





Most of the original international sports federations were formed in order to agree on rules to govern their sports at the Olympic Games. Needless to say, there were international competitions in many sports, including equestrian sports, long before the Olympic Games, but these were usually run under the national rules of the country where the competitions happened to be organised.

Since competitive carriage driving was not included as an Olympic sport, this situation continued until 1969, when the FEI decided to produce some international rules for the discipline to meet the growing demand for international driving competitions and championships.

Once international rules had been adopted for the Olympic Games, it was only sensible to use them for all international competitions. It was, therefore, the Olympic Games which effectively introduced the concept of international championships, and, as the custodians of international rules, it gave the International Federations the opportunity to organise such championships.

The problem, then, was to decide for which disciplines, for what area and for which class of competitors there should be international championships, and at what frequency. 'World' championships, although desirable, would be very expensive. There could also be 'Continental', 'Regional' or any other grouping of nations; they could be for men or women only, or for juniors, or any other class of competitor. By the early 1960s, when I was the President, these problems had become acute for the FEI, and there was an urgent need to try to bring some sort of order to this vexed issue.

I warmly welcome Max Ammann's valiant effort to record the evolution of the whole championship structure in the equestrian sports. He has always been a well-informed equestrian journalist, with a real concern for the welfare of equestrian sports, and he is also a shrewd supporter and critic of the FEI.





BUCKINGHAM PALACE

When I was asked to follow my father, The Duke of Edinburgh, as President of the FEI in January 1987 not only was I still competing in Horse Trials and riding in National Hunt Racing, but also President of the Windsor Three Day Event Committee. The FEI represented quite a change, but I felt I had something to offer the wider equestrian community as I was very keen to encourage grass roots activity in all equestrian disciplines by using the more successful competition nations to mentor the newer members. I was also convinced of the need to involve volunteers across all sections of the equestrian world. Volunteers bring so much to the sport, and without them no sport could exist and the numbers needed for Equestrian events are enormous. Volunteers of course need a support structure to enable them to gain skills and develop interests, but this extra work has already paid dividends many times over. Using the skills and experience of long standing volunteers to introduce, maintain and improve the new volunteers as the disciplines spread around the world is vital!

Whether I succeeded in my aims or not is for others to judge. The FEI has survived some testing times and is now well placed under its new President to face the difficult challenges that undoubtedly lie ahead. I congratulate Max Ammann on writing a trilogy of books covering the history of the FEI Championships, the history of the Equestrian Olympic Games and finally the history of the FEI since 1921 to celebrate the FEI's 90th Anniversary in 2011. It is an ambitious task and I am sure we all look forward to reading the fruits of his labours.





At the F.E.I. we had for many many years, close to us, a very intelligent and clever person full of innovating ideas but, at the same time, very respectful with the traditions of our sport and tireless collector of everything related to the history of the F.E.I.

Dear Max you are this especial person and I have had the opportunity to see and know of your knowledge.

Looking to the legacy you left to the F.E.I. and just as an example, I want to mention that you created the rules and directed the World Cup for Jumping, now running since 1978 to our days and still a great success followed by World Cups in other four F.E.I. disciplines.

Max you have now the most thrilling files of the F.E.I.'s activities since its creation and you will now share its contents with all the lovers of our sport.

I am waiting with upmost interest for the edition of the first of your promised three books.

H.R.H. the Infanta D^a Pilar de Borbón
President of the F.E.I. since 1994 to 2006





When young people start riding it is my belief that every one of them will cherish a small, perhaps unspoken, dream to one day stand on top of a podium in some foreign land and listen to the strains of their national anthem in recognition that they have reigned supreme and wrested the ultimate prize. This beautiful book is homage to those who have lived that dream and a wonderful historical record of the evolution of the championships which are now an integral part of our sport.

I can think of no one better to compile such a complete and factual biography of this element of horsesport than Max Ammann. Max has been at the forefront of the development of many of the events and shows in this book and in particular the Championship and World Cup series. As a journalist Max's elegant and eloquent writings on the sport have always been both incisive and thought provoking.

This is the first time that a book of this scope has been endorsed by the FEI and it underlines the important role of the FEI at the heart of horsesport and the guardian of its history.

Championships in horsesport are the ultimate expression of our desire to continually improve by challenging our current knowledge and prove our skills outside of the Olympic Games.

My own international championship career began at 13 when I was first given the distinction and responsibility of representing my country, Jordan, in my chosen sport of Jumping. The honour was that such a rare opportunity existed for me, a young Arab girl in a sport that was not widely practised or well-known in the Middle East at that time.

I have come to understand that this opportunity was no accident. The environment and structure which gave me this chance, was created by my predecessors as Presidents of the FEI. They guided and oversaw the development of the championship structure from its birth as a concept flowing from the Olympic Games through its infancy and teenage stages. Now the championship structure is mature and it is ready to provide a wider platform in which we can embrace more nations, athletes and even disciplines. The championship structure also enabled me to compete in the Pan Arab Equestrian Games in 1992 and this experience along with my subsequent experiences at the FEI World Equestrian Games and the Olympic Games has given me a deep appreciation of the important role of the national, continental and world championship structure in the development of horsesport worldwide.

Although careful attention is constantly paid to the evolution of the championships, many of the challenges that faced earlier generations such as rules and locations have now been smoothed away. But new challenges face this generation. Fairness and a level playing field are the foundations of true championship competition and we must strive to attain the highest standards in both areas. As horsemen and women, whose love of horses first drew us to our chosen career paths, the welfare of our equine partners is the first and foremost responsibility in our minds. Protection of horses, the conduct of humane practice in dealing with them, prevention of suffering and injury to the utmost of our abilities – these are the only fair means of attaining our individual and collective goals for highest achievement in our sport. In this way we will preserve the integrity of our championships and inspire a new generation of athletes and a broader audience.

HRH Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein
FEI President