

2023 Eventing Forum

The FEI Eventing Forum and National Safety Officers Seminar took place at Haras de Jardy in Paris (FRA) from 20-22 January 2023, returning to an in-person format after two years online due to the world health situation.

The main topics on the opening day on Friday, 20 January, were the Future of the Sport, Sanctions related to Horse falls, the role of Organisers, Risk Management Data and Risk Management Studies. The fitting, development and recommendations for use of Frangible Devices led the way on Saturday morning, followed by a presentation from the Swedish National Federation (NF) on a proposal for Cross Country obstacle flag penalties.

Breakout Groups discussed a range of topics before presenting their findings after which moderators David O'Connor, Chair of the FEI Eventing Committee, and Geoff Sinclair, Chair of the Eventing Risk Management Steering Group (RMSG), brought the Forum to a close.

Sunday's National Safety Officers Seminar began with an introduction to Risk Management Programs within NFs, before delegates from nine countries made individual presentations.

The Forum and Seminar were preceded by a one-day course on Cross Country obstacle frangible devices MIM systems on Thursday 19 January which was led by MIM's founder Mats Björnetun and Cross Country course builder James Willis and attended by 72 NF representatives. Friday morning began with a tour of the spectacular Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games venue in Versailles led by footing specialist Paul Jacques Tanvez and Laurent Bousquet, a member of the FEI Eventing Risk Management Steering Group.



A total of 108 delegates from 24 countries (ARG, AUS, AUT, BEL, CAN, CZE, DEN, FIN, FRA, GBR, GER, HKG, IRL, ITA, JPN, NED, NZL, POL, POR, ESP, SUI, SWE, THA, USA) attended this year's Forum and Seminar which is available to watch in replay [here](#) accompanied by all the presentations, and annexes.

In his opening remarks, David O'Connor warmly thanked the French Federation and the Haras de Jardy for hosting the Forum / Seminar this year. The visit to Versailles had been very special and it was exciting to get an insight into what would be happening next year while the Forum provided a much needed opportunity to get together and discuss what was happening in the field and to look at how the Eventing sport could develop in the future.



Eventing Future - Social License

Horse sport was unusual as the involvement of animals added an extra emotional dimension.

It was important to earn public trust, both inside and outside the equestrian community and transparency was needed in all our actions. Maintaining the Social License for our sport is a never-ending process that requires continuous work.



David O'Connor

The public doesn't distinguish between different equestrian sports. All equestrian disciplines became embroiled in the Pentathlon controversy at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games. Pentathlon had to change, removing horses in their competition, due to outside pressure and it happened very quickly. The public didn't know if it was an FEI sport or not. People may not have started with a negative attitude to Equestrian sport but social media and controversies like that could change people's perception. Emotion often over-rides evidence.

An FEI Commission on Equine Ethics (see Annex II - Eventing Future / Social Licensing) was set up in June 2022, and a preliminary report has already been published with a final report still to come.

The Commission initiated two surveys - one received 28,000 respondents from the equestrian community and another with 14,000 members of the public across 14 nations indicated that 33% of respondents in the public survey believed welfare standards were high, 52% believed they needed improving and 15% believed it is impossible to provide adequate welfare protection for horses. The public survey identified the main areas of concern are horse welfare and horse safety.

In the survey amongst the equestrian community 78% believed welfare standards needed improving and only 6% believed standards were high.

It was reported that three-quarters of the general public believed that horses did not enjoy competition, and people in the sport were divided 50/50 on that. Changes needed to include reference to horses, rather than "horses being used in sport" it should be replaced with "horses as partners in sport".

Media Training

Media Training was relevant for everyone involved in the sport and practice at dealing with the media essential to promote the story of what we believed and openness to adjustment. When something went wrong, it required admission and addressing.

FEI Veterinary Director Göran Åkerström stated that in addition to Media Training everyone needed to be aware of the power of photos and videos. An agreement with the Swedish University of Agriculture had been reached to work with their educational programme designed to recognise signs of pain in photographs of horses through an evaluation system called "Pain Face".

David O'Connor pointed out that the biggest social media presence in the world was National Geographic which provided an emotional connection with the world around us. "It was about what we said and how we said it, it all happens so fast and once it's out there then there is no getting it back". Stuart Buntine, FEI Risk Management Steering Group (RMSG) Member / Level 3 Technical Delegate/Course Designer / CCI4* Organiser spoke about the sport of Eventing being at a cross-roads. "We face change and challenge, and a lot of the change will be led by Social License. In five years' time the sport will be different whether we like it or not.

Sanctions

RMSG members Geoff Sinclair, Laurent Bousquet and Gert Naber presented a proposal of new sanctions concepts (*Annex III*) to mitigate Cross-Country horse falls and injuries and asked for comments on:

- Systematic removal of a fence after two horse falls. Such a sanction would take pressure off the field of play if it was in the rules and no decision had to be made by the Officials
- After a horse fall, riders needed a compulsory hearing with Ground Jury to review the fall and minimise the risk of it happening again
- Warning card for every horse fall. Suggestion to suspend athletes for 2 months after 2 horse falls in 12 months or 3 horse falls in 24 months. Such a rule would help riders to understand their responsibilities to their horse and their sport.
- A defined number of horse falls at any event should warrant a compulsory review with Officials and the RMSG to understand what happened and the possible related reasons.
- Retrospective sanctions "It was sometimes difficult to issue an Eventing recorded warning or yellow warning card on the day. For serious falls and/or situations, a panel group could review on video and penalise the rider afterwards. This is already done in others sports and will help ensure the right decision is made."



Geoff Sinclair

Discussion

One of the problems was related to the rider mindset, adrenalin running, pressure of owners, expenses of horses, going up a level to improve prize money etc. Formula 1 drivers needed stewards to change their behavior but a warning card was rarely given for a fall in our sport. A large proportion (the group agreed 80%+) of horse falls were due to rider error, what could be done to change the mindset? The suggestion would be an automatic warning card after a horse fall (including on the flat).

Retrospective sanctions could be decided by a "small Tribunal" including the rider and President of the Ground Jury, along with a penalty increase for both a) a Tired Horse and b) a Horse Fall.

In a recorded interview, renowned athlete William Fox-Pitt (GBR) said that while the Cross Country test should remain at the heart of the sport and continue to be exciting and influential, it needed to be as safe as we could make it. He added that riding too fast, horses not ready for the level at which they were competing and riders going for the moment were why it sometimes went wrong. He described the decision to pull a rider up as a tough one but agreed if it was necessary, then it needed to be done. He continued by mentioning that riders needed help, the adrenaline was going and sometimes the Ground Jury needed to be braver, maybe riders needed to learn the hard way.

He added that following a horse fall very few sanctions were given out and riders could compete the next week without any record of it. Riders did feel there should be a connection between falls and warning cards and although they didn't want to see riders punished, certain riders having a lot of falls needed to be monitored, most riders felt horse falls were serious and there should be consequences."

He believed a fence should be removed from the course after three horse falls and that athletes should endorse retrospective penalties. If riders knew they could be eliminated afterwards that would be good, he said.

Level 3 Course Designer and former RMSG member, Mike Etherington-Smith (GBR), advised caution about over-regulating of the sport. MERs and the combinations that were not ready for the level needed to be looked at and it was important to ensure that the 3* and 4* Long were up to standard. Combinations were getting soft qualifications and going to 5* level.

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Athlete, FEI RMSG Member and USA National Safety Officer (NSO), Jonathan Holling (USA), pointed out that removing a fence due to a fall could make the next fence combination more dangerous. How could Officials be empowered to make those decisions about pulling fences out?

Organisers

David O'Connor and panelists joined in wide-ranging discussions on the 5* standard/level, MERs to qualify for the level, and should there be an increase in the MER requirements and/or should this level of competition be restricted to category A/B Athletes?

The total falls, horse falls and rider falls as a percentage of starters per Athlete Category were shown (*Annex IV*). A shift was noted with A and B Athlete categories having now an increased number of falls compared to the C and D categories.



Jane Tuckwell, 5* Badminton (GBR) Organiser mentioned that some combinations were qualified but were not ready for the level. Vanessa Coleman, 5* Lexington (USA) explained that Category C riders competed at Lexington and the only horse fall was in that category, the strength of MERs were questioned.

These views were not shared by the 5* Pau (FRA) Organisers who felt that qualifications were good as they were and if qualification were to be strengthened, less riders would be able to compete. The focus should be on the 3*/4* Long competitions which needed to be up to standard to prepare Horses and Riders for the 5* level.

It was felt that some athletes could manipulate the MERs, obtaining qualification 18 months before the event which was not healthy. The new additional requirements implemented in the Rules for 2023 addressed the issue and should ensure that Horses have competed within the previous 13 months.

During the discussion, the relevance of 5* competition, bearing in mind the larger number of horse falls, was questioned and it was suggested that trainers/coaches should take responsibility for the combinations they approved for moving up a level and where they obtained their MERs. There should be a "traffic light system" to guide competitors from one level to the next.

National Federations had to take responsibility for the combinations entered, certain NFs using the ERQI/HFI had restricted entries to Horses with a low rating.

The target Horse fall number had to be decided taking into account the social license perspective and public acceptance.

Risk Management Data - Review of International Statistics

The 2011 – 2022 statistics review were presented (*Annex V*).

A total of 788 competitions were held in 2022 which was the largest number ever. An overall total of 21,560 starters, 370 (1.7%) of those in 5*.

Between 2021 and 2022 the number of competitions increased by 19.4% and the number of starters increased by 12.1%.

In 2022, a total of 1,161 falls were reported. The highest percentage rate was 11.08% at 5* level (a total of 41 falls). 458 in 2* (5.12%), 320 in 3* (5.08%), and 223 in 4* competition (7.21%) during the same period.

There were 909 unseated riders across all levels and 252 horse falls. Of those horse falls 237 were at a fence (1.10%) and 15 were rotational falls (0.07%).

The percentage of rotational horse falls (higher risk of injuries for horse and athlete) had decreased from 0.20 horse fall every 100 starters (1 rotational horse fall every 510 starters) in

2011 to 0.07 rotational horse fall every 100 starters (1 rotational horse fall every 1437 starters) in 2021. Rotational falls had constantly been decreasing since 2013 and had never reached such a low rate.

National Statistics were presented, please refer to *Annex VI*.

Risk Management Studies - Alogo "Move Pro"



David Deillon

David Deillon, Alogo CEO, described the Alogo Move Pro, the performance sensor, placed on the girth provided information including the measurement of speed, trajectory, energy consumption, etc.

The device, had been trialed at Avenches (SUI) in 2021, it showed a comparison between the first jump, mid-course, a fall and at the last fence, analysing the energy level of the horse throughout.

Course Designer Peter Hasenböhler (SUI) and Swiss Veterinarian Dr. Stéphane Montavon had conducted a study of structural elements in the construction of Eventing fixed obstacles in the spring of 2022 which had an influence on the biomechanics of the jumping parabola. This study was in the final phase of writing and would be submitted very soon.

Dave Vos spoke about energy consumption and jump efficiency - "how the course progression affects the horse".

The "take home" message was that there were several significant kinematic changes during cross-country test and various associations with metabolic fatigue providing a basis for further individual analysis of Eventing horses, analysis of Cross Country course, design and safety considerations (*Annex VII*).

Risk Management Studies EquiRatings, Horse Form Index (HFI) - Venue Analysis

In his presentation (*Annex VIII*), Irish 5* rider Sam Watson from EquiRatings provided an insight of the Venue Analysis which had been done to spot competitions which looked different compared to others at the same level to understand if there was meaningful elements in regards to the course, the results, the falls, etc.

The aim was to reduce horse falls and acknowledging rider's mistakes.

The influence of Dressage had changed the type of horses chosen by the athletes and how the training was more focused on Dressage rather than Cross Country.

It was as important to concentrate not only on the Horse falls but also on the clear round as they gave both a qualification and a positive impact to the HFI (Horse Form Index). It could suggest the combination's performance was perfect, which was not necessarily the case. A suggestion was to increase the number of 25 penalties given during XC to athletes who were not performing, which would remove the MER and would be reflected in the combinations' results.

Talking about frangible devices, could it be considered to define these not just for preventing falls but also for promoting safer riding and testing skills (better presentation, appropriate speed, demonstration of control, balance and good footwork)?

The Horse Form Index (HFI) helped riders to set aims by allowing them to assess their own performances and ability through results. The rating tracked the most recent cross-country results of a horse. It was available for all horses competing at FEI Eventing three star level and above. The tool was developed to show horses' performance, track their progress and to help enable more informed decisions prior to the competitions.



Sam Watson

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HFI did not replace the MERs, which had to be achieved according to the FEI Eventing Rules (Article 520).

There was some discussion about using the HFI more widely and making the information public but some considered putting the information in public could prove counter-productive as it would require additional explanation.

Risk Management Studies - Safety Stirrups

In his interview with William Fox-Pitt, Geoff Sinclair asked for his view on safety stirrups and William described them as “a no-brainer”.

“We do hats, back protectors and frangible devices so why not safety stirrups?”, William said.

It was generally agreed that they should at least be highly recommended until a safety stirrup standard had been developed.

Risk Management of Cross Country & Officials Education

Alec Lochore, FEI Eventing Committee Member and Level 3 TD and CD, asked the participants for input on how to assist the education of Officials specifically on the Risk Management during Cross Country.

A big evolution of the Officials' roles had taken place over the last few years and there were challenges in regards to Risk Management situations.

- How can the sport address and support the Officials with the development of the technical aspects of the Cross Country course?
- How can the Officials improve their knowledge on XC? (ex. correct fitting vs perceived incorrect fitting).
- Which educational measures could be implemented to adapt to the social licensing shift related to dangerous riding, abuse of horse, falls etc...
- How can the Officials be encouraged and supported to take action when needed?

It was felt that there was a big onus on the President of the Ground Jury and the whole Jury to make a decision about pulling up a horse and it could take a while to stop a rider so it can look slow to react. When we did act, that rider should get a warning card for dangerous riding and have an interview (with the Ground Jury).

Difficulties in dealing with rider reactions when pulled up were pointed out, David O'Connor said, he was a big believer in getting the decision made and pulling them up. Officials needed to be more supportive of those decisions, we talk about rider responsibility all the time but sometimes they need someone to take them out of the game.

Contributors spoke about the need for better communication and the need to empower Course Designers and Technical Delegates - Ground Juries out in the field were often greener and less confident, but the CD and TD had more experience and they needed to get into that communication loop. Experienced people should be used in communication.

Level 3 Judge Sue Baxter (GBR) said those involved in pulling up horses should have solid and valid experience. They should be people who understand when a horse is tired and that riders were in “adrenaline mode”. “If we encourage officials to move up the levels too quickly you end up having people without enough experience”.

FEI Veterinary Director Göran Åkerström suggested there was a need to train Ground Jury members with appropriate techniques designed to keep heated conversations under control.



Alec Lochore

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More involvement was needed in fence judge's briefings. Improving communication in the control centre was important, having one member of the Ground Jury on the XC course or appointing a "spotter" was encouraged.

ERA President and Eventing Athlete Bruce Haskell (NZL) suggested developing an "education module" for Officials. It was maybe time to have a license for riding above 2* or 3*, he asked. He talked about taking the pressure off the rider because the official had the power to tell them that they could not continue.

It was suggested to look at the relationship between Officials and other sport's governing bodies to understand if any lessons could be learned.

Frangible Devices – MIM



Mats Björnetun

Mats Björnetun gave an update on the MIM frangible devices (see *Annex XI*). The challenge was that we had to work with speed, energy and gravity, and all three are a problem. Gravity was a law that couldn't be changed.

The energy of a horse pushes a fence away faster, every jump was a controlled rotation and the closer the horse came to a fence the more it was the beginning of a rotational fall. It took 330 times more energy (165 joule) to release a cross-country fence than a showjumping fence.

A checklist for the correct fitting of MIM clips was available ([here](#)) to help Officials. Questions were asked about the course of action should a fence not appear to break on contact. It was answered that it either needed adjusting or it should be taken out.

New frangible device developments were explained and MIM table fences were strongly recommended.

Design of XC Boots

Former British and Canadian Eventer Robert Lemieux presented his new "V Concept cross-country boot" which was designed to avoid catching a fence when on an upward trajectory (see *Annex XII*).

Flag Penalties

Staffan Lidbeck, Risk Management Steering Group Member, explained rule changes introduced at national events in Sweden in recent years including a penalty for knocking down a flag (*Annex XIII*).

He said the original rule, as currently used at FEI events, was not easy to understand and interpret which resulted in objections, discussions and questionable judgements as a result.



Staffan Lidbeck

Changing the rule had led to rewarding superior performance, making the sport easier to understand and more interesting to watch, making the XC test more influential, and was also designed to encourage better riding and greater safety while making life easier for both Officials and riders.

Somewhere along the road riders were given the opportunity to get away with no penalties without answering the question (at the fence) properly and was it due to course design?, he asked.

The current rule at non-FEI events in Sweden was as follows:

0 penalties: Horse and rider jumps the fence between the flag and no flag leaves its upper attachment.

7 penalties: Horse and rider jumps the fence and one (or more) flag(s) loses its upper attachment.

20 penalties/run out: Horse and rider jumps the fence with no part of the hind end of the horse passing between the extremities (attachment of flag) of the fence.

Very few penalties were given up to Intro level. At 2* level penalties were given quite frequently, approx. 1-2 per 20 starts. 3* level and upwards were FEI events in Sweden.

In a show of hands, the concept to propose a rule change in line with this idea was widely endorsed by the attendees.

Breakout Groups Conclusions / Key points:

Group 1 - Social License – Group leaders: Rob Stevenson and David O'Connor

- It was important to create our own story, showing we were partners with our horses by highlighting what horses did for humans, their intrinsic value to youth and society
- More attention should be given to bringing early participants into the sport and giving them the tools to progress.
- The language used, for example “making your horse do something” should be “working together with your horse”.
- The therapeutic value of equestrian sport.
- Safe sport was part of social license and minors should have an excellent experience.
- Talk about what horses do for us.

Finally, it was suggested to create stories and have a library of positive stories ahead of time.



Group 2 - Promotion of the sport through good stories, Media training TD, CD, PGJ, OC Commentators / Organisers – Group leaders: Neil Mackenzie-Hall and Jon Holling

This group all agreed that it was crucial to keep Cross Country at the centre of the sport.

- Production of the event - knowledgeable people needed to be in charge of broadcast, especially livestreams. Firm protocol in place to deal with any issues that arose.
- Audience - the amateur audience was the one to target, push good stories consistently and create goodwill, people loving the sport and riders at a competition loving their horses. “People fall in love not just with horses but with the relationships we have with them”.
- FEI co-ordination of stories to provide to National Federations.
- Dealing with negative situations – needed to be dealt with quickly but tread lightly. It was essential to show what we did and move on.

- Officials needed media training. Provide “Top 10 Tips” about how to deal with media (including social media).
- General communications - advice on how to deal with interaction with media.
- Mandatory rider training at the beginning of each year through an online training module to ensure understanding of the sport rules and media. In terms of social media, riders had responsibility for promoting our sport.

David O'Connor spoke about his time spent with IOC President Thomas Bach during the FEI Eventing World Championships 2022 in Pratoni (ITA) last year. “He enjoyed the concept of what we are doing, he wanted to be up close to the athletes and got the whole thing with the horses, it was very positive. That day we talked about promotion, media, setting up the Games but that wasn't the restriction - the most important thing was, the return off the investment through TV broadcast, media, print etc. It was everyone's job to make it work”.

FEI Communications Director Olivia Robinson mentioned that we needed to find the balance between the Unique Selling Proposition (USP) of the sport, the excitement and making it understandable. The global audience had no understanding of equestrian sport. We needed a constant trickle of positive content but also credibility when things occurred to back that up”.

Group 3 - Horse falls at a fence, removal of fences, retrospective sanctions, increase penalties and possible consequences – Group leaders: Staffan Lidbeck and Gert Naber

- Removing a fence after two horse falls: The opinion was 50/50 within this group.
The positive effects were that it was a clear rule and would help the social acceptance of the sport. It would require the CD and TD to have an alternative plan if fence was removed.
The negatives sides were related to the “fair play” if some riders had less fences and an easier course, the MERs and it could be negative viewing for spectators/TV audience when suddenly there was no water fence because there had been 2 falls.
- Retrospective sanctions: this proposition was not well accepted in the group.
- Automatic sanction for Horse falls: the group was mostly in favor as a big percentage of horse falls were rider responsibility. The sanction could remove the automatic warning if caused by some outside interference and was unrelated to athlete action such as a dog chasing a horse.
- Defining the acceptable number of horse falls for an individual rider within a certain time was important

Group 4 - Cross Country: actions during test, Officials Education/levels/function – Group leaders: Andrew Bennie and Stuart Buntine

Actions that Officials can / should take during XC:

- It was important to have a good distribution of Officials out on the event to address incidents quickly and efficiently. For the warm up areas, the communication between Veterinarians and Stewards to ensure good decisions were taken
- Officials needed to be supported by the FEI when decisions had been taken
- Bringing the sport into disrepute. A lot of athlete's connections use social media to be brutal to officials. This should be managed.
- Fences judges needed to be monitored as they weren't always very experienced. Riders (with complaints) should have to go through officials rather than fence judges.
- Education and levels:
- Development of riders education and competency evaluation -CES.
- Basic management and leadership training for Officials
- A better gallery of (training) videos relevant to Officials (tired horses, dangerous riding, etc.)
- Need for Seminars that are more specific to different levels of Officials.
- Mentoring of Officials and a pathway for experienced Officials.



Group 5 - Standards of events / EquiRatings Venue Analysis / XC designing to the level / HFI exposure – Group leaders: Alec Lochore, Laurent Bousquet and Sam Watson

- The same standards should apply for all levels worldwide.
- 3* was considered the most important level because that was where the biggest change happened as MERs were achieved allowing athletes through to higher level events.
- When a course was not up to standard, the issue should be addressed and it was firstly the responsibility of the CD, then the TD and then the Ground Jury.
- For 4 star level and above, the FEI should appoint all TDs.
- EquiRatings Venue Analysis to be used to identify recurrent clear rates at events. If a trend appeared, or a one-off problem occurrence that might suggest the course was not up to standard, the FEI should become involved and issue warning were to improve standard and, failing that, an Official could be appointed to address the situation.
- If a course was too soft, the next event needed to be corrected or it could be restricted to a lower level.
- Consider not validating MER if horse/rider take more than two alternative routes.
- 90-second MER time was felt too easy as it allowed all long routes.
- The FEI Veterinary and Endurance Departments have existing protocols to analyse events and if they were not up to level they should be investigated.
- MERs for CCI5*-L should be clear within a defined timeframe

Group 6 - Frangible Devices – Group leaders: Dave Vos and Lars Christensson

- Fences no longer complying with the standard / instructions could easily be adapted. Anyone with questions about legal or practical use of frangible fences should contact the Risk Management Steering Group Member, Dave Vos.
- New instruction manual for Table fences would be published shortly. Tables were to have Yellow Clips and should not be jumped at an angle.
- The check lists about correct fittings (one pagers) would be published and sent to all Officials.



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- The MIM instruction manuals would be updated. The first criteria to be followed will be the maximum weight/mass of the timber rather than the dimensions. A method to weigh the elements will be published and circulated.
- It was reminded that frangible fences needed to be fixed to the ground as they did not release if not properly anchored.
- Constructions must be checked so they are not a trap for horses. Timber should not be used under fences because it could give an optical distraction and / or false groundline.
- There was still a need for education, the new Level 1 workshops for Course Designers were a good tool for practical work with frangible devices. Also necessary to include education of Officials at other levels on a practical basis to ensure better understanding.
- TD's should make sure at the fence judge's briefing that all judges know how to check clips, how to change clips, how to put them back up and that enough spare clips are available at the fence.
- Penalty for activation of a frangible should remain at 11 penalties until the review of the Cross Country obstacle Flag Rule penalty.
- It was important that the colour of MIM clips was shown in the course plan well in advance and before the XC walk so riders understood how those fences should be jumped.

Group 7 - Future 5* Standards – Group leaders: Geoff Sinclair, Mike Etherington-Smith and Kevin McNab

- One of the biggest threats to this level of the sport was “bad pictures”.
- The 5* standard should not be changed as the distance, efforts, etc. were felt adequate. Prize-money should not be reduced.
- 5* events were the pinnacle of the sport and should be kept as they were, the variety of events was good but the pathway was key and there should be a way to filter out the combinations which were not ready for the level.
- Coaches and Officials needed further education to identify the combinations who were qualified but not necessarily ready for this higher level of the sport.
- FEI needed to have a strategy for the future of Eventing including for 5 star level. It was important that no more 5* events were added to the list because there were so few competitors at that level and we didn't want the 5* offering to be diluted.



Conclusions

Geoff Sinclair thanked the Risk Management Steering Group for the enormous amount of work throughout the year in helping to prepare much of what was discussed during the 2023 Forum. He also thanked David O'Connor for leading the sport through all these challenges in such a great way.

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It was regrettable that not many Athletes had attended the Forum and it was important that National Federations encouraged them to attend such Forums.

The discussions and proposals would be further reviewed and presented with other stakeholders, Committees and decision making bodies. This will allow relevant input before finalising any Rule proposals.

David O'Connor said it had been a great few days with great conversations and interaction. He thanked all the attendees for their contribution and participation in all the action items and discussion points.