



## TRAINEE JUDGES GUIDELINES

Thank you for the interest you have shown in becoming a Dressage Judge. I have received your CV & References and I am pleased to confirm that you will be placed on the Trainee Judges list.

**All Trainee Judges must be members of British Dressage.** This will ensure that you keep abreast of any new rules and will generally keep you informed of matters affecting the Dressage scene.

The registration fee covers a period of 2 years and if you wish to be considered for the official list you must apply to the office for a CV form and reference forms stating that your referees feel you are ready to be tested for List 6/5 at Novice level. Complete the CV & reference forms and log book, Form K and return together with a testing fee of £25 with Form N. You will then need to complete an Exam paper and Practise sheets for no less than 12 horses, these will then be assessed and you will be notified if you can then go forward to a testing day. Should you be unable to accept that date you must notify the office at once and they will try to find you a more convenient date. However, the application to be tested will only be valid for 2 years.

If you are successful on the testing day you will be placed on the official list at List 6/5. If you should be unsuccessful you must wait for a period of **12 months** before re-applying, but you will not need to reproduce CV, written paper or Practise sheets (H & H1).

### 1. Notes Regarding Training

To try to ensure that you are well prepared before coming forward for testing, the Judges Committee has produced the following notes to assist you.

As a Trainee Judge before coming forward for testing it is recommended (but not compulsory) that you: -

- a) Write for judges on an official list, in order to become familiar with the terminology and understand the demands made on the writer.
- b) Sit in with judges on List 4 or above when tests of Novice and Elementary standard are being judged. When sitting in you must not interrupt or offer comment as the Judge needs to keep their full concentration on the competitor. Allow the judge to decide how much discussion of marks and remarks can be undertaken. To keep to the strict timetable usually set for classes, in all probability any discussions will be limited to the coffee break.
- c) Practise Judge Novice classes. You must apply to the organiser of the selected competition for permission to park your car alongside that of the official judge. You must also contact the official judge in advance of your practise judging so they are aware of the situation and introduce yourself to the official judge on the day. Please provide your own writer and score sheets, which can be obtained, from the Dressage Office at a discount rate using the enclosed form 'M'. Once you are on the Judges panel you must practise judge at least two classes between testings.

At the end of the class ask the Official Judge to sign your form. He or she may then be prepared to discuss the tests with you, but is not obliged to do so, they should not be bullied into discussion!

**Practise judging sheets must be totalled and show the date, venue, name of the official judge and their results for comparison. You can then use one set of these practise sheets for your upgrading.** The purpose of the practise judging is to give you a chance to judge affiliated classes at the level at which you will be tested. These sheets are destroyed once the results are known.

**The Practise Judging Sheets and Written Paper will be forwarded to an assessor as soon as they are received into the office, you will receive a report stating whether the Practise Sheets and Written Paper are acceptable. If the assessor feels you need further experience before coming forward for the practical exam this will be stated on your report form and you will need to send further sheets or a further written paper for assessment before you can undertake your practical test. (If the practise judging sheets/written paper do not reach the required standard a further set can be presented after 6 months)**

- d) Those holding a BHSI certificate, International Riders & Trainers (the BD Trainer's categorisation will be used to decide International status) and riders who have competed regularly at Prix St George level or above may apply to be tested directly for List 4 and do not have to comply with all the above requirements. They must complete the written paper and practise judge one Elementary class to be assessed. Although the sitting in and writing requirements are not obligatory it is emphasised that the experience is of great benefit to all prospective candidates. Candidates applying directly to List 4 must furnish evidence of competition experience at PSG a photocopy of their BHSI certificate or training qualifications to the office.
- e) Attend at least One Judges Seminar every two years and One training session a year. **Attendance at the Seminar & Training session must be completed before you come forward for testing.**

For a, b, and c you must be present throughout the class.

## **2. Some Useful Hints**

The following suggestions are also made to help Trainee Judges, not only to improve their knowledge but, equally important, to enable them to express their thoughts clearly and concisely. To be able to judge a class, technical knowledge is not enough, it is also necessary to instantly put thoughts into words and, at the same time, evaluate the movement with a mark.

- Watch horses training, particularly at Novice level.
- Read books and magazine articles on Dressage Training.
- Learn the value of the scale of marks. i.e. 4=insufficient, 6=satisfactory.
- Make sure that you are familiar with the rules so that you are not thrown into confusion if something goes wrong.
- Learn the test from a 'Judges' point of view, noting particularly the split up of the movements and whether the transition is in the preceding or following movement.
- Remember that a movement starts at the first letter mentioned and continues until the first letter of the next movement.

e.g. Novice test No 23 (2007) Movements 3 & 4

- |    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 3. | E | Half circle left 10 metres diameter to X  |
|    | X | Half circle right 10 metres diameter to B |
| 4. | B | Circle right 15 metres diameter.          |

- g) Study the F.E.I. definitions of Paces and Movements as given in the Rule Book.

## **3. Judges Responsibility**

**Before the Day** - When you receive an invitation to judge answer it promptly, confirming the time, place and test as you write. State whether you require a writer. Don't arrive to judge with your own writer when you have asked for one to be supplied, it may mean that someone has driven a long way to be disappointed.

**Remember** - It is an honour to judge and as such you are a representative of British Dressage. Please dress tidily and keep in mind the position you represent and the fact that competitors have to turn themselves out properly.

**On the Day** - Arrive at least twenty minutes before you are due to start judging, and report to the Secretary who will be able to direct you to your arena.

If for any reason you are unable to judge once you have accepted the invitation, it is your responsibility to inform the Organiser/Secretary and to find a replacement.

Check your arena. You must not change it once the competition has started so make sure it is in accordance with the requirements laid down in the Dressage Rule Book. Things to look for particularly are markers and their positioning, the centre line and X, the width of the entrance. You cannot do much about the terrain, but you can remove stones or have potholes filled in.

Make contact with the steward in charge of your arena and ask them to help you keep to time. Suggest that as one horse finishes the next is sent forward.

Brief your writer, as to your procedure, i.e. say, "I give my comment and then my mark" etc. It is helpful if you have your own board to use to complete the collective section thereby giving your writer freedom and time to head up the next sheet.

Go through the test with your writer before your first horse enters.

Try to compose your mind, the first horse could well be your winner.

You must know the Rule Book very well and be prepared to implement those rules with experience.

### **The Test -**

1. See that all rules regarding tack and clothing etc. are observed.
2. Be quick to observe errors of course and ring the bell if necessary.
3. Make sure to use kindness, and do as you would be done by. Do appreciate the good points whilst penalising the faults. **Try to be constructive with your comments** and remember that if you give a mark of 5 or less you must make a comment to justify your mark.
4. Both you and your writer **must** write in ink and ensure that any correction is very clear for the scorers and is initialled by you.

**Don't** tell the rider how to train his/her horse but state the facts as to what is good and what is lacking i.e. basic problems.

**Do** comment only on what you can see. If you cannot see clearly from your point of view don't guess what the horse might be doing, but comment on the points you can see i.e. straightness - rhythm. (When you are practise judging and being judge tested you will not be positioned at 'C').

**Don't** abbreviate your words, such as impulsion or transition. Your writer will do this for you.

**Do** make sure your end marks reflect those given during the test, for example if you give some 5's during the test because the horse wasn't going freely forward, this should be reflected when arriving at your end mark for 'impulsion'. Higher marks also need comments to guide the rider and explain why the mark is not 8 / 9 or 10.

**Do** underline the printed words to illustrate your points and relate the underlining to your comments.

**Do** ensure your end marks and remarks are shown against the appropriate item e.g. balance not seeking the bit, ease of movement. Unlevelness, and incorrect sequence against paces. Stiffness, quarters trailing and laziness against 'impulsion' etc. However, an overall sum up is often appropriate providing it covers the good points and basic problems. If you give a low mark for paces you must say which pace is at fault, you must also give a reason if the rider mark is low.

**Do** remark on good and impure paces in the collectives. They frequently warrant a separate remark. If the paces are true and correct they deserve a 6 and any lesser mark must be explained.

If time permits **Do** allow competitors to compete Hors Concours if problems have arisen - especially at the lower levels.

**Do** enjoy your judging and be sympathetic to riders.

**Do** try to write your comments so that competitors can read them and **Do** remember to ensure your name is printed on the sheets and that you sign them.

**After Judging -** Thank your steward and writer. Check the score board and if it looks wrong, enquire.

Be self-critical at the end of the day and be ready to admit to a failure of judgement. Most judges get one or two horses a bit wrong during a class. We are only human. Be aware of the days when you judge badly.

**Make sure you do not drive away with any score sheets, coffee mugs or your writers coat!**

It is a wise judge who checks that the scorers have all the sheets, especially at Horse Trials.

#### **4. Judge Testing Format:**

The office will arrange testing venues and dates according to the demand. We will offer you the most convenient venue available but as many factors are involved some travelling will be inevitable.

The office, with the agreement of the organiser, will appoint Examiners for the nominated class. The candidates will meet up with the examining judges half an hour before the class is due to start to introduce themselves and put the candidates at ease.

From the beginning of the class the Examining judges will Judge the class and maybe a roving examiner will sit in for couple of horses to check Judging, and the manner with the writer etc.

**Candidates will be assessed as a result of: -**

- Marks, Placings and Remarks
- Knowledge of the test, candidates' ability to keep up with marks and comments, knowledge of error procedure, knowledge of contravention of the rules, use of underlining, checking sheets and signatures, relationship with writer and suitability of manner i.e. confidence, sincerity, concentration, stamina and ability to stay calm and efficient under stressful conditions.

Candidates must bring their own writers who must not be a listed judge.

#### **Results:**

Your result will be sent from the Dressage Office as soon as possible after the testing day and a written report form will be sent to you as soon as possible. Some of your judging sheets may be returned to you if they are relevant. (Please note that you possibly may not receive any of your judging sheets back). Any comments written on your sheets are to promote thought and consideration as the purpose of the testing is to be constructive and educational. i.e. red ink does not automatically mean wrong!

In the event of a failure at any level, and before coming forward again, candidates must re-register for testing with the accompanying fee. They must wait for a minimum of **12 months** and attend further judge training. If the CV, Practise judging sheets and written paper were successful these do not need to be re-done, you must send a copy of the assessment form which you will have received from the assessor of your practise sheets and written paper.

Following 3 unsuccessful attempts to upgrade at any one level, judges may not put themselves forward again for 2 years after their last attempt.

If you need any further information please give me a ring on 02476 698831.

Good Luck and happy judging!

Judges Officer