

**MANAGING YOUR OBSTACLE**

1. **SAFETY**

- If your obstacle becomes unsafe, stop judging, and notify the Event Manager immediately.
- 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.

2. **WELCOME EACH GROUP**

- 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.

3. **BE FRIENDLY**

Interject fun and encouragement to your riders. You are encouraged to comment 'great job', or 'nice try', or words of encouragement to young riders.

4. **VERIFY RIDERS**

Ask rider their number and say back their name from the score card. Ask their Challenge Level and Repeat their Challenge Level. Tell them when it's OK to start.

5. **OBSTACLES ARE NOT TIMED**

You are in charge of keeping riders moving through the obstacle to avoid backups. Once you've asked a rider to 'continue down the trail', you must remain consistent keeping that same standard for all subsequent riders on that obstacle.

6. **RETURN TO CAMP**

When the last rider has passed your obstacle, look over your score card. If there any riders that have not been scored, contact the ride manager to check on these riders to ensure they are no-shows before leaving your obstacle. You are to return to camp promptly with your score cards and seek out the person inputting scores. You will personally read your score sheets to the scorekeeper.

7. **SHOUT OUTS**

Shout Outs offer an opportunity to provide education to the riders and to spread the joy of winning. Before awards, discuss your obstacle(s) according to the below outline. Then, give the Shout Out token provided by the host to the rider(s) illustrating your educational point.

- Discuss what you expected at your obstacle in terms of a 'perfect' score.
- Then discuss what you saw in terms of how riders performed and scored at your obstacle.
- Let riders know what they can work on to improve.

8. **COMPANION RIDERS** do not perform the obstacle, nor are they scored.

9. **NO SCHOOLING** - If asked, save instructive comments for riders after awards.

10. **ON HORSEBACK**

It is strongly recommended you do **not** ride a horse to your obstacle unless absolutely necessary. If you take a horse, tie your horse and remain dismounted in order to properly give attention to judging the riders.

**SCORING YOUR OBSTACLE**

1. **STUDY THE OBSTACLE CRITERIA** located on your clipboard. Recognize your critical and minor elements for each level and understand how you will use the decision tree to apply scoring.

2. **VISUALIZE A PERFECT PERFORMANCE** of the obstacle and deduct points based on the 'perfect' horse and rider.

3. **POINTS**

Maximum 10 points for the horse, 10 points for the rider, 20 points total. 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.

#	RIDER	EQUINE	LEVEL	Rider		Equine		COMMENT
				Score	+	Score	+	
101	Karen Ankley	Appaloosa; Brown						
New	Adult							

4. **SIMPLE, BRIEF COMMENTS** are to be written for every rider. Keep comments constructive as to **why** points were deducted.
5. **NO EXTRA POINTS** - Riders may not gain extra points by performing the obstacle in another manner. Rider is expected to perform the obstacle as written on their obstacle sheet for their declared Challenge Level.
6. **YOU CAN'T JUDGE WHAT YOU DON'T SEE**— Your score must reflect the performance with the written instructions in mind, not what you think the horse or rider is capable of doing.
7. **ACRONYMS** - You may develop acronyms for your comments on your score card.
8. **UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT** - Unsportsmanlike conduct by a participant towards another participant, judge, equine, volunteer or event staff member may result in point deductions, a 20 point penalty, or a disqualification from the event. If the judge experiences unsportsmanlike conduct during their obstacle, they are to score the obstacle appropriately taking into consideration the Rider Participant Pledge noted in the judging criteria. If the unsportsmanlike conduct is experienced outside of an obstacle, the host may use discretion and apply a penalty or a DQ in the scoring app.
9. **SCORING SCALE**

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

- **ZERO**
  - 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 past the start point. The start point is defined as the point where each horse and rider team starts the obstacle. This may be marked by a cone/apparatus/natural terrain area.
- **PARTIAL CREDIT**
  - Low percentage of completion and/or
  - 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

**GENERAL JUDGING CRITERIA (specific obstacle criteria is on the Obstacle Criteria Sheet)**

1. **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.
2. **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).
3. **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, or bucking, ears flat back, bucking, biting, or opening their mouth and arguing with their rider.

4. **NERVOUS/ANXIOUS/RUSHING** - A calm, patient, willing horse is most desirable. Deduct point(s) for anxiousness, nervousness, or rushing.
5. **CADENCE** must be maintained with all forward and backward movement. Deduct point(s) for breaking cadence.
6. **CUES** - Subtle/refined cues will score higher than obvious cues.
  - Deduct point(s) for excessive cues.
  - Deduct point(s) for any harsh use of bits or spurs or equipment.
7. **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.
8. **HANDS ON REINS:**
  - Soft use of reins/bit will be rewarded.
  - Penalize use of reins/bit that cause horses to raise or throw 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.
9. **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.

### GAITED HORSES

1. Gaited horses may gait as opposed to trotting, but must canter if asked to canter.
2. Many gaited breeds carry a naturally high headset.
3. A gait is generally a 4 beat lateral movement.
4. A gait may appear somewhat faster than a Quarter Horse trot or canter; however, the horse should not appear out of control.
5. A head bob is natural to several gaited breeds, and does not indicate unsoundness.

### DISQUALIFICATION SUMMARY

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

1. Minors must wear a properly fitted SEI/ASTM approved riding helmet.
2. No training equipment of any kind that will restrict head movement such as tie-downs or martingales.
3. Stallions must have a yellow ribbon in their forelock and tail.
4. Riders must wear proper equestrian attire including riding footwear with a heel. No shorts, sneakers, flip flops etc.
5. Horse must have headgear with reins on both sides of the horse's neck, and a saddle. No bareback pads.

#### Judge needs Event Manager's agreement with the following disqualifications:

6. Noticeable lameness or injury.
7. The use of any excessive force or unsportsmanlike conduct by a participant directed towards another participant, judge, or an equine outside of an obstacle.

#### If a disqualification event 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 – i.e. take off a martingale, thereby removing the DQ status.
- If it can't be remedied with immediate action:
  - Politely inform the rider of their disqualification.
  - If the DQ is #6 or #7 on the DQ list from above, inform the rider that the Event Manger will review the DQ.
  - Make a DQ comment on the score card for that rider.
  - Bring the DQ to the Event Manager's attention as soon as possible.