

**National Championships Ad-Hoc Committee
Report to the Executive Board – November 12, 2008**

The committee held seven meetings between February 13 and November 11, 2008, with a quorum at every meeting. Detailed minutes including motions, abstentions, and those opposed were documented and approved by the committee.

The following document is being presented as a draft proposal and includes general championship specifications including date, location, levels and divisions, criteria and entry requirements, oversight of the championship, site specifications, organizing committee specifications, and a draft application. This document incorporates the specifics that were approved through official motions.

The committee recognized that a national championship is a USEF property, and therefore, many elements of this proposal include USEF inclusion, particularly in the areas of site and organizing committee selection, rights to the event, and sponsorship.

Areas of concern that the committee recognized include the scheduling of the championship and how it fits in with the Regional Championships scheduling; location of the championship and rotation; size and number of horses, and the facilities that can accommodate; the cost to competitors, including travel; the impact that the economy may have on this event; and the need for major sponsorship for this event.

Additional areas that have been discussed by the committee, but need further development include: a way to recognize and engage the various breed registries by offering them tiered award/sponsorship opportunities; further definition of the role and make up of an oversight committee; and long range planning strategies for the program.

While this proposal is a draft, the National Championships Ad-Hoc Committee is formally requesting that time be dedicated during the 2008 Board of Governors, in order to make an announcement that the proposal has been put forward to the USDF Executive Board, and will be made available to the members upon approval by the Executive Board.

Respectfully Submitted by the National Championships Ad-Hoc Committee: Janine Malone, chair; Sarah Martin, Colorado; Peggy Klump, California; Veronica Holt, Colorado; Joyce Hardesty, Kansas; Ann Guptill, Connecticut; and Carol Lavell, North Carolina.

National Championships for Dressage Selection Criteria

Management applications for the organizer of National Championships for Dressage for the year 2011 will be available from the USDF by July 1, 2009. Bids will be accepted by the USDF after (TBA), and the deadline for submissions to be received in the USEF office is (TBA). The selection of the site and Organizing Committee (OC) will be awarded and announced by January, 2010.

National Championships for Dressage Goals and Objectives:

The National Championships should showcase the sport of dressage and the best dressage horses and riders in the United States by offering a championships at the National and International levels providing AA and Open riders who are United States citizens with an opportunity to compete head to head, thereby offering them an incentive to be the very best they can be.

By having the top riders and horses from each level and from each region of the United States competing head to head, the National Championships should promote overall interest in dressage and increase growth while helping to attract sponsorship and supporters to the sport of dressage.

The National Championships is conceived as an annual event which should attract the public's interest by ensuring that the event receives national media coverage preferably via a major network.

Championships Specifications

Date:

The proposed date for the first National Championships is early November, 2011.

Location:

The National Championships will rotate every three years with the first proposed location to be the Kentucky Horse Park, with the option to rotate to a more westerly location after 3 years providing applications are received from suitable Organizing Committees and sites in the intended location.

Levels and Divisions:

Open Division: Training Level through GP and all Freestyles

Adult Amateur Division: Training Level through Grand Prix

Classes Offered:

One warm up class offered per level/division. At least one Warm-up championship test must be offered per level and division, at least one day prior to their Championships ride. Each Freestyle test may be offered at least one day prior to the Championships Freestyle at that level.

Officials:

The USEF Dressage Committee, after consultation with the Organizing Committee, will select all Judges and Technical Delegates for Championships classes, at least one (1) year prior to the date of the Championships.

Three judges will officiate in each Training through Fourth Level Championships class. Five judges will officiate in each FEI level and FEI Freestyle class. Judges for warm-up classes must be (1) USEF "S" judges or FEI judges selected and invited by the Championships Organizing Committee, with prior approval of the USEF Dressage Committee, or (2) Championships judges who are not judging any horses entered in that particular warm-up class. One judge may be used per warm-up class, although organizers are encouraged to use more than one judge per class, if possible.

The Official Veterinarian and Official Farrier may be appointed by the OC, and must be on the grounds during all scheduled competition and warm-up hours, and on call at other times. Their selection, invitation and expenses are covered by the OC. All expenses (Travel, Fee, Lodging and Food) for all Officials are the responsibility of the National Championships Organizing Committee.

12.2.08 FINAL abbrev version

Qualified Entries:

Champion and reserve champion horse/rider combinations for each level and division, who are US citizens, will be invited from each of the nine (9) Regional Championships.

Each horse/rider combination entering each Regional Championships class which would qualify for the National Championships for that year will be required to file a "Declaration of Intent" for the Championships, specifically committing "Yes" or "No" to participate in the National Championships. The "Declaration of Intent" form must be filed, along with a \$10 fee, with the entries for each Regional Championship. The form must be included in each championship prize list. Champion and Reserve Champion will be automatically invited, provided their score is 55% or higher. If the Champion and/or Reserve Champion decline the invitation, the top two declared "Yes" out of the top five placings in that National Championship level and division are eligible to attend, if their Championship score meets or exceeds the USDF Regional Championships Qualifying score for that level and division. This Declaration must be submitted with the entry for the Regional Championships event, and must be signed for each National Championship level and division entered.

Horse/rider combinations not otherwise qualified to compete in the National Championships may participate in a particular championship class by earning a Wild Card. For all levels and divisions from Training-FEI, except freestyles, a horse/rider combination that competes in a Regional Championship class and achieves at least 5% above the minimum USDF Regional Championships Qualifying Score for that particular level and division, may compete in the same level and division at the National Championships. In order to earn a Wild Card to compete in a freestyle championship class, a horse/rider combination must earn at least 8% above the minimum USDF Regional Championships Qualifying Score for that particular level.

The "Intent" of every eligible Regional Championships entry must be posted at each Regional Championships, so that at the end of each Regional Championships class competitors and organizers will know which competitors will be invited to the National Championships from that region.

Only the top two (e.g., the top two declared "Yes" out of the top five placed competitors) from each National Championship level and division who have (1) achieved the pre-requisite score, (2) declared "Yes" on the Declaration of Intent for that particular level and division, and (3) are US citizens will be eligible to participate in the National Championships. In other words, unless they earn a wild card, sixth or lower placed horse/rider combinations who declared "Yes" will not be eligible even if the top five placed competitors declared "No" on their Declaration of Intent for that particular level and division.

The final list of qualified and declared competitors from each region will be sent to the National Championships Secretary within 24 hours of the end of each Regional Championships. Official Invitations to the National Championships must be sent by the National Championships Organizing Committee to each qualified competitor upon receipt of each region's list.

The last date for Regional Championships to be held will be three (3) weeks prior to the National Championships. Therefore, the last and final list of competitors will be available approximately three weeks prior to the National Championships.

The maximum number of horse/rider combinations which can qualify for the Championships is:

Open Division:	432 (includes Freestyle)
Adult Amateur Division:	324
Total:	756 (Maximum possible total, not including wild cards)

National Championship Committee:

A National Championships Committee will be named by the USEF and USDF to consult with the OC prior to and during the Championships on questions relating to the organization of the National Championships which may arise and are not covered in the National Championships Criteria and Specifications. The Chair of the National Championships Committee will act as the liaison between the Committee and the OC and must receive all pertinent Championship communications. The decision of the National Championships Committee is final on questions relating to the competition. It is recommended that the National Championships Committee appointments should be for a term of three years.

12.2.08 FINAL abbrev version

In addition to the duties listed above, the National Championships Committee may be assigned the following tasks:

- (1) Review of Host Site Applications and recommendation of Championship Host Site and/or Organizer
- (2) Development of a Three-Year Plan for future championships

National Championships Fees:

Entry fees will be charged for all classes, including championships classes. Competitors are responsible for the cost of stabling, hay, grain, bedding and grooming or tack stalls.

Hotel and Incidental Expenses:

All hotel and incidental expenses of riders, trainers, owners and grooms are at their own expense.

Prize Money and Awards

Prize Money should be offered for each of the championship classes. The amount of prize money is dependent on available funding but should be sufficient to entice participation. A goal of \$2,500 per class at the national levels and \$5,000 per class at FEI levels is recommended. The responsibility for providing Prize money, awards and ribbons for championships classes will be obtained from a joint effort by USDF, USEF, and OC. Warm-up class awards provided by OC. Valuable prizes should be solicited for all first place winners, with special attention to the winners of the Freestyle and FEI Level Divisions.

Sponsorships

Major corporate sponsorship is essential for an event of this magnitude. A Sponsorship solicitation plan will be developed to determine sponsorship levels, contacts, and solicitation obligations and rights. Title and presenting sponsorships will be solicited by USEF, USDF or the OC. The OC must accept USEF and USDF sponsors, and provide sponsor benefits at pre-determined levels. All sponsorship proposals should be subject to USEF/USDF approval, with revenue rights to be negotiated.

USEF/USDF Rights

USDF understands that USEF owns all rights to ~~the~~ an event with “National Championship” designation, including all copyright, trademark, trade name, broadcast, electronic media (including television and video) and merchandising (including commemorative souvenir) rights. Final approval of all rights and sponsorship matters shall be solely reserved to the USEF Executive Committee acting upon the advice and recommendation of the USEF Dressage Committee, Budget and Finance Committee and the USEF Officers. (See USEF GRs.) USDF also understands that these rights can be assigned to an affiliate organization.

Merchandise rights will be mutually agreed upon between the USEF, USDF and OC and pre assigned to the USEF, USDF or OC. All taxes, licenses and fees are the responsibility of the OC.

No “rights fee” should be charged by USEF to host the National Championships, and USEF agrees to award the event to the OC with all rights, privileges and obligations, except as specified in the Selection Criteria. However, all show licensing and recognition fees must be applied for and paid to USEF and USDF within 30 days of the official acceptance of the Host Site Proposal. USEF comparable dates/mileage rules do not apply to this competition.

Media and Broadcast Rights:

All broadcast proposals subject to USEF/USDF approval, with revenue rights to be negotiated.

Event Promotion:

All promotion subject to USEF/USDF approval. OC must provide a knowledgeable press officer who will communicate with USEF and USDF on all phases of media and event promotion.

Schedule:

The event should be held over a minimum of four days. Only warm-up classes should be held on the first day. One warmup class at each level must be offered on any day prior to a championship at each level. *(Need to calculate the number of championship rides and warmup rides possible based on the anticipated number of horses invited to compete.)*

12.2.08 FINAL abbrev version

Order of Go:

An Open Drawing must be conducted to determine the order of starting for each Championships class, according to procedures outlined in the FEI Rules for Dressage Events. Computer scheduling will be used to determine the Order of Go for each Warm-up class.

Other:

Except as noted in this document (the "National Championships Selection Criteria"), all USEF rules for USEF/USDF Regional Championships and National Championships for Dressage will be applicable, as will the USDF Regional Championships Standards. FEI Championships and Freestyles should be scheduled in the main arena.

The National Championships OC will be required to post a performance bond for \$TBD within one month of the official host site announcement.

The scheduling and arena location of Championship classes is subject to NCC approval.

Site Specifications:

(1) The following are to be considered the preferred minimum specifications for the host facility:

- List available upon request

(2) The following are to be considered the preferred minimum specifications for the host city:

- List available upon request

(3) If necessary, a site inspection would be performed by representatives of the National Championships Committee, the USEF Dressage Committee and the proposed OC prior to approval of the Host Site Application.

Organizing Committee Specifications:

(1) The National Championships is a stand-alone event. An open dressage event or other championship may not be held in conjunction with it, but may be held on an adjacent weekend, under separate licensing/recognition and name.

(2) The following services must be provided by the OC, and must be described in the Host Site Application and proposed organizational plan:

- List available upon request

(3) The following experienced personnel must be provided by the OC, and must be described in the Host Site Application and proposed organizational plan:

- List available upon request

Addendum #1: National Championships for Dressage Host Site Application