



Observation of horse and rider

Preface

The relationship between horse and human is a constantly evolving process which ultimately aims to achieve as conflict-free cooperation as is possible between two living beings.

Obviously the reality of life is that the full scope of this aim cannot necessarily be achieved at all times. In this criteria catalogue different examples of this

cooperation are categorised conscientiously, professionally and appropriately, in order to be able to judge the interaction as well as the occasional confrontation of horse and human in a **positive (= horse-friendly)** as well as in a **negative way (= non-horse-friendly)**.

The criteria catalogue serves as an aid for orientation and discussion and not as a check-list to be processed!

Generally and especially in the area between clearly horse-friendly and non-horse-friendly, which actually occurs frequently in real-life situations, the judge in the

practice area, with his expertise and experience, is required to act responsibly!

For reference the table is divided into three columns:

■ **Horse friendly conduct: No need for action!**

Here horse-friendly cooperation is described.

■ **Conspicuous issues: Requires attention!**

The judge needs to take a closer look. It may be a question of abuse or it may be a communication problem due to incorrect application of the aids. It may also, however, after consideration of the overall impression, be judged as acceptable and reasonable.

■ **Non-horse-friendly conduct: Need for immediate action!**

The rider should be addressed. It is a question here of appearances, circumstances or conduct which can lead to measures extending from cautioning i.e. verbal or written warning, up to disqualification.

The middle column "conspicuous issues" forms a "grey area", often involving very common inadequacies of horse and/or human.

This has to be monitored carefully during ongoing observation in order to decide

- if it is still acceptable under the circumstances
- it improves and becomes horse-friendly again or
- it degenerates in to the direction of being non-horse-friendly.

Naturally the person in question should always be approached with the necessary and appropriate sensitivity.


Depending on the situation, the contact with the rider can be of

- an advisory nature and provide clarification for both sides or
- it can already be of a cautioning nature.

If possible, it can also be helpful to speak to the respective Trainer.


Observation of horse and rider

Reference for classification and evaluation especially for judges in the practice areas/warm up arena

	Horse friendly conduct: No need for action!	Conspicuous issues: Observation / Monitoring	Non-horse friendly conduct: Need for immediate action!
Way of Riding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> harmonious, in good cooperation understanding, sensitive confident, consistent, appropriate, technically correct in application of the aids and in the use of auxiliary aids, also in conflict situations comprehensible and fair 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> incorrect application of the rider's aids or techniques constant backwards actions with the hand or moving about from side to side (sawing on the mouth) causing a tight head-neck posture situational inappropriate driving aids and use of the whip and spurs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> aggressive behaviour inappropriate emotional outbreaks specific implementation of techniques deliberately aimed against the horse conscious and obvious backwards actions with the hand or moving about from side to side (sawing on the mouth) rough and incorrect use of aids and auxiliary aids injury through spurs, whip, bit, equipment any use of force (e.g. punishing horse with rough rein aids)
Paces / Gaits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> mostly good regularity of movement, supple, well-balanced evenly swinging with corresponding "enjoyment of movement" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> situational insecurity or dysfunctional tension in the sequence of movement disturbances in rhythm or balance particularly dull paces strikingly cumbersome sequence of movement (tiredness, exhaustion, excessive strain, ...) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> constant or repeated disturbance in rhythm or balance lameness – repeated bolting or bucking constant, excessive head shaking continuously repeating significant resistance (e.g. rearing, etc. ...) consistent and extreme faltering in the paces
Back	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> supple back harmoniously swinging in rhythm with the motion regular, supple contracting and relaxing of the muscles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> making the back hollow, possibly in connection with a high posture of the head tense, not swinging back or bucking in response to the rider's aids 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> strikingly hollow back constant, repeated bucking constant, uncontrolled and unspecific kicking
Mouth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> closed mouth content, supple chewing animated salivation supple, moving and salivated lips occasional opening of the mouth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> grinding teeth open mouth cramping of lips showing of teeth protruding tongue (to front or side) tongue above the bit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> tongue pinched/turned blue blood and rawness in or around the mouth or blood in saliva open, bleeding bare or even raw patches constantly open mouth in connection with rein aids
Head-neck posture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> according to the classical principles the horse's face briefly in front of or at the vertical momentarily deeper head-neck posture with the horse's face slightly behind the vertical in extended posture forwards/ downwards on the bit genuine relative elevation on long reins with loose reins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the horse's face behind the vertical restricted head-neck posture absolutely raised head clearly resistant above the bit clearly against the bit repeated shaking of the head occasional extremely deep head position in connection with restricted or tight head-neck posture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> extreme posture positions with fixation caused by specific influence physical contact of the mouth with the chest caused by the riders influence deliberate, extreme over flexing sideways continuous extremely deep head position in connection with restricted or confined head-neck posture

Observation of horse and rider

Reference for classification and evaluation especially for judges in the practice areas/warm up arena

	Horse friendly conduct: No need for action!	Conspicuous issues: Observation / Monitoring	Non-horse friendly conduct: Need for immediate action!
Eye / face	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> alert relaxed aware of the environment attentive sometimes also excited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> bulging eyes watching with wide open eyes – tensions and cramping in the eye area conspicuous rolling of the eyes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> constant or repeated abnormalities of the eyes (bulging eyes, etc...) dull, introverted apathetic expression injuries or acute medical problems/ anomalies in the eye area
Ears	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ears pricked both ears calm, relaxed movement of ears in rhythm with sequence of movement content, attentive movement of ears one ear or both backward concentrated towards the rider 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ears laid flat back constantly pointing backwards hanging limply downwards to the sides 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ears clearly and constantly lain back in tense manner pressed extremely downwards to the sides (due to pain or exhaustion) outer/inner injuries of the ears
Tail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> swinging harmoniously with the horse's movement carried in light and free manner, swinging swinging to-and-fro swishing the tail for its natural purpose (warding off flies) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> tail carried crookedly clamped, sometimes pinched tail repeated swishing of tail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> constant and fierce swishing of tail constantly very clamped tail
Nostrils / breathing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> relaxed snorting relaxed working nostrils regular breathing, possibly higher breathing sequence with nostrils working more intensively, appropriate to the sporting activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> excessive snorting or coughing nervous function of nostrils, short of breath raised, cramped nostrils conspicuous respiratory sound 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> constantly, cramped, raised nostrils and even pulling up of upper lip conspicuously loud respiratory sound (when strongly developed with suspected lack of oxygen supply, shortness of breath) purulent or bloody discharge from nostrils wounds or blood in or at nostrils or nose-line
Sweating – amount	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> moderate sweating normal sweating taking into consideration the sporting exertion and weather condition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> strong sweating over whole body clear localised formation of foam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> extreme and wide-spread formation of foam, even as far as spreading of foam over the whole body
Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> professional and animal-friendly fitting of equipment [noseband (sufficient room for chewing and breathing) saddle, leg protection, etc. ...] appropriate, technically correct use of double bridle occasionally with curb reins taken up with angle of approx. 45° appropriate, technically correct use of equipment / special bridles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conspicuous tightening of equipment, apparently incorrectly tacked up (saddle, bit, noseband, brushing boots, girth, bandages, etc...) too tight or loose double bridle conspicuous use of special bridles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> incorrectly or too tightly tacked up and / or unreasonably restricting the horse's movement preventing mouth and / or tongue activity injuries or bloody bare or even raw patches caused by the equipment incorrect usage of double bridle with double bridle reins held too tightly extremely shortly buckled curb chain incorrect use of special bridles