

# Guide for Writers (Pencillers)

## **JUDGE AND WRITER: A TEAM**

Judges depend upon the writer to quickly, accurately, legibly, and quietly record the scores and comments made about each test.

Judges are grateful for the volunteer help and are usually willing to answer any questions a writer might have in relation to the role they perform.

## **CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN JUDGE AND WRITER**

It is the judge's responsibility to judge the test. It is not appropriate for the writer to comment on the judge's decision, nor to question that decision. It is what the judge sees that matters, so if a judge does not see a mistake, don't comment. In addition, any comments (written or verbal) made by the judge while in the judge's box/car are strictly between the judge and the rider. Never carry these conversations outside the judge's box/car.

Never volunteer information about competitors or their horses, even if asked by the judge.

Wait for the judge to set the tone as to whether conversation will be encouraged between tests or during breaks. Most judges are helpful and friendly, and will initiate some small talk, but some need time to review tests or just clear their minds. While it is tempting for the writer to ask questions about their own riding or a particular horse problem, don't do it!

## **WATCHING THE TEST**

Writing takes concentration to accurately record the scores and comments. It is not possible for a writer to watch the test in its entirety while recording the scores and comments.

## **THE SCORING PROCESS**

The writer must quickly and legibly record only the comments the judge makes, without adding or deleting anything. All judges have their own style for giving comments and scores on a ride. Some judges give so many comments that the writer

may have difficulty keeping up. In this case, the writer should be sure to record the score as soon as it is given, and then continue with the comments.

In the event that a judge fails to give a score for a movement, the writer should be cognisant of the fact, and skip to the next movement. At the first opportunity the writer should call the omission to the judge's attention.

## **THE SCORES**

The judge's scores will range from 0 to 10, with a 10 being the maximum (best) score that can be awarded for any one movement.

To more heavily emphasise a movement, some are 'weighted' with a coefficient of two (2).which are pre printed on the test in the second column. The writer need not worry about coefficients. All multiplication will be handled later by the scorers.

Scores are written in the first column of boxes on the test sheet.

The third column is for the total points earned on each movement. Totals are left for the scorer to fill out; the scribe is only responsible for one column: POINTS.

Collective marks at the end of each test and a few more general comments may be dictated to the writer or written by the judge. However, often the judge prefers to complete this part of the test sheet themselves.

## **ERRORS**

An error occurs when a rider goes off course (rides the wrong pattern) or in some way does not perform the movement as prescribed. The judge will notify the writer when an error is given.

An error is marked in addition to the regular score. The points given for the movement where the error occurred are put into the 'points' box, as usual. The word ERROR or EOC (Error of Course)

is put under 'remarks' (room permitting) or under 'directives'. The scribe should circle the word ERROR to draw attention to it. In addition it is appropriate to place a large asterisk (\*) on the left hand side of the page next to the movement number.

On the EFA test sheets the writer should also circle error at the bottom of the test sheet so it also easy for the scorer's to see.

For the first error, two points are deducted; for the second, four points; for the third, the competitor is eliminated (although the judge may allow the rider to continue). The total deduction will be entered by the scorer at the bottom of the page. In some cases the judge will also do this, and check that the error has been noted correctly.

Use of the voice (speaking to the horse or clicking of the tongue) is not an error of test, but it will be penalised. At the judge's direction, simply write 'use of voice' in the remarks column for the movement in which it occurs. Circle this also to draw attention. The judge will tell you how to handle the point deductions .Not all judges will deduct marks as not all will have heard the use of the voice. If the judge does here, two marks will be deducted from the mark that would have been given for the movement. So that the competitor can see what has happened the writer should note the mark that would have been given for the movement then cross this out and reduce it by 2 marks. If you are not sure check with the judge at the end of the test.

## **BEFORE THE EVENT**

Familiarise yourself with basic dressage terms and how to spell them. Study the commonly used abbreviations listed. When asked to be a writer, you should inquire with the organising committee (OC) about which tests you will be required to write for and study each of the tests before the event. It is etiquette not to accept a position to write for a judge that you will compete before later in the event.

## THE COMPETITION BEGINS

As each horse warms up by working around the arena before the ride begins, the writer must check the horse's number to ensure it is the same number marked on the start list/draw of the competition. The number will usually be on the bridle or the saddle cloth.

- If the numbers do not match, alert the judge to the problem and attempt to identify the horse and rider who have presented themselves. If the score sheets have been already been written p with the competitors and the horse's name quickly find the right score sheet for that horse, if available.  
*As a final check, write the number the horse or rider is wearing in the box on the inside of the score sheet. Write the number you actually SEE, not the number you expect to see. When there is confusion about horses and tests, it's a good idea to describe the horse on the test sheet so there will be a method for identifying the ride.*
- If a ride scratches (cancels) or just does not show up, write 'scratch' or 'no show' on the test sheet (on the label, if there is one) and give it in to the runner with the other score sheets. This way the scorer will not hold up the posting of competition scores due to waiting for another test sheet.
- After the ride is complete, make sure there is a score in every box. Make sure each test is signed by the judge before it is sent to the scorer. Any change of a score on the test must be initialed by the judge.
- Check off each horse on the start list as it completes the test. Keep an eye on the scheduled time, and if the judge requests it, inform the judge whenever the competition is running behind by more than a few minutes.
- As the day progresses, the writer should check for scheduled breaks and possible moves from arena to arena. Check the program and the folder of tests to determine

if the folder moves with the judge or stays with a particular arena. This should be explained to you when you report on arrival.

- If the runner has not picked up all the tests the writer is responsible for delivering the tests to the scorer during a break, at lunch, and at the end of the day. Never leave completed tests in the judge's box/car unattended.

## THE DAY OF THE EVENT

The writer should arrive at least 30 minutes before the start of the competition they are writing for and check in with OC. Dress in neat, comfortable sportswear and be prepared for predicted weather conditions. The secretary or volunteer coordinator will indicate the arena and judge to which the writer has been assigned.

Ask about the judging materials for that ring: score sheets, pen, updated start list or program. Also a bell if one is needed and you are writing for the judge at C. You may need to carry these materials out to the arena. Also ask about the location of the toilets etc

Once at the judge's box/car, the writer should organise the work area and check for all proper materials:

- At least 2 ink pens.
- Start list/program to follow the order to go with updated list of scratches and additions.
- Bell or whistle if not using a car.
- Stopwatch to time freestyle competitions or the 45 second limit.
- Test sheets - check to make sure that they are the correct test sheets for the judge and arena assigned. Also check to make sure that there are enough tests sheets for the number of horses entered plus a couple of spares.
- If the name of the horse and rider have already been written on each test sheet check the order of tests against the start list and make sure any additional horses have been assigned tests. There should be some blank

tests included for this purpose. If the tests are not in the order of go, a rider may be written on the wrong test and great confusion will result.

- Make sure that the tests match the competitions scheduled in the program.
- Check that there is an extra copy of each different test for the judge to follow as the ride progresses.
- Make sure that all loose items (papers, cups, tissue, etc.) are anchored down with a heavy object so that nothing blows or rustles in a sudden gust of wind.

When the judge arrives, introduce yourself, and take the time to ask any questions. Let the judge know that you have checked the items discussed above. Some judges will take this opportunity before the first competition or rider to give the writer an idea of how comments and scores will be given.

Be sure the judge is allowed time to get settled, look at the start list/program and review the first test to be judged.

### **FREESTYLE COMPETITIONS**

By the very nature of the word, Freestyle means that the rider performs the test with the movements and paces in random order. The test is divided into two sections, the Technical and the Artistic. During the test the judge is marking the technical work, watching the harmony and the choreography, the degree of difficulty and listening to the music and assessing its suitability.

### **FREESTYLE -TECHNICAL**

Movements can be repeated several times and a mark needs to be recorded for each attempt so there could end up being several marks beside a specific movement by the end of the test. The judge will tell you the pace and the movement i.e. trot left, 10m circle, and will then give you the mark. There is enough room to record each mark under the matching description of the movement on the left hand side of the page. At the end of the test, the judge will average the marks and write the final mark in the correct column. The scorers will do the rest of the additions.

Remarks in the Technical part of the test are usually brief.

It is helpful if the writer observes the test as movements may not always be clear or may not be shown at all.

### **FREESTYLE -ARTISTIC**

At this point the writer has completed their requirements. This artistic section is completed by the judge. Here the judge can use both whole and half numbers. The judge usually completes the Artistic remarks themselves.

### **YOUNG HORSE COMPETITIONS**

Writing for the Young Horse competitions is completely different to any other form of writing. In this instance, the competition may consist of 1, 2, or 3 horses all being assessed in the arena at the same time. These horses are judged by at least two judges who sit together in the one car. Usually there is only one writer but if available, two writers may be used. The writers will decide amongst themselves who will write for which horse or horses being assessed at the time.

The test is in five sections - Trot, Walk, Canter, Submissiveness and General Impression and a mark is given for each of these. Decimal points can be used e.g. 7.3 or 8.1.

Between the two judges they will decide which judge will give the mark and comment for each section to the writer/s to avoid confusion. After discussion amongst themselves, the judge will nominate the horse, the mark, the pace or section and the comment. It is the writer's job to record this information on the correct test sheet for each horse in the correct section. Both judges are required to sign the test sheet at the end of the test. Time is very limited and the role of the writer is vital to the judges being able to keep to the draw time.

## DRESSAGE TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

The following is designed to assist writers to abbreviate common terminology used by judges. The list below is not exhaustive. Writers where possible should abbreviate words on test sheets.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Abbreviation</b>
Above bit/bridle	↑ - e.g. H↑ bit
Balance	Bal e.g. not bal
Behind bit/bridle	← - e.g. Horse ← bit
Centre Line	CL – e.g. Good CL to X
Circle	O – e.g. O not round
Collected	Coll – e.g. Not really coll
Corner	L – e.g. Fell through L C-H
Diagonal	Diag – e.g. Not st on d
Disobedient	Disob – e.g. Disob at E
Downward Transition	↓ trans
Engaged/Engagement	Eng e.g. more eng
Expression	Exp – e.g. More exp in FC
Extended	Ext – e.g. More for ext
Flying Change	FC – e.g. More exp in FC
Forward	→ - e.g. Could be more →
Half Circle	½ O – e.g. Not flexed on ½ O
Half Pass	HP – e.g. ¼ s trail in HP
Hind	H – e.g. Resting H/leg in halt
Impulsion	Imp – e.g. More imp
Irregular	Irreg – e.g. some irreg strides
Lengthening	Leng – e.g. Some leng shown
Medium	Med – e.g. Need more for Med
Quarters	¼ s – e.g. ¼ s in M-F
Regular	Reg – e.g. Reg strides
Rein Back	RB – e.g. RB not st
Resisting	Res – e.g. Res into halt
Rhythm	Rhy – e.g. Good Rhy
Shoulder In	SI – e.g. SI not maintained
Simple Change	SC – e.g. No SC shown
Square	□ – e.g. Halt □ but not st
Straight	St – e.g. Halt st but not □
Trailing	Trail – e.g. ¼ s trail
Transition	Trans – e.g. Good trans to walk at C
Upward Transition	↑ trans
Vertical	Vert – e.g. Horse → vert

## DRESSAGE WRITERS 'QUICK-REF SHEET'

*The sole duty of the Writer shall be to record the Judges' scores and comments on the Horse and Rider's individual Dressage Test Sheet.*

The following is a 'Quick Reference Sheet' for dressage writers it includes suggested abbreviations.

Term	Abbreviation	The Job of the Writer
Above bit/bridle	↑ - e.g. <b>H↑</b> bit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read through the test before the event to familiarise yourself with the movements</li> <li>• Arrive at the venue 30 minutes before test is due to start</li> <li>• Report to organisers on arrival</li> <li>• Familiarise yourself with the venue; arenas, office, toilets etc</li> <li>• Make sure there is a start list in your folder</li> <li>• Check with organisers for withdrawals</li> <li>• Check there are sufficient number of test sheets in the folder plus some spares</li> <li>• Check which arena you will be in and the position your judge will sit</li> <li>• Set your watch to event time</li> <li>• Introduce yourself to the judge &amp; ask how they operate; mark first or comment first</li> <li>• Have 2 pens on hand</li> <li>• Write neatly &amp; accurately</li> <li>• Scores will range from 0 - 10</li> <li>• Make sure there is a score in each box</li> <li>• Use the abbreviations listed to save time</li> <li>• Be sure to mark in any errors with <b>E/C</b> or <b>EOC</b></li> <li>• Ask the judge to initial any changes to marks</li> <li>• Notify the judge if they miss a mark</li> <li>• Ensure that your judge signs every test sheet</li> <li>• Do not make comments to the judge about any horse or any rider</li> <li>• Do not chat as this can be disturbing</li> <li>• Make sure all tests are returned to the scorers</li> <li>• Note if a rider does not appear; advise office</li> <li>• Dress in neat comfortable smart sportswear</li> <li>• Take everything you need with you eg water</li> <li>• Be aware you may be sitting for up to 2hrs</li> </ul>
Balance	<b>Bal</b> - e.g. <b>Not bal</b>	
Behind bit/bridle	← - e.g. <b>Horse ← bit</b>	
Centre Line	<b>CL</b> - e.g. <b>Good CL to X</b>	
Circle	<b>O</b> - e.g. <b>O</b> not round	
Collected	<b>Coll</b> - e.g. Not really <b>coll</b>	
Corner	<b>L</b> - e.g. Fell through <b>L</b> C-H	
Diagonal	<b>Diag</b> - e.g. Not st on <b>diag</b>	
Disobedient	<b>Disob</b> - e.g. <b>Disob</b> at E	
Downward Transition	↓ trans	
Engaged/Engagement	<b>Eng</b> - e.g. more eng	
Expression	<b>Exp</b> - e.g. More <b>exp</b> in FC	
Extended	<b>Ext</b> - e.g. More for <b>ext</b>	
Flying Change	<b>FC</b> - e.g. More exp in <b>FC</b>	
Forward	→ - e.g. Could be more →	
Half Circle	½ <b>O</b> - e.g. Not flexed on ½ <b>O</b>	
Half Pass	<b>HP</b> - e.g. ¼ s trail in <b>HP</b>	
Hind	<b>H</b> - e.g. Resting <b>H/leg</b> in halt	
Impulsion	<b>Imp</b> - e.g. More <b>imp</b>	
Irregular	<b>Irreg</b> - e.g. some <b>irreg</b> strides	
Lengthening	<b>Leng</b> - e.g. Some <b>leng</b> shown	
Medium	<b>Med</b> - e.g. Need more for <b>Med</b>	
Quarters	¼ <b>s</b> - e.g. ¼ <b>s</b> in M-F	
Regular	<b>Reg</b> - e.g. <b>Reg</b> strides	
Rein Back	<b>RB</b> - e.g. <b>RB</b> not <b>st</b>	
Resisting	<b>Res</b> - e.g. <b>Res</b> into halt	
Shoulder In	<b>SI</b> - e.g. <b>SI</b> not maintained	
Simple Change	<b>SC</b> - e.g. No <b>SC</b> shown	
Square	□ - e.g. Halt □ but not st	
Straight	<b>St</b> - e.g. Halt <b>st</b> but not □	
Trailing	<b>Trail</b> - e.g. ¼ s <b>trail</b>	
Transition	<b>Trans</b> - e.g. Good <b>trans</b> to walk at C	
Upward Transition	↑ trans	
Vertical	<b>Vert</b> - e.g. Horse → <b>vert</b>	