

# Para-Dressage Newsletter

Jan 2010



Dear Riders, Coaches, Parents and Judges

I thought you would find the Paraequestrian chairman's report interesting and so have included it in its entirety for you to read.

## **SANEF PARAEQUESTRIAN TECHNICAL COMMITTEE** **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2009**

**Prepared by:** Sharon Boyce

**Date:** 21 January 2010

As I reflect on the happenings in Para equestrian in this past year I am struck by the magnitude of what has been achieved and what still requires to be done. The committee have been phenomenal in their commitment to accountability, transparency and communication and I believe it is because of this and their indefatigable determination that para equestrian has thrived. In addition Para equestrian has been most fortunate to have received allocations of money from the National Lotteries Board (NLDTF) through South African Sports Association for the Physically Disabled (SASAPD) as well as through the recent South African Equestrian Council Application which certainly assists in the setting and achievement of goals.

As with any journey the para equestrian road has not been without its challenges:

- U The first challenge was the integration of SASAPD and SANEF; the SASAPD equestrian convener, Maudelene Frenzel was co-opted onto the Technical Committee to share with us her experience in SASAPD. Unfortunately she resigned during the year and so it was agreed with SASAPD EXCO that the Chairman of the SANEF technical committee would also be the SASAPD Equestrian Convener and in this way ongoing communication would be facilitated. This process has been in place for a number of months now and it appears to be a far easier and all round more satisfactory arrangement. On behalf of the members of the committee I wish to publicly thank Maudelene for her commitment and efforts in Paradressage and we hope to see her and Mark in the para equestrian arena in the not to distant future.
- U Secondly it would appear that certain of the riders, especially those in KZN, struggled with the transition from communicating with the SASAPD equestrian convener to using the Provincial bodies in order to gain information and problem solve issues relating to the sport in general. As the provincial para equestrian committees gain more visibility and the provincial bodies include para equestrian as they do all the other disciplines this challenge is slowly beginning to fade.

- U A third challenge would have to be the low numbers of competitors in the sport. Given the statistic that between 10 and 12 % of the population are people living with disability, and the costs associated with equestrian sport in general; it would be suffice to say that para equestrian will never be a huge mass participation sport. Nevertheless ways to encourage riders to move from therapeutic riding into sport riding will need to be addressed at both the national and provincial level in the coming year.
- U Fourthly the small numbers of qualified paradressage judges makes it difficult to conduct shows in which riders can receive points towards team selection. In addition the dearth of para dressage stewards also has a limiting impact on the ability to conduct shows. A concerted effort to encourage qualified dressage judges and stewards to add paradressage judging / stewarding to their basket of skills is on the agenda to be addressed in the coming year.
- U The national training clinics hosted by SANEF and funded by SRSA were a categorical success. Unfortunately this was marred by a delay in the funding allocation being dispensed by SRSA. It appeared that the system for approving and claiming the expenses of these training clinics was not clearly communicated to SANEF as the usual process of claiming had been changed to a system of claiming through a Centre of Specialisation (CoS). Ongoing negotiations between SANEF and the SRSA have resulted in all the invoices being submitted through UKZN the designated CoS for para equestrian. I believe the outstanding invoices will eventually be paid, however I cannot indicate in what time period.
- U The National Academy Program (NAP) probably presented the greatest challenge to the committee this past year. The Department of Sports and Recreation enrolled four para equestrian riders without SANEF's prior knowledge, so it came as a surprise to this committee when we realised that there was meant to be a training program in place for these high performance athletes. Tracey Cumming has worked tenaciously in attempting to create a programme for the riders that develop their riding skills through consistent coaching and exposure to as well as the usage of to the medical and scientific services at the UKZN Centre of Specialisation (CoS). In summary I believe this programme to have been generally dissatisfactory as it was essentially directed towards athletes in a residential tertiary education system that were able to practice their sport at this establishment under the direction of a national coach. In addition the UKZN appeared to have initial administrative problems and so there were delays in the processing of claims. This situation was not relieved by the fact that the riders were of the impression that they would have access to the cash value of the programme inspite of having received the guidelines which indicated to the contrary and so submitted many claims which fell outside of the payment guidelines. Many discussions ensued between Tracey, SRSA the CoS and I around how to shape this programme to best suit the needs of the riders. This took months and the situation is now that the riders will receive some of the allocation to use towards their horse costs as they have not used a large amount of the money allocated to them. It would appear NAP no longer falls under the jurisdiction of SRSA and will fall away at the end of the contract which is the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010. The learning this experience presented has been invaluable and has paved the way towards the development of a much broader SANEF Talent Identification and Development plan which provides opportunities for talented development riders from low socio-economic backgrounds to apply for a scholarship from SRSA, to the High Performance Centre (HPC) which offers quality schooling; specialist medical and scientific support services and top quality specialist equestrian sport training administered by SANEF. In addition SANEF will

now also have access to funding to host training camps for identified talented athletes. (More about this will be communicated via MANCO)

It is suffice to say that the learning from the challenges faced has contributed to the developments and achievements within para equestrian this past year:

- U There are paradressage riders competing in four provinces namely; Freestate Gauteng, Kwazulu Natal, and Western Province and the latter three provinces have all installed para equestrian discipline committees. All of these provinces host regular paradressage competitions which in some of the provinces are occurring as regularly as once a month, and show schedules and other information is available on all the provincial websites. In the future it is hoped that the Freestate will be able to set up a committee to represent and assist the para equestrians within the province and that para equestrians will emerge in the other provinces as well.
- U In all the above mentioned provinces paradressage competitions are being incorporated with able bodied dressage competitions. It is very encouraging to see that para dressage is being accepted and integrated within the wider able bodied dressage circles. The paradressage riders dream came true when dressage agreed to include the 2010 SA Paradressage Championship alongside the SA Dressage Championship which is to be hosted in Port Elizabeth.
- U The 2009 SA Para dressage Championship included the first ever interprovincial event. There were three provinces represented; Gauteng, Kwazulu Natal and Western Province. Freestate only had one rider competing so could not field a team. It was suggested that in the future those provinces that have small numbers of riders should join forces to field a combined team. This could be an interim solution until the smaller provinces rider numbers grow such that they can field there own team.
- U Para equestrian has developed a data base of riders and interested people and they all receive regular information regarding para equestrian through a regular newsletter which has been wonderfully managed and edited by Wendy Möller, who also acts as the riders' representative. The provincial bodies also publish this newsletter on their respective websites. This database has proved to be a valuable forum for communication between the riders, the coaches and the national technical committee.

- U History was made in that the application to the FEI to allow SANEF to host international qualifying competitions for World Equestrian Games and Paralympics was granted. It was agreed that SANEF could host one CPEDI3\* event a year. The first one was brilliantly hosted by Western Province and the following four riders join Philippa Johnson with qualifying results for WEG; Marion Milne, Anthony Dawson, Wendy Möller, and Cathy Lloyd. The next CPEDI3\* event will be hosted by Gauteng Horse Society and this will provide a second opportunity for the riders to qualify for WEG and London 2012.
- U Rider and coach capacity building and development was facilitated firstly through the national training clinics held early in 2009, and then by a two-day international training clinic which was facilitated by international coaches; Mrs Jane Goldsmith and Mrs. Chris Porterfield. Training was directed to empower both coaches and riders together with emphasis being on the preparation for international competition. The riders were introduced to the new FEI 2010 Paradressage tests. All riders were given input into their performance during the CPEDI3\* competition and given pointers on areas to work on before the next international competition. It is planned that there will be a similar format training clinic held after the next CPEDI3\* in March. Thanks must go to SASAPD and the NLDTF for providing the much needed funding for both the international competition and the training clinic.
- U The SASAPD funding from the NLDTF also assisted a senior South African Riding for the Disabled (SARDA) instructor, Teri Smith, to accept the invitation from the Hong Kong RDA to attend the 3<sup>rd</sup> Asia Pacific Conference on the preparation of Paralympic riders. It is hoped that through capacity building initiatives such as this that more riders will be seen to move from the therapeutic riding environment of SARDA to the competitive sport riding environment of SANEF.
- U The NLDTF allocation of money in late 2009 towards the “Para Equestrian Road to London 2012 project” has made the vision of including a para equestrian team as part of TEAM SA a reality. Hopefully this together with the increased experience the riders will have had through SA based international competition and training will realise the goal of SA being placed amongst the top 10 Para equestrian teams at WEG.

In summary 2009 has been a year of foundation building for SANEF Para Equestrian. A year which will pave the way for healthy development of the sport from grass roots to the international arena. I leave you with the words of John Wayne:

***“Courage is being scared to death and saddling up anyway”,***

And courage is something Para Equestrians and this committee have in plenty supply!

### **WORLD EQUESTRIAN GAMES 2010**

The final schedule is now available and can be downloaded off the SANEF and GHS websites. Be aware that it is a very long document.

Now that WEG is definitely on our show schedule for this year I thought it would be a good idea to remind you who the Para Equestrian National Selectors are. The selectors are bound by the SANEF and Para Equestrian Selection Policy and Procedure which are available on the SANEF website together with the Para Equestrian Selection Criteria.

The national selectors, who will remain in position until after London 2010, are:

- Liz Day (convener)
- Tracey Cumming
- Caroline Potts
- Bev Franklin
- Teri Smith
- Sharon Boyce

### **TEAM SA – PARADRESSAGE MANAGEMENT POSITION APPOINTMENTS:**

Thank you to all the riders who nominated people to the position of chef d'Equipe. In accordance with the SANEF general regulations the Para Equestrian National Selectors, will make the appointment, and SANEF MANCO will announce the chef d'Equipe before the end of February 2010.

The position of National Para dressage coach is now being advertised and the job description detailing the requirements are on the SANEF websites. Applications must be submitted to Sifiso at SANEF [sifiso@horsesport.org.za](mailto:sifiso@horsesport.org.za) and must include all the requested information, applications that are incomplete will not be considered and the closing date for applications is the 28 February 2010.

The Para equestrian High Performance Committee has agreed to appoint an international para dressage consultant expert to assist in the development of Team SA as well as with Talent identification and development for both riders and coaches. It is hoped that this will be finalized and in action by the CPEDI3\* in March. Watch this space for more information!

### **INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION REQUIREMENTS:**

All riders who compete in FEI (International) competitions are required to be registered with FEI and the year runs from 01 January – 31 December. All horses must also be registered with the FEI. Forms are available on the SANEF website and must be returned to Tiffany at SANEF [tiffany@horsesport.org.za](mailto:tiffany@horsesport.org.za) .

Please be aware that the FEI require riders who are competing overseas to be registered members of SANEF and have an international license which must be obtained through SANEF, this does cost and details are on the SANEF website. SANEF MANCO have agreed to waive the SANEF membership fee for SA based riders going to WEG, as you have all paid your provincial body membership for the year.

**Picture of the month: (Please send me your show pictures)**

Due to the file size I can only include one picture of a rider at a show, therefore I will select a new one every month. This month we have Grade 4 rider Cathy Lloyd on Shadow Dancer at the SA championships in Cape Town



**FEI 3 \* CPEDI EVENT AT GHS 18 – 21 MARCH 2010 and TRAINING CLINIC 22 – 23 MARCH 2010**

This competition will be the last opportunity to attempt to qualify in SA for WEG later this year.

Please note that there will be a 2 day training clinic for both riders and coaches, following the competition. This training clinic is compulsory to all long listed riders and hopefully their coaches will be able to attend as well. The trainers for the clinic are Mrs. Jane Goldsmith and Mrs. Kathy Amos-Jacob. The trainers have specifically requested that the riders on the clinic ride the same horses they are riding during the competition.

Please watch both the SANEF and GHS websites closely as the show schedule is currently with the FEI for approval and will be sent out shortly

Until next time happy riding!!



Wendy

PS. Feel free to contact me if you have any tips, funny horsy stories or anything you would like to add.