

Session 4 - Eventing Future

I - AUDIT OF EVENTING

Further to the request of the FEI, Charles Barnett has been asked to conduct an audit into Eventing with the purpose of identifying factors that may affect Eventing as an Olympic Sport. These include safety of horse and rider and exploration of all areas of the sport to maintain its current position including further development of the sport.

The project includes examining ways of widening the appeal of the sport both from a spectator and participant point of view and to enhance the spectator engagement with the sport both from an attendee and TV audience. Part of this project is to thoroughly review the safety aspects of the sport. The starting point for this will be an analysis of the data which the FEI has collected from FEI Events over the past 10 years.

Risk Factors for Horse Falls on the Cross Country Test in FEI Eventing.

The objective is to understand the issues based on safety through a detailed analysis of all falls in FEI competitions and any other National Federation statistics. The objective of this analysis is to see if there are any common factors leading to falls and whether these are capable of remedy.

A summary of the factors and circumstances that are explored to identify if any, increase (or decrease) the risk of a horse fall, focused on;

- rotational horse falls and
- horse falls resulting in serious injury to horse and/or rider
- factors related to the fences themselves, including their physical structure and location (e.g. uphill/downhill/flat, into/out of water).

All factors will be explored individually and also in conjunction with other factors of interest (e.g. the siting of particular fence types).

The aim is to identify factors that can be modified to reduce the risk of horse falls and subsequent horse / rider injury whilst maintain the spirit of the sport.

II – OLYMPIC FORMAT EVENTING

Preliminary Proposal from the Eventing Committee

BACKGROUND

Further to the IOC Olympic decision through the 2020 Agenda, the IOC have now moved from a sport-based to an event-based programme (Recommendation10). The objective is to create limits on accreditation for athletes, coaches and other athlete support staff to ensure that the Games do not grow bigger. This provision will also allow more than 28 sports to be on the programme while respecting these limits.

The IOC will evaluate the sports included in the Olympic Games and in the past for the Summer Games, the IOC had to evaluate 26 or 28 sports and now they will have to evaluate, after Rio, 306 different events.

The IOC are determined to shape the Olympic Movement to be fit to speak to a new generation of fans and athletes.

IFs have been asked to review their sports to ensure that they are attractive, modern, TV and spectator friendly.

The following are the main objectives identified by the FEI for the three Olympic Equestrian Disciplines:

- Ensure the core values of each disciplines are respected
- Ensure the welfare of the Horse remains paramount

- Ensure the highest level of competition while maximising the number of nations participating (flags)
- Ensure a substantial separation of competitions and classifications (Team an Individual competition)
- Ensure the competitions to be “best sport entertainment” attractive, modern, TV and spectator friendly

EVENTING

In order to address the ongoing concerns of the IOC relating to costs, space and complexity Eventing has already undergone a main change of format in recent years and the current Olympic format has worked well for the sport so far.

The review of the Eventing discipline is an ongoing process and the IOC 2020 Agenda is a great opportunity to explore new possibilities.

The management of universality and excellence is one of the key Olympic requirements and, for the Eventing discipline with such a great variation of abilities and opportunities worldwide, striking the right balance is a challenge.

Therefore the following thinking process is an attempt to find new ways to manage and combine universality and excellence aiming to the inclusion and attraction of new nations and athletes while at the same time offering the maximum of excitement showing the highest level of the sport.

The thinking process must also be very mindful of the needs of TV, spectators, sponsors, extended media interest etc.

Awareness, recognition and active management of an element of risk inherent to the discipline to be always maintained with accepted and acceptable levels is part of the process.

Eventing Core Values

The following have been identified as core elements of the discipline to be in any case maintained while looking for alternative proposals:

- Same rider riding same horse in three different tests (combined scores of the three tests). The three tests to represent the complete horsemanship
- The Dressage and Jumping tests to be representative of the respective disciplines and the cross country test to be representing of the essence and uniqueness of Eventing
- The traditional order of tests (Dressage – XC – Jumping) to be maintained as the key element to safeguard the welfare of the horse in conjunction with the horse inspection to be held before the final jumping test

Eventing proposals

The following Eventing format proposals have been developed to be possibly used for both the Olympic Games and other FEI Championships. The principle is to harmonize with the proposals in the Jumping and Dressage disciplines to develop a coherent Equestrian Olympic program taking into account the above mentioned objectives and challenges.

- Complete separation of Team and Individual competitions to be run concurrently
- Athletes can only participate in one of the competitions
- Complete separation of qualifications (Teams 3* - Individual 4*)

- For the Olympic Games (65 places available) 40/45 places for the team competition and 25/20 for the individual competition

Team Competition

- 3* level Cross Country – 4* level Dressage & Jumping tests
- Teams will be up to 3 Members with no drop score. (Teams of 2 can participate and will start with 1000 points)
- 1 Reserve horse per team will be allowed
- Competitors from one team to ride one after the other in the three tests
- The time of the round to be added for all team members for XC and SJ so that a faster round of one team member could counterbalance a slower round of another member

Individual Competition

- 4* level Cross Country, Dressage & Jumping tests
- Maximum of 3 athletes per nation will be allowed

Positives of proposal	Negatives of proposal
more flags for teams	less flags for Individuals
values team effort	increased cost for XC (differentiating of obstacles and courses for the 2 levels)
shorter competitions – results are more easy to follow	best riders may not compete in team competition
more exciting and open results	team members may not be starting if previous members have not finished
no addition of competition days	
improved qualification structure	
Olympic dream easier accessible to smaller nations	

III – FUTURE OF EVENTING

Other points of discussion for the Sports Forum

Taking the opportunity of the Sports Forum, the Eventing Committee would like to propose more points for discussion that, like in the past, will be further discussed in Eventing dedicated Open Forums.

These Forums will take place at the Pan American Games (Toronto); European Championships (Blair Castle) and the Olympic Group F&G qualification (Boekelo).

1. Levels and Formats

- In line with the thinking for the Olympic and Championship proposals it is felt that the Classics 4 star circuit (Individuals) could be completely separated from the regular Olympic and Championship circuit (Teams)
- For the development of the sport Team competitions at WEG and Olympic Games would be run at 3* level, and Individual competitions would run at "true" 4* level reserved for top level Athletes as the pinnacle of the Classic 4 star circuit.

This would allow the qualification for highest level championships to take place on the same level as the competition and not at lower level which is now the case.

This proposal would include increased qualification requirements for participation to the Classic 4 star circuit and Championships (Individuals).

- In considering the possible future integration of Pony competitions and the introduction of Children competition for Eventing a level based only on Athletes age and with no differentiation between Horses and Ponies could be developed. Therefore the addition of new international level (1.05m XC) as an introductory level competition for Children/Ponies that could also be very useful for and developing nations.
- With the introduction of this new international level (new 1 star) all current levels would be upgraded of one star level. The current 1 star to become 2 star 2 star - 3 star, 3 star - 4 star, 4 star - 5 star.
- In regards to formats the possible merging of the current long and short 1 and 2 star competitions in one format and the addition of CIC (short) 4 star level could be considered.

2. Technical Rules

Review of some of the Cross Country penalties:

- a different cumulative penalty system for refusals: e.g. 10 points for the first refusal on course, 30 (40) for the second, etc.
- Introduction of a penalty system related to knocking obstacle flags: e.g. 5 penalty for knocking flags on skinny, narrow, corners fences. Clearly a completely different approach from Course Designers (allowing more space between flags) must allow the possibility, for a straight horse when jumping correctly, to jump without touching flags.

3. Saddlery

- Cross Country bits is an item for discussion in relation to Risk management and horse welfare. It is felt that strong biting used by less experienced riders can affect the ability of the horse to focus on the fence and use his natural abilities to solve the jumping question.

4. Other

- Indoor Arena Eventing – Review integration possibilities within the Eventing framework to ensure the Risk Managements elements are included.
- Name of the sport: Equestrian triathlon, Equestrathon, Tri-equathlon
- Future Eventing Series
- Ongoing review of proposals resulting from the Eventing Audit in the next forums
- Any other proposals raised by NFs or interested parties

22 March 2015