

NZCCA

Official Rule Book

May 2025 Edition



www.cowboychallenge.co.nz

This Rule Book belongs to:

Membership number:

New Zealand Cowboy Challenge Association Inc. Rule Book

Updated May 2025

1. Definitions

1.1 Rules will say "shall".

1.2 Guidelines will say "should".

1.3 **Season** is 1 May to 30 April.

1.4 **Horsemanship:** Horsemanship is the most important element of cowboy challenge. Good horsemanship includes:

- A partnership between horse and rider that appears effortlessly working as one with finesse.
- The rider has a kind effective attitude while showing consideration for their horse.
- Obstacles are completed with preparation, correctly, in an efficient manner and with finesse.
- The rider makes good decisions and demonstrates sound leadership.
- The horse is relaxed and supple, moves freely forward, willingly on a soft feel and transitions are soft and round.
- The rider is balanced and steady, with effective communication while maintaining a soft feel.

2. Competition Divisions

All Points Approved Challenges shall have Youth, Rookie, Intermediate and Open divisions.

2.1 **Youth:** aged up to 18 years (inclusive). Youth age shall be computed as from 1 May each year and shall be maintained throughout the entire year. At organiser's discretion, the Youth Division may be divided into two age groups (12 and under and 13 to 18).

2.2 Upon turning 15 years, a Youth rider can apply to the Council to move into the Rookie Division if they can prove just cause to do so, ie multiple wins in Youth with scores that are competitive in Rookie Division. The Council has the right to approve or decline the request. If this timing falls within a current season and the Council approves the request, the Youth can choose to move divisions straight away but loses eligibility for Youth Hi Points and begins accruing new Hi Point scores under Rookie for the remainder of that season. The rider may choose to finish the season in Youth before moving divisions. Once in Rookie the rider cannot return to the Youth Division (even as a new combination). They will now start to accrue points as a Rookie combination to move up through the divisions as per division rules 2.2 and 2.3. They are required to wear a helmet until 18 years.

2.3 **Rookie:** An Adult Rider & horse combination who can earn up to a total of 15 points at a points approved Cowboy Challenge (accumulated) Once 15 points is reached, the combination may finish the current season and shall then move up to Intermediate the following season.

2.4 **Intermediate:** An adult rider & horse combination who is out of Rookie. The combination can earn up to a total of 15 points at Points Approved Cowboy Challenges (accumulated). Once 15 points is achieved, the Intermediate combination may finish the current season and shall then move up to Open the following season.

2.5 **Open:** An adult rider & horse combination who is out of Intermediate. Open riders may ride one or two handed regardless of tack.

2.6 **Note about Combinations:** In Points Approved divisions, it is the rider and horse combination that progresses. A rider may compete on a different/new horse in a different division to which they have already competed, eg a rider competing in Open on X horse may compete in Rookie or Intermediate on Y horse. Also refer 3 Entry Guidelines. Note that Youth combinations remain in that class until the rider reaches the maximum age (see 2.1).

2.7 **Riding non competitively:** A course organiser may on occasion allow someone to ride a course "non competitively" and be judged by the official judges. The competitor shall pay an entry fee and a levy is to be paid (to NZCCA as per other competitors). They shall not be included in placings, gain Division points or be eligible for Hi Points.

This entry shall not affect any subsequent competitive entry in a points approved Division.

Riding non-competitively shall be considered as part of the maximum two horses allowed to be campaigned at one event.

3. Entry Guidelines

3.1 **Limiting entries:** The overall number of entries shall not be limited at any Points Approved Challenge, unless prior approval has been given by the Association and with good reason.

3.2 **Any Club** running a Points Approved Challenge shall not allow their members to enter ahead of others wishing to enter.

3.3 **Starting division:** An adult rider may choose to start in any Points Approved division they wish; however once their combination has competed in a particular division, that combination shall not then compete in a lower division, regardless of whether or not they have placed.

3.4 **Choosing to move up:** While a rider and horse combination can remain in a Points Approved division until they have reached the required number of points (refer 2), the rider may move their combination into the next division before reaching those points if they wish. They shall not then return to the lower division.

3.5 **One horse, two riders, separate divisions:** The same horse may be ridden by two different riders at the same Challenge only in Youth & Rookie, with one rider competing in each division, but ONLY If the Rookie class is run before the Youth class.

3.6 One Horse, two riders, same division: The same horse shall not be ridden in the same division twice with the exception of Youth division only, where a maximum of two riders may share the one horse.

3.7 Two horses: A competitor can campaign up to two horses at any one event.

4. Safety

4.1 Individual capabilities: All competitors are expected to compete within their individual capabilities. It is the riders' responsibility to have a clear understanding of their own ability and the ability they have achieved within the partnership with their horse. Should any rider approach an obstacle that he/she feels is beyond their ability, he/she is expected to skip that obstacle and go to the next obstacle.

4.2 Condition of horse: All competitors are expected to make certain their horse is in condition to compete in the Cowboy Challenge.

4.3 Tack: All competitors are expected to ensure their tack is correctly fitted and in safe condition.

4.4 Responsibility: The competitor or the parent (s) / legal guardian in the case of contestants 18 years and under, assumes all responsibility for participation in a Cowboy Challenge event.

4.5 Obstacles: All obstacles must be constructed with safety for the rider and horse in mind. (Example: no pointed posts, exposed waratahs and wire). All obstacles that are to bear the horses weight must be built from a minimum of 50mm thick timber, 21 mm plywood or equivalent steel construction and adequately supported with a strong supporting structure.

4.6 Alcohol: Riders may not drink any form of alcohol until they have completely finished competing on the day they participate.

4.7 Spectators shall be able to safely watch a competition without being in the way of riders and crew. They shall not be within 10 metres of an obstacle or defined path of the course and shall not be within 10 metres of the judges.

5. Dress Code

5.1 Required: Riders shall wear jeans; collared, long sleeve shirts to be worn down the full length of the arm while competing; riding boots with a heel; western or stockman's style hat or NZSS approved riding helmet. All youth 18 years and under are required to wear an NZSS approved safety helmet.

NOTE All hosts of events have the right to request and enforce the use of hard helmets and or NZSS approved helmets.

5.2 Optional: Chaps, spurs and body protectors are optional.

5.3 Prohibited: Caps are not allowed.

5.4 Elimination: Riders that compete without the required dress (see 5.1) or with prohibited dress (see 5.3) as deemed by the judge, can complete their round and be scored but will be eliminated from the competition.

6. Tack

6.1 Saddles: Western (with horn) or other horned saddles shall be used at All Points Approved Events, except for Youth or Rookie who may use western, stockman or English Saddles. A competitor shall not choose to ride bareback (only allowed in the bareback obstacle ride).

6.2 Optional tack: The use of protective horse boots, bandages and shoes is allowed.

6.3 Prohibited tack: The following are not allowed: mechanical hackamores, tie downs, standing/running martingales, any form of drop nose band and any form of gag bit or slip bit.

6.4 It is the competitor's responsibility to ensure they comply with the tack guidelines.

6.5 A judge may disallow any tack they deem unsuitable or unsafe at their discretion.

6.6 Elimination: Riders that compete without the correct tack (see 6.1) or with prohibited tack (see 6.3) as deemed by the judge, can complete their round and be scored but will be eliminated from the competition.

7. Cowboy Challenge Courses and Obstacles

7.1 Obstacles: All Divisions shall have 13 obstacles per event. The obstacles included should show different skill sets.

7.2 Difficulty rating: Obstacles will be assigned a difficulty rating of 1-6, with 1 being the easiest and 6 being the most difficult. Each Division has been assigned a specific level of difficulty for the obstacles that they are allowed to attempt.

- **Youth and Rookie** shall ride a course of R1-R4 rated obstacles.
- **Intermediate and Open** riders may ride a course of R1-R6 rated obstacles.

7.3 Course design: Each course shall be designed so that the judges can clearly see the approach, obstacle and departure for every obstacle they are judging. Each judge should have either 6 or 7 obstacles to judge (when using 2 judges with half each). Each course should allow for two competitors at once (one on each half), with no cross-over of horses partway through or clash at the start or finish line.

7.4 Course numbers and markers: Each obstacle shall have a clearly shown number placed on the right-hand side. This will also indicate where the scoring of the obstacle begins (the approach). If there is a good reason for putting the number on the lefthand side, this shall be discussed during course approval and pointed out during the course walk.

7.5 Course approval: Course must be approved by both the judges prior to the contestants walk through. Any adjustments to the course can only be made by the approving judge(s) for that Points approved event and the course designer and must be made prior to the contestants walk through.

7.6 Obstacle time limit: Each obstacle shall have a time limit. The rider will be allowed 45 seconds per obstacle with the exception of a judge's call on the day of competition allowing for terrain, footing, weather conditions and distance to cover. The judge may add extra time onto one or more obstacles at their discretion. This must be told to competitors on the course walk. At the end of the allowed time period a whistle will be blown and the rider must move on to the next obstacle. Any obstacle time increase must be taken into account when setting the overall course time.

7.7 Timing: Overall time on the course shall be measured by electronic timers or two stop watches per competitor. Each judge/writer shall also have an electronic timer or stopwatch for timing obstacle time limits.

7.8 Overall time limit: In a points-approved Cowboy Challenge there will be an overall time limit for the course. This should differ between divisions. This will be set by the course designer/s with the judge's approval prior to the walk through. This time will be assessed on a course by course basis and will be based on a horse moving forward freely between the obstacles at a reasonable speed. If the rider exceeds the allotted time, but has not yet completed the course he/she will not be eliminated but shall incur a penalty (see 11.3).

7.9 Timing competitors who catch up: If a competitor catches up with the competitor in front, ie there are two horses on the same half of the course, the second competitor shall be stopped until the course is clear to continue. The time for their round shall be adjusted to take into account the length of time they are stopped for.

7.10 New obstacles: To add a new obstacle to the rule book a detailed description and photo must be sent in as a notified motion for approval at the following AGM.

8. Judges

8.1 Two or more judges: There shall be two or more NZCCA approved judges for each Points Approved Cowboy Challenge.

8.2 Do not confer: Judges may not confer with each other with regard to the scoring of each combination.

8.3 Horsemanship: Judges shall pay particular attention to good horsemanship.

8.4 Knowledge of breeds: Judges should have knowledge of the different breeds and consider the breed in their judging. This means a judge must consider the way of going for any given breed and judge accordingly.

8.5 Abuse by competitors: The judges may disqualify a rider for what the judges deem to be abuse of any animal, officials, organisers or the abuse of any of these rules. Judges may do this with a reason given.

8.6 A judge may disqualify a rider if they appear affected by drugs/alcohol.

8.7 Judges have the right to withdraw an obstacle at any point during a competition for safety reasons.

9. Draw for "Order of Go"

9.1 The draw for order of go shall be held at a time convenient to the organisers prior to the Cowboy Challenge starting. The draw for the order of go may not be challenged and riders must compete in the order they are drawn. Not competing in the correct order will be grounds for immediate disqualification.

10. Walking the Course

10.1 The course walk is a formal part of the competition. It shall be led by the course designer and/or the judge/s. Riders and officials (judges, timers, writers) only may join the course walk; however a Youth rider may have one support person with them.

10.2 Each obstacle shall be viewed in numbered order and any designated pathways pointed out, plus specific instructions given for an obstacle (eg which way to face on a side pass). Riders only may seek clarifications during the walkaround; they shall not challenge any directions or instructions given by the judge/s unless it is to raise a significant safety concern that may affect all competitors. It is the competitors' responsibility to fully understand obstacle requirements and rules as per the Rule Book. An explanation of how to ride an obstacle shall not be given during the course walk.

10.3 The course shall not be walked prior to the official course walk and the obstacle list shall not be published any earlier than the day before competition. No horses are allowed on the course before competing (refer Rule 15 re Training Days). Competitors may continue to walk around the course at the conclusion of the official course walk, but must ensure they are off the course before the first competitor starts.

11. Judging and Scoring

11.1 Obstacle: The NZCCA judging of each obstacle will be done on a scale of 0 – 10, with 5 being considered an average score. Any increment used in scoring shall be no less than a half.

A score of 8 or 9 indicates the horse rider team had an outstanding Approach, Obstacle and Departure. A perfect ride and a score of 10 should be extremely rare. A perfect ride and a score of 10 may be rare but achievable.

- If the rider does not complete the obstacle, points will be given or deducted based on his/her attempt. A valid attempt may be scored from .5 – to 2 points. The judges shall not give a 0 (zero) if a valid attempt is made.
- When two attempts are made to complete an obstacle within the designated time for that obstacle, eg the horse comes off a bridge partway across but the bridge is then fully completed on a second attempt, the first attempt shall be taken into account and a score given accordingly; this will be below the average score. This does not apply if the obstacle description allows for two attempts, eg roping a dummy calf, where two swings are allowed.
- When an obstacle is not completed as instructed, eg a side pass is undertaken in the wrong direction, scoring shall only apply to the part of the obstacle that is completed as instructed up until the time the obstacle is done incorrectly. This

excludes the Pattern, which shall be judged based on the overall movements completed; if one element is completed incorrectly or missed out, scoring shall reflect this rather than only scoring up until an incorrect element.

11.2 Horsemanship: There shall be a horsemanship score given by each judge for each rider in each round. This score is to be marked out of 20 at the judge's discretion. The purpose of this is to improve horsemanship and to allow the judge to provide a more accurate score for each obstacle, as well as pinpoint areas for improvement.

11.3 Time score: The score for total time shall be based on the following format:

- 5 points awarded to contestant with the fastest time
- 4 points awarded to contestant with the 2nd fastest time
- 3 points awarded to contestant with the 3rd fastest time
- 2 points awarded to contestant with the 4th fastest time
- 1 point awarded to contestant with the 5th fastest time
- 0 points awarded to any other contestants.

A course time shall be set (see 7.8) and any riders going over the course time shall incur a 5 point penalty.

11.4 Missed Obstacle: If a rider forgets or misses an obstacle, he/she may go back and complete the obstacle unless they have already started the following obstacle in which case they may not complete the obstacle they missed.

If an obstacle is missed the rider will receive 0 points and a 5 minute time penalty on the missed obstacle.

If a rider attempts to get their horse to approach an obstacle but does not come inside the approach zone (number/marker), they shall not receive the time penalty (score shall be 0).

11.5 Number on right: 1 point shall be deducted if a competitor does not keep the obstacle number/marker on their right (or other designated position as advised on the course walk).

11.6 Designated path: A 3 minute time penalty shall be applied if the course designer states on the course walk that a specific path between obstacles is to be followed, eg going around a designated cone/log/tree, and this is not done so by a competitor. The designated marker must be clear to riders.

11.7 Missing the start/finish line: If a competitor fails to go through the start line and does not do so before starting the first obstacle, they shall be eliminated. If a competitor fails to go through the finish line and does not do so before leaving the course, they shall be eliminated.

11.8 Rider fall off / horse departs: Should a rider fall off or the horse departs from an obstacle (such as ground tie), the rider may continue to compete provided s/he can catch their horse unassisted and remount within one minute. Should the horse leave the parameter of the course, the combination is disqualified from that round of competition.

11.9 Cannot complete and no forward movement: If a contestant cannot complete the course, the judges will disqualify the contestant. Should the contestant remain on the course without sufficient forward movement toward completing the course, the contestant will be disqualified. Example: the rider takes over 2 minutes with no forward movement toward the next obstacle.

11.10 Unfair outside assistance: Spectators and other competitors are permitted to cheer on and encourage competitors while they are on the course. However, if the judge considers the communication to be significant so that it advantages the competitor, the judge will use their discretion, score accordingly and communicate with any spectators and competitors involved. Any competitor concerned may lodge a protest (refer 16).

11.11 Re-ride: At the judge's discretion, a contestant may be issued a re-ride should an outside distraction from beyond the course be so great as to inhibit the contestant from competing. Should such a distraction occur, the contestant must complete the course; receive an official time and seek a re-ride from the judges within one minute of completing the course. If a re-ride is granted, the contestant will have the re-ride at the end of the competition that day. The judge's decision regarding a re-ride may not be challenged in any way for any reason.

11.12 Scores and individual score sheets: First round scores shall be available to everyone at the end of all first rounds on the day of competition and individual score sheets given to competitors. Individual score sheets for the second rounds shall be given out at or prior to the prize giving.

11.13 Master score sheets: Master score sheets must be displayed for all riders to view after the 1st and 2nd go-rounds.

11.14 Comments: Judges shall provide comments on individual score sheets as much as possible.

11.15 Two judges/all obstacles: When there are two judges who are judging **all of the obstacles**, the two total scores should be added and then divided by two to arrive at the total point score. Example: Judge A gives a total score of 72 and Judge B gives a total score of 76 ½. The combined score is 148 ½; divided by two is a point score of 74 ¼. In this scenario the contestants score is 74 ¼.

11.16 Multiple Go-round Events: Some events may have two or more go-rounds. Example: The first round has 30 riders; the second round cuts down from 30 to 15; the third round cuts from 15 down to 8. Rider A scores a 75 during the first round and Rider B scores a 60. Rider A qualifies to go the second round with the score of 75 but rider B does not qualify for the second round with a score of 60. During the second round, Rider A scores a 77. Rider A now has 152 points and Rider B has 60. Rider A qualifies for the third round with 152 points and scores a 74 in the third and final round. Rider A now has 226 points and Rider B has 60 points.

11.17 Second go-round with less than 12 riders: If less than 12 riders the first six places in the first go round go forward to the second go round.

11.18 Scoring system: The following is an explanation of the NZCCA scoring system. This is how judges will be looking at each obstacle. It is included to help riders learn how the judges are scoring.

There are three basic components to each obstacle: the Approach, the Obstacle itself, and the Departure. Although there are three components to consider, the judge records a number out of 10 for each obstacle using the following recommendations as a guide.

The Approach

The approach to any obstacle might involve a downward transition to a trot or walk from a lope or even a gallop. NZCCA places an emphasis on riding with **soft feel**. The judge will be scoring on what happens when the soft feel is picked up to make a transition or start the manoeuvre. The downward transition should be **smooth, soft and balanced**. The horse should be in a **natural frame and willingly respond** to cues from the rider. The horse should act as if it **knows how to do** the transitions, and that they are **following the cues** they were taught. The horse should not act as if being pulled down by strength, gaping its mouth, or throwing its head up in the air to resist to the point of notice. The horse should not be swapping leads on the way in. The approach should be as straight as possible.

The Obstacle

The rider shall start the obstacle portion with an average score of 5. After transitioning down to the **appropriate safe speed** the horse should act as if it has seen and done the obstacle before and is **looking to find their way** through the challenge. On the obstacle, the NZCCA is looking for a horse working on a **loose or soft rein**. Ideally, the horse and rider should look **confident** and even a little **relaxed**. Again, **horsemanship is always stressed as well as speed with control**.

The Departure

Leaving an obstacle is probably a little easier to do and judge. How the actual obstacle is accomplished will have a lot to do with how the horse and rider leave. If an obstacle went well, the NZCCA would expect to see a **smooth exit** and an **efficient line** being established to the next obstacle. Like jumpers coming down from one jump while looking and lining their horse up for the next jump. The upward transition should be **smooth and on the correct lead** for the line of travel. Leads are really important here but may not always happen within the parameters of the obstacle. A lot of riders trot out and acquire the new lead on the way to the next obstacle. That correct or incorrect lead will be judged in the overall horsemanship category. **Balance, cadence and confidence** are what the NZCCA wants to see coming into and out of obstacles. **Smoothness** up and down through the gait transitions, similar to automatic transmissions, rather than four speeds with popping clutches.

Awards:

- Starting on and maintaining the correct lead
- Riding with soft feel
- Good speed control with lots of rate
- Keeping the horse collected and correct throughout the obstacle maintaining the proper framed body
- **Backing:** through an obstacle with straightness, cadence and speed while having the horse bridled up and broken at the poll
- **On a turn around:** showing correctness, speed and crossing over in the front without hopping
- **Big sliding stop:** without pulling on the horses' face, causing a gaping mouth and head elevation

Penalties:

- Incorrect lead
- Gaping mouth
- Not changing in the back during a lead change (cross firing)
- Excessive spurring
- Hanging or balancing on your reins to maintain balance
- Going too fast when conditions make footing unstable
- Being heavy handed
- Having excessive speed going into/out off an obstacle creating an unnecessary risk for the horse and rider
- **On a turn around:** hopping and not crossing over correctly on the front end
- **Big sliding stop:** pulling on the horse's face, causing gaping mouth and high head

12. Tie Breaker

12.1 Fastest overall time: If there is a tie at the conclusion of the Cowboy Challenge that involves the top places that are to receive cash or prizes, it will be resolved by the rider with the fastest overall time.

13. Fraternization

13.1 **With officials:** Riders may not fraternize with Cowboy Challenge officials before or during the Challenge until the entire event is completed.

13.2 **With scorers:** The only people to be in the office while scoring is being undertaken shall be the Secretary and their helper unless called upon. This includes all officials.

14. Horses

14.1 **Breed:** Horses that are competing may be of any breed.

14.2 **Maturity and condition:** The horse must be of suitable maturity and physical condition to comfortably complete the course.

14.3 **Abuse:** Every horse shall be treated with dignity and respect. Any action or treatment that is deemed to be cruel, abusive or inhumane will result in immediate disqualification from the Cowboy Challenge. A judge may ask any rider to drop the bridle after the rider completes the course. A judge may disqualify any horse/rider team if the horse has a bloody mouth that is determined to be caused by rough handling.

14.4 **Lameness:** The judges have the responsibility and authority to disqualify any horse that is obviously lame. Lameness is determined if:

- The horse is showing consistent lameness at a trot.
- Obvious nodding, hitching and shortened stride.
- Minimal weight bearing while moving or standing still.

15. Training Days Before Points Approved CC

15.1 Training Days can be held the day before an official event as long as half of the course and obstacles are off limits and unriden by riders until the challenge day.

16. Protests

16.1 **Judge's decision:** The Judge's decision will be considered final. A Judge's decision, presenting his or her individual preference, is not protestable unless it is alleged to be in violation of the rules.

16.2 **Written protest:** Any competitor or official may lodge a written protest, which must be lodged within 30 minutes of the completion of the event. The completion of the event is at the end of prize giving. Protests must be accompanied by \$50.00 cash refundable if the protest is upheld.

16.3 **Protest committee:** When a protest is received, a protest committee will meet as soon as possible to investigate the protest. The committee will consist of 3 members of the NZCCA council not involved in the protest. If 3 council members are not available then members of the organising group will make up numbers.

16.4 **Protest upheld:** When a protest is upheld, where possible, placings are to be corrected accordingly. If this is not possible, the entry fee is to be refunded.

16.5 **Videos:** The use of videos to resolve protests is not allowed.

17. End of Season Hi Points and Division Points

17.1 All points are only collected at Points Approved Challenges.

17.2 **Official NZCCA paperwork:** All points approved Challenges shall use the official Judge's score sheets and master score sheet and return a copy of the master score sheet to the secretary within 7 days of the event. Failure to do so will result in the points being disallowed for that event.

17.3 **Registration for Hi points:** To be eligible for end of season Hi Points awards a horse and rider combination shall be registered using the official Hi Points registration form. Hi Points shall only be recorded from the time the complete registration is received by the NZCCA Secretary and shall not be backdated. Registration of a combination is only required once in a lifetime, but Hi Points shall only be recorded in years when the rider is an NZCCA member, ie paid a membership subscription.

17.4 **Registered Names:** A horse shall be entered in a Challenge with the same name they are registered for Hi Points in order for Hi Points to be allocated. This name shall also be entered on the Master score sheet. If a rider changes their name during the season (eg from marriage), they shall advise the NZCCA Secretary.

17.5 **One division:** Each horse and rider combination shall only collect end of season hi points in one division each season.

17.6 **Calculating Hi Points:** End of season Hi Points are calculated by adding the total scores achieved at each of five Challenges. If a combination competes in more than five Challenges, the five highest scores will be used, eg Jill riding Blaze scores 189, 230, 222, 210, 245, 199, 204, 232 over 8 competitions in one season; 245, 232, 230, 222 and 210 are added to 1139 to be Hi Points for that season.

If a combination competes in less than five Challenges, the total scores will be added for that number of Challenges. If a combination does not qualify for the second round, their first round score will be recorded for that Challenge, eg Round 1 score of 89 is the Hi Points score for that Challenge.

17.6.1 **If there are not two rounds in a Challenge** Hi Points will be calculated for that Challenge by:

Only one round: the combination's score will be doubled for that Challenge, ie score of 102 is 204 for Hi Points.

Three rounds: the combination's total score will be divided by three, then multiplied by two, ie score of 355 is divided by 3 to 118.3, and multiplied by 2 to be 236.7 for Hi Points.

17.6.2 Tie breaker: The first tie breaker for end of season Hi Points shall be the horse and rider combination with the [one] highest horsemanship score from the five (or less) Challenges counted for Hi Points. The second tie breaker shall be the horse and rider combination with the two highest horsemanship scores, added together, from the five (or less) Challenges counted for Hi Points, and so on until the tie is broken.

17.7 Division points are collected at all points approved Cowboy Challenges for Rookie and Intermediate Divisions. When you reach the allotted points you will be notified by the NZCCA Secretary of your graduation from the Division.

17.8 Division points are awarded as follows:

No. of competitors	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
1 or 2	1					
3 or 4	2	1				
5 or 6	3	2	1			
7 or 8	4	3	2	1		
9 or 10	5	4	3	2	1	
11 to 15	6	5	4	3	2	1
16 to 20	7	6	5	4	3	2
21+	8	7	6	5	4	3

18. Approval and Cancellation of a Points Approved Cowboy Challenge

18.1 Application: All points approved Cowboy Challenges must be applied for in writing on the official form no less than 30 days before the challenge.

18.2 Confirmation: The organiser of any points approved challenge must receive notice in writing from the NZCCA secretary confirming the date approved.

18.3 Advertising: Approval must be received from the NZCCA before advertising the Cowboy challenge anywhere.

18.4 Official forms: Once a challenge is approved, the secretary (or other delegated person) is to email, guidelines, score sheets and other templates provided by the NZCCA to the organiser.

18.5 Change after approval: Any changes to a points approved Challenge must be given to the NZCCA Secretary in writing before being advertised anywhere.

18.6 Cancellation: The cancellation of a points approved Challenge must be given to the NZCCA Secretary in writing as soon as possible after cancellation.

19. Prizegiving

19.1 Ribbons shall be provided for 1st to 6th placings.

19.2 Any ribbon used must display the NZCCA logo.

Cowboy Challenge Obstacles

Refer to Judging and Scoring Section for Judges' expectations in regards to scoring of these obstacles.

<i>Group</i>	<i>Obstacle</i>	<i>Rating</i>	<i>Page number</i>
Performance Moves	Pattern		10
	Backing - Back straight or on a designated path 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R		10
	Back down a hill or a grade 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R		10
	Back up a hill or grade 4R, 5R, 6R		10
	Circles - Slow and Fast 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R		11
	Ride a Straight Line 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R		11
	Roll backs 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R		11
	Serpentine / Zig Zag Through a Pattern 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R		11
	Side Pass 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R		11
	Spin 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R		11
	Stops 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R		11
	Turning into a Fence 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R		12

<i>Group</i>	<i>Obstacle</i>	<i>Rating</i>	<i>Page number</i>
Bridges			
	Bridge: 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R		12
	Narrow Bridge: 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R		12
	Roller Bridge: 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R		12
	See Saw Bridge: 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R.		12
	Suspension Swing Bridge:		12
Carrying			
	Ball carry 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R		12
	Mock Sheep Carry 4R, 5R		12
	Rain Coat or Tarp Carry 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R		12
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Obstacle Descriptions:

Pattern

A pattern is included in the first round of every Points Approved Challenge.

Pattern 1 (Time allowed 75 sec)

Markers may be used for point of centre for each circle in the figure 8. The course designer will select the size of the circle, how long the straight line is and how many steps in the backing.

- Ride a figure of eight, with circles of between 15 and 20 metres diameter. Start and finish in the middle point of the figure.
- At the finish, complete a stop on the hindquarters.
- Drop the contact and stand for four seconds.
- Ride a straight line from the halt.
- Stop again, then back up.

Pattern 2 (Time allowed 90 sec)

The course designer will select how many steps in the backing.

- Complete a large full circle on the left rein.
- Complete a stop on the hindquarters.
- Side pass to the left for 4 steps, then to the right for 4 steps.
- Turn 180 degrees to the left.
- Complete a large circle on the right rein.
- Complete a stop on the hindquarters
- Turn 180 degrees to the right.
- Then back up six steps.

- **Highest scores** are given for soft feel and speed with control.
- **Point deductions** given for lack of speed, poor control, tight reins, lack of straightness, incorrect bend, incorrect leads, uneven circles.

Performance Moves

Backing - Back straight or on a designated path from one point to another, 3 to 18m **2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R**

Back down a hill or a grade 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

Back up a hill or grade 4R, 5R, 6R

- Construction: may have cones, drums, poles or other objects to mark designated path.
- **Highest scores** are given for a fluid back up; soft feel; straightness and following the designated path; horse willing; good collection of the horse.
- **Point deductions** given for heavy hands; unwilling horse; high headedness of the horse; loss of straightness or not following the designated path.

Circles - Slow and Fast 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- Construction: Cones or similar could be used for start/finish point and size of small circle. The course designer may require different sized small circles for different divisions.
- Ride smooth round circles, on both reins, first a small circle at a slow speed followed by a large circle at a faster speed. Include a turn across the middle of the circle to reverse direction with a flying change, simple lead change (when a horse drops to a walk to change leads) or change through the trot.
- **Highest scores** are given for correct shaped circles; significant change in speed; remaining on the correct lead, flying changes; departing on the correct lead.
- **Point deductions** given for no speed changes, simple lead change, dropping gait, cross-firing; high headedness; tight reins and the rider leaning in.

Ride a Straight Line 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- Construction: The straight line can be marked (eg cones or barrels) or unmarked.
- Ride a straight line at the trot or lope; the longer the distance the better. Can include a turn.
- **Highest scores** are given for riding without breaking gait in a perfectly straight line; the horse being straight from poll to tail; soft feel; smooth turn and unity between horse and rider.
- **Point deductions** given for breaking gait; not riding in a straight line; tight reins and lack of unity between horse and rider.

Roll backs 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- Construction: may use markers on the ground or fence to show where to do the rollbacks. Minimum distance 15 metres between cones.
- A roll back should be performed at a lope and is a stop, 180 degree turn on the hindquarters and lope back the opposite direction. 3 to 5 roll backs are performed together. The first step of the lope should be on the correct lead.
- **Highest scores** are given for a smooth sliding stop on the hindquarters with a pivot on the hindquarters going back the opposite direction and on the correct lead.
- **Point deductions** given for stopping on the front end; jerking the horse to a stop; horses head high in the air; turning on the front end; trotting off or no lead change.

Serpentine / Zig Zag Through a Pattern 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- Construction: Pattern can be built with panels, cones, ground poles or any object to create 3 to 6 changes of direction.
- The serpentine is an S shaped or snake-like pattern of loops that requires the horse/rider team to continually change direction and make lead changes when at a lope.
- **Highest scores** are given for good balance; good control; proper lead changes; even loops and a soft feel.
- **Point deductions** given for breaking gait; poor lead changes, or lack of lead changes; uneven loops; lack of balance and control and tight reins.

Side Pass 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- Construction: poles or panels at horse length apart; or over logs, drums or other designated obstacles; in a straight or angled pattern.
- Side pass can be done between or over objects. When done 'over' an object the horses' feet front feet are on one side of the object and the hind feet on the other side.
- **Highest scores** are given to the rider that keeps horse parallel with direction of travel and bent in direction of travel; maintains rhythm; and correctness (outside leg crossing in front, inside leg stepping from behind).
- **Point deductions** given for stepping forward or back and over or on the object; lack of straightness; incorrect bend by bending in opposite direction to travel; lack of rhythm and poor side pass.

Spin 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- Construction: a designated area or spin box, approximately 3.5 x 3.5m square, which can be made from poles or logs.
- Reining horse spins. The spin should start and end with the rider facing the same direction.
- **Highest scores** are given to combinations that exhibits flat and fast spins in each direction with the front end of the horse moving around a stationary hind leg. Slow and correct spins are scored higher than fast, incorrect spins.
- **Point deductions** given for horses that are hopping; unable to maintain a stationary hind quarter; or perform a poor, sloppy spin.

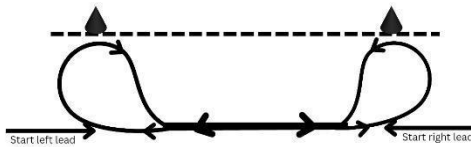
Stops 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- Reining or sliding stop performed at a designated area on the course. These stops can be in natural ground or a groomed area for better stops.
- **Highest scores** are given to riders that stop from a lope, exhibiting a straight sliding stop on the hind quarters; controlled stop with a soft feel.

- **Point deductions** given for yanking or ripping the horse in the ground; high headedness by the horse; a gaping mouth; loss of straightness; stopping on the front end.

Turning into a Fence 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- Construction: 2 markers on a fence line.
- Completing between 2 and 5 turns into the fence between 2 marks on the fence approximately 15 to 25m apart. Unlike the roll back, this is a moving turn similar to turning a cow into the fence in a working cow horse event.
- **Highest scores** are given to the horse/rider completing smooth turns into the fence at a lope with a soft feel; changing lead with each turn; an athletic pivot and driving the horse off the hindquarters.
- **Point deductions** given for awkward, rough turns into the fence; sloppy or uncoordinated pivot; not driving the horse forward off the hindquarters and tight reins.



Bridges

Bridge: 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R. Not more than 60cm in height. If over 2.2m in width then there is no height restriction.

Narrow Bridge: 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R. Not more than 60cm wide and 4.5 – 6m long, not more than 60cm in height.

Roller Bridge: 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R. 2.5-3m wooden bridge laid on top of multiple round poles causing the bridge to roll at some point during the crossing. Poles/logs should have a set distance they can roll before bridge stops moving.

See Saw Bridge: 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R. 2.5-3m wooden bridge laid on top of a small pole causing the bridge to tip at some point during the crossing.

Suspension Swing Bridge: 4R, 5R, 6R. Bridge crossing where the bridge is suspended no more than 30cm above the ground, 5-8m long and 1.2m wide. The suspension cable should be wire rope or chains that can hold at least 1000kg.

- Construction: All bridges made from 50mm timber, 21mm plywood or a material that can hold at least 1000kg.
- **Highest scores** are given to the horse and rider that crosses at a safe speed; without hesitation; the horse working with a low head and a soft feel; and travels the complete length of the bridge.
- **Point deductions** given for balking, spooking, or refusing to go on the bridge; not crossing the full length of the bridge; crossing at an unsafe speed; horses head being too high and heavy hands

Carrying

Ball carry 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R Construction: A large ball at least 45cm in diameter.

Mock Sheep Carry 4R, 5R Construction: Mock sheep to be no more than 10kg in weight.

Rain Coat or Tarp Carry 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R Construction: Tarp may have a rope attached. Rain coat may be worn.

Saddlebag Carry 3R, 4R, 5R Construction: The saddle bags should contain loose items that creates noise.

Water Carry 4R, 5R, 6R Construction: 10 litre bucket or other object to carry water, water container on a drum or other object, container to receive water.

- **Ball, rain coat, tarp, saddlebags:** The rider will pick up the object from the ground, a handler or stationary location (eg railing or drum), ride a predetermined course and replace the item as instructed.
- **Mock Sheep:** The rider must **dismount** to pick up the sheep, place on the horse, and remount before riding a predetermined course and replacing the sheep as instructed.
- **Water Carry:** The rider is to pick up or fill a container with water, carry the container up to 10m and pour the water into a container.
- **Highest scores** given for a smooth, willing approach; athletic dismount and mount (if appropriate); horse that stands quietly for the object to be picked up; no spook or fear from the horse during carry; a smooth, balanced ride to the drop off point with speed and control on a soft feel; a good stop at the drop off point and placing the object in the designated spot.
- **Point deductions** given for a sloppy dismount or mount; rider dropping the object; the horse baulking, spooking or hesitating when approaching or carrying the object; travelling crooked when carrying; rough stops on the front end; an unbalanced ride and tight reins.

Flag Race 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- Construction: a hand held flag, 1 or 2 holders eg cone, pipe on a fence
- Rider picks up a hand held flag and carries it on a designated course, returning the flag to a holder.
- **Highest scores** given for a smooth approach to the flag; flag picked up without stopping the horse; carry the flag with speed, balance and control on a soft feel and successfully deposit the flag into the holder.
- **Point deductions** given for the horse/rider team that has difficulty approaching the flag due to lack of control, balking or spooking; the inability to pick up or deposit the flag in a smooth, athletic manner; lack of balance; inability to travel in a straight line, lack of speed and tight reins.

Mail Box 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- Construction: Mail box mounted on a pole, drum or railing; mail such as a rolled up newspaper or letter; designated path and drop off point eg a bucket, circle, cone or tarp.
- Rider to halt; open the mailbox, remove the "mail", close the mailbox, and carry the "mail" to a designated drop off point.
- **Highest scores** are given for a smooth halt at the mailbox; the horse stands quietly in a perfect position for the rider to access the mailbox; balanced controlled ride; accurately depositing the mail in the drop off point.
- **Point deductions** for the horse not standing quietly for the rider to access the mailbox, failure to open or close the mailbox, a sloppy departure; lack of control and failure to deposit mail.

Spearing Stationary Rings 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- Construction: A minimum of 3 stationary rings in ring holders set in a row 6 - 15m apart, spear eg broom stick handle, container at pick up and drop off point(s) eg barrel or cone
- Rider picks up a spear out of a container, spears the 3 rings from a moving horse, places the spear and 3 rings in the drop off point container.
- **Highest scores** are given to the rider that picks up the spear, travels with control at a good pace and collects and deposits all 3 rings and spear in the drop off point container.
- **Point deductions** for the rider that misses or drops the rings or spear and lacks smoothness and control.

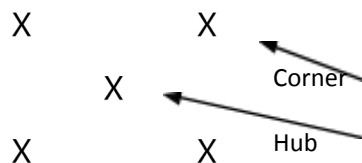
Circles and Turns

Barrel Turns 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- Construction; 2, 3 or 4 barrels
- Turns around barrels in a traditional 3 leaf clover pattern, 4 leaf clover pattern or a simple figure 8.
- **Highest scores** are given for tight, fluid turns; correct leads; lead changes; straightness; speed and control.
- **Point deductions** given for wide, sloppy turns; incorrect leads; failure to change leads; lack of straightness; lack of speed; poor control and incorrect use of the reins.

Daisy Chain 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- Construction: 4 pole bending poles or cones in a square with a 5th cone in the middle as shown. All cones are 6 to 9m apart.



- Start the obstacle by going **around the hub on a left lead**, then approach a corner to ride in a figure 8 pattern which requires a **change to the right lead**, returning to the hub changing to a left lead and so on until each corner is completed. All turns around the hub are on a left lead and all turns around the corners are on a right lead. The exit point from the obstacle is to be the same as the entry point, ie inbetween the same two corner markers.
- **Highest scores** given for tight, fluid turns; being on the correct lead; flying lead changes and soft feel.
- **Point deductions** given for wide, sloppy or uneven turns; dropping out of a lope; incorrect leads; simple lead changes and tight reins.

Key Hole 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- Construction: four cones to form a square or use chalk or poles to form a keyhole configuration flat on the ground. Must be large enough for the horse to enter the keyhole at speed, stop and do a nice turn or rollback to exit to the next obstacle.
- Highest scores given for a smooth entry; smooth stop with soft feel; smooth turn or rollback on the hindquarters. Entry and exit at a lope/canter.
- Point deductions given for stepping out of the keyhole; entering and exiting too slow; tight reins; rough stop and a sloppy or poor turn or rollback.

Merry go round 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- Constructed using 2 to 4 poles, 2.5-3ms long, that rotate around a fixed point. Poles must be of a height not to go under the belly of horses. Natural or non-harmful material objects can be attached to poles for added effect.
- The rider must hold one end of a pole and walk, jog or lope a circle/circles, in one or two directions.
- **Highest scores** given for a smooth even circles at lope on a soft feel.
- **Point deductions** given for letting go of the pole; uneven circles; horse hesitating on approach; shying or spooking; hard handedness.

Pin Wheel 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- Constructed using a cone and 4 poles that are at least 3.6m in length. The cone is used as the hub of the obstacle with each pole extending from the cone to form a circle with 4 equal quarters.
- The rider must ride in a circle around the cone and over each pole; to complete a full circle the first pole ridden over must be ridden over again to finish. If a change of direction is required, the turn is performed within the circle quadrant (not outside the poles).
- **Highest scores** will be awarded for riding the obstacle at a lope; being on the correct lead; cleanly riding over the poles in an even circle with a soft feel, smooth turn.
- **Point deductions** given for walking or trotting; being on the incorrect lead; not riding over the poles cleanly; uneven circles; having tight reins.

Protractor Pole 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- Construction: 3 to 3.5m pole (eg PVC) and 2 or 3 barrels. The pole is lying across two barrels that are approximately 2.5 to 3m apart.
- The rider must pick up one end of the pole and walk, jog, lope or side pass around the other barrel, leaving the other end of the pole in contact with the pivot barrel. Riders may be asked to ride 1 or 2 circles and/or ride in both directions
- **Highest scores** will be awarded for riding the obstacle at a lope or side pass; being on the correct lead; in an even circle with a soft feel.
- **Point deductions** given for walking or trotting; being on the incorrect lead; not riding an even circle; poor side passing; dropping the pole and having tight reins.

Cowboy Skills

Archery Shoot: 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- The rider must pick up a bow and blunted arrow and shoot a fixed target attached to a bale of hay, straw or another form of safety barrier. Maximum of two arrows can be used. The rider will have the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the bow during the course walk. Note: The shooting will always away from any observer, judge, spectator or helper.
- **Highest scores** are given for riders showing a smooth stop; smoothness and control with the bow; good marksmanship; horse that stands quietly throughout.
- **Point deductions** given for abrupt or hard handed stop, poor marksmanship; uncoordinated effort; horse flinches or moves; loss of control of the horse.

Cow Sort 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- Construction: Small herd of cattle numbered or with coloured marks. The pen may be a single pen or a double pen with a second interior gate.
- Horse and rider combination must sort a numbered cow(s) or cow(s) of a certain colour from the herd. Depending on the construction of the pen, the rider may be required to open and close the gate when entering and exiting the pen.
- **Highest scores** are given to the rider that opens and closes the entry gate in a smooth manner (if required); enters the herd in a quiet, controlled manner; sorts the designated cow(s) within the time allowed; opens and closes the exit gate in a smooth manner.
- **Point deductions** given for the inability or awkward opening and closing the entry gate (if required); entering the herd in a fast, rough manner; disturbing the herd; not sorting the designated cow(s) within the time allowed and inability to open and close the exit gate in a smooth manner.

Pistol-Shoot 5R, 6R

- Pistol may be a sports starter gun or air pistol.
- A ground handler will hand the pistol to the rider or the rider will pick up the pistol from a safe, stationary location. Riders will discharge the pistol OR shoot at a designated target. The rider will return the pistol to the handler or to the stationary location upon completion of the obstacle. The shooting shall always be toward the centre of the course away from any observer, judge, spectators or helpers. The riders will have the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the pistol during course walk.
- **Highest scores** are given to the horse and rider team that works smoothly, without the horse spooking and discharges the pistol/hits the targets.
- **Point deductions** given for horses spooking at the gun fire; and failure to discharge pistol/hit the target.
- If the pistol misfires, the rider will not receive a point deduction.

Rope a Dummy Calf 4R, 5R, 6R Construction: Dummy calf can be stationary or move by being pulled along.

- The contestant will be allowed to throw two (2) loops. If they miss the second loop they must move to the next obstacle.
- **Highest scores** are given for a horse willingly approaching and/or following the dummy calf; horse accepting swinging loop; rider showing quiet handling of horse; expert rope handling and throwing including catching with first loop.
- **Point deductions** given for rough handling of the horse, or livestock; horse unsettled, spooking or shying due to livestock or rope; rider missing with the rope.

Rope Livestock (cattle or horses) 4R, 5R, 6R Construction: The livestock should be kept, handled and worked in a safe corral with water and feed.

- The contestant will be judged on entering the corral or a designated helper can let the participant into the corral. At the point of entry the contestant will be told which livestock he/she is to rope.
- The rope shall have a breakaway Honda, unless otherwise determined. The course will provide a rope or the contestant may use their own provided the rope has a break away Honda, unless otherwise determined.
- The contestant will be allowed to throw two (2) loops. If they miss the second loop they must move to the next obstacle.
- **Highest scores** are given for a horse willingly working the livestock; horse accepting swinging loop; rider showing quiet handling of horse and livestock; expert rope handling and throwing including catching with first loop.
- **Point deductions** given for rough handling of the horse; horse unsettled, spooking or shying due to livestock or rope; rider missing with the rope.

Swing Stock Whip 3R, 4R

- Rider to pick up stock whip from a designated point and swing while mounted.
- **Highest scores** are given to the rider that can stop smoothly; pick up the stock up and swing it; horse stands without moving or flinching.
- **Point deductions** given for hard handed stop; inability to pick up and swing the stock whip; horse moving or flinching.

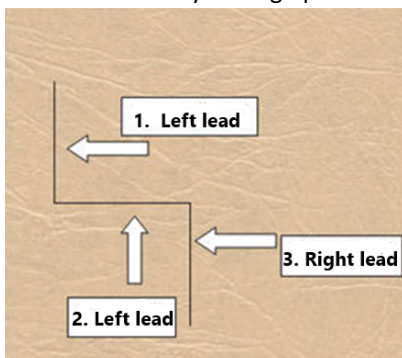
Float Load 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- The float shall be attached to a suitable vehicle and shall be of sufficient width, length and height for a large horse to enter and stand safely. It is preferable to remove internal partitioning. The door shall be open on approach and the rider is to dismount and load their horse into the float. The horse can be sent or led in. The horse is to load in a straight line and the rider may be asked to back the horse straight back or turn them around to come out if the float is suitable. The rear bar/chain and float door shall be left undone. Or the rider may be able to ride the horse into the float and may grasp the top of the float and swing off as the horse enters, if the type of float allows this. Safety to horse and rider is paramount.
- **Highest scores:** Smooth stop and dismount. Horse loads willingly, smoothly, without hesitation, in a straight line; stands still and quietly in the trailer; comes out smoothly and calmly, without hesitation. Sending horse into the float when dismounted. Swing off in an athletic, smooth and safe manner.
- **Point deductions:** Horse resisting, hesitating, backing away or going to the side; turning around in the float (when not asked to), not standing inside float; rushing out. Unsafe or sloppy attempts by the rider to ride in or swing off.

Jumps and Crossings

Broken Jump 4R, 5R, 6R

- Constructed by setting up a series of 3 jumps, maximum 60cm each, that are connected. See diagram:



- This obstacle can be approached on either a left or right lead and should be manoeuvred making certain there is at least one lead change as the horse/rider team jumps each of the 3 jumps.
- **Highest scores** are given for approaching and departing the obstacle on the correct lead at a lope on a soft feel; going over each jump cleanly; changing leads when required.

- **Point deductions** given for approaching and departing from the obstacle on the incorrect lead; not showing leads (only trotting between jumps) or lead change; failure to go over the jumps cleanly; not in the centre of the jump; tight reins over the jump; being off pattern.

Dead Fall 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- Constructed to represent rough country found in a forest or on a ranch, made up of limbs, branches, logs or natural debris. The dead fall crossing shall be at least 4.5m and no further than 36.5m in length.
- **Highest scores** will be given for the horse being sure footed; low head and crossing the dead fall in a safe manner at a walk or trot (depending on density of the dead fall).
- **Point deductions** given for reckless speed; horse tripping; high headedness and poor control.

River Bed Crossing 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- Constructed to represent river bed crossing using rocks boulders from river bed or in an actual riverbed. Minimum approximately 2 meters wide and no further than 15 meters approximately in length.
- **Highest scores** will be given for the horse being sure footed; low head and crossing the River bed in a safe manner at a walk
- **Point deductions** given for reckless speed; horse tripping; high headedness and poor control.

Jumps 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- Construction: jumps can be rails, logs, or up to 4 drums laid end to end, maximum 60cm each. This obstacle may involve 3 to 4 jumps in succession with 7 to 9m between jumps.
- **Highest scores** are given for a straight, willing, non-hesitant approach; the rider maintaining good balance, and position; the horse taking the jump in the centre of the obstacle with a good crest release (hands forward) on the takeoff and landing to produce an eye appealing, athletic jump. Higher scores will be given for a controlled lope/canter, the rider maintaining the correct stride between multiple jumps, meaning he/she does not approach the jumps on a stride that is too short or too long.
- **Point deductions** given for hesitation, shying or refusal to take the jump(s); high headed; rushing; not staying in the centre of the jump(s); poor crest release on take-off or landing; failure to maintain good balance and position; not maintaining the correct strides between jumps.

Moguls 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- Construction: Moguls may be constructed of dirt or sand, tyres filled with soil/gravel, timber and may be of varying degrees of difficulty such as different widths and heights.
- The rider must ride his/her horse over each mogul.
- **Highest scores** are given to the rider that keeps the horse moving forward at an even pace; centred on the moguls with soft feel and perfect control.
- **Point deductions** given for lack of forward movement; moving to the side or off the mogul; lack of control; lack of balance and /or tight reins.

Pedestal Stand 4R, 5R, 6R

- Construction: Height 20cm - 50cm, width I/O 50cm - 130cm, R/Y 70cm - 130cm. A packed tire or steel or timber construction, either square or round in shape. Must be designed not to tip over, non-slip and to hold up to 1000kg.
- Ride to the pedestal and step all four feet onto the pedestal. Halt on top for four seconds on a loose rein. Ride forward off the pedestal.
- **Highest points** for smooth step up; maintain halt on a loose rein; smooth step down.
- **Point deductions:** for unwilling step up or down; horse stepping off before the four seconds is up.

Ravine Ride (Deep or Shallow) 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- Construction: a natural or manmade ravine or gully that can be deep or shallow, long or short. The ravine may have brush, debris, logs or water. The entry and exit points can be challenging but must be negotiable.
- **Highest scores** will be given for riders' position and soft feel and the horses' willingness, smoothness and awareness of their feet.
- **Point deductions** given for riding with poor position; lack of control; inability to negotiate the entire ravine.

Banks – Down or Up: 2R, 3R, 5R, 6R. Rating depends on height. 30cm - 2R, 60cm - 3R, 90cm or higher - 5R, 6R

- Construction: One, two or three solid banks in a row that the horse negotiates up or a drop that the horse negotiates down. Horse may step or jump up and down the obstacle.
- **Highest scores** are given to the horse/rider team that approaches the obstacle and goes up or down the entire obstacle smoothly, without hesitation, on a soft feel, with good balance and control.
- **Point deductions** given for a balk or refusal; jerking on the horse's mouth; loss of seat, poor balance; tight reins and lack of control.

Tarp Ride-Over 3R, 4R

- Construction: a tarp which is secured to the ground.
- **Highest scores** are given to the horse/rider team that approaches the tarp willingly and goes over the entire obstacle smoothly, on a soft feel, with good balance and control.
- **Point deductions** given for a balk, hesitation or refusal; jerking on the horse's mouth; loss of seat, poor balance; tight reins and lack of control.

Moving and Towing

Ball on a Cone 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- Construction: A ball is placed on the top of a cone. Cones can vary in size and height - the lower the cone the further the rider must lean down, thus a more difficult task.
- While on your horse, lean over and pick the ball off the cone, ride a predetermined course and place the ball on the same or different cone.
- **Highest scores** are given for an athletic lean down by the rider; the horse standing perfectly still while ball being picked up; balanced controlled ride on a soft feel without dropping the ball; placing the ball on the cone.
- **Point deductions** given for an uncoordinated lean down; the horse moving during the lean down; inability to pick up the ball from the cone; inability to place the ball on the cone or dropping the ball; loss of balance or control and tight reins.

Ball push 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R Construction: a large ball at least 45cm in diameter; place where ball is moved from and returned eg container, tyre or circle; may have a pre-determined course the ball is moved around.

Chest push 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R Construction: Push obstacle made of a non-harmful material that the horse can slide, roll or spin using its chest.

- With rider mounted, the horse will push the ball with its nose, chest or legs **OR** push object with its chest over a set distance or pattern (rider must refrain from touching the object).
- **Highest scores** are given for the horse that approaches the object calmly, straight on with no hesitation, and maintains forward motion while smoothly pushing the object.
- **Point deductions** given for a rider touching or pushing the object; horse hesitating, spooking or refusing to approach the object; horse refusing to push the object; losing control of the object while pushing.

Cache Hoist 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- Construction: a lariat tied to an object to lift off the ground eg sack containing a filling. Middle of rope is held high eg by placing it over the branch of a tree and may be placed through a pulley. This simulates hoisting your food or belongings off the ground at a campsite.
- The horse approaches the hoist and the rider reaches and takes the rope and begins to back up or side pass away from the object that is tied to the lariat, lifting the object up from the ground. Unless it is specified to only back up or only side pass away, the rider may choose to do a combination of both. The hoist rope can be tied off, leaving the object suspended in mid air, or can be let back down to the ground.
- **Highest scores** are given for the horse that approaches willingly; stands quietly for the rope to be picked up; backs up/side passes smoothly and straight; and allows the cache to be tied off or lowered smoothly without the horse spooking.
- **Point deductions** for a rider approaching the obstacle in a dangerous manner; rider dropping the lariat; horse that spooks, hesitates or fails to back up or side pass.

Towing an object 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- Construction: Object to be towed must be of a safe construction such as a pallet, tyre, tarp, log. The object shall be able to be towed at any pace without easily tipping over.
- This is a towing challenge designed to show complete control of the horse. The rider must tow the object a set distance or around a predetermined course which may include returning the object to its starting position; level of difficulty is set by course designer depending on weight of object, distance to tow, and if backing up or side passing is required. The tow rope is to be kept on the inside of the horse's body when undertaking a turn. The rope shall be long enough so that the tow object does not touch the horse's legs.
- **Highest scores** are given to the rider that can tow smoothly and easily; horse stays calm and straight during tow; horse exhibits no fear and travels with soft feel at the speed the rider requests; tow object does not touch horse's legs; accurate completion of task; completing at a canter.
- **Point deductions** for poor control while pulling the object; horse spooking, running sideways or showing fear; inaccurate completion of task; knocking over markers on predetermined course; overtight reins and loss of control.

Wheelbarrow Push 1R, 2R, 3R, 4R

- Construction: wheelbarrow, load, cones to mark path or start/finish points.
- Rider must dismount and lead their horse while pushing a wheel barrow to a designated point, pick up a load and continue to the finish point.
- **Highest scores** are given to a horse that stops, starts and leads willingly on a loose lead/rein; athletic dismount and mount; accurately completing the task.
- **Point deductions** given for losing the load or losing balance and/or control of the wheel barrow; sloppy dismount or mount; horse hesitating; pulling horse with tight reins.

Ride Through

Gate - Open and Close 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- Construction: Rope, pole or regular gate.
- The rider is to unlatch, open, go through, close and re-latch the gate while keeping their hand in contact with the gate or latch throughout the process.
- **Highest scores** are given for willing approach; opening, going through and closing the gate in a smooth, controlled manner; showing side pass or backing as required; maintaining contact with the gate or latch.
- **Point deductions** for hesitation on the approach to the gate; the rider's hand losing contact with gate or latch; bumping or hitting the gate or gate post; failure to open or close the gate.

Cowboy Curtain 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R Construction: Rope, cloth or plastic strips and should be 2-3m wide and high enough for a safe entry.

Flares and Smoke 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R Construction: Flares may be on the ground and horse and rider must ride by flare or through the smoke.

Hay Ring 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R Construction: Ring a minimum of 1.8m diameter, dirt path to assure safe footing, secured on each side to prevent ring rolling or moving. 2 or 3 rings used to make a longer tunnel.

Push Through 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R Construction: area of dense brush (e.g. gorse or broom) or any other material that will not harm rider or horse eg noodles. May be a natural area of brush or the material can be held in a frame. Must be thick enough or close enough that the horse must push through the material.

Ride Through Bales / Hay Maze 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R Construction: hay bales set up making a straight or curved narrow path between them.

Road Flashers and/or Road Signs 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R Construction: Lights and signs at ground level or be hung rider height can be set in lanes for the rider to ride past or through.

Rubbish Ride 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R Construction: Alley way, minimum 2m wide and 8-12m long, containing rubbish, such as feed sacks, paper bags, plastic bottles, that are safe for the horse and rider.

Tunnel 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R Construction: Tunnel created items such as tarps, panels or hay bales. Must be safe in construction, height and width. The tunnel should simulate a tight canyon, ravine or concrete road culvert.

- Ride past, through or push through the object.
- **Highest scores** are given for the horse that approaches the object calmly, straight on with no hesitation; looking where they are going; with head down (if appropriate); maintaining forward motion while smoothly loping through the object; rider has good balance, control and soft feel.
- **Point deductions** for horse hesitating, shying, spooking or refusing to approach the obstacle; leading horse or backing through obstacle if horse hesitating; horse jumping or leaping through the obstacle; inconsistent pace or rushing on departure; rider having lack of balance, lack of control or tight reins.

Riding Skills

Dismount/Remount 2R, 3R, 4R

- At a designated point, the rider is to dismount, and either move around to the other side of the horse and remount or remain at point of dismount and horse is to turn around and park up for remount. The dismount can be off the near/left side or off/right side of their horse
- **Highest scores** are given for a smooth stop with soft feel; athletic dismount and remount; smooth turn of horse back into park up position; horse stands for dismount and remount
- **Point deductions** given for hard handed or high headed stop; a sloppy dismount; horse resisting turn around; horse moving while being mounted; sloppy remount.

Bareback 4R, 5R, 6R

- The rider removes the saddle at the designated point on the course, mounts from the ground or use of a safe mounting block, then rides to the designated point (no more than 70m away).
- Time allocated for obstacle is 60secs.
- **Highest scores** are given for standing relaxed while unsaddling, smooth mount from the ground; maintaining good balance and control at speed on a soft feel.

- **Point deductions** given for horse not standing for unsaddling; inability to remount; poor balance; lack of control; tight reins and slower speed.

Blindfold 4R, 5R, 6R

- Construction: The blindfold can be made from a fly mask with a piece of cloth material sewn to the outside, covering the horse's field of vision.
- The rider is to blindfold the horse at a designated point on the course and lead or ride the horse a designated distance over or through an obstacle, then place the blindfold at a designated point.
- **Highest scores** are given to rider that demonstrates an athletic dismount; the horse willingly accepts the blindfold and is willingly led or ridden through the obstacle.
- **Point deductions** given for an awkward, sloppy dismount; the horse being hesitant or unwilling to accept the blindfold and the horse being hesitant or unwilling to be led or ridden through the obstacle.

Bridle Remove 3R, 4R

- Construction: Set 2 barrels, or other objects of suitable height, 6 to 10 meters apart. A rope halter is placed on one barrel.
- Time allowed is 90 secs.
- Timing will start when rider has dismounted at barrel and the time will end when halter is replaced on barrel and/or bridle is fully fastened on horse.
- The rider must dismount at the barrel where the halter is, remove their bridle and hang it on their saddle then halter the horse and lead at a run to the other barrel, where they reverse the procedure and remount **OR** dismount, remove bridle, hold bridle up to judge, put bridle on, remount.
- **Highest points** are given for a smooth dismount and remount; a horse that stands relaxed for the unbridling and re-bridling; and a horse that leads at speed on a loose lead.
- **Point deductions** given for a high-headed, un-relaxed horse; catching the horse's teeth with the bit, sloppy dismount or mount.

Ground Tie 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R (includes Branding-chalk, Climb Ladder- Ring Bell, Hay Carry, Pick Up Horses Feet)

- Ground tie may be done in several ways: Dismount and ground tie horse to complete a task and then remount. Possible tasks include: walk a prescribed distance from the horse; walk around a chalk circle with the horse inside the circle; climb a ladder, ring a bell; move 3 or 4 hay bales 3m neatly restacking them; pick up 1, 2, 3 or all 4 feet; pick up a branding iron, dip in chalk, brand own horse on the designated body part (eg hip, shoulder, gaskin), replace branding iron.
- **Highest scores** are given for a smooth stop; athletic dismount; completing the task accurately and in a quiet manner; horse standing quietly without moving or walking away; re-approaching the horse and remounting in a smooth manner with the horse standing quietly.
- **Point deductions** given for an abrupt or heavy handed stop; sloppy dismount; the horse moving or walking away; turning towards or returning to horse to enforce ground tie; not completing the task; sloppy or inaccurate completion of task; sloppy or awkward re-mount.

Hobble 3R, 4R, 5R

- Timing will start when rider has dismounted where hobbles are placed and time will end when hobbles are replaced.
- One set of hobbles only shall be provided for all competitors. They must be provided fully undone on approach; the rider dismounts, applies the hobbles and completes one of the following:
3R: Dismount and leave your horse at a designated point and walk around the marker which is placed 3 metres away and return to your horse.
4R: Dismount and leave your horse inside the 6 m diameter marked circle, walk around the circle and return to your horse.
5R: Dismount and leave your horse at a designated point, walk 3 m, move three bales of hay from one marked point to another and return to your horse.
- **Highest scores** are given for the horse who willingly accepts the hobbles without struggle and who stands waiting for them to be removed in a quiet manner; quiet manner in applying and removing the hobbles; hobbles fully fastened.
- **Point deductions** given for sloppy dismount or mount; horse struggles; horse moves while hobbled; rider works abruptly; hobbles not fully fastened.

Leading Horse - from Ground 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- Lead your horse at a walk, trot or lope along a designated path eg point A to point B, between two poles on the ground.
- Highest scores are given for the horse who willingly leads on a loose lead; moves at the same rate as the handler is travelling; horses' head at the handlers' shoulder. If leading downhill/uphill horse should be at a distance that is deemed safe depending on the terrain.

- Point deductions given for pulling the horse to follow; horse moving or shying away from handler; horse moving too fast or too slow.

Park-Up Mount 3R, 4R

- Rider must dismount at a designated point and climb up a fence or other safe object. From that position the rider parks up (positions) the horse to enable a balanced and smooth remount from the elevated object.
- **Highest scores** are given for a horse that parks up willingly and straight; stands quietly; and a smooth athletic dismount and remount.
- **Point deductions** given for inability to position the horse; horse not straight; the horse moving while being mounted; sloppy mount or dismount.

Pony or Lead a Second Horse 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- Rider will pick up a second horse from a handler or untie the horse from a stationary object then lead the pony horse over a predetermined distance or course of obstacles eg logs, ravine or water. Horse that is led must be of a suitable height so that it can be controlled safely on the lead rope; its head should be able to be taken near the rider's leg. (Note: If the pony horses must be rested, the replacement horses must be of the same temperament and calibre).
- Highest scores are given to the rider that handles this task in a smooth consistent manner as they handle and lead the pony horse.
- Point deductions given for the pony horse getting loose; the rider's horse kicking at the pony horse; handling the pony horse in a rough manner.

Stand Up in Saddle, Hit Tennis Ball 4R, 5R, 6R

- Rider goes to a designated area and stops their horse, stands up on the saddle and touch a dangling object, such as a tennis ball, which is suspended 3m above the ground by rope or string from an overhead or tree limb. If fall the rider can re-mount within the allotted time limit to try again. Designated area must have a "safe zone" of at least 2m radius.
- **Highest scores** are given to the rider whose horse stands perfectly quiet, never moving; the rider exhibits total control and balance by standing completely up in a confident manner and touches the suspended object; returns gently to saddle.
- **Point deductions** given for the horse moving; loss of balance or if a rider jumps or falls from his horse; doesn't touch the suspended object; returns heavily to saddle.

Water Obstacles

Lead Across a Water Obstacle 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R

- Construction: Water may be belly to mid chest deep on the horse.
- Rider must dismount and lead their horse across the water.
- **Highest scores** are given for the horse that willingly follows the rider into the water and leads across the water on a loose rein or lead rope; rider that maintains their balance and a steady consistent pace; both exit the water smoothly.
- **Point deductions** given if the horse refuses or balks at being led into the water; tight reins or lead rope; the rider losing their balance and/or pulling and tugging on their horse in the water; inconsistent pace and difficulty exiting the water.

Water Box 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R Construction: digging out a low spot, lining it with a plastic tarp (if necessary) and filling it with water. Boundary of the box can be made with posts or railroad ties to hold the plastic tarp in place. Safe sloping bank for entry and exit.

Water Crossing (shallow or deep) 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R Construction: From a shallow 0.1m to 0.9m which requires the horse to swim. Should start shallow and go deep and end shallow to give safe entry and exit points.

Waterfall 4R, 5R, 6R Construction: A volume of water flowing or falling to create a waterfall effect.

Water Sprinkler 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R Construction: Water sprinklers may be positioned where the water goes up, down or sideways.

- Riders must ride through the water box and water crossing and may ride through or near the waterfall and water sprinklers.
- **Highest scores** are given for smooth entry and exit; the rider staying centred with a soft feel; horse travels willingly and straight, looking where they are going; completed with speed but maintaining safety and control.
- **Point deductions** given for the horse hesitating, balking, jumping or leaping; backing into if horse refusing; tight reins and an un-centred or unbalanced rider.

END