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OCTOBER 2023



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Chris Stanko, President

Happy October,

It's already October and we're preparing for 4th Quarter elections, licensed show results and membership renewals! In September, all three Zone Championships were well attended, challenged horse-rider pairs and offered opportunities to celebrate member achievements. I'd like to take time to thank each of the Zone show organizers, show secretaries, licensed officials and

possible to offer education opportunities and competitions.

2023 has been a tough year behind the scenes. The Board of Directors and Committee Chairs not only volunteered countless hours on daily duties but also undertook a HUGE project by writing Policies and Procedures for each of the board positions and for each committee. This defined volunteer roles and responsibilities.

As President, my goal has been to support and encourage thinking outside the box that defines organizational growth locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. As USA Working Equitation continues to emerge as a viable equestrian sport, it requires change. Change is often hard for many of us. We get comfortable in the way things are, we develop routines that enable us to navigate and plan based on our familiarities. However, change is necessary in order to experience growth and provide opportunities that enable us to achieve goals and dreams.

Winston Churchill once wrote: *“To improve is to change; to be perfect is to change often.”*

Let's all continue to learn, grow and support each other along the way.

Ride Softly

Ride with Grace

Ride with Rhythm

Ride with Tact

CORPORATE NEWS

Kris Blacklock, Secretary

2023 Election Reminder!

Visit the usawe.org website > Corporate > [Election Information](#) for the list of candidates and candidate statements. Ballots for the 2023 election will be emailed to U.S. Adult members on November 1st.

Activity	Deadline
Candidates and Candidate Statements posted on USAWE website.	October 15
Ballots emailed to all U.S. Adult members.	November 1
Voting closes.	November 15
Results announced.	November 16
Those elected take office.	December 1

Avoid Newsletter SPAM! Please setup info@usawe.org with a first/lastname of Clerical Assistant as a 'Contact' within your email to prevent the USAWE Newsletter from going to 'spam'.



What's New?

BOARD OF DIRECTOR MOTIONS

Agendas and Minutes of all Executive Committee and Board of Directors (BOD) meetings are posted on the usawe.org website > Corporate > [Records](#) > Meeting Minutes. Below are decisions since BOD meeting Sept 13, 2023.

- Appoint **Sharon Miesen** (R4-TX) as a reporter and member of the Marketing and Promotion Committee, effective immediately.
- Add a privacy statement to the usawe.org website, membership request form and policies and procedures.
- Add the following privacy statement to the usawe.org website Membership Info, Membership Request Form and Policies and Procedures "*USA Working Equitation does not sell membership data. The personal data we collect is limited to information regarding our relationship with you. Contact information, such as name, telephone number, mailing address, and email address, relates to newsletters, mass communication, projects and events while birth year, membership type and competition status tell us who our members are.*"

Decisions by Email October 4

- Effective January 1, 2024, raise the Show Licensing Fee to \$4 per horse/rider pair competing in each USAWE licensed competition that uses GIRA. Retain the \$5 per horse/rider pair competing in each USAWE licensed competition that does not use GIRA.
- Appoint **Morgan Osbaldeston** (R7-GA) as a reporter and member of the Marketing and Promotion Committee, effective immediately.

Executive Session – October 5

- To define and identify in Policies and Procedures which committees are Board Committees (authorized to act on behalf of the board and require public notice, agendas and minutes) and committees that are considered operating Working Committees (not authorized to make decisions without board approval).
- Authorize the distribution of an eBlast and Social Media posts for committees seeking volunteers.

Board of Directors Meeting – October 11

- Effective January 1, 2024, remove the option for non-members to compete at USAWE-licensed competitions. Non-members will still be allowed to ride "schooling rides" at regular (non-championship) licensed competitions but can no longer compete without joining USAWE.
- Effective January 1, 2023, change the Regional Leaderboard awards to honor the top two horse/rider pairs in each rider division (Open, Amateur, Youth) and Level (L1-L7) in each region (R1-R7), rather than the top three, as the organization has done since its founding.
- Effective January 1, 2024, change the name of the recognition given to the top two National and Regional Leaderboard horse/rider pairs at each level (L1-L7) and in each rider division (Open, Amateur, Youth) from "National or Regional #1" and "National or Regional #2" to "National Leaderboard Champion [level] [division]", "National Leaderboard Reserve Champion [level] [division]" and "Regional Leaderboard Champion [level] [division]", "Regional Leaderboard Reserve Champion [level] [division]".
- Authorize increasing the Adult membership fee to \$55 beginning with the 2024 membership year.
- Distribute an eBlast membership campaign and accept next year's memberships starting December 1st.
- Appoint **Virginia Aulin** (R1-ID) as a reporter and member of the Marketing and Promotion Committee, effective immediately.
- Authorize implementing a Youth membership fee of \$41 beginning with the 2024 membership year.
- Authorize replacing the term 'Junior' with 'Youth' (age 7-17 years) in all aspects within the organization (i.e., Awards, Competitions, GIRA, Membership, Rules, Policies & Procedures, website, etc.), effective January 1, 2024.



Corporate Meetings

The Board of Directors (BOD) regular meeting is scheduled the 2nd Wednesday of each month. All USAWE Members in good standing are welcome to attend as a silent participant.

NOTE DATE CHANGE The next regular BOD meeting was rescheduled to **Wednesday November 29, 2023** 5:00-6:30 pm Pacific time and will take place virtually via Zoom. Agenda topics due November 15, 2023.

Please contact Secretary Kris Blacklock (Secretary@usawe.org) at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting if you would like the Zoom meeting room access information. Requests for access arriving less than 24 hours prior to the meeting are not guaranteed a response.

President approved BOD agendas and BOD approved meeting minutes are posted to USAWE.org > Corporate > Records > [Meeting Minutes](#) in accordance to the Bylaws of USA Working Equitation.

A *Log of Motions Passed* is posted to USAWE.org > Corporate > [Records](#)

usawe.org website > Corporate > Records > [Board Agenda Item Request Form](#)

The Board welcomes requests, proposals and recommendations submitted through Committee Chairs, Regional Directors and Officers, so we can better serve our members' and organization's needs.

Help Wanted! Financial Oversight Committee

The Financial Oversight Committee is looking for a committee member. Ideal candidate(s) are those who, in addition to financial experience are detail-oriented and able to navigate around Google Drive, Spreadsheets, Word Docs. The work level requires approximately 2-4 hours a month as well as monthly and quarterly meetings via zoom. If you think this might be something for you, please submit your interest by using the online [USAWE Members Interested in Volunteering and Serving](#) committee form. Thank you!

COACHES NETWORK COMMITTEE REPORT

Coaches Network Committee Members

COACHES IN YOUR REGION

Region 1

Kimberlee Barker of Corvallis, OR
Trisha Kiefer-Reed of Wolf Creek, MT
Laura Stutesman of Ashland, OR

Region 2

Ashley Bowers of Cave Creek, AZ
Judy Mackenzie of Payson, AZ
Jessica Mosbaugh of Fiddletown, CA
Tessa Nicolet of Payson, AZ

Region 3

Chris Stanko of Niwot, CO

Region 5

Emily Kemp of Newton, WI
Erica Peet of Wonder Lake, IL
Michelle Lackey of Medina, OH

Region 6

Bree Sprik of Ancramdale, NY
Holly Linz of Woodbine, MD
Rose Watt of Cochranon, PA
Stephanie Hayes of Johnson, VT

Region 7

Jody Fontanetta of Milton, TN
Polly Limond of Mooresville, NC
Shannon Yee of Bradley, SC

To learn more about our coaches or how to become a coach visit: usawe.org/coaches



GET TO KNOW A RECOGNIZED USAWE COACH

Kimberlee Barker - Corvallis, Oregon

What inspires you to be a Working Equitation Coach?

The fun challenge of teaching riders how to take their horses up the levels delights me. I love that magic moment of discovery when a student develops clear communication and harmony with their horse.

What is your favorite obstacle? Why?

The bull line. I love the finesse needed to elegantly pick up the spear and ring and the trust and confidence your horse needs to approach the bull. And honestly, it's fun to ride around with a spear!

Practice, practice, practice! Make your horse so comfortable and confident at home that pressure in competitions does not overwhelm you. Remember to breathe! Remember to smile! Remember this is FUN!

What's your favorite trick for remembering WE courses?

I memorize the obstacles by number in a list first. Then I create "stories" after the course walk like "head for the hills" to remember to exit away from the judge, or "open the gate to the bridge."

Your all time favorite WE horse?

Oxidado: my original WE crush! Now Mafalda Galiza Mendes & Isco, and of course my own kind, generous horses rank high on my list too, especially Minuet & Gladheart Black Harris, my Masters partners.

What would your students say is your catchphrase?

"When in doubt, just ride better!" It breaks tension & helps us realize we can be our own worst enemies—we forget to breathe, we forget to ride, and mostly we forget to sit back and enjoy the ride!

What non-equestrian activities do you love to do?

I enjoy camping, exploring, and photographing deserts like Death Valley, Escalante, and Goblin Valley with my husband. Bicycling, sailing, and kayaking are up there too!

Thanks for the great information, Kimberlee! Learn more about Kimberlee and all our coaches at: usawe.org/coaches. Check back next month to learn about our next featured coach from our diverse network!

ELECTIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

Elections Committee Members

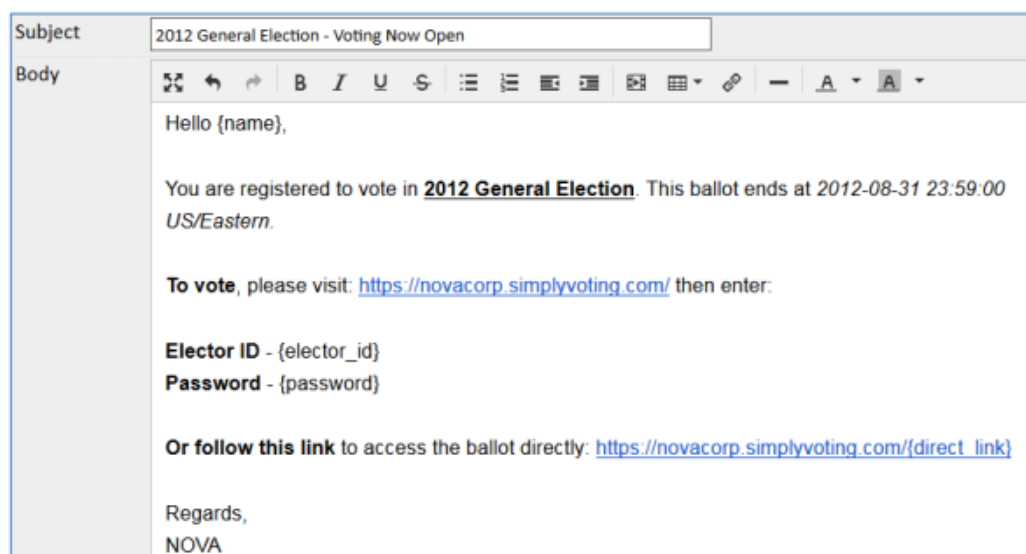
USAWE Election Begins November 1st!

The election of the 2024 USAWE Board members is right around the corner! USAWE uses an independent company called Simply Voting to conduct the election. U.S. Adult members will be able to vote anytime from November 1st to November 15th.

Here is a bit of information on how this process works.

First, the candidates' names and statements have been posted on the USAWE website as of October 15th. Please read about your candidates so you can make an informed decision. On November 1st, you will receive an email from Simply Voting.

Here is a sample email from Simply Voting:



- The Elector ID is your USAWE membership number.
- The password will be generated by Simply Voting.
- Follow the link to go to the voting website, log in with your Elector ID and password given to you in the email. You will then see the ballot.

This year, everyone will vote for President-Elect and At Large Director 1.

Regions 1, 3, 5, 7 will also see a question to vote on the candidates for their regions only.

Each year, \$5 of your annual membership dues was earmarked as Member Designated Funds (MDF). The final question will give you an opportunity to determine the destination of your MDF. Your choices will

QUALITY ASSURANCE TASK FORCE

Lidia Taylor, Team Lead

On August 11th, the Board of Directors appointed a Quality Assurance team tasked with identifying and resolving licensed show scoring/placement/show result issues, soliciting GIRA.io user feedback and seeking software enhancements/apps that streamline the process from start to finish. The QA Audit identifies what works well, makes suggestions for improvement and suggests ideas to enhance functionality.

[Click Here](#) for a recap of the GIRA.io Feedback Survey results. Survey conducted August 11 – September 15, 2023 with 134 Show Organizers, Managers, Scorers and Licensed Officials (Judges and TDs); 34 respondents, a 25% response rate.

The Quality Assurance GIRA.io Audit Recommendations presented to the board on October 11, 2023 will be discussed in November with the board and committee chairs directly impacted. Should you have any questions, please contact QualityAssurance@usawe.org

COMPETITIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

Competitions Committee Members

Zone Championship Wrap-Up

Since the last newsletter, USAWE has held three successful Zone Championships. The Eastern Zone Championship, with 37 horse/rider pairs competing, was held September 22-24 at the Diamond 7 Ranch and Arena, Dillsburg, PA. The Central Zone Championship, which took place September 29 - October 1 at the Walworth County Fairgrounds, Elkhorn, WI, also welcomed 37 horse/rider pairs -- 11 of them youth. Finally, the Western Zone Championship had 32 horse/rider pairs compete at the Big Sky Horse Park, Missoula, MT.

All three championships welcomed L1-L5 competitors, and those attending the Western Zone Championship had the opportunity to watch a Masters Level competitor as well. The cattle trial proved quite popular, with a total of 42 horse/rider pairs entering across the three competitions. At the Eastern Zones, 4 out of 10 horse/rider pairs successfully penned their cattle; at the Central Zones, 11 of 15 horse/rider pairs penned their cattle, and at the Western Zones, 9 of 17 horse/rider pairs penned their cattle.

Participation at these large in-person championships helps USAWE members get to know others participating in the sport from across the country. The opportunity for making new friends from outside their local show area is one of the highlights of the championships. The Competitions Committee would like to thank the organizers and the many volunteers who made these events possible. Kudos to all involved for a job well done!

2024 Changes:

There will be a small change in the competition fees charged to USAWE licensed show organizers. Starting with the 2024 show season, The fees will increase from \$2 per horse/rider entry to \$4 per horse/rider entry when the GIRA scoring system is used. The Licensed shows not using GIRA will remain @ \$5 per horse/rider entry competing in a USAWE licensed show.

Starting with the 2024 show season, non USAWE members will no longer be able to compete in USAWE licensed shows. Non-members may ride as "Schooling Rides" only in any non-championship licensed shows.

AFFILIATE ORGANIZATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

Kristine Strasburger, Affiliate Organizations Committee Chair

To all USAWE Members

Share the Love!

If you have been involved in a local Working Equitation event, you have probably enjoyed the fruits of the labor of a hard-working USAWE Affiliate Organization (AO). Your local AO goes the extra mile to bring you Working Equitation competitions, clinics, educational opportunities, and fun events.

Now you have the opportunity to let that AO know how much you appreciate their service to you. \$5 of the dues you have already paid to be a member of USAWE in 2023 have been earmarked as Member Designated Funds (MDF) to be distributed as determined by your vote on the annual election ballot.

Please vote in the upcoming USAWE election and consider supporting your favorite Affiliate Organization

To all AO Leaders and their Leadership Teams

Upcoming Affiliate Organization Quarterly Networking Hour

Affiliate Organization Leaders, don't miss the final AO Quarterly Networking Hour meeting of 2023. You were emailed the meeting link last week, and should also receive the meeting link again the morning of the meeting. Please reach out to me if you didn't receive the meeting invite link.

Amy Star, of USAWE AO Arizona Working Equitation (AZWEC), is our guest presenter at this meeting. AZWEC has consistently been a top recipient of votes for Member Designated Funds during the USAWE elections since the founding of USAWE. Amy has lots of ideas and strategies for growing your AO membership and making it profitable and successful. She will be sharing these ideas with us at the upcoming meeting. Don't miss this opportunity to get together and share!

AO Quarterly Networking Hour Agenda

Welcome & Introductions (20 minutes)

Topic Presentation - Tips for Increasing AO Membership and Income - Amy Star (20 minutes)

Questions to Presenter & Group Discussion on Topic (15 minutes)

AO Program Announcements (5 minutes)

Date: Oct 23, 2023

Time:

5:00 PM Pacific Time

6:00 PM Mountain Time

7:00 PM Central Time

8:00 PM Eastern Time

Kristine Strasburger

USAWE Affiliate Organization Program Coordinator

(208) 818-0400 (Central time zone)

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

Kate Steffes, Membership Committee Chair

Total Members as of 10/09/23: 1103 (+10 from 09/09/23)

Members by Region

- Region 1 – 284 (+5)
- Region 2 – 261 (+1)
- Region 3 – 81 (+2)
- Region 4 – 83 (+2)
- Region 5 – 132 (+1)
- Region 6 – 142 (+4)
- Region 7 – 110 (-5)
- International – 10 (9 Canada, 1 Germany) (+0)

Members by Competition Status

- Amateur 681 (+8)
- Junior 121 (+3)
- Open 301 (-1)

AWARDS COMMITTEE REPORT

Bridgett Klingler, Awards Committee Chair

USAWE Eastern Zone Championship was held on 9/21/2023 with 37 riders. Levels L1-L5, with 23 Amateurs, 13 Open, and 1 Youth.

The top Dressage score went to Kasey Riddle with a 65.52% riding L3.

The top EOH score went to Kasey Riddle with a 65.12% riding L3.

The top speed run went to Danee Rudy riding L2 with a flying 131.41 (2.19 minutes)

Kasey Riddle, Amateur L3, was swept up the Cow Trial by penning her cow in 58.4 seconds.

USAWE Central Zone Championship was held on 9/29/2023 with 37 riders. Levels L1-L5, with 14 Amateurs, 12 Open, and 11 Youth.

The top Dressage score went to Michelle Lackey with a 73.52 % riding L4.

The top EOH score went to Michelle Lackey with a 78.52 % riding L4.

The top speed run went to Michelle Lackey riding L4 with a flying 145.69 (2.42 minutes)

Cecilia Freese, Youth L2, swept up Cow Trial, penning her cow in 46.38 seconds.

The top Dressage score went to Emily Callihan with a 71.25 % riding L2.

The top EOH score went to Emily Callihan with a 70.72 % riding L2.

The top speed run went to Heather Longshore riding L5 with a flying 177.88 (2.96 minutes)

Kaylee Overman, Youth L3, swept up the Cow Trail by penning her cow in 90.69 seconds.

All results can be found on [GIRA.io](https://gira.io), and our National and Regional leaderboards can be found at [Equestrian Sports Software \(gira.io\)](https://gira.io).

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE REPORT

Kellee Campbell, International Committee Chair

Check out the NEW! International page on the usawe.org website > Competitions > [International](#)

For members who wish to be part of the USAWE International Program, please review the [USAWE International Program Details](#), complete the [USAWE International Program Expression of Interest Form](#), create and maintain a *Rider Competition Plan* (coming soon) and review the [International Committee's Policies and Procedures](#) document.

Questions? Please contact the International Committee at International@usawe.org

Save the Date!

January 25-28, 2024
Weatherford, Texas

Working Equitation Training Camp

Developing
High Performance
Riders



Mounted
\$200 per ride
(Limit 2 rides)

Interactive Auditor
Q&A Session with Clinician
\$100 per day
\$300 for 4 days

Silent Auditor
\$50 per day
\$150 for 4 days

Saturday Night Dinner
\$30 per person

Stalls \$40 per night pre-bedded
Shavings \$10 per bag

With
SENIOR WAVE JUDGE
José Andrés Benito
From Spain

For More Information
[https://usawe.org/
competitions/international/](https://usawe.org/competitions/international/)

Photo Credit: Carmen Elisa Franco

Working Equitation Training Camps – Train to Win

Plan to attend the first International Rider Development 'Train to Win' working equitation training camp scheduled January 25-28, 2024 in Weatherford, TX. Riders and auditors are welcome.

[Click Here](#) to register. Full payment reserves your spot. This 4-day camp is the first of three International Rider Development Programs to be held in 2024; one in each of the USAWE Zones (Central, Eastern and Western). Once your registration is submitted you should receive an invoice within 5 business days.

MARKETING & PROMOTION COMMITTEE REPORT

Amie Perryman, Marketing & Promotion Committee Chair

The Marketing and Promotions Committee would like to welcome three new members! These members will serve as 'reporters' for their respective Zones and help us keep the USAWE members across the country more connected! We will highlight members, Affiliate Organizations, activities, events – including shows, clinics and educational opportunities. If you have a story, event or member you'd like to see showcased and shared reach out to marketing@usawe.org and we'll be sure to get a reporter to respond!

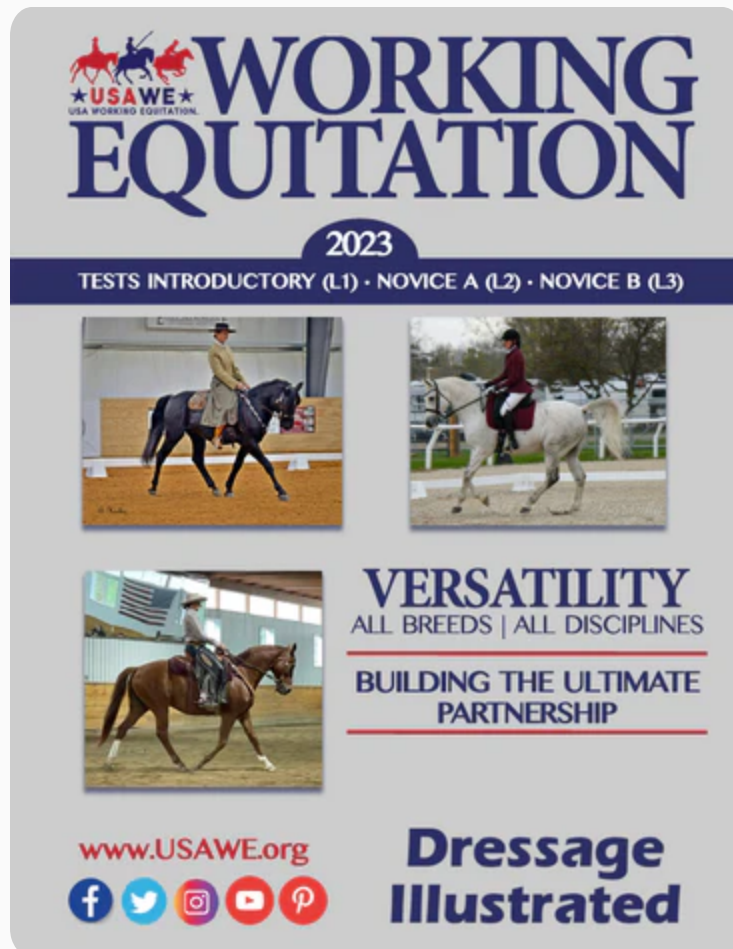
[Virginia Aulin](#), Western Zone

[Sharon Miesen](#), Central Zone

[Morgan Osbaldeston](#), Eastern Zone

If you are interested in joining the Marketing and Promotions Committee, we are in need of graphic designers and someone with strong social media skills! Contact marketing@usawe.org!

Great gift idea for the USAWE 2024 show season!



Order today!

Percentage of proceeds go to our Youth Development!

<https://dressageillustrated.com/collections/riders-instructors-usawe-books>

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

Kasey Riddle, Youth Development Committee Chair

Hello Parents, Youth Members, and all other USAWE members

There is much to discuss as USAWE, youth members and the Youth Development Committee have been making some serious moves!

First, let's recognize some significant achievements with the YOUTH.

43 YOUTH horse/rider teams QUALIFIED for ZONE CHAMPIONSHIPS this year!

14 YOUTH horse/rider teams ATTENDED the ZONE CHAMPIONSHIPS this year!

Eastern Zone Championships

Landyn Riddle, Rusty, L1, North Carolina

Central Zone Youth Competitors

Madyson Anderson, KTM Eclipse the Wind, L1, Wisconsin

Emily Dymesich, Maverick, L1, Wisconsin

Max Allinder, Whata Bout Ta Fame, L1, Michigan

Cecilia Freese, Sampson, L2, Minnesota

Erin Beuerle, Legatta, L2, Michigan

Tabitha Long, Cody, L2, Michigan

Annaliese Rowe, Incomparable, L3, Michigan

Allison Richardson, Zorro, L3, Michigan

Annaliese Rowe, Once a Foxy Lady, L3, Michigan

Western Zone Youth Competitors

Izzy Logan-Young, Arks Skips Color Copy, L2, Montana

Kaylee Overman, Lady Cricket, L3, Arizona

This is an amazing turnout for the CHAMPIONSHIPS and we hope this will grow with the more opportunities we are able to provide for our YOUTH. The Youth Development Committee has been busy creating opportunities for the youth in our organization. **11 scholarships were awarded this year allowing these teams to attend CHAMPIONSHIPS!**

Speaking of opportunities... All of the membership and the youth were asked (all Summer) to design ideas for an USAWE Youth Logo. There have been three finalists selected for this contest! Please keep a lookout in November for a MEMBERSHIP VOTE for the FINAL logo selection! YOUR VOTE COUNTS! This logo will be used for awards, logo wear as well as to represent the youth!

An official announcement (**in this newsletter first!**) is that the USA Board of Directors, with support; has voted that there will be a membership fee beginning 2024 for youth. You may initially be disappointed hearing this, but let me personally assure you that ALL of this money is 100% going back to the youth that can be applied for! As a mother of TWO YOUTH members, I never would have let this pass if it was not a benefit for the youth of this organization!

This membership fee will keep the Championship Scholarship Fund ongoing as well as the Youth Development Fund and future grant opportunities we are developing.

In 2023, a youth member could apply for \$425 (Central Zone) to attend a championship show and ALL QUALIFIED applicants were awarded the Championship Scholarship.

(\$41 membership fee (2024))

-\$425 zone show fee (2023))

- +\$384 difference

The **NEW** Youth membership fee in 2024 is \$41 per applicant, so essentially your YOUTH can join, apply (if we can keep this program alive and develop new programs) and attend functions; and they may be COMPLETELY PAID FOR by the membership fees! We also have programs in motion for grants, fundraisers and discounts for youth.

As always, please feel free to contact me with any questions or suggestions.

Kasey Riddle

Youth Committee Chair

youth@usawe.org

(828) 450-9269

LICENSED OFFICIALS COMMITTEE REPORT

Christy Reich & Doreen Atkinson, Licensed Officials Committee Co-Chairs

Dressed to Impress!

Wondering how to increase your Presentation score? USAWE licensed officials have developed a helpful **Guide to WE Tack and Attire** to give competitors clear direction and are looking forward to seeing all competitors in 2024!

This guide describes appropriate tack and attire for WE competitions held in the U.S. Its purpose is to promote a greater level of understanding of the traditions and expectations of Working Equitation with respect to tack and attire and enable judges to provide greater consistency in the marks for presentation while staying true to the spirit of the sport.

Please find this guide on our website usawe.org > Competitions > US Rules for Working Equitation > Helpful Resources for Competitors > [Guide to WE Tack and Attire](#)



WAVE INTERNATIONAL JUDGE'S SEMINAR AT THE SPANISH NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Doreen Atkinson, President Elect

This is a recap of my experience of my time in Spain for the WAVE judges testing. But first, I would like to thank USAWE Board of Directors, Licensed Officials Committee fellow, competitors and members for your support in attending this seminar. The time I spent in Ciudad Rodrigo, during my tryout to be a WAVE judging candidate, was a great treat. Jose Benito and Merchy Ruiz were the best hosts starting with a tour around the city, which, by the way, is a walled city. You could see the moat all the way around the historic city and see vantage points to look over the hill with cannons pointing out in case of an attack. It even had a castle which was turned into a nice hotel. This town is one of the towns that has the running of the bulls down the streets chasing many runners. I saw the list of bulls being picked for each town that would participate in this run. The history and culture there truly depicts Spain. The people are genuinely nice, social and excepting of our non-Spanish speaking group. One area I had to get used to was the times for meals. They close the restaurants for lunch by four and they do not open again till 8 PM. I guess that's for the siesta. The Iberian meat, which are usually wild pigs that eat acorns, was the most popular meat. I still chose steak and grilled cheese sandwiches. The Spanish culture and riding style using the garrocha was evident with many statues around town and pictures in some of the bars and restaurants. My fellow candidates were Polly Limond and Nicole Chastain Price from the USA, others from Belgian, Italy, the Netherlands, Australia, Poland and one from Czech Republic. We became fast friends and traded many stories and experiences.

This was a testing seminar, not a teaching seminar. Candidates were expected to know the material beforehand. There were written tests, as well as video and live shadow judging. The written test was on theory and technical movements, e.g., completely describe walk rhythm, half pass, leg yield, pirouette, side pass and how to perform specific obstacles; etc. True/False questions covering WAVE rules were in the test as well. Then came silent Video judging on score sheets. We had no time to prepare or review. It was Handled as if in real time. There was no time to second guess the marks we gave because we turned in the tests immediately – no time to go back and look at them. We had to be quick on collectives and quick on comments. (A scribe would have been helpful but was not allowed.)

We scored six dressage tests, and our scores had to be within 4% of the examiners score. And it was the same thing with EOH. We watched 6 rides to judge. Then we judged videos out loud. Scores were entered in a computer and compared to the WAVE judges scores. Claudia Matos, from Portugal, was our examiner, and she drilled us with questions, as if we were being asked by a reporter. She watched as we handled pressure with questions fired at us, and how confident we were in our answers. This testing definitely was a stressful setting but used by the examiners to assess our ability to work under pressure. Saturday was the live judging portion of the testing and unfortunately the weather started to turn bad with rain and wind so we only watched the Dressage phase before they canceled the rest of the day. That

held with each candidate went over 'this is where you are weak, this is where you are good'. Sunday was not raining, but it was very windy and cold. We watch the EOH and speed phase. The cattle phase was canceled due to a contagious cattle disease that had broken out that month.

Claudia watched everything:

- Tested on how you handled pressure
- Tested on how you handled people
- Tested If you were a team player

This was also taken into consideration of each candidate:

- Personality
- Knowledge
- Professional image

My advice is for candidates to be confident, competent, assertive, and able to work under pressure. This is a sport for the field horse so judge/train it as that – a useful working horse. Understand the criteria for each movement/obstacle. Know the Quality of the gaits and the basic training which is #1. What is a good walk? Canter? Be able to identify quality. Which is good and why. What is the 'why' behind the quality. Must be able to technically explain why a gait is good or not good. The quality of the gait and the training, balance, connection and collection is more important than the precision of the figure. One must be able to defend your marks. Use judge's terminology in comments. Know terminology of basics. Be able to answer why you gave a mark. If a candidate passed this testing exam, the next step is to silent/shadow judge two international shows within 2 years with scores within the 4% range or attend another one of the testing seminars.

More Tips for future candidates:

- Know the rules in advance
- Train your eye to the basics, collection and connection.
- Study movements. How would you rate this horse, and why?
- Participate in calibration sessions
- Take USDF L Program basics
- Bring a scribe to the testing seminar if possible
- Listen. Talk doesn't mean anything – you're assessed on how you perform.

If one is interested in becoming a WAVE judge in the future, I will be happy to assist you in that path. Thank you again for your support.



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