



Para-Equestrian Dressage Program Structure and Pathways **Elite Athlete Program**

(Updated and Effective March 19, 2024)

Principles

- Internationally competitive athlete / horse combinations with potential to help put the U.S. Team in the Medal Zone and moving towards winning a Team Medal at Paralympic Games and World Championships.
- Based on competition & training opportunities and Games preparation and success.
- Technical Advisor and USEF Discipline Director led communication, training sessions, competition planning, selection methodology, logistical planning.
- Competing at a given level does not imply “elite athlete status,” being internationally competitive does.

Competitions

- Paralympic Games
- World Equestrian Games
- World Championships
- CPEDI3*s in Europe
- CPEDI3*s in North America

Identification

- Selection Personnel – Technical Advisor / Discipline Director / Selectors / Representatives of Sport Committee.
- Objective/Scores at CPEDIs plus subjective criteria.

Support

- Communication with Technical Advisor and Discipline Director.
- Observations by Technical Advisor at Athlete’s home base with personal trainer.
- Competition Planning toward key Championship events and strategies for the short term and long term.
- Establish KPI’s (Key Performance Indicators) for short term and long term.
- Review of KPI’s.
- Prioritized access to Training Sessions and home visits by the Technical Advisor.
- Competition Opportunities.
- Equine and Human Sports Science Medicine Support (Equine and Human SSM).
- Financial support, if available
- Logistical planning and support.

The Aim of the Elite Athlete Program is to identify athlete / horse combinations that are truly internationally competitive.

Elite Athlete Program - Criteria for Selection

Open to current athlete / horse combinations who have met the criteria from one of the two track options within the previous 24 months:

- **Track 1:** The athlete / horse combination have medaled (Team, Individual, or Freestyle) at the previous WEG or Paralympic Games.
- **Track 2:**
 - Gr. II – V** - The athlete / horse combination have earned two (2) 73% or above scores in the Team, and Individual tests prior to January 1, 2023 or Grand Prix A and Grand Prix B test after January 1, 2023 (4) scores at Athletes' classified Grade, and two Freestyle scores at a minimum of 74%) for a total six (6) scores at a minimum of one CPEDI3*.
 - Gr. I** - The athlete / horse combination have earned two (2) scores 74% or above in the Team, and Individual tests prior to January 1, 2023 or Grand Prix A and Grand Prix B test after January 1, 2023 (4) scores at Athletes' classified Grade, and two (2) Freestyle scores at a minimum of 74% for a total of six (6) scores at a minimum of one CPEDI3*. Scores do not have to be obtained from the same CPEDI3*. One set of scores (Team, and Individual tests) prior to January 1, 2023 or (1-Grand Prix A, 1-Grand Prix B & 1-Grand Prix Freestyle) after January 1, 2023 may be obtained through the USEF Virtual Judging program.

Athlete / Horse combination must compete in a minimum of two (2) separate USEF licensed competitions in FEI Team or Individual test prior to January 1, 2023 or Para Grand Prix A Test or Grand Prix B Test after January 1, 2023 at their Grade OR through the USEF virtual judging program.

Elite athletes who have secured a new horse must have earned a minimum score as listed above for your Grade in a Grand Prix A or Grand Prix B test at a CPEDI3* and one score as listed above for your Grade in the virtual judging program with the new horse to have the horse added to the Elite tier.

Elite athletes who have not produced the minimum scores as outlined above in the previous 24 months, will be identified by an * as inactive, until the athlete/horse combination have achieved the required scores for regaining the Elite Pathway tier.

If an athlete is inactive for three years, they will be removed from the program until the required scores are achieved and athlete has reapplied to the Program.

Athlete List will be reviewed and edited quarterly by the USEF Director of Para Equestrian.

Benefits to Membership

- Included on USEF Para-Equestrian Dressage Elite Program Member List published on www.usef.org as well as issued in Press Releases at least once a year.
- "Home" Visit by Team Vet and/or the Technical Advisor and/or Discipline Director in order to facilitate communication and planning as budget allows.
- Assessments by the Technical Advisor and access to Training Sessions.
- Funding may be available to the athlete selected for membership to the Elite Program. Funding is tied to meeting the agreed upon markers, evaluations, and with consideration of the athlete/horse combination to represent the U.S. in the following four years. It is intended to be used towards additional development opportunities such as training sessions and/or travel to European competitions. Distribution of funds will be done on a bi-annual basis as budget allows. Grant eligibility will be re-evaluated based on meeting the agreed upon markers. If the markers are not met, this may result in a loss of a grant or reduction in monetary assistance.
- Priority Access to educational opportunities offered through the Elite Program.
- Access to USEF Human and Equine SSM education resources as available.

Application

It will be the responsibility of the athlete to apply for selection to the Elite Athlete Program based on results achieved in the previous 24 months to the Application.

Staffing

- Discipline Director – Laureen Johnson
- Para Dressage Technical Advisor and Head of Coach Development– Michel Assouline
- Para Dressage Team Physiotherapist – Joanna Frantz
- Team Veterinarian – Kim Snyder



APPLICATION
PARA-EQUESTRIAN DRESSAGE PROGRAM STRUCTURE AND PATHWAYS

DIVISION (Please check one) ELITE DEVELOPING: EMERGING:

RIDER

Name: First Last USEF #

Date of Birth:

Address: Street Address City/State/ZIP

Cell Phone: Fax:

Email Address: Is email a reliable way to reach you? Yes No

HORSES (Athlete/Horse Combination Required for Elite and Developing Divisions)

Horse I USEF# Horse Owner (1) Name

Horse II Horse Owner (2) Name

Email

Coach Name Coach Contact Phone:

BINDING AGREEMENT (The rider is required to sign the following Agreement.)

I have read and understand the Para-Equestrian Dressage Program Structure and Pathway plan and requirements for each Division. I have completed the application and submitted required scores for the Division in which I am applying. By providing my handwritten or electronic signature below, I acknowledge the aforementioned and agree to accept my role and responsibilities as a participant in the Para-Equestrian Dressage Program Structure and Pathway.

Rider Electronic Signature - Type Rider Name

Rider Email Address

Parent Electronic Signature - If Rider is a minor

Parent 1 Email Address

In order to be considered for the Para-Equestrian Dressage Program Structure and Pathway, an Application must be completed and submitted to USEF along with qualifying scores for the Division for which I am applying. Applicants will receive confirmation of receipt.

If you have any questions regarding the program, please contact Laureen Johnson at lkjohnson@usef.org or 908-997-3008.

Please return completed application and applicable scores, if any, to Laureen Johnson, Director of Para-Equestrian, lkjohnson@usef.org, or via fax to 908-234-9417.