

New USEF Dressage Rules to Take Effect April 1, 2013

Dressage USEF/USDF Recognized Competitions

Attire

- **HELMETS FOR EVERYONE!** From the time horses are officially admitted to the competition grounds by competition management, *anyone mounted on any horse must wear protective headgear*, defined as a riding helmet which meets or exceeds ASTM (American Society for Testing and Materials)/SEI (Safety Equipment Institute) *standards for equestrian use* and carries the SEI tag. *The harness must be secured and the helmet properly fitted.* [DR120.6]
- **Waiving jackets:** In locations with high average heat and humidity on the date of a competition, management can publish in their prize list that jackets will be waived for the duration of the competition. Alternatively, management can announce prior to or during a competition that competitors can show without jackets when In extreme heat and/or humidity is forecast. *This waiver applies to all classes including FEI.* [DR120.7]
- **Shirts get colorful:** If jackets are waived, competitors must wear a shirt with sleeves and collar, without neckwear, and without decoration. [See DR120.14 and DR121.1 for permitted logos/sponsor branding.] T-shirts are not permitted. NOTE that the requirement that the shirt be light, solid or even conservative in color has gone away. [DR120.7]
- **Riders in classes and tests at all levels in Level 1 Competitions, and riders in Opportunity classes in Level 2 and Level 3 Competitions will not be required to wear jackets at all.** Breeches and shirts, boots and protective headgear as specified in DR120.1-6. Jackets or vests of any type are allowed but not required; neckwear may be worn only if the rider chooses to compete in a riding jacket. [DR120.5]

Tack/Equipment

- **Fly hoods (ear covers) are permitted for competitions held outdoors** in order to protect horses from insects. NOTE that permission from the judge/management is no longer required. The fly hoods should be discreet and should not cover the horse's eyes; it cannot be used for masking noise cancelling earplugs.
- After completion of the test, **the rider or his representative is responsible for removing the fly hood to present to the ring steward** for inspection. [DR121.7 & .8]

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Tests & Execution of Test Movements

- **Dressage Rider Tests** at Training, First and Second Levels took effect 12/1/12. They count toward the horse's limit of three tests per day and two consecutive levels per show, and follow the dress, tack and equipment rules for performance tests of the same level.
- **Training Level Freestyle**, effective 12/1/12. Horse/ rider pair must have earned a score of at least 60% at Training 3 or any test of a higher level in open competition; photocopy of front of test must be submitted with entry. [DR129.9]
- **Freestyle Qualification, all levels:** the qualifying score must be earned in open, not breed-restricted, competition.
- To execute the exercise **"stretching on a long rein" at the walk** correctly, the rider allows the horse to take the reins gradually and smoothly as he stretches his neck... [DR103.3.e]
- A **four-beat rein back**, if done without resistance, can be scored Sufficient or better. [DR106.1]
- When **rising trot** is permitted in a test or class, the rider should change the diagonal when changing directions, except during a lengthening. The correct diagonal is considered to be when the rider is sitting when the outside front foot and inside hind foot are on the ground. DR117.7 and 133.2.i]
- **Pirouette/half-pirouette/quarter-pirouette/turn on haunches:** At whatever gait the turn is executed, the horse should maintain the ~~eade~~ appropriate sequence and timing of footfalls of that gait. [DR112.4]

As of 1 MAR, the Dressage chapter of the USEF online rule book has not yet been updated with these changes, all of which were approved in January to take effect 1 APR 2013. (Dressage Rider tests and Training Level Freestyle took effect 1 DEC 12.) You'll find the rule book at http://www.usef.org/_IFrames/RuleBook/2013Chapters.aspx; you'll find the full text of the above changes at [Rule Changes Approved by the Board of Directors on 1/17/13 and 1/19/13](#) Be sure to review the General Rules as well as the Dressage chapter. As always, responsibility remains with the competitor to be aware of and comply with all rules that apply to his or her chosen sport.

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