

## Welcome and Apologies

### Present

Prue Spurrett	Judy Wilson	Flora Robson	John Spurrett	Alex Schebesta	Nerida Downs
Pip Tonkin					

### Apologies (\* Proxies received)

*Helen Zimic	Jan Geary	John Geary	*Toni Venhaus	*Sue Scaysbrook	*Debbie Hennessey
*Louise Cairns	*Gail Benson	Wendy Cooper	*Trevor Klein	Cathie Drury-*Klein	Flora Freeman
Robyn Targa	*Sue Baker	*Anne Lucas	*Peter Turner	*Camilla Mowbray	*Nicholas Fyffe
*Louise Neill	*Sue Birch				

## Confirmation of 2007 Meeting

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

Moved: Flora Robson    Seconded: Pip Tonkin

**Motion Carried**

## Business Arising from Previous Minutes

- There was no business arising from the minutes.

## President's Report

Our recovery year saw a full on return to Competition combined with the bedding down of a new Rule Book, which is proving an ongoing process. Our challenge was to regather and keep NSW a dominant presence on the national scene – both through the quality of riders and events we produce (and providing good opportunity and quality infrastructure for competition is one way we do this) and by being at the forefront in national debate on issues and developments in our sport.

I would like to thank you, my co-workers on the Committee of Dressage NSW for your commitment to the planning and development of our sport and for the time taken with its administration. Many of you have busy careers and travel long distances to meetings and yet you make time to oversee the development of our sport and are always readily accessible when issues arise that need urgent consideration or decision. We thank our delegates for your dedication and commitment to your regions. Your role should not be underestimated, as your reports are our direct link to our clubs and thus the state of our sport on the ground. We thank Ann-Maree Lourey who stepped down during the year from both the Committee and as Delegate for the Central Coast/Hunter. In her place we welcomed Louise Cairns, who is proving a very capable replacement for an area that is a bellwether for our sport. Likewise in March Robyn Targa took over as South Coast delegate for an area that is becoming increasingly active in competition.

Our year began on a high note with the Olympic Qualifier and ended on a high note with the visit of Christoph Hess. Over 150 people attended his workshop showing the demand is there for high level clinicians – also how effective National co-ordination of such workshops can be. Hopefully we will see similar sharing in the future. Mr Hess demonstrated that correct training 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. The 'wellness' of the horse is the key to its development and progression and we must ensure all players have as much access as possible as frequently as possible to clinicians of such quality as Christoph Hess. Having said that, we must be on the right track as his view of the riders chosen for the clinic was overwhelmingly positive, especially of their position, balance and perception. This was especially so of the five Young Riders, who he said were equal to any training in Europe at present.

We congratulate our Olympians for both qualifying as an Australian team and representing us so professionally in Beijing – we can be proud of our ambassadors.

We thank Flora Robson for her guidance of Young Riders throughout the year. The quality of the clinics has ensured that our young Riders are given every opportunity to develop their skills and also provided access to other services such as sports psychology, diet, etc. The Young Rider & Pony Dressage Championships saw a total of 195 riders and 240 horses competing at both EFA & FEI and young riders are now regularly seen in open competition, on our Leader board and winning our performance medals.

Maintaining our grounds is vital to our integrity and our claim of providing the 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 is available at Clarendon on a regular basis throughout the year. We especially thank Kathy and her team for the work done throughout the NSW Dressage Championships under the most provoking weather conditions. Her management also ensures ongoing improvements on the ground, the upgrading of the stables being one major task undertaken this year.

Once again the demand for competition puts the spotlight on judges and our need to maintain quality training of judges across all levels. 2008 saw a mass induction of newly accredited Young Horse judges, which has added another dimension to both judging and club competition with more clubs now adding these classes to their calendar.

We thank Jan Geary for her supervision of our judges training and for the successful workshop programme held throughout this year. Jan ensures our judges are kept up to date and their interests well represented at national level. We thank her sub committee for their assistance throughout the year, which has been greatly appreciated. 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 is at the coalface when seeking judges for our Clarendon events. 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 those who resort to verbal or physical harassment or intimidation do not belong in Dressage. We will continue to get this message across throughout 2009.

Flora Freeman has done a wonderful job with Young Horse – her reports on the training of young horses are required reading and this area is well and truly established within DNSW now.

Deb Hennessy and her Pony Dressage sub committee have had an 'interesting' year dominated by debate about height classification and the lack of official measurers statewide. This has caused much frustration in Pony Dressage but fortunately common sense is set to prevail and 2009 should see fewer complications - hopefully this will be reflected by an increase in pony numbers in competition. Congratulations to Deb and her team for staging another successful Championships with over 200 tests being ridden over the 2 days. We also thank Deb for representing Pony Dressage so effectively on Committee.

As Event Director for the Sydney CDI\*\*\* and the Australian Dressage Championships, Toni Venhaus continually builds on the success of these premier events – the Sydney CDI\*\*\* now has 'standing room only' for the Saturday session and the event has well and truly assumed its own persona. This success is due entirely to Toni's direction and her ability to manage a team which has now worked together for several years and takes up the running when called to do so.

Although we understand Jenny Carroll's decision to stand down from the Committee after many years of service, we nevertheless hold the hope that it may be just 'long service leave'. As one of our longest serving Committee members, Jenny's experience will be sadly missed – her extensive cv includes progressing young rider dressage onto the national agenda and its relevance and current status owes much to her commitment and foresight. As with any organization, having people with corporate knowledge is vital and this will be our loss. Thank you Jenny, the two words do not seem quite adequate but they are heartfelt.

We have dealt with many issues throughout the year but there are always issues outstanding. Changes to the Constitution stalled and can only be kick started if there is a collective will to do so, or if it is seen as a priority item. Changes are also ahead for our squad programme, which must be implemented by next year. Other issues are dealt with as they arise and emails allow for effective debate when something needs a decision between meetings. We collectively have the experience to resolve any issue in the best interests of our members. It is a pleasure to work with you all.

Dressage NSW wishes to thank the Chief Executive, the staff and the Board of EFA (NSW) for their ongoing support throughout 2008. This support underpins many of our major events and development programmes and is particularly welcome with the running of our State Dressage Championships.

Karen Lever's expertise and support is highly valued by us all on Committee and we thank her for the assistance she gives to riders and Committee alike. There is of course another Lever in this equation and our thanks also go to Graeme Lever, whose 'can do/can fix' attitude helps us out on many occasions – from his technical expertise to digging trenches for flooded arenas.

My final thanks to my husband John for his continuing support, depths of patience and intrinsic understanding of my deep love of my chosen sport.

Prue Spurrett  
President

### **Honorary Secretary's Report**

My apologies for not being present this evening as I am enjoying a holiday in Argentina. I thank Jan Geary for agreeing to present this report on my behalf.

Dressage across the state has been affected by EI with many Clubs across the state noticing a decline in entry and membership numbers. The trend we hope will turn around in 2009 as more and more riders get back into competition mode. In contrast to the regional areas, the metro clubs appear to be doing better than their country cousins.

**Committee:** Two Committee Members resigned this year. Deirdre Stock resigned at the end of December 2007 and Ann-Maree Lourey resigned as an elected Committee member and as Area Delegate in May 2008. On behalf of the Committee, I would like to thank both ladies for their time and contribution to the Committee the sport and the membership. Two new Area Delegates came on board during 2008; Robyn Targa (with Jane Bruce as the Alternate) for the South Coast region and Louise Cairns representing the Hunter/Central Coast areas. Not to be forgotten, our thanks to Rachel Hunter the previous Delegate for the South Coast region for her efforts during her time as Delegate.

**Membership & related:** Our membership suffered initially in the post EI period but improved as the competition season got underway. The financial figures show a drop in income in this category. The membership table below is based on numbers as at November where as the financial figures are for the financial year. The table is to give you a guide as to how our membership is evolving. Our ordinary membership continues to be pretty static and in real terms has dropped over the past few years.

## Membership Break-Up Summary (based calendar year not financial)

Category	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004
Constituent Club	53	53	53	53	47
Honorary	6	5	5	5	5
Honorary Life Members	8	7	7	7	10
Life	80	79	79	80	78
Junior	18	16	22	17	24
Ordinary	530	522	596	515	569
Centreline Subscribers	122	142	146	159	155
	<b>859</b>	<b>824</b>	<b>908</b>	<b>836</b>	<b>888</b>
Var on previous year	+ 4.2%	-10%	+8.6%	-6%	unknown

**Administration:** Things were quieter than normal in the July to December 2007 period due to the lack of events. The decline in workload for the 6 months impacted by EI is reflected in the drop in expenditure for Secretarial support. In 2008, things slowly got back to normal and the demands on our Admin. Secretary (Karen Lever) and the Office Bearers re-enforced the need to make some changes in our administration structure. In the last few months, the Committee considered and decided to make some changes to our administration support structure with some changes to take effect in 2009.

**Communication:** Our web site continues to grow and provides a "first port of call" for many of our members and others looking for up to date information and developments.

- Stats: Total Pages displayed for the Site are as follows.

October	108580
September	74691
August	138320
July	86148
June	72363
May	108255
April	78498
March	55781
February	54270
January	42975
December	33821
November	29147
October	26372
September	54244
August	55024
July	52005

- As you will see on the financial statements, our income for Centreline decreased in the current year due to a drop in advertising during EI. On the other hand, our expenses have increased by around 10%. The high cost of producing a monthly magazine for our members and subscribers is something the Committee will need to address. More and more people are using the web to obtain up to date information so the need for a hard copy magazine is not as vital as it has been in the past. We must however remember that part of the income received under membership goes towards centreline but it is not shown as such on the accounts.

### Events and related

DNSW conducted fewer events in the financial period we are considering at this AGM due to EI. In 2008 we have not been idle and each month we have had at least one or more events to organize. As well as Clarendon events, there was the Sydney CDI (April) which was a huge success, the Young Rider Championships combined with the NSW Pony Championships (July), the NSW State Championships (September) and the Nationals in October.

Regular competition days at Clarendon continue to be the bench mark for our riders and of late, many interstate competitors are spending time in NSW training and competing for just that reason. Clarendon is also vital to our finances and it is important that we try and conduct an event each month. However, this is very difficult to achieve in the months where we stage major events as the workload for many on the Committee and our volunteers is just too demanding. The old 8-20 rule applies to DNSW just like it does to other organisations (80% of the work being done by 20% of the people).

We appreciate and acknowledge the contribution from some of the riders who are starting to help out at events. This sort of help is necessary if events are to survive.

All of the major events in the latter part of 2007 were cancelled so gauging the success of NSW riders for that period is not possible. At recent events in 2008, NSW has featured at the top of the placings across most levels. Three NSW riders (Heath Ryan, Rozzie Ryan and Brett Parbery) played an important role in qualifying a Dressage Team for the Beijing Olympics at the FEI Regional Qualifier in February 2008. The rest is history and we congratulate the AUS Dressage Team on their results at the Games in Hong Kong.

### **Clarendon grounds**

In the current year we have continued with improvements to the grounds at Clarendon. The stables have been upgraded and the arenas had a top of sand and a top dressing of sand/loam was put down around the competition arenas.

### **Performance medals**

Fewer medals will be presented this year due to having had fewer events this year. Congratulations to Amanda Shoobridge on Revelwood World Class who achieved Gold medal status this year.

### **Planning and other**

Jan Geary has driven the Judge Education scheme this year. With the financial support of the EFA (NSW) we were able to continue to provide Seminars/workshop for judges free of charge – these have been well attended. Several Seminars and Workshops were conducted in regional areas. The new system for re-accreditation of Judges had some teething problems which should diminish by the time of the next renewal period.

Declining numbers of accredited judges continues to be a problem across the State with the regional Clubs in particular finding hard to recruit judges.

There also appears to be a worrying trend emerging in the drop of in the numbers of people willing to volunteer. If this continues it will impact heavily on our sport.

Our Three Year Plan (2008-2010) was updated and reviewed in the early part of 2008.

In all, a full and productive year and I would like to thank Karen, the Committee and Delegates and the Executive in particular for their support over the past 12 months.

Toni Venhaus  
Honorary Secretary, Dressage NSW 2008

### **Motion: That the Secretary's Report be received**

Moved: Judy Wilson                      Seconded: Flora Robson      **Motion Carried**

## **Treasurer's Report**

Good evening Ladies and Gentlemen

The accounts for the year have been distributed to you. They refer to the year ending 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2008

I have a few comments.

This financial year included the Equine Influenza Outbreak. The accounts reflect this in terms of lower activity – over \$200,000 lower for both Income and Expenditure. Both the 2007 State and National Championships were cancelled, and these two events account for most of the decline in activity. As far as Clarendon was concerned the financial impact was less. We cancelled two smaller competitions at the end of 2007: and the February 2008 competition was restricted to the Young Horse. Unfortunately the wet weather added to our woes and the June 2008 event had to be cancelled. So even though this year we increased Clarendon entry fees, our total entry fees for the year were lower.

The financial impact of EI was cushioned somewhat by the recovery money we received from the Federal and State Governments. We received \$15,000 from the Federal Government. This covered most of our expenditure for both State and National Championships. The Return of the Horse moneys (State Government funds distributed by the EFA) assisted with some of the expenses at the CDI.

We continued to receive support from both the Federal and State EFA and the Dept. of Sport for our big events. The State EFA Special Project Grants supported Judges Education and Young Rider Training. The New South Wales Institute of Sport subsidized Adult Rider Training. And the NSW EFA provided support for administrative activities. The Committee is active in pursuing other opportunities which are available. In the current financial year, we have received a grant for Women in Sport, we have submitted an application for upgrading the remaining stables at Clarendon, and an application for \$5000 to go towards Volunteer expenses. As an aside can I just say that the the preparation of these applications are demanding in time and energy. - they are usually done by members of the Executive. We probably miss a number of opportunities through lack of time. I suggest the Committee considers appointing one of its members to take ownership of the general grant submissions. (By that I mean searching out the opportunities and managing the preparation of submissions).

There was very little capital expenditure in this financial year. However we will soon have to look at refurbishing the buildings at Clarendon. The old "hut" badly needs refurbishing, and the new demountable is in need of repair,

You will see from page 1 of the report that our bottom line for the year was a surplus of \$9484. (the figures on this page are expanded in the last two pages of the report) This is a welcome turnaround from the previous year (loss of \$6064) and somewhat of a surprise given that it was the year of the Equine Influenza Outbreak.

Looking ahead, one would expect that the current financial turmoil will have an impact on our activities. As money becomes scarce, people tend to review their priorities. New approaches may be needed to ensure that our riders continue to have the opportunities to compete and our members continue to see the value in belonging to Dressage NSW. There are perhaps challenging times ahead.

Judy Wilson  
Honorary Treasurer, Dressage NSW Inc.  
26/11/08

To complete the audit of the financial records it is now necessary for us to pass the following resolution, which I will now read out:

**Motion:** In the opinion of the committee the financial report as set out on pages 1 to 9:

1. Presents fairly the financial position of Dressage NSW Incorporated as at June 30, 2008 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.
2. 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: Judy Wilson                      Seconded: Flora Robson                      **Motion Carried**

**Motion: That the Treasurer's Report be received**

Moved: Judy Wilson                      Seconded: Pip Tonkin                      **Motion Carried**

**Motion: To use D Scott and Associates as Auditors for the 2008/2009 Financial Year**

Moved: Judy Wilson                      Seconded: Pip Tonkin                      **Motion Carried**

## **Committee Elections**

Two nominations were received for the vacant positions on the Committee. Toni Venhaus and Cathie Drury-Klein were re-elected to the Committee, leaving five positions vacant.

The following nominations were received from the floor to fill the vacancies on the Committee:

**Motion: To elect Alex Schebesta to the Dressage NSW Committee.**

Nominated by Prue Spurrett      Seconded by Flora Robson      **Motion Carried**

**Motion: To elect Sue Baker to the Dressage NSW Committee.**

Nominated by Prue Spurrett      Seconded by: Judy Wilson      **Motion Carried**

With no further nominations from the floor the remaining positions shall remain on the books as casual vacancies.

## **General Business**

- There was no general business to report.

## **Close of Meeting**

- There being no other business the meeting was declared closed at 7.31pm