



Fédération Equestre Internationale (FEI)

The Fédération Equestre Internationale (FEI) is the international body governing equestrian sport recognised by the International Olympic Committee (IOC). It is the sole controlling authority for all international events in Dressage, Jumping, Eventing, Driving, Endurance, Vaulting, Reining and Para Equestrian. It establishes regulations and rules and approves programmes for equestrian competitions at Championships and Regional and Olympic Games.

The FEI encourages the observance of the principles and spirits of horsemanship, particularly in the relationship with horses, and promotes the highest standards of organisation, judging, course design, veterinary and medication control and fair play at international events.

The FEI was founded in 1921. Since 1991, its headquarters have been located in Lausanne(SUI). 133 National Federations are currently affiliated to the FEI.

President: HRH Princess Haya (JOR)
Secretary General: Alex McLin (SUI/USA)

Some history

The Oldest National Shows

Equestrian sport began developing to its present-day format during the latter half of the 19th century. In 1868 The Royal Dublin Society included for the first time in the programme of Its annual Horse Show two jumping competitions: the "high leap" and the "wide leap", both derived from the Irish passion for fox hunting. The *Société Hippique Française* was founded in 1865 and organised its first *Concours Hippique* a year later. In 1872, a "Society for the Award of Prizes for Well-Trained Riding Horses" was created in Vienna. The *Cercle Equestre Royal* of Belgium, founded in 1877, held its first *Concours Hippique* in 1881. In 1883, jumping competitions were part of the first National Horse Show in New York and in 1884, a *Concours Hippique* took place in Turin as part of a national exhibition.

The First International Shows

By the beginning of the 20th century, the sport had developed enough for international competitions to be staged. The first ever international *Concours Hippique* took place in Paris in 1900. Two years later, the first ever Eventing competition, the *Championnat du Cheval d'Armes*, was organised in France. Of

Special significance was the first Nations Cup competition organised in 1909 in London.

Introduction of Equestrian Sport in the Olympic Games

The idea of including equestrian sport in the Olympic programme had been raised when the first Olympic Games were being planned for 1896 in Athens. However, due to organisational problems, it made its first appearance at the Games of the V Olympiad in Stockholm in 1912. Sixty-two competitors, all military, from ten nations with 70 horses took part in Jumping, Dressage and Eventing competitions.

Equestrian sport has been on the Olympic programme ever since 1912. Jumping, Dressage and Eventing remain the FEI Olympic disciplines.

The founding of the FEI

The rapid development of the sport and the advent of the Olympic Games made it obvious that some internationally recognised rules were essential if orderly growth was to be aspired to. In May 1921, a meeting, chaired by the then-IOC President, Baron Pierre de Coubertin, was held in Lausanne. Delegates from ten national equestrian organisations had convened to discuss the formation of an international federation. In

November of the same year, the first Congress of the new International Equestrian Federation was held in Paris, with Belgium, Denmark, France, Italy, Japan, Norway, Sweden and the United States present. The FEI was born and Baron du Teil of France was elected as the first FEI President.

Mission

The primary mission of the FEI is to advance the orderly growth of equestrian sport world-wide by promoting, regulating and administering humane and sportsmanlike international competition in the traditional equestrian disciplines and by helping them to evolve in ways that enhance their attractiveness both for the participants and the public, while respecting and furthering the ideals and principles of horsemanship.

Values and principles

Equestrian sport is one of the very few sports where men and women compete on equal terms all the way up to Olympic level. It is also the only sport which involves two athletes: horse and rider. The relationship and mutual respect built up between the two is the key to a successful partnership.

The FEI is based on the principle of equality and mutual respect between all National Federations, without prejudice to race, colour, religion or internal politics.

Welfare of the horse

Ever since it was founded, the FEI has concerned itself with the welfare of the horse through its Statutes, General Regulations and Rules, which are continually reviewed and revised as the sport develops.

In 1991, a Code of Conduct for all those involved in the wellbeing of competition horses was ratified by the FEI General Assembly. It was re-examined and updated in 2003. The first article summarises it all: "At all stages during the preparation and training of competition horses, welfare must take precedence over all other demands".

Conservation of the Environment

Equestrian sport is the only Olympic sport, which is performed in union with an outstanding ambassador of nature: the horse. This factor alone makes our sport one of the most interested in the conservation of a sound environment. In order to ensure minimal impact on the environment, since 1997 the FEI has abided by a Code towards the Environment and Sustainable Development.

Over the years, the FEI has become prominent on the international sports scene. The FEI maintains active relationships with numerous organisations in and outside the sports world and is a member of the Association of Summer Olympic International Federations (ASOIF) and the General Association of International Sports Federations (GAISF).