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# eCentaur

## President's Message

Hello fellow RMDS members!

**I am honored to be your next president** and look forward to working with the amazing RMDS Board, Chairs, Chapters, and Members to continue promoting dressage in our region. I'm a big believer in collaborative work--together we can achieve great things. Being part of something bigger than ourselves allows us to connect with other like-minded people on a similar journey, enjoy our passion more, and encourage one another.

**A little about me:** I'm outgoing and enjoy meeting people. During my career I led a large nonprofit that served vulnerable and impoverished populations. I managed a large staff and a cadre of about 4,000 volunteers. I have experience dealing with challenging situations and troubleshooting. I also was responsible for handling administrative work such as managing board meetings, outreach, budgets, event planning, donor relations, grant writing, fund raising, and quality assurance.

**Please let me know how RMDS can help you.** I will be reaching out to the Committees and Clubs over the next few months to learn more about the work that you do and to get to know you better. I already know that RMDS is fortunate to have many members with tremendous talent, expertise, and experience. I can't wait to meet you!

**This coming year is going to be fabulous.** RMDS Championships are back! Our calendar is loaded with events, activities, shows and training opportunities. I hope you will make it a goal of yours to sign up, attend, and get involved. We will need lot of volunteers to run these opportunities. I have made some of my best friends ever through volunteering. I hope you will too.

**USDF Convention:** last month, RMDS was well represented by our volunteers at the annual convention in Kentucky. RMDS is one of the larger GMOS—

Group Member Organizations (of USDF) in the US. The convention brought together GMO volunteers from across the nation.

The most fruitful experience at the convention was spending time meeting people, chatting, and swapping ideas and lessons learned. I enjoyed the GMO roundtables, where people from the many GMOs attending shared best practices on how they manage fundraising, volunteers, competitions, clinics, and much more.

There were several committee meetings and a couple of educational sessions, including a presentation given by our very own Gwen Ka'awaloa on emergency preparedness in the event of a rider injury. There was a presentation about the new tests and proposed new rules were reviewed. Congrats to Heather Petersen, who was re-elected at the convention to serve as Region 5 Director.

The highlight was attending the Gala Dinner, where Gwen was awarded Volunteer of the Year for the entire country. We are very lucky to have her in RMDS. USDF President George Williams presented the awards. Many awards went out to RMDS members.

## January: Start Planning now—how will you improve your knowledge and dressage skills this month?

I highly recommend that members consider taking the **Scribe Training** offered by Grand Valley Dressage. I took this one-day course from Amber Benson in Grand Junction and by the time it was over, I was ready to scribe. The course offered practical information in the morning and in the afternoon, we used our new skills to role play with a judge and competitors riding tests. Volunteering as a scribe is very exciting and will help you understand what the judges like to see! I spent the weekend out in Grand Junction, met some amazing ladies and enjoyed the breathtaking beauty of the area. Consider carpooling with others.

**Our next RMDS Board Meeting is on Jan 12th.** All members should attend at least one meeting to learn more about this organization, get to know the leadership team, and find out how you might get involved. If you would like to attend via zoom, simply email us at [rmds@indra.org](mailto:rmds@indra.org).

**Get out and train.** On the weekend of Jan 28th, the Foothills Chapter Winter Clinic Series is hosting Maureen Sterling. This a terrific opportunity to learn new skills, get some great ideas and tips, and have a new set of eyes evaluate

you.

**RMDS Banquet:** The banquet is coming up soon! Meet new people, support fellow riders, enjoy a great meal among old friends, and shop at our silent auction. Click here for all the details: <https://wp.rmids.org/wp-content/uploads/2023-Banquet-Flyer.pdf>. Volunteers are needed to help set up the banquet and with the silent auction. If you would like to volunteer, please let our Central Office know at [RMDS@indra.org](mailto:RMDS@indra.org)

**Omnibus:** We need advertisers for the omnibus. We really need everyone's help. Please reach out to those you know that could benefit from advertising their product or service to our members. We have our media kit that you can send them for all the details.

[https://www.rmids.org/assets/pdfs/RMDS\\_MediaKit2023.pdf](https://www.rmids.org/assets/pdfs/RMDS_MediaKit2023.pdf)

Please let them know that we really appreciate their support and that this print magazine will be in everyone's hands throughout this year and after, especially with the new tests that are included in this publication.

**RMDS is a great organization**—it's yours and mine. I look forward to working with you all to continue our tradition of providing great training educational, and competition opportunities and a wonderful welcoming community.

Let's ride!

Sally O'Dwyer

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## Marketing Chair

We're looking for a Marketing Chair to help the Communications Chair and Omnibus Chair support RMDS.

If you're interested in volunteering in this role, contact Sally O'Dwyer ([slodwyer@gmail.com](mailto:slodwyer@gmail.com)) and cc Rebecca Ciota ([rebecca.ciota@gmail.com](mailto:rebecca.ciota@gmail.com)).

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## USDF Region 5 Director's Message

The Holidays have wrapped up and we're into a new year! I'm going to repeat a bit of the information from my December message as I didn't get it sent out to the GMOs, it was only published in the USDF email newsletter. There were some important things that I just want to make sure folks are aware of.

Congratulations to our GMO award winners at the Convention:

- Region 5 GMO Volunteer of the Year – Kathleen Martin – Santa Fe Dressage Association
- GMO Website Award – Honorable Mention (less than 75 members) – Santa Fe Dressage Association
- Ruth Arvanette Memorial Fund Grant – Ginny Sorenson – Utah Dressage Society

A few key things from the Convention this year:

- The 2023/2024 USDF Budget was approved at the Board of Governors, as was a By-Law change regarding electronic notification of the USDF Board of Governors meetings.
- There was a lot of discussion of promoting the USDFBC Sport Horse programs. Those interesting in adding these classes for our breeders, please reach out and we'll help you with more information on the programs. The Sport Horse committee will also be hosting a Sport Horse Seminar and Judges Training Program in June with Kristi Wysocki and Sue Mandas at DG Bar Ranch in California. They will also be holding at least one handlers' clinic and a Sport Horse Development Forum as well.
- The USDF Test App has been updated for the iphone and will soon be released in adroid. It has gone to a subscription method sign up.
- The USDF Regional Championships will have a new split in the freestyle divisions for the 2023 Championships. The Adult Amateurs and Jr/Young Riders will be in one class and the Open riders will be in a separate class.
- Changes are coming down the pipe for the USDF Certified Instructors Program and those changes will be rolled out in 2023, stay tuned for some exciting things!
- The USDF Schooling Show program is showing some growth, but we'd love to have more shows and riders participating! It's easy to participate and the awards are pretty amazing... check out the USDF website for more information.

The 2023 FEI North American Youth Championships will be returning to

Flintfields Horse Park in Traverse City, Michigan and the USEF Festival of Champions will be returning to Lamplight Equestrian Center in Illinois as well shortly after NAYC.

The dates of the 2023 USDF Region 5 Championships are September 29-October 1 and we will be at West World in Scottsdale. Qualifying started August 29th and continues through September 4, 2023. Bid documents are now available for hosting the 2024 Great American USDF Region 5 Championships and are due to USDF by February 6th. I'd love to hear from any interested parties as soon as possible so we can help you with the bid process and anything you're going to need for those bids. All Regional Championships will continue to be held by early October since the Champions and Reserve Champions of the Jr/YR (Training-Fourth Level), Adult Amateur and Open divisions will feed into the Nationals Championships through the nomination process. There are also wild card spots for those who obtain high enough scores in the Championship classes.

If you are getting ready to show for the upcoming season, here are a few reminders:

- Make sure the name on your horse's coggins matches their registered name that they show under. This is a USEF general rule and quite a few folks sadly don't pay attention to the need for all documents to have the horse's name match.
- USEF Show pass – the rules regarding USEF non-members at competitions have changed significantly for the 2023 competition year. I've pasted below the FAQ sent out from USEF to hopefully answer any questions folks may have.
  - Q. Currently riders competing in Academy, Walk-Trot, and Opportunity classes are exempt from USEF membership. Will these exemptions remain in place in 2023?
    - A. Yes, any classes or sections that are currently exempt from membership will continue to be exempt.
  - Q. Will the online show pass system at USEF communicate with show management software systems?
    - A. Yes, the USEF Show Pass information will be available live, in real time through the USEF API to show management software.
  - Q. Will the USEF API indicate whether someone is ineligible for a Show Pass if they have already paid for one for that year?

- A. Yes, the USEF API will return information that the person is ineligible.
- Q. Are riders, owners, and trainers all eligible for one Show Pass per competition year?
  - A. No. While riders and owners are eligible for one Show Pass, trainers and coaches are no longer eligible to participate under a Show Pass and must be an Active USEF member.
- Q. Are parents that sign as the trainer or coach for their minor child exempt from membership and/or show pass?
  - A. No, anyone that signs an entry blank or acts as a trainer or coach must be an Active USEF member and is not eligible for a Show Pass.
- Q. Are foreign competitors (citizens of other nations) with proof, in English, of current membership in good standing of their own National Federation required to pay a Show Pass?
  - A. No, non-US citizens who are members in good standing of their National Federations with proof, in English, of current membership in good standing of their own National Federation are exempt from payment of the Federation Show Pass fee.

Finally for this month, I'd like to congratulate Kirsten Romig on receiving the Carol Lavell Gifted Memorial Fund Award for Region 5 from the Dressage Foundation. Kirsten is a member of the Paso del Norte Dressage Society. She will spend a week training with and shadowing Dr. Bessie Babits. Kirsten said, "I am unbelievably honored to receive this exceptional gift. This grant means I can invest in training for me and my horse for one week with my favorite trainer, Bessie Babits, without worrying about my job or how I may feed my livestock, myself, and other strays for the rest of the month. Not only will I be relieved of monetary worries, but I get to follow my dream of becoming a rider with 'feel.'"

Happy New Year!

Till next month!  
Heather Petersen

Region 5 Director

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Our L-Program is underway! Auditing is available. See our [auditor application](#) for more details.

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## The Evolution of Shoulder-In

*By Rebecca Ciota*

One of the foundational movements of dressage is the shoulder-in. For most of us, we probably are familiar with riding the movement on three tracks, bringing the horse's shoulder in while its two hind legs step on an outside track. This is how the FEI Rulebook explains it, and how USDF and FEI tests (and judges) expect it to be ridden. However, did you know that – like renvers and travers – the shoulder-in used to be ridden on four tracks?

If you didn't already know this – or even if you did – you're probably wondering:

why did the shoulder-in change? Why do we now ride the shoulder-in on three tracks instead of four? To understand how the modern shoulder-in came to be, let's look at its history.

### **The Dawn of the Shoulder-in**

In 1730, the French Francois Robichon de la Gueriniere (1683-1751) and founder of Classical Dressage innovated on a concept experimented by a previous equestrian master, the Duke of Newcastle (1593-1676), where the horse was suppld by riding a circle with its head more to the inside than the rest of the body. De la Gueriniere placed his movement along the wall and used his outside hand to steady and his inside leg to shape. This movement that suppld the horse's shoulders, asked the horse to sit on its haunches by bringing its inside hind leg under itself and over the outside leg, and taught the horse obedience to the leg cues.

And thus de la Gueriniere had created the shoulder-in.

Classical riders would use his shoulder-in – on four tracks – for centuries.

### **The Gymnasium of the Horse**

Gustav Steinbrecht's (1808-1885) *The Gymnasium of the Horse* is a behemoth with annotations from three later riding masters, where the annotators update and change the training recommendations to suit the annotators' time and place.

Within *The Gymnasium* and many editions, we see the shift in how the shoulder-in was ridden. Steinbrecht and his pupil Paul Plinzer, who helped him write *The Gymnasium*, recommend riding a four-track shoulder-in in the original 1886 edition. There are four editions. (I have the fourth edition translated into English.) The fourth edition was edited by Colonel Hans von Haydebreck, who claimed that Steinbrecht presented contradictions within the text, wrote overly long about outdated modes of training (such as the pillars), and spoke too little of the practicality of dressage training (for training cavalry horses). One of Haydebreck's edits in 1935 was to recommend riding the shoulder-in on three tracks, with the inside hind leg and outside hind leg on the same track. For military horses – as von Haydebreck was training – the trainer should “not bother himself and his horse with excessive lateral positions but instead consider the [three-track] position of the shoulder-in...as the nucleus of his work.”

### **To Each Their Own**



With the 1935 edition of *The Gymnasium*, we see that dressage riders and trainers were debating the benefits of de la Gueriniere's classical four-track shoulder-in and the more modern three-track shoulder-in. That continued through the mid-twentieth century. Colonel Alois Podhajsky (1898-1973), the Spanish Riding School's chief rider from 1939-1964, stressed the importance of de la Gueriniere's shoulder-in. French cavalry officer General Albert Decarpentry (1878-1956) recommended beginning horses on a three-track shoulder-in and progressing to the four-tracks when the horse was ready. And German Olympic gold medalist Harry Boldt (1930- ) wrote a book called *Das Dressurpferd* in which he demonstrated the shoulder-in on three tracks. The original FEI Rulebook (1920) had the shoulder-in as a four-track movement.

In 1975, the FEI produced the 14th edition of its rulebook with the shoulder-in as a three-track movement with an angle of no greater than 30 degrees.

Interestingly, 1975 was also the first year the shoulder-in was included in a dressage test. From then on, the three-track shoulder-in has been the standard in competitive dressage, becoming near ubiquitous.

### **A Modern Take On A Classic**

If we take a look at the timeline, the three-track shoulder-in has been standard for less than 50 years, with some debate about it for the 40 years prior to that (1930s-1970s). For the previous 200 years, riders used the four-track shoulder-in. As a rider, I struggle to balance Classical and competitive, old and new: I don't think that just because the "old masters" did it, it's correct, but I also don't think that all new innovations are helpful either. The three- vs. four-track shoulder-in falls into my uncomfortable gray area.

For those of us riding USDF and FEI tests, we need to ride a three-track shoulder-in – as the four-track one is considered incorrect per the rulebooks. Most dressage riders will, therefore, be most familiar with the three-track shoulder-in. However, there are still riders and trainers who use the four-track shoulder-in, including Christian Carde and Albrecht von Ziegner. For more information and theory on why one might want to ride a three-track or a four-track, check out our Facebook page for an article by Angelika Fromming (FEI 4\* judge) and Silke Rotterman, in *Eurodressage*.



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