

JUNIOR NATIONAL EQUESTRIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS AT KOLKATA INDIA 2018

REPORT OF TECHNICAL DELEGATE JNEC

1. The Junior National Equestrian Championships for the year 2018 were held with a resounding success at Kolkata under the aegis of Tollygunge Club Kolkata with assistance from HQ Eastern Command.
2. In spite of vehement opposition from certain quarters with vested interests and various apprehensions in granting the Championships to Kolkata, the show in all disciplines was timed to the second, flawless and culminated without a single objection.
3. The following are the salient points during the conduct and recommendations for future implementation :-

(a) **Jury and Judging** - The jury as asked for by the organisers and detailed by the EFI was of superlative quality with maximum experienced international judges and officials. This made a major impact and impression on the entire conduct of the show. The jury showed their sterling experience, acumen and responsibility in shouldering at times difficult duties and I must put on record that the judging was par excellence, without prejudice, fair and extremely professional. This is the reason that there were no objections. The main jury of Col SS Ahlawat, Col D Bali, Col Rajeev Dahiya supported by Brig GS Puri and Comdt Naresh Tehlan was of exceptional order.

Recommendation: Time has come that we lay and have more faith in our indigenous jury rather than demeaning their integrity by superimposing a foreign jury where it is not mandated by the FEI. For the record all Indian judges during dressage in JNEC were significantly better and more realistically balanced than the foreign jury. In fact, the foreigner has gone back more learned and wiser after judging with our dressage judges namely Col D Bali, Col SS Ahlawat and Comdt Naresh Tehlan. If we use our indigenous jury as these experienced judges then there is no need whatsoever to spend funds on calling foreign jury. Also EFI must not relent to vehement indigenous propaganda, the same voices which go quiet in front of foreigners, which is nothing but just posturing and noise. The best way is to simply ignore them and not allowing them the respect of even acknowledgement.

(b) **GROUND AND ARENAS** - From the feedback from various quarters including the participants, coaches, horse owners and the foreign jury, all the competition arenas, practice arenas for all events to include jumping, dressage and tentpegging, were absolutely top class second to only the artificial turf standards. The undersigned has officiated at numerous events worldwide and can comfortably place the Tollygunge grounds in top five natural surfaces. For their superlative effort in their relentless pursuit of ground excellence, the team Tollygunge deserves a pat on the back by the Federation. In my 27 years of association with Tollygunge equestrian area, I have never seen the grounds and arenas looking and riding better. Everyday the arenas were tailorlaid depending upon that day's horse traffic, level of event, number of entries etc to fit it to the days requirements. Even the eventing which was carried out mostly on Polo ground the affected parts were adequately sanded, river sand and JCB being suitably provided by Tollygunge Club right till the Race course far away from the Club.

Recommendation : A leaf should be taken from this JNEC and more shows be given to regions and centres with natural arenas. Though the artificial arenas are very welcome and be encouraged to develop but they should not be allowed to hold the Federation at ransom because India is still a developing country and we do not want the elitist tag to our sport and artificial turf being exorbitantly expensive, good natural arenas well inspected and passed beforehand must be widely encouraged. This will ensure widespread of our sport among the masses.

- (c) **STABLING AND PARKING OF HORSE FLOATS**—Excellent stabling facilities for 160 horses were created by Tollygunge Club. This included well ventilated, secured horse stalls with on the site readily availability of hay and green grass. A canteen was also put up for the food for grooms at a very low price and the quality of food was so good that most of the riders and parents/coaches ended up eating there only. The army horses were stabled under the army stables, transport to and from provided by the Army. The horse floats were provided parking at the Polo ground vicinity.
- (d) **VETERINARY COVER** - Superlative veterinary cover was provided by on site veterinary team of Tollygunge Club and under the aegis of Brig SS Kashyap, Dir RVS HQ East Comd. He and his team ensured each and every horse was inspected thoroughly on arrival, during and after the event, during eventing trot up and the event itself. Every emergency care and facility were made available for the show by him and his team of three vet officers.
- (e) **MEDICAL COVER** - Adequate and timely medical cover in terms of doctors and ambulances was available through out the show.
- (f) **ALLIED FACILITIES** - Facilities in terms of food stalls, tack shops, accommodation, meals and transport of officials were very well taken care of.
- (g) **COOPERATION BETWEEN THE OFFICIALS AND SUPPORT STAFF** - The cooperation provided by the Support staff of Tollygunge Club was immense, precise to the point, timely and unflinching. They generated a tremendous amount of goodwill among the participants, coaches, parents and EFI officials. Among the lot, one name definitely must be mentioned here, that is of Mr Sangeet Bagrodia of Tollygunge Club, who along with his support team spearheaded the entire show from womb to tomb. It's primarily due to his relentless efforts the National show was such great success.

Recommendation : More such, passionate about the sport, institutions and individuals be identified and worked within close collaboration for benefit of our sport.

- (h) **TIMINGS AND SCHEDULES** - It's worth mentioning that each and every event started absolutely on time, without delay or change of schedule. This needed lot of fine tuning and coordination but was gladly provided by the organisers. There was a scheduled officials and organisers conference every single evening at the show office chaired by the undersigned to discuss and review the days proceedings, any anomalies and distribution of next days responsibilities and modality of functioning and the state of desired ground footing. It must go on record that each and every official made it a point to attend it without a single failure and all contributed very actively in making the show flawless. Additional responsibilities taken on by Brig GS Puri, who was there on his leave, Comdt Naresh Tehlan and Lt Col BS Rathore were really commendable. All egos were shed aside with the sole aim of having a successful grand show.

- (i) **QUALITY OF COURSES AND EVENTING TRACK** - The quality, measurements, degree of difficulty befitting a National show were of sublime quality and I am very confident and happy in putting in record that Comdt Naresh Tehlan has really matured and come of age wrt laying of courses, arenas, ground footing and eventing track and obstacles. Today India and EFI are enriched in having such a dedicated and passionate tireless man working for the sport which can only be better for our country and riders in future to come. All the courses were up to laid down specifications, suitably challenging but safe, laid out very well in time and best of all admired by all competitors, coaches and judges alike. Truly a tremendous effort.
- (j) **EFFECT OF REL FOOTPRINT ON NATIONAL SPORT** - The efforts put in by the EFI and its Secy Gen in pushing the REL and making it mandatory till junior level has borne fruit and rich dividends. It can be evidently observed in the remarkable upswing in quality of riding and horses. REL have passed the test of time and withstood its relevance and must continue to be encouraged.
- (k) **MISCELLANEOUS RECOMMENDATIONS** - There was a perceptible delay in despatch of army horses for army children as allotted by the QMG's branch. The horses did not reach till one evening before their event and some did not reach at all and some reached lame. This caused considerable consternation among the army parents and participants as they could not give entries in time as they lacked the horse particulars, though the organisers facilitated them by not charging post entry fees and allowing entry right up to one hour before the event but it needed tremendous extra work and last minute fine tuning and could have been avoided.

Ambit of RELs must be expanded to encompass all the disciplines.

TOLLYGUNGE Club and its officials spearheaded by Mr Sangeet Bagrodia and functioning under the direct supervision of its CEO Mr AK Mukerjee, really deserve at least a letter of appreciation and a memento from the President EFI for a job very well done indeed. This organisation is absolutely capable of taking on various international shows on behalf of EFI and must be encouraged to do so. They have the necessary vision, passion, resources and most importantly the will to excel.

4. Overall an excellent show in all its aspects. The initial credo of the event, as spelt out to all in the first briefing "**SAFETY AND HAPPINESS**" was well achieved.

Best wishes for a very happy New Year,

Regards,

(Col PP Singh)

Technical Director JNEC