

KDCTA HOOFBEATS

FEATURE ARTICLE: What is Working Equitation

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Working Equitation (WE) originated in Europe where people from Spain, Italy, France and Portugal, who worked stock like our cowboys in North America but also had a classical dressage background, wanted an event that showcased their horses. In the mid-1990's, the sport of Working Equitation was born and since then has spread throughout the world with record growth.

There are seven levels of Working Equitation, enabling riders of all skill levels to participate. At the Intro level, all phases are ridden at walk and trot. At the Master level, all phases are ridden in canter and with one hand.

There are four phases or trials in Working Equitation:

1. Dressage
2. Ease of Handling (EOH)
3. Speed
4. Cattle



The cattle trial is not included in most schooling and lower-level shows. Intro level does not do the Speed trial. The dressage test is judged in the same manner as a classical or western dressage test. The EOH challenges the horse and rider to execute the dressage elements while negotiating obstacles, showing proper change of bend, immobile halts, and lateral movements. In the speed trial, there is more strategy in how you will ride your lines to each obstacle as opposed to extreme speed. You can learn more about the rules, obstacles, and judging criteria at www.usawe.org

KDCTA is now an AO (Affiliate Organization) of USAWE and will be hosting a series of WE events this year. Our obstacle playdays will give you and your horse a chance to explore a variety of obstacle. Our 2-day clinic with the WE Region 6 Director, Kim Hillyer, will delve deeper into the competitive aspects of the discipline. And for the finale, a WE schooling show will be held in conjunction with our annual Fall Dressage show at the Grange Fairgrounds. Be sure to check out our KDCTA.org website for details and to register.

Riders from every discipline compete in WE; english, western, dressage, reiners, jumpers, trail riders, gaited horses, even sidesaddle. We all want to develop a relationship with our horse while having fun at the same time and WE looks to be another way to fill that bill! No matter what tack you ride in, choice of breed or how experienced you are, there is a place for you in Working Equitation.