

# Measure of association between assessed traits and final rank for a sport horses performance evaluation system within the UK.



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## 1. Background

- Evaluation of the potential of young sport horses has been routinely conducted via performance evaluations.
- Historically, within the UK such an approach has had limited attendance and engagement.

## 2. Aim

To evaluate the association between assessed traits and final rank of competition horses at the British Equestrian Federation Young Horse Futurity Scheme Evaluations. Horses were assessed at one year of age.

## 3. Method

Measures of association were established using Spearman's ranks correlations.

## 4. Results

Total of 244 animals assessed over a four year period (2005 n=23, 2006 n=36, 2007 n=62, 2008 n=123).

Correlations between assessed traits and final rank in competition;

- conformation  $r_s = 0.720$  ( $P < 0.001$ )
- correctness of paces  $r_s = 0.584$  ( $P < 0.001$ )
- athleticism  $r_s = 0.596$  ( $P < 0.001$ ).

For 2007 and 2008 a veterinary examination relating to general soundness and health (n=185) returned  $r_s = 0.422$  ( $P < 0.001$ ).

In 2008 an additional veterinary score (potential) was introduced (n=123)  $r_s = 0.537$  ( $P < 0.001$ ).



## 5. Conclusions

- This study indicates a degree of differentiation between assessed traits and final rank.
- Further work relating to differences and similarities between other age groups within the assessment process is recommended.
- Additionally the subsequent competition performance of the assessed animals needs to be captured.