



2023 USEF Dressage National Championship Qualifying Requirements **Young Horse and Developing Horse**

Approved by the USEF Board of Directors Ad Hoc Selection Group on December 8, 2022.

The 2023 Dressage National Championships (“Championships”) Qualifying Requirements published herein are effective December 8, 2022 unless stated otherwise. The qualifying criteria published herein are subject to additions or revisions. This Championship qualifying criteria pertains to the following divisions:

- Markel/USEF Young Horse Dressage National Championships for Four, Five, Six, and Seven-Year-Old Horses
- Markel/USEF Developing Horse Dressage National Championships – Prix St. Georges
- Markel/USEF Developing Horse Dressage National Championships – Grand Prix

While every effort has been taken to avoid mistakes in this publication, the United States Equestrian Federation, Inc. (“USEF”) assumes no liability to anyone for errors or omissions. For questions concerning these Qualifying Requirements, please contact the USEF Dressage Department at festival@usef.org. These Dressage National Championships will be conducted under USEF Rules except where outlined herein.

a. I. Application and Membership and Registration Requirements for Qualifying and Championships.

Application:

1. In order to be considered for these Championships, an application of intent must be completed and submitted to USEF no later than June 15, 2023 at 11:59pm, ET. Applications are made available on the USEF website [here](#) after September 15, 2022.
 - a. Applications received by the USEF on or before May 15, 2023 at 11:59pm, ET, will require an application fee of fifty dollars (\$50) per horse.
 - b. Applications received between May 16, 2023, and June 15, 2023 at 11:59pm, ET will require a fee of one hundred fifty dollars (\$150) per horse.
 - c. An application of intent is considered complete once the confirmation email is received. If the applicant does not receive the confirmation email, it is the applicant’s responsibility to contact USEF (festival@usef.org) to determine if the application has been received.
 - d. Additional horses must be added to an existing application(s) of intent until June 15, 2023 and will require a fee of fifty dollars (\$50) per horse.
 - e. Athlete/horse combinations without a complete application of intent by the closing date will be removed from their respective ranking list.
2. No applications of intent will be accepted after June 15, 2023 at 11:59pm, ET and no refunds will be given after the closing date.
3. Developing Horse: The athletes are permitted to compete at the Championships with only those horse(s) named on a submitted application of intent.
4. Young Horse: See Section III – Qualification System.
5. Qualifying scores may be earned prior to the submission of the Application of Intent.

Athlete Membership:

- a. For Young Horse Championships (Four, Five, Six, and Seven-Year-Old Horses):
 - a. Athletes must be an Active Member in good standing with USEF or his/her National Federation for qualifying scores to count, as well as at the time of application, selection, and until the conclusion of the Championships.
- b. For Developing Horse Championships (Prix St. Georges and Grand Prix):
 - a. Athletes must be U.S. Citizens in order to earn qualifying scores and compete in the Championships. If the athlete has an FEI Registration, they must have designated the USA

- as their Sport Nationality with the FEI to earn qualifying scores and to compete in the Championships.
- b. Athletes must be Active Competing members in good standing of USEF for qualifying scores to count, as well as at the time of application, selection, and until the conclusion of the Championships.
 - c. Athletes are NOT required to have an FEI Rider Registration to earn qualifying scores or to compete in these Championships.

Horse Membership:

1. Horses must be Annual or Life Recorded with USEF in order for qualifying scores to count as well as at the time of application, selection, and until the conclusion of the Championship. Horse Identification (HID) Numbers DO NOT fulfill this requirement.
2. Horses must have valid registration papers with a member of a national studbook, which is recognized by the World Breeding Federation for Sport Horses (WBFSH), or with a recognized national breed registry. Horse must have registration papers, but entry is NOT limited to WBFSH members (i.e., Jockey Club, AQHA papers are accepted). These Registration papers must be submitted to USEF by end of business (5:00pm ET), no later than July 24, 2023, in order to receive an invitation to the National Championships.
3. An FEI Horse Registration, FEI passport, or FEI Recognition Card is NOT required to earn qualifying scores or compete in these Championships.

Horse Owner(s) Membership:

1. For Young Horse Championships:
 - a. Owners must be Active Competing members in good standing with USEF or his/her National Federation (and have proof in English) in order for the athlete/horse combinations' qualifying scores to count, as well as at the time of application, selection, and until the conclusion of the Championships.
 - b. U.S bred horses may be owned by non-U.S. citizens. Foreign-bred horses must be either owned or co-owned by U.S. citizen(s).
 - c. Owners must be in possession of horse's valid registration papers.
 - d. Qualification goes with the horse; ownership may change during the qualifying period and for the Championships as long as the new owner(s) meet all of the above criteria.
2. For Developing Horse Championships:
 - a. Owners must be Active Competing members in good standing with USEF or his/her National Federation (and have proof in English) in order for the athlete/horse combinations' qualifying scores to count, as well as at the time of application, selection, and until the conclusion of the Championships.
 - b. Owner must be in possession of horse's valid registration papers.
 - c. Qualification goes with the athlete/horse combination; ownership may change during the qualifying period and for the Championship as long as the new owner(s) meet all of the above criteria.

USEF strongly encourages all athlete, horse, and owner membership requirements be completed by June 8, 2023, or rush fees may be required in order to submit the application of intent by 11:59pm, ET on June 15, 2023.

II. Division and Age Requirements for Athlete and Horse.

For all divisions listed below, athletes must be a minimum of 16 years old by December 31, 2023, to compete in these Championships. No athlete may compete more than two (2) horses or ponies (when applicable) in each Championship division. The same athlete/horse combination shall only participate in one division at these Championships within the same year. A horse may only be competed in one division at these Championships. Mules will not be allowed to qualify for or compete in these Championships. Per DR119.10, the horse's age is counted from January 1 of the year of birth to January 1 of the current competition year. FEI Rules apply in CDI competition.

Young Horse:

1. Young Horses must fit into one of the following age categories for competition (refer to DR119.10):
 - a. Become four (4) years of age in 2023;
 - b. Become five (5) years of age in 2023;
 - c. Become six (6) years of age in 2023; or
 - d. Become seven (7) years of age in 2023.
2. Ponies are eligible to qualify for and compete in these Championships. The height of ponies must not exceed 148cm without shoes, and 149cm with shoes (DR119.1). Ponies must have a current and valid USEF Standard or Temporary Measurement Certificate for Dressage/Driving. All ponies may subject to additional measurement at the Championships.

Developing Horse:

3. For the Prix St. Georges division, horses must fit into one of the following age categories for competition (refer to DR119.10):
 - a. Become seven (7) years of age in 2023;
 - b. Become eight (8) years of age in 2023; or
 - c. Become nine (9) years of age in 2023.
4. For the Grand Prix division, horses must fit into one of the following age categories for competition (refer to DR119.10):
 - a. Become eight (8) years of age in 2023;
 - b. Become nine (9) years of age in 2023; or
 - c. Become ten (10) years of age in 2023.

III. Qualifying System.

For the Young Horse division, qualification goes with the horse. The athlete may be changed during the qualifying period and for the Championships as long as the new athlete meets all of the above the criteria.

Once the entries close for these Championships, the athlete may not change from the athlete submitted on the entry for the Young Horse Championships. The deadline to submit an entry will be published in the official prize list and in the invitation to the Championships (See Section V).

For the Developing Horse division, qualification goes with the athlete/horse combination. Athletes are permitted to compete at the Championships with only those horse(s) named on a submitted application of intent.

Qualifying Period:

The qualifying period shall begin January 1, 2023 and end July 24, 2023 unless otherwise noted by USEF no later than February 1, 2023.

Qualifying Competitions:

A series of national competitions throughout the U.S. have been designated as USEF/NAYC Qualifying Competitions (Qualifying Competitions) and a list of the Qualifying Competitions is available on the USEF website [here](#) (please note that the 2023 FEI Calendar will not be published on this link until approved by the FEI, no later than December 31, 2022). Qualifying scores may only be earned at the USEF/NAYC Qualifying Competitions or CDIs.

For all divisions, please check regularly for updates to the FEI Calendar and the USEF/NAYC Qualifying Calendar as changes to competitions may be posted at any time.

Qualifying Tests and Minimum Qualifying Scores:

All tests must be held as individual classes which are specifically designated as USEF qualifying ("Test of Choice" classes will not count). USEF/NAYC Qualifying Competitions held over the course of a weekend are considered one qualifying opportunity, even if they have separate license/recognition

numbers. Only one score per respective Test may be earned over the course of weekend. See Section IV for Judging Panels.

1. Young Horse
 - a. Horses must obtain at least two (2) qualifying scores in their respective age division.
 - b. The current editions of the following Young Horse Tests must be used for qualification:
 - i. Four-Year-Old: USEF Dressage Test for 4-Year-Old Horses.
 - ii. Five-Year-Old: FEI Dressage Test for 5-Year-Old Horses – Final.
 - iii. Six-Year-Old: FEI Dressage Test for 6-Year-Old Horses – Final.
 - iv. Seven-Year-Old: FEI Dressage Test for 7-Year-Old Horses - Final.
 - c. A minimum overall average must be achieved in order to receive an invitation to these Championships:
 - i. Four-Year-Old: 7.5 average
 - ii. Five-Year-Old: 7.5 average
 - iii. Six-Year-Old: 7.5 average
 - iv. Seven-Year-Old: 68% average
 - d. For the Seven-Year-Old division, both the quality and technical markings must be scored on the FEI Dressage Test for 7-Year-Old Horses – Final to be included on the ranking list.
 - e. The FEI Preliminary Dressage Tests for Five, Six, and Seven-Year-Old Horses may be offered at Qualifying Competitions as warm-up classes only but do not count towards qualifying scores for these Championships. However, both the Preliminary and the Final Tests will be used in the Championships competition. The Four-Year-Old Division will use the USEF test ONLY. Please refer to our [USEF Dressage National Championships Competition Format](#) for more details.
2. Developing Horse:
 - a. Athlete/horse combinations must obtain at least two (2) scores in the current editions of the USEF Developing Horse Prix St. Georges Test or the USEF Developing Horse Grand Prix Test in their respective age division.
 - b. A minimum overall average must be achieved in order to receive an invitation to these Championships:
 - i. Prix St. Georges: 69% average
 - ii. Grand Prix: 66% average
3. Athlete/horse combinations may also earn qualifying scores at any CDI in their respective age division held within the qualifying period. For scores to count, see point 8 below.
 - a. Young Horse:
 - i. Four-Year-Old horses: The FEI Dressage Test for Four-Year-Old Horses cannot be used. Only the USEF Dressage Test for Four-Year-Old horses is used for qualification.
 - ii. Five-Year-Old horses: Only the FEI Dressage Test for 5-Year-Old Horses – Final in a CDI-YH may be used.
 - iii. Six-Year-Old horses: Only the FEI Dressage Test for 6-Year-Old Horses – Final in a CDI-YH may be used.
 - iv. Seven-Year-Old horses: Only the FEI Dressage Test for 7-Year-Old Horses – Final in a CDI-YH may be used.
 - b. Developing Horse Prix St. Georges: Athlete/horse combinations may only use the FEI Prix St. Georges Test.
 - c. Developing Horse Grand Prix: Athlete/horse combinations may only use the scores from FEI Intermediate II Test or FEI Grand Prix Test; however, only one score per CDI may be submitted on the USEF CDI Report Form to be counted towards the ranking list.
4. For Young and Developing Horses, an athlete/horse combination cannot earn a qualifying score from a National Qualifying Competition if the CDI Report Form is submitted from a CDI, at the same event. For CDI score reporting, see point 6 below.
5. **Competing Outside of the U.S.:** Horses that meet all age, registration, and ownership qualifications may qualify by competing at either [FEI competitions](#) or national level competitions in a foreign country. The applicable division tests must be used. For CDI score reporting, see

point 6 below. However, all foreign national level competitions must be approved by the USEF Dressage Sport Committee or its designees prior to the start of the competition. All other requirements as outlined above including application, eligibility, qualification period, judges, scores, etc. will apply for this method of qualification. Copies of the entire qualifying score sheet(s) must be submitted to and received by the USEF Dressage Department (festival@usef.org) no later than the end of the qualifying period for consideration.

6. CDI scores as described above are calculable at the option of the athlete and will only be computed into the athlete/horse or pony's overall average upon receipt of a USEF CDI Report Form within the specified deadline stated on the form to the USEF Dressage Department. Scores submitted late will not be accepted. It is the sole responsibility of the athlete to ensure that all qualifying CDI scores for this program are submitted to USEF on time and are accurate.

Score Calculation:

For calculation purposes, the athlete/horse or athlete/pony combination's overall average will be determined by averaging the scores earned in their respective Test. For all divisions, scratches, eliminations, and withdrawals will not be penalized on the ranking list.

1. Ranking List
 - a. USEF will automatically track scores for athlete/horse combinations which are earned at National Qualifying Competitions. Submission of score sheets to USEF is not necessary for these Championships unless requested by USEF staff.
 - b. As stated above, CDI scores must be reported to the USEF by the deadline as indicated on the USEF CDI Report Form in order to be counted.
 - c. International Qualification procedures as stated above must also be adhered to in order for scores to count.
 - d. Percentages are carried out to the third decimal point with numbers of five (5) and above rounded up (63.4555% = 63.456%). USEF is not responsible for inaccurately reported scores. If any errors are detected, athletes are encouraged to contact the USEF Dressage Department at festival@usef.org immediately.
2. Dropped Scores
 - a. If an athlete/horse combination completes three (3) or more of their respective test, the lowest score earned in the Test will be dropped. A maximum of one (1) score may be dropped. All remaining scores will be used to calculate an athlete/horse combination's overall average.

IV. Additional Rules and Requirements

One Athlete Rule:

1. For USEF Championships, within 24 hours prior and through the conclusion of the competition, any horse entered in a USEF Championship class shall not be ridden by anyone other than the athlete entered in that class on that horse under penalty of elimination from the USEF championships. Exception: grooms riding on a loose rein. For purposes of this rule, the competition starts when horse or pony and athlete arrive on the show grounds.
2. For CDI Events, FEI Dressage Rules apply.

Judging Panels for National Qualifying Competitions:

1. Qualifying tests must be judged by a panel of at least two (2) FEI and/or USEF "S" judges (or at least one (1) FEI Judge and one (1) USEF 'S' Judge).
2. For tests to be counted towards qualification, at least one (1) judge must differ per Qualifying Competition.
3. Four-, Five-, Six-, and Seven-Year-Old: It is required that all judges on the panel have completed and received credit from a USEF or FEI-recognized Young Horse Judge training session.

Conflict of Interest:

1. Judging Panels at CDI Events: Refer to FEI Dressage Regulations for Judge Requirements and Codex for Judges.
2. Judging Panels at USEF National Licensed Competitions: Refer to USEF Chapter 13, GR1304.

3. All competitors and officials are subject to the conflict-of-interest rules as outlined in the USEF General and Dressage Rules.

Dress and Saddlery:

1. Please refer to [DR120-121](#) for dress and saddlery rules for USEF/NAYC Qualifying Competitions.
2. If competing in a CDI event, all [FEI Dressage](#) and [General Regulations](#) must be followed.
3. A double bridle is mandatory for the Developing Horse Grand Prix division and is optional for the Developing Horse Prix St. Georges division.
4. See Section V regarding Dress and Saddlery rules at the Championships.

Non-Discrimination Policy:

USEF does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), sex, gender identity, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations. Everyone involved in the development of selection procedures and selection process must abide by the Non-Discrimination Policy.

Clean Sport:

1. [Equine Anti-Doping](#): All horses/ponies shall be subject to drug and medication testing during qualifying and at the Championship and the horse must meet all Federation drug and medication rules. Blood and/or urine samples may be collected at any time during the competition. Samples collected from horses/ponies will be tested for the presence of all substances forbidden and/or controlled by USEF. Any horse/pony whose sample contains a prohibited substance or a restricted substance in a concentration greater than USEF limits shall be subject to sanctions in accordance with USEF Rules.
2. [Human Anti-Doping](#): Athletes must adhere to all WADA, FEI, USEF and USADA protocols, policies and procedures. This includes participation in out of competition testing as required by WADA, FEI, USEF, and/or USADA rules, if applicable.

Grievance Procedures:

Athletes wishing to file a grievance challenging a denial or threatened denial to participate in competition, please see the [Athlete's Guide to Filing a Grievance Regarding Opportunity to Participate](#) and Opportunity to Participate Complaint Form. For procedural guidance for filing a grievance, please contact Emily Pratt at epratt@usef.org.

Please contact the USOPC Athlete Ombudsman Office at (719) 866-5000, or ombudsman@usathlete.org, or visit www.athleteombudsman.org for guidance as to the USOPC grievance process

General:

1. It is the responsibility of the owners and athletes of horses/ponies to ensure that they know and understand the [USEF Rules](#), [Qualifying Requirements](#), and the USEF Code of Conduct.
2. All athletes, horse owners, and trainers are required to follow the [USEF Safe Sport Policy](#) which includes the [USEF Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies](#).
3. USEF is not responsible for any late, lost, delayed, misdirected, or stolen correspondence either electronic, postal, commercially shipped, or voice activated. It is the athlete's responsibility to ensure that all application, application fees, and qualifying competition scores have been received by published deadlines.

V. Championship Competition.

Invitations to the Championship:

- a. Invitations to these Championships are anticipated to be sent via email no later than Friday, July 28, 2023.
- b. All athlete/horse or pony combinations that have submitted an Application of Intent as outlined above (see "Application") and have qualified by the method outlined above (see "Qualifying System") will be ranked according to scores and be accepted up to the numbers of entries available, not to exceed 15 athlete/horse combinations.
- c. In the case of a tie, the athlete/horse or pony combinations shall remain tied but shall take up two places so that if tied for first place, the next ranked athlete/horse or pony combination shall

- be #3.
- d. If there is a tie for 15th place, all tied combinations will be invited, thereby increasing the total number of entries accepted (e.g., 16 entries accepted).
 - e. **Young Horse and Developing Horse:** Following the end of the qualifying period, athlete/horse combinations not qualified as listed in Section III – Qualifying System may be invited to participate in these Championships if there is not a maximum of 15 qualified athlete/horse combinations on the Final Ranking List for a respective age group, not to exceed 15 unless there is a tie, if the following criteria is obtained:
 - a. The athlete/horse combination obtained at least two (2) scores in the USEF Four-Year-Old Test, FEI Five-, Six, or Seven-Year-Old Final Tests, the USEF Developing Horse Prix St. Georges Test or the USEF Developing Grand Prix Test within the qualifying period at Qualifying Competitions.
 - b. The athlete/horse combination's final overall average is within 1% of the minimum overall average as required per their respective age group and is the next highest overall average on the Final Ranking List.

For clarification purposes to the above, the additional invitations are based upon the Final Ranking List at the end of the qualifying period and not on the final entry list for these Championships.

Competition information:

1. It is anticipated that the 2023 U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions will take place on August 21-27, 2023 at HITS Chicago at Lamplight Equestrian Center Wayne, IL.
2. USEF Championship Rules will be followed and the Championship Format for each division will be available on the USEF website by March 1, 2022.
3. Tests shall be ridden from memory and WHIPS ARE FORBIDDEN. Please refer to USEF Dressage Division Rules for complete dress and saddlery requirements (DR120-DR121).
4. With the exception of the USEF Dressage Seat Medal Finals, all horses in entered in these Championships will be examined for soundness. A horse inspection will be scheduled prior to the start of the Championship classes, at which time horses must be presented to an FEI Veterinarian and at least one (1) member of the judging panel for examination. Horses shall be evaluated from the side and following consultation with the FEI Veterinarian, the decision of the judge(s) is final and not subject to further protest. If a horse does not pass the horse inspection, the athlete may request to re-present the horse to the judge(s) and FEI Veterinarian. The judge(s) must give an option for reinspection in consultation with Competition Management at any time up to one (1) hour prior to the start of the class. The FEI Veterinarian and the judge(s) from the original panel must be present. All individuals aged 25 and under must wear protective headgear during the horse inspection.

These Qualifying Requirements are based on the USEF and FEI rules and regulations as presently known and understood. Any change in the Qualifying Requirements caused by a change in USEF or FEI rules and regulations will be distributed to the affected athletes immediately. The Qualifying Requirements are based on the latest information available to USEF. However, the Qualifying Requirements are always subject to unforeseen, intervening circumstances, and realistically may not have accounted for every possible contingency. Changes in Qualifying Requirements are subject to approval by USEF.