

Saddlery Inspections

Rules and Procedures
for Ring Stewards
to conduct Saddlery
Inspections in Dressage
classes at USEF/USDF
competitions



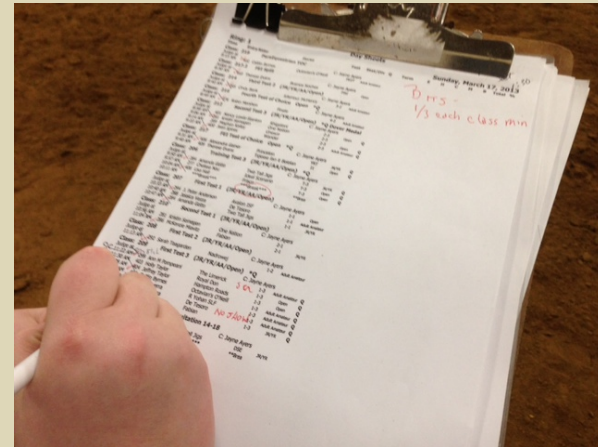
Northern Ring at 2012 Lexington Spring Dressage



April 2020

Saddlery Inspections

- Competition management must appoint a sufficient number of ring stewards to carry out the following duties:
- Communicate with the warmup steward and announcer, so that competitors can be kept informed as to who is “on deck” and whether the ring is running on time.
- Check saddlery and equipment, and the horse, after the specified number of rides.
- Inform judges of any delays or other concerns.
- Radio for help for ring repairs or emergencies, as directed according to the Accident Preparedness Plan.
- Depending on the layout, number of rings and other factors, more than one ring steward may be appointed to share these duties.



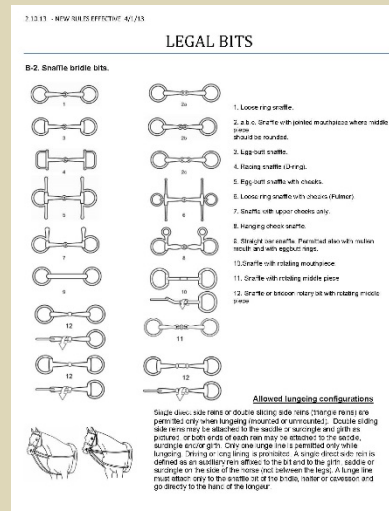
Saddlery Inspections

- Ring stewards must check saddlery and inspect bits and spurs on both sides of the horse for at least one-third of the horses in each class.
- In some classes, inspection is required for each horse.
- Inspection of saddlery and bits should be done at the direction of the Technical Delegate.



Saddlery Inspections

- Management must provide (preferably latex free) disposable protective gloves, at least two per horse. (Two gloves are required, one on each hand, for both USEF and FEI competitions.)
- The rider should see the inspector put on fresh gloves when the horse is exiting the arena. Inspection is done immediately after the performance ride.
- At no time should the horse, spurs or other equipment be touched with an “ungloved” hand, as the glove provides protection against the spread of disease.
- Used gloves should immediately be discarded and the inspector should use a disinfectant if her skin contacts saliva or sweat.
- Management or the TD should provide the ring steward with illustrations of legal bits and equipment.
- Refer also to “Annex A” posted on the Dressage Discipline page of the USEF website for additional information on permitted and prohibited bits, nosebands and bridles.



Saddlery Inspections

- The Technical Delegate may ask the steward to check every horse, especially if it is a FEI Junior/Young Rider/FEI Pony Rider or Young Horse Qualifying class.
- All horses must be checked in USEF/USDF regional and national championship classes, and in some other competitions.
- Make sure you have plenty of gloves, and that the Technical Delegate will have a radio and is easy to reach. It is also advisable to get the cell phone number of the TD in case he/she cannot be reached on the radio.
- It is also recommended that stewards have on hand a supply of tissues or paper towels and hand sanitizer.



Saddlery Inspections

- The checking of the bit and bridle must be done with the greatest caution, as some horses are very touchy and sensitive about their mouths. The inspector should be “horse-friendly”.
- The bit inspection should be done quickly and efficiently in order not to upset the horse. Inspection of the bit is done both visually and by running one gloved finger over the contour of the bit(s) inside the horses’ mouth to the center link.
- When inspecting the bit, pay attention to the corners of the horse’s mouth. Blood or pink, fresh bruising is cause to call the Technical Delegate and keep the horse at the inspection station until the TD’s arrival.



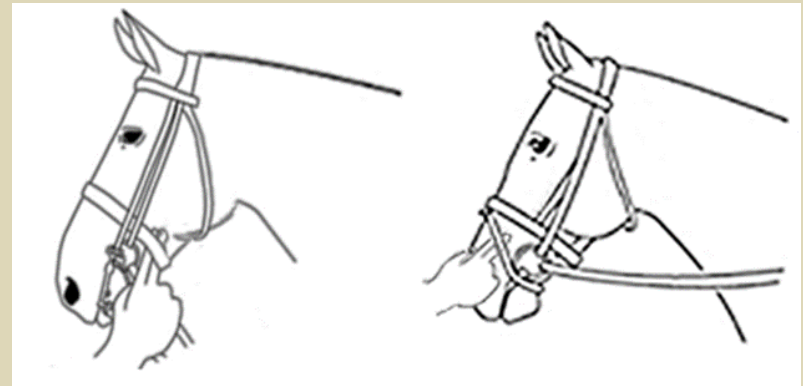
Saddlery Inspections

- The inspector should stand at the side of the horse, not in front, when checking the bit.
- After checking one side of the bit, immediately check the other side of the bit.
- If the drop or flash noseband needs to be loosened in order to properly check the bit, it should be done after the tightness of the noseband has been checked. This allows the horse to open the mouth – it's much easier to see the bit. The groom or rider should adjust the tack.



Saddlery Inspections

- Check the tightness of the noseband (and curb chain of a double bridle) before moving to the spur and the area of skin next to the spur.
- At any level of competition, a cavesson or both parts of a flash noseband may never be so tight that it causes severe irritation to the skin.
- The curb chain may never be so tightly fixed as to harm the horse.
- The cavesson should be adjusted to allow at least two fingers under the noseband on the side of the face under the cheekbone.
- If the rider is carrying a whip, the length should be checked after inspection of the horse, saddlery and spurs (see page 13).



Saddlery Inspections

- Run your gloved hand over the skin around the spur area. If there is any blood and/or fresh pink bruising, immediately call the Technical Delegate. The horse should be kept at the inspection station until the TD's arrival.
- It's handy to have a small piece of white tissue or paper towel to "touch" over the wound and keep evidence of blood, which you can keep in a glove until the TD arrives.
- Be careful not to smear the area that is bleeding or completely clean the blood away. Take care not to completely remove the evidence on the horse, or further irritate the area.
- Inspect the spur and skin first on one side and then the other.



Saddlery Inspections

- Spurs must be made of metal and only English-style spurs are permitted. The shank must point down or out from the center of the spur.
- The inside arm of the spur must be smooth. One or both arms may have rubber covers. Metal spurs with hard round plastic knobs on the shank are allowed as are “dummy” spurs that do not have a shank. Armless “Smart Clix” spurs are also permitted.



Not Legal – spur above is upside down or pointed up.



The spur to the left is a variation of the “Impuls” spur and is legal in USEF competitions. It is also now permitted in FEI competitions.

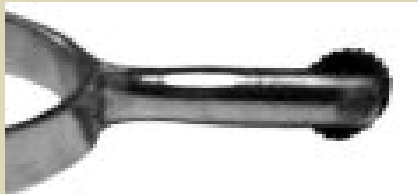


All other spurs on this page are legal for USEF competitions.



Saddlery Inspections

- If rowels are used, they must be blunt/smooth and free to rotate. The pair pictured on the boot are smooth/blunt, the long spikes on the bottom right are not.



The spur above has small “pizza cutter” rowels, but if they are not sharp to the touch, they may be permitted.



Daisy rowels (above) are legal



Armless “Smart Clix” spurs are legal



Offset spurs and spike rowels are not legal



Saddlery Inspections

- FEI Pony Riders and riders in FEI Tests for Children may wear only blunt metal spurs with no rowels, no longer than 3.5 cm. The maximum length for spurs used in other classes and tests is 5.08 cm (2 inches) including rowels.
- For USEF/USDF competitions, the length of the spur is measured from the base to the end of the shank.
- However, for FEI Pony Rider tests and FEI Tests for Children, in both USEF and FEI competitions, spur length is measured from the boot to the tip of the spur.
- Check both boots. If the rider has dismounted, they still must be checked.



The spur above is too long for use by riders in FEI Pony Tests and FEI Tests for Children.



Saddlery Inspections

- One whip may be carried in most classes except, under penalty of elimination, for USEF and USDF Championships. The maximum whip length is 47.2 inches or 120cm, including lash.
- The maximum whip length for FEI Pony Rider Tests is 39.36 inches or 100cm, including lash.
- Adjustable length whips are not permitted.
- Show management or the TD should mark a fence or post so you can measure whips or provide you with a measuring tube or tape measure with both inch and centimeter markings.



Whip is under 120 cm



Whip is over 120 cm

Saddlery Inspections

- All Riders must wear protective headgear and the harness must be secured and properly fitted at all times when mounted.
- Riders must not start to detach the harness or remove their helmet until they have dismounted.
- This means that, when mounted, electronic devices/earpieces must be removed without detaching the harness!



Not allowed!!



Correct procedure

Saddlery Inspections

- If the horse is excited, and resisting the bit check, you should not let the horse go unchecked.
- Another steward or the Technical Delegate should be called to follow the horse back to the stable and check the equipment and the horse.



Saddlery Inspections

Snaffle bits used in tests through Fourth Level:

- Snaffle bits must be smooth with a solid surface. A mouthpiece with more than one rolling part is prohibited.
- Bits may be made with a rubber or plastic covering, but the bit may not be modified by adding latex or other material.
- Bits with mouthpieces made of synthetic material are permitted, provided that the contours of the bit conform to the contours of one of the bits pictured in DR 121 Figure 1A. Flexible rubber or synthetic mouthpieces are permitted.
- The mouthpiece of a snaffle may have up to two joints. A bushing, barrel, coupling or ball joint is permitted as the center link of a double jointed bit. The center link may be tilted in a different orientation from the mouthpiece but must have rounded edges and may not have the effect of a tongue plate.
- A double jointed bit or snaffle with rotating mouthpiece may be shaped to allow tongue relief.



All bits on this page are legal for use as a snaffle in tests through Fourth Level. The bit on the bottom left has a shaped mouthpiece well under the 30 mm maximum, as compared to a similar bit on the next page.

Saddlery Inspections



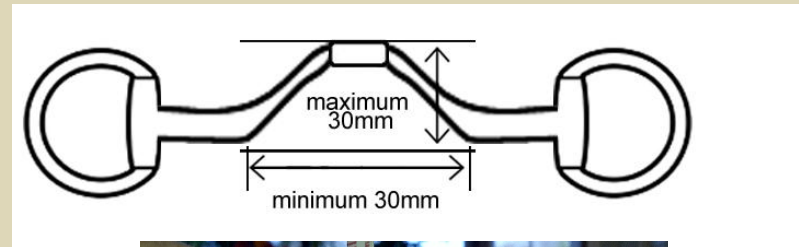
All bits on this page are NOT legal.
Clockwise from top: (1) Dr. Bristol, (2)
Golden Wings snaffle, (3) wire coils on
mouthpiece, (4) Center link has port
just over 30mm in height.



Saddlery Inspections

Acceptable height and width dimensions for a double jointed bit or snaffle with rotating mouthpiece that is shaped to allow tongue relief:

- The maximum height of the deviation is 30mm from the lower part of tongue side to the highest part of the deviation.
- The widest part of the deviation must be where the mouthpiece contacts the tongue and must have a minimum width of 30 mm.
- The mouthpiece of a jointed or unjointed snaffle may be shaped in a slight curve within the dimensions specified in the illustration, but other ported snaffles are prohibited.
- If you have any questions as to the legality of a bit, call the TD and keep the horse at the inspection station until the TD arrives.



Saddlery Inspections

Bridoon, Curb and Snaffle bits used in FEI tests and optional in Third-Fourth Levels:

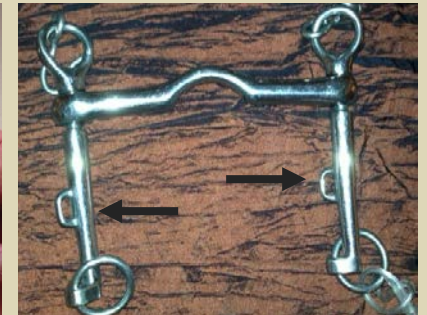
- Bits must be smooth with a solid surface. Bits (including curb and/or bridoon bits of a double bridle) must be made of metal or rigid plastic and may be covered with rubber (in manufactured state); flexible rubber or synthetic curb or bridoon bits are not permitted, however flexible snaffle bits are permitted..
- The type of bit should not vary from those pictured in DR121 Figure 1 B1 and B2, except where specified, and bits should be attached only as pictured in diagram.
- FEI Level horses may be warmed up only in a double bridle (with both bit and/or bridoon made of metal or rigid plastic) or a metal or plastic snaffle pictured under DR121 Figure 1B.
- A cavesson, dropped, crossed or flash noseband is allowed when a snaffle bridle is used in warmup or competition, except as prohibited for some tests.
- A snaffle pictured in Figure 1A or Figure 1 B2 CANNOT be used as a bridoon unless it is specifically pictured and described as a bridoon in Figure 1 B1.
- Bridoons where the center link(s) of the bits can lock, and have the effect of a mullen-mouth snaffle, are not permitted. Bits must not place a mechanical restraint upon the tongue.



All bits shown are legal



Rotating lever shank



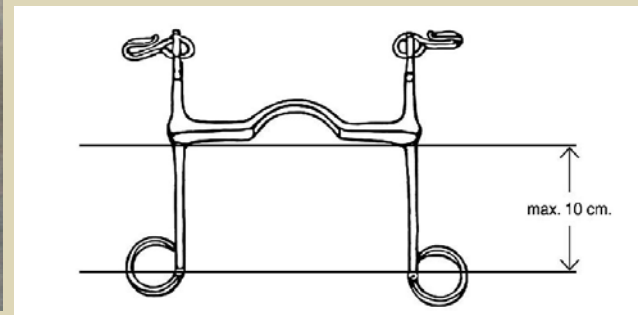
Swivel curb shank

Saddlery Inspections

- The diameter of the snaffle or bridoon mouthpiece must be at least 10mm at the rings or cheeks of the mouthpiece (except for ponies, where the diameter can be less).
- The diameter of the curb must be a minimum of 12 mm, and the snaffle used in Young Horse and FEI Children's classes must also have a minimum diameter of 12 mm.
- The lever arm of the curb bit is limited to ten centimeters (10 cm) (length below the mouth piece). The upper cheek must not be longer than the lower cheek.
- The curb "chain" can be made of metal, leather or a combination. Must have curb chain hooks. Curb chain hooks can be fixed or not fixed.
- A rubber, leather or sheep skin cover is permitted for the curb chain.



Bit mouthpieces suspected of being too thin can only be measured once the bridle is removed from the horse. The fixed curb chain hook shown on this page and loose curb chain hooks on this and previous page are all legal.

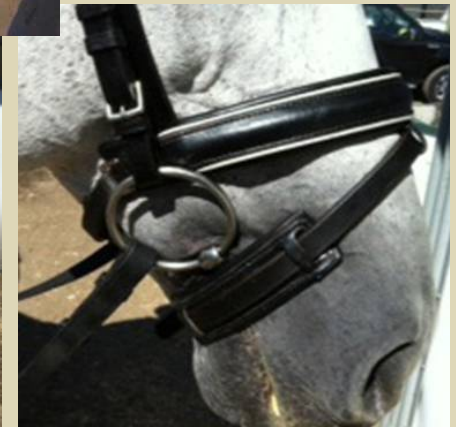
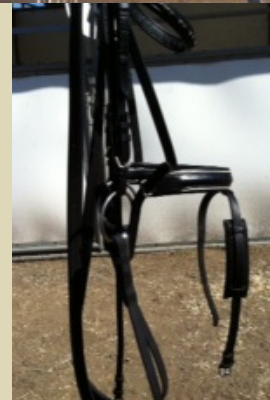


Saddlery Inspections

- Padded cavesson/ nosebands and crownpieces are allowed. Nylon or other non-metal material may be used to reinforce leather in the headstall but must not come in direct contact with the horse.
- Elastic inserts are permitted in the crownpiece and cheekpieces only. Cavesson nosebands may be used with a chin pad.
- The headstall and cavesson/ noseband must be entirely leather or leather-like except for buckles. However, wear tabs on cheek pieces and reins may be made of non-leather or other material.
- A browband is required, and except for the parts that attach to the crownpiece or headstall, is not required to be made of leather or leather-like material. Decoration on browbands is permitted.
- Non-metal decoration on the surface of the noseband is permitted.
- Reins must not be made of rope or rope-like material.

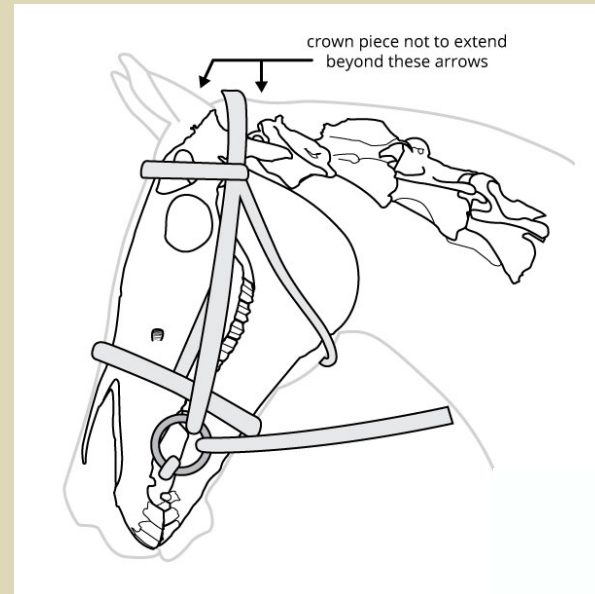


Bridle to left is not legal – noseband has metal decoration



Saddlery Inspections

- The crownpiece of the bridle must lie immediately behind the poll and may extend forward onto the poll, but it may not be fitted to lie behind the skull (see diagram).
- A throatlatch is required except when the combined noseband or Micklem bridle is used.
- For bridles with a combined noseband, a jowl strap is considered a throat latch and can be used to replace, or used in addition to, a traditional throat latch. A jowl strap must be fitted around or immediately below the horse's jowl. Nosebands with one or two lower (chin) straps must also have a throat latch, as described above. The back strap (or chin strap) of a noseband cannot also be considered a jowl strap.
- On the right are examples of a combined noseband bridle with both a jowl strap and a traditional throat latch. This bridle would also be legal per USEF and FEI rules without the traditional throatlatch as in the second illustration.
- The shaped cavesson on this bridle is legal per USEF and FEI rules.

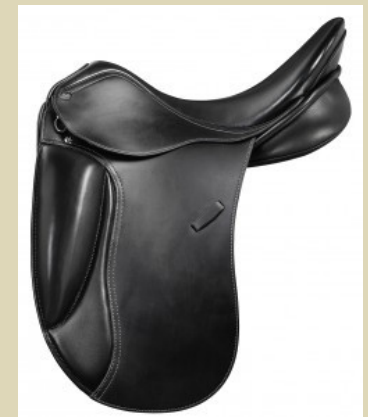


Saddlery Inspections

- An English type saddle with flaps and stirrups is compulsory except for FEI tests. Stirrups must have closed branches. The saddle may be constructed with or without a tree, and cannot have a horn, swell, gallerie, or open gullet.
- Australian, Baroque, Endurance McClellan, Spanish, Stock or Western or modified versions are not permitted.
- English or safety stirrups without attachments are required.
- The foot must not be fully or partially enclosed and must in no way be attached to the stirrups (for example with magnets).
- Safety stirrups must have closed branches of metal or other breakaway material.
- FEI tests must be ridden in a Dressage saddle.



Permitted
except for
FEI tests



Required for FEI tests

Not
allowed



Saddlery Inspections

- Saddle pads are optional, but must be white or conservative color. Contrast coloring and piping are allowed. Striped or multi colored pads are not permitted.
- Logos in compliance with DR121.1 and manufacturer's logos are permitted.
- Logos, monograms or names on either or both sides of saddle pads are allowed but limited to breed logo, national flag, USEF or USDF names/logos.
- Competition award pads and stable name pads are permitted.
- Professionals of any age may have a business or product name/logo of their official sponsor.
- Amateurs are not permitted to have sponsorship and may not have a business or product name/logo on their saddle pad while in a competition ring or awards presentation unless they own the business.
- No other advertisement or publicity is permitted on saddle cloths or horses.
- Maximum size of logo: 200 cm² (26.632 sq. inches)



Saddlery Inspections

- Be sure to look over saddlery used for the particular test and observe that all items of tack are permitted.
- For example, Rein additions or attachments aren't allowed, but this is something that the judge may not see and only the ring steward can determine.



Rein attachments and the curb bit above are not legal. Elastic inserts that are part of a continuous rein, as shown below, are legal. The breastplate in the bottom left photo is legal for USEF but not FEI competitions.



Saddlery Inspections

- Fly hoods/ear covers are permitted for all classes/rings but they should be discreet in color and design and cannot cover horse's eyes and may not be attached to the noseband.
- After the test, the rider or his representative must remove hood for inspection by the ring steward.
- The steward must check that nothing prohibited (for example, ear plugs) is covered by the fly hoods.
- Ring stewards are only required to inspect fly hoods and other equipment in one-third of the horses in a class. When an inspection is conducted, all equipment including fly hoods, whips, etc. must be inspected. In championship classes, saddlery inspections are required for each horse.



Ear muffs, plugs and pompoms are not legal. Ear covers (3 photos on left) are allowed in all riings, including indoors. Fly mask (top right photo) is allowed only in warmup..

Saddlery Inspections

- Blinkers and fly masks that cover the horse's eyes are permitted in warmup but are forbidden in the competition arena.
- Cooling caps (hoods) are forbidden in both competition and warmup areas.
- One small ID tag, no larger than 1.5" diameter, may be attached to the horse's mane, and a red ribbon in a horse's tail is permitted to identify a horse that kicks.



Saddlery Inspections

- When a communicable disease has been diagnosed in a state where horses in the show have originated, your show may have permission from USEF to implement an alternative saddlery inspection procedure where there is no physical contact by show personnel with any horse. Visual inspection of saddlery and equipment is recommended vs. the normal inspection protocol.
- As an added precaution, some shows may also implement other biosecurity procedures designed to provide additional safeguards to the health of horses on the show grounds.
- Show management and the TD will brief stewards on specific procedures required by USEF and the show when visual inspection is permitted by USEF.

UNITED STATES EQUESTRIAN FEDERATION : 4047 IRON WORKS PARKWAY, LEXINGTON, KY 40511-8483 : WWW.USEF.ORG



March 15, 2013

Notice to Dressage and Eventing Competition Managers and Officials

from the USEF Communications Department

As a result of recent confirmed diagnosis of Equine Herpes Virus 1 (EHV-1) in multiple states, the use of alternative saddlery inspection procedures is recommended for Dressage and the dressage phase of Eventing competitions in states where the respective State Department of Agriculture has confirmed diagnosis of EHV-1 in the state or the competition has entries traveling from a state where there has been confirmed diagnosis of EHV-1.

Competitions following the approved modified inspection protocol described below must provide a written statement from the State Veterinarian's office confirming the diagnosis of EHV-1 in the state at the time of the competition (or from a state from which an entry is originating) to the Technical Delegate of the competition and it must be included in the TD Report to the Federation office. Use of the modified inspection protocol at any competition must be reported on the TD Report Form.

Saddlery inspection protocol is defined in DR121.9 for Dressage Competitions and in EV115.4 for Eventing Competitions. The approved modified inspection protocol follows:

For both Dressage and dressage portions of Eventing competitions, stewards should conduct a visual check of the horses, without touching the horse or any equipment.

- For Eventing, a steward must be available at designated times so that competitors (if requested by the steward) may bring their bridle and equipment for further inspection once removed from the horse.
- For Dressage competitions, the visual inspection must be upon completion of the respective ride and the entire bit and other saddlery and equipment must be visually inspected for at least one-third of the horses in a class. Stewards must be assigned to the stables and day parking areas to conduct these visual inspections once bridles have been removed.

Competition managers should consult with their State Veterinarian's Office on additional recommended precautions that should be taken at their competition. Competitors and Officials must resume normal protocol for saddlery and equipment inspections when the State Veterinarian's Office confirms there is no current diagnosis of the virus at the time of their competition. Saddlery and equipment inspections are required as described in DR 121.9 and EV115.4 for all Dressage and Eventing competitions in states where there is not confirmed diagnosis of EHV-1.

The apparent increased frequency of disease and severity of symptoms being seen indicates a need for initiation and implementation of extra precaution by competition management. The USEF encourages competition managers to review their biosecurity practices and, if needed, elevate their biosecurity plan to minimize the chance of horses having direct or indirect contact with one another. Indirect contact would include common water and feed sources as well as shared equipment and common areas. The goal of a biosecurity plan is to prevent the transmission of infectious agents among individuals. The components of a successful program will include cooperation of management, facility layout, decontamination, and when applicable immunization. Each of these factors directly affects the success or failure of a successful biosecurity plan. A copy of the American Association of Equine Practitioners biosecurity guidelines and EHV resources can be found at www.aaep.org/ehv_resources.htm. Additional information regarding available resources is also available at this link:

<http://www.usefnetwork.com/news/9670/2013/3/9/equine-herpes-virus-type-1-ehv1.aspx>

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United States Equestrian Federation | 4047 Iron Works Parkway | Lexington | KY | 40511

Saddlery Inspections

- Be sure to review the Accident Preparedness plan, as well as the illustrations and descriptions of permitted bits, saddlery and equipment. It's important!
- Know who to contact and the proper actions to take in case of a fall of rider and loose horse.
- Don't hesitate to contact the TD or show manager if you have questions.
- THANK YOU for your help with the show!

5.7.12

Lexington Spring Dressage Accident Preparedness Plan

Ambulance/Police/Tire: Dial 911
Address: Virginia Horse Center, 487 Maury River Road, Lexington, VA 24450
Emergency Directions: Route 11 to Route 39 West. VHC is one mile on left.
Closest Hospital: Stonehill Jackson Hospital, 1 Health Circle, Lexington, VA, 24450, (540)430-3300
Closest Veterinary Emergency/Surgical Facility: Mountain View Equine Hospital, 309 Old R & O Road, Sieles Tavern, VA, 22476, 540-377-5700
Show Manager & Safety Coordinator: Janine Malone (contact on show radio) or on cell: 919 602 6203
Show Secretary: Diane Boyd (703-856-8794)

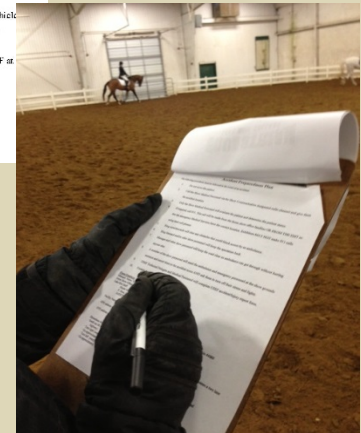
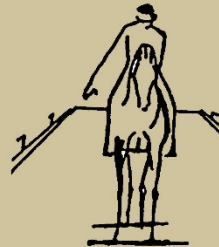
General Information:

Medical Personnel on duty: VHC EMT on grounds. Contact through Show Office using VHC radio.

- Medical personnel will carry a show radio at all times. Veterinarian (Mountain View) must be immediately contacted at 540-377-5700 if horse is injured.
- Competition staff and officials will have a copy of this Accident Preparedness Plan easily accessible at all times.
- Announcer will relay accident information to officials via radio and PA and confirm that medical personnel has been dispatched to the accident location.
- Management/safety coordinator MUST be notified any time an EMT or Vet is paged to respond to an incident, regardless of seriousness.
- If an accident happens during non-competition hours, staff MUST immediately contact 911 and alert management.

In case of accident:

- Do not move the patient and instruct the patient not to move.
- Ring Steward or Older Show Official immediately notifies Office of an accident and goes to accident site.
- Give exact ring or other location.
- EMT, Show Manager/Safety Coordinator, TD and Vet, if needed, are notified and leave for scene of accident.
- Make sure someone catches horse, if loose.
- Medical personnel will evaluate patient and determine status.
- If required, call 911. If possible, this call should be made using a landline or smartphone, rather than another type of cellphone, so that emergency medical services have the correct location.
- Emergency services must be instructed to turn off siren and upon entering VHC grounds, in order to minimize disturbance to horses.
- If necessary, ring stewards, grounds manager or other staff will remove fencing or any obstructions for ambulance access.
- Show personnel will clear the accident area and keep spectators back.
- Show personnel will be dispatched to clear road and/or stable area to facilitate access by emergency vehicle.
- Manager or designee will meet emergency vehicle at VHC gate and escort vehicle to accident location. Manager/designee will remind ambulance driver, if necessary, to turn off siren and lights.
- Technical Delegate and medical personnel will complete the USDF accident injury report form.
- In case of a serious accident or fatality, only Manager, TD or a designated representative will call USDF at 859-225-6959 if accident occurs during the week and at 859-312-5186 if accident is on the weekend.
- Only the show manager may make public statements regarding a medical or veterinary incident. Other communications about accidents must have approval of the show manager.
- Show Management is only source for any media responses made after any accident occurs.
- Contact information for the show office and manager are as follows:
Show office: 919-602-6203 or 703-856-8794 Janine Malone cell phone: 919-602-6203



This presentation created by Veronica Holt, Janine Malone and Lisa Gorretta. Photographs courtesy of authors and many others including High Time Photography (NC) and Lake Erie College (OH) Equine Studies students.