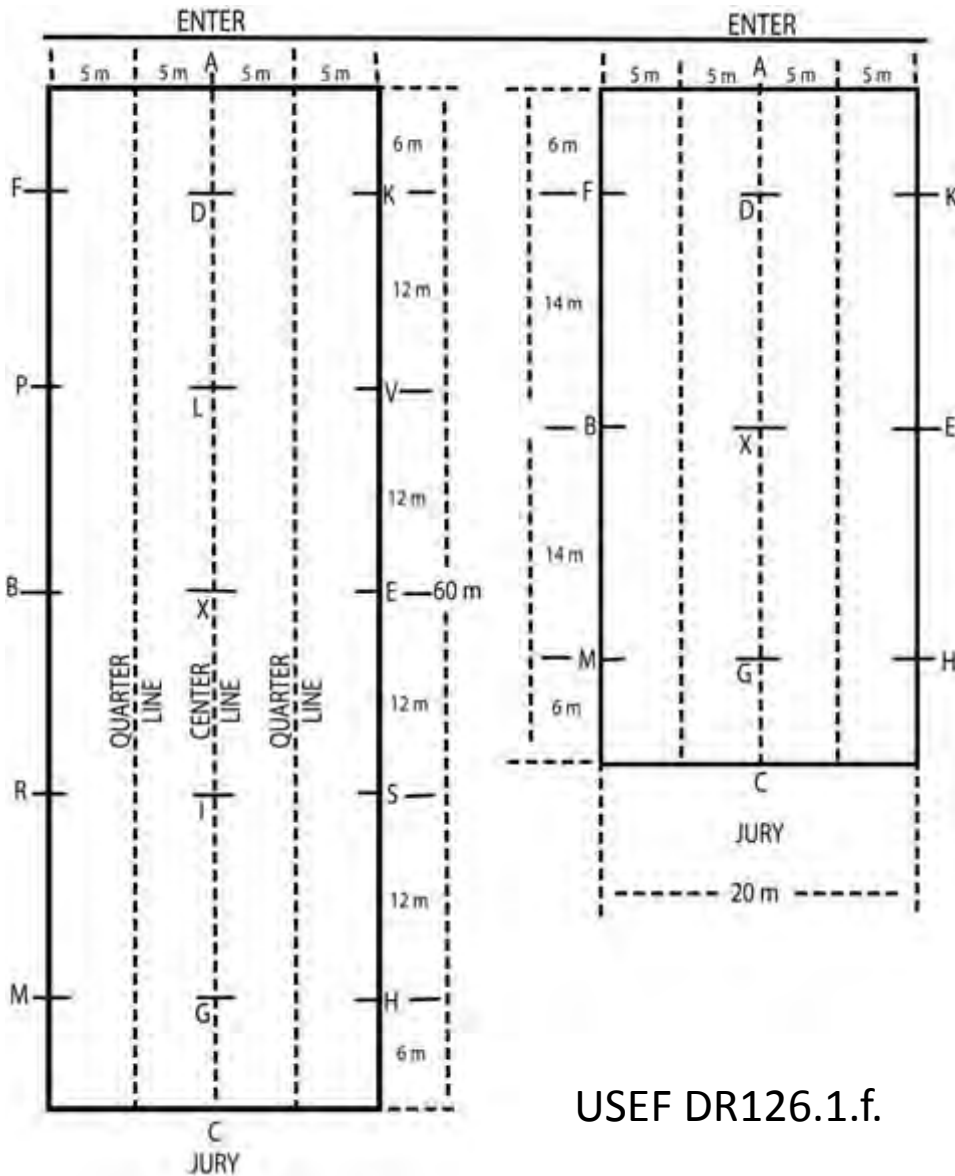




# ARENA SETUP



Based on USEF Rules Effective April 2013



USEF DR126.1.f.

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# ARENA SETUP

## What is a dressage arena?



### ❖ What is a dressage arena?

- Dressage arenas have a **short arena fence** that defines the 20x60m or 20x40m arena and **dressage letters** that define the location of the various dressage movements in a dressage test.
- The arena fence and letters can be home made or can be ordered from companies that sell them. The fencing varies from white cones and white plastic chain or PVC pipe to elegant designs. The letters vary from vinyl letters applied to an arena fence to elegant flower boxes.
- Refer to the USEF's rule book, DR 126.1, on page 3 for a description of legal fencing. The rule book is available at [www.USEF.org](http://www.USEF.org).





# ARENA SETUP

## USEF Rules – Arena Specifications



### ❖ USEF DR126.1. (April 2013)

#### f. Arena Specifications.

1. The arena should be on as flat and as level ground as possible. It is recommended that the difference in elevation across the diagonal or along the length of the arena shall not exceed 0.60 meters [1.97 feet]. It is recommended that the difference in elevation along the short side of the arena shall not exceed 0.20 meters [0.66 feet].
2. The **Standard [Large] Arena is 60 meters long and 20 meters wide. The Small Arena is 40 meters long and 20 meters wide.** Arena measurements are for the interior of the enclosure.
3. The enclosure itself must consist of a low fence about 0.3 meters [0.66 feet] high and must be completely enclosed, except for the entrance at A. The width of the entrance must be at least two meters.
4. The fence should be such to prevent the horse's hooves from becoming entangled and arena stakes, if used, must be covered with a ball or similar object so as to prevent injury. Rope, concrete or unbreakable chain fencing is not allowed.
5. The part of the fence at A should be easy to remove to let the competitors in and out of the arena in a suitable way. The part of the fence at A can remain open except at Federation [USEF]/USDF Championship classes.
6. Except for the letter A, the letters outside the enclosure should be placed about 0.5 meters [1.64 feet] from the fence and clearly marked. So that the judges can note the exact point on the track opposite each letter, it is compulsory to place a marker on the fence itself, level with and in addition to the letter concerned. It is not permitted to place the letters on the arena fence; however, one-sided (flat) letters may be placed on the wall of an indoor arena when such an arena is permitted under(7) through (9) below. The letter A should be placed at least five meters [16.4 feet] away from the arena.
7. No publicity is permitted anywhere on the arena fence. It is permissible to decorate the letters with flowers or greenery to enhance the appearance of the arena; however, letters must be visible from all sides at Level 3-5 competitions.
8. It is recommended that arenas be separated from the public (people, horses and other activities) by a distance of not less than 15 meters [49.21 feet], with a minimum allowed distance at any point around the arena of 3 meters [9.84 feet]. For indoor competitions, the recommended minimum distance from the public is 3 meters [9.84 feet], with a minimum allowed distance at any point around the arena of 1.5 meters [4.92 feet]. For Level 1 and Level 2 competitions, where tall solid walls preclude public access or visibility, arenas are exempt from this requirement. Indoor and outdoor arenas must be separated by a minimum of 5 meters [16.4 feet] at Level 3-5 competitions and 2 meters [6.56 feet] at Level 1-2 competitions.
9. Where severe inclement weather threatens to disrupt participation in the competition due to concerns for footing or safety, Level 3-5 competitions are permitted to follow the same arena specifications as in #8, above.
10. A modified arena is one that is not exactly 20x60 meters or 20x40 meters, as required for the particular level and test. Use of a modified arena is permitted only for Level 1-2 competitions and only when the dimensions of the arena to be used are clearly specified in the prize list. When a modified arena is used, it must not be shortened more than five meters in length or more than two meters in width. However, for all competition levels, Qualifying, Championship, USEF High Performance Championships, qualifying and selection trials and observation trials and Freestyle classes must be held in an unmodified standard size arena
11. Entry and exit must be at A for Level 4-5 competitions. For Level 1-3 competitions: If competitors enter and exit at any location other than A, the arena fence must be completely closed for the duration of the ride.
12. For all classes or tests where the arena size is optional or may be modified, the size must be stated in the prize list.
13. The following tests and classes must be held in a Standard [Large] Arena:
  - a. Federation First Level Dressage tests and above, FEI Dressage tests; and musical freestyles, except those tests written for a small arena.
  - b. Federation/USDF Qualifying and Championship Classes at all levels
14. At the discretion of competition management, all tests for Para Equestrians may be ridden in a Standard [Large] Arena. (Exception: Grade I - II freestyle tests must be held in a small arena. Grade III - IV freestyle tests must be held in a standard arena.) The arena sizes to be used must be indicated in the prize list. For the USEF National Para-Equestrian Championships and Para-Equestrian Selection Trials, all tests for Grades IA, IB and II must be ridden in a small arena and Grades III and IV must be ridden in a standard size arena.

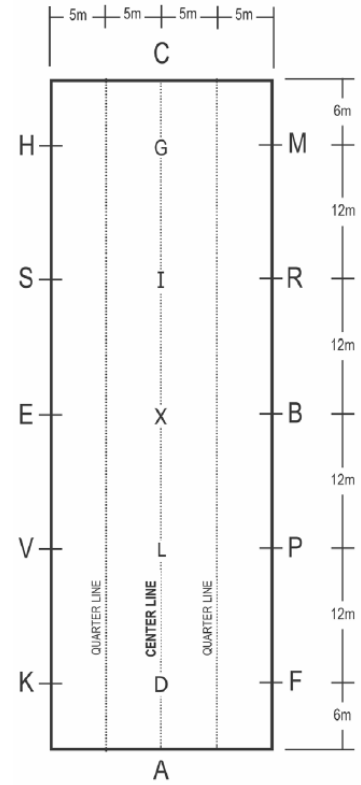
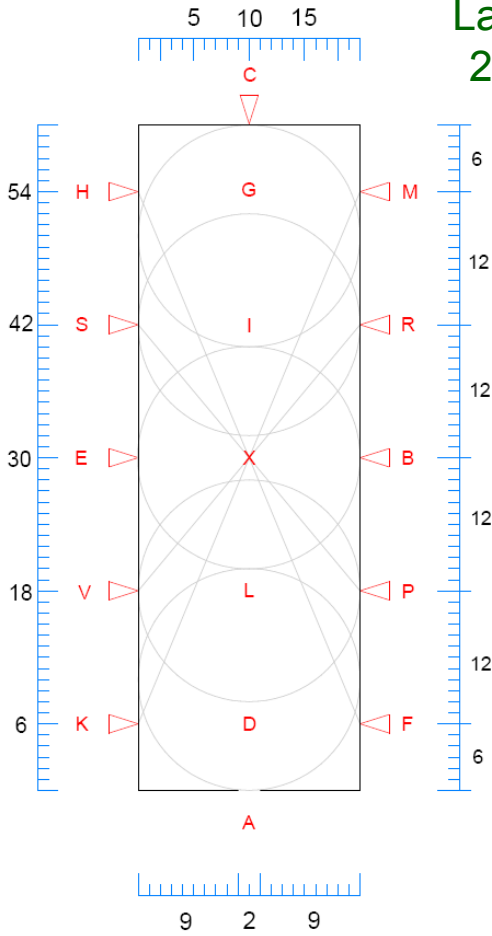


# ARENA SETUP

## Standard (Large) and Small Arenas

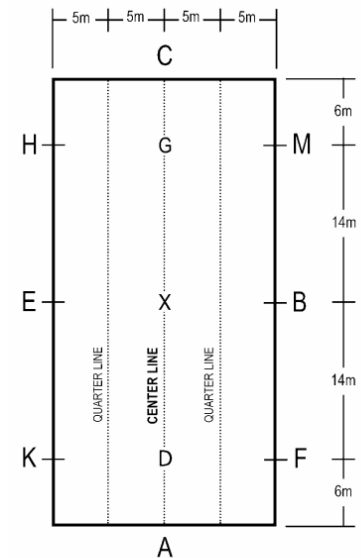
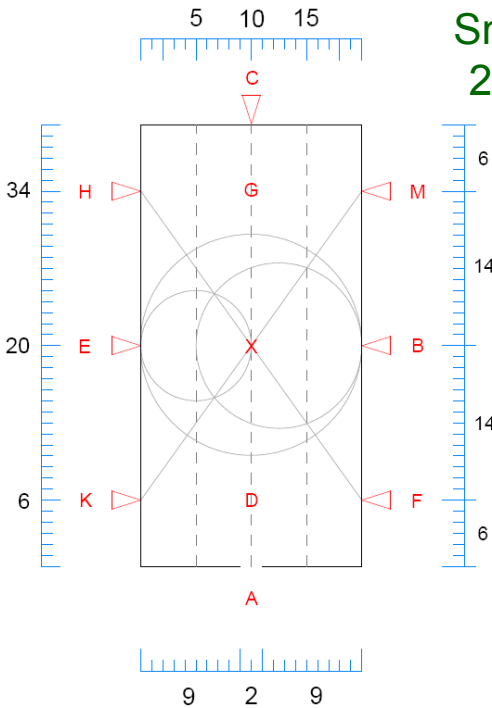


### Large Arena 20m x 60m



Standard Arena

### Small Arena 20m x 40m



Small Arena



# ARENA SETUP

## Judge Locations, Footing Maintenance



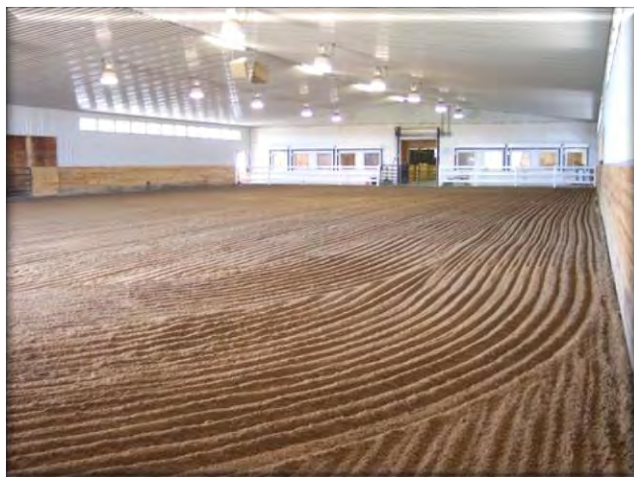
### ❖ USEF DR126.1.

#### g. Location of Judges.

1. *If there is only one judge he/[she] is preferably placed a maximum of five meters [16.4 feet] and minimum of three meters [9.84 feet] from the end of the arena and must be opposite the letter C. Except in Young Horse and Rider Tests, when two judges are used one is placed at C and the other at B or E, preferably a maximum of five meters [16.4 feet] and minimum of three meters [9.84 feet] opposite the letter. When three judges are used, one is placed at C, the second at B or E, and the third must be placed at the end of the arena on a line with the judge at C and 2.5 meters [8.2 feet] in from the edge of the long side of the arena at H or M (If the second judge is at B, the third should be at H and vice versa). If this is not possible, judges should be placed at the end of the arena, one at C, one 2.5 meters [8.2 feet] in from the long side of the arena at M and the other 2.5 meters [8.2 feet] from the long side of the arena at H.*
2. *At indoor competitions, judges must be placed a minimum of 3 meters from the arena, unless modifications are permitted by application to the Federation Dressage Committee.*
3. *Except in Young Horse tests and Rider Tests, a separate enclosure (booth, tent, trailer) or platform for indoor classes must be provided for each judge.*
4. *Each judges booth or platform must be raised at least 0.5 meters (20 inches), for Freestyle Tests possibly a little higher, above the ground to give the Judge(s) a good view of the ring.*
5. *The booth/hut/platform must be large enough to accommodate three people except that the booth at C must accommodate four people for Young Horse Championship classes.*
6. *Judges' booths placed at E and B must be equipped with side windows.*
7. *The jury for the FEI Dressage Tests for 4, 5, and 6-year-old horses and USEF Dressage Test for 4-year old horses, and Rider Tests, must be seated together at C and may comprise a maximum of three judges.*
8. *Judge booths or platforms must be separated from other arenas by a minimum distance of 3 meters [9.84 feet].*

#### h. Footing Maintenance.

1. *Competition management must make every effort to provide the best possible footing in competition and schooling areas.*
2. *Provisions should be made (by having on hand proper equipment and scheduling sufficient breaks in the schedule) to maintain throughout the competition the footing in all riding areas by dragging, watering and, if necessary, raking.*





# ARENA SETUP

## Methods, Materials, Metrics



Adapted from <http://www.usdf.org/docs/showflash/web/GeneralInfo/Before/ArenaSet-Up.pdf>

“Thank you” to the United States Pony Clubs for providing the text from which this description was derived.”

### ❖ Methods for Laying Out Arenas

- There are commercial arena layout tools available that may simplify the process.



- The triangulation method is described here.

### ❖ Materials for the Triangulation Method

- Dressage arena fencing, dressage letters
- At least one 60-meter (200-foot) surveyor's tape, preferably marked in meters on one side of the tape. Two 60-meter tapes are ideal. Metric/English fiberglass measuring tapes in reel-type plastic cases with flush-folding handles are available from contractors' supply stores, lumber yard supply stores, or surveyors' supply stores. These measuring tapes are available in 60-meter (200-foot) and 100-meter (300-foot) lengths.
- Two 100-foot builder's tapes are used to set corners and short walls. They are available for a nominal cost at hardware stores.
- Six stakes or long nails to establish corners and measuring points.

### ❖ Metrics – Meters to Feet Conversions

- 20 meters = 65.62 feet
- 40 meters = 131.23 feet
- 60 meters = 196.85 feet
- 9.144 meters = 30 feet
- 12.192 meters = 40 feet
- 15.24 meters = 50 feet



# ARENA SETUP

## Directions



Adapted from <http://www.usdf.org/docs/showflash/web/GeneralInfo/Before/ArenaSet-Up.pdf>

### ❖ Directions

#### ➤ Establish the approximate locations of the rings.

- Stride out approximate distances or use a measuring wheel.
- Check the footing in the area you have selected. If possible, avoid wet areas or uneven areas.
- Determine the location of the judge relative to sun. It is highly desirable to NOT have the sun in the judge's eyes.
- Confirm whether there will be adequate space for the judge's booth and for a comfortable circle at entry.
- Relocate as required.

#### ➤ Determine 1<sup>st</sup> corner:

- A 90° corner is established using tapes to establish a right triangle with sides of 40 feet and 30 feet and a hypotenuse of 50 feet.
- This is the first corner.
- Drive in one stake or nail to establish the location for the first corner stake.



#### ➤ Measure short side: Using the 100-foot builder's tape, measure 20 meters (65.61 feet) along the short side.





# ARENA SETUP

## Directions, Cont'd.

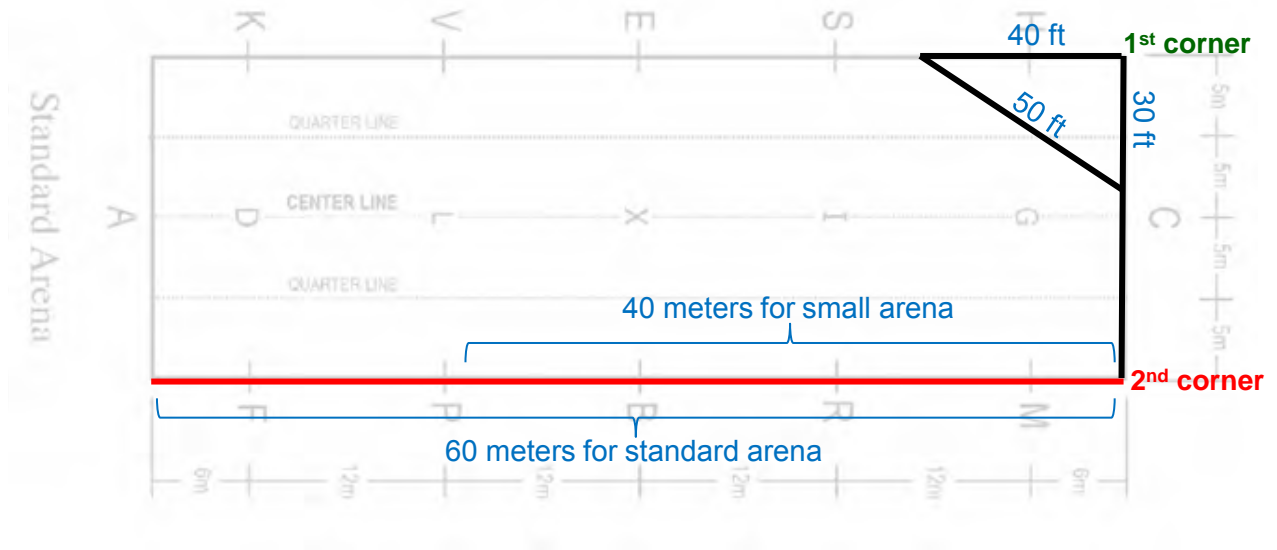


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### ❖ Directions, Cont'd.

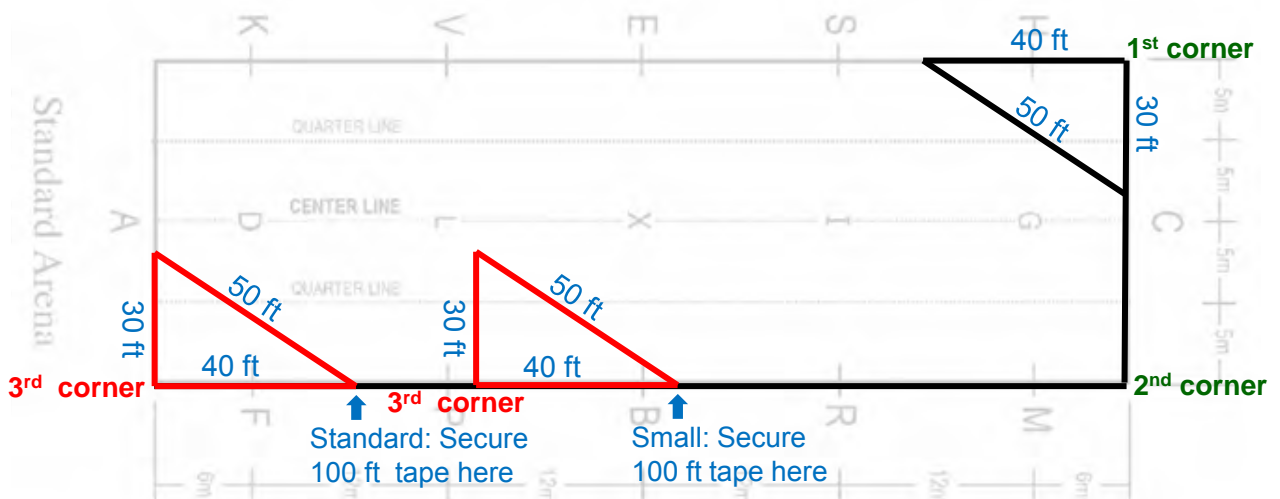
#### ➤ Determine 2<sup>nd</sup> corner:

- Take a 60-meter tape and for a standard arena measure 60 meters down the long wall, or for a small arena measure 40 meters, and place a stake with the tape secured to be straight and taut.
- This is the second corner.



#### ➤ Determine 3<sup>rd</sup> corner:

- Secure the second 100-foot builder's tape at the **40-foot point** on the long wall.
- Unreel **50 feet** and then adjust the positions between the **40-foot location** on the long wall and a **30-foot location** on the short wall so they are exactly **50 feet apart**. The easiest way to do this is to pivot the short wall while leaving the long wall taut.
- Mark the final location of end of the short side with a stake.
- This is the third corner.







# ARENA SETUP

## Directions, Cont'd.

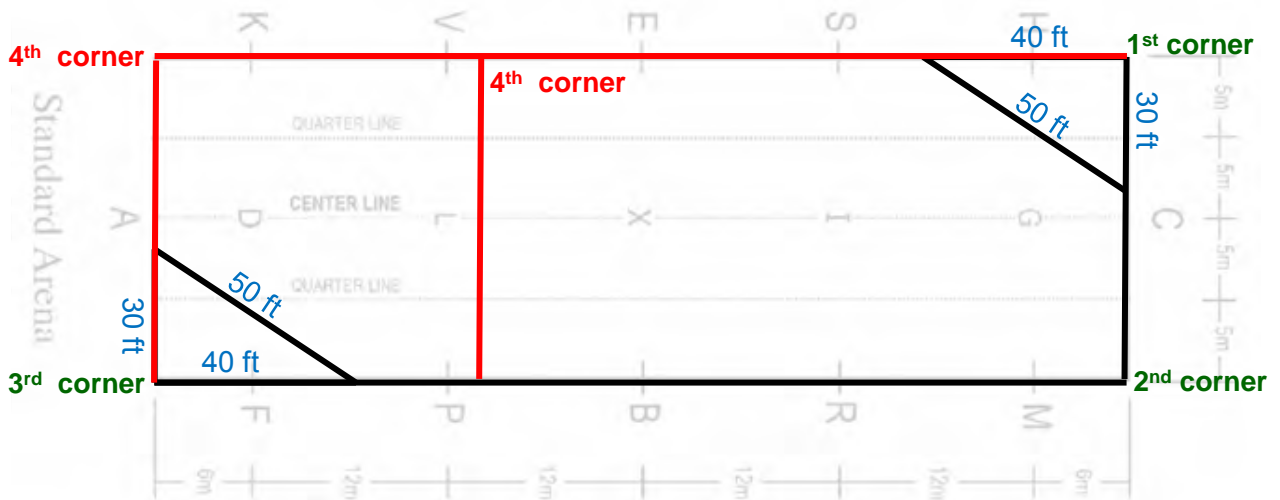


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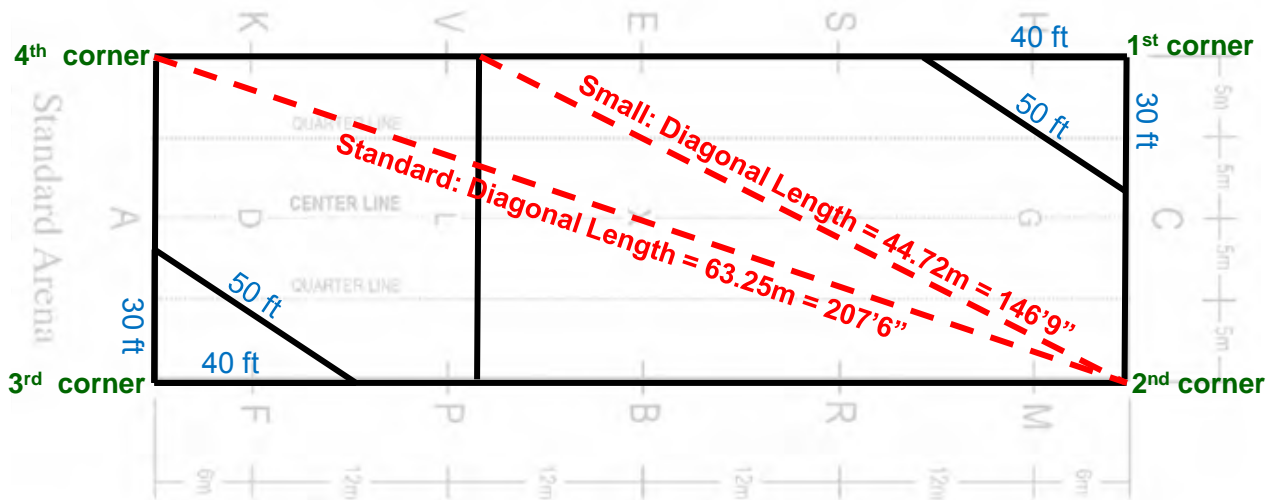
#### ➤ Determine the 4<sup>th</sup> corner:

- Use the tapes to measure out the other long side and short side.
- The fourth corner is located at their junction. By making these last two walls the correct lengths, all corners will be square. Optionally, the diagonal of the ring may be measured as a check, as shown in the following diagram.



#### ➤ Verify the ring dimensions and square corners:

- The diagonal of the ring may be measured as a check, as shown in the following diagram.





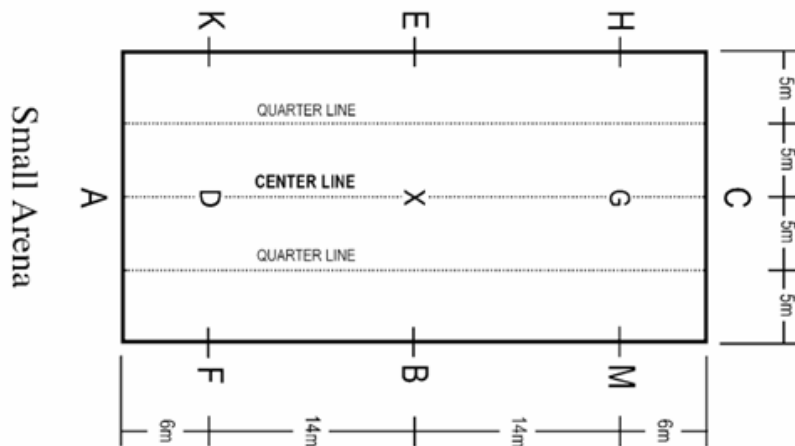
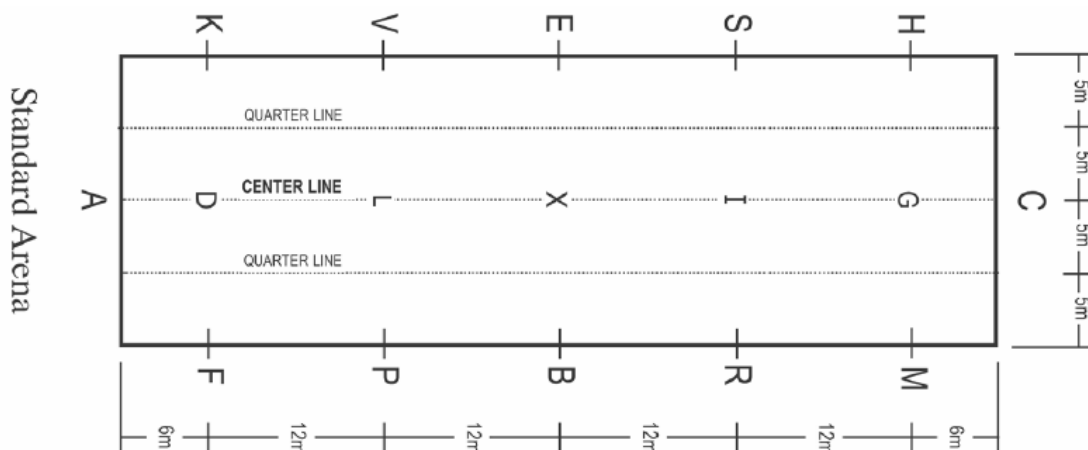
# ARENA SETUP

## Directions, Cont'd.



### ❖ Directions, cont'd.

- Using the stakes in the ground, set the arena fencing.
- Refer to the following diagrams to determine placement of letters.
  - Except for the letter A, the letters outside the enclosure should be placed about 0.5 meters [1.64 feet] from the fence (USEF DR126.1).
  - The letter A should be placed at least five meters [16.4 feet] away from the arena (USEF DR126.1).



- So that the judges can note the exact point on the track opposite each letter, it is compulsory to place a marker on the fence itself, level with and in addition to the letter concerned (USEF DR126.1). This is a red marker (red tape or special markers that can be purchased) on the fence itself.

