

## DRESSAGE SA YOUTH SQUAD CRITERIA 2026



### PURPOSE

Dressage South Australia (DSA) is committed to encouraging, training and developing young dressage riders of all levels. The newly developed program incorporates the following squads.

#### **YOUTH DEVELOPMENT SQUAD** (8 to 21 years of age)

(Official EA Classes Prelim -Elementary, FEI Pony, FEI Children's & FEI Juniors)

The objective of this squad is to identify and recognise talented dressage combinations and to support their development through the provision of high-quality coaching, both mounted and unmounted. The program seeks to enhance riders' knowledge of the horse, improve performance in dressage competition, and monitor rider progression through the levels. In addition, the Youth Squad fosters a supportive and inclusive environment that encourages personal development and peer connection.

The overarching objective is to bring young riders together to enjoy learning and to prepare riders to represent South Australia at interstate and national-level competitions.

#### **EMERGING RIDERS SQUAD** (8 to 25 years of age)

(Official EA classes: Medium – Advanced, FEI Young Riders, FEI U25 GP Tests & FEI Small/Medium/Big)

This squad will consist of a maximum of the 4 best performed combinations as per the applications received, having competed in the outlined classes in the calendar year. Squads will be reviewed at the end of each year with a mid-year review. This pathway will aim to assist talented combinations to further their equestrian development with a view to being selected onto Australian National Squads, as well as identify talented riders and assist them to further their knowledge and abilities in the sport of dressage.

### ELIGIBILITY

1. Riders need to be a current competitive member of ESA.
2. Meet the age requirements
3. Horses must be registered with the EA, micro-chipped and have a current competition license.
4. Riders must comply with the current Dressage Rules.
5. Qualifications can be attained at EA Dressage events and Interschool dressage events

## QUALIFICATIONS

SQUAD	LEVELS	CONDITIONS
<b>YOUTH DEVELOPMENT SQUAD</b> (6x Positions)	EA Preliminary	Open for riders 8 to 21 years of age that compete at EA Official Dressage classes who aspire to ride at a higher level and are showing some talent.
	EA Novice	
	FEI Children's	Riders must have an ESA Dressage card to be eligible and submit 3x dressage scores from the tests outlined, from the previous 12 month-period from closing date of applications. *Interscholar Test will be accepted provided other criteria is met
	EA Elementary	
	FEI Pony	
<b>EMERGING RIDERS SQUAD</b> (4x Positions)	EA Medium	Open for riders 8 to 25 years of age that compete at EA official Medium level and above who aspire to ride at a higher level.
	EA Advanced	
	FEI Young Riders	
	FEI Small	Riders must have an ESA Dressage card to be eligible and submit 3 dressage scores from the tests outlined, from the previous 12 month-period from closing date of applications.
	FEI Medium	
	FEI Big	
	FEI U25 GP Tests	

## YOUTH SQUAD COMBINATION SELECTION

Youth Development Squad - 6 positions

Emerging Riders Squad – 4 positions

**IF** the number of applications exceed the available spots, the selectors will use an average of the 3 submitted Dressage test percentages to determine the successful combinations, highest average being selected.

When comparing scores across levels, the scores will be weighted to provide an equality.

### Youth Development Squad

- Preliminary - No weighting
- Novice & FEI Children's – +2%
- Elementary & FEI Pony- +4%

### Emerging Riders Squad

- Medium - No weighting
- Advanced - +2%
- FEI YRs/Small Tour/Medium Tour/Big Tour - +4%

## BEING PART OF A TEAM

The focus of the squad is on commitment to being part of the team and embracing all the activities and opportunities provided.

The squad members will have priority access to high-performance on and off-horse training programs. It is expected that these riders will represent SA at Interstate and National Championship events whenever possible.

## SQUAD MEMBER BENEFITS

- will have express entry to on and off-horse training programs
- successful squad applicants will be listed in Moving Forward and on the DSA Facebook page and website.
- will be provided with a squad saddle cloth badge and jacket pin
- may be asked to be demonstration riders for judges' clinic and master classes
- will have access to presale tickets to attend master classes as a spectator before opening to the general public
- will have the opportunity to attend judges update sessions

# **SQUAD MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES**

## **Volunteer Requirements**

Must volunteer at a minimum of ONE South Australian Dressage Club event (Competitive or CR/Participation)

## **Conduct Requirements**

- Riders must comply with the current Dressage Rules
- Riders are role models for the sport and must conform to the EA Code of Conduct, Social
- Media Policy and Welfare of the Horse Policy
- Poor sportsmanship and inappropriate behaviour by squad members will not be tolerated.
- Combinations can be removed from the Squad at the discretion of the DSA Committee at any time if poor sportsmanship or inappropriate behaviour has been verified. Combinations will be formally notified of the decision and reasons will be outlined. Mentoring will be offered if the situation is appropriate with the aim of re-instatement
- Any rider that has disciplinary proceedings against them enforcing a term of suspension will automatically be removed from the squad for the remainder of the year
- If at any time a horse and/or rider become unavailable due to injury or illness for a period in excess of 6 months, or the horse is sold, DSA must be advised in writing and they will no longer be part of the squad
- At the time of the mid-year review if the competitor has not competed at an EA official competition in the previous 6 months on their selected squad horse, they will no longer be part of the squad
- Where a selected horse is unavailable to attend a clinic due to injury, riders may make a request to DSA to substitute another horse, each application will be considered on merit
- Riders may be included on the Squad on more than one horse (subject to the combinations meeting the criteria) but may only register one horse for clinics that are run, unless additional places are available and the organisers choose to offer places to riders with a second Squad horse
- The young riders will be seen as role models to their peers and their behaviour and adherence to the EA Code of Conduct must reflect this
- Riders may be asked to attend DSA events or Judges Clinics as demonstration rider/horse combinations from time to time
- Riders may be invited to attend user pays training clinics and/or workshops conducted by DSA/DJSC and should make every effort to attend
- Applications will be open through JotForm with the Squad announced once the selectors have reviewed the applications. Ratified decisions are final
- Riders will be notified by email of their successful selection.
- DSA reserves the right to review and amend the selection criteria and Squad numbers, as and when, required.

For any queries and information please contact:

**Natasha Cockburn**

**Youth Squad Coordinator - Dressage SA Committee**

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