



Drivingsport Congress *Horse in Sport* 2013

This was „Horse in Sport 2013“...

International Drivingsport Congress – Horse in Sport 2013, in Austria and Hungary

The International Drivingsport Congress – Horse in Sport 2013, was truly a combined event - held in Austria

and Hungary, two nations who have a history together in which driving with horses was one of the common factors. This event - organised by the National Federation of Austria, OEPS, and Hippoevent - brought together a diverse group of people – Drivers, International and national Officials, Trainers, Representatives... a great spectrum of Drivingsport enthusiasts.

The Congress hotel was located in Sopron, Hungary, and the second congress location was the Equestrian Sportpark Magna Racino in Ebreichsdorf, Austria

There were perfect seminar conditions in the modern and guest-friendly hotel in Sopron and the most modern horse sport park in Europe, the Magna Racino in Ebreichsdorf, Austria, with its unique ambience directly outside of Vienna were the locations for the International Drivingsport Congress 2013 during the first weekend in March. The Equestrian Sport park of Magna Racino in Ebreichsdorf was the impressive and optimal location for the three-day event in which over 150 officials and active drivers out of 20 nations participated in.



FEI Education on a high level

The first 2 days were reserved for the education of 30 FEI officials from 14 nations.

International judges and Technical delegates as well as candidates for both of these positions participated on Friday and Saturday in these FEI education courses. The courses were lead by Dr. Klaus Christ, Richard Papens and Mark Wenten. The courses were designed to support the candidates (for the judging and TD positions) on their journey to their education/qualification, as well as continued education seminars for those officials already qualified previously. These courses did not only include theoretical presentations, but also practical performances, in which dressage tests (Singles, Pairs and Teams) were performed by drivers from the Dobrovitz' Lovasfarm (Vecsés, HUN).



Open Congress started with innovative Ideas

The Open Congress started on Saturday afternoon with a "Come Together" in the Congress Hotel in Sopron. This part was opened by the chairman of the FEI driving committee - Károly Fugli -, who also supported the Sunday with two highly interesting presentations around the organisational structure of the FEI and the FEI Legal system. Highly decorated driving athletes – medal winners of a total of 77 FEI medals – participated at the congress. The organisers were honoured with the presence of the reigning World Champion Pairs, Carola Diener, and the reigning World Champion Singles, Christoph Dieker, who participated actively on the discussion about the future development of the driving sport. The younger generation of the Drivingsport athletes was represented by the European Champion, Martin Hölle, and József Dobrovitz jun.

Also Vilmos and Zoltan Lázár, the very successful Hungarian brothers, the members of the highly successful Team Germany, the World Champion Pairs, Georg Moser, and lots of other stars of the driving scene were present.



Chairman of the FEI Driving Committee - Károly Fugli and Frank Spadinger - OEPS

In this intro part of the open congress the discussion was around the potential future way of the driving sport? Quo Vadis? Lot of input and thoughts were shared – they spanned between the ideas of audience-friendly music dressage till the construction of an obstacle course with different cone distances per cone pair.

During the open congress on Sunday the participants had the chance to listen to a variety of presentations which included thoughts from the organisers of the European Championship (Teams) in Hungary 2013, an informative presentation about sport horse feeding by the Company Alltech as well as a very interesting review about horse health by the FEI veterinarian Florian Hörmann.

The participants shared the following impressions and feedback after the event:

Christoph Dieker, reigning double World Champion Singles:

“It was a new and very positive experience here at the driving sport congress. It was great for me as a driver to have the opportunity to share thoughts and ideas in the presence of these high calibre experts. With that I had the chance to be actively involved in the design of the future of our sport. I have heard lots of interesting aspects and believe that the driving sport is on a good way forward. Innovative and modern – with tradition into the future.”

Dr. Klaus Christ has summarised:

„The International Drivingsport Congress – Horse in Sport 2013, was an event in which lots of different facets of the driving sport – from the continued education of officials to the visions for the future – were addressed.

Beside - continued- education there were also discussions at very high levels, as much as possible, during both of the FEI courses. Due to the very helpful, optimal preparation and support by the organisers the high requirements of an FEI event were for sure met for me. My personal thanks to the Austrian FN, Mr. Spadinger, as well as Mrs. Zimmermann for the tremendous efforts.

The congress offered beside discussions with promising aspects for the future also a wide variety of information and a short insight into the practice, which was definitely interesting for some of the visitors. All over a very successful start to combine best practice and future at different levels.”

Mark Wentein, BEL:

„As one of the FEI Course directors of the FEI Seminar Ebreichsdorf (AUT) /Sopron (HUN) I can confirm that the interest, the organization, and the common interest of many driving stakeholders showed that there is open communication between them. 28 participants for the FEI promotion and refreshing course for FEI TD and judges proved that these courses are well attended. The magnificent equestrian complex of Magna Racino was to many of them a real revelation. Also the Drivingsport Congress that was well attended.

Richard Papens, BEL:

“The FEI Course at Austria and Hungary, within the framework of the International Drivingsport Congress - Horse in Sport 2013, was a very professional and well organised host, able to coordinate the FEI course on a high level.”

Conclusion:

With such events it is possible to influence positively the future of the driving sport and especially also with respect to the welfare of the horse. The first step into this direction was made during this first weekend in March 2013, and the project **“International Driving Sport Congress – Horse in Sport 2014”** is already being prepared.

