

DRESSAGE Ireland

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Chairman's Address

2022 saw a full return to sport post covid.

In January the board undertook to commence updating policy documents and the rule book. Due to the increasing volume of office work, we agreed to increase the office admin hours.

Early in the year Sarah Mellor and Claire Sedgeman stepped off the board, subsequently Ronan Murphy and Miriam Walsh were Co-opted on, again their specialised skill set was much appreciated. Mid-year we began assessing our constitution and later commenced on updating it.

Regional training clinics continued throughout the country and for advanced riders Dressage Ireland ran training clinics with Richard White, International coach.

The Winter Finals were held in Castle Irvine in early April, and we were delighted to have sponsorship from Omagh and Fermanagh District council and many other local sponsors.

The Wild Atlantic Dressage Festival ran over the May bank holiday weekend in Sligo, Leinster ran the Botanica three-day festival in the National Sports Arena over the June bank holiday weekend, while The Northern region ran a two day festival in Castle Irvine and the South Eastern region ran the Two day Nutriscience classic.

I'd like to express our gratitude to all regions but in particular to those regions and individuals who worked tirelessly to make these festivals happen. They are not only a great motivation for riders but are also an opportunity for judges to have judges training while visiting international judges are on duty here.

The judges committee also organised several judge trainings throughout the country and in the UK in an endeavour to encourage and train new judges and to up skill others. Again, thanks to the judges committee for all their work in this area and to the many judges throughout the country that support and assist at regional and National shows.

The Dressage Demonstration at the RDS took some organising and the promotional video that was made has been great in increasing our image among the public and potential sponsors. In an effort to acknowledge and celebrate Para Dressage Rider; Michael Murphy's achievements Dressage Ireland flew him in to be our guest of honour at the demo where he proudly showed off his double individual bronze medals won at the Para Dressage World Championships in Herning in Denmark.

Grant applications to increase participation were also processed and DI and the IPS joined forces in an initiative to encourage grassroots riders through a joint programme to be delivered throughout the country. Three days took place in Co

Armagh, Kildare and Co Mayo with coaching from International riders Heike Holstein and Kate Dwyer. DI Elevate provides affordable training to riders throughout Ireland across a series of regional events that incorporates flatwork training and workshops to improve skill levels in the saddle and on the ground with a range of topics designed to cover essential horsemanship skills. Most of all it provides opportunities for children to learn while having fun! The south eastern region also continued with their very successful youth training scheme, coaching delivered by level 3 coach Ann Marie Dunphy and test riding and horse care management with Dressage Ireland List 3 judge and BHSI coach Jillie Rodgers.

In September the Slieve Bloom Stud National Championships were held in Barnadown, 740 tests ridden which was an increase of over 10% on the previous year. The National Championship title was claimed for the second consecutive year by Dane Rawlins on Espoire. Slieve Bloom Stud, HSI and Childeric were among a list of supportive sponsors. Again, a huge thank you to all our sponsors. After the Nationals we sent out a member's survey which was well supported the result subsequently informed our decision to move the Nationals to a more central location in 2023.

The Dressage autumn development series kicked off in October for young Irish bred horses. The prize fund was very attractive, and it rewarded both owners and breeders. The Leinster regional committee kindly hosted the final in Greenogue.

On October 31st the Judges Gala took place in Spruce Lodge. Five star FEI judge Katrina Wuest shared her knowledge and experiences with both Riders and judges on the scales of training from young horses to Grand Prix. 2022 also marked the sad loss of two Dressage Ireland supporters, Dressage Ireland's founding member Mrs Joan Keogh and Debbie Osborough Dressage Ireland judge. May they rest in peace.

On the International stage in the spring of 2022 Heike Holstein, on the Irish home bred Sambuca had a third place at the Keysoe CDI3*. Mid-year HSI announced the three combinations selected to represent Ireland at the World Dressage Championships in Denmark- Sorrell Klatzko and Turbo, Alex Baker and Dutchman and Anna Merveldt and Esporim.

Anna had a good run of success in 2022 with a third in San Giovanni in February, a third in the GP Special in October again in Italy, she also had top ten placings in Austria and Stuttgart.

Alex Baker had a 6th in Le Mans CDI3*in October.

Abi Lyle qualified two horses for the World Championships - Farrell and Giraldo, her successes included a win in the consolation GP class in Compiègne, a 5th in Hartpury in the GP special and 6th in Wellington. She finished the year on a high with a PB of 70.39% in the FEI Dressage World Cup short GP followed by a 75.25% in the GP Kur. Other Irish International riders with notable results were Dane Rawlins with Espoire 4th in the GP at Le Mans in April. Carolyn Mellor and VSH Gouverneur M had a 3rd place in the GP Kur in Belgium. At the same show Sorrell Klatzko had a 4th place with Turbo and Judy Reynolds on For fun placed 5th.

Jennifer Hartnett and Eximio also had a 10th place in Meerle.

At small tour level Belinda Brereton also had some good results in the UK.

At junior level Victoria Campbell had a 5th place in Wellington. Martha Jobling had a 1st and 2nd in Le Mans in April. The Irish pony team clocked up some impressive scores at the Europeans in Poland, Oscar O Connor with scores up to 69%, Lily Larkin up to 67%, Ellen Mc Donald up to 65% and Jessica Grogan 63% placing the team 13th.

October also saw some fantastic youth results in Keysoe GB, three riders won four classes, Martha won two, Ellen won a pony class and Maeve Deverell a children on horses class.

Other Irish International riders included Laragh Byrne, Sophie Doheny, Cillian Curran and Lily Kelly.

In August a team of 11 young riders travelled to Arena UK, GB to compete in the Youth Home Nations competition with some great results across the Board. This competition is invaluable experience for our young riders on their journey to compete at the higher levels and we look forward to developing this further in the future.

2022 was a busy year both both nationally and internationally. It is exciting and encouraging to see so many Irish riders both Senior and junior having come through the national circuit to progress to the international stage. Being an island on the edges of Europe it takes a lot to travel to European shows, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all our riders and their families for flying the flag for Irish Dressage abroad.

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