



# UNITED STATES *Dressage* FEDERATION

## Dressage Seat Equitation Guidelines For Managers

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The purpose of the USDF Dressage Seat Medal (“DSM”) Program is to promote and reward correct seat, position and use of aids in dressage for junior riders.

USDF will administrate the qualifying system and the Semi-Finals of the USEF/USDF DSM program. It is our intent to grow participation nation-wide, both in the number of competitions offering the classes and in the number of riders competing in these classes; while at the same time, creating an effective and efficient method of qualifying for the USDF DSM Semi-Finals.

In an effort to do so, USDF is making it simple to ride and qualify for both the competitor and competition management. USDF will record results of all dressage seat equitation classes held at all USEF-licensed/ USDF-recognized Dressage Competitions, but not all classes are eligible to be counted for qualifying purposes. Any dressage seat equitation class held at a USEF-licensed/ USDF-recognized Dressage Competition during the qualifying period may be used for qualifying for that year’s USDF DSM Semi-Finals, with the exception of classes restricted by criteria other than normal dressage rider categories of open, junior, or junior/young rider. Management will not have to collect any qualifying fees; only submit the results of each class in the same manner as the rest of the results.

### How do Riders qualify for the USDF Dressage Seat Medal Semi-Finals?

There are two methods that a competitor can use to qualify for the USDF DSM Semi-Finals. One method allows a competitor to earn a qualifying score in any open Dressage Seat Equitation class. Only one score of 70% or higher will qualify a competitor to compete in the USDF DSM Semi-Finals. There is a universal qualifying period of August 1 through July 31. The list of eligible riders who have qualified by score can be found on the USDF Web site [HERE](#). **Note: As described above, DSE classes such as USDF DSM Semi-Finals classes and USEF DSM Finals classes, which are restricted by criteria other than normal dressage rider categories of open, junior or junior/young rider, do not count for qualifying purposes.**

Competitors may also continue to participate in the USDF DSM Semi-Finals based on the fact that they are qualified for the Great American Insurance Group/USDF Regional Championships (the “Regional Championships”) at any level (excluding Freestyles). A list of riders qualified for the Regional Championships is maintained and updated continuously on the USDF website [HERE](#). Competitors who earn the necessary qualifying scores to participate in the Regional Championships and are otherwise eligible are automatically qualified to participate in the USDF DSM Semi-Finals. Riders can elect to compete in **any one** of the 9 USDF DSM Semi-Finals, but may only compete in **one** semi-final competition per calendar year.

### What do you need to know to offer a Dressage Seat Equitation Class?

Dressage Seat Equitation classes may be offered for Juniors, Young Riders, Adult Amateurs and/or Open riders.

- ✓ Be sure that the class is listed in the official prize list.
- ✓ Back numbers must be used instead of bridle numbers.
- ✓ USEF Dressage Seat Equitation score sheets must be used. Judges are encouraged to provide verbal comments to riders after the class but score sheets must not be posted.
- ✓ Dressage Seat Equitation classes should be held in an enclosed ring that is larger than a standard dressage arena, if available. If such a space is not available, an open schooling area is permitted. If classes must be held in a dressage arena, it must be at least 20m x 60m, and no more than 6 horses shall be asked to canter at the same time.
- ✓ Dressage Seat Equitation classes are excluded from a rider’s maximum limit of rides per day.
- ✓ **Judges are required to give a final percentage score for all riders competing in the class.**
- ✓ Refer to USEF DR133 for complete specifications.
- ✓ Additional information can be found on the USEF website [HERE](#). The USDF Guidelines for Competitors can be found [HERE](#).

## **What memberships do riders need to have in order for their dressage equitation class to count for qualifying?**

The minimum requirements for rider/owner and horse are as follows:

- ✓ Rider must be a USDF Group or Participating Member at the time of the qualifying ride.
- ✓ Owner must meet minimum competition eligibility requirements.
- ✓ The horse must have either a USDF Horse Identification Number (HID) or a USDF Lifetime Horse Registration (LHR) at the time of the qualifying ride and, if applicable, at the time of the USDF DSM Semi-Finals.
- ✓ If a rider competes in the USDF DSM Semi-Final competition, a Participating Membership will be required: no USDF memberships for owner or horse beyond minimum competition requirements.

## **Suggestions for Successful Dressage Seat Equitation Classes**

In order to assist USDF in its goal of increasing participation in Dressage Seat Equitation classes, show managers and secretaries are offered the following suggestions:

- ✓ Try to schedule equitation classes at a time that encourages both participation by riders and attendance of spectators. Since classes can pose some time constraints, scheduling before a lunch break can give needed flexibility. When a show runs more than two days (excluding weekday only shows), try to schedule equitation classes on the weekend.
- ✓ The amount of time allotted for each class can vary depending on the number of riders entered. A suggested guideline is to schedule approximately 3 minutes per rider entered in the class, with a minimum of 10 minutes if only 1-3 riders and a maximum of 20 minutes for larger classes.
- ✓ When hiring judges for your show, consider adding one judge that has completed a Dressage Seat Equitation education program. These judges are indicated by the word "Equitation" by their names on the Dressage Judge roster posted in the Licensed Officials section on the USEF website.
- ✓ Whenever possible in accordance with USEF rules and in consultation with your judge(s), it is desirable to distribute awards for equitation classes while riders are still in the ring. This provides immediate feedback to the riders and encourages spectator interest. Scores must, of course, be properly recorded in the show results.

## **For Managers of USDF Dressage Seat Medal Semi-Finals Classes ONLY**

USDF DSM Semi-Finals classes must be offered in all nine Regional Championships. There are two age divisions in the USDF DSM Semi-Finals: 13 & under and 14-18. A rider is eligible for the 13 and under Semi-Final class until the end of the calendar year in which he/she reaches the age of 13. A rider is eligible for the 14 through 18 Semi-Final class from the beginning of the calendar year in which he/she reaches 14 until the end of the calendar year in which he/she reaches the age of 18 (DR133.2 (f)).

Riders may compete in the region in which they qualified for Regional Championships or in another region of their choosing and are not required to ride their USDF DSM Semi-Finals class in the same region as Regional Championship classes they participate in. Competing on the same horse in one Regional Championship and in a USDF DSM Semi-Finals class in another Region is allowed. No declaration of region is required, but riders must submit an entry for the USDF DSM Semi-Finals class at the Regional Championships of their choosing in order to compete. Refer to the USDF website [HERE](#) for complete rules pertaining to the Regional Championships.

Juniors who are named Regional USDF DSM Semi-Finals Champions and Reserve Champions at age 13 or 18 will be eligible for the next year's USEF DSM Final in the respective age group in which they qualified (DR133.2 (d)).

The top two riders in each USDF DSM Semi-Finals class will qualify to advance to the annual USEF DSM Finals. In case one of the top two riders in either USDF DSM Semi-Finals class does not compete in the Finals, the third placed rider in the respective class will be allowed to compete (DR133.2 (c)).

Managers of Regional Championships will find the complete requirements for the conduct of USDF DSM Semi-Finals classes at Regional Championships as an Addendum to their Contract with USDF. Also refer to USEF Rule DR133.