



USA Working Equitation
TECHNICAL DELEGATE HANDBOOK



USA Working Equitation
Technical Delegate Handbook

January 2022

This handbook provides a summary of Technical Delegate duties and responsibilities. Please contact the Licensed Officials Committee with any questions.

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1. Overall Responsibilities

- The TD is one of the two official USAWE representatives in attendance at a show.
 - The Judge is responsible for what goes on inside the arena.
 - The TD oversees what goes on outside the arena.
- The TD:
 - Ensures that all trials are run in accordance with the Rulebook and USAWE competition requirements.
 - Ensures that EOH and Speed course obstacles are set properly for each level.
 - Handles all questions that arise.
 - Does not perform any show staff functions but makes sure that show staff functions are performed correctly.

2. Knowledge Requirements

- Knowledge of the Rulebook is essential. Memorization is not important – knowing where to find what you’re looking for is.
- You must understand the job responsibilities of each show staff function, e.g., Paddock Steward, Gate Steward, Secretary, Scorers, Ground Crew, Timers, Veterinarian, etc., and ensure those job requirements are being met.
- You must understand the basics of certain USAWE processes and requirements, i.e., membership, horse recording, results submission, protests, and appeals.

3. Items to Have on Hand

- Required
 - Complete copy of the Rulebook
 - Blank Protest forms
- Recommended
 - Competition Manual
 - Tack and Attire Checklist
 - Obstacle Specification sheet
 - Gate Steward Duties
 - Paddock Steward Duties
 - Show Protest Requirements
 - Tape measures (30’ and 200’)
 - Clipboard
 - Pens with different color ink
 - Stopwatch/timer

Note: All documentation items are on the USAWE website:
Competitions/Resources/Downloadable Forms.



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4. Work in Collaboration with the Judge

- Keep one eye on the Judge as much as possible to be available to support if needed. The Judge may ask you to:
 - Look up items in the Rulebook.
 - Answer questions about a specific rule.
 - Verify obstacle or distance measurements.
 - Check a bit.
- Station yourself in a visible area outside the arena (preferably close to the gate so it's not that long a walk).
- The TD's role is especially critical when supporting an international Judge who will likely not be as familiar with the U.S. Rulebook.

5. Membership/Horse Recording Verification

The Show Secretary is responsible for verifying competitor membership status, horse recording numbers, and qualifying scores (championship shows only). This is a critical function to ensure that (1) only qualified horses/riders are competing, and (2) results can be posted correctly and in a timely manner.

Prior to the start of the show:

- Review the list of competitors and horses to verify that all entries are properly identified (names and numbers are correct as listed in the registries), and that all non-members are identified.
- Verify horses are the correct age for the level shown. As of January 1, a horse must be:
 - 4 years old to participate in L1 and L2.
 - 5 years old to participate in L3, L4, and L5.
 - 6 years old to participate in L6 and L7.

Competition Year	Birth Year (On or Before)		
	L1, L2	L3, L4, L5	L6, L7
2022	2018	2017	2016
2023	2019	2018	2017
2024	2020	2019	2018

- Verify Youth division competitors meet age requirements delineated in the Rulebook.
- For championship shows, verify qualifying scores, vaccination records, and other identifying documents.



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6. Conflicts of Interest

- A TD may not compete.
- A TD may not officiate if any of the following are competing:
 - Person with a close relationship.
 - Trainer, coach, or student of the TD within 30 days of the competition.
 - Employee or employer of the TD.
 - Anyone who purchased a horse from the TD within 90 days of the competition.
 - Anyone who leased a horse from the TD within 90 days of the competition.
- If possible, check the entries prior the show to ensure there are no conflicts. Show management will need to get a second qualified TD to officiate during the rides where there are conflicts.
- Verify that other specified members of the show staff are not competing, i.e., Scribe, Scorer, Paddock Steward, Gate Steward.

7. Rider Dispensations

- Riders with permanent disabilities can apply for a Dispensation Certificate that approves the use of adaptive equipment and other allowances in competition.
- Competitors with dispensations include a copy of their Dispensation Certificate with their entry form.
- The Show Secretary provides copies of this certificate to the Judge and TD. This may be overlooked in the activities required to get a show underway, so it's a good practice to ask if there are any competitors with dispensations prior to the start of the show.
- Special exceptions may be required depending on individual requirements. It's important that appropriate members of the show staff (e.g., Paddock Steward, ring crew) are alerted to these exceptions in advance of the competition.

8. Course Design Approval

- The EOH and Speed course designs must be approved by a TD or Judge prior to release of the course map to competitors.
- If the show's TD or Judge is the course designer, then another licensed official must review/approve the design.
- Ideally course design approval happens during the week of the show, giving enough time to make adjustments if necessary.
- Contact the Show Manager at least a week in advance of the show to verify who designed the course, that the course was approved, and by whom. This information is required in the TD Report.
- See the **Approving Course Design** guide on the website.



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9. Veterinary Inspections

- Initial inspections are required at championship shows; they are optional at licensed competitions.
- Horses are inspected to assess their general condition and verify the integrity of identification documents/vaccination records.
- TD, Judge, Paddock Steward, or Veterinarian may require inspections before and/or after trials.
- Inspections performed immediately after a trial must be done in a discrete manner and location.
- The TD must be present at all veterinary inspections.

10. Entry Order (Order of Go)

- Assist the Secretary in determining the entry order if needed.
- Verify the entry order is accurate for each trial.
 - ⇒ For championship competitions, the entry order for EOH and Speed trials is the inverse order of placing at the time of the trials.
 - ⇒ Licensed competitions may follow the inverse order process but have the option to use the same entry order for all trials.
- Ensure competitors with multiple horses have adequate time between rides.
- Ensure entry order is posted no less than 2 hours prior to the start of each trial.

11. Warm-up Arena

- Verify that the warm-up arena includes at least two obstacles that are representative of the obstacles used in the EOH and Speed courses.
- It is helpful if the obstacles are set to the correct dimensions.

12. Course Set-up

- Prior to every course walk, the TD and/or Judge must verify that the course is set up according to plan and is in accordance with requirements. Things to check include:
 - Dimensions of obstacles according to level
 - Distance between obstacles in a course line
 - Location and setup of entrance/exit markers
 - Safety issues with respect to arena footing or dimensions.
- Keep a tape measure handy - it is useful for initial inspection and obstacle resets.

13. Course Walk-through

- Must be held prior to EOH and Speed trials.
- The TD and Judge must be in the arena during the walkthrough to answer questions.
- Course changes can only be made if all exhibitors are advised of the change.
- Recommend setting a finite time for walkthrough, e.g., 15 – 20 minutes.
- Competitors must leave the arena after the closing signal.
- Trial must begin no later than 15 minutes after closing signal.
- No schooling is allowed on the course at any time.

14. Importance of the Paddock Steward and Gate Steward Roles

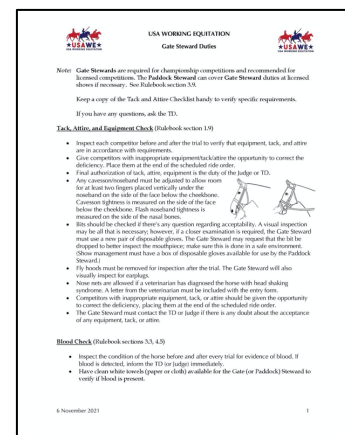
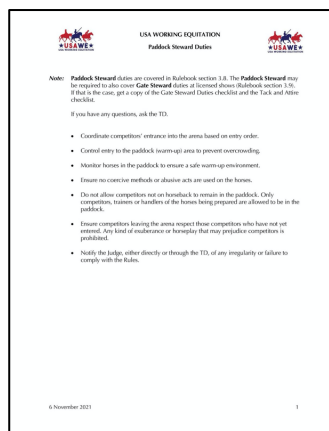
Paddock Steward

- ◆ Controls the paddock (warm-up arena) to ensure all paddock rules are followed.
- ◆ Coordinates the competitors' entrance into the competition arena based on entry order to ensure an orderly and timely flow of riders.

Gate Steward

- ◆ Inspects competitors before the trial for correct tack, attire, equipment.
- ◆ Inspects the condition of the horse before and after every trial for lameness or evidence of blood.

- The Paddock Steward handles Gate Steward duties if a separate Gate Steward is not present (usually the case for licensed shows).
- Check with the Paddock Steward (and Gate Steward if present) to make sure they have a clear understanding of the duties required.
- Have an extra copy of the Paddock Steward and Gate Steward duties available if needed.



15. Tack, Attire, Equipment

- It is the Gate Steward's job (or Paddock Steward if a Gate Steward is not present) to identify anomalies. The Tack & Attire Checklist is helpful; have an extra copy available if needed.
- The TD is responsible for resolving disputes regarding tack, attire, or equipment that cannot be handled by the Gate/Paddock Steward.
- Use of illegal tack, attire, or equipment is a DQ.
- Not using the same tack and/or style of attire throughout the competition is a DQ.
- If in doubt, consult with the Judge.

Tack/Equipment		Allowed	Not Allowed	Additional Info
Bell boots, protective boots		✓		EQH, Speed, and Cattle trials only
Bits, combination			✓	
Bits, elevator			✓	
Bits, gag			✓	
Bits, ported		✓		Port can be no higher than 3.5 in. Exception: Spade bits can have higher ports. Must be ridden with the reins in one hand.
Bits, shank		✓		Shank not to exceed 8.5 in. from top to bottom
Bits, twisted or wire			✓	
Blinkers			✓	
Brakes, rollers		✓		
Brakes, tilted		✓		
Cavesson/noseband		✓		Must have room for 2 fingers placed vertically under noseband on side of face below cheekbone.
Ear plugs/muffs			✓	
Electronic comm. devices			✓	Allowed in warm-up paddock; not allowed in competition arena.
Fly hoods		✓		Rider responsible for removing hood for Steward to visually inspect for ear plugs.
Halters/lead rope		✓		Boots used in lieu of shoes.
Hoof boots			✓	
Martingales			✓	
Mechanical hackamores			✓	
Metal-core nosebands or hackamores			✓	
Natural nasal/hackamores		✓		
Nose net			✓	If approved by show mgmt with letter from vet.
Reins, eating/side/draw/balancing			✓	
Secrets			✓	
Sleepmats		✓		
Shaddled or spiked curb/chain straps			✓	
Tail wraps			✓	
Tie-downs			✓	
Tongue ties			✓	
Whip		✓		Not to exceed 120 cm (47.2 in.) long, incl. lash

Attire		Required	Allowed	Not Allowed	Additional Info
Chinks, armlets, half chaps			✓		
Gloves			✓		
Hat or helmet		✓			
Jackets			✓		
Long pants or breeches		✓			
Protective gear			✓		
Riding skirts			✓		
Scarves			✓		
Shirts, long or short sleeve w/collar		✓			
Shirts, sleeveless				✓	
Tank tops				✓	
Vests			✓		

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16. Disqualifications

- The Judge handles all performance-related disqualifications.
- The TD, Show Manager, or the Judge can disqualify a:
 - Horse for lameness, pain, severe distress, or if horse is unsafe.
 - Rider for mistreating a horse.
 - Exhibitor for gross disrespect or misconduct.
- A Veterinarian is not authorized to disqualify.
- An entry may be eliminated from the competition entirely, depending on severity.
- There is no option for appeal in the case of DQ or Elimination for blood or lameness.

	Judge	TD	Show Mgr
Horse shows signs of lameness, pain, or severe distress	Yes	Yes	Yes
Horse shows signs of blood on any part of its body	Yes	No	No
Rider mistreats a horse	Yes	Yes	Yes
Horse is unsafe	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gross disrespect or misconduct by an exhibitor	Yes	Yes	Yes



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17. Evidence of Blood

- The Gate Steward (Paddock Steward if a Gate Steward is not designated) is responsible for inspecting the condition of horses before and after every trial. He/she must notify the TD immediately if blood is detected.
- The rider must remain in the competition area for examination. The Judge must be alerted at the next available opportunity.
- The Judge will analyze the situation. The Judge is the only one who can DQ for blood.
- If the blood is caused by bridle/bit, spurs, whip, or any wounds apparently from abuse or mistreatment, the competitor will be eliminated.

18. Approving Show Results Prior to Posting

- Before the start of the show, check with the Judge to see if she/he plans to approve results or wants to delegate that job (all or a portion of it) to the TD.
- Verify the base number of entries for each level/division. The number of competitors who actually enter the Dressage trial for a given level/division is the base number used to determine points for the entire level/division, regardless of how many competitors may scratch, withdraw, disqualify, or be eliminated in subsequent trials.
- Check a sample number of actual score sheets to make sure the Scorer is computing totals and averages correctly.
- Review and verify Final Competition Placement sheets for each level/division. Validate placings and points. Initial each trial as you approve. Include the time of approval.
- Verify results throughout the day. It will help uncover any consistent problems early and can get corrections in place.

19. Timeline for Posting Results

- Multiple day shows: No later than 2 hours after trial completion
- One-day shows: No later than 2 hours after the last ride of the day
- Original Dressage and EOH tests to be made available to exhibitors after each trial.

Important: Make sure copies of the Dressage and EOH score sheets are made before handing the originals to the competitors.



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20. Handling Questions/Inquiries

- The TD's job is to answer questions that arise during the competition.
- Questions may be about the rules, show requirements, or USAWE requirements.
- Actively listen to all questions asked; understand the question fully before formulating a response.
- What you say is important; however, how you say it can be equally important.
- Sometimes all that is needed is for someone to be heard. Actively listen.
- Unless you are absolutely certain, do not try to answer a question from your memory of the rulebook. You can say something like,

I believe the correct answer is _____, but let's check the Rulebook to be certain.


- If you cannot answer the question, determine if it needs to go the Judge or the Show Manager for an answer. Go to the proper individual to get the answer. The TD intercedes on behalf of the competitor if necessary to ask a question of either the Judge or Show Manager.

21. Handling Complaints


- It is important to fully understand the complaint and address it thoroughly.
- Resolve the problem if possible. Consult with the Judge and/or Show Manager if necessary for resolution.
- If the complaint cannot be satisfied, ask if the person wants to file a formal protest. *Do not encourage or discourage them in any way with that decision.*

22. Handling Protests

- Have blank copies of the Protest form readily available. Protest must be in writing.
- Protests can be filed by a rider, the parent/guardian of a rider under 18, an owner, or an owner's agent
- Ensure the Protest form is complete and clear in stating the complaint.
- Collect a check for the deposit (\$75) made out to USAWE.
- Notify the Judge and the Show Manager immediately upon receipt of a protest. Show must be put on hold to settle the protest.



United States Rules for Working Equitation



COMPETITION PROTEST FORM

Competition Name:	
Competition Date:	
Horse Name:	
Rider Name:	
Level/Division:	
Trial:	

Describe the details of this Protest. Use additional sheets as necessary.

Submitted by:	
Name:	
Relationship:	<input type="checkbox"/> Rider <input type="checkbox"/> Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Owner's Agent <input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Guardian
Email:	
Phone:	
Date/Time:	

Submit this form to the Technical Delegate along with a \$75 deposit.
Refer to the [U.S. Rules for Working Equitation](#) Section 4.9.2 for further details.

Know the time limits for certain protests:

Eligibility of horse or competitor	No later than 1 hour before start of competition
Condition of the dressage arena	No later than 1 hour before start of trial
EOH/Speed: Obstacle, length of course, condition of course	No later than 15 minutes before start of relevant trial
Dressage, EOH, Speed: Irregularities during the competition or scoring	As soon as possible, but no later than 30 minutes after publishing test results
Cattle: Irregularities or incidents during the competition	As soon as possible, but no later than 30 minutes after the ride
Math or transcription error in scoring	No later than 1 hour after posting

23. Protests Committee

- The Judge, TD, and Show Manager serve on the Protests Committee.
- The Protests Committee must issue a ruling within 2 hours of submission.
- If the protest is upheld, the Protests Committee must issue a statement to that effect and correct the posting of any scores and/or results affected by the ruling or allow a re-ride if that is the determination.
- If the protest (or any part of the protest) is upheld, the \$75 protest deposit is refunded.
- The TD documents all information regarding the protest in the TD Report, and includes any documentation submitted by the person filing the protest, the ruling, and any other clarifying information necessary to explain the ruling and the rationale.



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24. Disciplinary Dispositions

- The Judge, TD, and Show Manager are responsible for enforcing the rules contained in the Rulebook.
- Any show official, competitor, or representative who commits a serious violation of the rules may be subject to disciplinary dispositions and/or fines as determined by USAWE.
- The TD may refer any serious violation of the rules directly to the Appeals Committee.
- The USAWE President, President- Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer serve on the Appeals Committee.

25. TD Report

- The TD Report is an important record of the competition from an official's perspective.
- Include all pertinent information. Please be clear and direct. The reports can help improve the competitions process, LO training, and the rulebook.
- The report must be submitted NLT 1 week following the competition.
- If there is more than one TD officiating, the senior TD is responsible for completing the report and consolidating comments from the other TD(s).
- The report is submitted online. The link is on the website:

[USAWE.org/Competitions/Resources/Downloadable Forms/TD Report](https://www.usawe.org/Competitions/Resources/Downloadable%20Forms/TD%20Report)

- A TD Report Worksheet is also available. You can use this to keep track of reportable items throughout a competition to make completing the TD Report easier.

26. Competitor Feedback

- A **Competitor Feedback Form** is now available on the Competitions page of the USAWE website to provide a means for competitors/trainers/owners to share feedback with competition organizers without worrying about that feedback impacting relationships.
- Submissions are anonymous. The Competitions Committee will provide a summary of the feedback received (both positive and negative) to the show organizer.
- As appropriate, let competitors know of this capability, and encourage them to take a few moments to share their feedback.