

Ecoestrian

In the beginning of 2017 I was invited by Kristina “Snuttan” Sundell, Professor at the Biological and Environmental Sciences, University of Gothenburg, to be a part of a project aiming at develop a sustainable jumping obstacle, a fence, targeting the Lövsta Future Challenge competition. With a core group of Senior Researchers from different disciplines, all with an interest in the equestrian field, we took on the challenge. The main question is how to implement sustainable solutions into an unaccustomed context. The Equestrian Sports Science targets the vast field of horse related sports and culture. Only in Sweden there where more than 360 000 horses in 2010 and it has increased. It is said to contribute with 8 billion SEK to the national BNP (Source: Jordbruksverket). It has at least 500 000 individuals connected to competition or leisure activities and is the second largest youth sports activity producing about 5 millions hours of riding activity (Source: Svensk Ridsport). Still, being such an important actor both economical and cultural, it has a low status. Not in the professional world though, where it belongs to a culture of money, high class and big mentions. In the high end of the scale the practitioners (owners) is a mixed group of gender, or probably more represented by males. On the other hand the Equestrian Federation has the highest percentage of females, 90 % (Source: Svensk Ridsport), than any other sport federation in Sweden. We end up in a typical de-valuation of female culture and by that, I would argue, also some means and resources to change traditions and norms within the field of Equestrian sport. Design is one actor that could contribute and support such a transformation.

By addressing sustainable questions, material investigations and product development we invite a broader audience and new discourses.

The Ecoestrian project has also contributed to the launch of a project in materials research focusing on environmentally friendly bio composites co-financed by Gothenburg University and Chalmers Sport & Technology.

The first design, “Ecoestrian”, created a visual impact thru piles of recycled paper in a flexible module system. By cut outs from the recycled felt the word “Ecoestrian” was clearly stated and communicated. The play of words between “ecology” and “Equestrian” gave us the name “Ecoestrian”. An important part of the design by reaching out in a medial way providing quick references. The initial idea was to make the rod of pressed recycled paper mass into a tube mixed with crushed shells of Oysters as binder. But time was limited and the rods was kept in wood covered with newspaper.

The second design, “the Ecoestrian Herald”, enabled different topics and news about sustainability being presented. The fence is easy changeable and always up to date.

The Ecoestrian fence was a collaboration between four senior researchers; Maria Sundin (Senior Lecture at the department of Physics, University of Gothenburg), Angela Wulff (Professor at the Biological and Environmental Sciences, University of Gothenburg), Kristina Sundell (Professor at the Biological and Environmental Sciences, University of Gothenburg) and Ingrid Martins Holmberg (Senior Lecture at the Department of Conservation, University of Gothenburg), Arja Källbom (Building Conservator) and Carl-Johan Skogh (Senior Lecture in Design at the Department of design, Academy of Design and Crafts, University of Gothenburg).

Academy of Design and Crafts
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Ecoestrian
2017-12-12

Thru the project leader Maria Sundin and her fellow partners, all with an interest in the field of equestrian culture, we got invited to participate in the Lövsta Future Challenge competition (www.lovstafuturechallenge.se). The task was to develop and present a sustainable fence that would be presented and used at the Gothenburg Horse Show 2017 (www.gothenburghorseshow.com).

By mixing recycled material with new research of oyster based composite material and natural dying the design solution provided a new way of presenting and constructing a fence in a professional setting.

The name "Ecoestrian" became as a word game between the words "ecology" and "equestrian". During 2017 the project has developed and was presented with a new design solution as "the Ecoestrian Herald" at the Longines FEI European Championship in Gothenburg.

Examples of Media attention:

<http://lovstafuturechallenge.se/jumping/miljosmart-hinder/>

<https://www.gu.se/omuniversitetet/aktuellt/nyheter/detalj//miljosmart-hinder-med-i-em-.cid1506307>

<http://www.ridsport.se/Tavling/Evenemang/EMiGoteborg2017/Nyheter/MiljosmarthinderpaEM-banan/>

<https://www.hippson.se/artikelarkivet/hippsonnews/nytt-miljosmart-hinder-premiarhoppas-under-em.htm>

<http://www.hastsmart.se/em-hinder-av-atervunnet-material/>

<https://www.physics.gu.se/forskning/andra-aktiviteter/hastsport/ecoestrian>

<https://science.gu.se/aktuellt/nyheter/Nyheter+Detalj/miljosmart-hinder-med-i-em-.cid1506307>

<http://gothenburg2017.com/sv/2017/07/miljosmart-hinder-pa-em-banan/>

<http://www.stadsbiblioteket.nu/ecoestrian-det-miljovanliga-hindret/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oGacHKQ0G8A>

<http://swtdevelopment.se/notiser/cirkulart-hinder-gor-succe/>

<https://www.tidningenridsport.se/komposterbart-hinder-vann-designtavling/>



