

2020 Austin Dressage Unlimited (ADU)

ADU started 2020 with a really awesome and special 2019 Year End Celebration party honoring various members for their personal dressage accomplishments. At this party ADU announced our ambitious plans for many great educational and competition events in the upcoming 2020 year. Of course the Covid 19 pandemic truncated these exciting plans. We did manage to host a couple of wonderful events before the pandemic hit:

February----ADU organized a "Learn to Scribe and Score Workshop" hosted by Fair Oaks Farm in Driftwood, TX. Recognized judges and L grads lectured and judged videos to teach the scribes proper procedures and methodologies. Another pair of seasoned scorers then tutored the group of attendees on how to properly and accurately score dressage tests. The group then went outdoors to the arena to judge and scribe several "live" tests---Training through Third level with volunteer riders on their horses.

March-----ADU organized a "Luck of the Irish" Ride-a-Test hosted by VP Equestrian Center in Coupland, TX. Some of the scribe and score trainees from our February event volunteered to work and gain experience at this event. The panel of multiple judges all contributed advice after each ride, making it a wonderful learning event for riders and auditors.

Then Covid 19 hit the fan. Due to an abundance of caution and concern for the spread of the virus, the events for the rest of the year were cancelled or at least postponed. They include:

1. The annual weekend of 2 ADU "Blue Hair Special" USDF Recognized Dressage Shows in Dripping Springs, TX
2. Co-sponsoring a 4 weekend series of 8 "Dressage in the Hill Country" USDF recognized Schooling Dressage Shows in Dripping Springs
3. 4 "Dinner & DVD Nights" at various ADU members' homes.
4. Another "Ride a Test" multi-judge Practice show & educational event
5. Another "Learn to Scribe & Score" workshop, possibly on the north side of Austin
6. Possibly a couple of 1 day USDF shows hosted at private farms

ADU's innovative and popular "ADU University" program started the year with multiple members signing up to participate in this year long mentor guided structured system of Dressage riding, training, and education. The Covid pandemic interrupted many riders' ability to actually participate in the program since most board and train their horses at public/private stables. These stables had to close down, preventing or strictly restricting riders from even coming out to the farms to ride their horses. And of course educational events and competitions had to shut down completely. Only a few ADU University students, who keep their horses at home, have been able to continue participation in the program throughout this pandemic.

Time will tell, and ADU will resume our educational, training, and competition events when it is prudent to do so.