

# Dressage NSW Inc Annual General Meeting – Minutes

Held at Windsor Bowling Club

Tuesday, 6 December 2016

Meeting opened at 7.00pm

## 1. Welcome and Apologies

### Present

Toni Venhaus	Tracey Lesslie	Earle Olaisen	Lauren James
Jan Geary	Judy Wilson	Gail Benson	Helen Lawson
Michelle Becchio	Vicki Newham	Kathy Shelley	Bruce Farrar
Justin Bayly	Petra Keranen		

## 2. Apologies (\*Proxies received)

Franz Venhaus*	Helen Zimic	Sue Cunningham	Jule Manolas*	Samantha Farrar
Jocelyn West	Sara Price*	John Geary*	Prue Spurrett*	Wendy Calabro*

## 3. Confirmation of the Annual General Meeting Minutes, 8 December 2015

**Motion:** That the minutes be accepted as correct.

**Moved:** Michelle Becchio

**Seconded:** Toni Venhaus

**Motion Carried**

## 4. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

## 5. President's Report

2016 has been a very busy and productive year for our committee and one of major achievements for DNSW and NSW riders. We started off the year with a strategic planning meeting which divided our roles into five major sub-committees: Judges headed up by Sue Cunningham, Major Events led by Toni Venhaus, Clarendon by Kathy Shelley, Regionals and Clubs with Pamela Bice and Sam Farrar in the lead and Squads with your truly. With the support of increased funding from ENSW and the financial success of our Clarendon competitions, we have been able to achieve many significant milestones.

With a particular focus on judges and officials, and expenditure of over \$25,000 in fy 2015/16 we have been able to provide:

- 6 free seminars at Clarendon for judges, riders and coaches at all levels, attended by 168 people
- 1 metro and 6 regional club-run free seminars (over 100 attendees)
- 3 stewards training courses
- 2 eventing dressage seminars
- 39 shadow judging and exam opportunities and more than 185 sit-in's at Clarendon competitions

This has resulted in 35 applicants registered to start their judging accreditation in 2016, with 9 already achieving accreditation, 7 judges upgrading across levels, a further 11 commencing their upgrading process and 5 FEI riders starting the judging fast-track process. This is a huge 150% increase in judge upgrades over 2015 numbers and is critical in maintaining judge numbers and education. We finish 2016 with 13 more judges than we started, a 9% increase in judging numbers in one year! Congratulations to Sue and her revamped judges committee.

2016 also saw the launch of our revamped High Performance and Development Squad program with 20 combinations being named over the year. With joint organization between DNSW and ENSW, riders participated in 6 x 1 day squad clinics, 2 protocol judging opportunities with Ricky McMillan and Maria Schwennessen and a 2 day clinic with FEI 5\* judge, trainer and rider, Lilo Fore. 2017 will build on the program further and we are very excited to announce that 2017 will also see the launch of our revamped Young Rider Squad program headed up by Mandy Jones.

DNSW again led the way in running 2 very successful CDI events – the iconic Sydney CDI and the NSW Championships which included a CDI-W for the first time in 14 years. With 270 horse and riders combinations and including Open, AOR, Pony and Para-Equestrian classes, the State Championships is now the largest dressage event in Australia. The Sydney CDI3\* is always a highlight of the Australian Dressage calendar and in 2016 was the only event in Australia to offer our riders the opportunity to compete in front of 2 Rio Olympic judges. NSW also took its turn to host the Australian Young Rider Championships with over 100 riders from 5 States and Territories making the trip to SIEC. It would not be possible to run these major events without the dedication and hard work of the army of volunteers that turn up year after year and for that we express our deepest gratitude. Of course, the longstanding support of our loyal sponsors is also a major contributor to the success of these major events - your ongoing support is never taken for granted and is greatly appreciated. Last but not least, a huge debt of gratitude is owed to our amazing energizer bunny Event Director, Toni Venhaus who handles every challenge, problem or situation with superb efficiency.

NSW metropolitan and regional clubs were also the beneficiaries of increased funding with \$19,800 provided to clubs for projects ranging from new gear check sheds, storage facilities, arena letters, judge funding and arena surface projects. Regional Dressage Festival events were supported to the value of \$6000 and a statewide survey of clubs was conducted to guide future strategies for growth in the regions. The Club Forum is scheduled for 25/26<sup>th</sup> February 2017 with planning well underway. Thank-you Sam and Pamela, for your enthusiasm and energy in advocating for our vitally important regional clubs and grass roots competitors. I would also like to formally recognize the outstanding work of all our regional delegates who keep clubs informed and regularly travel long distances to attend our committee meetings.

Clarendon has had another busy and successful year providing well run, friendly competitions across all levels on well-maintained surfaces as well as valuable opportunities for judge education and training. It also has an essential role in generating funds for other DNSW projects. The 4 day Clarendon Winter Festival has quickly become a highlight of the annual NSW dressage calendar as Opens, AOR's, Pony's, Young Riders and Para-Equestrians compete side by side in their own categories at the one event. The enthusiasm and dedication shown by Kathy, Karen and their tireless Clarendon sub-committee is unflagging and we congratulate them on their continued success.

The Rio Olympics and the lead up events provided a significant showcase for our NSW riders. Brett Parbery, riding Susie Duddy's elegant DP Weltmeiser and Sue Hearn riding her own Remington vied for places on the team, with Sue achieving the ultimate prize of an Olympic berth. Para-Equestrians Lisa Martin and Katie Umback represented Australia in Grade 4 and 3 respectively, with Lisa missing out on a medal by the thinnest of margins to place 4<sup>th</sup>. Congratulations to all and their dedicated support teams – you have achieved something that many dream of from childhood but only the elite few actually realise.

Lastly, I can't let 2016 end without expressing my gratitude to the extremely hardworking DNSW committee and the many co-opted members who provide invaluable support and guidance to our committee. Your encouragement, enthusiasm and willingness to contribute to our sport is amazing and I'm honoured to work with you all. To Suzanne Doyle, who will be stepping down as Treasurer, but will remain on the DNSW committee, thank-you for your service. And to Tracey Lesslie, our dedicated and knowledgeable Admin Secretary, for another year of support at meetings, major events and patience in answering many and varied enquiries, your work is appreciated. Welcome also to Lizzie Wilson-Fellows – our new riders representative who will do a sterling job and a huge thank-you to Denise Rogan who has stepped down from the NSW role but continues on in her National role.

The Pirouettes Party, our annual awards night and general 'let your hair down' year-end party was a fitting end to a highly successful and positive 2016. Roll on 2017 (after a much anticipated break!)

Helen Lawson  
President

## **6. Honorary Secretary's Report**

The Committee has had a busy and productive year, the issues we deal with are varied some are worth highlighting.

As the administrators of dressage in NSW under the umbrella of Equestrian NSW we:

- represent dressage in NSW at a national level;
- maintain a close working relationship with ENSW and the ADC;
- recommend rule changes and contribute to the formulation of rules through the ADC;

- represent and support clubs in NSW;
- represent NSW riders at all levels;
- support our dressage squads and provide training clinics for riders;
- maintain and approve the NSW dressage calendar;
- conduct educational seminars and workshops for judges as well as exams at all levels;
- provide annual awards and performance medals for our members;
- produce a bi-monthly magazine for our members and subscribers;
- host an informative website and an active Facebook page.

In addition to the administration side of our duties, through sub committees, in 2016 DNSW conducted regular dressage events at Clarendon, the NSW Championship which included a CDI-W, the Sydney CDI and the Australian Youth Dressage Championships was ably coordinated for us by Mary Houghton and Jo Gun.

In 2016 we have seen a few changes within our Committee and the Executive.

Prue Spurrett stepped down as President and resigned from the Committee due to her appointment to the Equestrian NSW Board and the Australian Dressage Committee. Helen Lawson took over as President and her enthusiasm and commitment to making a difference is evident and making an impact across many aspects of our organisation.

In October, we welcomed Petra Keranen who filled a casual vacancy on the Committee. Denise Rogan stepped down as NSW Riders' representative in September and Lizzie Wilson-Fellows has taken over the role. A huge thank you to Denise who did a wonderful job representing the riders.

Two of the Regional Delegates (Lesley Gilles from the Southern region and Jule Manolas from the Central West) have stepped down and replacements will be announced shortly. Our thanks to both Lesley and Jule for their contribution.

Eleven committee meetings (including a planning meeting) were held since the last AGM. A summary of attendance is attached for your reference.

DNSW scheduled 9 events at Clarendon in 2016 with a total of 22 days of competition (compared to 24 days in 2015). In addition to the regular Clarendon events, Training and Protocol days were held. Protocol days are growing in popularity with most events offering Protocol competitions the day before each event.

The members of the Clarendon Sub-Committee headed by Kathy Shelley and supported by Karen Lever (Clarendon Events Secretary) continue to do a wonderful job ensuring all who attend enjoy the events. The Clarendon Winter Festival is growing each year and full credit goes to the Clarendon Sub-Committee and Karen. Clarendon play an important role in our judge education programme through seminars, shadow judging and exams opportunities.

The DNSW Regional Dressage Festival series continued this year with six events being held throughout the regional areas. Financial support from Equestrian NSW combined with funding from Dressage NSW allowed us to contribute up to \$1500 to each event well as promotional support in Centreline, our website and Facebook. Co-ordination of the official dressage calendar is not getting any easier with some clubs expanding and other groups such as breed societies applying for dates. The Committee is considering limiting the number of events Clubs can conduct until we have enough judges to service the sport.

158 Official Club including Clarendon events were held in 2016. This is slightly down on the previous year as many Club are running more closed and member events or training days.

Our website continues to be popular but it is difficult to compare history due to the current platform.

- In the last 12 months (Nov 2015-Nov 2016) we had 35,331 users and 266,398 page views. These numbers are down on the previous year and partly due to DNSW not hosting the National Championships. The peak month was during the NSW Championships and the National Youth Dressage Championships. Social Media: The number of our followers on Facebook has increased by 2130 (40%) to 7,488. Twitter has also increased by 7% to 2295 followers.

Judge education has been one of our priorities and we are starting to see an increase in judge numbers. We currently have 161 EA-accredited Dressage Judges in NSW compared to 148 around the same time last year. DNSW conducted Seminars/Workshops across all levels in 2016 as well as Seminars in regional areas at Albury, Far South Coast, Grafton, Alexander Park, Mudgee and the ACT.

Two Stewards Seminar were held during 2016 in the regional areas.

Our Annual Awards and Performance Medals continue to represent a significant achievement for our members.

In addition, a Clarendon Amateur Owner/Rider and Young Rider Leaderboard recognised winners from Preliminary level.

117 Performance Medals were presented this year, compared to 128 in 2015. 10 Gold (10 in 2015), 41 Silver (43 in 2015) and 66 Bronze (75 in 2015).

In line with our Constitution, four committee positions are declared vacant to be filled at the AGM. Four Nominations were received for the 2017-2019 term (Michelle Becchio, Earle Olaisen, Suzanne Doyle, and Jan Geary). There being no other nominations a vote was not required and Michelle, Early, Suzanne and Jan are re-elected to the Committee. We have one remaining position open and nominations will be called from the floor this evening.

A special thank you to Tracey Lesslie, our Admin Secretary, and Karen Lever, our Clarendon Events Secretary, for the wonderful job they do in their respective roles as well as putting in extra hours on a voluntary basis. Thank you to all Committee members and for your contribution and support during the year. It is rewarding to see that the tremendous work has paid off and that we have made a surplus this year which boosts our finances and goes back in to developing our sport.

Dressage like other sports is possible because of the huge effort put in by Club Committees and Volunteers. They are often overlooked but their efforts are appreciated. Thank You!

Toni Venhaus,  
Honorary Secretary, Dressage NSW

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

### **7. Honorary Treasurer's Reports**

Judy Wilson spoke to financial accounts that had been prepared by Ross Fowler & Co and highlighted the following

- The financial year has been profitable
- Revenue from Clarendon has increased.
- Expenditure has also increased in line with this however Clarendon remains profitable
- Judges seminars are working well and well supported
- Encouraging to see the membership numbers holding up
- Major Events such as State Championships and Young Rider Championships had been profitable and the CDI broke even.

### **8. Proposed changes to the Constitution**

#### **Proposed change to the Dressage NSW Constitution, December 2016**

To add a second paragraph to Rule 49 and "number" the two paragraphs "a" and "b":

#### **ASSOCIATION BANKING ACCOUNT**

47. The Association shall open a banking account in Sydney including an area within 100 km of the G.P.O., in the name of the Association with one of the recognised banks.

48. The Association's banking account shall be operated upon by cheques or electronically and signed or authorised by such persons not being less than two as the Association may from time to time authorise.

49. a) The Committee shall from time to time determine the maximum amount up to which payments may be made in cash rather than by cheque drawn upon the Association's banking account.

b) The Committee may authorise recurring payments to be made by automatic electronic direct debit from the Association's bank account.

The Honorary Treasurer shall keep a separate list of these payments.

50. All cash, cheques and negotiable instruments received by or for the Association shall forthwith be paid to the credit of the Association's banking account.

**Motion: That the constitution be amended to reflect the inclusion of 49b.**

**Moved: Toni Venhaus      Seconded: Michelle Becchio**

**Motion Carried.**

## **9. Financial Reports and Appointment of Auditor**

**Motion:** a) (page 10) that the committee resolves that financial report presents fairly the financial position of Dressage NSW Incorporated as at June 30 2016 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, mandatory professional reporting requirements and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board

b) at the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Dressage NSW Incorporated will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

**Moved: Toni Venhaus**

**Seconded: Vicki Newham**

**Motion Carried.**

**Motion: Motion: to appoint Ross Fowler & Co as the auditor for DNSW for the 2016/2017 financial year.**

**Moved: Toni Venhaus**

**Seconded: Vicki Newham**

**Motion Carried.**

## **10. Committee Elections**

Four positions on the Committee were declared vacant.

Four nominations were received by the due date (Michelle Becchio, Earle Olaisen, Suzanne Doyle, and Jan Geary),

One position remained vacant and nominations were called for from the floor.

Toni Venhaus nominated Petra Keranen (seconded by Vicki Newham) and as no other nominations were received Petra Keranen was elected to the committee.

Confirmation of the 2017 Committee: Gail Benson, Kathy Shelley, Jan Geary, Helen Lawson, Petra Keranen, Toni Venhaus, Sue Cunningham, Earle Olaisen, Michelle Becchio, Jocelyn West, Vicki Newham, Judy Wilson and Suzanne Doyle

## **11. General Business**

Lauren James asked the President to clarify the statement regarding clubs being required to reduce the number of events due to the numbers of judges. Helen Lawson clarified that is more about the number of clubs in an area and that DNSW will actively continue to recruit judges to assist clubs in securing judges for their events including training of eventing dressage judges.

### **Close of Meeting**

**The meeting was declared closed at 7.36 pm**