

Summary of Discussions FEI Eventing Open Forum, Luhmühlen (GER) 25 August 2011

EVENTING COMMITTEE - Consultation process 2013 Rules revision

Further to the published documents on the consultation process the Eventing Committee chaired by Giuseppe Della Chiesa, consisting of Anne-Mette Binder Deputy Chairman, Clayton Fredericks (AUS), Robert Kellerhouse (USA), Alec Lochore (GBR) and Pierre Michelet (FRA), together with the FEI Eventing Department have collected the first rounds of views from 8 NFs, 21 Officials from 10 NFs ERA and IEOC and 1 OC involved in Eventing.

A document outlining the initial answers was presented to the first of the 4 FEI Eventing Open Forums during the European Championship in Luhmühlen in August 2011, with a discussion summarized below on the main topics that could be part of the statutory Rules revision for 2013.

The next FEI Eventing Open Forum will take place in Guadalajara (MEX) during the Pan Am Games Eventing on **Wednesday 19 October 2011**.

The feedback from all parties is very much appreciated to allow full involvement by all for the future development of the Eventing Sport.

The intention is to have an overall consultation process to take place until **May 2012** in order to prepare the needed rules revision and changes for presentation to the FEI GA in November 2012 for implementation **1 January 2013**.

Consultation process roadmap

2011 June	Discussion document sent to NF's
2011 July	Answers received from NF's
2011 25 August	Luhmühlen (GER) - Open Forum
2011 19 October	Guadalajara (MEX) – Open forum
2011 17-20 November TBC	Adelaide (AUS) – Open Forum
2012 May	Taupo (NZL)
2012 May	Final proposal to NF's
2012 November	Presentation for approval to FEI GA
2013 1st January	Implementation of new Rules

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The Chairman opened the Forum by welcoming and thanking all participants for attending and all the National Federations and individuals who gave an answer to the Consultation Process.

A Message from the FEI President was conveyed to the participants by the Chairman.

He explained that the Eventing Committee's intention was to organise this consultation process to generate thinking regarding the Rules Revision. It was essential to receive feedback from Eventing stakeholders to understand the concerns in the sport. After the Forum's a proposal would be sent by May-June 2012 to NFs.

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Eventing Committees questions and 1st round of comments received

-Eventing Formats

-Qualifications

Competition formats (CIC – CCI)

Is it still relevant for the international sport of Eventing to keep two different competition formats ?

The overall feeling is that CCI's in the traditional order of tests are and should remain the ultimate international Eventing competition while CIC's in general have a role as a preparatory (training/qualifying) competition.

While there seem to be a case for CIC's at three star level there are doubts about the real need of CIC's as international competitions at one and two star level.

Competition formats (CIC – CCI)

Is the tradition order of tests important or not – does the Dressage, Cross-Country, Jumping order of tests represent Eventing and does it have any influence on the public perception of "horse welfare" ?

There is a shared opinion that for the CCI format, as the ultimate Eventing competition, the traditional order of test is important because it cares and tests for some of the fundamental values of Eventing and can also help on the public perception of "horse welfare".

Competition formats (CIC – CCI)

If we retain the two different competition formats should there be a clearer difference between the formats ?

The general answer is that if the two formats are to be retained internationally a much clearer difference is needed in the following areas:

- distance of cross-country
- duration of the competition (one, max 2 days for CIC's)
- order of tests (cross country last for CIC's and show jumping last for CCI's)
- horse inspections procedures
- overall cost of the competition that should be less for CIC's
- new distinctive and understandable names

Competition formats (CIC – CCI)

Could the international sport of Eventing be defined as "one sport" based on the current CCI format leaving the one day (CIC) to be used at national level only?

There is a general consensus that CCI's are "the real thing" and represent Eventing while CIC's are more of a preparatory competition aimed to training and qualification.

Discussion: should a "preparatory training competition" be an international competition or should be kept at national level?

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Competition formats (CIC – CCI)

Do we need two formats to ensure we maintain robust MER principles? Or could the overall structure of “qualifications – minimum requirements” be simplified by restructuring the competition formats.

With few exceptions there is a feeling that maintaining CIC's as international competitions is unavoidable to ensure that standards for qualifications are met globally.

Discussion: are CICs needed only at three star or also at one and two star level. Would it be possible to achieve the same results with something like “national certified” competitions?

Mark Phillips GBR: the difference between both formats must definitely be increased. The distances and jumping efforts should be counted as a ratio of efforts, for 3* 1 effort per every commenced 135 meters, for 4* 1 effort per every commenced 140 meters allowing for 12 minute courses with more discretion of the Course Designers.

Mike Etherington-Smith GBR NF: Cost of organisers and competitors must be taken into consideration. Time is money and CCIs are getting very expensive. Solutions to reduce the costs could be at 1* and 2* the sport could be one format, organisers could have flexibility to run the competition in whatever order he prefers, over either 1 or 2 days.

Sönke Lautenbach GER NF: It was felt that the CIC format should be retained at all levels, the Cross Country as last phase produced interest, excitement, entertaining and doesn't put the sport in any danger.

Carl Bouckaert BEL: Necessity to take into account the conditions world-wide, in some countries the difference of level between National competitions International competitions is insignificant therefore the concept of certified National competitions could be appropriate. In other countries where the sport is less developed, national standards are not the same.

Thomas Werngren SWE NF: the issue in Sweden is that riders tend to go abroad to qualify at International competitions. Domestic competitions are losing popularity and losing sponsors. Developing and maintaining competitions CCIs and certified National competitions in Sweden would help to keep sponsors and reduce costs.

John Watson IRL: Public perception is essential, Eventing sport is about education of riders, officials, and also the public. It is very difficult to understand the difference between CCIs and CICs. Should the denomination of CICs be changed.

Yogi Breisner- GBR NF: The window of distances within each level and format should be reduced to allow less flexibility, this would allow the XC of different levels and categories to be more consistent and significantly different.

Lucinda Green GBR: referring to the CIC's Vet inspection constraint to be questioned as it is created confusion within CICs organisation.

Mike Etherington-Smith GBR NF: consideration should be given to increase the responsibility of National Federations for qualifications through National competitions and ensuring that the competitions are up to standard.

Qualification of Athletes & Horses (MER)

Is the current Eventing qualification system achieving the right result ?

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There is a shared view that the qualification system is in general working, but also that it is too complicated and could be clearly improved in different ways.

Is the meaning of “minimum eligibility requirement (MER)” clear to national federations, riders, trainers, parents, sponsors ?

There are very mixed views about this point and there is also the feeling in some cases that the qualification system is discouraging interested parties from taking up their responsibilities.

Qualification of Athletes & Horses (MER)

Are technical requirements for MER strong enough ?

There are different opinions, but the real problem seems to be the consistency of the cross-country courses for each level and the need of having stronger requirements for new athletes coming up the grades.

Could a different approach for riders and horses improve the system (riders licenses) ?

In general is felt that having a different approach for horses and riders could well improve the system.

Qualification of Athletes & Horses (MER)

Could a “reverse qualification” (downgrading) in the case of a clear failure of performance improve the system and increase the level of responsibility of all involved ?

The general view with few exceptions is that some form of “downgrading” for clear failure of performance should be introduced.

How important is the achievement of a MER as a combination ?

There are different views on this point but in general is felt that this requirement is not essential, but should be kept for Championships and Games.

Mark Philips: Two qualification tracks could be envisaged, one for first time riders who need more experience before moving on, the second for the experienced riders who could move up the levels. A separate procedure should be implemented for Riders and horses.

Helen Christie NZL: The two qualification tracks is used in Australia at One Star level. Riders with more experience can enter a One Star competition quicker than the less experienced riders. Reverse qualifications could also be implemented through Officials watching the riders having repeated trouble at a level.

Seppo Laine FIN NF: It is difficult in countries with a limited number of competitions to set the national standards at the 1* level.

Rüdiger Schwarz GER: currently the minimum qualifications work, however it is difficult to ensure that a One Star is the same in Germany as in other countries. Reverse qualification could be difficult to implement, it could be appropriate for horses falling twice.

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Gert Naber, NED NF: The Dutch NF rule on the age of horses. 5 year old horses are not allowed to enter a National One Star competition. Downgrading is also applied for 2 disqualifications (one after the other) in the XC, the next competition must be of a lower level. Two disqualifications at a 2 star level the next competition must be National. NFs must be responsible for their athletes and horses.

Carl Bouckaert BEL: the system must be based on objective criteria to enable an easy understanding.

Yogi Breisner GBR NF: it was felt important not to create a system which puts unnecessary pressure on the horse at the lower level or is over complicated, time and opportunities to qualify must be looked at. It was felt that the system should take into account that owners could take away horses from the less experienced riders to allow the horse to go quicker up the levels.

The system is progressing, with the increase of levels the increase of qualifications has become necessary.

RUS NF: A qualification system needs to take into account small countries that do not have many Eventing horses and have less the opportunity to go to high level events.

Thomas Werngren SWE NF: Reverse qualifications require NFs to take decisions. Yellow cards are very efficient for a NF. We have had some riders who wanted to move up to another level and due to their yellow cards we have mentioned that they should remain at the level until progress was registered.

Other Topics

Championship formats - increase the number of riders to 5 per team for Championships as per Olympic format?

Carl Bouckaert BEL: Olympic Games format advantage is that everybody feels part of team. 4 results counting instead of 3 could be envisaged.

John Watson IRL: 5 riders in a team could be against the welfare of the horse as unexpected result from allowing two discard scores, and the riders could change attitude to become careless and not really ride on the 4th day.

Mark Phillips GBR: Would disagree as if 5 in a team and 3 to count, the responsibility of the team riders with results only kicks in when 2 riders have been eliminated.

Giuseppe Della Chiesa: it is felt that with 5 per team advantage is given to the bigger nations. However it is interesting to note that for the Regional and Continental Games at lower level, 5 riders per team provides an additional possibility of having competitors participating and finishing.

Sönke Lautenbach GER NF: We support the Olympic format and we should not underestimate the discussion between developed and not so developed countries, 3 counting riders make it easier for the less developed countries, that is a very important factor when it comes to universality.

Dressage tests - are new tests needed? an additional test at all levels and one for Championships only ?

Ciska van Meggelen NED NF: proposed that the flying changes be reviewed to be located so the judges could see them in the 3 and 4 star test. Also the One Star test could be made

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more difficult.

Lucinda Green GBR: *it would be a good idea to have a different test for Championships only*

Rules for Ponies

- line up all Pony Rules to the Eventing Rules with exceptions regarding the bits used for XC and Jumping ?
- maximum age of athletes for ponies to be brought to 14 and have only one level of international competition to be a clear "introduction to the sport" ?
- Alternatively if age (16) and two levels to be maintained line up CCIP** to CCI* with the only exception of XC obstacle top spread ?

Officials - Age limit (70 years) ? Accountability ? Championships and Games appointments ? Ground Jury role in show jumping test ?

Carl Bouckaert BEL: *Many people are in such good shape at age 70, it's a shame to lose such passionate committed people at the age of 70, suggest to either remove the age limit or increase it to 75.*

Mike Etherington-Smith GBR NF: *The necessity for new younger Officials to come through is essential and objective criteria must be basis. Increase of age limit is not helpful.*

Sönke Lautenbach GER NF: *The limitation of age is acceptable providing no exemptions on age limit are given.*

Riders per competition – Minimum/Maximum number of riders ?

Helen Christie NZL: *If certain events wish to organise events with very few riders it is not felt to be a problem*

Fly shields to be allowed in Eventing dressage:

Yogi Breisner GBR NF: *As authorised in Dressage and Show Jumping – Eventing should follow allow it.*

FRA NF: *What are the arguments against the fly shields, as it does not really change the performance.*

Anne-Mette Binder: *if fly-shields be allowed permanently they should have another name as they will be used not only as fly shields but also for noise, etc. Regarding the nose piece (protector) as a Judge it would find it quite difficult to make sure how the contact between the horse and rider is with those kind of material.*

Giuseppe Della Chiesa thanked all the participants and encouraged all to send their thoughts and comments to the FEI.