

# Dressage NSW Inc Annual General Meeting - Minutes

Held at Windsor Bowling Club

Friday, 2 December 2011

Meeting opened at 6.30pm

## 1. Welcome and Apologies

### Present

Prue Spurrett	Toni Venhaus	Judy Wilson	Jan Geary	Beth Turner	Franz Venhaus
Kathy Shelley	Gail Benson	Helen Zimic	Helen Lawson	Cathie Drury-Klein	Trevor Klein
Wendy Cooper	Sue Scaysbrook	Sue Lewis	Rachael Sanna	Kelly Hattersley	Kate Taylor-Wheat
Tinika Bliss	Elizabeth McMaster	Rachel Hunter	Carolyn Lieutenant	Georgina James	

Observers present: Denis James, Adam Wheat

## 2. Apologies (\* Proxies received)

\*Jenny Rapson, Stuart Drysdale, Lesley Gillis, Robyn Targa, Karen Skimmings, Louise Cairns, Robyne Smith, Mim Poolman, Roger Fitzhardinge, Flora Freeman, Sue Cunningham, John Geary, Judy Dierks, Barb Vial, Jill Cobcroft, Marion Squire

## 3. Confirmation of the Annual General Meeting Minutes, 23 November 2010

**Motion** That minutes be accepted as correct

Moved: Jan Geary      Seconded: Judy Wilson      **Motion Carried**

## 4. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

## 5. President's Report

Welcome to our members and visitors to our 2011 DNSW AGM. We are the only SDA to combine the role of Sports Administrator with the business of running competitions and major events and I wish to open my report by thanking my co-workers on Committee for your commitment to the planning and development of our sport and for always being readily accessible when issues arise that need urgent consideration.

We thank our delegates - Your reports are our direct link to our clubs and thanks to your commitment, we do know 'what's going on in the country'.

Our year began with the Planning Meeting in January, where membership issues was a major item as is building the best communication link to members. We can thank our Hon. Secretary Toni Venhaus for the fact that we have the most pro-active website in the country, the one our membership goes to first up for information.

We also congratulate Toni in her role as Event Director for the success of our two 'majors' for the year, the Sydney CDI and the Bates Australian Dressage Championships.

There is nothing that rivals the atmosphere and excitement generated by the Sydney CDI3\* and this year at both the CDI and the Dressage Championships we saw some of the highest scores earned at GP/GPS and GP Freestyle level, with the headline acts undoubtedly being Brett Parbury and Carolyn Lieutenant's Victory Salute and Rachel Sanna and Bev Edward's Jaybee Alabaster. In the GP Freestyle at the Nationals, for the first time the first 4 horses achieved above 70%.

We wish continued success to Rachel, Bev and Alabaster and our ongoing hope and best wishes are with Carolyn, Brett and Sam, who just under 12 months ago did us so proud at WEG.

Christoph Hess returned to SIEC in June with just on 200 attending his workshop. Christoph demonstrated that correct training and the 'wellness' of the horse will always win out – there are no short steps to long-term success in our sport and it is our responsibility as Administrators to get that message across to riders, trainers and judges. Thank you to all who helped with the workshop, and to Equestrian NSW for their financial support.

The 2011 Brightons Saddleworld Young Rider Championships included the ParaEquestrian National Championships, making it a good mix of competition. My own special thanks go to Craig Neale and Karen Lever, Assistant co-ordinator and Event Secretary respectively. Unfortunately, this year's Championships ran at a considerable loss – whilst there was no lack of goods in kind, and particular acknowledgement goes to Brightons Saddleworld and Toshiba Australia for their ongoing loyalty and support, sourcing sponsorship dollars proved especially elusive this year. Unfortunately we are seeing this across the board.

Our thanks also to Cathy Drury-Klein and her team in Tamworth for the successful staging of our NSW Dressage Championships – They have worked tirelessly to stage this event on our behalf and deserve wholehearted congratulations once again.

We thank Jenny Carroll for her continued guidance of the squad programme throughout the year. The quality of the clinics has ensured that our riders are given every opportunity to develop their skills, although we have to acknowledge the frustrations sometimes experienced when state and national programmes clash. Seeking better lines of communication is a work in progress.

Maintaining our grounds is vital for providing a benchmark for competition in the state. Kathy Shelley and her Grounds Sub-Committee deserve the thanks of all our members for ensuring high-level competition at Clarendon on a regular basis. Our major expenditure this year has been on the arena upgrade –another work in progress – but with Kathy’s guidance, and the assistance of Stuart Drysdale, our riders will enjoy better surfaces in 2012.

We thank Jan Geary for her supervision of our judges training and for the successful workshop programme held throughout this year. Increasing the number of judges across all levels is a challenge but we must make it a priority to support our existing judges and to encourage those interested in progressing their judging careers.

I am sure Pip Tonkin would echo this as she has been at the coalface when seeking judges for our Clarendon events. Pip has now stepped down from this role and heartfelt thanks from all of us Pip, your efforts are much appreciated.

Unfortunately this year has also seen incidents of confrontation between judges and riders - no matter what the pressures of competition, there is no place for bad behaviour and bad sportsmanship and those who resort to verbal or physical harassment or intimidation do not belong in Dressage. We will continue to get this message across.

Flora Freeman continues to oversee Young Horse Competition and her insightful reports on the major Young Horse events are always enjoyable.

We welcomed Kelly Hattersley to committee this year as Pony Dressage co-ordinator. Kelly has continued the good work of her predecessors in building the profile of Pony Dressage and her reports in Centreline are always a good read. Congratulations to Kelly and her team for the success of this year’s Pony Dressage Championships, which saw the introduction of Young Pony Classes, a definite feature in future competition.

Karen Lever’s expertise as Competition Secretary is highly valued and we thank her for the assistance she gives to our riders. Graeme Lever also figures in our thanks –Graeme has helped us out on many occasions – from technical expertise to digging trenches for flooded arenas.

Thank you to Jeanne Brown for her Administrative support, which is much valued by the Executive in particular and the Committee and membership in general.

Dressage NSW wishes to thank the Chief Executive, the staff and the Board of Equestrian NSW for their ongoing support which underpins many of our major events and development programmes.

My final thanks to my husband John for his continuing support and almost untapped depths of patience.

We are a good-humoured committee – when differences of opinions occur we respect each other and our combined years of experience usually see us making the right decision. It is a pleasure to work with you all and an honour to represent NSW on your behalf at National level.

Prue Spurrett  
President, Dressage NSW

## **6. Honorary Secretary’s Report**

It seems hard to believe but this is my 8<sup>th</sup> report as Hon. Secretary and while the job becomes second nature after a while, the workload has increased quite a lot. Some of the work is self-generating, but the sport has grown as have member expectations.

After the last AGM, changes to our Constitution resulted in a reduction of our Committee to 12 elected members with up to six (6) Area Delegates. We started the year with 13 Committee members after electing Rachael Sanna and Gloreen Goldin to the Committee. Gloreen resigned earlier this year for health reasons, which brought our Committee back to twelve (12) members. After the AGM, the Area Delegate regions were reviewed and re-aligned to six regions. Jan Smith, the Delegate for the South West area, resigned at the beginning of the year and in August, Lesley Gillis took over the position for this area. With the re-alignment, the North-West region, which was without a Delegate for some time, merged with the North Coast and for the first time in many years we have a Delegate in all regions.

In March, we held an Extraordinary General Meeting to change our constitution to bring it in line with new Fair Trading requirements.

At the start of the year we updated our business plan for the next 3 years, and this formed the basis of discussion at our planning meeting in February.

The long awaited changes to the grading system took effect at the beginning of 2011. As a result we have seen a considerable fall in the number of applications for downgrading. This could partly be due to the method used to re-grade horses when new performance cards were issued which had resulted in many horses re-graded lower than the level at which they had been competing. No doubt this will sort itself out in the next 12 months.

### **Membership**

Our **membership** numbers continue to trend downwards with a decrease of 7.5% in 2011 compared to the previous year and a 15% reduction in overall numbers over the last 5 years. The main reason for people joining is to take advantage of discounted entry

fees at Clarendon and to be eligible for Annual Awards and Performance medals. A summary of the membership is attached in the handout.

The Committee has discussed the membership trend on several occasions over the last 12 months but we have not really resolved what we should do about it - if anything at all.

### **Member Communication**

Our website continues to be a strong **communication** source for many of our members and dressage fans with 153,000 to 246,000 page views each month. This is remarkable when you consider that the page views have increased by over 300% in the last five years. On top of this, the Sydney CDI web site attracts up to 50,000 page views in peak periods.

The number of our fans on **Facebook** has increased to around 2,300 fans. Twitter has also increased to over 830 followers.

**Centreline continues to be popular with members but pure subscriber levels are down by 35% compared to last year. Despite this our costs (-4.5%) and income (-6.5%) are not too bad when one considers that the portion of the membership fees set aside for the Centreline doesn't show up as income. People are turning to the web to get immediate information. Perhaps it is only a matter of time that we can afford to continue with a printed newsletter.**

### **Events and Competition**

The number of Clubs and other organisations conducting Official/Associate dressage events means putting the dressage event calendar together is quite a challenge. From the riders perspective, they would like to see more events, however we have only so many judges to go around and this is an important factor when we approve dates.

190 Official/Associate dressage events (not days) were scheduled throughout NSW in 2011 (197 in 2010). Several Clubs had to cancel events due to wet weather.

DNSW conducted events at Clarendon in most months of the year with a total of 19 days of competition. Two events were cancelled due to wet weather. These cancellations are reflected in the downturn of income for the current period in the accounts.

In addition to Clarendon, the Sydney CDI (April), the NSW Young Rider Championships (July), the NSW State Championships in Tamworth (September), NSW Pony Championships (October), and the National Dressage Championships in October were held all under the umbrella of DNSW.

### **Clarendon Grounds**

This year we got down to business with upgrading our arenas at Clarendon. \$120,000 was set aside to do the three competition arenas. The process took a little longer than we had planned but we are pleased to report that all three-competition arenas are now completed. Further improvements to the warm-up arenas are planned over the next few months along with some other enhancements.

### **Judges and Judge Education**

It was a full year for our Judges Sub-Committee with Seminars and Workshops held covering all levels. In addition this year we had the Christoph Hess Workshop and an FEI Freestyle Workshop held in conjunction with the Sydney CDI. Equestrian NSW and Eventing NSW provided some financial support towards judge education.

We currently have 197 EA accredited Dressage Judges in NSW (compared to 193 last year) with 10 new judges coming into the system this year. Judges drop out of the system and others come in.

It is worth noting that 47 (23%) of these are H-Level judges. Hopefully they will stick it out and go on to upgrade to higher levels in the next few years.

The demand for judges remains high and Clubs still struggle to get enough judges for their events.

### **Rider Development**

Several rider training clinics took place this year. Some were conducted under the NSWIS banner and other clinics for Squad members, young riders and open clinics have been held. DNSW subsidised some of the clinic costs for our Squad members.

DNSW continued to provide some financial support for riders selected to represent NSW at State and National Championships.

NSW riders continue to perform well at a National level. NSW won both the EA and FEI teams Competitions at the recent 2011 National Championships.

Congratulations to the riders and owners who are eligible for Performance Medals this year. 106 **performance medals** will be presented. 4 Gold (awarded to Diamond Star at Novice level, Aber Hallo 29 at Medium level, Luxor 118 at Medium level and PSI de Caprio at FEI Small Tour), 22 Silver (16 in 2010) and 80 Bronze (67 in 2010).

An overall increase of 22% on 2010, which indicates a rise in performance across the board and also suggests we need to review the performance requirements especially for Novice level.

Comparison of medals awarded in recent years:

- 2011-**106**; 2010-**84**; 2009-**54**; 2008-**57**; 2007-**69**; 2006-**86**

In closing, thank you to our Admin Secretary Jeanne Brown who could not be here this evening, to Karen Lever our Clarendon Events Secretary and to the Executive, Committee and Delegates and all our Volunteers for your contribution and support during the year.

Toni Venhaus,  
Honorary Secretary, Dressage NSW

Attached to meeting hand out:

- Summary of Committee members attendance at Committee meetings
- Summary of membership

## **7. Honorary Treasurer Report**

The audited accounts refer to the financial year ending 30th June, 2011

The first page is a snapshot of the financial activity. We continue to grow - following the trend of the last few years. However our Nett profit is down: \$80,239 in 2009/10 to \$55,221 in 2010/11.

This year I prepared a graph of our income, expenditure, assets and profits, over the past 15 years. You will see that for almost every year our income and expenditure has increased. This trend is reflected in asset growth although that line is a little flatter. Profits have remained low across the period. (Average 2.88%) I would think this pattern is fairly normal for our type of organization.

(That very low year July 2000 to June 2001 is because we had no Nationals championships or CDI in that financial year. And the year ending June 2008 was the year of Equine Influenza. )

The next page sets out our current assets and liabilities and on page 4 there are details of our daily cash based operations followed by several pages of notes to the accounts.

Details of Revenue and Expenditure are detailed on the last two pages of the audited accounts.

### **Revenue**

I would like to acknowledge the support we receive from our parent bodies – Equestrian NSW and Equestrian Australia. Besides the annual administration and special project allocations, Equestrian NSW supports all our Championships and the CDI. The National Office supports the CDI and the Nationals.

Competitions (including championships) provide 85.7% of all income. This year the State Championships are included in our accounts. In the previous financial year they were organized and financed by the Tamworth group.

Clarendon competitions entry fees are down 25.8% in value; this is reflected in the number of tests ridden - which are down 25% compared to the 2009/2010 year.

There are several reasons. Some competitions or part competitions were cancelled due to wet weather. We have offered fewer associate competitions on the grass. As always our attempts to programme more Friday Competitions run into problems of getting the judges and volunteers we need. All this means our Revenue in this category is significantly lower in this financial year

Since the end of this financial year – that is since June 2011 - there has been some improvement in entries and hopefully the trend will continue.

The interest received from our Term Deposits is less this year reflecting lower interest rates; I expect that next year this category of income will decrease further as we reduce the amount invested to pay for the upgrade to the Clarendon arenas.

### **Expenditure**

Expenditure on Clarendon Competitions is greater than income for this financial year - i.e. in round figures - our income was \$69,600 and expenditure was \$73,500; also expenditure was a only 3.7 % less than the previous year's expenditure – despite the fewer entries . We did spend about \$2000 in putting sand on the arenas. That is a one off cost. Cancelled competitions are expensive because of the fixed costs.

The very wet 2010/11 summer resulted in excessive grass and weed growth and we spent a considerable amount of money getting the arenas into order for the Competition year. It was also the first full year of paying judging fees.

I think a target for the current financial year is to bring Clarendon Competitions finances back into surplus – to help pay for all the other costs we incur in running Dressage NSW.

A pleasing development from my point of view is that we are now paying about 50% of our bills by direct deposit to bank accounts. This is a considerable reduction in workload and results in a small saving in consumables and postage.

Last year I commented on the workload on all of us when 4 championships are held in the second half of the year. That situation continues. I would recommend that the incoming Committee consider rescheduling the Pony Championships to November or early December. That would spread the Championships more evenly across the latter part of the year.

Finally I expect that the current financial year will continue the trend of lower surpluses. I think that having Equitana run so close to our National Championships did show that there is a finite amount of money available to support Dressage and this year we saw the flow on effect of that. It is a challenge for the future.

Judy Wilson

Honorary Treasurer, Dressage NSW Inc.

**8. Motion: To use D Scott and Associates as Auditors for the 2011/2012 Financial Year**

Moved: Judy Wilson

Seconded: Helen Zimic

**Motion Carried**

**9. Committee Elections**

Four positions on the Committee were declared vacant. Six members stood for election to the Committee for the 2012-2014 Term: Tinika Bliss, Sue Cunningham, Cathie Drury-Klein, Stuart Drysdale, Kathy Shelley, Toni Venhaus.

90 valid ballot papers were received, 34 invalid voting papers received.

The following members were declared as elected to the Committee: Sue Cunningham, Cathie Drury-Klein, Kathy Shelley, Toni Venhaus.

Confirmation of the 2012 Committee: Gail Benson, Sue Cunningham, Cathie Drury-Klein, Jan Geary, Helen Lawson, Jenny Rapson, Rachael Sanna, Kathy Shelley, Prue Spurrett, Beth Turner, Toni Venhaus, Judy Wilson

**10. General Business**

Cathie Drury-Klein raised the issue of the calendar clashes with the CDI in Orange in February 2012.

The President responded this was a matter to be raised at a Committee meeting.

Close of Meeting

The meeting was declared closed at 7.11pm

# DNSW Committee Meeting Attendance Record

December 2010 to November 2011

	Dec-10	Feb-11	Mar-11	Apr-11	May-11	Jun-11	Jul-11	Aug-11	Sep-11	Oct-11	Nov-11
<b>Elected Committee</b>											
Prue Spurrett	A	A	A	A	A	Ap	A	A	A	A	A
Cathie Drury-Klein	Ap	Ap	A	Ap	A	A	Ap	Ap	Ap	A	Ap
Stuart Drysdale	A	A	A	A	Ap	Ap	Ap	Ap	A	A	Ap
Toni Venhaus	A	A	A	A	A	A	Ap	A	A	A	A
Judy Wilson	A	A	Ap	A	Ap	A	A	A	A	A	A
Jan Geary	A	A	A	Ap	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Gail Benson	A	A	A	A	Ap	A	A	A	A	A	A
Kathy Shelley	A	A	Ap	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Beth Turner	A	Ap	Ap	A	A	Ap	A	A	na	A	A
Rachael Sanna	A	A	A	na	na	A	A	A	na	A	na
Jenny Rapson	A	na	A	A	A	Ap	A	A	Ap	A	A
Helen Lawson	Ap	A	A	A	A	Ap	A	A	A	A	A
Gloreen Goldin	Ap	A	Ap	Ap	na						

## Co-opted members

Rozzie Ryan	A	A	na	Ap	A	Ap	A	Ap	A	Ap	Ap
Kelly Hattersley			A	A	Ap	A	A	A	A	A	A

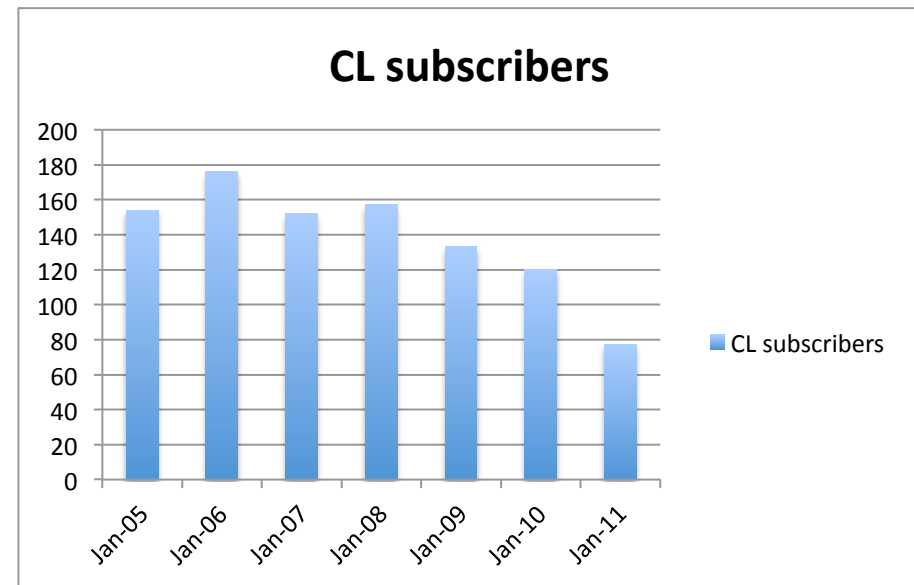
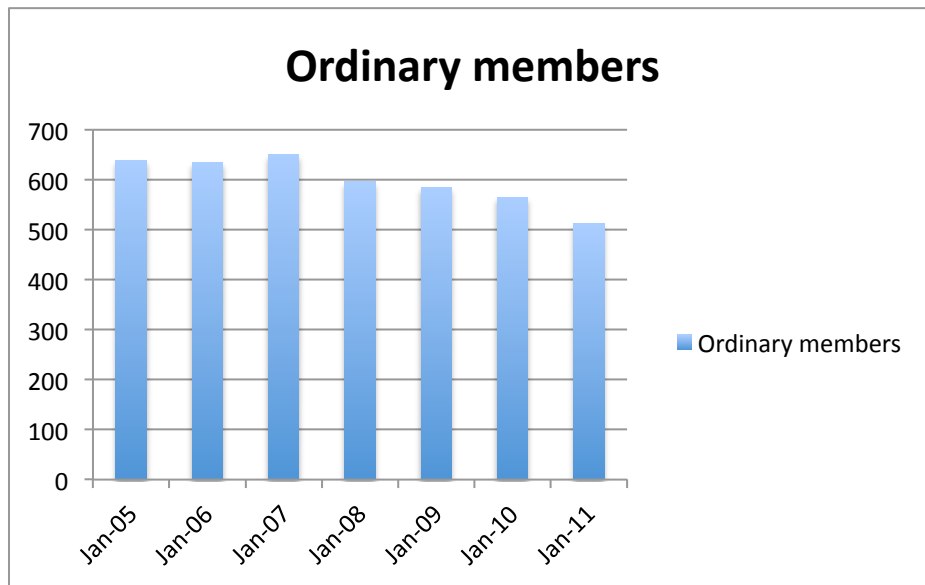
## Delegates

Louise Cairns	na	A	A	A	A	Ap	A	A	na	Ap	A
Helen Zimic	Ap	Ap	Ap	A	Ap	Ap	A	A	A	A	Ap
Robyn Targa	Ap	A	Ap	A	A	Ap	Ap	Ap	Ap	A	A
Jan Smith	na										
Lesley Gillis									Ap	A	Ap
Karen Glendenning	Ap	na	Ap	na	na	Ap	na	Ap	Ap	na	na
Tinika Bliss			A	A	na	A	Ap	A	Ap	A	na
Sue Baker	na										

**Code:**      A      Attended                      Ap      Apology  
                   na      Not in attendance                      Not on Committee at the time

## DNSW Membership Comparison

	Jun-11	Jun-10	Jun-09	Jun-08	Jun-07	Jun-06	Jun-05
Ordinary members	512	565	585	596	650	635	639
Life & Hon Members	94	93	93	91	90	92	92
Junior	32	31	17	27	28	27	44
	<b>638</b>	<b>689</b>	<b>695</b>	<b>714</b>	<b>768</b>	<b>754</b>	<b>775</b>
Affiliated Clubs	54	55	53	53	53	52	52
CL subscribers	77	120	133	157	152	176	154
<b>Total</b>	<b>769</b>	<b>864</b>	<b>881</b>	<b>924</b>	<b>973</b>	<b>982</b>	<b>981</b>



### Notes

Overall members: -15% over last five years

Subscribers: -54% over last five years

### Financial Trends 1999 to 2011

