

### 7.12 SPORT SPECIFICATIONS – PARA DRESSAGE

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#### 1. Objectives of Dressage for ID Para Dressage Riders

On the inclusion level, the objective of Dressage is to promote inclusion of riders with an intellectual impairment into the Para Dressage Community and the Dressage Community as a whole.

The object for ID Para Dressage riders is the same as for Para Dressage riders, mainly to improve balance, control, mobility, memory and self-esteem.

The tests for the Senior riders are taken from the FEI Grade 4 tests. They include walk, trot, canter and lateral movements. While the newest tests written for a 20x60 arena are used, for the promotional and development phase, the Novice A test can be ridden in a 20x40 arena.

These tests are challenging the riding skills of the ID Para Dressage riders.

The tests for the Youth riders are taken from the FEI Grade 2 tests. They include walk, trot and lateral movements.

The objective for the dressage horse is to harmoniously develop its physique and ability, making the horse calm, supple, loose and flexible, but also confident, attentive and keen, thus achieving perfect understanding with its rider.

These qualities are revealed by the freedom and regularity of the paces, the harmony, lightness and ease of the movements, the lightness of the forehand and the engagement of the hindquarters, originating in a lively impulsion and the acceptance of the bridle, with submissiveness throughout and without any tension or resistance.

The horse thus gives the impression of doing of his own accord that which 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. In all movements the purity of the paces, rhythm and acceptance of the bridle are paramount.

#### 2. The Para Dressage Working Group

The Working Group is formed of interested parties including Virtus, HETI, FEI members, RDA members and independent parties who will try to establish a relationship with their respective national and international partners. Their goal is

- a) to develop aligned guidelines, programs and pathways for participation and competition in para dressage globally,
- b) to provide the eligibility process for riders with an intellectual impairment,
- c) to maintain and make available an up-to-date Virtus Para Dressage Rule Book.

The Working Group endorses the FEI Code of Conduct and acknowledges and accepts that the welfare of the horse must be paramount and must never be subordinated to competitive or commercial influences.

The rules stated in this Rule Book are to be adhered to by all riders and anyone associated with them when joining into global competitions under Virtus. When not otherwise stated, the FEI Para Dressage Rules will be in place. If an issue cannot be resolved by the rules stated in this Rule Book and the FEI Para Dressage Rules, it will be the duty of the Judges and Official Stewards together with the head of the Organizing Committee to make a decision in a sporting spirit.

#### 3. Eligibility & Classification

- a) Eligibility

All riders who fulfil the Virtus eligibility criteria fall under the rules set in this Rule Book.

To be considered eligible to compete as an athlete with an intellectual disability, athletes must fulfil the eligibility criteria as defined by Virtus which are based upon the World Health Organization and American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD).

The criteria state that an athlete must demonstrate:

- Significant impairment in intellectual functioning which is defined as a Full Scale IQ score of 75 or lower.

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- Significant limitations in adaptive behavior as expressed in conceptual, social, and practical adaptive skills. This is defined as performance that is at least 2 standard deviations below the mean of, either one of the 3 types of adaptive behavior (conceptual, social, or practical skills) or an overall score on a standardized measure of conceptual, social and practical skills.
- Intellectual disability must be evident during the developmental period, which is from conception to 18 years of age

All eligibility requests must be with Virtus at least 12 weeks before the start date of the competition.

At a future date, once the sport is established for athletes with an intellectual disability and a partnership and agreement has been made with the FEI, classification criteria should be developed.

Classification rules would be developed to establish that the individual's impairment has an impact on their sports performance in Para Dressage.

*Please note: For national competitions as well as for the initial Video Competition Virtus would recommend the use of 'Virtus National Eligibility' is permitted. Details of the eligibility requirements are on the Virtus website at [virtus.sport](http://virtus.sport)*

#### b) Class

FEI Profile 39 is for Intellectual Impairment. Currently this profile is ineligible according to the FEI Para Dressage Classification Manual - January 2015, unless the individual has a movement and mobility/eligible vision impairment.

Virtus, HETI and its working partners will work together to influence the FEI to reinstate this class with those with an intellectual impairment as classified by Virtus to be deemed eligible (with a sport classification system to be developed in future). In the meantime, for ID para dressage Virtus primary eligibility criteria will be used to form the class.

#### c) Grade

The para-equestrian Senior class will fall within the parameters of FEI Grade IV. The former Grade III (now Grade IV) was previously the Grade assigned by the FEI before the class became ineligible and the working group deems this still to be the most appropriate level.

For the Youth class the FEI Grade II tests are chosen.

Some countries (Spain, Germany) have chosen to create a Grade VI for ID Para riders in order to facilitate their integration into their national Para Dressage Program.

## 4. Dressage Tests

In the first phase of promoting Para-Equestrian the FEI Grade IV Novice A Test from 2017 will be used for Virtus competitions, albeit ridden in a 20x40 arena.

It is kindly advised, at the discretion of the competitions organizing committee, to use all the tests of Grade IV (2018):

- Introductory A (20x40 arena)
- Introductory B (20x40 arena)
  - Novice Test A (20x60 arena or 20x40 arena)
  - Novice Test B (20x60 arena)
  - Team Test (20x60 arena)
  - Individual Championship Test (20x60 arena)
  - Freestyle Test (20x60 arena)

The tests can be found on the FEI website:

<http://inside.fei.org/fei/your-role/organisers/p-e-dressage/tests>

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#### 5. Arenas

In the promotional phase using the Novice A Test, the 20x40 arena will be used. For non-video competitions using the higher tests, a 20x60 arena will be required.

#### 6. Equipment (Rider & Horse)

##### a) Riding Wear

All riders should be encouraged to be as able as possible and to this end the rider should wear an outfit as stated in the FEI PE rules, however the riders may wear Jodhpur boots and black or brown half chaps.

##### b) Compensating Aids

All compensation aids that are allowed for **all riders** under FEI Rules will be allowed. Please refer to the FEI website: [http://inside.fei.org/system/files/Standard%20and%20Non%20Standard%20Compensating%20Aids%20Summary%2017\\_updated%2020.04.2017.pdf](http://inside.fei.org/system/files/Standard%20and%20Non%20Standard%20Compensating%20Aids%20Summary%2017_updated%2020.04.2017.pdf)

As per the FEI Para Equestrian Classification Manual - January 2018, a commander is allowed for those with an intellectual impairment, if required. The commander reads the test as it is written on the test sheet. He is not allowed to add other information. The use of the voice is not allowed.

##### c) Whips

One whip may be carried, maximum length 1m20.

When saluting, the whip should be carried in the hand, which is not used for saluting. Riders can also salute with the head only.

##### d) Spurs

Only blunt spurs without rowels or sharp edges may be worn. Spurs may only be worn by riders able to control their leg movements.

##### e) Saddles

English or continental saddles, preferable Dressage Saddles, should be used.

Seat savers may be used.

The riders are encouraged to use the stirrups able bodied riders use, but all safety stirrups allowed for all riders under FEI Rules can be used.

##### f) Bridles

Bridles can be used as stated in the FEI PE rules, however for the Novice Tests and the introductory Tests snaffle bridle should be preferred.

#### 7 Competition Rules

Competitors must have gone through the eligibility process set by Virtus and appear on the Virtus Master List in order to be able to join the competitions under Virtus.

All other competition rules not stated in this Rule Book will abide by FEI rules.

#### 8 Notes on the Interpretation of Dressage Tests

Please refer to the FEI PE Dressage Rules.

#### 9 Rules for Video Competition

Tests should be ridden and will be judged according to the rules of this Virtus Rule Book.

Some modifications have to be made to suit judging online.

- Videos of tests must not be entered if they already have been judged in another competition. For this reason horses have to wear bandages or boots.
- The videographer must stand well behind C.

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- The quality of the video must be so that it can be judged.
- Sound must be recorded to make sure the rider is not receiving coaching during the test.
- The video must be one take without cuts.
- Horses and ponies can be ridden by more than one rider.
- Entry Fees will be paid online to Virtus in line with Virtus event entry terms and conditions.
- A date will be set for the competition and a rider/horse combination can only send in one entry.
- A rider can however enter with a second horse at the same time.
- Rosettes and Certificates will be awarded to the riders placed 1 to 6.
- Regarding the outfit of the rider and equipment of the horse, please refer to the rules in this book.
- Spurs and one whip may be used.
- All kinds of auxiliary reins may not be used. Using of auxiliary reins leads to disqualification.
- A commander may be used.
- Sitting trot or rising trot or a mixture of both may be ridden.
- The Salute should be with the reins (and whip) in one hand and the free hand lowered to the rider's side. The rider should nod his head. Riders can also salute with the head only.
- If there is a team competition, teams can be made up of three riders or more, but only the top three scores will count. A nation may enter only one team and it must be stated which riders are part of the team.