

USEA Embarks on Bold New "T3D" Initiative

The Thrill of the 'Chase Lives!

By Kevin Baumgardner, Co-chair of the USEA Classic Three-Day/T3D Task Force

An overwhelming majority of the USEA's membership has repeatedly affirmed its support of the classic format three-day event, and nowhere has that grass-roots passion been more evident than at training-level three day events. These events experienced a big increase in participation, sponsorship, and "buzz" in 2005—a stateside trend that was mirrored in the United Kingdom. The formula for the success of "T3D" events is no secret: they attract many of the sport's "core" competitors: Adult Amateurs and Young Riders who want to experience the unforgettable rush of a full-format three day events. They combine first-class competitions with educational clinics featuring some of the sport's greatest names. Most of all, they are fun!

And now the USEA has committed its energy and resources to ensuring that the Classic Format T3D continues to thrive. Starting in 2006, the USEA is implementing a trial program as a means of assisting T3D events to attract competitors and achieve a higher profile (from the perspective of publicity, sponsorship, and recognition), while at the same time maintaining their special status as a "hybrid" of educational events and competitions.

The following are the key elements of this initiative:

- **USEA Recognition of T3D Events as "Tests":** T3D Events will henceforth be allowed recognition as "Tests" as outlined in the current *United States Equestrian Federation Rules for Eventing*, Subchapter EV-2—Rules for Tests, EV 122.4: "... Organizing Committees are encouraged to create attractive competitions, whether they use the Tests described below or create additional Tests." Again, recognition as "Tests" under this Rule will not change the way these



events are currently run, or alter their status as events that combine educational and competition components.

- **Points Toward USEA Training Level Leaderboard:** T3D Event participants can earn points toward the USEA's regular training level year-end leaderboard. The same point values as those in the CCI* point structure (which is applicable to the USEA preliminary level leaderboard) will be adopted for this purpose. See page 135 of the rule book for details.

Above: Pat Wiedemann gives a steeplechase metering demonstration at the Waredaca Educational Training Three-Day Event Test held in Laytonsville, Maryland October 22-23, 2005.

Left: Kelley Williams and Bomber demonstrated for the group how to ride a steeplechase fence.

- **Eligibility:** In order to be eligible for the T3D Event points, competitors must be active members of the USEA, and horses registered with the USEA, and otherwise eligible for participation in the training level year-end leaderboard.

- **Qualifications:** Specific qualifying criteria for each T3D Event recognized as a "Test" will be at the discretion of the organizer.

- **Publicity:** A page in each USEA *Omnibus* will be dedicated to participating T3D events, listing the date, location, contact information, and qualifying criteria for each event. This page will also set forth membership/horse registration requirements and the award points table. Additionally, a full-page ad in *Eventing USA* magazine will list these events,

together with sponsor information/logos (see below).

• USEA fees to be minimal or non-existent:

T3D Events will be exempt from association fees (i.e. starter fees, et cetera). T3D Events run as “Tests” in conjunction with USEA-recognized horse trials will not incur any additional registration fees (under the previous system, where such events are run as educational activities, a \$100 registration fee is required). T3D Events run as “Tests” but not in conjunction with recognized horse trials will pay a \$25 registration/insurance/advertising fee.

• Sponsorship: The USEA will work with the T3D Event organizers to develop sponsorship both for individual T3D Events run as “Tests,” but also, it is hoped, for an eventual “series” of T3D events as the format develops and grows. It is anticipated that sponsorship assistance for individual T3D Events will start with in-kind prizes to be awarded at events, and then, as the program develops, will include financial help with the promotion and development of the event (i.e. prize money or direct financial assistance to the event). This is similar to the sponsorship program that has developed around the Adequan USEA Gold Cup Series. It is expected that organizers will cooperate in the placement of T3D Event sponsor banners and related promotion at their events.

• Rules: Organizers are expected to run the T3D Event “Test” in the format of the classic three-day event (i.e. “with steeplechase”). Specifications are at the discretion of the organizer, but the height of obstacles on the cross-country phase may not exceed USEA-recognized training level horse trials heights, and height of obstacles on the steeplechase phase may not exceed 3’6”. Organizers are encouraged to continue to run T3D Events as educational events as well as competitions, and the incorporation of “mini-clinics” into the weekend (e.g. instruction on how to trot up your horse, feedback on practice jumps on a steeplechase fence after the dressage phase) is strongly encouraged, so long as reasonable efforts are made to ensure that access to instructors/clinicians is available to all competitors, and no actual on-course unauthorized assistance is permitted.

T3D organizers, competitors, and other interested persons with questions about this initiative are encouraged to contact USEA Director of Sport Services, Sharon Gallagher, at sharon@useventing.com, or the co-chairs of the USEA Classic Three-Day/T3D Task Force, Kevin Baumgardner at kbaumgardner@corrchron.com and Shelley Lambert at HorseTrialsInc@aol.com.



Are you a Jump Builder?

The USEA is compiling a list of course builders so we can keep you informed of educational opportunities, special events, rule changes, safety issues, etc.

This list will also be used as a resource for people looking to contact and hire builders.

If you would like to be added to this list, please contact Nancy Myers at nancy@useventing.com or via phone at 703-779-0440, Ext. 3007

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