



Baileys Horse Feeds/BEF Futurity 2010

Factsheet 8

The veterinary assessment

The veterinary surgeon will ascertain that the horse is sound and safe to participate (i.e. shows no signs of lameness or symptoms of infectious disease). The horse will be assessed statically (standing) and in motion in walk and trot. The vet's opinion is final in such matters.

The vet or the vet's assistant will give you clear instructions as to what they would like to see during this stage, and actions you are advised to follow. If you do not understand, please ask again now because it is difficult to revisit any concerns later.

The Veterinary Score (out of 10)

This gives a score for the horse's feet, limbs, musculo-skeletal build and condition score on the day. This means that the vet assesses the overall orthopaedic health state of the young horse at this early stage of its development with particular emphasis on identifying signs that certain tissues such as joints, growth plates etc are developing in an appropriate way.

The vet's findings are communicated to the handler as the assessment happens and the handler is expected to take note of the vet's observations and take into account any advice offered by the vet.

The mark you will be given consists not only of what the vet sees on the day but also of the vet's experienced judgement on the horse's potential to stay sound under the rigours of modern competition PROVIDED any warnings given, as outlined above, are adhered to and that any issues which have been identified are properly managed. This element of the mark therefore gives a reflection of whether the conformation and physical structure of the horse is such that the horse is likely to REMAIN SOUND and still be competing at the peak of its ability.

It must be remembered that some conformational features may not necessarily compromise a horse's ability to perform long term, and a vet's judgement as to the severity and likely impact of any feature or condition is crucial.

Veterinary conformation assessment vs evaluator conformation assessment

The difference between this veterinary assessment and the conformation assessment undertaken by the panel of evaluators is that the panel of evaluators are looking at the conformation required for potential success in the chosen discipline. They are looking for conformation, **related to discipline**, which will make a horse stand out and the criteria they will assess are broadly as follows:

Head proportional, throatlatch clean, neck muscled over top line and neck length proportional, body direction, shoulder sloping, withers defined and sloping gradually to back, good saddle position, back and leg length proportional, croup length and shape of back and loins appropriate.

It is quite possible to have a vet score and a conformation score which differ because the finer details being assessed are different.

The veterinary surgeons conducting the veterinary assessments are members of BEVA and have been drawn from an approved panel of properly briefed specialist sport horse vets, led by the Futurity's Chief Veterinary Surgeon – Jane Nixon, of Nixon Equine Vets in Buckingham.

The vet will provide written feedback as well as verbal feedback. Please listen to what the vet says. Futurity vets are highly experienced and will offer you constructive advice as to how to deal with any conditions they may identify. This is intended to help you. If you have any questions please ask now. It becomes very difficult to deal fairly with misunderstandings after the event.

The handler/owner should ensure that the horse is used to having its ears, eyes, teeth and hooves examined by unfamiliar people. The horse must also accept examination of its skeletal frame, tendons and ligaments by a veterinary surgeon using both visual methods and palpation if required. The horse should be used to walking and trotting in a straight line away from and towards the vet and, if it is wearing a bridle, should have been introduced to the bit in plenty of time to become accustomed to it.

Please note that it is your responsibility to present a horse in a suitable state to be assessed. Low scores attributable, for example, to poor hoof care or a horse insufficiently well prepared to present themselves adequately for the vet are your own responsibility. The vet can only assess what they see before them. Please see Factsheet 3 for pre Futurity hoof trimming recommendations.

A Baileys Horse Feeds nutritionist will be on hand in the vet section to provide you with advice on a recommended feeding regime for the stage of development of your horse.

What does your vet score mean?

Vet Score	Criteria
10 Excellent	A horse or pony that shows no performance potential inhibiting

	issues on the day and no changes in care/routine are seen to be required today in order to fulfil the horse's potential in terms of future soundness.
9 Very good	A horse or pony that shows minimal performance potential inhibiting issues on the day and minor additional care is required in order to fulfil the horse's potential in terms of future soundness.
8 Good	A horse or pony that shows some minor performance potential inhibiting issues on the day and possibly some additional care is required in order to fulfil the horse's potential in terms of future soundness.
7 Fairly good	A horse or pony that shows some minor performance potential inhibiting issues on the day and further important additional care is certainly required in order to fulfil the horse's potential in terms of future soundness.
6 Fair	A horse or pony that shows significant minor or one major performance potential inhibiting issue/s on the day and further significant additional care is required in order to fulfil the horse's potential in terms of future soundness.
5 Acceptable	A horse or pony that shows significant performance potential inhibiting issues on the day and further important additional care is required in order to fulfil the horse's potential in terms of future soundness. It is uncertain today as to whether any issues identified are resolvable, but they may be.
4 Not acceptable	A horse or pony that has major performance potential inhibiting issues on the day and further important additional care is required in order to fulfil the horse's potential in terms of future soundness. It is highly questionable as to whether long term soundness is achievable.
3 Fairly poor	It is unlikely that long term soundness is achievable.
2 Poor	It is very unlikely that long term soundness is achievable.
1 Very poor	It is almost certain that that long term

	soundness is unachievable.
0 Not shown	The horse was not able to be assessed
<p>Your score is an indicator for the day of assessment. It is not a guarantee of future potential nor does it replace a full five stage vetting or any other form of specialist veterinary assessment. It is not a guarantee that any stallion may be a suitable candidate for stallion grading where a specialist assessment and X rays may be required.</p>	

Information

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Version 1 - 2010