

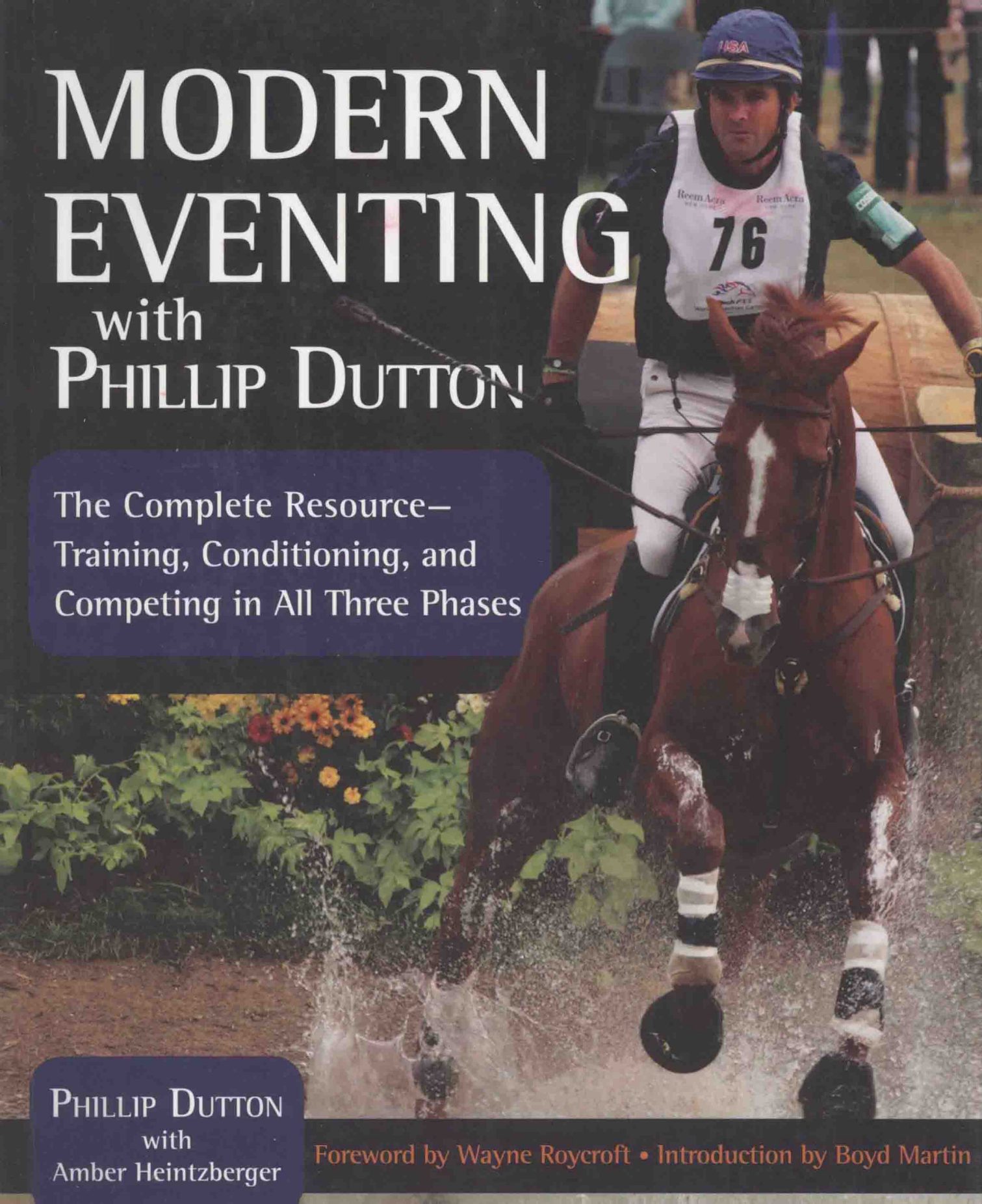
MODERN EVENTING

with
PHILLIP DUTTON

The Complete Resource—
Training, Conditioning, and
Competing in All Three Phases

PHILLIP DUTTON
with
Amber Heintzberger

Foreword by Wayne Roycroft • Introduction by Boyd Martin

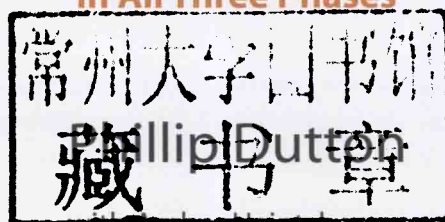


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Dedication

*I dedicate this book to my parents,
Peter and Mary Dutton. I was fortunate to grow up
with their love and support, which gave me the strength
and confidence to leave our farm in the Outback of
Australia to pursue my sport and my passion.*

Foreword

by Wayne Roycroft

It is a great pleasure to write a foreword for Phillip's book, *Modern Eventing*. I first met Phillip some 25 years ago when he came to a clinic in Sydney, Australia. He was already an accomplished horseman, coming from an Out-back farming community. I was impressed by the quiet, confident way that he rode and managed his horses.

Some time after this Phillip moved to the United States, and his success there has been truly inspiring. We joined forces at major events in Europe while I was Coach of the Australian Eventing Team, and we formed a great coach/pupil relationship, as well as being good friends.

One of my fondest memories was riding and galloping horses with Phillip, leading into the Atlanta Games, on the beautiful hills overlooking his and Evie's property at True Prospect Farm in Pennsylvania. The Australian team won the gold medal and Phillip's team spirit, help, and advice, as well as his performance on his great horse True Blue Girdwood, was instrumental in the team winning by an extraordinary 60 points.

Phillip came back to Australia some months before the Sydney Olympic Games with his two horses, Show of Heart and House Doctor. He stayed at my property at Mt. White and we had the best time, training and just working out how to get the best out of the horses. As always, we worked well together, and I continued to be impressed by Phillip's knowledge and skill.

This was followed by his selection to the Australian Team and a wonderful performance to win team gold on his very young horse, House Doctor.

This book reflects on a truly amazing horseman, coach, husband, father, and most of all, to me, a great friend.

Wayne Roycroft

Australian Olympic Medalist and Team Coach

Introduction

by Boyd Martin

For those of you who don't already know, Phillip Dutton was born and raised in a small, country town called Nyngan in Australia. There are no coaches or riding instructors within two hours' drive from there, there are simply people called "horsemen." Phillip's early training and understanding in the art of horses was not your typical, structured, riding-school education, but about working with horses to do what you needed to do. He has learned the hard way that you cannot tell the horse what to do, but must make him *want* to do what you ask of him.

In 2006 I was privileged and honored to meet Phillip while I prepared my horse Ying Yang Yo for the Rolex Kentucky Three-Day Event. After watching Ying Yang jump a few fences, he knew what type of horse he was, the exercises that would improve him, and he knew how hard he could test and challenge the rider. I was blown away every day by the number of exercises he had up his sleeve to teach and train all types of horses to become successful eventers. He was so brilliant in the way he did this and I knew that I had to change my career path and take the opportunity to learn more from this great horseman if I was to become all I had dreamed I could be.

I quickly abandoned my native Australia and became a working pupil/assistant trainer for Phillip for the next three years. The thousands

of hours I was lucky enough to spend observing him and his horses was life-changing. You could never put a price on it. While he is a man of few words, he speaks a thousand words through "feel" to every horse he sits on. On a day-to-day basis Phillip is dealing with horses of every level—from three-year-olds getting broken in and four-year-olds starting their first event, right up to preparing horses for the Olympic Games.

The first ten years of my career in Australia I spent trying to get myself onto an Australian team, with no success. Either my horses did not perform well at the correct event, or they were unsound at the most critical moment. Within two years of studying with Phillip I tasted my first team experience, riding Neville Bardos at the 2010 World Equestrian Games in Lexington, Kentucky. Two years later I experienced my first Olympics with Otis Barbotiere riding for the United States (along with Phillip) in London. Without question both team representations were thanks to the guidance of Phillip every step of the way, and not only did he train me to be selected for the US Team, I was riding with him as a teammate in both instances.

The most extraordinary thing about Phillip is that he could take you on a course walk or on a training session and tell you precisely how your horse would react. This is the brilliance of Phillip

and his decades of experience with every type of horse put on the planet. Now that I'm off on my own, running my own business, I often get cornered by a challenge with a particular horse. I stop and ask myself, "What would Phillip do?"

For a very quiet and humble person, Phillip Dutton has had an enormous impact on producing the best event riders in America, without question. If you look at the top 50 riders in this country at any point in the last ten years, the majority of them have been influenced by the greatest trainer this country has ever seen. No one has matched in American history the number of advanced horses produced by Phillip and no one has come close to his record of USEA Rider of the Year twelve times.

In 2011 whilst renting the upper barn at Phillip's training facility in Pennsylvania the unthinkable happened when an electrical fire completely destroyed the barn. As much media hype and recognition as I received for pulling my horse Neville out of the burning barn, at the end of the night, the true unsung hero was Phillip Dutton. He arrived at the fire and went in on his own to search for horses. He was solely responsible for retrieving Caitlin Silliman's mare Catch A Star from the barn, guiding her down the blazing aisle to safety. Catch A Star had third-degree burns over 70 percent of her skin, which shows the immense danger Phillip put himself in to retrieve this magnificent mare. If that wasn't enough, once again unprompted, he chased me into the barn and allowed me an extra set of hands to retrieve Neville from the inferno. As always he showed unselfishness helping get Neville out of the barn, never thinking twice about the danger he put himself in.

The riders on the 2012 Olympic Games shortlist were all sent to a training camp in England.

Most of us were "first-timers" who had never experienced the pressure and intensity of being placed in this unusual situation. After the team was announced, the feelings in the camp ranged from deep depression and hostility to joy. It was Phillip who privately took aside the riders whose dreams had been shattered, and gave them the guidance they needed to go on and train.

He also played a huge role for his teammates, giving us direction over the weeks leading up to the Games. Everyone turned to Phillip for his thoughts and suggestions. At the Games he was almost like a primary grade school teacher, making sure everything was as perfect as it could be for the rest of us. He was more than a teammate, he was the leader, the coach, and a guide. When my horse Otis Barbotiere failed the final horse inspection, it was Phil who came over and gave me the first hug. A champion coach is not only there when things are going great, but he is there when it all falls apart.

If you watch a Rolex, or a Burghley, or an Olympics on television, you will notice top US riders entering into the start box with a nervous look on their face. The majority of times you will also notice Phillip in the background, standing close by, giving comforting advice in those final moments before the rider sets out on course. He does not do this for money, or to be seen in public, or because he has nothing else to do; he does this because a great trainer leaves nothing to chance; a great trainer knows that the thousands of hours of practice comes down to this moment, and he is there.

Boyd Martin

Member of the US Eventing Team at the 2010 World Equestrian Games in Lexington, Kentucky, and the 2012 Olympic Games in London, England

Preface

The sport of eventing has grown so much in recent times that there is a place within it for virtually any rider and horse. We have competitions from the very low introductory level right up to the highest level—the CCI Four-Star. The number of horse-and-rider combinations competing in events each weekend throughout the United States and the rest of the world is impressive.

Although not all horses and riders can or want to compete at the highest level, the horse and rider at every level should have a good, clear understanding of the basics of riding, training, and competing. I will try to explain my methods in this book and share a lot of my experiences, as well.

The first phase of an eventing competition is the dressage, and in most cases this is the area where we spend the most time training. For those of you who have followed the sport's progression, you will know that the required movements have gotten more difficult and the standard has risen sharply. If you win the dressage and you jump faultlessly you can't be beaten!

Traditionally, event horses have moved up the levels when their cross-country and show jumping skills were up to standard but not necessarily their dressage education. That has changed a lot; now if you want to be competitive



Team Australia accepting Gold Medals at the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta. From left to right: Andrew Hoy, Wendy Schaeffer, me, and Gillian Rolton.

at any level, improving your dressage training before you move up is a must.

The effect of improved dressage at all levels has changed what we look for in a potential horse as well. A “soft,” loose-moving, quiet horse requires much less training to achieve good dressage scores and therefore is more desirable.

Cross-country courses have evolved as well; increased efforts to improve the safety of horse and rider on course has demanded this evolution, and the attention of course designers to safety has truly decreased the chances of a serious accident occurring. Courses are challenging while technologies such as frangible pins and collapsible jumps are now being used to make them safer.

Over time cross-country courses have become more technical so that you see a lot more combinations and narrow jumps where riders must hold their line. In an effort to make the cross-country phase still have an effect on the outcome of the competition, designers have had to come up with jumps that “slow” riders down to negotiate them. From this idea, narrow jumps and apexes have been used more and more. It is then a balance for the designer to get the flow of the course right so that it still has enough forward-riding jumps to keep both horse and rider confident.

At the Four-Star Level, the courses are now shorter in length. Therefore the endurance aspect of the cross-country phase in some ways plays less of a part than it used to. However, a designer can still have the maximum number of jumping efforts, as long as the course is over 11 minutes long. Therefore, with shorter courses and the same number of jumps, it is harder to complete the course within the allowed time; the horse winds up doing more sprinting, which requires more “wind” fitness.

It used to be a traditional mindset as an eventer that you finished your cross-country course at all costs. I am sure this came from eventing’s military and fox hunting background. There was a notable case at the Rome Olympics in 1960 where the great Australian rider Bill Roycroft fell and then remounted, completed the cross-country and then show jumped the next day with a broken collarbone to help the Australian team win a gold medal. Even in my day, my teammate on the Australian team at the Atlanta Olympics, Gillian Rolton, slipped on a turn and fell between jumps early on the course, remounted then had a spectacular fall at

the water jump where she broke her collarbone, remounted again, and finished the course.

As brave and gritty as these performances were, there are so many cases where this kind of action has not been fair to the horse and in some cases, not fair to the rider. Currently the rules state that if you have one fall you are eliminated. The general thought now is, or should be, that there is always another day! The rider should understand that more training for your horse is necessary and retiring before more damage is done is a much better course of action than pushing your and your horse’s limits.

The show jumping is the last phase of an event and often the one where the competition is won or lost. The horse and rider must really understand the difference needed in the horse’s approach to the jumps compared to the cross-country. Show jumping courses generally include related, or measured, distances so that horses need to be adjustable and riders need a good understanding of what is being asked from the course.

Our goal as event riders is to excel at all three phases. This requires a lot of training and knowledge, but successfully completing an event at any level can be a very rewarding challenge. I hope to help give you the tools to meet these challenges and have fun in the process!

Phillip Dutton

*Twelve-Time USEA Leading Rider
of the Year and Five-Time Olympian
2009 Developing Rider Coach of the Year*

Eventing Past and Present

The Three-Day Event was first introduced at the Olympic Games in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1912, based on the training and testing of military chargers. Spread over three consecutive days, it was a complete test for the army horse. As of the Paris Olympics in 1924, eventing was open to civilians; women were not allowed to participate until 1964. But now, as in all equestrian sports, men and women compete on equal terms.

Up until very recently, the format of the Three-Day Event included a dressage test on the first day. An endurance test followed on the second day in what is now known as the “classic” or “long format, which included a short roads and tracks (Phase A); followed immediately by a steeplechase (Phase B); then by a long roads and tracks (Phase C). A compulsory halt (10 minutes) was instituted after Phase C for a veterinary examination, after which the competitor began Phase D, the cross-country. The third and final day was the show jumping phase.

Today, however, the second phase has been changed (in nearly all events) to a “short”

format whereby Phases A to C (roads and tracks and steeplechase) have been eliminated and replaced by the cross-country course alone—Phase D.

LEVELS

The United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) and the United States Eventing Association (USEA) recognize three types of eventing competition: Tests (Individual or Combined); Horse Trials; and Three-Day Events. Run under USEF rules, there are six levels of eventing in the United States:

- 1** Beginner Novice Level is designed to introduce green horses and riders to Horse Trials, combining dressage, cross-country, and beginner jumping tests.
- 2** Novice Level is a continuing introduction to Horse Trials. It is designed for competitors and horses with some experience at lower levels or for experienced riders and horses new to the sport.

- 3 Training Level is an elementary examination of competitors and horses with some experience and training.
- 4 Preliminary ("Prelim") Level is a moderate examination of competitors and horses in a regular training program preparing for One-Star Events.
- 5 Intermediate Level is an examination of increasing technical difficulty that prepares competitors and horses for Two-Star Events.

- 6 Advanced Level is the highest national level of Horse Trials, of a difficulty designed to prepare competitors and horses for either Three- or Four-Star Events.

International events are run under the rules of the Fédération Equestre Internationale (FEI). The international levels of eventing are the Concours International Combiné (CIC) and the Concours Complet Internationale (CCI). The CIC events occur at One-, Two- and Three-Star Levels, while the CCI events range from

United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) Regulations

HORSE TRIALS

- 1 The Horse Trials comprises three distinct tests, usually taking place on one or two days, during which a competitor rides the same horse throughout, namely:
 - Dressage
 - Cross-country
 - Show jumping
- 2 The dressage test must be first. The cross-country and jumping tests may follow in either order.
- 2 Relative influence of the tests: In principle, the cross-country test should be the most influential of the three tests of a Horse Trials. The dressage test, while less influential than the cross-country test, should be slightly more influential than the jumping test.

- 3 Levels: The following levels of competition may be offered at a Horse Trials:

- Beginner Novice
- Novice
- Training
- Preliminary
- Intermediate
- Advanced

THREE-DAY EVENT

- 1 The Three-Day Event comprises three distinct tests, taking place on separate days, during which a competitor rides the same horse throughout, namely:
 - A dressage test spread over one or more consecutive days, depending on the number of competitors, directly followed on the next day by a cross-country test (see below).
 - A cross-country jumping test. Sometimes this test comprises four Phases as described in the long format on p. xiii: Phases A and C (roads and tracks); Phase B (steeplechase); Phase D (cross-country obstacles).

One to Four Stars (Championship). One-, Two- and Three-Star CIC competitions are roughly comparable to Preliminary, Intermediate, and Advanced Levels of American national competition; and to the Novice, Intermediate and Advanced Levels of British national competition (see sidebar).

The traditional difference between the CCI and the CIC was that the four phases of cross-country (A, B, C, and D) were held in a CCI competition, while CIC competition only ran the D, or cross-country phase. With the advent

of the new “short” format (no roads and tracks or steeplechase), the FEI agreed to increase the distance and difficulty of the CCI cross-country courses to make them harder than those run in CIC competitions. Thus, CIC competitions have fewer obstacles on a shorter course.

Today, all championships held under the auspices of the FEI are held in the short format, although in the United States, at the One-Star Level, the “long” format continues to be used to test the proper development and training of the event horse. For educational purposes,

- A show jumping test.

2 Categories indicate the extent of foreign participation in a Three-Day Event. The four categories of Three-Day Events are:

- National Three-Day Event (CCN)
- International Three-Day Event (CIC) and (CCI)
- Official International Three-Day Event (CCIO)
- International Championship Three-Day Event (CH)

3 Levels of Three-Day Events are indicated by stars. The five levels of Three-Day Events are:

- Training Three-Day Event: An educational introduction to the Three-Day Event at the Training Level. It's sometimes referred to as a “Half-Star.”
- One-Star (*): An introduction to the Three-Day Event for competitors and horses.

- Two-Star (**): For competitors with some experience in Three-Day Events on horses just beginning International competition.
- Three-Star (***): For competitors and horses with some International experience.
- Four-Star (****): For experienced and successful combinations of International competitors and horses.

All Three-Day Events in the United States will be denoted by their category and their level, for example, a CCN** is a National Three-Day Event at the Two-Star Level. Events limited to Seniors are indicated by the letters noted above, for example: a CCN***. Events limited to Young Riders are indicated by the addition of the letter “Y,” for example: CCN-Y**. Events limited to Juniors are indicated by the addition of the letter “J,” for example: CCN-J*.

(Continued on p. xvi.)

long-format events at the lower levels have also become popular, although at the time of writing, they are fairly uncommon.

Thanks to the new “shorter” format cross-country phase, upper-level horses can return to competition more quickly so horses tend to compete nearly year-round. Many professionals,

including myself, spend the summer in one location and the winter in a warmer climate. (Ocala, Florida, and Aiken, South Carolina, are two popular winter destinations with numerous Horse Trials and Three-Day Events within a short drive.)

USEF Regulations *continued*

LEVELS OF NATIONAL HORSE TRIALS AND THREE-DAY EVENTS

“QR” means Qualifying Result

“NQR” means National Qualifying Result

“IQR” means International Qualifying Result

- 1** Beginner Novice (B): Open to competitors of any age, on horses four years of age and older.
- 2** Novice (N): Open to competitors of any age, on horses four years of age or older.
- 3** Training (T): Open to competitors of any age, on horses four years of age or older.
- 4** Preliminary (P): Open to competitors from the beginning of the calendar year of their fourteenth birthday, on horses five years of age or older. The competitor must have obtained an NQR at four Horse Trials at the Training Level or higher.
- 5** Training Three-Day Event: Open to competitors of any age, on horses four years of age or older. Both the competitor and the horse must have obtained NQRs at four Horse Trials at the Training Level or higher, one of which must be attained as a combination. A competitor established at the Preliminary Level may compete on a horse that has obtained two NQRs at Training Level or higher.
- 6** Preliminary Three-Day Event: Open to competitors beginning the calendar year of their fourteenth birthday, on horses five years of age or older. Both the competitor and the horse, though not necessarily as a combination, must have obtained an NQR at four Horse Trials at the Preliminary Level or higher.
- 7** Intermediate (I): Open to competitors from the beginning of the calendar year of their sixteenth birthday, on horses six years of age or older. Both the competitor and the horse, though not necessarily as a combination, must have obtained an NQR at three Horse Trials at the Preliminary Level or higher, plus an additional NQR with no more than 20 jumping penalties at obstacles on the cross-country test.
- 8** Advanced (A): Open to competitors from the beginning of the calendar year of their eighteenth birthday, on horses six years of age or older. Both the competitor and the horse, though not necessarily as a combination, must have obtained an NQR at

SAFETY

Eventing is not without risk. Rules protecting the rider include a requirement to wear a safety vest (body protector) during cross-country, as well as an ASTM/SEI or ISO approved equestrian helmet equipped with a safety harness,

which must be fastened while on the horse, although riders over 18 on horses seven years and older may wear a top hat in the dressage phase. Many riders also choose to wear an inflatable safety vest over the regular body protector on cross-country.

In an increased effort to improve safety

three Horse Trials at the Intermediate Level or higher, plus an additional NQR with no more than 20 jumping penalties at obstacles on the cross-country test.

LEVELS OF INTERNATIONAL HORSE TRIALS AND THREE-DAY EVENTS

In all instances, at least one of the QRs must have been obtained in the current or preceding calendar year. All competitors and horses must meet the minimum requirements published by the Fédération Equestre Internationale (FEI).

- 1** CIC* (Competition International Combined): Both the competitor and the horse, though not necessarily as a combination, must have achieved three NQRs at either National Preliminary Horse Trials (CNC*) or National One-Star Three-Day Events (CCN*).
- 2** CCI* (Competition Complete International): Both the competitor and the horse, though not necessarily as a combination, must have achieved four NQRs at any combination of CNC*, CCN*, and CIC*.

3 CIC**: Horse and rider, though not necessarily as a combination, must have achieved two IQRs at a CNC** or higher.

4 CCI**: Having met the minimum requirements of the FEI, the horse and rider, though not necessarily as a combination, must have achieved three IQRs at a CNC** or higher.

5 CIC***: Having met the minimum requirements of the FEI, the horse and rider, though not necessarily as a combination, must have achieved two IQRs at a CNC*** or higher.

6 CCI***: The horse and rider must meet the minimum requirements of the FEI.

7 CCI****: The horse and rider must meet the minimum requirements of the FEI.

COMBINED TESTS

Combined Tests consist of two distinct tests during which a competitor rides the same horse throughout. The tests may include two of the following—dressage, cross-country, jumping; or may include one discipline (such as cross-country) repeated twice under different conditions. Combined Tests will be conducted under guidelines published by the USEA.

on cross-country by preventing rotational falls (falls in which a horse somersaults), some fences are now being constructed with frangible pins, which support regular timber and break under a certain amount of pressure. There are also “breakable” logs that collapse when a horse falls on them.

SCORING

Dressage is scored with penalty points, and the goal is the lowest score possible. Time and jumping penalties are added to this score from cross-country and show jumping, and the horse and rider with the lowest score at the end of the event is the winner. See the Appendix for

a quick reference list of scoring (p. 314).

RULES

The rules for eventing are constantly under revision. In the United States the current rulebook for eventing is available online at the USEA and USEF websites: www.useventing.com and www.usef.org. In other countries, check with the national governing body and for FEI events visit www.fei.org.

GLOSSARY

See page 309 in the Appendix for an extensive glossary of eventing terms.

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