

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

A member of the Ground Jury as designated by the President of the Ground Jury must be present at all times during competition to examine, at the request of the Chief Steward, a Horse if it is found to have blood on the flank(s) and/or marks indicating excessive use of the spur(s) and/or whip.

In accordance with VRs Art. 1047.3 the Chief Steward must inform the Foreign Veterinary Delegate/Veterinary Delegate (FVD/VD) whenever the examination of boots is taking place and the FVD/VD must be available for consultation if required.

If a Steward notices blood on a Horse's flank(s) and/or marks indicating excessive use of the spur(s) and/or whip at any time in connection with the warm-up for a competition, or at any time in connection with a Horse leaving the competition arena, including, but not only, during post-competition boot and bandage control, the following procedures must be followed.

1. The Steward must inform the Athlete that there is an issue with blood on the Horse's flank(s) and/or marks indicating possible excessive use of the spur(s) and/or whip, and give clear instructions that any blood present is not to be wiped off, and the area must not be touched until the arrival of the Chief Steward*.
2. After informing the Athlete as above, the Steward must:
 - a) Inform the Chief Steward* and request their presence.
 - b) Take photographs of:
 - i. the injury/mark(s) and/or any blood present. This must be a close-up photograph.
 - ii. the general location on the Horse's body of the injury/mark(s) and/or any blood present.
 - iii. the Horse, including its competition number. If possible, this photograph should also include the areas of the injury/mark(s) and/or any blood present.
 - iv. the spurs and/or whip that the Athlete was using.
 - c) Remain with the Horse until the Chief Steward* arrives, making sure that nobody touches the area(s) in question and that the blood is not wiped off and/or marks smoothed away.

NB: If the Horse is in a very public area, the Steward should require that the Horse is moved to a more private area before proceeding with the above steps, with the exception of informing the Chief Steward, which must be done as soon as possible. The Athlete may, if they wish, place a rug or cooler over the Horse while it is being moved, but great care must be taken that the affected area(s) is/are not disturbed.

3. On their arrival, the Chief Steward* will:
 - a) Establish whether all photographs as per 2b) above have been taken, and if not, take those which are missing.
 - b) Examine the area in question making sure that they are wearing an unused latex or similar glove.
 - c) If there is blood present, lay the back of their gloved hand over the area in order to transfer blood from the flank(s) onto the glove, taking care not to smear or spread the blood over a wider area. It is strongly recommended that a video is taken of this action.
 - d) Photograph the glove even if no blood has transferred onto it.
 - e) Place the glove into a clean, clear plastic bag, taking care not to disturb any blood present on the glove, then close and photograph the bag.
 - f) Advise the Athlete that, according to FEI Rules, the Ground Jury and the FVD/VD must be informed of the situation, and tell the Athlete that the Horse must remain available and under the supervision of a Steward, or other FEI Official, until further notice.
 - g) The Chief Steward* will then report the incident to the Ground Jury member designated by the President of the Ground Jury to handle such cases and show them the visual evidence.
 - h) At the same time, the Chief Steward* will also report the incident to the FVD/VD, and provide them with the visual evidence, preferably in a message via smartphone. The role of the FVD/VD in such incidents is to determine if the Horse needs further care.

4. If blood on a Horse's flank(s) and/or marks indicating possible excessive use of the spur(s) and/or whip is/are noticed prior to the horse entering the competition arena, the Steward shall notify the Chief Steward and the designated Ground Jury member and the FVD/VD, and inform the Athlete that the horse will not be allowed to enter the competition arena until the procedure outlined above has been carried out and permission has been granted by the Ground Jury for the horse to take part in the competition. Failure of the Athlete to comply with the Steward's instruction may result in the issuance of a yellow warning card by the Chief Steward.
5. Applicable sanctions for cases of blood on the flank(s) and/or marks indicating excessive use of the spur(s) and/or whip
 - 5.1 In all cases of blood on the Horse's flank(s) the Ground Jury must eliminate the Athlete/Horse combination from the Competition or round in question. Particular attention must be paid to two round competitions and competitions with a jump-off. If a Steward notices blood on a Horse's flank(s) after it has taken part in the second round or jump-off, but had found no blood on that Horse's flank(s) after the previous round, the combination is to be eliminated from the second round or jump-off only.
 - 5.2 The penalty for marks indicating excessive use of the spur(s) and/or whip is disqualification; additional sanctions may also apply (see JRs Art. 243).
 - 5.3 Nevertheless, the Ground Jury may not take a decision on either elimination for blood on the Horse's flank(s), or disqualification for excessive use of the spur(s) and/or whip until the designated member of the Ground Jury has reviewed the visual evidence, and examined the Horse. It is never the role of the Chief Steward, the Foreign Steward if appointed, or any member of the stewarding team, or any other Official to inform the Athlete that they have been eliminated or disqualified. This responsibility lies solely with the Ground Jury.

The Chief Steward must always brief their team on the above procedures before the start of the Event.

*In certain circumstances, such as, but not limited to, when competitions are running in more than one arena at the same time, the Chief Steward may be officially substituted by a specific member of the stewarding team.