



MEMORANDUM

To: Potential Applicants for the 2026 U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions

Date: May 28, 2025

From: Kristen, Director, Dressage Special Events

Copy: Hallye Griffin
Laura Roberts

Re: Qualifying Dates and Competitions for the 2026 USEF Dressage National Championships for the Brentina Cup Division.

This preliminary information is being provided to assist you with your competition planning and may be subject to change. Please remember that this information is based upon the recommendations of the USEF Dressage Sport Committee and the final qualifying requirements are subject to approval by the USEF Board of Directors, Executive Committee, or an Ad Hoc Selection Group approved by the USEF Board of Directors.

Date and Location: The 2026 U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions is scheduled to take place on August 24-30, 2026, at HITS Lamplight Equestrian Center in Wayne, IL.

Qualifying Period: The qualifying period for the 2026 USEF Dressage National Championships ("Championships") for the Brentina Cup divisions will begin on July 22, 2025, and end on July 27, 2026.

For this Championship, qualification is athlete/horse combination based. Therefore, any change to the athlete during the qualifying period will result in a new combination for qualifying purposes.

Age Requirements for Athlete (U25) and Horse: Athletes are eligible to earn scores towards the ranking list and to compete in this Championship from the beginning of the calendar year in which they reach the age of sixteen (16) until the end of the calendar year in which they reach the age of twenty-five (25). Horses must be a minimum of eight (8) years old to be eligible to compete in the U25 level.

Qualifying Competitions: Qualifying Competitions include national USEF/NAYC Qualifying Competitions as well as U.S. and foreign CDI-U25, CDIO-U25 or CDI2* events. However, a combination cannot earn a score in a national Qualifying Competition if the CDIU25 is also offered at the same event. Qualifying Competitions held over the course of a weekend are considered one qualifying opportunity, even if they have separate license/recognition numbers.

The list of national USEF/NAYC Qualifying Competitions is available on the USEF website [here](#). The 2025 FEI Calendar can be found [here](#) and please note that the 2026 FEI Calendar will not be published on this link until approved by the FEI, no later than December 31, 2025.

Scores earned from the 2025 U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions cannot be used towards qualifying for the 2026 U.S. Dressage Festival Championships.

Scores earned from the 2025 FEI NAYC can be used towards qualifying for the 2026 U.S. Dressage Festival of Championships if held during the qualifying period.

Qualifying Tests: Hors de Concours entries are not permitted in national Qualifying Competitions.

Combinations must obtain at least two (2) scores from the current edition of the FEI Grand Prix 16-25 Test and at least two (2) scores from the current edition of FEI Intermediate II Test.

Combinations must also complete one (1) FEI Grand Prix Freestyle Test within the qualifying period and earn a minimum score of 65% (Certificate of Capability). The Freestyle Test score must be earned in an FEI Grand Prix Freestyle Test held at a CDI or national Qualifying Competition, or an FEI Freestyle Test of Choice class held at a national Qualifying Competition. This score will not be used in the calculation of a combination's final average.

Qualifying tests at national Qualifying Competitions must be judged by a panel of at least two (2) FEI or USEF 'S' judges. Freestyle Tests completed at a national Qualifying Competition must be judged by a minimum of one (1) USEF 'S' or FEI judge. For CDI Events, [FEI Dressage Rules](#) apply.

Ranking List Score Calculation:

- a. USEF will automatically track scores for combinations which are earned at national Qualifying Competitions.
- b. Scratches, eliminations, and withdrawals will not be penalized.
- c. **CDI Scores:** CDI scores are calculable at the option of the athlete and will only be computed into the combination's overall average upon receipt of a USEF CDI/CPEDI Report Form within the specified deadline stated on the form to the USEF Dressage Department. Scores submitted late will not be accepted. It is the sole responsibility of the athlete to ensure that all qualifying CDI scores for this program are submitted to USEF on time and are accurate.

Questions: If you have any questions regarding the above, please do not hesitate to contact the USEF Dressage Department at festival@usef.org.