



USDF

UNITED STATES DRESSAGE FEDERATION™

Show Biz, Chapter 9, Scoring

Introduction

This section offers competition management information on how to handle scoring at a competition so that scores are posted quickly, and tests can be made available to competitors quickly. This keeps the competitor happy and therefore, by extension, management is happy.

Regardless of the type of competition with which you are involved, advanced preparation and planning are the keys to success. The methods presented have been used with great success at two-day, six rings per day, recognized competitions. They have also worked well at schooling shows and one-day recognized competitions.

If you do not have all the personnel available as in this ideal situation, you will need to make appropriate adjustments.

A realistic aim for posting scores is to try to have each score posted within the next three rides, or about every 10 to 15 minutes. This is facilitated by live score streaming if you have that capability. Class placings, ribbons and tests should be available to the competitors about 30 minutes after the class has ended.

Electronic submission of scores is required by both USDF and USEF, and a computer program of some kind is necessary to fulfill the requirements of both organizations. The USDF requires competition results to be submitted via the USEF universal results template. This template is published on the [USEF website](#).

Information that is specific to schooling shows is in italics and generally refers to non-electronic posting and reporting. Schooling show personnel still need to read the entire document to learn of the basic procedures of running a scoring office.

Scoring Chairperson

Regardless of the size of the competition, there should be one person who assumes the responsibility for scoring. The person appointed to this position should have a reasonable amount of administrative and organizational skill, some knowledge of competition management in general and not be intimidated by detail.

The scoring chairperson should have his/her headquarters set up in an area that has no traffic, even though a logical incentive would be to provide scorers with a view of the rides taking place. Such a quiet location is not always possible, and he/she should be capable of working under stressful and distracting conditions.

Competitors should not have access to the scoring area. The number of assistants that the scoring chairperson needs will depend on the size of the competition. The following fall under the jurisdiction of the scoring chairperson.

Scoring Personnel

Each scoring office needs at a minimum, one person to input scores into the computer (or to monitor the scores from e-scribes) and an individual with a calculator to double check. Multi-ring shows may need extra personnel but the systems have become so refined that two or three experienced people can handle multi-arena, multi-judge shows.

Scoring offices rely on runners to bring the tests from the judge(s) stands and may have a person dedicated to posting scores. The show secretary is part of the team and scoring offices need to be aware of the changes of horses, riders, classes, tests, out-of-order competitors, hors de concours entries and other changes. Ideally the show secretary will have entered that data into the computer.

Alternative scenario: A secretary or entry processor with a computer and accepted dressage software is necessary for the show to comply with the USEF and USDF electronic standard. Ideally this individual will be on the grounds but there are instances where the entry processor does the pre-show paperwork and delivers the materials necessary to the individual who will be responsible on the grounds. Often in this scenario, there is no computer on the grounds which means all of the paperwork must then be returned to the entry processor who will then input the results and submit them to the organizations.

It is preferred to have the official computer reports posted on the grounds where any discrepancies can be noted by the best proofreaders available – the competitors/trainers/parents.

The scoring chairperson may be responsible for recruiting assistant scorers. Be sure that this is communicated prior to the show days.

The most important qualification for a scorer is a good comfort level with figures and calculators, but there is no need to be a math genius or even to know anything about the technical aspects of the test. In fact, there is no need to know anything about horses. One could therefore prevail upon spouses, other family members, friends, neighbors, business associates and acquaintances.

Once the competition committee has decided on the relative size of the competition (number of rides that can be accepted, number of rings), you will have a reasonably good idea of the number of scorers that you will need on the day of the competition. Start recruiting well in advance. By doing this, you might be able to use schooling competitions to train people who have little or no experience.

If you are running a multi-ring show, follow the operating procedure described later under the heading “Competition Day Operating Procedure”.

Scoring directly into the computer, whether in the office or by an e-scribe is preferred. An individual with a calculator double checks the addition. This is especially important with handwritten scoresheets as the second set of eyes often finds something that the computer input person has not (errors, discrepancy in reading a number, signature). You will also need a person to assist in posting the scores on the report forms or into the computer program. An often-overlooked assignment of a runner is to return to the judge any test that is questionable, incomplete, unsigned or does not have changes initialed.

Posting Scores

Computer programs provide reports that are used for posting scores and should be used as redoing by hand increases the potential for error. The scoresheets should be posted in a location that is safe and convenient for competitors to view (i.e. free of horse traffic, reasonably close to the score office, spacious enough for multiple people to congregate), and under cover or otherwise protected from the elements.

The programs provide clear, computer-generated class listings of riders by number, name and score results. These reports can be produced approximately every five rides, labeled "preliminary" or "provisional", and posted on the public scoreboard so competitors can see where they stand as the class progresses. When the class is done and placed, this sheet is can be replaced by a “final” sheet with the percentages and placings added. Posting every five rides is ideal but difficult at multi-arena shows. However, some computer software programs

“stream” provisional results as the scores are keyed in and competitors are very happy when this system is working. One of the most common “complaints” to a show office these days: “The streaming stopped.”

If score posting sheets have NOT been provided, the following suggestions will work:

Large sheets of poster board (22 x 28 or so) or photocopied enlarged class sheets can be prepared for posting the scores, if a computer program is not used. Some organizers like to color-code the sheets by level or by arena—all training level boards are blue or all arena 1 are green. Besides making a more attractive display, it is a great help for the person posting the scores and for the competitors. For a small show it is just as easy to go by a class schedule. Scores can be organized by ring, judge or level and always separate each day's score. As with the computer programs, post as soon as possible. (And be prepared for the inevitable complaints when the score poster has put a score on the wrong line and the class results are therefore different from what has been anticipated.)

Recording Official Results

The scoring chairperson (or whoever is designated to submit results) is responsible for recording the official results using the computer-generated reports and data. Results need to be submitted to both USEF (results@usef.org) and USDF (results@usdf.org).

Procedures for schooling shows where a computer and computer software are not available:

If you are not using a computer show program, before the competition, type up the necessary information including all USDF and USEF horse, rider and owner numbers. Always include the name of the class and division (if applicable) and the name of the judge. For combined freestyles (ex. USDF Freestyle-First, Second, Third Levels), or for test of choice classes, always include the level or test performed by each horse. Put the sheets in a folder or binder labeled "Official Scores". After each score is double-checked, simply drop the raw score and percentage (rounded to three decimal digits) into the correct box. During the competition, you will need to communicate score information with others on the grounds. As each class is completed, write the information on horses, scores and placings on the handwritten scoresheets or input them into the computer program. If neither is available, consider using three-part NCR (carbonless) sheets, a photocopier, or print out extra sheets from the computer. One copy will stay with the head scorer, one copy will be posted, one copy goes to the announcer, and another to the awards chairperson.

Special Trophies

Most competitions offer some special trophies (memorial, perpetual, traveling, etc.) or awards to the competitors. A special sheet should be made out for each trophy offered, listing the name of the trophy and the requirements for winning it. Specific classes (or riders, horses, etc.) that figure into the eligibility requirements should also be listed. As the competition progresses, notes can be made on the sheet as to the leading rider, horse, etc., so that at the end of the competition, the winner's name is immediately available. This is the easier method than, at the end of the competition, having to scan the entire class standing to generate the required data.

Equipment and Supplies Checklist

- Calculators with tape with backups. Know ahead of time if you will have power or if you will need battery-operated equipment. Reports from the computer can be attached to the test sheet. Using those means the tape is no longer necessary on the calculator.
- Ballpoint pens

- Felt pens--various colors used for marking scores on posting sheets, such as black for scores and red for placements
- White-out tape or liquid
- Stapler, staple gun and staples for both. Some facilities will not allow the use of staple guns on their posting areas.
- Tape-cellophane and masking
- Thumbtacks or push pins
- Paper clips
- Clipboards
- Extension cords
- Score boards-also plastic sheets to cover in case of rain
- Photocopier
- Computer
- Paper (letter and legal)
- File folders
- Instruction sheets for scorers
- Tables and chairs for scorers and weather protection

Before the Show

A scorer assignment sheet should be posted at scoring headquarters so that you can see who is scoring when and where. If your competition is very large, it is also helpful to make up a class timetable or use a show program so that you know whether or not you are on schedule with your posting.

Class	Test	Ring	Class Over	Tests Available
3A	T/2	2	9:52	10:20
10	2/1	3	10:06	10:30
15	PSG	1	10:12	10:40

Competition Day Operating Procedure

Each test is scored by two people. One person puts the scores into the computer or monitors the e-scribe feed and the other uses a calculator. The calculator operator needs to figure the percentage. Either person can write the points and percentages on the test with the other individual initialing when they are in agreement.

The physical layout of your rings, and the number of scorers available, will dictate the most efficient location of scoring personnel. On the other hand, the facility may have just one location with the appropriate electrical, lights and WiFi amenities.

For most competitions, the scorers are all together in one place. Runners bring in the tests at frequent intervals and wait for any instructions from the scoring chairperson.

One game plan for a large, multi-ring competition:

1. Test sheet is completed by the scribe, signed by the judge and checked at ring.
2. Runner collects test sheet at ring and brings to headquarters.

3. One of the scorers checks the incoming test against a day sheet, using the label on the front and verifying that the number inside in the upper right box as written in by the scribe is the same. This scorer also checks that the test is signed by the judge, all boxes have a number, all changes are initialed.
4. Score is calculated, checked, written on test sheet, and recorded into the computer.
5. Scores are posted on scoreboard approximately every 5 riders.
6. Test sheet is placed in class folder and, as time permits, is sorted with highest score on top. This can save some time at the end of the class when placings are determined. If they are already sorted numerically, they only need to be checked. A more common procedure is to stack the tests in piles by class. The sorting remains the same.
7. At the end of the class, determine placings and post on scoreboards, as well as on official report form and computer.
8. Present copy and test sheets to award staff who will then distribute tests, trophy and ribbons to competitors.
9. Give copy to announcer who will then broadcast class results.
10. Keep track of special trophies and have them announced as available.

Procedural Instructions to Scorers

- The show records should never be left unattended.
- Take your time. More errors are made by hurrying than by ignorance.
- Double-check everything no matter how silly or redundant it may seem.
- Always score in pairs. It is better to have two people together score two rings, than one person scoring one ring.
- The first thing the scorers do is check the test received off on a day sheet. It is important to verify that the number written in by the scribe on the box in the upper right of the test is the same as the label or hand-written designation on the front. If these do not agree, the test must immediately be taken to the judge for clarification.
- Check to see that the judge has signed the test, all the movements have a score, all scores have a number after the decimal point, and that any changes have been initialed. If not, send the test back to the judge as soon as possible.
- Multiply by coefficients where they appear in the test and under general impressions.
- Check for errors: Error calculation information is printed on the tests. If there is more than one judge, they all must mark the errors in the same boxes. Return to the judges to correct if necessary.
- Check for use of voice. Use of voice does not constitute an error of test; it is only a deduction of up to two points per occurrence. Return the test immediately to the judge if the point deduction is not clear.
- Subtract errors, if any, from subtotal. Write results online marked total points.
- Convert total points to percentage by dividing the total score by the maximum points possible from the front of the test sheet. Have your partner double-check. Record percentages to three decimals, rounding up from five. (e.g., 64.8745= 64.875%).
- If you have two or more judges per ring, add together the totals from both (all) tests. If a percentage is needed, average the total. When there is more than one judge, the averaged percentage decides the placings.

- Enter total points and percentage on the test in the space provided. Where there is more than one test sheet (as in the case of two or more judges for a class), put the tests together and staple with the adding machine tape or computer printout showing computation of points and percentage.
- Enter score and percentage in computer and post on scoreboard.
- Hors de Concours (HC) scores, or scores from horses that are eliminated but finished the tests, are not posted on the public scoreboard. They are included in the results, with no score, and marked HC or eliminated, as fits the circumstances.
- Put tests in order, arranging them with the highest score always on top.
- In case of ties refer to the current USEF Dressage Rules and/or the FEI instructions. If the horses remain tied, as an example, in a tie for third place, give each rider a yellow ribbon, the next place is fifth and will receive a pink ribbon. No one is placed fourth.
- Dressage tests are not to be shown or returned to riders until the class is finished and placed, for any reason whatsoever. If the tests have been released, it is impossible to check. If riders must leave before ribbons are awarded, tests should be mailed.
- Competitors should not have access to the scoring room. If one does enter, do not make any decisions regarding questionable scores unless it involves a math error. Refer the rider to the technical delegate or the competition manager. Do not argue with competitors. The quicker a questionable test can be returned to the judge for resolution, the better chance the judge has in recalling that part of the ride. ([See USEF DR 123](#))

Addendum- What Can Go Wrong?

1. Test is not configured correctly on the computer (wrong total points, co-efficient on the wrong movement, etc.). Solution: hand calculator will come up with different total points and/or percentage. Computer operator can then correct the computer profile.
2. Scribe has used the wrong test, meaning the bridle number written in the upper right box on the inside does not match the label on the outside. Solution: when received, check for this and return to judge as soon as possible if they do not match. Do this even if there is no number written inside.
3. Scribe has taken the number off the front and written it into the box inside without verifying that is the horse in front of them. Solution: This one is trickier because there is no immediate discrepancy unless the day sheet shows that number as a scratch. The discrepancy may not become apparent for several tests if the scribe continues to ignore the bridle numbers. The most common clue is that there will be a test missing for some other individual. The only people who can clear up this confusion are the judge and scribe. In the meantime, complete the hand-adding of the tests but be prepared to re-enter into the computer under the correct bridle number.
4. Scores hand-posted on the wrong line of scoreboard. Solution: computer printouts are more accurate unless there is an instance of 3 (above).
5. Out of order competitor. If the out of order is before the actual class, it does not present as much of a problem as when it is after. Solution: scan the day sheets first thing and mark up the day sheet to hold the class(es) involved. If the out of order was missed and the class has been placed, it will have to be replaced, with ribbons and awards re-distributed.
6. Hors de concours competitor, not so marked on scoresheet or day sheet. Solution: Show secretary should have notified you but if not, it is a mess. The scores must be removed from the computer with HC checked as the reason for zeros. A courtesy hand addition is acceptable. If the class has been placed, it must be replaced after the HC scores are removed and ribbons/awards redistributed if necessary.

7. Multiple judges on a class and no agreement on errors. Solution: The jury should have taken care of this before the tests are submitted to the scorers. However, it is the responsibility of the scorers to determine that the number of errors on a competitor's tests agree. If not, it is the judge at C who should be consulted.
8. Award ceremony pressures. Solution: Do not allow the announcer, award presenter or anyone else to pressure the scorers. Allow them to do their jobs. See #9.
9. Reasons for delays in scoring: power outage, missing scores on tests, runner disappears with test (yes this has happened), runner leaves without notifying anyone, missing signature on tests, see 1-7 above.
10. Test arrives with an uninitialed score change.
11. Test arrives with a written over score, but it is initialed, and scorers disagree on what is the correct score. Hint: scribe needs to cross out the score and write in the new score.