

Stallion Approval Guide 2024

WSI's selection system has been proven successful in identifying young talent since our founding in 2009. According to an analysis done in 2022, approximately three-quarters of living stallions that were six years or younger when approved by WSI went on to compete in international (FEI) showjumping competitions up to 1.60 m. or in international eventing competitions up to 4*-L.

Every WSI Approved Stallion is eligible to compete in restricted sport horse classes and championships in Ireland including the Dublin Horse Show and the DAFM Studbook Series, and in the the Sires of the World competition in Lanaken. Stallions that pass Stage 1 and Stage 2 this spring, and are registered for the 3-Day Performance Test in October, are expected to be eligible to compete in the 2024 Dublin Horse Show and 2024 DAFM Studbook Series.

WSI approves senior, middle-aged, and young stallions. Approving proven sires is desired by breeders with young, modern mares. But rapid genetic advancement can come only by using modern young stallions bred to meet the demands of tomorrow's sport requirements. So WSI is always on the look-out for superior young stallions, and we encourage their use.

In this Guide we present useful information to explain the approval process to everyone, and especially stallion owners. If you need more information or guidance, please contact Studbook Administrator Dawn Kelly (admin@irish-warmblood.com or 087.222.9701) or Breeding Director Thomas Reed (tom@irish-warmblood.com or 087.827.4831). We are here to help you.



Watch the video for an overview of WSI's Stallion Approval System process:
<https://bit.ly/WSI-SAS-Video>

WSI's Philosophy

Our stallion approval process is guided by our values and philosophy:

1. WSI will inspect a stallion only if he fulfils our published criteria for pedigree and damline quality. If your stallion is ineligible to be approved because of his pedigree or damline, your application and payment will be returned.
2. WSI uses insights from the behavioural sciences to reduce cognitive biases in our inspection system and decision-making process.
3. Inspectors are governed by strict conflict of interest regulations published in WSI's Rules. Inspectors may not inspect their own stallions, or stallions they have bred or previously owned, or stallions in whose purchase, sale, or lease they have been involved as an agent or advisor. And once an inspector has played a role in approving a stallion, he or she must stand back for five years from any commercial involvement with the stallion. (Inspectors may use a stallion in their own breeding programmes, but they must pay published stud fees.)
4. WSI discloses all data about approved stallions to our breeders, including summaries of his health and radiographic examinations, and genomic and genetic results. We believe transparency is very important for continuous genetic improvement and to maintain confidence in the approval system.
5. Horse welfare is very important to WSI. Stallions must be born in 2021 or earlier to be eligible to participate in the 2024 Stallion Approvals. We expect stallions to be prepared for inspection in a sympathetic manner without training techniques or the use of equipment designed to make the horse move or jump extravagantly or unnaturally. Hind boots are prohibited, as is clipping whiskers around or on a stallion's eyes, nose, and muzzle. The use of draw reins is strictly prohibited during the entire Stage 1 Inspection and Stage 3 Performance Test. A pair of spurs (maximum length of the shank is 4.5 cm [incl. rowel, and with a flat ending]) that do not cause any sharp injuries during normal use, is permitted. The spur has to be buckled in such manner that the shank points horizontally or downwards. The rider may carry a whip with a maximum length of 120 cm during any exercise, training, or test session. Stallions are subject to testing for prohibited substances.
6. The safety of participants is also very important to WSI. Riders and handlers of stallions must wear a helmet.

Inspection Preparation

Make sure your stallion is current with his influenza and tetanus vaccinations and worm treatments. If he is not up to date, take care of these things now.

Have a skilled farrier trim your stallion's hooves. But do this well before the inspection date in case he becomes foot tender.

Do not over-train your stallion. Young stallions should be given experience so they are relaxed and moving forward. But do not jump them too often or they will become tired, bored, or unhappy with the pressure. Mind his mind as much as you mind his body. Inspectors hope to see a relaxed young stallion showing his natural athleticism as he moves and jumps.

Stallions with progeny will have a sample of them inspected. We do this to better understand what qualities the stallion transmits to his foals, and what types of mares best suit him. You may select some foals to be assessed, and others will be chosen randomly by WSI. Additional charges may apply for progeny evaluations.

Steps in the Approval Process

1. Complete a Stallion Inspection Application and send it to WSI by post, email, or WhatsApp (087.222.9701). If the stallion is not an Irish Warmblood, include a clean, clear copy of the stallion's passport (registration page, marking chart, extended pedigree, and zootechnical certificate). If you are not already a Member of WSI, please join.

2. **Stage 1 Inspection: 8 - 9 March**

In Stage 1, the stallion is presented in-hand, and his conformation is evaluated and recorded using linear profiling. His soundness and straightness of movement are assessed by walking and trotting in hand on hard ground. If the stallion is 3-years-old, he is asked to move loose in an indoor arena, and he is loose-jumped if a showjumping or eventing prospect (see page 17 for a diagram of the loose-jumping chute). If 4-years-old or older, he is shown under saddle, and if a showjumping or eventing stallion, he also is asked to jump a course that is appropriate for his age and level of development, in consultation with the owner and rider. If the stallion passes Stage 1, he proceeds to Stage 2.

3. **Stage 2 Health Exams & Tests: 15 March - 15 April**

A stallion that passes Stage 1 must undergo veterinary, genetic, and genomic examinations and testing in Stage 2 from 15 March - 14 April 2024. The stallion's DNA is analysed to confirm his parentage (if not already done). His DNA is used to create a genomic profile, and if his genetics are closely related to the reference population, his genomic profile is assessed through the DNA-OC test for the genes associated with osteochondrosis. And his DNA is tested for the mutated allele associated with Fragile Foal Syndrome (WFFS1) for disclosure to breeders, but not for selection purposes. The Thoroughbred stallion's genomic profile is assessed through the "Speed Gene" test because, all else equal, WSI prefers distance rather than sprint genes in Thoroughbred stallions presented for approval. All stallions must attend a clinical and radiographic examination conducted by Troytown Equine Hospital under the supervision of the Chair of the Veterinary Committee, Dr. Rachel Read. These examinations are focused on health, soundness, and screening for moderately to highly heritable traits that WSI does not want to see in the Irish Warmblood population. Biological samples are taken at Troytown for laboratory tests for CEM, EVA, EIA, and prohibited substances. All tests and examinations must be scheduled, conducted, and paid for through WSI.

4. Stage 3 Performance Test: 15 - 17 October

A stallion that passes Stage 2 advances to the Stage 3 Performance Test in October 2024. The Performance Test last three days, and during this time inspectors assess the stallion's natural athleticism expressed under saddle, interior qualities (character/temperament and work ethic), and stable behaviour. Stallions that already are approved by a warmblood studbook that is a member of the World Breeding Federation for Sport Horses (WBFSH), and already have passed a performance test in Germany or the Netherlands, may be exempted from the Performance Test. Also, stallions that already are approved by a warmblood studbook that is a member of the WBFSH, and have not passed a stallion performance test in Germany or the Netherlands but have competed successfully in FEI dressage, eventing, or showjumping classes at 3* level or above, may be exempted from the Performance Test or be required to attend only for one day to assess character/temperament and stable behaviour. Exemptions are granted by and at the sole discretion of the Stallion Committee.

If a stallion is withdrawn from the Performance Test before he has fully completed all the required activities, no result can be determined. Termination of the Performance Test will be published in the official results list, along with the reason (e.g., withdrawal by exhibitor, withdrawal upon veterinary advice, or withdrawal upon advice of inspectors).

During the Stage 3 Performance Test, the stallion's rider or other capable individual must remain at all times at the venue with the stallion and maintain full custody, control, and care of the stallion. The venue will provide access to water, bedding, and fodder. The rider or other capable individual is responsible for the feeding, mucking out, care, control, safety, and welfare of the stallion.

Stage 3 Performance Test

Schedule & Activities

Day 1: Arrival and Exercise/Training

Stallions must arrive at the testing facility by 12:00 noon. Upon arrival, inspectors assess each stallion to determine soundness and fitness to participate. After stabling of the stallions and a rest period, riders are required to engage in appropriate exercising/training of the stallion (basic gaits, and without jumping), in accordance with a posted time schedule. Inspectors observe the exercise/training. Exhibitors are invited to a meeting with the inspectors to discuss the schedule for Day 2 and any questions or concerns.

Day 2: Assessment of Gaits and Athleticism

Morning

Dressage Stallion's gaits are evaluated while completing an age-appropriate dressage test:

- 3-year-old: Dressage Ireland Introductory Test C
- 4-year-old: Dressage Ireland Preliminary Test 5
- 5-year-old: FEI Dressage Test for 5-Year-Olds - Preliminary
- 6-year-old: FEI Dressage Test for 6-Year-Olds - Preliminary

Eventing Stallion's gaits are evaluated using an age-appropriate dressage test:

- 3-year-old: Dressage Ireland Introductory Test C
- 4-year-old: Dressage Ireland Preliminary Test 4
- 5-year-old: CCI 1* Level Dressage Test
- 6-year-old: CCI 2* Level Dressage Test

Showjumping Stallion's gaits are evaluated using an age-appropriate dressage test:

- 3-year-old: Dressage Ireland Introductory Test C
- 4-year-old: Dressage Ireland Preliminary Test 4
- 5-year-old: CCI 1* Level Dressage Test
- 6-year-old: CCI 2* Level Dressage Test

Afternoon

Dressage Stallion's athleticism is evaluated by negotiating a small gymnastic course specifically designed for young dressage stallions. (See page 12.)

Eventing Stallion's athleticism is evaluated by jumping an age-appropriate course. (See pages 13 - 16.)

Showjumping Stallion's athleticism is evaluated by jumping an age-appropriate course. (See pages 13 - 16.)

Late Afternoon - Evening

Exhibitors are invited to a meeting with the inspectors to discuss the schedule for Day 3 and any questions or concerns.

Day 3: Further Assessment of Gaits and Athleticism

Morning

Dressage Stallion's gaits are further evaluated while completing an age-appropriate dressage test:

3-year-old: Dressage Ireland Preliminary Test 4

4-year-old: FEI Dressage Test for 4-Year-Olds

5-year-old: FEI Dressage Test for 5-Year-Olds - Final

6-year-old: FEI Dressage Test for 6-Year-Olds - Final.

Showjumping Stallion's athleticism is further evaluated by jumping the same age-appropriate course as on Day 2 with the opportunity to raise and widen the obstacles, after consultation with the rider. (See pages 13 - 16.)

Eventing Stallion's athleticism is further evaluated on an age-appropriate cross-country course. Obstacles are chosen in consultation with the rider. WSI uses five inspection criteria when evaluating eventing stallions on the cross-country course:

gallop
stamina
courage
5th leg
blood in athleticism.

Afternoon

The Stallion Committee meets with each exhibitor to discuss the stallion and his performance, and to communicate the outcome of the Performance Test. The official Performance Test Report is sent to the owner(s) and rider of the stallion within ten business days.

Please note: In the dressage tests, the individual movements will not be marked (although an individual inspector may do so to guide his or her evaluation process). The stallions will be evaluated on walk, trot, canter, elasticity, athleticism, balance, and rideability. Age and level of development/training will be taken into account. The purpose of the test is to give structure to the evaluation and guidance to the riders as to what is expected.

Inspectors

Stage 1 Inspections and Stage 3 Performance Tests are conducted by two WSI committees: the Stallion Committee (Eventing/Showjumping) and the Stallion Committee (Dressage). Membership in both committees is composed of officials from WSI and the KWPN:

Thomas Reed (WSI Stallion Committees Chair & WSI Inspector DR/EV/SJ)

Wim Versteeg (WSI Inspector DR/EV/SJ & KWPN Senior Inspector).

Claire Wood (WSI Stallion Committees Vice-Chair & WSI Inspector DR/EV/SJ)

There always will be at least two inspectors at each Stage 1 Inspection and three inspectors at each Stage 3 Performance Test.

Important Dates

Stage 1 Inspection

- 1 February: Deadline for application and payment for Stage 1 Inspection.
- 8 - 9 March: Stage 1 Inspections in Kildare and Kilkenny.

Stage 2 Health Exams & Tests

- 15 March: Deadline for scheduling and payment for Health Exams & Tests.
- 15 April: Deadline for completion of Health Exams & Tests.

Stage 3 Performance Tes

- 1 May: Deadline for registration and payment for Performance Test and stabling.
- 15 - 17 October: 3-Day Performance Test.

A reservation for Stage 3 Performance Test is binding on 1 May 2024. Due to the high fixed costs associated with the Stage 3 Performance Test, no refunds will be granted if a stallion fails to participate despite a binding reservation.

Costs and Payment Method

Stage 1 Inspection

€150 Irish Warmblood Stallion
or
€250 Non-WSI Stallion

Stage 2 Health Exams & Tests

€80 Parentage Verification (if not done already)
and
€80 WFFS1 Test (if not done already)
and
€300 * DNA-OC Test (warmblood stallions only, if not done already)
and
€660 Clinical & Radiographic Exams & Lab Tests (add €40 for optional
back and neck radiographs, which are not used for selection)
and
€400 Speed Gene Test (Thoroughbred stallions only)

Stage 3 Performance Test

€500 3-Day Performance Test
€175 Stabling (with shaving bedding, hay, and access to water)
€15 Optional hook-up facilities facilities in car park area, per day

Payment

Bank: Bank of Ireland
Account: Warmblood Studbook of Ireland
IBAN: ie91bofi90441322533027
BIC: bofiie2d

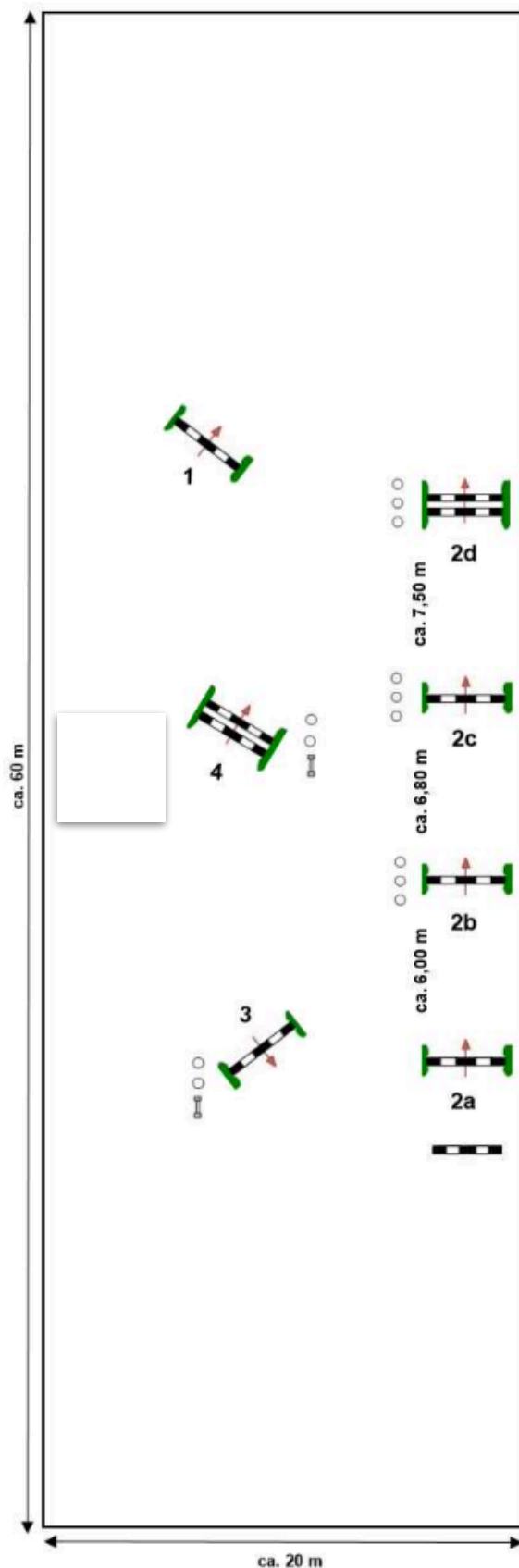
* Stallions whose genetics are too dissimilar from the reference population to be tested for the genes associated with osteochondrosis will have the €300 DNA-OC Test fee refunded, as the test cannot be used in that stallion's selection decision.

Funding

WSI will receive partial support for the 2024 Stage 1 Inspection and Stage 3 Performance Test from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine's Equine Technical Support (ETS) Scheme. The ETS Scheme is administered under the European Commission's State aid regulations.



Gymnastic Jumping for Dressage Stallions (indoor or outdoor arena minimum 20 x 60 m)



Height/Width: **0.60 m - maximum 0.90 m**

Warm-up jumps before the start of test: Obstacles **1** and **3**.

Transition to the trot after obstacle **1** on the long side; proceed in the canter after obstacle **2** and finish.

Obstacles **1** and **2a** designed as an X.

Oxers should generally be ramped (the rear bar must be higher). Safety cups are mandatory with oxers.

Use ground poles at all obstacles to highlight the baseline.

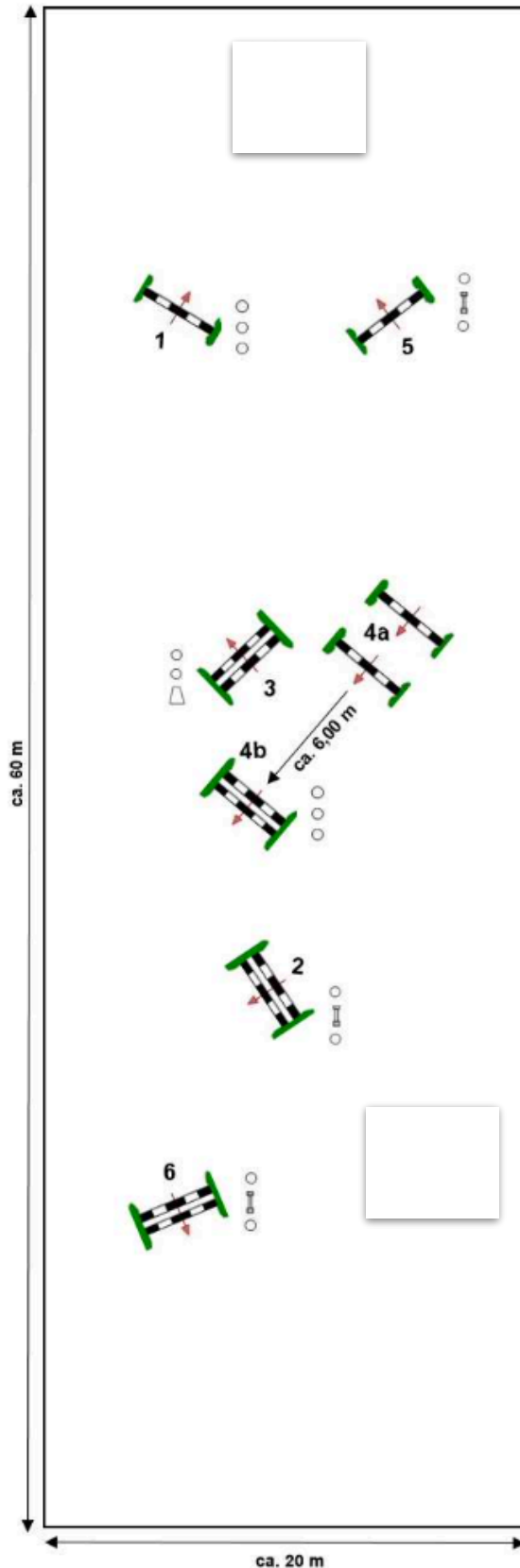
Legend:



Pole
Plank
Small Filler

Source: Deutsche Reiterliche Vereinigung e.V.

Course for 3-Year-Old Eventing & Showjumping Stallions (indoor or outdoor arena minimum 20 x 60 m)



Height/Width: **0.60 m – 0.90 m**

Warm-up jumps before the start of test: Obstacles **1** and **2**.

Following obstacle **3**, transition to the **trot**.

Obstacle **4a** designed as an X including ground and trot pole.

Oxers should be ramped (the rear bar must be higher). Safety cups are mandatory with oxers.

Use ground poles at all obstacles to highlight the baseline.

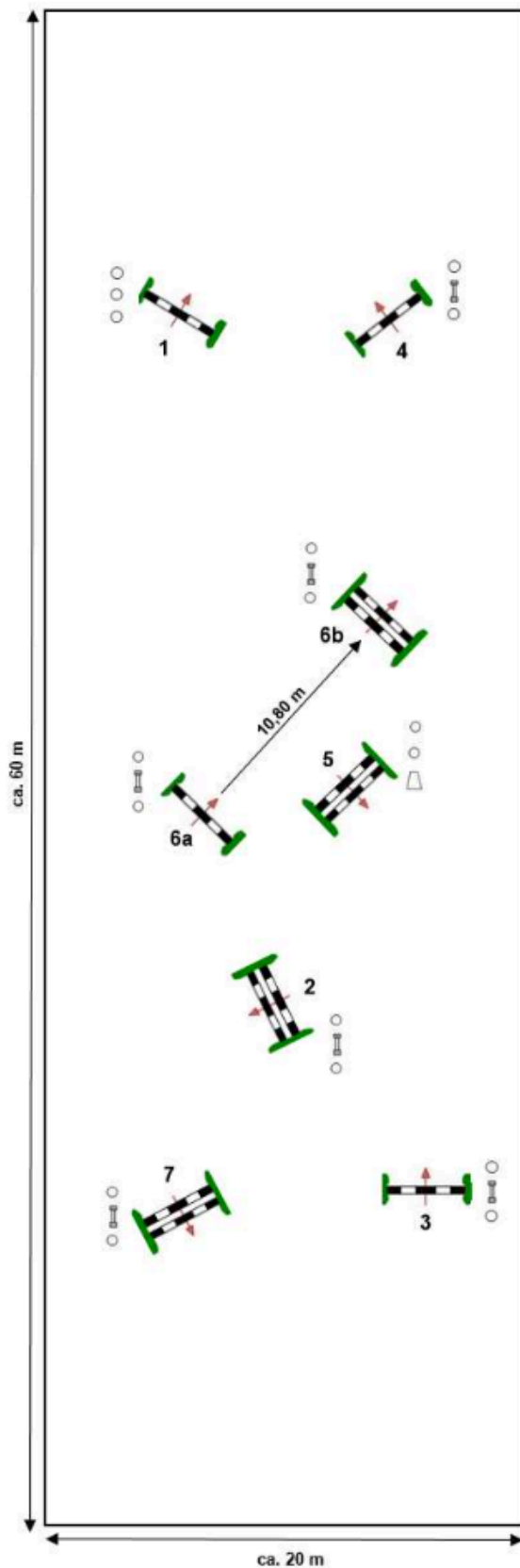
It is permitted to raise obstacle **2** (as vertical) and obstacle **3** on Day 3.

Legend:



Source: Deutsche Reiterliche Vereinigung e.V.

Course for 4-Year-Old Eventing & Showjumping Stallions (indoor or outdoor arena minimum 20 x 60 m)



Height/Width: **0.90 m – 1.0 m**

Warm-up jumps before the start of test: Obstacles **1** and **2**.

Oxers should be ramped (the rear bar must be higher). Safety cups are mandatory with oxers.

Use ground poles at all obstacles to highlight the baseline.

It is permitted to raise obstacle **2** (as vertical) and obstacle **5** on Day 3.

Legend:



Pole



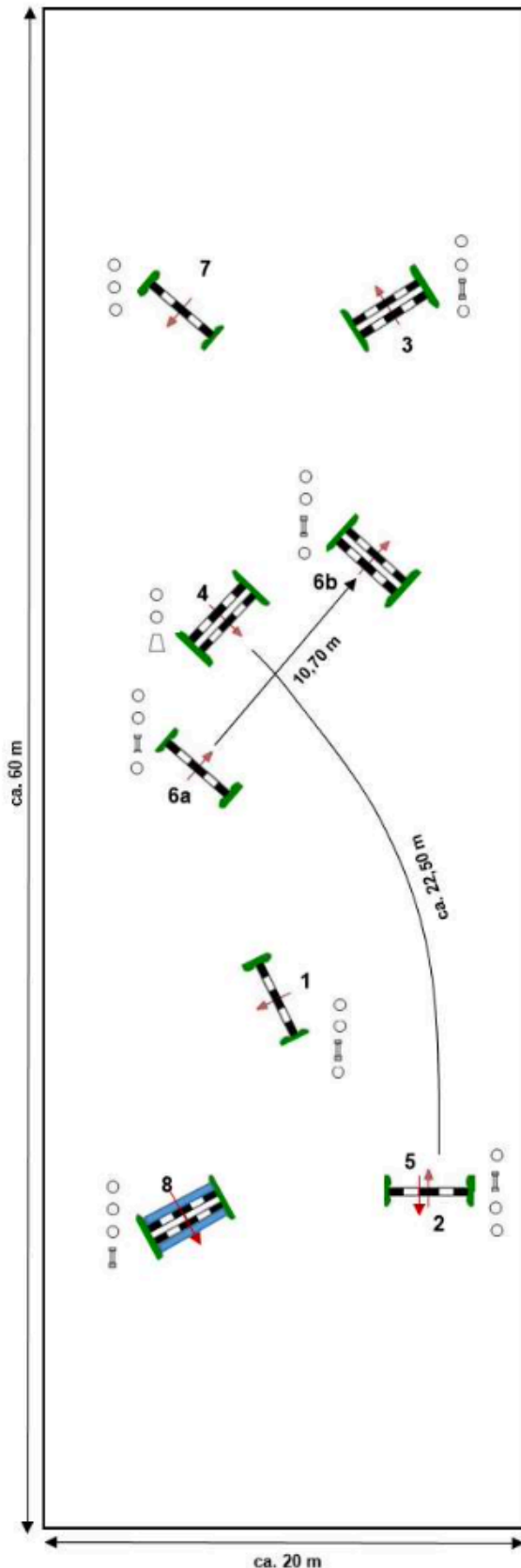
Plank



Small Filler

Source: Deutsche Reiterliche Vereinigung e.V.

Course for 5-Year-Old Eventing & Showjumping Stallions (indoor or outdoor arena minimum 20 x 60 m)



Height/Width: **1.0 m - 1.05 m for Eventing; 1.05 m - 1.10 m for Showjumping**

Warm-up jumps before the start of test: Obstacles **1** and **4**.

Obstacle 7:
Open-water jump, approx. 40 cm ahead of the obstacle.

Oxers should be ramped (the rear bar must be higher). Safety cups are mandatory with oxers.

The base line of the obstacles is no longer highlighted by ground poles.

It is permitted to raise obstacle **1** (as vertical) and obstacle **4** on Day 3.

Legend:



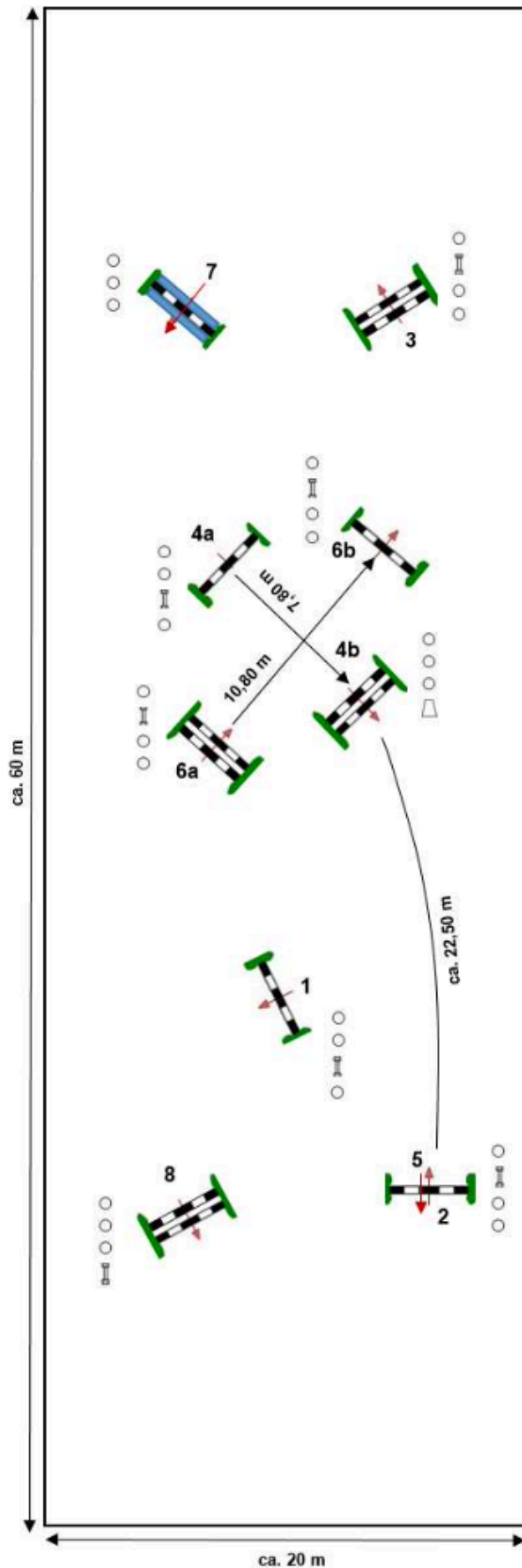
Pole

Plank

Small Filler

Source: Deutsche Reiterliche Vereinigung e.V.

Course for 6-Year-Old Eventing & Showjumping Stallions (indoor or outdoor arena minimum 20 x 60 m)



Height/Width: **1.10 m - 1.15 m for Eventing; 1.15 m - 1.25 m for Showjumping**

Warm-up jumps before the start of test: Obstacles **1** and **3**.

Obstacle 7:
Open-water jump, approx. 40 cm ahead of the obstacle.

Oxers should be ramped (the rear bar must be higher). Safety cups are mandatory with oxers.

The base line of the obstacles is no longer highlighted by ground poles.

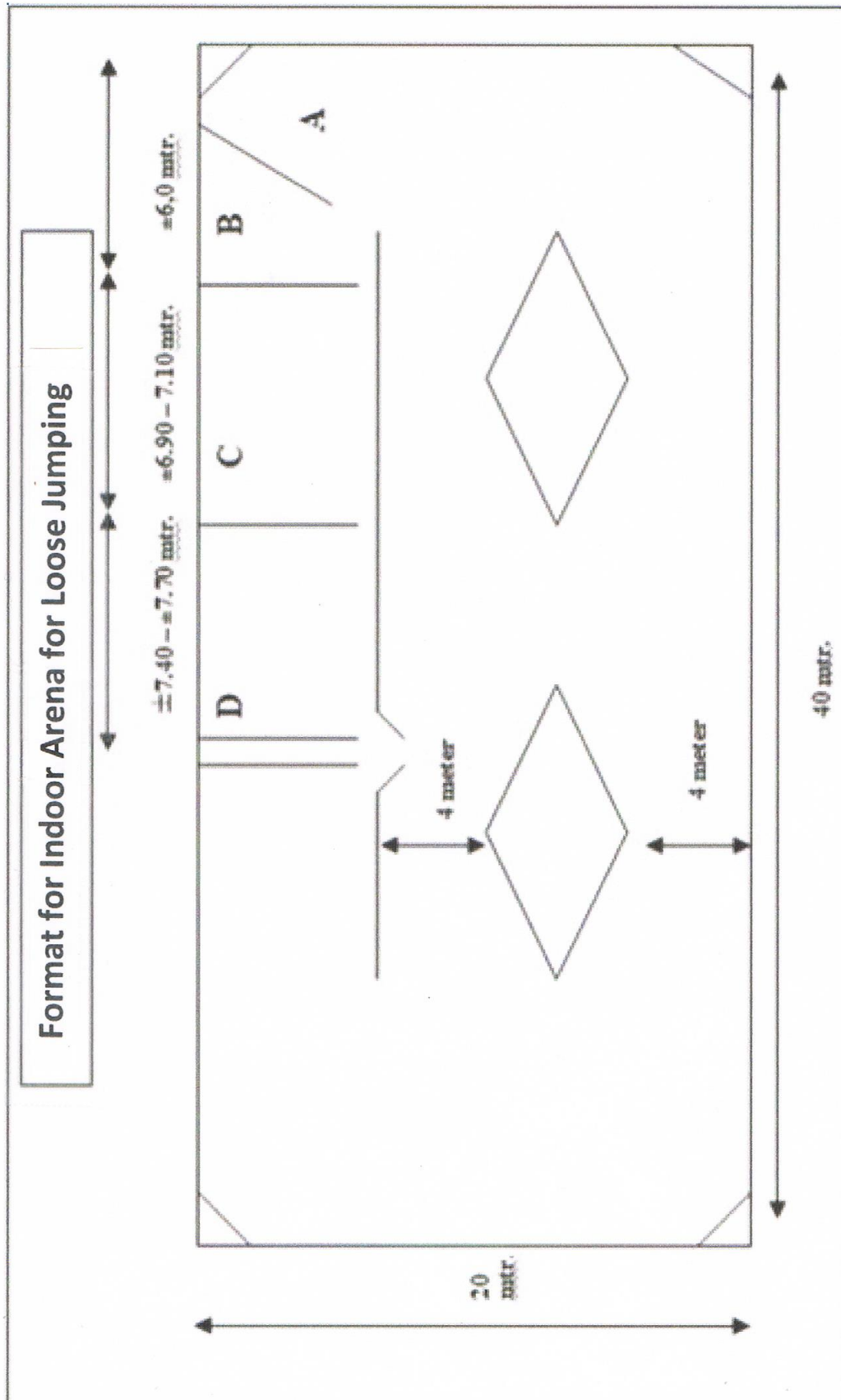
It is permitted to raise obstacle **1** (as vertical) and obstacle **8** on Day 3.

Legend:



Source: Deutsche Reiterliche Vereinigung e.V.

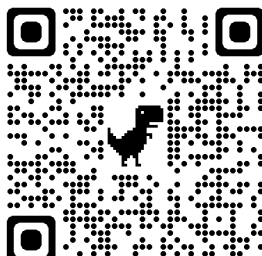
Loose-Jumping Chute



Useful QR Codes



Application



WSI Stallion Approval
System Video



WSI Rules