

2007 FEI World Dressage Challenge

The 2007 edition of the FEI World Dressage Challenge ended on a positive note, i.e. it was unanimously recognized by FEI Judges that the quality of riding has radically improved. In terms of quantity, the number of participants in the Adult Classes has remained the same as in 2006 (720). However, there has been a slight decrease in the Children Class with 200 riders as opposed to 227 in 2006.

This decrease may have been caused by the difference in Level between the Children's Class and the Adult Novice Class. This concern was raised in 2006 by several Judges and NFs whom thought the transition from one level to the next was often too difficult, it was therefore decided that the FEI would put together a working group in 2007 to work on the revision of the FEI World Dressage Challenge tests.

This objective was reached and the 2008 Edition of the FEI World Dressage Challenge is now composed of the following classes: Preliminary / Elementary / Medium / Advanced / PSG. The main idea behind this revision was to use this opportunity and find a way to combine both coaching and competition, therefore creating continuity between the education of coaches and their pupils. The working group used the dressage module of the coaching system to redesign the different tests used for the competition and create a better cohesion between all of them and provide a real sense of progression which did not exist until now. In order to do so, a fifth test was added therefore offering riders more opportunities to evolve.

Although the NFs of Belarus and Hungary had to cancel the competition, the overall number of participating NFs remained the same as in 2006. With the participation of Slovenia and Turkey we were able to count 53 NFs in total.

Group 1: ARG, BRA, CHI, RSA, URU

The South African Team once again took the lead in the Team Competition, dominating the other National Federations with a total score of 203.59 points. In the individual classification, though most Classes were once again won by South Africa, riders Julio Alvarez and Carlos Acuña from Uruguay distinguished themselves in the Prix St-George thanks to their excellent performance, allowing them to finish respectively 1st and 2nd of the PSG Class.

Group 2: COL, CRC, GUA, MEX, PER

This year, all Classes were won by Mexican riders which consequently allowed them to finish first of the Team Competition in front of Colombia. The battle for the third place of the Team Competition was very tight between riders from Peru (3rd) and Guatemala (4th) as only 0.31 % separated both teams.

Group 3: BOL, DOM, ECU, ESA, HON, VEN

This year, the Team Competition was won by Bolivia which was a first for this NF. The NFs of Venezuela (2nd) and Honduras (3rd) have been successful in the past finishing regularly in the leading trio of the Team Competition. Ecuador finished fourth, El Salvador fifth and Dominican Republic sixth. Riders from Ecuador took over the Novice Class with 5 riders finishing in the top 10.

Group 4: CYP, GRE, ISR, ROM, UAE

Group 4 welcomed back Turkey which had not participated in the FEI World Dressage Challenge since 1996. The Turkish Team finished third right behind the United Arab

Emirates (2nd) and Greece (1st). Though Greece riders won 2 out of the 4 Classes, Israel's rider Reut Harel won the Advanced Class and UAE's rider Cristina Calin won the Novice Class. Congratulations to Turkey which has made great efforts in developing Dressage with the help of FEI Dressage Experts and the FEI Development Fund.

Group 5: BLR, CRO, HUN, RUS, UKR

After a great success in 2006 the NF of Belarus was unfortunately not able to participate in the 2007 Edition of the FEI World Dressage Challenge, which gave the other NFs a chance to stand out. However, with Hungary's cancellation and Russia's disqualification, only riders from Croatia, Slovenia and Ukraine actually took part in the competition. With a total of 193.59 points the Team of Slovenia won first place, followed by Croatia second and Ukraine third.

Group 6: CZE, EST, LAT, LTU, SVK

The leading trio was composed this year of CZE, EST and Slovakia. Considering the Team of Slovakia finished last in the 2006 Team Competition, their third place in 2007 shows the great progress of the riders. With a score of 62.13 %, Latvia's rider Atina Lapina won the Prix St-Georges Class, therefore allowing her Team to finish fourth.

Group 7: BOT, KEN, NAM, SWZ, ZAM, ZIM

With a victory in the Prix St-Georges and the Children's Class, Zimbabwe's riders took the lead of the Team Competition followed by Namibia in second and Botswana in third. Namibia's rider Sumari Piepmeyer won the Advanced Class and Peter Kay from Swaziland won the Novice Class. It is encouraging to see a rider from Swaziland winning the Advanced Class. It is important to mention that Swaziland has put lots of efforts in the education of their coaches with already 2 FEI courses for coaches organized in 2004 and 2006.

Group 8: INA, IND, MAS, SIN, THA

Indonesian riders were very successful in Group 8, winning the Advanced and Children Class as well as the Team competition. The Prix St-Georges Class was won by Malaysian rider Sandra Baljeu on Mount William Perelin with a score of 67.88 %, whereas the Novice Class was won by Amanda Harvey from Singapore riding Laser Fella.

Group 9: CHN, HKG, KOR, NZL, TPE

This year's FEI World Dressage Challenge finished on November 22nd 2007 in Group 9 with the victory of the New Zealand Team after winning 3 out of the 4 Classes. Indeed, the New Zealand riders faced serious competition in the Advanced Class which was won by Chinese rider Cai Qiao followed by his compatriot Huang Lixing who finished second and Soo Jin Lee from Korea took the third place.

Group 10: ANT, BAR, BER, HAI, JAM, TRI

This year again, the team competition was won by Barbados followed this time by Trinidad & Tobago second and Jamaica third Haiti finished fourth and Bermuda fifth. Unfortunately, Antigua only entered competitors in two levels and therefore was unable to put together a team. Barbados' riders won both the Prix St-Georges and the Advanced Class, whereas Jamaica's riders won the Novice and the Children's Class.

The results are available on our website under: www.fei.org > Development > FEI World Dressage Challenge > Results