

By Email:

To the attention of Mr. John P. Roche
FEI Jumping Director

March 31st, 2017

Dear John,

We want to share our concern about the future of the FNCJ series. The Division 1 Organisers, in a meeting held in Brussels in March 20th, to prepare for the Sports Forum, studied the document available in the FEI website regarding the Future of the Nations Cup™ Jumping and more specifically how can further improve and strengthen the FNCJ, and we would like to make the following considerations:

1. *Do we believe the concept of qualifiers and a Final is a good concept from a sports and marketing perspective?*

Yes, it is interesting under all points of view: sports, marketing and media.

From the marketing aspect, the format must be attractive and with a good value. The format must be competitive within the market.

The FNCJ division 1 must also determine qualification for European and World Championships and for Olympic Games.

Double Longines ranking points in the Nations Cup could be a good option.

2. *Is it possible to reduce the number of qualifiers and increase the financial contribution to them if available?*

We do not feel there is a need to reduce the number of qualifiers, but we think each region should manage their own qualifiers or their own qualification system. If the Series continues to be global, each region should have the chance to qualify for the Final.

The current FNCJ qualifier is not understandable for audience. The concept is better explained when all qualifiers count.

3. *Should all qualifiers be of 5* level (based on prize money and ECS)?*

We do not consider that all qualifiers should be of 5* level, otherwise we would kill Europe Division 2 and North America, Central America & Caribbean leagues. At least not for a few years, helping to the development of some regions.

4. *Do we need to try to involve the CSIOs that are not part of the series and if so how?*

We don't think that we need to involve CSIOs that are not part of the series.

5. *At the qualifiers, is it an option to merge the NC and the GP into the NC competition by merging the prize money and offering prize money for team and individual performance as well as allocate more points for the Longines ranking?*

No, we believe that the NC and the GP can coexist. We also think that more Longines ranking points should be allocated for performance in the NC.

Nevertheless, we all agree that the NC should be the highlight of the event. It is important for each event to accommodate 15 to 20 home riders who would have little to compete for if the NC and GP were merged.

The FNCJ competition must be the highlight of the event, top consideration must be prizemoney and programming.

6. *Do we need to review the competition format for qualifiers? How can we make it more interesting for a wider audience?*

Most the shows are of the opinion that a possibility of changing format could be a reality. The preferred format would be 1 round and 1 jump-off for the first place. This change could make it not only especially more interesting and attractive for a wider TV audience, but also more understandable.

The format has been tested in Barcelona over the last 4 years and it seems that works fine. We understand that this change would be well received by most of the stakeholders.

7. *What would be the minimum prize money needed in the FNCJ Final?*

In an ideal situation, a rider from the winning team should make comparable money as a rider that wins a CSI5* GP. We consider that 1,5M€ on prize money for the Final must be a minimum requirement. We also consider that instead of giving a bonus in prize money, it should be given in Longines ranking points.

Finally, it could be an interesting proposal that the Final has the same Longines ranking points than WEG.

The format needs to be competitive and prize money must be attractive for competitors.

8. *Should the FNCJ be used as a qualifier to allocate some quota places for the Olympic Games?*

Using the FNCJ as a qualifier to allocate some quota places seems a very good idea. Maybe it should be based on a team ranking over a period of three years preceding the Olympic year. This gives the NFs and FNCJ likewise importance in the process of developing the athletes.

9. *During a WEG year should we integrate the Final of the FNCJ in the WEG as the Jumping Team World Championship?*

No, keep it the way it is.

10. *How can we increase the identity of the FNCJ and make it more consistent at events?*

We must make a better job in global communication. Especially in order to reach out to a new audience we need emotional involvement and a guided story telling. We understand that for the general media an audience, the identity of each of these traditional shows, in most cases, supersedes the identity of the League.

While preparing the media report, the FEI should also consider the coverage of the rest of competitions of each event where you can also find the brand of the NC title sponsor. That could help to reach a better ROI.

The FNCJ must be the most important series of the FEI, the FEI must handle the series as such.

11. *How can we further increase the value of the potential sponsor?*

Remove the FEI TV concept in the NC. Leave the streaming of the NC available for free, as other series do. Improve the fan engagement on the screens on the site.

12. *We understand Europe wants to maintain Division 1 but how can we better integrate the other European NFs (Division 2) in the FNCS?*

We support the plan that the EEF has proposed for the NC in Europe.

Furthermore, we must express our disagreement with the following points:

The signature of a MOU with GCL, without making sure NC will have a healthy environment. We believe that this agreement is highly unfair to other events.

The entry fee proposal for the CSIO. We don't feel that the AJO represents our interests with the proposal.

Decisions must be taken to preserve the oldest equestrian series, but these decisions need to be taken now, we cannot postpone it more. Long term planning is essential for the survival of our shows. It is necessary that we have a firm schedule to secure financial viability for our events. We need a definite date.

Looking forward to see you and discuss our concerns at the Sports Forum.

Kind regards,

Peter Polstelmans, CSIO5* Lummen

Nadia Poirier, CSIO5* La Baule

Duccio Bartalucci, CSIO5* Rome

Nayla Stössel, CSIO5* St Gallen

Jan de Mooij, CSIO5* Rotterdam

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