

Catrin Norinder
Director, Eventing and Olympic

Federation Equestre Internationale
HM King Hussein I Building
Chemin de la Joliette 8
1006 Lausanne
SWITZERLAND

28th February 2016

Dear Catrin,

Australia congratulates the FEI in its efforts to consult widely with National Federations to establish the proposal to be submitted to the IOC in regard to the future of Equestrian in the Olympic Games.

Australia was one of 16 nations to have representatives in attendance at a meeting convened by British Eventing on 23 February in London to discuss the FEI's Olympic Agenda 2020 proposals for Eventing.

EA wishes to reaffirm its position on the proposals which have been put forward by the FEI in relation to Eventing.

Olympic Competition Format

A.

Three horse/rider combinations per team – plus a reserve

This proposal is not supported by Australia. Along with the significant majority of nations who compete in Eventing, it is our view that the long term future of the sport in the Olympics will depend on a high proportion of teams completing the competition. Whilst we recognise that teams of 3 would appear to allow more Nations to qualify, it would be disastrous for the public's perception of the sport if few teams complete the competition.

Australia wishes there to be a team of 4 and a reserve rider

No Drop Score; all three team members would count towards the final team score

This proposal is not supported by Australia. There must be four team members with the best three results to count. This leads to exciting viewing, is not hard to understand and will contribute to more teams completing the competition.

B.

5 Minute Dressage test, all tests conducted on one day

This is supported by Australia. A maximum of 65 riders competing would mean that Eventing dressage would run for 6 hours.

Equestrian Australia does not agree with the deletion of collective marks. We do support removal of judges comments in order to promote time efficiency.

C.

The Cross Country Test to be organized in 1 day in the traditional starting order.

Equestrian Australia supports the cross country test to be organized in one day.

D.

The Jumping Tests (Individual) and (the team) to be organized in one day.

Equestrian Australia supports Jumping Tests in one day. The team competition is most important and therefore should take place first.

Equestrian Australia supports the teams jumping in reverse order of merit for the top placed teams. Lower placed individuals (26th and below) can also jump within this part of the competition.

The individual final will then be made up of the top 25 placed individuals. If in the case of four individuals from one nation being in the individual final, the Chef d'Equipe will then decide which three individuals will compete (as per IOC regulations).

We do not support all nation's riders in the arena together however do support team riders jumping consecutively according to individual rankings.

We do not support reducing the team to three riders if all four riders complete the final horse inspection as per the GB proposal. The number of nations still with 4 riders at this stage of the competition is very low so would only save minimal time. It would also disadvantage a rider who is the lowest placed in their team as it is likely that they would be dropped at this stage. If they jumped clear in the team jumping but another of their team mates had many faults, this would prevent them from competing in the individual final.

Australia notes that although having teams enter the arena together appears to be a crowd pleaser it presents difficult problems for horses warming up in preparation for their rounds.

E.

Equestrian Australia supports the existing qualification system as for Rio 2016. Australia supports the inclusion of composite teams in the sport of Eventing at Olympic Games. This is a proven way of encouraging both individuals and Nations (Flags) to participate.

General update of the competition star level system

Equestrian Australia does not support the initiative of the proposed star level system in its entirety.

As per the Eventing Revision Rules we have considered the following

2. Competition Levels and Format

- 1. The introduction of a lower level event of a XC at 1.05 metre level. This new category would allow a smoother transition between national and international competitions in the developing countries. The level can be used for the Pony championship and can be the basis for developing a Children level/category in Eventing*
- 2. As a consequence shift the star system up one level, the new level to become new 1 star, current 1 star = new 2 star, current 2 star = new 3 star, current 3 star = new 4 star*

We agree. EA would propose however we have no requirement to run 1.05 metre at 1* level. EA has well established National levels to provide a smoother transition into international levels of competition

- 3. Rename as a separate category named "Classics" the current 4 star allowing also for a short format version.*

We don't agree.

- 4. Bring in line the technical requirements for WEG and Olympic Games*

We don't agree.

We are of the opinion that the Olympic Games format should remain at existing levels where publicly this is respected as the pinnacle of the sport

albeit the cross country phase has been adapted to encourage the number of flags as promoted by IOC.

We are further of the opinion that WEG should remain at the highest level of the sport as it is known within the equestrian community.

Positive Scoring System

Equestrian Australia needs a further understanding of the revised proposals. It is critical from our point of view to simplify the scoring model and therefore believe this needs further review and discussion.

At this stage EA is comfortable with negative scoring as it currently exists as lowest score wins. This is widely accepted by the public and equestrian community alike.

We would welcome additional research and data regarding an analysis of the removal of the coefficient scoring system.

If the FEI was to approve a positive scoring system we would not support Proposal B.

Dress Code

Equestrian Australia is very interested to view the feedback and findings from the branding agency. This would allow us to consider how we can make comment on effectively branding and presenting our sport.

Renaming of the discipline

As above Equestrian Australia supports the fact that the FEI Eventing Committee has proposed the hiring of a branding agency. This is specifically aimed to evaluate changing the sport's name to Equestrian Triathlon in the effort of improving the understanding of the sport to new audiences.

We would further wish to consider these findings before we could support a suitable name change or new name.

In addition

- Australia would further support additional research and investigation around the presentation of the sport both visually and via broadcast. This may include adjusting commentary, analysis, review and preview from experienced profile broadcasters and technical experts.

- Australia supports the FEI in its plan to hire a brand agency to advise on the options. We are of the opinion this is highly valuable to investigate further opportunities for the wider community to be become engaged in the sport however this needs to be a cost effective exercise.
- Equestrian Australia is of the very strong opinion that Eventing and Equestrian must remain in the Olympic Games. Competition figures following Barcelona proved the influence on number of riders who participate in the sport of Eventing. Our presence at the Olympics is a critical piece in the Australian Sporting landscape. Equestrian Australia will look to support the changes necessary in the format in Eventing that will ensure our continued participation in the Olympic Games.
- In regards to the proposed Rules Revision for Eventing we would comment on the following;

Qualifications of Athletes and Horses (MER)

We do not support the proposed new MER parameters to be applied to the cross country phase. Athlete and horse safety and welfare needs to remain as a priority in the sport and therefore strict MER guidelines for this phase must remain.

Indoor/Arena Cross Country Rules

In order to promote the sport from a participation point of view we believe this should be open to an expanded group of riders as opposed to Category A and B riders only.

Australia thanks all those who have been involved in this very extensive consultative process.

On behalf of Equestrian Australia

Very best regards,



Judy Fasher
Chair, Equestrian Australia