



Session 10 – Para Dressage Rules Revision

Presenters: Amanda Bond, Chair Para Equestrian Technical Committee
Bettina de Rham, FEI Director Dressage, Para Dressage and Vaulting

Panellists: Rodolpho Riskalla, Para Dressage Athlete
Michel Assouline, Member Para Equestrian Technical Committee
Maribel Alonso, Chair Dressage Technical Committee
Patrik Kittel, Member Dressage Technical Committee

The second half of the Session was dedicated to the main changes proposed for the FEI Para Dressage Rules full revision, with some of the proposals having already been discussed during the online FEI Para Equestrian Forum that was held in January 2022.

Chair of the Para Equestrian Technical Committee Amanda Bond first provided delegates with a short overview of the progression and the development of the sport from the 1970s until the Paralympic Games in Tokyo 2020. While the quality of the para sport has increased exponentially over the years, there was still more work to be done to grow the number of registered athletes and horses, to ensure the sustainability of the sport. Many of the proposals that have been put forward for consideration have been done with this in mind. Michel Assouline added the importance of Coaches in the development of Para Dressage, and encouraged the use of FEI Solidarity programmes.

1. Structure of the Rules book

As with Dressage, to review the Structure of the Rule book for Para Dressage.

2. Sport Structure

A more progressive structure of Events to encourage National Federations to hold competitions at every level and to provide more appropriate entry level and progression for Athletes. Each level proposed would have different sets of tests with progressive technical difficulty and a qualification system, with two proposals creating a space for progression from 1* to 3* Events, or only to 3* Events. A move towards harmonizing team events with other FEI disciplines was to be proposed for the future.

3. Test Names and Review

The Chair explained that the Para Dressage tests would undergo a review, with minor changes made in 2022 and a more in depth change after Paris 2024.

A proposal for new FEI Para Dressage Test Names to avoid the confusion created using the term "Team" and "Individual". The Test names needed to no longer refer to the competition they were used for. There was widespread agreement that a change in terminology is required and the use of "Para Grand Prix" is more reflective of the top level of the sport, as it was used in many sports to define the pinnacle of the sport. Following the Para Forum a survey was sent out to all registered participants, which came back with an 80% approval rate for the use of the test names Para Grand Prix (PGP) and Para Grand Prix Special (PGPS).



A discussion ensued between Wendy Laeremans (BEL), Fanny Delaval (FRA) and Jason Brautigam (GBR) NFs concerning the appropriateness of using PGP and PGPS which could be confused with the Dressage tests. FRA explained that they had used the same names for national level Dressage and Para Dressage tests which worked very well and was easy to understand. Rodolpho Riskalla noted that Athletes welcomed the change, and that even though the tests could be perceived as easier (not having movements up to Piaffe and Passage) they were the very top level of the sport per Grade. Andrew Hoy agreed that the move was beneficial to the Para Dressage Athletes, and Trond Asmyr reminded stakeholders that changing the names of the Grades had been seen as a big change but was quickly and widely accepted once in place.

The Chair explained that the Tests names would no longer relate to the competition they were ridden for, and would follow the same order as Dressage with the PGP first, followed by PGPS and then Freestyle. At CPEDI1* and 2*, lower levels of tests would be used (Novice and Intermediate) and the Freestyle would always be optional.

4. Qualification system between CPEDI levels

A proposal for a new qualification process which would encourage development of the sport through the different levels and provide an incentive for Organising Committees to hold lower level Events. Two proposals were put forwards, one with qualification through each level, and one with qualification criteria just for CPEDI3*. Ulf Helgstrand (DEN) and Soenke Lauterbach (GER)

Bettina de Rham noted that all athletes currently competing at CPEDI3* would qualify for CPEDI3* in the new system. OCs would be encouraged to hold CPEDI1* and CPEDI2* alongside CPEDI3*, as well as having less requirements so that they were more attractive to run. This would lead into educational opportunities for National and low level Officials, and overall would be better for the welfare of the Athletes to be competing at appropriate levels rather than jumping directly to CPEDI3*.

5. Topics raised by National Federations in Rules Proposals

Permitted movements – The NFs had asked for clarification on which movements were allowed per Grade in the warm-up arena and before entering the competition arena. The Para Equestrian Technical Committee (PETC) would make this clear in the rules.

Competing in a different Grade – The FEI Classification Rules had to comply with the IPC Classification Code, and competing out of Grade would not be permitted.

6. Projects to ensure further development of the discipline were also presented:

The PETC were looking to develop the discipline to be included in FEI named Series, such as the FEI World Cup™ and FEI Nations Cup™ in the future.

The FEI Para Dressage World Challenge concept which would be developed together with the FEI Solidarity Department. The Challenge is intended to be used as a key tool to developing Para Dressage sport structures and Officials, as well as broadening and



increasing participation levels in the sport. Bettina de Rham presented the timeline for the implementation of this series.

Delegates were also provided with updates on the Compensating Aids project, to provide a working Guidelines to Compensating Aids by the end of the year, and were given a brief summary of the ongoing FEI Classification Research Project, which was recruiting for Athletes to take part in the testing phase of the project. All information on the Classification Research could be found on the dedicated [FEI Classification Research website](#).