

National Dressage Championships Costs



The schedule for the Bates 2020 National Dressage Championships was released on 15 January. The release of this schedule has generated extensive, at times heated, online discussion relating to the level of cost to enter the Bates Nationals this year.

It comes as no surprise to the DNZ board and staff that the cost of Nationals has generated this reaction. The ever increasing costs of running this event, and of delivering the sport in general, weighs heavily on our minds and is a cause of constant concern. Increasing the level of entry fees for the Nationals was not a decision made lightly and only occurred after every other possible option was explored.

The budgeted cost to run the 2020 Nationals is \$97,659.00. This figure is exclusive of fees for stabling, camping and ground fees collected on behalf of the NEC. The Nationals is a more expensive event to run than a Regional Championship show. Because Nationals includes a CDI it is necessary to bring international Judges to the event. This attracts an expense for international air fares of \$13,500.00 this year. Running a CDI involves other expenses due to the FEI rules around such an event; for example there is a need for an onsite vet, on call farrier, and there are FEI charges that must be paid. The additional cost of running a CDI is in the range of \$25,000 to \$28,000 depending on the costs of flights and the exchange rate. In addition, the Nationals requires a higher grade of Judge across the board, meaning that the cost of travel for NZ resident Judges is also significantly higher than other events. We have weighted this added cost towards the FEI level riders by charging a higher rider levy to those riders.

The other side to this coin is the fact that external funding is becoming increasingly difficult to secure; traditionally more than 20k – 30k of external funding has been secured to support the event but to date no applications have been successful. The sport is also in a sponsorship rebuild phase following the move to Taupo. The Bates Nationals team have put in a monumental effort to raise sponsorship of \$30,950.00 as at the time of writing this statement. As of today, the sponsorship figure has still not reached that of previous years but with work still being undertaken.

Competitors and supporters are invited to submit any possible contacts to: dressage@nzequestrian.org.nz

The schedule this year does not offer prize money for the individual rounds of the Championships in national classes, but instead prize money is paid to 6th place based on overall championship points with rosettes to 8th. The intent was to recognize more riders placed in the final championship placings rather than just Champion & Reserve.

Leaving entry fees and prize money at the same level as previous years would have resulted in a projected loss of a little over \$20,000.00. This would have had to be covered from the Dressage NZ cash reserves. While that may have plastered over the issue temporarily, it would have damaged the financial stability of DNZ and only created a far greater shock in a future year when the DNZ cash reserves were depleted and entry fees would have had to be increased by a far greater amount.

In summary, compared with 2019, the actual increase for national riders is \$15 per class (\$45 for three classes) plus \$50 rider fee, plus \$30 NEC Ground levy fee totaling \$125.00. Stabling/Yarding fees in 2019 also included the Ground Fee.

Offsetting this to some degree is a \$60 saving in camping fees at NEC over a four-day period meaning national riders have an approximately \$65 increase. FEI level riders face a total increase in costs of \$165 based on a rider competing a single horse.

It was a difficult decision to increase fees and reduce prize money, but as a Board we felt that it was the responsible and necessary thing to do in order to ensure the ongoing viability of the National Championships and the ongoing financial stability of Dressage New Zealand.

Dressage NZ wishes to sincerely thank BATES SADDLES, the Championships naming rights sponsor, national series sponsors and all event sponsors for their support.

Scott McKenna
Chair
Dressage NZ
16/1/20