

Minutes

2025 Judges Symposium

February 1, 2025, 8-10 am, Doubletree Hotel, Modesto

Sonoma Room

Roll Call: Carri Gunn, Maria Hines, Charlotte Johnson, Cindi James-McElwain, Diane Medlock, **Cindi Paine (zoom attendance)**, Victor Pedroza, Deb Waters, Kelly York

Riders, ride managers and others interested may sit in on the meeting but discussion is limited to the Senior Judges unless time allows.

Rule Changes: Please bring a 2025 copy with you. Available at www.trailtrials.com Calendar of Events or from CSHA website under information.

5.1.2 Added the last sentence:

5.1.2 A halter with lead rope or halter bridle and hoof pick must be carried on the ride. The natural or Spanish hackamore will count as a halter and lead rope

11.0 Points was removed and subsequent sections renumbered.

11.1 Reworded to include sending and moved definition from 12.1.6

11.1 **Leading or Sending: When leading**, horse to follow willingly, not crowding or lagging. Excess rope shall be held in the non-leading hand. The send is defined as: From a designated position, the horse moves as directed ahead of the rider without the rider moving position and with slack in the lead rope. Hand position should never be in front of the horse after the initial send.

Old Section 12.1.5 New Section 11.1.6 When a horse is asked to “send” in an obstacle a halter and lead rope must be used was inadvertently left in, should have been revised “unless exception applies.” Need discussion between Sr Judges and TT Committee how to interpret for 2025.

Agreed the intent is to allow Spanish Hackamore/mecate in Send, will fix rule next year.

12.10 Gate revised and renumbered:

11.10 Gate: Competitors may be required to negotiate a gate either mounted or dismounted. The horse and rider combination will move through the obstacle quietly, deliberately and under the rider's direction.

11.10.1 Direction of opening the gate will be given as follows:

11.10.1.1 Push - the riders initial direction will be to push the gate away from their horse. Horse to side pass through the gate to open the gate.

11.10.1.2 Pull - the riders initial direction will be to pull the gate towards their horse. Horse to side pass away from the gate to open the gate.

11.10.2 Solid Gate- A rider must keep their hand on the gate at all times. Moving or adjusting hand position on the gate while negotiating the gate is allowed.

11.10.3 Rope Gates - when going through a rope gate, the rope should not touch the ground. The rope shouldn't become tangled in the horse's legs nor should the horse hang their head over the rope gate.

12.12 Added the word "See Appendix C & D for specified knots" and renumbered.

11.12 Standing tied: Some obstacles may require riders to tie their horse. Horses will be tied with the halter and lead rope or correctly configured halter-bridle, or other approved means, using a knot that is safe and appropriate for the situation and horse. (**See Appendix C & D for specified knots**) The knot must be secure and the horse must be tied in a location that is safe for the horse, the rider, and any bystanders, other tied horses and their handlers. Horses will stand quietly while tied.

13.2.1 Rider Awareness reiterated and included rule 2.14 to avoid conflict. Reworded and Renumbered.

12.2.1 Rider awareness: Judging only begins once the words "you may proceed" or "you are now being judged" are read.

12.2.2 The rider should evaluate the obstacle for potential cautions before proceeding, and during the obstacle. If the rider is asked to answer a question (i.e., where are we on this map?), perform a specific skill (i.e., tie a specific knot, using only specified knots found in the State Trail Trials Rulebook. Use only specified knots included in Appendix C & D.), or lead their horse, and the rider does not perform the skill correctly, the judge may use this category to assess points.

13.5 Balance removed duplication of wording and renumbered.

12.5 Balance: This applies to both rider and horse. The rider should be well balanced in the saddle. For uphill, the rider should lean slightly forward with legs balanced under rider and not hitting horse's flanks, and deep in the saddle but not hitting the back of

cattle. For downhill, the rider should lean slightly back. The rider is not to lean excessively forward, back or sideways. The horse is to be balanced while negotiating obstacles. For downhill obstacle hindquarters should be under the horse and the horse should not lean on forehand. While negotiating step overs, the horse is to be balanced and pick up feet and avoid clipping and stumbling. A slight brush that does not imbalance the horse or move the obstacle is acceptable.

Submitted Issues for Discussion, Consensus or Resolution Development

1. Crossover of OB challenge Obstacles to Trail Trials, OB Challenge type obstacles in TT...EM obstacle to straddle pole both left on left, both right on right
2. Crossover of judging from OB to TT (hesitation ok in TT, not in OB)

We all agreed to try to stay away from those types of obstacles and leave as natural to the environment as possible. I.E. no straddling poles between front and back legs.

**** Remember that hesitations are ok, stopping to check the correct path, and this is not timed. Remind all obstacle judges that this is ok. Don't judge TT like Western Pleasure or O/C. These are not generally arena horses and shouldn't be judged as such.***

3. Conflicts b/w ride officials and senior judges
4. Does Schooling and Companion need to be defined in rules? Situation where RM allowed Companion to negotiate obstacles.
5. 5 of 8 obstacles in camp should not be allowed in TT? Should we recommend event evaluation by Senior Judge as part of future sanctioning?

Due to past issues between Senior Judges and Ride Managers:

- ***Maria will draft a "contract" form to use stating what is expected of the senior judge and the ride manager, defining responsibilities taken from the Rule Book (7.0) i.e. written directions submitted 2 weeks prior to the event for review.***
- ***Remind managers that the event needs to be on a trail approximately as stated on the submitted Sanction form and flyer. Get the obstacles out on the trail, not majority in camp. One or two at end or beginning ok.***
- ***Update definition in rule book to include Schooling (rides obstacles and gets a score/comments) vs Companion (rides trail, no obstacles/scores/comments)***
- ***Kelly volunteered to write resolution to define Schooling and Companion***

6. Ponying of horses "off the mountain" when rider can't continue. 2.12
Ponying a horse due to an emergency is ok. Hand off horse to another rider to complete an obstacle if continuing to compete and finish the ride.

7. Senior judges instructing OB judges on sidepass not to judge on crossover

Another reminder to not judge as pleasure or O/C. Side passing and shuffling is ok, they do not have to cross their legs over to sidepass. As long as the movement is lateral, that is what we are looking for.

8. Copy of old rules in judges boxes

Reminder your ride managers that the scoresheet boxes should have the most current version of the rules. Maria had rules printed and they are currently in the boxes. Check each clipboard to ensure they are still in there for your ride!

9. How do we address video “evidence” of a score.

We will not review video evidence regarding an obstacle judges scoring.

10. “You may proceed”, “You are now being judged” How and when these are applied

“You are now being judged” is in the rules and allowed to be used in specific situations. This generally happens at the very beginning once asked to come forward from a whoa sign. This is used when you might be stopping on challenging terrain and you need to be sure to “face your danger” or other situations. Once you are told that you should be sure to access the situation to be sure you are following all rules for safety of you and your horse. I.e. dangerous drop off, crossing a road (check for cars). You will still be read the directions to the obstacle but will be judged while those directions are being read and will still receive the words “you may proceed”. Don’t overuse.

11. Off Course vs DQ, continued discussion. Example pull vs drag.

Off course vs DQ - for the drag/pull we are “agreeing to disagree”. If you do the opposite of what you should do, some of the senior judges might believe you should be disqualified but some think you should just get a lot of points. Overall we will work with each obstacle judge to help them with consistent judging on their obstacle without telling them how many points they should give for each error the rider accrues. Obstacle judges should be given the leeway to judge as they see fit without judging on things that are not in our rules (i.e. crossing over to sidepass).

12. Repairing the obstacle to make it the same

13. Horse pooping in an obstacle

Repairing or fixing an obstacle.- make sure to tell the obstacle judge to repair obstacles as they were or replace items (i.e. hanging lollipops from a tree) so they are as close as

possible each time. Things like manure that has been dropped in a horse trailer or in the middle of stepovers, is natural and will not be removed.

14. Cutting items off of a line

Knife cutting from horseback is allowed. Do not ride with knife open!

Added item – Sending backwards

Send backwards - this seems to have been a misunderstanding. We do not send backwards around things. Backing your horse around items, you are allowed to move or position yourself as necessary to accomplish the task (except getting off the obstacle unless asked to).

Judges Commission

February 1, 2025

Sign-in Sheet

2025 Trail Trials Judges Symposium

Double Tree, Modesto

Name	Region
Diane Mylock	SR Judge 3
Maria Hines	R4
Rene Turubull	R5
Ellen Liebenberg	R5
VICTORIA EDROZZI	R4
KELLY YORK	R2
Cam Gunn	R11
Charlotte Johnson	R2
Linda Smerber	R14
Bonnie Douglas	R4
LAURA SWETZ	R11
Brenda Duncan	R3
Cindi McElwain	R2
Staci Workman	R13