



BRITISH CARRIAGEDRIVING

USING THE SCALE OF MARKS

A Guideline for Dressage Judging

- 0 - NOT EXECUTED** This mark is given very rarely and only when a movement is not executed, such as a horse trots through entire walk movement, or a circle is forgotten. If there is a fragment of the movement performed, a higher mark is in order. Normally the President of Jury will ring the bell and ask for the movement to be re-driven.
- 1 - VERY BAD** and
- 2 - BAD** these marks are about severe resistance. If a horse stops, runs back, kicks, rears or is disobedient.
- 3 - FAIRLY BAD** This could be given if there is fairly bad resistance, or a resistance combined with a lack of quality and/or mistakes. If there is a total lack of quality and mistakes it would also be possible to give a 3 or even a 2.
- 4 - INSUFFICIENT** The most important thing when giving a 4 is that one thinks of the movement as 'insufficient'. If in the quality area the horse loses the regularity throughout the movement caused by stiffness or resistance rather than unsoundness. In cases of an 'error of test' when an attempt at a movement has been made but is not successful, this would be appropriate. If bending is not consistent throughout the test then the mark should be 4 or possibly 5.
- 5 - SUFFICIENT** If the movement has been achieved, even if somewhat restricted, earthbound, lacking suppleness or impulsion, as long as regularity is clear and the figure is fairly accurate it can warrant a 5. Clearly state in your remarks why the movement is not 'satisfactory'. When there is nothing wrong with the quality, such as in a reinback where the quality is good but there were too many or too few steps back, or on the other hand if the steps back were as required but the quality was poor such as not backing straight, the mark is 5. However, if in the too few step example the quality is poor, a 4 is appropriate as is a 6 when quality is good. If a horse is falling in on the corners and circles on only one rein but is otherwise able to hold his balance and rhythm, a 5 may be an appropriate mark
- 6 - SATISFACTORY** Covers a multitude of sins. When the movement is basically correct but lacking in quality - not supple enough, needing more engagement and balance, or maybe the contact is inconsistent. This can also be for a high quality of movement with a small mistake or inaccuracy. For example, a good collection in a circle that is 'too big'. Straightness issues often result in 6's as long as the quality is otherwise good.
- 7 - FAIRLY GOOD** There is usually nothing to really complain about with a 7. Normally everything needs a little more impulsion, suppleness, expression and/or cadence. The basic qualities are clear and show a certain amount of harmony and ease within the movement itself.

8 - GOOD

There must be no basic problems. The movement has been properly executed. Maybe there was an extended trot that was worth a 9 but came down to 8 because the transition was not good enough. Usually it is the secondary part of the movement that stops

9 - VERY GOOD

'Goose bump material', with most of the movement being excellent.

10 - EXCELLENT

Perfect - no room for improvement. It is something very special to give a 10, and if awarded too lightly will lose its significance.

USE THE RANGE

Our job as judges is to be as fair and clear with the marks as possible. If we see a 'very good' or 'excellent' movement we should be brave enough to reward the competitor. However, if the movement is only worth a 6, then only give a 6. We can only mark what we see - not guess what the movement may look like. Reward the well driven movements, and give a low mark with helpful and constructive comments to a lesser performance.

These useful guidelines on using the Scale of Marks were originally produced by Stephen Clarke GB, FEI Official International Judge, to help the ridden dressage judges. With his permission, these have been changed so that they apply to the driven horse. It is hoped that you will find them helpful.