



Austin Dressage Unlimited's 4th Annual presents



Improving Your Judging Eye & Showing Skills

with

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“The Practical Application of the Training Pyramid to Judging and Showing“



Part 1



The Training Pyramid



The Training Pyramid



Basics

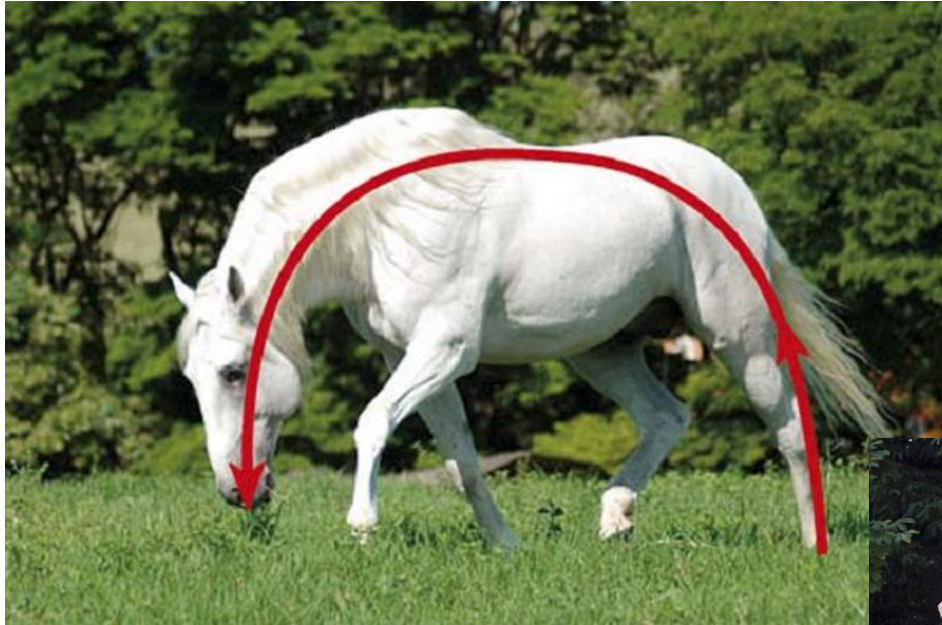
- Handling the horse
- Correct training
- Harmony between horse and rider
- The well-schooled horse is the best teacher
- Variety in training (disciplines, exercises, movements)
- Maintenance of the horse's health and soundness



The Training Pyramid



Balance – the prerequisite for all training

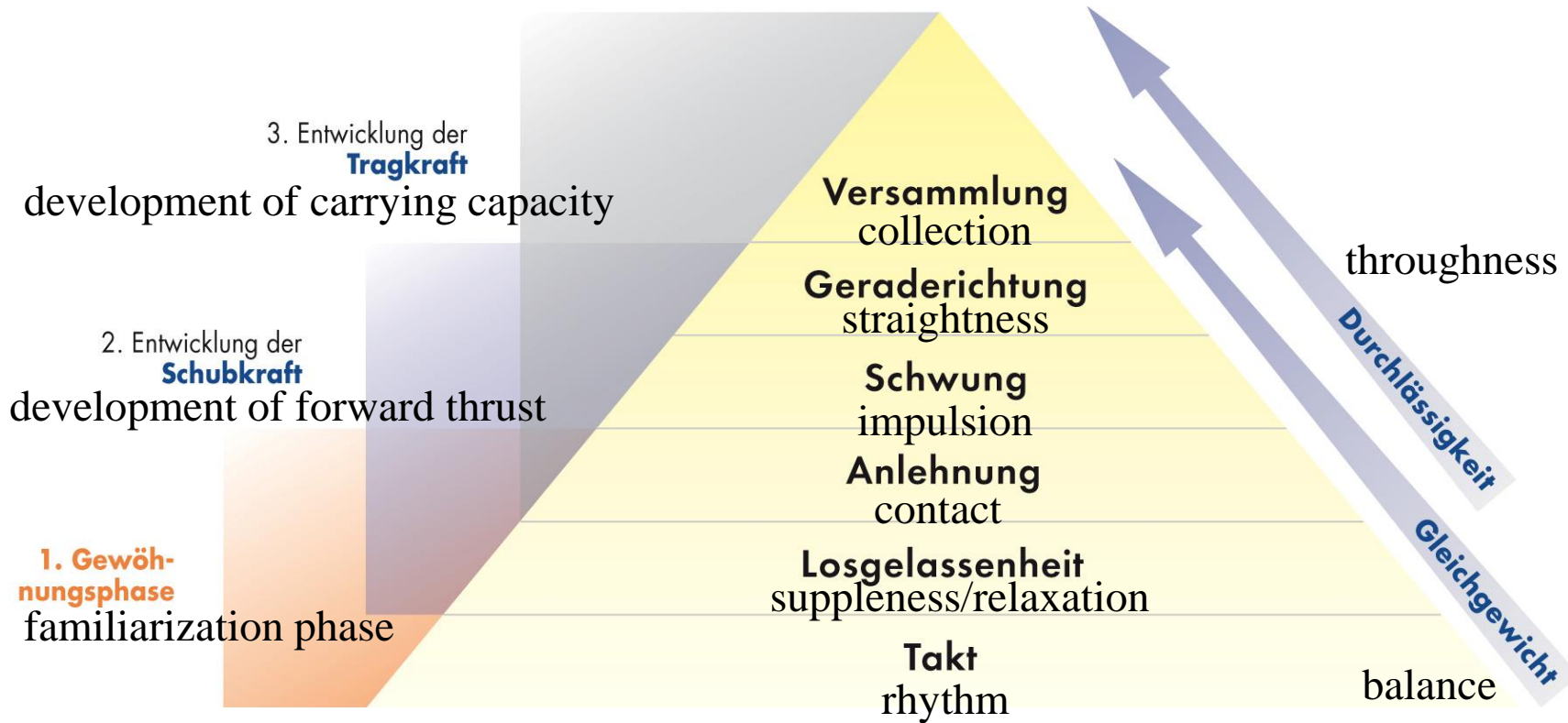




The Training Pyramid



Ausbildungssystem des Pferdes | „Skala der Ausbildung“





The Training Pyramid



Rhythm

Rhythm is the regularity of the beat in all gaits and paces.

Regularity is the correct sequence of the footfall.

Tempo is the speed of the rhythm.

A loss of rhythm is often a sign of incorrect training. Regularity must be maintained not only on straight lines, but in all bends and transitions. No exercise or movement is valuable if regularity is sacrificed.

**The judge must know how the horse moves
in the basic gaits and paces.**



The Training Pyramid



Rhythm – the walk

The walk is a four-beat gait.

The following walks are recognized:

medium walk, collected walk, extended walk and free walk.

The horse should show clear differences in its attitude and overtrack in the different forms of the walk.

The quality of the walk is judged on:

- **regularity of rhythm**
- **activity**
- **ground cover (variety of the length of steps in the different walks)**



The Training Pyramid



Rhythm – the trot

The trot is a two-beat pace with a lateral-diagonal movement of the legs and a moment of suspension. The trot should show free, active and regular steps.

The following forms of trot are recognized:

working trot, lengthening of steps, collected trot, medium trot and extended trot.

The quality of the trot is judged on:

- **regularity**
- **elasticity of the steps**
- **cadence**
- **impulsion**



The Training Pyramid



Rhythm – the canter

The canter is a three-beat gait followed by a moment of suspension.

The following canters are recognized: working canter, lengthening of strides, collected canter, medium canter and extended canter.

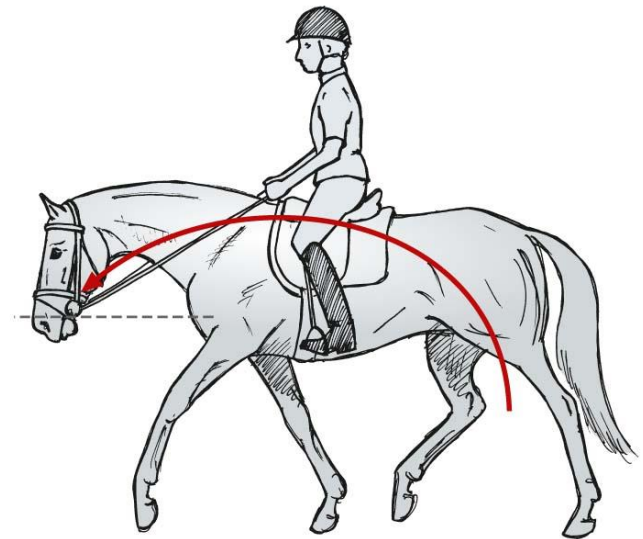
The quality of the canter is judged on:

- **general impression**
- **regularity and lightness**
- **acceptance of the bit with a suppled poll**
- **forward movement → engagement of the hindquarters**
- **uphill tendency**
- **ground-cover in extensions**
- **straightness**
- **uphill tendency**

Suppleness/Relaxation

Outer and inner signs of suppleness

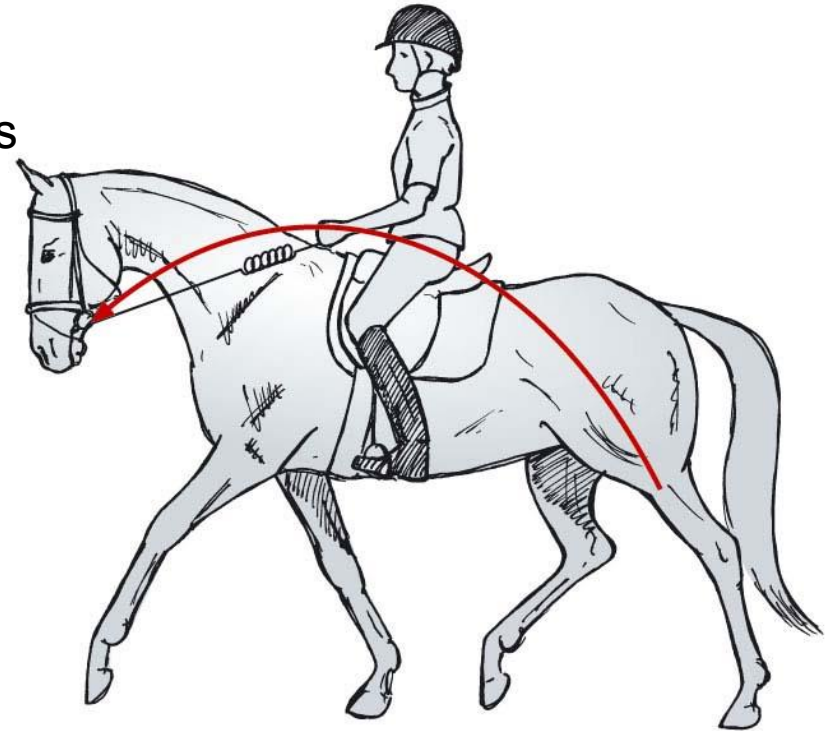
- a content, happy expression
(eyes, ear movements →
"the whole picture")
- a rhythmically swinging back
- a closed but not immobile mouth
(the horse should gently chew on the bit)
- slightly lifted ('carried') tail, swinging
in sync with the movement
- snorting, a sign that the horse is
mentally relaxed



The Training Pyramid

Contact – signs and criteria

- the horse is framed by the rider's aids
- the nose is in front of the vertical
- the poll is the highest point
- self-carriage is established
- the horse steps forward to the bit
- the horse accepts an elastic contact
- the horse uses and swings through its whole body
- in medium and extended tempi there should be a visible lengthening of the frame



Contact – signs and criteria

The elastic, trusting connection between the horse's mouth and the rider's hands is the warranty that the rider feels the horse's dynamics from the hindquarters over the swinging back in his own hands. Driving aids are more important here than restraining aids.



The judge should have the feeling that the rider could at any time

1. hold the reins in one hand
2. give and re-take the rein
3. give the reins and allow the neck to stretch

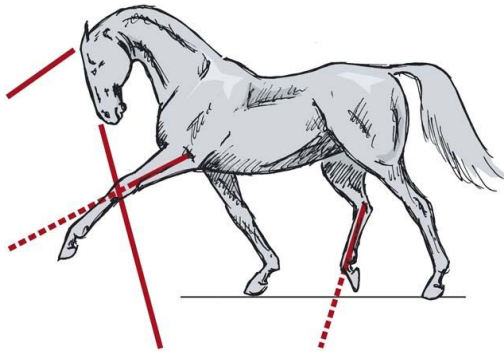
The Training Pyramid

Contact – “On the bit”



The Training Pyramid

Contact – common mistakes



false bend



leaning on the bit



behind the vertical



above the bit



The Training Pyramid



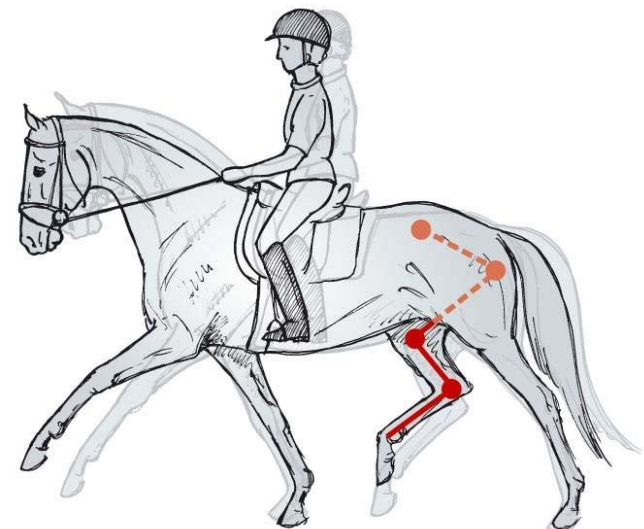
Contact – „to give and re-take the reins“ to test self-carriage



Impulsion

How is impulsion developed?

- „Ride your horse forward and straighten it“.
(Quote Gustav Steinbrecht)
- through repeated, quiet driving aids without allowing the horse to rush forward
- through changes of tempo in the trot and canter
- to make it possible for the horse to step underneath himself (“tracking up and over”) and to avoid constraining the movement of the hind-legs, the rider’s hand must remain elastic and soft





The Training Pyramid



Impulsion

Prerequisites for impulsive movement:

- the rider's suppled, balanced and independent seat
- the first three criteria of the training scale must be achieved and maintained (rhythm, suppleness, contact)
- reliable straightness in the horse
- the horse's acceptance of the driving aids.

The impulsion is of a good quality if the hocks are carried forward and upward after the horse's feet have left the ground. Impulsion is a question of training. The rider uses the horse's natural pace and adds suppleness and forward to it.



The Training Pyramid

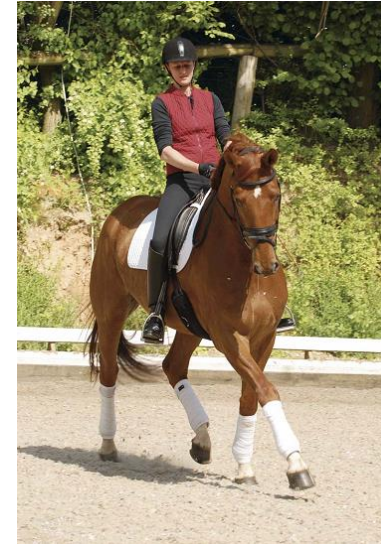
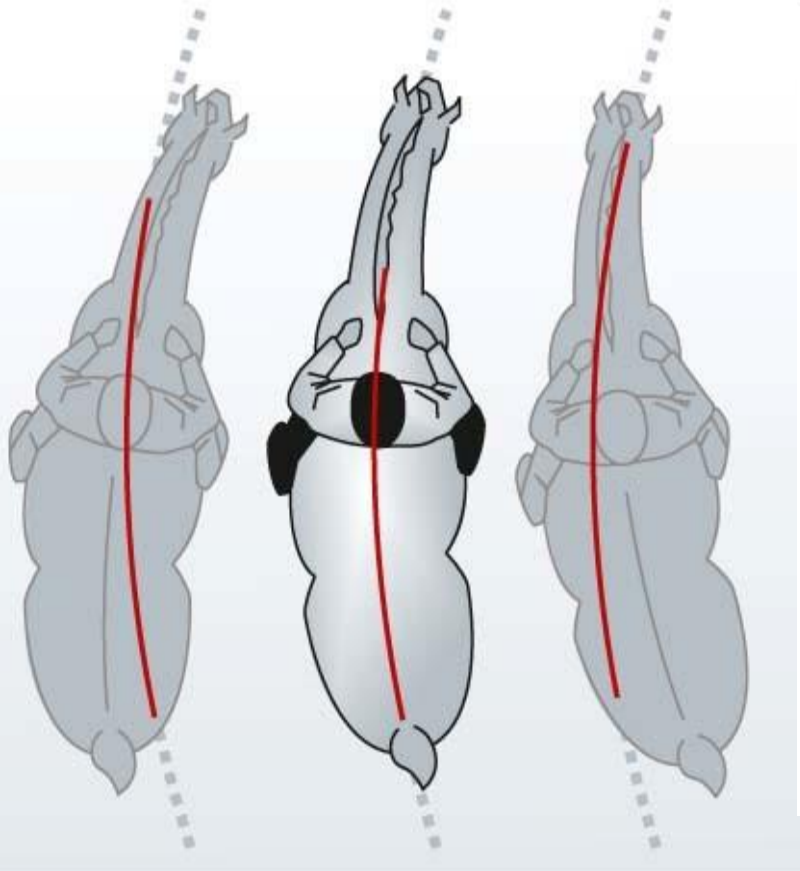


Impulsion – common mistakes in the development of impulsion

- irregularity (by asking to much)
- “circus trot” or tense passage-like steps (caused by a tense back)
- mistakes in contact
- rushing and running
- falling on the forehand
- extensions without lengthening the frame
- stepping wide with the hind legs
- etc.

The Training Pyramid

Straightness



Straightness

The development of impulsion and straightness is important to prepare the horse for collection. The horse is straight when its forehand is in line with its hindquarters (“tracking true”).

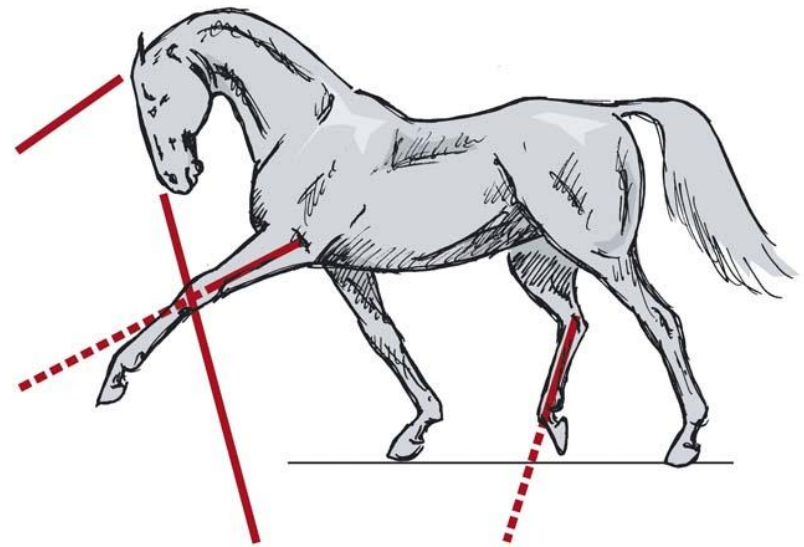
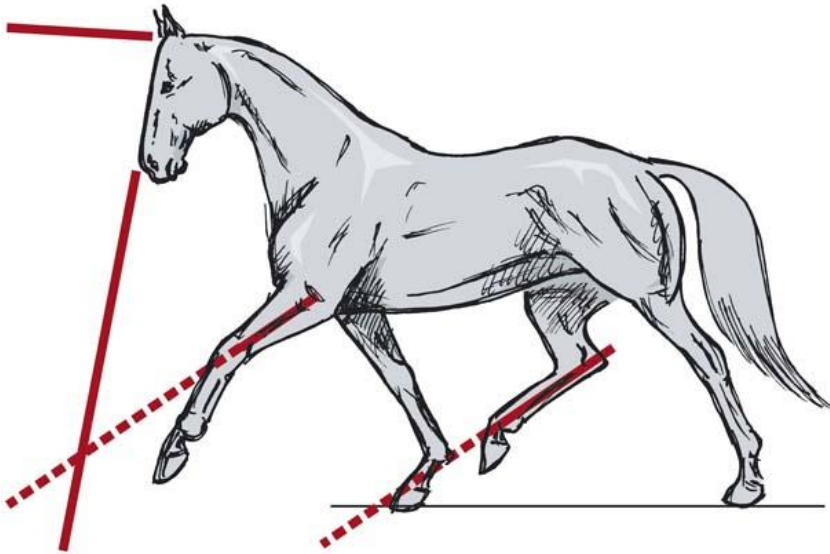
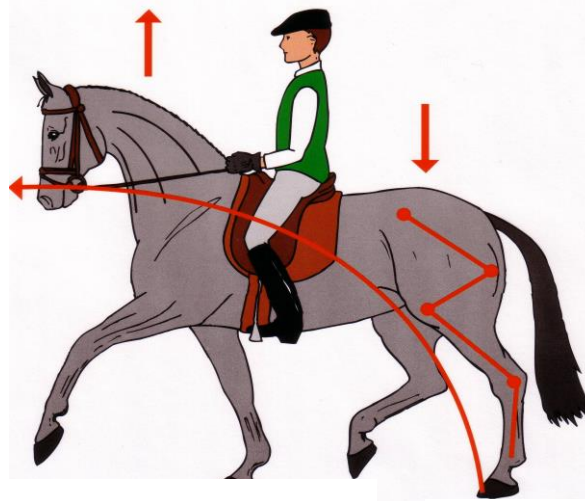
Straightness can be achieved through:

- frequent riding on large bending lines in working gait
- frequent change of rein and transitions,
- correct driving aids into a soft contact
- serpentines and leg yielding
- counter canter



The Training Pyramid

The interaction of impulsion and collection

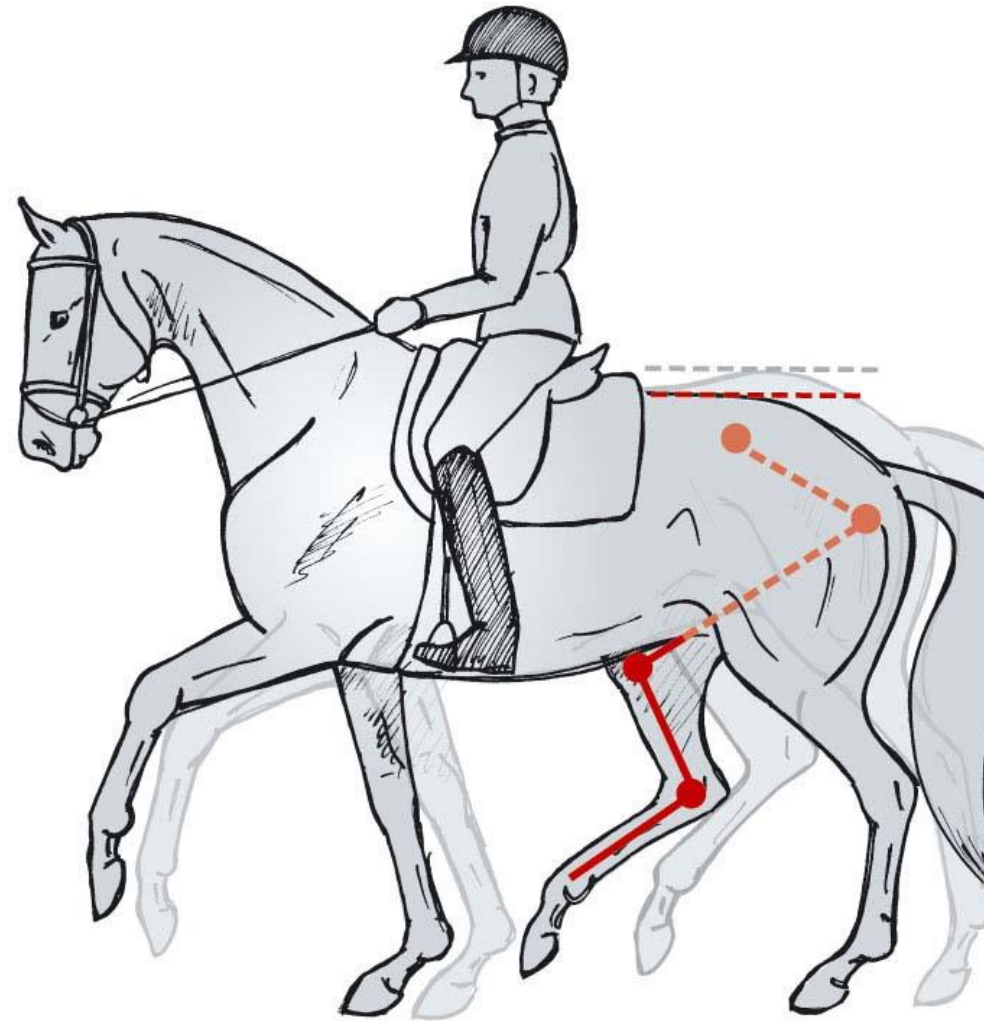


The Training Pyramid

Collection and cadence

The aims of collection are:

- to further develop and improve the balance and stability of the horse
- to develop and increase the horse's ability to lower and engage its hindquarters
- to make the horse more pleasureable to ride → the rider is drawn deeper into the saddle and therefore he is able to swing better with the horse



Collection

Some primary collecting exercises:

- changes of tempo in trot and canter
- trot – halt – trot transitions
- rein back
- frequent canter - walk transitions
- decreasing and increasing the circle in canter
- eight meter circles



Collection

Advanced collecting exercises

- counter canter
- simple changes
- turn-on-the-haunches
- turn-on-the-haunches (halting before and after)
- lateral movements, flying changes, pirouettes etc.



The Training Pyramid

Collection – signs and criteria

- harmony between horse and rider, barely visible aids
- elegance and cadence in the horse
- elevated, cadenced, impressive movement
- lowering of the haunches with a corresponding elevation of the forehead
- self-carriage, light contact
- carrying power, elasticity and springiness





Practice exercise



JUDGING

exemplary tests



Part 2



Riding and judging a dressage test



Requirements for riding a dressage test



- general requirements for every dressage test
 - suppleness, submissiveness and collection of the horse
 - correct seat and aids of the rider
 - movements have to be carried out correctly



Requirements for riding a dressage test



The Horse

1. absolute regularity of and activity in the movements
2. calmness in the horse's neck and head with a soft and steady contact
3. connection to the bit with the horse going forward into its bridle, bringing its nose close to the vertical



Requirements for riding a dressage test



The Rider

4. a supple and balanced seat, free of tension, with the weight on both seat bones and a relaxed middle-posture
5. a steady position of the lower leg with the inside of the calf maintaining a soft contact with the horse's body
6. a supple and low position of the hands in the correct position



Requirements for riding a dressage test



The performance

7. exact halts,
with definite transitions from the halt
8. exact transitions between the gaits and the
exact maintenance of the tempo
9. accurate execution of the figures and
movements, (especially riding correct
corners)

Requirements for a good judge

- riding- and training experience
- clear picture of the test
- clear knowledge of movements
- knowledge of rules
- neutral, independent attitude
- strong character



Judging means taking on a high responsibility for the sport.

Judges have to find a clear line of evaluation, which riders and trainers have to recognize.



Requirements for a good judge



The score-sheet

- The score sheet and the notes on it help to give reasons and explain the single marks and the overall total points
- The judge has to be in a position to explain his marks with a correctly completed score sheet where all marks and notes complement each other. This applies for separate and joint judgement.

Difference between score sheet and commentary

- scoring sheet: objective rehearsal of events
- commentary: clarifying statement with possible explanations



Requirements for a good judge



Positive and negative statements – frequency of mistakes and meaning of words

- the right balance of positive and negative statements
- when negative statements are given the frequency of mistakes and their causes should be made clear
- the meaning of words needs to be considered
- personal comments should be given cautiously and only after careful consideration
- through incorrectly worded comments the salient point might become lost
 - clichés such as “**Ok. Correct**” should be avoided
 - the same applies for statements with question-marks such as “**Rhythm?**”



Requirements for a good judge



Commentary of Dressage competitions

1. benevolent and with esteem
2. positive approach
3. short and sweet → to the point
4. illustrate cause and effect
5. basis: principles of training
6. give training advice

The judge always needs to address two questions:

- ❖ Are horse and rider following the right path in training?
- ❖ Is the horse suitable for dressage?



Requirements for a good judge



Some features of how to find the right marks

- benevolent attitude towards the performance of two living beings
- **knowing** and **seeing** what is **possible**
- **wrong: the judge as a** “registration machine for mistakes”
- **knowledge of the task and** of what is important in a movement
- every exercise and movement has to be considered from start to finish
- **judge needs to focus on the main point but at the price of exclusion of the others**
- **consider own judging position in relation to the point of movement in the arena**
- main focus on criteria that is “judgeable”
- **Attention: no judging of things that cannot be seen**
- **sound knowledge of the meaning of marks and their handling**
- use of exactly the same starting point (all the time)
- every single mark stands in its own right
- differentiate and substantiate
- there are no “unimportant marks”



Requirements for a good judge



Some features of how to find the right final mark

1. Regularity of paces
 - ❖ all three paces need to be taken into account
 - ❖ performance of paces needs to be seen independently
2. Impulsion
 - ❖ including collection
 - ❖ without walk
3. Obedience
 - ❖ in general
 - ❖ in detail: regarding to level and test = résumé
4. Seat and influence
 - ❖ comments about the achievement
 - ❖ no general judgement like
 - applies just for this performance
 - applies just for this day
 - applies just for this horse



Requirements for a good judge



Visible Mistake

4 Beat Canter

tongue out;

open, dry mouth

position of poll, overflexed,

tilted head

Possible basic

→ lacking rhythm,
regularity and engagement

→ not accepting the bridle

→ straightness, not
accepting the bridle



Requirements to be a good judge



Visible Mistake

hind quarters swinging out

hollow back

resting a leg

breaking of pace

Possible basic

→ bending/straightness

→ rhythm, impulsion,
relaxation

→ lacking engagement

→ tension, lacking
collection and relaxation

Discussion

questions and discussion

1. Can you explain the difference between a “leg mover“ and a “back-mover“ and how and where (on the judging sheet) a judge must consider this in the scores and the lower and higher levels?
2. How important is practical riding and training to a judge’s qualification, as opposed to theoretical knowledge?
3. Scoring the “acceptance of the contact“ (at training level): When we see the horse with the outline appearing as if he “swallowed the telephone pole“ (neck and head nearly straight out), what should be our considerations? Supple topline? Steady connection? Etc.
4. discussion: the relationship between the “training scale“ and the evaluation of impulsion and submission in determining the marks for each movement
5. How does the judge address (or not address) minor issues that happen before or after the main emphasis of a movement, i.e. a shy on the short side before a lengthening across the diagonal



Part 3



Exemplary exercises and movements



Exemplary exercises and movements



Transitions

Important:

- preparation of the rider; using the seat and the driving aids
- keeping rhythm and tempo
- keeping collection
- distinct
- without resistance



Exemplary exercises and movements



Transitions - mistakes

- too much influence with the hand
- rider tips forward
- resistance
- high croup
- horse becomes short in the neck
- losing the rhythm
- losing engagement
- change of pace and tempo
- not distinct

The Halt

Demonstrating obedience, balance and self-carriage.

Important:

- smooth Transitions into the halt
- immobility
- squareness
- balance
- straightness
- contact
- active transition from the halt





Exemplary exercises and movements



The Halt – common mistakes

- **resistance**
- **not square, hind legs wide**
- **no straightness**
- **no immobility**
- **horse not in front of the rider's aids**

The most important thing is that the horse still responds to the rider's aids.



Exemplary exercises and movements



The rein-back

Important:

- remaining „on the bit“
- fluent backward movement
- correct number of steps
- self-carriage, collection and balance
- transition into and out
- square halt

It is important that the horse is not running backwards but is rather ridden backwards.



Exemplary exercises and movements



The rein-back – common mistakes

- **clear resistance, disobedience**
- **too much influence with the rider's hand**
- **against the hand and bit, open mouth**
- **steps not diagonally**
- **no relaxation**
- **hurried**
- **incorrect number of steps**



Exemplary exercises and movements



Shoulder in

Important:

- quality of trot
 - rhythm, impulsion
 - maintaining the “big trot”
 - no change in the quality of the movement
- constant angle of 30 degrees, three tracks
- correct and consistent bend
- engagement of the inside hind leg
 - in direction towards the outside front leg
- no crossing of the hind legs
- elastic and steady contact
- collection, balance and fluency



Exemplary exercises and movements



Shoulder in – common mistakes

- loss of rhythm
- on the forehand
- wrong angle
 - less angle
 - leg-yielding
- incorrect bend
- poll coming low



Exemplary exercises and movements



Travers

Important:

- quality of trot
- correct and consistent bend
- engagement and carrying capacity of the inside hind leg
- crossing of the front and hind legs
- elastic and steady contact
- collection, balance and fluency
- on four tracks



Exemplary exercises and movements



Travers – common mistakes

- loss of rhythm
- tense back
- wrong angle
- not stepping into the outside rein
- on forehand, with poor engagement

Half-pass in trot

Important:

- clear rhythm, no unevenness
- bend and flexion into the direction of the movement
- keeping collection and balance
- self-carriage
- forehand ahead
- introduction with a slight shoulder-in 'tendency'
- forward tendency more important than the sideways
- crossing of the fore- and hindlegs
- correct position of the rider





Exemplary exercises and movements



Half-pass in trot – common mistakes

- losing rhythm, uneven steps
- coming on the forehand, no collection and balance
- no bend, wrong flexion
- too much sideways
- not crossing legs in trot
- incorrect seat of rider
- leading hindlegs
- tilted neck



Exemplary exercises and movements



Half-pass in canter

Important:

- quality of the canter
- the degree of bend in the half-pass depends on the 'steepness' of the diagonal line
- forward tendency and carrying power of the inside hind leg is more important than the sideways tendency
- consistency of forward/sideways strides
- elastic and steady contact
- collection, balance and fluency



Exemplary exercises and movements



Half-pass in canter – common mistakes

- loss of regularity
- resistance
- wrong bend
- tense back
- lack of energy and engagement
- on the forehand

Flying change

Important:

- showing reaction to the rider's aids
- quality of the canter before, during and after a sequence of flying changes
- 'jumping through' from behind
- the fluency of the movement and the uphi
- forward tendency and groundcover
- calmness, straightness and balance
- maintenance of the rhythm



Flying change – common mistakes

1. Category

- in two phases
- one stride late (behind or in front)
- behind the rider's aids or too early

2. Category

- tension
- high croup
- swaying hindlegs





Exemplary exercises and movements



Half pirouette in walk + turn on the haunches

Important:

- correct sequence of steps
- willingness of the horse to turn around the inside hind leg
- bending the horse slightly in the direction of the turn
- activity and the clear four-beat rhythm
- collection before, during and after the walk-pirouette
- size of the walk-pirouette
- forward tendency of the movement



Exemplary exercises and movements



Half pirouette in walk + turn on the haunches

– common mistakes

- incorrect sequence of steps
- losing activity, balance
- hindlegs ‘sticking’ to the ground
- wrong flexion and bend
- tension, stiffness



Practice exercise



JUDGING

exemplary tests



Part 4



International competitions for Young Horses (FEI Young Horses)

International dressage competitions for 5- and 6- year-old horses



Aims and basic idea

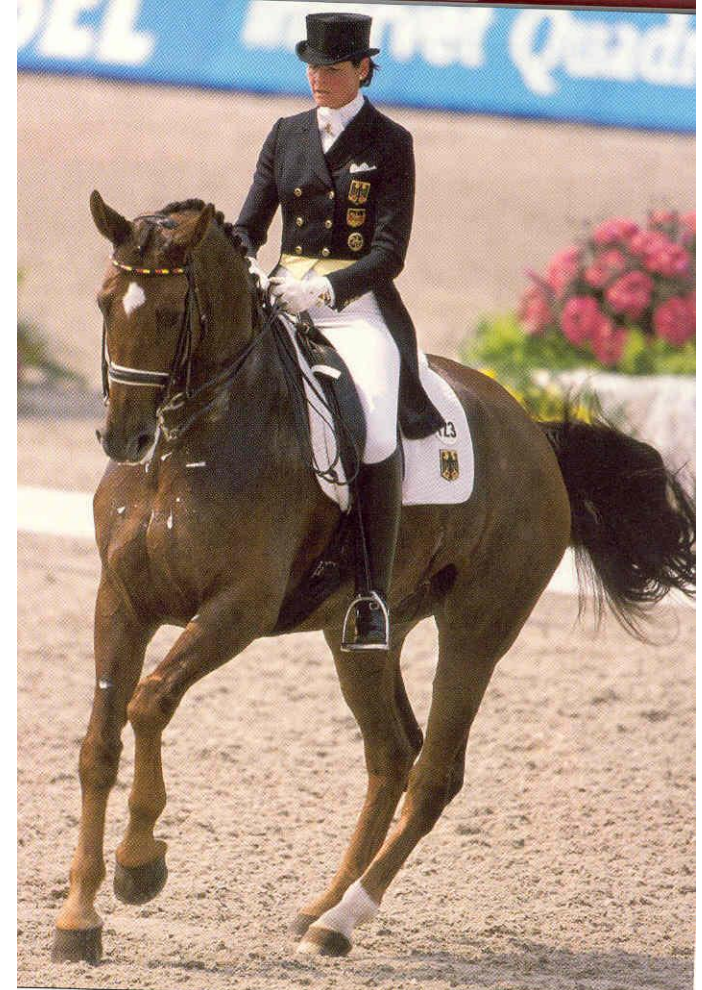
- to introduce 5- and 6-year- old horses to dressage competitions
- to help them gain experience in the dressage arena
- to give them the opportunity to compete against each other on the same testing level



Primary objective

- to evaluate the correct training of young dressage horses
- to encourage the development of national breeds and the interest in international competitions for young horses.

The young horse classes are the basis for higher level classes i.e. Prix St. Georges and Intermediate I



The Tests

All tests are generally ridden at a level related to the horse's age. The design of the tests gives the opportunity to emphasize the value of the basic gaits.

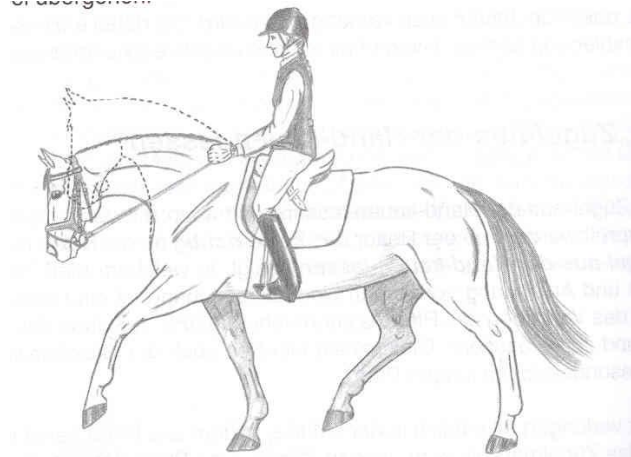
In the 5-year-old tests, only the beginning of collection is required.

For the 6-year-old horses, a more clearly defined collection is necessary.

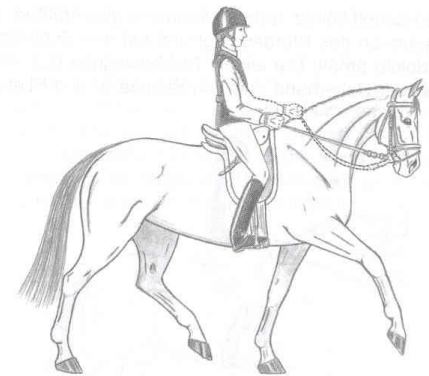
The quality of the lateral movements and the flying changes are also an important part of the assessment of the 6-year-old tests.

Two special exercises in the test for young horses are:

„Stretching on a long rein“



„Give and retake the reins“





International competitions for young horses



The judging system and the principles of the Young Horses Classes

The young horse classes are to be judged by a Ground Jury consisting of three FEI-judges positioned at C, working as a team.

They give 5 marks: For the trot, the walk, the canter, submissiveness and the general impression.

While judging young horse classes three aspects are most important:

- the paces
- the standard of training
- the general impression including conformation, temperament and the natural talent to become a high-class dressage horse.

General impressions

The general impression is based on:

- The standard of training according to the training scale including the quality of the gaits, suppleness, ease and fluency in carrying out the exercises
- The potential and suitability as a dressage horse



A suitable horse for dressage is characterized by its temperament, confirmation and expression. Colour and size are not taken into account.



FEI Dressage Test for 5-year old horses

Marking Sheet - including directives

Event : _____ Date : _____

Time 5'00" (for information only)

Arena 20 x 6

| | Test |
|---------------|---|
| | A Enter in working trot |
| | X Halt - salute, proceed in working trot |
| | C Track to the left |
| | CA Serpentine 3 loops (touching the long side) |
| | FXH Medium trot |
| | H Collected trot |
| Before C | Medium walk |
| | C Turn on the haunches through walk, proceed collected trot |
| | S Circle 10 m |
| | E Turn left |
| | B Turn right |
| | P Circle 10 m |
| | KXM Medium trot |
| | MC Collected trot |
| | CH Medium walk |
| | HP Medium walk, let the horse stretch on a long rein |
| | P Retake the reins |
| | PF Medium walk |
| | F Proceed in working canter right |
| | FAK Working canter |
| | KS Medium canter |
| Between S & H | Collected canter |
| | HGE Half circle 10 m, returning to the track at E |
| | VP Half circle 20 m, counter canter |
| | PR Counter canter |
| | R Simple change of leg |
| | RCH Collected canter |
| | HK Medium canter |
| | K Collected canter |
| | FE Change rein |
| | SR Half circle 20 m, counter canter |
| | RP Counter canter |
| | P Simple change of leg |
| | PFA Collected canter |
| | A Working trot |
| | VP Half circle 20 m, let the horse gradually stretch on a long rein, sitting trot |
| Between P & F | Retake the reins |
| | A Down the centre line |
| | X Halt - immobility - salute |

| Assessment of individual tasks | Commentary | Mark |
|--|------------|------|
| Trot Rhythm, suppleness, elasticity impulsion, swinging back, ground cover, willingness to collect | | |
| Walk Rhythm, relaxation, activity, ground cover | | |
| Canter Rhythm, suppleness, elasticity natural balance, impulsion, willingness to collect, ground cover, uphill tendency | | |
| Submissiveness , suppleness, contact, straightness, obedience, ability to self-carry | | |
| General impression Potential as dressage horse Standard of training (on the basis of the "scale of training") | | |
| Total marks | | |
| Divided by 5 = TOTAL SCORE | | |

Marks from 0 to 10, decimals allowed (e.g. 7.3 or 8.7)

1st error of course : Total score reduced by 0.2 points

2nd error of course : Total score reduced by 0.4 points

3rd error of course : Elimination

Carrying of a whip is not permitted - Entering the area around the arena with a whip entails a penalty of 0.1 points per judge

Judges' signatures (1)

(2)

(3)



Organisers :
(exact address)



FEI Dressage Test for 6-year old horses

Marking Sheet - including directives

Event : _____ Date : _____

Time 5'15" (for information only) Arena 20 x 6

| | Test |
|---------------|---|
| A | Enter in working trot |
| X | Halt - salute, proceed in working trot |
| C | Track to the right |
| RK | Medium trot |
| KAF | Collected trot |
| FB | Shoulder-in to the left |
| B | Circle 10 m |
| BG | Half-pass to the left |
| C | Track to the left |
| HXF | Medium trot |
| FAK | Collected trot |
| KE | Shoulder-in to the right |
| E | Circle 10 m |
| EG | Half-pass to the right |
| Before C | Medium walk |
| CM | Medium walk |
| MEV | Extended walk |
| Before V | Medium walk |
| V | Turn left |
| Between L & P | Collect to half pirouette - half pirouette to the left - medium walk |
| Between L & V | Collect to half pirouette - half pirouette to the right - medium walk |
| L | Collected canter right |
| P(FAK) | Turn to the right |
| KVPF | Medium canter, between V & P half circle 20 m |
| FAK | Collected canter |
| KLB | Change rein |
| L | Flying change |
| BMCH | Collected canter |
| HIB | Change rein |
| I | Flying change |
| BF | Collected canter |
| FDB | Half circle 10 m, returning to the track at B |
| Between R & M | Flying change |
| MCH | Collected canter |
| HEV | Extended canter |
| V | Collected canter |
| KDE | Half circle 10 m, returning to the track at E |
| Between S & H | Flying change |
| CM | Collected trot |
| MXK | Extended trot |
| K | Collected trot |
| A | Down the centre line |
| X | Halt - immobility - salute |

| Assessment of individual tasks | Commentary | Mark |
|---|------------|------|
| Trot Rhythm, suppleness, elasticity impulsion, swinging back, ground cover, ability to collect | | |
| Walk Rhythm, relaxation, activity, ground cover | | |
| Canter Rhythm, suppleness, elasticity, natural balance, impulsion, ability to collect, ground cover, uphill tendency | | |
| Submissiveness, suppleness, contact, straightness, obedience, including flying changes, shoulder-in and half pass | | |
| General impression Potential as dressage horse Standard of training (on the basis of the "scale of training") | | |
| Total marks | | |
| Divided by 5 = TOTAL SCORE | | |

Marks from 0 to 10, decimals allowed (e.g. 7.3 or 8.7)

- 1st error of course : Total score reduced by 0.2 points
- 2nd error of course : Total score reduced by 0.4 points
- 3rd error of course : Elimination

Carrying of a whip is not permitted - Entering the area around the arena with a whip entails a penalty of 0.1 points per judge

Judges' signatures (1)

(2)

(3)

Organisers :
(exact address)





Discussion



questions?

1. It seems that in the FEI tests we often see an exaggerated trot at the collected trot instead of a pure collected trot. What should the judge be looking for? How much is correct and what should the rider be producing?



Part 5



German models

Dressage Horse Tests

Dressage Rider Tests



Dressage Horse Tests



The purpose of Dressage Horse Tests

- To allow young dressage horses to compete against each other.
- To support tests which include criteria suitable for the horse's level of training.
- To check the fundamentals.
- To school the young horse in accordance with the classical schooling and training principles.
- To tolerate curiosity and cheerfulness
- To give dressage riders on the highest levels the opportunity to introduce, ride and present their young horses themselves.



Dressage Horse Tests



Judgement

Central questions the judge should ask himself

Is the horse on the classically correct 'road' to gymnastic dressage development?

Does the horse presently show the accepted outlines of a dressage type and does it perform the movements accordingly?

Does the horse have a future in dressage?



Dressage Horse Tests



Commentary for Dressage Horse Tests

1. sympathetic, with respect
2. positive first sentence
3. short and accurate
4. pointing out cause and effect
5. basis: general training pyramid principles
6. training advice



Dressage Horse Tests



Criteria: Scale of Training

Rhythm: correctness of the paces

Suppleness: steps and strides without tension, a supple and swinging back.

Impulsion: the desire to move forward, activity, length of steps/strides.

Straightening: a regular flexion and bend on both sides

Collection: Second Level: willingness to collect
Third: ability to collect



Dressage Horse Tests



Mistakes

Fundamental mistakes
(disobedience or lack of correct training)

→ generally lower marks

Minor mistakes (e.g. momentary loss of concentration)

→ not a significant factor in the score



Dressage Horse Tests



Fundamental mistakes 5-year-old horses:

- walk: uneven or pacing steps
- trot: uneven rhythm
- canter: lack of three-beat, including counter canter
- resistance, loss of diagonal steps during rein back
- simple change of leg through trot (without walk steps)
- tension
- tilting / mouth problems
- tight back
- obvious crookedness
- lack of energy, stiff hind legs



Dressage Horse Tests



Fundamental mistakes 6-year-old horses:

- same mistakes as 5-year-old horses
- + lack of bend during lateral movements
- incorrect flying changes



Dressage Horse Tests



Minor mistakes

Minor mistakes are not taken into account as much as at other international dressage competitions, as long as the horse is presented correctly in accordance with its training level.

Minor mistakes 5-year-old horses

- transitions not started exactly at the markers
- medium canter slightly crooked
- slight crookedness when collecting after extensions
- starting off in the wrong canter, which is corrected responsively
- 'falling out' in canter and going back into trot which is corrected obediently
- medium canter slightly crooked

From 5-year-old horses a low level of collection in the exercises is demanded.



Dressage Horse Tests



Minor mistakes 6-year-old horses

- lateral movements not exactly at the markers
- not holding the bend of the longitudinal axis during the last two or three steps after the correct introduction and implementation of travers and half pass
- a slightly overdone position in shoulder-in
- flying change not directly at the marker

From 6-year-old horses a much higher level of collection is demanded. In addition lateral movements and flying changes take a major significance in the assessment.

Summary



Judging the young horse competition is based on extensive experience in judging dressage classes.

Furthermore the judge should have a clear picture of a young dressage horse in his mind and should be very familiar with the principles and the way of training young horses – both, in theory and in the saddle.



Dressage Rider Tests



Aims

- to foster and support basic education at the roots
- to foreground the importance of the rider's seat, aids and feeling
- to revive the basics of classical training

principal ideas

- for training, first, second and third level
- to test if the rider is on the right path in his basic education
- rider and horse present themselves in set tasks
- the emphasis is on the preparation and execution of individual exercises, including: riding corners, riding on bended lines and in turns, riding of transitions, riding of halt-halts
- fundamental: only a correct seat can lead to correct riding



Dressage Rider Tests



Judging criteria in Dressage Rider Tests

- correct seat: balance, sensitive, swinging middle-posture in accordance with the horse's movement, correct position of rider in the saddle
- correct aids (seat, legs, hands/reins) and their interaction
- feeling
- impact of the rider on the horse:
 - ➔ level of horse's training has to be in accordance with the degree of difficulty of the test and with the principles of the training pyramid
 - ➔ regularity of gaits without excessive movement or impulsion
- correct execution of school-figures and exercises



Dressage Rider Tests



Judging criteria in Dressage Rider Tests - summary

- ➔ the emphasis is strongly on the rider's performance
- ➔ one mark for the overall performance is given in the end
- ➔ written commentary according to Dressage Horse Tests
- ➔ oral commentary right after the test is 'nice to have' for rider and audience to compare their own judgement
- ➔ important: explanation of the strengths and weaknesses and the rationale for the final mark



DISCUSSION



USA: RIDER TESTS – questions

1. The new USEF tests have divided the rider score under the Collective Remarks divided into 3 parts – rider's position and seat, rider's correct and effective use of the aids and the harmony between rider and horse. What criteria would you use to arrive at each score?



DISCUSSION



USA: RIDER TESTS

issued for the show year starting
December 2012

- more questions?
- ideas?
- suggestions?
- opinions?
- thoughts?



Practice exercise



JUDGING

“Rider Tests“



Part 6



The Freestyle

The Freestyle

principal ideas

The creative freedom of a freestyle test makes it possible for the rider to highlight the assets of his horse as well as enhance them with suitable music.

The observance of the classical principles of riding and of the „Training Pyramid“ remains an absolute precondition for all freestyle competitions; the correct schooling of horse and rider are the relevant criteria.

The freestyle presentation should be clearly and logically structured displaying a true harmony between the horse and the rider.

The elements with a high degree of collection should interact with exercises containing forward impulsion and clearly presented basic gaits.

All elements that raise the degree of difficulty are to be positively rated when fully complemented and supported by the music.

All exercises should be performed with a well-defined starting and finish point.

The Freestyle

Judging the Freestyle

Movements allowed and not allowed

The compulsory movements for the Freestyle can be found in the test sheets for each class.

- Junior Freestyle
- Young Rider Freestyle
- Intermediate I Freestyle
- Grand Prix Freestyle



FREESTYLE TEST Intermediate I
FREESTYLE TEST Intermediate I

Competitor No : ____ Name : _____ NF : _____ Horse : _____

Event : _____ Date : _____ Judge : _____

 Time allowed : performance to be finished between 4'30" and 5'00" Minimum a
Note: Scoring - Refer to Guidelines for Judges - FEI Freestyle tests

Remarks:

| | Technical marks | Marks | Mark | Coefficient | Final mark | Remarks |
|--------------------------------------|--|-------|------|-------------|------------|---------|
| 1. | Collected walk (minimum 20 m) | 10 | | | | |
| 2. | Extended walk (minimum 20 m) | 10 | | 2 | | |
| 3. | Collected trot including shoulder-in right (<i>minimum 12 m</i>) | 10 | | | | |
| 4. | Collected trot including shoulder-in left (<i>minimum 12 m</i>) | 10 | | | | |
| 5. | Collected trot including half-pass right | 10 | | 2 | | |
| 6. | Collected trot including half-pass left | 10 | | 2 | | |
| 7. | Extended trot | 10 | | | | |
| 8. | Collected canter including half-pass right | 10 | | | | |
| 9. | Collected canter including half-pass left | 10 | | | | |
| 10. | Extended canter | 10 | | | | |
| 11. | Flying changes every third stride (minimum 5 times consecutively) | 10 | | | | |
| 12. | Flying changes every second stride (minimum 5 times consecutively) | 10 | | | | |
| 13. | Single pirouette in canter right | 10 | | 2 | | |
| 14. | Single pirouette in canter left | 10 | | 2 | | |
| 15. | The entrance and halts at the beginning and the end of the test | 10 | | | | |
| Total for technical execution | | 200 | | | | |

| | Artistic marks *) | Marks | Mark | Coefficient | Final mark | Remarks |
|--|---|-------|------|-------------|------------|---------|
| 16. | Rhythm, energy and elasticity | 10 | | 4 | | |
| 17. | Harmony between rider and horse | 10 | | 4 | | |
| 18. | Choreography. Use of arena. Inventiveness | 10 | | 4 | | |
| 19. | Degree of difficulty. Calculated risks | 10 | | 4 | | |
| 20. | Music and interpretation of the music | 10 | | 4 | | |
| Total for artistic presentation | | 200 | | | | |

 *) half points may be given

To be deducted

Entering the area around the arena with a whip entails a penalty of 1% per judge

Time penalty : more than 5' or less than 4'30" deduct 0.5% from the total of artistic presentation

Score (see conversion table)

Total for technical execution divided by 2

100

Total for artistic presentation divided by 2

100

Final score

200

Final score %

In case two competitors have the same final score, the one with the higher marks for artistic impression will have the better placing

 Organisers :
(exact address)

Signature of Judge :

FREESTYLE TEST Grand Prix Level

FREESTYLE TEST Grand Prix Level

Competitor No : ____ Name : _____ NF : _____ Horse : _____

Event : _____ Date : _____ Judge : _____

Note: Scoring - Refer to Guidelines for Judges - FEI Freestyle tests

Time allowed: performance to be finished between 5'30" and 6'00" Minimum a

| | Paces | Technical marks | Marks | Mark | Coefficient | Final mark |
|-----|-----------------|--|-------|-----------|-------------|------------|
| 1. | WALK | Collected walk (minimum 20 m) | 10 | | | |
| | | Extended walk (minimum 20 m) | 10 | | | |
| 3. | TROT | Collected trot including half-pass right R | 10 | | | |
| 4. | | Collected trot including half-pass left L | 10 | | | |
| 5. | | Extended trot | 10 | | | |
| 6. | CANTER | Collected canter including half-pass right R | 10 | | | |
| 7. | | Collected canter including half-pass left L | 10 | | | |
| 8. | | Extended canter | 10 | | | |
| 9. | | Flying changes every second stride (minimum 5 times consecutively) | 10 | straight | curve | |
| 10. | | Flying changes every stride (minimum 9 times consecutively) | 10 | straight | curve | |
| 11. | | Canter pirouette right R | 10 | single | double | 2 |
| 12. | | Canter pirouette left L | 10 | single | double | 2 |
| 13. | PASSAGE /PIAFFE | Passage (minimum 20 m <i>on one track</i>) | 10 | one track | Half-pass | 2 |
| 14. | | Piaffe (minimum 10 steps <i>straight</i>) | 10 | straight | pirouette | 2 |
| 15. | | Transitions from passage to piaffe and from piaffe to passage | 10 | | | |
| 16. | | The entrance and halts at the beginning and the end of the test | 10 | | | |

Remarks

| | | Artistic marks *) | Marks | Mark | Coefficient | Final mark | Remarks |
|-----|--|---|-------|------|-------------|------------|---------|
| 17. | | Rhythm, energy and elasticity | 10 | | 4 | | |
| 18. | | Harmony between rider and horse | 10 | | 4 | | |
| 19. | | Choreography. Use of arena. Inventiveness | 10 | | 4 | | |
| 20. | | Degree of difficulty. Calculated risks | 10 | | 4 | | |
| 21. | | Music and interpretation of the music | 10 | | 4 | | |

Total for artistic presentation Σ'

Time of test execution: **0'.00"** Time penalty: more than 6' or less than 5'30", deduct 0.5% from the total of artistic presentation: Σ=Σ'-2

Average % for artistic presentation [000.000] = 100%*(Σ or Σ')/200

Entering the area around the arena with a whip entails a penalty of 1% [-1%]=

Final average % for artistic presentation A%=

SCORE

TOTAL FOR TECHNICAL EXECUTION %T = [000.000]

TOTAL FOR ARTISTIC EXECUTION %A = [000.000]

FINAL SCORE % = [000.000]/200

In case two competitors have the same final score, the one with the higher marks for artistic impression will have the better placing

Total for technical execution Σ 200

Average % for technical execution [000.000]=100%*Σ/200

*) half points may be given
 Organisers : _____ Signature of Judge : _____
 (exact address)

The Freestyle

Technical marks

The mark for the technical execution depends only on the quality of the performance in the compulsory movements of the test.

The judge gives a mark (only full marks) for each single movement shown.

Any movement that is not shown is marked a “0”.

Movements that are only executed below the requirements (e.g. too few series changes, not enough steps in piaffe) are regarded as insufficiently or badly performed and must receive a mark below 50%



The Freestyle

Artistic marks

The five artistic marks are scored by half or full marks and multiplied by their coefficients

- rhythm, energy and elasticity
- harmony between rider and horse
- choreography
- degree of difficulty
- music and interpretation



All artistic marks are more or less dependent on the quality and degree of technical execution.

The Freestyle

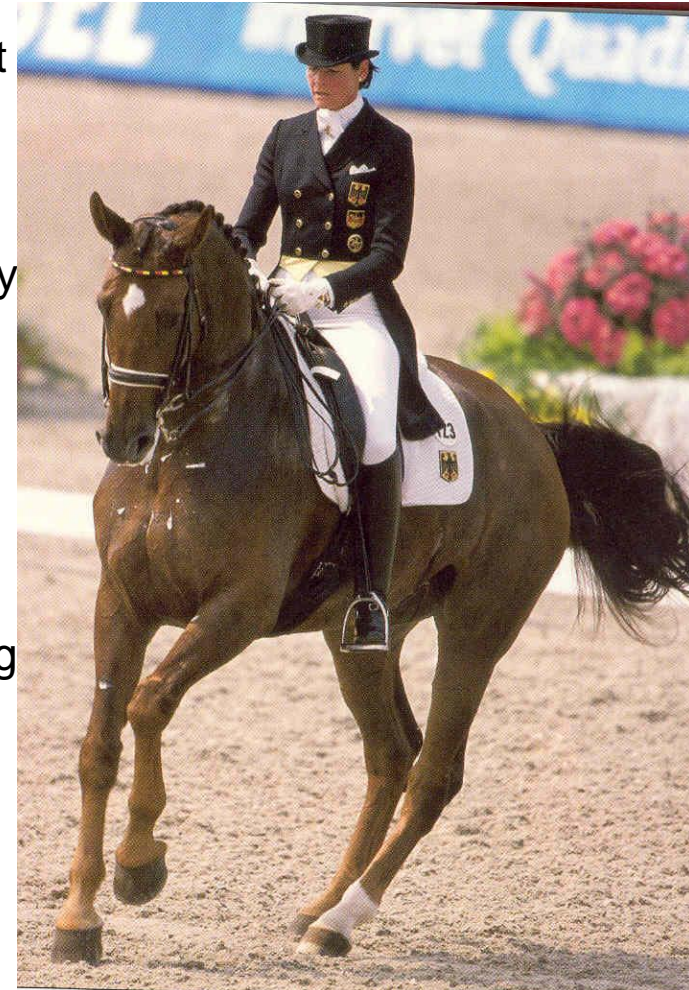
Rhythm, Energy and Elasticity

The artistic mark combines the criteria of the first collective marks of a standard dressage test.

Here the consistency of rhythm and the regularity of the gaits are marked as well as

- the quality and the impulsion of the horse,
- the suppleness of the back,
- the elasticity and the engagement of its hind leg

This means that this mark is also dependent on the respective criteria of the technical execution in the Freestyle.



The Freestyle

Harmony between rider and horse

This mark combines the criteria of the third and fourth collective marks of a standard test.

The correct dressage training of the horse is reflected in:

- the suppleness, the contact, the straightness,
- the collection and uphill tendency,
- the thoroughness in all movements and transitions
- the confidence of the horse and its willingness to fulfill the movements



The Freestyle

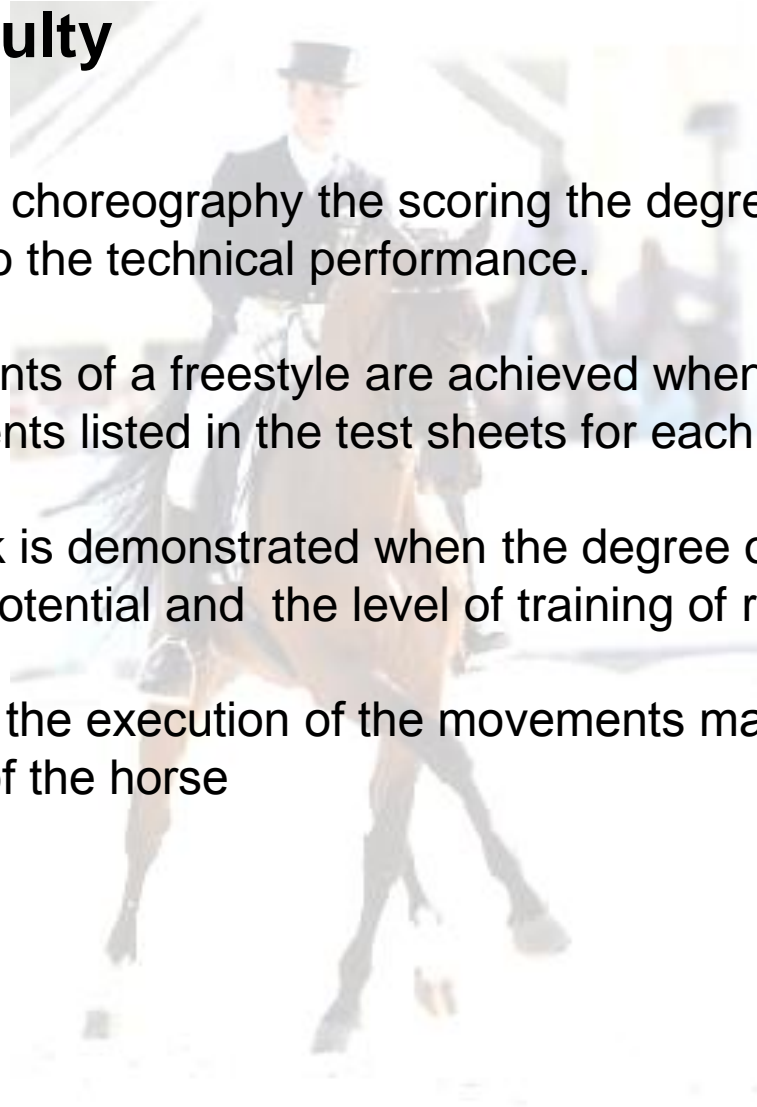
Choreography, use of arena, inventiveness

- This is one of the true artistic marks and is therefore more independent from the technical performance. However, strong resistance and disturbances have a negative effect on the scoring.
- The structure of a freestyle test should be original and may contain surprising elements, yet it should not be overloaded or exaggerated. It has to be in accordance with the classical criteria of training and the horse's actual training level.
- A clear structure of the movement allows for better assessment and thus a better scoring ability from the judge's standpoint.
- The choreography should be designed and focused to the judge on the short side at C.
Too many movements with the horse's tail to the judges are not appreciated.

The Freestyle

Degree of difficulty

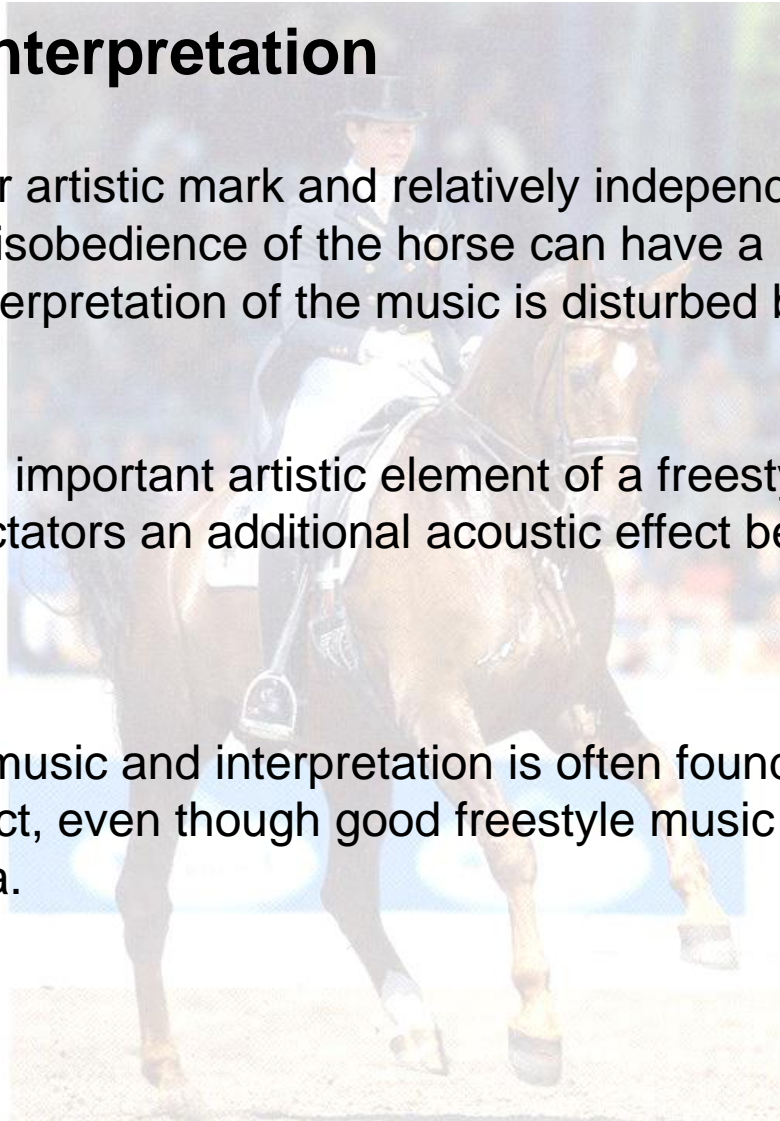
- In comparison to the choreography the scoring the degree of difficulty is again more related to the technical performance.
- The basic requirements of a freestyle are achieved when the rider shows all compulsory movements listed in the test sheets for each level.
- A well-calculated risk is demonstrated when the degree of difficulty corresponds to the potential and the level of training of rider and horse.
- Obvious mistakes in the execution of the movements may reflect an 'over-asking' by the rider of the horse



The Freestyle

Music and Interpretation

- Music is another artistic mark and relatively independent of the technical performance. Disobedience of the horse can have a negative effect on the scoring if the interpretation of the music is disturbed by it.
- The music is an important artistic element of a freestyle performance, since it gives the spectators an additional acoustic effect besides the visual impression.
- The judging of music and interpretation is often found to be the most subjective aspect, even though good freestyle music has to satisfy objective criteria.



The Freestyle

Conclusion

The majority of the total freestyle score is influenced by the technical performance.

The technical scores in freestyle tests are generally higher than in standard tests. The reasons are:

- riders can emphasize the highlights of their horses and minimize the weak points
- there is a chance to repeat a failed movement that and thus to enhance the final mark for this movement
- there is more room for the riders to perform the exercises at liberty

Dressage Freestyle is a perfect combination of riding and art and, like in every work of art, there will always remain an individual perception in its assessment.



Practice exercise?



JUDGING

Freestyles?



Questions?

Thank you for your Attention

