

The following guidelines, issued by the FEI between 2011 and 2013 have, with the approval of the FEI, been amalgamated into this one document and like subjects grouped for ease of reading.

I would like to thank the FEI for giving approval for me to do this so that the information can be provided to our National Judges in one document.

This document covers Mouth Problems and Walk



This document will be updated as further guidelines are issued by the FEI

## **MOUTH PROBLEMS**

**From the FEI Dressage Judge General Ghislain Fouarge – 1/7/11**  
**Guidelines for the evaluation of mouth problems**

### **Problems with the contact and how to deal with them**

Under the present rules if blood is showing there is no discussion – the horse must be eliminated immediately.

The welfare of the horse is paramount.

A horse going with an open mouth should be dealt with by deducting 1 or 2 marks each time it is observed depending on severity. Issues with the tongue are further evidence that the horse is avoiding the contact and has problems to accept the right contact through the bridle.

Where the tongue is drawn right up or over the bit the mark would be taken down by 2 or 3 points for each time it is clearly observed. The same would apply where the tongue is hanging out to the side and this fault would never score higher than 5 per movement. If the tongue is clearly over the bit not more than 4.

In some cases the tongue shows a very small amount at the front of the mouth. When this is approximately some mm it can be ignored. When this becomes exaggerated then 1 or 2 marks should be deducted depending on severity.

When a horse is momentarily a little behind the vertical but the overall picture is willing and on the aids the fault is not severe. If the horse is short in neck or too deep in front for a longer time at least 1 point would be deducted per movement (also for the Halt). The whole execution of the movement should be judged.

Sometimes the horse is correctly in front of the vertical, but it is clear that the contact is strong and that the horse is not through enough or leaning on the bit. In such cases at least 1 point would be deducted per movement.

Moving the lips is not a fault and can be ignored if the way of going is willing and in every other way correct. Grinding the teeth is not considered a fault if the horse appears happy and willing and has saliva.

Slight tilting will result in the deduction of 1 point per movement but 2 points where more severe.

Judges should keep in mind that problems with the contact also influence the mark given for submission. Severe problems with the tongue coming out or over the bit would result in a maximum of 5 for submission. If however, the contact is good then the judge should be prepared to go up with the submission mark.

**To: All FEI Dressage Judges**

**From: Ghislain Fouarge, FEI Dressage Judge General – 19/7/12**

**Re: Walk**

Dear Colleagues,

Some time ago guidelines were published concerning the judging of the piaffe and the walk. It would seem, however, that not everyone is following the guidelines.

**Walk**

The same problem is occurring in the marks awarded for the walk and it seems that very often there are big differences showing in the marks displayed to the spectators. Sometimes walks that do not have a correct rhythm are being given 6 or higher.

**A reminder about marks for walks where there are problems:**

- If the walk is not a clear 4 beat (in danger) the mark is not more than 5
- Only some jogging steps not more than 4
- Really tense and trotting not more than 3
- Clearly lateral not more than 3

Perhaps it would be very helpful to read through the guidelines again (available here on the FEI website) and concentrate to adhere to those in order to make our judging more uniform.

**From the Dressage Judge General Ghislain Fouarge (6/4/11) – Updated 25/7/13**

**Evaluation of the walk**

When the walk is not a clear 4 beat rhythm the mark is not more than 5.

When not regular (sometimes due to tension) not more than 4.

When clearly lateral maximum 3.

When both extended and collected walks shown are irregular, the mark for paces cannot be higher than 6.

When the collected walk is only affected, then it is not a problem as the former, but means that the horse is not yet prepared for that degree of collection .

This is not included in the marks for the paces but rather in the 3rd collective mark .

(what is usually named submission, but which in fact means amongst other COLLECTION)

*Please note that a clarification has been made in a new Guideline from the Dressage Judge General Stephen Clarke, dated 25 July 2013 – see below.*

**From the Dressage Judge General Stephen Clarke – 25/7/13**

Following the introduction of 'Half marks' the guidelines in the FEI Handbook for Judges concerning the evaluation of the walk and its relationship to the collective mark for Paces (Page 216) will now be updated as follows. This is also an update of the published "Guidelines for the evaluation of Piaffe / transitions and the walk", dated 06 April 2011)

*'If the walk is shown but is clearly lateral throughout, the mark of paces must be considered as only sufficient (five) at best – or lower, depending on the quality of the trot and canter.*

*If the walk is lateral in one of the sections (usually the collected walk) but is regular in the other section (the extended) the mark for the paces can only be considered as satisfactory (six to six point five) at best – or lower depending on the quality of the trot and canter'.*