

A Visual Guide to 2022 Dressage Attire

Revised 7/4/2022 [Page 36](#)

AN IN-DEPTH LOOK AT THE NEW USEF
RULES PERTAINING TO RIDER DRESS



This Learning Module is to help everyone, competitors judges, technical delegates and competition management to navigate through the new dress rules for 2022. It is understandable that everyone has questions at this time as the dress rule changes have been substantive.

During the Learning Module, the wording of the rules are in standard text for the: USEF Rules
and our comments are in Italic text: *Comments.*

We have given examples of different helmets, coats, spurs etc. in order to give everyone more depth in the explanation of the intent of the rules.

The 2022 Rules

1. Dress. The Dress Code provisions of this section apply to all classes and levels, including Championships, at USEF Licensed-USDF recognized dressage competitions.

FEI Dress rules apply only to FEI recognized dressage events (CDIs).

This means that any class, any level in a USEF/USDF competition follows these rules. If the competition is a CDI, in the CDI classes, the FEI Dress Rules prevail.

1.1 Protective Headgear

Protective headgear is defined as a riding helmet, which meets or exceeds current ASTM (American Society for Testing and Materials)/SEI (Safety Equipment Institute) standards for equestrian use and carries the SEI tag.



TDs are not required to inspect any helmet worn by a competitor.

1.1 Protective Headgear

From the time horses are officially admitted to the competition grounds by competition management, anyone mounted on a horse at any time on the competition grounds,

- including non-competing riders,
- riders on non-competing horses,
- mounted participants in exhibition classes,
- and those competing in all classes and tests, including Para Dressage tests,

must wear protective headgear as defined by this rule and otherwise in compliance with GR801.

1.1 Protective Headgear

The harness must be secured and properly fitted. Any rider violating this rule at any time must immediately be prohibited from further riding until the headgear is properly in place.



Mounted/secured/fitted.



*Mounted/fitted but
not properly secured.*



Unmounted & OK.

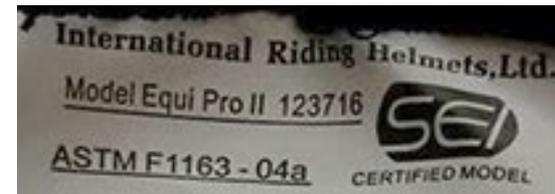
Protective headgear may be the same as or a coordinating color with the coat, and may include contrast coloring, accent, and crystal decoration. See DR136 for dress code rules for exhibitions.





All approved and therefore acceptable helmets.

Only helmets with the ASTM/SEI label inside are acceptable. The TD is advised to check helmets that have come into question, either by the judge at C or due to an accident.



There are brand names that are ASTM/SEI certified brands and there are knock-offs that look the same but are not certified. The three pictured are not ASTM/SEI certified helmets.



This one also has a too loose chin strap demonstrated.

2.2 Competitors are permitted to wear a hat cover and a rain coat, with or without a riding jacket, in inclement weather.



All of the above  would be unusual but permitted covers.

1.2 Coats and Jackets

A short riding jacket or cutaway coat (modified tailcoat) with short tails is permitted at any level of competition. A tailcoat is permitted only in classes above Fourth level.



Any single color jacket or tailcoat is permitted and may have subtle pin striping, checks or tweeds.



Examples of Tweed Riding Jackets



Subtle Tweed allowed.



Subtle Tweed allowed.



Not subtle Tweed and not allowed.

Coat colors have a wider range...



Striped or multi-colored jackets or coats are not permitted.



These are all examples of legal coats.



These coats are not a subtle pattern and are not allowed.



Not subtle pinstriping or tweed pattern – not allowed.





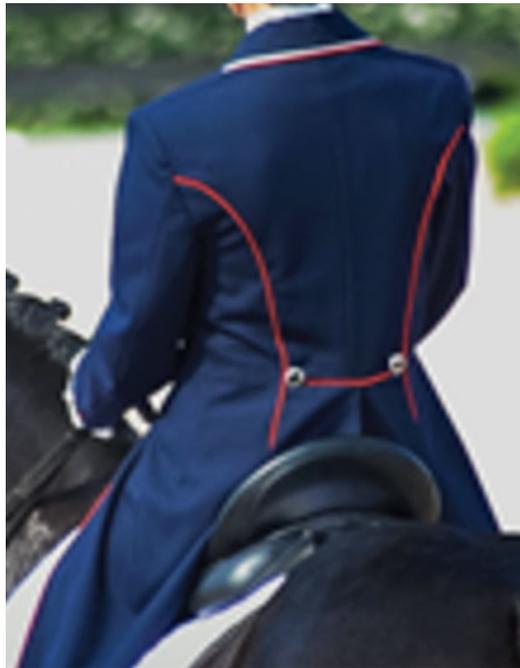
These coats are legal.



Tasteful and discreet accents, such as a collar of a different hue, modest piping, or crystal decorations, are acceptable.



Tasteful and discreet accents, such as a collar of a different hue, modest piping, or crystal decorations, are acceptable.



These are acceptable.



These are acceptable.





The trim on this coat's sleeves is borderline. Some may feel that the cuffs are not discrete and tasteful and others may feel that they are. When in doubt, rule on the side of the competitor.

For TDs, if there is concern expressed in relation to a coat like this, this should be included in the TD Report. Include photos if possible to obtain.

Riders competing in Level 1 dressage competitions or in Opportunity classes are not required to wear a riding jacket or coat.



1.3 Vests

Vests of any type are permitted but not required. Vests, including cooling vests, may be worn underneath a riding jacket or when jackets are waived.



1.3 Vests.

1.3.1. Per GR801, a body protecting or inflatable vest, specifically designed for use in equestrian sport, may be worn in any division or class without penalty from the judge.



These have a connecting strap that releases the inflation device and it is attached to the saddle.

1.3 Vests.

1.3.2. When the only warmup available is open to all horses and riders, riders with safety concerns are encouraged to wear an orange vest.

This applies to safety concerns of any kind with horse or rider.



1.4 Breeches and Jodhpurs.

White, light or dark colored breeches or jodhpurs are permitted in competition.

Bright colors or patterns are not permitted.

Contrast piping is allowed.



Breeches and Jodhpurs



Breeches



Jodhpurs have a foot strap



Foot strap is around instep of the boot.

You wear jodhpurs with or without garters.



Breeches or jodhpurs may be of any white, light or dark color but not bright or patterned.



Bright colors not allowed.

1



2



3



6



7



8



4



5



9



10



1-5 are all bright colors and not allowed.

6-10 are all colors that are not bright.
They are legal.

Patterns are not allowed.



Shirts may be of any color.



If jackets are not worn, shirts must be without bold pattern. This shirt has a bold pattern and is not allowed if no jacket is worn.

1.5 Shirts and Neckwear.

Shirts with tie, choker, stock tie, (1-5) or integrated stand-up collar(6-7) are required.



1



2



3



4



5



6

7



Ties, chokers, or stock ties may be any color.



...without neckwear... Which of these is considered neckwear?



Left is an integrated collar, center a choker, right is a stock tie.

The integrated collar is legal as is. The choker may or may not be 'integrated' and if removable is neckwear and must be removed. The stock tie is neckwear and must be removed.

Must they open their collar?



The rule does not specify that the collar has to be open.

Common sense says that it might make the rider cooler to ride with it open...

BUT IT IS NOT REQUIRED.

When a rider is not wearing a jacket, neckwear is not allowed in the competition ring.



2. Weather Conditions.

In locations with high average heat and humidity on the date of a competition, competition management may publish in its prize list that jackets will be waived for the duration of the competition. Alternatively, management may announce prior to or during a competition that competitors may show without jackets when extreme heat and/or humidity is forecasted. This waiver applies to national classes at a USEF licensed-USDF recognized dressage competition.



2. Weather Conditions.

2.1 Competitors must wear protective headgear and a shirt with sleeves and collar, without neckwear. T-shirts are not permitted.

This rider has a sleeveless shirt and is wearing neckwear. This would be fine for the warmup but not in the competition ring.



2. Weather Conditions.

2.2 Competitors are permitted to wear a hat cover and a rain coat, with or without a riding jacket, in inclement weather.



Equipment needs to be checked under the long coat.

1.6 Boots & Half Chaps.

For tests or classes at Fourth level or below, riders may wear tall boots or paddock/jodhpur boots with half-chaps or garters, matching the color of their boots, and made of smooth leather or leather-like material.



1.6 Boots & Half Chaps.

... boots with half-chaps or garters, matching the color of their boots, and made of smooth leather or leather-like material.



Half Chaps that are not leather like material are not allowed.



Paddock or Jodhpur boots



Tall English-style riding boots, including dress or field boots or variations thereof, are required above Fourth Level.



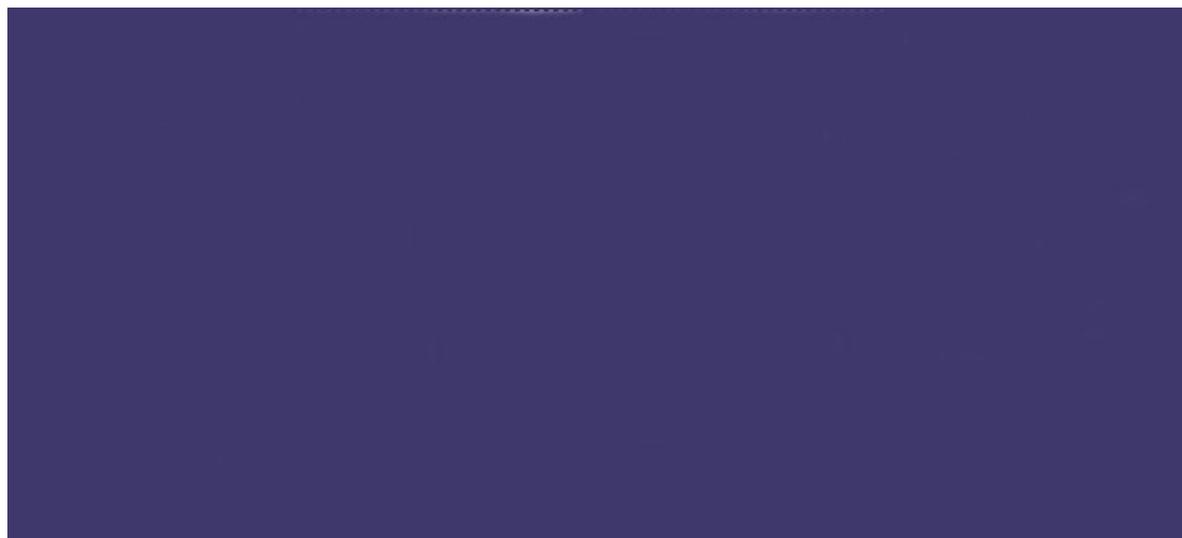
Boots of coordinating color(s), with or without accents, are permitted. Boots/shoes worn while riding anywhere on the competition grounds must have a distinguishable heel. (GR 801.9)



A rider could have a coat of this color with boots that match.

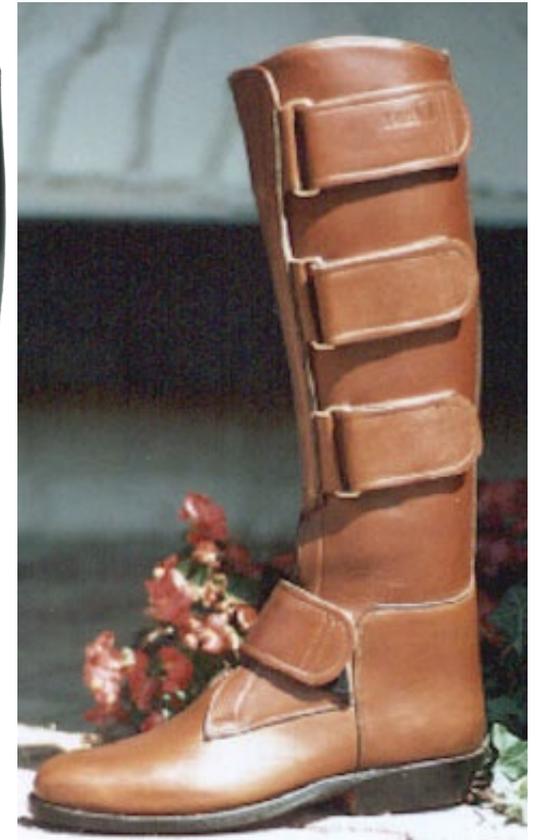


Purple





The rule says boots... It does not specify what the boots look like. These are all legal but...



These are all legal riding boots.

1.7 Gloves.

White or light colored gloves are recommended and any solid color is permitted at Fourth Level and below.

Black, brown, or white gloves are required in FEI tests or levels.



1.8 Military.

Current and retired members of the Armed Services and police units may ride in the uniform of their service. All riders who choose to wear Armed Services or police uniform must wear protective headgear as defined in DR120.1.1 and in compliance with GR801. Members of the Armed Services or police units may wear summer uniforms if jackets are waived.



Legal or not legal?



Not legal as the rider has no helmet.



1.9 Pas de Deux and Quadrille Attire.

Riders in Pas de Deux and Quadrille classes are exempt from the dress code requirements of DR120.1.2, 1.4, 1.5, and 1.7. However, headgear and boots as required in DR120.1.1 and 1.6 must be worn. Riders must follow the dress requirements outlined in the USDF Rules and Guidelines for Quadrille Competitions and for Pas de Deux.



Batman has a helmet on under the costume.



DR 136.3 Horses used in exhibition classes, demonstrations and retirement ceremonies are subject to the provisions of GR839, but are exempt from the dress and saddlery rules of the competition, except that protective headgear is required for all mounted participants in exhibition classes.

Demonstrations that are educational or for entertainment purposes (e.g. vaulting, historical reenactments, trick riding) are exempted from the protective headgear rules except for those competitors riding horses who are entered in the competition.



Tim Sutherland

3. Sponsor logo and Non-Sponsor Logo or Brand Marks.

When sponsorship is permitted in accordance with GR1306, the name and/or logo of the individual's sponsor(s) may appear on each of the two sides of jackets and top garments at the height of breast pockets not exceeding 80 cm² in size. Logos described under DR121 are also permitted. No other sponsor logos are permitted on any garments (including jackets or coats, vests, shirts, or stock ties).



When sponsorship is permitted in accordance with GR1306, the name and/or logo of the individual's sponsor(s) may appear on each of the two sides of jackets and top garments at the height of breast pockets not exceeding 80 cm² in size.

The name and/or logo of an individual's sponsor may also appear on the rider's protective headgear if permitted in accordance with GR1306 and DR121.1.b.



3.1 Dress may include non-sponsor logos or brand marks of any size. Refer to GR1306.



Difference between a Brand Mark (Ariat) and a Logo (USEF)



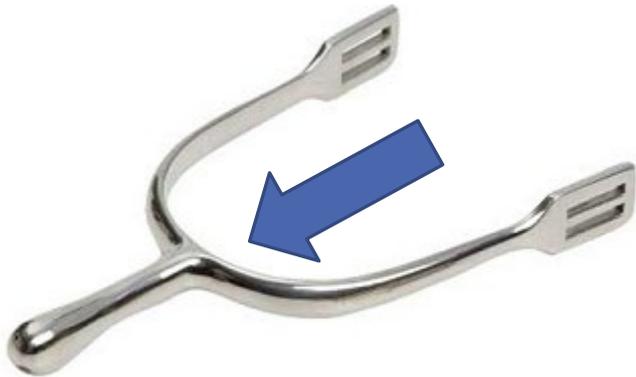
4. Spurs. Spurs must be made of metal. Only English-style spurs are permitted, ...



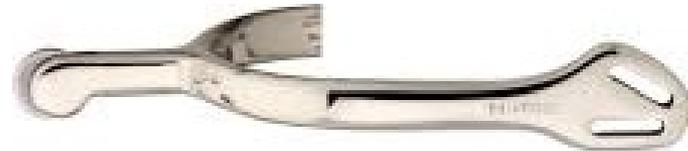
Western Spurs are not allowed.



4.1 The shank must be either curved or straight pointing directly back from the center of the spur when on the rider's boot. If the shank is curved, the spurs must be worn only with the shank directed downwards.



Shank not straight back from center of spur



Shank pointing up is not legal

However, swan necked spurs are permitted.



The inside arm of the spur must be smooth and one or both arms may have rubber covers.



Not Legal



If rowels are used, they must be blunt/smooth and free to rotate.



Spikes are a NO!

Metal spurs with round hard plastic knobs on the shank are permitted (“Impuls” spur).



“Dummy” spurs (without shank) are permitted. Armless spurs are permitted.



4.2 Spurs are mandatory during competition in FEI Tests. However, spurs are optional for all of the FEI Children tests, FEI Pony tests, and the FEI and USEF test for 4-year old horses.

4.3 The maximum length for spurs in all classes except the FEI Children tests and the FEI Pony tests is 5.08cm (2 inches) including rowels. Only blunt metal spurs (i.e., with no rowels) no longer than 3.5cm are permitted for FEI Pony Rider tests and FEI tests for Children. Except for FEI Pony Rider tests and FEI tests for Children, the length of the spur is measured from the base to the end of the shank. For FEI Pony Rider tests and FEI tests for Children, spur length is measured from the boot to the tip of the spur. *(See pictures on next slide)*

4.4 Offset spurs without rowel are permitted for riders having an appropriate Federation Dispensation/Classification Certificate.



Except for FEI Pony Rider tests and FEI tests for Children, the length of the spur is measured from the base to the end of the shank.

For FEI Pony Rider tests and FEI tests for Children, spur length is measured from the boot to the tip of the spur.



Base of shank to end of the shank.



Boot to tip of spur.

Variations of legal spurs



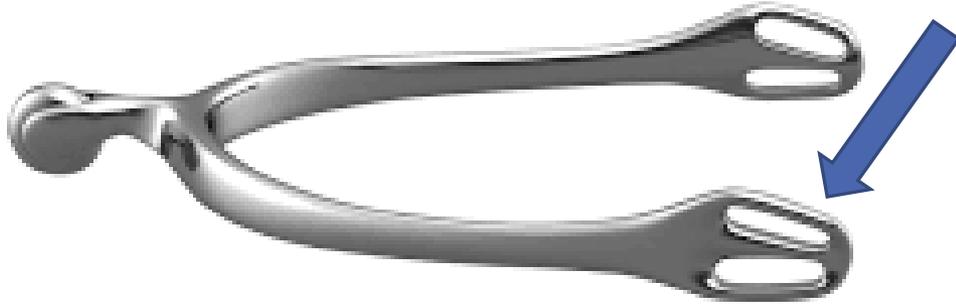
Spurs with issues...



The shank is pointing up in each of these spurs. Very often riders do not realize they are putting their spurs on their boots upside down. This will result in elimination.



This spur is put on upside down. The flat portion of the shank should be on the top and the curved area of the shank should be on the bottom.



If you look at this spur where the spur strap runs through it, the very top is flat and somewhat sloped downwards. This is one clue that the spur is the correct side up.



When put on upside down the flat top of the branch spur attachment area is on the bottom and the roller curves upward.

Spur Straps – there are no specifics about color or material of spur straps.



Position of the spurs on the boots



Spurs are meant to be level on the boots, which is why many boots have a built in spur rest.

A 'not level' spur is not illegal. It just indicates a sloppy method of wearing the spurs.



5. Electronic Communication Devices.

Earphones and/or other electronic communication devices are strictly prohibited while competing and such usage is penalized by elimination. Electronic devices that transmit and/or receive information may be used in the stabling area and in warm up areas.

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.

5.1 Electronic devices are permitted for Para Dressage riders if stated on their Federation Dispensation/Classification Certificate.

6. Federation Dispensation/Classification Certificates

Individuals holding Federation Dispensation/Classification Certificates may be allowed exceptions. See DR307.

All exceptions to required dress must be listed on the rider's Federation Dispensation/Classification Certificate. BOD 6/28/21 Effective 12/1/21

USEF Dispensation/Classification Certificates and Federation Presidential Modification Letters

Riders with a diagnosed permanent disability who require the use of compensatory aids or adaptive equipment must hold a Federation Dispensation/Classification Certificate indicating their International (FEI) or their National (Federation) classification status. A copy of an athlete's Dispensation/Classification Certificate listing all of his or her allowed compensating aids and adaptive equipment must be included with the riders entry, with a copy then attached to each of their Dressage sheets for the Judge's reference. A copy must remain with the entry records for review by the Technical Delegate.

Athletes in FEI Para Dressage tests must have a current Federation Dispensation/Classification Certificate which indicates their Classification status to be eligible to participate.

Riders who do not submit a current Federation Dispensation/Classification Certificate or a Federation Presidential Modification letter to the competition secretary cannot compete within any modifications, compensatory aids, or dispensations to the rules in DR Chapter 1. Federation affidavits cannot be used to compete with modifications or compensatory aids when either the Federation Dispensation/Classification Certificate or Presidential Modification is not available.

DR 121.17. Whips. *(Although whips are in DR 121, we will mention them here also)*

The length of the lash is included in measurements of the length of the whip.



For schooling, the rider while mounted, is permitted to carry one whip that is no longer than 120 cm (47.2 inches) or 100 cm (39.4 inches) for FEI Pony Riders.

One whip no longer than 120 cm (47.2 inches) may be carried in all classes except, under penalty of elimination, USEF/USDF Championships, USEF National Dressage Championships, USEF High Performance Championships, and USEF High Performance qualifying and selection trials. Exception: Competitors riding side-saddle may carry a whip no longer than 120 cm (47.2 inches) in USEF/USDF Championships.

One whip no longer than 120 cm (47.2 inches) may be carried in all qualifying classes (including NAYRC and NAJC) unless such use is otherwise prohibited by FEI or Federation rules or selection procedures for the classes. However, when a whip is permitted for FEI Pony Tests, the maximum length is 100 cm (39.4 inches).

An adjustable-length whip may not be carried by a mounted rider.

The use of one lungeing whip is permitted only when lungeing. There is no restriction on the length of whip permitted for working a horse in hand or on the lunge.

Rules regarding whip use at the Dressage Festival and USEF Selection Trials. The following rules (17.1 and 17.2) apply exclusively to use of a whip at these competitions:

- a. Upon arrival on the showground, only the rider while riding, walking, leading or lungeing a horse (lunge whip allowed) is allowed to carry a whip (maximum 120 cm) anywhere on the showground. The groom may also walk, lead and lunge a horse as above. Other parties are allowed to carry a whip, provided it is not in connection with the training of the horse.
- b. The whip must be dropped before entering the space around the competition arena or the rider will be penalized for an error (see DR122.5.j).

Dressage Whip (top), Neon Whip, Crop, Bat, Bat with flapper
All are Legal



Remember GR803 Use of Whips applies

...No appendages of any kind are permitted... Some breed and/or disciplines may have use of whip division rules that depart from this rule and as such, the division rule governs.



These are not considered appendages as long as they are 'as manufactured' parts of the whip/bat.

These are appendages...



SADDLE PADS

Although these are under DR121, we thought it might be beneficial to cover these in greater detail at this time.

The rule states: DR 121.1.b Saddle pads are optional and when used should be white or of conservative color. Contrast color and piping are permitted. Striped or multi-colored pads are not permitted.



Conservative color pad with piping.



Contrast piping allowed.



Saddle pads are optional and when used should be white or of conservative color.

Everyone's definition of conservative varies.

The colors indicated in the chart are all acceptable colors as long as they are not bright, shiny and/or reflective shades of these colors. Lemon or Lime would have to be flat colors.

Dayglow and neon shades of each color are not acceptable.

Blush	Beige	Burgundy	Brown	Cherry	Chocolate
Coast	Cream	Gray	Hunter	Ivy	Kelly
Lavender	Lemon	Magenta	Mint	Mustard	Navy
Olive	Orange	Lime	Peach	Pink	Pumpkin
Purple	Red	Rose	Royal	Rust	Salmon
Sea Blue	Sky Blue	Smoke	Stone	Tan	Pine
Teal	Black	White			

Bright/Shiny/Dayglow — are not acceptable



These pads have an acceptable base color but the shine/reflectivity is very high especially when you are in the sunlight. Not allowed.



These pads, in the sunlight, really sparkle and are very distracting.

The objective of this rule is to not have something on the horse that distracts the judge's eye from their primary focus of the 'horse/ rider'.

These pads may be acceptable in the competition ring as the one on the left has a sheen to the material but is not 'glittery' or reflective.

The one on the right is acceptable if the cross hatching does not glitter really prominently.



These are all fine for warmup areas but not for the competition ring.



These are all variations of striped pads and are not allowed.



While in the competition ring and during awards ceremonies, a logo, monogram or name may appear on either or both sides of a saddle pad. Logos shall not exceed 200 sq. cm (26.632 sq. inches) in size.

Only the following logos or names are permitted: a breed logo for horses registered with that breed; a national flag for citizens of that country; Federation or USDF names/logos.

Professionals of any age may have a business or product name/logo of their official sponsor. Amateurs shall not have a business or product name/logo displayed unless they own the business. Competition award pads and stable name pads are permitted. No other advertisement or publicity is permitted on saddle pads or horses, except as noted in DR121.8 fly hoods.



Professionals of any age may have a business or product name/logo of their official sponsor on their saddle pad.

Amateurs shall not have a business or product name/logo displayed unless they own the business.



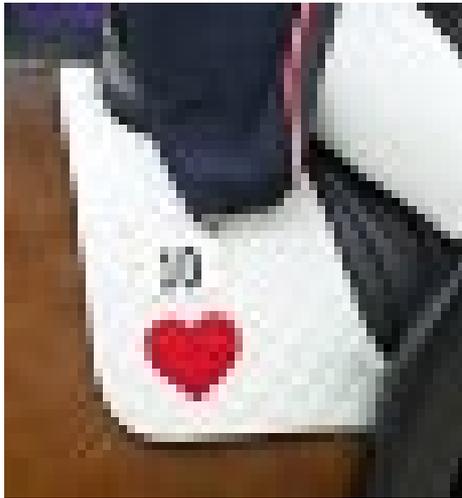
We are currently discussing the issue of the logo rules and the reality of increasing numbers of pads with manufacturer marks on them.

If it is a pad with the Custom Saddlery logo (which is considered an advertisement) or other company name on it, it is not legal for use in the competition ring except by a professional that is sponsored by that company.

If the same logo or company name pad is incorporated into an Award or Logo pad containing a competition award name or similar information, it is legal in the competition ring and award ceremonies. The company name could be on one side and the award name on the other.



These two pads are examples of personal logos of the horse (on the left) and the rider (on the right) and are acceptable in the competition ring and awards ceremonies.



****Please remember that any pad of any color with anything on it may be used at any time in any warmup area. What goes in the competition ring or awards ceremonies is where pad rules come into effect.*

We hope that this Learning Module has proven to be helpful in navigating through the complexities of the new Dress Rules for 2022.

If you have any questions, please contact the USEF Dressage Department.