

2009 AGM REPORT – GRADING

FOR THOSE THAT DID NOT ATTEND THE WORKSHOP AT THE BEGINNING OF THIS YEAR, I'D LIKE TO MENTION THAT THE NEW GRADING SYSTEM WAS THE BRAINCHILD OF SIBYLLE KAZMAIER, WHO DID A LOT OF RESEARCH BEFOREHAND AND PUT A LOT OF THOUGHT AND ENERGY INTO THIS NEW CONCEPT. ALTHOUGH WE HAVE RECEIVED SOME NEGATIVE CRITICISM AND CONTENTION; THE POSITIVE INPUT AND ENTHUSIASTIC ACCORD AMONGST THE RIDERS, JUDGES, COURSE BUILDERS AND SHOW ORGANIZERS WERE OVERWHELMING. I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO ASSURE YOU THAT WE ONLY HAD THE BEST INTEREST OF THE SPORT AT HEART WHEN DELIBERATING THIS NEW SYSTEM.

OUR AIM WAS AND IS (AMONGST OTHERS) TO AVOID THE UP- AND DOWN GRADING SCENARIO OF THE PAST; TO MAKE THE COMPETITIONS MORE COMPETITIVE BY INCREASING THE NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS; TO MAKE SHOWS MORE INTERESTING FOR SPECTATORS BY DECREASING COURSE-BUILDING TIME; AND IN SHORT – TO MAKE IT FAIR TO ALL.

I WOULD LIKE TO SINCERELY THANK ALL THOSE INVOLVED WITH THE EQUESTRIAN SPORT FOR YOUR PATIENCE, UNDERSTANDING AND INPUT WITH REGARDS TO THE GRADING CHALLENGES THAT WE HAVE EXPERIENCED AFTER CONVERTING TO THE NEW LEVEL SYSTEM. TO MENTION A FEW CHALLENGES:

1. SOMETHING THAT DID NOT CHANGE, IS THE CONFLICTING SITUATION WHERE SOME RIDERS ARE EXTREMELY EAGER TO ACCUMULATE GRADING POINTS IN AS FAST A POSSIBLE TIME; WHILE OTHERS ARE NOT SO KEEN TO MOVE UP TO THE NEXT LEVEL.

MOTIVATION FOR THE LATTER BEING:

- YOUNG HORSES / RIDERS NOT YET BEING READY FOR A HIGHER LEVEL;
- HORSES / RIDERS HAVING REACHED THEIR LIMIT AND PREFER TO STAY ON THE SAME LEVEL.

WE ARE AT PRESENT LOOKING AT SUGGESTIONS RECEIVED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES, TO FIND A FAIR SOLUTION THAT WILL SOMEWHAT SATISFY MOST RIDERS AND AT THE SAME TIME BENEFIT THE SPORT.

2. ANOTHER PICKLE IS RIDERS / HORSES GAINING POINTS TOO QUICKLY – WE HAVE e.g. A CHILD RIDER WHO ACCUMULATED THE MAXIMUM 20 POINTS, IN 3 CONSECUTIVE TOURNAMENTS WITHIN A PERIOD OF ONLY 2 MONTHS.

BECAUSE OF THE FACT THAT THE CLASSES ARE NOW SO MUCH BIGGER, MORE POINTS ARE AWARDED FOR 1ST AND 2ND PLACE (e.g. 20 PARTICIPANTS = 4 POINTS FOR 1st PLACE). WE HAVE THEREFORE NOW OPTED TO DO AWAY WITH THE GRADING POINTS TABLE, WHERE ADDITIONAL POINTS ARE AWARDED FOR PLACINGS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN A COMPETITION.

3. THEN WE ALSO HAVE RIDERS THAT HAVE NOT YET REACHED THE MAXIMUM POINTS BUT REGARD THEMSELVES AND/OR THEIR HORSES READY FOR A HIGHER LEVEL.

TO SOLVE THIS SCENARIO, WE INTRODUCED THE DIRECTIVE TO ALLOW THOSE THAT HAVE ACCUMULATED 50% OF THE MAXIMUM POINTS, TO ENTER FOR SHOWS IN A HIGHER LEVEL; THE GRADING POINTS EARNED THERE TO BE ALLOCATED TO THEIR REGISTERED LEVEL. THIS GIVES THEM THE OPPORTUNITY TO TEST THEIR ABILITIES IN THE HIGHER LEVEL WHILST STILL BEING ABLE TO COMPETE ON THEIR CURRENT LEVEL AFTERWARDS, WITHOUT HAVING TO UP- AND DOWN GRADE.

WHILE WE ARE STILL IN THE TRIAL YEAR WITH THE NEW GRADING SYSTEM, WE GENUINELY NEED YOUR INPUT AND SUGGESTIONS AND ASSISTANCE BEFORE FINALIZING THE SYSTEM AND BEFORE REVISING THE RULES & REGULATIONS.

THANK YOU,

PAULETTE WISE