

WHO IS FEIF?

FEIF unites people in their passion for the Icelandic horse

FEIF is the International Federation of Icelandic Horse Associations, composed of Icelandic Horse associations in 21 countries. FEIF, from the German Föderation Europäischer Islandpferde-Freunde (Federation of European Icelandic Horse Friends), was established in 1969 in Switzerland. As a federation of national associations, FEIF is also the sum total of the members of these organisations. That means: FEIF really is you – and about 80,000 other people who love, ride, breed, care for, and passionately enjoy the Icelandic horse, wherever they may live, from Iceland to New Zealand. Phew – that is huge! But does it really help to answer the question? This series of FEIF leaflets on breeding, education, leisure riding, sports and youth work will explain the work of FEIF, and how we achieve our goals.



International Federation of Icelandic Horse Associations

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SPORT



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Sports and sportsmanship

The Cambridge dictionary defines the word sport as: 'a game, competition or activity needing physical effort and skill that is played according to rules, for enjoyment'. Furthermore, the Oxford dictionary also introduces the notion of 'team', and let us just add a few more terms: a quality often associated with sports is 'fairness'. The close association is shown in everyday language when for example we talk about 'being a good sport', which means to behave in a positive and cooperative way. A further concept is that many sports are 'games', and 'played', this adds a touch of lightness (!) to whatever we are doing. Finally, there is that eternal paradox: we cannot find freedom without discipline, neither can we run fair games without 'rules'. By this time you have realised: whether you are competing, or merely walking up to your horse out in the field, it seems that as a horse person you are constantly engaging in a team sport.

A level playing field

So, what is the role of the FEIF Sport Department? The most visible aspect is the FEIF Rules and Regulations book. Holding together the many and varied performances that can be shown by horse and rider, and can be judged for the development of skill and the enjoyment of spectators, is a complex task, requiring lots of attention to detail. Nobody is saying that you cannot engage in most equestrian disciplines with the Icelandic horse and enjoy some level of success. However, there is a certain consensus that the most precious thing about the Icelandic Horse is its range of different gaits, and therefore the competitions, specific to the Icelandic horse, the FEIF classes such as T1 or F3, are what makes up Icelandic horse sports. Particular classes have evolved over many years and will continue to develop in the future.



At the World Championships, the elite of horses and riders compete, surrounded by on average 12,000 spectators.

The FEIF Sport Department works in the same way as any other FEIF department: ideas and refinements are suggested and discussed at either the February or the October meeting, put into written form and share with national associations, and finally voted on at the Delegates' Assembly in February.

Excellence

The biggest and most visible event run in the name of FEIF is the biennial World Championships. The detailed planning of the event, including the infrastructure of the venue, the catering, the programming and advertising, plus a million other matters, are undertaken by a group of national organisers who proposed the venue and a feasibility plan, usually about 4 years before the event. But the actual competition is run by FEIF and in compliance with FEIF Rules and Regulations.

This is where it all comes together: the elite of horses and riders compete on the oval track, surrounded by on average circa 12,000 spectators, who celebrate the achievements shown before



them. Wherever horse people meet, there is always something common to talk about, and events like the World Championships are of course also a major social (and shopping!) event. Old friendships are strengthened, and new friendships are formed (Nice to meet you! Really? My horse is by the same stallion! That means they are practically brothers...) – If you do not believe it, just go and see for yourself!

FEIF WorldRanking

The FEIF WorldRanking is a system to compare results of riders of pure-bred Icelandic horses at selected sport events all over the world with each other. FEIF started the WorldRanking initiative in 1995. The system is continuous, every day a new list is computed. The position of riders in the ranking lists may vary per day! You find the rankings for all FEIF classes that were run under Sport Rules and Regulations on the FEIF website.



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