

BREED DRESSAGE SHOWS - WHAT MAY/WILL BE ENCOUNTERED

When a TD has dressage classes to monitor at a breed show that offers dressage, there are several areas that you will need to be aware of in regards to rule differences and potential areas of concern management wise. The breeds that have dressage and specific dressage rules are Andalusians, Arabians, Friesians, Morgans. It is very important for the TD to carefully review the breed specific dressage rules as there are many variations on the theme. Some key things are:

SADDLERY: Dressage saddlery rules apply to just the Dressage specific warm up areas in Andalusian, Arabian, Friesian and Morgan. Although not desirable, a rider could be in draw reins from the stall area to the warmup area and then take them off in the dressage specific warm-up area and be legal.

CHECKING EQUIPMENT: In regular dressage classes, we check 1/3 of the class. The type of equipment check is the full equipment check which includes checking the bit(s) in the mouth as well as everything else. Breed shows often have championship classes but unless the competition states that all horses are being checked for equipment, it is still 1/3 of the rides. In Arabian, there are Regional and National Championships, i.e. Sport Horse Nationals. If you are working one of these competitions, ask management what their preference is for the number of rides being checked.

SPURS - many breed riders in non-dressage classes will invert their spurs and wear them upside down (with the end pointing up). Smaller horses/longer legged riders are the reason. In the Dressage warm-up and competition ring you may find illegal spurs due to this. As doing this is perfectly legal in the other classes that competitors show in, they most often do not even recognize that the spur is actually upside down. The spur with the teeth on the inside arm is very common in Breeds and should be watched for. It is illegal in Dressage classes.

WHIPS - Morgans allow whips in Championship classes. Arabians cannot have them in Regional and National Championships unless Sidesaddle. Friesians and Andalusians (except Side Saddle) cannot in Championships.

FALSE TAILS – None of the four breeds allows the use of false tails.

READERS – Andalusian Championships cannot have a reader. Arabian allows them in Regional Championship classes except for FEI Level and Freestyles but not in National Level Championship classes. Friesian allows them in all Championship classes. Morgan allows them in all classes period.

NUMBER OF TESTS PER DAY – Andalusians are allowed a maximum of four Dressage rides per day at Fourth Level and below. They are allowed a maximum of three above Fourth Level. and Friesians fall under the ride limit rule. Arabians and Morgans are not limited.

LEVELS – Andalusians and Friesians have the two level rule. Arabians and Morgans do except for Intro which does not count as a level. Arabs and Morgans could do Intro/Training/First.

RIDE TIMES – Ride times may not be changed unless the appropriate rules for changes are followed for Arabian and Morgan. Ride times may be changed by management for Andalusian and Friesian.

CHAMPIONSHIP PERCENTAGE – In non Breed Dressage Championships, 55% is the lowest score that a horse can receive and be named champion. In Andalusian, it is 50%. Arabian/Friesian/Morgan do not specifically address this, so it would be 55%.

BREAKING TIES - Andalusian breaks ties from the collective marks for 1st, 2nd, 3rd. If collective marks are equal, the judge breaks the tie. Arabian will never have a tie that cannot be broken. They have a very detailed approach to absolutely breaking the tie. See AR174. Friesian and Morgan follow dressage rules of collective marks and then remain tied.

ADULT AMATEURS – Arabian has a different age rule for AA's. They are over 18 or no longer juniors.

STALLIONS – Dressage permits them in all classes except equitation. Andalusian, Arabian and Friesian allows them in all classes even equitation. Morgan cannot show stallions in Junior Exhibitor or Equitation classes.

HDC – Andalusian cannot have HDC entries. Arabian, Friesian & Morgan could.

OPEN DRESSAGE CLASSES AT BREED SHOWS – Andalusian, Arabians and Morgan must comply with all dressage rules including DR121. Friesian does not specify.

WARM UP AREAS

Saddlery rules apply to just dressage warm up areas in Andalusian, Arabian, Friesian and Morgan. Some of the exhibitors may compete in open dressage shows and be more familiar with dressage rules concerning equipment. Some do not and are clueless. **Closely monitoring the warm up area is very important.** There may be a supervisor of the warm up but if they are not conversant in dressage and breed practices, they may not be able to sort out the possible equipment issues.

These are very often designated dressage warm up area(s) that are dressage only. Other people/horses will try to work there. They must be told to exit (politely). There are other classes at the show where the rider may be in dressage equipment and attire and not be showing in dressage. These people may appear in the dressage warm up area. They may be using equipment that is not legal. Ask if they are competing in dressage and if the answer is yes, they are in illegal equipment. If the answer is no, they are in the wrong warm up area.

NUMBERS – (DR 121.11. - Numbers must be worn at all times when a horse is being exercised or ridden.) Breed dressage riders (Andalusian, Arabian & Morgan) do not have to have a number on unless they are in the warm up area. Friesians have not made an exception to DR121 in their rules so they should have a number on when they are being exercised or ridden anywhere but the likelihood of it happening is slight. Do not expect to see numbers on horses anywhere else but in the warm up area.

Riders in the warm up area should/must have numbers on but the problem arises due to their usually wearing their numbers on their coats at breed shows. The coat will usually be in the hands of the mother or related person and not on the riders back, and therefore no readily apparent number. You must continually remind dressage exhibitors that they must have their number on when working their horse in the designated dressage warm up area.

SEPARATE NUMBERS - Are not required in Andalusian, Arabian, and Friesian. Morgan does not have an exception.

SHOW SECRETARY/COORDINATOR - the show secretary may not be a dressage knowledgeable person. A lot of shows hire a separate dressage coordinator. This person will be in charge of setting up and running the dressage portion of the show. Sometimes the coordinator will handle the entries and be knowledgeable about them and sometimes it is the show secretary that handles the entries and sends the information to the coordinator.

If the dressage coordinator is knowledgeable, and if they know what they need to have for the show, i.e. personnel, tests, scheduled times, etc. all is good. If they are not strong, they may not know what is needed. They may assume that show management will supply some or all of what is necessary and show management was expecting the dressage coordinator to have everything ready. There may be a disconnect between what should be happening and what does happen. When inquiring in advance, of the show secretary, show manager or dressage coordinator, if everything is ready for the dressage classes, they may all assure you that all is taken care of, thinking that the other people have it well in hand. When the actual time comes, things may be missing. **Sometimes major things are missing!** Getting to the show grounds early is very important. Asking specific questions about things, i.e. tests, arena set up, scheduling will often give you an idea if it is happening or not.

PERSONNEL - if you have sufficient personnel, they may or may not be knowledgeable. Check early into who is in these positions and what experience they have. If the show is relying on volunteers, there are the usual problems of those that do not show up and getting management to produce the necessary people. Who is in charge of supplying the necessary people is a question that you need to have answered as it may be the show manager or it may be the dressage coordinator. Each may think that the other has arranged workers but sometimes neither has.

JUDGES, DRESSAGE CLASSES AND SPORT HORSE CLASSES - this can be a real problem. Dressage judges are hired to judge a breed show and sometimes do not realize what they are getting into even though it is in the contract. The dressage classes may run from 8-5. Then they may also be the sport horse judge and will judge the in-hand and under-saddle classes. Their day may be from 8 a.m. to late evening. As the sport horse classes are not dressage classes, the rule (No judge shall be required to officiate longer than 8 hours in one day, unless the judge has agreed in writing, and cannot be required to be on the competition grounds longer than 10 hours.) does not apply.

Dressage judges are not legged up to this type of schedule and although they signed the contract they may not realize what the contract actually means time wise. You may receive a lot of static from some of the judge(s) in these situations if they have not judged these shows before.

The Sport Horse Classes are covered by the Steward and not the Technical Delegate.