



MARKEL/USEF National Young Horse Dressage Championships

SELECTION PROCEDURES FOR **2008 MARKEL/USEF NATIONAL YOUNG HORSE DRESSAGE CHAMPIONSHIPS**

*Kentucky Horse Park, Lexington, KY
September 2008*

Markel/USEF Young Horse Dressage Program Mission Statement: The Markel/USEF Young Horse Dressage Program promotes the importance of selective breeding and correct training of horses in the United States, and encourages participation of breeders, riders, and trainers of young horses in dressage competition. **The purposes of this program are to encourage the properly structured development of young dressage prospects through the training scale; to identify and recognize outstanding talent and the training of international-caliber horses; and to prepare these horses for future careers at the FEI level and participation on U.S. High Performance teams.**

The United States Equestrian Federation, Inc. (USEF) is the National Governing Body (NGB) for equestrian sport. The USEF Dressage Committee will oversee the selection process, which process subsequently shall be reviewed and approved by the USEF Executive Committee. Any member of the USEF Dressage Committee who has a conflict of interest or a substantial appearance of a conflict of interest as defined in the USEF Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy must recuse himself/herself and not participate in the selection process.

The Markel/USEF National Young Horse Dressage Championships will be conducted under the auspices of the Federation Rule Book.

APPLICATION:

1. In order to be considered for the 2008 Markel/USEF National Young Horse Dressage Championships, an **Application of Intent** must be completed and submitted to USEF. Applications received by the USEF Dressage Department on or before **June 20, 2008** will require an application fee of \$50. Applications received after June 20, 2008 but on or before August 1, 2008 will require payment of a \$150 fee. **No applications will be accepted after August 1, 2008.** A separate application must be received for each horse. The Application of Intent is available on the Federation website or by contacting the USEF Dressage Department.
2. It is the responsibility of the owners and riders of horses to ensure that they know and understand the USEF Rules.
3. Qualification is based upon each horse (not horse/rider combination).

ELIGIBILITY:

FOR RIDER:

1. Must be a minimum of 16 years of age as of January 1, 2008.
2. Must be an Active Member in good standing with USEF or his/her National Federation at the time qualifying scores are earned. During the Championships, the rider must be an Active Member in good standing of USEF or have proof, in English, of membership in good standing from their National Federation.
3. Qualification goes with the horse; the rider may be changed during the qualifying period and for the Championships as long as the new rider meets all of the above the criteria.

FOR OWNER(S):

1. Must be a United States citizen(s);
2. Must be an Active Member(s) in good standing with USEF at the time all qualifying scores are earned and during the Championships;
3. Must be in possession of horse's valid registration papers;
4. Must be willing to pay for all expenses incurred for the inclusion of the horse/rider combination in this competition, including but not limited to, transportation.
5. 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.

FOR HORSE OR PONY:

1. Must have a current **Annual or Life Recording with USEF** at the time all qualifying scores are earned and during the Championships (**Horse Identification [HID] Numbers DO NOT fulfill this requirement**);
2. 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).
3. Must fit into one of the following age categories for competition (refer to DR119.9*):
 - A. Become four (4) years of age in 2008; or
 - B. Become five (5) years of age in 2008; or
 - C. Become six (6) years of age in 2008.

4. The Championships will be held as part of a USEF-Recognized Competition (not a CDI); therefore, an **FEI passport will NOT be required for the Championships.**
5. Mules will not be allowed to qualify for or compete in these Championships.

**Rule DR119.9 states: "The horse's age is counted from January 1 of the year of birth to January 1 of the current competition year."*

BREEDING/REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS:

Owners must submit a copy of the horse's registration papers with Application of Intent, and with entry to the Championships competition. Horse must have registration papers, but entry is NOT limited to WBFSH members (i.e. Jockey Club, AQHA papers are accepted).

QUALIFYING PROCEDURE:

1. **QUALIFYING PERIOD:** The qualifying period shall begin **January 1, 2008 and end August 15, 2008.**
2. **QUALIFYING COMPETITIONS:** A series of competitions throughout the U.S. have been designated as Qualifying Competitions for USEF Developing Dressage Programs, which includes the Markel/USEF Young Horse Dressage Program. A list of these Qualifying Competitions is available on the Federation website or by contacting the USEF Dressage Department. **Qualifying scores for the Championships may only be earned at these designated Qualifying Competitions. Each horse must earn scores in at least two (2) different Qualifying Competitions.**
3. **TESTS:** Qualifying classes must be ridden using the following tests. These tests must be held as individual classes which are specifically designated as Markel/USEF qualifying (FEI or USEF "Test of Choice" classes will not count unless designated specifically as "Young Horse Test of Choice – Markel/USEF Qualifying"):
 - **Four-Year-Olds:** "USEF Dressage Test for 4-Year-Old Horses" (2006 Edition)
 - **Five-Year-Olds:** "FEI Dressage Test for 5-Year-Old Horses – Final" (2004 Edition)
 - **Six-Year-Olds:** "FEI Dressage Test for 6-Year-Old Horses – Final" (2004 Edition)

Please note: The "FEI Preliminary Dressage Tests for 5 or 6-Year-Old Horses" (2004 Edition) may be offered at competitions as warm-up classes only but do not count towards qualifying scores. However, both the Preliminary and the Final Tests will be used in the Championships competition (see "Championship Competition Format, below). The Four-Year-Old Division will use the USEF test ONLY.
4. **NUMBER OF SCORES:** Horses must obtain **at least two (2) qualifying scores** which meet all qualification requirements outlined herein.
5. **DROP SHOW:** If a horse competes in more than two (2) different Qualifying Competitions, the score from the one (1) competition that has the lowest score will be dropped. Only the score from one (1) competition may be dropped. All remaining scores will be used to calculate each horse's overall average.
6. **JUDGES:** Qualifying tests must be judged by a panel of at least two (2) FEI or USEF "S" officials. For tests to be counted towards qualification, at least one (1) judge must differ per panel.

7. **MINIMUM SCORES:** A minimum overall average of 7.2 must be maintained for consideration to these Championships.
8. **SCORE CALCULATION:** USEF will automatically track scores for horse/rider combinations which are earned at designated Qualifying Competitions based upon official results submitted to the USEF office by Competition Secretaries. Submission of score sheets to USEF is no longer necessary for this Championship unless requested by USEF staff.
9. **USEF YOUNG HORSE SHORT LIST:** Any horse that has been placed on the 2008 USEF Young Horse Short List for the FEI World Breeding Championships (via participation in Markel/USEF Young Horse Dressage Selection Trials) is automatically eligible to participate in the National Championships. However, **an Application of Intent must still be received by USEF** in order to secure this invitation (see “Application”).
10. **DRESS & SADDLERY:** Tests must be ridden from memory; whips are allowed for qualifying classes, except when the class is run within the CDI competition in accordance with FEI rules. Please refer to USEF Rules for complete dress and saddlery requirements (DR 120 – 121).
11. **INTERNATIONAL QUALIFICATION:** 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. FEI Young Horse tests (see “Tests”) for their age group or equivalent National test for the same age group may be used. All other requirements as outlined above including application, eligibility, qualification period, judges, scores, etc. will apply for this method of qualification. **Copies of entire qualifying score sheet(s) must be submitted to and received by the USEF Dressage Department no later than August 15, 2008 for consideration.**

INVITATION TO THE CHAMPIONSHIPS:

1. All horses for which an Application of Intent has been submitted as outlined above (see “Application”) and have qualified by a method outlined above (see “Qualifying Procedure”) **will be ranked according to scores and be accepted up to the number of entries available. The number of entries accepted will be limited to twenty (20) horse/rider combinations per age division (4-, 5-, and 6-year-old).** For the five- and six-year-old divisions, Short-Listed horses will be awarded automatic invitations to the Championships (see “Qualifying Procedure”, #9). Remaining spots will be awarded up to the maximum number of entries available according to rankings by scores earned (see “Qualifying Procedure”).
2. In the case of a tie, the horse/rider combinations shall remain tied, but shall take up two places so that if tied for first place, the next ranked horse shall be #3. If there is a tie for 20th place, all tied combinations will be invited, thereby increasing the total number of entries accepted (e.g. 21 entries accepted).
3. Horse/rider combinations will be notified of their final Championship qualification status by e-mail, phone and/or fax no later than August 22, 2008.

CHAMPIONSHIP COMPETITION:

1. The 2008 Markel/USEF National Young Horse Dressage Championships shall be held at the Kentucky Horse Park, September 2008 in Lexington, Kentucky. USEF Championship Rules will be followed.
2. The number of entries for each age group accepted for the Championships competition will be limited to twenty (20) per division.
3. Horses will be examined for soundness. A jog will be scheduled prior to the Championships classes, at which time all horses must be presented to the treating veterinarian and a member of the judging panel for examination.
4. Tests shall be ridden from memory and **WHIPS ARE FORBIDDEN** (except as noted below). Please refer to USEF Dressage Division Rules for complete dress and saddlery requirements.
5. Starting order shall be determined by a draw (except as noted below).
6. The Ground Jury for all Championships tests will consist of at least two (2) FEI judges. The panel shall sit together at C. Judges shall give one score, and fill out general comments on one Marking Sheet. Competition Management shall provide a sound system and a microphone in order for the judges to give the audience a short summary after each ride.
7. Horses in each age group will be ranked in order of their scores in each test. In the case of a tie for National Champion or Reserve Champion, the United States bred horse shall prevail. (U.S. bred is defined as a horse that is foaled in the U.S.) If both horses are non-U.S. bred or both horses are U.S. bred (U.S. bred is defined as a horse that is foaled in the U.S.), the Ground Jury will be asked to possibly break the tie.

CHAMPIONSHIP COMPETITION FORMAT – Four-Year-Old Division:

1. **DAY 1 – “WARM-UP CLASS”:** Entries in the 4-Year-Old Division will have the option of competing in an open “warm-up” class. The USEF Dressage Test for 4-Year-Old Horses will be used. This class will be OPTIONAL and will NOT count towards the overall Championship results. Ride times will be assigned. This test will be judged by one (1) or two (2) FEI judge(s) who may or may not offer commentary. Whips will be allowed for this class ONLY.
2. **DAY 2 – CHAMPIONSHIP CLASS:** All entries in the 4-Year-Old Division will compete in the Championship Class. The USEF Dressage Test for 4-Year-Old Horses will be used. Starting order will be determined by open draw. This test will be judged by two (2) or three (3) FEI judges (at least two [2] of which must differ from those judging the “Warm-Up Class”). Whips are PROHIBITED. *Complete placings, including National Champion and Reserve Champion for the 4-Year-Old Division, will be determined based upon score received in this Championship Class only.*

CHAMPIONSHIP COMPETITION FORMAT – Five- & Six-Year-Old Divisions:

1. **DAY 1 – QUALIFYING COMPETITION:** All entries in the 5- and 6-Year-Old Divisions will compete in their respective **Preliminary Test**. This test will count towards **40%** of overall average. Starting order will be determined by open draw. This test will be judged by two (2) FEI judges.

The top twelve (12) placing horses will directly qualify for the Final Competition (Day 3). The remaining horses will be eligible for the Consolation Final (Day 2 – below).

2. **DAY 2 – CONSOLATION FINAL:** Excluding the top twelve (12) placed horses from the Qualifying Competition, **the remaining eight (8) horses in each age division (5 & 6) will compete in this Consolation Final**. The respective Final Test will be used for each age division (5 & 6). This test will count towards **60%** of overall average. Starting order will be determined by open draw. This test will be judged by two (2) FEI judges (both differing from those judging the Qualifying Competition). **Horses will be placed first through eighth based upon overall average (Preliminary Test 40%, Finale Test 60%).**

The top two (2) placed horses in each age division (5 & 6) from the Consolation Final (based upon overall average of Preliminary and Finale Tests) will be eligible to compete in the Final Competition (Day 3).

3. **DAY 3 – FINAL COMPETITION:** The **top twelve (12) placed horses** from the Qualifying Competition (Day 1) in addition to the **top two (2) placed horses** in each age division (5 & 6) with the highest overall average from the Consolation Final (Day 2) will compete in this Final Competition. The respective Final Test will be used for each age division (5 & 6). This test will count towards **60%** of the overall average. Starting order will be determined by draw in two (2) groups of seven (7) horses, based upon Qualifying Competition (Preliminary Test) scores; the higher-placing group will draw for the second set of class ride times. Horses advancing from the Consolation Final (Day 2) will be placed within the lower-placing draw group. This test will be judged by three (3) FEI judges (one from Day 1, two from Day 2). ***Complete placings, including National Champion and Reserve Champion for each age division (5 & 6), will be determined based upon overall average: Preliminary Test – 40%, Final Test (Final Competition only) – 60%.***

CODE OF CONDUCT: Riders, horse owners and trainers may be required to sign and abide by the USEF Code of Conduct prior to entry into the Championships.

DRUG TESTING: All horses shall be subject to drug testing at the Markel/USEF National Young Horse Dressage Championships, and the horse must meet all Federation drug rules. Blood and/or urine samples may be collected at any time during the competition. Samples collected from horses will be tested for the presence of all substances forbidden and/or controlled by USEF; in the event a substance is detected for which the Federation has established quantitative restrictions, the amount of this substance will be quantified and reported to the USEF Dressage Committee. Any horse whose sample contains a prohibited substance or a restricted substance in a concentration greater than Federation limits shall be disqualified from the Championships.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: No person involved in the Selection Process, including but not limited to veterinarians, members of the Dressage Committee, and the Executive Committee, shall have had, during the entire Selection Process, any financial or other interest, including as coach, trainer, or otherwise, in an applicant horse, or have had financial dealings with the rider or owner or members of their families, nor be a member of the family of an applicant rider or owner. If within the entire Selection Process an individual has had any financial or other interest as outlined above, he/she shall excuse himself/herself from the selection process. Further, each decision maker in the selection process shall be required to fill out a conflict of interest statement, disclosing any potential conflicts with any of the applicants. Potential conflicts as disclosed will be reviewed by the Dressage Committee, or by the Executive Committee if involving a member of the Dressage Committee, and a decision will be made as to whether or not the stated conflict is deemed disqualifying.

QUESTIONS? Contact:

Jennifer Keeler
National Director of Dressage
United States Equestrian Federation, Inc.
4047 Iron Works Pkwy.
Lexington, KY 40511
(859) 225-2024
jkeeler@usef.org