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Equestrian Australia Ltd

ABN 19 077 455 755



DRESSAGE
AUSTRALIA

Riders Forum

Thursday 25th October 2012 from 6:30 to 7:30 pm held in Riders Retreat, SIEC National Dressage Championships

Minutes

Chaired By: Riders Representative – Elizabeth Owens
Minute Secretary: Deb Ashby
Riders in attendance: Total of 55

1. Introduction

- EO stressed importance of emailing the riders representative with issues/ideas. In order to maintain a consistent email address, irrespective of elected representative, a new address has been set up which will be transferred between successive representatives. This address is dressageridersrep@gmail.com and should be used for all email communications.

2. Updates from ADC

Matters arising from September meeting and actions from ADC

- Hot Weather Policy – now ratified by EA and Veterinary Committee and comes into effect immediately. There will be implications for organizers and riders in how they respond to predicted increased heat loads during competitions and EA events. Now an obligation to change timing for competition and/or have additional cooling mechanisms available such as ice, foggers, fans and extra hosing sites.
- Developing Grand Prix test – test agreed upon following consultation with ADJC and riders. Will be known as the Big Tour Entry level test and will be available for inclusion in competition programs from January 2013.
- New EA tests will be introduced in Jan 2014 and are based on USEF tests from 2011
- New preparatory tests will be introduced from 1/1/13
- New freestyle tests being introduced from 1/1/13
- PSG Challenge – successful qualification for this event will be recognized by awarding of badge and certificate. These to be presented at the completion of tonight's meeting.
- FEI Dressage Forum 2013 – this has been cancelled (leading international guest presenter cancelled) and will now be an FEI refresher with Stephen Clarke.
- Flyhoods – agreed by ADC that flyhoods will be allowed for prevention of insect annoyance from 1/1/13 without need for special approval. Still not allowed indoors except with permission OC.
- Grading system – feedback requested. Suggestion that it is too easy for talented horse/rider combinations to upgrade – especially in Nov/Elem/Med. Top horses will likely grade out of current level within 5 tests which prevents them from participating in all available major championship events in that season. It was put to the meeting that the ADC should investigate increasing either the points required to upgrade in

Novice and Elementary and/or increase % to gain points. This was put to the vote and the consensus was to maintain status quo and those riders who felt that their competition opportunities were limited due to risk of upgrading, should go HC.

- Some states have successfully introduced special category for non-professional riders to encourage increased participation. Put to the meeting that perhaps it was time that Australia had a 2-tier competition system that separate professional from non-professional riders. This suggestion did not receive majority support although a number of riders expressed their backing for the Division scheme introduced in Qld.

3. Update from EA

- Membership review underway across state branches. Goal to standardize membership categories – suggestion is Competitor, Recreational and Supporter categories. Cost differential and fees per category to be decided by state branches. Decline in membership a source of major concern for anyone interested in equestrian sport.
- High Performance
 - Relayed to meeting that position of Performance Director for Dressage would be re-advertised following poor response prior to Olympic Games. Brett Parbery noted that this is a key position for the sport and encouraged all riders to consider any individuals they believed capable of taking on this role to apply. Brett also encouraged judges to be involved in the High Performance Program. It was also noted that the position of Chef D'équipe was a separate role.
 - Nicole Tough queried the direction of the National Futures Squads and what the plan was for this initiative. Asked if there had been any report on progress or milestones achieved in its first 12 months. Suggestion was made that this should be the job of the Dressage Performance Director.
- Olympic debrief function being covered by Australian Sports Commission on this occasion. Concerns of Australian riders conveyed to Brett Mace by Riders Representative at last ADC meeting.

4. Any other business

- Petition from riding member submitted to ADC requesting that use of snaffle bit be made optional in EA competitions up to and including Grand Prix. The basis for the request was on animal welfare grounds. The feeling of the meeting was that acceptance of the double bridle is an integral stage in the progressive development and training of dressage horses and is no more a welfare concern than any other bit in the right hands. The proposal to make snaffle bits optional to Grand Prix was not supported.
- Lack of Athlete Representative on National Board discussed – strong feeling at the meeting that this position needs to be filled and EO was asked to pass this recommendation to the ADC to send message to EA. ***(NB – position has since been advertised and it is clearly the intention of the new EA board to have an Athlete's Representative on the National Board)***
- Cathie Drury Klein reminded meeting that a number of vacancies were coming up on the ADC and encouraged all riders to consider nominating for these positions.
- Kerry Mack stated that she had nominated. She also commented that with the new national board, there was a very positive outlook for the future of the organization.

- Disappointment expressed that the same judges had been used at 2 consecutive levels at the 2012 National Championships. Asked that the message be conveyed to the ADJC/ADC that this situation be avoided in future championships.
- Some riders stated that they only had 1hr and 10 mins between events at the Nationals which was too close. Cathy Drury Klein explained that it was an electronic draw and while every effort was made to spread classes, there were also complaints from riders that their events were too far apart. With many riders competing on multiple horses it is extremely difficult to maintain optimum space between all horses in all events.
- Libby Welch had raised with the Riders Representative verbally the request that a rotation of the National Championships be considered – specifically that Qld be allowed to host them. EO explained to meeting that the states had agreed to centralize the event in Sydney but other organizers could apply 18 months ahead of intended competition for consideration. This would be conveyed to state branches for consideration. When put to the vote, the meeting strongly disagreed with moving the National Championships away from SIEC.
- PSG Challenge medals awarded.
- Jenny Carroll reminded riders that if they intended qualifying as FEI judges that an age limit applied and that they should not leave it too late. Further discussion centered on judge mentoring in rural areas to prevent occurrence of scores getting higher the further away you get from a capital city.

5. Election of Riders Representative for next 2 years

- Roger Fitzhardinge stood in as moderator for the election. There were 3 nominations accepted and Elizabeth Owens was re-elected for another 2 year term.
- Elizabeth thanked the attendees for their continued support and wished them success at the competition and safe travels home.

6. Meeting closed 7:30pm