

## FT's Trainers test – outside the school system

Trainer who finishes FT's Trainers test outside the school system joins the Society of Professional Trainers if he/she passes testing in the following requirements. He/she will join FT, receive the society's approval as a trainer of a young horse ("young horse trainer") and may call himself/herself a trainer. Young horse trainers are allowed to wear the uniform of the Society, the blue riding jacket, and FT's initials made of bronze. Those who wish to take this young horse training test outside the school system have to pass the following requirements:

**The training of young horses (55%)**

**The training horses (33%)**

**A written essay (12%)**

**A shoeing course**

**A course in judging breeding horses**

Marks are awarded on the scale of 0-10, in whole and half numbers. They are awarded according to the following criteria:

0 = not shown

1 = extremely bad

2 = very bad

3 = bad

4 = average

5 = adequate

6 = fairly good

7 = good

8 = very good

9 = excellent

10 = without fault – perfect

Minimum requirements to pass the test are:

- 1) 5.0 average grade.
- 2) 5.0 average grade awarded by a judge who tests the young training horses.

## *The training of young horses (55%)*

### **The test itself and goals:**

#### **The test itself:**

The prospective trainer must provide five untrained horses for the test. The horses may be used to leading and may have been shod when the judges inspect them at the beginning of the test.

The trainer will then choose the best three for the final testing.

#### **Goals:**

The goal is that at the end of the training period the following has been obtained:

- The horse is not nervous and trusts the trainer as its leader.
- The horse is comfortable with the trainer and follows him/her when turned loose in the round-pen.
- The horse obediently steps sideways and does rein-back (reverses) in-hand.
- It is easy to put a bridle on the horse.
- The horse is easily led on both reins, beside the trainer and also following the trainer.
- The horse is easily led in-hand by the trainer riding another horse – on both reins.
- The horse is calm and stands still while being tacked up – it shouldn't matter from which side it is approached.
- The horse is calm and stands still when the reins are put over its head and the rider should be able to mount it from either side.
- The horse waits for the rider and won't start without the rider's encouragement.
- The horse starts calmly without stress and is focused ahead.
- The horse has a supple mouth and responds easily to both reins.
- It should be easy for the horse to walk in a short circle (volte) on each rein and it should stop instantly and stand still when asked to do so.
- The horse should respond to leg aids and know how to step sideways—both from standing still and while in walk.
- The horse should be eager to go forward and obediently go wherever its rider wants to go.
- The horse should be balanced in the basic gaits: walk, trot and canter (natural gait ability/tendency is taken into full consideration).

- The horse is without tension and its movements are free and natural.
- The horse should use its topline correctly and know how to bend its neck in walk.
- The horse should be prepared for tölt training and if able it may be starting to tölt. (The tölt itself is not evaluated).

## **1.2. The judging**

The nature of the young horses (character and gait ability/tendency) is taken into consideration when the horses and their training is judged. The training is compared against the first impressions of the judge when the horses were inspected at the beginning of the test.

### **1.2.1. The appearance and the health of the young horse. 3%**

The young horse must be well fed, well cleaned and groomed, with a shiny coat. Hooves must be trimmed and the shoeing must look nice, the shoes must fit the hooves correctly and the horse's feet must be at a right angle (correctness of legs). The horse's mouth has to be without wounds and there may not be any wounds on the legs due to overreaching. If a horse is seriously injured, undernourished or the shoeing terrible the judge has full authority to dismiss it from the test – thereby automatically failing the trainer in the test.

### **1.2.2. Riding equipment and its uses. 3%**

The trainer must saddle the horse calmly and in an organised way. The horse should be saddled while standing inside, in a wide aisle or other available space. The horse must not be tied and if someone has to hold it must be done by the trainer. The saddle is put on the horse's back in a rather forward position and then slid backwards so that the hairs underneath it are lying flat. The length of the saddle must fit the young horse and care must be taken that it is correctly positioned and is neither hindering the shoulders nor the back. The girth must be tightened 1-3 hands behind the front legs, the hairs are smoothed underneath with the hand and then the same thing is done on the other side. Then the crupper is put on gently with care taken that it is not strapped on too tight. It should be possible to put a hand's width between the crupper strap and the horse's croup. The bridle and noseband must be correctly fastened. All riding equipment should look good and fit the horse – be clean and in good order.

### **1.2.3. Feet picked up. 3%**

The trainer should be able to pick up all the horse's feet without problems. The trainer should stand beside the young horse, stroke his/her hand quietly down the leg until the horse picks the foot up easily. The foot should then be put down carefully.

#### **1.2.4. Mounting and dismounting. 3%**

The trainer should stand closely beside the young horse when he/she puts the reins over the horse's head and mounts the horse. The trainer mounts the horse when it is standing perfectly still, with a light rein contact or with loose reins. The trainer steps into the stirrup, stops for a moment before he/she puts the leg over the horse's back, puts the other leg into the other stirrup and sits quietly into the saddle. The young horse should stand quietly and calmly and wait for a signal from the rider. The trainer then takes his feet out of both stirrups and slides out of the saddle. This must then be repeated from the other side of the horse.

#### **1.2.5. The trainer rides the young horses. 20%**

Equipment: Saddle – noseband – whip – snaffle bit.

Facilities: The horses are evaluated while being ridden on a straight track or road as well as in an outside riding school or an indoor school. The marks are awarded in the following order:

##### **1.2.5.1. Mental and physical balance. 5.0%**

The young horse must be relaxed and confident (not nervous) and should trust the trainer. It's muscles should be supple and without tension. It's movements should be supple and regular. The young horse should put its head down and stretch its neck when allowed to do so. The trainer must ride the horse also on a loose or long rein in walk and trot (or gait of choice). (The trainers seat and riding is taken into consideration.)

##### **1.2.5.2. Attentiveness, obedience, commands. 5.0%**

The young horse should accept the leadership of the rider and be willing to go into the direction the rider points it towards. The trainer must ride circles in walk and trot (or natural gait of choice) and perform stopping exercises in walk and working trot with the horse standing in a straight line. The young horse should respond to a half-halting rein and light rein contact on either side, its head carriage should be natural and without tension. The young horse should know how to "kiss" each stirrup (touch its nose to each stirrup). It should be supple in its neck in walk and while being asked to stop performing this with a supple mouth. The young horse should respond to leg aids both forward and sideways and know how to step sideways from standing still and walk with

attentiveness, lightness and without tension. The rider moves in balance with the horse's movements and all aids and commands must be correctly timed and executed.

(The seat of the trainer and his/her riding are taken into consideration).

#### **1.2.5.3. Basic gaits. 5.0%**

The young horse needs to be balanced in the basic gaits. The first impressions of the horse will be considered when it comes to taking into account the natural gait ability/tendency of the horse.

(The seat of the trainer and his/her riding is taken into consideration when this is evaluated).

#### **1.2.5.4. Preparations for tölt. 5.0%**

The young horse should understand the relationship between encouraging aids and halting aids and should respond easily to the aids when asked to tölt. The tölt itself is not judged and the first impressions of the horse are important when it comes to evaluating natural gait ability (trotty-pacey). (The seat of the trainer and his/her riding is taken into consideration.)

#### **1.2.6. The horse running freely in a round-pen, lead in hand by the trainer and exercises in-hand. 12%**

Equipment: Rope pressure halter, lunge reins and whip. A bridle, noseband, reins and whip are also permitted.

The trainer chooses one of the young horses to perform the following four parts of this phase of the test.

##### **1.2.6.1. The horse running freely in a round-pen. 3%**

The trainer drives the young horse a few rounds in the round-pen on each hand/rein. When the trainer allows, the young horse should turn towards the centre of the round-pen, and towards the trainer. The trainer should walk around the horse, stroking it everywhere. The young horse should follow the trainer as he/she walks inside the round-pen. The horse should be calm and easy to catch, should seek the attention of the trainer while respecting his/her authority.

#### **1.2.6.2. Leading the horse in-hand 3%**

This exercise is performed in a riding arena (not a round pen). The trainer stands beside the horse. The reins are down and held in the hand closer to the horse while the whip is in the hand positioned further from the horse. The trainer uses encouraging voice commands to ask the horse to walk on and follows the horse walking by its side.

The reins are kept as loose as possible and it should be evident that the young horse is attentive to the trainer, obeying him instantly. The horse should be bent a little towards the trainer and there should be an obvious gap between the trainer and the horse while it is being led. The young horse should be stopped by using voice commands and rein contact. The horse should walk approx. 40 m. and then stop for ca. 3 seconds. Then it should trot or use a preferred gait for approx. 40 m then slow down and stop. The same should be done on the other hand/rein. The whole of the school arena should be used with changes of hand/rein across the long diagonals.

#### **1.2.6.3. Leading the horse behind the trainer 3%**

The trainer leads the young horse behind him/her in walk and trot. The reins should be loose. The trainer shows stopping from trot or preferred gait and then asks the horse to reverse/do rein-back while turning his/her back towards it. Then the horse is asked to move forward in walk. This should be performed at least twice.

#### **1.2.6.4. Exercises in-hand 3%**

This phase of the test is in three parts:

1. The trainer stands on the left side of the young horse, the reins are kept in the left hand and the whip in the right hand. The trainer strokes the whip along the top of the neck, down to the back, down the flanks towards the hind legs. Voice commands are added to the movement while the trainer gently pulls the reins. The young horse should easily move its hindquarters to the side. The young horse should step a little bit forward while yielding to the command.
2. The trainer asks the horse to move its forehead by using a whip or the hand. The horse should respond easily by crossing the front legs – it may not reverse/do rein-back.

3. The trainer should let the young horse do rein-back by using a light rein contact or body signals, and using voice commands.

The horse should then step confidently towards the trainer.

It is important that the horse is attentive to all aids, trusts the trainer and is unafraid of the whip while being disciplined in a fair manner.

### **1.2.7. Leading the young horse from another horse 7%**

Equipment is the same as in 1.2.6. All the young horses are led. The horse should lead without problems on both reins. The position of the leading horse is approximately a head further back than the riding horse. The leading horse should bend his neck towards the riding horse, the reins should be almost loose and a visible gap should be between the two horses (approx. 50 cm.). The trainer starts in walk, then goes in medium tempo tölt or trot, slows down after 80-100 meters to walk and then to a full stop for approx. 3 seconds. The trainer should ride forward again without problems into medium tempo tölt or trot, and go into medium tempo canter for 50-100 metres. Then the trainer slows down again to a full stop. The young horse should then be moved to the other side of the riding horse. The trainer may dismount for this purpose. The same exercise is then repeated. The leading exercises should be performed outside and it is not permitted to do this in an enclosed riding school.

### **1.2.8. Lungeing. 7%**

Equipment: 7-9 metres long reins, a lungeing whip plus one of the following optional gear:

- a) Rope pressure halter.
- b) Lungeing cavesson (or halter) bridle with the reins attached to a ring on the halter
- c) Bridle and noseband, with reins fastened to the noseband and the ring of the snaffle bit.

Facilities: Closed circle of 19-16 metres in diameter, and the ground must be soft but not too deep nor too firm. The trainer chooses one of the young horses for this exercise.

The young horse must be disciplined and focused ahead. The trainer's commands must be clear and precise i.e. voice commands – whip – body language. The trainer makes sure that the use of reins and whip is controlled and professional throughout the exercise.



The trainer leads the horse beside him/her towards the centre of the circle. The horse is encouraged to step away from the trainer in walk. The horse should then trot 2-4 circles, walk approximately 1 circle, stopping for approx. 5 seconds on the outside tracks. The horse should then trot 1-2 circles, walk for one circle and then stop again. The trainer then repeats the exercise on the other hand/rein. The trainer leads the horse beside him/her when they leave the circle.

### **1.2.9. A judge rides the young horses. 36%**

The last section of the test is when the young horses are ridden by a riding judge/judges. If a judge feels that a horse is not rideable he has the authority to dismiss that horse from the test thereby failing the trainer. The judge should wear a hard hat when trying out the horses and must be polite and considerate to the trainer.

The judge will especially note the attitude of the young horses, they must be confident/not nervous with a trusting attitude towards the rider, physically and mentally stable, obedient, comfortable and eager to please. The judge should try to determine by testing the horse if the trainer has made reasonable demands on the horses, if the training has been well organised and how well the horses know what the rider is asking them to do.

The grading is split into the following percentages:

#### **1.2.9.1. Mental and physical balance 6.0%**

The young horse should be confident/not nervous with a trusting attitude towards its trainer. It's muscles should be supple and without tension. It's movements should be regular and natural. The horse will stretch it's neck forward and down when that is offered.

#### **1.2.9.2. Eagerness and obedience 6.0%**

The young horse needs to accept the leadership role of the rider and must be willing to go in whatever direction it is asked to.

#### **1.2.9.3. Basic gaits 6.0%**

The young horse must be balanced in the basic gaits. This should be compared against the first inspection of the horse and the natural gaits of the horse.

#### **1.2.9.4. Responsiveness towards the reins 6.0%**

The young horse must respond easily to a halt command and light rein contact towards the sides and stop softly when asked to do so. Head carriage should be natural and without tension. The horse's neck should be supple with a nice bend in walk and its mouth must be supple and sensitive.

#### **1.2.9.5. Responsiveness towards encouragement to move forward and sideways 6.0%**

The young horse understands the leg aids and knows how to move sideways from a full halt and from walk, easily, lightly and without tension.

#### **1.2.9.6. Preparations for tölt 6.0%**

The young horse needs to understand the interaction between the commands to move forward and to halt and must respond without complaint when asked to show tölt. The tölt itself is not judged and natural gait ability as noted in the first inspection is considered when this part is graded (trotty-pacey).

#### **1.2.10. The trainer and how he/she works the horse. 6%**

This grade is awarded to the prospective trainer by the young horse teacher in both tests. In test II the grade is determined after hearing the comments of the horse trainer's employer. This grade is based on the ability of the student and how he/she works with the horses. Taken into full consideration is the nature of each horse and other external factors. The trainer should use the methods he/she has learned in the approved school.

#### **1.3. Rules of equipment.**

The use of protective boots and methods of tongue tying is forbidden. In general the horses should be shod with normal shoes (8x20 mm, with 10% variable). It is not permitted to use 10 mm. shoes unless the teacher has recommended its use. The rules of LH concerning gæðingakeppni apply to bits and bridles. The use of hoof pads is not permitted unless it has been authorised by a veterinarian and is accompanied with necessary documents.

