

21st March, 2016

Carina Mayer
Senior Manager
Head of Dressage and Para Equestrian Dressage as Interim

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

Dear Carina

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 Paralympic Games.

After a review of the relevant documentation relating to Para Equestrian, Equestrian Australia and the relevant stakeholders can provide the following observations and comments.

Australia's recommendations to the FEI PE Committee will be as follows:

1. We do not want to see the sport change because currently it is successful. We can understand the need to change the logistics of the sport to make it shorter in duration and to include "more flags". We do feel passionately that PE does not need "dressing up". The spectacle of these riders with impairments riding at their best is more than sufficient for the media.
2. Basically those people competing and those dedicated spectators are happy with the traditional dress however to add colour and country identification, for the Team Event, riders could ride in country colours or use saddle cloths bearing the colours of their country.
3. There are currently 78 places. The Team is made up of 3 riders from each country with a reserve and this is not negotiable with the FEI. Australia agrees with this however, if we are travelling 3 horses to the Olympics we insist that there is room to use the Reserve Athlete until post trot up and/or the start of the competition. For most countries travelling their teams to Tokyo with injury or illness is considered a risk and therefore the need to replace a sick horse or an unwell athlete with the Reserve Athlete is essential. Horses and riders, however can only be substituted with the appropriate veterinary or medical certificate.

Possible solution 1:

Day 1 and 2: All athletes ride the Team Test. The Team medal is awarded to the winning combinations from the Team Test.

Day 3: The top 6 athletes from each Grade go on to ride the Individual Championship test.

Day 4: The top 3 athletes from each Grade go on to ride in the Freestyle test.

On Day 3 Individual Medals could be awarded to the Individual Grade Champions

On Day 4 Freestyle Medals could be awarded to the winners of the Freestyle Grade Championships

OR

On Day 4 medals could be awarded to the winners with the top combined scores from the Individual and Freestyle championships.

Possible solution 2:

Days 1 and 2: All athletes ride the Team Test over two days. The Team medal is awarded to the winning combinations in the Team Tests.

Day 3: The top 7 (or whatever number is suitable) athletes from each Grade go through to the Freestyle. The Freestyle medals are awarded to the Freestyle Champions.
There is no Individual Test.

Our understanding was that a further suggestion by the Technical Committee that considered all nations riding individual championship test, freestyle and the team test in that order was tabled. Equestrian Australia further supports this concept.

Alternatively

If there were two competition arenas available, there could be two sets of judges made available. For the exercise let's call the judges Group 1 Judges and Group 2 Judges.

Day 1: In Arena 1 Group 1 judges would judge half the Team Test athletes (39 riders)

In Arena 2 Group 2 judges would judge half the Individual Championship Test athletes (39 riders)

Day 2: In Arena 1 Group 1 judges would judge the other half of the Team Test athletes (39 riders)

In Arena 2 Group 2 judges would judge the other half of the Individual Test athletes (39 riders)

At the close of Day 2 the Team Test medal could be awarded.

At the close of Day 2 the Individual Test medal could be awarded.

Day 3: Using only one arena the top 3 or 4 riders (or however many applicable but this could easily include more riders) from each Grade would ride the Freestyle test with a medal awarded at the end of the competition.

There would have to be a ballot system for the Team and Individual tests athletes as some of the riders would be riding the Individual Test before the Team Test. It would be necessary to change the mindset of the competitors who see the Team test as the “warm up” test. However, since these riders have been riding the same 3 tests for the last 4 years at every major competition, we cannot see that it is too difficult to swap them around or suggest that the Grades III and IV ride the Individual Championship tests first.

There could be a ballot system between the judges to allocate the Freestyle judges. This would create more opportunities to include more countries, it shortens the competition format and does not increase the cost enormously as the judges would be staying for a shorter period of time. It also provides more opportunities for judges to participate at this level.

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 Para Equestrian must remain in the Paralympic Games. Our presence at the Paralympics is a critical piece in the Australian Sporting landscape. Equestrian Australia will look to support the changes necessary in the format in Para Equestrian that will ensure our continued participation in the Paralympic Games.

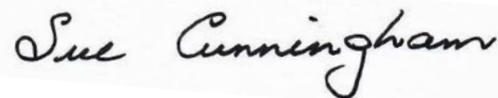
Australia thanks all those who have been involved in this very extensive consultative process.

On behalf of Equestrian Australia

Very best regards,



Judy Fasher
Chair, Equestrian Australia



Sue Cunningham
Chair of Para Equestrian Pathways
Advisory Panel