

## BOOT AND BANDAGE PROTOCOL

### **Additional Stewarding Guidelines for International Jumping Events**

**In an effort to ensure that the FEI Veterinary Regulations and the FEI Rules for Jumping Events are fully enforced as voted into effect by the General Assembly, the following additional guidelines are being issued to FEI Stewards with immediate effect. All of these guidelines pertain to the specific implementation of existing rules and therefore do not represent rule changes. We ask that the Stewards take these guidelines seriously and use their best efforts to apply them.**

**In line with the current rules, at the following Events boot and bandage controls are considered by the FEI to be compulsory:**

- Both rounds of the Nations Cup competition;
- Grand Prix or the competition with the highest prize money if there is no Grand Prix;
- All FEI World Cup competitions;
- Puissance and Six Bar competitions.

It is also recommended that boot and bandage control be carried out during Ranking competitions, Derby competitions and other competitions.

#### **1. Stewarding at Morning Training Sessions**

During the morning training sessions each day, bandage and boot checks should be carried out at all Events. Such checks should be done on a random basis unless another approach is considered necessary or unless there is reason to examine a specific Horse, with particular attention being paid to bandages and use of boots that may be excessively heavy.

If a Horse's boots are changed during the course of a training session, the Steward should inspect the boots which have been removed at the time of removal, as well as the replacement boots once the Athlete in question has completed their training.

Should the Steward in question observe anything unusual with the boots or bandages, they must inform the Chief Steward immediately.

#### **2. Stewarding Prior to Competition/Hind Boot Check**

If an Athlete is uncertain as to whether the boots they intend to use during an Event are allowed, they or their representative should show the boots to the Chief Steward for their opinion before the boots are used in training or in competition.

The following updated procedure is in place from 12.09.2022. This procedure does not replace boot and bandage control after completion of an Athlete's round for competitions for which boot and bandage control is mandatory (refer to JRs Art. 244.1).

The following procedure is compulsory in competitions for which boot and bandage control is mandatory, that is the Nations Cup, Grand Prix, Puissance, Six-Bar and the competition with the highest prize money, and is at the discretion of the Chief Steward for other competitions.

In competitions where a Hind Boot Check takes place, and at any time of the Athlete's choosing before entering the competition arena, all hind boots must be inspected by the designated Hind Boot Check Steward\* in order to ascertain that they comply with current Jumping Rules (Art 257.2.4). If hind boots are being swapped, the designated Steward will inspect both the boots that have been removed and the boots that will be used. After this procedure, the hind boots may be placed on the Horse's legs, following which the horse must walk forward. If the horse steps backwards, the Steward may ask that the boots be removed and put on again. If bandages are used in place of boots, Athletes are not required to remove the bandages in the warm-up arena before competition.

As an alternative to carrying out this procedure at the time indicated above, an Athlete whose horse is particularly difficult, or their representative, may ask for this procedure to take place either in a quieter location or in the stables. (If this procedure takes place in the stables, please refer to the procedure below\*\*).

The Hind Boot Steward\* has the authority to intervene if a boot is considered to be excessively tight or incorrectly positioned and may instruct that the boot(s) be removed and put on again correctly. *[Stewards are to note that it is not necessarily unusual for a Horse's gait to be somewhat affected for a few strides after boots have been put on.]* If an Athlete or their representative refuses to remove and re-place the boot(s) when instructed to do so by the Steward, a Yellow Warning Card may be issued to the Athlete in question by the Chief Steward.

If it is deemed impossible or unsafe to remove the hind boots prior to the combination entering the competition arena, due to an excited or nervous Horse, the boots of the Horse in question must be removed following the Athlete's round upon leaving the arena and inspected by the Steward. This inspection may be carried out during the boot and bandage control if the boot and bandage control is carried out for the competition in question.

The ultimate responsibility for using correct saddlery, including hind boots, lies with the Person Responsible.

If a Horse's boots are changed during the preparation for a competition where hind boot check does not take place, Stewards may inspect the boots which have been removed at the time of removal, as well as the replacement boots preferably before the Horse in question enters the competition arena. If the horse is wearing bandages, or lightweight bandaging or socks underneath hind boots, this should be done after the horse has competed unless the bandages, or the lightweight bandaging or socks have been put on in the presence of a Steward before competition. If a Steward observes anything unusual with the boots and/or bandages, they must inform the Chief Steward immediately.

If the Hind Boot Check takes place in the stables, the Steward or another Official must remain with the Horse until it goes to the warm-up arena where it may be observed by the Hind Boot Check Steward.

If a Horse leaves the warm-up arena for any reason after its hind boots have been checked but before competing, the Hind Boot Check procedure should be repeated.

### **3. Stewarding at Boot and Bandage Control during Competitions**

Boot and bandage checks should be carried out during as many FEI competitions as possible. Such checks may be done on a random basis, unless there is reason to examine a specific Horse. It is advised that two (2) Stewards should be present for any examination taking place during competition.

Stewards are encouraged to take every precaution to ensure their safety, for example by wearing a helmet if they wish to do so, when carrying out boot and bandage controls. For stallions or particularly excitable or nervous Horses, this procedure may be performed by a Steward in the stables prior to the Horse leaving for the practice arena. In this case, a Steward must accompany the Horse to the practice arena and advise the Steward tasked with carrying out the control that the Horse has arrived in the practice arena and has been checked. This procedure may also be used for Hind Boot Check.

NB: When carrying out Boot and Bandage Controls Stewards must also check for the presence of blood anywhere on the Horse's body. Refer to the Stewards' Protocol for handling cases of blood on a Horse's flank(s) and/or marks indicating excessive use of the spur(s) and/or whip in Annex XVI.

### **4. Stewarding in the Stables**

At all times during FEI Events, there should be a presence of Stewards in the stables patrolling randomly and observing during the period the stables are open. During such time, Stewards are advised to pay particular attention to, among other things the following;

- Unauthorized administration of any medication, if in doubt it is recommended that the Steward request to see the applicable veterinary form;
- Anything that may negatively affect the welfare of the Horse such as:
- Horse's head tied up in the stable too tightly for an extended period;
- Horse's head tied down for an extended period;
- Horses left without water in the stable;
- Stables not mucked out;
- Any indication that efforts have been made to sensitise or hypersensitise a Horse's leg(s).