

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
Standard	12/1/2025	8/28/2024	

Rule Change Intent

Two of the three eventing disciplines currently allow mules at the national and FEI levels; jumpers since 2022, and dressage for nearly 20yrs. The USEA Board of Governors has approved mules in eventing competition since 2016 and has expressed no concerns regarding their participation. The USHJA Board has also voted in favor of mules in the Hunter discipline, though the final vote with USEF is pending the September meeting. Furthermore, there are no known reports from USEF or show managers indicating that mules participating in jumper or dressage competitions have been a safety issue or disruption to other exhibitors. Prohibiting mules stifles sport growth and discourages inclusivity, especially at the lower levels. A mule has been successfully competing at USEF rated jumper competitions in Kentucky since 2023 without complaint from competitors or concerns from show management. Derek Braun from Split Rock Jumping Tour can speak to this. In 2023, a mule won the USEF Horse of the Year for Western Dressage, the first mule in any discipline to accomplish this feat.

With mules now permitted to compete at USEF/USHJA jumper competitions, both hunter and jumper horses competing at those shows are automatically in a position to stall, school, and be around mules participating in jumper classes. Dressage has set a precedent for successful subjective scoring of mules and horses in the same classes and jumping phases are scored on time and faults, which do not discriminate. With mules having the same capabilities as horses over fences as well as on the flat, there is little reason not to allow them to compete equally against one another. Eventing horses are already exposed to innumerable potential spooky things, including the cross country jumps they have to compete over, so asking them to be present alongside an occasional mule competitor at the same competition shouldn't be too much to expect in a discipline that requires horses be brave, curious, and confident.

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Linked Rules Comments

Committee Actions

GR127 Horse

1. The term "horse" as used in these rules denotes either a horse or pony.
2. In all levels of all Federation licensed Driving and Endurance Competitions and in the case of any other Federation Rule as it relates to the Driving or Endurance disciplines as the context permits it, the term "horse" shall also include a mule. See DC Annex 9, EN102.1.
3. Mules are also eligible to compete in **eventing divisions, and** jumper and dressage classes with the exception of the following dressage classes:
 - a. USEF Championships, USEF qualifying and selection trials, and observation classes;
 - b. any other classes designated as qualifying or selection classes for international or international high performance competition, and championships where such participation is prohibited in the championship selection procedures. See DR119.1.
4. When the term "Horse" or "Pony" is used or intended in prize lists and catalogues of Licensed Competitions where height is one of the qualifications of the class, the word Horse denotes animals over 14.2 hands. Exceptions:
 - a. Registered Arabians, Half or Anglo Arabians, Connemaras, English Pleasure entries, Friesian, Icelandics, Morgans, Paso Finos, Welsh Cobs, and Dressage.
 - b. In the Dressage Division, a Horse is an animal over 148 cm without shoes, and 149 cm with shoes.
 - c. For Combined Driving, see DC930.