



Horse Council British Columbia

Rule Book 2025
Mountain Trail

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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.



Mountain Trail

2.1 Mountain Trail Class Guidelines

Mountain Trail classes are designed to demonstrate the horse's ability to negotiate and maneuver through and around obstacles they may encounter in a natural mountain trail setting. The competition may be held in the arena or out on the trail and can be scored individually or as a team event.

- The horse will be asked to perform multiple maneuvers over a course of obstacles that range from traditional trail obstacles, which may include hills, bridges, ditches, water, ponds, bogs, rocks, and logs.
- The horse may be required to back out of obstacles, side pass over obstacles, complete pivots with belly turns/carousel turns with 45, 90, 180, and 360 degree turns either left or right.
- Horses may be required to maneuver forward and backward and sideways in all directions between obstacles at the gait(s) specified on the course map.
- A rider may be asked to dismount, mount, drag or move an object as part of an obstacle, or guide the horse through obstacles while dismounted.
- Mountain Trail (Arena-to-Trail) encompasses two mountain trail experiences, riding nature's obstacles on a mountain trail as well as a natural portrayal of obstacles in a course design. Both actual and portrayed mountain trail courses should contain eight and up to eighteen obstacles and test the skill of the horse and rider's performance.
- The difficulty of obstacles or maneuvers should be appropriate for the level, type of class, and or competition. A start and finish marker should be included on the course map.
- The horse should approach obstacles in a forward motion remaining focused, bold, and with a willing attitude. On the line of travel between obstacles, the horse should be moving forward with a balanced, relaxed, natural head and neck position.
- The term "horse" herein, refers to all breeds of equine, horses, ponies, VSE, mules, with no preference given for any type, breed of horse, or style of riding. Scoring penalties and credits are assessed at the discretion of the Judge(s), based on performance, correctness and ease of negotiating obstacles.

2.1.1. Age & Technical Categories

- **Youth:** 17 years old and under as of January 1st of the current year. Youth competitors are not permitted to compete with a stallion.
- **Beginner:** The green rider is less experienced and defined as a rider with not more than two (2) wins or to have won a championship in this category. Green riders may not compete in open division at the same competition with no cross entry permitted.
- **Novice:** The novice riders have more experience competing in Mountain Trail (Arena to Trail) classes with not more than five (5) firsts or to have won a championship in this category.
- **Amateur:** 18 years and older as of January 1st of the current year, who participates in equestrian sport for pleasure only, and has not received any payment for training horses or coaching riders in the equine industry.
- **Open:** This category is open to all riders and horses with no restrictions. Obstacles may be of more complexity and or difficulty designed to test skills of advanced horse and rider combinations. No cross entry with the green rider division.
- Hors Concours (H/C) entries are not eligible for awards.

2.1.2. Attire

- Horse Council BC highly recommends that all riders wear properly fitted approved BSI or ASTM protective headgear at all times when mounted.
- Adults may compete in a properly fitted BSI or ASTM approved riding helmet or a western style hat.
- Youth competitors are required to wear properly fitted approved BSI or ASTM protective headgear with safety harness securely attached at all times when mounted on the event grounds.
- English or Western attire is permitted but should be consistent with the style of tack presented.
- Riding boots of any style English or Western with a 1-inch heel are required.
- Raincoats are permitted
- Gloves are permitted.

2.1.3. Equipment

- The judge may disallow any tack due to safety concerns.
- Competitors may present themselves in clean working style English or Western tack.
- English or Western style bridles, bosal, hackamore, or bit-less bridles are permitted.
- English, Western, Endurance, Australian saddles are all permitted.
- Splint boots and leg protective boots are optional and permitted.
- Draw reins are prohibited.
- Halters for riding are prohibited.
- Standing or running martingales and tiedowns are prohibited
- Mechanical hackamores and bitless headstalls that apply compressive pressure are prohibited
- Whips or crops longer than 75cm are prohibited.
- **Bits:** Excessive use of bits will be penalized at the discretion of the judge.
- **Curb:** Defined as a solid or broken mouthpiece that has shanks which act as leverage. Free of mechanical devices and is 8-1/2" (215 mm) maximum length shank which may be measured. Shanks may be fixed or loose. Mouthpieces, bars must be round, oval or egg shaped, smooth and unwrapped metal of 5/16" to 3/4" (8 mm to 20 mm) in diameter, measured 1" (25 mm) from the cheek. The mouthpiece may be two or three pieces. The port must be no higher than 3-1/2" (90 mm) maximum, with rollers and covers acceptable. Broken mouthpieces are standard. The curb strap may be of leather or chain, must be at least 1/2" in width, and must lie flat against the jaw of the horse. Rommel or split reins are permitted.
- **Snaffle:** Defined as the conventional; O-ring, egg-butt, D-ring, loose ring, full cheek, or western snaffle bit. The inside circumference of the ring must be free of attachments which would provide leverage. The mouthpiece may be two or three pieces. A three-piece, connecting ring of 1" to 1-1/4" (25 mm to 32 mm) or less in diameter, or a connecting ring of 1-1/4" (32 mm) or less in diameter, or a connecting flat bar of 3/8" to 3/4" (10 mm to 20 mm) measured top to bottom, with a maximum length of 2" (50 mm), which lies flat in the horse's mouth is acceptable. The rider will ride two handed.
- **Hackamore:** Defined as a braided rawhide or leather bosal which is used in lieu of a regulation snaffle bit. It does not refer to a mechanical hackamore. There must be a minimum of two fingers (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. Rider will ride two handed.

2.1.4. Course Walk

- This is an opportunity to navigate the course on foot prior to competition to become familiar with the course map. Competitors are encouraged to walk- through the course prior to the judge's official course walk-through. Judge's course walk-through is scheduled prior to the beginning of the class. The judge leads the walk-through with the use of course maps. Each competitor should receive a course map prior to the competition. The judge may give directions at different obstacles. Participants should refrain from talking during the judge's walk-through so all competitors can hear the judge's directions. Questions are answered by the judge following each obstacle on the walk-through. Competitors are not allowed to ask questions during the competition.

2.1.5. Definitions

Obstacles / Maneuvers

- **Backing** – Backing obstacles shall be completed in a straight motion without weaving side to side. Backward motion must be performed at a consistent regular pace. The horse/rider will be penalized for hitting obstacles while backing.
- **Beam (Angle or Balance)** – Walk on straight, may be asked to back-off, side pass over, or enter/exit at any part of the beam.
- **Bog / Quicksand** – can be any dimension, but the depth should not exceed 8". Horses will not be asked to stop.
- **Boxes / Tires** – Walking up and over and backing off the box may be asked to Stop & Settle. Turns of 45 to 360 degrees in any direction may be asked of the competitor. Horses front or hind feet on the box and may be asked to turn either direction.
- **Bridge (Rolling or Suspension)** – The horse should approach a bridge squarely and move over the bridge in a forward motion when entering, crossing, and exiting the bridge in a straight path. May be asked to stop and settle, and change directions.
- **Ditches** – enter straight either forward, backwards or sideways. Ditches can be various depths, lengths and directions.
- **Forward** – Throughout the entire course the horse and rider must continue in a forward motion unless the pattern specifies otherwise. The horse's gait should be regular, consistent, and not altered unless the rider is performing a different movement or gait specified in the course plan.
- **Gates** – The rider may be asked to open the gate from either direction, pulling, pushing, or backing through the gate. The rider should have control of the gate at all times. The horse should follow the direction from the rider to stay close to the gate and minimize movement with the rider or handlers' hand controlling the gate.
- **Ground Tie** – Horse should be tied to the ground with a lead or a git-down rope.

7.1.5 Definitions (cont.)

- **Hoof Check** – The horse should pick up its leg willingly, and not move around. The rider should keep control of the horse at all times, whether the horse is tied, ground tied, or in hand. Riders may be required to pick up any number of feet including from the opposite side.
- **In Hand or Leading** – may be performed with a halter and lead, or bridle with a git-down rope. The horse should lead willingly, not crowding or lagging behind the handler which results in a lower score.
- **Maze** - Compiled group of obstacles including logs, bridges, tires, etc. Rider/handler can be asked to enter or exit from any direction.
- **Mounting or Dismounting** – Horse should stand quietly while rider mounts or dismount from either side. The rider will easily put the horse in a position of good balance for either the mount or the dismount, maintaining control of the reins and sitting down softly. Any movement by the horse will result in a lower score. A mounting block will be provided for mounting and dismounting.
- **Rocks** – Minimum 30 rocks, at a 6" minimum size.
- **Balance** – Refers to a horse rider combination that is clearly unified as a team while negotiating obstacles or maneuvers, performing smoothly, making it look effortless, simple, vigorous, fun, and easy.
- **Horsemanship** – Refers to the rider's ability to perform with confidence, balance, in harmony with the horse as a unified team, executing obstacles or maneuvers with boldness and ease over the entire course. The rider demonstrates confidence guiding the horse through the obstacles using subtle aids. The rider is penalized severely for instilling fear in the horse, jerking on the bit, and or for excessive use of crop or spurs.
- **Control** – Rider must maintain control of the horse at all times whether mounted or leading in hand.
- **Rider Awareness** – A rider should pay attention to the direction of the course, guiding the horse straight to each obstacle. The rider should evaluate each obstacle with a clear plan in mind demonstrating a safe, correct execution of the obstacle.
- **Overall Awareness** – The horse should respond to the rider without hesitation or resistance. The horse should have an alert expression and focus, demonstrating boldness with a willing attitude. The gait of the horse should be regular and maintained through the entire obstacle.

7.1.5 Definitions (cont.)

Beginner 8 - 10 Obstacles	Novice 8 - 14 Obstacles (All Green obstacles plus)	Open 8 - 18 Obstacles (All Green/Novice obstacles plus)
Backing Up	Backing with direction	Angled Beams
Barrels	Boxes (turns)	Animal Hide
Beams	Carousel Turn (belly turn)	Back down ditches
Blow Down	Cowboy Curtain	Backing through tunnel
Boxes (no turns)	Ditches	Bog/ Quicksand
Green Rider Bridge (non-moving)	Ground Tie	Cap-gun (noise)
Gate (push only)	Mailbox	Gate (back through)
Ground Tie	Mattress	Log Drag
Hoof Check	Own the Trail	Rope (drag, throw)
Mazes	Driving	Squishy Box
Mounting/ Dismounting	Raise Flag (obstacle)	
Rocks	Ramps	
Sawbucks	Ring the Bell	
Side pass	Rolling Bridges	
Step Over (logs/ poles)	Rope	
Stop and Settle	Slicker (pickup)	
Tires	Suspension Bridge	
Turn on the Forehand	Teeter Totter	
Turn on the Haunch	Tunnel	
	Water	

- **Course Pattern or Plan** – It is important for a rider to stay on pattern. Going off pattern will result in a Zero (0) score for that obstacle.
- If a class is offered with numbered obstacles, going off pattern will result in a minus 10 for that obstacle.

2.1.6. Divisions

- **Beginner:** The obstacles should be performed at the walk only, easy to understand, with basic maneuvers or skill techniques required to complete the obstacle.
- **Novice:** The obstacles may be performed at the walk, or jog (or gait). The horse and rider should be in condition to compete over a longer course.
- **Amateur:** Obstacles may be performed at the walk, jog (or gait), lope, or canter. Horse and rider have established skills to negotiate difficult obstacles, and are conditioned to compete over a longer course.
- **Open:** Obstacles may be performed at the walk, jog (or gait), lope, or canter. Horse and rider have established skills to negotiate difficult obstacles, and are conditioned to compete over a longer course.

2.2 Category and Class Divisions

The following divisions are recognized at competitions.

Local divisions or classes may be included as listed in the Prize list.

Beginner	Novice	Open
Youth Rider	Youth Rider	Youth Rider
Youth In-Hand	Youth In-Hand	Youth In-Hand
In-Hand Mares	In-Hand Mares	In-Hand Mares
In-Hand Geldings	In-Hand Geldings	In-Hand Geldings
Green Horse	Novice Horse	In-Hand Open
Green Rider	Novice Rider	In-Hand Open Jackpot
Green Ranch	Novice Ranch	Open Rider
Amateur Rider	Amateur Rider	Open Ranch
Seek the Trail	Own the Trail	Amateur Rider
Driving	Driving	Driving

- **In Hand Class:** The handler leads or sends the horse through the course obstacles on foot using a halter.
- **Money Classes:** if offered are open to all riders.
- **Gamblers Choice:** 70% of the score will be judged on horsemanship and skill – a timed event where each obstacle is worth a pre-determined number of points.

2.2.1. Judging

- The quality of the horse's performance, as well as the horsemanship skill of the rider as they guide the horse through the obstacles over the entire course are scored by the judge. Higher scores are awarded where the horse and rider perform well as a unified team.
- Horses are judged and scored on performance negotiating obstacles carefully, not rushing, responsive to the rider aids, correctly executing with a forward moving tendency throughout the obstacle.
- Judges will score each obstacle considering three phases; the entrance, middle, and exit of the obstacle.
- Judges will consider the approach to an obstacle, the straightness, accuracy, attention, and willingness by which the horse enters the obstacle maneuvers through and exits the obstacle.

7.2.1 Judging (cont.)

- Class score sheets at a competition must be provided for the judge by the competition organizing committee.
- The score sheet keeps a record of each competitor's individual obstacle or maneuver scores on course, with any credit or penalty scores from the Judge noted.
- An experienced scribe may assist the judge recording the scores in the arena, or the Judge may record their own scores.
- Credit or penalty scores are assessed by the judge for each obstacle or maneuver on course with the total final score calculated to determine the class placing results.
- The total penalties and or credits of maneuver and or obstacle scores are added or subtracted according to the system used. This results in a Final score which determines class placing results in descending order from high to low score.
- Calculating the Final scores may be determined by the Judge, or the assistant scribe in the arena, or a scoring secretary in the office.
- All Final score calculations must be verified by the judge.
- Final placings by entry number are recorded on all class score sheets.
- The judge's name, signature, class #, date, competition name, location should be listed on score sheets.
- All Judge Score sheets are available for downloading on the HCBC website at the following link: <http://www.hcbc.ca/index.php/competitions/competition- documents/>

2.2.2. Scoring

At the discretion of the Judge, or the competition management, one of two recognized scoring systems may be used at Mountain Trail (Arena to Trail) competitions. Scoring systems are based on the same horse and rider performance criteria stated herein.

Credit and penalty scores are assessed for each obstacle or maneuver, and accumulated over the entire course to determine a total Final score for each competitor. The scoring system used is at the discretion of the Judge(s). Whichever scoring system is used at a competition, the same system must be used for all classes of the competition. The final score total determines the class placings.

(0 – 10) Scoring System

- Judges score each obstacle or maneuver on the course out of a maximum possible of 10 points.
- A horsemanship assessment for the rider may be included in each obstacle score, or may be included on scorecard as a separate score with a total score possible from (0 – 10).
- Half marks (.5) may be used.
- Using the (0 – 10) scoring system, the Final score is calculated into a percentage score.
- If a separate score is used for horsemanship skill of rider then 10 points is added to total possible points for final score calculations.
- As determined by the Judge(s) specific obstacles identified prior to class may be assigned a coefficient (x 2) valued twice the points possible for that obstacle.
- A horse that receives a (– 9) at any obstacle for a complete refusal may NOT place higher than a horse with a score for each obstacle. All penalties apply to each obstacle.

7.2.2 Scoring (cont.)

Formula to determine percentage final scores is as follows:

- Add the total points (0-10) awarded to the competitor over the entire course.
- Deduct any penalty scores for misuse of tack on course.
- Divide total points awarded by the Judge(s) by the total points possible for the entire course plan.

Example(s) of performance deductions when using the (0 – 10) scoring system are:

- **Minor deductions** of (.5 to 3.0 pts) in a score may result from, but are not limited to; hitting or stepping on a log, plant or a component of an obstacle, incorrect or break of gait, steps (s) taken while ground tying, approaching an obstacle off centered, loss of forward motion, rushing, one-two step (s) going into an obstacle or out of an obstacle.
- **Average deductions** of (3-5.5 pts) in score may result from, but not limited to: dropping or letting go of the gate or object, the horse taking more than 3 steps on a ground tie, tight reins, over bridled, minor disobedience or resistance, loss of attention, willingness or forward movement.
- **Major deductions** of (6-9 pts) in score may result from, but are not limited to: Refusal(s), balking, or evading an obstacle, blatant disobedience (kicking out, bucking, rearing, striking), errors of course, or rider using hand to instill fear in the horse. Refusal or any action taken by the horse to avoid performing an obstacle, any part of a combination of obstacle, or portion of the course. Such actions may include evading or running past an obstacle, complete loss of the required gait, and any blatant action by the horse that demonstrates an unwillingness to approach, negotiate, and or complete an obstacle.
- **Off-Pattern (OP)** obstacles or maneuvers not executed in correct sequence as directed by the judge or course map; missing an obstacle entirely will receive a score of Zero (0) for that obstacle.
- **Zero Score (0)** – After 15 seconds attempting an obstacle, the judge may instruct the competitor to move on to the next obstacle and receive a Zero (0) score for that obstacle. A competitor may choose to bypass an obstacle and receive a Zero (0) score for that obstacle.
- **Tie Breaker** - Competitors will not know the tie breaking obstacles. Obstacles will be chosen by the senior judge at the start of the competition. Three obstacles will be chosen as tie breakers as one, two and three, if the first chosen obstacle does not break the tie then the second and then possibly the third as needed to break the tie will be used.
- **Misuse of tack** - will result in at least a two (2) point deduction for each occurrence. The points deducted will be determined on severity on the misuse of tack. Example: using a rein to instill fear in the equine will result in more than 2 points deduction for each occurrence or at the judge's discretion. Penalties are deducted from total points awarded prior to final score calculations.

2.2.3. Disqualification

- Fall of horse or rider
- Abuse or aggressive schooling Improper language to an official or judge

70 Base Score System

- Judges start with a base score of 70 points and add or deduct points.
- The same judging performance criteria is applied to each obstacle whether it be a bridge, gate, trench, water, logs, rocks or other.
- The judge will make assessments for performance with each obstacle given a value of 9 points. This gives a foundation for scoring if an obstacle is not attempted or incurs penalties.

Each obstacle is scored in three phases as follows;

- **Entry into the obstacle - 2 points.** Two points are given if the horse enters the obstacle straight, acknowledges the obstacle, and maintains forward motion in an alert and willing manner. A horse may stop for up to 3 seconds to examine the obstacle before entry without penalty but will not be eligible for a Bonus score. After 3 seconds it may be counted as a refusal and lack of forward motion.
- **Navigating through the obstacle – 5 points.** Five points are given if the horse picks its way through an obstacle in a willing, confident, bold and safe manner without stumbles, clicks, or breaks in gait.
- **Exiting the obstacle – 2 points.** Two points are given if the horse exits at the same speed that it entered and is straight and on course.
- **Bonus points (optional)** – If the horse and rider navigated the obstacle demonstrating an excellent performance, the judge has the option of adding 3 bonus points to the score for that obstacle. (1 point for entry – 1 point for body – 1 point for exit.)
- **Horsemanship points** – (0 – 5 points). Judge(s) will determine a score for the horsemanship awarded at each obstacle. Half-points may be used.

2.2.4. Scoring Deductions (Obstacle Penalty Deductions)

Entry Deductions

- **1 point** - horse does not enter an obstacle straight one-horse length, willing and/or breaks forward motion with a pause longer than 3 seconds. ("stop" is a break of forward motion longer than 3 seconds on entry only) Does not enter the obstacle centered.
- **2 points** - horse refuses twice (the horse backs up twice) and/or horse has two refusals and is not straight and/or will not enter an obstacle. Jumps into an obstacle
- **9 points** - after three refusals the horse and rider must move on to the next obstacle.

2.2.5. Navigating Deductions

- **½ point** - for each tick of an obstacle, hopping into/out of an obstacle with the front two or back two feet, slight off-center entry, slightly off from entering straight into the obstacle.
- **1 point** - hopping into/out an obstacle, every stride out of gait, every stride off center in an obstacle, missing a required step in an obstacle, break of gait, failure to enter an obstacle straight one-horse length, failure to enter obstacle in the center.
- **1 to 1½ points** - horse and rider lose forward motion, Horse steps on or moves an obstacle. Incorrect or break of gait, skipping space or failing to step into required space, 1 step on dismount or ground-tie (except shifting to balance), deviates from center of obstacle and or course pattern.
- **2 to 2½ points** - horse stumbles, rushing, incorrect or break of gait at walk or jog for 2 strides or more, out of lead or break of gait at lope, knockdown, jumping out/in the obstacle entry/exit, steps out of obstacle with one foot, once the foot had entered obstacle, missing one element of obstacle on line of travel with one foot, steps on dismount or ground-tie.
- **3 points** - horse is not listening to the rider or judge's discretion, consistent tight rein.
- **4 points** - a small rearing where the front two feet leave the ground when uncalled for. Unsafe behavior by the horse, but not bad enough to be dismissed from the class or receive a – 5-point penalty.
- **5 points** - all the above. Rider or horse's safety placed at risk. Horse steps out of the obstacle with two or more feet once entered, or falls off the obstacle. Dropping slicker or object, cumulative refusals, balking, or evading obstacle(s). Rider letting go of the gate. Stepping outside the confines of, jumping off, or out of obstacles with more than one foot, once entered an obstacle. Blatant disobediences, 4 or more steps movement on a dismount, or ground-tie, holding onto saddle, except to mount and dismount, or for large step-down obstacles, or large step ups or jump ups. For excessive whipping or spurring, horse rearing or bucking. - 18 – failure to attempt an obstacle.

Exit Deductions

- **1 to 1 ½ points** - hurries or rushes, not straight one-horse length, not centered
- **2 points** - not straight and all of the above and not safe, jumps out
- **9 points** - A rider can't receive a greater deduction than -9 point for any given obstacle, if obstacle attempted

Horsemanship Deductions

- **0 to 5 points possible for each obstacle.** Penalty deductions may be assessed for use of hand or tack to instill fear or praise. Jerking on the bit. Excessive use of spurs or crop, overcorrection of the horse, dirty tack or horse, use of 2 hands other than riding with a snaffle or English style. equipment failure, entering or exiting obstacle from incorrect side or direction, working obstacle the incorrect direction. Riding outside the boundary marker of arena or course hold area, Failure to show correct gait between obstacles as designated. Failure to follow the correct line of travel between obstacles, horse's head consistently carried too low or over flexed. Excessive emotions of anger or praise. Talking in any way inappropriately to a judge. Consistent tight rein.

7.2.5 Navigating Deductions (cont.)

Disqualification

- Fall of horse or rider
- Abuse or aggressive schooling
- Improper language to an official or judge

Timed Class

- For timed classes a designated timer must keep the official time for all competitors.