that British Dressage has discussed internally previously as a simple and straightforward way to address potential problems of poor scoring or bias. If we are to eliminate large discrepancies in scoring or other anomalies that may exist within the current system then it would make sense to amend only those scores that are significantly outside of the average range.

While there will still be variances, by limiting these to a maximum of 5% (for the final score) it ensures that scores all remain within an acceptable band. The final total can be immediately amended, thereby rectifying any significant differentials without the added complication of dropping the highest and lowest score by movement. Any judges whose scores fall consistently outside of this range should then be subject to further scrutiny and re-training provided as appropriate.

Article 434 – Add 2.2 with the following text: If a judge's final score for a Horse / Athlete combination varies (above or below) by five (5) % or more from the average of the scores of the other judges for the same combination, that particular score will be changed to the same as the next closest score.

Article 438 – Text amended as follows:Delete the text from "If a judge's final score" through to "the next closest score"

GBR DRE Judges

The British Dressage Judges Committee are writing to express their concerns about the FEI working group's proposed changes. We are concerned that the proposed changes will not be for the good of the sport and could in fact be detrimental to the development of judges and the production of dressage horses as athletes.

While we support change, where change produces improvement and progress, in this case we fear that this could be brought about with very little insight and evidence that it is the best way to improve the sport. There currently appears to be very little grounding to suggest this is the best way forward. We would be interested to hear the methodology with which this proposed system has been tested and how comprehensively, as well as the outcomes. So far the proposed system has not been well received by riders or judges alike.

We feel the negatives of the FEI working group's proposal of removing collectives far outweigh the positives, as the collectives are valuable for several reasons. They are reflective of the whole picture and should not be used to influence the result of a class and any judge found to be doing so in a purposeful way should be disciplined accordingly.

BEL NF

The BEL national dressage committee does not agree with the addition of the high/low judging system to the new FEI rules.

NOR NF

HiLo drop: The Norwegian NF does not support this proposal.

CHI NF

HILO Drop Scoring per movement: We do not agree or support this proposal.

In other hand to solve problems with judging we support the idea of a reviewed handbook, with images and films. And also that courses and seminars for judging could be done on line.

ESP NF

Support the International Dressage Officials Club (IDOC) proposal and NOT support the HiLoDrop rule change proposal recommended by the FEI Dressage Judging Working Group (DJWG).

Central European Dressage Working Group:

HiLo drop is not a step into the right direction. It is nothing but a mathematical approach, weighting the consensus in marks more strongly

USA NF

US Equestrian obtained feedback on this proposal from our various stakeholders including many of our top athletes. The proposal is not supported as it is not addressing the issue but seeking to cover it up.

NOR NF

Article 434, add new 2.2 with following text: For Ground Juries of 5 or more judges: If a judge's final score for a Horse/Athlete combination varies (above or below) by five (5) % or more from the average of the scores of the other judges for the same combination, that particular score will be changed to the same as the next closest score.

See also 438

AUS NF

- is against the introduction of the HiLoDrop scoring system
- is against the HiLo proposal to be included in the Dressage Rule changes to be voted on at the 2017 FEI General Assembly 2017.
- supports further education of judges by the FEI.
- supports further exploration of judging systems and how they may apply to dressage.

- does not support any change to a judging system without appropriate lead in time, especially if it has a cost implication.
- believes that any change to the judging system must be thoroughly live tested over 12 months prior to introduction

JPN NF

Issues of Present Judging System:

1. The job as Ground Jury has become too complicated and has been very difficult to achieve impartiality. There is also an issue of being attractive and comprehensible to the spectators.
2. Most of the stakeholders agree that the present system and Judge Handbook need overall review. JEF agrees with the direction.
3. It is true that if a Ground Jury member intentionally "always" gives a particular rider high/low marks, it surely affects the placing.

Considering HiLo Drop System as a solution to the above-mentioned issues...

Due to the biomechanics of horse body and/or the composition of the tests, often is the case that there is a significant difference in how and what Ground Jury members see depending on where they sit, either on the long side or the short side. If the difference in scores derives from where the judges are seated, then that difference must not be ignored. We can understand if the consensus is built between the judges on the short side or the long side, not among all the judges.

The roles of JSP must be emphasized more. A judge who intentionally gives arbitrary marks should be strictly mentored, and if that does not work, the judge should be eliminated from Ground Jury.

Furthermore, instead of eliminating the highest/lowest marks automatically, it might be better to consider eliminating the highest/lowest marks only in the case when "there is 6% or 7% (pre-determined figure) difference between the marks.

We do agree that we must reconsider the overall judging system, which gives significant effect towards placings. We suggest that we should discuss further, taking more time, and deepen the understanding of various parties.

FRA NF

We are not supporting the HiLoDrop scoring per movement which is not solving problems. Judges are encouraged to not use extremis marks even if they would have to use it.

We propose to consider the final percentages :

- calculate the average %
- readjust the percentages which are further than 5% from the average % by using the closer next %. Same procedure for % too high or too low

This system would be more effective, less expensive and easier to understand. Example :

68% / 67% / 68% / 67% / **74%** . Average : 68,8%

74% readjust to **68%**.

68% / 67% / 68% / 67% / **68%**. Final % = 67,6%

NED NF

Hilo Drop scoring per movement

The KNHS is pleased that, after three years of insisting, the FEI has taken over this proposal. We strongly advise the FEI to adopt HiLODrop scoring per movement for all FEI

dressage competitions, with the exception of Young Horse events and for all juries with 3 judges.

This will have several advantages:

1. The system would also considerably reduce the impact of unacceptable differences between judges that occur regularly (intentionally or unintentionally), also at Major Championships; for example nationalistic or anti-nationalistic judging, difficult views at some movements, or just mistakes of a judge.
2. The final score is a composite of the previously adjusted individual movement scores, and thus provides a better reflection of the quality of the performance.
3. Judges, whose scores were previously scrapped, will no longer be singled out publicly.
4. The system would also remove the need for a JSP, as any inaccuracies in the judging of individual movements (such as a missed flying change) will already have been removed.
5. The public and press will be able return their attention to the sport, instead of focusing on the competence of one or two individual judges, and the so-called poor quality of dressage judging.

In our view, such a change to the current judging system would be a positive step forward from the introduction of seven judges. It would also send a strong message to the equestrian world and the general public that the sport of dressage is forward thinking, self-critical and intent on improving any shortcomings. In our opinion it would be good to start with a Pilot and evaluate after a certain period.

We also would strongly recommend the introduction of a "code of points" as soon as possible, in order to improve the judging system in the long term.

Collective Marks

Recommendation: Collective marks should be partially removed from all FEI tests in 2018, keeping only the collective mark for the Rider. This will not be applicable for the Young Horse Tests.

Dressage Judging working Group

With the possible exception of the Rider/Aids mark, the DJWG feels that the collective marks are already taken into account in the movement scores. The switch of emphasis from a movement mark - based on exactly what the judge sees at the moment of execution - to a collective note that is designed to summarize the entire test, does not aid the judge's focus. In analysis of the ~1000 2017 tests it is seen that while technical and collective scores are quite correlated, the riders at the top of the ranking do typically receive an extra boost from the collective marks. We also observe that even in some high level events the ranking of the technical marks is effectively overruled by that of the collective marks. The completion of the collective marks also takes time between starters and, particularly for televised events, a small gain *in overall competition time can be expected if collective marks are no longer used.*

GBR NF

Collective marks - There was more support among our stakeholder groups for the proposal to drop the collective marks. It is generally felt that this is effectively 'double counting' and rewarding combinations twice for the same effort. These are also the marks that are open to the most variation and / or potential abuse by judges who are not

<p>being wholly objective and impartial in their scoring, whether in terms of international or reputational bias towards individual riders.</p> <p>We would still want to retain collective marks up to FEI level, as they do provide a useful training guide, although some concern has been expressed about the impact this could then have on national competition longer term. Ideally we always want to ensure that our rules domestically are harmonised with those at international level to avoid confusion, which would obviously not be the case if collectives were removed.</p> <p>We would also question whether it is appropriate for these changes to also apply to Under 21 competition, where the collectives have more use for the training and development of young riders? We would recommend that the needs of this group is considered more carefully before applying rule changes to all FEI competition</p>
<p>ESP NF Agree with the suggested change but the mark for the Rider should be maintained</p>
<p>GER NF Collective marks. They seem to be dispensable because their statistical impact on the overall result is low, but the collective marks are a means to express the Judge's evaluation of the important basic requirements. And those should not be neglected. But again they only make sense if an unprejudiced Judge gives marks for what he sees, irrespective of the rider's/horse's name.</p>
<p>NZL NF NF NZL supports that the collective marks be partially removed but request that a strong emphasis be on harmony between horse and rider. That effectiveness of aids, seat and position does not necessarily conform to the harmonious combination that is strived for.</p>
<p>FIN NF FIN NF not in favour of removing them</p>
<p>IDOC Regarding the collective marks, we would like to support the recommendation made by the 5* judges during the meeting in Amsterdam earlier this year to keep all four of them with coefficient 1.</p>
<p>CAN NF Collective marks. We are not sure there is enough reasoning to make this change. The rider collective mark must remain. If this is beneficial for the rider we would not be opposed, however if this proposal merely seeks to "speed things up" we are not in favor.</p>
<p>SWE NF Regarding the Rule change of taking away the Collective Marks, except the Rider's position and effect of the aids, we believe, that these are a Summary of the whole performance, which together with the comments of the Judge, gives a very valuable guidance for the continuation of the rider/horse training.</p>
<p>NED NF Collective marks. Agreed. We also recommend that the judges write more feedback on the protocols. Also remarks instead of only marks.</p>
<p>ITA NF Collective marks. In agreement with the GER NF, we feel that the collective marks may seem to be dispensable because their statistical impact on the overall result is low, but the collective marks are a means to express the Judge's evaluation of the important basic requirements. And those should not be neglected. But again they only make sense if an unprejudiced Judge gives marks for what he sees, irrespective of the rider's/horse's name.</p>
<p>BRA NF Against removing collective marks</p>

CHI NF

Our Federation does not support this idea, there is no clear separation of submission and rider issues within the individual marks. The collective marks are a good chance to reward excellence and mark down overall issues in the test.

Changing the system will cause confusion and probably a lot of money spent in new courses.

USA NF

Collective Marks. The removal of the Collective Marks (except for the Rider) has drawn an array of responses. In general, there is resistance to supporting this change. It is felt that there is not enough reasoning being provided to justify this level of change. The U.S. looks forward to further discussion and explanation of this proposal during the GA.

AUS NF

- supports two collective marks being retained (being marks for Submission and for Rider)
- believes Collective marks should be partially removed from all FEI tests in 2018, keeping only the collective mark for the Rider. This would not be applicable for the Young Horse Tests.

Art. 438 Judges Supervisory Panel

Recommendation: the JSP no longer corrects scores in championship events, but that this is replaced with the introduction of HiLo drop by movement and 6% Rule would no longer apply with the HiLoDrop scoring (for CDI with 5 and above Judges).

Dressage Judging working Group

The JSP has two main functions, the supervision of the judging corps and more recently the correction of specific judging mistakes at championship events. This second role will become largely redundant with the introduction of HiLoDrop scoring as most movement "judging mistakes" will automatically be corrected. (For example an unseen change-error by one judge will automatically be removed from the final score). In addition, with a system of not correcting marks, the awarded score will remain part of the public record.

GBR NF

JSP. We would be in favour of retaining the Judges Supervisory Panel for a number of reasons. We believe that this provides an important oversight of judging standards at international level and would actually welcome the introduction of a similar panel for Para Equestrian Dressage too.

In conclusion, we would not recommend the adoption of a Hi-Lo Drop system at this stage, but agree it would be appropriate to consider removing the collectives. We support the retention of the Judges Supervisory panel and would further recommend that this function is extended to Para-Equestrian competition. We would also agree that the Ground Jury of seven members should be maintained for higher level championships, regardless of these other proposals.

This submission is a balanced representation of the collective views of our various stakeholder groups, but for your reference we have also included a separate letter sent on behalf the British Dressage Judges Committee for your review and consideration.

GER NF

The JSP should only modify those marks that are objectively wrong, for example because a mistake was made in a movement and the mark does not reflect it. They should not be like a schoolmaster. They could chair a discussion of the Ground Jury after the competition as explained above, this would be a very helpful schooling aspect and the Judges would learn from it.

One possible action could be that if the marks of a Judge show a deviation of a certain percentage, like more than 5 % from the average of the other Judges' results, his marks are aligned to those of the result that is closest to his.

ESP NF

Support the important functions of the JSP done so far supervising judging corps and correcting of specific judging mistakes at championships events.

Not support the elimination of JSP corrections in Championships events.

Review the tasks of the JSP giving them more power and range of decisions.

NZL NF

NF NZL supports a review following HiLo judging decision

NF NZL supports a review to consider the 5% proposal made by the FEI 5* Judges Group but has concerns about manual observations and calculations being necessary

USA NF

We are not supportive of the replacement of the JSP with HiLo drop system. The JSP's role at the Championships is vital and the reasons for not adopting the HiLo are outlined above.

NZL NF

Support but is not possible if HiLo scoring per movement is introduced

AUT NF/SVK NF /POL NF / HUN NF

Art. 438.9 JSP. JSP members are appointed for two (2) years periods. They may be reappointed for (3) successive an unlimited number of periods. There is no age limit for JSP Members.

It is important for every committee to renew itself.

NED NF

With the introduction of the Hilo Drop scoring, the JSP should be installed to have a mentor/coaching role at an event. In our opinion it should be enough to appoint two persons for the panel (also thinking about costs). It would be good if the FEI would consult with the different NF's about which officials will be in the panel. Next to this we think there should be a circulation system with a maximum term of three years.

CAN NF

What happens to the JSP under the HiLo Scoring System?

ITA NF

With the introduction of the Hilo Drop scoring, the JSP could become a tool to aid mentoring and coaching during an event. It could be formed from max. 2 judges, to try and keep costs to a minimum. There should also be some kind of system to ensure a rotation of judges with in the JSP.

NOR NF

Article 438: delete the text starting with "If a judge's final score", ending with "the next closest score"