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# JUDGING

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ENGLISH EQUITATION AND  
EQUITATION OVER FENCES

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A Standard of Reference for AQHA Judges



AMERICAN QUARTER HORSE ASSOCIATION  
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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# ENGLISH EQUITATION



## FORWARD

The purpose of this case book is to serve as a guide to proper attire, equipment, basic position and class procedures. You will also find scoring suggestions, pattern examples and situations encountered in the arena. Equitation is judged on the riders and their effect on the horse. It begins with the basics of equitation on the flat and progresses to over fence work.

*No person shall treat any horse in a cruel or inhumane manner, including, but not limited to, the prohibited conduct specified in the Show & Contest Rules & Regulations section of the AQHA Official Handbook of Rules and Regulations.*

## INTRODUCTION

Equitation has evolved from the European sport of fox hunting. As the sport has grown, the art of riding hunters has spawned many disciplines in the American show ring. The Equitation on the Flat class is an evaluation based on the rider's ability to perform various maneuvers in harmony with his horse. The communication between horse and rider should not be obvious to observers but give the impression of unity. Equitation on the Flat provides a natural progression to over fence classes. (Words in italics may be found in Glossary.)

# THE RIDER

## ATTIRE

**HARD HAT:** Black or brown is preferred. In Equitation Over Fences the youth must wear a harness, properly fastened.

**HAIR:** Must be neatly contained (as in a net or braid) or secured under the hunt cap.

**SHIRTS:** Ladies' shirts are choker style and choker should be secured with a pin or button (*Ratcatcher*). Men's shirts with collars and secured tie.

**JACKETS:** Traditional colors such as navy, dark green, grey, black or brown. Maroon or red are improper. Jackets are mandatory in equitation.

**GLOVES:** Optional but desirable and if worn should be of dark color for both males and females. Hat, gloves and boots should match in color.

**BREECHES:** Must be of traditional shades of buff, khaki, canary, light grey or rust. Jodphurs are acceptable for young riders but must be worn with *paddock boots*, knee straps and elastic clips.

**BOOTS:** Black or brown. Height of boots ideally up to knee. Field or dress boots are acceptable. *paddock boots* must be worn with jodphurs, knee straps (garters) and elastic clips.

## ACCESSORIES

**JEWELRY:** If worn should be conservative. Earrings should be small and not dangling type.

**HAIRBOWS:** Not proper.

**BELTS:** Traditional and proper.

**SPURS:** Unrowelled type, to be worn at spur rest with straps. Slip on spurs are not acceptable.

**CROPS:** Black or brown is acceptable. Dressage style whip is not acceptable.

# THE HORSE

## EQUIPMENT

BRIDLES: Conservative leather type, plain or stitched, must have cavesson and browband.

LEGAL BITS: Refer to OFFICIAL HANDBOOK, #444 a, b & d.

REINS: Must be leather. Rubber reins are prohibited in all classes except jumping.

SADDLES: Should be leather of traditional hunting or forward seat type, knee insert on skirt is optional.

SADDLE PAD: Should be white or natural color to fit size and shape of saddle, not a square shaped pad.

**OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT- (Presence of optional equipment should not be penalized.)**

*breast collar or breastplate.*

*Standing or running martingale* in over fence classes only.

Protective boots, leg wraps and bandages in Equitation on the Flat and Equitation Over Fences.

*Crops or bats.*

## TURNOUT

*Turnout* is the way the rider's clothes fit and look, the neatness and grooming of the horse, and proper fit and cleanliness of equipment. The total look and the pride with which the rider presents the horse are part of the overall score. Braiding is optional; however, riders should use every option to their advantage. If mane is braided, forelock must be braided and tail may only be braided if mane and forelock are braided. Tail, if

braided, should be braided to the end of the tail bone and finished with a looped braid or pinwheel.

Equitation riders should be observed and checked for neat, clean turnout such as tidy hair, fitted clothes and polished boots. The quality of equipment should not influence your opinion, but its presentation, overall cleanliness, fit and condition should.

## EQUITATION ON THE FLAT

### **CLASS PROCEDURE**

The Equitation On The Flat Class is judged primarily on the ability of the rider to perform individual pattern work with correct riding position and gaits. The judge is required to have all exhibitors work an individual pattern, having the option of working all or only finalists on the rail. Patterns should be drawn clearly and concisely with specific written instructions and designed in such a way that any horse can complete the pattern.

When markers are used, they should be set far enough apart to allow all horses, regardless of size, to perform the requested maneuver(s) correctly. Markers should be placed in a position to allow for several full *strides* and not interfere with maneuvers. If asked to perform a specified number of strides in the equitation pattern, a cone should not be used at the end of the pattern.

Judges should position themselves in such a way as to not interfere with the pattern. Pattern must be posted at least 1 hour before class begins. Exhibitors may work individually from the gate or they may all enter at once but a working order must be drawn regardless. After the pattern is performed, riders are asked to perform rail work at a walk, trot and canter. At the judges' discretion, rail work may be performed either direction of the arena and only one direction is required. This can be used to break ties and possibly adjust placings.

When designing a pattern, consideration should be given to size of pattern in relationship to size of horse, gaits required within space allowed and maneuvers requested. The horse's gaits, while ridden in the pattern phase, should be of the same cadence as you would find in the rail phase allowing for free, flowing, forward motion. When designing a pattern, age and level of ability should be considered, i.e., Novice and 13 & Under. The pattern should be designed in such a way that the majority of exhibitors can complete it in a reasonable length of time (under 60 seconds). All patterns must include a trot and canter. When working off markers, the range for execution of maneuvers should be from the horse's nose to the exhibitor's leg unless specified otherwise.

Individual works may be comprised of any of the following:

GROUP #1: Walk, Sitting Trot, Extended Trot, Posting Trot, Circles, Figure 8, *Halt*, Back, Sidepass, Address Reins, Demonstrate Change of *Diagonal*.

GROUP #2: *Serpentine* (Trot or Canter), Turn on Haunches or Forehand, *leg yield*, Flying or Simple Change of Lead.

GROUP #3: Canter and *band gallop* in a straight or curved line, *counter canter* Figure 8, Drop or Pick up Stirrups without stopping.

If riders are asked to drop their irons, they can leave them down or cross them over the withers. If the judge gives the exhibitors the option of performing a simple or flying lead change, then the judge should not give preference when placing the class to those exhibitors who perform the flying change. It is appropriate that the judge entertain questions from the exhibitors concerning the pattern prior to start of the class.

Patterns used in classes for riders 13 and under should use maneuvers from GROUP #1 and/or GROUP #2.

## **POSITION**

The eyes of the rider should plan the next step of the horse. Excessive turning of the head to the inside of a circle, looking down at the horse's head, neck or shoulder should be penalized.

The rider must be positioned correctly over the horse's center of gravi-



ty. The upper body is upright but not rigid or stiff. It should be possible to draw a line through the ear, shoulder point, center of hip and down through back of heel. Rider should sit in the center of horse in the middle of the saddle, not shoved back against the cantle.

Shoulders should remain open and straight and the rider's back should be flat, relaxed and supple. Flexibility should come in the lower back and abdomen. An overly stiff and/or overly arched lower back should be penalized. Elbows should be bent and kept by the rider's side while remaining flexible and following the horse's mouth.

The inclination of most riders is too much hand and too little seat and leg. There should be light contact from the hands to the bit. In proper position, the hands are just over and slightly in front of the withers and in a direct line from the riders elbow to the horse's mouth. Wrists should be straight, not rigidly bent inside or out. Looped reins show no feel of the horse, too tight shows too much restraint and tension. Fingers should always be closed around the reins with the hands in a straight line to the horse's mouth. Penalties should occur when hands are held too high, wide or low. Quick snappy hands, bent or broken wrists, floppy, loose arms and elbows should also be penalized.

A simple and excellent guideline to use in judging the leg position is to observe the *stirrup leather rule*. When a rider is in balance, the leather should hang straight down from the point of attachment. If the rider's leg pushes the leather either forward or backward, the leg is not in the correct position.

The seat of the equitation rider is not only for elegance but also for practicality, both of controlling the horse and allowing the use of minimal natural aids. The body, seat, legs and hands are all natural aids.

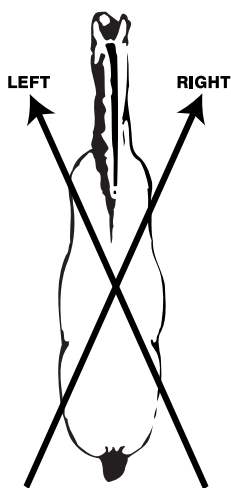


## THE WALK

The walk should be a 4-beat gait with the rider in a vertical position with a following hand, one that yields to the natural movement of the horse's head and neck.

## THE POSTING TROT

At the posting trot (a two beat gait), the rider should rise as the horse's outside foreleg moves forward and sit when it strikes the ground. (Example: When asked for a right diagonal at the posting trot, the rider is rising and falling with the right front leg of the horse.) This is referred to as posting on the correct diagonal. When working at the posting trot, riders should close their hip angle forward to allow their torso to follow the horizontal motion of the horse. The upper body should be inclined about 20 degrees in front of the vertical.



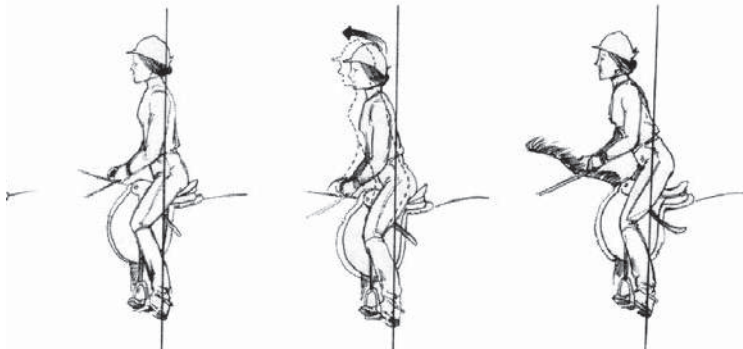
**DISTINGUISH DIAGONALS BY RISING FRONT LEG**

## SITTING TROT AND CANTER

At the sitting trot (a two beat gait), the upper body is only a couple degrees in front of the vertical. This nearly upright position allows one's weight to sink into the horse's back. At the canter (a three beat gait), the body should be positioned slightly in front of the vertical, to match the upward motion of the gait. As the stride is shortened, the body should be in a slightly more erect position.

## TWO-POINT POSITION

In a *two-point*, the pelvis should be forward but relaxed, lifting the rider's weight off the horse's back and transferring the weight through the rider's legs. In this position the two points of contact between horse



Sitting Trot

Posting Trot

Two-Point

and rider are the rider's legs. When properly ridden, a rider with deep ankles reflects downward distribution of the rider's weight and the rider's legs stay fixed on their horse's sides at all times. Hands should be forward, up the neck, not resting on the neck.

### **HAND GALLOP**

A three-beat, lengthened canter ridden in two-point position: legs are on the horse's sides while the seat is held out of the saddle. With the aid of leg pressure, the rider causes the horse to lengthen its stride and increase its pace to a controlled, three-beat "gallop in hand". When at the hand gallop, the rider's angulation will vary somewhat as the horse's stride is shortened and lengthened. A good standard at a normal hand gallop should be about 30 degrees in front of the vertical (forward, not straight up and down).

# FAULTS TO LOOK FOR

## **Faults of Turnout of Exhibitor: (avoids disqualification)**

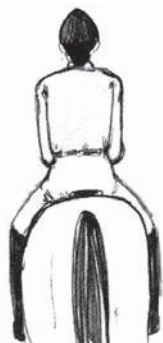
- Loose, untidy hair (male & female)
- Crooked hat
- Loose choker, flapping tie
- Gaudy jewelry
- Poorly fitted, wrinkled, dirty, stained clothes
- Gloves tattered
- Unpolished boots
- Upside down spurs

## **Faults in Overall Appearance of Horse: (avoids disqualification)**

- Poorly groomed, conditioned or trimmed horse
- Sloppy braiding
- Dirty, poor fitting tack and saddle pads
- Loose *keepers* on equipment
- Improperly fitted martingales

## **Faults of the Position: (avoids disqualification)**

- Eyes down and looking down for lead and/or diagonals
- Head and/or shoulders crooked, shoulders rounded forward and/or raised
- Stiff arms - unbent, straight position
- Flapping elbows
- Open fingers - open pinky
- Uneven hands



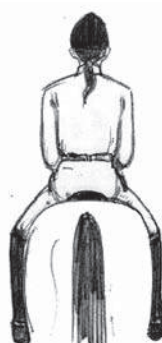
**PINCHED IN**

*Pressed downward from shoulder, stiffens entire back, neck and shoulders*



**OUT**

*Causes balance to come from arms, stiffens shoulder, neck and hands brace on horse's mouth*



**NATURAL**

*Relaxed, comfortable resting easily at rider's side.*

Hands too flat, too high, too low, spread too wide or too close

Wrists bent inside or outside, wrists turned in or braced hands

Wrists down - hands lower than wrists, referred to as puppy dog hands

Uneven length of reins

Improper hold of reins when using a *double bridle* or pelham

Twisted reins or stirrup leathers

Excessive body motion, pumping

Upper body too stiff (rigid) or too loose (sloppy)

Excessive arch in back or roached back (rounded)

Sitting behind vertical

Shoved back to the cantle



**CORRECT POSITION**



**PELVIS TILTED TOO FAR FORWARD**

*Allowing leg to swing back to counter balance*



**PELVIS TILTED TOO FAR FORWARD**

*Placing weight on tailbone, makes leg wing forward*

Splayed seat, thighs open

Knees open or up, or pinching knee

Leg too far back behind girth, leg too far forward in front of girth

Foot too far into stirrup (at home) or riding on toes

Stirrups too long or too short

Toes too far out (calf gripping) and toes too far in (no contact)

Excessive kicking by rider

Horse with open mouth or kicking at rider's leg due to fault of rider



**LEG TOO FAR BACK, TIPPING RIDER FORWARD, OUT OF BALANCE**

### **Severe Faults of Overall Performance: (avoids disqualification)**

Not completing pattern as described

Failure to exhibit change of speed when requested

Inclusion of maneuvers not specified

Wrong diagonals

Wrong leads

Rough *transitions*

Rhythm changes uncalled for

Too slow - lack of *impulsion*, especially in pattern work

Break of gait

Poor circles

Improper arc on curves or circle

Poor halt or downward transition

Back sluggish or crooked

Use of crop or riding stick

### **Severe Disobedience of Performance (avoids disqualification)**

Omission or addition of maneuvers

Turning wrong way

Knocking over cone

Working on wrong side of cones

Kicking at other horse, exhibitors or judge

Bucking or rearing

### **Disqualification (should not be placed):**

Use of prohibited equipment

Failure by exhibitor to wear correct number in visible manner

Willful abuse

Excessive schooling or training

Fall by horse and/or rider

*Although the horse is only considered a prop in equitation, soundness is a consideration. Obvious lameness will be cause for disqualification.*

## **SUGGESTED SCORING**

Faults can be classified as minor, major or severe. The judge will determine the appropriate classification of a fault based upon the degree and/or frequency of the infraction. A minor fault will result in a 1/2 to 4 point deduction from the exhibitor's score. An exhibitor that incurs a severe fault avoids elimination, but should be placed below all other exhibitors that complete the pattern correctly. A minor fault can become a major fault and a major fault can become a severe fault when the degree and/or frequency of the infraction merits.

**SCORING** may be on a basis of 0-20, with an approximate breakdown as follows:

**20: Excellent** equitation including body position and use of aids. Pattern is performed promptly, precisely and smoothly.

**18-19: Generally excellent** performance with one minor fault in appearance and position of exhibitor or execution of the pattern (performance).

**16-17: Generally good** pattern execution and equitation with one minor fault in precision or execution of pattern (performance), or appearance and position of exhibitor.

**14-15: Average** pattern that lacks quickness or precision, or rider has obvious equitation flaws that prevent effective equitation, or commits two or three minor faults in the performance or appearance and position of exhibitor.

**12-13: One major fault** or several minor faults in the performance and/or appearance and position of exhibitor that precludes effective communication with the horse.

**10-11: Two major faults** or many minor faults in the performance or appearance and position of exhibitor.

**6-9: Several major faults** or one severe fault in the performance, or appearance and position of exhibitor. Exhibitor demonstrates a complete lack of riding ability or commits a severe fault in the performance.

**1-5: One or more severe faults** in the performance, or appearance and position of exhibitor, but does complete the class and avoids disqualification.

## CASE STUDIES ON PATTERN WORK

### EXAMPLE #1:

RIDER A: Did a very good job	Score 18
RIDER B: Has one minor problem	Score 16
RIDER C: Passes the cone on the wrong side (She had the best pattern, would have scored 19)	Score 8



Rail work was comparably even for all three riders so placings are as follows:

PLACING: 1st A 2nd B 3rd C

**EXAMPLE #2:**

RIDER A: Did a very good job Score 18

RIDER B: Has one minor problem Score 16

RIDER C: Passes the cone on the wrong side

(she had the best pattern, would have scored 19) Score 8

RIDER A misses a lead for one stride on rail so placings are as follows:

PLACING: 1st B 2nd A 3rd C

**EXPLANATION:** B wins because of excellent rail work, elevating B over A even though A had a better pattern. C, who had the outstanding ride in both phases of the classes, placed at the bottom of the class due to executing the pattern incorrectly with one severe fault.

**EXAMPLE #3:**

RIDER A: Had good equitation, good pattern but misses diagonal for a stride, corrects diagonal without looking down. Score 15

RIDER B: Great equitation and good pattern, smooth and correct. Score 18

RIDER C: Good equitation, yet misses lead for one stride in the pattern Score 13

Rider A misses a lead for 3 or 4 strides during rail work and other riders have good rail work.

PLACING: 1st B 2nd C 3rd A

**EXPLANATION:** Although Rider A did a very good job of correcting his/her error in pattern, the incorrect lead for 3 or 4 strides on the rail causes this rider to be placed below Rider C who had a similar error in the pattern but did a better job on the rail.

# EQUITATION OVER FENCES

## INTRODUCTION

The class objective is to judge the rider's ability over the fences, not the horse's. Only the effect the rider has on a horse is to be considered. How a rider elects to ride the course, the pace and approach to the jumps during the go, give you information to evaluate the rider's judgment and ability.

## CLASS PROCEDURE

At least four obstacles are required and horses must jump a minimum of six fences. The course is a test that offers options that allow the riders to show their horse's abilities and strong points. At least one change of direction is required. Minimum height of fences must be 2'9", with a maximum height of 3'.

The course must be posted one hour prior to the class. Scoring begins when contestants enter the ring and ends when they exit the ring. Contestant may circle once before approaching the first obstacle. Except for refusals, jumping faults of the horse are not to be considered unless it is the result of the rider's ability. If a refusal occurs in a double or triple *combination*, competitors must re-jump all obstacles in that combination.

Equitation Over Fences is a fusion of the Hunter and Jumper disci-



plines. It should look effortless and choreographed like a hunter go, but it asks questions of the rider through the use of options. These questions call on the rider's ability to plan the best ride before entering the ring. They must accurately assess their own as well as their horse's skills. This class is preparation for the more difficult discipline of the jumper ring where accuracy and a plan are paramount parts of the competition.

When judging an equitation class over fences, the job can be made easier if you are organized and break down a rider's go into parts. The areas presented here give you the opportunity to evaluate different abilities in different areas of a rider's class.

## **THE ENTRANCE**

Exhibitors have the option of walking or trotting into the arena (in any order of gaits) for a short distance, then doing a smooth canter departure. During the *courtesy circle*, riders should set their pace and approach to the first fence with eyes showing confidence and a plan. Keep in mind the exhibitor is being judged as soon as he/she enters the arena. The horse and rider should present a neat, workmanlike appearance. This is the exhibitor's opportunity to make a good first impression.

## **RIDING THE COURSE**

Riding the course represents, in order of importance; the mechanics of the execution of the course, evaluating the effectiveness of the rider and, finally, evaluating individual style. The mechanics consist of finding the *distances*, correctly using the course options, leads, balance of both horse and rider, and use of arena ends. Secondly, evaluate the effectiveness of the rider as evidenced by pace, proper *bend*, smooth transition, use of the arena relating to the course and the look of the partnership between horse and rider. Finally, evaluate style, which consists of position, poise, presentation and turnout.

## **THE FINISH**

Rider must obtain correct lead to properly round the ends of the arena

before breaking into final trot circle. The class is not over until the exhibitor trots a circle and walks out of the ring. The transition down to the trot and then walk to be controlled and definite, showing a well planned finish. This is the judge's final opportunity to assess the rider's position. Riders should leave the arena at a walk unless otherwise instructed. (Rider's head shaking and theatrics should not be considered.)

## **TIES**

In the unlikely event of a tie, riders must be brought back for a *ride off*, which may consist of a shortened course, jump without irons or any other test over jumps the judge deems necessary.

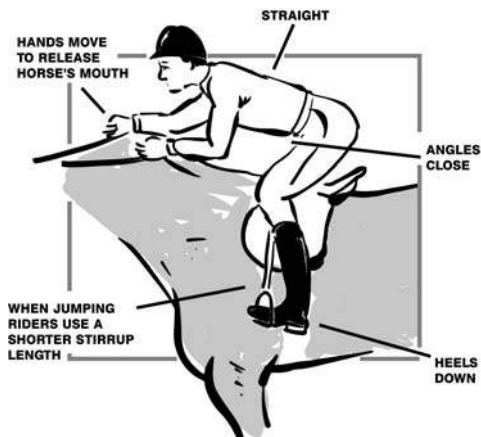
## **THE EYES**

Eyes are the window of the rider's mind. A judge should never have to guess the direction a rider will take. The expert rider's eyes are up, preceding them around the course. Riders should not obviously look down to find a diagonal or lead, and never look down at the fences as they jump them. This last error can produce many faults at the jumps.

## **THE UPPER BODY AND HANDS**

The elbow angle is closed (bent) on take off and opens (straightens) on the landing as the horse's neck stretches forward. The arms and hands must always follow the horse's mouth. Judges should severely penalize any rough treatment of the horse's mouth due to a rider's hands. These faults can include but are not limited to rider balancing off the horse's mouth, falling back in the landing and catching the mouth, banging the mouth with any quick or abrupt movements.

There are several types of releases starting with the basic short release where the rider rests his/her hands a few inches in front of the withers, on the crest. The intermediate rider's release is the long release in which the rider's hands press further up the neck, on the crest. The most advanced release is out of hand, which is an educated, responsive hand that follows the horse's mouth and yields as needed. These releases represent various



**MODIFICATION OF THE RIDER'S SEAT FOR JUMPING POSITION OF RIDER DURING LAST THREE STRIDES OF A JUMP**

degrees of proficiency due to the security of the rider's legs and base of support.

## **THE BODY ANGLES**

The opening and closing of the rider's *angles* are important in over fence work. The term "angle" refers to the angle between the upper thigh and calf (knee joint); the angle between the upper body and thigh (hipjoint). These are the two major angles used in riding. Two other important angles are the ankle joint and elbow joint.

Over the top of a fence the hip angle is closed. In over fence classes riders usually ride with stirrups a hole or two shorter than in flat classes to allow the knee and ankle angle to close easier. This also keeps the rider in better balance over the horse's center of gravity and absorbs the shock of the horse landing off the jump.

## **THE LEGS**

The legs are the rider's base of support. It makes the difference between a steady, secure body position over the jumps and one that tips forward or is left behind. The *stirrup leather rule* (see glossary) applies here. A rider's leg position should stay at the girth, with the stirrup leather straight. The lower leg should not swing back or forward in the air over the jump.

## IN SUMMARY

A rider's position over the fence should show a marked closing of the angles. Riders should not jump ahead or be left behind as the horse leaves the ground but allow the action of the horse jumping to close the rider's hip angle. The rider's release, hands and arms, follow the horse's head as he stretches into the *bascule* over the jump and should never hit his mouth or restrict his neck from stretching into the landing. Ideally a rider's hands should relate the release over the jump to the horse's conformation and jumping style. Upon landing the rider should maintain his/her position allowing the leveling of the horse to open the hip angle. Any quick or excessive motion by the rider is undesirable and should be penalized.

## JUDGING CRITERIA

The following is the judging criteria in order of importance:

### **EXECUTE THE TEST (The test is the course.)**

Mechanics - Correct completion of the course including pace and leads

Finding the distances for take off and landing

Using course options correctly. Weight should be given to the rider who correctly uses the more difficult/risky options.

### **EVALUATE EFFECTIVENESS (Finding the good rider.)**

Even pace (rhythm and balance)

Use of the arena relating to the course

The look of a partnership between horse and rider

### **EVALUATE STYLE (Considered only after the first two points are accomplished.)**

Presentation

Position

Poise

Turnout

## THE COURSE OPTIONS

Options are a very important part of the equitation course. An *option* is not often used in a hunter class but always in jumper classes. An option is a problem presented by the course that has more than one approach or solution. A simple example of that would be a turn from one fence to another which can be ridden by a short, tight route or a longer, flowing route. A novice to the field might think longer, flowing would be pretty. To an equitation rider the answer isn't so simple.

If a horse and rider do the *inside turn*, as opposed to taking the long approach, and they perform the short turn well, they should be rewarded for the effort. If they "go for it" and it fails or rides roughly, then they should be penalized. Knowing your horse, knowing your own skills and making a planned ride to highlight your strengths are important parts of the equitation class. Riders learn to use a decision-making process. The rider taking the risks successfully earns higher prizes.

### **Some options are:**

Timing and control of the horse at a required trot fence

Long single distances

Turns

Riding a *line* in the correct number of strides (also called steps)

Bending/Broken lines: Where you can ride different tracks, adding or leaving out strides between two jumps, to make them ride better.

The more direct approach (showing a greater degree of difficulty), when properly executed, is awarded a greater number of points than a rider taking less risk executing a longer approach.

A judge should ask the course designer to explain the options if they do not understand them.

## **THE ROLE OF THE HORSE IN EQUITATION**

### **FAULTS AND CREDITS**

The horse is a prop. Its conformation, movement or jumping style should not weigh in the outcome of the class. A poor mover or one not the tidiest in front over the jumps should never penalize the rider. Horses are not to be judged on head carriage, way of going, style over fences, or color. If a horse has certain faults or talents and the rider can present the horse in a favorable light, the rider should earn credit. Only mechanical faults, such as refusals, missed leads and knock downs are of issue.

### **AREAS TO GIVE CREDIT THROUGHOUT RIDE**

Good mechanics

Good plan

Eyes up and evaluating ahead of ride

Correct position

Rider workmanlike in attitude

Shortening and lengthening of stride as required by course

Accurate turn

Release over jump

Positive and accurate use of options

Polished presentation



## FAULTS AND PROBLEMS TO LOOK FOR

### Rider: Faults of the Upper Body

Eyes looking down or not telling you the course in advance

Eyes looking down at the jump can be an indication of many possible faults

Elbows excessively out or flapping

Stiff, often comes with posing and renders the rider ineffective

Sloppy, an upper body that loses its balance, bounces or undulates

*Roached back*, rounded out, convex silhouette, hunched shoulders

Busy, rider doing too much. Often accompanied by an agitated horse.

Angles, not enough (usually too long a stirrup)

Angles, too extreme (jockey length)

Pumps, body moves back and forth excessively in response to the horse's motion

Posts at canter, an up and down motion actually looks like posting

Over closes hip, looks mechanical and forced

Sits behind motion to drive horse

Getting ahead, jumping ahead of horse at jump

Open early on landing, snapping up or sitting up over fence

Getting left behind, falling back in the saddle after the jump

Ducks, rider forces body to snap down mechanically over the jump, often to one side or the other of the neck

Falls in a heap after landing off jump, characterized by loss of form after a fence

## **Faults of the Hands**

Flat, which are characterized by being able to see all four knuckles straight across

Hands do not move with the motion of the horse

Hands too high, too low, too wide spread. Hands should be carried over the neck in front of or at the withers, depending on the conformation of the horse and rider.

Over release, shoves reins up neck

No release, fixed hands

Rotating release, hands that rotate back on take off pulling the horse off the ground

Catching the horse in the mouth with a jerk, usually accompanied by a rider sitting back or getting left

Wrists turned in, braced and stiff hands come with this locking of the wrist joint

Wrists down, hands lower than wrist, limp wrists

Too long a rein, cannot control the horse

Reins uneven

Drops a rein

Nips or picks at horse and takes back at jumps (horse has stride shortened on approach to fence)

Rides backwards to fence

## **Faults of the Leg:**

Very loose, moves a lot, swings back over the jump

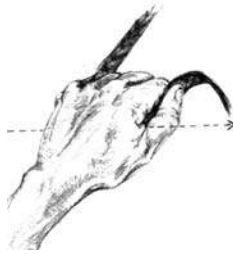
Pinches with knee, often characterized by above

Splayed thighs with knees rising too high on flaps. Rider sits on the back of the saddle, pushed against the cantle. Legs resemble position of a person sitting in an easy chair.

Too far back



**GOOD POSITION**



Too

**TOO FLAT**



**TOO STRAIGHT**

far ahead which is a lesser fault than too far behind if it isn't extreme as to cause the buttocks to push back toward the cantle.

Foot too far (home) or not far enough in the iron (on toe)

Heels up, too extreme

Loses iron

Kicks too noticeably, too much

Stirrup leather twisted

**Mechanical Faults:**

Wrong diagonal on entrance circle

Pace too weak/too strong

Leaving strides out, which is often a rider problem

Adding strides, can be a rider fault or a physically limited horse, it's a judgment call.

Obvious adjustment of horse (rough adjustment)

Missed distance, or misses distances repeatedly (no eye)

Over riding which can result in a too forward, chased go. This can produce extreme and unplanned rhythm changes.

Under riding, results in a weak ride, "iffy", questioning, passive trip

Doesn't ride straight line to the jump. Reflected as an unintentional bow in the line, or a weaving line on approach to the fence.

Picks off turns (Rides to the jump backwards. Holds the horse off of the jump.)

Runs at jump. Rider commits to the jump at a faster pace than necessary.

Cutting corners on the ends of the ring (will usually cause riders to *miss* their distances)

This shouldn't be confused with a rider choosing a shorter option between two jumps, which would actually be considered a greater degree of difficulty.

Wrong lead or lead problems such as *cross canter*, *counter canter*, *skip changes* or *swapping out*.

Trot on course, not called for (break of gait)

Dangerous fence, heavily penalized

Use of the stick/crop, an indicator that something is going wrong. To carry one is fine but using it is a penalty.

Refusal

Knockdown (can still place if not the result of poor riding)

Bucking and playing (must be taken in the context of the go, and marked accordingly if evaluated as rider caused)

No plan, late turns, poor use of eyes

Poor plan, often seen as a rider runs for a distance that isn't there or tries an option that won't work. An example would be a short right hand turn back to a fence that ends in a runout.

Rubs, not penalized unless fault of poor riding

## **SUGGESTED SCORING SYSTEM**

Scoring may be on a basis of 0-100, with an approximate breakdown as follows:

**A 90-100 Excellent equitation**, position and presentation; meets all fences squarely and at proper distance. Uses all options to their advantage.

**B 80-89 Minor equitation faults**, i.e., long, weak distance, deep distance, one step land at counter canter. Rider still maintains a quality ride.

**C 70-79 More problems** occur, equitation suffers, i.e., rounded shoulders, heels are not down, hands incorrect; lacks the style and presence. One major fence problem i.e., chip with a ride *up the neck*, or discreet swap out, jumping off one side of jump. No dangerous fences, not a flowing course.

**D 60-69 Major equitation faults**, poor body position, loose legs and seat, failure to obtain or maintain trot to a trot fence approach, 2 or 3 misses at the fence.

**E 40-59 Severe faults**, breaking to a trot while on course, counter canter or cross canter ends of arena, missed lead changes, loss of stirrup, dropped a rein, extra stride in *combination*.

**F 10-39 Rider avoids elimination**, one or two refusals, knockdowns, dangerous fences.

If a rider steps into the obvious wrong lead for one or two strides only before or on the courtesy circle, it is noted on the score sheet, which may be used as a tie breaker in the event of a ride of equal quality and score.

## CASE STUDIES

### LEAD CHANGES:

RIDER A: This rider has 8 good fences. They perform with a correct position. However one lead change is accomplished 3 strides late of the optimum spot (the center of the gate).

RIDER B: This rider has a course characterized by excessive speed. The hands are noticeably rough, the riding position is defensive. Other than meeting the fences at inconsistent *spots*, there were no other technical problems.

RIDER A wins in spite of the late change.

## **BASIC EQUITATION/POSITION**

RIDER A: Has one very *deep spot* (not a dangerous fence), just obviously deep in an otherwise good, consistent ride. The rider was workmanlike and efficient.

RIDER B: This horse finds 8 good spots. The rider is in a perched position, taking whatever the horse offers. Luck is obviously part of the plan.

RIDER A should be your winner even with an obviously inconsistent distance.

Judge positive. If you have an obviously good rider that makes an error such as above they are probably at a +95 ride at this point, even if you minus them they would have a winning ride. Add back points for being a good rider (it is equitation) and that would easily let good RIDER A beat the weak RIDER B who, even with 8 good spots, only shows the quality to be a 60.

## **LEADS, SKIPS & TROTS**

RIDER A: A good rider with a good trip that trots several steps on course coming around the end.

RIDER B: A good rider with a good trip that misses a lead, completely, never gets it.

RIDER C: A good rider with a good trip that has a *skip change* at the end of the arena.

The class places:     1st C    2nd B    3rd A

You may get different opinions from different judges but the obvious message here is that maintaining the canter is a heavily weighted part of the class criteria. Losing forward motion is penalized heavily. All riders were of the same physical abilities, but each violated the mechanics of the class. The judges are basing their placing on what is aesthetically correct as well as safe.

## LEAD PROBLEM/DISTANCE

RIDER A: This is a good rider with a good trip but is having lead difficulty. The horse changes to the correct lead, in front only. Then changes back to the outside lead (incorrect lead back and front), then has a clean change to the correct lead. This all happens in a short span of distance around the end of the ring.

RIDER B: A good rider with a usable trip but may be the horse is a bit green and they have four obvious misses. A miss is a distance error in the take off area in front of the jump. It can be too close or too long (far away) from the jump.

RIDER A wins.

We want to reward the rider that is not only an efficient rider but is able to find the distances. RIDER B committed too many misses.

## SCORING TROT FENCE

RIDER A: Rider trots jump but not in control of body.

RIDER B: Rider canters one step to trot fence yet has great equitation and form.

RIDER B wins over RIDER A.

We want to give more credit to the more effective rider who maintained the trot except for the last stride, rather than give the placing to an obviously weaker but lucky rider whose horse trotted the fence in spite of the loose, ineffective riding.

## COUNTER CANTER/CROSS CANTER

RIDER A: Comes into the arena and picks up a wrong lead on the *courtesy circle*, tries to correct it but counter canters to the first jump. The jump is a little weak and long which causes an added stride in the line to the second jump.

RIDER B: Comes in the arena and picks up his proper lead. Jumps the course well, but misses a lead change on both ends. Cross cantering on both ends and wobbles down two lines.

RIDER A wins.

Picking up a counter canter is not considered as bad as cross cantering. A counter canter is at least with more control of the horse's hips and shoulders. An added stride is safer than a horse that wobbles down two lines (i.e.: A horse that has a tendency to weave between fences, down the line, is not focused. Most likely, not enough leg and soft feel of the reins.).

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

RIDER A: Comes in the arena on a wrong diagonal for 1/2 a circle, changes, picks up a canter, jumps three jumps and leaves out a stride between jump three and four, gets too aggressive at jumps and pulls a rail but completes the course.

RIDER B: Proper diagonal, good canter departure, rides to jumps quiet and a little weak, making the distances a little long. Drags a lead across the diagonal line.

RIDER C: Proper diagonal, good lead with smooth departure. A little tight on first jump and slow in their pace. Adds a stride down the first line, counter canter around one end and finishes the round excellently.

PLACING: 1st C 2nd B 3rd A This group has an easy third place


















with Rider A who is obviously having control problems, placing it somewhere in the 10-39 range. Placing C over B is close and more subtle, based on two things:

1. C was "tight" or "close" and slow on the first fence, probably contributing to the added stride in the first line, but has good distances and fences for the remainder of the ride, while B had "weak", "long" distances at all the fences. When forced to compare, long, weak fences are less desirable than "tight" or "close" fences.

2. C counter cantered around an end which is a slightly less severe lead penalty than B's dragged lead across the diagonal.

## SUGGESTED SYMBOLS DESCRIBING EQUITATION OVER FENCES

-  Good jump
- ++ Wonderful impression
- ↖ Good impression
- = Very poor impression
- Poor impression
- ↙ Excessive open angle
- ↘ Excessive closed angle
- ↓ Eyes look down
- gdi Good eyes
- noi No eyes
- ^ deep spot
- ^— deep spot followed by a long spot
-  Drift to one side of jump
- ↑ Legs off horse's side
-  Cuts corner
- ! Scary fence
- ┌ Good position
- └ roached back
- └ Sway backed
- ^ Chipped
- He↑ Heel up
- ←Lg→ Leg forward or back
- +1 Added one stride in a four stride *line*
- 1 Omitted a stride - two strides instead of three

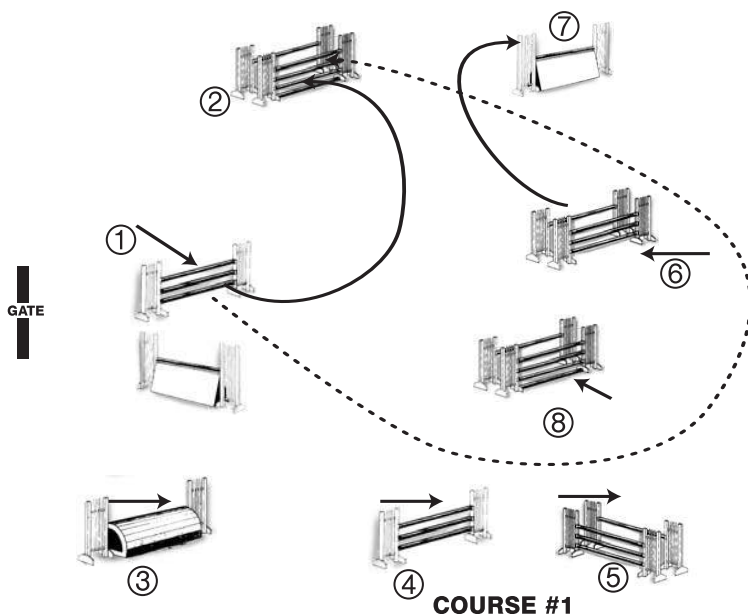
-  Front rub
-  Hind rub
-  Very close - crow hop jump
- Pmps Pumps upper body
- Ducks Upper body while jumping fence, ducks to side
- Sb Snaps upper body upright as horse's front feet touch the ground
- GR Good release
- PR Poor release
-  No release
- Pmgr Passenger
- Rb Rounded back
- P+ Pace good
- P- Pace slow
- Sh Rn Short rein
- Lg Rn Long rein
-  Dropped rein
-  Dropped stirrup
-  Wrong lead
- X-C cross canter
-  counter canter
-  Knockdown
-  Refusal
-  Elimination
-  Iffy approach, weaving

*These are suggested symbols only, each judge is encouraged to incorporate their own system of scoring.*

# SAMPLE COURSES

The following courses have been designed over fences originally set for working hunter classes. This can be a time saver for show committees.

## Course #1 An Equitation Course Illustrating Turns



### Explanation Of The Course #1 Options.

1 to 2 <> When the first fence is jumped away from the in gate it is usually harder to establish a consistent forward pace. The left hand turn (roll-back) can show a rider's ability to ride a forward pace through the turn and can be ridden as A or B option.

**A** <> The more complicated option giving the greater degree of difficulty as the rider turns in front of fences #6 and #7. A well performed turn inside of fences when properly executed can earn more points.

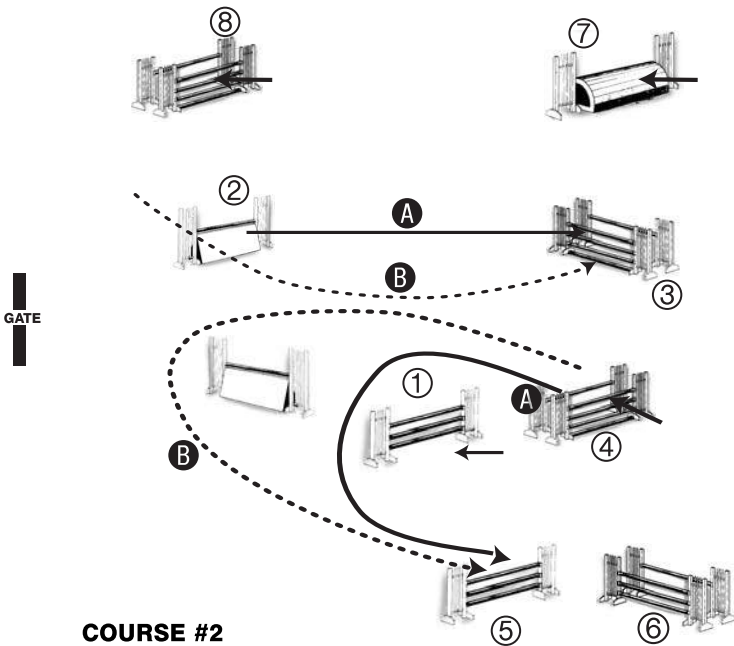
**B** <> The long approach going around behind the fences allows more time for the rider to react and less accuracy is necessary. This lesser difficulty is worth less on that exhibitor's score card.

3 to 4 and 5 <> An in and out line which must be ridden in the correct number of strides or it incurs heavy penalties.

6 to 7 <> A right hand turn which demonstrates a rider's ability to perform a right hand turn. Again the shorter route if well ridden receives more credit for the greater degree of difficulty.

8 <> Is a straight forward fence which must be ridden in a controlled yet forward pace to accomplish the finishing circle in cadence.

### Course #2 An Equitation Course Illustrating the Bending Line Option



#### Explanation Of The Course #2 Options.

1 <> When the first fence is jumped toward the in gate it is usually easier to establish consistent forward pace.

2 to 3 <> Can be ridden as A or B option.

A <> The more complicated option giving the greater degree of difficulty is the straight approach. This is true because it calls on the rider to produce a straight line while jumping the fences at an angle. The rider must be more accurate and produce a more obedient horse to be accomplished well. Worth a plus if accomplished correctly.

B <> The bending line approach allows greater flexibility, The fences are accomplished at more jumpable angles inviting less opportunity for the horse to run out. A lead change is not necessary or necessarily worth more points. Even if well done option B will earn less credit if option A is ridden competently.

3 to 4 <> An opportunity for the rider to demonstrate a right hand turn. A shorter route if well ridden could receive more credit but at the end of the ring the smooth well orchestrated turn will do as well.

4 to 5 and 6 <> A left hand turn that can be ridden as A or B option.

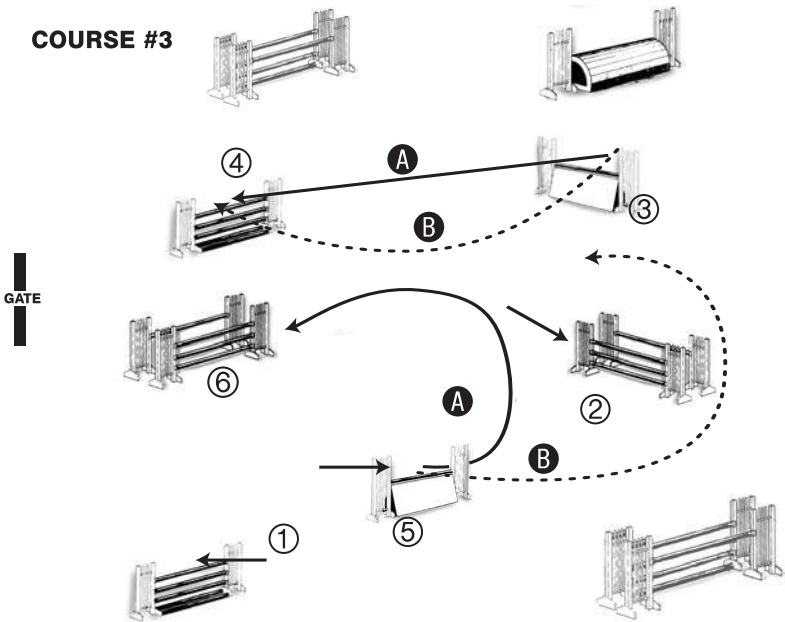
A <> The more complicated option giving the greater degree of difficulty as the rider turns behind fence #1 and in front of the unused fence.

B <> The long approach (The *Tour*) allows greater flexibility and less accuracy on the rider's part and is therefore worth less points. The in and out should always be accomplished in the exact number of strides intended or become a major liability in the over all score.

7 to 8 <> This straight forward line can offer an opportunity for the judge to view the riders position as he finishes the course and observe the pace and decide if it is producing the correct number of strides on a line.

### **Course #3 An Equitation Course Showing Use of a *Skinny* Option**

### COURSE #3



#### Explanation Of The Course #3 Options.

1 <> When the first fence is jumped toward the in gate it is usually easier to establish a consistent forward pace.

2 <> A long ride to a single fence going away from the gate is an excellent option to earn extra credit. When an exhibitor shows a definite forward ride and jumps the fence in stride without taking back at the fence it's a big plus. But watch here for the rider that leaves early and produces a scary or weak effort at the jump as well as the horse that gets *past the distance* and chips on the take off.

3 to 4 <> See explanation on Course #2 (fences 2 to 3). Can be ridden as A or B option.

5 <> A "Skinny" fence (a narrow jump 6' to 8') presents several difficulties. The first is a mental one for the rider. The narrow visual causes riders to second guess themselves and not produce a smooth, positive forward ride. The horses are more likely to be disobedient at this style obstacle and it takes more control and accuracy to align the horse to the

center of a narrower jump. In summary, this jump can cause problems and is another area in the course to earn credit for a good job.

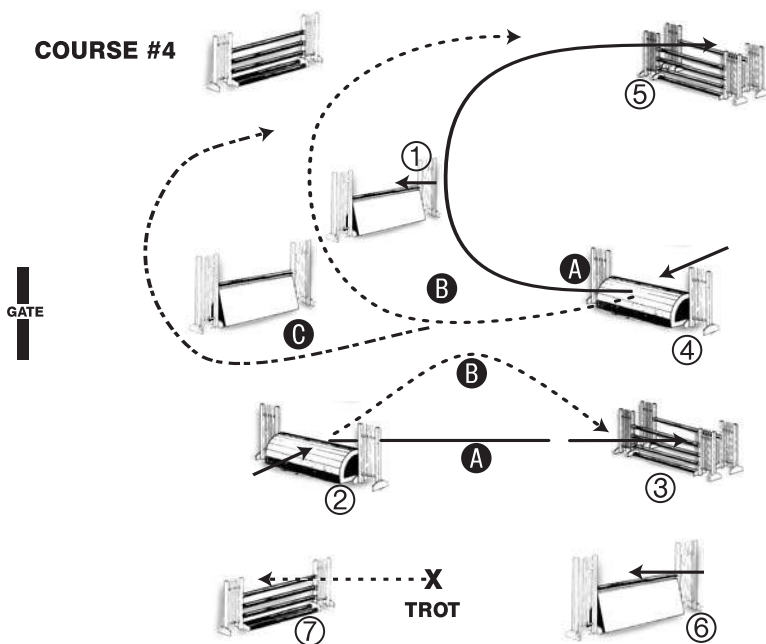
5 to 6 <> A left roll-back turn that can be ridden as A or B *option*.

A <> The more complicated option giving the greater degree of difficulty as the rider turns in front of fence #2. The tighter turn is another excellent place to earn credit. When the rider chooses this option he must produce a good result to earn the credit. Just taking the risk doesn't automatically receive credit.

B <> The long approach shown going behind fence #2 offers greater flexibility and requires less accuracy and cooperation from the horse and rider. When the scores are in it shouldn't be worth as much as option A if both competitors rode it with the same degree of competency.

### Course #4 An Equitation Course Showing a Trot Option

#### Explanation Of The Course #4 Options.





This course seems basic and uncomplicated starting toward the in gate. The bending line from #2 to #3 is where the first option appears. On a bending line, if two exhibitors ride the line equally well, the rider who does the more direct line with fewer strides should score slightly higher than the rider who does the longer line in a greater number of strides.

Our next challenge in this course is the option from #4 to #5. Assuming all options are well ridden, Option A is the most direct route from #4 to #5 and it is also the most difficult and would, therefore, receive the highest score. Option B is longer and less difficult; therefore, it would place below A. Option C is much longer and gives a lot more time for balancing and preparation; therefore, it is the easiest option and would score lowest of the three.

The next area of discussion is the transition to the trot between #6 and #7. Ideally, you would jump #6 well and land balanced with good control canter half of the distance to #7 and then handily break to a good trot with no loss of rhythm or forward motion. You should then maintain the trot until the horse leaves the ground at the ideal point of jump #7, again with no change in rhythm or impulsion. The trot fence headed toward the gate adds an additional difficulty to this particular course. A horse is less likely to be obedient to the transition at "X" when the welcoming gate is in his field of vision. When using this trot option there should be at least 72' between jump #6 and jump #7.

One of the most important aspects of the trotted fence is to test the rider for the ability to maintain the connection with the horse in order to prevent a break of gait into the canter or walk in front of the fence, prior to take off. The horse is expected to land off fence #7 in the canter and obtain the correct lead to properly complete the course around the end of the arena and into the final trot circle.

# GLOSSARY

**ANGLES** - Open or closed - refers to the opening or closing of rider's angles at the elbows, hip, knees or ankles. (See Picture page 19)

**ADDRESSING OF REINS** - Refers to the proper way of picking up reins. The rider should pick up the reins from the neck. One hand picks up the reins at the buckle, maintaining contact. The other hand draws the reins through the first hand until arriving at proper length. Both hands then assume the proper position.

**BASCULE** - The horse showing good form, rounding the back while in arc over fence.

**BENDING** - Is the part of performance on the flat that demonstrates the rider's ability to supple his/her horse. A properly bent horse is molded around the rider's inside leg according to the shape of the turn.

**BENDING/BROKEN LINE** - The curved line of travel between two fences setting at different angles.

**BIT KEEPERS** - Small leather band which holds full-cheek bit in upright position connecting bit to bridle.

**BREAKING GAIT** - Momentarily switching to an incorrect gait. Major fault.

**BREAST COLLAR/PLATE** - Most often used to hold the saddle from slipping backward.

**COCKED HEAD** - When rider's head is cocked to one side. The upper body weight usually shifts in that direction, too.

**COLLECTION** - The horse traveling with its hocks well under its body and its neck and poll flexed.

**COMBINATION** - Two or three jumps ridden as parts of a whole (including 'in and out', which is a combination of two jumps set 1 or 2 strides apart and must be ridden in the correct number of strides).

**COUNTER CANTER** - Calls for the horse to take the outside lead when on a curved line. While traveling counter clockwise when on a curved line, the horse would be on right lead for the counter canter; while moving clockwise, it would be on the left lead. In the counter canter, the horse should remain bent to the actual lead it is on.

**COURTESY CIRCLE** - One circle allowed to the rider before the first fence.

**CROSS CANTER** - Disunited in leads at canter. Horse canters on left lead in front, right lead behind or vice-versa.

**CROP/RIDING STICK/BAT** - Short, sturdy black or brown leather crop.

**DEEP SPOT** - Leaving the ground too close to the jump.

**DIAGONAL** - At the posting trot, the rider should rise as the horse's outside foreleg moves forward and sit when it strikes the ground. (Example: When asked for a right diagonal at the posting trot the rider is rising and falling with the right front leg of the horse.) This is referred to as posting on the correct diagonal.

**DISTANCE** - Distance between two fences.

**DOUBLE BRIDLE** - Also known as a full bridle, consists of a thin snaffle and curb bit. Each bit is attached to its own headstall and its own set of reins.

**EXTENSION** - The horse's lengthening from a medium stride into a long stride through increased impulsion.

**FLEXION** - The contraction of the horse's neck that results from the rider pressing the horse into the bit with his legs. When a horse is flexed, his head moves inward toward the vertical and his neck becomes more arched.

**HALF SEAT** - Basically the same as two-point position except rider places some weight on horse's back.

**HALT** - Cease of forward motion.

**HALF TURN ON FOREHAND AND/OR HAUNCHES** - A forehand turn to the right is accomplished by moving haunches to the left. A forehand turn to the left is accomplished by moving haunches to the right.

**HAND GALLOP** - A three beat, lengthened canter ridden in a two-point position.

**IMPULSION** - One of the most important aspects of performance either on the flat or over fences. Impulsion is not the speed or 'pace' at which the horse is going, but the push power the animal has.

**INSIDE TURN** - Taking shorter route.

**JODPHUR BOOTS** - Usually worn by children, with garters or knee straps and elastic pant clips to prevent wrinkling and rubbing at the knee.

**JODPHUR PANT** - Pants longer than breeches worn over top of jodphur boots.

**KEEPERS** - Small leather band which secures loose leather straps.

LEG YIELD - Forward and sideways horse is bent away from direction of travel.

LINE - Two or more fences in a row to be jumped consecutively in a related distance.

LONG SPOT - Too far away from jump.

MISS - Miss your take off distance or "spot".

NECK STRETCHED/SET JAW- When rider's neck juts out of shoulders with a set jaw look. Ear/neck should be aligned with shoulder.

OPTION - Rider's decision to take the shortest or longest (tour) distance to a fence. The shortest option has a higher degree of difficulty.

PADDOCK BOOTS - See jodphur boots.

PAST THE DISTANCE - leaving the ground too close to the fence

PELHAM BIT - A combination snaffle and curb, has a set of rings connected to the mouthpiece and another set connected to the curb cheek, used with two sets of reins. Mouth piece styles include a straight mullen mouth, a hard rubber or metal, jointed mouthpiece, or a port.

RATCATCHER - Ladies English shirt choker that can be button-on or attached to shirt collar with a pin.

REIN STOPS (GUARDS) - Attachments for reins to prevent rings of running martingale from catching on reins where they attach to the bit.

RIDE OFF - A test used to break a tie.

ROACHED BACK - Rounded back.

RUNNING MARTINGALE - Similar to the standing martingale except the upper chest strap forks approximately 12 inches, ending in rings that slip onto each rein with *rein stops*. Purpose to limit range of motion of head.

SERPENTINE - May be performed at a trot demonstrating correct diagonal or the canter on the correct lead with simple or flying changes of lead across the center line.

SKIP CHANGE - Break in canter in an attempt to change leads, not to be confused with simple lead change.

SPOT - Terminology used to describe the place where horse leaves the ground in front of jump.

SPUR NECK - Length of 'shank' of spur. Most common lengths 5/8", 3/4" or 1".

**STANDING MARTINGALE** - A strap that fits around the horse's neck with a second strap crossing the first at chest center. The chest strap loops around the girth under the belly and attaches to the back of the cavesson. Purpose to limit range of head motion. *Keepers* on the girth loop should not be behind the girth in an attempt to shorten this strap.

**STIRRUP LEATHER RULE**-Observe the stirrup leather. When a rider is in balance the leather should hang straight down from the point of attachment. If the riders leg pushes the leather forward or backward the leg is not in the correct position.

**STRIDE** - Two steps are equal to one stride. At canter, from beginning of one series of foot falls to the beginning of next series of foot falls. The canter is a three beat gait. When backing, is considered diagonal pair of legs stepped backward.

**SWAPPING OUT** - Swapping of lead in front of jump.

**SWAYBACK**- Rider with concave back.

**TOUR** - (two definitions )

1. Riding around the course and jumps to familiarize the horse with the arena.
2. Using excessive distance from one jump to the next.

**TRANSITIONS** - Specified changes of gait of horse or position of rider

**TROTting ON COURSE** - Breaking to trot from the canter displaying a loss of forward motion. The exception is when a trot or trot fence is specified.

**TURNOUT** - Grooming and presentation of horse, equipment and rider.

**TWO-POINT** - A body position which can be assumed at any gait. The two-point refers to the two points of contact between horse and rider. Legs of rider are on the horse's sides while the seat is held out of the saddle Other common terms referring to the term two-point position are galloping position and jumping position.

**UP THE NECK** - Rider pushes out ahead of his/her leg often resulting in the lower leg falling back

## RECOMMENDED READING

*WINNING WITH THE AMERICAN QUARTER HORSE* by Don Burt  
(Doubleday)

*JUDGING HUNTERS AND HUNTER SEAT EQUITATION* by Anna  
Jane White- Mullin (Trafalgar Square Publishing)

*RIDING* by Kate Decker (Lyons & Burford)

*THE USPC MANUAL OF HORSEMANSHIP*-by Susan Harris (Howell)

*HUNT SEAT EQUITATION* by George Morris (Doubleday)

*THE AMERICAN JUMPING STYLE* by George Morris (Doubleday)

*WINNING WAYS* by Margaret J. Cannelkl (Howell)

*BASIC JUMPING* by Carol Foster (Crowood)

*SCHOOL EXERCISES FOR FLAT WORK & JUMPING* by Eleanor Roff  
(Kenilworth Press)

*JUMPING: LEARNING & TEACHING* by Froissard (Barnes)

*TEACHING RIDING* by Diane F. Solomon (University of Oklahoma  
Press)

*LEARNING TO RIDE, HUNT & SHOW* by Gordon Wright (Garden City  
Books)

*THE HAND BOOK OF JUMPING ESSENTIALS*- by Francios Lemaire de  
Ruffieu (Stephen Greene Press)

*EQUESTRIAN TECHNIQUE* by Tris Roberts (J. A. Allen)

*STARTS TO RIDE* by Holger Heck & Volker Greiner (J. A. Allen)



Judging is not absolute.  
It is exactly what it says it is:

A matter of  
Judgement.





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