

13 November 2022, Cape Town (RSA)

<b>Committee name</b>	<b>FEI Para Equestrian Technical Committee</b>
<b>Date</b>	13 November 2022
<b>Chair</b>	Amanda Bond

<b>Committee Report</b>	
<b>Pt.</b>	<b>Subject</b>
1	<p><b>Sports Demographics:</b> With the pandemic finally subsiding, Para Dressage numbers have returned to pre-pandemic levels. Athlete numbers have increased by 22.5% year on year to 327 registered athletes in 2022. Horse registrations have followed a similar trend with an increase of 21.3% compared to the previous year, with 393 active horses. There was a 38.5% increase in the number of events held in 2022 when compared to 2021.</p>
2	<p><b>World Championships, Herning:</b> A very successful World Championships was held in Herning in August, alongside Jumping, Dressage and Vaulting. The Organising Committee did a superb job in providing a truly inclusive championships where Para Dressage was centre-stage alongside other FEI disciplines. 83 athletes came forward to contest the 11 medals on offer; the number down on previous world championships due to the notable loss of some nations due to ongoing pandemic travel restrictions.</p> <p>We wish to send our sincere thanks to the Organising Committee, the officials, volunteers and FEI staff who made these World Championships such a success.</p>
3	<p><b>Judges Supervisory Panel Trial:</b> Herning provided a valuable opportunity for the FEI to run a trial to see how Para Dressage may be able to adopt a system similar to Dressage's Judges Supervisory Panel (JSP). Thanks to the efforts of Deputy Chair David Hamer, all Individual and Team tests across all grades were observed using the same system adopted by Dressage. The Technical Committee are now reviewing the results prior to making a decision on whether to adopt the system for major championships going forward.</p>
4	<p><b>Para Forum:</b> In January 2022 the Para Dressage Forum was held. Hosted online and spanning across 3 separate sessions, the Forum attracted 140, 120 and 89 participants respectively, representing over 30 different nations. The Forum provided a very valuable opportunity to discuss with our community important topics including the rules revision, Para Dressage tests, education, classification, competition formats and ideas for the future development of the sport. Alongside the FEI Sports Forum held in April, these events gave a vital opportunity for the Committee to hear the views of all stakeholders involved in para dressage.</p>

5	<p><b>Full Rules Revision:</b> Much of the Committee’s work this year has been undertaking a full rules revision. Delayed one year due to the postponement of the Paralympic Games, the new rules will come into effect in January 2023, after approval at the 2022 General Assembly. Alongside a complete restructuring of the rule book, major amendments include the introduction of a new competition structure, designed to provide a more progressive and appropriate entry level for those new to the sport. It is hoped more one- and two-star events will be held alongside three-star competitions to provide opportunities for those new to the discipline. In addition to the main discipline rule book, a review of the Classification rules and Paralympic regulations has also been undertaken.</p>
6	<p><b>World Challenge:</b> As discussed at the Forum in January, one of the Committee’s main focusses is how to grow the discipline and attract more Athletes from new nations. Having received a very positive response at the Forum, the Committee set about the planning to introduce an FEI World Challenge for Para Dressage. Working closely with the Solidarity Department, the Committee have drafted rules for the new competitions and aim to launch in 2023. Using the easier Para Dressage tests and providing an opportunity for new athletes to gain a national level classification, the initiative aims to support new and developing nations to introduce the discipline.</p>
7	<p><b>Education System:</b> It has also been a busy year for the Education Working Group. In collaboration with the Education and Officials Department, a full review of the education systems for Judges, Stewards and Classifiers has been undertaken and is ready to launch in January 2023. Aligning with the other FEI disciplines, each level’s requirements have been reviewed along with amendments to the criteria to maintain status at each level. Consideration has been given to making officiating more accessible, particularly for those in more remote parts of the world.</p>
8	<p><b>International Influencing:</b> The discipline has achieved another important international position with the appointment of Brazilian Athlete Rodolpho Riskalla to the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) Athlete’s Council. Rodolpho was elected as one of only 8 Athlete’s elected from a nomination pool of 34 candidates.</p>
9	<p><b>Sports Promotion:</b> Following on from the Paralympic Games, the Communications Department introduced the new ‘Para Equestrian Digest’. Using online articles issues monthly, the initiative aims to give a stronger voice to Para Equestrian Athletes, bringing attention to the social barriers that our Athletes face. Additionally, it highlights the therapeutic value of the horse-human connection. The Digest aims to keep our discipline in the spotlight throughout the Paralympic cycle, rather than just focussing attention around the time of the Games.</p>

10	<p><b>Thank you:</b> 2022 has seen the sad loss of two icons of the Para Equestrian discipline. Jonquil Solt OBE (GBR) was the driving force behind the discipline’s development and is credited with bringing Para into the FEI family. Hope Hand (USA) was a well-known Athlete and former member of the Technical Committee. Both were immensely passionate about supporting the development of our sport, and the Committee would like to acknowledge their tremendous contribution.</p> <p>Having completed his four-year term of office, Deputy Chair, David Hamer (GBR) will leave the committee at the end of the year. His insight, experience and commitment to the committee has been outstanding and we wish to thank him for his excellent contribution.</p> <p>Additionally, the Athlete Representative Dr. Angelika Trabert will also complete her term this year. We wish to thank Angelika for her efforts over the past 4 years and for providing the valuable athlete voice to our work.</p> <p>Finally, it has been a very busy year for the Para Equestrian Technical Committee as well as the staff at headquarters and we owe a debt of gratitude to everyone involved.</p>
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