

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
Extraordinary	4/1/2025	12/17/2024	Approved 1/25/2025

Extraordinary Change Reason

participant and horse safety and well-being

Rule Change Intent

The use of biometric sensors for both horse and human athletes can provide valuable safety and health information. The Federation supports the use of technology to promote safety and wellness. Under this newly proposed rule, biometric sensors will be permitted to be worn by horses and humans on the field of play.

Proponent Details Contact Information

USEF Officers

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Linked Rules Comments

GR801 Dress Exhibitor Safety Equipment

[...]

**6. Biometric Sensors and Equipment.** *The use of equine and human biometric sensors that are minimal in design is permitted in competition. Materials or methods of attaching the biometric sensor that may enhance performance are prohibited. Information obtained from biometric sensors must not be accessed by the competitor while on the field of play.*

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
Extraordinary	4/1/2025	1/28/2025	Approved 1/25/2025

Extraordinary Change Reason

horse welfare

Rule Change Intent

The rulebook currently contains different rules that address prohibited practices. In an effort to streamline and improve the rulebook, this rule change combines some existing prohibited practices in a single rule, while expanding the list to include other important sections, including obscuring the visibility of horses stabled on competition grounds, excessive use of draw reins, and augmented nosebands.

Regarding stabling, this proposal supports equine and human safety and wellbeing by ensuring the inside of stalls are observable by persons outside of the stalls and considers the variances in construction of stalls and venues, recognizing that in situations when the stall's original construction is such that the inside cannot be observed may occur, but is not the norm.

Proponent Details      Contact Information

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Linked Rules      Comments

**GR839 ~~Attention Getting Devices Prohibited Practices and Equipment~~**

*The following contains a non-exhaustive list of practices and equipment that are prohibited. Where there is a conflict with the division rules, the more restrictive rule will prevail.*

1. ***Attention Getting Devices.*** Attention getting devices and/or other noisemakers (including but not limited to tape measures, blow horns, altered bamboo poles, explosives, etc.) are not allowed in and around the make up/schooling/warm-up and competition rings during scheduled competition sessions. (Except for the National Show Horse division.) Use of explosives and fire extinguishers by or for exhibitors/competitors (except in the case of fire) is not allowed on competition grounds at any time.
2. ***Augmented Nosebands.*** Any noseband with an interior that is abrasive is prohibited, except nosebands made of rope or rawhide.
3. ***Poling.*** Manual poling, or the use of offsets, is prohibited.

**GR843 Poling**

~~Manual poling, or the use of offsets, is prohibited on competition grounds.~~

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
Extraordinary	4/1/2025	1/28/2025	Approved 1/25/2025

Extraordinary Change Reason

rider safety

Rule Change Intent

The intent of this rule is twofold:

1. As currently written, the protective headgear rule contained in GR801 has been found to be confusing. The re-organization and clean up of the protective headgear language does not substantiively change the rule, except that the exception to remove the protective headgear during prize giving is removed.
2. As modern equestrian apparel includes more stretchy fabrics, which are more likely to result in the possibility of getting caught and hang on hooks or other protrusions, this rule change introduces a prohibition on hooks or other upward projections/attachments on saddles, including stirrups with hook or open bar designs that could cause a rider's apparel to get stuck or cause injury to the rider.

Proponent Details	Contact Information
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Linked Rules	Comments
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## SUBCHAPTER 8-A ATTIRE AND EQUIPMENT

### **GR801 Dress Exhibitor Safety Equipment**

#### **1. Protective Headgear.**

- ~~a. It is the tradition of the competition ring that riders and drivers be correctly attired for the class in question, that attendants be neatly dressed, and horses be properly presented.~~
- ~~b. It is compulsory for all persons at Federation licensed hunter, jumper, or hunter/jumper competitions when mounted anywhere on the competition grounds, to wear properly fastened protective headgear in compliance with the accepted testing standards published on the Federation's website, **unless stated otherwise in the relevant division rules**. Protective headgear must carry the applicable quality testing tag and/or label. It must be properly fitted with harness secured. Exception: In Hunter or Jumper classes, adults **Adults** may be allowed to remove their headgear while accepting prizes and during the playing of the National Anthem only; they must refasten their headgear prior to the lap of honor. It is compulsory for riders in Paso Fino classes, both open and breed restricted including Hunter Hack, where jumping is required and when jumping anywhere on the competition grounds to wear properly fastened protective headgear. It must be properly fitted with harness secured. A Show Committee, Competition Management, and Licensed Officials must bar riders without protective headgear from entering the ring for classes in which protective headgear is required and may bar any entry or person from entering the ring if not suitably presented to appear before an audience.~~
- ~~c. Except as may otherwise be mandated by local law, all sub-junior exhibitors in the Paso Fino division, while riding or driving or while in the driving cart anywhere on the competition grounds, must wear properly fitting protective headgear. Harness must be secured and properly fitted. Any rider violating this rule at any time must immediately be prohibited from further riding until such headgear is properly in place. For all exhibitors competing in the hunter, jumper, or hunter/jumping seat equitation section, if a rider's chin strap becomes unfastened, the rider may stop, re-fasten the chin strap and continue their round without penalty or elimination. A judge may, but is not required to stop a rider and ask them to refasten a chin strap which has become unfastened, again without penalty to the rider. Members of the Armed Services or the Police may wear the Service Dress Uniform.~~
- ~~d. **The Federation makes no representation or warranty, express or implied, about any protective headgear, and cautions riders that death or serious injury may result despite wearing such headgear as all equestrian sports involve inherent dangerous risk and as no helmet can protect against all foreseeable injuries.**~~
- ~~e. **It is the responsibility of the rider or the parent or guardian of the junior exhibitor to see to it that the headgear worn complies with appropriate safety standards for protective headgear intended for equestrian use and is properly fitted and in good condition. The Federation, Show Committee, Competition Management, and Licensed Officials are not responsible for checking headgear worn for such compliance.**~~

**2. Body Protecting Vest.** Any exhibitor may wear protective headgear and/or a protective vest either body protecting or inflatable, specifically designed for use in equestrian sport in any division or class without penalty from the judge. The Federation recommends that the vest pass or surpass the current ASTM standard F1937 or be certified by the Safety Equipment Institute.

~~3. See DC928 for protective headgear requirement in Combined Driving.~~

~~4. See DR120 for protective headgear requirement in Dressage.~~

~~5. See EN102 for protective headgear requirement in Endurance.~~

~~6. Except as may otherwise be mandated by local law, the Federation strongly encourages all riders, while riding anywhere on the competition grounds, to wear protective headgear with harness secured. (Exception hunter, jumper, or hunter/jumper competitions refer to GR801.2) It is the responsibility of the rider, or the parent or guardian or trainer of the junior exhibitor to see to it that the headgear worn complies with appropriate safety standards for protective headgear intended for equestrian use, and is properly fitted and in good condition, and the Federation, Show Committee, Competition Management, and Licensed Officials are not responsible for checking headgear worn for such~~

compliance.

7. ~~The Federation makes no representation or warranty, express or implied, about any protective headgear, and cautions riders that death or serious injury may result despite wearing such headgear as all equestrian sports involve inherent dangerous risk and as no helmet can protect against all foreseeable injuries.~~
8. ~~Refer to EQ106 and HU107.~~
9. **Boots.** Boots/shoes worn while riding anywhere on the competition grounds must have a distinguishable heel. (Exception: Arabian, Hackney Pony, Morgan, National Show Horse, Parade, Roadster, American Saddlebred, and Saddle Seat Equitation).
10. **Assigned Numbers.** Competitors must display the correct number which must be clearly visible while performing in any class unless otherwise stated in the prize list. Competitors may be penalized at the discretion of the judge. Numbers to be supplied by management in compliance with GR1213.11. Refer to DR121.11 (Dressage) and DR207.8 (Dressage Sport Horse Breeding).
11. **Saddle Attachments. Beginning December 1, 2025, no piece of equipment shall be attached to a saddle that has a rigid upward pointing projection, hook, or similar object capable of catching a rider's clothing or person when dismounting, including stirrups.**

#### AL101 Eligibility to Compete

[...]

13. **Protective headgear is not required in any class in the Andalusian/Lusitano Division unless stated otherwise within these rules. Use of protective headgear cannot be penalized.** Junior Exhibitors are required to wear protective headgear in all Hunter, Jumper and Hunter Equitation classes in conformity with GR801.

#### AR111 Protective Headgear

1. It is the tradition of the competition ring that riders and drivers be correctly attired for the class in question, that attendants be neatly dressed and horses be properly presented. **Protective headgear is not required in any class in the Arabian Division unless stated otherwise within these rules. Use of protective headgear cannot be penalized.**

#### CO103 Showing

1. Entries must be serviceably sound. Emphasis is placed on manners and an appropriate way of going.
2. Entries may be shown as native ponies or as appropriate to their performance section. Braiding and shoeing are optional. No Connemara may be shown with excessively long toes. Connemaras are not to stand in a stretched position.
3. If a class states it is for purebred Connemaras only, no entry registered in the halfbred division of the Registry or Stud Book may enter such class. In hand classes must be held separately for purebred and halfbred Connemaras and classes may not be combined. Performance classes must be divided into purebred and halfbred Connemara if there are four or more purebred entries and four or more halfbred entries. Performance classes for purebred and halfbred must be combined if there are three or less entries in either section.

[...]

6. **Protective headgear is not required in any class in the Connemara Division unless stated otherwise within these rules. Use of protective headgear cannot be penalized.**

#### CP105 Responsibilities of Drivers and Officials

12. **Protective headgear is not required in any class in the Carriage Pleasure Division unless stated otherwise within these rules. Use of protective headgear cannot be penalized.** All competitors are encouraged to use protective headgear for all competitions. Whenever the rules stipulate that "hat" or "cap" or "headgear" is required, protective headgear may be worn without penalty.

#### DC913 Dress, Safety, and Whips

[...]

6. **Protective headgear is not required in any class in the Driving Division unless stated otherwise within these rules. Use of protective headgear cannot be penalized.**

#### EP102 Appointments

**1. Protective headgear is not required in any class in the English Pleasure Division unless stated otherwise within these rules. Use of protective headgear cannot be penalized.**

[renumber accordingly]

#### EQ116 Appointments

1. PERSONAL. Exhibitors and judges should bear in mind that at all times entries are being judged on ability. However, neatness is the first requisite regarding a rider's attire and the following requirements are based on tradition and general present-day customs. Judges must penalize and may eliminate those competitors who do not conform.

a. INFORMAL: Riding habit will consist of jacket with collars and lapels of the same conservative color with matching jodhpurs, a collared shirt, tie, vest, and complimentary gloves, jodhpur boots, and derby or soft hat (protective headgear may be worn without penalty per GR801.4). Conservative colors for informal riding habits include black, blue, grey, burgundy, green, beige, or brown and may contain herringbone, pin stripes, and other combinations of colors that appear solid. Colors not included in this list are not acceptable and must be penalized and may be cause for elimination. Only informal dress is permitted in American Saddlebred Pleasure Equitation classes and Morgan Classic Saddle Seat Equitation classes, day or night.

b. FORMAL: Even more conservative attire is required for evening classes. Riding habit will consist of tuxedo-type jacket with collars and lapels of the same color with matching jodhpurs, formal shirt, bow tie, vest or cummerbund, and matching top hat (women), homburg or other soft hat (men). Solid colors for formal riding habits include dark grey, dark brown, dark blue, or black. Formal shirt must be white or offwhite with the bow tie and vest or cummerbund to match shirt or riding habit in color. Colors not included in this list are not acceptable and must be penalized and may be cause for elimination. Formal riding habits are not to be worn before 6:00 p.m. and are not mandatory after 6:00 p.m.; exhibitors competing on Pleasure horses have the option to wear formal attire in Open equitation classes as specified by the rule.

c. OPTIONAL: Blunt end (unrowelled only) spurs and/or riding crops.

**d. Protective headgear is not required in any class in the Saddle Seat Equitation unless stated otherwise within these rules. Use of protective headgear cannot be penalized.**

#### FR101 Eligibility to Compete

17. ~~For protective headgear requirements and information please see GR801.2 through GR801.8.~~

**Protective headgear is not required in any class in the Friesian Division unless stated otherwise within these rules. Use of protective headgear cannot be penalized.**

#### HK113 Appointments

**5. Protective headgear is not required in any class in the Hackney Division unless stated otherwise within these rules. Use of protective headgear cannot be penalized.**

#### MO106 Attire

1. Rider's attire must be suitable to the saddle being ridden. Protective headgear (See GR801) may be worn without penalty.

**2. Protective headgear is not required in any class in the Morgan Division unless stated otherwise within these rules. Use of protective headgear cannot be penalized.** Protective headgear (See GR801) must be worn by riders in lead line classes at all times while mounted.

#### NS105 General

**8. Protective headgear is not required in any class in the National Show Horse Division unless stated otherwise within these rules. Use of protective headgear cannot be penalized.**

#### PF102 General Rules

**16. Protective headgear is not required in any class in the Paso Fino Division unless stated otherwise within these rules. Use of protective headgear cannot be penalized.**



#### PH103 Appointments

1. Equipment and rider must be suitable to the size of the horse.
2. Entries shall be shown under stock saddle with silver, Mexican or other appropriate equipment.
3. Riders shall wear attire which is both colorful and typical of the Old West, of American, Mexican or Spanish origin, consisting of fancy cowboy suit, hat and boots. Spurs, guns, serapes, etc., are optional.
- 4. Protective headgear is not required in any class in the Parade Horse Division unless stated otherwise within these rules. Use of protective headgear cannot be penalized.**

#### RN102 Equipment

- 7. Protective headgear is not required in any class in the Reining Division unless stated otherwise within these rules. Use of protective headgear cannot be penalized.**

#### RD107 Appointments

- 4. Protective headgear is not required in any class in the Roadster Division unless stated otherwise within these rules. Use of protective headgear cannot be penalized.** Except as may otherwise be mandated by local law, protective headgear is strongly recommended for everyone showing in any class in the Roadster Division as outlined in GR801.4 and .8. Except as may otherwise be mandated by local law, while riding or driving anywhere on the competition grounds, all juniors riding or driving in Roadster to Bike or Roadster Under Saddle classes must wear properly fitting protective headgear, as specified in GR801. Harness must be secured and properly fitted. A matching cover may be worn over the protective headgear or the protective headgear may be painted in matching Roadster Silks.

#### SB104 Appointments

- 14. Protective headgear is not required in any class in the Saddlebred Division unless stated otherwise within these rules. Use of protective headgear cannot be penalized.**

#### SP106

1. Attire Unless otherwise specified the suggested attire for Performance classes is as follows:
  - a. Ladies—blouses/dresses with at least 3/4 length sleeves and slacks or dress below the knee. Lap robe, hats and gloves are optional.
  - b. Men—jacket, tie and hat. Lap robe and gloves optional. Protective headgear may be worn without penalty. ~~See GR801.~~
- 2. Protective headgear is not required in any class in the Shetland Division unless stated otherwise within these rules. Use of protective headgear cannot be penalized.**

#### VA107 Equipment

[.]

#### 2. Optional:

- a. Bandages, protection boots.
  - b. Ear plugs and Earhoods.
  - c. Breast collar or breast plate.
3. No auxiliary equipment is allowed.
    - a. Standing reins or auxiliary reins are not permitted.
    - b. The use of any equipment other than described above will entail elimination.
  - 4. Protective headgear is not required in any class in the Vaulting Division unless stated otherwise within these rules.**

#### WD123 Attire

[...]

#### 2. Optional apparel:

[...]

- e. **Protective headgear is not required in any class in the Western Dressage Division unless stated otherwise within these rules. Use of protective headgear cannot be penalized.** Protective headgear is acceptable; not required to be of Western style.

#### WL107 Attire (General)

In all classes, handlers, riders, and drivers should be appropriately attired. ("Short" shorts, bare midriffs and flimsy footwear are not acceptable). Those persons who, in the opinion of the judge, are inappropriately attired may be excused from the ring. ~~Protective headgear may be worn in all classes without penalty. See GR801.~~ **Protective headgear is not required in any class in the Welsh Division unless stated otherwise within these rules. Use of protective headgear cannot be penalized.**

#### WS104 Personal Appointments

1. Competitors must be penalized for incomplete appointments but not necessarily disqualified.
2. Riders must wear a Western hat; long-sleeved shirt any type of collar, (exhibitors in National Show Horse, and Saddlebred divisions must wear a necktie, kerchief or bolo tie) trousers or pants and boots; (a one-piece long-sleeved equitation suit is acceptable provided it includes any type of collar). Chaps, shotgun chaps and spurs are optional unless riders are showing in trail or pleasure class (riders showing at an Arabian, Half Arabian, Morgan or National Show Horse competition must wear chaps). A vest, jacket, coat and/or sweater may also be worn. Whips are not allowed except with side saddle. (See GR1310.2 Dispensations). Protective headgear may be worn without penalty; not required to be of Western style. Refer to GR801.
3. A side saddle rider must wear an apron of closed or button type with belt under loops. It is suggested that an apron with waist band cut the same as chaps and double thickness, be used in classes where chaps are required.
4. **Protective headgear is not required in any class in the Western Division unless stated otherwise within these rules. Use of protective headgear cannot be penalized.**

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
Extraordinary	4/1/2025	9/9/2024	Approved 1/25/2025

Extraordinary Change Reason

horse welfare

Rule Change Intent

The Federation's investigation process is dependent on the participation of individuals with information. Witnesses to misconduct feel safer participating in the investigation process when it is compulsory. For those that manipulate the process, whether by obstruction, misrepresentation, or other means, should be held accountable under the Federation's rules. In order to hold bad actors accountable for their misconduct, such as Unethical Treatment of the Horse, USEF must have cooperation and participation of fact witnesses. The requirement to participate will compel otherwise reticent witnesses to participate and thereby aid in enforcing the rules and protecting the safety, welfare, and enjoyment of the sport. This rule change proposal will provide the Federation the ability to protect its investigation process by prohibiting manipulation with said process.

Proponent Details      Contact Information

USEF Officers

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Linked Rules      Comments

## GR702 Violations

1. A violation is any act prejudicial to the best interests of the Federation, including but not limited to the following:
  - a. Violation of the Code of Conduct or any rules of the Federation.
  - b. Disqualification by a Licensed Competition.
  - c. Determination that disciplinary action has been taken by an administrative agency, arbitration or other tribunal body, humane society, other National Governing Body, or a court of law.
  - d. Acting or inciting or permitting any other to act in a manner contrary to the rules of the Federation, or in a manner deemed improper, unethical, dishonest, unsportsmanlike or intemperate, or prejudicial to the best interests of the sport and the Federation.
  - e. Any act committed or remark made in connection with the competition considered offensive and/or made with the intent to influence or cast aspersions on the character or integrity of the licensed officials, approaching a judge before or after a decision without first obtaining permission from the show committee or steward/technical delegate, inspecting a judge's card without the judge's permission, or public verbal abuse of competition officials.
  - f. Physical assault upon a person and/or unethical treatment to the horse as defined in GR838, cruelty, or abuse to the horse.
  - g. Failure to obey any penalty imposed by the Federation.
  - h. Exhibiting any horse while in the care, training or custody of a suspended trainer.
  - i. Riding, exhibiting, coaching or training for the benefit, credit, reputation or satisfaction of a suspended person.
  - j. Failure to pay indebtedness to the Federation or indebtedness for hearing transcripts or other hearing expenses arranged through the Federation.
  - k. Participating in any manner at a licensed competition while not in good standing or competing horses not in good standing at a licensed competition. (See GR137)
  - l. Prescribing, dispensing, or administering a drug by a veterinarian which results in a finding of a prohibited substance. In the event a positive report is received by the Federation for a horse or pony to which a prohibited substance has been administered in any manner and the veterinarian is identified in any manner as the source of said prohibited substance, said violation will be addressed pursuant to GR412.
  - m. Any action which is subject to reciprocity by the Federation under the Federation Bylaws.
  - n. Retaliation against a person for making an allegation of any rule violation, for supporting a reporting party or witness, or for providing information relevant to a potential violation. Retaliation may be considered any adverse action taken by an individual against a person participating in a USEF proceeding.
  - o. Failure to cooperate with any investigation carried out by, or on behalf of, the Federation in relation to a possible violation of these rules, including, without limitation, failure to provide accurately, completely, and without undue delay any information and/or documentation and/or access or assistance requested by the Federation as part of such investigation.***
  - p. Obstruction or delay of any investigation that may be carried out by, or on behalf of, the Federation in relation to a possible violation of these rules, including without limitation concealing, tampering with, or destroying any documentation or other information that may be relevant to the investigation, or precluding another person from participating in the process by written agreement.***

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
Extraordinary	4/1/2025	1/28/2025	Approved 1/25/2025

Extraordinary Change Reason

Horse Welfare

Rule Change Intent

This rule change will streamline the Yellow Warning Card rule and clarify the process of what occurs when an individual receives a Yellow Warning Card, as well as the penalties that may result from the receipt of multiple Yellow Warning Cards over a twelve month period. This rule change further introduces a Recorded Warning, which will be issued by Competition Officials in instances of less egregious behavior that does not warrant a Yellow Warning Card or disciplinary action on the part of the Federation. The rule change establishes the potential penalties for those who receive three or more Recorded Warnings in a twelve-month period.

Proponent Details Contact Information

USEF Officers

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Linked Rules Comments

## GR1037 ~~Yellow Warning Card System –Stewards and Technical Delegates~~

1. ~~A Recorded Warning may be issued by a Judge, Steward, or Technical Delegate at a competition to any person for minor offenses, including behavior that should not be repeated and that does not warrant a more severe penalty, including a Yellow Warning Card.~~

2. ~~A Yellow Warning Card may be issued by a Judge, Steward, or Technical Delegate, or Competition Official working in any of these capacities at the a competition to any person competitor, spectator, or participant for improper conduct, or for noncompliance with the Federation Rules, when the misconduct is not a minor offense but not severe enough to warrant formal disciplinary action through the Federation Regulation Department. rules, provided the issuer considers the conduct not severe enough to cause the issuer to submit the matter to the Federation for a Disciplinary Action Complaint.~~

3. ~~To issue a Recorded Warning or Yellow Warning Card, a Judge, Steward, or Technical Delegate, or Competition Official must:~~

- ~~a. complete and sign the Recorded Warning form or Yellow Warning Card;~~
3. ~~b. timely provide a~~ A copy of the signed *Recorded Warning form or Yellow Warning Card* ~~must be provided to the affected person, alleged offender at the competition either in person or by any other suitable means; and~~
- ~~c. send a~~ A copy of the *Recorded Warning form or Yellow Warning Card* ~~must then be sent to the Federation with the Steward's/Technical Delegate's Report Form and noted therein.~~

*[Renumber accordingly]*

4. Upon receipt of the *Recorded Warning form or Yellow Warning Card*, the Federation will send an acknowledgment of its receipt of the ~~same Yellow Warning Card~~ to the *affected person* ~~alleged offender~~ advising of the provisions of this Rule.

5. The issuance of a *Recorded Warning or Yellow Warning Card* is *final and not appealable*. ~~meant to replace the filing of a Disciplinary Action Complaint for a willful and serious violation of Federation rules, and in no case may a Yellow Warning Card be issued for abuse of a horse in any form. It is for lesser offenses only.~~

6. ~~The Federation will levy a fine or seek a suspension of no less than two months against any person who within a twelve-month period receives three or more Recorded Warnings or two or more Yellow Warning Cards.~~

6. ~~Immediately following receipt by the Federation of a third Yellow Warning Card indicating that a competitor, spectator, or participant has been issued three Yellow Warning Cards within a 16 month period the CEO or their designee shall either levy a fine ranging from \$500 to \$1000 or issue a formal Disciplinary Action Complaint pursuant to the Federation Bylaws. If the alleged offender is found in violation of any or all of said violations, they may be subject to the penalties set forth in Chapter 7 of the Rules.~~

7. ~~The issuance of a Recorded Warning or Yellow Warning Card does not preclude the Federation from seeking further penalties set forth in Chapter 7 of the Rules.~~

8. ~~All Recorded Warnings and Yellow Warning Cards issued within the preceding twelve months will be published to the membership.~~



Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
Extraordinary	4/1/2025	5/9/2024	Approved 1/25/2025

Extraordinary Change Reason

The proposed language adds additional guidance regarding the application of the frangible devices but does not alter the way in which it has been and should be applied. Frangible technology is a very important tool in mitigating the risk for athletes and horses during the Cross-Country phase.

Rule Change Intent

The proposed language adds additional guidance regarding the application of the frangible devices but does not alter the way in which it has been and should be applied. Frangible technology is a very important tool in mitigating the risk for athletes and horses during the Cross-Country phase.

Proponent Details Contact Information

Eventing

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Linked Rules Comments



## EV145 Cross-Country Phase Obstacles

### 8. FRANGIBLE TECHNOLOGY

a. ~~Whenever possible, Obstacles for which frangible technology (e.g., frangible pins, MIM Clips, or any other load relieving device) is appropriate must be constructed or retrofitted with frangible technology for the Training level and above.~~ *For Training level and above, all open oxers, open corners, verticals or near verticals with open rails, top rail on triple bars and gates where the rail dimensions and weight fit the acceptable parameters of an FEI approved frangible device, must be fitted with frangible devices (e.g., frangible pins, MIM Clips, or any other load relieving device). At a minimum, frangible technology devices used at national Events must meet the FEI Updated Standard for Frangible/Deformable Cross Country Fences.*

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
Extraordinary	4/1/2025	8/28/2024	Approved 1/25/2025

Extraordinary Change Reason

This is an issue that needs addressed as soon as possible. ESWT is being used by lay people on Federation grounds potentially putting horses at risk.

Rule Change Intent

- Extracorporeal Shock Wave Therapy (ESWT) is a therapeutic modality intended to aid in the treatment of soft tissue and bone injuries. As ESWT can provide significant analgesia, this treatment is covered by the respective Veterinary Medical Practice Act in many states. The use of ESWT without the understanding of anatomy and training can decrease the therapeutic effectiveness and even put horses at risk. The intent of this rule change is to only permit veterinarians to conduct ESWT at Federation Licensed competitions. However, a veterinary assistant or technician, appropriately trained by the veterinarian may conduct ESWT if only under direct veterinary supervision. The prohibition on the use of ESWT on the limbs of horses will remain a prohibited practice within 72 hours of competing.

Proponent Details      Contact Information

Veterinary

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Linked Rules      Comments

GR 414 Prohibited Practices

**4. Only a licensed veterinarian may administer Shockwave Therapy on competition grounds. ~~may only be administered by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian.~~ No Shockwave Therapy is permitted within the 12 hours prior to competing.**

- a. If sedation is required for Shockwave Therapy, only sedation performed by a licensed veterinarian and administered at the same time as the Shockwave Therapy will be considered therapeutic and GR411 will apply. No sedation associated with Shockwave Therapy will be considered therapeutic if administered within 24 hours prior to competition. ~~No horse may be treated with Shockwave Therapy within the 3 days preceding competition with the following exception:~~
  
- b. ~~a-~~ Shockwave Therapy **administered within the three days preceding competition must be** ~~may be administered by a licensed veterinarian within the 3 day prohibited period, but no closer than 12 hours prior to competing, and is limited to application to the back and dorsal pelvis areas. No Shockwave Therapy is permitted within the 12 hours prior to competing.~~ This exception is permitted only when the "Trainer" as defined under GR404 properly files, or causes to be properly filed, an Equine Drugs and Medications Report Form after administration and prior to the horse competing. If an online form cannot be submitted due to lack of internet or phone service, a paper form may be submitted. The form must be filed with the Steward/Technical Delegate or competition office representative within one hour after the administration of Shockwave Therapy. If administration occurred outside of competition hours, the form must be filed within one hour after the Steward/Technical Delegate or competition office representative returns to duty if the administration occurs at a time outside competition hours. The Steward/Technical Delegate or competition office representative shall sign and record the time of receipt on the Equine Drugs and Medications Report Form.

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
Extraordinary	4/1/2025	5/16/2024	Approved 1/25/2025

Extraordinary Change Reason

This is requested to be implemented as an Extraordinary rule change because the current language, given the current climate in sport could be misinterpreted as permitting unethical treatment towards the horse which is not the intent or within the spirit of this rule.

Rule Change Intent

The intent of the proposed rule change is to modernize the language regarding the use of the whip. However, it does not change what is permitted use of a whip in competition. This proposal aligns with USEFs efforts to improve language in the Rulebook to support our Social License to Operate.

Proponent Details Contact Information

Eventing

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Linked Rules Comments

EV112 Abuse of Horses

3. WHIP. The use of the whip must be ~~for a good reason, reasonably administered~~ at an appropriate time, ~~and~~ in the right place, ~~and with appropriate severity~~.

~~a. Reason: The whip must only be used as an aid to encourage the Horse forward, or as a reprimand. It must never be used to vent an Athlete's temper. Such use is always excessive.~~

b. Time: As an aid, the only appropriate time is when a Horse is reluctant to go forward under normal aids of the seat and legs. ~~As a reprimand, the only appropriate time is immediately after a Horse has been disobedient, e.g., napping or refusing.~~ Instances of inappropriate use of the whip include the whip used after Elimination, after the last fence on course, and/or multiple times between Obstacles.

c. Place: ~~As an aid to go forward, t~~The whip may be used down the shoulder or behind the Athlete's leg. ~~As a reprimand, it must only be used behind the Athlete's leg.~~ It must never be used overhand (e.g., a whip in the right hand being used on the left flank). The use of a whip on a Horse's head, neck, etc., is always excessive use.

d. Severity: ~~As a reprimand only, a Horse may be hit hard. However, it~~A whip should never be ~~hit used~~ more than two times for one incident. If a Horse's skin is broken or has visible marks from the use of the whip, that will be deemed excessive use. ~~It must never be used to vent an Athlete's temper. Such use is always excessive.~~

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
Extraordinary	4/1/2025	8/12/2024	Approved 1/25/2025

Extraordinary Change Reason

To align return to play requirements as quickly as possible to ensure participants are working with medical providers to gain proper clearance to participate.

Rule Change Intent

Requirements placed on competitors for return to competition following a suspected head injury must be continually updated based on evolving, evidence based medicine (or science). With the release of the 6th International Concussion in Sport Consensus Statement and the Sport Concussion Office Assessment Tool 6 (SCOAT 6) in June 2023, the USEF Medical Advisory Group reviewed the requirements for return to competition, and have recommended that all participants who sustain or are suspected of a concussion at a USEF licensed or endorsed competition, work directly with their medical provider to follow a staged (or graded) return to equestrian sport protocol.

Additionally, it is imperative to ensure each individual is evaluated by their provider against the relevant components of the SCOAT 6 in office. The mandatory suspension periods for equestrian competition should align with the current sport science with regards to concussion recovery and return to sport. Mandatory suspension periods may create the incorrect perception that following the passing of a mandatory suspension time period, every individual should be cleared to compete. Each individual may respond to concussion and recovery differently, and they should work cooperatively with their medical practitioner to determine the appropriate timeline to return to competitive sport.

With the removal of EV138.1, competitors will follow the return to play guidelines in GR848. Eventing is currently the only breed/discipline that follows the mandatory suspension period. This proposal will align with the other breed/disciplines and the current evidence-based medicine recommendations for head injuries.

Proponent Details	Contact Information
Human and Equine, Safety & Welfare	Katlynn Wilbers  kwilbers@usef.org

Linked Rules	Comments
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## EV138 Medical Requirements

### 2. RETURN TO PLAY. See GR848.

~~2. In conjunction with GR848.6, the following apply in the case of a fall/accident or other injury that may have caused a concussion (as determined by qualified medical personnel):~~

~~a. No loss of consciousness and no sign of concussion—no mandatory suspension;~~

~~b. No loss of consciousness but with brief symptoms of concussion e.g., confusion, loss of memory, altered mental state (all symptoms of concussion must have resolved within 15 minutes both at rest and exercise)—minimum of seven days mandatory suspension. The day of the injury counts as the first day of the suspension period;~~

~~c. Any loss of consciousness, however brief, or symptoms of concussion persisting after 15 minutes—minimum 21 days mandatory suspension. The day of the injury counts as the first day of the suspension period.~~

~~d. Notwithstanding the above, Athletes who have established a baseline neurocognitive skills level through a Federation approved testing program (e.g., IMPACT test) may return to competition upon submission to the Federation a certification that they have passed an exam establishing that they have suffered no impairment of that level. In addition, they must submit clearance as required under GR848.6.~~

~~e. All other Athletes may, at the expiration of the mandatory suspension period, return to the Event by complying with the requirements of GR848.6~~

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
Extraordinary	4/1/2025	9/1/2024	Approved 1/25/2025

Extraordinary Change Reason

This rule change is extraordinary due to the biosecurity concerns regarding competition officials when performing any type of routine inspection that involves the touching of a horse's muzzle, oral cavity, or bit. The changing of gloves between horse inspections should be a mandatory practice to reduce the chances of spreading pathogens amongst horses.

Rule Change Intent

On a biosecurity front, with VS and other viral diseases, there is no requirement for a TD/Steward to change gloves after a bit inspection or an examination of the horse's muzzle or oral cavity. For the safety of horses, this is something that must be implemented in official rule form. There is a potential risk of spreading pathogens from horse to horse when handling multiple horses without changing gloves between horses. As far as best practice, it is currently recommended that gloves are changed between horses, or the rider is asked to drop the bridle to display the bit to the official as this would eliminate the need for the official to touch individual horses, but this is not an official rule, only a suggested best practice. This rule change seeks to inact this as a requirement for the health and safety of horses.

Proponent Details	Contact Information
Andalusian/Lusitano Committee	Ashton Street  astreet@usef.org

Linked Rules	Comments
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## SUBCHAPTER AL-1 GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS

### AL101 Eligibility To Compete

(...)

19. Judges must excuse from the ring any horse that possesses a whip mark (welt) on any portion of the horse. A whip mark or welt is an inflammation of skin and subcutaneous tissue resulting in a swelling in extreme cases is an abrasion or laceration. The cardinal signs of inflammation include heat, pain (sensitivity or palpation) and swelling. The judge(s) finding of fact with respect to the presence or absence of a whip mark (welt) evident during a class shall be final and no appeal may be taken thereon. The judge(s) shall make written finds of fact which shall be delivered to the Federation steward with respect to any horse excused under this rule. In a class that is judged by more than one judge, if a judge in that class believed that an entry has a whip mark, that entry must be examined by all judges of the class and each judge must determine if a whip mark exists. If a majority of the judges of that class determine that whip mark exists, the entry must be excluded from the ring, according to the specification set forth in this article. If a majority of the judges determine there is not a whip mark, then each judge who is of the minority opinion shall submit their own written finding of fact and shall have the authority to eliminate said entry from further consideration

**20. Any individual who is required to touch the muzzle, oral cavity, or bit of the horse for purposes of inspection shall utilize a new pair of gloves for each inspection. Once an inspection of the individual horse is complete, the gloves shall be properly disposed of in a trash container.**

**2021.** The following classes do not affect Maiden status of the horse: English Pleasure Pro-Am, Western Pleasure Pro-Am, Versatility Driving to English, and Versatility English to Western

**2422.** Electronic communication devices used for purposes of coaching exhibitors during a competition shall be prohibited in all classes in the Andalusian/Lusitano Division. Exhibitors with a permanent hearing impairment are permitted to use an electronic communication device upon submission of a written certification from a treating medical professional's office certifying the permanent hearing impairment and certifying the requirement of an electronic communication device. The certifying medical certification must be provided to the competition Steward within a reasonable time prior to competing who shall attach a copy to the Steward report.

**2223.** An exhibitor with a disability (other than hearing), will be provided reasonable accommodation upon submission of a written certification from a treating medical professional's office certifying the disability and identifying the accommodation necessary for the exhibitor to compete safely. The medical certification must be provided to the competition Steward within a reasonable time prior to competing who shall attach a copy to the Steward report.

**2324.** No horse may be entered and shown in more than six (6) performance classes per day. This does not include halter, showmanship, and sport horse in-hand.

**2425.** When the Dressage chapter is referenced herein, any rule or portion of a rule that is in direct reference to USEF/USDF or USEF National Championships shall be disregarded for the purpose of breed Dressage classes.

**2526.** In the event coats are waived due to weather, an exhibitor may wear a short sleeved blouse/shirt with a closed collar and, if desired, an appropriate tie, scarf, brooch or pin. Polo Shirts are not permitted except in Sport Horse In-Hand classes. The remainder of the attire should conform with the rules of the class.

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
Extraordinary	4/1/2025	10/9/2024	Approved 1/25/2025

Extraordinary Change Reason

This change is being submitted to close a loophole that members are using to circumvent the re-measurement and appeal processes. It needs to be adjusted as soon as possible to prevent the continued mis-use of the protest process.

Rule Change Intent

The protest measurement process has been used with increasing frequency as a way to circumvent the appeal or re-measurement process or to gain an additional opportunity to attempt to have a pony re-measured after a failed attempt at an appeal or a re-measurement. The protest process was intended to be used for individuals to protest other horses or ponies they believed to be competing in the incorrect height section and was not intended to be used as a "friendly protest" to re-measure horses or ponies into a lower height section. The intention of this rule change is to close the gap in the protest rule that currently allows for these "friendly protests."

Proponent Details	Contact Information
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CEO - Bill Moroney

Kelsey Shanley

kshanley@usef.org

Linked Rules	Comments
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## HJ136 Protesting Height

1. An owner or trainer may protest the height of only one horse or pony competing in a class in which they are also competing. ***In order to be considered, the basis of a protest must be that a horse or pony has been issued a measurement card for a division or section that is lower than the height of the horse or pony.***
2. A protest ~~questioning the height of a horse or pony showing in a division, section or class requiring measurement~~ must be filed with the steward and ~~must be filed~~ at least one hour prior to the end of the competition day on which the horse or pony is showing in a division, section or class requiring measurement. ~~Such measurement shall be conducted pursuant to HJ126-HJ138 rather than GR512-514.~~
3. The animal is required to be presented for measurement within one hour of the completion of the animal's last class on the day of the protest.
4. The animal may be presented for a protest measurement with or without shoes regardless of how shown.
5. Protest Results. If a horse or pony is found to be **above outside** the permitted height range that is determined by the animal's measurement card (e.g. Small Hunter Pony, Large Junior Hunter, etc.), the owner forfeits entry fees and winnings for that competition. All points accumulated for Horse of the Year and Zone Horse of the Year Awards to that date are forfeited. Said animal is suspended from competing in USEF Licensed Competitions for ninety (90) days from the date of the protest and a new measurement card will be issued to the owner at the end of the suspension period.
  - a. The current trainer and the Steward who conducted the original measurement of a horse or pony that is found to measure **above outside** of the permitted height range that is determined by the horse or pony's measurement card may be subject to penalty by the Federation.
  - b. If the horse or pony remains in its current height section, the animal may continue to compete as before.
  - c. The decision of the measuring officials is final unless an appeal is filed with the Federation within fourteen (14) days (see HJ137).
6. If a competition's steward is unable to notify an exhibitor of a protest before the exhibitor leaves the competition grounds, the protest will become void, and the steward will refund the protest fee. If a competition's steward notifies an exhibitor of a protest of an animal's height, and the exhibitor leaves the grounds before the measurement can be conducted, the protest will be filed with the Federation and an official protest measurement will be set up at the owner's expense, before the animal is eligible to compete again.
7. The measurement card, or valid measurement form of any animal that is found ineligible for the height section in which the animal was shown must be surrendered to the competition steward who must forward it to the Federation office with their report. If the owner is not in possession of the original measurement card at the time of the protest it is the owner's responsibility to surrender all measurement cards to the Federation Kentucky office within five (5) days of the protest.
8. The decision of competition officials is final unless an appeal is filed with the Federation.
9. Pony and Junior Hunter measurement protests.
  - a. The identity of the protestor will be revealed to the protestee by the competition steward. At the time the competition steward receives the protest, the competition steward will explain the protest measurement process to the parties involved and answer any questions. The competition steward will instruct the protestor and the protestee that any inappropriate behavior and/or

communication between parties will result in disciplinary action.

b. When the animal is presented for measurement, only the following individuals may be present: The owner of the animal, two representatives/handlers of the animal being protested, the protestor, the competition veterinarian(s), the competition steward(s), and any representative of the Federation. At least one competition steward must be certified to measure and that steward will conduct the measurement.

c. If an animal is protested and found to be within its height section, the animal's height cannot be protested again for the remainder of the competition year.

***10. A new measurement card lowering a horse or pony's height may only be issued through the Appeal (HJ138) or Re-measurement (HJ135) process.***

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
Extraordinary	4/1/2025	10/25/2024	Approved 1/25/2025

Extraordinary Change Reason

Horse Welfare

Rule Change Intent

This is in the interest of limiting horse use at competitions especially when USEF and EVUSA competitions are occurring at the same time.

Proponent Details	Contact Information
Vaulting	Michelle McQueen mmcqueen@usef.org

Linked Rules	Comments
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## CHAPTER VA VAULTING DIVISION

### SUBCHAPTER VA-1 GENERAL

#### VA 105 Horse Use

1. Horses may be used for a maximum of ~~24~~ **18** units per day.
  - a. Squad Events:
    1. Squad Compulsories = 6 units
    2. Squad Freestyle = 6 units
  - b. Individual Events:
    1. 1 Compulsories = 1 unit

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
Extraordinary	4/1/2025	10/25/2024	Approved 1/25/2025

Extraordinary Change Reason

To align with current FEI rules

Rule Change Intent

This rule has shifted in point deduction and needs to be changed to reflect this change.

Proponent Details

Vaulting

Contact Information

Michelle McQueen

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Linked Rules

Comments

## VA127 Penalties and Deductions

1. Compulsories—*Pas de Deux*, Squad and Individual Events:
  - a. Up to one (1) point deducted for:
    1. Each landing other than on both feet only.
    2. ***Arm and leg are not raised simultaneously in Flag.***
  - b. One (1) point deducted for:
    1. Each stride less than 4 (Basic Seat, Flag, Stand).
    2. Each passing of the leg out of a 4-count rhythm in the Mill and the Half Mill.
    3. Interfering with lunge line or side reins.
    4. Touching neck in Flag without loss of form.
    5. No kneel (both knees) before Flag or Stand.
    6. Legs not closed throughout flight in dismount Swing off from the seat astride to the outside
  - c. Up to two (2) points deducted for:
    1. Time wasted: between taking grips and vaulting on, before commencing an exercise, and between parts of an exercise.
    2. Landing heavily on horse's back.
    3. Buttocks leaving horse during Mill or Half Mill.
  - d. Two (2) points deducted for:
    1. Exercise fails, but vaulter stays on and repeats successfully.
    2. Retaking grips in Basic Seat, Flag or Stand.
    3. Touching horse with hand behind surcingle in Mill or Half Mill.
    4. In Senior Events, when Basic Seat is shown. Flag receives the deduction.
    5. In Squad Events, a compulsory exercise shown out of order in which the vaulter stays on and repeats the correct exercise before dismounting.
    6. Repeating mount (first attempt unsuccessful; second attempt successful).
  - e. Score of zero (0) for:
    1. Coming off horse during a compulsory exercise.
    2. Retaking grips twice.
    3. Repeating a compulsory exercise twice.
    4. After Swing Backward, performing dismount in wrong direction (to outside). Swing Backward receives the zero.
    5. Turning the wrong way in the Scissors Forward and/or Scissors Backward (not turning toward the lunge).
    6. A compulsory, no part of which is performed at the required gait.
    7. Each compulsory exercise not performed.



Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
Extraordinary	4/1/2025	10/28/2024	Approved 1/25/2025

Extraordinary Change Reason

JP 144.3 was brought up in the beginning of this process but got overshadowed by another discipline’s related rule. After meeting with CEO Bill, it was suggested that an EO be submitted with a Pres Mod to cover the time between Dec 1st and April 1st so that the Jumper discipline could continue using JP 144.3. A Presidential Modification is being proposed to cover the time from Dec 1st, 2024 until this rule becomes effective on April 1, 2025.

Rule Change Intent

This ability for judges to use video including video not provided by an official videographer has been in the Jumper Chapter since at least 2007 with no issues. To only allow official video to be used per the new GR 1219 (effective 12/1/2024) would eliminate the ability for judges to view video at most all the lower-level jumper shows which isn’t fair to those exhibitors.

A Presidential Modification is being proposed to cover the time from Dec 1st, 2024 until this rule becomes effective on April 1, 2025.

Proponent Details Contact Information

Jumper

Jennifer Haydon

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Linked Rules Comments

## JP144 Violations

3. Use of Video. The Senior Judge, alone or with other members of the judge's panel, may, at their discretion, view an official video recording of all or part of a class in order to verify decisions involving scoring. A review of an official video recording is solely at the discretion of the Senior Judge. The Senior Judge may consult with a licensed 'R' Judge who may or may not be officiating at that competition. Upon review of such video recording, provided it is made available within 60 minutes after the results are announced the Senior judge may make corrections to the placing of the class. An official video recording is considered to be a recording made by the designated host broadcaster and/or a designated official video recording company as named by horse show management. **As an exception to GR1219 and o**Only under certain circumstances when there is no official video recording, the Senior Judge may consider using a private **unaltered** video. Note: A video may never be used to establish the time of a round.

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
Extraordinary	4/1/2025	1/28/2025	Approved 1/25/2025

Extraordinary Change Reason

There are no legitimate reasons for trainer, owners, riders, and grooms to have these substances on the grounds of a Federation Licensed Competition, and horse welfare is at risk.

Rule Change Intent

There are some substances that non-veterinarians should not have in their possession or use on the grounds of a Federation Licensed Competition, due to the potential threat of abuse for competitive advantage.

Proponent Details Contact Information

Veterinary

Stephen Schumacher

sschumacher@usef.org

Linked Rules Comments

GR 414 Prohibited Practices

[...]

6. It is a prohibited practice to administer bisphosphonates, except in horses four years of age or older and when using bisphosphonates that are FDA approved for use in horses. GR411 must be followed.

7. It is a prohibited practice to compete in Federation competitions with a tracheotomy/tracheostomy (i.e. surgical opening through the skin into the trachea).

**8. It is a prohibited practice to use and/or possess any of the following substances on competition grounds:**

- a. *Injectable ACTH*
- b. *Injectable Adenosine*
- c. *Injectable Formaldehyde*
- d. *Injectable Magnesium Sulfate*
- e. *Injectable Melatonin*
- f. *Injectable Oxytocin*
- g. *Injectable Pentobarbital, except by a veterinarian for the purpose of euthanasia*
- h. *Injectable Thiamine*
- i. *Injectable Tryptophan*
- j. *Liquid Nitrogen*
- k. *Any injectable prescription medication in any formulation without a manufacturer or compound pharmacy label that identifies all ingredients.*

**9. It is a prohibited practice to rectally administer any substance on the grounds of a Federation competition.**

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
FEI Rule Change	4/1/2025	5/9/2024	Approved 1/25/2025

Rule Change Intent

As many U.S. Events host both FEI and national levels, the proposed alignment of the course specifications will make the rules easier to comply with for Course Designers.

Proponent Details	Contact Information
Eventing	Amber Braun abraun@usef.org

Linked Rules	Comments
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**EV144 Cross-Country Phase Courses**

3. FINISH LINE. The last Obstacle of the course must be between ~~25~~ 20 m and ~~75~~ 50 m from the finish line.

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
FEI Rule Change	4/1/2025	5/9/2024	Approved 1/25/2025

Rule Change Intent

As many U.S. Events host both FEI and national levels, the proposed alignment of the course specifications will make the rules easier to comply with for Course Designers.

Proponent Details Contact Information

Eventing

Amber Braun

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Linked Rules Comments

## EV145 Cross-Country Phase Obstacles

### 5. NUMBER OF JUMPING EFFORTS

c. At the Beginner Novice and Novice levels, water crossings must be marked, numbered, and subject to penalties but must not be counted in the number of jumping efforts.

*d. In addition, for all levels, a maximum of two additional efforts may be used, whereby steps and ditches will not count as efforts under the following conditions:*

- 1) Two steps as part of a combination/related Obstacle only count as one effort, e.g., a sunken road with what would traditionally be four efforts (fence before, step down, step up, fence after) will count as three efforts;*
- 2) Three steps up or down will count as two efforts; or*
- 3) A ditch as part of a combination (e.g., a hollow/coffin type fence) does not count as an effort.*

*The steps and ditches must be flagged/lettered and judged as normal. The Course Designer and Technical Delegate must determine in advance of the Event how many efforts, if any, are appropriate given the nature of the terrain and the balance, flow, and intensity of the course.*



Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
FEI Rule Change	4/1/2025	5/9/2024	Approved 1/25/2025

Rule Change Intent

The intent of the proposal is to align with the FEI rule that was effective on January 1, 2024.

Proponent Details Contact Information

Eventing

Amber Braun

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Linked Rules Comments

## EV122 Cross-Country Phase Definitions of Faults

### 2. DISOBEDIENCES (REFUSALS and RUN-OUTS)

#### a. Refusals.

3. A second refusal is considered any attempt by the Athlete to reattempt the Obstacle or element without success or if the Horse is represented at the Obstacle after stepping back, stopping, or step backs again

**4. Reattempting an activated frangible Obstacle not restored to its original condition will result in Elimination.**

### EV123 Cross-Country Phase Scoring (add to chart)

Fault	Penalty	Applicable Level	Reference
Activating a frangible Obstacle as the result of a Fall or Disobedience	0 penalties	All	
<b><i>Reattempting an activated frangible Obstacle not restored to its original condition</i></b>	<b><i>Elimination</i></b>	<b><i>All</i></b>	<b><i>EV122.2</i></b>
Activating a frangible Obstacle as the result of a Fall or Disobedience	0 penalties	All	

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
FEI Rule Change	4/1/2025	9/10/2024	Approved 1/25/2025

Rule Change Intent

Updating the Dress rules for Para athletes to reflect the current FEI rules. At the national level, Para riders compete in FEI tests and aligning the USEF national rules with the FEI Dress rules will avoid confusion amongst our riders.

Proponent Details      Contact Information

Dressage

Lauren Moore

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Linked Rules      Comments

**DR306 Dress. Change to read:**

1. Military, police, etc. may wear civil or service dress at all Federation licensed competitions.
2. Protective Headgear must be worn in compliance with DR120.6.
3. Black or brown boots ~~or stout riding shoes~~ with heels must be worn. Plain black or ~~brown~~ **dark color** half-chaps or gaiters to the knee may be used.
4. Cream, beige, **white** or ~~off~~-white jodhpurs or breeches shall be worn, with a ~~black or dark~~ **plain color** jacket. Contrast coloring and piping is allowed. Striped or multi-colored coats are not permitted. Tasteful and discreet accents, such as a collar of a different hue, modest piping or crystal decorations, are acceptable. A stock tie or tie that is white, off white or same color as coat is required. Gloves that are white, off white or same color as the coat may be worn. ~~Riding boots or paddock boots should be black or same color as coat.~~ Safety vests (including inflatable), **dark in color**, are permitted.
5. An arm band, provided by the Athlete, in a distinctive color must be worn at all times by Athletes with visual impairment while mounted outside of the Competition arena.
6. Spurs are optional. Spurs must be made of metal. The shank must be either curved or straight, pointing directly back from the center of the spur when on the Athlete's boot. Spurs must not be offset, unless allowed as a compensating aid and noted on the Athletes Federation Dispensation/Classification Certificate. The arm of the spur must be smooth and blunt. If rowels are used, they must be blunt, smooth (**no sharp edges**) and free to rotate. Metal spurs with round hard ~~plastic~~ knobs **are allowed** ('Impuls' spurs). **The knobs may rotate.** ~~or~~ "Dummy" spurs with no shank are **also** allowed. Athletes abusing the Horse with their spurs, whether intentionally or not may be asked to remove spurs by the Technical Delegate.

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
FEI Rule Change	4/1/2025	10/25/2024	Approved 1/25/2025

Rule Change Intent

We wish to align our compulsory exercises to the FEI's current exercises.

Proponent Details Contact Information

Vaulting

Michelle McQueen

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Linked Rules Comments

## **SUBCHAPTER VA-4 PAS DE DEUX EVENT**

### **VA 123 Compulsories**

1. Compulsory Test for 1\* Pas de Deux may be performed to the left or to the right.

Exercises to be shown:

1. Vault on
2. Basic Seat
2. Flag
3. Stand
4. Swing Forwards (~~legs closed~~)
5. Half Mill
6. Swing Backwards (~~legs open~~) followed by dismount to inside

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
FEI Rule Change	4/1/2025	10/25/2024	Approved 1/25/2025

Rule Change Intent

The rule change is being asked in order to align with current FEI rules regarding squad limits.

Proponent Details Contact Information

Vaulting

Michelle McQueen

[mmcqueen@usef.org](mailto:mmcqueen@usef.org)

Linked Rules Comments

## VA 127 Penalties and Deductions

3. Freestyle and Technical Test, Artistic score—Squad, Pas de Deux and Individual Events:
  - a. One (1) point deducted for:
    1. In all Events, any exercise (including the dismount) commenced after the time limit. (See VA111.1), **or not performing a final dismount after a fall.**
    2. In 2\*B and 1\*C Squad Events, for performing **any** more than six (6) static triple exercise.



Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
FEI Rule Change	4/1/2025	11/13/2024	Approved 1/24/2025

Rule Change Intent

The FEI is permitting only one earphone or similar devise during training or warmup, effective 1.1.25.

Proponent Details      Contact Information

Dressage

Lauren Moore

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Linked Rules      Comments

**DR120 Dress. Change to read:**

5. Electronic Communication Devices. The use of earphones and/or other electronic communication devices is strictly prohibited while competing and such usage is penalized by elimination. There is no penalty for having cell phones or other electronic devices worn or carried in clothing while competing as long as they are not in use. Electronic devices that transmit and/or receive information may be used in the stabling area and in warm up areas, *however, only one earphone or similar device is permitted while mounted or while lungeing*. The unsafe use of electronic devices, as determined by the competition Technical Delegate in their sole discretion, including cell phones, with or without earphones/buds, while mounted is prohibited in all areas designated for schooling and exercise, and while lungeing horses on competition grounds. Exception: medical devices, such as hearing aids are allowed to be used for the medical condition for which they are prescribed.

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
FEI Rule Change	4/1/2025	11/13/2024	Approved 1/25/2025

Rule Change Intent

To eliminate confusion to clarify that sitting trot is required, especially in the FEI Four Year Old tests.

Proponent Details	Contact Information
Dressage	Lauren Moore lmoore@usef.org

Linked Rules	Comments
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**DR104 The Trot. Change to read:**

5. All trot work is executed “sitting”, unless otherwise indicated in the test, *including in FEI Young Horse tests.*

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
FEI Rule Change	4/1/2025	11/13/2024	Approved 1/25/2025

Rule Change Intent

This rule change mirrors the FEI rule change on only allowing body protectors in Marathon, to increase athlete and groom safety while on carriage at high speeds.

Proponent Details	Contact Information
Driving	Anna Brooks Thomas abthomas@usef.org

Linked Rules	Comments
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## DC913 Dress, safety, and whips

### 2. Dress in Marathon and Combined Marathon

- 2.1 Less formal dress is acceptable in Marathon for the athlete and grooms. Shorts are not permitted. Infringement will incur 10 penalties per person.
- 2.2 From the In-Harness horse inspection until the end of the Cool down, athletes and grooms must wear securely fastened protective headgear, and a **body-back** protector in the Marathon Sections. See GR801.
- 2.3 During the Section A, Controlled Warm-up, Warm-up Obstacle and Section B, failure to wear such Protective Headgear and back/body protector will result in elimination.
- 2.4 During the In-Harness Inspection, Halt area and Cool Down area, failure to wear such Protective Headgear and ~~back~~body protector where and when required after being notified by an Official to do so, will result in a Yellow Warning Card being issued to the athlete.
- 2.5 Medical armbands are strongly recommended.
- 2.6 When a ~~back~~body protector is required, air protector can be used combined with a ~~real back or~~ body protector but never without.

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
FEI Rule Change	4/1/2025	11/13/2024	Approved 1/25/2025

Rule Change Intent

This proposal mirrors the FEI change for increased equine safety in both tack and carriage set-up.

Proponent Details Contact Information

Driving

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Linked Rules Comments

DC925 Harness, Carriage, and Horses

3. Nosebands, ancillary equipment and blinkers:

3.1 Any nosebands, attachments or ancillary equipment which impede or are likely to impede the free intake of air into the nostrils of the horse are not permitted. If the horse has obtained a medical certificate to wear a nosenet, it must be used whenever the horse is harnessed, ridden or lunged and at the First horse inspection. ***The noseband must be adjusted with sufficient laxity as determined by a member of the Ground Jury.***

3.2 Blinkers, if used, and ancillary equipment must not impede forward vision or be so close to the eyes as to irritate them.

[...]

1. Connecting straps. Connecting straps between neck or breast collars may be used in all Four-in-Hand competitions. The leaders may not be attached to each other in any other way (except by the reins). The swingletree/trace of the leaders may not be ***attached in any way that would reduce the width of the lead bar as defined in DC 925.1.7.***



Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
FEI Rule Change	4/1/2025	11/13/2024	Approved 1/25/2025

Rule Change Intent

This proposal mirrors the FEI rule change to add more defined language as it relates to athletes lap belt attachments in Marathon carriages.

Proponent Details Contact Information

Driving

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Linked Rules Comments

## DC928 Participation

### 1. Method of Driving

Athletes may use any method or style of driving.

### 2. The Athletes and Grooms

2.1 Each athlete must drive the same horse(s) in all phases of the competition, except where a substitution was decided in compliance with the rules. See DC931.

2.1.1 In National Championships, an athlete or groom may compete only one turnout in a USEF National Championship. If a driver wishes to enter more than one turnout in a USEF National Championship class, one hour before the beginning of the scheduled first horse inspection ("the jog"), the competitor must declare which of their turnouts is participating in the Championship.

2.1.2 When participating in a National Championship, athletes and grooms with multiple entries must complete the Championship entry before the non-Championship entry in Marathon. Accepting multiple entries will be at the discretion of the Organizer, if scheduling permits.

2.2 For Intermediate, Preliminary, Training, and Beginner levels, the requirement for a groom with a Single or VSE turnout is at the discretion of the Organizer. Exception: All Para-Driving turnouts must always have a groom while on the carriage.

2.3 Depending on the schedule, an athlete can compete twice and in addition, they can act as groom. Athletes can compete more than once as athlete or groom, subject to event scheduling requirements. 2.3.1. At Short Format Driving Events, there is no limit to the participation of athletes or grooms other than what the Organizer can accommodate in the schedule.

2.4 Groom(s) may participate several times in all competitions, as per 2.3.

2.5 The athlete is the only person allowed to handle the reins, use whip and brake throughout each competition. Each contravention of this rule, even if to prevent an accident, will result in 20 penalties. However, a groom may handle the reins and brake without penalty in all competitions provided the vehicle remains stationary.

2.5.1 Para Driving Athletes from nominated profiles may compete with the whip held or used by groom, the brake operated by the groom, and the groom holding the finger loop but must have this noted on the FEI Masterlist or their Federation dispensation following classification evaluation.

2.6 No person may be tied to the carriage in any way during the competitions. An athlete may be secured by rope, webbing or belt provided one end is held by a groom ~~and not wrapped or fastened to the carriage in any way.~~ ***The lap belt may be attached to the carriage on one end with the other free end of the belt neither fastened to the carriage such as with tape, zip tie, buckle, or snap nor wrapped to the carriage by more than one single 360-degree loop which contains no overlap, half-hitch, or other means of knotting to secure the loop.*** Failure to comply will result in elimination.

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
FEI Rule Change	4/1/2025	11/21/2024	Approved 1/25/2025

Rule Change Intent

The additional language clarifies that a flagged Obstacle without height (e.g. ditch) may be jumped in the wrong direction in order to re-present or negotiate the next Obstacle. It is not permitted at national or FEI levels to jump a flagged Obstacle with height (e.g. oxer) in the wrong direction (see EV121.3b).

Proponent Details Contact Information

Eventing

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Linked Rules Comments

## EV122 Cross-Country Phase Definitions of Faults

### 5. ADDITIONAL ATTEMPTS AT OBSTACLES COMPOSED OF SEVERAL ELEMENTS.

- a. It is permitted, but not required, after a Disobedience at an Obstacle composed of several elements for an Athlete to retake any element already jumped in order to complete the negotiation of the Obstacle. The Athlete may be penalized for any additional fault even if it is at an element previously jumped successfully.
- b. After a Disobedience, when necessary to negotiate the next Obstacle, it is permitted for an Athlete to pass through markers *of an Obstacle without height (i.e step or ditch)* in the wrong direction.

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
FEI Rule Change	4/1/2025	11/21/2024	Approved 1/25/2025

Rule Change Intent

The intent of the proposal is to align with lanuage in FEI Article 526.1 and 527, effective January 1, 2025.

Proponent Details Contact Information

Eventing

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Linked Rules Comments

## EV112 Unethical Treatment of the Horse

1. Unethical Treatment (see GR838). Any act or series of actions that, in the opinion of the Ground Jury, or in its absence the Technical Delegate, can clearly and without doubt be defined as Unethical Treatment of the Horse must be penalized by Disqualification. Such acts include, but are not limited to:

- a. Riding an exhausted Horse;
- b. ~~Excessive~~ **Continued** pressing of a tired Horse;

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
FEI Rule Change	4/1/2025	12/1/2024	Approved 1/25/2025

Rule Change Intent

The wording change is necessary to align with FEI rules. This is to correct any confusion as to which set of equipment is eligible to be used in the ring.

Proponent Details Contact Information

Vaulting

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Linked Rules Comments

## CHAPTER VA VAULTING DIVISION

### SUBCHAPTER VA-1 GENERAL

#### VA 107 Equipment

1.
  - c. Two (2) side reins or two (2) ~~draw~~ **3 – Point Reins**.
    1. Side reins must be attached to the bit or cavesson and one (1) point of contact on the surcingle on the same side.
    2. Either two side reins, or **3- Point Reins** reins, are permitted. **3 – Point Draw Reins** reins are attached from the surcingle through the bit rings back to the surcingle on the same side. The distance between the two attached points (top and bottom) on each side of the surcingle must not be greater than 40 centimeters. The **3 – Point Reins draw reins** must be adjustable only as per manufacture and any homemade modification of the adjustments of the **3 – Point Reins draw reins** (for example making a knot) is not permitted. (Standing reins or auxiliary reins are not permitted). See the FEI Rules for Vaulting Article 719.2.5.

\*below, a pictogram of allowed **3 – Point Reins** ~~draw~~ reins:



Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
FEI Rule Change	4/1/2025	12/1/2024	Approved 1/25/2025

Rule Change Intent

The FEI has made adjustments to the Freestyle requirements for Squad. We must align with them in order to ensure matching judging requirements for competition.

Proponent Details	Contact Information
Vaulting	Michelle McQueen mmcqueen@usef.org

Linked Rules	Comments
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## SUBCHAPTER VA-2 TEAM EVENT

### VA117 Freestyle

#### 8. Technique Score

##### a. 3\*A Squad

1. Divided into Performance (70%) and DOD (30%).
2. Only the twenty-five (~~25~~**20**) exercises with the highest Degree of Difficulty (DOD) will be counted. DOD D exercises count 0.5 points, DOD M exercises count 0.3 points. DOD Exercises count 0.1 points.

##### b. 2\*B Squad

1. Divided into Performance (70%) and DOD (30%).
2. Only the twenty-five (~~25~~**20**) exercises with the highest Degree of Difficulty (DOD) will be counted. DOD D exercises count 0.5 points, DOD M exercises count ~~0.3~~**0.4** points, DOD exercises count ~~0.1~~**0.2** points.

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
FEI Rule Change	4/1/2025	12/6/2024	Approved 1/25/2025

Rule Change Intent

The FEI currently has their 2\* junior level with one round of compulsories and two rounds of freestyle. In order to match this with our 2\* level, we must make this adjustment. This will benefit vaulter for 2 reasons. First, our vaulters will be able to practice and compete along the same lines as international level vaulters and thus be more competitive at the international competitions. Secondly, this will reflect the World Championships format at the 2\* level, so our vaulters will be better prepared for the world championships and able to compete more evenly with international competitors.

Proponent Details	Contact Information
Vaulting	Michelle McQueen mmcqueen@usef.org
Linked Rules	Comments

## **SUBCHAPTER VA-3 INDIVIDUAL EVENT**

### **VA118 3\*Individual, 2\* Young Vaulters/Gold, 2\*Silver, 1\*Bronze, and Event Requirements**

3\* Individual and 2\* Young Vaulters/Gold Events take place in one round, consisting of Compulsories, Technical Test, and Freestyle performed in separate sections. The 2\* Silver ***Individual event takes place in one round, each round consisting of Compulsories and two rounds of Freestyle, performed in separate sections.*** and 1\* Bronze Individual Events takes place in one round, each round consisting of Compulsories and Freestyle and Compulsories to the Right performed in separate sections.

1. Competition must be offered at 3\*Individual, 2\* Young Vaulters/Gold, 2\*Silver and 1\*Bronze levels.
  - a. Women's and Men's divisions must be offered at each level.
  - b. Vaulters who hold AVA Gold Medals may not compete in the 2\*Silver or 1\*Bronze Division. Vaulters who hold AVA 2\*Silver Medals may not compete in the 1\*Bronze Division.
2. In 3\*Individual and 2\* Young Vaulters/Gold Events, the competition is at the center to the left or to the right for Compulsory, Technical Test, and Freestyle sections.
3. In 2\*Silver ***and Events, the competition is at the center to the left or right for the Compulsory and Freestyle sections.***
4. ***In*** 1\*Bronze Events, the competition is at the center to the left for the Compulsory and Freestyle section and to the right for the second Compulsories section.
5. In the event there are more than 30 competitors in the 1\*Bronze and/or 2\*Silver Event, Competition Management, at its discretion, may limit the number of competitors who compete in the Compulsories to the Right section. In this instance, the top 15 highest scoring women and the top 15 highest scoring men in 1\*Bronze event and the top 15 highest scoring women and the top 15 highest scoring men in the 2\*Silver event will advance to compete in the Compulsories to the right section.

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