



## **Para-Equestrian Dressage Program Structure and Programs**

### **Development Athlete Program**

(Revised and effective 1.14.2025)

**The Aim of the Development Athlete Program is to identify athlete / horse combinations with the perceived ability to reach Pre-Elite status. This will include developing athletes who have not yet reached Pre-Elite status and athletes who have, previously reached Pre-Elite status but who currently have a horse that has not yet reached Pre-Elite status but is on a trajectory to do so.**

#### Principles

- Identification of developing athlete/horse combinations and developing Athletes is a key component of the Development Athlete Program in order to manage expectations, facilitate direct communication and foster the talent effectively.
- The Development Athlete Program is not a centrally based clinic driven program but a communication- based system that provides opportunities. Educational and training opportunities will be offered.
- Para Dressage Development Coach, Technical Advisor and USEF Discipline Director led communication, training sessions, competition planning, selection methodology, logistical planning.
- Ensure Technical Advisor is briefed on combinations moving up the Pathway.
- Empower Development Athletes to remain with their own trainers within their own programs but challenge them to move up the Pathway and provide opportunities where possible or requested. Identify certain KPIs and requirements to stay in the Development A Athlete Program.
- Work with Development Athletes' trainers to better involve them and help them (where necessary) to understand what is required to be internationally competitive within each Grade.

#### Competition

- North American CPEDIs
- European CPEDIs

#### **Development Athlete Program - Criteria for Selection**

Open to current athlete / horse combinations who have met the criteria within the previous 24 months:

##### **CPEDI3\* Criteria**

The athlete / horse combination have earned one (1) 64% or above score in each of the three (3) tests at Athletes' classified Grade (FEI Para Dressage Grand Prix A, Grand Prix B, and Grand Prix Freestyle) for a total three (3) scores from a CPEDI3\* or at the US Dressage Festival of Champions, Para Dressage Events. Scores may be obtained from more than one of the above events.

Athlete / Horse combination must compete in a minimum of two (2) separate USEF licensed competitions in FEI Para Dressage Grand Prix A or Grand Prix B Tests at their Grade OR at the US Dressage Festival of Champions, Para Dressage Division OR through the USEF virtual judging program.

##### **CPEDI2\* Criteria**

The athlete / horse combination have earned one (1) 66% or above score in each of the three (3) tests at Athletes' classified Grade (FEI Para Dressage Intermediate A, Intermediate B, and Intermediate Freestyle) for a total three (3) scores at CPEDI2\* events. Scores do not have to be obtained from the same CPEDI2\*.

Athlete / Horse combination must compete in a minimum of two (2) separate USEF licensed competitions in FEI

Para Dressage Intermediate A or Intermediate B Tests at their Grade OR at the US Dressage Festival of Champions, Para Dressage Division OR through the USEF virtual judging program.

Development athletes who have secured a new horse must have earned a minimum score in one test at a CPEDI3\* or CPEDI2\* as outlined above in their respective grade and a score from the virtual judging program with the new horse to have the horse added to the Development tier.

Athlete List will be reviewed and edited quarterly at which time athletes will be added or removed based on their scores from the previous 24 months by the USEF Director of Para Equestrian.

**Athlete must meet these proficiencies:**

- A. Technical skills
- B. Trainability
- C. Strategy & Planning
- D. Commitment
- E. Mind set
- F. Management
- G. Fitness (athlete / equine)
- H. Competition record
- I. The length of time the athlete/horse combination has been on the Program and their progression up the Pathway in conjunction with what the Program can still offer
- J. Demonstrate Potential for the Pre-Elite Program
- K. Quality of the athlete's horse and their perceived ability to progress up the competition levels. As an indication a minimum score may be required.

In extenuating circumstances, the Technical Advisor may request the Selectors select an athlete / horse combination to the Development Athlete Program for a set period of time (maximum 12 months).

**Additional Development Athlete Criteria (Applicable to All)**

- FEI Classification or interim Classification by a USEF approved Classifier (all FEI Approved Classifiers are automatically USEF Approved).
- Satisfactory veterinary inspection and/or report if requested by Selectors.
- Agreement to Requirements of Program.
- Willingness of athlete to agree to the aims of the Program including facilitating effect communication between the athlete's support staff (trainer, vet, farrier etc.) and the Program.

**Benefits to Membership:**

**Support:**

- Communication with Technical Advisor.
- Competition Planning.
- Prioritized access to Development Athlete Program Educational opportunities.
- Establish KPI's (not necessarily competition-based).
- Review of KPIs.
- Competition Opportunities.
- Access to Equine and Human Sports Science Medicine support and advice as available.
- If the budget allows, funding may be available to the athletes selected for membership to the

Development Athlete Program. Funding is tied to meeting the agreed upon markers, evaluations, and with consideration of the athlete/horse combination to reach Pre-Elite status. It is intended to be used towards additional development opportunities such as training sessions and / or competitions. Grant eligibility will be re- evaluated based on meeting the agreed upon markers. If the markers are not met, this may result in a loss of a grant or reduction in monetary assistance. ***Funding will be allocated on a sliding scale based on the Athlete / Horse combination record of results.***

### **Training and Evaluation Sessions**

Training and evaluation sessions will be run as funding allows. These will be open to members of the Development Athlete Program and those that are seeking selection to the Pre-Elite Program and meet the minimum criteria.

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS PROGRAM IS NOT REQUIRED AND WILL NOT BE USED FOR THE PURPOSE OF SELECTION**

### **Application**

It will be the responsibility of the athlete to apply for selection to the Development Athlete Program based on results achieved in the previous 24 months to the Application, in addition to submitting new scores quarterly to the Director of Para Equestrian, Laureen Johnson. If an athlete is inactive for two years, they will be removed from the Athlete List.

### **Staffing**

- Discipline Director – Laureen Johnson
- Para Dressage Technical Advisor and Head of Coach Development– Michel Assouline
- Para Dressage Team Physiotherapist – Joanna Frantz
- Para Dressage Team Vet – Kim Snyder