



Criteria for the selection of the Youth Squads (U16, U18, U21) for the Eventing High Performance Pathway

Pony U16 Programme

1. Nature of the Programme

- 1.1 The purpose of this programme is to provide Ireland's eventing athletes with the best preparation within the allocated resources to represent Team Ireland at Youth European Championships and to provide a performance pathway for long term development.
- 1.2 This programme aims to make the best athletes better, through the provision of a range of services and coaching support. The Programme also seeks to work closely with the Parents and Owners to ensure that they are fully involved with the process of trying to win medals. As a member of the Youth Performance Pathway ('YPP') the athlete and horse will receive guidance regarding their specified individual programmes, which incorporates a team focus, coordinated by the Eventing Youth Squad Performance Managers in each age group and Horse Sport Ireland. This programme aims to improve the performance of the athlete and horse, as a combination, with the ultimate goal of securing podium finishes.
- 1.3 Where a combination is selected for the Youth Eventing High Performance Pathway, the combination will be named on the relevant High Performance squad. The criteria below sets out the requirements in order to be included on the **Elite, High Performance or Development Squad in each age category.**

2. Pony (U16) Squads

Each Athlete/Horse combination ("the Combination") is required to meet the following criteria to be considered for inclusion on the '**Pony Performance Pathway**'

- 2.1 The purpose of the squad is to select the combinations that are developing and have demonstrated an ability to improve, from participating in a High Performance Programme and be committed to
 - i. Being willing to make change and develop;
 - ii. Commitment to team and to drive best team culture;
 - iii. Have personal coaches, individual performance plans, personal fitness structures and horse management programmes in place;
 - iv. Ownership of the horse must be secured and they must be available to compete for Team Ireland.
- 2.2 The Pony HPM will select *up to* 60 athletes to form the **Elite, High Performance and Development Squads.**

Under 16 Athletes

- i. Athletes must be between 11 and 15 years old on 1st January.
- ii. Athletes must be eligible to compete for IRL.
- iii. Have a **pony with international potential, that meets the measurement rules** All new **pony** registrations (i.e. **ponies** that have never been in the **FEI** System) must be measured at **FEI** NF Official Measuring, the regulatory **height** of 148cm/ 149cm with shoes will be applied.

- iv. Athletes must have ambitions to compete at 2* level with a view to progression to the applicable Championship squad.

In addition, the following is a mandatory requirement, athletes should have attained at least one of the below:

Elite Squad

- i. Be shortlisted for the Pony European Squad in the preceding 2 years
- ii. Are qualified for the Pony European Championships in 2021

High Performance Squad

- i. Combinations that have MER's at 3 x EI100
- ii. Athletes that have previous EI110 form with a new pony with EI110 form

Development Squad

- i. Combinations that have MERS at 1 x EI100
- ii. PLUS they must be assessed as a combination in all 3 phases by the Pony HPM or a designated coach approved by the Pony HPM. Remote Assessment by video analysis can be permissible.
- iii. **New combinations without EI experience** must be assessed as a combination in all 3 phases by the Pony HPM or a designated coach approved by the Pony HPM. Remote Assessment by video analysis can be permissible.
- iv. **Criteria for assessment in appendix 1**

- 2.3 The Pony High Performance Manager reserves the right to remove a combination from the U16 Squad if the combination is deemed to have made insufficient progress through the competition levels.
- 2.4 It must be clear that the Combination is open to improvement and has demonstrated the ability to improve from training, and the support of the Pony HPM.
- 2.5 The **Pony HPM** reserves the right to amend and update the criteria for inclusion in the **Pony Elite, High Performance, or Development Squad**.
- 2.6 Combinations that are not currently listed on either the **Pony Elite, High Performance, or Development Squad** may be invited to join one of the HP Squads at any time. This invitation will be wholly dependent on results, attention to detail with regard to performance planning, team player orientation and the capability to perform to the highest standard under pressure. Such Combinations will be considered based on their results in previous seasons and 2021. The HPM reserves the right to add additional combinations at any time.

3. General criteria

- 3.1 The primary focus will be on combinations that have proven ability and that have already shown this ability [or potential] to represent Ireland at International level, and at 2* competitions.

- 3.2 In all instances, the standard of competition, the number of competitors, the number and level/experience of the judges, the type of ground/weather conditions and the overall quality of the competition will be taken into consideration.
- 3.3 Horses must be sound and fit to compete to the satisfaction of the HSI Team Vet or his designate. Athletes and owners must be prepared to submit their horses for fitness assessments by the HSI Team Vet or his designate and to submit a full veterinary history, as requested.
- 3.4 Athletes must be fit and able to compete to the satisfaction of the Pony High Performance Manager and the HSI Medical Officer.
- 3.5 Athletes must provide all requested paperwork regarding competition plans and performance reviews to the Pony High Performance Manager & Administrator **within the agreed deadlines**. Athletes should note that where the requisite paperwork is not submitted within the timeframe agreed, athletes are at risk of being removed from the **High Performance Programme**.
- 3.6 Squad Athletes agree that he/she will not comment publicly on **any issue** or concern he/she may have unless or until it is resolved **to the satisfaction of both the Athlete and HSI**.
- 3.7 Subject to clause 3.7, Squad Athletes acknowledge and agree that despite anything else in this Criteria, Squad Athletes will not make or provide adverse public comment on social media, national print or any other public forum, on any HSI matter related to the High Performance Eventing Programme and/or team to which he/she has been selected, including, but not only, any member of it, selection to it or performance of it. 'Adverse' in this clause means any comment which can be seen to be disparaging of, detrimental or prejudicial to, the Team, the 'HPM' and Horse Sport Ireland. Further, Athletes are bound by the Horse Sport Ireland Social Media Policy, appended at Schedule 2.
- 3.8 Any change in the selection procedure[s] caused by a change in the FEI Rules will be immediately distributed to the relevant athletes. The selection criteria are based on the latest information available to HSI. However, selections are always subject to unforeseen, intervening circumstances, and realistically may not have accounted for every possible contingency.
- 3.9 As such, the criteria can be amended at any time by Horse Sport Ireland. In the event, that Horse Sport Ireland is of the opinion that such an amendment is necessary as a result of any change in the FEI guidelines; 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.

4. Squad Support

- 4.1 The High Performance Manager and/or Coaches will support members of the **Pony High Performance Pathway** in the form of interval meetings (either at training or in competition) to identify how each Athlete can improve or enhance their respective performance(s).
- 4.2 Athletes must be prepared to work within the High Performance Programme structure and may be required to submit "training and competition plans" to the High Performance Manager, at the time of initial selection to the programme, and subsequently as requested during the year, by the HPM.
- 4.4 Once selected for the **High Performance Pathway** horses may be required to present their horses for a **Veterinary Examination** at the request of the HPM. Athletes are requested to

keep a veterinary log book for their respective squad horses for inspection at any time by the HSI Team Vet or his designate.

4.5 The Pony HPM reserves the right to:

- Request all veterinary records pertaining to any squad horse;
- Require a horse to undergo a further Veterinary Assessment at any time
- Remove the combination from the **High Performance Pathway** upon veterinary advice, if the HPM deems appropriate;

Any questions or queries with regard to this programme can be directed to the Pony HPM.