



**US Equestrian
Combined Driving Athlete Pathway Program**

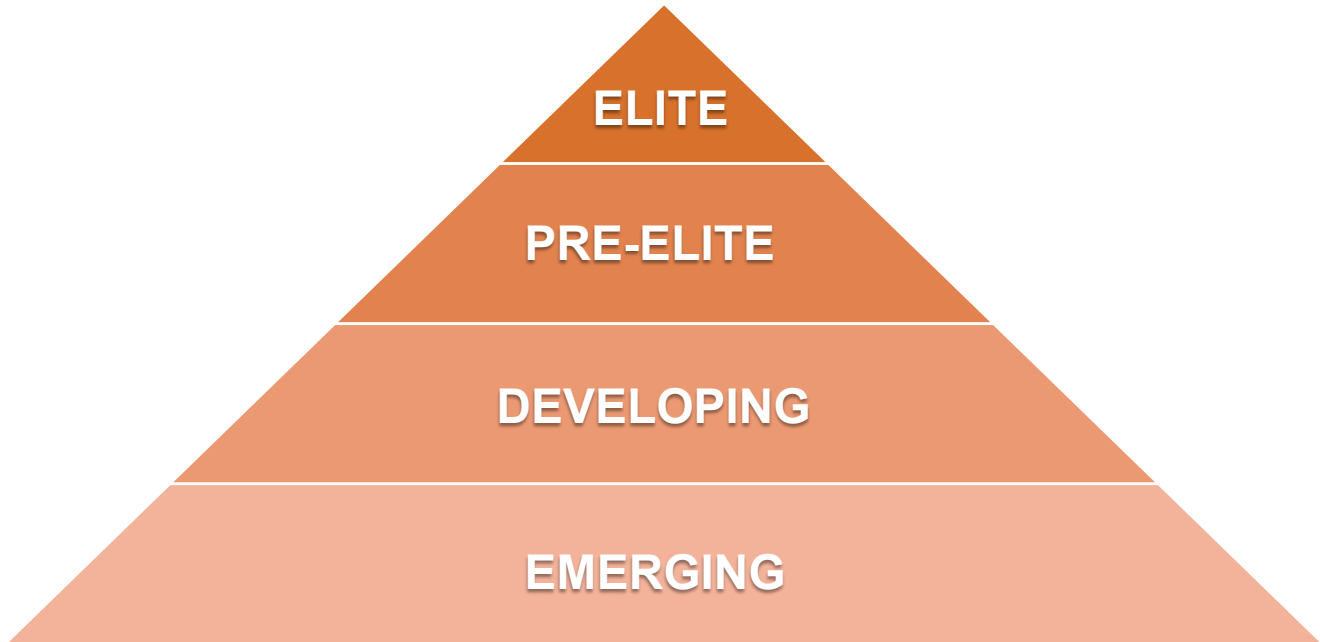


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Mission: Through a structured performance ladder, USEF will simultaneously increase the national standard of Combined Driving and achieve recognition on the world stage.

Vision: To grow and develop US Driving athletes and equines at all levels of their career.

USEF Driving Athlete Pathway Overview:

Designed as a route to prepare US Driving athletes for international success, the USEF Driving Athlete Pathway Program is designed to increase the quality of Driving talent in the United States as well as prepare those athletes to set their sights on Elite Driving and joining Team USA on the World Championship stage. Upon acceptance to the Pathway, Athletes agree to abide by the USEF Code of Conduct, USEF Safe Sport Policy, and all other USEF rules, Bylaws, policies, and procedures, while upholding the highest level of sportsmanship and horsemanship.

Pathway to Membership:

The Emerging Program level is open to all interested Athletes, while the higher tiers are limited to application or score-based admittance. For more information on each level's entrance requirements, please refer to that section of the Pathway Program.

Emerging Driver Program

The purpose of the USEF Emerging Driver program is to provide guidelines and support for introductory education in the sport. The program invites instructors to host introductory clinics where curriculum is used to teach the basics of driving for singles up to multiples. Hosts and Clinicians may offer private lessons outside of Clinic hours. The Driving Sport Committee will approve both the Clinic and Grant amount at its discretion.

Guidelines for instruction at Emerging Driver Clinics will be created and shared with Hosts. Alternatively, hosts may also submit a clinician's own curriculum for consideration and approval.

Minimum Requirements to host a Clinic:

- Clinic hosts and Clinicians are required to be USEF Senior Active Competing members in good standing through the conclusion of the Clinic, including successful completion of all USEF Safe Sport Policy requirements.
- Clinic hosts will be required to execute an Emerging Clinic agreement prior to the clinic dates.
- Clinic hosts will be required to maintain liability event insurance with USEF named as additionally insured.
- Clinic hosts will be required to collect completed USEF waivers from all participants and provide to the USEF following the clinic.
- In the event of an accident, injury, or fatality, Clinic hosts must complete a Report Form and return it to USEF in accordance with GR848 and GR849.
- After the Clinic, the Clinician must submit a written report of the Clinic to the Director of Driving.

Program Benefits:

- Promotional support for the event via the USEF Driving Newsletter and USEF Combined Driving Website.
- Free USEF Fan Memberships for participants who are not yet USEF members.
- Clinic hosts must submit an application by December 1st for clinics held December 1st through May 31st and June 1st for clinics held June 1st through November 30th. Applications may be considered following this date if the budget allows.
- Emerging grant amounts will be communicated following the deadline of applications.

Developing Athlete Program

The mission of the USEF Developing Athlete Program is to provide guidance and educational resources to cultivate selected athlete/equine combinations who display the potential to improve the national standard of the sport and eventually contribute to a U.S. Team score at Driving World Championships. Athlete/equine combinations are admitted to the Developing Athlete Program for a maximum of four years.

Minimum Requirements for Eligibility:

- Athletes must be a U.S. Citizen & maintain an Active Competing membership with USEF in good standing.
- All horses/ponies must be recorded in good standing with USEF.
- Athletes must have completed and signed the USEF Code of Conduct.
- Athletes must comply with all requirements of the USEF Safe Sport Policy.
- Athletes must comply with the Clean Sport and Equine Drugs & Medications policies.
- Within the last two years from the date of application, athlete/equine combinations must have completed at least three CDEs (not including short formats) at the USEF Preliminary level or above with the following minimum score requirements:
 - Dressage: 55 penalties or less
 - Marathon: Placing within the top 20% of the competition across all divisions held at the same level.
 - Cones: 6 penalties or less
- Athletes based more than 1,000 miles from the closest USEF licensed CDE may apply for an exception to the competition requirements above. For more information or to apply for an exception, please contact the Director of Driving.

How to apply to the Developing Athlete Program:

Eligible athletes may apply via their Athlete Dashboard in either November or May; applications must include a video of the athlete's current division level Dressage test and a video of either a Cones or Marathon course. Para-Drivers will be considered on a case-by-case basis in comparison to the applicable level.

The following factors are considered for admission to the Developing Athlete Program:

- Athlete/equine competition results and the trajectory of results over the last two years, including a complete class comparison.
- The athlete's previous commitment to the sport of driving, including advancement through competition schedule and various participation opportunities.
- Athlete/equine combinations committed to seeking out additional training opportunities.
- Athlete/equine combinations showing consistency in performance, reviewed via video submission.

- Behavior of the athlete and team associated with the athlete; including, but not limited to equine owners, coaches, grooms, and partners, that may have an impact on creating a positive group environment.

Minimum Athlete/Equine Combination Requirements for Retention:

- Attend one DAP training session and two USEF or FEI competitions a year.
- If entering the program with Preliminary results, the combination must begin competing at the Intermediate level before the end of their first two years in the program. If entering the program with Intermediate results, the combination must begin competing at the Novice Advanced level before the end of their first two years in the program. If entering the program with Novice Advanced results, the combination must begin competing at the Open Advanced level before the end of their first two years in the program.
- All members must renew their Developing Athlete Membership during the November application cycle each year of their 4-year term.
- An Athlete may request to substitute an Equine in the program by request to the Director of Driving. The substituted Equine must have met the requirements to be included in the Program.

Program Benefits:

- Competition planning and goal setting with Clinicians for both short term and long-term goals for the athlete and equine combination.
- Training sessions with a variety of appointed clinicians. The athlete's personal trainers are encouraged to attend and audit Training sessions as well.
- Access to virtual educational opportunities which will enhance the athlete's competition performance.

Developing Equine Program

The purpose of the USEF Developing Driving Equine Program is to allow current or previous Elite Athletes as well as athletes who have been selected for FEI Driving World Championships to receive support in expanding new equine's talents. The Developing Equine Program is part of the Driving Athlete Pathway which seeks to assist athletes wishing to advance their up-and-coming new Driving equines to the next level of competition and performance.

Minimum Requirements for Eligibility:

- Athletes must be a U.S. Citizen & maintain an Active Competing membership with the USEF in good standing.
- All horses or ponies must be recorded with USEF in good standing and a minimum of four (4) years of age as defined by USEF in GR 102.
- Athletes must have completed and signed the USEF Code of Conduct.
- Athletes must comply with all requirements of the USEF Safe Sport Policy.
- Athletes must comply with the Clean Sport and Equine Drugs & Medications policies.
- Athlete/equine combinations must have only competed for two years or less prior to application.
- Athletes must have, at one point in time, been named to or competed in at least one of the following:
 - USEF Elite Athlete Program
 - FEI Driving World Championship for Single Horses
 - FEI Driving World Championship for Pair Horses
 - FEI Driving World Championship for Four-in-Hand Horses
 - FEI Driving World Championship for Combined Ponies
 - FEI Driving World Championship for Young Horses
 - FEI Para Driving World Championship for Singles

How to apply to the Developing Equine Program:

Applications are available in either November or May through the Athlete Dashboard in your MyUSEF account. The submission must include a video of the equine training or competing. The following factors will contribute to the evaluation of the athlete's equine:

- Equine showing perceived potential for future competitive success internationally.
- Review of the submitted video, including quality of movement, perceived scope and suitability for the discipline.
- Positive recommendation from another professional or a USEF or FEI licensed official.
- Athlete/equine competition results and trajectory of results, if applicable.
- Behavior of the athlete and people associated with the athlete (including, but not limited to equine owners, coaches, grooms, and partners) that may have an impact on creating a positive group environment.

Athlete/equine combination admittance to the Program is limited to two years and must renew during the November application cycle each year. Equines are limited to two years in the program, while Athletes may reapply with a new equine. Upon approval, athletes will be notified of their admittance into the Program and will be included in all DAP member communications.

Program Benefits:

- When availability permits, athletes may attend DAP training sessions with their developing equine.
- Competition planning and goal setting with Clinicians for short term and long-term goals for the equine.
- When available, optional access to educational opportunities offered in the DAP.

Pre-Elite Program

The Pre-Elite Program is designed to help athletes, and their horses/ponies begin to establish themselves on the international competition stage. Admission to the Pre-Elite Program is a score-based system determined by the top 30% of each competition phase and overall result at the last 2 World Championships. Score criteria will be updated on December 1st of each USEF year.

Minimum Requirements for Eligibility:

- Athlete must be a U.S. Citizen and must be an active competing member of the USEF in good standing.
- Athletes must maintain an active registration with the FEI in good standing.
- Athletes must have completed and signed the USEF Code of Conduct.
- Athletes must comply with all requirements of the USEF Safe Sport Policy.
- Athletes must comply with the FEI Clean Sport Policy (WADA).

Minimum Requirements for Qualification:

The qualifying period for the Pre-Elite program runs from December 1 to November 30 of the following year. Able-bodied Athlete and equine combinations must obtain the following results at the USEF Novice/Open Advanced (not including short formats) or FEI CAI 2*, 3*, or above competitions within the qualification period to be named to the Pre-Elite Athlete program list. Para-Driving Athletes and equine combinations must obtain the following results at the USEF Intermediate (not including short formats), or CPEAI 2* or above competitions within the qualification period to be named to the Pre-Elite Athlete program list:

- (4) Four competition phase results met at no more than (2) two competitions; or
- (2) Two overall results met at (2) competition; or
- (2) Two competition phase results met at no more than (1) one competition AND (1) one overall result met at (1) one different competition.

Athlete/equine combinations are defined as two of the same horses/ponies in the turnout for pairs or three of the same horses/ponies in the turnout for Four-in-Hands. Qualifying results for competition phases will only be considered successful when obtained together at the same event. Marathon results for all divisions are determined by seven obstacles, and where applicable, athlete results are calculated to an average of seven obstacles.

Phase	Horse Four-in-Hand	Phase	Horse Pair
Dressage	49 or better	Dressage	56 or better
Marathon	106 or better	Marathon	95 or better
Cones	7 or better	Cones	11 or better
Overall	166 or better	Overall	164 or better
Phase	Horse Single	Phase	Pony Four-in-Hand
Dressage	58 or better	Dressage	53 or better
Marathon	88 or better	Marathon	96 or better
Cones	2 or better	Cones	7 or better
Overall	151 or better	Overall	157 or better
Phase	Pony Pair	Phase	Pony Single
Dressage	52 or better	Dressage	54 or better
Marathon	89 or better	Marathon	83 or better
Cones	6 or better	Cones	5 or better
Overall	151 or better	Overall	145 or better
Phase	Para-Driving Grade I	Phase	Para-Driving Grade II
Dressage	52 or better	Dressage	54 or better
Marathon	113 or better	Marathon	111 or better
Cones	9 or better	Cones	4 or better
Overall	183 or better	Overall	170 or better

Program Benefits: Athletes can:

- When availability permits, athletes may attend Developing Athlete Training Sessions.
- Receive up to a one-time \$1,500 grant (subject to budget confirmation) to be used toward training and competition. Athletes must submit a request to the Director of Driving by the end of the competition year to receive the grant.

Pre-Elite Athletes that qualify for the Elite Athlete Program in the same year will only receive the difference between the two grant amounts.

Elite Athlete Program

The Elite Athlete Program is primarily a score-based system with admission also based on Individual podium finishes at World Championships. Score-based entry is determined by the top 15% of each competition phase and overall result at the last two World Championships. Score criteria will be updated on December 1st of each USEF year. By making the Elite list, Athletes gain grant support to remain continuously competitive at the top level.

Minimum Requirements for Eligibility:

- Athlete must be a U.S. Citizen and must be an active competing member of the USEF in good standing.
- Athletes must maintain an active registration with the FEI in good standing.
- Athletes must have completed and signed the USEF Code of Conduct.
- Athletes must comply with all requirements of the USEF Safe Sport Policy.
- Athletes must comply with the FEI Clean Sport Policy (WADA).

Minimum Requirements for Qualification: The qualifying period for the Elite program runs from December 1 to November 30 of the following year.

Podium finish qualifications: Athletes that earn an individual medal at the following events will earn a qualification to the Elite Athlete list for two years following the championship:

- FEI Driving World Championship for Single Horses
- FEI Driving World Championship for Pair Horses
- FEI Driving World Championship for Four-in-Hand Horses
- FEI Driving World Championship for Combined Ponies
- FEI Driving World Championship for Young Horses
- FEI Para-Driving World Championship for Singles

Athletes with podium qualifications will earn a qualification to the Elite Athlete List the year following their podium qualification as long as the Athlete successfully completes during that year in either USEF Open Advanced or CAI 3*. Para-Driving Athletes admittance is based on USEF Intermediate, where the CPEAI Dressage Test is being used, or CPEAI2* or above competitions.

Score-based qualifications: Athlete/equine combinations must obtain the following results at the USEF Open Advanced (not including short formats) or FEI CAI 3*, or above competitions within the qualification period to be named to the Elite Athlete program list. Para-Driving Athlete/equine combinations must obtain the following results at the USEF Intermediate (not including short formats) or equivalent Foreign National Competition, where the CPEAI Dressage Test is being used, or CPEAI 2* or above competitions:

- (4) Four competition phase results met at no more than (2) two competitions; or
- (2) Two overall results met at (2) competition; or
- (2) Two competition phase results met at no more than (1) one competition AND (1) one overall result met at (1) one different competition.

Athlete/equine combinations are defined as two of the same horses/ponies in the turnout for pairs or three of the same horses/ponies in the turnout for Four-in-Hands. Qualifying results for competition phases will only be considered successful when obtained together at the same event. Marathon results for all divisions are determined by seven obstacles, and where applicable, athlete results are calculated to an average of seven obstacles.

Phase	Horse Four-in-Hand	Phase	Horse Pair
Dressage	44 or better	Dressage	53 or better
Marathon	103 or better	Marathon	92 or better
Cones	5 or better	Cones	7 or better
Overall	157 or better	Overall	155 or better
Phase	Horse Single	Phase	Pony Four-in-Hand
Dressage	54 or better	Dressage	45 or better
Marathon	86 or better	Marathon	89 or better
Cones	0 or better	Cones	0 or better
Overall	143 or better	Overall	142 or better
Phase	Pony Pair	Phase	Pony Single
Dressage	47 or better	Dressage	51 or better
Marathon	87 or better	Marathon	81 or better
Cones	3 or better	Cones	3 or better
Overall	143 or better	Overall	137 or better
Phase	Para-Driving Grade I	Phase	Para-Driving Grade II
Dressage	47 or better	Dressage	49 or better
Marathon	103 or better	Marathon	100 or better
Cones	5 or better	Cones	3 or better
Overall	163 or better	Overall	155 or better

Program Benefits: Upon acceptance, Elite Athletes can:

- When availability permits, athletes may attend Developing Athlete Training Sessions.
- Receive up to a one-time \$5,000 grant (subject to budget confirmation) per qualification period to support the Athlete/Equine combinations training and competition. Athletes must submit a request to the Director of Driving by the end of the competition year to receive the grant.

Protocol for Access to Developing Athlete Training Sessions

Athletes will be accepted into Developing Athlete Training Sessions in the following ranked order:

- Developing Program Listed Athletes
- Developing Equine Listed Athletes
- Athletes that are targeting a World Championship within one year of the training session (as approved by the Director of Driving)
- Pre-Elite Program Listed Athletes
- Athletes under the age of 25 with USEF Memberships (as approved by the Director of Driving)
- Elite Program Listed Athletes

Should there be oversubscription to training sessions within these groups, acceptance will be granted based on time of online application.

Should there be availability for Athletes to drive a second turnout in a training session, the Athlete must pay the Clinician directly for the cost of training for the second turnout.

Should there be availability for Athletes that do not meet the above criteria, the Director of Driving will accept other Athletes on a case-by-case basis.

Athletes may enter training sessions with an equine that does not match the equine they are listed to a Program with, but this must be approved by the Director of Driving ahead of the training session.