



**Update on use of bitless bridles in dressage competitions**    publication date: Feb 10, 2010

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The Dressage Committee and the Board of Directors disapproved the rule change on January 17, 2010. But, thanks to explanations by the Chairman of the Dressage Committee and the Project Development Coordinator, the news is better than it appears.

A bitless dressage 'seed' has been planted and it is up to riders and researchers to ensure that it germinates and grows. The USEF recognize the proposal as 'significant' and have agreed to keep the discussion open as they gather input from across the country.

The support of the U.S Dressage Federation is essential, so presentations to group member organizations are needed. Support from all disciplines and other interest groups (e.g., Quarter Horse, Pony Club, 4H organizations, NHRA, welfare societies) is important.

Results of experiments are not scientifically validated until they can be duplicated. The experiment carried out at the Certified Horsemanship Association Conference in 2008 should be repeated. The supportive result of an experiment based on trail riding and reining has already been received from The Netherlands, where the Royal Dutch Equestrian Federation has approved bitless dressage for three years.

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