



DISTANCE RIDING ASSOCIATION SOUTH AFRICA

WWW.DRASA.ORG.ZA

Re: Your communication dated 30th July

To: Wessel Strauss, SG SAEF

Good morning Wessel,

Please see our responses to the below from yourselves as well as what was discussed at the meeting in your offices:

When we submitted our official documentation to SAEF on 12th February 2019 to be registered as an SAEF discipline no restriction was ever placed in writing on DRASA by SAEF, based on our distances or divisions offered within our discipline. Our constitution and rules were approved by SAEF on the 22nd February 2019 pending ratification from SAEF council on the 11th May 2019 at the SAEF AGM.

At the SAEF AGM, DRASA was granted registration as a separate discipline. We have never received any communication from SAEF (when we originally applied for SAEF registration as well as when we were approved by SAEF) requesting any changes or modifications to our Constitution or Rules submitted.

When SAEF approved DRASA as a discipline this approval indicated that DRASA was seen as a discipline on its own with no conflict of interest to other disciplines already registered with SAEF.

The SAEF constitution states in Schedule F that it is the duty of the Discipline Association Ordinary Members to manage and control all technical aspects and administrative aspects of the specific discipline nationally and includes in these duties the setting of, continuous administration and adding of all rules of such a discipline. Our members submitted a motion at the AGM for us to approach FEI to ask that our 40km courses be approved for FEI novice status. It was not to approach FEI for FEI status or to take anything away from ERASA.

They also requested that we offer longer distances over multi day rides which is well within our rules and SAEF rules and constitution to do. One only has to look at the similarities in all the Equitation disciplines, polocrosse and polo as well as the mounted games disciplines which, to a spectator, or



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non-participant, look very much the same, but have completely different sets of rules and scoring systems.

We have had very different rules and qualification criteria for different distances and from the beginning we have emphasised that in all communications. The riders who participate in our discipline do so specifically because of those different criteria and rules.

“We therefore request that you make this clear to all your members and request them to refrain from making statements on social media stating that 40km DRASA rides will be accepted by the SAEF and ERASA as a qualifying distance for novice registration in ERASA. “

DRASA Exco has never publically made any statement regarding any of the above. We are not responsible for people’s opinions on social media, especially non-members posts. We always aim to correct these opinions if we see them and have done where possible. We very carefully moderate our official Facebook page and have strict visible rules thereon. Someone posted, on his personal page, an extract from our AGM agenda and jumped to some very incorrect assumptions. The post was removed immediately and a new article was posted apologising to DRASA for the incorrect posts and acknowledging that CTR and Endurance are two very different disciplines.

As previously stated, members may in a democratic institution request and put forward any motion at an AGM that, if carried by all members, must be investigated by the institutions elected officials. We followed protocol by sending an official letter to you as the National Federation.

We understood that you as SAEF would investigate our request for our 40km rides to be accepted as FEI novice qualification rides and revert to us with an answer, fully expecting that answer to be a NO. We would have accepted that unequivocally and reported back to members the same. However, we find it very unprofessional that a letter addressed to Mrs Cindy Radomsky by name, be widely circulated on social media. This person who posted these accusations is NOT a DRASA member.



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Furthermore it is imperative for you to note that no 80, 120 or 160 km rides may be presented by DRASA as this will be in direct conflict with ERASA.

We have been accepted and affiliated as a separate discipline, not in conflict with ERASA, by yourselves and have always had as part of our rules, accepted by SAEF, that we would offer multi day rides. Our rules have allowed for maximum distance in one day **UP TO** 40kms. We have added another Division to our competition rules of **UP TO** 80kms in one day as per Rule changing process and mandate at an AGM. The maximum 80kms distance for Summit Division was chosen as all our divisions and distances increase from Pleasure to Trail and now Summit in 20km increments. This is our “high performance” division that members will aim for and obtain provincial colours for at the National Championships.

The 120km and 160km distances you refer to in this letter could be achieved if a rider and horse combination participate in a two or three day event. They **MAY** complete those distances depending on the distances offered and participated in each day. These are **NOT** seen as one event, but each day counts separately, with each individual day having results and scores for speed, veterinary and horsemanship criteria. A Rider may in fact, ride a 40km one day and a 20km the next day depending on what they enter and what their horse has qualified for.

We have always intended to work together, if possible, by encouraging our members who wish to go faster and move onto endurance to do so once they have improved their knowledge and skill in DRASA. Over ninety percent of member's who have joined so far, are riders who have never partaken in endurance for a variety of reasons. They do not have the horsemanship skills, do not have the knowledge to ride a horse safely and carefully over longer distances within the innate capability of the horse, find the veterinary aspects and pacing aspects intimidating and want to start slowly and carefully moving up the distances while seeing positive improvements in their scores and obtaining recognition for those improvements. These riders generally are riding horses of different breeds not able to compete in endurance due to their heavier builds or ages (Draft horses, various local breeds and thoroughbreds, warmbloods etc). In DRASA they can improve their horse's fitness, enjoy trails, camping and family time, improve their horsemanship skills, learn how to pace their own specific horses within the horse's capability and slowly dip their feet into longer distances obtaining recognition for their own skills improvements. The veterinary scoring (including body



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condition scoring and recovery of the horse after each leg) and horsemanship scoring (including care and grooming of the horse at the venue and a ridden test at the venue and on the course) count two thirds of the scoring for placement in the division entered. The third aspect is the speed aspect. The maximum and minimum riding times are provided for that course (within our criteria set by our Rules) and that day's weather etc. and riders choose a riding time within that range that they nominate as their speed for each leg. The ability to choose a riding time/speed based on the course, terrain, fitness, capability of the horse, speed of the horse's optimal gait, taking into account water points and technical obstacles along the way is the most difficult aspect of the scoring.

DRASA has a policy of not responding to incorrect facts and emotional social media speech and will never do so publically. Where a person enquires regarding our discipline they are more than welcome to approach us directly or on our official face book group, via email or on our official website and we will assist them in understanding our mission and sport, however we do not engage in knee jerk emotional reactions.

Regards,
Cindy Radomsky
President DRASA