



Athlete Selection Policy for the FEI European Championships (Dressage)

Crozet (FRA) 2025

Introduction

This Policy sets out the process for selecting athletes and horses for the FEI European Championships (Dressage) in Crozet (FRA) 26 -31 August 2025.

Section 1 – Key Timelines

24th July 2025	Horse Sport Ireland formally submits the nominated entries to the FEI, to include a certificate of capability for the FEI European Championships (Dressage) pursuant to FEI General Regulations. Inclusive on the nomination entry list does not confer selection to the team.
1st August 2025	The Dressage High Performance Manager will determine the selected athlete combinations who will represent Ireland at the FEI European Championships (Dressage) in Crozet (FRA).
19th August 2025	Horse Sport Ireland will submit the Definite Entries to the FEI for the FEI European Championships (Dressage) in Crozet (FRA).

Section 1A – Discretion to Field a Team

Notwithstanding the attainment of the Minimum Eligibility Requirements (MER) by athlete/horse combinations, the High Performance Manager (HPM) reserves the right not to nominate or field a team for the FEI European Championships (Dressage) where, in their sole and absolute discretion, the overall standard of performances, form, or consistency of eligible combinations does not meet the standard deemed necessary to represent Ireland competitively at Championship level. In such circumstances, consideration may instead be given to nominating one or more individual athlete/horse combinations where it is considered that their inclusion is in the best interests of the programme and consistent with the core objective of achieving the best result for Ireland.

Section 2 - Eligibility for Nomination

- 2.1 All athletes and horses wishing to compete at the FEI Europeans Championships (Dressage) must in the first instance achieve a Minimum Eligibility Requirement (MER) in accordance with the FEI Qualification Procedures. Please note that the achievement of the MER is a basic requirement and in no way confers an obligation upon the High-Performance Manager to select an Athlete/Horse combination.
- 2.2 It is the sole responsibility of each Athlete to ensure that they have the required MER for the level of Championship.

FEI qualification criteria for the European Championships – Dressage:
In order to qualify for participation at the 2025 FEI Dressage European Championship, athletes and horses must have attained (as a combination) a result of at least 66% attributed by the Ground Jury and by any two different FEI Level 4 Dressage Judges, of a nationality other than that of the rider, in a Grand Prix, at two different CDI3*/CDI4*/CDI5*/CDI-W or CDIO events, from 1st January 2024 until the date of nominated entries.

- 2.3 For clarity, see Section 1A for Horse Sport Ireland's discretionary authority in fielding a team.

Section 3 - Responsibilities

- 3.1 It is each athlete's responsibility to be fully cognisant of the current FEI Rules for Dressage and the FEI Clean Sport policy.
- 3.2 Athletes must strictly abide by the following:
 - a) FEI General Regulations and FEI Discipline Sport Rules
 - b) FEI Code of Conduct for the Welfare of the horse.
 - c) FEI Equine Anti-Doping Rules and Equine Controlled Medication Rules and the Human Anti-Doping Rules as set out by the FEI and Sport Ireland.
 - d) Horse Sport Ireland General Rules.
 - e) The Horse Sport Ireland Athlete Code of Conduct.
 - f) Prompt communications with the Dressage High Performance Manager, Team Veterinarian, and Horse Sport Ireland in relation to the Horse Sport Ireland High Performance Programme requirements/requests.
 - g) Athletes must show a commitment to personal fitness and professional behaviour.
 - h) All Athletes selected will be required to wear the official NF kit where provided while participating at the FEI European Championships (Dressage).

Section 4 - Veterinary

- 4.1 Horse Sport Ireland can request that a horse be made available for inspection by the Team Veterinarian(s) or an appointed Veterinarian at any time. Athletes must comply with this request.
- 4.2 Athletes must notify Horse Sport Ireland of any change in their horse's health status or of any veterinary issues when they first become apparent.
- 4.3 The Horse Sport Ireland can send the Team Veterinarian or an appointed Veterinarian to take a blood and/or urine sample from a horse at any time, for

- the purposes of testing for prohibited substances, and/or FEI Pre-Arrival Testing and/or as part of an assessment of the horse's well-being.
- 4.4 Athletes (at their own expense) shall make available, upon the request of the Team Veterinarian or an appointed Veterinarian, the veterinary records of horse(s) being considered for selection. In addition, athletes, (at their own expense), shall be responsible for supplying any follow-up diagnostic information requested by the Team Veterinarian for horses being considered for selection. Failure to comply with any request of the Team Veterinarian or an appointed Veterinarian may adversely affect a combination in respect of selection.
 - 4.5 Each athlete will be required to keep a medication logbook for their horses in which they shall record all products, treatments, foodstuffs and all supplements used on or given to their horse commencing **42 days** before the event until the conclusion of the FEI Europeans Championships (Dressage).
 - 4.6 The Team Veterinarian will be entitled to view this logbook at any time. Athletes are required to submit this logbook together with the Medication and Anti-Doping Control Declaration (Appendix 3) to the Team Veterinarian for assessment on or before the FEI Final Definite Entries in line with Rule 8.12 of the Horse Sport Ireland General Rules.
 - 4.7 In the event that treatments and medications are necessary subsequent to the submission of the logbook, express approval is required from Team Veterinarian and Horse Sport Ireland. This is a mandatory requirement to ensure that squad horses are managed appropriately within the pre-competition window and before departure.
 - 4.8 For the purposes of section IV, Horse Sport Ireland reserves the right to remove an athlete combination from selection, where the athlete does not comply with any of the above veterinary requests, or the horse is deemed unsound and/or unfit by the Team Veterinarian to travel and compete at the European Championships (Dressage). The decision of Horse Sport Ireland on advice from Team Veterinarian is final.

Section 5 – Specific Nomination Criteria

Core Objective:

This nomination policy combines both competition and general criteria to allow the Dressage High Performance Manager (HPM) to select the Irish Dressage Team and/or individual athlete/horse combinations to compete at the FEI European Championships (Dressage). The primary objective is to achieve the best possible result for Ireland at the Championship.

Important Note:

The HPM reserves the right, at their sole and absolute discretion, not to nominate a team where, in their view, the overall standard of athlete/horse combinations does not meet the competitive standard required to represent Ireland at Championship level. In such cases, consideration may be given to nominating one or more individuals, where this is deemed to be in the best interest of the programme.

The HPM also reserves the right not to nominate individual athlete/horse combinations who have achieved the MER, where in their sole opinion, the standard of the combination is unlikely to deliver a creditable Championship result.

5.1 Competition Measures

In assessing the performance of athlete/horse combinations, the HPM will consider the following competition measures:

- i. Results achieved at CDI3*, CDI4*, CDI5*, CDIO*-NC, and CDI-W level in 2024 and 2025, with particular emphasis on the Grand Prix, the Grand Prix Special, and the Short Grand Prix, with secondary consideration given to the Freestyle.
- ii. Consistency of scores above 68%. While consistency at or above this threshold is preferred, the HPM reserves the right to consider scores below 68% where merited by circumstances, progression, or overall trajectory.
- iii. The level of competition (star level of events) and the strength and composition of judging panels.
- iv. The performance trajectory and evidence of upward progression across the qualification period.
- v. Greater weight will be afforded to performances in 2025 compared to 2024.
- vi. The overall quality of the start list at competitions attended (based on FEI athlete rankings and the form of competitors).
- vii. The experience and track record of the athlete and horse as a combination, including their ability to perform under the pressures of a major Championship.
- viii. The degree of commitment demonstrated by the athlete to the Horse Sport Ireland Dressage High Performance Programme.

5.2 General Considerations

In addition to performance-based measures, the HPM will give due consideration to the following general factors:

- i. The soundness and fitness of the horse to travel and compete at the Championship. Non-disclosure of relevant veterinary information may result in removal from consideration or selection.
- ii. The health, fitness, and availability of the athlete, including any declared illnesses or injuries that may affect performance.
- iii. Past performances and current form of both the athlete and horse, either individually or as a combination.

- iv. Consideration of circumstances behind any non-completions (elimination, retirement, or withdrawal), including any supporting submissions made by the athlete.
- v. Suitability of the combination for the expected conditions and arena characteristics at Crozet (FRA).
- vi. The ability of the athlete and their support team to contribute to a professional, cohesive, and high-performing Championship environment.
- vii. The capacity of the combination to compete successfully at top-level international competition.
- viii. Previous experience and/or demonstrated success at Championship level.
- ix. The ability of the athlete to prepare their horse to peak condition for a targeted campaign such as a Championship.
- x. Consistency of performance and the likelihood of a performance that will positively contribute to the team or individual result.
- xi. Exceptional ability or podium potential may, at the sole discretion of the HPM, justify the selection of a combination with less consistency or experience ahead of others.
- xii. Degree of ongoing commitment and contribution to the Horse Sport Ireland Dressage High Performance Programme.

Section 6 – Force Majeure

- 6.1 In considering the performances of athletes at events or other attendances in line with this policy, the High-Performance Manager may, at her discretion, give weight to extenuating circumstances.
- 6.2 For the purposes of section 6.1 above, extenuating circumstances means an inability to compete, or perform or contribute at an optimum level arising from:
 - i. Injury or illness.
 - ii. Bereavement or personal misfortune, and/or;
 - iii. Any other factors reasonably considered by the High-performance Manager to constitute extenuating circumstances;
- 6.3 Athletes unable to compete at events or other attendances must advise the High-Performance Manager by email of this fact and the reasons thereof as soon as practicable after the extenuating circumstances arise.

Section 7 - Removal of Athletes and/or horses

- 7.1 An athlete and horse as a combination, or separately, may be removed from nomination to FEI and FEI Definite Entries by the High-Performance Manager for any reason, including in particular the following:
 - a) Violation or alleged violation of the Sport Ireland and FEI (Human) Anti-Doping protocol, policies and procedure.
 - b) Violation or alleged violation of FEI Equine Anti-Doping Rules.

- c) An adverse analytical finding following on from testing pursuant to Sport Ireland, FEI Clean Sport protocol, (Human & Equine), Horse Sport Ireland National Equine Anti-Doping Programme policies and procedures.
- d) Violation or alleged violation of the FEI Sport Rules and Regulations and Horse Sport Ireland General Rules.
- e) Violation or alleged of the Horse Sport Ireland Code of Conduct.
- f) Any action which could damage the reputation of the sport or the country.
- g) Selected horse produces an adverse analytical finding following on from an assessment and/or Pre- Arrival Testing.
- h) The Team Veterinarian determines the nominated horse unsound to travel and compete at the FEI European Championships (Dressage).
- i) The Team Veterinarian determines the selected horse incapable of travelling to the FEI European Championships (Dressage) for any stated reason.
- j) Where an athlete falls ill or sustains an injury subsequent to nomination by the Dressage High Performance Manager and is certified by the Horse Sport Ireland Medical Officer or his/her designate as unfit to travel and compete.

Section 8 - Disclaimers

- 8.1 These procedures are based on FEI General Regulations, applicable FEI Sport Rules as presently known and understood. The selection criteria are based on the latest information available to Horse Sport Ireland. However, the selections are always subject to unforeseen, intervening circumstances, and may not have accounted for every possible contingency.
- 8.2 As such, this selection policy can be amended at any time by Horse Sport Ireland. Horse Sport Ireland reserves the right to amend or change the Policy where necessary at any time in order to fulfil any objective within the Policy. In the event that Horse Sport Ireland is of the opinion that such an amendment is necessary as a result of any change in any of the above stated rules, regulations and agreements, to give effect to the policy following discovery of a drafting error or oversight or for any other reason determined to be in the best interests of Horse Sport Ireland, Horse Sport Ireland shall not be responsible or liable in any way to anyone as a result of any such amendment.

Section 9 - Appeals

- 9.1 An eligible athlete who fails to be selected for (1) the nominated entry list or the team selection, and/or reserve athlete in the team of 5, pursuant to the criteria set out in this policy, may appeal against said omission as arising as set out in this section.
- 9.2 Limitation of Appeal - The sole grounds of any appeal are that:
Any appeal is limited to grounds of:
 - (a) bias, and/or
 - (b) failure to adhere to the relevant Athlete Selection Policy
- 9.3 Any appeal under section 9 will be dealt with by Sport Dispute Solutions Ireland (Just Sport Ireland Limited) <http://sportdisputesolutions.ie/about/> SDSI is an independent dispute resolution service for Irish Sport.

9.4 Appeals will be heard by Sport Dispute Solutions Ireland and otherwise proceed in accordance with the time limits set out below and in accordance SDSI Arbitration Rules for final and binding arbitration. Sport Dispute Solutions Ireland Rules.

9.5 Notice of Appeal:

Any eligible athlete wishing to appeal against their omission from the selection must lodge a Notice of Appeal Form (Appendix A, SDSI Rules), and comply with the requirements as set out in Rule 14 and Rule 57 of SDSI Arbitration Rules.

Athletes must submit the completed form within 36 hours of published nominated entries on the Horse Sport Ireland website and in respect of the team selection and reserve team athlete, the clock starts from the publication of the team selection on the HSI website. Athletes should note that the time limit as set out in SDSI Rules 14.2 (b) does not apply in this instance.

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9.6 Statement of Appeal:

Within 48 hours after lodging the SDSI Rules, for nominated entry list or team selection the appellant (the athlete making the appeal) must file a Statement of Appeal as set out in Rule 14.2 (f) & (g) of SDSI Arbitration Rules, Appendix B. Athletes should note that the time limit of (7) days as set out in SDSI Rules 14.2 (f) does not apply in this instance.

9.7 Reply

Within 48 hours from receipt of the Statement of Appeal, the Respondent (High Performance Manager) shall file a "Reply Form" in accordance with the provisions of Rule 14.3 (a) & (b) and Rule 57 of the SDSI Arbitration Rules. Athletes should note that the time limit of (14) days as set out in SDSI Rule 14.2 (a) does not apply in this instance.

Ends/

Approved by the HPM, Anne-Marie Dunphy
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