

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT? THE BREED SHOW

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You have all heard about it...The NEDA Fall Festival Breed Show...you might even know that it is part of a series of shows accredited by USDF under the umbrella of USDF Cosequin Breeder's Series.....and if you are really "In the Know" you will understand that it is currently a qualifier for "*Dressage at Devon Breed Show*" and the *Cosequin East Coast Breeders Series Championships*. Those of us who have participated in the Series since it has been offered are excited to find that the USDF Sporthorse Committee has "upped the ante" with the HOY Breeders awards given at the USDF annual meeting based upon scores earned in a minimum of 3 USDF accredited Breed Shows in the Series!!!! But, what is showing at a Breed show all about???

NEDA Breed Show is one of the oldest Breed Shows in the country. From the humble beginnings, the show has grown both in participation and the classes offered. Under Breed Show Chairperson, Anne Marie Gregoire the committee has grown to include many special people and positions. Kathy Hickerson came on board and designed a special "Breed Show Computer Program" to streamline the show process. Other managers running breed shows now seek after her program around the country. Beth Dzaugis is also involved in the Computerization of the Breed Show and takes her duties further to include all the Breed Show and Stallion Auction/Futurity information and entry forms on the NEDA web site at <http://www.NEDA.org>. Of most importance is the contribution of Beth in seeing that we have a successful *Stallion Auction!!!!* With this contribution Beth allows for the running of the *\$2,000 NEDA Stallion Futurity Class*, a program that was planned and put into action by Beth and our Chairperson, Anne Marie Gregoire. I am sure that you have all noticed that show day has become more organized and efficient over the past few years, even with a largely increased entry. One of the biggest factors in making a best effort would not be possible without the INCREASED VOLUNTEER SUPPORT...now organized under the direction of Kate Almy. Kate is the gal that is at the awards table on show day, making sure you get the right award and that all her volunteers know what to do and where to go!!!! Oh those Awards!!! Yes, they have grown with greater registry participation and addition in 2001 of the **INDIVIDUAL BREED REGISTRY CLASSES**. NEDA BREED SHOW offers increasing opportunities for breeders to showcase their stock and take home some great prizes! It is my pleasure to work on this small part for the committee. Last but certainly not least, who lets everyone know who you are and what you won????? Sandy has been our breed show announcer for many years now, it isn't easy pronouncing all those sometimes foreign names, but Sandy gets it done, often without a break for the whole day. I think you can easily see that any breed show starts with a committed crew willing to work long and hard throughout the year to make your experience "happen" on show days!

The USDF Breed show is organized so that all classes are open to horses of any breed, except for those specially designated Individual Breed Classes. The classes offered are divided into three basic categories for judging:

1. Young Horse/Sport Horse Classes: these include all horses up to and including the age of 3 years old, colts, fillies & geldings. These youngsters are judged in-hand, on the triangle at walk and trot, and stood for conformation analysis. They are judged on suitability to become Dressage Sport Horses.

In the Young Horse Class sections, the classes are judged on 60% movement, 30% conformation and 10% general impression

2. Mature Horse/Breeding Horse Class- these classes are for all horses 4 years old and older, mares & stallions. These horses are also shown in-hand, on the triangle for walk/trot, and stood up for conformation analysis, and are judged on suitability to produce Dressage Sport Horses.

For the Mature Horse and Group Classes (Get of Sire, Produce of Dam, Breeders Group), the weighting of scores is 50% movement, 40% conformation, and 10% general impression.

3. Under Saddle Classes- these classes are for horses 4/5/6 years old and are divided by age and sex. The horses are judged on suitability to become Dressage Horses. Recently, the Material Prufung classes, which include a conformation analysis, were added to this group of classes.

From this weighting of the scores, one can see that the MOVEMENT is the most important factor in the judging. In a perfect analysis, the horse being judged would move straight with the hind feet following directly into the track of the front feet. This horse would be relaxed, and supple, showing good overstride in walk and trot. In the trot the horse would ideally show suspension and lift with articulation of the hocks and power from behind with Diagonal Advanced Placement, to create a forward and uphill, athletic picture of presence. The horse, would, of course, show a willingness to work with the handler and attitude commensurate with what is expected for a working partner in dressage.

The conformation analysis of the horse is looked at differently for the stages of growth in the horse. The mature horse must be analyzed for harmony and function of the parts of the horse. The judge critiques the Frame/topline, head/neck/withers, forequarter, hindquarter and gaits against standards set by the USAE/USDF DSHB Sporthorse Breeding Judge Program. General Impression is also considered for overall condition, muscle development, Masculinity or Femininity, attitude and willingness to work as well as forward presence and athletic appearance. The theory provides that the closer a sporthorse or prospect is able to come to the standard, the more likely they will be able to perform to their best in the sport. For Mature Horse Breeding Stock, the theory holds that when applied, the analysis gained thru the judging of the stock will result in the production of horses that will show increased aptitude for the correct movements and ability for dressage. For this reason the major benefit of undertaking outside & objective judging of the Mature Sporthorses and their offspring should not be overlooked by breeders, owners, and buyers attending the USDF Breed Show.

Analysis of the young horses is an extremely difficult task burdened by the fact that youngsters are presented at all ages and stages of growth. This is exacerbated by the fact

that the official birthday of each young horse is January 1st following the birth, as per the USAE rules. This reality imposes that youngsters in a yearling class in September can be greatly varied in actual age. Because the Dressage Sporthorse Show is open to all breeds of horses, the difficulty increases. It is well known that certain breeds can grow and mature with different timing and that even within breeds certain bloodlines mature differently. In this light, it is up to the owner/breeder to present their stock to the judge at the best possible time for analysis. Sometimes, “throwing the yearling out back” is not such a bad idea if they need to mature and become more elegant for their bloodline.

The Breeder/Owner must remember that the judge must follow the standards and criteria written on the official score sheet on the day the young horse is presented. These standards take into account the straightness and correctness of movement, elasticity, suppleness, and athletic balance. They also look for the correctness of legs, feet, croup, shoulder, and hip angles, and proportions of head/neck. Like the Mature Horses, the young horses are scored for General Impression. The judge takes into consideration the general manners of the youngsters in the ring. Observations include how the youngster handles the show situation in terms of surroundings, attentiveness, and willingness to work with the handlers when requests and corrections are given. The judge is fully aware that you are working with a minimally trained youngster and is able to take into consideration normal and expected behavior of the young horse in this new and stressful situation.

The USDF Sporthorse judges have a lot of experience and training and see many foals to 3 yr olds every year. In fact, many Sporthorse Judges are breeders, stallion owners, and sporthorse inspectors for breed registries. Some also are Dressage Judges. Because the Judges have vast experience they are well educated to handle the difficult task of judging youngsters fairly.

When you bring your Sporthorse or young prospect to the **NEDA FALL FESTIVAL BREED SHOW**, you will be asked to present them “on the triangle”. The next article in this series will go into detail about the preparation and training for the show and what to expect on that day. It is strongly recommended that you contact the USDF and purchase their tape “**Showing Your Sporthorse In Hand**”. This tape will give you a very good idea how to present your horse on the triangle. You may also contact any member of the NEDA BREED SHOW COMMITTEE to ask questions that you might have about your entry. Chairperson: Anne Marie Gregoire-Silvercrst@Aol.com Kathy Hickerson –Kathy@magesticgaits.com Beth Dzaugis - Bdzaugis@Charter.net Kate Almy – rkalmy@att.worldnet.net Rachel Ehrlich – greengatestud@aol.com

PLEASE see the NEDA website, <http://www.NEDA.org> **Sporthorse Shows: For Breed Show Series listings, entry forms, & prize list information.**