

DECISION MAKING PROCESS – This is a step-by-step protocol that can be utilized to problem solve.

Example #1: EQUIPMENT QUESTIONS



You have a bit -

1. Steps to follow to work out if it is legal or not.

a. Is it pictured in:

a. the Rule Book

If pictured, it is legal.

b. Annex A

It has a ✓

YES – it is legal.

It has a ✗

NO – not legal.

It says pending

NO – not legal.

c. a memo was received from USEF concerning the item – what did it say? Keep a file of these for future reference.

d. Dressage Equipment & Attire Book – variations on legal/illegal photos are included here.

b. It is not pictured in any of the above but is similar in design, look, effect as one that is? It is most likely legal. You can let it go for the immediate but send pictures in to the Dressage Department to clarify it.

c. It is not pictured and not similar – it possibly/probably is illegal but it is not automatically.

2. How to proceed? You can reach out:

a. USEF – if a week day, you can call the Dressage Department. Send a picture followed up by a phone call. If a weekend, calling the USEF Hotline will not be the best answer. You will not get the Dressage Department.

You could 'Consult the Hive Mind' (an entity consisting of a large number of people who share their knowledge or opinions with one another, a collective intelligence. For our purposes, this is the TD collective.)

b. Running it up the ladder – Senior TDs - you are drawing on their more advanced level of knowledge and experience.

c. Fellow TDs - If you choose a fellow TD, make sure that they are more experienced than you. But there is usually comfort in numbers. We all like to bounce ideas/issues off of each other.

d. Share your concern and plan of action with the manager and let them know that you are investigating this.

3. What about the TD Facebook page? Maybe someone has posted information on your item here, look and see. If not when you find the answer from a/b/c then post the answers that you find to this page. This info will then serve as a resource for other TDs who experience a similar issue.

4. What will occur when consulting the USEF Dressage Department?

A question on a piece of equipment or wearing apparel can be sent into the Department with pictures. (Dressage@USEF.ORG) They receive the question. They do the necessary research. If they have seen/experienced the issue before, they may respond immediately. But if it is a totally new, undiscussed item or issue that has not been seen before, getting a definitive answer may **take from a week or longer (several weeks)** as it must go through the procedural steps for an answer.

5. If you need a weekend, on the grounds, immediate answer, then you could consult the Hive Mind. If you cannot get an immediate unquestionable answer, ******we should always err on the side of the competitor or the competition*****. Tell them that you are not sure about the item/issue, will find out an answer and let them know. Get their contact information to utilize for your response back to them when you have an answer.

This must be included in the addendum in detail, how you proceeded, and with photos/video included.

But in the meantime: The following is the difficult part where TD judgement has to come into play!!!!

1) DO NOT INTERFERE WITH THEIR WARMUP/SCHOOLING

If it is something that can be fixed immediately and would prevent them from being eliminated, approach the trainer/coach if there is one, or the last resort the competitor. **If there is sufficient time to correct the issue before their ride.** Examples could be the horse has their boots on, they have the wrong number or no number, coats have not been waived and they are not wearing a coat or they still have their neckwear on.

But if it is not an issue that would entail elimination within the ring, wait until after they compete and then address the issue.

2) DO NOT STOP THEM FROM COMPETING

A score/test can be taken away after the fact but if they do not compete, they will not be able to make it up.

Example #2: RULE INTERPRETATIONS - More complex issues that involve GR 8, DR 122 and beyond.

You are being told that the boarders at the show which is hosting the competition are warming up in their indoor arena. Is this allowed? You are being told that the facility requires a health certificate to accompany every horse, can they do that? A question arises of whether or not they are eligible for the class...Any question that is raised that is not equipment based...

1. Steps to follow to work out if it is legal or not, required or not...

A. Is it covered in:

- | | |
|--|---|
| a. the DR section of the Rule Book? | If covered, what is the answer. If not... |
| b. is it covered in GR's? | If not... |
| c. is it covered in the program rules? | If not... |
| d. is it covered in the prize list? | If not... |
| c. take the issue to show management | What is their interpretation? |

B. If it is published either as a rule, in DR or GR, or the program rules or in the official prize list (the prize list may address the issue if it is not addressed in a DR/Gr/Program rule i.e. Prix Caprilli classes) program rules follow and DR/GRs are then consulted to see if it is covered there. Is there a rule that speaks to the issue? What is management's perception of the issue?

Has the question been answered? If no, then this:

2. How to proceed? You can ask for help with the decision by the following:

- USEF – if on a week day, call the Dressage Department. Send an explanation/picture (if applicable) followed up by a phone call. If a weekend, calling the USEF Hotline will not be the best answer. You will not get the Dressage Department.
- Running it up the ladder – Senior TDs – (more advanced level of knowledge and experience.)
- Fellow TDs - are they more experienced than you?

d. Share your concern and plan of action with the manager and let them know that you are investigating this.

3. What about the TD Facebook page? Maybe someone has posted information on your item/issue there, look and see. If not, when you determine the resolution to the issue share it on the page. This info is then a resource for other TDs who experience a similar issue.

4. What will occur when consulting the USEF Dressage Department (Dressage@USEF.ORG) – an explanation or picture (if relevant) can be sent/called into the Department. If they have seen/experienced it before, the response may be immediate. If it is a totally new, undiscussed item/issue that has not been seen before, getting a definitive answer will usually **take from a week or longer (several weeks)** as it must go through the procedural steps for an answer.

If you need a weekend, on the grounds, immediate answer, then you could contact the Hive Mind. If you cannot get an immediate unquestionable answer, ******we should always err on the side of the competitor or the competition*****. Tell them that you are not sure about the issue, will find out an answer and let them know. Get their contact information to utilize for your response back to them when you have an answer.

This must be included in the addendum in detail, how you proceeded, and with photos/detail included.

But in the meantime:

1) **DO NOT INTERFERE** WITH COMPETITORS WARMUP/SCHOOLING

2) **DO NOT STOP** A COMPETITOR FROM COMPETING for rule interpretation questions on equipment, dress, eligibility/qualification to ride in the class...

3) If it is something that competition management is doing/allowing that you are not sure is legal, discuss it with management and advise them that this is possibly a rule violation and let them solve it. We have no authority to stop it from happening or saying 'the competition can't do that', but must advise the competition that we are not quite sure and are reaching out for further information.

NOTE: If you are confronted with an issue that encompasses Equine Health and Safety issues, Drugs and Medications or Emergency situations with horses, then call the D&M number.