



Horse Council British Columbia

Rule Book 2025
Dressage

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www.hcbc.ca

Horse Council BC (HCBC)

is recognized by the Government of British Columbia as the official organization for Equestrian Sport in BC.

Every eventuality cannot be provided for in these rules.

It is the duty of the officials and the competition management to make informed decisions in a fair and sporting spirit, approaching as near as possible the intention of these rules, and in doing so protecting the reputation of the sport and the welfare of the horse.

All Competition Organizers hosting HCBC sanctioned competitions, should be familiar with the HCBC rules and policies and should have copies available for the use of exhibitors, parents, volunteers and officials. At no time are Equestrian Canada Rules to be used at a Provincially sanctioned competition.

The HCBC Rules are reviewed annually and posted on the HCBC website. Submissions for recommended rule changes will be considered until October 1st annually and reviewed for inclusion to the next years' rule book.

Aims Goals and Objectives

To ensure that Competition Organizers have the tools and support they need to operate within the recognized sport framework, follow current safety rules and guidelines and be aware of the risk management that is necessary and of the utmost importance for hosting a well-planned, successful competition.

To provide HCBC sanctioned competitions the support and governance of the current Horse Council BC Rule Book.

To develop, grow and retain a deep pool of well-educated and knowledgeable officials.

To capture the activity that demonstrates the value of Equestrian Sport to the government at all levels.

To provide, through education, participation in a quality structured, grass roots competition system and a well-planned development pathway, a feeder system that will grow and strengthen the development of the discipline sports and equestrian athletes.

To align with Long Term Equestrian Development (LTED)

Horse Council BC welcomes and encourages all grass roots and entry level competition organizers to sanction their show with HCBC. By doing so the equestrian sport community in BC can work together to ensure a fun, affordable environment within a fair playing field that will aid towards the growth and success of Equestrian Sport in BC.

Horse Welfare Statement

Horse Council BC members are responsible for the well-being and humane treatment of any equine entrusted to their care. Every horse at an HCBC approved event shall, at all times, be treated humanely and with dignity, respect, and compassion. The welfare of the horse is paramount. Any inhumane treatment or the abuse of a horse by any person at an approved HCBC show is forbidden. The obligation and responsibility to handle horses you own, use or that are in your care, with skill and compassion ensuring, regardless of value that they are not subjected to abuse, neglect or mistreatment. Horses used in competition, spectator events, shows, or exhibitions must not be subjected to unscrupulous use of medications, non-nutritive agents, equipment or procedures that may alter performance, appearance or natural function.

The standard by which conduct, or treatment will be measured is that which a person who is informed and experienced in generally accepted equine training and competition practices would determine to be neither cruel, abusive, nor inhumane.

It is recommended that competition management publish a statement in their show program regarding the commitment to humane treatment of horses with the penalties to be imposed for confirmed abuse of horses at a recognized event.

1. All forms of cruel, inhumane or abusive treatment of Horses, which include, but are not limited to various forms of rapping, are strictly forbidden. and will result in elimination

- Rapping:

The term “rapping” is construed to include all of the artificial techniques intended to make the horse jump higher or more carefully in competition. In general Rapping consists of the Rider- and/or dismounted assistants, (for whose behavior the rider is responsible) - either hitting the horse’s legs with something (no matter with what or by whom) or deliberately causing the horse to hit something itself, whether by building obstacles too large and/or too wide, setting false ground lines, placing trotting poles or the elements of a combination at a false distance, intentionally pulling or pushing the horse into an obstacle or otherwise making it difficult or impossible for the horse to negotiate the practice obstacle without hitting it. In the case of rapping or any other abusive schooling practice within the period of jurisdiction of the Competition Management and Provincial Rules Official, the competitor and the horse concerned will be disqualified from the competition with the possibility of being asked to leave the competition grounds

- Excessive use of the whip:

- The whip may not be used to vent an Athlete’s temper.
- A Horse should never be hit with a whip more than three times in a row.
- The horse’s skin should never be broken due to excessive use of the whip
- The whip is not to be used after elimination

- Excessive number of classes: typically, no one horse should do more than five classes in one day.

Bio Security

It is strongly recommended that horses be up to date on vaccinations and in good health to perform.

Vaccinations offer horses protection from some infectious diseases, but do not eliminate disease risk. Vaccination guidelines vary by region. This should be taken into consideration when weighing the risk for exposure. While there are costs associated with vaccines, those costs are generally much lower than the costs associated with an infectious disease.

Show management has the right and duty to demand removal of a horse from the grounds if it is deemed unfit to compete. Competition management may enforce vaccination requirements for their competition or venue.

A request for supporting documentation confirming a horse's compliance with mandatory vaccination requirements is an acceptable condition of entry.

For more information on bio security practice please visit <https://hcbc.ca/equine-welfare/biosecurity/>

Helmet Policy

Horse Council BC (HCBC) strongly recommends that anyone riding or driving a horse should wear ASTM/SEI/BSI/BS EN; EN; AS/NZS; CE VGI approved protective headgear, specifically designed for equestrian activities. ASTM (American Society for Testing Materials); SEI (Safety Equipment Institute, Inc.); BSI/BS EN (British Standards Institution); EN (European Union Standards); AS/NZS (Australian/New Zealand Standards); or CE VG1 01.040 2014-12 (provided they are BSI Kitemarked).

The helmet should be properly fitted with safety harness correctly secured, while mounted, riding or driving, ***with the exception for the discipline of vaulting.***

Every time, every ride, all riders all drivers.

Youth competitors must wear properly fitted approved ASTM, SEI, BSI/BS EN, EN, AS/NZS/ or CE VG1 protective headgear, with safety harness correctly secured while mounted on the competition or event grounds and in ALL classes and Performance Divisions.

The wearing of religious headwear will be accepted for adult riders/drivers without penalty. The option to wear an approved helmet with a sports turban is strongly advised.

Concussion Policy

Resources: For concussion education and awareness resources, please visit the Concussion Awareness page on the HCBC website www.hcbc.ca.

Definition: A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury (or TBI), caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head that can change the way the brain normally works. Concussions can also occur from a fall or a blow to the body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. All concussions are serious.

Concussion Policy (cont.)

Policy Statement: Anyone participating in an activity with horses should understand the signs, symptoms and implications of sustaining a concussion.

It is recommended by health care professionals that anyone presenting symptoms or suspected of sustaining a concussion should cease the activity until they have been evaluated and cleared by medical personnel.

Anyone having contact with, or handling horses is responsible to educate themselves on the prevention and proper management of concussion related injuries.

All Coaches and Instructors recognized by Horse Council BC will be required to participate in concussion awareness training once in every three-year period to maintain current certification status.

Liability

The Horse Council BC (HCBC) Competition Committee, HCBC and co-sponsoring organization, if any, will not be responsible for any accident, injury of horse or person or loss or damage of any article of any kind or nature that may be lost or destroyed or in any way damaged that may occur to, or be caused by, any horse exhibited at a competition.

Each exhibitor, agent or horse owner will be responsible for any injury that may be occasioned to any person, animal or damage to any property while on the competition grounds, by any horse owned, exhibited or in custody or control and shall indemnify and hold harmless HCBC, its officials, staff and Directors individually and collectively, and any co-sponsoring organization, from and against any and all claims, demands, cause of action costs, charges and expenses of every kind or nature whatsoever arising out of, or which may be caused by, or incurred by, reason of the ownership, exhibition, custody or control of any animal exhibited.

HCBC will not be responsible for any financial arrangements between show management, exhibitors, owners, agents, or officials.

All federal, provincial and city laws will be adhered to and shall supersede these rules.

Safety

It is essential that every sanctioned competition/event have an emergency action plan in place.

A First Aid kit should be always readily available.

A competition or event must have qualified medical personnel appointed for the duration of the competition who is trained in First Aid Emergency Medical treatment. Qualified Medical personnel are defined as either a:

- Doctor
- Professional emergency personnel, such as EMT or Paramedic
- An adult with recognized and valid First Aid certification who is not competing. This individual may act in some other capacity at the competition providing this does not restrict their availability to all areas on the competition grounds.

Safety (cont.)

It is recommended that the minimum certification required for qualified medical personnel be Standard First Aid Certification.

The facility address, emergency contact name and phone number should be posted at the show office and in other appropriate locations for the benefit of the exhibitors and public at any time.

Emergency Phone Numbers: veterinarian, farrier, hospital name and address should be posted at the show office and in other appropriate locations for the benefit of the exhibitors and public at any time.

It is recommended that all shows arrange for a veterinarian and farrier to be available either on– call or on the show grounds for the duration of the show.

In the event where an accident occurs at an HCBC sanctioned competition or event, Accident Report Forms must be filled out and returned to HCBC. Accident Forms will be emailed to all organizers as part of the sanctioning package, but can be found on the HCBC website at

<https://hcbc.ca/competitions/competition-documents/>

If a competitor suffers a fall in warm-up or during a class, they may be asked to be evaluated by the attending medic. Competitors are solely responsible for ensuring on-site medical assistance takes place. If a competitor refuses evaluation, Competition Management may make the decision to disqualify the competitor from the competition.

Administration

Sanctioning

Any organization, club, individual or group may apply to Horse Council British Columbia (HCBC) to sanction an entry level competition or event offering any of the disciplines outlined in the HCBC Rule Book. There is no restriction to prize money offered at the competition.

The Person Responsible listed on application must be a current HCBC member and is responsible for the conduct of the competition in accordance with the current Horse Council BC Rule Book.

Organizers must apply through the HCBC/ Horse Sport Pro online event sanctioning portal.

Instructions for Login and links to the online application process can be found on the Competition page of the HCBC website <https://hcbc.ca/competitions/organizers/>

The competition application and all required information must be uploaded through the online system, preferably within a minimum of one month prior to the competition or event date(s).

The competition must be approved before publishing, posting online or circulating the prize list.

All required information, prize list, entry forms and a current, endorsed certificate of insurance must be provided.

Administration (cont.)

Every competition must obtain a certificate of insurance endorsed by the insurance carrier to cover law suits, claims or judgment for bodily injury or property damage sustained by spectators, participants, or others arising out of the use of the show grounds or operation necessary or incidental to the show.

All approved competitions will be emailed a Competition Package including a HCBC Certificate of Sanction which is to be printed and displayed in the Competition Office, or other clearly visible location.

The Competition Organizer is required to provide a copy of the approved Competition Prize List to the Official(s).

Competitions or Events should not start earlier than the time listed in prize list or advertised in the schedule.

Competitions sanctioned with another discipline or breed association may apply for dual sanctioning with Horse Council BC for specific divisions. Discipline or Breed Association rules may supersede HCBC rules at a dual sanctioned show in some divisions.

Clubs may include local club rules provided the local rules do not compromise the integrity and safety standards of Horse Council BC sanctioned competition. Any local club rules must be stated clearly in the Prize List and be approved by Horse Council BC during the application process.

Sanctioning Fees

The fee for sanctioning a Horse Council BC Provincial Competition is \$42.00 per show.

Payment of fees can be processed by credit card through the [HCBC Online Sanctioning Portal](#) or by mailing a cheque to the HCBC office.

Sanction fees are not refundable.

An NSF charge of \$50.00 will be applied for any returned fees.

Prize List

All Prize Lists must contain the following disclaimer:

It is the responsibility of the show/event committee, or competition organizers and the facility owners and managers to ensure that all BC Health Authority and WorkSafeBC directives are followed and enforced. Horse Council is not a regulatory body, and it is understood and agreed that sanctioning and approval of a HCBC Provincial competition / event relates to the use of the rule book and approved officials only.

This Competition is a Horse Council BC provincially sanctioned competition and will be governed in accordance with the Horse Council BC Rule Book. Knowledge of the rules is the responsibility of Competition Management, Officials and Competitors.

The Horse Council BC Rule Book, can be found at www.hcbc.ca <https://hcbc.ca/competitions/competition-documents/>

Prize List (cont.)

Neither Horse Council BC, its Board of Directors, organizing committee, staff, volunteers, officials, or employees of the horse show, will be responsible in any way, for damage, injury, or loss to persons, horses or property of exhibitors, spectators, owners, riders, trainers, or grooms. All competitors and owners of horses must be members of Horse Council BC to participate."

Prize Lists must include:

- Date(s), Start Time, Location, Directions
- Official's names
- Name and contact of the person responsible, or competition manager
- Entry Secretary's name and contact information
- Type of Competition
- Entry deadline.
- State the competition will be run under the current HCBC rule book
- HCBC Prizelist Disclaimer
- Any local club rules must be stated clearly in the Prize List and be approved by Horse Council BC during the application process
- Entry fees per class or division
- Classes numbers and specifications for each class
- Reserve the right to cancel or combine any class that does not have sufficient entries
- If post entries or day of adds are allowed
- If Hors Concours entries are allowed
- Number of ribbons for each class and if there are trophies and /or prize money.
- Types of Championships or/and Aggregates and how will be determined.
- . Any Age Categories where classes will be split.
- Any special ground rules.
- Whether jumping will be held on grass or sand rings.
- Local Hotels and Accommodations with Contact information

If prize money is offered in any classes, the amounts and class entry fee must be specified in the Prizelist. Prize money distribution by total percentage breakdown or dollar amount by placings for each class where prize money is offered must be shown.

The competition's' policy regarding Hors Concours entries (not to be judged) must be clearly stated in the prize list.

Prize List (cont.)

Prize and Awards

Show management must make the full payment of prize monies as specified in the competition Prize List.

If High Point Awards are to be presented at the competition, the method of tabulating points for such awards is at the discretion of show management and must be stated in the Prize List.

The following schedule of ribbons is recommended:

First Place	Red
Second place	Blue
Third Place	White
Fourth Place	Yellow
Fifth Place	Green
Sixth Place	Pink
Seventh Place	Purple
Eighth Place	Brown
Champion	Red, Blue, White
Reserve Champion	Blue, White, Yellow

The following point scale may be used for tabulating High Point Awards:

# in class	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th
1	1							
2	2	1						
3	3	2	1					
4	4	3	2	1				
5	5	4	3	2	1			
6	6	5	4	3	2	1		
7	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
8	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
9 - 15	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2
16 - 20	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3
21 - 25	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4
26- 30	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5
31 - 35	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6
36 - 40	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7



Section 1:

General Competition Rules

1.1 Entries

All exhibitors are required to be current Horse Council BC members when participating in HCBC sanctioned events.

Exception: Lead Line class competitors 6yrs of age and under. Lead Line competitors must be accompanied by an adult holding current HCBC membership.

In the event of failure to sign the entry form, the exhibitors' first entry into the ring shall be deemed in acceptance of these rules.

1.1.1. a) Hours concours (H/C) Entries:

Hors Concours entries may be accepted at the discretion of the organizing committee. The competition's' policy regarding Hors Concours entries must be clearly stated in the prize list.

Hors Concours entries must pay the same entry fee as regular entries (unless otherwise stated in the prize list) and are subject to the same conditions and rules which apply to regular entries.

Hors Concours entries are not eligible for prizes or awards.

1.1.2. b) Youth Entries

The age limit for a youth competitor is 18 years of age or younger as of January 1st of the current year. A person born on January 1st shall assume the older age as of that date.

Proof of youth's age may be required on entry forms at HCBC sanctioned competitions.

All entry forms for youth exhibitors 18 years of age and under must be signed by parent or legal guardian.

Youth competitors must wear properly fitted approved ASTM, SEI, BSI/BS EN, EN, AS/NZS/ or CE VG1 protective headgear, with safety harness correctly secured at all times while mounted on the competition or event grounds and in ALL classes and Performance Divisions.

Exception: Vaulting

The Youth competitor need not own or lease the horse he or she is competing with to enter any class.

A horse may be entered in any or all youth age divisions, but not more than once in each class A youth competitor may not show a stallion in any class, regardless of the age or size of the stallion.

1.2 Competition Numbers

Competition numbers will be issued by the Show Secretary to all entries (horses not riders/drivers) and must be visible at all times while competing.

Competition numbers are available for purchase through the HCBC website <https://store.hcbc.ca/>

1.3 Officials

Horse Council BC sanctioned events must use current, certified Provincial Officials when possible.

Officials with expired status or recognized by another organization may be used, with a guest card, provided they meet the requirements for that discipline as set out by the provincial body responsible for said discipline.

All provincial officials must be current members of Horse Council BC and be listed on the competition or event application. In the event that an official must be substituted, Horse Council BC is to be notified immediately and provided with the name and contact info of the substitute.

It is strongly recommended that for the protection of both the official and the competition management, a written contract be completed between both parties.

Officials should arrive on the competition grounds at least one hour before the first class begins.

The Judge's decision is considered as final in all classes.

Judges should be provided with the Prize List and any tests, courses or patterns they will be judging at the competition.

Competition management must schedule appropriate breaks for officials.

1.4 Provincial Rules Officials

HCBC Provincial Rules Officials (PRO) may attend provincially sanctioned competitions to offer help and guidance with HCBC rules, assist competition management with the development and rule content in prize lists as well as address questions or concerns arising at a competition. Provincial Rules Officials attendance at competitions will aid to encourage a safe and enjoyable competition experience for both horses and competitors.

All Provincial Championship designated competitions must have a PRO in attendance.

Provincial Rules Officials are appointed by and will be assigned by HCBC to competitions as requested by competition management or by the HCBC office.

Provincial Rules Officials are governed by the HCBC Officials' Code of Conduct and protocol.

1.5 Officials Protocol / Conflict of Interest

An official shall not discuss with any exhibitor the purchase, sale or lease of a horse during a show at which that Judge is officiating.

An official shall not be an exhibitor, rider, driver, trainer, coach, handler, manager, or conditioner of any horse at any show or event at which they are officiating.

A judge may not act as course designer at the same competition in which he or she is judging.

1.5 Officials Protocol / Conflict of Interest (cont.)

No horse may be shown under an official that has acted in the capacity as an owner, coach, trainer, agent, or conditioner of the horse, within 30 days prior to the event, 14 days if the official is presiding over a virtual/online event and is not judging entries in person.

The Official must comply with class specifications and rules governing individual classes. Class specifications should be noted and included on all class judge's cards where possible.

Officials are prohibited from using tobacco and/or alcohol products, cellular phones, pagers or electronic communication devices in the arena or judges' booth.

All Officials must dress appropriately and professionally (no jeans, shorts, tank tops, etc.)

1.6 Guest Cards

Uncertified officials may be used at provincial sanctioned competitions under the following conditions.

- Individuals must have extensive experience and knowledge of the discipline being judged and of the current HCBC Rule Book.
- Uncertified officials may be requested to provide HCBC with a minimum of two references.
- Guest card application must be completed during the competition approval application process.
- HCBC will approve a maximum of three guest cards to an uncertified official. Once three guest cards have been issued to an uncertified official, further guest card applications for that individual will be subject to a fee of \$25.00 charged to the competition. The Official will be encouraged to participate in the HCBC Officials Program to become certified.

1.7 Scribes

Scribes should arrive and check in with the competition office at least forty-five (45) minutes before the start of the competition. This will allow for enough time to gather any paperwork, tests, bell, whistle etc. or any other equipment needed. Scribes should allow for time to go over any scribing instructions with their judge.

Cell phones (or any other personal electronic device) must be turned off while scribing

All test sheets must be completed in ink. Pencil is not permitted.

It is the duty of the scribe to ensure that the test sheets include the competitor's entry number, class, description, and Judge's signature if required.

Before the test sheet is handed in for totaling, the scribe must give the test to the Judge for review

Scribes must be appropriately dressed (clean and neat, no cut offs, tank tops, etc.)

1.8 Test Callers

If a competitor requires a test caller, it is their responsibility to provide one.

Calling the test is limited to reading the movement a maximum of twice without adding anything else which might assist the competitor.

Elimination of the competitor may happen should there be a failure to comply by the caller. The Judge will monitor this.

Permitted dress for a Caller is considered “smart casual”, such as jeans, slacks, mid length shorts. Tank tops, flip flops, short shorts, sandals, etc. are not allowed. Inappropriately dressed callers may not be allowed to call a test.

Callers may not wear two-way personal electronic communication devices, i.e. Bluetooth headphones, etc. while calling a test. They may however read tests from a media device. Exception: Para athletes or athletes with hearing impairment may use a two-way communication device, provided a request for dispensation has been submitted in writing to competition management prior to the competition. If in attendance, the PRO (Provincial Rules Official) and judge must be advised of any dispensation.

Callers must position themselves so as not to obstruct the judge's view.

1.9 Elimination

All artificial appliances are prohibited in any class. Any incident in contravention of the HCBC Horse Welfare Statement may at the judge's discretion result in disqualification of the competitor from participating in the remainder of the competition.

After an entry enters the arena, if either the horse or the exhibitor becomes ill or is injured and cannot continue, the entry shall be eliminated from that class.

All horses must be serviceably sound. Any horse showing lameness, broken wind, or impairment of vision shall be refused an award.

Lack of complying to required appointments for a class will result in elimination of the competitor in that class specifying required appointments.

The judge shall have the authority to eliminate any entry from a class who at their discretion is not under sufficient control and or considered by the judge to be a safety risk.

The judge, and/or competition management have the authority to eliminate from the competition / event any exhibitor, owner, or agent, for cruelty or the abuse of a horse.

Obvious lameness is cause for elimination in all classes. The judge has the sole authority to make this decision, which is final, with no right to appeal or protest.

1.10 Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Any unsportsmanlike conduct by an owner, exhibitor, agent, or spectator including but not limited to abuse of one's horse, excessive use of foul language, intoxication anywhere on the grounds of the event, blatant disrespect for any other attendee at the event, or any other detrimental conduct shall jeopardize their right to further exhibit at the competition.

At any time, the judge, and/or competition management, may issue a first warning to any exhibitor, owner, or agent for any unsportsmanlike conduct. Upon failure to comply with this warning, the exhibitor, owner, agent, or spectator shall be disqualified from any further participation at the competition.

Any disqualification from a class or sanctioned competition for unsportsmanlike conduct by any person may be reviewed by the disciplinary committee of HCBC and or applicable breed or discipline association.

No points or awards may be given to any person or person's horses if they are disqualified from a sanctioned competition or event for any unsportsmanlike conduct.

1.11 Protests

Protests for any violation of HCBC competition/event rules at any HCBC sanctioned competition/event may be filed by an exhibitor, owner, trainer, spectator and or parent of a youth exhibitor at that show.

Inquiries must be made through a member of the competition committee regarding a decision. Should the competitor not be satisfied with the result of the inquiry, an official protest must be lodged to competition management. At no time may the judge be approached directly unless the competition specifically prints an exception to this policy. In the event contact with the judge is permitted, at no time will abusive or confrontational language or gesturing be tolerated, under penalty of elimination and possible further disciplinary action initiated.

The person lodging the protest shall do so in writing within 12 hours of the time of the cause of the protest and submit the protest to the competition management.

No protest will be recognized unless it is accompanied by a deposit of \$100.00 in cash, which shall be forfeited if the protest is not sustained.

Neither HCBC nor any organizing committee of the competition will recognize any protest that is not in writing, not signed, or not accompanied by the protest fee.

Any protest shall be adjudicated by a Protest Committee, consisting of two competition officials not involved in the dispute and a committee representative also not involved in the dispute.

1.11 Protests (cont'd)

An official of the competition /event, a director of HCBC, or Provincial Rules Official may file a claim at any HCBC sanctioned competition /event to either the competition committee or the Board of Directors of HCBC for any violation of HCBC recognized event rules.

The judge's decision representing his or her individual preference may not be protested unless it is in clear violation of the recognized event rules. The judge's decision will be considered final.

1.12 Procedure

Upon receiving a protest or a dispute, the Protest Committee shall promptly hold a hearing and obtain from any witnesses, all necessary information and evidence.

All persons directly involved and concerned shall be immediately notified and given the opportunity to attend a hearing.

The Protest Committee shall then adjudicate the issue impartially, make effective its decision upon the parties of interest and report its decision to the parties of interest. A report of the decision shall also be given to the HCBC Competition Manager

1.13 Appeals

An appeal of a Protest Committee's decision may be made to the HCBC Officer specializing in Competition and Sport.

Appeals must be made in writing within 20 days of the date of the Protest Committee's decision and must be accompanied by an appeal fee of \$300.00 payable to Horse Council BC.

The hearing on the appeal shall be heard within a 30-day period from date of filing.

The Appeal Committee of the Board of Directors of HCBC shall consist of two members of the HCBC Board plus one member from the competition organizing committee.

The competition organizing committee of a competition at which a protest is lodged and upheld, must hold all awards, points and prize money for the protested classes in escrow for a placed horse and all following horses, until after a 20-day appeal deadline has passed.

If no appeal is filed, then such awards, points and/or prize money will be awarded at the end of the appeal deadline.



Discipline Rules Dressage

2.1 Dressage

2.1.1. English Dressage

The object of Dressage is the development of the horse into a happy athlete through harmonious education. As a result, it makes the horse calm, supple, loose, and flexible, but also confident, attentive, and keen, thus achieving perfect understanding with the rider. These qualities are demonstrated by the freedom and regularity of the paces, the harmony, lightness, and ease of movements. The dressage horse should demonstrate the correct basic training principles, with lightness of the forehand and engagement of the hindquarters originating from a lively impulsion, while willingly accepting a light contact on the bit without tension or resistance. At all times the training should be following the training scale, the basis of which is three pure gaits.

2.1.2. Western Dressage

Western Dressage integrates the historic principles of classic Dressage with the best of Western Working Horse tradition. The goal of Western Dressage is to develop a partnership between an equine athlete working in harmony with its rider. Western Dressage is a systematic and progressive system of training for the Western horse and rider, in the traditional stock tack with the purpose of enjoying a safe, pleasurable, versatile, and useful working horse. Western dressage tests provide the opportunity for horse and rider to demonstrate growth through a series of progressive elements by advancing from test to test and level to level as they develop in physical skill, mental maturity, and partnership.

The Western Dressage Horse should travel in a natural way demonstrating free flowing, comfortable strides. The gaits are free, regular in cadence and rhythm, consistent in speed and tempo. Lightness and harmony are the hallmarks of a Western Dressage horse with the horse willingly accepting light contact on the bit without tension or resistance to present a balanced harmonious appearance with the rider.

2.1.3. Levels of Dressage Tests for English and Western

Note: For all HCBC Dressage Tests, the rider has the option of rising or sitting the trot at ALL levels unless it calls for a collected trot. The collected trot must be ridden sitting.

HCBC Dressage Tests for English and Western, including the Rising Stars Equitation Score Sheets are available for use at no cost, and can be found on the HCBC website under link: Competition Documents.

The tests offered through Horse Council BC are as follows:

- Introductory (walk, trot/jog & small introduction of the lope)
- Training
- First Level
- Second Level
- Third Level
- Fourth Level

2.1.4. Purpose of Dressage Levels – English and Western

Introductory Level – Walk, Trot/Jog & small introduction of the Lope

- The purpose of this level is to provide an opportunity for the horse and rider new to dressage to demonstrate elementary skills to encourage correct performance and prepare the horse for dressage tests, which will include all three gaits. All trot work to be ridden in rising trot.

Training Level

- The purpose of training level is to confirm that the horse's muscles are supple and loose and that it moves freely forward in a clear rhythm with a steady tempo, accepting contact with the bit. All trot work may be ridden sitting or rising, unless stated. Halts may be performed through the walk.

First Level

- The purpose of First Level is to confirm that the horse demonstrates correct basics. In addition to the requirements of Training Level, the horse has developed the thrust to achieve improved balance and thoroughness and maintain a more consistent contact with the bit. All trot work may be ridden sitting or rising, unless stated otherwise.

Second Level

- The purpose of second level is to confirm that the horse demonstrates correct basics, having developed the thrust required in First Level, now accepts more weight on the hindquarters (collection) and can elevate the forehand sufficiently to execute balanced medium gaits and transitions while reliably on the bit.
- Self-carriage is required with lateral movements as an integral part of horse development within this level.

Third Level

- The purpose of Third Level is to confirm that the horse demonstrates correct basics and has developed an uphill balance with increased engagement, especially in the medium and extended gaits. Transitions between collected, medium and extended gaits should be well defined and performed with engagement. A greater degree of straightness, bending, suppleness, balance, and self-carriage is required than at Second level. The horse must at all times be reliably on the bit.

Fourth Level

- The purpose of Fourth Level is to confirm that the horse demonstrates correct basics, and has developed sufficient suppleness, impulsion, and thoroughness to perform the Fourth Level tests which have a medium degree of difficulty. As a result of improved engagement and collection, the horse remains reliably on the bit, showing a clear uphill balance and lightness of forehand. The movements are performed with greater straightness, energy, and cadence than at Third Level

2.2 Dressage General Rules

- Dressage is performed in an arena with a set of letters that designate where movements are to be executed.
- The arena size may be 20m x 40m (Introductory/Training) or 20m X 60m for Training Level. These measurements are for the inside of the arena.
- First Level through Fourth levels must be ridden in a 20m x 60m arena.
- It is recommended the competition arena should be separated from the public by a minimum distance of 10 meters up to 15 meters for outdoor rings and 5 meters for indoor rings.
- If self-supporting letter markers are used, they should be placed outside the ring about 0.50 meters away from the fence and clearly marked.
- During the competition, the arena/ring fence may remain open at A. The letter A must be placed a minimum of 5 meters away from the arena. A distance of up to 15 meters is permitted. The entrance at A should be 1.5 to 2 meters wide.
- Arena fence conditions must be the same for all competitors in a class.
- The footing in the arena should be flat and level.
- The Judge should be positioned 5m from 'C' and elevated for a good view of the whole ring. A booth, platform or truck should be used to give the judge a proper view of the arena. (Note: The Judge should not be on ground level sitting at a table).
- Test Callers are permitted.

2.2.1. Errors/Penalties

An entry will receive penalty points on their test under the following circumstances:

- Failure to salute is an error of test and the competitor will incur a two-point penalty.
- An "Error of Course" made by a competitor will result in the Judge signaling the rider with their bell/whistle. The Judge will correct the rider by explaining the error and where the competitor is to resume their test.
- If the bell/whistle is not used to signal the competitor and the same error occurs against the same movement which is required to be repeated in the test, only one error is recorded.
- If a competitor performs a rising trot when a sitting trot is required or vice versa, the judge must signal the rider with their bell/whistle and warn the competitor that this is an error that accumulates if repeated, which could lead to elimination at the third occurrence.
- Not entering the arena within 45 seconds after the signal (bell/whistle) has been given, but within 90 seconds is a "Late Entry". This is considered an error. Two points will be deducted. This is not cumulative.
- A competitor who enters the arena before the starting signal is sounded may be directed by the Judge to exit the arena and commence the test again. The mark for the entrance will be given and crossed out with one line and then another mark applied to indicate the deduction of two points. The Judge should add the remark "Competitor entered before start signal". (Note: this is not considered an "Error of Course").

2.3.1 Errors/Penalties (cont.)

- The Judge may stop a test and/or allow a competitor to restart a test from the beginning or from any appropriate point in the test if the Judge feels in their opinion some unusual circumstance has occurred to interrupt a test.
- Use of voice in any way or the clucking of the tongue once or repeatedly is a significant fault, which will receive a deduction of two marks from the movement in which it occurs. Each use of voice and/or tongue will incur a deduction of marks, but does not result in elimination. (e.g., 7 becomes 5, with the comment: voice).
- "Error of Course, "When the bell/whistle has sounded or not must be penalized:
 - First Error = 2 points,
 - Second Error = 4 points,
 - Third Error = Elimination. At the discretion of the judge, the athlete may finish the test unless by doing so, it will interfere with the start of the next scheduled time.

2.2.2. Eliminations

An entry shall be eliminated under the following circumstances:

- Evidence of blood on the horse
- Not complying with the dress rules
- Use of illegal equipment
- Unauthorized assistance (such as: voice, signs, earphone, electronic communication devices)
- Continuous irregular pace or unevenness
- Judge's decision is final with no appeal
- Dangerous/unruly behavior of horse
- Resistance by the horse of more than 20 seconds in a test or earlier if resistance creates a dangerous situation.
- All four feet of the horse leave the arena during the test
- Fall of horse or rider during the test, may not remount to continue the test.
- Dismounting during a test
- Taking more than 90 seconds to enter the arena at A after the start signal.
- Three errors of course
- Taking more than 30 seconds to enter the arena after the start of the music in a freestyle test.

2.2.3. a) Judge

- Must check the arena being used for correct placement of the letters, etc.

2.2.4. b) Scribes

- All test sheets must be completed in ink, pencil is not acceptable.
- The Scribe must check that the test sheets include the competitor's entry number, competition name, date, and judge's name.
- Any changes in the marks given by the judge must be initialed by the judge and be in ink.
- Before the test sheet is handed in for totaling, the scribe must give the test sheet to the judge to review to ensure all movements have been scored, comments filled in and signed by the judge.
- Scribes should familiarize themselves with the tests being judged.

2.2.5. c) Test Callers

- Test callers are permitted.
- If a competitor requires a test caller, it is their responsibility to provide one.
- Calling the test is limited to reading the movement a maximum of twice without adding anything else which might assist the competitor. Elimination of the competitor may happen should there be failure to comply by the caller. The Judge must monitor this.
- Permitted dress for a Caller is considered "smart casual", such as jeans, slacks, mid length shorts. Tank tops, flip flops, sandals, etc. are not allowed. Inappropriately dressed callers may not be allowed to call a test.
- Callers may not wear two-way personal electronic communication devices, e.g., Bluetooth, headphones, etc. while calling a test, they may however, read tests from any form of media device. (Exception: Callers for competitors with documented hearing impairment may use a two-way communication device provided documentation of their impairment has been submitted and the PRO (Provincial Rules Official) and the Judge have been advised.)
- Callers must position themselves so as not to obstruct the judge's view.

2.2.6. d) Provincial Rules Official (PRO)

- Provincial Rules Officials provide help and guidance with HCBC rules at Provincially sanctioned competitions. A PRO is to assist show management with questions or concerns and encourage a safe and enjoyable competition experience.
- PRO should be dressed in "smart casual," such as trousers/slacks, mid length shorts, etc.

2.2.7. e) Para Dressage

- Intended for equestrian competitors with physical and/or visual impairments and to provide and develop competition opportunities for Para athletes.
- Para competitors must supply the show organizer with the correct documents regarding any permitted compensating aids according to his/her respective degrees of impairment.
- A copy of these documents must be attached to the test(s) for the judge's information.

2.2.8. f) Miscellaneous Tests

Prix Caprilli

- In the working gaits, a jumping horse is not expected to be as round on the bit as a competing dressage horse. The horse must softly accept the bit and may show more “roundness” in the parts of the tests separate from the jumps. Trot work to be done posting. Transitions into and out of the halt maybe through the walk. Tests may be called. Refusals will be penalized as an error of course. Knockdowns will be penalized at the judge’s discretion. In the case of a knocked down rail being in the way, the judge will ring the bell for the rider to stop without penalty. After the jump is replaced, the bell will be rung again telling the rider to continue from where he stopped. In the event of TWO refusals at one of the jumps, the rider should go around the jump and continue with the test. This does not incur elimination.
- Rising Stars Equitation Score Sheet (see Rising Stars section for more information)
- RS-Adult Amateur Equitation Score Sheet (see RS Adult Amateur section for more information)
- Tests of Choice
- Eventing, Pony Club, English/Western Dressage, Freestyle, Para or other dressage tests may be offered at HCBC recognized competitions as Test of Choice but must be specified in the prize list.

2.2.9. g) Attire English Dressage

- All dressage competitors regardless of age participating at any HCBC sanctioned Dressage competition must wear properly fitted approved BSI or ASTM ASTM, SEI, BSI/BS EN, EN, AS/NZS/ or CE VG1 01.040 2014-12 (provided they are BSI kitemarked) protective headgear with safety harness correctly secured at all times while mounted on the competition or event grounds.
- Long hair should be neatly in a braid, bun or fully under the helmet, use of a hair net is recommended.
- Riders must wear riding boots (plain with or without boot crowns, laced or with zippers) with heels (tall boots or jodhpur/paddock boots). Boots may be of a matching colour to the coat. Tasteful piping or crystal decoration is permitted.
- Half chaps may be worn with paddock boots if they are well fitted and are of matching colour to the boots.
- Long or short sleeved shirts with a collar may be light coloured, two complementary solid colours or pin-striped without bold pattern, with a stock tie, bow tie, rat catcher with choker of any colour or dress shirt with tie and may be long or short sleeved.
- Stock ties are not required when riding without jackets.
- White, light or dark solid-colored breeches (preferably white); are permitted. Contrasting piping is permitted.
- Jackets or tailored dressage vests of any single colour. Subtle pin striping, checks, tweeds and modest piping are allowed. Contrasting colours, collars with modest piping and or crystal decorations are allowed.
- Safety jackets/vests may be worn without penalty, provided they conform to the rules governing jacket colours.
- In case of inclement weather riders may wear a suitable warm or waterproof jacket and protective hat cover. In extreme humidity or temperature, the judge may permit riders to ride without a jacket or vest. When permission is given, competitors must comply with all other dress requirements except shirt collars may be open.
- Gloves should be worn. Black or brown gloves are recommended.

2.2.9 g) Attire English Dressage (cont.)

Not Permitted

1. Sleeveless shirts or tank tops are not permitted when riding without jackets.
2. Multi-coloured/patterned gloves.
3. Bright coloured or patterned breeches.

2.2.10. h) Dressage Equipment English Bits

- Bits must be smooth with a solid surface and no sharp edges on center links and must not put mechanical restraint on the horse's tongue or cause discomfort or pain to the horse.
- Snaffles and curbs bits with smooth ridges are permitted.
- Snaffle bits must be made of metal, durable plastic, synthetic material or flexible rubber.
- Snaffle bits may be Loose Ring, D Ring, Eggbutt,, Full Cheek
- Snaffle and bridoon rings: inside dimensions must be between 3.5cm and 10.16 cm
- Minimum bit diameters where the bit connects to the cheek or ring: Ponies: 10 mm for snaffles
- Horses: 10 mm for snaffles and bridoons; 12 mm for curbs
- Upper cheek pieces must not exceed 5 cm or be longer than the curb lever arms, measured below the mouthpiece which should not be more than 10 cm when the mouthpiece is in the uppermost position.

Not Permitted

- Wire or hard twisted bits are not permitted.
- Bit burrs
- Bit guards
- Tongue ties

2.2.11. i) Bridles

- English style correctly fitted bridles with reins, black or brown of any type (may have a subtle accent color on the bridle such as white padding, etc.)
- Reins may be plain, rolled, braided and must be leather or rubber.
- Browbands may be plain, contrasting padding, coloured. Tastefully decorated browbands are permitted as long as there is nothing dangling or hanging from the browband (exception: name tags)
- Noseband, at all dressage levels a snaffle bit and bridle with one of the following nosebands are permitted; drop, regular cavesson, flash, figure 8 (also known as a crossed or Mexican noseband), comfort noseband (either with or without a flash for a snaffle, must be plain when used with a double bridle) or crescent cavesson (which may only be used with a snaffle bridle). Note: the noseband must not be tight.
- A throatlatch strap is required except when a combined noseband or Micklem bridle is used.
- Micklem bridles (bit clips are not permitted) may be used at any level where snaffles are permitted.
- At higher levels (Test of Choice, third, fourth) double bridles are optional.
- Bitless bridles may be used at the discretion of Show Management.

2.2.12. j) Saddles

- Dressage saddle or English style saddle or side saddle, black or brown in color only (subtle piping is permitted on the saddle) with a girth, stirrups or safety stirrups (safety stirrups may be used and have the opening on the outside).
- White, off-white, grey, black or conservative coloured saddle pads are recommended. Piping of a different colour is permitted. Striped or multi-coloured pads are not permitted.

2.2.13. k) Other Permitted Equipment

- Boots or bandages
- Well fitted “Scoot Boots”, hoof boots or glue on shoes are allowed, provided they do not protect the soft structures of the hoof, such as the heel bulbs and coronet bands.
- Girth covers
- Sternum relief girth or pads
- Fore girths
- Breastplates
- Cruppers
- Non-restrictive fly guards
- Bucking straps
- Fly bonnets (un-stuffed)
- Net Relief or UV visor for Head shakers or light sensitivity if accompanied by a letter from the athlete and a veterinary certificate recommending its' use.
- Headsets for athletes with documented hearing impairment. (Documentation from a doctor must be provided to show management. Competition organizer must be able to appoint a supervisor to stand with the caller.)
- Whips may be carried at all levels. Note: Total length of whip must not exceed 120cm for horses and 100cm for ponies.

Spurs

- Spurs or ‘dummy’ spurs may be worn.
- The arms of the spur must be smooth.
- The shank the spur must point downward or straight pointing directly back from the center of the spur.
- Rowel spurs must be mounted vertically, free to rotate, and not sharp and point directly back from the center of the spur.
- Junior athletes mounted on ponies may not use spurs with rowels.

2.2.14. l) Other Prohibited Equipment

- Martingales (*EXCEPTION: running martingales are only allowed in designated warm-up and/or schooling areas if a snaffle bridle is being used*)
- Draw reins
- Blinkers
- Ear Plugs

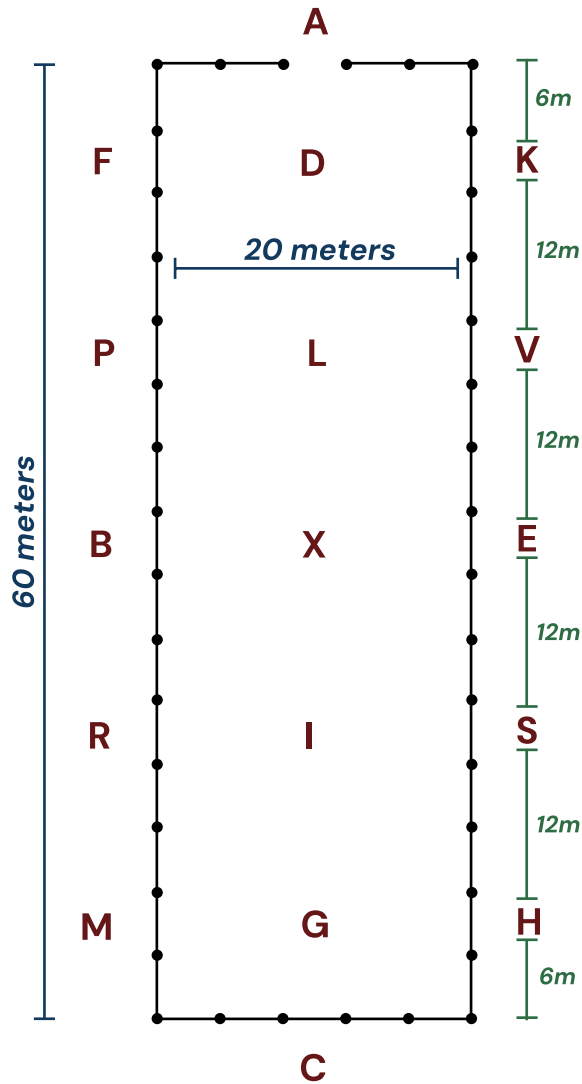
2.2.15. m) Turnout of the Horse

- Manes and forelocks may be braided. There is to be no penalty if not braided.
- Tails should not be braided.
- If braiding:
 - Black, brown, or white braiding tape.
 - Black, white or coloured thread/wool/elastic bands are allowed.
 - Braiding wire is allowed.
 - Braiding bands are allowed. This includes decorative bands with a smooth base and no sharp edges.
 - The forelock does not need to be braided even if the mane is.
 - Items such as ribbons or flowers, etc. in the mane or tail are **Not Allowed**. Exception: a simple **RED** ribbon in the tail for safety reasons.

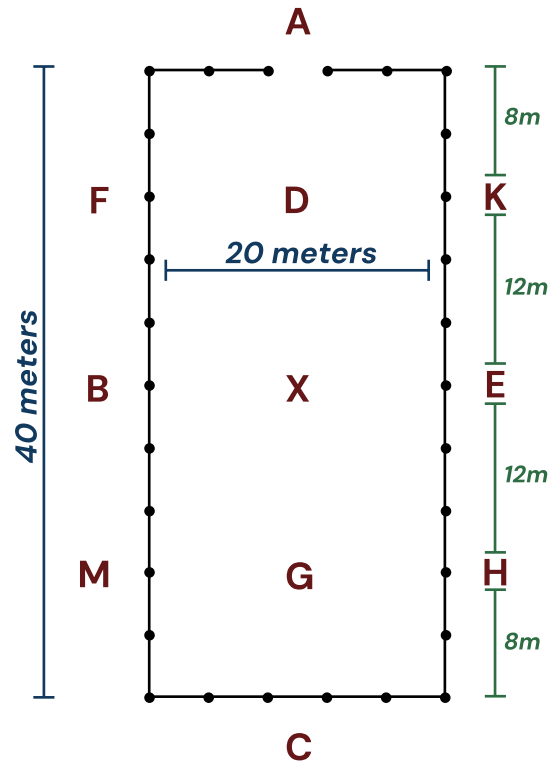
2.2.16. n) Arena

- Dressage is performed in an arena with a set of letters that designate where movements are to be executed.
- The arena size may be 20m x 40m or 20m X 60m for Introductory and Training Levels
- First Level through Fourth levels must be ridden in a 20m x 60m arena.
- It is recommended the competition arena should be separated from the public by a minimum distance of 10 meters for outdoor rings and 5 meters for indoor rings.
- If self-supporting letter markers are used, they should be placed outside the ring about
- 0.50 meters away from the fence and clearly marked.
- The ring fence may remain open at "A" during competition.
- The letter "A" must be placed at least 5 meters away from the arena and a distance of up to 15 meters is permitted.
- Arena fence conditions must be the same for all competitors in a class.
- Footing in all warmup and competition rings should be flat and level.
- The Judge should be positioned 5m from 'C' and elevated for a good view of the whole ring. A booth, platform or truck should be used to give the judge a good view of the arena. (Note: The Judge should not be on ground level sitting at a table).

20 x 60 Meter
40 Four Meter Sections
12 Letters



20 x 40 Meter
30 Four Meter Sections
8 Letters



2.3 Provincial Rising Stars Dressage Equitation Program

Program

The Rising Stars Equitation Program was developed and continues to be overseen by the Rising Stars Youth Dressage Committee established in 2004 in Chilliwack, B.C. In 2023, Horse Council BC collaborated with the Rising Stars Youth Dressage Committee for approval to offer this program through the HCBC Provincial Competition System.

Mission Statement

To provide Youth Dressage Riders, up to and including 25 years of age, the opportunity to participate in Rider Skill Development programs which foster competence and confidence to take part in Dressage competitions that provide a fair playing field environment for Youth Dressage Riders wherein each can compete with their peers at all levels of skill, from beginners to advanced.

Objectives:

To assist in the development, improvement and continuing advancement of the equitation skills required by Dressage Riders, by providing an ongoing evaluation of their equitation skills during the performance of a technical dressage test.

The improvement of equitation skills is the best pathway forward to develop Dressage Riders toward higher levels.

Categories:

Foundation Level: those competing at: Training, First and Second level. Progressive Level: those competing at: Third and Fourth Level

NOTE: A competition may offer the Foundation Level only or they may offer both the Foundation and Progressive levels. The decision is at the discretion of the show organizers. Offering Introductory level is optional depending on entries. If it is offered, Introductory will have its own Champion/Reserve Champion (including the “Ride Off”) and will not be combined with the Training, First and Second Level riders.

2.3.1. Ages and Levels

Youth: up to and including 25 years.

Adult: 26 years and over

Foundation Level: those competing at Training; First and Second

Progressive level: those competing at: Third; Fourth.

Anyone judging Rising Stars classes must be a Certified Senior Dressage Judge

- The Equitation Judge for both the judging of equitation during the technical test and for the “ride off” must be the same judge.

2.3.1 Ages and Levels (cont.)

- Rising Stars Equitation classes in each division will be designated in the competition prize list by the show organizers. (i.e., in Foundation Level Training, First and Second level and in Progressive Level; Third, Fourth.
- The show organizer will decide if they will use the two (2) judge system for the equitation judging or the one (1) judge system.
 - Two (2) Judge system: The Judge at C will be judging the technical test. The second Judge, (the Equitation Judge) may sit at E, H, M, B or any marked letter. The Equitation Judge can be added to a scheduled technical class.
 - One (1) Judge system. A class designated as the RS Equitation Evaluation class. The Rider will ride their technical test at their level, but will only be judged on their equitation. The Equitation Judge in this case, would sit at C.

2.3.2. Ride Off/ and Championships:

- The equitation score and technical score are not to be combined to determine equitation placings.
- Based only on the equitation scores of the RSYD Riders, all riders achieving 60% or over, will be eligible to compete in one of two Equitation Championships
- For eligible riders in: The Equitation Foundation Level Championship, the 'Ride Off' will be based solely on equitation skills judged by the 'Equitation Judge'.
- The 'Ride Off' will be a group class including all riders who achieved 60% or over on their Equitation score sheet in Introductory, Training, First or Second level.
- Individual patterns may be requested by the 'Equitation judge' to establish the Champion and Reserve.
- **If Introductory is offered, there is a separate Champion/Reserve Championship ride off. This is not to be combined with Training, First or Second level Championship Ride Off.
- For eligible riders in: Equitation **Progressive** Level, the Champion and Reserve will be determined by the highest and second highest equitation scores achieved by those riders who achieved 60% or over on their Equitation score sheet at Third, Fourth or FEI level(s).
There is no ride off for the Progressive level.

NOTE: If for any reason, a show committee is not able to offer the "ride off" for the Champion and Reserve Equitation **Foundation** Level, then the Champion and Reserve will be determined by the overall highest and second highest score (from the Equitation score sheets).

NOTE: This program may be offered to Western Dressage Riders as well.

2.4 Western Dressage

2.4.1. Level Requirements

- Through Introductory to Second Level all horses must compete in a snaffle (loose ring, eggbutt, or D-ring configuration, and be ridden with two hands.
- At Second Level, the introduction of a snaffle shank bit is permitted and can be ridden in one or two hands.
- Third and Fourth Level may compete in a snaffle or shank bit with either a solid or snaffle mouthpiece and can be ridden in one or two hands.

2.4.2. Attire

- All Youth Western dressage competitors participating at any HCBC sanctioned competition must wear properly fitted approved BSI or ASTM protective headgear with safety harness correctly secured at all times while mounted on the competition or event grounds.
- Adult Western Dressage competitors may wear:
 - A Western Style Hat
 - approved protective Western headgear
 - approved protective English headgear
- No rider may be penalized for wearing equestrian protective headgear or a safety vest in any class.
- Long sleeved shirt of any colour with a collar. Weather permitting and at the discretion of the judge, short sleeves may be permitted.
- Western jackets, sweaters or vests are optional.
- Pants, trousers, clean jeans, or a one-piece long-sleeved collared equitation suit
- Chaps, chinks, or split riding skirt are optional.
- Gloves are optional.
- Necktie, kerchief, bolo tie or pin are optional.
- Boots with a distinguishable heel up to one (1) inch.

2.4.3. Equipment/ Bridles

Western type headstall must be used. The headstall may be used with or without a cavesson.

- A Western cavesson (flat, rolled, braided or plain, with an adjustable noseband), pencil bosal with or without a get-down rope with space for two fingers placed between the cavesson and the jowl of the horse is allowed. No metal (except for the buckle on the cavesson), studs of any kind, or other harsh substances can be used in conjunction with or part of a Bosal and the jowl of the horse.
- A bitless bridle of western style made of leather or leather-like material is acceptable. A cross-under bitless bridle – a simple and subtle two-loop system, one over the poll and one over the nose that embraces the whole of the head is permitted. No other variations are permitted.

2.5.3 Equipment/ Bridles (cont.)

- A Hackamore (Bosal) is permitted on a horse of any age, and at any level. A hackamore includes a bosal, rounded in shape, and constructed of braided rawhide or leather. It must have a flexible
- Non-metallic core attached to a suitable headstall. It does not refer to a mechanical hackamore. There must be a minimum of a two finger space (approximately 1 1/2") between the bosal and the nose, and absolutely no metal under the jaw or on the noseband or in connection with the noseband. Bosals may be wrapped with smooth electrical tape to prevent rubbing.
- Any horse may compete with a western style bit or solid curb bit with one hand.
- Any horse may compete with a snaffle bit at any age and be ridden at any level. When using a snaffle, the rider must ride with two hands whether using a loop rein or split reins.
- Split reins may be used with a snaffle or a curb bit. When used with a snaffle bit, two hands must be used. For a curb/shank bit, riders may use one hand (see "level requirements & Hand position" for exceptions).
- Romels may be used with a solid curb bit but must be ridden with one hand only. The reins must come up from the bottom of the hand and out of the top with no fingers in between the romel reins.
- Curb chains and flat leather chin straps must be at least 12.7mm in width and lie flat against the jaw of the horse.
- A curb strap or chain (bit hobble) may be used with a snaffle bit. It must be attached below the reins. A curb strap when used as a bit hobble may be braided or narrow.
- A Western style saddle is required.
- A working Western side saddle is also permitted.
- A breastplate and/or crupper may be used.
- Spurs: western style spurs with or without blunt tines, English dressage style, roller ball, and blunt bumper spurs are allowed. Rowels must be vertical.

2.4.4. Prohibited Equipment

- Draw Reins.
- Tapaderos.
- Bits with sharp edges, gag bits and donut and flat polo mouthpieces.
 - Wire curb bit, regardless of how padded.
- Any chin strap narrower than 1/2" inch (12.7mm).
- Chin straps cannot have wire, rawhide, metal, or other substance in conjunction with or as part of the flat leather chin strap or curb chain.
- Round, rolled, braided or rawhide curb straps are prohibited.
- Standing or running martingales or tiedowns.
- Bosal without reins attached and used as a noseband.

2.4.4 Prohibited Equipment (cont.)

- Mechanical hackamores.
- Horsehair Bosals.
- Bitless bridles with sidepulls.
- Any Twisted wire mouthpiece.
- Rope halters or bridles.
- Bit guards.

2.4.5. Hand Position on the Reins

- Romal reins – the romal is held in one hand with no fingers between the individual reins and the end of the romal may be held in the hand not used for reining. This will keep the romal end from swinging and to adjust the position of the rein.
- Split reins – may be held in one or two hands. **NOTE:** the rider may not switch back and forth from one and to two hands during a test.
- There is no restriction on the method of holding the reins in two hands.
- When split reins are held in one hand, there are two ways in which the rider may use them:
 - The rider may put one finger between the split reins with the ends of the reins falling on the side of the reining hand.
 - The rider may hold both reins in one hand without a finger between the reins. In this method the rider's hand must be around the reins. The end of the split reins may be held in the hand not used for reining in order to keep them from swinging and to adjust the position of the reins.
- Should a looped rein/buckled reins be used, the reins are held in one or two hands. There is no switching back and forth between one or two hands during a test.

2.4.6. Turnout of the Horse

- The mane of the horse may or may not be banded.
- Braiding of the forelock is permitted.
- The tail must be left natural.
- Items such as ribbons or flowers, etc. in the mane or tail are Not Allowed. **Exception:** a simple RED ribbon in the tail for safety reasons