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APPENDIX

Dressage Saddlery: Permitted Bits and Nosebands

Dressage Arenas

The North Carolina 4-H Horse Program would like to express our sincere appreciation to Mary Hunt, Guilford County 4-H Horse Program Volunteer leader for her efforts in revising this manual.

**INTRODUCTION**

Dressage is often referred to as ballet on horseback. It is the uniting of rider and mount to produce pure movement, balance and harmony. Dressage is multi-discipline and can be as basic as elementary equitation patterns and as complex as working cow horse patterns. Flexibility of body and mind are required of both horse and rider. As the dressage levels progress so do the demands put on the horse and rider. At the introductory levels transitions, accuracy and balance are emphasized. In the higher levels more difficult movements are prescribed that require complete harmony between the horse and rider. The most important things to remember about dressage are 1) it's fun, 2) it is multi-discipline and lastly each ride is evaluated against a standard for each individual test not against each rider in a division.

**Objective of Dressage**

Basic dressage should demonstrate obedience, control and horsemanship. It should also demonstrate harmonious development of the horse and its understanding with its rider.

**The Levels**

**Introductory Level:** Tests consist of Walk-Trot work, transitions from each and the halt. This is a good level to begin at especially for Junior and Short Stirrup rider .

**Training Level:** Introduces the horse and rider to the basic principle of dressage competition. Transitions are gradual, circles large and only working gaits are required. Training Level requires obedience to the aids of the rider without fight or evasion when ridden on light contact.

**First Level:**  Emphasis is on freedom, relaxation and rhythm. The First Level determines that the correct foundation is being laid for successful training of the riding horse. The horse moves freely forward in a relaxed manner and with rhythm, its spine always parallel to the track of the prescribed movement and it accepts the bit and obeys simple aids of the rider.

**DRESSAGE**

**Terminology**

**Dressage Test:** A published pattern. A predetermined order of specific movements to be performed by a individual in an average amount of allotted time. Movements are required to occur at specific locations in the arena.

**Arena:** Designated area where a dressage test is performed.

**Combined Test**: Consists of two phases, a dressage test and stadium jumping.

**Above the Bit:** A resistance or evasion by the horse accomplished by raising his head to escape the action of the bit.

**Aids:** Natural aids are the hands, legs, weight and voice. Artificial aids are whips and spurs.

**Behind the bit:** An evasion by the horse to avoid the action of the bit by tucking his head behind the vertical.

**Rhythm:** The regularity of foothill at any pace.

**Procedural Notes**

All tests must be carried out from memory if it is part of the Combined Test and all movements must follow in the order laid down in the test. A competitor failing to enter the arena within 45 seconds of the starting signal (bell or whistle) will be eliminated. A horse leaving the arena completely, with all four feet, between the time of entry and final salute, will be eliminated. If a competitor elects to have their test read to them they must furnish their own reader.

The arena must be 60 meters long and 20 meters wider (standard Arena) or 40 meters long and 20 meters wide (Small Arena), depending on the specifications for the test to be used. The measurements are for the interior of the enclosure. The arena should be separated from the public by a distance not less than 15 meters. The enclosure itself should consist of a low fence about 30 cm (12 inches) high when possible. The part of the fence at A should be easy to remove, to allow access or may be left open. The fence should be such to prevent the horse's hooves from entering. The letters should be placed outside the enclosure, about 50 cm (20 inches) from the fence. It is desirable to place a special marker on the fence itself, level with and in addition to the letter concerned. If there is only one judge he is placed 5 meters (16 feet) from the end of the arena opposite the letter C.

**Scoring the Dressage Test**

Each movement is scored using the scale below:

10 excellent 6 satisfactory 2 bad

9 very good 5 sufficient 1 very bad

8 good 4 insufficient

7 fairly good 3 fairly bad

**Errors of the Course- Penalty points**

First time – 2 points

Second time – 4 points

Third time – 8 points

Fourth time - elimination, although the exhibitor may continue the third performance to the end and be scored in the ordinary way.

In the case of marked lameness, the judge will inform the competitor that he/she is eliminated. There is no appeal against a judge's decision.

**Attire and Tack**

**Attire -** Neatness is required. Hunter attire of conservative and dark solid colors are acceptable. Riders must wear proper r footwear. Riders must wear approved protective headgear. Hairnets should be worn by riders with long hair. Stock ties may be worn. In extreme heat, coats may be excused at the discretion of the management. Competitors must wear a solid long or short sleeved shirt.

**Tack and Equipment** - For the Dressage test an English type saddle with stirrups is required. A plain or smooth snaffle bit and a regular leather caveson, dropped noseband or figure 8 noseband are required. Twisted or wire bits are prohibited. Snaffles listed below are acceptable. Martingales, side reins and running reins of any kind are forbidden. Spurs are optional. Boots, bandages, or blinders are forbidden. A steward will be present to check equipment prior to the horse entering the arena. Whips not longer than 4' may be used in the Dressage test UNLESS it is part of the Combined Test. Use of whips in the Dressage portion of the Combined test will result in **elimination**. In the jumping portion of the Combined test, the type of saddlery is optional. Only unrestricted running martingales or Irish martingales are allowed. Gag bits and hackamores are allowed as well are any bit acceptable for the Hunter Division. Protective Headgear must be worn by the rider as well as boots. Crops, bats and spurs are acceptable. Whips may not exceed 30".

**STADIUM JUMPING AS PART OF A COMBINED TEST**

The test is designed to prove the suppleness, obedience and jumping ability of the horse. At the same time, it demonstrates the competitor's knowledge of pace and the use of his horse in the jumping arena. It is not a test of style or endurance.

Competitors must enter the arena when their number is called or during the allotted time period for their specific test. Each competitor must enter and leave the arena mounted except with the permission of the show committee, or in case accident under penalty of elimination. Competitors are forbidden to jump or attempt to jump an obstacle in the arena before starting or to show the horse an obstacle on the course or risk being eliminated. Once the bell or whistle has been sounded, the competitor has 60 seconds to cross the starting line. A false start or failing to start within the prescribed time limit results in elimination. Crossing the starting line in the wrong direction prior to starting the course is not penalized as long as the competitor crosses the start line in the proper direction within the prescribed time limit. Unless otherwise posted, crossing the start/finish line during the course is not penalized. Unauthorized assistance or failing to stop at the signal will also result in elimination.

**ARENA**

The dimensions of the nature of the arena will be different for each event, however, a minimum dimensions of 50 meters by 80 meters or an equivalent is recommended. The arena must be defined and preferably enclosed. The track of the course will be winding with changes of direction, so as to constitute a test of handiness. Red or white boundary flags shall be used to mark the start and finish lines, and to define the obstacles. Each obstacle shall be numbered. Combinations shall in addition be lettered (A, B, etc.). The rider's right should be on the same side as the red flag and the rider's left on the side of the white flag. The starting line may not be more than 25 meters nor less than 6 meters from the first obstacle. The finish line may not be more than 25 meters nor less than 15 meters from the last obstacle.

**The Course**

The course may consist of 8-12 jumping obstacles. In the Beginnery Novice Division, the fence heights are 2' – 2’6” with no more than 1 combination. Fences may be trotted or canted. The Novice Division fence height will be up to 2’9” with no more than one combination. The Training Level Division fence height will be up to 3’" with at least one combination when possible and may have one spread. All fences will have a true ground line or a solid base (i.e. a wall or brush box).

The course will be posted at prior to the first jumping session and will at that time be open to riders and trainers for inspection. Every effort will be made to allow maximum inspection time for exhibitors. NO HORSES are allowed in arena prior to actual ride.

**Scoring the Combined Test**

In the combined test, the winner is the horse and rider combination with the fewest accumulated penalty points from the dressage and jumping phases. Dressage points are computed by taking the

Dressage test score, subtracting it from the highest possible score, and multiplying this difference by 0.6. Jumping points are accumulated as follows:

**Fault Penalty Points**

First refusal 10 points

Second refusal 20 points

Third refusal elimination

Knocking down an obstacle 5 points per knockdown

Falling of horse and/or rider 30 points

Jumping obstacle out of order elimination

Error of course not corrected eliminated

Any assistance eliminated

**Check in Procedures**

You will receive a ride schedule at the State 4 -H Horse Show. Familiarize yourself with your ride time(s) and plan your daily schedule accordingly. Times will also be posted at the Show Office no later than 7:00 pm Saturday right for tests to be ridden on Sunday and by 11:00 on Thursday for tests to be ridden on Thursday afternoon

Pick up your entry packet at the show office.

Familiarize yourself with the dressage and stadium jumping arenas as to location, entry gates and exits.

The stadium jumping course will be opened to walk prior to the first jumping session. NO HORSES ALLOWED.

You must check in with the Dressage Steward at the entry to the appropriate Dressage arena several minutes prior to your scheduled ride time. Failure to do so will result in the start of a one minute gate call. Failure to meet the gate call will result in elimination.

Inform the Dressage Secretary of any scratches.

THERE WILL BE NO SCHOOLING IN THE DRESSAGE ARENA(s) OR STADIUM JUMPING ARENA. Any exhibitor caught schooling in these areas will be eliminated from the Dressage Division of the show.

Your dressage test score sheets will be available at the conclusion of the Dressage Show.

**Championship Tie Breakers and Awards**

Tie breakers will be awarded in the following priority when determining the Dressage Champion and Reserve Champion:

Combination of all test scores.

Highest percentage score in a dressage test.

The following Championship will be offered: Dressage Champion & Reserve Champion

Combined Training Champion & Res. Champ.

Also the following **High Score Awards** will be presented:

***Introductory Level*** &  ***Training Level*** &  ***First Level***

**Entry Information**

Copies of the Dressage Test will be available from the State 4-H Office.

Entering a Combined Test AUTOMATICALLY enters you in the appropriate Dressage Test. You may enter additional different Dressage Tests at additional cost. You may only complete in two levels that are consecutive.

Example: Beginner Novice and Novice: Novice and Training

NOT Beginner Novice and Training

Jumping Test

This test is similar to an ordinary show jumping competition, but without any attempt to find a ‘winner’ of this test on its own. The main objective is to prove that, the horse and rider are well trained in the specialist discipline of show jumping. The nature of the course, its length, the speed demanded and the dimension of the obstacles depend on the degree of difficulty of the whole competition.

The arena must be enclosed. While a horse is in the arena during a competition, all entrances and exits must be physically closed.

The bell

-The bell (or other sound) is used to communicate with the competitors. One of the members of the show staff or additional judge is in charge of the bell and is responsible for its use.

The bell is used:

-To give permission to the competitor to enter the arena when the course is ready for their inspection. (a show ground wide announcement may be used in place of a bell).

-To give the signal to start and to active a 45 second countdown. The 45 second countdown sets the time that the competitor can spare before commencing the round.

-To stop a competitor for any reason or following an unforeseen incident and to signal to him to continue his round after an interruption

-To indicate by a prolonged and repeated ringing that the competitor has been eliminated.

-To indicate to him that an obstacle knocked down, following a disobedience, has been replaced,

-If the competitor does not obey the signal to stop, he may be eliminated at the discretion of the show committee or designee.

FLAGS

Each obstacle will be flagged with a red flag so that when the obstacle is jumped the red flag is on the rider’s right. The flag may be a flag attached to the wing of the obstacle or a red cone placed in front of the wing.

NUMBERS

Numbers may be placed on the just, on the left side as the obstacle is jumped. The number will reflect the order the obstacles must be taken for the successful completion of the course.

UNAUTHORIZED ASSISTANCE

Any assistance including but not limited to verbal directions, whistles and hand gestures. Spectators must stand behind area immediately adjacent to the arena. Show staff will monitor the designated area.

Whips- One whip no longer than 120 cm (47.2 in) including the lash may be carried when riding on the flat at any time. One whip no longer than 120 cm (47.2 in) may be carried during the Dressage Test.

Combined Training divisions/classes will be updated to the following:

Beginner Novice Level

Novice Level

Training Level

We will use the USEA dressage tests as noted below:

Beginner Novice Level- US Equestrian Federation 2010 Beginner Novice Eventing Test A

Novice Level- US Equestrian Federation 2010 Novice Eventing Test B

Training Level- US Equestrian Federation 2010 Training Eventing Test B

Tests used will be updated as the USEF updates their tests.

Fence heights for the jumping phase:

Beginner Novice- 9-11 jumping efforts- up to 2’6”

Novice- 9-11 jumping efforts- up to 2’9”

Training – 10-12 jumping efforts- up to 3’- 3’3”

\*as the fences we use are for hunter courses the heights are set up accommodate these heights.

The diagrams for the bits and other equipment allowed will be updated to reflect the current rules.







