

DRESSAGE REPORT

With one of Dressage's highlights around the corner – the FEI Dressage Challenge – I would like to start with complementing last year's participants on their performance. The challenge was held in Swakopmund in lovely settings and surroundings, with the highest number of participants ever!

Riders were able to enter two tests on the same horse and the adding of the Preliminary and Elementary tests proved positive for Namibia. In the advance class, Sumari Piepmeyer achieved 60.77% with Pirate Prince out of a total of 11 riders. Silke Kubirske on Jason competed in the Medium class and was the overall winner with 66.45% in a pool of 25 riders. The Elementary class was also won by a Namibian rider, being Wilmi Venter on Tokki with 66.11% out of 48 participants. Namibia lay 4th overall in the Preliminary class with Kira Rohloff riding Dusti and a score of 65.52% competing against 28 other riders.

The Namibian Team, comprising of Silke Kubirske on Jason, Wilmi Venter on Tokkie and Kira Rohloff on Dusty, rode to victory with Zimbabwe on second place and Zambia on third. Well done to you!

This year the Challenge Team had to be announced before the Challenge and NAMEF decided to do a FEI TEAM SELECTION test. We divided the team selections between the coast and the inland. On one day the coastal riders rode their tests then the next week the Inland riders rode in Windhoek. The same judges judged all tests.

Thank you to Kathrin at Okakambe Trails for providing the venue with food, music and generally everything the heart desires. Thank you also to the judges Mrs. Gesa Flemming and Dieter Voigts who came down especially for the day.

The dressage challenge will be held again in Swakopmund I and I hope that all dressage enthusiasts from the inland will make the effort to travel to the coast!

One of the judges is Mrs. Sharon Rhode, whom many of us remember as she had judged at various shows here and also given seminars. It will be interesting to hear how she sees the quality of our sport.

I have had concerns from dressage riders about the fact that too little dressage tests are offered throughout the year at shows. Every year at the AGM I plead to show organizers: Please offer more tests!! If there are three jumping competitions for a rider, why not offer three dressage competitions? Also, please open up the tests for riders to more than one level. E.G. let N horses participate in E tests.

As for NAMEF – we can only recommend and ask (very nicely) that shows are staged in a certain way, but we cannot enforce!! It is in the organisation's hands as to how and what they offer at their shows. We do look at every show schedule and also advise changes, but it is often the case that those are ignored by the organizers. It would be advisable that riders raise their concerns directly with the show organizers.

A concern is also that there are currently only two EM horses competing but we see a strong pool of promising N horses which will hopefully move upwards.

As the dressage delegate, I would like to stress that I cannot do my job on my own, and I appreciate any constructive ideas from anyone! Please always feel free to approach me with any concerns and suggestions.

In closure I would like to thank all riders, show organizers, my judges and scribes who enjoy dressage as much as I do. To my colleagues at NAMEF a big thank you for the support and hard work – it was a great year.

Adriane Jandrell