

## Houston Dressage Society

### Show Volunteer Job Descriptions

Borrowed from Dallas Dressage Club and amended by HDS October 2005

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Be assured you are really appreciated - no show could function without the volunteers!!!!!!

Always arrive at the show venue 15 mins before the start of your shift to sign in and be briefed by the volunteer coordinator. Depending on the area you volunteering in you will be given a copy of the show schedule and a radio to communicate with other key show people. Keep radio communications brief and succinct.

At the Championships and Spring Shows you will be given a volunteer T-shirt to wear, this will help competitors and officials recognize you.

### Warm Up- Ring Steward

#### Job Description:

The main job of the warm-up ring steward (a.k.a. paddock master) is to ensure that riders have a safe place to warm up and are ready to go into the competition ring on time. You'll keep track of horses as they come and go, notify riders if the show is running ahead or behind schedule, and notify management of any no-shows.

Maintaining safety in the area includes keeping people on foot from entering the arena; making sure that longeing is only done in designated areas; limiting riders in the warm-up arena to those preparing to enter the competition arena.

You will be close contact with the ring stewards by radio.

**YOU MUST INFORM THE TD IF THERE ARE PROBLEMS WITH HORSES OR COMPETITORS** -e.g. Riders being abusive to their horses with whips or spurs, riding for excessive amount of time in the heat. Someone falls or is bucked off their horse. Un-sportsman like behavior!

#### Job Requirements:

No prior experience is needed, but you do need to be comfortable working around horses and know how to keep yourself out of harm's way. Patience and tact are needed, as you will be dealing with competitors, coaches/trainers, parents and spouses.

### What to Expect:

If you are not working in an indoor or covered arena, some form of cover will be provided. There is usually a lot of traffic around the warm-up arena - horses coming and going, trainers/coaches working with their students, grooms and well-wishers. When the arena is busy and there is a lot of horses coming and going, you'll spend a lot of time on your feet - primarily to keep yours out of underneath theirs! You probably won't be able to view the actual tests as they are being ridden, but you will get to see the warm-up and will usually pick up some tips on how to ride a test or deal with specific problems in a test. You'll have plenty of people to visit with and can always have friends stop by.

### Ring Steward - Competition Arena & Equipment Checker

#### Job Description:

The two jobs of ring steward and equipment checker are usually done by a single person. The job of the ring steward is to make sure competitors are ready to go into the ring on time. They may start to walk around the outside of the arena as soon as the competitor before them has finished their test, saluted and turned away from the judge to walk out of the arena. The job of equipment checker is to perform random inspections once the competitor has completed a ride and **notify the TD of any issues**, for example whip is too long, or the bit is illegal. Depending on the level of competition will depend on how often equipment is checked - guidelines will be given at each show as well as detailed descriptions of legal equipment.

#### Job Requirements:

No prior experience is needed. You need to be comfortable working around and with horses, in addition to keeping yourself out of harm's way; you must be willing to stick your fingers in their mouths for the bit check. (This is not as bad as it sounds, and you will have protective gloves.) Patience and tact are needed; you'll be dealing mainly with competitors and their horses.

#### What to expect:

If you are not working in an indoor or covered arena, some form of cover will be provided. The competition arena is much calmer than the warm-up arena, you only have one horse coming and going at a time, and most of the competitors "entourage" are headed for the stands (before test) or stable (after test). On the

positive side, you get to watch all the tests. On the down side, you have to perform random equipment checks, which include the dreaded bit check. (Really, it's not that bad.) You'll be provided with protective gloves and you're basically checking to make sure he horse has an acceptable bit in its mouth, vs. something non acceptable (barbed wire or some other strange contraption). There will be a folder with pictures of legal and illegal bits for you to refer to - if in doubt speak with the show TD.

## **Scribe**

### Job Description:

The job of the scribe is to make sure the judges have the proper tests for each ride, ensure that the test is marked with the correct competitor's number, and write down the judge's comments exactly as given. Your job is to take notes and make sure all the correct blanks are filed in.\* Note to remember always check the horses bridle number with the test sheet and the show schedule.

**USDF guidelines** are available on the HDS website.

### Job Requirements:

For rated shows, you **MUST** have prior experience. (Schooling shows are a great place to get that experience.) You must be able to write fast and legibly - at the same time! And only use the accepted abbreviations!! You should be organized and able to multitask - judges do not always give scores and comments in order, so you must keep up with the judge and make sure no movements are skipped. (Although not required, the ability to read minds does help.)

### What to Expect:

This is definitely a "desk job", but not in an office and not always with a desk. You'll have something to write on (desk, clipboard) and you'll have some type of cover to protect you from sun and rain.

On the upside, you will learn a lot from the scores and comments - both about the judge (what they look for, pet peeves, etc.) and on how to ride a test. However, this is a job where the old adages "to be seen and not heard" and "speak only when spoken to" apply - **BIG TIME!** If you're really lucky, the judge **MAY** ask you if you have any questions during breaks. You also may be invited to have lunch or dinner with the judge. On the downside, you don't get to watch the rides - you'll be too

busy writing. You might be able to catch glimpses of lower level rides, but the higher the level, the more movements there are, and the faster the comments come.

Scribing is one of the more popular volunteer positions. Since judges prefer to have the same scribe for the entire show, the more time you can work (weekend vs. day. Vs. half day) the more likely you are to get the job and the perks that go with it.

## **Runner**

### Job Description:

The primary responsibility of a runner is to get completed score sheets from the judges to the office in a timely manner. Runners may also be asked to deliver messages, refreshments, and supplies to the judge and/or scribe.

### Job Requirements:

No experience is needed. You don't even need to know much about horses - except to steer clear for safety reasons. Although you don't actually have to "run", you will be on your feet and moving the whole time. This is not a job for those with low energy or those who get tired easily. There will always be plenty of FREE refreshments for you, keep drinking!!!

### What to Expect:

You'll be on your feet and moving. Although you'll have access to the test, you don't get to read them. Nor do you get to hang out and visit with all the people you'll see. The benefit - lots of walking. Which, according to [www.theramblers.org.uk](http://www.theramblers.org.uk) "studies show that walking can:

- 1 Reduce the risk of coronary heart disease and stroke
- 2 Lower blood pressure
- 3 Reduce high cholesterol and improve blood lipid profile
- 4 Reduce body fat
- 5 Enhance mental well being
- 6 Increase bone density, hence helping to prevent osteoporosis
- 7 Reduce the risk of cancer of the colon
- 8 Reduce the risk of non-insulin dependent diabetes
- 9 Help to control body weight
- 10 Help osteoarthritis

## 11 Help flexibility and co-ordination hence reducing the risk of falls"

### **Scorer**

#### Job Description:

The scorer calculates the overall score for each test based on the individual scores given by the judge using either an adding machine or computer.

#### Job Requirements:

You must be comfortable using a ten key adding machine and a computer. This is a great job for the non-horse person or for those who prefer a climate-controlled environment.

#### What to Expect:

You will be under the supervision of the Show Secretary.

This is the ultimate "desk job" and the only volunteer position where you don't have to worry about the weather forecast! Downside, you're in an office, you won't get to watch any of the rides. Upside, you're in an office, think "air-conditioning". You are also one of the few people who get to see the completed tests - both with comments and final score. And, if you're in the show office, you'll learn a lot about the inner workings of a show.

### **Awards**

#### Job Description:

Competitors pick up their completed test and any ribbons or awards at the awards table. This volunteer is responsible for filing test as they are delivered from the show office, ensuring that competitors or their representatives sign for their test, and handing out the correct ribbons/awards.

#### Job Requirements:

You do not need to be a "horse-person" to do this job. You do need to be organized, patient, and tactful.

#### What to Expect:

You will be sitting at a table with some form of cover. Be prepared to answer the questions "why isn't my test here yet?", "when will the tests be here?" and

"when/where will the scores be posted?" at least a few hundred times a day. Competitors, volunteers, and visitors will assume that you know everything about the show and what is going on. You're not expected to, but you will need to be prepared to direct these questions to the appropriate place - if in doubt you can direct people to the show manager. You may or may not get to see any of the rides, but you will meet a lot of people.

## **Judge Hospitality**

### **Job Description:**

Your job is to make sure the judges are where they need to be when they need to be there, have what they need, are well fed, and comfortable. You will provide transportation between their hotel and the show grounds and possible between the airport and hotel. You are responsible for their meals and may also be asked to take them out to dinner.

### **Job Requirements:**

Good driving skills and a clean, dependable vehicle. Friendly and respectful attitude - you will be the judges first face-to-face- contact.

### **What to Expect:**

In addition to providing transportation for the judges, you'll need to make sure they are well fed. This includes arranging for breakfast at the hotel or show ground, taking /placing/picking up lunch orders, and either escorting them to diner or directing them to restaurants within walking distance of their hotel. You'll need to check on them during the show and make sure they are comfortable (do they need blankets, fans, etc.?) and make the occasional Starbucks run. This is a great chance to meet and talk to the judges.

## **Set up & Tear Down**

### **Job Description:**

Rings, tents, tables must be set up the day before the show, chairs must be set out for judges and volunteers, banners and signs must be hung, etc., etc., etc. After the last test is ridden, all these things must be broken down and collected.

### Job Requirements:

Willing attitude, good back, common sense.

### What to Expect:

Basic physical labor. Not back-breaking, but you may sweat some. This isn't a very exciting or glamorous job, but it is critical for the show to run. You may pick up some things about show management.