



KDEA E Newsletter – Late December 2023

KDEA Mission Statement

KDEA serves the South Central Kansas dressage and eventing community by providing educational, social, and competitive opportunities that promote a harmonious partnership between horse and rider



KDEA Officers and Board 2024

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President's Message December 2023

Time flies when you are having fun! Thanks to everyone who came out to our December election meeting and party. I am honored to be elected as KDEA president for a second year and look forward to serving you all to the best of my abilities. As always feel free to reach out with any ideas, questions or concerns. I am happy to explore with you and find what you might need.

This time of year we begin to look at next year's plans. This show season is over (for most) and the new calendars are coming out. KDEA has a full slate of schooling shows, one each month, and we are running a recognized Western Dressage Lite show for the third year in a row. There are also many opportunities regionally for both Dressage and Eventing. Please take a look at the calendar on our website so you don't miss anything.

In December I start to make my list of goals for the year. At last year's meeting in February Marie Maloney did a wonderful presentation about setting goals. My take aways from that were:

- **Make the goal believable and attainable**-your young horse probably isn't going to be running Prelim this year if he was beginner novice last year. But you can plan to school some Training fences by the end of the year if he is ready.

- **Set up for success**-Use positive language, review your goals, accept change, record accomplishments, ask for help, identify challenges, etc
- **Share your goals**-with your trainer, friends, on social media
- Goal setting is a great way to focus your riding and training over the next few cold months. March will be here before we know it and we will be gearing up for another great show season with KDEA.

Thank you again for allowing me the honor of being your president
Cassie Black

Renew for 2024! It is not too early to join KDEA for 2024. The membership year starts 12/1/23 and runs through 11/30/24, and the 2024 membership application is on the website for you to download. Please be sure that if you pay by PayPal, that you ALSO SEND IN A FORM to our **new Membership Chair, Charlotte Pinkall**. Her address is on the bottom of the Membership Form, or you can email her your completed membership form. If you are renewing and any information on the form is new/changed, please highlight the changes or mark them in some way. Paypal address is kdeamain@gmail.com and is also on the membership application.

KDEA Awards Meeting – January 21, 2024! January 21st at 2pm we will be awarding our year end awards at the Equestrian Estates clubhouse. Please plan to attend this celebration and get to know your fellow members. We are a great group with so much to offer each other. Watch for further details, and contact Haley Kottler (haleykottler@gmail.com) if you would like to earn volunteer points by helping her with this event. Please RSVP by January 17th, please, to Haley Kottler so that she can get an accurate head count for food.

Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities. Right now, we will need help with the Awards Meeting on January 21st. If you can assist with set up/tear down, planning, please contact both Marty Foster Dennett (shobewalkin@gmail.com) and Haley Kottler, Awards committee member (haleykottler@gmail.com). You can also write an article for the KDEA newsletter, agree to host a meeting, come to a meeting, or find show sponsors as other volunteer opportunities.

Next KDEA General Membership and Board Meeting: February 6th at 6:30 pm at the home of Kris and Erin Keith, (near 21st and Woodlawn). The April 2nd meeting will be at the home of Kelli Wolf.

March 2-3

- **KDEA Ride A Test** - 2 full days – Sat AM at Capall, Sat PM at Eagleview. Sun AM at Eagleview, Sun PM at Capall.
- Instructors Susan Lang, Marie Maloney, Lisa Del Mundo
- What is a Ride A Test? You sign up for a 30 minute time slot and then you decide how you want to use it. You can warm up in the arena before your start time, and then if you want to ride your test of choice (English, Western, Working Equitation, IEA) you will be judged and scored. During the ride, if you want to circle, try something again, you can do so (but your first attempt will be judged). When the test is done, your assigned clinician (one of the 3) will then discuss your test with you, and you can decide to ride it again with instruction as you go, or just work on some of the “sticky points” in your test while being schooled. The ½ hour can be tailored to however you want to use it.

- You can sign up for one day or both, but if we are over subscribed, we may ask you to drop one of your slots if others are “chomping at the bit” to participate. You can sign up for AM/PM at whichever facility you want, and hopefully we can accommodate.
- Watch for an entry form to come out in February.

New Competition-Related Rules for 2024:

1. When you go to a USEF/USDF Recognized dressage show, you must check in with the office and get your bridle number before you can school. The reason is that you must have all required signatures on entry forms and all fees paid...
2. If you have someone who coaches you at a show, WHETHER PAID OR NOT, they must sign on the Coach line, must be a USEF member, and must be current with SafeSport. This is not just for dressage, but at any USEF sanctioned show.
3. Baucher bit is now back to a 7cm allowance – measured from top of ring for cheekpiece to the top of the mouth of the bit (it was 5cm last year....but was changed back to 7cm as most Baucher’s on the market were 7cm). Dressage rule (eventing is different)
4. All horses entering a dressage show must have at least a USEF Horse ID # (or Annual or Lifetime USEF number). In the past, at a dressage show, a USDF HID number (or Annual or Lifetime) was all that was required, but now you must also have at least a USEF Horse ID.

The Five Stages of Mud – by Elaine Cornell

Watching the water rush by as I looked out the window this morning inspired me to write as a means of therapy and postponing my inevitable trip to the barn. All I could think about was the coming joy of dealing with all this mud for weeks. Again.

Underwater Mud

You forgot that you left your mud boots in the barn when you changed to riding boots. After all, it had finally dried enough that you could go places without them. Now you have to figure out how to get to the barn in non-mud boots to get to the mud boots. Dangers include muddy water not only soaking your leather boots and going over the tops of them, but also being swept away by the current in the driveway. And it’s impossible to tell just how deep puddles are. You pray that your mud boots remain without leaks

Sloppy Mud

The next stage is where the water has mostly run off, but mud is like thick soup. You walk carefully to avoid splashing mud all over yourself, but the horse you are leading doesn’t and he carelessly slops along beside you splashing sloppy mud all the way to the top of your full seat riding pants. Or higher.

Slick mud

It’s dried just enough that when you step down your foot slides, and you never know which direction it will go. This is the stage where you find yourself doing the splits, sliding down any slight slope, and praying that if you start to fall there is something nearby to grab. Hanging on your horse’s lead rope is acceptable in an emergency and fence posts work well. Electric fences do not. Ask me how I know.

Sticky mud

Ah, my favorite! This lovely stage is where each step requires huge muscular effort just to extract your foot from the mud. Your legs are sore at the end of the day. You sometimes have to lean over and try to pull your boot out of the mud with your hands. Sometimes your foot takes a step and your boot refuses to follow, leading to a cold wet foot and a sock covered in thick mud. You are taking your life in your

hands being out in this mud around horses, because if Miss Cranky Mare decides to go after Mr. Obnoxious Gelding there is no way you can get out of the way in time.

On top of all that, huge globs of mud stick to your boots and are tracked everywhere, and it takes longer to clean a horse up enough to ride it than it does to ride. This is, by the way, a horse's favorite mud to roll in. When large globs of this mud get in the mane and dry we call them pottery. I could go on and on about this stage, but I won't because I'm getting depressed thinking about it.

Spotty mud

Things are finally beginning to dry up and, being overly optimistic, you venture out to retrieve a horse in non-mud boots. Of course you discover that it's drying except a spot where you absolutely have to step, like that low spot right at the gate. Your good boots end up in mud anyway, so you still end up wearing mud boots for days just for those special spots.

Each stage can last for days, even weeks in the winter when it never dries. I know every one of my farm friends knows exactly what I'm talking about. I'll see you at the liquor store. 🍷 🤔

A Class with Kristi Wysocki – Judging Materiale and Para Equestrian Classes
USEF Dressage Judge's Forum – with Janet Foy and Michael Osinski
by Susan Lang

In mid November, Marie Maloney and I participated in two USEF/USDF judge's clinics in Lexington, KY. The first focused on judging Materiale Classes as well as Para Equestrian classes. This class was taught by Kristi Wysocki. We then spent 3 more days in Kentucky for the USEF Judge's Forum with Michael Osinski and Janet Foy (both International judges who have the appropriate licenses to judge at the Olympics and other international events). Gail Matheus also attended this clinic. Here are some notes from our days at these clinics.

What is a Materiale Test? These classes are group classes, which can be grouped by age (3, 4 and 5 year olds), but classes for mares must be separate from gelding/stallion classes. The class does not have to be held in a dressage arena and in many cases, numerous panels are removed from an arena so horses can ride in the ring, but can also leave the ring through an opening if they need to circle or avoid traffic.

What is evaluated? The gaits of the horse are evaluated – medium and free walk, working trot and working canter. If a 4 or 5 year old class, they can be asked for a lengthening. There is no "collection" as is needed for the FEI Young Horse Tests and there are no trot stretch circles required. If the horse breaks out of the canter, that is not important, as the judge is looking for the very best strides of canter, and is looking for the trainability of the horse.

Para Equestrian. The second half of our first day was related to the Para Equestrian tests and judging those tests. Contrary to popular belief that "Para" is not related to "paralytic;" the "Para" stands for "parallel sport for those with a physical disability." Those who have a cognitive only disability are not within the definition of a "para rider." There are numerous ways a person with a physical disability can participate in a dressage show, either in standard dressage classes, or in FEI tests which are only for FEI – Graded athletes. If the person is not "graded" by an FEI Classifier, they cannot compete in FEI Tests for Para Riders, but they can compete alongside "able bodied" riders in a test; the para rider has a Dispensation Certificate, issued by USEF, that is attached to their test to show what compensating aids they can use in the test to allow them to compete with their disability.

As for FEI Grades, a Grade V is the least impaired person, and a Grade I is the most impaired (usually in a wheelchair). Visually impaired riders are classified as Grade V. Those at Grade V compete at walk, trot and canter, including lateral work at all 3 gaits, simple changes and collected work. Grade IV compete walk/trot/canter and have collection and lateral work. Grade III compete at walk/trot and have a longer more difficult test than lower grades. Grade II competes at Walk/Trot only, with simple patterns and requirements. Grade I competes only at the walk. The FEI Tests used are Novice A/B (at Grades 1 to 5), Intermediate A/B (at Grades 1 to 5), Grand Prix A/B (at Grades 1 to 5) and Freestyle (at Grades 1 to 5).

When judging an FEI para test, the judge evaluates the horse's performance only. For example, in the Grand Prix test that is a Grade 1 (walk only) the judge watches EVERY walk step with great scrutiny, looking for purity, regularity, tempo, and exact figures. The judge's comments are not related to the position of the rider, but rather the effect of the rider's aids in producing the correct figures, gait and quality, as well as the skill of the rider in directing the horse. The judge ignores any extraneous physical movements of the rider, or disability-created posture of the rider and only looks at the performance of the horse. These FEI level tests are international tests, and are those that are ridden in the Para Olympics. At the national level, graded riders can participate in Para classes, or if not graded can ride in any standard dressage class (and can use compensating aids as long as the appropriate documentation requirements are met).

If a rider requires adaptive equipment to be able to ride (such as velcro straps to keep limbs in place, a modified saddle or stirrups, or handholds on reins, these pieces of equipment are listed on their USEF Dispensation Certificate which is attached to their dressage test. If the piece of adaptive equipment is not listed on the Certificate, it cannot be used. Visually impaired riders are allowed "living letters," which are people who stand at each letter and "call out" the letter for the rider to know where in the arena they should be riding a figure or a turn. Those who are hearing disabled may have special communication equipment to allow them to hear a reader.

Judge's Forum – with Michael Osinski and Janet Foy. Day 1 was in the classroom, with about 50 "I," "R" and "S" judges and L graduates in attendance. We also were able to judge video clips on Black Horse One (see further discussion, below). Day 2 and 3 was at the US Dressage Finals (held at Kentucky Horse Park) and all participants and auditors sat behind the judge at C. The instructors commented on the tests, and then had us judge portions of tests, which we then discussed. Here are some of my notes from the sessions.

- Extended Walk – horse should reach out and down, walk through the body, with the ears at the level of the withers.
- Trot – horse should be elastic, uphill and engaged, showing a quality trot
- Medium Trot – is the most "off the ground" trot and the judge should be able to imagine "passage" out of a quality medium trot.
- Extended Trot – has less height because there is more length (covers more ground, so not so high)
- Canter – if the gait has "lateral tendency," comment on the lack of clarity, lack of jump, and tightness in the back. In a quality canter, the outside hind should bend and not get left behind the horse.
- Rider Score of 7 – to receive this score, the rider should have produced some 8's within their test, or if no 8's, handled well an issue in the test.
- First Rider score in Collectives = how the rider looks

- Second Rider score in Collectives = how they created the test
- Transitions between gaits at Grand Prix should occur within 2 strides, while in training level it may take more strides, but still should be able to be identified as a transition.
- Halt - Rein Back –Karl Mikolka said a halt should be like a snowflake hitting the ground. The halt is the modifier to the rein back. When counting steps of the rein back, the steps with the front legs are counted. When coming forward a specific number of strides before once again backing, the forward strides are counted from the hind legs.
- Walk Pirouette –7 = slightly large, might need activity. 6 = large 5 = stuck one step 4 = stuck two steps. 3 = haunches swing out rather than perform actual pirouette
- Half Pass – if the haunches lead, no more than a 6 for the score. If the half pass arrives at the wall before the appointed letter, the score should be dropped. If the horse struggles to gain ground sideways, then less than a 7 with a comment about lacking lateral suppleness.
- When talking about elasticity – Needs more elastic topline. Needs more elastic connection throughout. Seek longer, more elastic strides.
- Maryann Ludwig used to say: Impulsion is CAN he do it (does he have the balance to do it) and Submission is WILL he do it.
- Single Flying Changes – a 7 flying change is reduced .5 if the hind legs change together, and a full point reduction if the change is ‘late behind.’ Score may be lower if other issues in/out of change or in connection
- If a horse does a flying change on his own – remember that “volunteerism doesn’t count in dressage.”
- Collected Canter over Centerline – inside joints must coil and load
- If poll is low and/or nose behind the vertical, if all else is correct, then the score should be no more than a 7.0 or 7.5
- In PSG, when horse does the pirouette and is to hold the counter canter until C, if the horse flies the change before C, the score is a 1 (the horse was still cantering, but was not on counter lead to do the change).
- In sequential flying changes, if one count mistake, then a 5.
- Many horses have clean changes, even with a correct count, but lack suppleness.
- Medium is to have overtrack, but can still give a 7 even if no overtrack, as long as all else is correct.
- Full pirouette has 6 to 8 strides
- A pirouette that looks like a “rear around” can be given no more than a 6 (if all else is done well)
- In the canter pirouette, the pelvis should tip so the horse carries from behind and makes it look easy.
- A pirouette should have 6 to 8 strides (rotates well), be steady on the bit with a correct size. If the horse takes 12 strides to do a pirouette, they are not rotating well.
- Transition in/out of piaffe should be distinct (piaffe should not travel to get to transition)
- A high quality piaffe, that advances too much, should get no more than a 7.5
- If a horse says “no” when rider asks for piaffe, and then rider re-applies aids and eventually gets the piaffe in the box of the test, the judge scores the first attempt.
- Piaffe – the horse should land and engage the new hind leg.
- In the Grand Prix, the quality of the gait in and out of the transitions is important.
- The horse should not “buckle” to the contact.
- Flying changes that “swing” are at maximum a 6.5

- If the horse advances too far off the centerline with a piaffe that (incorrectly) travels, then there is not enough passage between centerline to next marker, and the passage score goes down.
- If the horse puts its tongue out, it is not accepting contact, and the score is a 5.0 or below.
- If the tongue just peeks out for a moment, then perhaps .5 deduction.
- In the collected walk, the shoulders should lift and the walk be active for a 7.0
- The horse should have energy through suppleness, not energy by way of tension.
- The tail is a reflection of the back.

General Freestyle Discussion Points

- Too much vocal in music selection risks that the voice interprets the ride, not the horse.
- To score an 8 for music, there must also be technical proficiency.
- Final remarks comment: Music does not highlight the horse. Sometimes too quick, overpowers the horse, and vocals do not enhance the ride.
- Halt to canter not allowed in any National level freestyle.
- You don't want the comment: You are making me guess as to your line of travel.
- The choreography should not resemble a fly in a paper bag.
- Degree of Difficulty can receive a score of 7.0 or higher only if there is also fulfillment of the technical side of the test.
- Some choreography has too much time lapsing between movements; choreography might be better if movements were closer together. Could also get comment "combinations need to be more direct and power packed."
- If a Degree of Difficulty element gets a 7.0 or more, then a + on Degree of Difficulty (.10 for each_
- A freestyle can have great music for the horse but if the horse/rider cannot TECHNICALLY interpret the music, then can't get an 8 for music. Someone who could "pull off" the technical requirements could get an 8.0
- If there are any 0s in the Grand Prix Freestyle (something NOT done), then a max of 5.5 for Degree of Difficulty and Choreography.
- At GP, at least 1 pirouette each way must have 3 straight strides of canter both in and out of pirouette. Can do others with canter pirouette to walk, for example.

A note about Black Horse One. Black Horse One is a software program that is utilized at many competitions holding FEI (International) classes. The software allows for electronic scribing and scoring of the tests, and provides immediate results (often as the horse is exiting the ring) as the scores are immediately posted and the judge finishes up their comments, independent of the score. It also has a component for freestyles where the riders enter their "floor plan" into the computer, and the computer then assigns a degree of difficulty to the combinations being ridden in the freestyle. You've probably seen this on videos of international rides, as the score box on the side shows a running total, and also has the Degree of Difficulty stated.

- At the Forum, we experienced Black Horse One in the classroom setting. Prior to arriving, we had all been instructed how to download the software on our phone or tablet, and we accessed a Practice Show with practice tests within it. The process was that we would judge 4 or 5 movements of a ride on video (scribing for ourselves putting down a score and comment). Then we would judge 4 or 5 more movements on another video clip. This went on until we had judged about 60 individual movements, and I might add that these movements often threw in various issues (Training Level to Grand Prix) that we had to quickly score. The issues might be a horse that took off in a canter depart, or refused to halt, or that tried to do a canter pirouette in

the wrong lead. After we had scored all these movements, we hit “submit” on the fake test that we had just judged (lots a segments of tests, actually). About 2 minutes later, on my tablet screen, I could see my test scores, compared to the scores of Michael Osinski, who judged the video clips as he saw them. With that immediate feedback, I could see how my scores compared to the “testing” judge. About 2 minutes after that, projected onto the screen in the room were ALL the scores from all attendees, for each movement, and the scores were either shown in green, yellow or red, depending on whether that person’s score was the same, +/- 1.0, or +/- 2.0 from the tester’s score. There was an instant visual for the “outliers” that had a significantly different score than the tester.

- This funding for the use of this program has come from Walter and Maryann McPhail of Florida. They have graciously provided funding for Black Horse One to be used by USEF in its judge development and testing/licensing. The USEF affiliate USDF has embraced this software and is working to strengthen the dressage judge program through use of Black Horse, and it is contemplated that judges will have both educational sessions and testing sessions to develop and maintain the quality and consistency of their judging. There will also be competitor-accessible education modules that will enhance riders’ ability to understand what judges are looking for, and for teaching riders to how movements are scored based on their technical execution. The software also has the capability of projecting videos from both the judge at C and the side judge for comparison, showing what the judge at C sees (and their score) and what the judge on the side sees (and their score). It is thought that this program will assist USDF with consistency of scoring and understanding of scoring methodology.