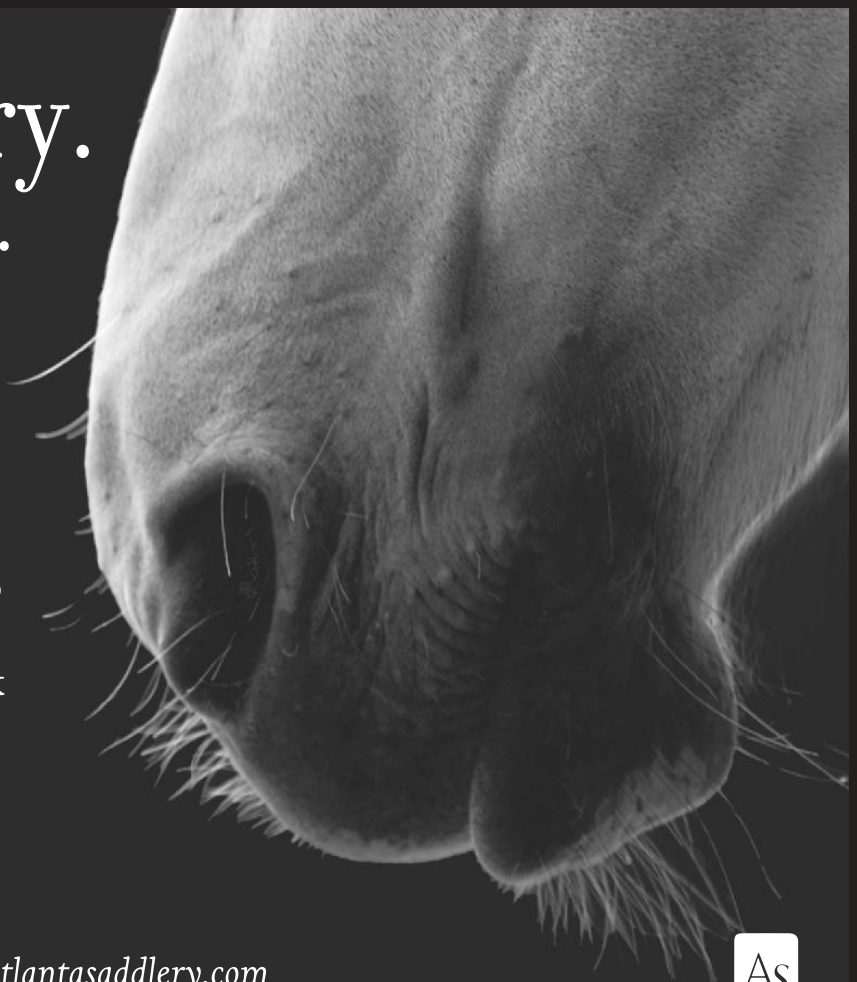
November 2026

# Collected REMARKS



# Atlanta Saddlery.

*more than* 40 years.



*featuring:*

Franco Tucci . Tailored Sportsman . Horse Pilot . Kask . Charles Owen . Sergio Grasso Samshield . oneK . Kep . Integrity Linens Journeymen . San Soleil . Edgewood . Fleck Sprenger . Roeckl .....and more.

*1600 S Main St, Alpharetta, GA  770.475.1967 . atlantasaddlery.com*

## HGF EQUESTRIAN












# *In This Issue*


**EDUCATION & TRAINING**

- Lateral Work Made Simple: Travers – Page 9
- What a Side View Video Shows You About Your Position – Page 10
- Better Humans, Better Horses: The New Coaching Mindset – Page 14

**EVENTS & COMPETITIONS**

- GDCTA Events & Upcoming Opportunities – Page 16
- The Priceless Value of the Show Ring: Why Horse Shows Are Worth Every Penny – Page 19
- US Dressage Finals 2026 – Page 20

**RIDER DEVELOPMENT**

- Ride Smarter, Keep Showing Up – Page 21
- Your Guide to GDCTA Awards – Page 22
- USEF Rule Changes: What's New for Dressage & Eventing – Page 24

**YOUR GDCTA COMMUNITY**

- GDCTA Board of Directors & Committees – Page 26
- Board Meeting Minutes – Pages 28–29
- Thank You to Our GDCTA Sponsors, Donors & Supporters – Page 30


## ON THE COVER

Megan Thomas on CA Destiny Gro taken by Jessica Ann Designs



GDCTA is a Group Member Organization of USDF

USDF GMO GROUP MEMBER ORGANIZATION

GDCTA

*Georgia Dressage & Combined Training Association*


Collected Remarks is a Georgia Dressage and Combined Training Association (GDCTA) publication. Subject matter published is the opinion of the author and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the publisher of this newsletter. Professional advice should be obtained before making any decision in which a professional is readily available. Advertisers assume responsibility for the content of the ads placed in this publication. Material published may not be reproduced without the written permission of GDCTA.

The contents of this newsletter are provided for the members of the GDCTA as a courtesy only. No representations are made as to the information presented, the quality of the goods or services advertised, or the veracity of the statements relating to the goods and services. The printing of opinions, information or advertisements does not constitute an endorsement by the Association of such opinions, information, goods, or services.






# PERFORMANCE THAT POWERS CHAMPIONS.

From training to the competition arena, Purina® Performance Horse feeds deliver the nutrition your horses need to stay strong, focused, and ready to excel. Backed by research and trusted by top riders, it's fuel for horses who compete at the highest level.




**CONTACT PEGGY MILES AT 770-241-2222 FOR MORE INFORMATION ON FEEDING TRIALS**

PURINA®

# *Dear Members:*

As we move through November, the competition season is winding down, but there is still plenty happening in the GDCTA community! This month's *Collected Remarks* is filled with opportunities to keep learning, celebrate accomplishments, and stay connected with fellow equestrians.

Education remains an important part of what we do, and I hope you'll take advantage of the upcoming Endel Ots Dressage Clinic at Noble Steeds on November 21–22. Whether you're riding or simply interested in learning from the sidelines, auditors are welcome! Watching an experienced clinician work with different horse-and-rider combinations can be just as educational as being in the saddle.

Speaking of learning, this issue includes several articles worth spending some time with. From exploring travers and improving your position through side-view video to considering the evolving role of the modern equestrian coach, there are plenty of ideas to take back to your own training program. We also have a look at recent USEF rule changes, so be sure to familiarize yourself with the updates that may affect you and your horse.

As we wrap up the 2026 awards year, I encourage everyone to visit the GDCTA Awards Gala page at gdcta.org/awardsgala and review the rider standings. Links to the current standings are available there. Please take a moment to check your scores and make sure everything looks correct. No changes will be made after November 30. Year-end award winners will hear from us by email in December, so keep an eye on your inbox!

We are also looking ahead to our February 6, 2027, Awards Gala. Thank you to everyone who participated in our recent surveys and shared thoughts about the awards program and Gala experience. Your feedback is helping guide decisions about how we recognize our members while keeping the program sustainable and accessible. We look forward to celebrating another year of accomplishments together.

Finally, don't forget to check the GDCTA Events Calendar regularly. There are always clinics, competitions, schooling shows, and other opportunities happening throughout Georgia and the surrounding region. Whether you're looking to compete, learn something new, or simply enjoy time with the horse community, there's something for everyone.

Remember to renew your membership so you don't miss any opportunities~ GDCTA membership year is **December 1st through November 30th** each year. Renew or join here: https://gdcta.org/join-us

Thank you for being part of GDCTA. Your participation, enthusiasm, and support are what make this organization a community. I look forward to seeing many of you at an upcoming event and, of course, celebrating with you in February!

**Happy riding,**

*Caren*

Caren Caverly
President, GDCTA
ccaverly@comcast.net
770-713-4025

# *GDCTA AWARDS GALA IS COMING!*

As the 2026 competition awards year has come to an end and we are in full swing planning for 2027, we wanted to announce a few changes to the upcoming Awards Gala happening in February. First, thank you to everyone who participated in the surveys. Your feedback provided the GDCTA Board with valuable insight, and we truly appreciate the time you took to share your thoughts. We value your opinions and want to ensure we are making the best decisions for the club and its membership.

Year-End Awards and the Gala are clearly important to our community, and we've listened carefully to what you told us. As a result, we have already begun making adjustments that we hope will improve the experience for everyone. While some elements of this year's event were already committed as planning has been underway for months, we are confident that the changes being implemented now, along with additional refinements planned for future years, are moving us in the right direction. We are excited to gather with you in Alpharetta this February and hope you'll see that your feedback has been heard and is helping shape the future of this event.

## Survey Highlights

The message from members was remarkably consistent. You told us that **year-end awards and recognition matter deeply**, and that celebrating the achievements of riders, horses, volunteers, and supporters remains a valuable part of being a GDCTA member. Members placed the highest value on championship ribbons, awards, and recognition, while the formal banquet experience itself ranked lower.

You also expressed a strong desire to keep participation affordable and accessible. Many members supported modest funding solutions, such as a reasonable horse enrollment fee and volunteer opportunities that could help offset costs, while emphasizing the importance of fairness for families and multi-horse households.

Perhaps the strongest theme was a desire to **reimagine the Gala experience**. Many members shared that the best parts of the evening are connecting with friends, celebrating accomplishments, and recognizing achievements, rather than the venue or banquet meal. Suggestions included exploring more casual formats, alternative venues, and simpler food options that could maintain the celebration while reducing costs.

Members also encouraged the club to pursue additional sponsorships and fundraising opportunities and to continue evaluating ways to make awards meaningful while ensuring the long-term sustainability of the program. *We welcome assistance in this area! We work on this for months~*

We are grateful for your thoughtful feedback, your passion for the club, and your commitment to helping GDCTA continue to grow and thrive.

## We look forward to celebrating with you February 6, 2027!

For Gala details, tickets, sponsorship opportunities, and event information, visit the GDCTA Awards Gala page: https://gdcta.org/awardsgala




GDCTA
Georgia Dressage & Combined Training Association

GDCTA
GEORGIA DRESSAGE & COMBINED TRAINING ASSOCIATION

RIDEES
HORSES
COMMUNITY
PROGRESS
*Stronger Together*

# AWARDS Gala 2027

*Celebrating the Riders, Horses, Volunteers, and Moments That Made the Year Extraordinary*

Join us for an evening of recognition, memories, and celebration as we honor the achievements of the 2026 competition season.

Whether you earned a championship ribbon, volunteered behind the scenes, coached a rider to success, or cheered from the rail, this is your night to celebrate the accomplishments that make our GDCTA community so special.

- AWARDS & RECOGNITION
- SPECIALTY AWARDS
- SILENT AUCTION & RAFFLE FUN
- FRIENDS, FELLOWSHIP & MEMORIES
- A NIGHT DEDICATED TO OUR MEMBERSHIP








*Save the Date*

## GDCTA Awards Gala 2027

ALPHARETTA, GEORGIA
FEBRUARY 2027

Tickets, sponsorship opportunities, event details, and updates are available at:

GDCTA.org/AwardsGala

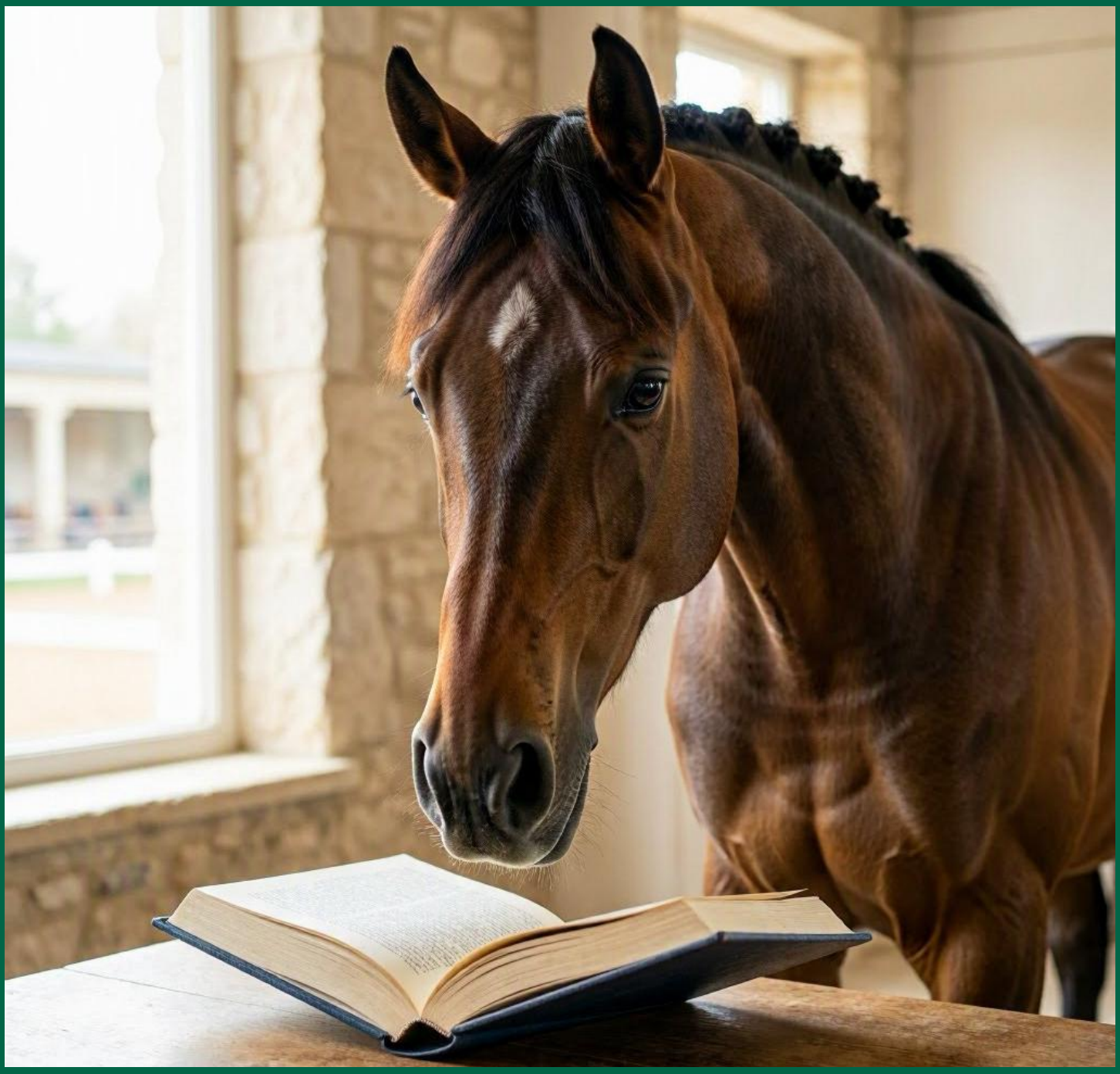
*Scan for details!*

SAME PASSION | STRONGER TOGETHER | A BRIGHTER TOMORROW

# Education & Training

## Ride Better • Learn More • Build Partnership

***Whether you're refining the basics, preparing for your next show, or simply looking to deepen your partnership with your horse, contnuous learning is at the heart of dressage. This month's Education Center explores the science behind harmony, introduces key lateral movements, and highlights an upcoming learning opportunity through the GDCTA Kudzu Klinic Program.***



# Lateral Work Made Simple: A Six-Part Series

*Based on insights from Brett Parbery, Australian Equestrian Team dressage rider and coach*

## #3 Travers — Placing the Quarters, Without Losing the Shoulders

Travers is where lateral work starts to feel more complex — but the concept, according to Brett Parbery, is straightforward once you understand what's actually driving it.

Travers is a **four-track exercise**, with the horse's hindquarters brought to the inside of the direction of travel. The bend and flexion run through the horse's body toward the inside of the movement.

Here's the twist most riders don't expect: even though the outside leg appears to be doing the work of positioning the quarters, Parbery stresses that **shoulder control is the real foundation**. Without it, travers simply doesn't work. Placing the quarters inward is only the final step of the exercise — not the starting point.

**Pro tip from Brett:** Don't overdo the angle. Four tracks with a soft, correct bend is all you need. Chasing a bigger angle at the expense of rhythm and impulsion will cost you more than it gains. Pace and rhythm remain the priority throughout.




**How to practice it:**

1. Establish shoulder-in first, since travers relies on the same shoulder control
2. Bring the quarters in gradually, checking that the bend stays soft
3. Prioritize a forward, rhythmic pace over a dramatic angle

**Common mistake:** Riders overuse the outside leg to shove the quarters in, which disrupts rhythm and often causes the horse to lose bend entirely.

**Key takeaway:** Travers isn't a hindquarter exercise — it's a shoulder-control exercise that ends with the quarters placed inside. Master the shoulders first, and the rest follows.

---

*This article is based on Brett Parbery's "Lateral Work Cheat Sheet," shared as a training resource for dressage riders. All technical guidance and pro tips are credited to Brett Parbery, Australian Equestrian Team rider and coach.*

# What a Side View Video Shows You About Your Position

By Hashem Wahed

Many riders practice alone. Between lessons nobody is there to tell you your lower leg is far too forward, or that you've slouched far too forward. It is very difficult to tell from the saddle at times and seeing it from a trainer's eye may be enlightening.

A short video filmed from the side can give much needed context. It takes a phone and half a minute, and it's the closest thing to eyes on the ground when nobody's there.

## Where to stand

Paying attention to the side view is where you can really exercise your trainer senses! That is where we can clearly visualize the ear-shoulder-hip-heel line!

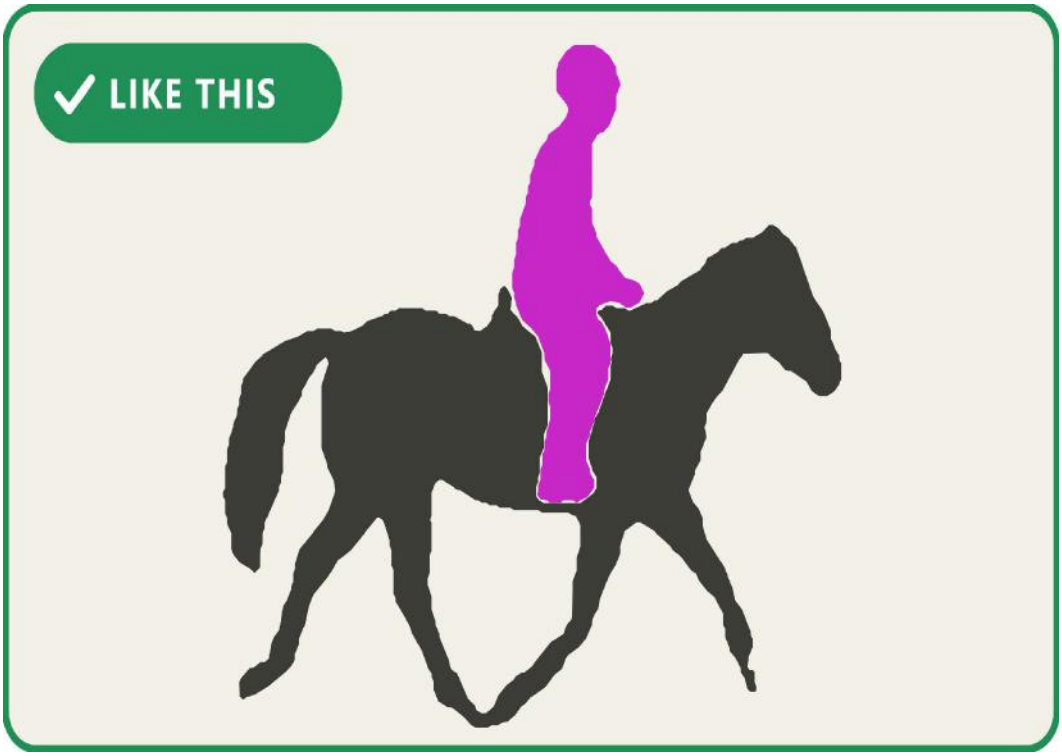



*Photo 1. Like this: filmed from the side, close enough that horse and rider fill most of the picture.*

You could grab a phone stand, balance it on a fence where it can't fall into the arena, or use a helper! Set it up in the middle of the long side of the arena and ride past it. The useful moment is when you're right in front of the camera, square to it. It could also be a fun little challenge for you to get a perfect square view with the camera.

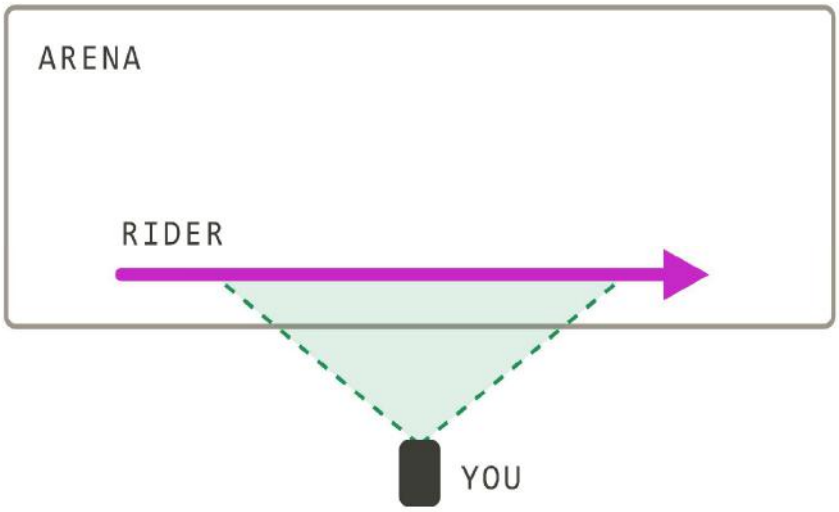



*Photo 2. Where to stand: outside the arena at the middle of the long side, with the rider coming past.*

Be careful, a clip filmed from the corner, at an angle, can make your leg look further forward or back than it really is. Get close enough that you and your horse fill most of the picture. From across a big arena, you'll be a tiny shape and you won't see much.

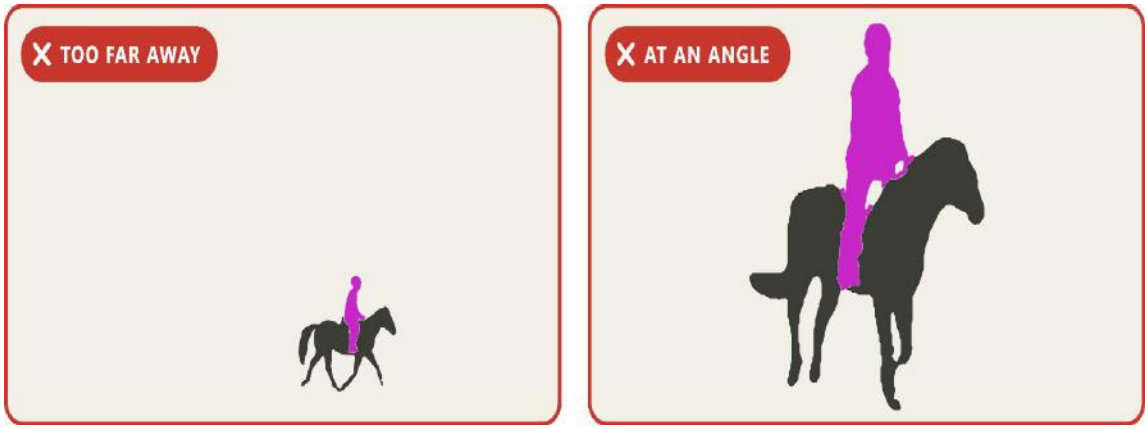



*Photo 3. Not like this: too far away (left) and at an angle (right).*

## Setting up the phone

- Hold it sideways (landscape mode) so the whole horse fits.
- Keep it steady!
- Try to have the sun behind the camera placement.

You don't need a long clip. A few passes at walk, trot and canter is plenty.

## What to look for

Watch it once at normal speed. Then go back, drag slowly through it, and stop on the frames where you're square to the camera.

Look for that ear-shoulder-hip-heel line.

# Endel Ots
# Dressage Clinic

Olympic Dressage Rider
10+ USEF National Champion
Multiple USEF Horse of the Year
2x World Young Horse Rider



## November 21–22, 2026

**Clinic Location:**
Noble Steeds
3452 Arbor Hill Road
Canton, GA 30115

**Hosted by**
**Georgia Dressage and Combined Training Association**

GDCTA

GDCTA.org
Abi Kroupa
(561) 284-3228

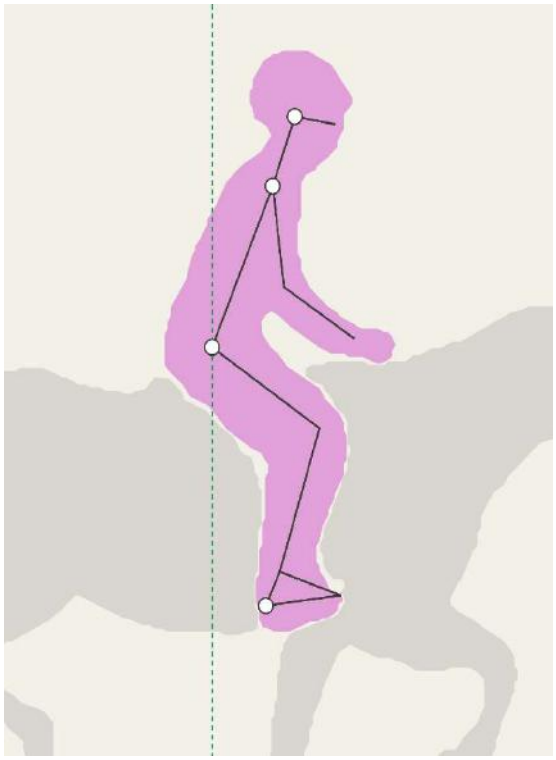


*Photo 4. The dashed line runs straight up through the hip. Here the shoulders and the heel are both ahead of it: leaning forward with the lower leg in front, at the sit of a rising trot.*

Here are some mistakes you may spot (like the ones you may already see in the pictures above):

- **You have a chair seat.** Your lower leg is in front of your hips!
- **Leaning forward.** Your shoulders are ahead of your hip and you are slouching.
- **Heels creeping up.** Easy to miss from the saddle, easy to see on video.
- **Hands and elbows.** From the side you can check for a straight line from your elbow through your hand to the bit.

Pick one thing to work on, not all four. Film again in a couple of weeks and compare. Seeing a real change on your own video is a lot more motivating than being told about it.

## Eyes on the ground, sort of

Practicing without someone watching is normal for most adult amateurs. A phone definitely won't replace a trainer, but it means you show up to your next lesson prepared and may make interesting conversation with your trainer!

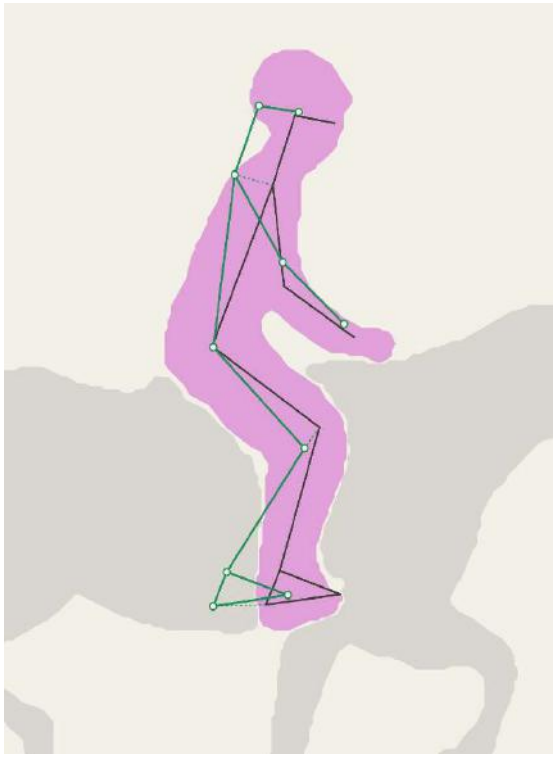


*Photo 5. The same moment, corrected: the rider as filmed in dark grey, the corrected position drawn by Rosalind in green.*

*Hashem Wahed built Rosalind (rosalind.cc), a free website that marks where your position slips in a side view video and draws the right position over it. The AI only ever sees a silhouette of you, never your actual video. GDCTA members who'd like to try it can email hello@rosalind.cc for an invite.*

*All pictures: Rosalind (rosalind.cc), traced silhouettes of a real side-on video, so no rider's photo is shown.*

# Better Humans, Better Horses: The New Coaching Mindset

*By GDCTA Contributor*



The landscape of equestrian instruction is undergoing a fundamental shift. Being a "good" instructor is no longer defined solely by technical proficiency or the ability to help a rider win ribbons. Instead, the modern coach is a facilitator of horse welfare, acting as a bridge between human ambition and equine experience.

## The Horse as the Primary Stakeholder

At the core of effective coaching is the recognition that the horse is an active participant in the learning process, not just a tool. A great instructor adopts a "realist lens," understanding that what works for one horse-and-rider pair may not work for another. They prioritize "Horse Welfare Literacy," which goes beyond basic knowledge to include the ability to evaluate and apply welfare principles in real-time.

By observing the horse’s behavior, posture, and breathing, the coach helps the rider understand what the horse is experiencing. If a horse is tense or resistant, a good instructor looks for the "why"—considering factors like saddle fit, rider balance, or environmental stress—before deciding on a correction.

## Cultivating Better Humans through Better Questions

Better decisions for horses start with better humans. To achieve this, a coach must foster an environment of psychological safety and curiosity. Rather than simply giving commands or defaulting to "do it again," a good instructor asks "better questions" that invite reflection:

- Observe: Notice subtle shifts in the horse's behavior and the surrounding environment.

- Reflect: Think critically about why a certain movement or reaction occurred. "What did you feel there?" or "How did the horse respond?"

- Decide: Make informed, horse-centered choices based on evidence rather than habit.

By empowering riders to think for themselves, the coach ensures that the horse benefits even when the lesson is over. This shift from "instructor" to "coach" means developing the rider's broader skills in communication, ethics, and independent judgment.

## Professionalism and Lifelong Growth

The modern coaching pathway emphasizes that expertise is not a destination but a continuous process of reflection and growth. A high-quality coach:

- Stays Updated: Follows the latest behavioral science and welfare standards.




- Knows Their Limits: Is honest about what they do not know and is willing to refer a horse or rider to another professional when necessary.

- Models Patience: Understands that progress is not always linear and celebrates small improvements in both partnership and performance.

## The Ultimate Goal

Ultimately, coaching is about creating the conditions that help humans make better decisions for horses. When an instructor prioritizes the horse's experience and fosters a culture of curiosity, they do more than teach someone how to ride; they advocate for a better future for the entire equestrian community. As the mantra goes: "Knowledge informs practice. Reflection changes practice."



# Events & Competitions

## •Clinics •Competitions •Community

***Bringing together dressage, eventing, schooling shows, recognized competitions, clinics, camps, and educational opportunities into one easy-to-follow event hub. Whether you're looking for your next competition, planning your season, or simply staying connected to what's happening around the region, this section, in addition to the website calendars is your go-to source for all things GDCTA and beyond. Check back each month and never miss an opportunity to ride, learn, compete, and grow.***



# 2026

### January

| Su | Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |

### February

| Su | Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |

### March

| Su | Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | 30 | 31 | | | | |

### April

| Su | Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | | |

### May

| Su | Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31 | | | | | | |

### June

| Su | Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | | | | |

### July

| Su | Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | |

### August

| Su | Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | 1 |
| 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 30 | 31 | | | | | |

### September

| Su | Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | | | |

### October

| Su | Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |

### November

| Su | Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | 30 | | | | | |

### December

| Su | Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Jan 1 | New Year's Day |
| Jan 19 | Martin Luther King Jr. Day |
| Feb 14 | Valentine's Day |
| Feb 16 | Presidents' Day |
| Mar 17 | St. Patrick's Day |
| Apr 5 | Easter Sunday |
| Apr 6 | Easter Monday |
| Apr 15 | Tax Day |
| May 5 | Cinco de Mayo |
| May 10 | Mother's Day |
| May 25 | Memorial Day |
| Jun 14 | Flag Day |
| Jun 19 | Juneteenth |
| Jun 21 | Father's Day |
| Jul 3 | 'Independence Day' day off |
| Jul 4 | Independence Day |
| Sep 7 | Labor Day |
| Oct 12 | Columbus Day |
| Oct 31 | Halloween |
| Nov 3 | Election Day |
| Nov 11 | Veterans Day |
| Nov 26 | Thanksgiving Day |
| Nov 27 | Black Friday |
| Dec 24 | Christmas Eve |
| Dec 25 | Christmas Day |
| Dec 31 | New Year's Eve |

***GDCTA Calendar: https://www.gdcta.org/events***

MASTERSON METHOD®
Certified Practitioner Equine & Canine

Shannon McBride
Certified MMCP Equine & Canine

ForwardFluidity.com
forwardfluidity@gmail.com
706-389-5292

## GEORGIA EQUESTRIAN WANTED

Help market my Grounded Rider coaching business in Georgia.

**Marketing experience required.**

Paid, project-based opportunity.

**jamrockcoachingconsultant@gmail.com**

JAMROCK

# The Priceless Value of the Show Ring: Why Horse Shows are Worth Every Penny

*By GDCTA Contributor*

It is often muttered among equestrians that an “affordable horse show” is an absolute oxymoron. Between spiraling entry fees, mandatory association registrations, and high-end show saddles pushing past the $5,000 mark, the financial reality of stepping under the arena lights can feel staggering. A cost comparison across regions, such as data compiled by the Georgia Dressage and Combined Training Association (GDCTA), confirms that regional and national championships are massive investments. Yet, looking strictly at the ledger ignores the profound return on investment that horse shows offer. Exhibiting horses is not merely an expensive hobby; it is a masterclass in dedication, a unique driver of athletic inspiration, and a powerful celebration of the human-animal bond.

The post-Olympic boom consistently highlights a fascinating trend: whenever the Games conclude, public interest in athletic sports skyrockets. The breathtaking performances on the global stage inspire a new generation to dream of their own gold-medal moments. While the elite top 5% of Olympians enjoy lucrative sponsorship deals and commercial fame, the other 95% of world-class athletes are just like everyday equestrians—struggling to find a balance between their finances and the sports they love.

Consider a financial parallel to elite figure skating. An aspiring skater faces $120-an-hour private coaching, thousands in ice time, up to $5,000 for choreography, and $10,000 for a single costume—all to conquer a routine lasting fewer than five minutes. Equestrians face similar, and often greater, pressures. A horse in full-time board and training easily commands $1,500 to $2,500 a month. Our "costumes" involve tailored jackets, boots, and hats that match a skater's wardrobe budget, while our equipment list—from specialized work bridles to engineered footing and routine veterinary therapies—grows exponentially because we are managing a living, breathing partner.

So, why do we do it? Because horse shows provide an irreplaceable arena for personal and athletic growth. They validate the grueling hours spent in the training barn. The show ring demands that a hybrid team of dedicated professionals and passionate volunteers come together to create a platform where true sportsmanship is forged. In an era where digital distractions dominate, horse shows teach young riders accountability, resilience in the face of defeat, and the unmatched work ethic required to care for an animal under pressure.

While there is undeniable peace and satisfaction to be gained from cultivating a relationship with a horse on a quiet backyard trail, the show circuit pushes that partnership to its absolute peak. It forces a level of clear communication and mutual trust between horse and human that can only be tested in a competitive environment. Where there is a will, careful budgeting, and community support, there is a way to bridge the financial gap. Horse shows may always be expensive, but the character they build, the dreams they inspire, and the bonds they solidify remain entirely priceless.

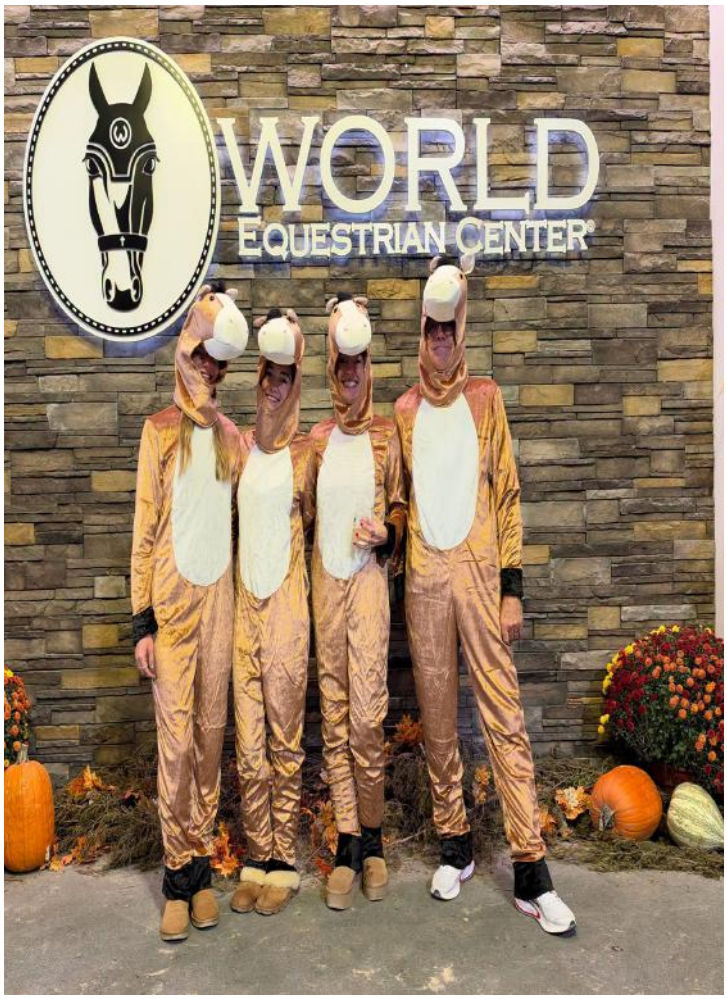
Musical Freestyle Production

JGS Production
MUSIC DESIGN AND EDITING
www.JGSproduction.com/freestyle
352-281-4245

Susannah Hamlin
CUSTOM CHOREOGRAPHY
susannahhamlindressage.com
susannahrhamlin@gmail.com





# Ride Smarter, Keep Showing Up

Every rider faces setbacks, whether they are physical limitations that come with age or a disappointing weekend at a competition. But according to Olympic riders Laura Graves and Boyd Martin, success isn't determined by perfect rides or youthful athleticism—it's built through resilience and consistency.

Their message is simple: ride the body you have today, not the one you remember. As riders gain experience, timing, feel, and strategy often become greater assets than strength, allowing many adult amateurs to continue improving well into their 50s and 60s. Rather than striving for textbook perfection, effective riders focus on giving their horses clear, consistent aids they can understand and trust.

The same mindset applies after setbacks. Everyone has difficult rides, but the riders who continue to progress are the ones who get back in the saddle the next day. Consistent, everyday work—even when conditions are less than ideal—is what transforms temporary disappointments into long-term growth.

In the end, resilience isn't about avoiding challenges. It's about adapting, showing up, and trusting that steady, thoughtful work will always outperform fleeting moments of brilliance.


SPORTS PERFORMANCE TRAINING

*"Love talking to Cheryl Williams! She has been with me throughout show season and even during my off season. Anyone looking for a sports/competition specialist, she's your pick! She understands the equestrian world and is amazing. Now that I have found her I can't imagine my career without her support! Thank you, Cheryl! Thank you!!"*

-Ashley Marascalco
USDF Bronze, Silver, and Gold Medalist

BECOMING THE VERY BEST YOU CAN BE DOESN'T HAPPEN BY ACCIDENT!

Maximize your full athletic potential! Changing your mindset is the secret to better performnce and getting into the zone!

To improve your riding results, contact Cheryl today!

**CHERYL WILLIAMS, L.C.S.W., B.C.D.**
**SPORTS PERFORMANCE TRAINING SPECIALIST**
**770-402-1666**




# Your Guide to GDCTA Awards

Whether you compete at USEF/USDF/USEA shows or at GDCTA-recognized schooling shows, there's likely an award with your name on it. Here's a quick tour.



## The Basics

- Be a GDCTA member and **opt in** to the "Recognized" or "Schooling Show" program on your membership form *before* earning scores. Participation isn't automatic.
- The awards year runs **October 1 to September 30**.
- Scores earned at GDCTA-hosted shows **count twice** (except the new Horse of the Year scores which only count once.
- Year-end standings are locked after **November 15** *unless otherwise noted.*

## Year-End Awards

- **Recognized Dressage and Eventing:** Dressage Training through Grand Prix, plus Freestyle and Young Horse, and eventing Starter through Intermediate/Advanced, with Open, Adult Amateur and Junior/Young Rider divisions.
- **Horse of the Year:** Lower- and Upper-Level titles in both dressage and eventing.
- **Schooling Show Awards:** Dressage Intro through Second Level and Combined Training/Eventing Amoeba through Training, with rider-only Junior awards for those without a horse and Special Needs divisions.
- **12 and Under Excellence Award:** Honors the best single score.

## Special Awards

- **Peaches & Perfect Circles Club:** Score 70% or higher in any dressage test.
- **Gallop & Glory:** Finish an eventing competition with a score under 30%.
- **Liz Faso Memorial Volunteer of the Year:** Cash prizes of $1,000, $750 and $500, plus a $250 raffle for any member logging 24+ hours.
- **Donald & Elizabeth Faso Perpetual Trophy:** Recognizes distinguished service. Send nominations to admin@gdcta.org by **November 30**.
- **President's Award:** Given at the President's discretion.

**Horse Show Awards**

- **Pam Kimble Memorial Trophy:** Highest average score for a Junior/Young Rider at USDF shows.
- **CA Solant Perpetual Trophy:** Highest average for an Adult Amateur at GDCTA-hosted USDF shows.
- **Ico Ila Pony Awards *sponsored by Janie Pride*:** Top pony/rider combinations. Notify Janie Pride janiepride@yahoo.com to enter.
- **Collegiate Best Score:** For college students in dressage and combined training.
- **Peri Lambros Memorial FEI High Point:** Awarded at each show.
- **Vintage Adult High Point (50+) – Open and AA:** Sponsored by the Harbin Agency.
- **Harbin Agency High Point:** Training through Fourth Level, plus FEI.

## Summer Finals

Held each August at Wills Park, the Finals feature the **Adult Amateur Medal** (Training Level Test 3, 60% minimum) and the youth **Dressage Seat Equitation Medal**, with trophies, ribbons and a saddle pad for champions.

## Youth Letterman Jacket

Student riders 22 and under who meet the grade, volunteer, and score requirements can earn a jacket through the Recognized or Schooling Show program. You must apply by **October 15th**, and it's a lifetime achievement.

Full rules are on the Awards page at gdcta.org.

Check your name on the participant lists, and good luck!



# USEF Rule Changes Approved by the US Equestrian Board of Directors During Their Mid-Year Meeting

All of these were approved by the USEF Board on 6/16/2026. Today is 11/11/2026, so the 9/1/2026 change is already in effect and the rest take effect **12/1/2026**. This summary comes from the proposal intent statements in your report. The exact rule wording sits on the pages you linked, which I haven't pulled.



## Dressage (DR)

### Welfare and equipment

- **DR101.1:** Adds a statement of the principles of dressage supporting ethical treatment of horses.
- **DR118.2 (USDF):** Expands the Purpose of the Levels to cover horse welfare, harmony and ease of performance. Riders are responsible for choosing a level where horse and rider are both competent.
- **DR120.4 (FEI alignment):** Only smooth rowels without projections are permitted.
- **DR121:** Snaffle bridle only at Third Level and below. Double bridles are allowed from Fourth Level, which has a six-year minimum age.
- **DR121.3 (FEI alignment):** Crownpiece rules now match FEI rules and the FEI Tack App.
- **DR121.8 (Extraordinary, effective 9/1/2026):** Fly hoods no longer have to be removed for some horses at post-test tack checks, because of safety incidents.

### Scoring and procedure

- **DR119.1:** Reorganizes and clarifies DR119, and fixes the conflict between DR119.2 and DR129 on freestyle qualification.
- **DR122.3:** Use-of-voice penalty becomes a single 2% deduction at the end of the test, matching FEI. Previously it was a deduction per movement.
- **DR122.5:** Cleans up confusing and contradictory language.
- **DR133.1:** Ties are only broken for the top three places. Fourth and below no longer need tie-breaking tests.

### Dressage Sport Horse Breeding (DSHB)

- **DR203.7:** Clarifies which classes geldings of different ages may enter.
- **DR208:** Removes the requirement for a veterinarian on the grounds for DSHB in-hand classes.

- **DR209.1:** Removes an outdated rule.
- **DR211.4:** Removes an outdated rule and clarifies how ties are broken when judges officiate together.

## Eventing (EV)



### Penalties and procedure

- **EV108.4:** Horses withdrawn from an FEI division after dressage, for reasons unrelated to welfare, may move to the national event at a level they're qualified for, at the Ground Jury's discretion.
- **EV113.1:** All Dangerous Riding must receive a Recorded Warning. The Ground Jury may add 25 penalties or elimination, which aligns with FEI.
- **EV122.2:** Clarifies when a missed marker occurs.
- **EV127.8 (#209-25):** Compulsory Retirement applies only when show jumping is run before cross-country.
- **EV127.8 (#217-25, USEA):** Safety-education change aimed at riders moving up the levels. The intent statement gives no detail on the mechanism.
- **EV156.2:** Fitness to compete now covers overall wellbeing, not just soundness. The Ground Jury President can rely on support from the TD and veterinarian.

### Appendices: specs, eligibility, attire, equipment

- **App. 1 (#214-25):** Clarifies distance requirements for ditches and steps at Beginner Novice and Novice.
- **App. 2:** Removes the Training Level MER allowance for the Modified Classic Series. One or more Modified MERs are now required.
- **App. 3 (#157-25):** Modified cross-country dimensions and speeds change to match the FEI 1-star specifications.
- **App. 3 (#215-25):** Fine-tunes show jumping specs, including some spreads, for a safer relationship to height.
- **App. 9:** Eases dressage and show jumping neckwear to a minimum of a shirt collar, and allows all conservative breeches colors.
- **App. 0 (#218-25):** Ear plugs are permitted in all phases, so ear hoods no longer need removing for inspection.

### Related General Rules for Eventing

- **GR1040.1:** Dually licensed FEI/Federation TDs and Stewards may serve in both roles at dually licensed events.
- **GR1211.4:** Creates an exemption within GR1211 and clarifies how to count horses under EV153, to reduce the number of TDs organizers must hire.

# GDCTA Board 2026

## OFFICERS

**President:** Caren Caverly
**VP Dressage:** Abi Kroupa
**VP Eventing:** Joanne Morse
**Treasurer:** Peter West
**Corresponding Secretary:** Carol Tresan
**Recording Secretary:** Ashley Boyd

## MEMBERS AT LARGE

Lindsey Burns
Doreen Durr
Noel Muehlbauer
Danielle Perry
Liz Molloy
Dianne Rawlston

## YOUTH MEMBERS

TBA

***The 2026 Board was seated at the January meeting***

GDCTA
Georgia Dressage & Combined Training Association

## Committees 2026

1) **Nominating –** 2 Non-outgoing board members
2) **Grievance –** 2 VPs, only if there's a complaint
3) **Finance –**
   a. Chair – Peter West
   b. Sponsorship - Caren Caverly, Aly Elliott
4) **Awards –**
   a. Grants – Danielle Perry
5) **Award Gala –**
   a. Chair – Caren Caverly
   b. Silent Auction – Joanne Morse, Abi Kroupa
   c. Barn Raffle – Danielle Perry
6) **Education –**
   a. Chair – Caren Caverly
   b. Clinics – Caren Caverly, Joanne Morse, Abi Kroupa
   c. Kudzu – Danielle Perry
   d. L Program – Marian Bickers
7) **Youth –**
   a. Chair – Joanne Morse, Abi Kroupa
   b. Schooling or Grassroots – Open
   c. Recognized – Lindsey Burns
   d. Collegiate – Amanda Garner
8) **Communication –**
   a. Chair – Joanne Morse
   b. Newsletter – Penny Morse, June Brewer
   c. Website – June Brewer
   d. Social Media – June Brewer
9) **Show –**
   a. Chair – Julie Shannon
   b. Recognized – Caren Caverly
   c. Schooling – Caren Caverly
      1. Horse Show Recognition –
   d. Regionals 2026
      1. Chair – Caren Caverly
   e. Volunteer Coordinator – Aly Elliott

## Newsletter Submission Guidelines

Collected Remarks is the official publication of the Georgia Dressage and Combined Training Association, Inc.

(GDCTA), a non-profit, exempt corporation organized under Section 501© (3). It is the monthly newsletter designed to inform, educate and entertain the membership. The Editors encourage members to submit original advertising, articles, photographs, and artwork for possible publication. The editors of 'Collected Remarks' reserve the right to reject any advertising or article deemed to be unsuitable for this newsletter.

- Editorial contributions of 600 words or less (accompanied by photos with permission to publish, if applicable) are welcomed although publication cannot be guaranteed.
- GDCTA is not responsible for the opinions and statements expressed in signed articles or paid advertisements.

GDCTA Collected Remarks welcomes submissions of quality color dressage and sport-horse photographs. All mounted riders must be wearing appropriate headgear (a safety helmet, a derby, or a top hat). Photos must be accompanied by complete captions, including the full names of all subjects.

Only high resolution (300dpi) Jpeg, PNG, or PDF files will be accepted.

Please submit electronically to designonpenny@yahoo.com and webmaster@gdcta.org.

## NEWSLETTER ADVERTISING

For information, please email: webmaster@gdcta.org

Ad space is limited. Scheduled ads are due by the 5th of the month prior to publication. Information about advertising is also available online at: GDCTA.org/advertise

The deadline for articles is also the 5th of the month prior to publication. Advertisements and Articles should be emailed to: webmaster@gdcta.org

*The advertisements contained herein are paid advertisements. The information is provided by the service provider. The GDCTA makes no specific recommendations for any particular company, individual, or service.*

## ORGANIZE A GDCTA-RECOGNIZED SCHOOLING SHOW

If you are organizing a schooling show and wish to have it GDCTA Recognized (so riders can use the scores
towards our year-end awards), submit the Recognition form. Shows won't be added to our calendars until the Recognition form is received.

Please review the other information and specifications/guidelines we have provided. For specific questions regarding recognition procedures, email Carol Tresan at Happy_horses@hotmail.com

Recognition details:
https://gdcta.wildapricot.org/GDCTA-Recognition

## DISCLOSURE

Complete GDCTA Board of Directors meeting minutes are available upon request to the Recording Secretary

Financial records are available upon written request to the Treasurer

For information regarding Awards, Show Recognition, Membership, Education or the Website, contact the appropriatechairperson on the website Contact Us page.

*https://gdcta.org/Contact*

# Georgia Dressage and Combined Training Association

**Regular Meeting**
August 17, 2026

President Caren Caverly called the membership meeting of the GDCTA to order on August 17, 2026, at 7:00 pm on Zoom.

Ashley Boyd performed a roll call. A quorum of the board consisting of Caren Caverly, Abigail Kroupa, Carol Tresan, Joanne Morse, Ashley Boyd, Peter West, Liz Molloy, Dorren Durr-Sullivan, Lindsey Burns, Noel Muehlbauer, Daniel Perry, and Dee Rawlston were present. Deb Crosby was present as a guest. The minutes from July 20, 2026, Board Meeting were emailed to the board. Joanne motioned to accept minutes; Daniel seconded. The board voted to accept the minutes.

**Treasurer's Report** – (Peter): July had a loss of $4,300 which was from the grants that we awarded

**VP Dressage Report** – (Abi): Dressage4Kids is coming up with entries already coming in. Endel Ots Clinic coming up.

**VP Combined Training** – (Joanne): Had a nice meeting with Stable View and discussed running a bigger camp with dressage-only being added on. Looking at doing two-day dressage camp and then doing the show that happens afterwards.

**Membership Report** – (Mary Lou): Still down. Joanne asked if we could get a breakdown of demographics so we can figure out where we are losing members.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

• **Communication** (Joanne): September newsletter is mostly done. If anybody has something to submit, do it now.
• **Show Committee** (Caren): Summer Finals were one of the smaller ones we have had. Part of the problem was Bouckaert changed their date to the same weekend as ours. We are going to ask Bouckaert to not do the same weekend. It ended up being okay because we did not have as many arenas as usual. There were additional issues with the park and Caren logged a complaint about several issues. Caren is working on next year's schedule. Next show is Labor Day Classic I & II - we have 56 entries in 1 and 42 in 2. We should get more entries. Regionals has opened and we have 35 entries so far.
• **Finance** (Peter): We have created a new finance committee and it has been great. Joanne and Abi are on the committee and it has been helpful. Joanne sent an outline of the purpose of the committee. Going to look at marketing ideas, etc. They are working on being more efficient. Abigail brought up what to do when we do not have regionals and what our deficit is that year. We need to figure out things to do when we do not have regionals to make enough to cover costs. We got a decent response to the other survey we sent out so there is a discussion about sending one out that if people feel the benefit of being a USDF Affiliate. Discussion within the board about benefits of being an affiliate versus not being one. GDCTA pays USDF approximately $20,000 a year versus $150 for USEA. Joanne motioned to do a survey with the members to find out what value they find from the USDF, Lindsey seconded it.
• **Youth Program** (Joanne): Dressage 4 Kids is getting ready to start in September 4-6. There will be a zoom on Wednesday to talk about what we need for it. Joanne wants to see if youth can help with social media so that we can cater to them on social media. Noel recommends auctioning off a "show takeover on social media".
• **Awards** (Danielle): Everybody has been notified and paid.
• **Education** (Joanne and Abi): nothing else to add see above
• **Gala** (Caren): The finance committee had an idea about the online auction and how much we pay for it. There is a free website – Givebutter - that she wants to look into. Wills Park uses it, so they are going to look into it.
• **Regionals** (Caren): Two months out. We really need people to step up and help get sponsors and vendors. Joanne asked about getting someone to do it on a commission basis. Joanne asked Penny if she would be willing to do it and Penny said yes.

Peter recommended offering the same deal to Penny that Aly has for sponsors, etc. Carol motioned to offer Penny the job doing sponsorship for the club, and Lindsey seconded. The board voted and it passed. Joanne abstained from the vote.

• **Nominating** (Lindsey, Li and Doreen): Lindsey said most people want to think about it. The deadline is the next meeting.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Email Blasts** – (Caren): Labor Day, D for K, Regionals
**Horse Registration** – (Noel): Noel sent a document out sharing what she has come up with. Discussion about what would be included for a Horse of the Year Award and how it would work as far as grouping and who is eligible for awards. Discussion about pricing and costs and tiering the cost based on when they sign up. We can work on prizes and make them special and desirable. Abigail motioned to add Horse of the Year for USDF and USEA for next year. Carol seconded and the board voted to accept the program.
**Trailering Clinic** – (Carol, Ashley, and Lindsey): Nothing current to report. Abigail recommended reaching out to Pony Club to see if they want to partner on it and have a pony club kid teach it.

**NEW BUSINESS**

• **New members** for September – Doreen

Joanne motioned to adjourn, and Danielle seconded. The board voted to adjourn.

Meeting Adjourned.

Meetings are held the third Monday of every month at 7:00 PM via Zoom. If you would like to join a meeting. email Caren at ccaverly@comcast.net



# *Thank you for your generous gifts!*

*Before we list the GDCTA GOATs, we must clarify who those GOATs are.*
*The GOATS are the benefactors, donors, and sponsors of this organization.*

### *Sponsors*

Atlanta Saddlery
Bouckaert Farm
The Harbin Agency
The Kroupa Reall Estate Team
Riding Warehouse
StableSecretary
Twenty For Carrots

### *Donors*

Leslie Allen
Sandra Almond
Eliot Axt
Julie Bakken
Caryl Berzack *
Beth Bishop
Meghan Cameron
Jamie Comstock
Lisa Curtin *
Ains Cushion
Evelyn Dampier
Terr Davis
Susan Day *
Abbey Dondanville
Anne Dutton
Kimberly Faist
Robin Felton
Candice Flig
Kaley Fuller
Kathy Gilker
Rhonda Hamel
Amy Hoffield
Michele Jester
Betsy Kaywood
Holly Kohaut
Lois Lassiter
Sydney Lee *
Linda Light
Sara Lowrey
Ashley Marascalco
Katie Mattick
Jennifer Melcher
Christi Meyers
Crockett Miller
Carol Morgan
Brie Murray
Cara Oswalt
Robin Puryear
Lou Roth
Elin Sebert
Isabella Smith
Nancy Thrasher
Claudia Tomaselli
Alexa Wegner
Dorothy Whelchel
Sandra Wight
Monica Williamson
Virginia Woodcock
Mary Youngblood *

### *Championship & AFND Sponsors*

***Gold Sponsor:*** Elite Equestrian Supply
***Silver Sponsor:*** Purina Animal Health
***Pewter Sponsors:*** Caren Caverly, International Riding Helmets, Southern Crescent Equine Services

***Arena Sponsors:***
CU @ X
Custom Saddlery
The Kroupa Team Real Estate
Riding Warehouse
Team Tate Dressage
Wilson Custom Products

***Class Sponsors:***
Bright Lights Farm
Carla Jimmerson BDF Tag You're It
Carla Vaneffen
Elite Equestrian Supply
Foxberry Farm
Frog Catcher Farm
JJarnigan Saddle Fit
Katie Patton
Lovingston Dressage
Southern Crescent Equine Services
Stal810
Willow Dell Equestrian



GOAT—Greatest Of All Time

# Saddle Up for More Than Just Ribbons 🐴

What if your next big win wasn't just in the ring, but also in the friendships and connections you made along the way? 🏆✨

At GDCTA, we're more than an organization—we're a community. From schooling shows to year-end awards and clinics, we offer endless opportunities to elevate your equestrian journey. And the best part? You'll be surrounded by people who share your love for horses and the lifestyle that comes with it. 🐴❤️

Whether you're here for the ribbons or the ride, we'd love to welcome you into the GDCTA family.

*Join today!*

https://gdcta.org/join-us

