



**For Immediate Release**  
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Drill offers an affordable and disciplined path of entry  
into the world of high level equestrian sports competition

*“Drill stems back to the military, and its all about precision. Any horse can do this, it doesn't have to be a big show horse. It can be from a pony to a draft horse.*

*A great thing about drill, is that anyone can do it. It doesn't have to be a \$30,000 horse.*

*Everyone can have good horsemanship skills - and drill, I think, helps promote that...”*

**- Carmen Herrmann Stiles**

Judge, 2006 United States Equestrian Drill Championship

To the uninitiated, competitors in the [2007 United States Equestrian Drill Championship](#) (Super Ride V) may appear to be worlds away from the highly intense spotlight that falls upon champions of the horse world's most storied national and international competitions.

Events such as Germany's Official International Horse Show (or CHIO) at [Aachen](#), Canada's [Spruce Meadows Masters Tournament](#), [The Mitsubishi Motors Badminton Horse Trials](#) in England and the annual fixtures staged at the legendary North American venues in [Wellington, FL](#), [Devon, PA](#), [Upperville, VA](#), [Harrisburg, PA](#), [Monterey, Mexico](#) and at the [Kentucky Horse Park](#) annually attract international television coverage, tens of thousands of spectators and millions of dollars in sponsorship.

In many ways, however, the team sport of equestrian drill provides a very sane and disciplined entry point, both for the confirmed amateur and for riders with lofty ambitions in the pursuit of their equestrian dreams.

*It's one of the only sports where you can get six to thirty riders that are on the same team, working for the same goal.*

*For 4-H, and for the youth, isn't it better to have kids working together as a team (as) opposed to competing against each other.*

*The camaraderie that you have in drill team is like a football team, or a soccer team. You have such camaraderie with each other, you become such a family, and you care... And that is what's lacking in the horse show world.*

*So, it just teaches them such good sportsmanship that is going to go through the rest of their life.*

**- Carmen Herrmann Stiles**

**Super Ride V: The United States Equestrian Drill Championship** (USEDCC) will be held June 6 – 9 at the Austin Arena in Myrtle Springs, near Canton, Texas. A record number of entries have been received.

Based upon the fundamentals of Dressage (or training) and military formations, equestrian drill is a well established tradition in many parts of the world.

The art of riding in formation is deeply meshed in the military, ceremonial and civilian histories of nations on all continents.

With a predominance of stock saddles and colorful western attire, and with the popular choice in theme music clearly skewed towards Country and Western, competitors in the Super Ride event may seem quite unrelated to the continental elegance epitomized by the famous horses and riders of the [Spanish Riding School](#), [Le Cadre Noir de Saumur](#) or the [Royal Andalusian School of Equestrian Art](#). To the knowledgeable horse person, however, the skills on display merely represent different branches of the same firmly rooted tree.

Prior to the mechanization of cavalry units and the transfer of U.S. equestrian sports leadership to civilian entities, drill competition was principally a military exercise.

In the 1930's, drill team competition was a popular feature of horse shows throughout America, including the National Capital Horse Show in Washington, DC and the [National Horse Show](#) held at Madison Square Garden in New York. The legendary horseman **John Clarke**, an officer in the [9<sup>th</sup> U.S. Cavalry](#), helped to train and coordinate U.S. Army drill teams that successfully competed against many of the world's best, including members of the [Royal Canadian Mounted Police](#), known internationally for their famous '[Musical Ride](#)'<sup>1</sup>.

For youth competing in the junior divisions, as well as for adults in the Rodeo Speed, Gaited Horse, Theme and National Championship Open Divisions, the USEDC offers a unique opportunity to compete on a prestigious stage, in front of well-informed and supportive audiences, without the need for astronomically expensive horses, professional grooms, custom build horse boxes (vans), international air shipments, or major corporate sponsorship.

Each of the 58 teams competing in Myrtle Springs has compiled countless hours in practice, choreography, music selection, costume design, fund raising and travel.

In the United States, the sport is today overseen by a national sanctioning body, the [United States Equestrian Drill Association](#) (USEDA), based in Canton, Texas.

Plans to organize an international end-of-season drill and color guard championship are underway for the fall of 2008.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: [Love of Liberty: African American Soldiers In The Post War Years 1900-1916](#), by Anthony L. Powell