



International Carriage Drivers Association

MEMORANDUM

To: Manuel Bandeira de Mello, Director of Driving FEI
Aude Barby, FEI Manager Driving & Para Driving

From: Hugh Scott Barrett
Marie de Ronde-Oudemans

Date: November 1, 2025

Re: **FEI Driving Rules and Para Driving Rules – draft changes dated 10th October 2025**

Dear Manu & Aude,

ICDA would like to propose a meeting to discuss the the FEI Driving Rules and Para Driving Rules as published on 10th October 2025.

It is good to see that a number of ICDA's recommendations have been taken up by the Driving Technical Committee. It is also encouraging to see that the Veterinary Committee will conduct a comprehensive review of Driving events in 2026 during which they will assess the format and timing of horse inspections as part of its Rules Revision as one of ICDA's key concerns is to shorten the time that athletes and their support teams are at competitions.

There are however several amendments which are difficult to understand in light of the feedback from National Federations and other stakeholders.

SCORING SYSTEM – Art. 900.4 & 958

In particular ICDA is seeking clarification on the decision to leave the scoring system unchanged so far as Dressage is concerned (Article 900.4 and Article 958). A number of Federations, including EEF, NED and US have made the case for change. ICDA has widespread support amongst its members for change. The argument that from a welfare and image perspective such a shift would be counter productive does not stand up to scrutiny. Those arguing for change are looking for a fair balance between the three phases and the clear evidence confirms that at the moment dressage counts for significantly higher percentages in the overall results than either marathon or cones. The establishment of a Working Group does not feel like an adequate response to this issue. In the absence of any change it is likely that these issues will still continue to be discussed for the foreseeable future.

PROTECTIVE HEADGEAR – Art. 928

By contrast a decision has been taken by the Driving Committee quite fundamentally to change the wording around Protective Headgear (Article 928) based on feedback from the National Federations which was not compelling. A number of Federations supported the "strongly recommended" approach which reflects the views of large numbers of athletes. It is very difficult therefore for ICDA to explain this last minute change.

GROOMS – Art. 942.7

ICDA would also like to highlight that Article 942.7 is not at all clear. It is explained that it is not the attention for grooms to be assessed after a fall until after the completion of a phase but the words "must not re-enter the carriage" until after the assessment has been made mean that this rule is in conflict with the explanation.



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REFERENCE WORLD CUP RULES

There is a reference to World Cup Format competitions on page 109 which says “please refer to the World Cup Rules” but there is no obvious place in the World Cup Rules where this is picked up.

The decision to refer to Phases instead of competitions has a knock on effect for Substitutions in Word Cup events which continue to refer to Competitions. This has been a hotly debated topic. In particular there is no clarity about whether changing horses between rounds is allowed. There is no separate clause in the World Cup Rules so we believe some clarification is required on how to deal with Substitutions in World Cup Competitions.

PREAMBLE

We think the preamble should refer to 1st January 2026 and not 1st January 2022.

We would be happy to discuss any of the above at your convenience. Hugh is flying to Hong Kong on Monday, so our suggestion is whether it will be possible for him to meet with you – Manu – on Wednesday prior to the Rules Session on Thursday.

Hope to hear from you. Thank you - best regards.

Hugh Scott Barrett
Marie de Ronde-Oudemans