



# THE ASSOCIATION OF FELLOWS OF THE BRITISH HORSE SOCIETY



## Fellows Full Statement regarding low deep and round (L.D.R)

Currently there is much discussion on the head carriage of horses in competition, with many people being critical of all horses who appear "Behind the vertical"

The Fellows of the BHS would support the following:

- There are a variety of reasons why at any moment in time a horse may appear behind the vertical, some are natural, others are manmade, and some a combination of both.

Common Natural reasons are: Conformation, strength, lack of energy, state of balance, adrenaline and instinctive tension. (Horses loose in the field will often appear behind the vertical for these reasons)

Common Manmade reasons are: restrictive riding, incorrect biting, poor training philosophy and a lack of control.

These often combine, for example a well trained and well ridden horse in a new environment may temporarily feel insecure, produce adrenaline and become a potential danger causing the rider to become restrictive to maintain control and stay safe.

- Training horses is about improving, developing and sometimes changing the horses natural balance. Throughout this process different horses of varying conformation types and temperaments will alter the degree to which they instinctively use their heads and necks to find their balance, causing a variation in the angle of head carriage. Some horses at times are more comfortable with the nose slightly behind the vertical.
- The trained horse, for maximum marks, must, amongst many other facets, maintain an outline that, based on the suppleness of the back and active engagement of the hind quarters, remains in front of the vertical. This element of performance, like many other facets of the desired end result, can at times be less than excellent, hence contributing to marks of less than 10.
- If it were possible for all the required elements of performance to be trained and ridden to a point of excellence, whereby all horses could gain a "10" for all movements, there would be no point in competing. It is the variation in rider skills and the degree of the horses confidence and training that produces the placings in a competition.

Horses who are repeatedly restricted by being worked clearly behind the vertical, either ridden or on the lunge, often with a very shortened and low position of the neck and with little relationship to the way the horse works as a whole, by people ignorant of the physical and mental damage caused **ARE BEING TRAINED IN AN UNACCEPTABLE MANNER THAT SHOULD BE CONDEMNED BY ALL EQUINE SPORTS NATIONAL GOVERNING BODIES.** These horses are frequently unhappy and tense, working with an unnatural way of going that produces physical stress and damage resulting in a shortened useful life.

Judges, Stewards and other officials receive training towards being able to clearly understand the correct training of horses. The Fellows of the British Horse Society would encourage all Governing bodies to include L.D.R. and its implications in all future seminars.

It is vital that all other interested parties, prior to condemning and criticising, have a clear understanding of the classical training of horses, and therefore do not react to evidence of superficial symptoms seen in a moment of time.

Hon. Chair Person:  
Sabrina Jones FBHS  
Lower Church Farm,  
Church Lane  
Mursley  
Bucks  
MK17 0RS

Hon. Treasurer  
Tim Downes FBHS  
Ingestre Stables,  
Ingestre,  
STAFFORD.  
Staffs.  
ST18 0RE