

# Irish Draught Horse Breeders Association

## Irish Draught Stallion and Mare Inspection Guidelines

Horse Sport Ireland launched a new breeding policy for the Irish Draught Horse Studbook in March 2010. This is a summary of the inspection criteria prepared by the *Irish Draught Horse Breeders Association* for its members. The full breeding policy can be obtained from Horse Sport Ireland

### Breeding Objective

To breed Irish Draught horses with conformation, movement and temperament that conforms to the breed standard, which will make good quality, sound and versatile horses

### Breed Description

The Irish Draught horse is a versatile, powerful and athletic animal with substance and quality. It has a pleasant head, good bone and a short shin, good spring of rib, strong loins, and hindquarter sand an active powerful stride. Known for its good temperament, docility and willing nature, it has a robust constitution and is inherently sound. The Irish Draught horse is a foundation breed that, when crossed with other breeds, will produce all types of leisure and performance horses.

## Stallion Inspection

Stallion inspections will normally take place in the spring. Stallions must be a minimum of three years of age. Older horses will be accommodated in suitable age categories.

The inspection will take place over two days. The following elements will be included

- i. Pedigree. The stallion's pedigree will be checked at the application stage. Inbreeding and relationship coefficients will be examined
- ii. Conformation assessment using linear scoring. Linear scoring will give a detailed description of the conformation, movement and athleticism traits. This will help breeders make informed breeding decisions
- iii. In hand gait assessment on a hard surface in an indoor arena. The stallion will be required to stand in front of the inspectors. When requested, the handler will walk the stallion away from the inspection panel, round a marker and return to the panel. The process is repeated in trot continuing past the inspection panel. The handler will also be asked to walk and then trot the stallion in hand around a triangle with 30m sides
- iv. Free gait assessment. In a specially constructed pen the stallion will be safely released and the free movement in trot and canter will be assessed.
- v. Free athleticism / jumping assessment. Each stallion will be asked to loose jump fences no higher than 1m for three year olds and 1.2m for a four year old.
- vi. Full veterinary examination including x-rays and scoping

### Bronze Merit through the inspection process

Stallions can achieve a 'Bronze' Merit award by jumping a course of fences at 1m under saddle as a four year old or older and achieving an above average score of over 70%.

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## Mare Inspection

Mares over two years of age will be eligible for inspection. The inspection will take on one day and will include the following elements

- i. Pedigree. The mare's pedigree will be checked at the application stage. Inbreeding and relationship coefficients will be examined
- ii. Conformation assessment using linear scoring. Linear scoring will give a detailed description of the conformation, movement and athleticism traits. This will help breeders make informed breeding decisions
- iii. In hand gait assessment on a hard surface in an indoor arena. The mare will be required to stand in front of the inspectors. When requested, the handler will walk the mare away from the inspection panel, round a marker and return to the panel. The process is repeated in trot continuing past the inspection panel. The handler will also be asked to walk and then trot the mare in hand around a triangle with 30m sides
- iv. Free gait assessment. In a specially constructed pen the mare will be safely released and the free movement in trot and canter will be assessed.
- v. Basic veterinary examination

Mares that successfully complete the inspection will be classified in Class 1 of the Irish Draught Studbook

Mares that do not reach the standard for conformation and movement will be classified in Class 2 while those that fail the veterinary examination will be classified in Class 3.

### **Bronze Merit through the inspection process**

Mares that achieve an average score of 80% for movement and conformation will be awarded a 'Bronze' Merit award.

Owners can have their mare's athleticism assessed. Mares that meet the requirements for classified in Class 1 may be loose jumped over fences no higher than 1m. Mares that achieve a score of 70% or over will be awarded a 'Bronze' Merit award.

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