



COMBINED DRIVING ELITE ATHLETES

Approved on November 9, 2022 by the Driving Sport Committee

The United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) Combined Driving Elite Athlete list is outlined by the Driving Sport Committee and funded through the support of USEF, its sponsors, and the USET Foundation. The purpose of the Elite Athlete list is to recognize and support selected athlete/horse combinations who have proven to be internationally competitive at the highest level. The list includes those athletes that have successfully earned the outlined criteria at an FEI Driving World Championship for Ponies, Singles, Pairs, or Four-in-hands. Competing at the Advanced/FEI levels or competing in a World Championship does not imply Elite Athlete status. Qualifications to be named to the Elite Athlete list are determined based on the criteria outlined below, which are reviewed annually and may be amended from time to time. The Elite Athlete list will be updated with newly qualified athlete/horse combinations at least twice annually.

A. Minimum Requirements for Eligibility for Qualification

Prior to earning qualifications as described below, the athletes and horses/ponies must meet the requirements enumerated herein:

- i. Athlete must be a **U.S. Citizen** and must be an **active competing member of the USEF** in good standing.
- ii. All horse(s)/ponies must be **recorded with USEF**.
- iii. Athletes must maintain an **active registration with the FEI** in good standing.
- iv. All horse(s)/ponies must be **FEI registered**.
- v. Athletes must have completed and signed the **USEF Code of Conduct**.
- vi. Athletes must comply with all requirements of the **USEF Safe Sport Policy**.
- vii. Athletes must comply with the **FEI Clean Sport Policy (WADA)**.

B. Qualifying Criteria

Upon satisfying the minimum requirements for eligibility above, an athlete may qualify for the Elite Athlete list by meeting any of the following criteria within the qualifying period:

The qualifying period **begins September 1, 2022 and ends August 31, 2023**.

- i. Athlete/horse combination(s) that **earn an overall team and/or individual medal** at the following events within the qualifying period will earn a qualification to the Elite Athlete list for two (2) years:
 - a. FEI Driving World Championship for Single horses;
 - b. FEI Driving World Championship for Pair horses;
 - c. FEI Driving World Championship for Four-in-hand horses;
 - d. FEI Driving World Championship for Ponies; or,
 - e. FEI Para-Driving World Championship for Singles.

- ii. Athlete/horse combinations that obtain **at least two (2) competition phase results for the applicable class at two (2) USEF Open Advanced or FEI CAI 3*** or above competitions within the qualification period as detailed below:

Note: Qualifying results for competition phases will only be considered when obtained together at the same event. Marathon results are determined by 7 obstacles or by the calculated average to 7.

Single Pony		
Dressage 54 penalties or better	Marathon* 87 penalties or better	Cones 2 penalty or better
Pony Pair		
Dressage 50 penalties or better	Marathon* 97 penalties or better	Cones 5 penalties or better
Pony Four-in-hand		
Dressage 49 penalties or better	Marathon* 97 penalties or better	Cones 5 penalties or better
Single Horse		
Dressage 53 penalties or better	Marathon* 81 penalties or better	Cones 2 penalties or better
Horse Pair		
Dressage 51 penalties or better	Marathon* 98 penalties or better	Cones 5 penalties or better
Horse Four-in-hand		
Dressage 44 penalties or better	Marathon* 111 penalties or better	Cones 5 penalties or better

**Relevant marathon scores are converted to an average of seven obstacles*

- iii. Athlete/horse combinations that obtain the following **overall result** in the applicable class at **two (2) USEF Open Advanced or FEI CAI 3*** competitions within the qualification period.

Overall Final Result*	
Single Pony	147 penalties or better
Pony Pair	156 penalties or better
Pony Four-in-hand	156 penalties or better
Single Horse	141 penalties or better
Horse Pair	159 penalties or better
Horse Four-in-hand	168 penalties or better

**Relevant marathon scores are converted to an average of seven obstacles*

The criteria is determined by results from recent World Championships and World Equestrian Games. Results are averaged from the past three Championships or World Equestrian Games from the top 15% of each competition phase as well as the top 15% overall score. Marathon scores are all converted to an average of seven obstacles.

For the purposes of this criteria, Athlete/horse combinations are defined as two (2) of the same horses/ponies in the turnout for pairs or three (3) of the same horses/ponies in the turnout for four-in-hands.

C. Acceptance on the Elite Athlete List

Upon qualifying, athletes will be notified by USEF of their acceptance onto the Elite Athlete list for the relevant qualification period(s). Names of qualified athlete/horse combinations will be published annually on www.usef.org as well as in an annual USEF Press Release. The Elite Athlete list will be reviewed regularly and newly qualified athlete/horse combinations may be added to the list at least twice annually.

D. Benefit

Athlete/horse combinations that maintain the required results according to the criteria (Section B) may have potential to receive Elite Athlete grants annually or semi-annually, subject to the availability of approved annual budgets. As a condition of grant payment(s), athletes will be required to abide by the following conditions and execute a grant acceptance agreement.

E. Grant Recipient Conditions:

As a condition of receiving an Elite Athlete grant, athletes must abide by the following:

- The athlete must maintain their Active membership in good standing with USEF and the FEI at all times while named to the Elite Athlete list.
- The athlete must agree to comply with and be bound by all SafeSport requirements under federal law, the U.S. Center for SafeSport, and USEF, including the USEF Safe Sport Policy, which includes the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (MAAPP). The athlete must complete SafeSport training.
- The athlete must not be found to have violated any of USEF's USEF Rules, Bylaws, or other policies, including the USEF Code of Conduct, at any point while on the Elite Athlete list.
- If required, the athlete must successfully complete a background check as required by the USEF Safe Sport Policy.

Failure to comply with the above, may result in the athlete being removed from the Elite Athlete list and revocation of any grant eligibility.

Questions may be addressed to the Director of Driving:
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