

New Dressage Rules Workshop 2025

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20 January 2025



New Dressage Rules



- Effective 1 January 2025
- New rule requests received from SDAs across Australia, the public, and the EA Dressage Officials Committee
- This year a diverse number of rule changes across many areas:
 - Horse Welfare
 - Equipment
 - Scoring
 - Judges

1.3.1 - Reporting of Abuse

1.3.1 Reporting of Abuse

Anyone witnessing an incident of abuse must report it in **writing** ~~the form of a written protest (see EA General Regulations Article 163) in confidence~~ to the OC immediately who will refer the matter **without delay to officials at the event with the appropriate time and authority to deal with it or, if such officials are not available, 14 days** to the State **CEO** ~~Branch authority~~ to initiate action.

1.5.1 Sensory Hair Rule Change

Please refer to the current EA General Regulations: Article 141 - Protection of Horses.

- In November 2024 the FEI General Assembly ratified a change to the Veterinary Regulations From January 2025.
- A similar prohibition will now apply in Australia regarding the removal or shortening the hair within the rims of the auricle (ears) of horses and ponies.
- From **1st January 2025**, horses found competing with hair in the auricles removed or shortened within the rims of the auricle will be issued a recorded warning and from **1st July 2025** will be eliminated from the event.

What is an Auricle?



The Auricle

What is an Auricle?

The Auricle is the outer ear (the part that is visible) It is made out of cartilage. It is covered with a thin layer of skin and muscles.

- *Removal of hair WITHIN the auricle (ear) no longer permitted*

1.5.1 Sensory Hair

Please refer to the current EA General Regulations: Article 141 - Protection of Horses.

FOR REFERENCE: EA General Regulations as of 1 January 2025:

Article 141 - Protection of Horses

1. In cases of a Horse's illness or injury during an Event the Ground Jury will decide, after consulting the Veterinary Delegate or Commission, whether the Horse may continue in that or subsequent Competitions.
2. A Horse's sensory hairs may not be clipped and/or shaven or otherwise modified in **any way nor may the hair in the auricles be removed or shortened within the rims of the auricle under penalty of elimination from the event.** Individual sensory hairs may be removed by a veterinarian to prevent pain or discomfort for the Horse.
3. Areas of hair that must be clipped, shaven or removed to allow veterinary treatment are exempt from this rule. Veterinary treatments are exempt from this rule.
4. Horses found competing with clipped/shaven/otherwise modified sensory hairs will be eliminated from the event .
5. **From 1st January 2025, horses found competing with hair in the auricles removed or shortened within the rims of the auricle will be issued a recorded warning and from 1st July 2025 will be eliminated from the event.**

1.6.1 Yellow Warning Card

1.6.1 A Yellow Warning Card may be imposed on the parties concerned or the Person Responsible (PR) for the following:

- a) **A Yellow Warning Card must be issued for actions occasioning** abuse of horse (an action or omission involving the mistreatment of a horse). ~~Any~~ Incidents considered to be serious Abuse of the Horse may be ~~better~~ **further** dealt with through the formal protest procedure as outlined in ~~Dressage Rule 1.3.1.~~ ~~However, it is possible to both issue a Yellow Warning Card and pursue formal protest procedure~~ **EA General Regulations**

1.6.3 - Who can issue Yellow Warning Cards?

An Official for the purpose of issuing a Yellow Warning Card or Recorded Warning Card may be any of the following*:

- an FEI or National-accredited Steward
- an EA Technical Delegate
- an FEI-accredited Judge
- an EA National Judge Educator
- **an EA-accredited A- or B-level Judge**

* An Official may issue a Yellow Warning Card or Recorded Warning Card only when officiating at an Event **with the exception of reports of horse abuse at the Event where officials with the necessary authority are not present at the event. In these cases the State CEO together with an official from the list above will decide the case and if warranted the Yellow Warning Card will be issued by that Official** .They can be hand-delivered or issued by any other suitable means and will state the reason for the warning.

For Recorded Warnings only: if none of these persons are present at an Event, the Organising Committee will designate the ~~most~~ **senior Judge-President** of the Ground Jury (**see 6.1**) to have authority to issue the Recorded Warning, if required.

3.19 Awards and placings

3.19 (i) updated to clarify that horses who are tied will each be allocated the same number of points

- i) For the purpose of deciding a Champion at a level **(between two or more tests), points shall be allocated to each horse according to their placing in each competition; first placed horses will be allocated 35 points, second 34 points and so on until the last placed horse. In case of a tie for any placing in a competition, each horse will receive the same points (e.g. equal 6th placed horses each receive 30 points). Only horses who competed in all tests are eligible for Champion. The Champion is the horse with the highest combined points.**
- **Ties: In the case of a tie in championship points, the horse with the higher aggregate percentage will have the better placing. If still tied, the horse with the higher percentage in the highest competition in the Championship will have the better placing.**

4.5 Youth Events

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See table below for age groups for FEI youth tests at EA national and FEI competitions.

| Test/Category | EA National Competition Age Group (years)* | FEI (CDI) Competitions Age Group (years)*# |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| FEI Pony Tests | 8 to 16 | 12 to 16 |
| FEI Children's Tests | 10 to 14 | 12 to 14 |
| FEI Junior Tests | 14 to 18 | 14 to 18 |
| FEI Young Rider Tests | 16 to 21 | 16 to 21 |
| FEI U25 Grand Prix Tests | 16 to 25 | 16 to 25 |
| Junior – Pony Riders | 8 to 18 | Not applicable |

**Riders are eligible from the start of the calendar year they reach the minimum eligibility age to the end of the calendar year they reach the maximum eligibility age.*

For riders competing in FEI Competitions at the Australian Youth Championships the FEI competition age group applies.

4.5.1 & 4.8.3 Children's tests

4.5.1 FEI Children's tests as national tests

The purpose of the Children's tests are to give youth riders feedback about the quality of their riding with a focus on the rider's seat, the aids, and precision and effectiveness of the riding.

- These are open to children aged 10-14 (at national competitions only)
- They must be judged by 3 judges as per the FEI format with one judge at C and two judges sitting together at E or B.
- The judges must be of at least National C level.

Additional notes to table in 4.8.3:

e) FEI Children's tests/competition is equivalent to Novice level

10.12.11 Qualifying Scores (in official dressage competitive competitions)

d) Combinations must qualify at the level they re entering with one score as follows:

- FEI Children's tests are equivalent to Novice Level

4.8.3 Conditions of Entry

4.8.3. Requirements for horses and ponies for Official Competitive competitions

- c) horses and ponies competing up to and including advanced:
- must only enter and compete in 2 consecutive levels per an event (regardless of number of days)
 - can enter and compete in no more than ~~2~~ **3 tests** in one day. This may include a Freestyle or Young Horse competition.

4.8.4.1 Age categories used in EA Youth Competitions

- (b) Young Rider or a Junior Rider is eligible to compete in their respective Young Rider competitions or Junior competitions and Official competitions on the same horse at the same event but no more than ~~2~~ **3 tests** per day **for Juniors and 2 tests per day for Young Rider competitions** (refer also to rule [4.8.4](#))

5.6 Whips

In relation to the carrying and using of whips:

d) for any horse/pony one whip, as specified above, may be carried and used

- in the exercise and warm-up areas
- in all tests up to and including Advanced level at all events including championships
- by a rider anywhere on the ground when riding or leading a horse/pony
- ~~by other parties, providing that it is not used in connection with training a horse/pony~~
- **Upon arrival at the *venue*, only the *nominated rider* when riding, walking in hand, leading or lunging a Horse (lunge whip allowed), is allowed to use a whip (maximum one meter and twenty (1.20) / ponies maximum one (1) meter in connection with the training of the Horse. 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.**

5.10 Saddles & Saddlecloths

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In regard to permitted saddles and saddle cloths:

- a) a fully mounted dressage-type saddle (including all-purpose) of traditional or treeless construction is compulsory and may be used with or without a saddlecloth
- b) English -style side-saddles are permitted**
- c) In Participation events ONLY, a jumping saddle is permitted**



5.12 Permitted Equipment & 5.18 Gear Checklist

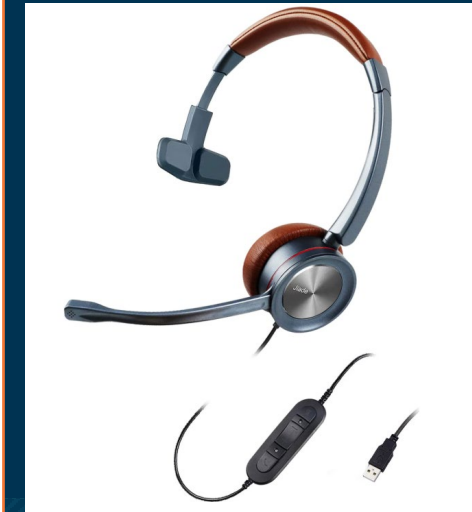
5.12 Table of equipment permitted/not permitted

| Details of equipment | Permitted in competition | Permitted in warm-up & exercise areas but NOT past Gear Steward & NOT in competition | NOT permitted at an event or venue The wearing of any of the following at an event will entail elimination |
|---|--------------------------|--|---|
| Foregirths | All levels | | |
| Grass reins | | | X |
| Headphones Earphones (one ear only) or similar devices | | X | X |



5.18 Gear Check list

| Please read carefully | | Preliminary to Advanced | FEI tests at EA events* |
|-----------------------|---|--|-------------------------|
| Additional gear | Breastplate | only with snaffle and only up to and including <u>Medium</u> level | X |
| | Foregirth | ✓ | ✓ |
| | Crupper | Permitted only for Ponies (but not in YH) | |
| | Running martingale, bandages, brushing boots, over-boots, double bridle (Medium level and above), saddle covers, headphones earphones (one ear only) | Warm-up area only | |



6.1 Ground Jury

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The Ground Jury consists of **all** the judges **at** ~~of~~ the event. The Ground Jury:

- a) must be drawn from the current list
- b) may include suitably accredited visiting overseas judges
- c) **It is recommended that a President of the Ground Jury be appointed each day at an event. The President of the Ground Jury should be:**
 - **the judge positioned at C for the highest-level competition during the event.**
 - **appointed by the OC prior to the start of the event and preferably noted on the draw.**
 - **named each day of the event but may not necessarily be the same person.**
 - **available from the start of the day to the end of the day or, if this is not possible, for the first half or second half of each day at an event.**

6.1.1 Responsibilities of the Ground Jury

6.1.1. Responsibilities of the Ground Jury ~~comprises all the judges at the event and is responsible for:~~

- a) the technical judging of all individual and team competitions
- b) the allocation and verification of final placings in a competition
- c) settling all technical problems **(in consultation with the appointed President of the Ground Jury)** that may arise during the course of the event that come under their jurisdiction within the **Field of Play**.
- d) referring any written protests received for 'Horse Abuse' to the OC (refer [1.3.1](#))
- ~~e) referring any case which is beyond its jurisdiction to the EA State Branch responsible for the event~~
- e) referring any technicalities or matters that are beyond the Ground Jury's jurisdiction to the **President of the Ground Jury**, Chief Steward, or TD, if appointed at the event in question, ~~or to the State Branch CEO in the form of a written protest (see section [1.3.1](#)).~~**
- f) If a TD is not appointed, the President of the Ground Jury may act in the capacity of the TD to settle any issues that may arise within the Field of Play and the whole grounds during the event. This should be carried out in consultation with the Chief Steward, as appropriate.**
 - The President of the Ground Jury also:**
 - **has the authority to issue a Recorded Warning (1.6.3)**
 - **may refer any incident, which is beyond their jurisdiction, to the OC in the form of a written protest**
- g) the Chief Judge/TD/person authorised by OC should **approve and sign off the results noting the time of official posting.** ~~quickly scan the document and when satisfied, sign and show the time of official posting of placings~~

7.6 Allocation of marks & scoring

Allocation of marks and scoring

- r) A digital scoring system may not allow individual movement marks to be visible publicly until the competition has been signed off by the Chief Judge.
- s) where electronic scoring platforms are used, all results must clearly indicate where the results are “provisional” (ie, the final results/placings have not yet been signed off by the C judge) and when they are “final” (ie, the final results/placings have been reviewed and signed off by the C judge).

→ For live scoring platforms on phones— aggregate marks and percentages can be visible during a test but no individual movement marks for a judge should be visible during the test

7.6 Allocation of marks & scoring (cont'd)

s) particularly when using electronic scoring, if an inadvertent entry error is made on a score sheet (e.g., a “1” is entered instead of a “7” by the scribe) and the error is not noted by various checks, a judge or rider may request a correction to the score/placing, if required. A correction may be authorised by the OC, President of the Ground Jury, and/or TD, providing contact is made with the authorising party within 30 minutes after posting of the final results or awarding of prizes for the test (whichever is earlier). If the electronic scoring error is discovered after this period, but within 24 hours of the last test of the day, the score will be rectified, in consultation with the OC, President of the Ground Jury, and/or TD. In this circumstance, although the score will be updated electronically, the final placings will remain unchanged, including any placings in championships. However, riders may use the updated result as a qualifying score.

9.2 & 9.3 Change to 7-Year-Old YH tests

- For Young Horse qualifying tests:
 - EA YH test for 7 YO (current EA ADV 5.2 test) will be used until 31 Jul 2025
 - Effective 1 Aug 2025, will be replaced by the **FEI 7 YO YH Preliminary Test**
- For Young Horse State Championship tests:
 - First round:
 - EA YH test for 7 YO (current EA ADV 5.2 test) will be used until 31 Jul 2025
 - Effective 1 Aug 2025, will be replaced by the **FEI 7 YO YH Preliminary Test**
 - Second round:
 - FEI 7 YO YH Preliminary test will be used until 31 Jul 2025
 - Effective 1 Aug 2025, will be replaced by the **FEI 7 YO YH Final Test**

10.2 Conditions of Entry Australia Dressage Championships

a) horses must qualify at the level they are entering with one score as follows:

- at least one qualifying score to have been obtained by the nominated horse/rider
- only one score from a competition with one judge to be accepted per combination
- **Novice qualifying scores** – at least ~~70%~~ **68%** (Pony ~~68%~~ **67%**)
- **Elementary qualifying scores** – at least ~~68%~~ **65%** -(Pony ~~67%~~ **65%**)
- Medium and Advanced qualifying scores – at least 63%
- Prix St Georges qualifying scores – at least 63%
- Intermediate I qualifying scores – at least 62%
- Intermediate A or B qualifying scores – at least 60%
- Intermediate II and Grand Prix qualifying scores – at least 60%

10.10 Determination of Placing AUS National Championships

10.10 Determining of placings

The final placings of the Australian Dressage Championships are determined by the following:

- a) championships are to be decided on points system **as per rule 3.19**
- b) other Awards or Trophies (such as an overall EADC champion award for a specific level) will be considered by the EADC, in conjunction with the Organising Committee, each year when approving the Schedule of the Championships. The method used to determine the award is to be published in the schedule**

10.14.1 Qualifying Scores for State & Natl Interschool Events

10.14.1 Qualifying scores for State and National Interschool events

The EADC recommends that **one scores** from **Regional**, State, ~~and the or~~ National Interschool Championships (and interschool competitions in Queensland of Elementary level and above held south of Rockhampton), be accepted as **a** qualifying scores for State and National Youth Championships, **provided a minimum of two judges of the appropriate level are used in the Interschool test.** ~~as long as they follow the requirements of the number/level of judges required for competition (refer to rule 3.21).~~

10.17.2 Qualification for CDIs Overseas

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g) CDIO ~~team standards:~~

Minimum international standards for participation (if any): Athlete/horse combinations must meet minimum FEI requirements for the relevant CDIO (Event) per Annex 7 of the current FEI Dressage Regulations.

- **EADC encourages participation in Nations Cup events at CDIOs. For CDIO-NC refer to the FEI Dressage Nations Cup rules. Qualifying scores required at CDI Grand Prix level in the previous 12 months as per 10.17.2 (a). ~~However, the performances need to be of an acceptable standard as follows:~~**
 - ~~GP: 66% at a CDI in previous 12 months~~
 - ~~Small Tour: 65% in a CDI in previous 12 months (applies to Wellington Florida CDIO)~~

12.5 Judges' Accreditation and levels they may judge

Accredited judges may act as a member of a Ground Jury at events or competitions in Australia.

The National levels of judges are:

- A-Level – accredited to judge up to and including Grand Prix level **and FEI Children's tests/competitions**
- B-Level – accredited to judge up to and including Intermediate I level **and FEI Children's tests/competitions**
- C-Level – accredited to judge up to and including Advanced level **and FEI Children's tests/competitions**
- D-Level – accredited to judge up to and including Medium level
- E-Level – accredited to judge up to and including Elementary level
- F-Level – accredited to judge up to and including Novice level
- G-Level – authorised to judge up to and including Official Competitive Preliminary as well as Participant events as outlined in 3.21 – with conditions – refer to rule 3.21

12.14 Potential applicants for Level 3 (FEI 3*) Judge Status

FEI Judge Levels have been renamed by the FEI:

FEI 2* = Level 1 (L1)

FEI 3* = Level 2 (L2)

FEI 4* = Level 3 (L3)

FEI 5* = Level 4 (L4)

12.14 Potential applicants for ~~FEI 3* or FEI PED 3*~~ FEI Level 2 judge status

National judges wishing to upgrade to FEI ~~3* or FEI PED 3*~~ Level 2 must **have been an EA A- Level judge for a minimum of three (3) years, and provide a written application** ~~apply~~ to the EADOC ~~and follow the criteria below:~~

- 1. The detailed history (minimum of three [3] years) of their significant and appropriate contribution to Dressage.**
- 2. Their fulfilment of the requirements per the respective FEI Education System, the details of which can be found on the FEI Website: <http://www.fei.org/fei/your-role/officials/dressage/education-system>**

Annex D: Arena Familiarisation

- **It is a recommendation that a helmet should be worn whilst leading horses for arena familiarisation or in warm up areas.**
- where possible, allow competitors a designated time to ride around and in the competition arenas on the day of the competition, if this has not been possible on the previous day
- if conditions are suitable, time may also be allocated during the day, but this will depend on the organisers and venue requirements
- OCs should specify the arena familiarisation arrangements in the competition draw and also specify at what pace horses are permitted to travel. For example, Arenas will be available from 7.30 am to 8.15 am on the day of the competition for familiarisation. Please make sure that you ride only at (pace to be noted here by OC if there is a restriction)
- any arena familiarisation and warm-up areas must be supervised by an accredited Steward
- OCs should ensure designated first aid official/medical service providers are present once the event has officially started; this includes arena familiarisation periods.

For more information or questions on EA Rule changes
please contact:

Julie Jones (Chair, DNSW Judges Subcommittee)

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Thank you!