

## Courtney King Dye's Riders4Helmets Safety Symposium video address

**The international dressage rider describes her 2010 accident and her new attitude toward helmets.**

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Courtney King Dye and Harmony's Mythilus competed at the 2008 Olympics in Hong Kong. Photo: [www.clixphoto.com](http://www.clixphoto.com)  
Olympic dressage rider Courtney King Dye suffered traumatic brain injury (TBI) in March of 2010 when a horse she was schooling tripped and fell. She was not wearing a helmet at the time. Dye's accident inspired to the creation of Riders4Helmets, an Internet-based campaign to educate equestrians about TBI and helmet use for riders of all disciplines.

On July 23, Riders4Helmets held its 2nd Helmet Safety Symposium in Lexington, Ky. which featured presentations and panel discussions with riders, physicians and helmet manufacturers. One of the most anticipated features of the symposium was an address from Courtney King Dye. Although she was unable to attend the symposium in person as she was attending a show with her riding students, she submitted her address via video. The video is now available on the Riders4Helmets YouTube channel.

[Click here to watch the video on YouTube.](#)

In her address, Dye describes the accident that led to her month-long coma and ongoing recovery that leaves her unable to perform many basic tasks by herself nearly a year and a half later.

"Sixteen months ago, I was riding a six-year-old horse who I normally rode in a helmet on principle because he was young. On this day, I was in a hurry to get to the show and because he'd never done anything naughty, I didn't bother to go get my helmet. We were cantering nicely down the long side, and he just tripped over his own feet and fell.

"I've learned...to expect the unexpected. Safety has nothing to do with level of skill. It's a shame that it took my accident to exemplify that, but I intend to make a terrible brain injury into something great by increasing helmet use and enhance safety."

Upper-level dressage riders have traditionally not worn helmets in competition or even while schooling. In her video address, Dye explains why her attitude toward helmet choice has changed.

"I used to think that it should be the individual's choice if they wanted to risk the suffering of themselves and their loved ones. At first I thought this accident was hard on me and my loved ones and didn't affect anyone else. Then I went to [the World Equestrian Games] and saw how I was mistaken. So many people recognized me and so many were idolizing the team. This made me deeply consider the impact top riders have on all of the individuals watching them. Then I thought, it doesn't have to be a team rider or a top rider. Everyone is a role model for someone."

Keep up with Courtney King Dye, visit her new website at [www.ckddressage.com](http://www.ckddressage.com). Learn more about the helmet safety campaign at [www.Riders4Helmets.com](http://www.Riders4Helmets.com).