

# EQUINE TRAIL SPORTS

## JUDGING STANDARDS

Version 12-02-2020

### WHAT IS EQUINE TRAIL SPORTS ?

2

- Founded in March 2013, ETS offers event experiences for equine and rider, both competitive and non-competitive.
- Format Highlights:
  - Competitive events offered by Equine Trail Sports can be In Hand or Mounted, and can range from 0-10 miles. Scores are based on obstacles. Non-competitive events offered can be Play Days, Trail Rides, or Judge Clinics.
  - Riders choose from 3 levels of difficulty at each obstacle. Riders can choose their levels, obstacle to obstacle.
    - LEVELS: 1 - NOVICE - 2 - INTERMEDIATE - 3 - ADVANCED
  - Obstacles are not timed, but can 'time out' – Judges use common sense, not stop watches, and give partial scores for attempts!
  - Local, National, and Regional recognition: Event Awards, Annual Awards, and Lifetime Awards for horse and rider!
    - Horses accumulate points for every competitive event no matter the rider.
    - Riders accumulate points for every competitive event no matter the horse ridden.

**Ride for Fun, Ride to Learn**

12/2/2020

## THE FOCUS FOR ETS – RIDE FOR FUN, RIDE TO LEARN <sup>3</sup>

**Ride for Fun** - A family friendly event that everyone can enjoy from the focused competitor, casual competitor, social competitor, to the 'ride along' friends.

**Ride to Learn** – ETS Judges participate in 'Judges Shout Outs' just prior to awards at each ETS event. ETS riders, who just competed, gather to hear each Judge share with the riders just what that Judge was looking for at their obstacle (i.e., how that judge envisioned the 'perfect' execution of that obstacle). Judges then share, in general, the results the judge saw at their obstacle – both good and bad. Judges often give general tips to the group on how to overcome or improve on the general problems the judge observed.

**Ride for Fun** – During 'Judges Shout Outs' judges encourage riders by recognizing individual riders from their obstacle and give multiple 'shout outs' for things such as overcoming a problem, showing good partnership with their equine, great execution, etc. Hosts frequently provide some token for the Judge to give to one special "Shout Out" – the 'Judge's Choice'. This token can be as simple as a candy bar, horse treat, or other prize.

**Ride to Learn** – Scoring and Comments - Judge's comments on the score card give riders an opportunity to learn and improve. ETS Riders appreciate their judges' feedback! Scores and Comments for every rider for every ride, are available on the ETS Web Site.

12/2/2020

## RIDERS CHOOSE FROM 3 LEVELS OF DIFFICULTY, OBSTACLE TO OBSTACLE <sup>4</sup>

Level 1 - NOVICE

Level 2 - INTERMEDIATE

Level 3 - ADVANCED

Obstacles are intended to accomplish the same skill at an increasingly higher degree of difficulty, progressing from level 1, to level 2, to level 3.

12/2/2020

## HOW DO DIFFICULTY LEVELS CHOSEN DETERMINE A COMPETITOR'S BRACKET?

Bracket	Challenge Level Total					Average Challenge Level
	6 obstacles	7 obstacles	8 obstacles	9 obstacles	10 obstacles	
Novice	6-8	7-10	8-11	9-13	10-14	1.0-1.49
Intermediate	9-14	11-17	12-19	14-22	15-24	1.5-2.49
Advanced	15-18	18-21	20-24	23-27	25-30	2.5+

- A rider is placed in the **Novice** bracket if their average challenge level is 1.49 or less.
- A rider is placed in the **Intermediate** bracket if their average challenge level is between 1.5 to 2.49.
- A rider is placed in the **Advanced** bracket if their average challenge level is between 2.5-3.0.
- ETS does the math for the rider and displays the range of the Challenge Level Totals for each bracket at the top of the Obstacle Sheet given at the event.

12/2/2020

SPORTS (100) Sat 09/17/16 Walnut Creek Ranch Trail Challenge

Hosted by Miranda Lyon (501) 249-4117  
Circle level for each obstacle and total.

Total	7 Obstacles		
12	Novice	Intermediate	Advanced
	7-10	11-17	18-21

Level	Obstacle Description
1	1) Anne Gabley (Control reaction in movement)
1	2) Pick up water gun, pump it up, squirt water in air, away from horse
2	3) Pick up water gun, pump it up, squirt water on one target.
3	4) Pick up water gun, pump it up, squirt water on three targets.
Level 2)	5) Fallen branches (cavaletti) (Forward movement)
1	6) Walk thru cavaletti from start point to finish point.
2	7) Trot thru cavaletti from start point to finish point.
3	8) Lope up to cavaletti, transition to trot thru cavaletti, transition to lope to finish point.
Level 3)	9) Drag Serpentine (Drag obstacle)
1	10) Retrieve rope, drag log in "C" shape past way around cone, be sure and turn TOWARDS cone so rope and drag are on the inside! (easier side!) Release rope.
2	11) Retrieve rope, drag log in "G" shape, serpentine around two cones. Be sure and turn TOWARDS cone first to rope and drag are on the inside first! (easier side!) Release rope.
3	12) Retrieve rope, drag log serpentine around all 4 cones. Release rope.
Level 4)	13) Back "W" (Backup)
1	14) Back the first leg of the W, stop, walk out forward.
2	15) Back the first V shape of the W.
3	16) Back the entire W.
Level 5)	17) Play Ball! (Push train)
1	18) Push ball to end of first lane.
2	19) Push ball down first lane, continue to push ball around corner and to end of second lane.
3	20) Push ball down first lane, continue to push ball around corner and to end of second lane, push around corner and to the end of the third lane.
Level 6)	21) May Pole / Wrap the Tree (Spin)
1	22) Obtain rope, walk rope full circle around tree wrapping the tree with the rope, release rope.
2	23) Obtain rope, walk rope full circle around tree wrapping the tree, stop, pivot, walk opposite direction full circle unwrapping the rope, stop, release rope.
3	24) Obtain rope, trot rope full circle around tree wrapping the tree, stop, pivot, trot opposite direction full circle unwrapping the rope, stop, release rope.
Level 7)	25) The Patriot! (Handle item)
1	26) Obtain flag, fly your flag at a walk from point A to point B, around point B, replace back at point A.
2	27) Obtain flag, fly your flag at a trot from point A to point C, around point C, replace back at point A.
3	28) Obtain flag, fly your flag at a lope from point A to point D, around point D, replace back at point A.

### SAMPLE RIDER OBSTACLE COURSE SHEET

Rider chooses the Difficulty Level for each obstacle  
 ↓  
 Challenge Level Total = 12  
 ↓  
 Bracket Placement → Intermediate

12/2/2020

## HOW DOES THE DIFFICULTY LEVEL CHOSEN AFFECT THE SCORE? <sup>7</sup>

**Weighted Score:** The judge's raw scores (0-10) are input into the ETS Scoring App, and the app multiplies the raw scores by the appropriate difficulty factor chosen at each obstacle, to get the weighted score for the obstacle.

Obstacle Level	Difficulty Factor
1	1.0
2	1.3
3	1.65

**Example:**

Level	Equine Score	Rider Score	Total	Difficulty Factor	Weighted Score
1	8	6	14	1.0	14.0
2	8	6	14	1.3	18.2
3	8	6	14	1.65	23.1

12/2/2020

## SCORING <sup>8</sup>

- Obstacle performance results are judged on a 0 – 10 scale for horse and 0 – 10 scale for rider, 20 points total. Judges score in whole numbers only – no fractions.
- Judges use the below Scoring Scale to score horse and rider according to the **OBSTACLE CRITERIA**. This scale is located on the judge's score card.

RANGE	SCORE		
ZERO / ONE	0 Fall, Pass, Did not get past the start point	1 Passed Go (no \$)	
PARTIAL CREDIT	2 Bless your heart	3 Not "Purdy"	4 Close but no cigar
AVERAGE RESULTS	5 Okay	6 Average	7 Almost Good
ABOVE AVG RESULTS	8 Good	9 Excellent	10 Perfect

- Pluses may be awarded at the judge's discretion for any performance, and are not added to the overall score; pluses are used to break ties. One plus can be given for any score range for the horse and/or rider.

12/2/2020

## SAMPLE OBSTACLE CRITERIA

9

### Obstacle #1 - Back "W"

Level	Maneuver: Backup
1	Back the first leg of the W, stop, walk out forward.
2	Back the first V shape of the W.
3	Back the entire W.

### Judging Criteria

#### Back "W" (Backup):

- Horse should back with soft neck and poll.
- Rider may glance backwards without a penalty, but a penalty will occur if rider's balance is compromised.
- Back should be smooth and fluid with cadence.
- Horse should proceed at rider's cue without hesitation.
- Any form of spooking, disobedience, stepping away, or refusal will incur a penalty.
- Horse may regard obstacle for a moment, but prolonged hesitation will incur a penalty.
- Rider should have a centered and balanced seat.
- Rider should have soft hands, seat, and legs.
- Subtle/refined cues will score higher than obvious cues or harsh use of bits/spurs.
- A calm, patient, willing horse will score higher than nervousness or rushing.
- A good attitude of the horse is most desirable with no excessive swishing of the tail, pinning ears, pawing, kicking, or bucking.

Your Obstacle  
Criteria is placed on  
your clipboard.

12/2/2020

## SCORE CARD EXAMPLE

10

EQUINE SPORTS (11833) Sat 04/06/19 BEC Spring 2019 Trail Challenge #1

1 Vines in the Trees							Julie Tetric Judge	
RANGE			SCORE					
ZERO / ONE			0 Fall, Pass, Did not get past the start point				1 Passed Go (no \$)	
PARTIAL CREDIT			2 Bless your heart		3 Not "Purdy"		4 Close but no cigar	
AVERAGE RESULTS			5 Okay		6 Average		7 Almost Good	
ABOVE AVG RESULTS			8 Good		9 Excellent		10 Perfect	
#	Rider	Equine	Level	Rider Score +	Equine Score +	Total	Comment / Shout-out *	
10	Elizabeth A.	QH Grey						
11	Kathy Baldock	QH Bay						
12	Minor(6)	QH Sorrel						
13	Skylar Berkvens	Tbred Brown						
14	Stacey Boudreaux	Tbred Gray					Ride Along	
15	Kimberly Brunson	Warmblood Bay						
17	Julie Carlson	* Gaited Arab Dk Bay Black & Wh						
18	Vickie Corbin	QH Black						
19	Cameron Culver	QH Sorrel						
20	Natalie Gordon	Arab Grey						
21	Elaine Hunter	Paint Sorrel Whi						

Scoring Scale

Alerting you to New Riders

Equine Breed & Color

Alerting you to Minor Riders

Alerting you to Gaited Equines

Indicate your Shout Out in this column

Alerting you to Ride Alongs

12/2/2020

## MAKING COMMENTS MEANINGFUL

11

- Make every effort to record simple, brief comments for every rider.
- You can use the acronyms provided to you or develop your own for the essential elements you plan to look for in the performance of your obstacle. I.e., NP – Nicked Pole
- In the spirit of **Ride to Learn**, note areas for improvement or mistakes noticed.
- Comments like ‘Good job’ are not helpful to the rider unless it accompanies a comment noting areas for improvement.
- Comments on 10’s can be what the rider did right and what you liked about their performance.
- Comments are transferred into the scoring system and made available to the riders to help them identify areas to improve upon.

12/2/2020

## THE ETS JUDGE: VALUED BY ETS, HOSTS, AND RIDERS

12

- Your judging decisions are backed by your Event Host and ETS Management when conducted according to the format provided.
- You are provided scoring tools to help you judge to a national standard.
- You are provided ETS Judging Criteria based on a common sense application of good horsemanship and practical safety practices.
- Judge Certification includes an ETS Judge’s Badge, a Judge Award program giving you recognition for the more riders you judge, and online certification recognition to hosts.

12/2/2020

## THE ETS JUDGE!

- ENCOURAGING
- FAIR
- CONSCIENTIOUS

12/2/2020

## ENCOURAGING ...

**The ETS Judge is VITAL to the riders' experience!**

- How you greet your returning and 'new to ETS' riders
- How you 'time out' a struggling rider
- How you send your riders off to their next obstacle
- How you encourage your riders during the 'Judges Shout Outs'

12/2/2020

# FAIR...

15

- Rate your rider's overall obstacle results in your mind, determine the range using the DECISION TREE logic:

RANGE	SCORE			
<b>ZERO</b>	0 Fall, Pass, Did not get past the start point			
<b>PARTIAL CREDIT</b>	1 Passed Go (no S)	2 Bless your heart	3 Not "Purdy"	4 Close but no cigar
<b>AVERAGE RESULTS</b>	5 Okay	6 Average	7 Almost Good	
<b>ABOVE AVG RESULTS</b>	8 Good	9 Excellent	10 Perfect	



- **Zero** (any of the following)
  - Rider decides to pass on the obstacle
  - Any fall during the performance of the obstacle (horse and/or rider)
  - Rider is not able to get their horse past the start point. The start point of your obstacle is defined as the point where each horse and rider team starts the obstacle. This is typically marked with a start cone or similar object.
- **Partial Credit** (one or both of the following)
  - Low percentage of completion
  - Low percentage of overall quality
- **Above Average Results**
  - Every element of the obstacle must be completed
  - The overall quality of the obstacle must be above average

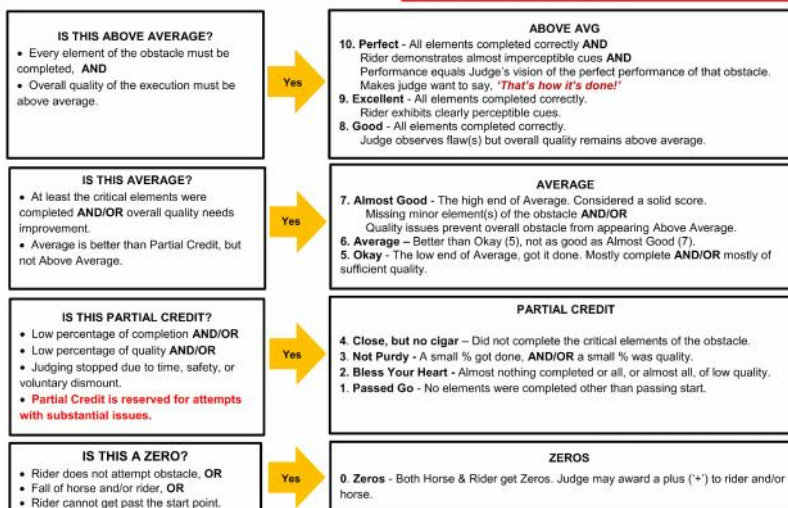
12/2/2020

EQUINETRAIL  
SPORTS  
**DECISION TREE**  
The ETS Judge's Guide to Scoring Obstacle Attempts

**SCORING:**

- In your mind, rate the overall performance of the obstacle compared to your vision of the 'perfect' performance.
- Score horse & rider equally if they contributed equally to the results.
- Adjust horse & rider scores up or down as appropriate to their contribution.
- In the majority of cases, there will not be more than 2 numbers between horse and rider scores.
- Pluses (+) are awarded with judge discretion.

16



Ver. 09/29/20

12/2/2020



## FAIR (cont'd) ... WATCH OUT FOR POSSIBLE PITFALLS

17

- **Pizzazz – No ‘Style’ Points Allowed** - Riders may not gain extra points by performing the obstacle in another manner, even if more difficult. Rider is expected to perform the obstacle as written on their obstacle sheet for their declared Challenge Level.
  - Example: If the obstacle criteria does not specify to sidepass to an object to pick it up, you cannot score a perfect sidepass higher than if they walked up to it perfectly without sidepassing. Extra ‘Pizzazz’ could merit the award of a PLUS, however, only at the Judge’s discretion.
- **Subconscious Prejudice** – Be aware that you may be subconsciously influenced to score a rider higher who arrives at your obstacle with a trophy saddle or wearing ETS Performance Awards, or who you know has won before. You may be subconsciously influenced by a particular breed or young riders. Awareness of this human tendency to be potentially influenced by these type of factors, may help you resist these tendencies and score most fairly.

12/2/2020

## CONSCIENTIOUS ...

18

AFTER JUDGING YOUR OBSTACLE:

- **Check Your Score Card** - When the safety rider arrives, or the last rider has passed your obstacle, check your score card. If any riders remain that have not been scored, contact the ride manager to ensure they are no-shows and not lost.
- **Return to Camp** – You are to return to camp promptly with your score sheets and seek out the person inputting scores.
- **Seek The Score Keeper Promptly** - You will personally read your score sheets to the scorekeeper. It is very important that you go to the scorekeeper as soon as you get back to camp. This is essential to compiling the scores in a timely manner.
- **Report Issues to Event Manager** - Make sure your event manger is aware of any disqualifications, falls, and any other rider or event issues of interest.

12/2/2020

## PREPARING TO JUDGE

19

### **Prior to Arriving at Your Obstacle**

- Attend the Judges Meeting prior to the Event.
- You are encouraged to attend the Rider Meeting as well, to hear questions and concerns the riders have about your obstacle.
- Study the Obstacle Criteria for your obstacle located on your clipboard.
- Visualize what 'timing-out' looks like for your obstacle.
- You will complete the Judge's Worksheet for your obstacle located on your clipboard:
  - Write down your 'Perfect 10' obstacle performance, the opener to your Judge's Talk & Shout Out.
  - Identify the most important skills being tested at your obstacle and what your comments could be.
  - Identify acronyms that could apply to your comments.

### **Getting Ready to Go to your Obstacle**

- Keep your pets back at camp
- Plan how & where to tie your equine away from the obstacle, if you MUST ride to the obstacle
- Know who to call for emergencies or event issues and take your cell phone

### **When you arrive at your obstacle**

- Look over your obstacle for potential safety hazards and to be certain that all the levels can execute it properly.

12/2/2020

## THE 'PERFECT 10'

20

- **It is essential that a judge clearly visualizes what the 'Perfect' execution of their obstacle looks like prior to judging.**
- 'Perfect' MUST include:
  - Flawless execution of every element of the obstacle as directed
  - Almost imperceptible cues of any kind
  - No engagement of directive aids such as:
    - A rider is welcome to wear spurs, but using them to cue is not 'perfect'
    - A rider may use heels to cue instead of just calf pressure, but doing so is not 'perfect'
    - A rider is welcome to use a leverage bit, but direct reining with it is not 'perfect'
- **The 'Perfect 10'** rewards the Horse and/or Rider who do not rely on these types of directive aids to execute the obstacle flawlessly. If a rider uses a directive aid, you must assume the Horse & Rider TEAM needed it to execute the maneuver. Use your 9s to reward a horse's and/or rider's excellent execution of an obstacle with the assistance of directive aids.

12/2/2020

## NO SET TIME LIMITS



21

### LET COMMON SENSE PREVAIL

- An obstacle can lend itself to multiple refusals in a relative short period of time or a long period of time. Pre-plan what is reasonable for your obstacle. You need to standardize it so that you keep the ride moving and prevent back ups, but also allow you to give a rider time to succeed if their equine hesitates.
- Before you start judging for the day, envision what 'CALLED OFF' looks like for your obstacle. Have in mind what lack of progression looks like and how long is too long when you first get to your obstacle.
- Once you've 'called off' a rider, you must remain consistent and **KEEP THAT SAME STANDARD THROUGHOUT YOUR OBSTACLE.** The same standard must apply to all.
- In the spirit of fairness, even when no rider is waiting, do not allow your rider more time than you would if riders were waiting.
- When you 'call off' a rider, instruct the rider "Thank you, I have completed judging you, please find a good stopping point and exit the obstacle."

12/2/2020

## YOUR OBSTACLE IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY <sup>22</sup>

Once the first rider is judged, the obstacle cannot be changed, because for fairness, the obstacle must be the same for every rider. Therefore, **before your 1<sup>st</sup> Rider arrives:**

- Examine your obstacle for potential safety hazards and make sure the terrain will not become unsafe before all riders complete your obstacle. Look for holes, 'soft spots', etc., in the area around and on the path of the obstacle.
- Eliminate any confusion of the execution – i.e., where to start, or enter the obstacle and when judging stops.
- Plan where you are going to stand while judging each level.
- If you feel you need to change anything for your obstacle:
  - Review it with the ride manager before starting the obstacle
  - Make sure that the obstacle matches the obstacle directions

12/2/2020

## MANAGING YOUR OBSTACLE

23

**The host will set up your obstacle, but as a judge you will confirm the following:**

- Make sure the start point is easy for you to judge as well as for the rider to get past. The Host should have set up a start cone or a similar object.
- Make sure there is enough room from the start to the obstacle to complete a gait designated on the obstacle sheet.
  - **Example:** If the start cone is too close to a bridge and a trot on is designated in a level, make sure the start is far enough away for a cadenced trot to be performed without hesitation in the beginning.
- Identify the end point to determine where you stop judging your rider once all components of the obstacle are complete. This will most likely be an end cone or a similar object.

12/2/2020

## MANAGING YOUR OBSTACLE (cont'd)

24

### Safety

- If your obstacle becomes unsafe, stop judging, and notify the Event Manager immediately.
- An obstacle cannot be changed after any rider has gone through the obstacle, unless it is required for safety reasons, and only then if all riders have the opportunity to perform the obstacle the same after being modified for safety reasons.
- If the obstacle cannot be restored to a safe condition, the same for all riders performing the obstacle, that obstacle must be deleted from the event score for all riders.
- To keep the obstacle count the same, a new obstacle can be created by the event manager, to substitute for the cancelled obstacle, as long as all riders have the same opportunity to perform on the substituted obstacle under the same conditions. Results from two different obstacles cannot be mixed.
- A rider may repeat the obstacle if they were stopped due to an obstacle deterioration, not due to the rider's actions, and the obstacle can be restored. Example: wind knocks down an essential piece of the obstacle.
- Be observant to dangerous situations, you may excuse a competitor to keep the rider safe.
- If an accident occurs at your obstacle, call management/911 immediately. Do whatever is necessary to assist, however, do NOT move a back or head injury.

12/2/2020

## JUDGE / RIDER INTERACTION

25

- Welcome each group – Your encouragement is central to your riders’ experience.
- Ask if instructions are needed before the riders attempt the obstacle.
- Take riders as they present themselves. You may suggest an order, but do not insist.
- If a rider is not on your score card, add them to the bottom.
- Verify Riders - Ask each rider their number and say back their name and number from the score card.
- **Ask their Challenge Level and Repeat back their Challenge Level as you record it. Make sure the level is recorded prior to the rider starting the obstacle.**
- The Level cannot be changed once the rider passes the start point.
- Tell them when it’s OK to start.

12/2/2020

## JUDGE / RIDER INTERACTION (cont’d)

26

- Be Friendly - Interject fun and encouragement to your riders. You are encouraged to comment ‘great job’, or ‘nice try’, or words of encouragement to riders.
- Ride Along riders do not perform the obstacle, nor are they scored. Event Manager has discretion to allow Ride Alongs to attempt obstacles if no other rider is waiting and if Event Manager is comfortable with the use of the obstacle.
- No Schooling - Save instructive comments after your rider completes their obstacle for the ‘Ride to Learn’ portion of Awards.
- No Coaching! Please inform parents and friends to not coach a rider while they are completing the obstacle. Announce “No Coaching”, if this occurs during the performance of an obstacle.
- No Speaking! You are not to speak to the rider while they are executing the obstacle. Only before the start point and after the end point.

12/2/2020

## JUDGE / RIDER INTERACTION (cont'd)

27

- ONCE YOUR RIDER STARTS YOUR OBSTACLE, YOU MAY ONLY SPEAK TO THAT RIDER FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS.
  - SAFETY – to address a situation, caused by the rider’s execution of the obstacle, which threatens the rider’s safety. I.e, rope wrapped around hand in a drag
  - SAFETY - to address a situation, caused by a condition of the obstacle, which threatens the rider’s safety. I.e, bank becomes unsafe at a water crossing
  - TIME-OUT – You ask the rider to please move on if the Obstacle Sheet requires you to tell the rider they are finished.
  - A FALL
- If the rider speaks to you, you cannot respond with instructive comments until you stop judging. Any lack of planning an execution of the obstacle should reflect the rider score.

12/2/2020

## RULEBOOK

28

### **Be familiar and knowledgeable of the rules.**

- You will be able to answer questions from the riders.
- You will know how to score effectively and fairly on a national scale.
- You will be able to help keep the obstacle and ride safe.
- Rules can be found on the ETS Web Site – under the INFO tab, click RULES.  
([www.equinetrailsports.com/info/rules/](http://www.equinetrailsports.com/info/rules/))

12/2/2020

## DISQUALIFICATIONS

29

**- rider is removed from the event and receives a zero score**

### **Judge may make the following disqualification determinations:**

- Minors must wear a SEI/ASTM approved riding helmet.
- A rider cannot interfere with another rider's performance at an obstacle.
- No training equipment of any kind that will restrict head movement such as tie-downs or martingales.
- Stallions must have a yellow ribbon in their forelock and tail.
- Riders must wear proper equestrian attire including riding footwear with a heel. No shorts, sneakers, flip flops etc.
- Horse must have headgear with reins on both sides of the horse's neck, and a saddle. No bareback pads.
- Riders are not allowed to bring extra horses to 'pony' along for the competition.
- Riders cannot 'ride double' (two people on one horse) during an ETS event.
- Youth riders (7-15 years of age) must be accompanied by an adult during the competition.
- No Pets on the trail during the competition.
- Participants may not ride the course to practice the obstacles set up for the event prior to the start of the event.
- Consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs during the competition.
- Intentionally taking a short cut to shorten the distance of the course.
- Performance enhancing equine pharmaceuticals that are not considered 'over the counter'.

**Contact the Ride Manager to inform them of the issue!**

12/2/2020

## DISQUALIFICATIONS (cont'd)

30

**- rider is removed from the event and receives a zero score**

### **Judge needs Ride Manager agreement with the following disqualifications:**

- Noticeable lameness or injury.
- The use of any excessive force or unsportsmanlike behavior by a participant directed towards another participant, judge, or an equine.
- If the DQ is one of the above, inform the rider that the Ride Manager will review the DQ.
  - Make a DQ comment on the score card for that rider.
  - Bring the DQ to the Ride Manager's attention as soon as possible.

12/2/2020

## **DISQUALIFICATIONS (cont'd)**

31

**- rider is removed from the event and receives a zero score**

### **If a disqualification situation occurs at an obstacle, the judge is to:**

- Politely discuss it with the rider, alerting them to the disqualification issue.
- Allow the rider to remedy the situation if possible.  
Example - take off a martingale, thereby removing the DQ status.
- Correcting the condition cannot delay the event.
- If it can't be remedied, politely inform the rider of their disqualification and contact the ride manager as soon as possible.

12/2/2020

## **FALL – NOT CAUSE FOR DISQUALIFICATION**

32

### **A 'FALL' during a competition is:**

- Any rider who involuntary dismounts from their equine
- When a horse drops to the ground at a point above his knees
- When an equine lies down in water

### **During an obstacle:**

- The Horse and Rider both score 0 for that obstacle score.

### **Outside an obstacle:**

- The rider must report the fall to an ETS judge or the Event Manager.
- The horse and rider may continue the competition, if able, and if they choose to do so.
- Subject to Ride Manager discretion, the rider may receive a penalty of 20 points from the rider's total score.

12/2/2020



## LEADING YOUR HORSE DURING THE COMPETITION

33

Riders must ride the entire course for the competition. A rider cannot lead their horse in order to advance down the trail on foot.

- **Exception:** This rule does not apply if a rider needs to dismount for health or safety reasons.
- **Caveat:** Any rider dismounting to lead their horse for health or safety reasons is subject to receiving 0s for the remainder of the course, if the act of walking would delay the competition.

12/2/2020

## GENERAL JUDGING CRITERIA

34

- **Negotiating the Obstacle** - Horse and rider teams should negotiate the obstacle with calmness and patience, moving safely through the obstacle, negotiating the obstacle with finesse and an appropriate rate of progress.
- **Proceeding at Rider's Cue** – Horse should proceed at rider's cue without hesitation.
  - Deduct point(s) for any form of spooking, disobedience, stepping away, or refusal.
  - Sniffing an obstacle is not a refusal, however if a horse demonstrates hesitation this shows a lack of bravery and the horse should receive point deduction(s).
  - Horse may regard obstacle for a moment, but prolonged hesitation will incur point deduction(s).
- **Horse's attitude** – A good attitude of the horse is most desirable.
  - Deduct point(s) for excessive swishing of the tail, pinning ears, pawing, kicking, ears flat back, bucking, biting, or opening their mouth and arguing with their rider.
- **Nervous/Anxious/Rushing** - A calm, patient, willing horse is most desirable. Deduct point(s) for anxiousness, nervousness, or rushing.
- **Cadence** must be maintained with all forward and backward movement. Deduct point(s) for breaking cadence.
- **Cues** - Subtle/refined cues will score higher than obvious cues.
  - Deduct point(s) for excessive cues. (hand, leg, verbal, etc.)
  - Deduct point(s) for any harsh use of bits or spurs.

12/2/2020

## GENERAL JUDGING CRITERIA (cont'd)

35

- **Good Equitation** - Rider should demonstrate good equitation.
  - A centered and balanced seat - straight posture and eyes forward.
  - Heels, hips, and shoulders all in alignment. Heels down.
  - Deduct point(s) for rider being unbalanced / out of control.
- **Hands on Reins:**
  - Soft use of reins/bit will be rewarded.
  - Penalize use of reins/bit that cause horses to raise or throw their head up, gaping mouths, hollowed out backs etc.
  - Reward rider that allows horse full use of his head, neck, and eyesight to negotiate obstacles, especially on the trail; hills, ravines, down-fall etc.
  - Reward rider for using one hand on a leverage/shank bit effectively with finesse.
- **Looking** - In any maneuver such as backing or sidepassing, there is no penalty for looking in the direction of movement, as long as the rider's balance is not sacrificed.
- **Uphill or Jump** – Grabbing the mane of a horse is not considered a 'perfect' performance.
- **Uphill** - A rider going uphill needs to stay balanced by maintaining an up and forward position parallel with the upright tree-line.

12/2/2020

## GENERAL JUDGING CRITERIA Gaited Horses

36

- Gaited horses may gait as opposed to trotting, but must canter if asked to canter.
- Many gaited breeds carry a naturally high headset.
- A gait may appear somewhat faster than a Quarter Horse trot; however, the horse should not appear out of control.
- A head bob is natural to several gaited breeds, and does not indicate unsoundness.

12/2/2020

## QUESTIONS – ASK THE EXPERT

37

- ETS is very blessed to have Miranda Holaday-Lyon of M&M Horsemanship and Miranda Horsemanship, serve as our ETS Director of Standards and Rules.



- Email: [support@equinetrailsports.com](mailto:support@equinetrailsports.com)

12/2/2020