

Dressage WA Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2016

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The competitions have already begun so make sure you and your horse are ready to go. DWA are working hard to bring you exciting and innovative competitions and clinics. But give some thought to how you can help us so we can improve dressage in WA.

In this edition we meet Claire McNaughton. Would you like to add something to the newsletter? Contact us at www.dressagewa.org.

Message from the DWA Chair - Gill Botten

Belated New Year greetings to all and I hope you all had a restful and fun festive season. The Summer Series meant the dressage season kicked off early in WA.

Many congratulations to Hannie Byrne who has been elected to the ADC. With Hannie Byrne and Kim Thomas on national committees WA is well represented.

The working party has already met to begin organizing the State Dressage Championships and it is shaping up to be a great event. Welcome to all those people who have come on board to help. I would

also like to welcome Marjory Stanger who joins our committee as the club representative.

We are always pleased to have feedback from riders and officials as well as suggestions of articles of interest you may wish to include in the newsletter so please contact Suzanne Simons (Suzanne.simons@hotmail.com) if you would like to contribute.

There have been some amazing stories of rescue and also some tragic stories of loss after the fires down south and hopefully owners and horses can now begin to recover from the devastation.

Wishing you all a happy, healthy and successful 2016. I am looking forward to catching up with some of the dressage community at the EWA Awards night on February 5th.

Thought for the month:

"Are you a thinking rider? A trained horse is the best instructor. Dressage will help you"

Tom Roberts. 1971. Horse Control – The Rider. TA and PE Roberts, Australia.



Dressage Western Australia Committee Members

Chair - Gill Botten
Vice Chair - Dwight Pedlow
Treasurer - Dinah Fleming

Finance/Treasury - Dinah Fleming
DWA budget management, DDF accounts, purchase orders and payments

Issue of Information – Rebecca DeVries
Website.

Correspondence - Gill Botten/Jo Yacopetti
Minutes, Agendas, incoming and outgoing correspondence.

Business/Strategic Planning - Dwight Pedlow

Sponsorship – Rebecca De Vries

Events – Working Parties

Club Liaison – Marjory Stanger

Official Liaison - Elaine Greene
Judges, Stewards, liaising with other disciplines, national issues.

High Performance - Gill Botten

EA/EWA - Gill Botten
liaising with EWA Board and CEO, ADC etc.

Riders Representative - Tracy Spackman
Includes downgrading applications, Rider's forum etc.

Performance Trophies/Awards – Dwight Pedlow/Val Mayger

DWA Newsletter - Suzanne Simons

Para Equestrian – Val Mayger

Young and Junior Rider Rep – Natalie Sakich

Meet dressage rider Claire McNaughton

Claire and Aravis are fierce competitors in the para-equestrian arena. Regular riding helps Claire maintain core and limb strength, enough to keep her on her feet and walking, albeit slowly. Her neurologist expected her to be wheelchair-bound due to MS some years ago but she had other ideas!

Tell us about Aravis. His breeding name is Aravis, stable name Silver (we nicknamed him Hoovie as he's a walking hoover). He is a 15 years old, 15.2 hh Andalusian gelding and I bought him about 2 ½ years ago from a lovely lady near Chittering, who had him advertised on Gumtree. He is a lovely boy who is a gentleman on the ground. He is a very sensitive soul whose passion is food food food! He had a large learning curve coming to me as my partner trains and drives standardbred pacers/racehorses, whereas my 'schooling area' is in the centre of a 720 metre fastwork training track, so it can be a challenge keeping his attention on me at times. We ride out 5 or 6 days a week with the majority of time in the bush with unavoidable busy roadwork. My sole riding companion is Gus, a lively kelpie x hunterway dog, who refuses to let us leave without him now. Gus has been a good desensitiser for Aravis as I don't think Aravis had been ridden out alone much prior so could be a little over-reactive to strange sights or noises. Gus tears around through the dense bush appearing out of nowhere or thunders past us. I think Aravis quite enjoys his company now and it has hugely helped his confidence.



I guess the dislikes would be that when he loses his nerve, in what he consider a confronting situation, he can become focused on getting home, though he is now 90% better than what he used to be. He can still be bit spooky and also can lack in keenness to work/motivation in ringwork, though this is improving.

What has been the key to the Aravis' training? Calm but disciplined training regime and giving him a variety of bush and arena work. I have retrained him to voice and a light leg. His weaknesses are that he doesn't like to exert himself for long periods of time and, therefore, can be lazy when asked to use himself. This makes it a challenge at times to maintain the impulsion required through the gaits.

What are you riding and long term goals? I'd like be competitive in both para-equestrian and able bodied EA & FEI dressage.

How did you start out in riding and dressage? In my late teens/early twenties I used to exercise other people's horses in England before I could afford my own. Many were problem horses (i.e. rearers, bolters, etc) that others didn't want to ride when there were far nicer horses

available to them. I mostly enjoyed the challenge of working with them and in some instances ended up being the sole rider without the high cost associated with owning a horse in London, as the owner had lost interest. At the same time I was also fortunate enough to regularly exercise some lovely horses too, including a 17.1 hh successful high level national dressage horse and a 16.3 hh eventer, whereby their owner gave me coaching in both flat work and jumping. I loved jumping the most, but this was probably when I started having an interest in dressage too.

When I moved to Australia a good friend gave me a galloper off the track. I mainly bush rode her as I didn't have any facilities. Once she became fit and well I realised she had quite a few mental issues which may have been associated with her long racing career. After many years of bush work it was time for me to get out competing again. A friend put me in touch with a riding coach. She was an enormous help as with her instruction she coached me to totally retrain Belle to voice due to my weakening legs and the pattern my MS was taking. Belle was a high energy mare with a zest for life, so repetition and patience was





the key and eventually we could go out and compete in dressage, riding the tests from my voice cues. Early on in our dressage career my partner, Murray, did a fabulous job of warming her up for me prior to a test as the MS made it difficult to do both. As a former para-equestrian coach used to say to him, "just take her out the back and give her a good gallop before the tests". She thoroughly enjoyed it and it took the edge off her excitement levels for her test. We continued this unconventional warm up regime before many of our competitions pending Belle's mood on the day. Through the years that followed Belle became an irreplaceable loyal working partner that helped me become involved in breed shows including the Royal Show, a little bit of hacking and dressage. We attended many clinics and competed at both para-equestrian events and EA events up to elementary level. We had started training medium level at home. I very sadly lost Belle after an amazing partnership of 14 years.

It took me a while to consider finding another horse due to the amazing connection we had but friends and my partner kept encouraging me to do so. When I did start my search, being partial to thoroughbreds, I said the three things I wasn't looking for was a chunky horse, a gelding and I didn't want white. I got the trifecta as after a long search Aravis caught my eye, an overweight, grey gelding. Aravis is completely different from Belle, but has become my new working partner.

Who has been your biggest influence? My coach, Heather Fraser. She has an uncanny ability to look at the degree of disability and ability for both the horse and rider and create the appropriate training regime which is built upon or amended to achieve the best outcome in each training session. This in turn has created a more harmonious working partnership between horse and rider, achieving a more competitive & enjoyable horse to ride. Also my partner Murray Lindau for his constant support to all my equestrian events, including his ability to confidently and effectively quickly warm up my horse if asked to do so, no matter how explosive my horse (or I, lol!) may be.

How could dressage in WA be improved? Due to a lack of participants in para-equestrian, an occasional open EA para-equestrian event with percentage handicapping would be advantageous whereby, the higher the level of disability, the less percentage deduction is awarded. This allows a rider with a high disability, with an average horse, an opportunity to compete against other riders and potentially be successful on that day. This could hopefully in time encourage other people of all ages with various disabilities to come out and compete in dressage.





From the Judge's Box

By Kim Thomas

Photos by Rebecca De Vries

This month's FAQ section has been compiled by Kim Thomas, ADJC Chair, NAOS A level dressage judge, judge educator, former FEI rider.

At the end of November 2015 WA was extremely fortunate to host Stephen Clarke, FEI5* judge, FEI Dressage Judge General. At the Symposium held on Sunday, a 'question and answer' panel consisting of Stephen Clarke, Brett Parbery, Harry Boldt, Nadine Merewether and Kim Thomas discussed several questions which had been received prior to the day. These questions covered a range of issues and the summing up of the panel is shown below.



E is for Extraordinary – Q and A panel, (left to right) Nadine Merewether, Kim Thomas, Harry Boldt and Stephen Clarke

Q - Rule 1.3.1

This rule states "where the judge at C is of the opinion that the horse and rider combination are not able to fulfil the requirements of the level of the test, and the performance is against the welfare of the horse, and/or shows abusive riding, the combination will be eliminated. There is no appeal."

This rule is all about Welfare of the Horse and comes straight from the FEI rules. No one wants to see a horse being "tortured" during a test by being asked to do movements beyond his level of training. However at FEI level it's not a hard judgement call for the judge, the horse either can or cannot fulfil the test requirements e.g. he may not be able to show piaffe/passage tours or other advanced movements.

But, how do we make this decision at lower levels? It is not an easy task for any judge let alone the less experienced judges. If the test is simply of poor quality then the marks should reflect this and hopefully the rider will "get the message", however if the horse is visibly distressed and anxious and the judge is of the opinion that this is not caused by environmental factors then that judge must question whether the horse is ready for the level.

A second question was:



Q - "What is the obvious difference between negative tension and positive tension, and how to create positive tension and identify it when judging?"



Masters of dressage - Harry Boldt and Stephen Clarke

All judges must make it their duty to discover a sound knowledge of the Training Scale so that they may be able to evaluate between "positive" and "negative" tension. Through correct posture the horse should have enough positive tension to keep his muscles in the correct frame with maximum ease and efficiency. This requires strength and fitness which is time related. Physically the horse is light, cadenced, regular, moving with a round back and uphill tendency, showing forward energy from well engaged hind quarters in all work, between the leg and hand, completely straight, and able to propel himself forward and upward with maximum ease and minimum effort. Mentally he is confident in all work, harmonious and cooperative. Active and with forward desire giving the appearance of ease, and is a delight to watch. Collection does not cause agitation. All this requires very good riding skills.

Through "negative" tension the muscles work against allowing the horse to move with ease and efficiency thus destroying the purity of the paces and longevity of the horse's physical structure. A weak musculature cannot sustain good posture thus he cannot move freely and effectively. Signs of negative tension can be:

Against or behind the hand, inconsistent contact, mouth issues with tongue, unsteady head, all collected movements cause agitation and disturbances to rhythm and regularity. The back is often hollow thus transitions happen in the neck only and hindquarters trail. Poor posture causes horse discomfort and thus evasive behaviour i.e. kicking out at leg, jibbing, running away etc.

Mentally in all work the horse appears to lack confidence, there is obvious disharmony between horse and rider and horse lacks cooperation. Poor breathing, excessive sweating, an appearance of discomfort or pain, nervousness displayed in halts, walk, and transitions. The horse appears to make "heavy work" of the test, and the test is not a delight to watch. Poor riding techniques often mentally upset the performance of the horse, if the horse is mentally upset for whatever reason the work will suffer accordingly.



Question 3 revolved around rule 3.17.2 – “please clarify what the judge’s reaction, marks and remarks should be when a rider deliberately re-presents their horse because it has shown resistance i.e. they repeat a movement”.

This is clearly covered under 3.17.2 which states “in principle a competitor is not permitted to repeat a movement of the test unless the Chief Judge decides on it being an error of course (rings the bell). If, however, the rider has started the execution of a movement and attempts to do the same movement again, the judges must consider only the first movement shown and at the same time penalised for an error of course”.

It was an honour to participate on this panel, and sincere thanks and appreciation must go to the WA Dressage Judges Taskforce, and in particular its Chair, Elaine Greene, for organising Stephen to visit us. It was an amazing opportunity for WA riders, coaches and judges to learn from such a master of the sport.



Q and A panel (left to right) Nadine Merewether, Kim Thomas, Stephen Clarke and Brett Parbery

WA member of the Australian Dressage Committee



The Australian Dressage Committee welcomes Hannie Byrne to the committee. Hannie is the newest member to the committee and has been elected by the State Dressage Authorities for a two year term commencing 1/1/16 and ending on 31/12/17.

Hannie will join Mary Seefried, Kerry Mack, Suzanne Cunningham, Prue Spurrett and Denise Rogan (Riders Representative) on this skills-based committee.



The ADC consists of five elected members plus the Riders' Representative, selected for their experience and skills relevant to the work of the Committee. As part of the governance arrangement for its skills-based structure, a number of positions on the ADC must be vacated each year and opened for re-election.



EA Dressage Rules Workshop and Information Night



DJTF proudly presents...

EA Dressage Rules workshop and information night

for anyone wishing to become a judge or wanting to upgrade this year

Friday 26th February at Swan Valley Equestrian Park, Haddrill Road

6.30pm start, \$10 fee, refreshments provided

Steward's Corner

By Janet Reid

The New Year brings in **new and amended Dressage Rules** from both Equestrian Australia (EA) and FEI (Federation Equestrian Internationale). The complete set of Rules and Regulations, effective from 1 January 2016, can be downloaded from www.equestrian.org.au/Dressage-rules.

FLY HOODS



Type permitted in manufactured state

- EA Dressage Rule 2.14(e) Sponsor Logos on Hoods are "not permitted". This EA Ruling applies to dressage tests from Preparatory to Grand Prix that are run by Equestrian Australia as "FEI Non-Sanctioned" Competitions (e.g. Local, Regional, State, and National Events).

- Note that non-sponsored logos are "permitted" – but please keep within the maximum logo size of 75cm² (circa 7.5cm x 10cm), and keep the fly hood discrete in colour and adornment!**



Permitted – as per original

- Fly Hoods are permitted for both "indoor" and "outdoor" dressage tests and are to be inspected, after the dressage test, to ensure that no additional insulating material has been inserted into the hood (from the original manufactured state of the Hood), and that no plugs or muffs have been inserted into the horse's ears.

- Riders competing at CDI Events need to check the relevant FEI Rules/Regulations.
- Eventing riders need to check the EA/FEI Rulings/Regulations for their discipline of competition.



SPURS FOR PONY RIDERS

EA Dressage Rule 2.5 - Spurs are now permitted to a maximum of 4cm for Pony riders - measured from the back of the rider's boot to the tip of the spur (inclusive of rowels).



Spur Rules for Pony riders are the same as for Horse riders (except that the spur cannot exceed 4cm in length):

- If rowels are used, they must be blunt / smooth and free to rotate, and not sharp to touch.
- Daisy rowels are permitted but only in a vertical plane.
- Soft touch spurs with a rolling ball on either plane are permitted.
- Impulse spurs are permitted. Metal spurs with hard plastic knobs are permitted.
- There is no maximum length of spurs for riders of 'Horses'.

The "daisy rowel" pictured below is an acceptable type of spur, but it exceeds 4cm in length and is therefore "not permitted" for Pony Riders





DID YOU KNOW.....

- 1.4.1 – Any form of protective skin covering on the horse such as plaster/tape/belly band covering or towel, whether the skin is broken or not, is strictly forbidden at an Event and will entail elimination if used.
- 2.5 – Spurs, if worn, must be identical on both sides (they must be a pair).
- 2.8 – Cutaway coats / mini tails are permitted providing they are cut straight across the back (only to be worn for competitions up to and including Advanced “informal”).
- 2.11.1 – Bits: (d) – Forward curved bits are permitted but not with ‘Hanging Cheeks’ and must have a joint (centrepiece must move) and can have fixed or loose rings.
- 2.11.1 – Bits: (e) - Hanging cheek (baucher-type) are permitted, but only when combined with a mouthpiece with a joint.
- 2.11.1.2 – Nosebands and curb chains may never be so tightly fixed as to harm the horse. Officials should not loosen the noseband, but request the rider to do so. If the rider refuses and the Official thinks the noseband is still too tight, the Ground Jury should be approached to make a ruling. Padding under the noseband is permitted as long as it is securely attached.

THE FOLLOWING ARE SOME OF THE BITS THAT ARE “NOT PERMITTED” IN DRESSAGE





The following are examples of Bit 'Rings' that are "Not Permitted" in Dressage

The reins need to be able to freely move around the bit ring



THE FOLLOWING ARE SOME OF THE BITS THAT ARE "PERMITTED" IN DRESSAGE

Refer to Section 2 of the EA Dressage Rules for acceptable bit types/contours, mouthpieces, and ring types



HOT WEATHER POLICY

For the complete "Hot Weather Policy", please refer to Appendix "K" of EA Dressage Rules 2016.

When heat conditions are adverse, exercising horses requires appropriate cooling measures to safeguard their welfare. The primary responsibility for the welfare of horses competing and exercising during hot weather lies with the rider of the horse. Riders must always take action to prevent, manage and treat heat stress in their horses.



Combinations of high heat and humidity impact severely on a horse's main cooling mechanism of sweating and evaporation. A heat stressed horse can have multiple organ failure, and it may collapse and die.

To assess the risk of heat stress in horses, the FEI uses the "Wet Bulb Globe Temperature" (WBGT) Index. WBGT information is published on the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) website under their Thermal Comfort Observations webpages: www.bom.gov.au/info/thermal_stress

The 6 Minute Threshold. Where the WBGT Index is high, horses that have just performed are at risk of suffering a dangerous temperature hike. Dressage horses do work extremely hard in both the warm-up and in their tests. For showjumpers the effort is generally under 6 minutes, however for dressage and cross country, horses are at risk in heat because the **effort will exceed the 6 Minute Threshold**. Aggressive cooling should be used where a horse's temperature is elevated after any demanding exercise (e.g. application of high volumes of cold / ice water, ice boots, repeatedly hosing and immediately scraping water as it warms on the horse's body, etc.).

Wind-flow (breeze) dramatically reduces heat overload (heat stress). On hot days, events should be scheduled early or late, when better wind-flow is likely, and outside of peak temperature periods.

Under EA and FEI Rules, Stewards are required to stop riders if they observe a horse showing signs of stress or fatigue.

The following is a guide to determining what measures are required under certain environmental conditions:

Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT)	Temperature : Relative Humidity	Recommendations for Competitions	Required Cooling Facilities / Methods for Horses
Less than 28	30 : 45	No changes needed to the competition format or timing of the Event.	1. Access to at least two wash bays. 2. Shaded areas / shelters.
28 to 30	29 : 60	Some precautions to reduce heat load on horses will be necessary: – Use shaded areas for competition and warm-up arenas. – Avoid non-grassed riding surfaces; – Reduction in overall effort (shorter distance, less jumping efforts, etc.) – Competition PA announcements.	1. Access to at least two wash bays with freely running water via hoses. 2. Shaded areas / shelters. 3. Note: each horse may need to be hosed with two hoses for 20 to 40 minutes if heat stressed.
30 to 33	30 : 65	Additional precautions to those above to limit overheating of horses will be necessary: – The timing of events / competition should be considered. Competitions should be held in cooler	1. Access to at least two wash bays with freely running water via hoses. 2. Shaded areas / shelters. 3. Mandatory provision of ad-lib ice for use in cooling horses. Aggressive cooling measures are compulsory for CCI**/** Eventing Horses.



		<p>parts of the day between 7am-11am, and/or after 4pm.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Avoid non-grassed riding surfaces. – Competition PA announcements. – CCI** and CCI*** Eventing horses require Aggressive Cooling Measures. 	<p>4. Note: each horse may need to be hosed with two hoses for 20 to 40 minutes if heat stressed.</p>
More than 33	32 : 60	<p>These environmental conditions are VERY HIGH risk and are probably not compatible with safe competition.</p> <p>Further veterinary consultation / advice will be required before continuing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The timing of events / competition should be considered. Competitions or the “high exertion phase” of the event must be held during cooler parts of the day between 7am-11am and/or after 4pm. – Higher level competitions should be run in the coolest part of the day. – Schedule the most demanding competition phases when it is cooler. – The lower level competitions generally make lower demands on horses. – Avoid non-grassed riding surface. – Competition PA announcements – frequently repeated. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Access to at least two wash bays with freely running water via hoses. 2. Shaded areas / shelters. 3. Mandatory provision of ad-lib ice for use in cooling horses. Aggressive cooling measures are compulsory for ALL HORSES. <p>Additional requirements for Eventing competitions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. A shaded area with misting fans. 5. A veterinary to monitor horses.



PROJECT NEON



2016 PROJECT NEON FEI SHOWCASE SERIES

13TH MARCH 2016

STATE EQUESTRIAN CENTRE - C QUEST ARENA

PRESENTED BY DRESSAGE WESTERN AUSTRALIA
WWW.DRESSAGEWA.ORG





Summer Series Training Day

Photos By Rebecca De Vries and Peter Fredericks – HorsePlay Photography





