

# ***General Information for Dressage Competitions and Some of the Most Common Rules***

*ECSJ sanctioned dressage shows included are conducted in accordance with ECSJ and USDF/USAE rules*

## **It is riders' responsibility to be familiar with these rules!**

- Spectators should be no closer than 10' from the dressage arena.
- A rider must enter the arena within 45 seconds of the judge's signal (usually a bell or whistle)
- Whips may be carried during a test but may not exceed 43 1/2" in length.
- Spurs capable of injuring a horse are forbidden.
- Riders may have a reader however; it is the rider's responsibility to know the test. Movements may only be read once.
- Talking or clucking to your horse is not permitted; nor is speaking to another person while in the arena (that includes speaking to your reader).
- Committing three course errors, leaving the arena during the test, or marked lameness result in elimination.
- Horses may not be entered in classes differing by more than one level at any one show.
- Horse/rider combination may not compete in more than three classes per show.
- Horses minimum age 36 months to be eligible to compete in any USDF recognized divisions. Horses younger than 36 months are eligible to compete in Introductory Level 1 and 2 tests only until 36 months of age. Age determined as of January first.
- A simple snaffle, regular cavesson, flash, figure-eight, or drop noseband are permitted. Twisted wire bits and bits combining copper with any other metal are not permitted. Refer to USDF rulebook for complete list of legal bits [www.usdf.org](http://www.usdf.org).
- A rider must be attired according to USDF/USAE rules for proper attire; i.e. light colored britches, boots, light colored shirt, dark jacket, and helmet. Jackets may be waived due to hot weather if permitted by show producers; no sleeveless shirts may be worn and neckware should be removed.
- Bandages, boots, blinders, martingales, draw reins, side reins, running reins, seat covers, earplugs, or artificial devices are not permitted. Lungeing with side reins, and riding or lungeing with boots, bandages is permitted during warmup.
- Each individual is responsible for checking the accuracy of all tests. Check tests immediately upon receipt. **No Changes in Scores Can Be Made After the Close of That Show!**