BCH – Obstacle Contests

Goal: To help participants increase their horsemanship skills and their relationship with their horse through education and participation in our events, to be safe and have fun.

Format: While riding a designated 6 – 7 mile (approx.) trail, the horse and rider will be judged on their performance of 6 obstacles they encounter along the way.

Horse and rider will be judged on each obstacle **as a team** with a possible perfect score of 10 total points per obstacle, unless a bonus challenge is offered.

Several obstacles will have a bonus challenge option where an additional 5 points can be earned, (score of up to 15 can be achieved).

Judges may have safety or horsemanship questions for riders. Correct answers can help the riders achieve an additional point.

Riders will be divided into Adult and Youth categories. (Youth being 15 years old or under)

With few exceptions, approx. 2 minutes maximum will be allowed for executing an obstacle. Three refusals means they are excused.

Safety/Rider Guidelines:

Helmets are encouraged but not required for adults. Youth riders are required to wear helmets.

Proper riding attire should be worn including boots (or sturdy shoes with a ½" heal), and long pants. Sun protection is recommended (hats, sun glasses, gloves, sun screen, etc.)

Horses must be ridden with a saddle, proper bridle, hackamore, side pull, or bosal. Bareback pads are not a proper saddle, halters and lead ropes are not acceptable as head gear for riding in the competition.

Riders may use one hand or two, regardless of the bit used.

Tie downs, martingales, cavesons, are not permitted.

It is recommended that unshod horses be equipped with boots.

Riders should carry essentials such as water & medications If a rider has a medical condition, please advise the event staff.

Check your cinches at least once during a ride and before riding up or down hills.

There must be at least two riders per group and no more than four riders per group unless given an exception by the ride chairman.

Companion (non-competing) riders will be allowed. Companion riders should not expect to perform obstacles.

All riders going out on the trail for a competition are required to attend a rider's meeting prior to the event. At this meeting the riders will be given their course information and obstacle guidelines.

Dogs and stallions are not permitted on trail competition rides.

Smoking, drinking alcohol, or using recreational drugs on a horse is not permitted on trail competition rides.

Disqualifications - Any rider may be disqualified for any unsafe or unsportsmanlike conduct. Falling off a

horse, or if a horse falls, results in the team being disqualified.

Trail Etiquette: *(adapted from Certified Horsemanship Assoc. Trail Guide Manual.)*

No Tailgating – To avoid horses or riders from being kicked, keep at least one horse length between riders.

Don't lag too far behind. Since horses tend to be herd bound, too much space between them can cause them to be anxious.

If your horse kicks, tie a red ribbon on its tail and be sure to bring it to the attention of the rider behind you.

The pace of the ride should be geared to the terrain and the abilities of the least experienced rider.

If you want to pass another rider or switch places, communicate with that rider then pick a safe and wide place on the trail to pass.

Do not trespass or ride on private property without permission.

Keep to designated horse trails and avoid injuring the environment.

If you pack it in, pack it out. Do not leave trash behind.

Leave gates the way you found them – open or closed, or obey signage.

Be polite and friendly to others using the trails. Always ride at a walk past anyone met on the trail. Riders have the right of way before pedestrians and bicycles. However, it may be a good idea to allow bikes and faster moving pedestrians (joggers) going the same direction as you to pass.

When starting or stopping, make sure all the riders in your group are mounted and ready before moving off.

Communicate with each other. If someone needs to stop, everyone should stop and wait. Never take off away from your group without notice.

Problems with jigging or anxiety on the trail can sometimes be alleviated by changing the group dynamic. For instance, put an anxious horse in the lead for a few minutes, or change the lineup so that two horses that aren't getting along are not by each other.

Try to maintain a walk when moving up or down hills.

Judging Criteria: Judges will be looking for -

Good preparation/set up to execute obstacle. (A judge expects the participants to read the course information and obstacle criteria prior to arriving at the obstacle. **Deductions can be taken if a participant causes delays**.)

Horse's willingness/ responsiveness to rider's cues

Quiet demeanor of horse and rider

Rider's ability – equitation (looking in the direction of travel, heals down, centered, rein management, seat)

Scoring: Fluidity and ease of execution

Percentage of completion of obstacle

Rider Deductions -
Attitude – rider is aggressive/mean/ugly toward horse or others (this behavior can be cause for disqualification)
Poor Preparation
Poor Balance/Leaning
Poor Rein Management
Excessive/Aggressive Cue
Looking Down
Sloppy Equitation
Doesn't complete obstacle
Poor execution of obstacle
Unsafe

Horse Deductions –
Anxious or Hesitant
Refuses
Rushes / or goes too slow
Tosses Head
Gapes mouth or champs at the bit
Jigs
Doesn't know how! (to side pass, turn on haunches, turn on forehand, etc.)
Won't stand still
Bucks, Rears, throws a fit

Types Of Obstacles

Backing – L, uphill, downhill, around objects, arc
Gates – rope, swinging
"Don't feed the bears"
Carrying objects, moving objects, throwing objects, fishing
Spray Bottle
Transitions – gait changes
Stops
Spanish pole
Log drag
Turn on forehand
Turn on haunches
Side pass
Jump
Deadfall
Bravery – Scary items (such as a tent), noisy items, walking over items
Bridges/step ups
Slicker
Barrel Pinwheel
Keyhole
Off Mount/Dismount
Mount/Dismount

EVBCH Fun Day Trail Obstacle Competition
Be Safe, Have Fun!

Obstacle #1 Off Side Mount Judge Chantel
Lead your horse through the start cones. You have a choice of doing your mount from the ground or by using the mounting block provided. Set up and mount from the right side (off side) of your horse. Proceed toward the exit cones, stopping to answer a question from the judge prior to exiting.

Obstacle #2 Slicker Judge Patti
From the start cones, walk your horse forward stopping with the yellow cone in front of you. Sidepass to the left toward the slicker hanging in the tree. Stop and remove the slicker. Swing the slicker on both sides of your horse in front of and in back of the saddle. Replace the slicker in the tree. Proceed toward the exit cones stopping to answer a question from the judge.

Obstacle #3 Back Uphill Judge Paula
Pause at the start cones to answer a question from the judge. Proceed forward stopping by the purple cone. Perform a turn on the forehand to position your horse to back up the hill. Back up, stopping when your horse's head is past the yellow cone. Turn and move on through the exit cones.

Obstacle #4 Uphill Weave* Judge Chris
From the start cones, walk your horse up the hill weaving through the cones, then proceed through the exit cones.

*Challenge Obstacle 4
You have broken a rein! Drop one hand by your side. Holding one rein walk your horse up the hill weaving through the first three cones. Stop and settle for a count of 3. Continue on weaving through the cones up the hill and through the exit.

Obstacle #5 Funky Wash Judge Renee
Pause at the start cones to answer a question from the judge. Walk your horse between the yellow cones, stopping in the ditch. Do a 90 degree (1/4) turn on the haunches to the left. Walk in the ditch, stepping over logs and stop by the purple cone. Turn on the haunches 90 degrees to the right, walk out of the ditch and proceed through the exit cones.