

2025 Ottawa Dressage Festival Rising Stars Competition

The Rising Stars Youth Dressage Equitation Program was started in British Columbia in 2015, with the aim of encouraging participation of youth riders in the sport of dressage. Since then, it has expanded across the country and today is an Equestrian Canada recognized program.

At the Ottawa Dressage Festival, riders who are 18 years and younger as of Dec. 31, 2025, are automatically eligible for Rising Stars ribbons and prizes when they enter any of the following classes:

- *Training, First, Second Level:* Tests 1, 2, 3
- *FEI Children:* Preliminary A, Team, and Individual Tests
- *FEI Pony:* Team and Individual Tests
- *FEI Junior:* Team and Individual Tests

To collect Rising Stars class prizes, visit the “RS Central” booth in the main tent. Here, you can also get updates about riding schedules and team standings. There will be opportunities to meet Olympic riders and other activities, so check in often.

RISING STARS EVENTS

Thursday May 29

Welcome Party

The Thursday Welcome Event is an opportunity to meet other Rising Stars participants, organize teams, and collect your welcome package. Rising Stars leaders will be there to answer any questions. Food will be served and there will be an interactive speaker for this event.

Attending the Welcome Party is mandatory for Rising Star participation – we need you there to form teams, meet your teammates, and give you your RS information/swag bag!

Friday May 30

RS Competition Classes – All day

Compete in Rising Stars classes and win special ribbons and prizes! Friday Rising Stars classes will also determine qualifying riders for Saturday’s Equitation Ride-Off, while technical scores from Friday and Saturday classes will be used to determine Team awards (See **Special Awards** section below).

Saturday May 31

RS Competition Classes – All day

RS Equitation Ride-Off

The two riders with the best equitation scores in each Rising Star class from Friday will qualify for the group class ride-off. Even if you do not qualify, come to cheer on your friends and teammates and see if you can judge rider equitation!

Presentation of Team Awards and RS Spirit of Sport Award

Sunday June 1

Final day of RS Competition Classes

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SPECIAL RISING STARS AWARDS

RS Class Prizes

In Rising Stars classes, the horse/rider combinations with the highest score will be awarded a prize in addition to the class ribbon:

- *Training, First, Second Level:* Tests 1, 2, 3
- *FEI Children:* Preliminary A, Team, and Individual Tests
- *FEI Pony:* Team and Individual Tests
- *FEI Junior:* Team and Individual Tests

RS Equitation Championship

Because equitation is one of the most significant factors for long-term dressage success, it is a critical component in the Rising Stars program. The RS Equitation Championship is comprised of a qualification process on Friday and a Championship Ride-off on Saturday.

How do riders qualify?

- In Friday's Rising Star classes, riders will be given a score by a second judge based on their equitation skills, in addition to their technical test score. The two riders with the best equitation scores (over 60%) in each of these classes will qualify for the group class ride-off on Saturday.
- The names of riders qualifying for the ride-off will be posted on the white board at *RS Central*. Qualifying riders will automatically be entered into the Ride-Off and riding times will be available at *RS Central* as well as in *Equestrian-Hub.com*. There is no charge for participating in the Ride-Off.

How does the Ride-off work?

Riders will compete in one of two group classes:

- Group 1: Qualifying riders from RS Training, First, and FEI Children classes
- Group 2: Qualifying riders from RS Second, FEI Pony, and FEI JR classes

The judge will direct riders to walk, trot and canter in both directions. They will be evaluated on equitation only. Competitors may be divided into smaller groups, at the discretion of the judge, to ensure safety. As well, individual patterns may be requested to be performed by finalists. The pattern will be simple and at the Training level.

An Equitation Champion and Reserve will be awarded for each group.

Additional resources are available for coaches and riders.

To find out what the judges are looking for and what a sample scoresheet looks like, visit:

<https://risingstarsdressage.com/resources-3/>

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Team Competition

To promote teamwork and camaraderie, RS riders are assigned to teams based on a draw. The top three teams will receive an award.

How are teams created?

Teams will be created by random draw at the Thursday RS Welcome Party. Similar to a draw for riding times in a CDI competition, a rider's name is drawn from a container and the rider then draws a team number from another container. This continues until all riders are placed on a team.

- Teams will consist of 3 or 4 horse/rider pairs.
- Each horse/rider pair can only be on one team but can be made up of mixed levels.

How will team scores be calculated?

- Team scores will be calculated based on technical scores from Friday and Saturday RS classes. One score is used from each rider on the team.
- The rider's scores must be taken from the highest level RS class that the rider is entered.
- The scores from all team members are added up and averaged.

Example of a Team Score:

Class	Training		First		FEI Children		Second		FEI Pony		FEI Junior	
	Test 1	Test 2	Test 1	Test 2	Team	Indiv.	Test 1	Test 2	Team	Indiv.	Team	Indiv.
Rider 1	68%	66%	62%	60%								
Rider 2								70%			64%	66%
Rider 3			60%	64%								
Rider 4	60%	64%	62%									
Team Score = (62 + 66 + 64 + 62) ÷ 4 = 63.5												

RS Spirit of Sport Award

The *Spirit of Sport Award* will be given to the Rising Stars participant who demonstrates a high level of fair play, respect, and generosity towards other riders and for the sport itself, based on nominations by their peers. Forms for nominations will be available at the show, at *RS Central*.

Questions?

If you have any questions, please email: secretary@nationalcapitaldressage.ca