



Session 3 – Paris 2024 Olympic Regulations Eventing

Chair of the Eventing Committee David O'Connor opened this third Session of the FEI Sports Forum 2022 dedicated to the proposed modifications of the Paris 2024 Olympic Regulations for Eventing.

The proposals submitted to the Delegates are the outcome of a consultation process which saw 2020 Tokyo Athletes, Officials, National Federations and Stakeholders Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signatories, put forward key topics for review as part of an initial survey.

The resulting feedback was then discussed during an online meeting with all consultative groups held on 28 March and the main points that emerged were then consolidated for further discussion at the FEI Sports Forum.

The list of topics that were put forward for discussion included:

- Timelines for Entries
- Ranking Rules
- Minimum Eligibility Requirements
- Substitution Process
- Competition Schedule/Format
- Timeline between the Eventing Team and Individual Jumping Test
- Any other topics

The Chair of the Eventing Committee, David O'Connor and FEI Director of Eventing/Olympic, Catrin Norinder, presented the proposed changes to be included in the Paris 2024 Olympic Regulations/Eventing. They were debated by Delegates and a panel of experts which included Alex Hua Tian (CHN) and Andrew Hoy (AUS) as Olympic Eventing athletes.

TIMELINES FOR ENTRIES

It was proposed to maintain the same deadlines principles for the 2024 Olympic Rankings and MERs for the Paris 2024 Olympic Games as for Tokyo 2020.

Catrin Norinder explained that the NOC Certificate of Capability (CoC), which requires the teams to have 3 qualified athletes per nation in order to confirm their team quota..

David O'Connor also clarified that 3 Athletes per nation needed to obtain 2 (1CCI4*-L/1CCI4*-S) out of 3 MERs to confirm NOC Certificate of Capability by 31 December 2023 for the team quota place.



RANKING RULES

The FEI Eventing World Athlete Ranking Rules would serve as the basis for the Olympic Eventing Rankings with the following adjustments:

The 4 best Athlete/**Horse combination** results to count including **only 4* and 5* events** during the **period of 1 January to 31 December 2023** (regular Eventing FEI World Athletes Rankings were based on a yearly rolling period of six best Athletes results to count).

David O'Connor added that the regular FEI Eventing Rankings rules were updated in 2019 to relate the ranking points to the total number of starters in the competition. This principle would also apply for the Olympic Rankings.

MINIMUM ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

David O'Connor explained that there had been a clear consensus of the effectiveness of the introduction of the Confirmation Result at the Tokyo 2020 Games, and that it had positively influenced the quality of the riding of the combinations present and the overall level of competition. The Eventing Committee, taking into account the comments received during the consultation process, was therefore proposing to maintain the principle and include the requirement of an additional MER to be obtained within the 6 months preceding the Games, i.e. from January to June 2024.

The Eventing MERs would then consist of one CC14*L (or CC15*L) and a minimum of two CCI4*S, one of which needed to be achieved after 1 January 2024. It was also proposed that the two MERs must be obtained at two different events, two different countries, two different Course Designers.

The additional MER was widely accepted by the participants.

Alex Hua Tian (CHN) questioned the consequences of a situation in which a nation receives a team quota place but only 2 Athletes obtain a confirmation result. In response, Catrin Norinder, clarified that this scenario would be included in the reallocation process (part of the IOC Qualification procedure). The team having not obtained the quota place would be allowed one or two riders in Eventing according to their place on the Olympic individual rankings.

As for the second proposal, there was a wide consensus on the proposed requirement to obtain MERs at two different events. However, the requirement of obtaining MERs in two different countries was received with less enthusiasm for various reasons such as disparity of venues in the same country, biosecurity standards and transport of horses. Richard Waygood (GBR NF) again alluded to the fact that events are different in the same country using the example of Blenheim, Blair Castle and Bramham. Chris Webb (AUS NF) also pointed out that such a measure would indeed be difficult to implement especially for the Oceania countries taking into account the still in place travel restrictions due to Covid. Same comment was made on behalf of the South America countries in terms of horse transport.

Quentin Simonet (FRA NF) emphasised that situations involving a MER event at a specific venue and a Team qualifying event at the same venue a few weeks later should be avoided to ensure all riders have equal opportunities.



SUBSTITUTION PROCESS

Emphasis was placed again (see session 1) on the difference between a pre-competition change before the start of the competition and substitution during the competition which for Eventing could take place either between Dressage/Cross Country and Cross Country/Team Show Jumping requiring a medical or veterinary certificate and a 20 penalties to the team score.

The proposal was to maintain replacement process as per the Tokyo Regulations with timings to be reviewed jointly with the IOC.

COMPETITION SCHEDULE/FORMAT

Due to the overall number of competition days available for Equestrian for the Paris2024 Olympic Games and further to the decision made at the GA in 2026, the Eventing Dressage test in Paris 2024 will be held on one day. Suggestions was made to adapt the test length and the timetable as well as organise a trial event for Judges with the Olympic quota number of horses. FEI Director of Eventing and Olympic specified that it would be difficult to plan the format at present moment until an Equestrian Organising Committee had been appointed to address logistical and organisational issues.

For Paris, it was also proposed to maintain the current order of tests and the long format principle for both Team and Individual competition as representing the values of the Eventing sports philosophy.

A proposal was also discussed to reduce the number of participants in the Individual Jumping test from 25 down to 20 competitors with the reasoning that only the best riders would be represented thus resulting in a shorter competition also being more appealing for commercial and media purposes.

In response to this proposal, key arguments were put forward in favour of having either number. Andrew Hoy (AUS) noted the fact that it is important for the sport to showcase the best of the competition, and that athletes ranked between places 20 and 25 had practically no chance of receiving a medal. Alex Hua Tian (CHN) agreed with Andrew Hoy, however he argued that 25 competitors in the final round is key for the promotion and growth of the sport. Given that he was personally placed between places 20 and 25 in the Individual Final at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, he certified that this provided a public relations boost for athletes from developing countries as this was the case with rider Fouaad Mirza from India.

Soenke Lauterbach (GER NF) suggested that if the final round included 25 participants, no replacement should be allowed to participate in case of potential withdrawals from the top 25 as this would not present the best of the sport.

TIMELINE BETWEEN THE EVENTING TEAM AND INDIVIDUAL JUMPING TEST

Andrew Hoy (AUS) commented that the length of the 90min break at the Tokyo Games was ideal and therefore, should not be lengthened or shortened for Paris 2024.



ANY OTHER TOPICS

It had been acknowledged that the sports format would be open for discussion and reviewed in future Olympic Games.

It was acknowledged that Technology and Sports Presentation must be improved for Paris 2024 and discussions with the Paris2024 Organising Committee and IOC must be held as soon as possible.

David O'Connor recognised that the NOC accreditation quotas was an ongoing discussion with the IOC which was to be reviewed for Paris2024.

David O'Connor concluded that the feedback received from Tokyo 2020 had been very positive on the Dressage test as it produced very good riding. Hence, the Dressage test would be reviewed for Paris 2024 while keeping to a shorter format as it is better for the promotion of the sport. This sentiment was also backed up by Andrew Hoy (AUS) who said that he was personally in favour of the length of the Dressage test as it resulted in improved competition from a riding perspective not to mention better viewing too.