



## **COLT SELECTION GUIDELINES**

### **Introduction**

The Australian Warmblood Horse Association Limited (AWHA) grades the best horses for breeding by means of Classification of mares and Colt Selection followed by Performance Testing of stallions. The grading process also applies to imported horses, which have not passed similar testing under the auspices of a recognised overseas organisation.

In the case of future breeding stallions, the selection is very demanding and the standard required is very high.

The AWHA describes horses that have passed Colt Selection as 'Approved' and grants a temporary Breeding Permit, re-issued annually, which is usually applicable until the horse passes performance testing within a certain time. The prestigious title 'Licensed' is reserved for stallions that have passed one of the recognised performance testing options within the time limits specified by the Association.

Stallions which do not go through the Colt Selection process but subsequently achieve a very high performance standard may be issued a breeding permit as Performance Accepted stallions.

*Only the progeny of Performance Accepted, Approved and Licensed stallions can be considered for inclusion in the AWHA Stud Book.*

The Association's guidelines for the selection procedures for the colts eligible for consideration as breeding stallions are overleaf. The guidelines apply equally to Warmbloods, Thoroughbreds and Anglo Arabs unless otherwise stated.

### **Notes on Training and Turnout**

Before the Colt Selection inspection, colts should be trained in presentation at the halt and in hand at the walk and trot. They should be accustomed to standing still while people move around them, pick up their feet, look at their teeth etc. They should also be familiarised with jumping, either free or on the lunge, and should be sufficiently fit to enable them to complete the free movement phase without distress.

Colts should be presented in the best possible body condition, neither fat nor thin, with healthy coats and well cared for hooves. Tidy, pulled or plaited tails and plaited manes are customary and enhance the general impression.

Handlers should be familiar with the Colt Selection rules and procedural requirements. While the style of dress chosen by handlers is optional, it is recommended that it be smart, neat and functional. Clothing should allow adequate freedom of movement and footwear should be sturdy but suitable for running.

## Colt Selection Rules

1. **Acceptance for Selection.** The Association reserves the right to reject any colt before, during or after any part of the selection process at its discretion, if any of the requirements outlined below are not met or upon recommendation of the Federal Board, selection panel or veterinary surgeon. *Any owner(s) of a colt that is rejected may appeal to the Federal Board for reconsiderations. The appeal must be in writing and be directed to the Federal Registrar with supporting documentation.*
2. **Ownership and Registration.** All owners or lessees of colts must be financial members of the AWhA and horses must be registered with the AWhA or otherwise acceptable to the AWhA (e.g. in the case of Thoroughbreds/Anglo Arabs or horses in transit from overseas) prior to applying for classification.
3. **Applications and Fees.** Applications in writing must be made to the Federal Registrar, on the forms supplied, no later than six weeks prior to the scheduled selection day. The application fee, is as determined by the Federal Board from time to time, and must accompany the application. The full selection fee must be paid at the time the veterinary check is accepted by the AWhA and must be no later than four weeks before the scheduled selection date. The fees are generally not refundable.
4. **Pedigree.** Colts must have a minimum of four (4) generations of proven breeding, which is acceptable to the AWhA. Warmblood colts must be sired by Approved or Licensed Warmblood stallions out of classified Warmblood Stud Book or classified Foundation mares. Identification Register colts are not eligible for selection.
5. **Age.** Colts must be aged between 2 ½ and 4 years at the time of selection. Special consideration will be given to the inclusion of colts outside the specified age range upon written request by the applicant to the Federal Board. The outcome of such requests shall be determined at the absolute discretion of the Federal Board and no further correspondence will be entered into after a decision has been made. Age is calculated from 1<sup>st</sup> August, not from the actual date of birth except in the case of horses bred in the Northern Hemisphere, whose age shall be considered on an individual basis. *Thoroughbreds and Anglo Arabs may be any age from 3 onwards.*
6. **Height.** All colts must measure a minimum of 160 cm *for Studbook and from 153cm and under 160cm for the Small Warmblood Studbook.*
7. **Brands.** Stud and numeral brands must be applied prior to classification. Where a colt is micro chipped and not branded, the micro chip will need to be verified as active by a veterinarian. This should be done at the time the colt has the Veterinary Examination (see point 8 below). Recording of the micro chip must be on the AWhA Identification form (*AWhA colt & stallion Veterinary Examination form II*) which is available as a download from the AWhA website.
8. **Veterinary Examination.** The colt must be examined by a qualified veterinary surgeon in accordance with standard examination procedures in conjunction with the AWhA specifications. The veterinarian may be nominated by the AWhA and the colt must be examined within four weeks of the Colt Selection date. A DNA sample will also be taken at that time *if horse has no DNA record*. A veterinary surgeon may be engaged by the AWhA for vet testing on the day of the Colt Selection and, if so, must examine all colts presented on that day. The AWhA Colt Selection Veterinary Examination requirements

will be provided to the chosen veterinary surgeon for this purpose. The examination is conducted at the owner/lessee's expense. All requirements must be met. Colts, which are not passed as free of hereditary defects and unsoundness, will not be considered further and will not be approved for the selection process.

9. **Foreign Substances.** Owners/lessees warrant that colts are presented for assessment free of prohibited substances, including but not limited to anabolic steroids, painkillers, stimulants and tranquillisers. Random drug testing may be conducted at the Colt Selection. The Association reserves the right to have blood or urine samples for testing for foreign substances taken from any colt whose drug-free status may reasonably be considered to be in doubt at any time during the selection process at the owner's expense.
10. **Verification of Identity and Height.** Colts should be present at the selection venue in good time to have their brands and markings checked against their original registration papers, which must be presented by the owner/lessee for this purpose. At the conclusion of this formality, colts will be officially measured. Colts of insufficient height (*see point 6.*) will be rejected at this time.
11. **Failure to Appear.** Applicants will be notified of the date, location and time of the selection test by the AWhA. Failure to present the nominated colt or failure of the colt to undergo or complete the test on the appointed day must be covered by a written explanation and veterinary certificate, where applicable, sent to the Federal Registrar within fourteen (14) days either side of that date or the colt concerned may be ineligible for further consideration. The Federal Board will decide whether the colt may be presented at a later date.
12. **Selection Panel.** Colts will be assessed by a panel of four (4) accredited Stallion Classifiers appointed by the Federal Board, plus one classifier appointed by the State Branch, according to standard Colt Selection procedures. *In a situation where there has been difficulty in obtaining the required number of classifiers for the particular classification day, a reduced number of colt classifiers can assess the stallion(s), (no fewer than three (3)), provided the stallion owner accepts this change in procedure. The AWhA standard letter to this effect must be completed and signed by the stallion owner(s) prior to the commencement of the classification.*
13. **Equipment and Assistance.** Colts shall be led in a simple bridle with one bit and optional noseband. *The handler may carry a whip.* No other means of assistance, restraint or control will be allowed, except for during the individual led movement and free jumping phases, when a second person and a whip are permissible. Boots and bandages are not permitted in any phase of the selection process except for the free jumping, where they are optional. Reasonable time will be allowed for fitting boots/bandages in the arena at the conclusion of the free movement on the flat. All items and personnel required should be close on hand to avoid delays. It is recommended that each handler have at least one other person available during the selection process to assist with the requests of the handler or the colt selectors in relation to the colt (e.g. to clean out hoof for viewing, to adjustment of tack, etc). *The age of any handler/helper must be 16 years and over. Any additional people that may be required to assist the handler must be approved by the organising committee on the day. Excessive use of the whip will not be tolerated.*
14. **Order of Appearance.** Individual appearances for assessment purposes will be made in alphabetical order of colts' AWhA registered names.

- 15. Requests from Classifiers.** All reasonable requests made by the selection panel at any time and during any phase of the selection process must be complied with.
- 16. Termination.** Either the owner/lessee/handler or the panel may stop the selection procedure at any stage in the event of the unnecessary risk of danger to the health or safety of horse or human.
- 17. Scores.** Warmblood colts, Thoroughbreds and Anglo Arabs must gain a minimum average score of 70% as per the Classifiers score sheets, with no average mark less than five (5). *Owners will be required to sign a consent form indicating that will accept the final score determination of the classifiers and they that have read and understood the Colt Selection Guidelines if the minimum panel (3) had to be used.*
- 18. Results.** PROVISIONAL RESULTS will be available as soon as practicable after the conclusion of the selection procedure and the FINAL SCORE, in the form of a summary assessment sheet of scores and average, will be forwarded to the owner/lessee/handler as soon as possible by the Federal Registrar. The AWhA reserves the right to announce the results and to make all results and scores public. Participation in the Colt Selection process implies the permission of owners/lessees for the results of their colt(s) to be so released. All score sheets are the property of the Association. No unauthorised persons, including owners/lessees/handlers, may have access to the actual score sheets nor to the marks awarded and/or comments made by individual Classifiers. These remain confidential.
- 19. Breeding Permits and DNA Typing (for horses they have no DNA record).** Selected colts will be known as 'Approved' and will be granted a temporary Breeding Permit ~~upon payment of a permit fee, payable to the Federal Registrar.~~ The DNA Typing fee is payable at the time of initial application. Once the application is approved, the Federal Registrar will furnish the owner/lessee with an AWhA DNA Typing form and a hair sample has to be taken at the time of the veterinary examination. No Breeding Permits will be issued or progeny registered until all fees are paid and the DNA Typing and Veterinary Examination requirements are fulfilled.
- 20. Registration of Progeny.** All progeny conceived after a colt has passed Colt Selection are eligible for registration as the get of an Approved sire, subject to normal registration requirements. Retrospective registrations will be considered.
- 21. Colts not Selected.** Colts presented as 2 ½ - 4 year olds which are not selected following classification may be re-presented at a Gala Day / Colt Selection during the following year, subject to meeting the requirements for presentation at that time. To be eligible for a second presentation, they must have achieved a final average score of 65% or more at their first classification. Special consideration will be given to issuing a Breeding Permit to Warmblood stallions, which have failed colt selection or performance testing but are subsequently graded at FEI level dressage, show jumping or eventing. Such stallions will be required to furnish validated documents of their level of achievement for eligibility and achieve an AV assessment score of 65% or higher during a static assessment of conformation and type at a Colt Selection day. Colts/stallions registered with the AWhA but which do not participate in the Colt Selection process of presentation and re-presentation are only eligible for subsequent consideration for a Breeding Permit under the Performance Acceptance provisions. Special consideration will be given on a case by case basis in a situation where, through no fault of the present owner, a colt that was eligible for colt selection, was not presented previously prior to reaching the upper age

limit of 4 years old. Any request for special consideration must be advised in writing to the Federal Registrar, who will forward the request to the Federal Board for discussions and consideration.

**22. Performance Testing.** Colts, which successfully pass the Colt Selection phase must also pass a stallion Performance Test (see separate guidelines) at a later date in order to retain their Breeding Permits. Those that fail performance testing (and/or progeny testing) will have their Breeding Permits revoked. (Note that stallions, which have passed Performance Testing or its equivalent under the auspices of a recognised breed society in Europe, can be granted 'Licensed' status in Australia without being tested again. *Such registration (status) also extends to those imported horses that have gained performance approval within Australia under the auspices of a recognised European breed society, for example the Hanoverian Society.*)

**23. Disclaimer.** The AWhA and the individuals constituting the Association accept no responsibility in respect of any claim for damages in consequence of personal injury or property damage whatsoever, including but not limited to any injury, loss or damage to any horse, handler, owner, lessee, groom or spectator. Horses and activities and events associated with horses are potentially dangerous and *involvement in the Colt Selection is strictly at the individual's own risk.*

## **24. Colt Selection Procedure**

**A. The Trot Up.** All colts will be presented individually and in alphabetical order to the classifiers at the commencement of the day for the 'trot up', a preliminary evaluation of walk, trot, soundness and general impression. The colt will then be height measured and the brands and markings will be recorded. After this initial assessment the colts will then be presented individually in alphabetical order for classification as per B, C, D and E below.

**B. Static Assessment.** The first phase of individual assessment requires presentation of the colt in an area specified by the panel for evaluation of type and conformation. The handler should place the colt at a distance of about 4 - 5 metres in front of the Classifiers and should present him so that all four legs can be seen from both sides. The Classifiers will move around the colt as necessary.

**C. Movement in Hand.** The first movement phase involves the horse being led first at the walk and then at the trot on a large triangle moving in a clockwise direction so that the colt is to the inside of the triangle and can be seen by the classifiers at all times during the movement. No side of the triangle shall measure less than 40m nor more than 60m in length. At the discretion of the selection panel, this exercise may be repeated or modified. (For example, colts may also be asked to walk straight away from the panel and trot straight back.) The colt should be allowed to move as freely as possible. To this end, the handler should be someone who can move well enough themselves to show the horse to advantage.

**D. Free Movement.** For the second movement phase, the lead rein (only) is removed and the colt is turned loose in the arena for approximately 5 minutes for assessment of his movement at the walk, trot and particularly the canter. No assistance is allowed except for such limited intervention as may be required to ensure that all three paces are shown.

**E. Free Jumping.** Free jumping in a conventional jumping lane (moving in an anticlockwise / on the left rein) constitutes the third and final movement phase. The jumping lane will consist of three elements –

- a cross pole fence (0.5m high)
- followed by an upright (0.7m high)
- followed by a parallel oxer (1m wide x 1m high)

The first two fences will comprise normal show jumping rails; the third fence may include some infill. The set distance of 7.5m between the obstacles will suit most horses without alteration. Adjustments of no more than 0.5m each way may be made for long or short striding horses. In the interests of uniformity for all candidates, the configuration of the jumps themselves and related rails may not be altered. The handler may, however, increase the height of the all three fences at his or her discretion during the assessment phase. After a brief warm-up period in which the colt may become accustomed to the jumping lane with the obstacles lowered, the colt is required to perform a minimum of four (4) complete runs through the jump lane, with the last jump (the parallel oxer) at a minimum height of one (1) metre. Failure to attempt, clear or complete the jumping assessment phase will be taken into consideration in the overall assessment of jumping ability.

At the conclusion of the classification process and after all scores have been tallied, each colt owner will be advised individually by the panel of classifiers as to whether or not the colt has achieved the required mark to gain Approved status. The panel of classifiers will be available to discuss the scores for the colt at this time and, the options available to the colt owner should the colt not achieve a pass on the day. These options include, re-presentation at another colt selection within the age time limit, performance acceptance from performance in open competition (refer Info Sheet – Performance Testing of Stallions (2) for guidelines) and progeny testing (refer Info Sheet –Progeny Evaluation).

Further information on preparation, training and presentation for a colt selection can be obtained by contacting your State Branch who will arrange for the Head Classifier to call and discuss the process.