



**Important Message from Mike Tucker to the IEOC,
on Monday 19th May 2008:**

Dear Jean,

Thank you for forwarding the various e-mails regarding the anxiety over safety in eventing particularly since the serious accidents that have taken place in the States this year, although as we all know it's not only there that has felt the trauma of these occasions. As a member of the FEI International Safety Committee I do want everyone to know that considerable efforts are being made to take the whole safety issue forward on a world-wide basis.

Changes in administration at the F.E.I are not making for an easy and speedy passage, but that does not mean that we are sitting back waiting for everything to happen. I for one, am constantly badgering to get what was agreed by 22 nations in Copenhagen in January, on the statute books and working, as I am convinced that this strategy is absolutely right. However, it isn't proving straight forward to get there, but we are winning on several counts.

The one thing we must not do is have 'knee jerk' reaction and there has in my opinion been some of that. I would remind everyone that the I.S.C is made up of people who have been dealing with exactly these situations since 1999/2000 and have enormous experience in the sport - and the changes that are going on within the sport.

We need to be forward thinking but not to re-invent the wheel and I'm sure the people on this committee have the ability to do that. What is more, we are all open to new ideas on top of what is being planned if that really is what is needed - I personally am not as yet convinced that it is. The sooner that Eventing National Federations are able to buy into what is being planned (e.g. the immediate implementation of National Safety officers) the better for everyone.

Similarly, the introduction of co-ordinated data collection at National level will help us manage our risk sport better.

I have asked David O'Connor and Catrin if we can have a meeting - or at least a conference call - to assess the progress of the plan, as well as a review of what has happened in recent weeks. I think we should be doing this before the Olympic Games.

Hope that puts some minds at rest that - **we are not lying idly by.**

Kind regards,
Mike Tucker



Subject: USEA -- Joint Letter from USEF President David O'Connor and USEA President Kevin Baumgardner: **29th April 2008**

[Click to read on useventing.com](http://useventing.com)

Dear Members of the Equestrian Community,

This past weekend at the Rolex Kentucky Three-Day, Laine Ashker suffered a serious fall during the cross-country stage of the competition. She is currently in critical condition at the University of Kentucky hospital in Lexington. Laine's horse and another involved in a separate accident had to be euthanized.

These accidents come just a month after Darren Chiacchia, an Olympic rider, had a serious fall at an event in Tallahassee, Florida. They also come in the wake of a recent article in the *New York Times* about 15 rider fatalities in cross country that have occurred worldwide over the last two years.

These accidents have hit us hard in the sport of eventing - we are all riders who care deeply about the horses, their welfare and the image of the sport. For us, the issue is also a personal one.

This spate of accidents has raised important and potentially troubling questions for those of us who govern the sport: Why are so many riders and horses having accidents? Is there more that can be done to make cross country safer? Is the sport just too dangerous?

There is no question that eventing is a demanding and yes, risky sport. Riders cross undulating terrain at high speed and jump a series of challenging fences - all while atop a 1,000 pound horse. So there is a constant need for us to ensure that every precaution is being taken to reduce the risk of injury to riders and horses.

Although we have implemented several measures to improve safety over the last year, clearly more needs to be done. In the coming days and weeks, we will be redoubling our efforts to identify additional steps we can take to make sure that riders and horses can compete as safely as possible. We would like to ask your help in this effort - whether you're a rider, trainer, coach, veterinarian, or simply a horse enthusiast.

We invite each and every one of you to the USEF/USEA Safety Summit to be held in Lexington, KY June 7-8. We will break the issue of safety down and examine the causes and potential solutions with some of the best minds in the



game. In the meantime, if you have immediate thoughts about how we can improve the safety of cross country, please email them to us at: safetythoughts@usef.org and/or safety@useventing.com.

Over the last few days, we have received emails from people who were at the Rolex event over the weekend and were disturbed by what they saw. They are asking hard questions of us and questioning whether they should continue to support the sport of eventing. To them and to you, we want to say that we too are disturbed by what we see. No matter how much we tell ourselves that injury is a part of our sport, it is always traumatizing to see a horse fall.

Therefore, we are working closely with FEI to do whatever we can to better protect riders and horses and to repair the public image of our sport. We are proposing today that within the U.S. the following five initiatives be put into effect:

1. If a horse has a rotational fall, horse and rider are suspended from competing for three or six months
2. If a horse has a rotational fall, horse and rider lose their qualification at the level at which they are competing.
3. If a rider falls off on the course they are eliminated.
4. Open oxers on courses at every level are made frangible.
5. If a horse falls related to a jump both horse and rider are suspended from competing for one month.

We don't have all the answers, we are deeply concerned about what is going on in the sport of eventing and we need your help.

Sincerely,

David O'Connor, USEF President

Kevin Baumgardner, USEA President

Contact Information of the Sender

United States Eventing Association

Old Waterford Road, NW

Leesburg, VA 20176

703-779-0440