

WHBSF annual General Assembly

Already in its fifth edition, this year the annual World Haflinger Breeding and Sports Federation General Assembly took place at the occasion of the Haflinger Club Lëtzeburg's Interregional Haflinger Show, organised from 01 to 03 July 2016 in Ettelbrück (Luxembourg). President Lukas Scheiber welcomed representatives from some 20 member organisations and provided an enthusiastic account of 2015, calling it a year filled to the brim with major events. Its main highlights, i.e. the Haflinger World Show in Ebbs (A) and the European Haflinger Championship in Milan (I), have hit the mark in every sense – putting the Haflinger breed at the centre of attention for months on end.

Bulgaria becomes latest member

The WHBSF, whose designated centre for Haflinger breeding is located at the Fohlenhof Ebbs stud farm (A), is based in Bolzano/Bozen (I). Since its foundation in 2013, the World Haflinger Breeding and Sports Federation has grown to include 23 full and three associate members. After its latest addition, the National Horse Breeding Association Bulgaria, talks are now under way to negotiate the accession of another new member: the Haflinger Horse Association New Zealand.

Opening and developing new markets is one of the core aims of the international Federation, and following a successful cooperation with the South Korean KRA (Korea Racing Authority), this autumn a Federation delegation will attend the 2016 China Horse Fair.

Haflinger Sports Committee launched

To foster and promote equestrian sports within the Haflinger community, an expert body was launched last winter: the Haflinger Sports Committee, which consists of an Extended Panel with a maximum of one person per member organisation and a Core Panel comprising six persons, who will be chosen by the Board of Directors out of the ranks of the Extended Panel. Three names have already been confirmed for the Core Panel: Roland Morat (I), Bruno Six (D) and Lothar Zebisch (A). The remaining three members will be nominated at the upcoming Board of Directors' meeting.

Equipped with plenty of enthusiasm and commitment, the Committee will be in charge of a number of issues concerning Haflinger sports and its marketing, reporting directly to the Board of Directors with proposals and initiatives. Part of the performance tests too will be the responsibility of the newly-founded Committee.

The Haflinger Sports Committee members are:

- Hariëtte van den Berg, Netherlands
- Herman Draaisma, Netherlands
- Tea Kelc, Slovenia
- Roland Morat, Italy
- Alexander Mittelberger, South Tyrol/Italy
- Julie Duus, Denmark
- Karl Lankmair, Austria
- Lothar Zebisch, Tyrol/Austria
- Bruno Six, Germany
- Tereza Sixtovà, Czech Republic
- Jens Jordan, Germany
- Julie Bernard, France
- Peter Zimmermann, Switzerland

World Haflinger Congress: this September in Ebbs

The WHBSF is faced with an ever-increasing level of expectations: As the Federation grows in numbers, the needs of the individual member organisations are starting to take on a whole range of different shapes – and it is only logical that much is expected from the Federation itself, but also from the organisations which hold the original stud books for the Haflinger breed and from the Commission of Experts for the Haflinger breed. As President Lukas Scheiber aptly put it: The Federation members expect concrete decisions regarding

- the standardisation of the evaluation systems
- joint judges' training initiatives
- clearly defined rules both for selecting colts and for the stallion performance test, and
- a joint marketing and communication approach.

One key initiative for the future is to organise an annual World Haflinger Congress at changing locations: a first-rate platform covering topics and matters of current interest to the Haflinger breed, accompanied by a wide range of events to create a positive signal and further enhance the appeal of the breed.

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