

Guideline for the preparation of young mares for participation in mare performance tests as field tests

To ensure that all mares are as well prepared as possible and can therefore be judged equally and fairly, the participating mares should have a unified level of preparation.

It is expected that the mares:

- are fully vaccinated in accordance with regulations (Influenza)
- let the riders mount and dismount without problems
- are balanced in all three basic gaits under the saddle
- can be ridden around the outside of the arena, on a full circle, change of direction across the diagonal
- can lengthen their strides in trot (no medium trot!)
- are familiar with free jumping

In our experience these goals can be achieved by:

- minimum three months preparation time
- first month: introduction to equipment and lunging
- second and third month: slow and careful breaking in and making familiar with free jumping

Working with the horse in the first month:

- introduce to bridle and lunging girth. Let the horse get used to it, then introduce the saddle
- start lunging on a halter that is put over the bridle
- very carefully start to use side reins. Leave longer at first and shorten over time
- let the horse gain stamina until it can be lunged in all three basic gaits (with side reins)

Working with the horse in the second and third month:

- carefully start breaking in
- riding a minimum of three times a week is recommended
- let the horse find its balance with the rider on top
- the horse is working obediently in all three basic gaits
- let the horse jump free over sensible heights that are appropriate for the horse's willingness to perform with a correct distance between jumps of ca. 7 metres (ponies and smaller horses accordingly less)
- **too big ambitions (of the owner/rider) usually affect the assessment of the horse during the test negatively**

The mares being presented at the field tests should be prepared according to this guideline. For the judges to be able to objectively assess the genetic potential and natural abilities of the mares we kindly ask the owners/riders to respect and follow the points made. Please keep in mind that the mares will be presented in groups of four for the evaluation of the basic gaits and rideability.