

**UNITED STATES EQUESTRIAN FEDERATION  
ATHLETE SELECTION PROCEDURES  
2024 US Saddle Seat World Cup Team**

**1. SELECTION SYSTEM**

1.1. Minimum eligibility requirements for an athlete to be considered for selection to the team:

**1.1.1. Nationality/Passport requirements:**

Athlete must be a national of the United States at the time of application, selection, and the conclusion on the event. Athlete must hold a valid U.S. passport that will not expire for six months after the conclusion of the 2024 Saddle Seat World Cup competition (“Event”).

**1.1.2. Other Requirements:**

- 1.1.2.1. Athlete must be an active Competing Member of the United States Equestrian Federation (“USEF”) in good standing from the time of application through the conclusion of the Event.
- 1.1.2.2. Athlete or legal guardian/parent, if applicable, must successfully complete the USEF Application by stated deadline.
- 1.1.2.3. All athletes wishing to be considered for the 2024 US Saddle Seat World Cup Team (“Team”) must be at least 14 years of age as of January 1, 2024.
- 1.1.2.4. Athletes 18 and older, who wish to be considered for the Team, must possess current Amateur certification issued by USEF through the conclusion of the Event (USEF Chapter 13, GR1307).
- 1.1.2.5. Any athlete age 18 or older will be required to undergo a background screen in accordance with the current USEF Background Check Policy.
- 1.1.2.6. Any athlete age 18 or older, as of the Closing Ceremony, will be required to remain current with the U.S. Center for SafeSport’s education and training requirements in accordance with the USEF Safe Sport Policy.
- 1.1.2.7. Athletes must select either the 3-Gaited or 5-Gaited Team on the Application. Athletes are only permitted to complete the Selection Trial in one section (3-Gaited or 5-Gaited). See Section 4 Replacement of athletes.
- 1.1.2.8. Athletes must successfully complete the USEF Application by the stated deadline - Athletes wishing to be considered for the Team must successfully complete an online application with the appropriate application fee at [www.usef.org](http://www.usef.org). Applications must be submitted on or before September 1, 2023, at 11:59 PM Eastern and will be charged a non-refundable fee of two hundred dollars (\$200.00) per

application. No applications or amendments to applications will be accepted after September 1, 2023, at 11:59PM EST.

- 1.1.2.9. The athlete and legal guardian/parent, if applicable, must certify, by signing the Application, that they have received, read, and assume responsibility for meeting all requirements of the Selection Procedures for the Team. The athlete and legal guardian/parent, if applicable, shall certify by signing the Application that they have read and received the Selection Procedures, the USEF Code of Conduct, the USEF Release, Assumption of Risk, Waiver and Indemnification, and the Team and Supporter Policies, and that they understand those documents, and agree to be bound by them. Additionally, by signing the application the athlete acknowledges receipt of the USEF Safe Sport Policy and other proactive policies, which can be found at <https://www.usef.org/compete/resources-forms/rules-regulations/safe-sport>.

## 1.2. Selection Trials:

- 1.2.1. Event names, dates and locations of all trials, competitions, and camps to be used as part of the selection process: In order to be eligible to participate in the Selection Trials, all athletes are bound by the Selection Trials Memorandum. Athletes are required to participate in the Selection Trials, currently scheduled to be held on December 1-3, 2023, at William Woods University, in Fulton, MO ("Selection Trials"), in order to be considered for selection to the Team.
- 1.2.2. Describe how athletes qualify for the events listed in 1.2.1.: To be eligible to participate in the Selection Trials, athletes must submit an Application and fee in accordance with the deadlines listed above in Section 1.1.2, in addition to a five-minute video submitted through the online portal.
- 1.2.3. **Selection to Participate in the Selection Trials:** Beginning September 4, 2023, the Selectors, defined below, will review the materials submitted in accordance with Section 1.2.2 above and select up to twenty (20) athletes for the 3-gaited section and up to twelve (12) athletes for the 5-gaited section to attend the Selection Trials ("Selection Trial Athletes"). The Selectors will review the applications and videos submitted in accordance with the criteria below, in no order of priority:
- 1.2.3.1. Rail work: The rail work must show correct form and good horsemanship. The athlete must demonstrate the walk, trot, and canter in both directions of the ring. In addition to demonstrating the walk, trot, and canter, athletes applying for the 5-gaited section are required to demonstrate riding at the slow-gait and rack in both directions of the ring.
- 1.2.3.2. Pattern work: The athlete must demonstrate performance of one or more patterns of their choice. For applicants of the 5-gaited section, slow-gait, and rack are required in pattern demonstrations.

- 1.2.3.3. Pattern complexity: The athlete must demonstrate circles, straight lines on and off the rail, pivots, lead, and diagonal changes.
- 1.2.3.4. Attention to Transitions.
- 1.2.3.5. The athlete and their chosen horse(s) are turned out properly (proper appointments for the riding video can be found in EQ116.1.a).
- 1.2.3.6. Demonstrate the ability to ride multiple horses. Preference will be given to athletes who submit videos with at least two horses, showcasing this skill.

1.2.4. **Selection to Participate on the Team:** Upon selection of up to twenty (20) Selection Trial Athletes for the 3-gaited section and up to twelve (12) Selection Trial Athletes for the 5-gaited section, the Selection Trial Athletes will be invited to participate in the Selection Trials. The Selection Trials (See Section 1.2.1 above) will be used to select athletes to be named to the Team. Selection Trial Athletes will be scored by a panel of three Judges. Judges will be selected from the current USEF Licensed Officials list. In accordance with the Selection Trials Memorandum, the Selection Trials Athletes will be scored at the Selection Trials and ranked in accordance with the following:

- RAIL: Rail work will be evaluated using a numerical system based on a perfect score total of 100 from each Judge.
- PATTERN: Each pattern will be divided into segments, which will carry possible score values as approved by USEF prior to the selection trials. Each pattern will have a total possible score of 100 points from each Judge, resulting from the combined total of the segment scores.
- ORDINAL CONVERSION: The numerical scores given by each Judge at the conclusion of each phase (with phase defined as a rail work, or pattern segment) will be converted to an ordinal; with each Judge's highest numerical score converting to a '1', the next highest a '2', etc.
- NUMERICAL SCORES for each ride of every Selection Trial Athlete will be announced at the conclusion of the ride except for the final rail scores. These scores will only be made public following the announcement of the Team at the Awards Ceremony.
- The grand total score for each Selection Trial Athlete shall be a combination of the ordinals awarded by all judges from all rail work and patterns.
- In the event of a tie, preference will be given to the Selection Trial Athlete with the lower combined rail ordinal scores from all judges. If the above method is not sufficient to break the tie, the lower combined total ordinal scores for the rail work and pattern segments from the tie-breaking Judge will be used. The tie-breaking Judge will be announced prior to the start of the first phase.
- The scoring system to be used will be explained in depth to each judge before the start of the selection trials.

1.2.4.1. The following criteria will be used in determining the scores of Selection Trial Athletes competing at the Selection Trials:

- The Selection Trial Athletes are judged 25%-25%-25%-25% with the rail counting for 50% and individual pattern work to count for the remaining 50%.
- Judges will use the standards from Subchapter EQ-3, Saddle Seat Equitation, in the USEF Rule Book as their guideline for evaluating each athlete. Judges may only call for tests 1-13 (EQ120 1-16).
- Judges will score athletes on Selection Trial Athletes' form, as well as their horsemanship abilities, while keeping foremost in mind the unusual demands of the trials.

1.2.4.2. Following the conclusion of the competition portion of the Selection Trials, the Judges will rank the Selection Trial Athletes in both the 3-gaited and 5-gaited sections based on the ordinal scores received during the Selection Trials. Those Selection Trial Athletes with the six lowest cumulative ordinal scores from the 3-Gaited and 5-Gaited sections of the Selection Trials will be named as members of the Team and will represent the United States at the Event. Selection Trial Athletes will be required to accept, in writing to USEF, their position to participate on the Team within seven calendar days of the completion of the Selection Trials. If a Selection Trial Athlete declines to accept their position, the vacancy will be filled by the Selection Trial Athlete who holds the next lowest cumulative ordinal score. The Team must be approved by the USEF Board of Directors, Executive Committee, or Ad Hoc of the Board, approved by the Board of Directors.

## **2. DISCRETIONARY SELECTION (if applicable)**

- 2.1. Rationale for utilizing discretionary selection (if any): Discretionary selection is used to field the best team possible for the Event.
- 2.2. Define the discretionary criteria to be used (if any):  
See Section 1.2 above for the list of discretionary criteria used to select athletes for the Selection Trials and Selection Trial Athletes named to the Team.
- 2.3. Name of the committee that will be responsible for making discretionary selections, along with a complete list of the members' titles:

Six individuals; three selectors for each section, 3-Gaited and 5-Gaited, (the "Selectors") will be approved by the USEF Board of Directors, Executive Committee, or an Ad Hoc Selection Group approved by the Board of Directors, at the recommendation of the USEF Saddle Seat Equitation Committee. The Selectors are subject to and bound by the USEF Code of Conduct, Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy (Exhibits A, B, C), USEF Safe Sport Policy, and other proactive policies. The Selectors must be Senior Active Members in good standing of USEF, who are also USEF Licensed Saddle Seat Equitation or Recognized Breed judges and are knowledgeable and experienced in Saddle Seat Equitation.

Appointed Selectors are barred from having instructed, coached, or tutored any applicant athletes, acted as agent or consultant with regards to the purchase, sale, or lease of a horse by an applicant athlete or parent or guardian of an applicant athlete, with or without pay, commencing thirty (30) days prior to the application deadline and ending thirty (30) days following selection of the Team. The conducting of clinic or assistance in group activities such as Pony Clubs, unless private

instruction is given, will not be considered as instruction, coaching, or tutoring. No applicant athlete or individual acting on behalf of an applicant athlete may contact a Selector for the purpose of discussing anything related to the Team selection.

Three USEF Licensed Officials, (the “Judges”) will be approved by the USEF CEO, at the recommendation of the USEF Saddle Seat Equitation Committee. The Selectors are ineligible to serve as Judges. The Judges are subject to and bound by the USEF Code of Conduct, and Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy (Exhibits A, B, C), USEF Safe Sport Policy, and other proactive policies. The Judges must be Senior Active Members in good standing of USEF, who are also USEF Licensed Saddle Seat Equitation or Recognized Breed judges and are knowledgeable and experienced in Saddle Seat Equitation.

Appointed Judges are barred from having instructed, coached, or tutored any Selection Trial Athletes, acted as agent or consultant with regards to the purchase, sale, or lease of a horse by a Selection Trial Athletes or parent or guardian of an Selection Trial Athlete, with or without pay, commencing thirty (30) days prior to the application deadline and ending thirty (30) days following selection of the Team. The conducting of clinic or assistance in group activities such as Pony Clubs, unless private instruction is given, will not be considered as instruction, coaching, or tutoring. No Selection Trial Athlete or individual acting on behalf of a Selection Trial Athlete may contact a Judge for the purpose of discussing anything related to the Team selection.

*(See attached listings for complete listing of individuals involved in the selection process)*

- 2.3.1. Process that will be used to identify and handle any potential conflicts of interest involving a member of the Selectors and/or Judges:

All individuals involved in selection must comply with the USEF conflict of interest policy, to include completing and submitting a disclosure form for review by the USEF Legal Department and USEF Audit Committee prior to convening for the purpose of selection.

Any individual involved in selection who has an actual, possible, or perceived conflict of interest must disclose it to the USEF Legal Department and USEF Audit Committee prior to the start of the selection process and/or recuse oneself from the review process and/or voting. A conflict of interest exists when a personal, family, financial, professional, club, team or business interest of the individual poses a direct or indirect relationship, connection, or affiliation, past or present, with an athlete or Horse in contention for the applicable team selection that could compromise the individual’s ability to participate in the selection process in an unbiased manner. If a conflict exists, the USEF Legal Department and Audit Committee shall review the conflict and determine the individual’s level of involvement (e.g., whether that individual must recuse themselves from participating in discussions and/or voting). For example, if it is determined that an individual must recuse themselves from voting, the Audit Committee may still determine that an individual who has relevant and necessary information with respect to athlete performance, for example a team coach or high performance director, may, if requested by the remaining individuals involved in selection, provide such information to the committee so long as such information is provided in a fair and unbiased manner and so long as the individual with the conflict of interest does not participate in the deliberation or vote toward the

final decision. The individual must not otherwise influence other individuals in the selection process.

Additionally, any person (including any potentially impacted athlete, owner, or coach of a potentially impacted athlete or Horse) with a good faith belief that an individual has a conflict of interest may report the alleged conflict of interest to USEF General Counsel and/or Audit Committee. Reports may be made anonymously. No individual shall retaliate in any way against a person who, in good faith, reports an alleged conflict of interest.

Any recused individual shall be replaced in accordance with the USEF selection appointment process.

### **3. REMOVAL OF ATHLETES**

- 3.1. Prior to and after the selection of the Team, USEF has jurisdiction over Team members.

An athlete that is selected to the Team by USEF may be removed for any of the following reasons, as determined by USEF:

- 3.1.1. Voluntary withdrawal. Athlete must submit a written letter to USEF (Emily McSweeney, Assistant Director – [emcsweeney@usef.org](mailto:emcsweeney@usef.org)).
- 3.1.2. Injury or illness as certified by a physician (or medical staff) approved by USEF. If an athlete refuses verification of their illness or injury by a physician (or medical staff) approved by USEF, their injury will be assumed to be disabling and he/she may be removed.
- 3.1.3. Failure to participate in Mandatory Training and/or Competition as defined in Section 9 of these procedures.
- 3.1.4. Violation of the USEF Code of Conduct.
- 3.1.5. Violation of the U.S. Center for SafeSport Code or USEF Safe Sport Policy.
- 3.1.6. Failure to adhere to the USEF rules, policies, and procedures.
- 3.1.7. Non-compliance with the eligibility requirements listed in Section 1.1. of these selection procedures.

An athlete who is removed from the Team pursuant to this provision has the right to a hearing per the USEF's Bylaws, Part VII, and the USOPC Bylaws, Section 9.

In these procedures, the removal of an athlete is closely related to the process by which they will be substituted. Therefore, the reasons for which an athlete may be removed are thoroughly addressed in Section 4. REPLACEMENT OF ATHLETES

### **4. REPLACEMENT OF ATHLETES**

- 4.1. The following is the process by which the substitute pool of athletes will be identified:

- 4.1.1. Prior to the Event Entries: USEF has the discretion to substitute athletes for the reasons set forth in Section 1.2
  - 4.1.1.1. Openings, if they occur, whether by voluntary withdrawal or removal, will be filled according to the Selection Trials

ranking list and based on the next lowest cumulative ordinal score. See Section 1.2.4.2.

4.1.1.2. Any substitution for reasons set forth in Section 3 except by voluntary withdrawal, will be at the recommendation of the USA World Cup Coaches or their designees, and with final approval by the USEF Board of Directors, Executive Committee, or an Ad Hoc Selection Group approved by the Board of Directors.

4.1.1.3. Any substitution for medical reasons other than voluntary withdrawal must be documented by a physician(s) approved by USEF.

4.1.2. After the team declaration and up to 1 hour prior to the start of the Event:

4.1.2.1. USEF can substitute athletes on Team for reasons set forth in Section 3.1. During this time period, if a selected athlete withdraws, an additional athlete that did not submit an application in accordance with the deadlines of the Event may be recommended by the USEF Saddle Seat Equitation Committee, and the USEF Board of Directors, Executive Committee or an Ad Hoc Group approved by the Board of Directors. The method used to select this athlete will be at the discretion of the Saddle Seat Equitation Committee, or its designees subject to the approval of the USEF Board of Directors, Executive Committee, or the Ad Hoc Selection Group approved by the Board of Directors. The method used may include but is not limited to recommendation by the USEF World Cup Coaching Staff and athlete availability.

4.1.2.2. Any substitution for medical reasons other than voluntary withdrawal must also be documented by a physician approved by USEF.

4.1.3. During the World Cup Competition, substitutes and/or replacements will be chosen in accordance with the Event's rules.

## 5. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

USEF will retain the approved Selection Procedures and all supporting documents, including scouting or evaluation forms, etc., and data from the selection process for six months past the date of the Closing Ceremony of the Event.

## 6. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

The following documents are required to be signed by an athlete as a condition of nomination to the Event:

- Application
- Selection trials Memorandum
- USEF Code of Conduct
- USEF Release, Assumption of Risk, Waiver, and Indemnification Agreement
- Saddle Seat Team and Supporter Policies
- USEF Safe Sport Policy

In addition, all persons participating in any decision made pursuant to the Selection Procedures, including but not limited to the USEF Saddle Seat Equitation Committee, USEF Board of Directors, and USEF Executive Committee, will be required to abide by the USEF Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy and USEF Safe Sport Policy.

## **7. PUBLICITY/DISTRIBUTION OF PROCEDURES**

The approved Selection Procedures (complete and unaltered) will be posted/published by the USEF in the following public location(s):

- 7.1. USEF Web site: [www.usef.org](http://www.usef.org)  
These procedures will be posted as soon as possible, but not more than five business days following notice of approval by the USEF Board of Directors, or an Ad Hoc Selection Group approved by the Board of Directors.
- 7.2. Other: These procedures will also be available by mail or email upon request.

## **8. DATE OF NOMINATION**

Nomination of Athletes will be announced to all Athletes on: December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023. The US World Cup team will be declared and submitted on or before: six months prior to the Event.

## **9. MANDATORY TRAINING AND/OR COMPETITION**

- 9.1. A mandatory Team training session(s) will be scheduled based on coach and athlete availability. Extraordinary circumstances that prohibited an athlete from attending the mandatory training session, must be approved in advance of the start of the training session by the USEF Saddle Seat Equitation Committee. Failure to obtain approval for an absence may constitute voluntary withdrawal from the Team.
- 9.2. Practice(s) will be announced with at least four months' notice and will be sent to all Team members via email.
- 9.3. The Event dates/location will be provided to athletes prior to the Event and will be posted online on the USEF World Cup page.

## **10. DEVELOPMENT OF SELECTION PROCEDURES**

The following entities were responsible for creating these Selection Procedures: USEF Saddle Seat Equitation Committee, and USEF Board of Directors or Executive Committee.

## **11. USEF BYLAWS AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

Athletes wishing to file a grievance challenging a denial or threatened denial to participate in competition, please see the athlete's Guide to Filing a Grievance Regarding Opportunity to Participate and Grievance Form. For procedural guidance for filing a grievance, please contact Emily Pratt at [epratt@usef.org](mailto:epratt@usef.org).



**12. NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

USEF does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), sex, gender identify, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations. Everyone involved in the development of selection procedures and selection process must abide by the Non-Discrimination Policy.

**13. DISCLAIMER**

Any change in the selection procedures will be distributed to the affected athletes immediately. The selection criteria are based on the latest information available to USEF. However, the selections are always subject to unforeseen, intervening circumstances, and realistically may not have accounted for every possible contingency. If any force of nature, or force majeure, should cause the alteration or cancellation of any of the selection events listed in this document, these selection procedures may require revisions.

Selection to the team does not guarantee that funds will be available for the expenses related to the Event.

**14. ATHLETE OMBUDS OFFICE**

The athlete Ombuds Office provides cost-free, independent, and confidential advice regarding athlete rights, grievance procedures and any other related guidance pertaining to selection procedures and can assist in mediating disputes between athletes and USEF.

To contact the Athlete Ombuds Office:  
PHONE: (719) 866-5000  
EMAIL: [ombudsman@usathlete.org](mailto:ombudsman@usathlete.org)  
WEBSITE: [www.usathlete.org](http://www.usathlete.org)

**15. USEF SIGNATURES**

**I certify that I have read and understand the standards/criteria set by the FEI and incorporated those standards/criteria into our Selection Procedures. I further certify that the information provided herein regarding athlete Selection Procedures represents the method approved by USEF.**

Position	Print Name	Signature	Date
USEF CEO	William J. Moroney	<i>William J. Moroney</i>	7/17/23
Sport Program Director	Terri Dolan		

\* If, for some reason, a sport does not have an elected USOPC AAC Representative, the USEF must designate an athlete from that sport to review and sign the Selection Procedures.

## **Definitions**

1. Transitions: the process in which you change from one gait to another. For example, how you transition from the canter down into the trot.
2. Pattern Complexity: how intricate or complex the elements within the patterns are.
3. Good Horsemanship: horsemanship, for these purposes, is identified as a combination of riding and handling horses. Good Horsemanship would show the rider having good control in the horse's direction, gait, and speed, with minimal effort and maximum effectiveness. In addition, demonstrating the ability to ride multiple horses with varying degrees of difficulty.
4. Correct form: in accordance with USEF rule EQ115 POSITION.