



# USDF Youth Regional Team Competition

## Organizer Guidelines

*effective 4/1/2009*

**“To promote dressage to young equestrians while providing for the future of the sport”**  
*-USDF Youth Council Mission*

### Introduction

These guidelines are meant to provide organizers with the information needed to organize and run the special features of a USDF Youth Regional Team Competition. Standard management details will not be dealt with, except to elaborate on selected areas that may be different from other competitions you have managed. More comprehensive information on organizing a dressage competition can be ordered from USDF.

### Before the Competition

**The following work should begin at least one year in advance:**

- **Organizer your show committee**, which may include the following:

- Manager
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Awards
- Stabling
- Grounds
- Advertising
- Sponsorship
- Program/Publicity
- Hospitality
- Scoring
- Volunteer Coordinator

- **Budget**

The budget for this competition may assume a volunteer show committee will be used. If you will be paying your Manager and/or Secretary, you may need to do fundraising to cover costs.

The local sponsoring organization (Group Member Organization) will be financially responsible for the competition. As organizer you should write down the budget for your competition and ensure that costs are covered. Each Region's situation will be different regarding fees for judges, facilities, etc. If costs in your area cannot be kept to a minimum, you can still offer this competition. Be sure all costs are covered, but plan to do some fund raising regionally and locally to offset additional or unanticipated costs. Speak with the Youth Regional Coordinator in your Region for ideas and help.

- **Competition Host Application**

As soon as location and date are known, send the completed host application to USDF. If this will be a United States Equestrian Federation USEF/USDF Recognized Competition (see section on recognition), send the appropriate recognition fees and forms to USDF and USEF. It is important that you send the application early enough so that we may include your event in the USDF Calendar of Competitions and list it in the USDF Connection Magazine. Proof of at least 1 million dollars in liability insurance with USDF named as an additional insured party and the USDF Organizer Waiver must also be returned with the host application.

- **United States Equestrian Federation (USEF)/USDF Recognition**

The decision to have this competition recognized by USEF and USDF is yours to make. There are benefits for each choice so the decision might be a tough one. If you choose not to have your competition recognized by both USEF and USDF, it might help keep fees down for your riders. Alternatively, if you choose to have your competition recognized, eligible scores earned by the riders will count towards USDF year end awards.

If your team competition will be held as a recognized competition, you must submit all required competition recognition forms and fees to both USDF and USEF. The USDF Youth Regional Team Competition Host Application will not fulfill the requirements for competition recognition. The Youth Regional Team Competition is usually most economical when run in conjunction with a 2-day recognized competition so that entry fees can be kept to a minimum. The least expensive way to offer stabling may be through combining this event with a recognized competition. A recognized competition would be more likely to draw enough competitors who would be stabling their horses to cover the costs of the stabling for the youth riders. Stabling could then be provided free or at low cost to the juniors. Make sure to check with USEF for information about required non-member fees and drug fees for both recognized and non-recognized competition. Non-recognized classes can not be held during a recognized competition.

The USDF Youth Regional Team Competition does not necessarily need to be USEF/USDF recognized. The decision to get USEF/USDF recognition for the Youth Regional Team Competition part of the competition is up to the show management. Whatever you decide regarding recognition, be sure to print it in your prize list.

**Note:** If your competition will be unrecognized, and you will be holding it in conjunction with an USEF/USDF recognized competition, be sure to check the current USEF rules regarding unrecognized classes.

- **Insurance**

The Group Member Organization or Region listed on the application to host the USDF Youth Regional Team Competition is financially and legally responsible during the competition [i.e. stands to gain (or lose) money in the event of a profit (or loss)]. It is important that all income and expenses be deposited to and paid out by the Group Member Organization or Region. This means that all entry fees should be made payable to the Group Member Organization, and all bills should be paid from that organization's bank account.

As a USDF sanctioned event, the USDF Youth Regional Team Competition must have liability insurance of at least \$1 million to cover and protect the organization legally responsible for the event (see above). **USDF must be listed as an additional insured party on the insurance certificate** obtained for this event. Most Group Member Organizations carry some type of package insurance coverage of club sponsored events, such as the USDF Group Member Organization (GMO) policy

As the Organizer, you will need to contact your Group Member Organization or Region and arrange to have the USDF Youth Regional Team Competition date(s) added to the list of events covered under their insurance. An official of the Group Member Organization or Region should then contact their insurance agent to arrange for coverage. If your competition is not covered under a USDF Group Member Organization (GMO) or Regional policy, you will need to arrange for other insurance.

**Additional Points to Remember:**

- The USDF GMO policy is handled by USDF corporate sponsor Great American Insurance Group. If your Group Member Organization has enrolled in the USDF GMO insurance program with Great American, the USDF Youth Regional Team Competition should be able to be covered under that policy. If the Group Member Organization does not yet have a local Great American Insurance agent, an official of your Group Member Organization can contact the USDF office to be referred to a Great American Insurance Representative who can arrange for coverage under the group's policy. **Double-check that your Group Member Organization has notified the insurance company of your competition's dates and paperwork is in order.**

- A copy of your insurance certificate with USDF listed as an additional insured party for this event must be submitted with the original host application. Your host application will not be accepted or approved until the insurance certificate is received. Your insurance certificate should be sent to USDF, attention Youth Team Competition Liaison.

- **Judges and other Personnel**

- **Judges**

- To make this a competition of special importance, it is recommended that two judges per arena are used for all classes, no matter what level test. A judge may be willing to provide their services free of charge or at a reduced cost.

- **The Technical Delegate, Medical Personnel and Farrier**

- These people may also be willing to donate their services or reduce their fees.

- **The Chef d'Equipe**

- Organizes the Awards Ceremony
    - Keeps kids updated on all activities throughout the show
    - Presents a brief talk about rules, procedures and the awards ceremony
    - Answers questions ~ Knows the rules and protocol
    - Helps children tack-up, tie ties etc., when necessary

To perform these duties, the Chef should literally walk from trailer to trailer or stall to stall throughout the day and ask if there are questions or if help is needed.

If your competition has mixed teams, it is the Chef's responsibility to introduce the kids to each other and help them feel like a team. The Chef can send each team member the names, addresses and phone numbers of their soon-to-be-team mates, and encourage them to contact each other. Once at the show, a time should be set up for the kids to meet and coordinate schedules, especially if not stabling together.

If you are having a pre-competition party, the Chef d' Equipe can go over the rules and awards ceremony and talk a little about competing on a team.

- **Publicity**

Start getting the word out about your show as soon as the date and location are finalized. Notify USDF so we can publish the dates in the USDF Connection magazine and on the USDF Web pages. Advertise in your Region's newsletter, local Group Member Organization newsletters (list available from USDF) and any dressage clubs, stables and general horse organizations with a "Calendar of Events." This will allow people to work the competition into their schedule.

Your promotions will need to explain the unique features of the competition and get kids, parents and trainers interested in attending. Take special care to ensure that all publicity of this event uses the correct name of the competition. **The correct name of the competition is the USDF Region \_\_ Youth Regional Team Competition.**

- **Local Businesses**

- Promote the competition to local businesses and call to ask for donations to use as prizes or offer reduced rates as a way for them to draw business from dressage competitors and spectators. Plan to let your competitors know in your prize list and program about merchants willing to help out this way. It may save your participants some money, and if enough business is generated, local merchants will encourage dressage competitors to return to the area regularly. Send out different information releases as the date of the competition approaches to attract spectators.

- **The Prize List**

The rules and special information pertaining to the Youth Regional Team Competition should be printed in your prize list. Any additional information specific to your USDF Youth Regional Team Competition should also be included.

We recommend adding Dressage Equitation, Musical Freestyle, Pas de Deux, and Quadrille classes. These classes are a fun and a wonderful learning experience for horses and riders.

- **Cover and/or Page One:**

- Correct name of the competition: **USDF Region \_\_\_\_ Youth Regional Team Competition.**
- Date(s) of competition, location
- Opening date/Closing date
- “The USDF Region \_\_\_\_ Youth Regional Team Competition is a USEF/USDF Recognized Competition" (if applicable) **or** "The USDF Region \_\_\_\_ Youth Regional Team Competition is **not** USEF/USDF Recognized”.
- Manager's name and phone number, Entry Secretary's name, address, phone (if different)

- **In the Team Competition section include the following information exactly as written here:**

- A rider may compete as a Junior/Young Rider until the end of the calendar year in which they reach the age of 21.
- The USDF Youth Regional Team Competition is a unique show for Youth, featuring team competition in dressage, educational programs, team medals and a mounted awards ceremony. The United States Dressage Federation (USDF) is sponsoring a competition in each region so young riders everywhere can join in the fun!
- There are no qualifying scores needed to enter. A team can be 3 or 4 riders. You may enter as part of a team or as an individual, and be put on a scratch team. A team may represent a dressage club, farm, barn, instructor, Pony Club, 4-H club, any youth riding club, or be a group of individuals. Any individual or partial team needing team members is encouraged to send in their entry and a mixed team will be formed. To enter, send in the Team Competition Entry Blank.

- **Rules**

- On the day(s) of the Youth Regional Team Competition while on the grounds (including the stabling area) the horse or pony may only be ridden by the Youth Rider(s) that will be competing that horse or pony. If the Team Competition is held in conjunction with an open competition, then on the day(s) of the Youth Team Competition the horse or pony may only be ridden by the Youth Rider(s) competing it in the team competition.
- One whip is allowed and must be in accordance with USEF whip rules.
- An ASTM approved helmet is strongly recommended for riders.
- Horses and ponies are to be braided.
- Parents are encouraged to participate.
- Awards Ceremony: Riders will be expected to be dressed in riding clothes and mounted for the awards ceremony.

- **Tests**

Each competitor will ride two tests in their division. Riders competing in FEI divisions will only ride one test. All tests used will be current issue.

- **Team Names**

Have fun with this! Some examples are: Pony Power; Wild Things; The Mountsters; The Tempel Terrors.

- **Awards**

- **USDF rider team medals on neck ribbons** will be awarded for first through sixth place in each division. Standings will be determined by the average of each team's total score. Any division

with more than six teams will be split. USDF Rosettes will be awarded to the Individual High Score Champion and Reserve in each division. Riders will be expected to be dressed in riding clothes and mounted for the awards ceremony.

- **USDF Shining Star** pins will be sent to each competition. The USDF Shining Star Award recognizes outstanding sportsmanship amongst USDF Youth Members (*see USDF Shining Star Award nomination form for further details*). Five (5) Shining Stars will automatically be shipped to competition management with the awards. Additional Shining Stars may be requested from the office if more than five are awarded at any one competition.
- **Scoring**

All scores from each team member will be counted. No scores will be dropped. Total points from each team member will be added together and divided by the number of team members to compute team placings. Three and four member teams may be in the same division.
- **Also include**
  - Entries Fees
  - Entry deadline
  - Where to mail entries
  - Entry Form
    - If your competition is USDF/USEF Recognized, your entry form must meet USEF requirements as stated in the current USEF Rule Book.
  - Class List
    - List the standardized team categories
  - List any warm-up or open classes your show may be offering in addition to those required for the competition.
  - Other
    - Information on the "get acquainted" party and educational activities, if available (otherwise, explain these items in your Program)

**The following work should begin at least six months in advance:**

- **Pre-Competition Educational Clinics**

These clinics should aim to increase the number of local young people entering the competition by attracting young riders from outside the established local dressage scene and by providing education, which clearly prepares the young riders to attend such a competition. Here are suggestions for topics for a mini-clinic:

  - Competing as a team
  - Showing in a formal competition (rules, etiquette, attire, salutes, braiding...)
  - Riding a dressage test
  - What "questions" are asked by each test
  - How to improve test scores
  - Understanding dressage terminology (e.g. "forward, on, behind or above the bit, etc.)
  - Nutrition and/or grooming
- **Ideas for Educational Activities**
  - As part of the original concept, your competition must offer at least one educational activity for the participants. Here are some ideas:
    - Review educational videos and encourage a discussion of the content.
    - Have books for loan or sale and an informational center of various Junior/Young Rider programs and activities hosted by dressage clubs in your Region.
    - Have the juniors work in various aspects of the competition during the show to give them a better understanding of what goes into running a show.
    - Have juniors sit with a judge on the sidelines watching and discussing rides in progress.

**The following work should begin at least one month in advance:**

▪ **Ordering Awards**

- *Special competition awards for riders are provided at no charge to your competition. It is not necessary to order your own ribbons or trophies unless you choose to offer additional awards. USDF does not provide horse awards for this competition.*

The special team awards consist of a gold tone USDF medal hanging from a neck ribbon, in the traditional colors for First through Sixth place (i.e. First place = blue, Second place = red, etc). To ensure that every rider, on every team, receives a medal, split the division if you have more than 6 Teams entered in a division. Your divisions should then be designated A and AA, B and BB, etc. order first through sixth place awards for both divisions. For example, when ordering, if you have six four-rider teams in a division, you should order 24 medals for that division (4 first place medals, 4 second place medals, and so on). In addition to the team medals, the high scoring individual champion and reserve champion from each division receive tri-colored rosettes. These are also provided by USDF.

To order the team awards use the Awards Order Form provided in this packet. Remember, USDF must receive your awards order no later than four (4) weeks prior to your competition. If you have any questions about placing your order, contact the USDF Youth Regional Team Competition Liaison at: 4051 Iron Works Parkway, Lexington, KY 40511; Phone: (859) 971-2277; Fax: (859)971-7722 or e-mail: [youthteamchamps@usdf.org](mailto:youthteamchamps@usdf.org).

- Five (5) Shining Stars will automatically be shipped to competition management with the awards. Additional Shining Stars may be requested from the office if more than five are awarded at any one competition.

**The following work should begin at least three weeks in advance:**

▪ **Scheduling the Team Test Rides**

If you have two or more judges for your competition, schedule the rides so that each rider shows under both judges. Schedule the tests in classes based on division, rather than test ridden (e.g.: Training Test 1 - "B" Team riders, Training Test 1 - "BB" Team riders, rather than Training Test 1, including both "B" and "BB" team riders). This way, riders from different team categories will not find themselves competing in the same class and it will promote a team competition atmosphere. To facilitate continuity of scores, use the same judges for every team within a division.

A maximum of six teams can be entered in each division. If you have more than six, split the divisions into two groups (Division A and Division AA, Division B and Division BB, etc.). This way, since you have medallions to six places, every competitor will go home with an award.

The announcer's result sheet should be made up in advance, by teams. List all teams, rider and horse names and leave blanks for their total scores and placing. If your program is set up this way, you can simply use a copy of it. During the competition this result sheet can be filled out as the scores are calculated. The Announcer will use this information during the Awards Ceremony.

▪ **The Competition Program**

Your program should contain the following:

- Use the title "USDF Region \_\_ Youth Regional Team Competition."
- Ride times
- Judges
- List of the different teams and the horse/rider combinations.

- Day, time and description of Junior/Young Rider party and/or meeting
- Day, time and place of mounted Awards ceremony.
- Sponsors

**The following work should begin at least two week before competition:**

▪ **Youth Rider Meeting**

A special Youth Rider meeting should be scheduled. If teams are arriving the day before the competition, an evening meeting works great. The youth riders get to meet each other before the show, and they are usually ready for some food and relaxation after a long day of preparing for the competition. An evening format gives you time to review competition rules, go over procedures for the awards ceremony and explain how the final team placings will be calculated. Another option is to get the participants together to discuss ideas and concerns of interest to youth Riders. You may want to invite your region's Youth Executive Board member to talk to the competitors about programs for young riders.

▪ **Special Touches**

- Stall assignments grouped by team. Have a stall decoration contest!
- "Souvenir" T-shirts. You can have a silk screen made of your own special design!
- Inspire team camaraderie with a picnic or a pizza party followed by an educational program, such as a Judges Viewpoint seminar
- A pre-competition Youth Rider mini-clinic in your immediate area. Encourage dressage clubs around your Region to offer clinics, too. The cost should be kept as low as possible.
- Special awards (example: best turnout, best sportsmanship, or humorous).

**During the Competition**

▪ **Decision Making**

Because this competition has specific goals in mind, if you have special circumstances that require a decision, you are encouraged to keep the following guidelines in mind:

- Find a place on a team for every rider who wants to participate.
- If the competition is not USEF/USDF Recognized, rules can be modified from USEF rules, with an eye toward fulfilling the purposes of the competition: education and having a positive competition experience.

▪ **The Announcer**

Before the competition, give your announcer a copy of the program and a listing by team name and rider number. Before and after each ride, the riders' names and the teams they are riding for should be announced. The announcer should be given the necessary information on high point individuals by name and team.

▪ **The Awards Ceremony**

The awards presentation at your Youth Regional Team Competition should reflect the special atmosphere and circumstances found at a special competition. The awards should be presented in a formal, mounted ceremony with riders in show attire.

- Begin the ceremony as early as possible after the last team ride so competitors and spectators don't have to wait too long. The ceremony can begin as early as 30 minutes from the end of the last ride, if you schedule one or two divisions to finish by mid-day. Begin the ceremony with these divisions. Meanwhile, the tests from the other divisions can be tabulated and team placings determined.
- The Chef d' Equipe (or other previously designated person) should be told ahead of time which divisions he/she can start lining up and the final placings for those divisions. Fifteen to twenty minutes before the start of the awards ceremony he/she should arrive in the "holding area" and start getting the kids lined up by team and division, starting with the first division that will be announced.
- Line the teams up in order of placing, from sixth place to first, preferably some distance away from the arena (pre-arrange where). The last divisions to finish their tests should be lined up last for the ceremony to give the scorer's time to finish their calculations.
- The Announcer should also have been given a list showing the order in which teams should be called into the arena. Flag any High Score or Reserves on the announcer's copy.

- At the designated starting time, the Announcer should start the special music tape, introduce the ceremony and the awards presenter(s). The Announcer can then begin calling the teams into the arena one at a time, starting with the sixth place team. During the presentation of each team, the Announcer should turn down the music.
- The team should enter four abreast at A, ride down the center line in the walk, and stop at "G." The Announcer will announce the Team, rider, and horse names while they are walking in. The pre-arranged "dignitary" will then present each rider with her/his medallion. Any High Score awards won by that team's members should be announced and presented at this time.
- Then, the Announcer will say "Victory Pass, please," and the riders continue down the center line to "C," split to the right and left and trot or canter to the end of the arena, coming to the walk just before exiting. The Announcer should turn up the music for the victory pass, and re-announce the team's name ("Ladies and Gentleman, I give you the [team name]"). Then announce the next team.
- An awards ceremony with this procedure goes faster and with less confusion than with the whole division in the ring. Also, the kids feel more honored because they receive their own "moment in the sun."

▪ **Reporting Scores**

If this is a USDF/USEF Recognized competition, you are required to report the results after the show using USDF recording forms or a computer print out that follows that format. You must report results from all classes of Training Level or higher, with each class recorded separately. Include the team division names [ex: Training Level - Test 1, Jr/YR (B Team)] and class headings on all results.

Although official results for USEF & USDF should be recorded by class, scoreboards should be posted by team. The scoreboard can simply be a larger version of the "Team Score Sheet" which can be found on the USDF website at [www.usdf.org](http://www.usdf.org).

▪ **Team Scoring Instructions**

▪ **Keeping Track**

Make copies of the "Team Scoring Sheet". This will help you keep track of the team scores and placings. This score sheet can be found on the USDF website at [www.usdf.org](http://www.usdf.org) or you may use your own form.

▪ **Individual High Score Winners**

In each division, the individual riders having the highest score, and second highest score, will be recognized as the Individual High Score Champion and Reserve. No calculation is necessary to determine the winners. Simply look for the two highest scores received on any test within a division. Do this for every division.

▪ **Posting Scores**

Scores should be posted frequently (every couple rides) throughout the day. Scoreboards should list the scores by team.

**After the Competition**

**The following must be returned to USDF following the competition:**

- Any banners obtained for your event.
- Unused team awards, including Shining Stars.
- A final copy of your prize list and program.
- Several clear photos of your competition, free of background clutter. Pose winners in front of the USDF banner! Behind-the-scenes candid shots and competition shots are also recommended. Do not write directly on the photos; this may create a raised image that will reproduce. Attach a gummed label with the Team name, Region, presenter(s) name, riders and horse names. Enclose photo release forms from the photographer for permission to use in USDF's national publication or the USDF Yearbook.
- The Competition Organizer's summary, filled out completely.
- The complete results of the show, by team and by test. (Note: results sent to the USDF competitions department will not fulfill this requirement, nor will results sent to the Youth Liaison fulfill the

requirement of submitting results to the USDF competitions department. Two separate sets of results must be submitted.)

- Post-event publicity; USDF requests several good, clear photographs. Consider submitting a 500-word synopsis of your competition for possible publication in USDF Connection magazine or Regional Newsletters. Photographs may also be used in USDF Connection, in the USDF Yearbook and on the USDF Web site.

## Form and Documents

All forms and documents are available on the USDF website at [www.usdf.org](http://www.usdf.org).

If you have any questions regarding USDF Youth Regional Team Competition, please visit the USDF website or contact the USDF Youth Regional Team Competition Liaison at 859-971-2277 or [youthteamchamps@usdf.org](mailto:youthteamchamps@usdf.org)

## Organizers Checklist

The following checklist is designed to help organizers before, during and after the competition:

### ONE YEAR IN ADVANCE

#### The Show Committee

- Organize your committee, which may include:
  - Manager • Advertising
  - Secretary • Sponsorship
  - Treasurer • Program/Publicity
  - Awards • Hospitality
  - Stabling • Scoring
  - Grounds • Volunteer Coordinator

#### Budget

- Plan how much fund raising you will need to do to cover fees for judges, facilities, etc.

#### Competition Host Application

- Send application to USDF as soon as possible, (several months in advance) to be included in the calendar of events.
- If you decide to be USDF/USEF recognized, make sure all forms and fees are submitted.

#### Insurance

- A Certificate of Liability for a minimum of \$1 million naming USDF as an additional insured to be submitted with host application.
- USDF Organizer Waiver of Liability signed and returned with host application.

#### Judges and other Personnel

- Appoint Judges, Technical Delegate, Announcer, Medical Personnel, Veterinarian, Farrier and volunteers.

#### Publicity

- Make sure to get the word out early, refer to the competition as “USDF Region \_\_\_\_ Youth Regional Team Competition”. Let them know what makes your competition special.

#### Prize List

- Make sure to include information about the Youth Team Competition as written in the prize list section of the guidelines.

## **SIX MONTHS IN ADVANCE**

### **Pre-Competition Educational Clinics**

- These clinics should aim to increase the number of youth entering the Competition and to provide valuable education.

### **Ideas for Educational Activities**

- Each Youth Team Competition must offer at least one educational activity. See guidelines for ideas.

## **ONE MONTH IN ADVANCE**

- Use the form on the web site to order team awards from USDF
- Order addition Shining Star Awards, if needed
- Schedule the Team Test Rides

## **TWO WEEKS IN ADVANCE**

- Design and Print program
  - Your program should contain the following:
    - Use the title "**USDF Region \_\_ Youth Regional Team Competition.**"
    - Judges
    - Ride times
    - List of the different teams and the horse/rider combination
    - Day, time and description of Junior
    - Day, time and place of mounted Awards ceremony
    - Sponsors

## **DURING THE COMPETITION**

- Make sure the announcer has a copy of the program and a listing by team name and rider number.
- The awards ceremony should reflect the special atmosphere of the competition.
- Follow team scoring directions in the guidelines.

## **AFTER THE COMPETITION**

### **Return the following to USDF:**

- Any Banners obtained for your event
- Any unused team awards, including unused Shining Star Awards
- A final copy of your prize list and program
- Photos of your competition and release forms from photographer
- The Competition Organizer's summary
- Youth Regional Team Competition results sent to Youth Team Competition Liaison ~ If USEF/USDF recognized, complete results sent to USDF Competition Department ~
- Consider submitting a 500 word synopsis of your Competition for possible publication

## **NOTES**