

NAMEF - Report for Showjumping 2009

Many activities, successes and changes have happened during the last year in our sport.

We had 10 graded shows from the various clubs all over the country. 3 at Gymkhana Club in Windhoek, 2 at Reiterverein Swakopmund, and one in Auas View, Nubuamis, Omaruru, Otjiwarongo and Okahandja respectively.

Additional many training shows and clinics were offered. Unfortunately it seems that these are not well and regularly attended by young horses and riders, who would gain a lot of experience.

Thank you to all those clubs and stables, for your efforts to offer shows and other activities.

The highlight in Namibian Showjumping during the last year definitely was Michelle Kuenzle's victory at the FEI World Jumping challenge for developing countries in Santiago de Chile in November 2008.

Once again from NAMEF's side, congratulations Michelle. You are a great example and motivation for the other riders.

Namibia can be proud to have Silvia Snyman, who has qualified for the same event in 2009 in Chile, and we wish her all the best for that big challenge.

At the Easter Show in Johannesburg 2009, a couple of Namibian riders from all age groups participated very successful.

Our Team ended up 4th from 5 teams, but all our riders gained a lot of experience during that trip. The riders in the Namibian Team were Gerhardt Kotze, Xanthe Witman and Amy Mattysen.

Due to our selection criteria AND that the invitations for the Africa Cup only reached us 3 weeks before the show, we were unable to send a full team. Thank you to the 3 riders that were prepared to represent Namibia on such short notice.

The Namibian Show jumping Team Championships 2008, held in Swakopmund in January 2009 was won by Reiterverein Swakopmund.

The Individual Namibian Championships, held at Gymkhana Club in Windhoek in September 2008 was won by Kira Rohloff (Children), Gerhardt Kotze (Juniors) and Vanessa Jacobs (adults).

Congratulations to all our Champions and all other riders, representing Namibia abroad.

A very special thanks from Namef goes to Nubuamis Riding Club, who once again hosted a show, with a lot of top South African and Swaziland riders competing on their own or borrowed horses. This tradition is a highlight in the Namibian show calendar, and inspires a lot of young riders, but also the "oldies", that are not active in horseriding anymore, can see, that the sport has not died yet, but is still very active.

A good indicator that the standard in showjumping is going upwards again, is that at this stage we have 4 B-grade (1.30m) horses/riders in Namibia. We hope that this trend will continue, and we are working on a concept, to support these – our best – riders.

We are very thankful to those clubs, who regularly invite riders from South Africa or elsewhere, to offer clinics for our Namibian riders. I'm sure, that those clinics are part of the success we had in recent years. But I also want the clubs to keep in mind, that there are also good riding teachers and other officials in Namibia, who can help our riders, at a much cheaper fee. In this context I want to congratulate Katrin Schaefer- Stiege, who passed her exams, and is now an acknowledged FEI B coach. Over the last years we have noticed the quality of horses and riders that have emerged from Okakambe.

The biggest change at the beginning of this season, is our new grading System. We from NAMEF think and hope, that this new system will benefit the riding sport in our country, and make it much easier for the riders, more interesting to spectators and less work for officials. Although there were and still are a few hiccups, we trust, that after a year of experience, the new system will be a good substitute for the old one. I appeal to all riders to please be patient, understandable and helpful, to get the new system on tracks. The shows held so far with the new grading system were a great success. Thank you for the positive input we received so far.

We are aware that there will be a time when horses or riders reach their limits. We want to encourage all clubs to discuss this and come up with suggestions of how this issue can be handled, as we do not want to loose riders or horses in the sport. The grading topic will be discussed in detail later today.

A big problem that we have in Namibia is a lack of Judges, Coursebuilders and other officials. By offering some clinics in the near future, we hope to get more “Applicants” graded up to official judges. To be successful with this we appeal to the show organizers, to please invite more applicants to their shows, in order to let them gain more experience. To become a course builder/ judge is not only writing an exam, but also and mainly to gain practical experience during the shows. We are thankful for each person, that wants to help, and therefore ask the clubs, to please give us the names of those who are interested in becoming judges or course builders.

To end off, I'd like to thank each and everybody who gave his input in our sport. NAMEF is trying it's best, but without the teamwork and help of the people actively involved, it's difficult, to keep the ball rolling.

Cord Cordes
Show Jumping Delegate NAMEF