

Session 4 – Paris 2024 Olympic Regulations - DRESSAGE

The Director of Dressage, Bettina de Rham, opened this fourth session of the FEI Sports Forum 2022 dedicated to the proposed modifications of the Paris 2024 Olympic Regulations for Dressage.

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 21 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
- Minimum Eligibility Requirements
- Competition Format
- Competition Schedule
- Competition Schedule / Rest day
- Horse Inspection – Timing in terms of starting order for the Grand Prix
- Team Competition – Grand Prix Special Competition Break
- Sports Presentation – GPS - Team Scores
- Grand Prix Special to Music
- Any other topics

The Chair of the Dressage Committee, Maribel Alonso de Quinzanos and FEI Director of Dressage, Bettina de Rham, presented the proposed changes to be included in the Paris 2024 Olympic Regulations/Dressage. They were debated by Delegates and the Athlete Representative within the FEI Dressage Committee, Patrik Kittel.

1. Timeline for entries

Proposal: Maintain the same deadline principles for Paris 2024 as for Tokyo 2020.

FEI deadlines include:

- Period for Athlete to earn points for Olympic Rankings: 1 January 2023 - 31 December 2023 (one full year)
- MER period for Athlete & Horse (Combination) : 1 January 2023 until Nominated entries 2024
- Nominated entries (max 3 times the number allowed to enter the Final entries) mid-June (TBC) 2024
- Final entries - set by Paris2024 : 5 July 2024 TBC

No comments received to the proposal.



2. Minimum Eligibility Requirements

Proposal: Change the MERs from 66% to 67%. All other provisions would remain unchanged.

Based on the feedback received, the MER limit could be slightly raised and would still ensure the universality principle can be maintained.

No comments received to the proposal.

3. Competition Format

Proposal: The current system for the allocation of qualifying events should remain unchanged. The list of 2024 MER Events to be published by the FEI in December 2023.

The Dressage Committee did not consider it motivated to limit the number of qualifying events to two in one country (in Europe) as suggested by one Stakeholder. Athlete/Horse combinations should be offered enough chances to qualify.

No comments received to the proposal.

4. Competition Schedule

Proposal: No change to the current format. See point 7 regarding the number of Teams.

First Competition (2 days, 60 Athletes): FEI Grand Prix. Team and Individual Qualifier. No Medals

Second Competition (1 day, ~24 Athletes): FEI Grand Prix Special. Best 8 Teams from GP. Team Medals

Third Competition (1 day, 18 Athletes): FEI Grand Prix Freestyle. Qualified from GP. Individual Medals

The OG format in Tokyo was well received. The Team competition according to IOC principles should not consist of the combination of the results of two separate competitions (i.e. one competition=one medal). Patrik Kittel confirmed from an Athlete's point of view that the format concept was good and kept all the group interesting for the spectators.

No further comments received to the proposal.

5. Competition Schedule – Rest Day

Proposal: Include in the rules a recommendation to have the rest day after the GPS and have the 2nd Horse Inspection on this day, if possible.

For Paris 2024, given scheduling constraints, in principle, the rest day will take place as in Tokyo, i.e. after the second day of GP and before the GPS. With the Paris schedule, there would be two consecutive rest days, good from a welfare perspective.

No comments received to the proposal.



6. Horse Inspection – Timing in terms of starting order for the Grand Prix

Proposal: Change the VRs to allow one day between the HI and the start of the GP, if possible.

The Dressage Technical Committee and the FEI Veterinary department support the proposal to have one day between the Horse Inspection and the start of the Grand Prix at the OG. The Veterinary Rules need to be reviewed (HI should take place within 24h before the start of the first competition – Ref. VR art. 1035).

No comments received to the proposal.

7. Team Competition – Grand Prix Special Competition Break

Proposal: If the starting order in the last group remains unchanged and the break is shorter, the proposal is to increase the number of Teams in the GPS from 8 to 10 (three groups of 10).

Most survey comments received expressed a wish to keep the same order in the last group and hence remove the need for a longer break (just regular arena maintenance break). There is a general consensus to agree to this; however, it is noted that a reverse order in the last group created more excitement.

Linda Keenan (IDTC) asked for the Tokyo format to be maintained, with the reverse order in the last group, as it generated much more excitement. Ulf Helgstrand (DEN), Klaus Roeser (IDRC) and Patrik Kittel agreed with the proposal to keep the same order throughout, not have a long break before the last group and instead add two more Teams to give the opportunity to compete in the Final for more Teams. Scott McKenna (NZL) also pointed out that having two additional Teams in the final was important to more developing nations and would provide a boost to them and the funding they could get.

8. Sports Presentation – GPS - Team Scores

Proposal: Review of the Team Competition results: use percentages in the Team Competition rather than points.

There is a clear general consensus that percentages are easier to understand and relate to for all Stakeholders and media. Support expressed for this.

9. Grand Prix Special to Music

Proposal: The fairest option is to remove the team test music option, and to have a provision in the rules for a Music provider so that all of the background music was equal with a controlled volume and quality.

The GPS to music was intended to make the sport more attractive. This was not very successful, neither in Para Dressage nor in Dressage, with many athletes not bringing their



own music (too expensive/complicated) and others even choosing to use the Music provider's over their own music.

Judges mentioned that the differences in quality and volume could be distracting, when the music was meant to be just background music.

Rodolpho Riskalla (BRA), on the Panel for Para Dressage, said his discipline had experienced the same issues, and added that the Athletes should be able to briefly meet with the music provider to discuss the choice of music. Patrik Kittel also agreed that the Athletes bringing their own music had not worked.

10. Other Topics

Starting order of the Horse Inspection: per Nation by draw

Technology: Omega/Swiss Timing – discussions to improve services, i.e. draw, information updates, communication and procedures – to be discussed with IOC

Sports Presentation: improvement of commentator information, TV graphics and information displayed – to be discussed with IOC

Will Connell (USA) asked for more running scoring during the Team competition, and also for the Team running score to be visible.

Jason Brautigam (GBR) asked if the issue of presentation/graphics could be opened to a wider consultation.

Klaus Roeser (IDRC), in line with recent discussion at the FEI World Cup Final™ in Leipzig, proposed that a small Working Group should be formed, also to make a list of Athletes and Judges who would be happy to work with Commentators at main events.

Bettina de Rham and Maribel Alonso thanked for the feedback, which had been taken on board, and closed the Dressage session.