

From: Office - ICDA
Sent: Tuesday, 22 April, 2025 18:46
To: Manuel Bandeira de Mello

Topic: Review first shows - Cones competitions at Exloo & Kronenberg

Dear Manu,

We are writing to express athlete concerns about the cones course design, based on the first two major competitions of the European season at Exloo and Kronenberg. Course Designers are continuing to prioritise technically difficult cones courses over courses that flow.

This has the potential to cause horse welfare issues as the designs have been very horse unfriendly. As the attached course maps from the Kronenberg competition highlights, turnouts were required to “double back” after each of the first six cones. We have reviewed some of the video evidence (for Horse Pairs and Horse Teams) and it presents a negative image for our sport.

You should also be aware that, at Kronenberg, athletes made representations to Officials the previous evening as the course was open for inspection and made suggestions on how the course could be improved without any material changes. The President of the Jury expressed a willingness to consider amendments but the Course Designer and the Technical Delegate were unwilling to make any (even simple) changes even though there was ample time to do so.

We would like to recommend the FEI Technical Committee takes the following steps:

1. A letter should be sent to Course Designers and Technical Delegates reminding them of the importance of horse welfare and social license issues in the design of cones courses.
2. The FEI Driving Technical Committee should consider an additional rule allowing the President of the Jury to ask the Course Designer to make changes to the course design where horse welfare issues so justify. We also believe that when athletes make representations as above then the Technical Delegate is obliged to give due consideration to such concerns.
3. As a broader issue ICDA continues to recommend changes to the scoring system, particularly in so far as cones are concerned to ensure that cones can make a meaningful contribution to the balance of the three competitions without the need to create horse unfriendly designs.

Please let us know if you need more information. We are looking forward to discuss this next week at our online meeting (date / time to be confirmed).

Thank you - best regards.
Marie

Marie de Ronde-Oudemans
Secretary General ICDA



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