

# B.C. MOUNTAIN TRAIL

# ASSOCIATION

RULE BOOK 2026



# B.C. MOUNTAIN TRAIL ASSOCIATION

## Rules 2026

### TABLE OF CONTENTS:

		Table of Contents.....	2
		Memberships	3
BCMTA	1	Purpose.....	3
BCMTA	2	What is a Competition Mountain Trail Horse?.....	3
BCMTA	3	Definition for Equine/Horse.....	4
BCMTA	4	Definition for Rider/Handler & Age.....	5
BCMTA	5	Shows.....	6
BCMTA	6	Classes.....	6
BCMTA	7	Championships.....	8
BCMTA	8	Prize Distribution.....	8
BCMTA	9	Tack & Attire.....	9
	9.1	Footwear.....	11
	9.2	Headgear.....	11
BCMTA	10	Obstacles.....	11
	10.1	Obstacle Definitions.....	12
BCMTA	11	Manner Definitions.....	13
BCMTA	12	Judging – General.....	14
	12.1	Judging – Attire.....	14
	12.2	Judging – Obstacles.....	15
BCMTA	13	Scoring.....	15
	13.1	Scoring Scale and Definitions.....	15
	13.2	Scoring Deductions.....	16
BCMTA	14	Refusals.....	17
BCMTA	15	Off Course.....	17
BCMTA	16	Eliminations.....	18
	16.1-16.7	Explanations of Eliminations.....	18
BCMTA	17	Disqualifications.....	18
	17.1	Explanations of Disqualifications.....	18
BCMTA	18	Posting and Checking of Scores.....	18
BCMTA	19	Safe Sport.....	19
	19.1-19.2	Explanations of Safe Sport.....	19
BCMTA	20	Horse Welfare.....	20
	20.1-20.5	Explanations of Horse Welfare.....	20

### Annex's

Annex	1	Permitted Course Obstacles	22
Annex	2	Non-Permitted Course Obstacles	23
Annex	3	Recommendation for Course/Obstacle Design	24
Annex	4	Trail Obstacle Dimensions (Guideline Only)	25

**MEMBERSHIPS:** Cost of membership is \$25.00 for the year of 2026 and must be paid before the first (1<sup>st</sup>) show of 2026.

## **BCMTA 1**

### **PURPOSE**

Mountain Trail Competitions are designed to replicate the rugged outdoors with the purpose to showcase talented mountain trail horses, riders/handlers and trainers within a competitive environment. The Mountain Trail course consists of several obstacles that would be found on a regular trail ride, with some obstacles that are a step above regular trail riding. These obstacles are designed to push the limits of not only the horse, but the rider/handler as well. The obstacles are continually testing the boundaries of the unknown and the relationship that drives the horse forward into the unknown territory.

A Mountain Trail Horse is any breed or type of horse from any discipline or background. It is open to all equines. The word "Horse" is used for reference but also includes mules, donkeys, ponies and miniature horses.

## **BCMTA 2**

### **WHAT IS A COMPETITION MOUNTAIN TRAIL HORSE?**

A competition Mountain Trail horse is one that is being judged on its ability to handle natural and simulated terrain which may be encountered in today's world in an environment such as that which would be found on a trail ride, hunting trip, working ranch, or any other similar use of our horses. One could expect to encounter normal natural terrain such as steep inclines and declines, rocks, logs, trees, water and more. One could also find man-made objects such as bridges, tarps, tents, backpackers, bikers and other such items in our world today. In addition to these, a competition Mountain Trail horse may encounter "live" obstacles such as other horses, mules, donkeys, llamas, cattle, sheep and more.

While being judged, the competition Mountain Trail horse will be presented with specific tasks to be accomplished as part of the judging criteria. These tasks are designed to showcase the horse and rider/handler's ability to perform manoeuvres that may be encountered on a ride in today's world. These can include opening/closing gates,

dragging a log or tree branch, carrying a tarp or backpack, putting on and taking off a slicker and many other such tasks.

The competition Mountain Trail horse may also be asked to exhibit certain manoeuvres to show it is willing to accept the rider/handler's guidance. These may include side-pass, haunch turns, forehand turns, gait changes, backing through obstacles and more.

A competition Mountain Trail horse should travel through and between obstacles exhibiting confidence and purpose. The horse should have an inquisitive, intent look that shows awareness of its surroundings and enjoyment of the job it is performing. It should have its head low enough to maintain the ability to see its path but not lose the awareness of the rest of its surroundings. Once over the obstacle, it should raise its head enough to be noting what is around it while not being distracted to the extent that it loses focus on what is under its feet and in its immediate surroundings. It should be able to accept guidance and instruction from its rider/handler, softly and willingly, with no signs of resistance or loss of focus on the task at hand. The rider/handler should be able to guide his/her horse with both hand and leg aids. The horse should be showing instant and willing response to the smallest signal from the rider/handler between and within obstacles and within any changes. The horse should show curiosity and a willingness to be guided, having confidence in the placement of its feet at all times. It should not only show the ability to take care of itself, but should also have an ability and awareness of taking care of its rider/handler. The horse should maintain its headset and body frame in its natural way of movement, according to its breed and conformation, yet will lower its head, as necessary, to look where it is going and to be drawn into and over obstacles in a quiet and safe manner.

### **BCMTA 3**

### **DEFINITION FOR EQUINE/HORSE**

**Green Horse** – Any horse, any age. Never to have been shown in Mountain Trail and/or Arena Trail classes at a sanctioned show. May not cross enter in Amateur and/or Open Classes. (Contact the Show Producer for eligibility, if required.)

**In-Hand** - There is no age limitation for the horse. May be shown in a halter or bridle.

**Novice Horse** - May be ridden by **ANY rider**. Never to have won more than three firsts in the Mountain Trail Novice Horse Division.

**Open Horse** – Open to all horses. (No cross entry with Green Horse or Back to Basics classes)

**Senior Horse** – Is seven years and over as of January 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year.

**Stallions** – Are not permitted to compete in B.C. Mountain Trail sanctioned competitions/clinics.

#### **BCMTA 4                      DEFINITION FOR RIDER/HANDLER & AGE**

**Youth** - The minimum age is 10 years as of January 1<sup>st</sup> in that calendar year to a maximum age of 18 years as of January 1<sup>st</sup> that calendar year. Youth can compete in all classes. However, in the Green and Back to Basics classes, should there be four or more youth competitors, they will be awarded separately. Youth will then be awarded points for youth and points for whichever class they were in (i.e., Green or Back to Basics).

**Senior/Adult** - Is 19 years and older.

**Amateur Rider** - Is an individual who engages in sport for pleasure only and does not receive payment for training, coaching, lessons, etc., in the horse industry.

**Green Rider** - Any age (10 and over). 1<sup>st</sup> year of showing in Mountain Trail. Never to have shown in Mountain Trail and/or Arena Trail classes at a sanctioned show. May not cross enter with Amateur and/or Open classes.

**Novice Rider** - Never to have won more than three firsts in the Mountain Trail Novice Rider Division. This does not apply to placings in the in-hand and/or youth classes.

**Open Rider** - This is defined as open to all riders.

**Hors Concours (H/C)** - Hors Concours (H/C) entries are not eligible for any awards.

- Hors Concours (H/C) entries may be accepted at the discretion of the Show Producer.
- These entries must pay the same entry fees and are subject to the same conditions which apply to regular entries.

- They compete in the classes in which they are entered as H/C and are judged and can receive a score but are not eligible for any awards in those classes.
- Cannot ride H/C

**Para Rider/Handler** - Competitors with a physical disability may compete at BC Mountain Trail Competitions. Adaptive (compensating) aids can be used by riders/handlers to compensate for the physical or sensory limitation resulting from their impairment, thereby enabling them to ride/handle a horse. Para Riders/Handlers are responsible for advising the Show Producer(s) of any limitations they may have, any adaptive aids they are required to use, etc. The Show Producer(s) in turn will make every effort to accommodate the Para Rider/Handler and will also advise the Judge(s) of these riders/handlers' accommodations.

## **BCMTA 5**

### **SHOWS**

All shows in the Mountain Trail Buckle Series must be sanctioned by the BCMTA (BC Mountain Trail Association).

The organizer(s) of these shows are referred to as the "Show Producer(s)".

Show Producers are to use judges that have been through the BCMTA Sanctioned Judging Clinics. Should a Show Producer also be a Judge, it is strongly recommended that they do not judge at their own show.

## **BCMTA 6**

### **CLASSES**

#### **NOTE:**

- If you start the year in a class, you can finish the year in that class even if you meet the criteria during the year. This does not apply to placings in the in-hand and/or youth classes.
- If an exhibitor enters a class, they were not eligible for, they can keep the prize money but will lose the points and can no longer show in that class.

- After two (2) seasons away from competing in B.C. Mountain Trail, a horse can re-enter the competitions where the horse left off. (**Note:** *after two 1<sup>st</sup> place awards in that division the horse/rider combination must move up to the next level the following year.*)

## **Classes:**

- 1) **Green In-Hand:** 8 to 12 obstacles. See Annex 1 for obstacles. First year of showing in Mountain Trail for horse or handler.
- 2) **Green Horse:** Any horse, any age. Never to have been shown in Mountain Trail and/or Arena Trail classes at a sanctioned show. May not cross-enter in Amateur and/or Open Classes. (Contact the Show Producer(s) for eligibility, if required.)
- 3) **Green Rider:** Any age. 1<sup>st</sup> year of showing in Mountain Trail. Never to have shown in Mountain Trail and/or Arena Trail classes at a sanctioned show. May not cross-enter in Amateur and/or Open classes.

***Note: Green In-Hand, Green Horse and Green Rider will now move out of the Green Division the following year after 2 (two) First Place wins in that class, and/or if you are a Champion in that year.***

- 4) **Back to Basics:** 8 to 12 obstacles (entry level obstacles). Open to green and novice horses. May not cross-enter in Amateur and/or Open classes.
- 5) **Mares and Geldings In-Hand:** Mares and/or geldings of any age and handlers of any age. May be shown in a halter or bridle. See Annex 1 for obstacles.
- 6) **Exploring the Novice:** This class is open to Green Horses and/ or Riders that would like to 'explore' the Novice division. It will use the same map as the Novice classes, and the Mares and the Geldings In-hand classes. This allows you to ride the Novice map without having to compete against the Novice horses and riders. You will move out of the Exploring the Novice after 2 (two) First Place wins in this class and/or if you are a Champion or Reserve Champion in that year. *Riders already competing in Novice classes are NOT eligible for this class.*
- 7) **Novice Horse:** may be ridden by **ANY** rider. Never to have won more than three firsts in the Mountain Trail Novice Horse Division.
- 8) **Novice Rider:** Never to have won more than three firsts in the Mountain Trail Novice Rider Division. This does not apply to placings in the in-hand and/or youth classes.
- 9) **Open In-Hand:** No cross-entry with **green** classes. This is a more technical course/pattern. The course will be the same course for the Amateur and Open classes.
- 10) **Open:** Open to all riders and/or horses. May not cross-enter with Green, Just off the Trail and Back to Basic classes. Open classes are very technical and ask for advanced abilities of the horse/rider team throughout the course/pattern.

**11)Amateur:** Is an individual who engages in sport for pleasure only and does not receive payment for training, coaching, judging, lessons, etc. in the horse industry.

**Course Walks:** there will be a Map walk-through for the Green Classes. For the Novice and Open there will only be a Question & Answer or a walk through with the Judges at the Show Producer's discretion.

- **BCMTA 7**

**CHAMPIONSHIPS**

In order to compete for year end awards at the BCMTA Championships, competitors must meet the following criteria to qualify:

- **Must have shown in at least three of the BC Mountain Trail Buckle Series shows by:**
  - Attending three individual days (of weekend sanctioned shows) throughout the year. Of the three shows, **one show must be on the lower mainland and one show must be in the interior to be eligible.**
- In order to be eligible for year end awards, the Open mounted classes must be the same Horse/Rider combination throughout the season.

**BCMTA 8**

**PRIZE DISTRIBUTION**

BC Mountain Trail awards **ONLY** the following at all shows:

Prize money:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place - \$25.00
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place - \$20.00
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place - \$15.00
- 4<sup>th</sup> Place - \$10.00
- 5<sup>th</sup> Place - \$10.00 (Should there be 12 or more in a class)
- Should a class have less than 3 entrants, the Show Producer(s) is not obliged to run this class.

Ribbons and/or Certificates are optional to 3<sup>rd</sup> place in addition to the prize money.

Should there be a tie, the rider with the highest number of high scores (starting at 10) will be used to break the tie in that class.



Should a Show Producer have prizes, they can be awarded additionally with the prize money.

## BCMTA 9

## TACK AND ATTIRE

*A competitor, should they prefer, may use tack/equipment that is specific to their horse's breed.*

### TACK - Permitted Items:

- English, Western, Endurance, Australian, or breed-specific saddles are permitted (***no bareback pads***).
- English, Western, or breed-specific bridles, bosal, hackamore(all), bit-less bridles or halters(all) are acceptable (must be considered safe and acceptable by the Judge(s) and Show Producer(s)).
- Romel reins may be used with a shank bit (ONLY).
- Crops, whips, or lead shanks with chains(in-hand) are permitted. Use of these items may result in loss of points per obstacles as determined by the judge. ***NOTE: Chains must be unsnapped when ground tying.***
- Any tack or attire (item) the Head Judge determines to be a risk/safety/unacceptable factor will be removed or replaced in order to participate.
- Optional - splint boots, bandages, leg protection, etc.
- **Two hands** are allowed with any snaffle bit or snaffle shank bit(in green classes only).
- **One handed** riding is required by a participant with any shank bit with a solid mouth piece (and choice of rein, i.e., Romel). ***If a participant needs two hands to support the horse, he/she will be deducted a minimum of one (1) point, but the use of the two hands could result in a better overall score depending on the training level of the horse.***
- A halter and lead or a get down rope are allowed and preferred while you dismount or mount.

### TACK - NOT PERMITTED/ALLOWED:

- tie downs
- martingales

## **ATTIRE – Permitted Attire:**

- Although proper “show attire” is not required, riders should strive to present themselves as clean, well put together and safe (long hair should be neat and tidy, not hanging down straight, etc.).
- As Mountain Trail Challenges and/or Shows take place outdoors and weather conditions will be a factor, rain gear is permitted; however, it should be neat, clean and presentable. Come prepared for all possible weather conditions.
- **Western Participants** – must wear a long-sleeved western style shirt/blouse and long pants without holes or tears. A cowboy hat or helmet and boots with a heel must be worn. Gloves, chaps and chinks are optional. Spurs are permitted - see below.
- **English Participants** - suggested dress is either casual or more formal English attire such as: shirt/blouse or a polo shirt with a collar, tie/pin (optional), proper riding vest or jacket (optional); boots (tall or paddock boots with half chaps/gators) with a defined heel are required. Headwear should be appropriate for English riding. Gloves and chaps are optional. Spurs are permitted - see below.
- ***Please Note: Helmets are recommended for all riders, but required for all youth participants.***
- Spurs are acceptable; however, any aggressive use of spurs will result in the loss of a point(s) or, at the Judge's discretion, disqualification.

## **ATTIRE - NOT PERMITTED/ALLOWED:**

- Ball Caps
- Hoodies
- Tank tops

## BCMTA 9.1

### FOOTWEAR

Heels are **required** on **all footwear** for safety reasons. For safety, be aware of wearing spurs when showing in-hand.

## BCMTA 9.2

### HEADGEAR

Protective headgear (i.e., helmet) is optional for adult competitors, but ***mandatory*** for youth competitors (18 years and under).

## BCMTA 10

### OBSTACLES

The varying terrain of the mountains allows the Mountain Trail Course Designers to come up with new, different and creative obstacles every day at a competition. (See Annex 1 for more detailed information on obstacles for competition.)

The horse/rider team will be asked to perform multiple tasks that range from traditional trail obstacles to manoeuvring/negotiating over hills, ditches, ponds, rocks and half logs. In addition, a horse/rider team may be asked to back out of obstacles, side pass over obstacles, complete pivots and move at various gaits. A rider may be asked to dismount, mount, drag or move obstacles, send the horse through obstacles while dismounted, etc.

## BCMTA 10.1

### OBSTACLE DEFINITIONS

1. **Leading/In-hand:** Leading/In-hand can be done with either a bridle or a halter and lead. The horse should lead willingly, not crowding or lagging which will result in a lower score.
2. **Mounting/Dismounting:** The rider may be asked to mount or dismount from either side. The rider should, while mounting and/or dismounting, maintain control at all times. The horse should stand quietly and securely. A mounting block will be provided.
3. **Hoof Check:** The horse should pick up a leg willingly and not move around.

4. **Gate:** The rider/handler may be asked to open a gate(s) from any direction, pulling or pushing. The rider/handler should have control of the gate at all times. The horse should follow direction from the rider/handler to stay close to the gate and minimize movement.
5. **Stop and Pause:** The rider/handler may be asked to stop and pause at any time in the pattern. The horse should stop quietly and stand without any anxious movement until the rider/handler is ready to move forward.
6. **Uphill/Downhill:** The rider/handler should maintain center of balance at all times to help the horse manipulate the obstacle.
7. **Water Crossing/Ponds:** The horse should enter water obstacles cautiously, continuing in a forward motion.
8. **Dragging/Pulling:** The rider/handler may hold the rope or dally but must never allow the rope to entangle the horse and/or rider/handler. The horse should stand quietly and not react to the rope or the object being pulled and/or dragged.
9. **Bridges:** The horse should approach the obstacle squarely and move over the bridge in a forward motion with cadence. Entering, crossing and exiting the bridge shall be on a straight path.
10. **Step Over:** The horse should move over without hitting the obstacle. Smaller horses or ponies will not be penalized for hopping taller step overs.
11. **Backing:** Backing shall be completed in a straight motion without weaving side to side. Backward motion shall continue at a consistent pace. The horse **will be penalized** for hitting the obstacle while backing.
12. **Side Passing:** The rider/handler may be asked to side pass the horse. The horse shall side pass keeping its body perpendicular to the obstacle without moving forward and/or back. The horse **will be penalized** for hitting the obstacle while side passing.
13. **Ground Tie:** To dismount and tie the horse to the ground. Can use a get-down rope, drop a rein (*buckled reins must be untied*) or a halter and lead. **NOTE: If using a lead shank with a chain, the chain must be unsnapped while ground tying.**

**Forward Motion:** Throughout each pattern, a horse and rider/handler should continue in a forward motion unless the pattern asks for a stop and pause. The horse's pace should stay consistent and not change unless the rider/handler asks for a different gait or movement.

**Balance:** To smoothly negotiate an obstacle, horse and rider/handler must be balanced, both individually and as a team. The rider/handler shall maintain proper horsemanship at all times.

**Horsemanship:** The rider/handler's ability to perform and execute the presented challenges of the course with their horse. The rider/handler shall present poise and confidence while maintaining balance and fundamental body position, helping the horse to be properly aligned. Horse and rider/handler should perform each obstacle with subtle cues. The rider/handler shall refrain from instilling fear, jerking on the bit and excessive use of the crop or spurs. ***If such acts are performed, a rider/handler may be asked to exit the course which will result in elimination from that class.***

**Control:** The rider/handler must maintain control of the horse at all times, whether mounted or leading.

**Rider Awareness:** A rider/handler should be paying attention to the direction of the pattern, setting up the horse to approach each obstacle correctly and squarely. The rider/handler should evaluate each obstacle and proceed carefully with awareness.

**Overall Awareness:** The horse should respond to the rider/handler without any hesitation or resistance. The horse should have an alert, obedient and willing disposition. Gaits should be consistent and comfortable.

**Pattern:** It is important that a horse and rider/handler stay on course. Going off course/pattern ***will result in a score of zero for that obstacle.***

Judges should be on the grounds **45 minutes** before the start of a competition. This will allow enough time for a meeting with the Show Producers.

The judges are expected to have knowledge of all breeds and are instructed to judge each horse accordingly. Each judge is required to be consistent in their scoring for all horses, without playing favouritism to any specific breed.

The classes will be judged on the horse's ability to manoeuvre/negotiate over various obstacles, with attention to manners, response to the rider and the quality of movement. In addition, the rider/handler will be judged on HORSEMANSHIP while performing each obstacle.

A horse will receive credit for showing attentiveness to the negotiating of the obstacle and/or path, or if the path is not specified, the horse's ability to negotiate and pick their own path through the course. A horse will be rewarded with higher manoeuvre scores for performing gaits correctly with an alert attitude. While on the line of travel between obstacles, the horse shall be balanced, carrying his head and neck in a relaxed, NATURAL position. (Example: Stock breeds tend to carry the head and neck in a relaxed, natural position with the poll level even with, or slightly above the withers; Gaited breeds tend to carry head and neck high above the poll and withers.) The horse should approach each obstacle in a consistent forward motion. The horse should ACKNOWLEDGE each obstacle while keeping a forward motion and remain calm and confident with a willing attitude.

The judge is to dress professionally. This can be for any equestrian discipline.

The Rider will be judged on their horse's approach to an obstacle, how accurately and willingly their horse manoeuvres through the obstacle and then how the horse departs from each obstacle.

Each rider/handler shall help the horse align their body as they approach each obstacle.

**A rider/handler's horsemanship will be judged throughout the entire course.**

**BCMTA 13****SCORING**

B.C. Mountain Trail uses the 0-to-10-point scoring system, with the use of half points when necessary. A score that has a .5 such as 5.5 means that the horse/rider combination is closer to a 6.0 than a 5.0, that they are working the obstacle more towards a score of 6.0.

The system is designed to be positive, encouraging and straight forward to the exhibitors.

**BCMTA 13.1****SCORING SCALE AND DEFINITIONS**

- **"0"** - a zero will only be applied when an obstacle is not attempted, refusals (see refusals), or off course (see off course) resulting with a zero for only that obstacle.
- **"1 – 4"** – Major faults
- **"5 – 7"** – Average quality
- **"8 – 9"** – High quality
- **"10"** – Perfect. A perfect score on an obstacle is a 10 (no measurable mistakes). To earn a perfect score, the horse shall approach the obstacle squarely and in a straight manner. They should enter the path with confidence and attention. As they continue through the obstacle, they should move with caution and cadence with little to no guidance from the rider. They should exhibit forward motion while acknowledging and adjusting to each section of the obstacle. They must

demonstrate a willing attitude, while carefully completing the obstacle with no measurable mistakes.

## BCMTA 13.2

### SCORING DEDUCTIONS

- **Minor deductions** may result from, but are not limited to: hitting or stepping on a log, plant or a component of an obstacle; incorrect or break of gait, step(s) taken while ground tying; approaching an obstacle off centered; loss of forward motion, dragging your line in an in-hand class.
- **Average deductions** may result from, but are not limited to: dropping or letting go of the gate or object; hitting or stepping on a log; rushing; horse taking more than 3 steps at ground tie; tight reins; the use of 2 hands on a shank bit; disobedience; loss of focus; one-two step(s) off, or out of an obstacle.
- **Major deductions** may result from, but are not limited to: refusal(s), balk, crow hop, popping up or evading an obstacle, using hand to instill fear; misuse of tack (i.e., use of Romel to instill fear), missed pattern.
- **Blatant** disobedience (including kicking out, bucking, rearing, and striking) results in elimination.

**Note:** These are only examples of point deductions. The judge is instructed to judge each obstacle at their own discretion. It is understood that not all horses are created equal and each score shall reflect this. Example: A miniature horse is not expected to step over a large log without hitting it or possibly jumping the log, just as, a draft horse may hit a component of the obstacles because it is too large to avoid it. Deductions in points shall not be reflected in these situations.

**Should a horse, while being belligerent damage an obstacle to the extent that it is no longer safe to be used for the remaining competitors, the obstacle will be removed from the course and all competitors in the class, even if they have been scored, will all receive a score of "5" for that particular obstacle. The horse and rider/handler that damaged the obstacle will receive a score of "0".**



A refusal is defined as:

- Any action taken by the horse to avoid performing an obstacle, part of a combination of obstacles or portion of a trail course.
- These actions may include, but are not limited to the following: refusing, evading or completely passing an obstacle with all four feet; complete loss of the required gait (i.e., stopping); and any blatant action by the horse that demonstrates an unwillingness to approach, and/or negotiate an obstacle.
- Movement of the horse in a side to side and/or backwards motion is a refusal.
- **NOTE:** after 3 refusals at an obstacle, or 15 seconds of refusing at an obstacle, the judge will instruct the competitor to move to the next obstacle and the competitor will be given a score of zero for that obstacle.

A horse and rider/handler team will be considered off course if:

- They miss an obstacle directed by the course map and the judge.
- They negotiate obstacles in the wrong sequence (i.e., obstacles 3 and 4 out of order – rider goes to obstacle 4 first). The Judge would then score both obstacles with an Off Course zero.
- They don't follow the correct line of travel, either in the drawn pattern or at the judges' instruction.

**Off Course will result in a score of zero for that obstacle.**

**NOTE: if you present to an obstacle that you know you are not going to negotiate, this is not "off course". However, you will still receive a zero score.**

**A horse will not be considered off course if:**

The obstacle is a "3-part obstacle"; i.e.: entrance/middle/finish (example: curtain, walk forward then back up and turn, then leave obstacle after turn). Should the rider/handler and horse have to leave/bypass the entrance but does finish the middle

and end of the obstacle the score for this rider/handler and horse should be a score of three (3) or less.

## **BCMTA 16**

### **ELIMINATIONS**

Elimination means the exclusion from any further participation in the class in which the elimination occurs.

The elimination of a horse/rider combination shall occur under the following circumstances:

**16.1** Use of illegal equipment.

**16.2** Unauthorized assistance (i.e., calling out directions, etc.).

**16.3** Dangerous/unruly behaviour of the horse (rearing, striking, kicking, etc.).

**16.4** Lameness – Ground Jury's decision is final with no appeal.

**16.5** Any abuse of the horse - Judge's/Show Producer's decision is final with no appeal.

**16.6** Fall of horse (where hip and shoulder touch the ground and or shows immediate unevenness) and must leave the course.

**16.7** Fall of the rider. The rider is considered to have fallen when a hip or shoulder, etc. hits the ground either in warm-up or on the course. The rider must leave that area on foot. It is the rider's responsibility to ensure the onsite medical assessment has been completed before being cleared to re-enter their next class. Should a rider simply trip/stumble landing on their knees (for example) and/or regain their balance after a trip/stumble when leading their horse through an in-hand class, they can continue in the class.

**NOTE: The Ground Jury consists of the Show Producer(s) and Judge(s).**

## **BCMTA 17**

### **DISQUALIFICATIONS**

Disqualification means the action of removing a competitor and/or entry from any further participation for the duration of a competition.

The disqualification of a horse/rider combination shall occur under the following circumstances:

**17.1** The judge(s) has the authority to dismiss any entry from the competition if he or she deems that entry is not under sufficient control.

## **BCMTA 18**

### **POSTING AND CHECKING OF SCORES**

Once the scores have been posted, initialed and time of posting noted by the scorer on the sheet, competitors must bring their concerns to the Show Producer by the end of the show, who will then discuss it with the scorer.

## **BCMTA 19**

### **SAFE SPORT**

1. B.C. Mountain Trail believes in respect for one another. At B.C. Mountain Trail sanctioned competitions, the following is considered unacceptable (but are not limited to the following):

- a) an individual does not leave the “arena/area” without delay after elimination or at the end of a round;
- b) an individual does not follow the directives of the Show Producer(s);
- c) an individual does not follow the directives of B.C. Mountain Trail officials;
- d) an individual exhibits disrespectful or inappropriate behavior towards B.C. Mountain Trail or event officials or any other party connected with the event (Athlete, B.C. Mountain Trail employee or representative, journalist, member of the public, etc.);
- e) an individual repeats an offense after a verbal warning to stop; or

2. Officials, Show Producers and/or Ground Jury have the final say regarding the above. Individuals can be asked to leave the premisses/show and forfeit any entry fees, prizes, etc.

**CRUELTY, ABUSE OR INHUMANE TREATMENT OF HORSES**

1. The abuse or inhumane treatment of a horse by an individual competitor or other person at an B.C. Mountain Trail sanctioned competition shall not be tolerated under any circumstances.
2. The standard by which conduct or treatment will be measured is that which, a person informed and experienced in generally accepted equine training and competition procedures, would determine to be cruel, abusive or inhumane. Any treatment or practice that causes undue stress, and/or pain, is deemed abusive.
3. Cruelty can be defined as causing pain or unnecessary discomfort to a horse. As examples, an act of cruelty can be but is not limited to any of the following:
  - a) nosebands used in such a way that they interfere with the horse's breathing, or be tight enough to cause pain or discomfort, pinching tack, ill fitting bridles or saddles, etc.
  - b) excessively whipping or beating a horse;
  - c) excessively or persistently using spurs or jabbing a horse in the mouth with the bit;
  - d) hyper-sensitizing any part of a horse;
  - e) neglect by:
    - i) leaving a horse without adequate food, drink and exercise; or
    - ii) failing to safely and securely tie or contain a horse while at the event location;
  - f) competing with a horse with raw or bleeding sores, or evidence of other blood on the horse (with the exception of insect bites or other environmental causes);
  - g) anything that puts a horse at risk, or any horse that becomes ill or is required to be seen by a veterinarian during a B.C. Mountain Trail sanctioned competition must be cleared by a veterinarian examination in order to resume competing;

4. The officiating Judge(s), Show Producer(s) and/or Ground Jury must investigate any information or complaints regarding cruelty, abuse, or inhumane treatment of horses.

a) the official may disqualify the offender from further participation in the competition.

5. Information regarding or reports of cruelty, abuse or inhumane treatment of horses will be compiled by the officiating Judge(s), Show Producer(s) and/or Ground Jury and are to contain, at a minimum, the following information:

a) date and time of the alleged abuse;

b) B.C. Mountain Trail competition name and number;

c) name of alleged offender and competition assigned number;

d) name of the horse if applicable;

e) a description of the incident and the nature of the alleged abuse;

f) signature of the judge or ground jury member;

g) witness information including Eye Witness Report form; and

h) veterinary information and report, if available. Copies of these reports must be attached to the B.C. Mountain Trail Officials Report and forwarded to the Show Producer(s).

\*\*\*\*\*

These rules have been developed and/or partially adopted by the B.C. Mountain Trail Association with permission and support from the Oregon Horse Centre.

# Annex 1:

## Permitted Course Obstacles

<p><b><u>Classes:</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Green In-Hand</li> <li>2. Green Horse</li> <li>3. Green Rider</li> <li>4. Back to Basics</li> <li>5. Exploring the Novice</li> </ol>	<p><b><u>Classes:</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. In-Hand Mares &amp; Geldings</li> <li>7. Novice Horse</li> <li>8. Novice Rider</li> </ol>	<p><b><u>Classes:</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. Open In-Hand</li> <li>10. Open</li> <li>11. Amateur</li> <li>12. Show Producer's Class</li> </ol>
<p><b><u>Obstacles:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Backing – straight only</li> <li>• Balance Beam – straight only (as per Annex 3)</li> <li>• Carousel Turn</li> <li>• Cowboy Curtain</li> <li>• Can require a jog/trot</li> <li>• Dry Box</li> <li>• Flag or raising other obstacles <b><u>BUT NOT</u></b> over head of horse</li> <li>• Ground Tie</li> <li>• Mounting and/or Dismounting</li> <li>• Non-Moving Bridges</li> <li>• Over bases with slight or ¼ turns only</li> <li>• Pick up Feet</li> <li>• Push Gates</li> <li>• Rocks/Sawbucks</li> <li>• Side Pass</li> <li>• Slickers</li> <li>• Step Over</li> <li>• Tunnels – Forward only</li> <li>• Up and Down Hills</li> <li>• Water (ponds, lakes, streams only)</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Number of Obstacles Recommended on Course:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8-12</li> <li>• 8-14 (Explorer Horse only)</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Note:</u></b> You may be asked to start or end <u>any</u> pattern in hand.</p>	<p><b><u>Obstacles:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>All green obstacles</u> plus</li> <li>• Balance Beam</li> <li>• Backing – straight, corner, etc.</li> <li>• Ditches</li> <li>• Flag or raising other obstacles over horse</li> <li>• Jog/Trot</li> <li>• Mattress</li> <li>• Over bases with up to a 180 degree turn only</li> <li>• Rolling Bridge</li> <li>• Straight Beams</li> <li>• Suspension Bridge</li> <li>• Tipping Bridge</li> <li>• Tunnel</li> <li>• Water box</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Number of Obstacles Recommended on Course:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 10-14</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Note:</u></b> You may be asked to start or end <u>any</u> pattern in hand.</p>	<p><b><u>Obstacles:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>All green and novice obstacles</u> plus</li> <li>• Angle Beams</li> <li>• Back in Ditches</li> <li>• Back through gates and tunnels</li> <li>• Can require a lope/canter</li> <li>• Dragging Obstacles</li> <li>• Increased level of difficulty on all obstacles</li> <li>• Squish Box</li> <li>• Turn on Base (can be a 360-degree turn)</li> <li>• Water Box</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Number of Obstacles Recommended on Course:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 10-16</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Note:</u></b> You may be asked to start or end <u>any</u> pattern in hand.</p>

# Annex 2:

## Non-Permitted Course Obstacles

<u>Classes:</u>	<u>Classes:</u>	<u>Classes:</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Green In-Hand</li> <li>2. Green Horse</li> <li>3. Green Rider</li> <li>4. Back to Basics</li> <li>5. Exploring the Novice</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. In-Hand Mares &amp; Geldings</li> <li>7. Novice Horse</li> <li>8. Novice Rider</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. Open In-Hand</li> <li>10. Open</li> <li>11. Amateur</li> <li>12. Show Producer's Class</li> </ol>
<u>Obstacles:</u>	<u>Obstacles:</u>	<u>Obstacles:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Backing through gates in-hand</li> <li>• Complete turnaround(s)</li> <li>• Water boxes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Backing on suspension bridges or moving bridges</li> <li>• Backing on a balance beam less than (as per Annex 3)</li> <li>• Backing through gates in-hand</li> <li>• Squish boxes</li> <li>• No 360 turns in water boxes under 4 feet X 6 feet</li> <li>• No more than two sequential water boxes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Backing on suspension bridges or moving bridges</li> <li>• Backing on a balance beam less than (as per Annex 4, Bridge and Plank specifications)</li> <li>• Backing through gates in-hand</li> <li>• No 360 turns in water boxes under 4 feet X 6 feet</li> <li>• No more than two sequential water boxes</li> </ul>



Hanging H Arena Mountain Trail Course,  
Chilliwack

# Annex 3:

## Recommendations for Course Obstacles/Design

Courses are divided into judging sections of which there are two or more judges, one for each section. When designing a course, the following should be taken into consideration in order to keep the course and the show running smoothly.

Backing up should be limited to no more than one obstacle on the course for all levels per day.

The more technical obstacle questions (such as; side passing, puzzles, time consuming obstacles, etc.) should be spread evenly throughout the course (don't load one side of the course with all the technical questions as this slows everything down).



Circle Creek Ranch – Sagewood Mountain Trail Park, Kamloops



# Annex 4:

## Trail Obstacle Dimensions – Guideline Only

Mountain Trail obstacles are seldom evenly spaced heights or widths. Practicing outside the “norm” will begin to teach your horse ownership responsibility of obstacles and will result in less rider micro-management.

<b>Walk/Trot/Lope-Canter Overs</b> Single Poles Multiple Poles	Maximum height 16” Maximum height 10”  Set 20 to 24 inches apart for walk-over 3 to 3 ½ feet apart for jog/trot 6 to 7 feet apart for lope/canter  Spoke style should be set 24 inches apart halfway out from the center
<b>Back-Throughs</b> On ground Elevated Barrels Raised back through off the ground	Minimum of 28” wide Minimum of 30” wide Minimum of 32” wide Minimum of 48” wide
<b>Sidepass</b> Single pole up to 24”	Space between poles, minimum 24”
<b>Serpentines</b> (Jog arounds)	Pylons 6 to 9 feet apart (base to base) minimum Guardrails 3 feet to either side of pylons  Pylons 3 feet apart (base to base) minimum Guardrails 6 to 8 feet to either side of pylons  If tall standards are used, dimensions can be looser

<b>Gate</b>	Latch set at between 54 to 60 inches from ground Minimum of 48" wide Rope Gate – optional
<b>Bridge or Plank</b>  Balance beams	Minimum of 36 inches wide for elevated bridge Minimum of 12 inch for plank placed flat on the ground Minimum of 18 inches wide
<b>Ground Tie or Hobble</b>	Inside a minimum of 6-foot circle
<b>Mailbox</b>	Minimum of 48 inches from ground to bottom of the mailbox
<b>Back through Ditches</b> Green Horse  Novice Horse  Open Novice/Open Horse	4 to 6 inches by 3 foot wide with sloped sides 12 to 18 inches by 3 foot wide with square sides 18 inches to 4 feet deep by 24 inches to 3 feet wide with square sides
<b>Walk through Ditches (straight and L shaped)</b> Green Horse  Novice/Open Novice/Open Horse	4 to 6 inches deep by 3 feet wide with sloped sides 8 inches to 5 feet deep by 3 to 4 feet wide with square sides

### Shumway Lake Equestrian Centre, Kamloops

