

ANNEX Pt 18.1

17 November 2021, Antwerp (BEL)

Committee name	PARA EQUESTRIAN
Chair	Amanda Bond (HKG)

Committee Report

Pt. Subject

Paralympic Games Following the 12 month delay, the Paralympic Games were successfully held at the Baji Koen Equestrian Park in Tokyo. Thanks to the Japan Racing Associated we were provided with one of the best venues of all time. This enabled the horses and athletes to perform to their very best, resulting in record breaking performances. The overall standard of competition was extremely high. The qualification system worked well, filling all 78 quota places with 16 teams and 27 NPC's represented. Unfortunately there was one withdrawal prior to competition, reducing the number of teams in the competition to 15. The competition was supported by an excellent team of officials. The climate during the competition was challenging, but thanks to close monitoring by veterinary and medical personnel and the cooperation of all teams, changes were made to warm-up procedures and competition start times which meant there were no issues encountered. The competition format, whilst used in previous Championships, was new to the Paralympic Games. It was welcomed by the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) and Paralympic Results and Information Service (PRIS), who stated it was easy to understand with one test leading to one medal, and was good for the sport. The introduction of an FEI Chief Medical Officer supported the implementation of all COVID measures for the Games. Thankfully, there were no positive test results at Equestrian for the duration of the Games. The reach of the Games to a global audience continued to grow, with some impressive early data on our social media reach. There were almost 109 million impressions, 17.4 million video views, 1.2 million website page views and 1.6 million engagements. This compares extremely well to the other Paralympic sports and will help to maintain our position in the Paralympic programme. IPC President, Mr. Andrew Parsons attended the full session of competition on day one, presenting the medals at three ceremonies. He continues to be complimentary and supportive of our sport. Thanks must go to the excellent organizing team, the officials, volunteers and FEI staff who helped the Games run so successfully; despite the challenging circumstances caused by the pandemic.	1.
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ANNEX Pt 18.1

17 November 2021, Antwerp (BEL)

	<p>Sport Demographics</p> <p>Para equestrian remains affected by the pandemic, with continued impact on athlete and horse numbers, as well as fixtures.</p> <p>In 2021, a total of 297 athletes were registered (comprising 267 in dressage and 30 in driving). This compares to 289 in the previous year; a 2.7% increase. However, it remains significantly behind the pre-pandemic levels of 2019, at 15% lower.</p>
2.	<p>Horse registrations show a similar trend, with 353 horses registered in 2021 (324 in dressage and 29 in driving), demonstrating a 1.4% increase on 2020 figures, but 14% behind pre-pandemic levels (2019).</p> <p>There were 16 shows/20 events held so far in 2021, with a further 3 shows/7 events scheduled, bringing a total in the year of 27 events. 9 shows were lost due to COVID or EHV cancellations. Currently there are 24 shows /30 events in calendar for 2022.</p>
3.	<p>Rules Revisions</p> <p>Due to the postponement of the Paralympic Games, the full rules revision was forced to delay by 12 months, so will now take place during 2022. A consultation with all stakeholders will take place throughout the year with the final rules being presented to the General Assembly in 2022.</p>
4.	<p>Review of Tests</p> <p>Following the Paralympic Games, the committee have discussed the review of the current tests. Whilst it is recognized that many in the sport would like to see new tests, given the shortened timeframe before the next Paralympic Games, it has been decided not to make significant changes in the next cycle. A test committee is in the process of being formed and will be tasked with checking the current tests for any areas that are in need of review, but complete changes to the test will not be introduced until after Paris 2024.</p>

ANNEX Pt 18.1

17 November 2021, Antwerp (BEL)

Classification

The Classification Working Group and the Classifiers were very busy in 2021 ensuring that all athletes that needed classification ahead of the Games were able to access it, to ensure their eligibility to compete. In January 2021 a list of 95 Athletes from qualified NFs were identified from the FEI Database who had met the qualifying MERs for the Paralympics but who had a Classification status that did not meet the MERs. The National Federations identified approximately 40 Athletes who were shortlisted for the Games but required Classification to qualify. The CWG and Classifiers worked incredibly hard to make sure that all of these Athletes had access to a Classification evaluation, and by the Nominated Entries date of 5 July 2021, all Athletes had classification statuses that met with the criteria.

5. The classification research project had been hampered by the pandemic and global travel restrictions, but work has resumed and plans are now underway to conduct the practical testing at Hartpury, GBR with recruitment for testing to be launched in October 2021. The Researchers aim to conduct tests on 13 Athletes from each Grade as well as 10 able bodied Athletes. The FEI requests support from National Federations to help in recruiting Athletes for the project which would help to improve the Classification system.

Para Equestrian Forum

Having postponed the Forum in 2021 due to the pandemic, it is planned to proceed with it in January of 2022. To ensure the safety of our community and to allow participation from all areas of the world, it has been decided to deliver the forum via an on-line platform rather than in person. Topics will include discussion on the full rules revision, changes to the sport structure, development of the sport and classification.

ANNEX Pt 18.1

17 November 2021, Antwerp (BEL)

Education

The PETC worked actively via virtual meetings to continue to track the tasks, deadlines, efficient workflow and communication within the PETC. Online solutions were also put in place for Courses and Seminars for Para Dressage Officials.

In March this year, the 5* Para Dressage Judges Seminar was held online with full participation and with the following items on the agenda:

FEI Update

General update

JAG presentation

Education Update

Other items (Topics for Para Forum; Tests review, Rules Timeline)

7. Code of Points

Video Judging (Dashboard)

Additional online Seminars included the Virtual Seminars (2 for Stewards and 1 for Judges) for all Para Dressage Officials requiring In-Person maintenance this year and which are being held during the month of September and October.

An In-Person Maintenance Course (IPMC) for Para Dressage Stewards was also held in Hartpury (GBR) in July with good participation.

Finally, the Para Dressage Education System will be fully reviewed in 2022 by the Para Dressage Education Working Group and the PETC once the Dressage Education system is finalised in order to harmonise on specific levels.

Committee News

Due to travel restrictions, the committee have not been able to meet in person, but have continued to meet monthly via video conference.

8. Having completed her four-year term of office, Katherine Lucheschi (ITA) will leave the committee at the end of the year. We wish to thank her for all of her excellent contribution to the committee's work and look forward to her continued involvement in our sport as a five star judge.

All committee members continue to work tirelessly providing their knowledge and experience to help guide the sport, and for that we are very grateful.