

Home » Guest Bloggers » Doug Payne's Tech Corner, Helmet Cam Videos » Doug Payne's Helmet Cam Video Secrets, presented by Five Star Tack

## Doug Payne's Helmet Cam Video Secrets, presented by Five Star Tack

January 18, 2012 6:30 pm Posted by Patricia under Doug Payne's Tech Corner, Helmet Cam Videos

1 Comment



Doug Payne and Running Order - AECs photo: Mark Walter Lehner-Photographer

We normally don't have articles written by top professional riders on HJU, but we are going to making an exception. If you read our site regularly, you might have noticed that we are big fans of US eventer Doug Payne.

You might not know that in addition to his riding skills, he's extremely tech-savvy (he's an engineer and all-around smarty-pants). He was one of the first riders to wear a helmet cam, and as they become more and more popular, we thought it would be interesting to learn more about the technology.

To learn more about Doug Payne and DP Equestrian, please visit his [website](#), [Facebook page](#) and follow him on Twitter [@dpequestrian](#)

Thanks for sharing your tech-savvy tips Doug!!

From Doug:

I guess I should start with a little background on where trend all began. My educational background is in Mechanical Engineering. Back in the early 2000's POV (Point of View Cameras) were just starting to make splashes in mass media. Usually in auto racing or film. At the time I was doing a lot of work with robotics, and figured it wouldn't be all that hard to put something together to give others the view that riders get on a daily basis. I started a company that sold such systems.

Although it didn't turn into a multi-national, it did have some early successes. I was hired by NBC for the 2005 Rolex broadcast. I provided the first helmet cam footage they used for equestrian purposes. If you find an old DVD of the broadcast, Karen O'Connor wore it on Upstage for the 'Lexus rider cam' on XC and in SJ.

A few years later, I along with Jimmy Wofford shot and I produced 'the Rider's Eye' and instructional DVD which uses both ground based cameras as well as helmet cameras to give viewers a perspective never seen before for educational purposes. It was Bit of Britain's #1 selling DVD in pre-holiday sales last year. More info on it is found here: [www.dpequestrian.com/store](http://www.dpequestrian.com/store)

I have found helmet cameras to be incredibly useful. As many know by now, they provide great entertainment for riders, owners and fans alike. It's also a great learning tool, if you have a problem you can relive it and figure out exactly what happened and how you might prevent it next time around. The footage can also come in handy if you have a questionable ruling by an XC jump judge. It saved me 20 pts at the Stuart Horse Trials CIC\*\* a few years back. The jump judge remembered me circling between the 'A' and 'B' element, it was clear as day in the helmet cam that this was not the case!

So what should you buy and how do you get the best footage possible.

There are a number of available cameras out these days they all will produce exciting results, some may be more realistic than others. As I see it, the goal of using a helmet cam is to record and replicate as close as possible the experience of riding.

I feel this is best done with a system called the POV.HD. It is unique in that the camera portion is quite small, roughly the size of a lipstick casing. This allows the camera to be right next to my eye below the helmet. Look close at the photo above and you'll see the camera next to my right eye. In the video itself, you'll see my sunglasses or nose in the corner of the frame. In my opinion, this vantage point produces the best results. Many of the other cameras are mounted either on top of, or on the side of the helmet. When watching these videos, I find myself feeling detached. It's not a realistic perspective of what the rider sees as he's riding.

Another pet peeve of mine is sub par audio. I can't stand incessant wind noise. Although it might happen at moments, the experience of riding is not one of annoying static sound! This is another great advantage of the POV.HD system, it has an inline microphone which works pretty well, but even better is that it has an auxiliary microphone input. I run a laval microphone with a wind buffer into the recorder. It sits just inside my vest near my collar bone, which allows it to pick up my voice as well as all the surrounding hoofbeats etc.

Of course, there are no free lunches. The downside to this system is that I have to wear the recorder on my chest with a cable running from the camera itself to the recorder. To me it's a nuisance that's well worth the numerous benefits.

The advantage of the all in one units ie Contour or GoPro is their ease of use and price. Cameras will range from the roughly \$150-\$500. They come with numerous mounting options, slap it on and press record and you're off! I would do my best to get as close as you can to eye level. It will make all the difference in the world.

What do you do once you have the footage?

I personally use Adobe Premiere, for most applications it's overkill. It is the same software I used to produce and edit 'the Rider's Eye'. It has limitless tweaking abilities and frankly I'm very comfortable with it. There are a number of other great options out there now. Window Movie Maker or iMovie will be just fine to stick your footage up on YouTube.

You should be able to plug your helmet cam into your computer and easily download the footage. Once the footage is on your computer you can either directly upload to YouTube or edit to your heart's content. One thing I've just started playing with is overlaying a voice track describing what is happening or what I was thinking during each moment of the XC course. An example of this is found here:



Search for:

Support our Sponsors!



CHARLES OWEN  
ESTABLISHED 1911



Facebook Like Box

Horse Junkies United on Facebook

Like

6,164 people like Horse Junkies United.

Dawn Jane Kate

Facebook social plugin

Recent posts

Penny Rowland's Coffee Break...  
Eventing Style!

Reality of British Eventing: It's Less  
Like Mr Darcy and More Like Mr Soggy

Doug Payne's Helmet Cam Video  
Secrets, presented by Five Star Tack

Part 5 - Will Bromont Get the 2018  
World Equestrian Games?

How To Spot An Honest, Caring,  
Responsible OTTB Re-homer

Joe Fargis Clinic Day 2: Flow, Rhythm,  
and Precision

Do Horses Bond Like People Do?

The Washington International Horse  
Show on TV.... Thanks to Some  
Cupcakes!

And The Winner Is...

Chester, The Next Chapter....Straight  
from The Horse's Mouth...

Equestrian in Italian Cruise Ship  
Tragedy - Safe But Trying to Get Home

Get Well Soon McLain!

Who Needs TV When We Have the