



## February 2012

### WELCOME TO THE FIRST EDITION OF OFFICIALS POST FOR 2012

This first edition of Officials Post for 2012 is an opportunity to jump-start the competition year. New rules, protocol review, priorities, etc. highlight this edition. Speaking of Rules- **DO YOU HAVE YOUR 2012 DRESSAGE RULE BOOK?** If not, and you have paid your Equine Canada memberships and your Officials fees for 2012, please contact Megan McCormick at [mmccormick@equinecanada.ca](mailto:mmccormick@equinecanada.ca) to request a copy of the rule book.

Three more issues are planned for this year. However, once again, we seek your input to Officials Post in order to ensure this publication is relevant to your needs and interest as officials. Please contact us at [officials@dressagecanada.org](mailto:officials@dressagecanada.org) with your input.



To the following officials who have been promoted or have been awarded recorded status for 2012.

#### STEWARDS:

##### Senior

- Jane Hunt
- Leslie Kennedy
- Lynne Milford
- Shirley Pederson

##### Medium

- Marilyn Elkin
- Anne Welch

##### Basic

- Elizabeth Smith
- Michelle Taplin

#### JUDGES:

##### Senior

- Joanna Crilly
- Leslie Kennedy

##### Medium

- Linda Dieno
- Ellen King

##### Basic

- Melanie Houston
- Yulia Novitskaya

##### Recorded

- Virginia Allen
- Marianne Fizet
- Sarah Hill
- Rene Huyge
- Donna McInnis
- Beth Murray
- Kristin Skinner-Boyd
- Alexis Wells

To become an official is a lengthy process with the need for on-going education and updating of skills. To have fulfilled the criteria, as well as having passed both the practical examination but the written tests is quite an achievement. You should be proud of yourself.

Again, the Officials Committee is pleased to recognize your dedication and extend our congratulations for your commitment to the sport. Well done!

**SAVE THE DATE**

### 2012 JUDGES PROMOTION/UPDATING CLINICS with Cara Whitham, FEI 5\*

September 1 & 2, 2012—Ontario Dressage Championships, Bethany, Ontario  
October 13 & 14, 2012—Pacific Regional Championships, Langley, BC

**Details to be emailed to all officials or contact EC for more information.**

### ***R-E-S-P-E-C-T - submitted by Brenda Minor***

It seems that the past century has seen a relaxing of traditions and good manners and as a society, we may have become much more casual in our everyday life. It is not surprising, therefore, when issues arise that may put officials in a bad light.

Being an official in a sport which is considered subjective at the best of times provides a lot of fodder for criticism from the other parties involved. The beginning of the new show season offers an excellent opportunity to revisit correct protocol in an effort to cut back on the myriad of complaints that can be heard at the end of a show season.

Dressage officials have a responsibility towards everyone involved in a competition. There are the obvious rules that must be adhered to, most of which are outlined in the rule book. There are also 'unwritten' courtesies that should be followed.

A simple way to follow protocol, is to think that, for all intents and purposes, an Official is an *employee* - not only of the show organizer, but of the competitor as well. If not for the show organizer and the competitor, an official would not have the job they were hired to do. If you treat an employer with respect, then it's a simple matter to treat the organizers and competitors with the same consideration.

Communication is key. Much of the time, complaints about officials stem from misinterpretation or miscommunication. The following is a simple checklist to ensure open communication with competition organizers leading up to a competition.

- √ Confirm the dates and ensure your availability.
- √ Check the contract when you receive it to ensure that all is in order as per your discussions with the organizer. Make certain that everything is clearly set out in the contract, including a cancellation clause if you are concerned it might be cancelled. Don't go running to an organizer if a show gets cancelled to demand some recompense after. Better to set this out initially, as one of your requirements for accepting the job.
- √ Do not break the commitment because a better

offer comes in later. Organizers talk and word gets out.

Bear in mind that show organizers would also like to make a profit so try to obtain the least expensive flights, etc.,

Prior to the show, if you do not hear from the organizer, try to contact them for a show schedule or go on line. Quite often everything is available online. Remember, organizers get busy and although they should contact you with the schedule, they may not remember. Be patient and understanding.

### ***It's Show Time...***

#### **The Do's!**

- Do arrive on time – Rules specify that a judge must be on the show grounds at least 20 minutes before the show commences.
  - Do come prepared. Bring a cushion, rain gear, a hat or sun visor, whistle, rule book, test book and pens.
  - Do check in with the organizer to let she/he know you are there.
  - Do arrange to meet the Steward as you are working as part of the team.
  - Do read the schedule before you get to the show. Organizers don't appreciate having to change things around at the last minute because an official can't judge a student in a class.
  - Do be polite to your scribe, runners and other volunteers. Remember, they don't often get paid and are doing it for the benefit of the organizer and/or the sport.
  - Do be accommodating. After a break, get back to your ring well before the start time of a competitor. Sometimes, a competitor may wish to go a little early and it's nice to accommodate them if you can. Remember, officials can eliminate a rider for being late – but the converse is not true.
  - Do not be annoyed at the show organizer/steward/runner/competitor should the competitor hold to their time even in inclement weather. An Official is paid to stay until the bitter end, scratches and all.
  - Do remain respectful of the competitor, no matter how badly a test may be going. Remember, they are doing their best.
-

- Do keep your comments as non-personal, positive and helpful as possible. Competitors can understand low scores – but can become upset by nasty, personal comments.
- Do arrange to have a Stewart with you should a competitor wish to question/talk to you. This ensures that neither you nor the competitor can ‘misinterpret’ the conversation.
- Remember—if in doubt decide in favor of a competitor, if the rules permit
- Do leave your booth the way you found it. Another judge may have to step in and take your place.

#### The Don'ts!

- Ask the organizer if you can leave early as soon as you arrive.
- Order the most expensive item on a menu regardless of the cost to the organizer
- Expect nor ask for special ‘courtesies’ which are not part of the show organizer/volunteers responsibility.

As an Official, there are undoubtedly many more ‘do’s and don’ts’ that you may have on your list and we encourage you to share them with your colleagues. Dressage competitions are stressful from all aspects; be patient and always respectful.

---

#### **NEWS FROM THE RULES COMMITTEE - submitted by Joanna Crilly**

The new rules have been posted, as we all know, but as a courtesy to our judging and stewarding colleagues, the Rules Committee would like to highlight some of the key changes that are now in place.

- Snaffle bridles may be used at all levels up to GP, but in those levels where there is a choice of double or snaffle, the judge must make a note on the test sheet if the test has been ridden in a snaffle. e.g. a rider in PSG/Inter 1 competes in a snaffle: judge notes on the sheet that the snaffle bridle was used. **We suggest noting the bridle at the top of the front page.** (E9.8.13)
- All riders competing in dressage in Canada must wear ASTM/SEI or BS EN approved safety headgear at all times whenever mounted at an EC dressage competition site. This applies to every level of rider. (E4.0) CDI competitions follow FEI rules.
- Chapter 1 reflects the changed wording in the FEI definitions.
- Basic judges will be pleased to note that they are now permitted to judge non-EC competitions. (E15.12.1)
- Basic judges will be permitted to judge up to Intermediate<sup>1</sup> at Silver competitions with no guest card and up to Intermediate 2 with a guest card. (chapter 3 chart)
- Medium judges no longer need a guest card for Silver Championships. (chapter 3 chart).
- The dress rules have been relaxed somewhat to allow for grey or dark coloured jackets and dark coloured boots. (chapter 4)8. The inconsistencies in the rules about stewards removing boots has been corrected. In every rule referring to the tack check where horses are permitted to wear boots, it states that stewards may require the boots to be removed.
- FEI tests of choice may not be used as qualifiers for Gold championships and Team qualification but all other levels of TOC may be used for Gold championship qualifiers. (E7.31)
- TOC classes at any level, including FEI, may be used as qualifiers for Silver championships. (E7.31)
- There are new rules for Medium judges wanting to upgrade to Senior status. (E15.4D) These new rules apply for 2012 and 2013 only. As of January 1st, 2014, the upgrading rule will revert to the 2011 rule.

As always, should you have any questions or suggestions, we would like to hear from you. On behalf of my colleagues on the DC Rules Committee, I wish everyone an enjoyable competition season.

---

## STEWARDS' CORNER - submitted by Christine Hickman

I would like to congratulate our new and upgraded Dressage Stewards for 2012. I am sure this will be a year of challenges for us all with a number of rule changes in both the General and the Dressage Rule Books. Please make sure that you are familiar with these before your season starts. Don't try and memorize them all, that is why we have rule books but I strongly recommend that you note the rule books with the changes in red.

As a Steward, you are there to help all those involved with a competition. Two things I feel you should be particularly aware of are "welfare of the horse" and "fairness to all". As a new Steward, you may sometimes feel overwhelmed with all the demands that a Steward can be expected to deal with. Try not to get flustered, take your time when making decisions to ensure that you make the correct ones, and don't allow yourself to be pressured by competitors, coaches or anyone else.

Remember those three magic words: HELP, PREVENT and INTERVENE. Always be honest and if you make a mistake (and we all do), admit it. Confidentiality is extremely important. Always act in a professional manner and dress accordingly, introduce yourself to your judges and tell them where you are located. You have all attended a Dressage Specific Clinic where what you need to have with you has been discussed (I know, it seems like a lot, and everyone will add their own bits and pieces) but do remember to take copies of ALL necessary forms. These can be downloaded from the EC website. Take more than one copy of each form with us. Some shows have facilities for making copies but some do not.

Please remember you are a representative of EC/DC – Stewarding is a privilege not a right so go with a good attitude and ENJOY.

### **A NOTE ON SAFETY HELMETS - from Christine Hickman**

I am sure you are by now aware of the new rule which makes it compulsory for ALL riders in EC competitions to wear an approved safety helmet. Helmets with initials BS EN are now accepted as approved helmets in EC Competitions.

### **PROMOTION/UPDATING CLINIC FOR STEWARDS**

**Saturday, April 15th, 2012**

National Capital Equestrian Park,  
Nepean, Ontario

CLINICIAN: Christine Hickman

Registration Form and details – on the EC website

## HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW THE DRESSAGE RULES?

True/False questions from Doreen Horsey (answers follow).

1. A competitor begins to lengthen stride across the diagonal. He/she loses control, circles and repeats the movement. You penalize for an error of course and score the second attempt.
2. When the test calls for an extended canter on the diagonal across HXF with a flying change at F, the flying change should be performed the moment the horse's nose reaches the letter F.
3. Following the final salute, time permitting, it is acceptable for you to briefly discuss the ride with the competitor.

## UPCOMING EDUCATION CLINIC

### ONE-DAY EDUCATION CLINIC FOR JUDGES/AUDITORS – "JUDGING ALL THE ANGLES"

Judging is never as straight-forward as it appears. This one-day clinic will attempt to cover "all the angles" including judging from the front as opposed to the side, judging on panels, assessing paces, identifying the correct angles as well as current rules. Practical judging from videos will cover Training to PSG levels. All levels of judges are welcome including anyone interested in becoming a judge or members of the public who wish to learn more about dressage judging. This is not a promotion/assessment clinic. CLINICIANS: Joan Macartney and Brenda Minor.

**Saturday, March 31, 2012**

9:00 am to 4:00 pm

Ontario Equestrian Federation Office

Registration form and details can be found on the EC website

**ANSWERS**

1. False  
If the rider has started the execution of a movement and attempts to do the same movement again, the judge must consider the first movement shown only and at the same time penalize for an error of course.

2. True  
In a movement which must be carried out at a certain point in the arena, it should be done at the moment when the competitor's body is above this point, except when the horse approaches the letter from a diagonal. In this case the transition is done when the horse's nose reaches the track at the letter.

3. False  
A member of the jury may not discuss a ride with a competitor before or after the final salute.

That's it for this edition of Officials Post. Best wishes to everyone with the start of the competition year.