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## Safety in Mind: Why Peacock Stirrups Should Be Banned

By Armand Leone, Jr.  
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The U.S. Equestrian Federation should prohibit rubber band and hooked safety stirrups from being used at recognized competitions. This hook-and-loop design, often called a “peacock stirrup,” has long been used to prevent a fallen rider’s foot from getting caught in the stirrup and dragged. However, these stirrups are dangerous and have caused horrific injuries to children while dismounting.

There is a long history of riders getting caught on the upward-pointing hook part of these safety stirrups while sliding down the saddle to dismount. Some riders have caught their belt or ripped their clothing on the way down, others have suffered horrible genital lacerations from the metal hook at the top of the stirrup.



*Armand Leone urges anyone with peacock stirrups to replace them immediately.  
Photo by [Jump Media](#)*

These stirrups are routinely used at USEF competitions by many young riders, which puts children at continued risk. USEF should recognize the risk these stirrups present and protect its members by outlawing their use at competitions.

If you have these peacock stirrups, don’t wait for an injury to happen to your child. Get rid of them and replace your stirrups today.

Read the full article on Chronicle of the Horse

## Protective Vests: To Wear or Not To Wear?

There have been major advancements in protective gear to lessen injuries in riding. However, there is also the possibility that with newer protective equipment, riders may have a false sense of security and take part in activities that exceed their competency level, therefore taking on increased risk.

At recognized eventing competitions, riders must wear an approved body protector — a foam vest intended to reduce rib fractures and penetrating torso injuries — for the cross-country phase. While the hunter/jumper world does not mandate their use, there is conversation around equipment that will protect against crush-related injuries, like airbag jackets and vests.



*"A protective vest is not a substitute for recognizing your or your horse's limitations."  
Photo by [Jump Media](#)*

How much safety gear, beyond the certified helmet and good equipment, a rider should use depends on their ability and risk preferences, along with the horse’s character and experience.

There is ongoing research about the effectiveness of airbag jackets and vests. It stands to reason that in a serious fall they may provide significant protection from injuries, but a protective vest is not a substitute for recognizing your or your horse’s limitations. Using a protective jacket or vest should not provide riders with a sense of security that allows them to exceed their abilities.

Read the full article on Horses Daily

*For advice and counsel related to the equestrian industry, contact Leone Equestrian Law at [info@equestriancounsel.com](mailto:info@equestriancounsel.com).*

*Led by Armand Leone, Jr., MD, JD, MBA, Leone Equestrian Law LLC provides legal services and consultation for equestrian professionals ranging from riders and trainers to owners and show managers in the FEI disciplines on a wide variety of issues.*

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