



USDF Region 7 director Carol Tice on the status of sport participation & educational programs.

by Kim F. Miller

Membership size is the basic barometer of the health of USDF Region 7, which encompasses California, Hawaii and Nevada. Numbers are not near their peak of about 5,000 before the 2008 recession but they are staying stable at around 3,400. Growth would be great, of course, but stability is good, too, says Carol Tice, veteran sport leader, volunteer and current USDF Region 7 director.

“Membership is always a priority because dues fund all the programs each Group Member Organization (GMO) holds,” Carol explains. “Without that, a lot of programs just don’t happen.” The California Dressage Society is the U.S.’s biggest GMO, and its members comprise the bulk of Region 7’s members as CDS membership automatically includes Region 7 membership. Compared to the country’s second biggest GMO, Region 1, with 3300; and third biggest, Region 8 with 3,100; Region 7 has the smallest number of GMOs, at five.

Bright spots for the region include strong showings for our riders and horses at national competitions including the USEF Young Horse Championships and the US Dressage Finals. That's the case even though it involved the usual long haul, this year to Chicago and Kentucky, respectively. The availability of travel grant money (through CDS and USDF), individual funding and horse/rider pairs peaking at the right time all contribute to the size and success of the West Coast contingent at these national shows.

Internationally, Carol notes that the majority of the silver medal winning World Equestrian Games riders hail from the West: Steffen Peters, Adrienne Lyle, Kasey Perry-Glass.

The now six CDI3* competitions that comprise the second annual Adequan West Coast Dressage Festival could help more of the region's riders earn the experience and points needed to follow their footsteps to this year's Pan Am Games and World Cup Finals or the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo.

CDIs in California aren't new, Carol notes. To the extent they can help promote the sport, she is all for them. But there is also a downside in that they stretch competitors' show budgets so far that smaller chapter and schooling shows may suffer. A CDS Temecula chapter competition probably benefited from its slot between festival weeks, Carol notes. But she worries that "smaller chapter shows might dissolve" with the new multi-week circuit luring some of its riders away.

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