

NEDA STEWARD INFORMATION

Updated 2-20-12

Thank you for your interest in becoming a dressage show volunteer. The dressage shows around the region are made possible by the generosity of people like you who take the time to assist in the production of the event. The volunteers are the lifeblood of the show!

The Stewards' mission is to be the "eyes and ears" of the competition and ensure that there is a level playing field for all competitors and fair, humane treatment of the horses. Show stewards generally work under the direction of the Technical Delegate (TD), who is hired by show management and is responsible for ensuring that the competition is run according to the rules and regulations of the national governing bodies.

- Stewards are available to assist the horse and rider combination to get to the correct ring at the correct time.
- **Ultimately, it is the riders' responsibility to get themselves to the ring on time.**
- Ring stewards will be asked to check saddlery, bits, spurs, and whip lengths.
- Cruelty or any signs of blood should always be reported immediately to the Technical Delegate (TD).

According to USEF rules, there is only one type of steward required, that is the **Ring Stewards** whose job it is to check saddlery, and inspect bits and spurs, on both sides of the horse, in each class at the direction of the technical delegate and in accordance with DR121.9.

For practical purposes, there are 3 different types of volunteers that come under the heading of "Steward." They are :

- 1. Warm-Up Steward**
- 2. Ring Steward**
- 3. Gate Keeper**

Prior to the show date:

- Please read and, if possible, bring with you; *USEF Dressage Rules 120 and 121*.
- Review this information especially if you will be performing attire and equipment checks.

The day of the show:

- Be on time for arrival, at least 30 minutes before you are due to start work unless you are a warm-up steward.
- Warm-up Stewards are generally needed to be at their post 30 to 45 minutes before anyone else in order to give the first competitors the opportunity to warm up so if you are a warm-up steward, you should be on the grounds an hour to an hour and 15 minutes before classes are scheduled to start.
- **Remember the show cannot start without all the volunteers in place.**
- Check in at the steward/volunteer table before your shift so the volunteer coordinator will know that you are on the grounds and can give you the necessary materials;
 1. clipboard with the order of go (ride times, competitor name and #), Dressage Rules 120 & 121, and Accident Preparedness Plan
 2. pens
 3. non-latex gloves
 4. walkie-talkie
 5. measuring stick (for whips)
 6. measuring ruler (for bit shanks)
- Make sure you bring a watch or other timepiece that can be readjusted to the official show time.

- Also, remember that this event is outside and that the weather may not be perfect all of the time. Be prepared for extremely sunny, cool and windy, or rainy, with sun block, warm clothing, and footwear that will keep your feet as dry as possible. The grounds and rings may be a little bit muddy if there is rain.
- If serving as a Ring Steward, you should be confident around horses and comfortable putting your finger into a horse's mouth.
- You should be able to stand for long periods of time though a chair should be provided.
- It is useful to bring binoculars in order to read horses' numbers from afar.

General:

- You set the tone of the competition for the competitor. We trust that you will be friendly, efficient and professional.
- A horse must have a number identifying it any time it is ridden or exercised, including in-hand horses being led to or from the arena. . If you see a competitor without a number, please ask them to find it and attach it. Sometimes a number will fall off on one side, and the judges normally are OK with this, as long as they are able to identify the horse and rider combination.
- If a horse has an incorrect number, contact the Head Steward or one of the TDs. Usually it is in error, but there are instances that have consequences.
- Be aware of ANY behavior anywhere on the grounds that could be construed as cruelty. The TD should be notified immediately.
- Horses in Regional Championship classes will have some sort of special designation on their numbers. Horses in CDI classes may have special numbers, at NEDA they will have numbers 100 and lower. It is against the rules for anyone but the rider to be mounted at any time in the championship and CDI classes, so if you see riders being changed and there is a red dot on the number, call the TD immediately and inform them. This can also result in immediate disqualification.

Warm-up Steward – help to get them to the ring on time:

- You will have a clipboard with the order of go; a printout with ride times, competitor number, and the rider and horse's name.
- You should have a copy of the Accident Preparedness Plan (which you should read before assuming your duties)
- You will also have a walky-talky in order to communicate with the rings stewards, the show announcer(s) and the show office, if looking for a horse and rider who has not been seen in the warm up area.
- You'll be stationed in a conspicuous spot so riders can find you.
- Safety is priority #1
- In the warm-up rings, keep a general eye on the riders. (Tack is to be checked **ONLY** after the ride.) Warm-up stewards may measure a whip if asked by the rider to do so. If the warm-up steward sees a whip they suspect is too long, they can call the Head Steward to the ring. The whip can then be measured after the ride. The rules specify that whips are to be no longer than 47.2" (120 cm) even in warm-up rings, so please be alert for this.
- Check off the horse and rider as they arrive in warm-up and make an X when they leave to go to the competition ring.
- If you do not see a scheduled competitor in warm-up, call in to the secretary to check on their status. Have they picked up their competitor packet? Have they scratched? Make the appropriate notation next to their name and number.
- If another rider has been given that ride time, the secretary or announcer should be aware of the change and let you know. Be sure to make note of the number of the new rider.
- Provide guidance to riders on official show time, if the show is running on time or not, and which horses will go before them.
- Will generally have to feed horse and riders into multiple rings so you must be able to keep track of who is due when and where.

- Also be alert for any potential abuse of the horse, such as very rough pulling and jerking of the reins, excessive warm-up with the horse's head and neck curled down and excessive schooling after a ride. If you have any questions or suspicions, call the TD. Be alert for any changing of riders on horses with red dots on the numbers, as this is forbidden in championship and CDI classes.
- Boots and bandages may be used in warm-up.
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On-Deck Steward – holding area between warm-up and competition arena:

- Some competitions may not have on-deck areas. It really depends on the size of the show grounds and how the rings are situated.
- Must be able to multi task to feed competitors from warm-up areas into competition arenas.

Ring Steward – get them to the ring on time:

- You will have a clipboard with the order of go; a printout with ride times, competitor number, and the rider and horse's name.
- You will also have a walky-talky in order to communicate with the warm-up steward and show announcers.
- You should have a copy of the Accident Preparedness Plan (which you should read before assuming your duties),
- Once the horse and rider have presented themselves to the ring steward, you should check them off on your order of go.
- Please make yourself familiar with the signal which is generally a bell, whistle or horn, for the judge in your ring. The competitor may ask you what to listen for if they don't know already.
- Your job is to tell the announcer when a competitor has entered the ring, keep an eye out for the next competitor, and to check the bit and spurs of the competitor once they have exited the arena. Equipment is to be checked after the ride, not before.
- When you communicate with the show announcer, please be brief, as there tends to be quite a bit of verbal communication on the walky-talkies. Press the button and hold it down, and say 'ring 2, number 234, entering'. Do this as the horse enters at 'A' and is on the centerline, not as they enter to walk and trot around the ring before the judge signals them to start.
- If you don't see the next horse and rider, ask into the walky-talky '**warm-up – do you have number XYZ?**' There will be other stewards whose job it is to watch the warm-up rings, and they will be able to let the rider know they are due in the ring. There should also be clocks at the warm-up rings with official show time to help everyone.
- You may have horses that just do not show up – and you may ask the announcer if they have any information about scratches, but don't worry if you don't get a response, as the announcer may be busy with something else. If there are scratches, show management may want to put another competitor in that slot, and this information will be relayed to you over the walky-talky.
- If the rings are running ahead of schedule, riders may ride early, but they also have the option of waiting until their assigned time. Once the judge gives the signal the rider has 45 seconds to enter. If the rider does not enter in this time period they may be disqualified, but this will be a decision made by the judge. In case of a no show, the next rider would need to wait for the 45 second time due to the prior rider to expire before they enter the outside of the ring if they wish to ride early.
- The walky-talkies have a number of different channels, but they will be preset for you. If someone needs to have a longer discussion, you will be asked to change to another channel. There is a small switch on the walky-talky for this, but remember to turn back to the original channel when you are done.
- If you have any question concerning how to interpret the rules, speak to the Head Dressage Steward who will speak with the Technical Delegate (TD) on the walky-talkie.

Ring Steward – Equipment Check:

- Bits, spurs, nosebands and whip lengths are to be checked at the end of the ride. This will be done for all of the riders in the Championship, CDI, and FEI classes. For Open classes, only 1/3 of riders must be inspected.
 - The general procedure is to approach the rider and politely ask to check the tack. Make sure you move to a safe place that is out of the way of other competitors. Then run 2 fingers under the noseband (if too tight, contact the TD).
 - With a fresh glove, check the bit, the sides of the horse, spurs, and whip. Check for any sight of blood on the horse (details to follow).
 - Always use a new glove for each horse.
 - In the National/Open (non-CDI) classes, 1/3 of all riders in each class must be checked. Please review the “Saddlery Inspection” guide.
 - There will be handout sheets each day of the show, but you should review the USEF rules 120 and 121. I recommend you to check these rules before traveling the show.
 - Second level tests and below will all be done with snaffle bridles. Third and fourth level can utilize a snaffle bit, but it is okay to use the double bridle.
 - FEI tests at a USEF-recognized national show may be ridden in either a snaffle or double bridle.
 - Bits are to be smooth wherever they contact the horse, and inside the mouth. It is common to see small connector pieces on a snaffle bit, as there are subtle differences between “legal” and “illegal” bits—please make yourself familiar with the bits shown in the attached Dressage Rules 120 and 121. The length of the curb is not to exceed 10 cm. This is also illustrated in the rules. If you are unsure about the bit, contact the TD (or should it be Head Steward?).
 - Riders may use half chaps in Introductory through First Level tests as long as the leather is smooth and the same color as the boot.
 - Nosebands should be loose enough that you can place two fingers between the noseband and the horse’s head, if you can’t, call the Head Steward.
 - It is all right to ask the rider or groom to loosen nosebands for bit inspection, but **only** the rider or groom should do this.
 - Spurs should be smooth and pointing straight back or downwards, although you may see swan neck spurs, which are legal (illustrated in the rules). If there are rowels, they must be blunt/smooth and need to be able to spin freely
 - Check equipment on both sides! Also check both sides of the horse for aggressive spur action from the rider. You may see where some of the hairs of the horse’s coat have been rubbed off, but the skin should be smooth.
 - If there is blood anywhere on the horse, ask the rider to wait with you outside of the ring and contact the TD and ask to come to your ring immediately. **DO NOT** mention on the radio the exact nature of the problem. This is usually only seen at the upper levels, if at all, but is a serious infraction and may result in disqualification of the rider.
 - Whips are to be measured against a wooden dowel stick that will be supplied at the show. The whips cannot be longer than 47.2” (120 cm). If you find a whip that is too long, ask for the TD on your walkie talkie. If the whip is ¼” too long, it will probably be OK, but if it is longer it is a rules infraction that will not be allowed.
 - Whips are not allowed to be used in Championship and CDI classes, but they can be used in warm-up, as well as outside of the ring just before entering. If they carry it into the arena as they enter at ‘A’ they will be disqualified by the judge. Some riders will drop their whips just before they enter at ‘A’, and they will appreciate it if you are able to pick it up for them if they do not have a groom assisting them.

Gate Keeper – Open and Close the Competition Arena Gate ONLY for Regional Championship classes and CDI classes.

- Keep your chair set about 20 ft behind “A.”
- Immediately upon hearing the judge ring the bell, blow the whistle or honk the horn, open the gate for the next rider.
- Set it to the side of the entrance and stand back as pair enter the competition arena.
- Close the gate after the pair has halted at X, always being as quiet and inconspicuous as possible.
- Quietly step back and take a seat.
- Once the rider has saluted, approach gate to open arena. You do not want to approach the gate before the salute as you may scare the horse and cause it to shy.
- You may be asked to close the arena between riders. Show management will let you know what they want you to do.

Other - Working a Lunging Area:

- Mounted warmup is not allowed in the lunging area.
- There have been too frequent (both deliberate and uneducated) abuses of the lunging equipment rules.
- Horses may be lunged with or without a rider.
- However, only one lunge line is permitted. Driving or long lining is prohibited. A single direct side rein (an auxiliary rein affixed to the bit and to the girth, saddle or surcingle on the side of the horse (NOT between the legs). A lunge line must attach only to the snaffle bit of the bridle, halter or cavesson and go directly to the hand of the longeur. (This has been abused, most frequently with the lunge line going from the girth/surcingle THRU the bit to the hand of the longeur, thus acting as a draw rein).
- A double sliding side rein (Vienna rein) is permitted. (See USEF Rulebook or the “Dressage Attire and Equipment” booklet for an illustration.

Breed Show - In-hand warm-up ring:

- The male and female breed show entries must be in separate warmup areas. (A colt foal would warmup in the mare area.)
- Be aware at all times for safety.
- All horses (including non-competing mares) 2-years old and older must be in bridles.
- There is no max/min length of whip for handlers/assistant handlers to carry.
- Check wristbands to ensure that all handlers/assistant handlers/whip assistants are wearing the appropriate wristbands.
- If there are handler changes at ringside, make certain that they sign the necessary forms prior to entering the warmup or competition arena.
- Keep your eye on pedestrian and horse traffic outside of the arena. Be proactive in preventing accidents.