

# Competing Interests

Official Newsletter of the AMHA Open Competition Program

## Do You Compete in Non-Sanctioned Working Western Events?

The AMHA Disciplines Steering Committee recognizes that there are several members who participate in the Open Competition program who compete in Working Western events that are not sanctioned. We would like to find an equitable way to include placings from these non-sanctioned

events in the Working Western category of the Open Competition program, which includes events in Reining, Cutting, Drafting, Team Penning, Roping, and Reining/Working Cowhorse. If you do compete in these events, we would like to receive information regarding the kind of

competition, judge's qualifications (or lack thereof), and any other information that would be helpful to determine a way we can scale points for non-sanctioned competitions within the category. Please send all information to Disciplines Steering Chair Kathy Newcomb at [KMNUkem@att.net](mailto:KMNUkem@att.net) or call her at 908-996-6495.

## New AMHA Open Competition Dressage Award and Proposed Changes Beginning in 2009

A new year-end award category has been approved for the Dressage section of the Open Competition program. This award, "Beginner Dressage" is designed to reward novice riders and horses to give them confidence to move up to the higher levels. The award has been developed by the AMHA Dressage Committee: Karin Weight, chair; Barbara Allen; Shirley Christian; Helen Dietrich; Jody Hugo; and Christine Miller. The Beginner Dressage award is for horses and riders competing in Intro level tests judged by USEF-licensed dressage judges or USDF "L"

graduates and for Training level tests 1 and 2, judged by USDF "L" graduates.

This award follows the same requirements as for other dressage year-end awards with regard to numbers of tests to be submitted, numbers of competitions, numbers of judges, and computation of the median. Exhibitors competing with the same horse in any test of a higher level judged by a USEF-licensed dressage judge at the same show they compete in an Intro level test may not submit the score earned in the Intro level test at that show toward the Beginner Dressage

award. Scores earned toward the Beginner Dressage year-end award category are not applicable toward a dressage medallion.

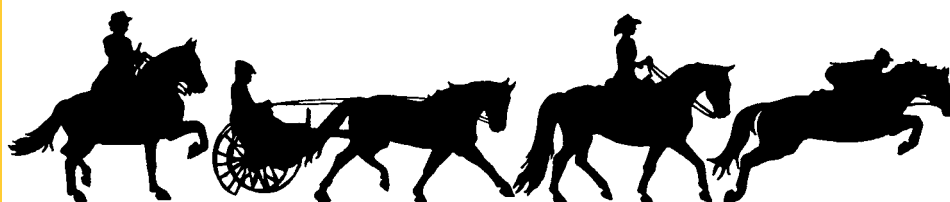
Other changes proposed for AMHA Open Competition dressage awards beginning in 2009 include increased requirements for earning points toward the year-end awards as well as for medallions. These changes reflect the fact that Morgans now are easily reaching the previous criteria and are gaining status and recognition at shows under recognized judges.

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Promote the Morgan in the AMHA Open Competition Program



## Nancy Vine and Angel earn Dressage Championship

I took my mare MVR Midnight Angel to the ECRDA dressage championships at Saddlebrook Ridge Equestrian Center in Shamong, NJ, October 5th. She won her intro division. Her score for the first test was not very good, but the second test was a 74. The place was an hour away and she did not have a good trip. We got held up for half an hour while the cops let bikers go through. I guess it was one of those biker runs. There must have been 500 or more, and some flew right toward the horse trailer to get on Route 70 going the opposite way as us.

Angel is an 8-year-old black Morgan mare, 15.1 hh, with a white star. Her sire, Turfwood Royal Flush, was a paternal brother to Criterion. The dam MVR Rose has Jubilee King throughout her lines. This was her first year showing. She has won almost all of her classes, with almost all of her scores in the 70's. I am

very proud of her accomplishments, especially since she is the horse I have put the least amount of work in. I really just started working her seriously this year. Angel was my Mom's horse. We bought her together as a weanling. Mom passed away in 2002, never having gotten to see her ridden. I know she would be very proud of her. I feel like she is looking down on us and smiling when Angel does so well. I feel that she is a great ambassador to how well Morgans can do in dressage.

My mare Sable Beedazzled qualified for the championships, too, but had a stone bruise so I didn't take her. She is doing quite well, too, in Open Training Level Dressage. Between my two girls and Jody Hugo's Pep Rally, Morgans are starting to get noticed in NJ Dressage competitions. At the

championships, I had people coming up to me and admiring Angel. I have had the same thing happen with Sable at the open show I took her to. It would be nice to see more Morgans competing; they definitely have the ability.



*Nancy Vine and MVR Midnight Angel*

## Spotlight on The Virginia Reeser and Family

In April, the Reeser Morgans performed well at the Mason Dixon Classic show in Lebanon, Pa. October Fox was 1st in sport horse stallions in hand, Champion training level dressage, and took Reserve to his stablemate in regular working hunter. Callisto Odyssey, ridden by 12-year-old Kelley, took reserve champion training level dressage and champion regular working hunter. Ragtime Rio Bravo, ridden by 13-year-old Hannah, performed well in his very first show, taking a 4th in training level 3. She also guided him through his very first hunter course at regular level, taking a 3rd in her first class and 4th in the other two classes.

In June, Hannah competed with Ragtime Rio Bravo in their first recognized trial in Erie, Pa. The team placed 6<sup>th</sup> out of 16 riders in their division.

In July, four of the Reeser Morgans competed in a schooling event (called a mini-trial) in the pouring rain in eastern Ohio. Three were competing at the Beginner Novice level. Loth-Lea Krystal Aire, their 23-year-old mare, who has

been leased to another young upcoming eventer, placed 2<sup>nd</sup>; Ragtime Rio Bravo and Hannah placed 3<sup>rd</sup>; and Callisto Odyssey and Kelley placed 5th. Their gelding Little Ireland Stardust, who is in training for eventing, competed at the schooling 2-foot division and placed 4th.

At the Erie Hunt and Saddle Recognized trial in August, Hannah and Rio were trying to qualify for Pony Club championships in 2009. They had a good dressage test and clean stadium. Unfortunately she had one questionable refusal on cross country and ended up 10th. Nevertheless, they were still being considered for the Eventing team for Pony Club. Kelley and Callisto Odyssey had a rough time. Her dressage score was originally posted as a 33 and later changed to a 46 (in Eventing, dressage scores are posted as the score earned subtracted from 100) due to scoring error, creating an emotional roller coaster. However, Kelley and "Hal" rallied with a clean stadium and cross country trip, ending up 6<sup>th</sup> overall.

October Fox introduced Kathy Reiman to Eventing at this trial. The pair was 3<sup>rd</sup> after dressage and ended up 2<sup>nd</sup>, only one point out of first place. This qualifies the pair for Region 8 championships for next year.

At the South Farm Horse Trials at the end of August, Hannah and Rio ended up 8<sup>th</sup>, with a clean cross country and stadium, and a 39.5 in dressage. She needs to have one more clean cross country ride to fulfill the requirements for the Pony Club Championships for Eventing. October Fox placed 7<sup>th</sup> in his division, having a clean cross country and one rail down in stadium jumping. Kelley and Callisto Odyssey took the weekend off.

The Reeser family received word in September that Hannah and Ragtime Rio Bravo, who just started evening this year, have made the first cut for the Tristate Region Eventing Team for the Pony Club Championships in Lexington, VA in 2009. They just need to have a clean cross country round in the spring to fulfill their requirements. Stay tuned....

## A Once in a Lifetime Horse: TJ Paddy O'Shea March 17<sup>th</sup>, 1982 – September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2008

Paddy O'Shea was, in every sense of the phrase, a once in a lifetime horse. He proved every day that physical ability is not measured by size, but by courage and perseverance. At 15.0 hands, he is one of only a few Morgans that have successfully competed at the Advanced level of Eventing. Paddy's success can be attributed largely to his attitude - feisty and proud. He loved to run and jump cross-country so much that we often had to be led into the start box because he wouldn't wait for the timer's countdown. When we galloped across the course, his stride seemed to devour whatever obstacles were in our way. Paddy did this because he wanted to, not just because I asked him. He got as much of a thrill out of competing as I did, maybe even more. Because of his size and breed, many people did not believe that Paddy was able to compete at this level with all of the 16+ hand Thoroughbreds. The way he acted, and the way he took me down to every jump, it was almost as if Paddy knew this and wanted to prove his critics wrong.

Throughout his career, Paddy was the USCTA (now USEA) High-Point Morgan Horse Champion in 1994, 1995 (co-champion), 1996, and 1997. He also won the AMHA Open Competition Award in Combined Training in 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996 (reserve), and 1997. In 1995 and 1996, Paddy represented California in the North American Young Riders' Championships at the One Star level. In April of 1997, Paddy and I had a clear cross-country round in our very first Advanced horse trials, placing us 7<sup>th</sup> overall. The next month, Paddy took me around another Advanced course at Trojan-Horse Horse Trials in Arizona. This time though, I had suffered a fall from the first horse I rode, and was riding with fractured ribs. Paddy sensed that I was not 100%, and at times took me through the course on a looped rein. I just sat up and stayed out of his way, and he literally carried me home. Paddy was incredible.

His versatility also made him a wonderful trail horse. With beginner riders he would take the reins and carefully pick his way through the most treacherous terrain. With me in the saddle, he would look for places to gallop out and take scary shortcuts that would make the ride more exciting. I have never experienced another horse that was able to sensitively adapt to who was riding him in the way that Paddy did.

Even in his old age, his gait impeded by different ailments, Paddy was still proud. He would take time out for you if you brought him carrots or sweet molasses cookies, but always turned his nose up at apples. He was also the vets' perfect patient, accepting medications and medical procedures without fuss. I'd like to think that his big heart, his pride, and his understanding came in part from the knowledge that he was cared for and loved. At the same time Paddy never let us forget in his own quiet way that we were privileged to be in his presence. He carried that through to the very end.

On September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2008, Paddy O'Shea was humanely euthanized with his friends and family by his side, and his ashes are with me in a beautifully engraved cherry chest. This horse was all heart and all fight; he truly believed that there was nothing he could not do. As his rider and friend, I was incredibly lucky to have had the opportunity to know him and be able to hang on for the whirlwind ride that was his life. – *Ariel Edwards*

*Ariel Edwards and TJ Paddy O'Shea*



New ideas for the Open Competition program are always welcome. Contact: Disciplines Steering Committee Co-Chairs

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## COMPETING INTERESTS

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE AMHA OPEN COMPETITION PROGRAM

Published quarterly and distributed electronically to participants in the AMHA Open Competition Program and AMHA recognized clubs.



**Do you have news or information for the newsletter?**

Please send news to:  
**Open Competition Program**  
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Shelburne, VT 05482

or contact **Amanda, Open Competition Coordinator:**

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Fax: 802-985-8897  
Email: [Amanda@morganhorse.com](mailto:Amanda@morganhorse.com)

## New AMHA Dressage Open Competition Proposals (continued from page 1)

Replace the existing requirement for a year-end award with: "A horse MUST compete in and finish a ride at the highest test offered for the level (e.g. Training Level 4). At least one of the five tests submitted must be at the highest test of the level (e.g. Training Level 4). Each of the five scores must be 55% or higher."

For medallion requirements, replace the existing text in the 2008 guidelines

with: For Bronze, the horse must earn eight scores from at least five shows and at least five judges. At least two scores must be from Second level; two scores may be from First or Second level, and four scores may be from Training, First, or Second level. All scores must be 55% or higher.

For Silver, the horse must earn eight Third and Fourth level scores in

at least five shows and at least five judges. At least three scores must be at Fourth level. All scores must be 55% or higher.

For Gold, the horse must earn eight Prix St. Georges through Grand Prix level scores in at least five shows and at least five judges. At least two scores must be at the Grand Prix level. The final average score for the must be at least 55%.

## USEF Dressage Rule Change Proposed

Attached to this newsletter is a copy of a USEF rule change proposal for Dressage. The AMHA Dressage committee discussed the proposal among themselves and generally feel that the rationale for the proposed change is that some riders (particularly at First Level) are riding tests that are beyond their ability, which is causing discomfort to their horses as they bounce on the horse's back and mouth at the sitting trot. Most of the committee feel the rule change would not affect Morgans or other non-traditional breeds more than it does traditional breeds in dressage, but they believe it is unnecessary and will generate a lot of unnecessary and expensive paperwork. It may also be more difficult for people who have to travel far to shows to qualify if their scores at 3rd level are below the 60's.

## End of An Era

### *Smucker's Harness to Liquidate.*

After 38 years, Mr. Moses Smucker, President of Smucker's Harness Shop, will be retiring from the business and begin pursuing other interests such as the auction business and possibly other ventures. He is accepting harness orders until December 31, 2008 and is selling remaining inventory beginning immediately. Regarding machines, some are available now and others will be available as time goes on, with the goal to be completely liquidated by the spring/summer of 2009. His son Daniel will continue to make custom harness on a full or part-time basis, most likely under the name D. M. Smucker. Moses wishes to thank all his good & loyal customers and is grateful for the friends he has made over the years. Call 717-445-5956 for more information.

## Short Snorts

**Esther Fiddes** and **LBF Hickory Smoke** got a score of 99 at their 50-mile GMHA competitive trail ride in Vt, earning them the Grand Champion award and AMHA's hi-scoring Morgan award. The pair earned top Morgan award at the Grafton, NY 25-mile ride; the VERDA 30-mile ride in Springfield, Vt; and the COBY 50-mile at Cobleskill in NY, where they were Reserve Champion of the ride. The pair ended the season as Champion and top Morgan with a perfect score of 100 at the Kay Fullerton Memorial ride in Marlborough, CT. Esther and "Pokey" also reached the ECTRA 3,000-mile mark this year. Good job, guys!!!

**We're on the Web!**  
[www.morganhorse.com](http://www.morganhorse.com)

**Rule:** DR135  
**Rule Change Type:** Standard

From time to time rules are adopted which change the sequence of rule numbering. The rule reference used here is the rule number that appears in the current website version of the United States Equestrian Federation, Inc. Rulebook

**Proposed Change:**

**DR135 Dressage Competition Performance Standards.** [Chapter DR, Dressage Division] **Add new and renumber remaining:**

*The purpose of Competition Performance Standards is to ensure that riders are properly prepared to successfully move up the levels. The qualification system is based on the rider, not the horse. Multiple horses may be used by a rider to earn qualification. Rider qualification is permanent and there is no time limit for earning qualification.*

**1. Three levels exist:**

**a. Bronze Level: (Training-Third Level).** All riders may compete at this level without earning qualification scores or points.

**b. Silver Level: Required to compete at Fourth Level - Prix St. Georges (including USEF Developing Horse Test).** Qualification at this level may be achieved as follows:

(1) Earning the USDF Bronze Medal

(2) Earning a minimum of ten (10) qualification points (as defined under DR135.3, below) in USEF Third Level tests ridden in USEF licensed/USDF recognized competitions. Scores must come from at least three different USEF or FEI judges. A panel of two or more judges will count as one distinct judge.

(3) Earning a minimum of 65% (6.5) in the USEF Riders' Test. The USEF Third Level Test 3 will be ridden using a separate "USEF Riders' Test" score sheet. Only one riders' test qualifying score is required with a panel of two eligible judges. Judges will officiate separately and both judges' scores must be a minimum of 65% (6.5) in order to achieve qualification at this level. If only one eligible judge officiates, two separate rides earning scores of at least 65% (6.5) will be required for qualification. Scores may be obtained at the same competition.

**c. Gold Level: Required to compete at Intermediaire I - Grand Prix (including Brentina Cup).** Qualification at this level may be achieved as follows:

(1) Earning either the USDF Silver or USDF Gold Medal

(2) Earning a minimum of eight (8) qualification points (as defined under DR135.3, below) in the FEI Prix St. Georges test. Scores must come from at least two different USEF or FEI judges. A panel of two or more judges will count as one distinct judge.

**2. Qualification may be earned only at USEF licensed/USDF recognized or FEI recognized competitions.** At all levels, freestyle scores and FEI Young Horse tests/rides do not earn points. FEI Junior, Young Rider, and Pony Tests and the USEF Developing Horse and USEF "Brentina Cup" tests may be used to earn points at the equivalent national or FEI level, as listed under DR119.2.

**3. Qualification System.**

**a. Qualifying points will be awarded for tests/rides with the following scores.** A score from a panel of two or more judges will be considered one test/ride.

58-59.99%	One (1) Point
60-62.99%	Two (2) Points
63-64.99%	Three (3) Points
65% and Above	Four (4) Points

**b. In order for qualifying points to be recorded after December 1, 2010, the rider must be a USDF Group, Participating or Life Member and a USEF Active Member at the time points are earned.**

**c. Scores/points earned between 1974 and December 1, 2010 at USEF licensed/USDF recognized or FEI recognized competitions (including foreign CDI's) may be used towards the number of points required for rider qualification as follows:**

(1) Scores earned in any Third Level test (except Freestyle) or equivalent may be used toward the ten (10) points needed for Silver Level qualification;

(2) Scores earned in any test at or above the Prix St. Georges level or the equivalent level may be used toward the eight (8) points needed for Gold Level qualification.

(3) All scores earned before December 1, 2010 must be verified by USDF before rider qualification is granted, unless the rider is "grandfathered" as described under DR135.7 below.

**d. Qualification at any level is not required to compete in the following tests: FEI Pony, USEF Four-Year-Old, FEI Five-Year-Old and FEI Six-Year-Old tests.** However, riders competing in the USEF Young Adult "Brentina Cup" and USEF Developing Horse tests are not exempt from qualifying.

**e. Qualification is not required for Juniors and Young Riders who are declared as candidates for the USEF National Championships or NAJYRC and who enter designated NAJYRC/USEF qualifying classes.** However, those riders must obtain the appropriate qualification in order to compete in any other class at any competition.

**f. United States Eventing Association (USEA) members are exempt from qualification requirements as follows: Horse/Rider combinations who have achieved one or more qualifying scores as defined within the applicable (USEF or FEI) rules for Eventing at the Advanced, CIC\*\*\*, CCI\*\*\* or CCI\*\*\*\* levels may compete at the Silver Level without any qualifying points in Dressage.**

**Proposed Rule Change/Bylaw Change**

4. Compliance with DRI35 (Dressage Competition Performance Standards) is mandatory at USEF-Licensed/ USDF Recognized Dressage Competitions and "Open" Dressage divisions or sections of USEF-Licensed Regular and Local Competitions. Compliance with Performance Standards is optional for USEF-Licensed Regular and Local Competitions with breed-restricted divisions or sections. Dressage test scores from all USEF-Licensed/USDF Recognized Dressage Competitions and "Open" Dressage divisions or sections of USEF-Licensed Regular and Local Competitions will be counted towards meeting Performance Standards eligibility levels. Scores from "breed restricted" Dressage divisions or sections of Regular and Local Competitions will only be counted for eligibility from those breeds that require Performance Standards qualification to compete in their breed-restricted dressage sections/divisions.
5. Foreign riders may qualify under this rule, as long as USEF and USDF membership requirements are met. Alternatively, they may prove competition eligibility with a letter to USEF from their National Federation verifying the level at which they are eligible to compete.
6. Riders may earn a higher qualification level once their scores are verified by USDF. However, a qualification level cannot be changed during a competition.
7. Prior to November 30, 2010, riders will be "grandfathered" into the qualification system as follows:
- Riders on a USET/USEF Long List from 1999 to November 30, 2010 will receive qualification at the Gold Level.
  - Riders who have competed at the USEF or USET Festival of Champions from 1985 to 2010, will receive qualification at the Gold Level.
  - USDF Bronze Medal winners from 1974 to November 30, 2010 will receive qualification at the Silver Level.
  - USDF Silver Medal and Gold Medal winners from 1974 to November 30, 2010 will receive qualification at the Gold Level.
  - USEF Dressage judges will be grandfathered as follows:
    - 'r' judges will receive qualification at the Silver Level.
    - 'R' judges will receive qualification at the Gold Level.
    - 'S' judges will receive qualification at the Gold Level.
  - USDF Certified Instructors certified through Second Level will receive qualification at the Silver Level and those certified through Fourth Level will receive qualification at the Gold Level.
8. Eligibility and qualification disputes will be addressed by an appeals committee which will include three members of the USEF Technical Dressage Committee and two members of the USEF High Performance Dressage Committee and one alternate from each committee
9. Qualification levels will be printed on USEF/USDF membership cards and will be available on both the USDF and USEF web sites.

**Proponent:** Dressage Committee

**Contact:** Janine Malone  
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Zebulon, NC 27597-

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**Date Received:** 8/27/2008      **Email:** JEMRPH@aol.com

**Intent of Proposal:**

To outline the criteria for the Dressage Competition Performance Standards.

**Proposed Effective Date:** 12/1/10

**Linked Rule Changes:** 302-08

**Proponent**

Dressage Committee

**Action****Date****Committee/Organization****Draft: Action-Date****Budget and Finance Committee Comments:****Staff and Committee Comments****Legal Comments:****Other Comments:****Board of Directors****Action****Date**