



Exciting Changes in Riding for Qualifying Scores for this Upcoming Show Season

- by Jan Lawrence

Starting December 1, 2016, Horse/Rider combinations may enter more than one qualifying class per level per day. They may also enter more than one qualifying freestyle per level per day. So what does this mean?

If you are trying obtain a qualifying score, you can enter the qualifying class more than one time if the show has offered the class in the prize list. For example, you might enter Training-3 AA qualifying (your first attempt to get a qualifying score) and then you might enter USEF Test of Choice riding Training-3 qualifying as an Adult Amateur (your second attempt to get a qualifying score).

All of the qualifying rules still apply, so you can still only earn ONE qualifying score per day per show per judge. This change provides you the opportunity to ride the same test more than one time if you would like to and also to ride the same test as qualifying ride more than one time if you choose to. This could be a great opportunity to get back in the ring if you are riding a new level and your horse is only prepared to do one test of that level. It could also be helpful if your horse suffered an injury early in the season, but is now ready to get qualified. You will have more than one chance to get that qualifying score at a single show.

There are no changes in the rules for calculating year end award scores and every test ridden will continue to count towards all applicable awards for USDF awards including medals and freestyle bars, but it provides the flexibility to use the same test as your "warm up" ride if you choose to. This could be a real boon for horses that are just starting flying changes or tempi changes, for example, or for horses that take some time to settle into their best work at competitions.

If you choose to ride a different test in any level as your warm up ride, you can certainly continue to do so, but this change will give many riders greater flexibility in choosing the tests that best suit the training needs of an individual horse in competition.

An important thing to keep in mind is that you can still only ride a maximum of 3 tests per day Fourth Level and below, and 2 tests per day above Fourth Level except for FEI Para Equestrian, which are allowed 3 tests per day.

This new change will be challenging for show management to implement, so please be considerate as the show secretaries figure out the best way to implement these changes. They will require a significant amount of work to schedule these extra classes. Show managers will appreciate constructive criticism as we implement these changes, but keep in mind there will be a learning curve as we go forward to figure out the best way to make this a user-friendly tool.

Here is the link to the complete program rules for the USDF/American Bankers Insurance Group Regional Championships: <http://www.usdf.org/docs/ShowFlash/web/RegionalChamp/RCRules.pdf> I strongly encourage everyone to read over these rules if preparing to ride in the Regional Championships is one of your goals for 2017. If you have questions about this change or any of the other rules regarding the Regional Championships, you are welcome to contact USDF to obtain specific answers.