

# Notes on Interpretation of Dressage Test Sheets

## 115. Turns and circles

A rider in movement along the outer track will continue along it on the same rein, without alteration of pace or manner of riding, until instructed to do otherwise. If required to leave this track and return to it (e.g. when circling), the rider will continue along the track in the same manner of going as he left it and on the same rein unless instructed to do otherwise. For a simple 'Turn right (or left)' the rider will change direction through 90° by riding a quarter of a small circle (as at a corner) beginning before reaching the marker and finishing on a line at right angles to the track and directly opposite the marker.

For 'Turn right (or left)' at any marker the rider will turn in a similar manner but will finish on the outer track. (N.B. – the horse must not begin by swinging out in the opposite direction and then cross the line of approach).

## 116. Change of pace at a given marker

The horse should make the first step in the new pace as the rider passes the marker. (When the transitions are progressive they must begin before reaching the marker). Where a movement requires medium or extended canter followed by a transition to collected trot, some collection should be shown just before the transition.

## 117. Simple change

Simple change of the leg at canter. This is a change of leg where the horse is brought back immediately into walk and, after approx. one horse's length, is restarted immediately into a canter with the other leg leading. The walk steps should be clearly shown. A simple change is always through the walk. If walk steps are not required the movement should be described as a 'change of leg/lead through the trot' and NOT as a simple change.

## 118. Give and retake the reins

The rider pushes forward **one or both hands as stated on the test sheet** to clearly release the contact and then retake it. The movement of the **hands/hand** should be continuous and achieved over two or three strides. As this is a test of self carriage the horse should stay in balance, keeping the same rhythm, level of engagement, suppleness of the back, and accept the restoration of contact without any loss of submission.

## 119. Leave the arena

After the final salute the rider should move off from the halt at a walk on a long rein and leave the arena at an appropriate place.

## 120. Work on a long rein

### a) Free walk on a long rein

Free walk on a long rein is a pace in which the horse is allowed complete freedom to lower and stretch out his head and neck while the rider maintains a light contact through the rein. The horse covers as much ground as possible, without haste and without losing the regularity of his steps, the hind feet touching the ground clearly in front of the foot prints of the forefeet.

### b) Trot/canter on a long rein

The horse is allowed the freedom to lower and stretch his head and neck forward and down while the rider maintains a light contact through the reins. The horse should continue to **trot/canter** in the same rhythm, with suppleness of the back and self carriage.



## 121. Large walk half pirouette

The principles are as in the walk pirouette but are performed with less collection. They are approached out of a medium walk although the rider can shorten the walk just before them. The hind legs are permitted to make a half circle of 1 metre in diameter and the horse returns to the track on a straight line without taking sideways steps.

## 122. Duration of judging

The judging begins when the rider enters at A and finishes when the rider moves off from the final salute.

## Definitions of Paces and Movements

For the most up to date FEI definitions see the FEI website and FEI Rule Book on [www.fei.org](http://www.fei.org)

## 123. Object and general principles

- a) The object of Dressage is the harmonious development of the physique and ability of the horse. As a result it makes the horse calm, supple, loose and flexible, but also confident, attentive and keen, thus achieving perfect understanding with his rider.
- b) These qualities are revealed by:
  - i) The freedom and regularity of the paces;
  - ii) The harmony, lightness and ease of the movements
  - iii) The lightness of the forehand and the engagement of the hind quarters originating in a lively impulsion.
  - iv) The acceptance of the bridle, with submissiveness throughout and without any tenseness or resistance.
- c) The horse thus gives the impression of doing of his own accord what is required of him. Confident and attentive he submits generously to the control of his rider, remaining absolutely straight in any movement on a straight line and bending accordingly when moving on curved lines.
- d) His walk is regular, free and unconstrained. His trot is free, supple, regular, sustained and active. His canter is united, light and cadenced. His quarters are never inactive or sluggish. He responds to the slightest indication of the rider and thereby gives life and spirit to all the rest of his body.
- e) By virtue of a lively impulsion and the suppleness of his joints, free from the paralysing effects of resistance, the horse obeys willingly and without hesitation and responds to the various aids calmly and with precision, displaying a natural and harmonious balance both physically and mentally.
- f) In all his work, even at the halt, the horse must be “on the bit”. A horse is said to be “on the bit” when the hocks are correctly placed and the neck is more or less raised and arched according to the stage of training and the extension or collection of the pace, and he accepts the bridle with a light and soft contact and submissiveness throughout. The head should remain in a steady position, as a rule slightly in front of the vertical, with a supple poll at the highest point of the neck, and no resistance should be offered to the rider.
- g) Cadence is shown in trot and is the result of the proper harmony that a horse shows when it moves with well marked regularity, impulsion and balance. Cadence must be maintained in all different trot exercises and in all the variations of trot. The rhythm that a horse maintains in all his paces is fundamental to Dressage.



## Notes on Interpretation of Dressage Test Sheets *(continued)*

### 124. The halt

- a) At the halt, the horse should stand attentive, engaged, motionless and straight, with the weight evenly distributed over all four legs, being by pairs abreast with each other. The neck should be raised, the poll high and the head slightly in front of the vertical. While remaining “on the bit” and maintaining a light and soft contact with the rider’s hand, the horse may quietly champ the bit and should be ready to move off at the slightest indication of the rider.
- b) The halt is obtained by the displacement of the horse’s weight to the quarters by a properly increased action of the seat and legs of the rider, driving the horse towards a more and more restraining but allowing hand, causing an almost instantaneous but not abrupt halt at a previously fixed place.

### 125. The walk

- a) The walk is a marching pace in which the footfalls of the horse’s feet follow one another in “four time”, well marked and maintained in all work at the walk.
- b) When the foreleg and the hindleg on the same side move almost on the same beat, the walk tends to become an almost lateral movement. This irregularity, which might become an ambling movement, is a serious deterioration of the pace.
- c) It is at the pace of walk that the imperfections of dressage are most evident. This is also the reason why a horse should not be asked to walk “on the bit” at the early stages of his training. A too precipitated collection will not only spoil the collected walk, but the medium and the extended walks as well.
- d) The following walks are recognised: Collected walk, Medium walk, Extended walk, and Free walk.
  - i) **Collected walk.** The horse remaining “on the bit” moves resolutely forward, with his neck raised and arched and showing a clear self carriage. The head approaches the vertical position, the light contact with the mouth being maintained. The hind legs are engaged with good hock action. The pace should remain marching and vigorous, the feet being placed in regular sequence. Each step covers less ground and is higher than at the medium walk, because all the joints bend more markedly. In order not to become hurried or irregular, the collected walk is shorter than the medium walk, although showing greater activity.
  - ii) **Medium walk.** A free, regular and unconstrained walk of moderate lengthening. The horse, remaining “on the bit”, walks energetically, but calmly, with even and determined steps, the hind feet touching the ground in front of the footprints of the fore-feet. The rider maintains a light, soft and steady contact with mouth.
  - iii) **Extended walk.** The horse covers as much ground as possible, without haste and without losing the regularity of his steps, the hind feet touching the ground clearly in front of the footprints of the fore-feet. The rider allows the horse to stretch out his head and neck without, however, losing contact with the mouth.
  - iv) **Free walk.** The free walk is a pace of relaxation in which the horse is allowed complete freedom to lower and stretch out his head and neck.



## 126. The trot

- a) The trot is a pace of “two time” on alternate diagonal legs (left fore and right hind leg and vice-versa) separated by a moment of suspension.
- b) The trot, always with free, active and regular steps, should be moved into without hesitation.
- c) The quality of the trot is judged by the general impression, the regularity and elasticity of the steps – originated from a supple back and well engaged hind quarters – and by the ability of maintaining the same rhythm and natural balance, even after a transition from one trot to another.
- d) The following trots are recognised: Collected trot, Working trot, Medium trot and Extended trot.
  - i) **Collected trot.** The horse, remaining “on the bit” moves forward with his neck raised and arched. The hocks, being well engaged, maintain an energetic impulsion, thus enabling the shoulders to move with greater ease in any direction. The horse’s steps are shorter than in the other trots, but he is lighter and more mobile.
  - ii) **Working trot.** This is a pace between the collected and the medium trot, in which a horse, not yet trained and ready for collected movements, shows himself properly balanced and remaining “on the bit”, goes forward with even, elastic steps and good hock action. The expression “good hock action” does not mean that collection is a required quality of working trot, it only underlines the importance of an impulsion originated from the activity of the hind quarters.
  - iii) **Medium trot.** This is a pace between the working and the extended trot, but more “round” than the latter. The horse goes forward with clear and moderately lengthened steps and with obvious impulsion from the hind quarters, always keeping the same character as in the working trot. The rider allows the horse, remaining “on the bit”, to carry his head a little more in front of the vertical than at the collected and the working trot, and allows him at the same time to lower his head and neck slightly. The steps should be even, and the whole movement balanced and unconstrained.
  - iv) **Extended trot.** The horse covers as much ground as possible. Maintaining the same cadence, he lengthens his steps to the utmost as a result of great impulsion from the hind quarters. The rider allows the horse, remaining “on the bit”, without leaning on it, to lengthen his frame and gain ground. The fore feet should touch the ground on the spot towards where they are pointing. The movement of the fore and hind legs should be similar (parallel) in the forward moment of the extension. The whole movement should be well balanced and the transition to collected trot should be smoothly executed by taking more weight on the hind quarters. All trot work must be executed sitting, unless otherwise indicated on the test concerned.

## 127. The canter

- a) The canter is a pace of three time, where at canter to the right, for instance, the footfalls follow one another as follows: left hind, left diagonal (simultaneously left fore and right hind), right fore, followed by a moment of suspension with all four feet in the air before the next stride begins.
- b) The canter, always with light, cadenced and regular strides should be moved into without hesitation.
- c) The quality of the canter is judged by the general impression, the regularity and lightness of the three time pace – originating from the acceptance of the bridle with a supple poll and in the engagement of the hind quarters with an active hock action – and by the ability of maintaining the same rhythm and a natural balance, even after a transition from one canter to another. The horse should remain straight on straight lines.



## Notes on Interpretation of Dressage Test Sheets *(continued)*

- d) The following canters are recognised: Collected canter, Working canter, Medium canter and Extended canter.
- i) **Collected canter.** The horse, remaining “on the bit” moves forward with his neck raised and arched. The collected canter is marked by the lightness of the forehand and the engagement of the hind quarters: i.e. is characterised by supple, free and mobile shoulders and very active quarters. The horse’s strides are shorter than at the other canters, but he is lighter and more mobile.
  - ii) **Working canter.** This is a pace between the collected and the medium canter, in which a horse not yet trained and ready for collected movements, shows himself properly balanced, and, remaining “on the bit”, goes forward with even light cadenced strides and good hock action. The expression “good hock action” does not mean that collection is a required quality of working canter. It only underlines the importance of an impulsion originated from the activity of the hind quarters.
  - iii) **Medium canter.** This is a pace between the working and the extended canter. The horse goes forward with free, balanced and moderately extended strides and an obvious impulsion from the hind quarters. The rider allows the horse, remaining “on the bit”, to carry his head a little more in front of the vertical than at the collected and working canter, and allows him at the same time to lower his head and neck slightly. The strides should be long and as even as possible, and the whole movement balanced and unconstrained.
  - iv) **Extended canter.** The horse covers as much ground as possible. Maintaining the same rhythm, he lengthens his strides to the utmost, without losing any of his calmness and lightness, as a result of great impulsion from the hind quarters. The rider allows the horse, remaining “on the bit” without leaning on it, to lower and extend his head and neck, the tip of his nose pointing more or less forward.
- v) The cadence in the transitions from medium canter as well as from extended canter to collected should be maintained.
- e) **Counter-canter.** This is a movement where the rider, for instance on a circle to the left, deliberately makes his horse canter with the right canter lead (with the right fore leading). The counter-canter is a balancing movement. The horse maintains his natural flexion at the poll to the outside of the circle, and the horse is positioned to the side of the leading leg. His conformation does not permit his spine to be bent to the line of the circle. The rider, avoiding any contortion causing contraction and disorder, should especially endeavour to limit the deviation of the quarters to the outside of the circle, and restrict his demands according to the degree of suppleness of the horse.
- f) **Simple change of the leg at canter.** This is a change of leg where the horse is brought back immediately into walk and, after approx. one horses length, is restarted immediately into a canter with the other leg leading. See Rule 117.
- g) **Flying change of leg or change of leg in the air.** This change of leg is executed in close connection with the suspension which follows each stride of the canter. Flying changes of leg can also be executed in series, for instance at every 4th, 3rd, 2nd or at every stride. The horse, even in the series, remaining light, calm and straight with lively impulsion, maintaining the same rhythm and balance throughout the series concerned. In order not to restrict or restrain the lightness and fluency of the flying changes of leg in series, the degree of collection should be slightly less than otherwise at collected canter.



### 128. The rein back

- a) The rein back is an equilateral, retrograde movement in which the feet are raised and set down by diagonal pairs. The feet should be well raised and the hind feet remain well in line.
- b) At the preceding halt as well as during the rein back the horse, although standing motionless and moving backwards respectively, should remain “on the bit”, maintaining his desire to move forward.
- c) Anticipation or precipitation of the movement, resistance to or evasion of the hand, deviation of the quarters from the straight line spreading or inactive hind legs and dragging fore feet are serious faults.
- d) If in a dressage test a trot or canter is required after a rein back, the horse should move off immediately into this pace, without a halt or an intermediate step.

### 129. The transitions

- a) The changes of pace and speed should be clearly shown at the prescribed marker; they should be quickly made, yet must be smooth and not abrupt. The cadence of a pace should be maintained up to the moment when the pace is changed or the horse halts. The horse should remain light in hand, calm and maintain a correct position.
- b) The same applies to transitions from one movement to another, for instance from the passage to the piaffe and vice-versa.
- c) The primary requirement is that transitions are fluent. The higher the level of the test the greater the emphasis is on them being direct. Therefore progressive transitions at the lower levels can still earn high marks but from Elementary upwards the highest marks would be reserved for the fluent direct transitions.

### 130. The half halt

The half-halt is hardly visible, almost simultaneous, co-ordinated action of the seat, the legs and the hand of the rider, with the object of increasing the attention and balance of the horse before the execution of several movements or transitions to lower and higher paces. In shifting slightly more weight onto the horse's quarters, the engagement of the hind legs and the balance on the haunches are facilitated, for the benefit of the lightness of the forehand and the horse's balance as a whole.

### 131. The changes of direction

- a) At changes of direction, the horse should adjust the bend of his body to the curvature of the line he follows, remaining supple and following the indications of the rider, without any resistance or change of pace, rhythm or speed.
- b) When changing direction at right angles, for instance when riding corners, the horse should describe one quarter of a circle of approximately 6 metres diameter at collected and working paces.
- c) When changing direction in form of counter-change of hand, the rider changes direction by moving obliquely either to the quarter line or the centre line or to the opposite long side of the arena, whence he returns on an oblique line to the line he was following when he started the movement.
- d) At the counter-change of hand the rider should make his horse straight an instant before changing direction.
- e) When, for instance, at counter-change of hand at half-pass to either side of the centre line, the number of metres or strides to either side is prescribed in the test, it must be strictly observed and the movement be executed symmetrically.

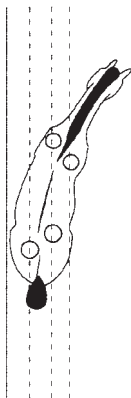


## Notes on Interpretation of Dressage Test Sheets *(continued)*

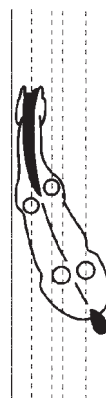
### 132. The figures

- The Volte** is a circle of 6, 8 or 10 metres diameter, if larger than 10 metres, one uses the term Circle, stating the diameter.
- Serpentine.** The Serpentine consists of half circles connected by a straight line. When crossing the centre line the horse should be parallel to the short side. Depending on the size of the half-circles the straight connection varies in length.
- Figures of eight.** This figure consists of two exact voltes or circles of equal size as prescribed in the test, joined at the centre of the eight. The rider should make his horse straight an instant before changing direction at the centre of the figure.

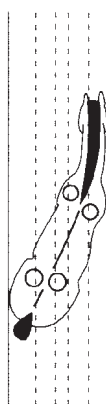
#### 1) Shoulder in



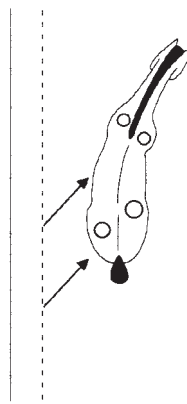
#### 2) Travers



#### 3) Renvers

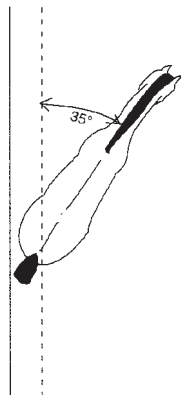


#### 4) Half-Pass

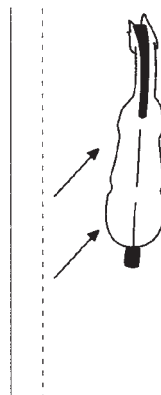




### 5) Leg yielding along the wall



### 6) Leg yielding on the diagonal



## 133. Work on two tracks

- a) A distinction must be made between the following movements: Leg yielding, Shoulder-in, Travers, Renvers and Half pass.
- b) The aim of movements on two tracks is:
  - i) To improve the obedience of the horse to the co-operative aids of the rider;
  - ii) To supple all parts of the horse, thereby increasing the freedom of his shoulders and the suppleness of his quarters, as well as the elasticity of the bond connecting the mouth, the poll, the neck, the back and the haunches;
  - iii) To improve the cadence and bring the balance and pace into harmony.
- c) Leg-yielding. The horse is almost straight, except for a slight flexion at the poll away from the direction in which he moves, so that the rider is just able to see the eyebrow and nostril on the inside. The inside legs pass and cross in front of the outside legs.

Leg-yielding should be included in the training of the horse before he is ready for collected work. Later on, together with the more advanced movement shoulder-in, it is the best means of making a horse supple, loose and unconstrained, for the benefit of the freedom, elasticity and regularity of his paces and the harmony, lightness and ease of his movements.

- i) Leg-yielding can be performed "on the diagonal", in which case the horse should be as near as possible parallel to the long sides of the arena, although the forehand should be slightly in advance of the quarters. It can also be performed "along the wall", in which case the horse should be at an angle of about 35 degrees to the direction in which he is moving. (See Page 61), Figure 5)



### 134. The lateral movements

- a) The additional aim of lateral movements is to develop and increase the engagement of the quarters and thereby also the collection.
- b) In all lateral movements – shoulder-in, travers, renvers, half-pass – the horse is slightly bent and moves with the forehand and the quarters on two different tracks. (See page 61)
- c) The bend or flexion must never be exaggerated so that it impairs the balance and fluency of the movement concerned.
- d) In the lateral movements the pace should remain free and regular, maintained by a constant impulsion, yet it must be supple, cadenced and balanced. The impulsion is often lost, because of the rider's preoccupation mainly in bending the horse and pushing him sideways.
- e) At all lateral movements the side to which the horse should be bent is described as the inside. The opposite side is the outside.
- f) **Shoulder-in.** The horse is slightly bent round the inside leg of the rider. The horse's inside foreleg passes and crosses in front of the outside leg; the inside hind leg is placed in front of the outside leg. The horse is looking away from the direction in which he is moving.

Shoulder-in, if performed in the right way, with the horse slightly bent round the inside leg of the rider, and at the correct tracking, is not only a suppling movement but also a collecting movement, because the horse at every step must move his inside hind leg underneath his body and place it in front of the outside, with lowering his inside hip. (See Figure 1)

- g) **Travers.** The horse is slightly bent round the inside leg of the rider. The horse's outside legs pass and cross in front of the inside legs. The horse is looking in the direction in which he is moving. (See Figure 2).
- h) **Renvers.** This is the inverse movement in relation to travers, with the tail instead of the head to the wall. Otherwise the same principles and conditions are applicable as at the travers. (See Figure 3)
- i) **Half-pass.** This is a variation of travers, executed "on the diagonal" instead of "along the wall". The horse should be slightly bent round the inside leg of the rider in order to give more freedom and mobility to the shoulders, thus adding ease and grace to the movement, although the forehand should be slightly in advance of the quarters. The outside legs pass and cross in front of the inside legs. The horse is looking in the direction of which he is moving. He should maintain the same cadence and balance throughout the whole movement.

In order to give more freedom and mobility to the shoulders, which adds to the ease and grace of the movement, it is of great importance, not only that the horse is correctly bent and thereby prevented from protruding his inside shoulder, but also to maintain the impulsion, especially the engagement of the inside hind leg. (See Figure 4).



### 135. The pirouette and the half-pirouette

- a) The pirouette (half-pirouette) is a circle (half-circle) executed on two tracks, with a radius equal to the length of the horse, the forehand moving round the haunches.
- b) Pirouettes (half-pirouettes) are usually carried out at collected walk or canter, but can also be executed at piaffe.
- c) At the pirouette (half-pirouette) the fore-feet and the outside hind foot move round the inside hind foot, which forms the pivot and should return to the same spot or slightly in front of it, each time it leaves the ground.
- d) At whatever pace the pirouette (half-pirouette) is executed, the horse, slightly bent to the direction in which he is turning, should, remain “on the bit” with a light contact, turn smoothly round, maintaining the exact cadence and sequence of footfalls of that pace. The poll stays the highest point during the entire movement.
- e) During the pirouettes (half-pirouettes) the horse should maintain his impulsion, and never in the slightest way move backwards or deviate sideways. If the inside hind foot is not raised and returned to the ground in the same rhythm as the outside hind foot, the pace is no longer regular.
- f) In executing the pirouette or the half pirouette in canter, the rider should maintain perfect lightness of the horse while accentuating the collection. The quarters are well engaged and lowered and show a good flexion of the joints.
- g) An integral part of the movement is the canter strides before and after the pirouette. These should be characterised by an increased activity and collection before the pirouette; and, the movement having been completed, by the balance being maintained as the horse proceeds.
- h) The quality of the pirouettes (half-pirouettes) is judged according to the suppleness, lightness, cadence and regularity, and to the precision and smoothness of the transitions; pirouettes (half-pirouettes) at canter also are judged according to the balance, the elevation and the number of strides (at pirouettes 6-8, at half-pirouettes 3-4 are desirable).

### 136. The passage

- a) This is a measured, very collected, very elevated and very cadenced trot. It is characterised by a pronounced engagement of the quarters, a more accentuated flexion of the knees and hocks, and the graceful elasticity of the movement. Each diagonal pair of feet is raised and returned to the ground alternately, with cadence and a prolonged suspension.
- b) In principle, the height of the toe of the raised foreleg should be level with the middle of the cannon bone of the other foreleg. The toe of the raised hind leg should be slightly above the fetlock joint of the other hind leg.
- c) The neck should be raised and gracefully arched with the poll as the highest point and the head close to the vertical. The horse should remain light and soft “on the bit” and be able to go smoothly from the passage to the piaffe and vice-versa, without apparent effort and without altering the cadence, the impulsion being always lively and pronounced.
- d) Irregular steps with the hind legs, swinging the forehand or the quarters from one side to the other as jerky movements of the forelegs or the hind legs or dragging the hind legs are serious faults.



## Notes on Interpretation of Dressage Test Sheets *(continued)*

### 137. The piaffe

- a) The piaffe is a highly collected, cadenced, elevated diagonal movement giving the impression of being on the spot. The horse's back is supple and elastic. The quarters are slightly lowered, the haunches with active hocks are well engaged, giving great freedom, lightness and mobility to the shoulders and forehand. Each diagonal pair of feet is raised and returned to the ground alternately, with an even cadence.
- b) In principle, the height of the toe of the raised foreleg should be level with the middle of the cannon bone of the other foreleg. The toe of the raised hind leg should reach just above the fetlock joint of the other hind leg.
- c) The neck should be raised and arched, the head vertical. The horse should remain light "on the bit" with a supple poll, maintaining a light soft contact on a taut rein. The body of the horse should move up and down in a supple, cadenced and harmonious movement.
- d) The piaffe must always be animated by a lively impulsion and characterised by a perfect balance. While giving the impression of being in place there may be a visible inclination to advance, this being displayed by the horse's eager acceptance to move forward as soon as he is asked.
- e) Moving even slightly backwards, irregular steps with the hind legs, crossing either the fore- or hind legs, or swinging either the forehand or the quarters from one side to the other are serious faults.  
  
A movement with hurried and unlevel or irregular steps without cadence or spring cannot be called a true piaffe.

### 138. The collection

- a) The aim of the collection of the horse is:
  - i) To further develop and increase the balance and equilibrium of the horse, which has been more or less displaced by the additional weight of the rider.
  - ii) To develop and increase the horse's ability to lower and engage his quarters for the benefit of the lightness and mobility of his forehand.
  - iii) To add to the "ease and carriage" of the horse and to make him more pleasurable to ride.
- b) The best means to obtain these aims are the lateral movements, travers, renvers and, last but not least, shoulder-in as well as half-halts.
- c) Collection is, in other words, improved and effected by engaging the hind legs, with the joints bent and supple, forward under the horse's body by temporary but often repeated action of the seat and legs of the rider, driving the horse forward towards a more or less stationary or restraining hand, allowing just enough impulsion to pass through. Collection is consequently not achieved by shortening of the pace through a resisting action of the hand, but instead by using the seat and legs to engage the hind legs further under the horse's body.
- d) However, the hind legs should not be engaged too far forward under the horse, as this would shorten the base of support too much, and thereby impede the movement. In such a case, the line of the back would be lengthened and raised in relation of the supporting base of the legs, the stability would be impaired and the horse would have difficulty in finding an harmonious and correct balance.
- e) On the other hand, a horse with a too long base of support, unable or unwilling to engage his hind legs forward under his body, will never achieve an acceptable collection, originated in the activity of the quarters.
- f) The position of the head and neck of a horse at the collected paces is naturally dependent on the stage of training and, in some degree, on his conformation. It should, however, be distinguished by

the neck being raised unrestrained, forming an harmonious curve from the withers to the poll, being the highest point, with the head slightly in front of the vertical. However, at the moment the rider applies his aids in order to obtain a momentary and passing collecting effect, the head may become more or less vertical.

### 139. The submission/the impulsion

- a) Submission does not mean a subordination, but an obedience revealing its presence by a constant attention, willingness and confidence in the whole behaviour of the horse as well as by the harmony, lightness and ease he is displaying in the execution of the different movements. The degree of submission is also manifested by the way the horse accepts the bridle; with a light and soft contact and supple poll, without resistance to or evasion of the rider's hand; not being either "above the bit" or "behind the bit" respectively.
- b) Putting out the tongue, keeping it above the bit or drawing it up altogether, as well as grinding the teeth and swishing the tail are mostly signs of nervousness, tenseness or resistance on the part of the horse and must be taken into account by the judges in their marks for the movement concerned as well as in the collective mark for "submission".
- c) Impulsion is the term used to describe the transmission of an eager and energetic, yet controlled, propulsive energy generated from the hind quarters into the athletic movement of the horse. It's ultimate expression can be shown only through the horse's soft and swinging back to be guided by a gentle contact with the rider's hand.
- d) Speed, of itself, has little to do with impulsion: the result is more often a flattening of the paces. A visible characteristic is a more pronounced articulation of the hind leg, in a continuous rather than staccato action. The hock, as the hind foot leaves the ground, should first move forward rather than being pulled upwards, but certainly not backwards. A prime ingredient of impulsion is the time the horse spends in the air rather than on the ground: in other words, an added expression within the paces, always provided that there is a clear distinction between the collected trot and the Passage. Impulsion is, therefore, seen only in those paces that have a period of suspension.

### 140. The position and aids of the rider

- a) All the movements should be obtained without apparent effort of the rider. He should be well balanced, with his loins and hips supple, thighs and legs steady and well stretched downwards. The upper part of the body easy, free and erect, with the hands low and close together without, however, touching either each other or the horse and with the thumb as the highest point, the elbows and arms close to the body enabling the rider to follow the movements of the horse smoothly and freely and to apply his aids imperceptibly. This is the only position making it possible for the rider to school his horse progressively and correctly.
- b) Not only the aids of the hand and the legs but also of the seat are of great importance in dressage. Only the rider who understands how to contract and relax his loin muscles at the right moment is able to influence his horse correctly.
- c) Riding with both hands is obligatory at all International Dressage Events, not only when executing any of the Official Dressage Tests published by the F.E.I. but also when executing any national test that might be inserted in the programme of the same event. However, when leaving the arena at a walk on a long rein, after having finished his performance, the rider may, at his own discretion, ride with only one hand. Riding with reins in one hand is however permitted in the Freestyle Tests.
- d) The use of the voice in any way whatsoever, or clicking the tongue once or repeatedly, is a serious fault, involving the deduction of at least two marks from those that would otherwise have been awarded for the movement where this occurred.