



UNITED STATES *Dressage* FEDERATION

USDF Adult Clinic Series

USDF Guidelines for Rider Selection

The heart of the USDF Adult Clinic Series is the selection of the riders. Unless the riders can enable the clinician to demonstrate his training techniques, neither the riders nor the auditors will receive the maximum educational benefits that the clinician has to offer. For that reason, the USDF Adult Programs Committee has developed these guidelines to assist in the rider selection.

(Note: The clinic guidelines state that the selection committee can only select riders from the pool of applicants. In addition, the committee is aware that no matter who is selected, there may be complaints. It is hoped that by publishing guidelines such as these before the selection process begins, complaints will be minimized.)

In choosing riders, the selection committee should keep in mind that the purpose of the clinic series is to provide the auditors with the maximum educational benefit.

General guidelines to follow in selecting riders:

1. Selection Committee and Selection Process

- a. Each Regional Director shall appoint a selection committee. USDF recommends the selection committee consist of the regional director, a member of the Adult Programs Committee (if applicable) and a knowledgeable third party designated by the regional director (for example, a USDF Certified Instructor, judge, the host GMO president or the clinic organizer if no GMO is involved).
- b. If feasible, the selection committee should meet together and review all of the applications and video tapes within two weeks of the closing of the applications. In the alternative, it is suggested the selection committee designate a primary reviewer whose job is to review all of the applications and video tapes, summarize and rank the applicants and forward the applications, video tapes, summaries and rankings to the next person on the selection committee, who will then review and rank and forward all to the third member. In any event, it is highly recommended that the final rider selections, including at least one alternate, be made no later than four weeks prior to the clinic date. At least one alternate should be located near the clinic site in case last-minute substitutions are required.

2. Horse/Rider Selection Criteria. In selecting riders:

- a. **Only USDF (Participating, Group, and Education) members, over the age of 22, may be selected as riders.**
- b. Riders may apply with borrowed horses.
- c. Horses do not need to be registered with USDF in order to participate.
- d. Clinics will have the auditor as their focus.

- e. The committee should keep in mind the goal of maximizing the auditors' educational experience.
- f. The committee should keep in mind that the clinician is primarily focused on the training of the horse. The exercises are intended to correct horse issues and not for the correction of rider issues. Towards that end, it is important that riders be ready and able to make corrections and perform the exercises as directed by the clinician consistent with the level of riding designated on the application. This is not to say that each rider must have a "solid seat" or able to make *all* corrections immediately upon request, but it is to suggest that each rider should have a good basic seat with reasonably independent seat and hands, and the ability to demonstrate positive changes over the course of the clinic.
- g. The committee should attempt to select a broad range of horses and riders so that the auditors can see a broad range of issues which affect horses trained through the different levels (the selection committee may wish to refer to the training pyramid for guidance on appropriate training issues). This clinic is NOT for the perfect horse – it is for the average horse whose owner/rider/trainer wants it to become better trained according to classical dressage principles. Only by selecting horses with training issues that might reasonably be encountered by the average auditor will the auditors get the most benefit through watching the corrections and their effects.
- h. To the extent feasible, the committee should select horses of various breeds, including traditional and non-traditional dressage horses. By presenting a broad selection of breeds, the auditors will see that classical training methods will have a positive effect on any type of horse.
- i. To the extent feasible, the committee should select riders with as much geographic diversity as possible. These clinics are for all members within the region and special care should be taken to include people from throughout the region. Riders may apply for clinics outside their regions but preference will be given to those within the region where the clinic is being held.
- j. Riders should have a history of instruction with the horse they wish to ride in the clinic.
- k. Riders and horses do not need to have a competitive history, either together or separately, in order to be considered.
- l. The selection committee will give the rider's history precedence over the horse's history.
- m. Submission of video/DVD is required.