Statement on the future of the dressage sport:
It is time to drop the requirement of metal bits and spurs

On account of that any party involved in horse welfare and equestrianism are (is?) allowed to express an opinion at the FEI Sports Forum, the Swedish animal welfare and animal rights organization Djurens Rätt, with 35 000 members and a special workgroup on horse welfare, would like to make a statement about the future of the dressage sport.

It is our strong opinion that FEI as soon as possible must take an important step into the future and allow bit-less bridles in the regulation of the dressage sport. In our opinion there is no reason to forbid riders that don’t want to use metal mouth pieces on their horses to participate unless they do so.

We also believe that it must be optional to use spurs in dressage – as it is in jumping. Even though we in the long run hope for a total ban of spurs in all riding disciplines, it is an important step on the way to allow the riders to decide themselves if they want to use spurs or not.

To be able to ride a horse in high level dressage without metal bit and spurs must be considered as something to strive for. We see no reason for the FEI to stand in the way of the development towards more humane training and riding methods, based upon understanding, respect and harmony with the horse, methods that often include bit-less bridles and no spurs.

We hope that FEI will take this under serious consideration and we are thankful for the opportunity to state our opinion.

Best regards

Eva Carlsson
Gunnel Söderback
Lovisa Nilsson
Emelie deBoussard

Djurens Rätt
Sweden