



Hi, my name is Kay, I am a groom and I'm here today to give you an insight into what that job means and to try and show you that we are tightly related to your work as stewards and judges. I also hope to make you realize that grooming has a very important role in our sport and in its welfare to our horses.

I want to make sure today that I only talk about things directly related to my job, how I interpret things in our sport and my personal experiences.

I feel there is no point for us to discuss about speculation, hearsay or about any situations I have nothing to do with directly or haven't directly experienced.

I will be happy to answer any questions, and I hope there will be lots, at the end, I promise to answer them honestly.

I would also like to add that I think you guys all do an amazing job and without you, we would not have a sport at all. so thank you.

A groom. I'm sure all of you have varied opinion as to what that job entails. Anyone want to tell me what they think a groom is? When someone asks me what I do for a living, I generally answer 'I'm a groom,' brush horses, how lovely. . .

Wikipedia says "a person responsible for some or all aspects of the management of horses." I think they might be right. The go-to person. . .Kay can you... where is my... do we have this.. can you call. Getting the picture?

If I were to advertise for my replacement today and I mean literally replacing what I do, it might look something like this: groom needed for 5* rider, around 46 shows a year (championships if we qualify) mainly in western Europe, at any time of day or night, can plan all journeys, layovers and paperwork needed for self, horses and truck, can organize a team of staff and their needs, days off, answer all questions, motivate and choose new members of staff. Take on interns, write school reports for them and see that they learn and achieve in our programme, ride to a high standard, work with the farrier and vets, make sure horses are shod and treated as they require for each horse's show programme and individual needs, keep all the medical books up to date
AND THE MOST IMPORTANT PART°°

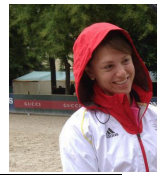
try always to be in a good mood and smile

The list of jobs to juggle is endless, but I wouldn't change any of it as I love my job. This is my way of life and my whole life for the now. I don't believe you can leave this job and go back to it. The body has to be used to being pushed to the limit most of the time, physically and mentally! So next time anyone may think a groom is grumpy, sad, tired or snappy. . . stop to think about the 10 million things that may be going on in their heads at that moment.

Being a groom also means we are the only ones in the stable 24/7, so if ever there was a group of people that know about our sport and what can go on. . . it's us!

That brings me to talking about stewards and judges. I must confess I'm a bit nervous about this part as I want to hit a positive note with all of you and hopefully find a way to make improvements in our work together towards a clean sport and fair play! As our sport grows it becomes more and more high profile with a lot of money at stake, which can cloud judgements made by everyone in our sport.

My first thought when I was asked to come here today was "what is a steward?" What does that mean to me personally and my colleagues? So the first thing I did was to look it up, surprisingly it took me a while to find a direct reference to stewarding as I was thinking of the term. I would like to share with you what I found on Wikipedia;



It states “that a steward is a licensed official at a horseshow tasked with the responsibility of interpreting and enforcing the rules of the organisation that sanctions the horse show.”

It goes on to explain in many cases the need for you to submit reports explaining any major violations of the rules and any other information that may be required.

A show steward has to be of the highest ethical standard.

It goes on to explain your training, in class rooms and on the job, passing tests and routinely attending educational programmes, which is what this is. . . right?

Next to the judge , the show steward is the most important official at the show. The next thing I did was ask a few colleagues and this is what we and I thought a steward is to us; a person of respect, was nearly top on everyone answer

A very necessary part of our sport and our daily lives, you are the people I rely on to catch and to prevent cheating and uphold fair play and our go-to persons for any questions or complaints.

Now having listened in yesterday, I must say I hope you all have very wide shoulders, as there are a lot of points and expectations that we all and even Wikipedia are putting upon them.

I believe there are judges here also today. I don’t come into contact with many of you as generally you are watching the ring and judging the sport.

Competing in the ring is actually only a small part of my day but your presence is always felt as you have the overall say in all situations that may occur inside and outside the field of play. You are the people calling the shots, which makes me want to question is that fair? Of course I know that it is, but still might I ask, “ can you rule on cheating in and outside of the ring, when you don’t usually walk through a stable before a big Grand Prix, where there is €150, 000 up for winning?’

I will also say I know nothing about the training involved to become a judge for our sport, so I am willing to learn more and have my mind changed. I hope it would be fair to ask that you are too.

The main part of judging and stewarding as I see it, is making sure everyone sticks to the rules. As was mentioned yesterday, that’s pretty black and white. In my opinion the biggest problem in our sport is to stop the cheating and the cheaters. It is not my place to name, names or single out individuals. I have always believed in the system and in the fact everyone gets what they deserve in the end.

The biggest question on my mind has been ‘what is the best way forward to ensure good stewarding and to make our sport as fair and clean as possible?’

Part of that question was answered yesterday and I do believe the problem is the amount of stewards and how they are/or by who they are ‘employed’.

Every time the FEI has found a way to stop or prevent cheating it has worked.

Such as the use of the infrared cameras, people have been more careful and a little scared to artificially help horses jump better. The problem is as you are inventing ways to deter the cheats, the cheats are inventing their own ways to get around it, eg icing the legs before the class, this avoids anything warm on the camera and looks like maybe they’re doing the horse a favor!

Most experts and I believe icing before a class highly dangerous, a numbing of tendons and bones can lead to a very serious injury.

Of course this is just one example of getting around stewarding and we are talking about doubling stewarding if



there was a need to control something like this.

Personally I have found the odd individuals in our sport are treating their horses very badly and seemingly getting away with it. So where can we draw a line and help stewards to be able to just send someone home, regardless of how much money they paid to get into the show. These incidents make people angry and upset because everyone inside the sport recognizes horses being ill-treated and when it looks like they are getting away with it, undermines everything a steward is standing for.

I have been privileged this weekend to listen to yesterday's speeches and spend time talking with many of you. This has been a huge lesson outside of the box, for me. I have been impressed by the comradeship of all of you and the community that has been opened up to me. At the shows I have seen you all more as individuals and not a team.

I was very happy to hear that many of the grey areas in our sport are being openly discussed. The fact that there still doesn't seem to be so much a steward can do about these areas is frustrating to say the least, eg when catching someone with a syringe.

I think I should be very clear: a HUGE number of riders are still cheating. We see it every time there are 16-18 horses in a jump off, for big prize money.

This can be in the form of injecting in the stable or artificially getting horses ready to jump.

2 yrs ago (or about that) when the rules to inject horses became open and clear-cut, the sport did clean up a lot. It was, for a while, very rare to see anyone injecting in the stable, alone.

There has been a huge increase again in the last, say, 6 months. A general feeling that "if we write down eg. Adequan every weekend, the FEI will ban that next." So let me be clear the huge problem throughout our sport is still communication and education.

I wonder, if you were to ask every groom or rider at a show about say about rule xxx, how many people would know the rule and its consequences or how many varying explanations you would get.

Take yellow cards; I had several people when asked, say they knew nothing of them, not which reasons you would get one, and for sure none the consequences. I didn't know until yesterday how serious they were myself!

That is why many people said there should be hefty fining to go with them.

One thing more than anything else that makes people take note, is when it's going hurt their pockets. I suggested this to a few riders and they all answered yes, directly, fining hurts and more than most things in our sport - money talks.

Our sport's largest problem, to my mind, are the stables. Cheating mainly occurs in the stable.

More stewarding is a huge problem and its not going to change tomorrow. I would like to suggest a wider use of say CCTV. We heard yesterday that if a steward catches someone cheating, they can do little about it.

That syringe that one saw would disappear so fast, getting a picture would be near impossible and before a steward could even react or ask "what are you doing?" the situation is already passed.

Is it not an idea to set up cameras on one aisle randomly every weekend, for even a day, tell people, if they have nothing to hide, shouldn't be a problem? People do fear cameras.

Let it be clear: the fear of being caught will clean up the sport.



I wanted to achieve today talking about the grey areas in our sport. I now release it is being widely discussed. There seems to be key problems arising and I am looking forward to seeing them changed.

I do believe we don't have enough stewards and they are not respected enough. This needs to change.

I think the biggest issue faced by stewards today is education. You cannot look for or prevent people cheating without knowing what you are looking for. In this I do believe grooms and stewards have the same goal at heart, to see a clean sport and working more closely together could bring about a positive result.

This is quite a controversial subject and there is never going to be an easy answer or a way of controlling everyone. But it is important that stewards are high profile and highly respected and that comes from making the right decisions based on the right information. I think many things in our sport need to become much more transparent. How about a uniform for stewards?

In the 2nd Captain America movie, he said "If you are going to war, you have to wear a uniform." (there might not be a war, but I think you know what I mean?)

Thank you for having me here today and I hope we can continue down a path of better communication to prevent cheating, in an ever expanding sport.