



Ethics and Code of Conduct

All persons and corporate bodies (e.g. riders, judges, organisers, other officials, and associations) involved in Icelandic horse competitions and other Icelandic horse events are committed to fair, comradely and sportsmanlike behaviour to one another, as well as fair and considerate handling of the horse internationally established principles for the prevention of cruelty to animals are respected and adhered to unreservedly at all times.

Ethics statement

FEIF unites people in their passion of the Icelandic horse. In the process of doing so FEIF stresses the following principles, which have been adapted from the FEI values.

In order to turn these principles into practices we have outlined the behaviours we expect from FEIF officials, riders, participants, volunteers and spectators. Ethics are not dependent on a comprehensive set of Rules only, they come alive by the way we commit to our standards and act according to our principles. Beyond complying with a code of conduct, we ask each of us to be aware of these principles, to be aware of how difficult it can be to live up to them, and to support each other to make this our culture rather than a piece of paper.

FEIF does not tolerate any form of discrimination on the basis of race, gender, ethnic origin, religion, philosophical or political opinion, marital status or other grounds.

Cooperation with the horse

Equestrianism is the only sport that involves two athletes, equine and human. It is the successful partnership between these two elements; the relationship of confidence and respect that is built up between them, that makes the sport so exceptional.

Principles translated into Codes of conduct

All participants, riders, officials, trainers, instructors and others involved with our sport are expected to keep to the respective code of conduct. In some cases, they may be asked to sign a code of conduct to make their commitment clear. However, even without signing this, each person will be expected to have accepted the code of conduct by taking a certain position or taking part in our events.

Respect for the horse

FEIF and its member associations put the welfare of the horse first in everything they do. Horse welfare receives focus through education, health and equipment checks at competitions and breeding shows, research on topics such as ideal hoof length, strict doping Rules and the FEIF veterinary committee, which provides advice on the welfare of our horses.

Code of Conduct: Welfare of the horse

This code of conduct is based upon the Codes of Conduct of the Fédération Equestre Internationale (FEI). In case of changes always the latest version of FEI applies.

The FEI requires all those involved in international equestrian sport to adhere to the FEI Code of Conduct¹ and to acknowledge and accept that at all times the welfare of the Horse must be paramount. Welfare of the horse must never be subordinated to competitive or commercial influences. The following points must be particularly adhered to:

¹ https://inside.fei.org/sites/default/files/Code_of_Conduct_Welfare_Horse_1Jan2013.pdf

General Welfare:**a. Good Horse management**

Stabling and feeding must be compatible with the best horse management practices. Clean and good quality hay, feed and water must always be available.

b. Training methods

Horses must only undergo training that matches their physical capabilities and level of maturity for their respective disciplines. They must not be subjected to methods which are abusive or cause fear.

c. Farriery and tack

Foot care and shoeing must be of a high standard. Tack must be designed and fitted to avoid the risk of pain or injury.

d. Transport

During transportation, horses must be fully protected against injuries and other health risks. Vehicles must be safe, well ventilated, maintained to a high standard, disinfected regularly and driven by competent personnel. Competent handlers must always be available to manage the horses.

e. Transit

All journeys must be planned carefully, and Horses allowed regular rest periods with access to food and water in line with current FEI guidelines.

Fitness to compete**a. Fitness and competence**

Participation in presentation must be restricted to fit horses and athletes of proven competence. Horses must be allowed suitable rest period between training and competitions; additional rest periods should be allowed following travelling.

b. Health status

No Horse deemed unfit to compete may compete or continue to compete, veterinary advice must be sought whenever there is any doubt.

c. Doping and Medication

Any action or intent of doping and illicit use of medication constitute a serious welfare issue and will not be tolerated. After any veterinary treatment, sufficient time must be allowed for full recovery before presentation.

d. Surgical procedures

Any surgical procedures that threaten a competing horse's welfare or the safety of other horses and/or Riders must not be allowed.

e. Pregnant/recently foaled mares

Mares must not be presented after their fourth month of pregnancy or with foal at foot.

f. Misuse of aids

Abuse of a horse using natural riding aids or artificial aids (e.g. whips, spurs, etc.) will not be tolerated.

g. Bleeding

The welfare of the horse must be paramount in all competitions. At the moment a judge suspects that a horse is actively bleeding during a test the judge must therefore ask for an inspection on the horse which will be eliminated from the test when failing the check.



Veterinary Rules

At competitions open for national and international riders, an official veterinary surgeon, who is responsible for the good health and well-being of the Icelandic horses taking part, must be appointed and be on call or on site.

The horses taking part in Icelandic horse competitions must be free from any infectious or contagious disease and must not come from infected stock. Proof that the vaccination requirements according to the Veterinary Rules of FEI have been adhered to must be provided on request.

If a horse appears to the majority of the judges or to the veterinary surgeon to be unfit to compete (lameness, lack of fitness, doping etc.), the chief judge or the official veterinary surgeon can order a veterinary examination to be carried out. The decision on whether the horse is fit to compete rests with the official veterinary surgeon. There is no right of appeal.

Fair Play and Equestrian Sport²

The equestrian disciplines, in common with other sports, depend heavily for their credibility, public acceptance and ultimate survival upon their adherence to the sportsman's code of fair play. Behind this precept lies the premise that the best man, woman or team should win fairly and squarely, having competed under even and equitable conditions and under Rules that are themselves fair, realistic, and applied with scrupulous competence and even-handedness. No result can be meaningful or valid if it has not been achieved "on a level playing field."

Translating the abstract ideals of fair play into practice requires the collaboration of all those who participate in any way in the competition, i.e., not only the competitors, officials, organisers and federations, but also even the owners, trainers, spectators and media. Each of these groups has an important role to play in enhancing both the image and the reality of equestrian sport, by respecting the spirit of fair play as embodied in the Rules and by insisting that the best interests of the sport and the welfare of the horse are placed above all else. Some additional considerations that especially concern particular groups are noted below:

Responsibilities of competitors, coaches and trainers

The competitors themselves play a highly critical role in promoting and safeguarding fair play in their sport. For whatever the responsibilities or actions of others, in the end it is the competitors who can most directly influence whether or not the play is fair by understanding all the Rules that govern their discipline, and by faithfully observing them even when nobody is watching.

High profile competitors must recognise how influential their example can be for others, and accept their responsibilities as role models. This applies to their actions both on and off the horse, and in the warm-up area as well as the competitive arena.

Coaches and trainers can also help to promote fair play by setting a good example and by discouraging disrespect for the Rules or acts of discourtesy by competitors under their supervision. Older advisers clearly exert as important an influence by their example as by their instruction.

Responsibilities of governing bodies

The governing bodies of equestrian sport not only formulate the Rules, but also qualify and licence the officials, approve the dates and programmes of the major competitions, and often act as the final level of judicial authority. They must make every effort to ensure that their Rules are fair, based firmly on reality and applied accurately and consistently by officials of demonstrated competence and impartiality. They must also do everything they can to enhance and promote the quality of the disciplines and their attractiveness for spectators and competitors alike through a proactive use of their executive powers. Finally, they must recognise that neglect or disregard of the ideals of fair play reflects both on the sport and on the organisations responsible for its conduct.

² http://www.feicleansport.org/fair_play.html



Responsibilities of judges, ring masters, veterinarians and all other officials

Officials exercise exceptional authority, which in turn requires them to assume exceptional responsibilities. Their overall effectiveness, no matter what their particular duties, depends not only on their technical competence and intimate knowledge of the Rules, but also on their maturity of judgment, self-control, flexibility and basic fairness and integrity. Beyond this, all officials must be scrupulously careful to guard against any appearance or actuality of conflict of interest. In all questionable cases it is always wiser to acknowledge a possible source of a conflict of interest and stand aside rather than permit suspicions to gain strength.

Responsibilities of journalists and other media

The media have their own standards of journalistic integrity but have to work within the constraints imposed by editors, publishers and producers. Even so, they can make an important contribution to the public's appreciation of fair play through their reportage and commentary, and especially, by placing the events and incidents they cover into a fair and balanced perspective and resisting the temptation to oversimplify or over-dramatize a story.

Responsibilities of spectators

Spectators attend equestrian events for their own pleasure and cannot be denied the right to express their own feelings. Nonetheless, basic fairness should dissuade them from attempting to influence the performances of the horses or the decisions of the judges. Audiences should carefully avoid acts that might upset the horses, such as untimely movement, applause or flash photography, especially in venues that bring them into close proximity to the competitors.

All types of artificial noisemaking devices are expressly prohibited at competitions and breeding assessments. Use of such devices may result in expulsion from an event.

Though it is easy to more or less ignore the spectators and let them fend for themselves, it is important for them to be provided with programme material and commentaries that help them not only to understand what is going on, but also to appreciate the skill and sportsmanship of all the competitors, and to applaud even if their hero or favourite team is not winning. Every time the spectators are neglected, a precious opportunity to invest in the future of the sport has been lost, no matter how well everything else has been handled.

Equality

Equestrianism is one of the few sports where men and women compete on equal terms. There is no maximum age limit for competing athletes.

Respect for the environment

The conservation of the environment is important to FEIF. We encourage all involved to follow the FEIF Code of Conduct towards the environment.

