

## **Ulf Helgstrand Letter of Motivation**

I believe I know the sport both on national and international level, as well as breeding of sportshorses (ref. my CV.). I feel that I am able to contribute to the challenges we have in the equestrian sport. At least I am more than motivated because of the my passion for the sport

We have been part of the Olympic games since 1912. However it is not given that we will be part of it in the future. We are threatened by upcoming sports and the total number of athletes will not increase. We also have to continue globalisation not only to please the IOC but for the development of our sport as such.

Furthermore we are a sport with big costs, not only in the eyes of IOC but also in the eyes of people in general. There is a tendency that our image is a sport only for the rich and we have to explain that this is not necessarily the case, when riding for pleasure on national club level. It is from the national clubs we get new members into the top sport.

We have to challenge costs in order to e.g. make more NFs able to host big series and championships in the interest of globalisation. A budget for a big show has reached enormous amounts which means that only a few NFs globally are able to take the risk. Maybe we should try to create a kind of FEI foundation which could support new hosting NFs in order to accelerate the globalisation.

If we are not going to ride on donkeys in the future we have to challenge the breeding associations (WBFSH), and get them more involved as is the fact in many NFs on national level.

90% of the horses in the olympic disciplines are bred in Europe. The number of foals born in Europe has over the last 5 years decreased 40-50% compared to the numbers born 2008. As we know it will take 8-10 years from foal to get an educated horse. You do not have to be a professor of mathematics to realize that the lack of horses will soon be a reality if we just sit back and wait for better times to come.

Clean sport and horse welfare is not only in the interest of ourselves and our horses. It is absolutely a must for the survival of our sport both on national and international level. The sport will not survive if we ignore media no matter if we think they are right or wrong. Inside ourselves we should try to understand that there are so many different cultures in the world. An issue in Asia might not be an issue in America etc. but we should be better to solve problems inside our organisation by dialogue compared to declare each other as criminals in media if we do not fit into a certain culture. Together we are stronger.

When taking responsibility in a global organisation it is important to look at the sport from above in a global/regional context. I have seen so many examples during many years that representatives have paid more attention to what was best for his or her NF instead of the best for the organisation as such. This attitude will not contribute to the development of our sport. As president of the Danish federation since more than a decade I still believe that I am able to distinguish between what is national and international interest, but of course I will, as always, also be happy to share our good experiences on national level in order to help others improve if asked.

**Ulf Helgstrand**

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