



USEA Emerging Athlete U21 Selection Criteria & Process for the USEA Areas

Selection Criteria for the EA21 Regional Clinics:

Criteria for selectors to use:

- Applicants should be 21 years or younger per FEI standards,
- Must be a US citizen and USEA member,
- Must be current members of their USEA Area Young Rider Program,
- Must be established at the Training level or higher (minimum of 4 MER's at the Training level or higher),
- Competitiveness and desire to continue in the sport of eventing,
- Ability and effectiveness in dressage, cross-country, and show jumping,
- Demonstration of horse welfare, stable management, general veterinary knowledge,
- Willingness to learn from coaches, trainers, and peers,
- Good sportsmanship and an ability to be a team-player,
- Ability to progress through the performance pathway,
- Evidence of an effective work ethic

Comments from David O'Connor, USEA EA21 Director of Coaching:

“The rider must not be judged totally on competitive results. That may be (those results reflect) the horse that they are sitting on at the moment. That part of the equation should be represented in the competitive score above. This must stay focused on talented young riders. Talent can be hidden though. A person that is dealing with a more difficult or untalented horse may be more talented than the person that is more successful on paper. Seriously difficult horses would not be appropriate as they can hold a clinic back. At this age we are trying to educate them along a line that helps them ride any horse and not just about making their own personal horse better, though anytime you ride better your horse goes better.

To summarize: we are looking for the riders who have the right ambition and work ethic to persist in eventing. It doesn't matter if they don't come from “means”- if there's a will, there's a way. Kids who work hard, want to learn, are driven to be better, are supportive and nice to be around...those kids are the ideal candidates for this program.”

Selection Process for the EA21 Regional Clinics:

This selection process is not solely based off of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- The rider is required to have a minimum of 4 MER's at Training Level or higher but there is a talent-spotting element to this selection and an understanding that this age group will still be limited in knowledge/experience and therefore that might show in their competition results.
- We are trying to see the whole picture of a rider. A rider with more horses or higher caliber horses will be able to achieve more in terms of competition results but this is not an indicator of talent. That rider who might only have access to an OTTB and limited competitions might be just as talented and motivated as those riders who have achieved more.

The rider's perceived longevity in the sport of eventing is weighted heavily

- We want to invest in riders who seem like they are in this sport for the long haul. The purpose of this program is to educate riders so that they can have a successful, long career in this sport. We want them to be able to have success on any horse- not just the current horse they have.
- A key factor in this is their work ethic.
- You can tell the difference in the riders who are truly invested: they spend the extra hours, go the extra mile, work hard outside of lessons (not just in lessons), aren't afraid of the work, look for extra opportunities, are working students (a rare and dying breed!), stick around and watch other lessons when they partake in a clinic, etc. These are just a few examples and also ties into the next piece.

We are interested in how they give back to the sport

- If you are passionate about the sport of eventing, you find ways to get involved. And, if these riders have hopes for bigger opportunities beyond the EA21 Program, they will need this on their resumes to open doors.
- Do the riders volunteer at shows, on councils, to fundraise for programs, with Pony Club, are a "barn rat" at local lesson programs, or volunteer at therapeutic riding programs? These are just a few examples.
- Getting involved in and volunteering for USEA Area programs is one of the many ways that riders can advocate for themselves as good candidates for this program. Advocating for themselves is something that we've been stressing to the athletes and it puts the onus on the riders to do everything in their power to show that they should be selected for this program.

For questions about the selection criteria, contact the USEA Young Rider Committee Chairs:

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A few notes to Area Coordinators about the selection document below:

- Area Selectors are ranking the top applicants 1-14 based on their knowledge of the applicants and the information from their application, in regards to the defined selection criteria. The other information on this document is to help the selection committee distinguish how to compare them against other riders from different Areas applying for the more popular venues.
- Only rank the riders that you believe are strong candidates for the program. If you do not have 12-14 candidates, that is okay. Quality always trumps quantity. The 13th and 14th candidate would be on a waitlist, should that be needed.
- The “Notes” section is where you include any information you feel would be helpful for selection committee / EA21 Task Force. If the rider has been or is currently a working student, we would love to know this! Have they brought along their own horse from scratch? Have they had success with multiple horses? Do they want to be a trainer? These are just a few examples of things that could be interesting to know. This section is very open-ended if you feel it is helpful to you.
- Each Area should submit one document with rankings, and notes on each rider. If you have riders in your Area who have applied for different regional clinics, please note that in your table below with their first choice and reserve choice. If they do not fill out a reserve choice, note n/a.

EA21 Selection Rankings

	Rider	1 st Choice Clinic	2 nd Choice Clinic	Level Currently Competing	Working Experience (High/ Moderate/ Minimal)	Longevity? (High/ Moderate/ Minimal)	Notes
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
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10							
11							
12							
13							
14							

*Selection for the National Camp will be determined by the regional coaches and the EA21 Selection Task Force, overseen by EA21 Director of Coaching, David O’Connor.