

Open International Sport Judges Seminar 2009 at Vindhólar (Stapelfeld, D)

The participants of the Open International Sport Judges Seminar at Vindhólar in Stapelfeld (D) can look back at a very successful weekend. The location was very good and Einar Hermansson and Maren Junge and their staff had made every effort possible to create a nice atmosphere and to find sufficient riders for both the seminar on Friday and Saturday and the exam on Sunday. The seminar was lead by Ása Eriksson, Einar Ragnarsson, Eva Petersen, Þorgeir Gudlaugsson and Uschi Heller.

The first part of the seminar had a training purpose. Apart from lectures about Judging the quality of riding, Core issues on judging tölt and Mental aspects of judging the practical work focused on judging basic gaits (walk, trot, canter), 'Loose rein' in T2 and pace in F1, when needed introduced with video material.

As it was a seminar, the participants were required to focus fully on the demands, like what is a proper walk, a proper trot and a proper canter.

When it came to the 'Loose rein' section in T2, it was clear that a rein slightly looser than normal is not the same as a real loose rein, without any contact to the horse's mouth. The requirement of having no rein contact means that the weight of the rein shouldn't help the rider. This means the rein should go from the bit straight to the ground (90 degrees) first and then through a loop to the hands of the rider, and not directly more or less slightly in the direction of the rider. Especially with bits with cheeks and/or a chain the rein (and the chain) still work when the rein is not totally hanging in a loop. This led to the discussion among the participants if a bit with cheeks and/or a chain is a proper bit for this test and if we should allow reins with add ons (metal parts). The question will be forwarded to the FEIF Sport Committee.

The renewed guidelines for judging pace in F1 were introduced to the participants. The area where the transition from canter into pace has to take place has been enlarged, to ensure that a horse can make the transition into pace while being straight and at a suitable moment. The same goes for the transition from pace into canter afterwards. The participants also got explanations about the minimum requirements to get any mark for pace (both in length of the pace shown and the quality of the pace) and how to combine the scores for two or three long sides into one mark and to deduct for bad riding style. This was exercised as well.

Afterwards the participants, when needed with a look at the video that was taken, discussed the marks given. They were rather close in their judgments. For some riders the final marks that came out were disappointing, as they got higher marks at previous events. But they have to keep in mind that there was a strict focus on the requirements in specific elements of tests, and that they were judged one by one.

Most participants took part the next day in the test to become a national sport judge (with participants from the Netherlands and Norway) or FEIF International Sport Judge (with participants from Austria, Germany, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland). Happily enough there were sufficient riders in all tests to get proper results for the test: 8 to 10 in every test.

The candidates took their test very serious. 9 candidates (out of 15) did pass the test to become an International Sport Judge. FEIF congratulates Andreas Windsio (D), Birgit Quasnitshka (D), Caro Klein (D), Hendrik Gepp (D), Jean-Paul Balz (CH), Kristinn Bjarni Þorvaldsson (IS), Lutz Lesener (D), Mark Tillmann (D) and Susanne Brengelmann (D).

One judge did pass the test for national judges: Hanne Hestevik (NO).

A great thank you goes to Einar Hermansson and Maren Junge and their very friendly and competent staff at Vindhólar, to Ása Eriksson, Einar Ragnarsson, Eva Petersen, Þorgeir Gudlaugsson and Uschi Heller for preparing, lecturing and examining and of course to the riders and their horses who were willing to present themselves for such a critical group of judges.

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