



Baileys Horse Feeds/BEF Futurity 2011 Run by *British Breeding* Factsheet 1

What is the Futurity?

The Baileys Horse Feeds/British Equestrian Federation (BEF) Futurity Young Horse Evaluations are run by the BEF's company *British Breeding*. Whether you have been a participant before, or this is the first year that you are thinking of participating, thank you for your interest in the Futurity and welcome to the fastest growing young horse evaluation programme in the UK!

There are three things that are important for you to remember:

1..The Futurity is an **evaluation**, rather than a sport horse show class. At a show your horse will be ranked in order of preference by a judge or judges. At an evaluation your horse will be marked using a set of criteria appropriate for that horse's age and intended discipline. At an evaluation your horse is considered for longer than at a show (you will see how in the other factsheets) and the feedback you receive will be more thorough. Because this is an evaluation for performance potential, horses should not be in "show" condition, as this may mean that they are carrying too much weight, especially for their age. Horses carrying excess weight cannot move as well as horses with the correct condition score and can also have related problems in later life. Please make sure your horse is the appropriate weight when you present it for evaluation or this may well have an impact on its score both from the vet and from the evaluators.

2.. The Futurity is principally run to **identify talented young sport horses and ponies**, for **collecting data on British breeding** so that British breeders can make use of that information for future breeding decisions and for **providing feedback** to participants on the suitability of the horse they have bred for its intended discipline and the market for which it has been bred. This is important to remember because not every horse will be an "elite" horse. The biggest sector of the market is the amateur affiliated sector and this market typically requires horses with slightly different attributes to elite horses. The premium definitions Factsheet 9 sets these out.

3.. Futurity is for **'amateur' and 'professional'** owners/breeders alike. High scores have come in equal measure from established studs and people with a small mare herd, so don't think that the Futurity isn't for you because you are a 'small breeder'. If you have a passion for breeding, you have critically assessed your mare(s) and have picked the very best stallion to complement her attributes and bred your young horse with a specific purpose in mind – then the Futurity is for you!

In the Futurity, horses and ponies from foals to three year olds are evaluated for their performance potential as dressage horses, show jumpers, eventers or endurance horses and ponies by a vet and a team of up to three evaluators at a number of regional venues around the country during July and August. Over 900 horses will be evaluated this year to assess their performance potential as an indicator for the future.

The aims of the Futurity are to:

1. Find potential elite international horses for British riders. Owners and breeders of top scoring Futurity horses of all ages are invited to attend the BEF World Class Equine Pathway training sessions and will be linked to the developing Equine Bridge (more to follow) to build a pathway from identifying performance potential to elite performance delivery.
2. Improve the quality and breeding of British bred horses and ponies by offering informative detailed feedback from a vet and a team of up to three evaluators. This aim is called-for in the Strategy for the Horse Industry in England and Wales (2005) and is part of the BEF Strategic Plan for 2009-2013.
3. Provide accurate pedigree and results information for breeders to use, regarding successful bloodline combinations, which will be available at all times through the fully searchable Futurity results database (with **NEW** features for 2011) and the National Equine Database (NED). Results data is also used as part of our research projects to develop Estimated Breeding Values which we hope will also be available on NED in due course.
4. Enable breeders to use the Futurity scores as an established marketing tool for their young horses, adding value to a young horse whilst it is still too young to have achieved a performance record. Many young horses are now advertised for sale as having a "BEF Premium" and many people have purchased young horses because they believe that an independent assessment run by a National Federation has value. Whilst of course this is not a guarantee of future success (see Factsheet 9), the Futurity is the programme which offers the most reliable indicator of potential success which is available at this time. There will be media coverage of each venue, with full reports and photos being circulated to regional, national and discipline-specific media following each regional evaluation and again at the end of the series.

5. Continuously receive feedback from participants as to the workability of the Futurity and improve the scheme so that it continuously becomes a more meaningful, clear and attainable process for the development of our industry. Please let us know if you come across a competition, evaluation or, assessment that seeks and listens to your views like Futurity does. If you can find one, we would like you to let us know so that we can learn from it.

Good luck and we hope you all have a very fruitful Futurity 2011!

FURTHER INFORMATION

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