

# Dressage NSW Inc Annual General Meeting

## Minutes

Held via Zoom

**Tuesday, 21 November 2023**

Meeting opened at 7.03pm

### 1. Welcome and Apologies

#### Present

Mandy Jones	Julie Jones	Kay Barney
Diane Hitchcock	Kathy Shelley	Gail Benson
Sue Birch	Kyli Bullock	Suzanne Cunningham
Toni Venhaus	Krystina Burdekin	Bruce McVey
Vireena Peacock	Cathie Drury-Klein	Mel Gough
Lynda Bruce	Wendy Bruszewski	Angela Dalby
Mary Houghton		

#### Proxies

Jo Gunn                      Christian Trainor                      Marjolyn Thomas

### 2. Apologies

Jo Gunn	Christian Trainor	Irene Bakels-Noreen
Franz Venhaus	Marjolyn Thomas	Sue Scaysbrook

The Chair (Mandy Jones) welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### 3. Confirmation of the Annual General Meeting Minutes, 6 December 2022

**Motion:** That the minutes be accepted as correct.

**Moved:** Kay Barney                      **Seconded:** Bruce McVey

**Motion Carried**

### 4. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

### 5. President's Report

It takes a village of volunteers to run a sport, and reflecting on the past year has highlighted the enormous work done by a huge number of committed and passionate volunteers.

The dedication of local club organising committees allows opportunities for all riders across the spectrum of the sport, from grass roots to elite. The majority of club events run Amateur Owner Rider, Youth and Open Divisions, and many clubs also offer Para and Equibility competitions. Thank you to each and every club and volunteer for making our sport so inclusive.

The volunteers on the Dressage NSW committee have worked tirelessly to deliver successful major events, judge education, develop high performance, coordinate a series of Club Forums and Jo Gunn, Honorary Secretary has spent countless hours calculating performance medals and leaderboard results. Her task is complicated by continuing issues with the accuracy of the EA results database. I urge all riders and owners to check their own results on the EA results site and draw ENSW's attention to any errors. The annual awards have been finalised and will be presented at the Pirouettes Party the Saturday before the AGM.

Over the past year the major events in NSW run by Dressage NSW were Sydney CDI, Australian Amateur Owner Championships, Australian Youth Dressage Championships, NSW State Championships, which included Open, AOR, Pony and Para divisions. Each year Dressage NSW runs 3-4 major events – a huge undertaking on top of the day to day management of the sport.

I would like to acknowledge all DNSW Committee members and thank them for their ongoing commitment to our sport. Gail Benson, Sue Birch, Sue Cunningham, Kylie Bullock, Zanna Northam, Kathy Shelley and Dee Vodden contribute as elected committee members, with the executive Jo Gunn, Julie Jones, Kay Barney and Di Hitchcock. Di fills a casual vacancy as Treasurer after we sadly farewelled Kirsteen Dixon. All regions of NSW are represented by Area Delegates: Mel Gough, Nadya Marshall, Bruce McVey, Kaye Spence, Marjolyn Thomas, and Christan Trainor, who recently took over from Pamela Bice. Co-opted members Krystina Burdekin and Toni Venhaus provide valuable input as the Riders Representative and Major Events respectively. At this AGM we will farewell Sue Cunningham and Kathy Shelley whose terms will conclude according to the DNSW Constitution, and we thank them for their many years of dedication and contribution.

Judge Education is one of Dressage NSW's most important roles. We have now launched 'Engage' a Learning Management System which is proving highly successful, as it streamlines education and enhances opportunities for judges across the state. The content includes videos, clear descriptions of movements and required knowledge. It also reduces the costs to judges while they gain knowledge and move through the accreditation or upgrade process. We have been approached by other states seeking to access the system, highlighting its success to date.

I would like to thank Zanna Northam for leading Dressage High Performance in NSW. Ten months ago, the then HP 'Squad' discussed how they could best work together, and collectively support one another. They agreed the answer was to be a team. Since then members of the DNSW High Performance Team have met and worked together and achieved their goal to be in the top in all levels at the 2023 Australian Dressage Championships. I am delighted to inform you that the NSW won both the Team A and Team B competitions at the Australian Championships in October at Boneo!

Participation in Para-Equestrian is growing, especially thanks to the Equibility program, which is a bridge between open and para competitions. The NSW Para riders were very competitive at the 2023 Australian Dressage Championships with the CPED12\* Intermediate Team placing 3<sup>rd</sup> and the CPED13\* Grand Prix Team placing 2<sup>nd</sup>.

We continue to offer young rider activities and support our regions. We have a number of new ideas and initiatives in the pipeline for 2024 to further support and develop dressage at all levels throughout the state.

On the whole dressage in NSW is strong and growing. However as we approach 2024 we face a number of ongoing and new challenges:

From 1 January 2024 all dressage events in Australia will require an accredited steward to officiate at the event. Two stewards education courses have been run in NSW in the past year, and more will be offered. We encourage all clubs to identify people to train as stewards to accommodate this new rule.

A major challenge for judge education - run by DNSW – is that once accredited, judges are utilised by other disciplines and groups, such as eventing, interschools and pony club. This is not sustainable unless all user groups identify people from within their own ranks to train as judges.

Trying to compile complete and accurate results data is an ongoing challenge presenting major issues for the volunteers who must review qualifying performances for major events or determine performance medal winners or leaderboard results.

Pony measuring is another ongoing issue due to the low number of measurers, the cost and location of calibrated measuring devices, the location of engineered measuring slabs, availability of measurers and increasing costs for measurers to attend events or measuring day.

The rising cost of living poses challenges that impact all facets of the sport. The cost of running events has increased enormously as venue hire, officials, catering, travel/fuel have all risen, and must be balanced with anecdotal reports of riders having to decide between the cost of training or competing as frequently.

As electronic scoring is becoming more widespread, experienced scribes are required, and many are reimbursed a nominal amount for their travel/tolls and time. Having experienced scribes is a valuable asset for events but has the downside of many events needing to increase entry fees, and also eroding the volunteer ethos. It is important that riders continue to volunteer at local and major events to help minimise your entry fees.

Dressage NSW is most grateful to Equestrian NSW for their ongoing support, enabling it to deliver and develop the sport throughout the state.

*Mandy Jones*  
*President*  
*Dressage NSW*

## **6. Honorary Secretary's Report**

Our sport has been busy over the last twelve months and many NSW clubs have conducted well patronised and successful competitions. The weather has been kinder than in 2022 and cancellations minimal which is a welcome change.

As the SDA (State Dressage Authority) we manage the day-to-day administration of the sport throughout NSW. Our responsibilities include:

- representing dressage in NSW with the EADC (Equestrian Australia Dressage Council)
- running major events held within NSW
- liaising with the EADC with regards to formulation of the rules of the sport
- supporting our dressage teams – both High Performance and Young Rider, as well as supporting the Young Rider Development Programme
- maintaining and approving the NSW dressage event calendar
- conducting seminars and workshops for judges by way of the Judges Sub-Committee
- assisting with steward education
- facilitating and supporting judge's exams by way of the Judges Sub-Committee
- providing annual awards and performance medals for our members

DNSW and the Clarendon Sub-Committee have run three club level competitions between January and now and one more is planned for December at Clarendon. Many training and protocol days have been held with positive feedback. We ran another successful CDI in April which was very well attended and a great success thanks to the efforts of Toni Venhaus and her team. Unfortunately, it again was impacted by the weather on Saturday which reduced spectator attendance but otherwise there was minimal disruption. The Australian Young Rider Championships ran smoothly in July with Bruce McVey and his capable team running another successful event. This was followed by the NSW Dressage Championships in late August/ early September with Karen Lever as Event Director. Karen did a wonderful job with this event and the feedback from everyone involved was excellent. NSW will host the Australian Amateur Owner Dressage Championships at AELEC in December. This is being run by Marjolyn Thomas and the Tamworth Dressage Club on behalf of the EADC. We are expecting another successful event and hope this one enjoys good weather throughout the competition.

Planning is well underway for 2024. We start with the Sydney CDI in May, NSW Young Rider Championships in July, NSW Dressage Championships in September and the Australian Dressage Championships which return to NSW will be held in mid-October. All these events will be held at the Sydney International Equestrian Centre.

Ten regular committee meetings and two special committee meetings have been held since the last AGM.

The Committee would like to thank Sue Cunningham and Kathy Shelley for their long-standing dedication to Dressage NSW. Both ladies leave the committee after completing the maximum nine year term as a committee member. Sue will still be very active in the judge side of our sport and Kathy will continue to assist with Field of Play duties at our major events, and with the Clarendon events. We are grateful for all the hard work put into our sport by these two dedicated committee members.

Clubs are continually struggling to secure judges and stewards, especially in the regional areas. Judge and steward education continues to be a major focus of the DNSW Committee, and we will do all we can to support this, statewide for the benefit of everyone in NSW.

DNSW Membership numbers have decreased this year. A handout of the member statistics is attached for your reference.

Our Annual Awards and Performance Medals qualifying period for 2023 was from the September 5<sup>th</sup> 2022 to September 4<sup>th</sup> 2023 . The qualifying period in 2024 will be from September 5<sup>h</sup> 2023 to September 2<sup>nd</sup> 2024.

237 Performance Medals were won by members this year, compared to 168 in 2022. 23 Gold (21 in 2022), 67 Silver (51 in 2022) and 147 Bronze (96 in 2022). Congratulations to all our medal recipients and our annual award winners.

***In accordance with the DNSW constitution four (4) committee positions become vacant each year. We also had a mid-term resignation resulting in a casual vacancy. This casual vacancy and the role of Treasurer was filled by Diana Hitchcock. We have received five (5) nominations, Diana Hitchcock, Kay Barney, Julie Jones, Lynda Bruce and Melissa Gough for 2024.***

There being no other nominations a vote is not required, and the listed candidates will be elected to the Committee for the coming term.

In closing, thank you to all Committee members and Delegates for your assistance and support during the past year

(This report was taken as read due to Jo Gunn being an apology)

*Jo Gunn  
Honorary Secretary  
Dressage NSW*

## **7. Honorary Treasurer's Report**

Included in this report to the members are the audited accounts for Dressage NSW for the 2022/23 Financial Year (FY23).

These accounts were prepared by the appointed auditor, Rod Laws of Tinworth & Co.

The 2023 Financial Year recorded a loss of \$8,900.

This report is very short as I was not the Treasurer for the period reported upon. However I am happy to take any questions relating to the financials on notice.

I would like to thank the Committee of DNSW for their support and assistance during the period I have been Treasurer and hope to continue to serve on the DNSW committee.

*Diane Hitchcock  
Hon. Treasurer (acting)  
Dressage NSW*

**Motion:** That the Honorary Treasurer's Report be accepted  
**Moved:** Sue Cunningham                    **Seconded:** Bruce McVey  
**Motion Carried**

**Motion:**

a) That the committee resolves that financial report presents fairly the financial position of Dressage NSW Incorporated as of 30 June 2021 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, mandatory professional reporting requirements and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Standards Board

b) At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Dressage NSW Incorporated will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

**Moved:** Lynda Bruce                            **Seconded:** Julie Jones  
**Motion Carried**

### **8. Appointment of Auditor**

**Motion:** That DNSW appoint "Tinworth & Co" as auditor for the 2023/2024 financial year.  
**Moved:** Kay Barney                    **Seconded:** Diane Hitchcock  
**Motion Carried.**

### **9. Committee Elections**

In accordance with the DNSW constitution four (4) committee positions become vacant each year. Kathy Shelley and Sue Cunningham stepped down after 3x3 year terms as per the constitution. The president thanked Kathy and Sue for their years of service to DNSW and their contribution to the sport of dressage.

Julie Jones and Kay Barney had to restand after a 1x3 year terms as per the constitution.

Diane Hitchcock filled a casual vacancy mid-term and had to restand.

Five (5) nominations were received being from Julie Jones, Kay Barney, Diane Hitchcock, Lynda Bruce and Mel Gough.

There being no other nominations a vote is not required, and the listed candidates are elected to the Committee for the coming term.

### **10. General Business**

Toni Venhaus expressed her opinion that the chart of accounts required restructuring to make cost centres and income/expense allocations more transparent to members and committee.

**11. Close of Meeting** the President declared the meeting closed at 7.24pm