



PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Updated June 18, 2020

The aim of the Dressage Emerging Athlete Program is to provide strategic guidance and educational opportunities to selected U.S. athletes under the age of 25 with the perceived ability to eventually contribute to the Elite Program and achieve Podium scores within three (3) quadrennials. While the focus of this program is on the Young Rider and Junior levels, U25 athletes who are not qualified for the Development Program are also eligible for support and membership to the Emerging Athlete Program. Children and Pony Riders may also be eligible for educational opportunities offered through the Program. This program is run by the USEF Dressage Youth Coach, with input from the USEF Dressage Technical Advisor and USEF Dressage Development Coach. This Program's budget and aims are approved by the USEF Dressage Sport Committee.

I. Membership to the Emerging Program

Athletes may be selected for membership through:

- A. Training & Evaluation Sessions
- B. USEF European Young Rider Tour
- C. Performance at USEF National Championships, NAYC or CDIs
- D. High Intensity Training Session(s)

Following these selection events described above, the Youth Coach in consultation with the USEF Dressage Coaching Staff will evaluate the athletes for membership. The following factors will be used:

- Likelihood of athlete developing into a future Team athlete through evaluation of athlete in Training & Evaluation Session.
- Results and the trajectory of these results; (i.e. is the athlete/horse combination showing improvement or has the horse's results plateaued?) Results achieved at CDI and/or CDIO – U25/Y/J/P/CH events and National Championships will be given greater weight.
- The soundness record of the horse
- Behavior of the athlete and people associated with the athlete (including, without limitation, accredited owners, coaches and grooms) that may have an impact on creating a positive environment that will affect (either positively or negatively) their contribution to U.S. Dressage.

A. Training and Evaluation Sessions

Training and Evaluation sessions will be conducted several times throughout the year. In order to participate, athletes must submit an application (found [HERE](#)). In addition, the USDF/USEF Jr/YR Clinics may be used as Training and Evaluation Sessions. Applications submitted to the USDF/USEF JR/YR Clinics by athletes who have met the criteria to attend a Training & Evaluation Session may be considered for Emerging Program Membership.

Athletes must meet the criteria as described below in order to participate or receive a Wild Card (Up to 4 Wild Card invitations may be issued per Training and Evaluation Session). Personal trainers are strongly



encouraged to attend the sessions. The Training and Evaluation Sessions will be overseen by the Youth Coach and supported by other experts (i.e. other USEF Coaches, FEI Judges, Team Veterinarian, etc.).

Minimum Criteria for Training & Evaluations Sessions

- Athletes must compete at a minimum of three (3) USEF Dressage National Championship/NAYC qualifying competitions and/or CDI or CDIO –Y/J/P/Ch events over the past 12 months.
- Athletes (applies for Young Rider, Junior, Pony Rider and Children divisions) must earn an overall average of 68% of both Team and Individual Tests (*Freestyles will not count towards this overall average*).
- U25 athletes must earn an overall average of a 65% in either the FEI Grand Prix 16-25 Test or the FEI Intermediate II test (*Freestyles will not count towards overall average*).
- U25 athletes may also earn an overall average of a 68% in the FEI Prix St. Georges or FEI Intermediate I Tests (*Freestyles will not count towards this overall average*).
- Athletes meeting point C and/or D below are automatically qualified for Training & Evaluations Sessions (applications still required).
- Athletes (including those under 25) may also be considered for Wild Card Invitations if they have participated in the following events or if they have been recommended for the session by a member of the USEF Dressage Coaching staff. Wild card invitations for the Training & Evaluation sessions are approved by the USEF Dressage Youth Coach.

Talent scouting events:

- Regional Clinics
- FEI North American Youth Championships (NAYC)
- National Championships
- USPC National Finals at A Level (East Coast and West Coast)
- Robert Dover's Horse Mastership Clinic
- Dressage Seat Medal Finals
- Strategic Test Riding

B. USEF European Young Rider Tour

Young Riders selected for the Young Rider European Tour are automatically eligible for Training and Evaluation Sessions and Emerging Program Membership subject to review by the Youth Coach in consultation with the USEF Dressage Coaching Staff.

C. Performance at USEF National Championships, NAYC or CDIs

- Individual medal winners at FEI North American Youth Championships (in Dressage) are automatically eligible for Emerging Program Membership subject to review by the Youth Coach.
- Festival of Champions - U25 (Brentina Cup), Young Riders, Juniors, Champions and Reserve Championships are automatically eligible for Emerging Program Membership subject to review by the Youth Coach in consultation with the USEF Dressage Coaching Staff.
- Athlete/horse combinations competing in CDI-Y/Js with a score of 70% or higher from two different CDIs (freestyles not included) are automatically eligible for Emerging Program Membership subject to review by the Youth Coach in consultation with the USEF Dressage Coaching Staff.



- Athlete/horse combinations competing in CDI-U25s with a score of 66% or higher from two different CDIs (Freestyles not included) are automatically eligible for Emerging Program Membership subject to review by the Youth Coach in consultation with USEF Dressage Coaching Staff

D. High Intensity Training Sessions

Athletes participating in High Intensity Training sessions are automatically eligible for Emerging Program Membership subject to review by the Youth Coach in consultation with the USEF Dressage Coaching Staff. See the memo regarding High Intensity Training Sessions for information on how invitations are earned.

II. Benefits to being an Emerging Program Member

- Opportunity to participate in USEF Training Sessions/Clinics/Coaching
 - High Intensity Training Session ('HITS' - additional 'HITS' details can be found on our website [HERE](#).) Priority is given to Program members.
 - Select Athlete One-on-One Coaching. Athletes who are not members of this Emerging Program may be invited, including those under the age of 25. Priority is given to Program members.
- Access to USEF Human and Equine Sports Science Medicine Education Programs and resources when available, appropriate and as funding allows)
- Assistance in transition to the next age bracket or division level (training, strategic planning, setting competition and training targets, data analysis, etc.)
- Emerging Program Apparel
- If funding permits, it is possible for these athletes to receive some funding to support their agreed upon targets and goals
- Included on USEF Dressage Emerging Program Member List published on www.usef.org
- Athletes' trainers may be invited to participate in these Programs (e.g. *USEF Coach Development; free attendance at USDF Trainers Conference; etc.*)

Priority is given to Program Members for all USEF Program events (except those that may be specially restricted).

III. Requirements to Maintain Membership

- Establish Targets (i.e. Increase of scores, training sessions, competition plan) agreed upon by the Youth Coach, the athlete and his/her personal trainer.
- The Emerging Program Members will be reviewed approximately every six months. This review may be conducted in-person or via conference call. Those unable to meet their targets, no longer have the ride on a horse capable of meeting the criteria, and/or unable to compete due to prolonged injury will be removed from the program.
 - Youth Coach to make final recommendation on membership evaluation. May work with other program coaches or technical advisors when requested or when applicable.
 - U25 athletes may be considered for an exception to remain in the Program, if they do not meet their targets per the discretion of Youth Coach.



- Must continue to meet the Minimum Criteria for Selection as outlined above (68%)
- Must achieve this minimum criteria and outlined targets, goals, etc. within 6 months following qualification for the Emerging Program unless given an exception by the Youth Coach
 - Flexible 6 month period and possibility of grace period for the following circumstances:
 - Transition for JR to YR division
 - Age out of division
 - Veterinary reasons/horse death
 - Number of qualifying competitions in the Region
 - Extraordinary circumstances
- Encourage communication between USEF Dressage support staff, Dressage Youth Coach, and athletes' personal Trainers
- Demonstrate a commitment to the aims of the Program and the Code of Conduct
- Abide by USEF Code of Conduct and Safe Sport Policy

IV. Other

- The Emerging Program List will be reviewed on an approximately 6-month rolling basis
- Membership is based upon an athlete/horse combination
- Code of Conduct must be signed by the athlete, horse owner, parent, and trainer of Emerging Program athlete/horse combination
- A complete list of our Youth Events and Calendar can be found on the website [HERE](#).

Additional Information:

Questions should be addressed to Hallye Griffin, Managing Director of Dressage at hgriffin@usef.org or 859.225.6949.