

Tri State Dressage Society



Volunteer Handbook

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Introduction

Why Volunteer?

Whether you are new to dressage or a seasoned pro, whether you ride competitively, just for personal enjoyment or not at all, there are many opportunities for you to get involved as a TSDS volunteer. Previous horse show experience is not required for most roles and there is no better way to get a free education in dressage show competition.

As a TSDS volunteer you will be able to learn, first-hand, what goes on behind the scenes at a horse show, what Judges look for in scoring a ride and – perhaps best of all – get to know your fellow dressage enthusiasts. And finally, there is the real satisfaction of knowing that your contribution of time and “sweat equity” has been invaluable in helping your association put on a first-class dressage competition that we can all be proud of. What’s not to like?!

The Volunteer Process – How Does it Work?

1. Identification of prospective volunteers:

Indicate your volunteer preference on your show registration form, and/or...

Respond to the e-mail call for volunteers (sent to all members 7 – 10 days before show), and/or...

Contact your Volunteer Coordinator directly.**

2. Follow-up:

The volunteer list for each show will be posted on the TSDS website along with ride times for each competition. Be sure to check your volunteer assignment as well as your ride times in advance of the show date.

Final confirmation: you will receive an e-mail confirmation as well as a courtesy call reminder shortly before the show date. If, for any reason you need to make a schedule change, cancel or are unsure about your assignment, please notify the Volunteer Coordinator ASAP!

3. Show Time!

Sign in at the show office the morning of the show (to ensure that you receive credit for your volunteer points). Be sure to arrive at least 30 minutes before the first ride in your assigned ring is scheduled to begin.

Ready, set...GO!

Day Show (Office) Manager

Duties:

The Day Show Manager (also known as Office Manager) is responsible for overseeing and coordinating a wide variety of administrative tasks on the day of the show, ensuring that the show runs smoothly. The DSM maintains/mans the front desk to answer questions and serve as a central communications center for the various show organizers and volunteers. The DSM's duties include the following:

Day before the show:

Set up show office the afternoon (usually Friday) before the show:

- o Place ribbon boxes.
- o Set up Scorers' table – pens, calculators, staplers & test bins.
- o Set up Office Manager's table – copy of financials, pens, judges expense reports (one for each), extra programs, current membership forms, liability release forms, next schooling show entry form, petty cash, competitors' packets.
- o Tape 17"X 11" class listing to outside windows.
- o Display volunteer sign-in sheet(s) in a clearly visible location (sign-in sheet to be provided to the DSM by the Volunteer Coordinator**).
- Make/purchase lunch for all judges and bring to show [sandwich (or other), salad, snack & beverage].
- Prepare coolers (one for each Judge) with beverages (water, soft drinks) –bring extra for office staff & Judges' lunches.
- Confirm whether cars, tents and/or trailers will be used for Judges' stands (if using tent or trailer, be sure to bring tables & chairs). Place cars, tents and/or trailers in the proper location at the end of each ring either the day before the show or prior to opening office.
- IMPORTANT NOTE: many of these "day before" tasks may be taken care of by the Schooling Show Manager. However, it is important that the DSM and the Schooling Show Manager coordinate their activities to be clear on who is doing what to ensure that all items are covered.

Day of show:

Add ice to coolers and place them, along with snacks (chips, candy, etc.), in all Judges' booths and in show office for volunteers.

Arrive at least 45 minutes prior to first ride to open office and begin distribution of competitors' packets. Do not distribute packets unless payment is received in full.

Make sure that all volunteers sign the volunteer sign-in sheet as they arrive at the show office (there may be multiple pages on the sign-in sheet). *If a volunteer can't be located, note that their contact information can be found on the sign-in sheet.*

Give each Scribe a clip board with all the tests for their assigned judge, two pens, a whistle, and a class listing.

Give each Ring Steward a clip board with class listing, pen, and orange vest.
Give each Runner the appropriate ring envelope for their ring.
Have lunch ready for each judge as he/she ends his/her classes.
Confirm afternoon volunteers – Scribes, Ring Stewards, Runners & Scorers.
Keep a list of special requests – apparel orders, etc.
Any TSDS expenses submitted with a receipt can be given or mailed to the TSDS Treasurer** with a full explanation of expense purpose.
Break down the office and pack up:
o Save master class list and ensure that it gets returned to the TSDS Schooling Show Manager** ASAP.
o Return all unclaimed tests & ribbons to the TSDS Schooling Show Manager.**
o Take down and dispose of outside class listing.
o Neatly place all scoring equipment in the Show Manager box (calculator, pens & staplers).
o Neatly place all Scribe equipment in the Show Manager box (clip board, whistle/bell, pens).
o Neatly place all Ring Steward equipment in the show manager box (clip board, pens, orange vests).
o Neatly place all Runner equipment in the show manager box (ring envelope).
o Return Show Manager box(es) and ribbon boxes to the TSDS Schooling Show Manager.**
o Return completed volunteer sign-in sheets to Volunteer Coordinator

Attributes & skills needed:

Ability to multi-task!
Previous show organizing/management experience preferable.
Good communication and delegation skills.

Time commitment:

A full-day (8 hour) commitment is required.

Scribe

Duties:

The primary function of the Scribe is to transcribe (put into writing) the Judge's scores and comments onto the test scoring sheet, thereby allowing the Judge to maintain continuous visual contact with the horse and rider during a test. Judges depend upon the Scribe to quickly, accurately, legibly, and quietly record the scores and comments made about each ride.

Upon arrival at the Judge's station, the Scribe should organize the work area and ensure that all needed materials are on hand:

- Several ink pens.

- Program showing the order of go with updated list of scratches and additions.

- Packet of tests. Check to make sure that it is the packet for the Judge and arena (ring) assigned.

Check the order of tests against the order of go, and make sure any additional horses have been assigned tests. There should be blank tests in the packet available for this purpose. If the tests are not in the order of go, a ride may be scribed on the wrong test, resulting in great confusion.

- Make sure that the tests in the packet match the tests scheduled in the program.

- Check that there is an extra copy of each different test for the Judge to follow as the ride progresses.

- Make sure that all loose items (papers, cups, tissue, etc.) are anchored down with a heavy object so that nothing blows or rustles in a sudden gust of wind. Before the first ride, the Scribe should introduce him/herself to the Judge and then discuss with the Judge how business will be conducted. Establish clearly whether comments for a movement will be given before or after the score so that comments will be entered in the proper place. At the start of each class, be sure the Judge knows what test is being performed. A spare copy of the test must be provided for the Judge. Check each rider's number as soon as possible, confirming it with the test sheet cover. If the numbers do not match, find out who the rider is and locate the proper test sheet. Write the rider's number in the number box on the inside of the test sheet. Completed test sheets are to be periodically given to the arena Runner between (never during) rides.

Tips for Scribes:

- Write the Judge's scores and comments exactly as given. Do not rearrange or edit.

- Establish whether the Judge wants comments abbreviated or will not accept abbreviations. If Judge allows such, use abbreviations as much as possible.

- Do not talk to the Judge during a ride.

- If you get lost, quietly ask what movement the next score will be for.

- Limit conversation with the Judge to a friendly greeting and small talk during breaks.

- Maintain complete confidentiality regarding tests and scores. Make NO remarks about any horse or rider in the competition, including but not limited to, any background information about the horse or rider, their trainer/coach, breeding, etc. Never repeat the Judge's remarks.

Attributes & skills needed:

Clear, legible handwriting, even at top speed.
Familiarity with basic dressage terms and how to spell them.
Ability to sit quietly and concentrate for long periods of time while recording the Judge's comments accurately and consistently.

Previous scribing experience preferred.

Time commitment required:

A minimum of 4 hours (half-day) is required; Judges often prefer to have the same Scribe all day wherever possible.

Note: *an excellent source of additional information regarding scribing duties (including suggested abbreviations) can be found on the USDF website:*

<http://www.usdf.org/competition/guidelines/docs/AppF.pdf>

For a glossary of judging terminology, refer to:

<http://www.usdf.org/competition/guidelines/docs/AppIJudgingGlossary.pdf>

Scorer

Duties:

As the name implies, Scorers are responsible for calculating scores directly from the test sheets, and then posting the final scores at the end of each class. This is typically done in the show office with the aid of an adding machine or calculator. Tests will be brought to the show office by a Runner (if there is a shortage of Runners, a Scorer may need to collect his/her own tests from the Scribe). The chief Scorer should instruct the Runners whether tests are to be brought after every ride or after a specified number of rides.

When scoring the test, the Scorer should follow this procedure:

Check test sheet to see that all movements and collective marks have a score.

Check that the Judge has signed the test.

For scores with a coefficient, the score should be multiplied by that coefficient to obtain the final number.

Look for errors which might be written as -2 in among comments.

If there is a problem with the test, bring it to the show manager or secretary for clarification.

Using an adding machine with tape, determine the point totals:

- o Add scores for each movement and the collective marks.

- o Subtract points marked as errors from the total. Check tape against the scores to be sure no error has been made. Some scorers like to run a second tape.

- o To determine the percentage, divide the total number of scored points by the total points possible for the test being scored. Carry percentages to three places after the decimal point. DO NOT round off to a whole number.

- o In case of a tie score, total the points of the collective remarks: the highest score would receive the next placing. If the scores are the same, look at the free walk with a coefficient. If these are the same, send the test to the judge to have the tie broken.

The total number of points and percentage is printed on the front page of each test sheet (the total number of points varies, so check before dividing).

Arrange the scored tests for each class in sequence, highest percentage scores on top.

When the class is complete, determine the placings and record them on the front of each test sheet.

Once the class is placed, tests can be handed back to competitors.

Tips for Scorers:

Because accuracy is critical in this job, peaceful and quiet surroundings are necessary to eliminate distractions. The scoring area should be kept quiet with minimal conversation or interruptions.

Scores must be posted after they are entered on a master sheet, but CAN NOT be given to competitors until the class is complete and placings have been determined.

If there is more than one Scorer available, it is often a good idea to double-check each other's figures.

The Scorer should not show or discuss a test with a parent, friend or trainer/coach nor show or return a test to a rider until after the class is placed and posted. However, in the event that a rider may have volunteered to serve in some capacity, courtesy may require that the rider/volunteer be allowed to see her/his test if the class is not completed before her/his volunteer duty begins. Certainly, the test should never be discussed with anyone until the rider has received the test.

Similarly, the Scorer should not repeat anything that is written on a test to anyone. The comments on the tests are confidential.

Attributes & skills needed:

Ability to use an adding machine or calculator.

Attention to detail and basic math skills are critical. A good Scorer possesses the ability to tune out distractions and concentrate on accurately calculating point totals.

Time commitment:

A minimum half-day (4 hour) commitment is required.

Ring Steward

Duties:

It is the responsibility of the Ring Steward to make sure that each rider enters the competition arena in the correct order of go and at the correct time. In addition to keeping the competition running according to schedule, the Ring Steward also checks equipment for adherence to rules, where appropriate [now required for all classes with more than six entries, or as directed by the Technical Delegate (recognized shows only)].

The Ring Steward should have a current schedule of ride times, a watch set to the official

show time, a list of legal equipment, latex gloves for bit checks and either a whip measuring tool or a measuring tape. The Ring Steward may receive changes from the show office during the show; he/she must, in turn, notify the Announcer of any such changes or riders scratching at the gate. To insure riders are ready, the Ring Steward should watch over the warm-up area and make sure the riders know the order of competition. It is NOT the responsibility of the Ring Steward to search for the next rider. According to the rules, a rider missing their time is eliminated, but can appeal to the Show Manager to fill a scratch within that class. This can be done *only with the permission of the Judge or Show Manager*. In addition, the Judge and Scribe must be notified of all changes in order of go to ensure that the test sheets are properly identified.

Tips for Ring Stewards:

As competitors approach the ring, check their names off the schedule (so you know they are there).

At any given time, there should be only one rider in the dressage ring, one waiting to go in ("on deck"), and one "in the hole."

Due to liability exposure, the Ring Steward should not adjust any rider's tack.

After the rider in the show ring has finished their final salute, the next rider may warm-up around the perimeter of the ring. If there is a break, do not allow the next horse to warm-up around the perimeter of the ring. To do so would constitute an unfair advantage to that rider.

Ring Stewards should dress appropriately for weather conditions and provide their own insect repellent, sunscreen, sunglasses, etc.

Make NO remarks about any horse or rider in the competition, including but not limited to, any background information about the horse or rider, their trainer/coach, breeding, etc.

Attributes and skills needed:

Visual acuity adequate to read bridle tags from a distance.

Good communication skills; a tactful, supportive and courteous speaking style is desired.

Ability to manage time effectively and supervise a strict schedule.

Time commitment:

A minimum half-day (4 hour) commitment is required.

Runner

Duties:

It is the responsibility of the Runner to collect completed test sheets from the Scribe and carry them to the Scorers (usually in the show office) quickly and unobtrusively. The Runner may not look at these tests.

When collecting tests from the Scribe, the Runner should walk quietly to the Judge's table as the horse in the arena finishes the final salute and leaves the arena. The

Runner should not talk to either Judge or Scribe if they are still commenting on the preceding ride. The Scribe or Judge may ask for coffee, snacks, pencils, etc. This may be

done while waiting for rides to finish. The Runner should never interrupt Judge or Scribe while there is a test in progress. The chief Scorer will indicate if tests are to be brought after every ride or after a specified number of rides. Scorers may ask the Runner to return

a test to a Judge for a signature, clarification, etc. The Runner should then return the corrected/clarified test to the Scorer. A Runner is expected to stay at his/her assigned work area until relieved.

Tips for Runners:

Runners should dress appropriately for weather conditions and provide their own insect repellent, sunscreen, sunglasses, etc. Comfortable walking shoes are a must!

Maintain a low profile and exercise care not to disrupt any rides in progress.

Make NO remarks about any horse or rider in the competition, including but not limited to, any background information about the horse or rider, their trainer/coach, breeding, etc.

Do not read the test sheets while they are in your possession.

Attributes & skills needed:

Ability to walk quickly and stand for periods of time.

Time commitment:

A minimum half-day (4 hour) commitment is required.

Ring Set-up Crew

Duties:

As the name suggests, the ring set-up crew is responsible for accurately measuring, laying out and setting up the dressage ring in accordance with USDF competition guidelines prior to the scheduled show. Depending on the events calendar at the show venue, the dressage ring may be set up the day before or - on occasion – early in the morning of the competition. TSDS owns its own dressage ring equipment and measuring tape which will need to be transported to the show grounds for set-up. The ring set-up crew chief will need to coordinate with the Schooling Show Manager ahead of time regarding delivery of the ring equipment to the show site.

Tips for Ring Set-up Crewmembers:

Be prepared for a certain amount of physical exertion including bending, stooping and lifting.

Dress appropriately for weather conditions and the task at hand. Heavy gloves and sturdy, closed-toe footwear is strongly recommended.

For detailed instructions regarding the proper set-up of a standard dressage ring, refer to the following helpful links:

<http://www.usdf.org/competition/guidelines/docs/AppG.pdf>

http://www.ponyclub.org/pdfs/rulebooks/rules_dressage.pdf pp. 33-37

<http://www.equicross.us/Dressage%20Arena%20Design.htm>

Attributes & skills needed:

Volunteers for this duty should be physically fit and able to lift and carry fence equipment.

Ability to accurately use a measuring tape.

Ability to read and interpret diagrams and follow written instructions.

Time commitment:

Generally, between 2 to 4 hours per set-up period is required.

Appendix A

The TSDS Volunteer Award System

Each member of the club has the opportunity to earn TSDS Bucks. These “Bucks” will be awarded at \$10 (Ten) Dollar’s for each 4 hours worked. These bucks can be redeemable for Entries into TSDS schooling shows and clinics.

For other, **non show-related** volunteer activities, volunteer credit may be applied for using the **Volunteer Credit Request Form** (Appendix D). This form will be posted at all times on the TSDS website and shall be submitted to the Volunteer Coordinator. This form may be used in **any one of three** ways:

1. Self-submission by an individual member to request volunteer bucks for service he/she has performed.
2. Submission by an TSDS Officer or Board Member on behalf of a member whose service the Officer or Board Member would like to recognize.
3. Request for TRANSFER of volunteer bucks (for example, from a friend or relative who performs volunteer service to a specified TSDS member).

Examples of such “non-standard” volunteer services may include (but not limited to): coordinating a dressage-oriented clinic or other educational event, hosting an TSDS holiday or awards party, representing the club at approved regional or national organization meetings, etc. **Note that volunteer Bucks will not be awarded for any activity for which the member receives financial or other consideration.**

TSDS 2014 Work Requirement Form

Name: _____

Date and Event: _____

I certify that the aforementioned person has worked:

☐ ½ Day (4 hours—good for \$10 in TSDS Bucks))

☐ Full Day (8 hours—good for \$20 in TSDS Bucks)

Authorized Signature: _____

(This must be signed by the Show Organizer, Volunteer Coordinator,
President or Vice President)