

# 2010-11

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## Name, Mission Statement

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### 1.1 NAME

The name of this organization shall be “Varsity Equestrian.”

**1.2 MISSION STATEMENT.** To advance the sport of Equestrian from Emerging to Championship status with the NCAA by promoting the benefits of Equestrian to universities, riders, prospective student-athletes, parents, horse industry professionals and sponsors while developing the rules and competition format.

## Organization of Varsity Equestrian

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### 2.1 GUIDELINES FOR ALL COMMITTEE MEMBERS.

**2.1.1 ATTENDANCE and PARTICIPATION.** Attend and actively participate in at least one meeting and any other meeting called by the chair (including conference calls of committees). Committee members are to participate in at least 50% of all scheduled and/or called meetings. If members do not participate in the minimum amount, then their voting rights are revoked and their spot may be replaced by the chair.

- 2.1.1.1 Participation.** Members who participate:
- (a) vote on issues as requested.

- (b) serve on committees and/ or task forces.
- (c) maintain a working knowledge of the events, issues and priorities concerning the committee's areas of responsibility.
- (d) communicate with USEF and AQHA staff on issues that affect the committee's areas of responsibility.
- (e) continually review policies and stay current of the activities of the committee and assist the committee's efforts to support programs implemented.

**2.1.2 NUMBER of MEETINGS.** All chairs (including standing) must organize and direct a minimum of 4 meetings and /or conference calls per year.

**2.1.3 MEMBERSHIP.** Members must maintain a current USEF and/or AQHA membership.

**2.1.4 STRUCTURE and RESPONSIBILITIES.** Each committee will elect the following officers with the following responsibilities:

- (a) Chair; organizes and conducts a minimum of four conference calls per year and is a spokesperson for the committee.
- (b) Vice-Chair; takes on the responsibilities of the Chair when the Chair is unable to assume their responsibilities.
- (c) Whip; keeps the committee on task and enforces time constraints and staying on agenda items.
- (d) Secretary; keeps accurate minutes and distributes them among the members and coaches' website.

**2.1.4.1 Shared responsibilities.** The Varsity Steering Committee and Executive Committee will share the same Chair, Vice-Chair, Whip and Secretary.

**2.1.5 QUORUM.** To constitute a quorum all meeting notices (including conference calls) must be sent at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting date.

## **2.2 VARSITY STEERING COMMITTEE.**

**2.2.1 PURPOSE.** The Varsity Steering Committee (VSC) is empowered to review all rules and policies pertaining to Varsity Equestrian. Members of this committee form all standing committees.

**2.2.2 MEMBERS.** The VSC is made up of active and interested coaches, administrators, graduate assistants, and directors of equestrian operations who participate in at least one meeting.

**2.2.3 NUMBER per INSTITUTION.** Each institution is limited to having four members on the VSC.

## **2.3 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.**

**2.3.1 PURPOSE.** The Executive Committee (EC) is empowered to adopt and amend all rules and policies pertaining to Varsity Equestrian.

**2.3.2 MEMBERS.** The EC is composed of a USEF and an AQHA representative as well as one designated representative per each member institution from the Steering Committee.

**2.3.3 ELECTIONS.** Elections for the Varsity Steering Committee/Executive Committee Chair and Vice-Chair will be held prior to discussion of new business at the annual meeting. The chair and vice-chair will:

- (a) be coaches representing different disciplines.
- (b) serve a maximum of three consecutive years as chair.

### **2.3.4 Additional Responsibilities of the VSC/EC Chair and Vice Chair**

**2.3.4.1** The VSC/EC Chair will:

- (a) serve as the figurehead for varsity equestrian; representing and promoting the mission of our sport.
- (b) oversee the standing committees and their adherence to their purpose and responsibilities as set in this rulebook.
- (c) serve as an ex-officio member of every standing committee and votes in these committees only in cases of ties.
- (d) conduct all executive meeting conference calls and annual meetings.
- (e) receive, distribute, and archive in a timely manner all post completion forms (master score sheet, competition form, and steward's report) to the appropriate standing committees and individuals.

**2.3.4.2** The VSC/EC Vice-Chair will:

- (a) fulfill the role of Chairperson in the absence of the Chair and be in training for the role of Chair.

(b) take minutes during all executive meetings conference calls and annual meetings.

**2.3.4 ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES of the CHAIR.** The VSC/EC Chair will serve as an ex-officio member of every standing committee and votes in these committees only in cases of ties.

**2.3.5 QUORUM.** A quorum for the Executive Committee will be 2/3.

## **2.4 STANDING COMMITTEES**

**2.4.1 PURPOSE.** The Standing Committees bring a number of knowledgeable individuals into a defined area of the group's activity; to continually examine and make sound recommendations to the voting body of the group; to better achieve the group's goals and objectives for the betterment for the sport, the athletes and the institutions.

**2.4.2 MEMBERS.** Any VSC member may request appointment to a standing committee in writing to the VSC Chair. The newly elected Chair and Vice-Chair, new VSC Chair, AQHA representative, and USEF representative will assign members at the annual meeting based on the criteria for each committee and the individuals' preferences.

**2.4.3 CHAIR ELECTIONS.** Nomination and election for VSC Chair and Vice-Chair will be conducted at the annual meeting. Standing Committee Chairs, Vice Chairs, Secretaries and Whips are then selected by the members of each committee. A member of the VSC may be nominated for multiple chairs and will be given their choice of committee chairs if they receive the largest number of votes for multiple committees. In this case the VSC member with the second highest number of votes would be selected as the chair of the committee the person did not select to chair. No person can serve as a chair for multiple standing committees. When voting for the Chair and Vice-Chair, there will be one vote per each institution and time will be given before the vote for each institution to decide on how to cast the vote.

**2.4.4 INSTITUTIONAL LIMITATIONS.** No more than two representatives from each school can be a chair of a standing committee. Not more than two members of an institution may be a member of a standing committee and there should be no more than three members from any single conference. The Selection and Standard and Ethics committees are excluded from this rule.

**2.4.5 QUORUM.** A quorum for all standing committees is 2/3.

### **2.4.6 COMMITTEE DETAILS.**

#### **2.4.6.1 Competition Committee.**

**2.4.6.1.1 Purpose.** The Competition Committee's purpose is to:

- (a) Review recommendations that have been submitted for adoption or amendment of rules which pertain to Varsity Equestrian events.
- (b) Ensure fair and equal competition for all competitors is a primary focus.
- (c) Establish rules to ensure all horses and animals are treated humanely and with dignity, respect, and compassion.
- (d) Develop the format of Varsity Equestrian.
- (e) Propose new and refine existing awards for Varsity Equestrian competition.
- (f) Plan and enhance the Varsity Equestrian National Championships (VENC) in conjunction with the Championship Committee.
- (g) Help provide criteria needed for the selection process in conjunction with the selection committee.

**2.4.6.1.2 Membership.** The Competition Committee will have a suggested minimum of six members. Care will be taken in selecting a balanced number of western and hunter seat oriented members.

#### **2.4.6.2 Championship Committee.**

**2.4.6.2.1 Purpose.** The Championship Committee's purpose is to:

- (a) Plan all details pertaining to the VENC while working to support the host institution.
- (b) Review the list of approved USEF and AQHA approved judges and make a recommendation on judges and steward for the VENC.
- (c) Work with the Competition Committee to develop a championship competition format that is fair to all participating institutions, fan friendly and in accordance with industry standards.
- (d) Ensure VENC is appropriately staffed to include the appointment of a championship horse ranking task force.
- (e) The Championship Committee will have a suggested minimum of six members. Care will be taken in selecting a balanced number of western and hunter seat oriented members.

### **2.4.6.3 Legislative Committee.**

**2.4.6.3.1 Purpose.** The Legislative Committee's purpose is to:

- (a) remain current on all NCAA legislation regarding Equestrian.
- (b) draft necessary legislation for submission to NCAA on behalf of the VSC.
- (c) review and/or approve any legislation submitted to the NCAA regarding Equestrian before it is presented to the VSC and approved by the EC.
- (d) maintain a working VE rulebook in cooperation with Competition and Championship committees to comprise all rules and regulations pertaining to the sport of Varsity Equestrian.

**2.4.6.3.2 Membership.** The Legislative Committee will have a suggested minimum of five members.

### **2.4.6.4 Promotion Committee.**

**2.4.6.4.1 Purpose.** The Promotion Committee's purpose is to:

- (a) make recommendations regarding the planning and implementation of projects which promote Varsity Equestrian and publicize the benefits of participation in the sport.
- (b) make recommendations on promotional and instructional collateral, which educate athletes, coaches, and member and/or nonmember institutions in the development, enhancement or management of a Varsity Equestrian program.
- (c) examine VE programs, activities and other standing committee recommendations in order to develop marketing material, strengthen VE's position in the marketplace and maintain a consistent message for all areas of the sport.
- (d) include more interactive applications to the Varsity Equestrian Website.

**2.4.6.4.2 Membership.** The Promotion Committee will have a suggested minimum of five members.

### **2.4.6.5 Sponsorship and Finance Committee.**

**2.4.6.5.1 Purpose.** The Sponsorship and Finance Committee's purpose is to:

- (a) attract sponsors for VE with the aid of every standing committee.
- (b) develop year long relationships to benefit the sport as a whole.
- (c) develop marketing collateral to be used in promoting the benefits of partnering with Varsity Equestrian.
- (d) work in conjunction with the Championship Committee to ensure all sponsor requirements are met at the VENC.
- (e) oversee the finances of Varsity Equestrian.
- (f) oversee appropriation of funds brought in via sponsorship, entry fees, etc.
- (g) create a budget for the VENC with the Championship Committee.
- (h) report all decisions to the EC for approval.
- (i) recommend to the EC the amount of money that each institution should pay for the VENC.
- (j) establish membership fees for all VSC members.
- (k) create a budget, with the Promotions Committee, for promotional activities (i.e. website, brochure, promotional events, etc.)

**2.4.6.5.2 Membership.** The Sponsorship and Finance Committee will have a suggested minimum of five members.

- (a) oversee the finances of Varsity Equestrian.
- (b) oversee appropriation of funds brought in via sponsorship, entry fees, etc.
- (c) create a budget for the VENC with the Championship Committee.
- (d) report all decisions to the EC for approval.
- (e) recommend to the EC the amount of money that each institution should pay for the VENC.
- (f) establish membership fees for all VSC members.
- (g) create a budget, with the Promotions Committee, for promotional activities (i.e. website, brochure, promotional events, etc.)

### **2.4.6.7 Selection Committee.**

**2.4.6.7.1 Purpose.** The Selection Committee's purpose is to:

- (a) review all competition information to determine the most qualified teams and individuals to participate in the VENC.
- (b) determine which qualification criteria will be used in the selection process with subsequent approval by the EC.

- (c) rank all selected teams and individuals in order of competitiveness for the VENC and for a mid-year ranking.
- (d) gather with the help of the USEF representative, all the information used in the selection process.
- (e) determine, with the Championship Committee, the number of teams and individuals that will compete at the VENC.

**2.4.6.7.2 Membership.** The Selection Committee will have a minimum of eight and a maximum of ten members to include the USEF and AQHA representatives and at least three administrators.

- (a) The committee shall include an equal number of coaching representatives from each discipline; not more than one from a school, or two from a conference.

**2.4.6.8 Standards and Ethics Committee.**

**2.4.6.8.1 Purpose.** The Standard and Ethics Committee's purpose is to:

- (a) enforce the bylaws of this manual.
- (b) establish a process to submit and review requests.
- (c) review issues and interpret rules of immediate concern when necessary.

**2.4.6.8.2 Membership.** The Standards and Ethics will have a suggested minimum of five members to include an administrator and the USEF and AQHA representatives.

**2.4.6.9 Officials Committee.**

**2.4.6.9.1 Purpose.** The Officials Committee's purpose is to oversee officials:

**2.4.6.9.1.1 General.**

- (a) Continue to educate officials as to rules and guidelines of Varsity Equestrian.
- (b) Foster relationships with licensed officials of USEF and AQHA.
- (c) Oversee issues involving officials at varsity equestrian events.
- (d) Utilize competition evaluation forms to track officials.

**2.4.6.9.1.2. Championship.**

- (a) To nominate a slate of judges and stewards for VENC to be approved by the Executive Committee (Judges to be contacted by AQHA and USEF representatives).
- (b) Hire stewards.
- (c) Issue contracts for all officials.
- (d) Provide appropriate materials to officials prior to and post championships.
- (e) Oversee hospitality for officials during championship.

**2.4.6.9.2 Membership.** The officials committee will have a suggested minimum of six members to include a balance of coaching representatives from each discipline.

## Legislative Process

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### 3.1 DEFINITIONS.

**3.1.1 BYLAW ITEM.** A proposal to adopt or amend a bylaw or rule in this manual is called a bylaw item. A bylaw item proposal will include a title, intent, committees affected, bylaw to be changed, how it will be read, source of the recommendation, effective date, rationale for the change, and estimated budget impact.

**3.1.2 ACTION ITEM.** A proposal not pertaining to a bylaw, but requiring action by any committee or individual of the VSC on behalf of Varsity Equestrian is called an action item. An action item proposal will include a title, intent, committees effected, action to be done, source of the recommendation, effective date, rationale for the change, and estimated budget impact.

**3.1.3 ANNUAL MEETING.** Annual meeting refers to either of the two biannual meetings of Varsity Equestrian, one during the USEF convention and one during the summer or at such other time as may be prescribed by the Executive Committee.

### 3.2 BYLAWS AND ACTION ITEMS.

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**3.2.1 BYLAW and ACTION ITEM PROPOSALS.** While most amendments or proposed adoptions of bylaws will come from a standing committee, any member of the VSC may propose a bylaw or action item by:

- (a) Writing the proposal item as defined in article 3.1.1, and
- (b) Submitting to the Chair the bylaw item 30 days prior to an annual meeting or submitting the action item by the Friday before the next scheduled EC meeting or conference call.
- (c) The Chair and EC may move the item to committee for review before voting or discussion if it is submitted by an individual or greatly affects a second committee.

**3.2.2 AUTHORITY to ADOPT or AMEND BYLAWS.** The bylaws outlined in this manual maybe amended or new bylaw adopted at an annual meeting of Varsity Equestrian by a 2/3 majority vote of the Executive Committee.

**3.2.2.1 Extraordinary Rule Change exception.** A bylaw maybe be adopted or amended during an EC conference call if, by a 3/4 majority the EC feels implementing the bylaw is necessary before the next annual meeting.

**3.2.3 AUTHORITY to ADOPT ACTION ITEMS.** Action items will be approved at any EC meeting, conference call or annual meeting, by a 2/3 majority vote of the Executive Committee.

### **3.3 NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES.**

**3.3.1 BYLAW CHANGES.** The VSC membership will be notified of changes to the bylaws by annual meeting minutes, a published bylaw amendment sheet posted on the coaches' website, and viewing the changed bylaws in grey highlights in the manual.

**3.3.2 ACTIONS.** The VSC membership will be notified of actions from EC meeting and EC conference calls by viewing the EC minutes on the coaches' website and receiving quarterly notes from the Chair.

## **Ethical Conduct and Enforcement**

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### **4.1 GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

**4.1.1 HONESTY and SPORTSMANSHIP.** Individuals employed by (or associated with) a member institution to administer, conduct or coach intercollegiate athletics and all participating student-athletes shall act with honesty and sportsmanship at all times so that Varsity Equestrian as a whole, their institutions and they, as individuals, shall represent the honor and dignity of fair play and the generally recognized high standards associated with wholesome competitive sports.

**4.1.2 COACHES CODE of CONDUCT.** A Coaches Code of Conduct must be signed and submitted to the Standards and Ethics Committee Chair prior to beginning of each season. The Code is found in the Appendix.

**4.1.3 Review Protocol.** After the Standards and Ethics Committee review of the Competition Form, the following protocol will be followed:

- (a) First offense – Written notice of infraction or questionable conduct will be sent to the head coach by the Standards and Ethics Committee chair. A copy will be sent to the VE Chair. The coach has 30 days to correct the problem, upon receipt of notice, and/or respond in writing.
- (b) Second Offense same issue – Notice will be sent to the head coach *and* sports administrator by VE chair.
- (c) Third offense same issue – Notice will be sent to the head coach *and* Institutional Athletics Director, and will be reviewed further by the Standards and Ethics committee.

### **4.2 UNETHICAL CONDUCT.**

Unethical conduct by a current or former institutional staff member or enrolled or prospective student-athlete may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- (a) no coaches, school personnel, team members or spectators are allowed to coach during the scoring of a ride. Stewards shall give an initial warning to coaches and/or competitors that they feel are in violation of this rule. Following the initial warning, subsequent infractions will result in elimination of the rider at the discretion of the steward.

**4.2.1 Protocol for reporting a Code of Conduct violation.**

- (a) If a violation of the Code of Conduct is witnessed, the steward needs to be notified immediately. The steward needs to address the situation and take appropriate action to

ensure the remainder of the competition runs smoothly. The steward will have the final decision on the matter.

- (b) After the competition the violation needs to be reported on the Competition Form AS WELL as on the Stewards Report, and both need to be submitted to the Standards and Ethics Committee for review, within one week.

#### **4.2.2 Infractions.**

- (a) Minor Infractions are violations that occur accidentally, unintentionally, or are handled in the rulebook with a warning. Examples:
  - (1) Failing to list a steward on original show bill.
  - (2) Failing to send required materials to the visiting school within the timeline.
  - (3) A coaching incident during a competitive ride.
  - (4) Rider competing with aids not consistent with the horse list.
- (b) Major Infractions are violations with the intent to gain a competitive advantage.  
Potential Major Infractions:
  - (1) Paying off a judge.
  - (2) Rearranging the draw.

#### **4.2.3 Protocol for reporting a rule infraction.**

- (a) If a rule infraction or interpretation of the rules is needed requiring immediate response from the Standards and Ethics committee, the following steps must be taken:
  - (1) A written letter must be submitted by the Head Coach to the Chair of the Standards and Ethics Committee within one week following the completion of the competition.
  - (2) The letter must be accompanied by a \$100 protest fee made out to the VENC Finance Committee Chair.
- (b) A copy of the letter will be submitted to the opposing school for an opportunity to respond. The opposing school has seven days to send a written response to the allegations to the Standards and Ethics Committee.
- (c) Once the response is received the Standards and Ethics Committee will review the complaint.
- (d) If a letter of response is not received within seven days, the Standards and Ethics Committee will move forward with the review.
- (e) If the protest is upheld, the \$100 fine will be returned and appropriate action will be taken to resolve the complaint.
- (f) If the protest is not upheld, the \$100 fine will be submitted to the VENC Finance Committee Chair and no further action will be taken.

#### **4.2.4 If an issue arises where no rule is broken, but a school would like serious discussion or an interpretation.** The following steps must be taken:

- (a) School A makes a complaint. The complaint must be filed in writing.
- (b) School B is given the opportunity to respond.
- (c) Both institutions will have the opportunity to make a written statement to the committee, sent to the Standards and Ethics chairperson.
- (d) Information will be sent to committee members 5 days prior to the call.
- (e) One representative from each school will be invited on the call to make a verbal statement, which will be limited to 5 minutes. School A will call in first, make their statement, then leave the call. School B will call in second, make their statement, then leave the call.
- (f) School A would then be notified to get back on the call in the event there are any further questions from the committee.
- (g) The Standards and Ethics committee will inform both institutions of the decision in a timely manner.

**4.2.5 On-going review.** The Standards and Ethics Committee will review issues reported on the Competition Form following competitions. Issues that do not require interpretation will be reviewed bi-annually and forwarded to the appropriate committee for further review.

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## **Competition Organization**

### **5.1 HOSTING REQUIREMENTS.**

#### **5.1.1 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS.**

**5.1.1.1 Host Institution.** Any school in good standing with the governing bodies, NCAA, Conference, USEF and AQHA is eligible for hosting a competition, provided their Head Coach/Coaches and/or institution is a current member with USEF and AQHA and are able to provide suitable facilities, horses and equipment for all entries. The following details the needs of a host institution:

**5.1.1.1.1 Fan-based needs.**

- (a) Bleachers
- (a) Restrooms
- (b) Concessions
- (c) PA system
- (d) Parking
- (e) Programs
- (f) Scoreboards

**5.1.1.1.2 Competitor-based needs.**

- (a) Warm-up arena or time in competition arena
- (b) Competition arena (based on rules herein and USEF)
- (c) Dressing area
- (d) Information packets for visiting schools
- (e) Video of all rides for the judges review if needed. All attempts should be made to video from the judge's point of view.

**5.1.1.1.3 Horses.**

- (a) Safe as determined by the steward and/or judge.
- (b) Schooled previously in the host arena where the competition is being held.
- (c) Typed or suited for their particular event
- (d) No horse may be used twice in the same event, or bracket on the same day of a tournament, and a suitable alternate in each event will be provided.
- (e) Horses may only be ridden in two divisions **per competition/day for** a total of four rides per **competition/day**.
- (f) The owner of a horse that is being used in the competition may draw that horse provided the institution has paid for all actual and necessary expenses for that horse for a minimum of one full semester and the horse is available for all student athletes to ride during the season and is not ridden solely by the owner. The owner may not draw the horse during the initial semester the institution begins the lease. A new lease is begun anytime the horse leaves the care and responsibility of the institution.
- (g) Use of equine medication will adhere to the regulations of USEF therapeutic drug use guidelines for all horses being exhibited at the meet.

**5.1.1.1.4 Equipment.**

- (a) All tack must be safe and in good repair.
- (b) Jumps are recommended to meet or exceed USEF standards. Break away cups or pins are required for the back rail of oxers.
- (c) Proper markers for Varsity Equitation arena: minimum letters required are A, K, E, H, C, M, B, F. Visual barriers should be supplied for corners and sides at E and B.
- (d) **During the VENC visual barriers must be supplied for all sides with an opening at A.**
- (e) Proper markers for Varsity Horsemanship patterns shall include cones with a minimum height of 12" maximum height of 2'.
- (f) In the event that a specialty spur is not suitable, the alternate spur must be approved by the steward.

**5.1.1.1.5 Arena Sizes.**

- ~~(a)~~ For Equitation the Arena size is a standard size of 20 x 40 meters for Equitation. Due to location, inclement weather, etc. a minimum arena size is 18 x 36 meters.
- ~~(b)~~ For Equitation over Fences arena size should be a minimum of 100' x 150'.
- ~~(c)~~ For Reining the arena size should be a minimum of 100' x 150'.

~~(d)~~ For Horsemanship the size of the arena is to be determined by the configuration of the pattern.

#### **5.1.1.1.5 Scorecard.**

- (a) The same horse cannot appear on the same scorecard, with the exception of Equitation over Fences.
- (b) Scorecards from the first section may not be in the judge's possession during the second section with the exception of Equitation over Fences.
- (c) Must be written in pen.
- (d) Standard judging cards are to be used.
- (e) For a regular season competition both head coaches and steward from a competition must sign-off on a master score sheet one week prior to the scores becoming official.
- (f) Scorecards must note simple or flying changes for all score cards as well as single or two-handed in a curb bit. Riders shall not be penalized for following the list of aids.

#### **5.1.1.1.6 Event Management.**

- (a) Music is encouraged; however it must be played soft enough so that competitors are able to hear the signals called by the judges.

### **5.1.2. PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS.**

#### **5.1.2.1 Qualified medical personnel on the grounds.**

- (a) Qualified medical personnel with no other duties and with appropriate medical equipment, as required by their certifying State or EMS Region, must be present during all scheduled performances at all competitions during all scheduled schooling sessions over fences, and on call during all scheduled performances.
  - (1) Qualified medical personnel is a currently certified or licensed EMT, or Paramedic, or a Physician or Nurse trained in pre-hospital trauma care and currently certified or licensed in their profession.
  - (3) It is strongly recommended that EMTs and/or Paramedics be used to fill this position. Medical personnel must not exceed the scope of their practice.

#### **5.1.2.2 Announcer** is strongly suggested for a regular season competition and is required for the VENC.

#### **5.1.2.3 Schooling and demonstration riders**

- (a) Riders must be safe and suitable.

#### **5.1.2.4 Secretary.**

##### **5.1.2.4.1 Duties.**

- (a) Is responsible for sending the *Visiting Team Guide* within the time stated herein.
- (b) Sends official packets to steward, judges and visiting team 15 days prior to competition to include the following:
  - (1) Current Varsity Equestrian Manual.
  - (2) Equitation test; Reining and Horsemanship patterns, to include the written test/pattern and a drawn test/pattern.
  - (3) *Officials Information Sheet*.
- (c) Sends Equitation over Fences course to steward, judges and visiting team 8 days prior to competition.
- (d) Sends competing schools the names of judges a minimum of 30 days prior to the meet and stewards' names will be provided 15 days prior to meet. Visiting team has 7 days to dispute selected officials.
- (e) Sends competing schools the written Horsemanship, Reining and Equitation on the Flat patterns/tests by 5 P.M., of **the earliest time zone of schools competing in the event**, 15 days prior to the competition date. If the test is received after 5 P.M. 15 days prior to the competition date, the host team will be penalized one (1) win/loss point per day until the test is received. The visiting team will submit a letter to the standards and ethics committee (1) week prior to the competition stating the infraction
- (f) Sends competing schools the jumping course for Equitation over Fences by 5 P.M. of the earliest time zone of the schools competing in the event, 8 days prior to the

competition date. If the test is received after 5 P.M. 8 days prior to the competition date, the host team will be penalized one (1) win/loss point per day until the test is received. The visiting team will submit a letter to the Standards and Ethics committee (1) week prior to the competition stating the infraction.

- (g) Arranges for the competition steward and judges' needs.
- (h) Sends the three post competition forms (master score sheet, competition form, and steward's report) within two business days of the competition to the current VSC/ES Chairperson.
- (i) A copy of the competition form must be e-mailed to the opposing institution at the same time all other competition documents are mailed to the Varsity Equestrian Chair.
- (j) Runs the coin toss and draw.

#### **5.1.2.5 In-gate personnel.**

- (a) Keeps coaches and exhibitors abreast of their order of go.
- (b) Keeps the event moving on a tight schedule.
- (c) Communicates with the announcer regarding each rider as they enter the arena.
- (d) Monitors compliance with the optional 45 second ride prior to entering the arena.

#### **5.1.2.6 Warm-Up personnel.**

- (a) Monitors time of warm-ups and the limits set for maneuvers or jumps.
- (b) Monitors for excessive application of aids and reports same to steward.
- (c) Monitors warm-up arena obstacles.
- (d) In the case of a fence being knocked down in the warm-up, a coach or event management may reset the fence.
  - (1) No time is to be added to the warm-up.

**5.1.2.7 Scribes.** A rules-educated scribe shall be supplied for each judge by the hosting school. The visiting school may also provide a scribe. During the VENC, the scribe cannot be a current Equestrian student-athlete.

##### **5.1.2.7.1 Responsibilities.**

- (a) The scribe will be responsible for recording numerical scores and descriptive remarks from the judge onto the judges score card. The judge may record his/her own scores and remarks for Equitation over Fences.
- (b) A scribe is only allowed to communicate with the judge during a rider's test by saying "score" when a score is required. A scribe is not allowed to remark on the rider's test, even if requested by the judge; i.e. a scribe is not allowed to help the judge determine if a rider is on pattern or has completed a required maneuver.
  - (1) All scores and remarks must be written in pen. If the judge changes a score after it has been marked on the scorecard, the judge must initial the change.
- (c) No communication (cell phone, PDA, etc.) is allowed between the scribes and persons outside of show management until entire event is over.
- (d) Scribes will behave in a professional manner.
- (e) A scribe is not required for Equitation over Fences.
- (f) Anyone sitting with the judge(s) is considered a scribe.

**5.1.2.8 Master Scorer.** An educated (non-student-athlete) master scorer shall be supplied for each competition by the hosting school.

##### **5.1.2.8.1 Responsibilities.**

- (a) The scorer is responsible for correctly calculating and posting each test's total score as well as the team's scores.
- (b) All scores and remarks must be written in pen or typed on 2 copies of a master scorecard showing all scores for the competition.
- (c) All scores should be calculated on an index-tape calculator, and then stapled to the original judge's scorecard, with the exception of fences.
- (d) It is advisable for all original tests to be held at the host university for the competition year.
- (e) Visiting schools must be supplied with copies of all tests prior to departure.
- (f) Competition and event winners are based on the summation of the scores.
- (g) VENC bracket winners are based on the current win/loss point system used for Varsity Equestrian. Two riders compete on the same horse. The rider with the highest score will receive one point for their team. The rider with the lower score will receive zero points for their team. If the two riders tie on the same horse, neither

rider will receive a point for their team. Team points will be added together within a bracket to determine the bracket winner.

- (1) In the case of a team tie within a bracket using the win/loss scoring system, team raw scores will be added together, the one lowest score will be dropped from each team score and the team with the highest resulting raw score will be declared the bracket winner. If a tie still remains within a bracket, raw scores will be recalculated to include the one dropped score per team and the team with the highest resulting raw score will be declared the bracket winner. If a tie still remains within a bracket after the two above tie breakers are used, the team with the highest raw scores from the senior judge will be declared the bracket winner. Senior judges will be determined at the draw for each bracket.

#### **5.1.2.9 Arena Crew.**

##### **5.1.2.9.1 Responsibilities.**

- (a) Set up and/or take down the equitation arena
- (b) Set up and/or take down jumping arena
- (c) Set up cones for Horsemanship
- (d) Set up cones for Reining
- (e) Set up area where judges will sit
- (f) Replace rails that fall during equitation over fences

**5.1.2.10 Stewards.** One steward is required for a regular season competition. A USEF steward, and two additional stewards per discipline are required for the VENC. Junior and Senior stewards will be designated before competition begins.

##### **5.1.2.10.1 Regular Season Responsibilities.**

- ~~(a)~~ Overall monitoring of rules and regulations during the competition.
- (b) Investigates and acts upon any alleged rule violation without waiting for a protest.
- (c) Watching the schooling and warm-up of the horses for safety and lameness, with the best interest of the student-athlete and horse in mind.
- (d) Monitors fence height and width.
- (e) Addresses rule infractions and serves as liaison regarding re-rides, after communication with the judge. The judge has the final word on whether a re-ride is granted.
- (f) The steward shall give an initial warning to coaches, competitors and/or spectators that they feel are in violation of a minor infraction (coaching during competition, schooling outside of warm-up time, etc.). Following the initial warning, subsequent infractions will result in elimination of the offending rider, or possible removal from the grounds of coaches or spectators, at their discretion.
- (g) The steward determines if a person's poor behavior (unethical, unsportsmanlike, dishonest, etc) is considered a minor or major infraction, and can act to have the individual removed.
- (h) The steward shall give an initial warning to coaches and/or competitors that they feel are in violation of over-schooling of any horses, including excessive use of aids and/or the repetition of maneuvers. Following the initial warning, subsequent infractions will result in elimination of the offending rider, at their discretion.
- (i) Approving the final scores and official program.
- (j) Instructing host school or management committee to make any alterations to the course or arena or to any technical detail associated with the conduct of the competition which he/she considers necessary per VENC, NCAA and NGB rules.
- (k) The steward, along with the judges must determine that the course and/or pattern is fair, at the standard of the level offered, and that knowledge of local conditions does not play any part.

##### **5.1.2.10.1 VENC Responsibilities. In addition to the above responsibilities, VENC stewards must also comply with the following:**

- (a) The junior or senior steward shall immediately report any rule infraction, rule enforcement, concerns, etc to the main USEF competition steward who will have the final ruling power over any discrepancies or appeals.
- (b) In the event of an extraordinary circumstance the steward s have discretion to use their best judgment to resolve the situation. If their resolution contradicts this rulebook it must be recorded in the steward's report.

##### **5.1.2.10.2 Qualifications.**

- (a) The host institution cannot hire a steward that is currently or has previously been employed by the university within the past four years.
- (b) The host institution cannot hire an alumnus of their university as a steward unless they have graduated at least four or more years ago.
- (c) The host institution may not hire a steward who is the parent of a prospective student-athlete. (Effective 8-1-10.)
- (d) The host institution may not hire a steward who is the parent of a current student-athlete at either competing institution.
- (e) The host institution cannot hire a steward that is currently a volunteer coach for either institution.

#### **5.1.2.11 Judges.**

##### **5.1.2.11.1 Responsibilities.**

- (a) Judges will be provided with score sheets that include a breakdown of required maneuvers with appropriate scoring columns. A judging guideline is recommended where each maneuver is drawn for the judge.
- (b) Judges using their scribes and scorers shall be required to judge a minimum of two test demonstration rides or demonstrations by a non-competing rider(s) to become more familiar with the test prior to the start of competition. Reining and Equitation over Fences are the exceptions where the host school may opt to provide only one or no demonstration rides. These rides will be performed on a horse that is not being used in the competition in that event.
  - (1) Coaches and steward shall be present during these test/demonstration and questions or concerns will be addressed at this time.
- (c) Judges are not required to watch the schooling of horses, but may if they wish to do so.
- (d) Judges are not permitted to watch the warm-up of the horses by the competition riders. It is required that judges turn and face away from the arena during competition warm-up.
- (e) Each rider is to be scored on the required test/pattern/course and numerical scores shall be written on each rider's scorecard. Descriptive remarks on maneuvers and collective remarks are highly recommended.
  - (1) If a judge changes a score after it has been marked on the scorecard, the judge must initial the change in pen.
- (f) The judge will select an MVP for each event.
- (g) Judges grant re-rides with communication from the steward during competition.
- (h) In the event of an extraordinary circumstance the judge has the discretion to use their common sense to resolve the situation. If there resolution contradicts this Manual it must be recorded in the steward's report.
- (i) Judges must remain at the competition venue until released by show management.

##### **5.1.3.11.2 Qualifications.**

- (a) Hunter seat judges must be current USEF hunter seat Equitation rated judges.
- (b) Western judges must be current AQHA carded judges, or in the event separate event judges are used, the Reining judge must be either an AQHA or an NRHA carded judge.
- (c) The host institution cannot hire a judge that is currently or has previously been employed by the university within the past three years.
- (d) The host institution cannot hire an alumnus of their university as a judge unless they graduated four or more years previously.
- (e) The host institution may not hire a judge who is the parent of a prospective student-athlete.
- (f) The host institution may not hire a judge who is the parent of or a current student athlete at either competing institution.
- (g) Event organizers will notify the visiting team(s) of the judges at least 30 days prior to the competition.
- (h) If a hosting school wishes to use a non-recognized judge, the visiting school must be notified prior to the hiring of the judge.
  - (1) The attached Amendment Form shall be filled in and approved by competing schools a minimum of 14 days prior to the event.

## **5.2. ENTRY REQUIREMENTS.**

### **5.2.1 MINIMUM ENTRY REQUIREMENTS for a COUNTABLE HEAD TO HEAD VARSITY EQUESTRIAN COMPETITION.**

- (a) Two schools are required for a regular seasonal competition in an official Varsity Equestrian competition.
- (b) In order for a competition to count in Varsity Equestrian rankings, the competition must meet criteria of the VENC selection committee and the Varsity Equestrian competition committee based on the following of all rules herein. Competing schools must be in good standing with the governing bodies, NCAA, Conference, USEF and AQHA.
- (c) The host school may run both hunter seat and western events in the four equitation based events (Equitation on the flat, Equitation over Fences, Horsemanship and Reining) for it to be counted in Varsity Equestrian rankings. Host school may run a hunter seat only meet based on Equitation on the Flat and Equitation over Fences or a western competition only using Horsemanship and Reining. Other events may be tested with varying numbers of riders as exhibitions but will not be counted in final scores. Any student athlete competing in an exhibition ride AND in one of the four countable events will have to ride her countable ride first or separate judges must be used.
- (d) In order for a school's scores in a varsity competition to count in selection committee review for the VENC, a school competing is required a minimum of 4 riders per event in head to head competition. There must be a minimum of 4 different athletes per discipline and a minimum of four athletes per event. In a four or more school tournament, there must be a minimum of three riders per event. There is no limit on the maximum number of athletes per event provided both institutions are in agreement. There are no changes to the number of competitors 15 days prior to the competition unless both institutions agree to change the number.
- (e) Competitions without sufficient numbers of athletes will not be counted in Varsity Equestrian rankings, and will be considered scrimmages.
- (f) Exhibitions within events will allow for competition of additional riders. Host school will determine number of exhibitions allowed and will offer same number to visiting team.
- (g) Exhibitions will be declared prior to event and will not count towards team scores.

### **5.2.2 VENC ENTRIES.**

- (a) Equitation and Equitation over Fences will be offered for the Hunter-seat Team competition with four riders per event per team. Horsemanship and Reining will be offered for the Western competition with four riders per event per team.
- (b) Twelve Hunter-seat and Westerns teams will qualify separately for the Varsity Equestrian National Championship through the VENC Selection Committee process. Hunter-seat and Western teams will qualify separately.
- (c) Eight individual riders and two alternates for the four events offered above will qualify for the VE Individual Championships through the VENC Selection Committee process. These individuals may participate, but are not required to, in the team competition listed above.

## **5.3 COMPETITION ROUTINE.**

All events for which rules are provided herein must be conducted accordingly. In the case where there are not applicable rules, the rules and regulations of NCAA, USEF for hunt seat Equitation on the Flat and Equitation over Fences, and AQHA for western Horsemanship and Reining, will govern.

### **5.3.1 SEEDING for the VENC.** Seeding will be determined prior to competition by the Varsity Selection Committee.

- (a) First round placement of competing teams into brackets will be done by draw prior to the first day of competition. A draw will also occur to determine which team will be placed on left/right side of bracket.

### **5.3.2 DRAWING for HORSES.**

- (a) There will be one coin toss to determine which team goes first in each event. Winner of the coin toss will chose one event in which to go first. The order of other events

will alternate (example: 1st in Horsemanship, 2nd Equitation, 1st in Fences, 2nd Reining.)

- (b) Order of riders will alternate between home and away throughout each event.
- (c) Drawings for horses will be by lot. Both schools will have a representative present during the draw. Both schools will compete on the same horses in each event (i.e. each event is drawn twice).
- (d) The Order of go will be determined by the order of the horses drawn. The exhibition horse will precede all the other horses.
- (e) When a competing rider has a personally owned horse in the draw, that rider's name must be drawn first without her horse in the pool of potential draws.
- (f) The order of go cannot be altered after the draw is complete unless agreed upon by both coaches and the steward.
- (g) Competing riders are not permitted to ride after the competition draw is complete until time for their warm-up and competition ride.

#### 5.3.2.1 **VENC. Drawing for Horses**

- (a) Placement of horses into brackets will be made by steward(s) and the Horse Selection Committee (appointed by Championship Committee) with the final decisions made by a steward.
- (b) Drawings for horses within a bracket will be by lot. Within a bracket, both schools will compete on the same horses in each event (i.e. each event is drawn twice).
- (c) A competition steward and show secretary will be present during all draws.
- (d) Horse order of go will be determined prior to draw and rider order of go will be determined by the horses drawn.
- (e) The owner of a horse that is being used in the competition may draw that horse provided the institution has paid for all the actual and necessary expenses for that horse for a minimum of one semester and the horse is available for all student athletes to ride during the season and is not ridden solely by the owner. The owner may not draw the horse during the initial semester the institution begins the lease.
- (f) A senior judge for each bracket will be randomly determined by event management during the drawing for horses.

#### 5.3.2 **JUDGES, STEWARDS and COACHES MEETING.**

The host institution will hold a judges, stewards and coaches meeting prior to the start of the competition. A representative from each team, the steward and judges must be present at this meeting.

- (a) *The Coaches Meeting Checklist* must be read during the coaches meeting.
- (b) Prior to the start of the competition, coaches, judge(s) and steward will determine the video equipment to be used and the placement for the video equipment in each event.

#### 5.3.3 **SCHOOLING.**

##### 5.3.3.1 **Riders.**

- (a) Competitors, including exhibition and alternates, cannot sit on a horse prior to their event on the day of competition or after the competition draw.
- (b) A "day" begins at 12:01AM and ends with the last ride of the competition/bracket.
- (c) Competitor cannot school a course over which they will compete during a tournament.

**5.3.3.2 Horses.** Each horse will be appropriately schooled by designated schooling riders for their respective events. The warm up will be based on the individual horse's needs, however, if requested by a visiting institution's coach, a horse may be asked to show any element of an upcoming test if it has not been shown.

- (a) Horses may not be re-schooled between competitors within a bracket.
- (b) Horses may be re-warmed up after extended rest.
- (c) Care should be taken when creating the competition schedule to avoid extended rest during a bracket.

**5.3.3.3 Alternate Horses.** Alternate horses must be schooled during regular schooling with the other horses competing in that event.

- (a) The alternate horses need to be readily available if called upon.

**5.3.4 DEMONSTRATION RIDES.** A minimum of two demonstration rides will be performed for the judge in Horsemanship and Equitation on the Flat. Demonstrations in Reining and Equitation over Fences are optional.

**5.3.5 SCORING SYSTEM AND FORMAT.** Varsity Competitions must contain either the two specified English events or the two specified western events or all four required events. The following point system will be used; (Equitation on the Flat – 100 pts., Equitation over fences – 100 pts., Horsemanship -70 base points., Reining – 70 base points.).

**5.3.5.1** Competition and event winners are based on the summation of the scores resulting in a win/loss point system. When two riders compete on the same horse, the rider with the highest score will receive (1) one point for their team. In the case of a tie score, both riders receive a zero for their team, however, their raw scores may be considered to break over-all discipline and/or team score results.

**5.3.5.2 Tie breakers.**

- (a) If there is a tie in one discipline; a tie breaker is used to determine the winner of that discipline. A tie breaker in a specific discipline will not affect the overall winner. (i.e. win-loss record from both disciplines will not affect the over-all winner.)
- (b) The first tie breaker when two teams have the same win-loss score will be the summation of the raw scores with the highest total determining the winner. If a tie remains, a second tie breaker will be used.
- (c) The second tie breaker when two teams have the same raw score will be the summation of the raw scores with the lowest raw score dropped. In the case of a tie for overall winner, one score per discipline will be dropped

**5.3.5.2 VENC. Scoring/Ties/Awards.**

(a) Current scoring system used in Varsity Equestrian competitions will be used. In the case of a team tie within a bracket using the win/loss scoring system, team raw scores will be added together, the one lowest score will be dropped from each team score and the team with the highest resulting raw score will be declared the bracket winner. If a tie still remains within a bracket, raw scores will be recalculated to include the one dropped score per team and the team with the highest resulting raw score will be declared the bracket winner. If a tie still remains within a bracket after the two above tie breakers are used, the team with the highest raw scores from the senior judge will be declared the bracket winner. Senior judges will be determined at the draw for each bracket.

(b) Placement of teams will be given to the top six Hunter Seat teams and the top six Western teams as well as the top eight Overall teams. Team awards given will be at the discretion of the Championship Committee (exception: Championship Hunter Seat team is awarded the USEF perpetual trophy and the Championship Western Team is awarded the AQHA perpetual trophy). It is also encouraged that all participating athletes receive a participation memento award.

(c) The Overall top eight teams will be determined by applying the following scale to their placing in each of the two discipline bracket competitions: 1<sup>st</sup> place—36 points; 2<sup>nd</sup> place—28 points; 3<sup>rd</sup> place 21 points; 4<sup>th</sup> place—15 points; 5<sup>th</sup> place—10 points; 6<sup>th</sup> place—6 points. The 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> place bracket will not take place and points for those two placings will be awarded as follows: 7<sup>th</sup> place—1.5 points; 8<sup>th</sup> place—1.5 points.

(d) In case of a tie for the Overall VENC Team Champion, each team will designate one rider per event to compete in a test chosen by the judges and scored on the same point systems used within the regular competition. The two judges for each discipline will confer to develop this test. A four minute warm up will be given to competitors and all other rules herein will govern the warm up. Competitors will compete on the same horse. Order of go will be based on a new coin toss decision for each event. During the championship bracket draw, horses will be designated for this tie-breaking situation. The win/loss point system will be used to determine the Overall VENC Team Champion. If a tie results from the win/loss point system, all raw scores will be added together to determine the winner (no scores will be dropped). If a tie still remains, the senior judges' (one per discipline, designated at the draw) raw scores will be added together to determine the winner (no scores will

be dropped). If a tie occurs in any other Overall team placing other than for the Overall VENC Team Champion those ties will not be broken.

**5.3.6 VIDEO REVIEW.** Video review may be requested by the judge at any time during the competition. The steward will determine time and place for the review before the end of that particular event.

- (a) Video Review may be requested by coaches only in the event that a disqualification occurred or should have occurred. Coaches must make the request through the Competition Steward. If the judge grants the request, the steward will determine the time and place for the review before the end of that particular event. Should the judge determine that a disqualification did occur, the score will be adjusted accordingly. No judge shall be required to change his/her score following a video replay.
- (b) The use of video equipment during a competition is only permissible if the judge and steward have reason to believe that all entries have been videotaped and were videotaped from the same location for each event.
- (c) In the event that there is a failure with the video equipment or failure to adhere to the above rules, video review will not be used.

**5.3.7 MOST VALUABLE PLAYER DESIGNATION (MVP).** Judges shall select one MVP for each event.

- (b) In tournament/invitational play, one MVP will be awarded in each event for each head to head match-up.
- (c) Upon completion of each event, judges may review their cards to choose the MVP for that event.

**5.3.8 TRIAL EVENTS and ANCILLARY COMPETITIONS.**

- (a) Special, trial events may be offered such as trail, gymnastics, etc. by the competition management if time and horse availability permit; however they are not counted in the scoring of the competition.
- (b) If using an ancillary competition within 48 hours prior to a regular season competition and the same riders compete, separate judges must be used.

**5.3.9 TIMED WARM UPS.**

- (a) Athletes shall have a timed warm-up on their mount in all events. This is the only time in which schooling is allowed prior to the call by the in-gate personnel. Any schooling outside of warm-up, to include moving off of leg or hand, noted by event personnel will be reported to the steward as an infraction of the rules. Stewards shall give an initial warning to coaches and/or competitors that they feel are in violation of a minor infraction. Following the initial warning, subsequent infractions will result in elimination of the rider that the infraction occurred with at the discretion of the stewards.
- (b) For Equitation on the Flat, each school will be given two, four-minute warm-ups with only their team riders in the competition arena. No limit is set on the movements and gaits to be performed. After the timed warm-up, each rider will be allowed to walk on a loose rein prior to entering the competition arena during the other team's warm-up and during the tests. A rider may ride on a light contact for safety concerns but may not school or flex the horse during this time. At the completion of the ride previous, the next rider is allowed to school and tune her horse. This time may be used at the rider's discretion as long as they do not enter the competition arena prior to the start of the test. The only time they can enter the arena before the test is if there is less than 15 meters on the outside of the entire arena. A signal will be used by the judge to designate his/her readiness for the rider to enter the competition ring. After the audible and visible signal, the rider has 45 seconds to enter competition arena. If the judge requires more time to finish scoring, the rider will receive extra time at no penalty. If a rider enters the arena prior to the judge's signal, she may be eliminated at the discretion of the judge.
- (c) For Horsemanship, each school will be given two, four-minute warm-ups with only their team riders in the competition arena. No limit is set on the movements and gaits to be performed. After the timed warm-up, each rider will be allowed to walk

on a loose rein prior to entering the competition arena. A rider may ride on a light contact for safety concerns but may not school or flex the horse during this time. Each rider is allowed up to 45 seconds to enter the competition arena. This time may be used at the rider's discretion. If the judge requires more time to finish scoring, the rider will receive extra time at no penalty.

- (d) For Equitation over Fences, each school will be given two, four-minute warm-ups with only their team riders in the competition arena. If the warm up is being conducted in an arena separate from the competition arena, the fence height may not exceed the height or width of the biggest fence being used in the competition. Each rider is allowed to jump any four fences provided the rider jumps them in the correct direction. No limit is set on the movements and gaits to be performed. This warm-up may take place in the jumping arena or a designated warm-up area. Combinations of two strides or less count as one jumping effort. Each rider will be allowed to walk on a loose rein prior to entering the competition arena. A rider may ride on a light contact for safety concerns but may not school or flex the horse during this time. Jumping more than four fences results in a disqualification. In the event that a fence is knocked down in warm-up, a coach or event management may reset the fence. No time is to be added to the warm up for a horse knocking over a fence. A signal will be used by the judge to designate his/her readiness for the rider to enter the competition ring. After the signal, the rider has 45 seconds to begin the course.
- (e) For Reining, each school will be given two, five-minute warm-ups with only their team riders in the competition arena. No limit is set on the movements and gaits to be performed. The additional time is ideally for the loping and settling of the horse. The steward may use their discretion in limiting the maneuvers, after a warning, if a competitor misuses the five minutes to the horse's detriment. After timed warm-up, each rider will be allowed to walk on a loose rein from the completion of the warm-up to the entering of the competition arena. A rider may ride on a light contact for safety concerns but may not school or flex the horse during this time. Each rider is allowed an additional large circle (use of half arena) prior to the start of the test to warm-up their horses.
- (f) If both schools are in agreement due to facility or horse capabilities, time constraints, etc., warm up may be revised to a single section group warm-up for 5 minutes for the Equitation on the Flat, Horsemanship, Equitation over Fences and Reining.
- (g) During warm-up, event management will monitor time and the steward will enforce violations of both time and proper care and treatment of the animal. A maximum of three applications of the aids are acceptable in each case of disobedience. Excessive use of the aids can result in elimination of the athlete from the event at the discretion of the steward or judges. USEF rules for abuse will apply in these situations.
- (h) Coaching is permitted in the warm-up arena.
- (i) Weather or extenuating circumstances can restart the warm-up as determined by the steward.
- (j) Judges may watch horses being schooled prior to the start of the competition but will physically turn away from the arena if the competitors are participating in their warm up sessions in the same arena.
- (k) In the event a competitor falls off during a warm up, all timing and all riders will be stopped to adequately check the safety and status of both horse and rider. If the rider is not injured, she may remount, continue her warm up and compete.

#### **5.3.10 TACK AND AIDS.**

- (a) Use of tack, boots and artificial aids will adhere to the regulation of USEF for hunt seat equitation and AQHA for western horsemanship and reining. Exceptions to be included for use at the discretion of the hosting school shall include: protective boots, running martingales, bits and cavsons appropriate for the individual horse. Any protest by the visiting school to the non-regulation equipment must be made to the steward during the schooling of the horses. The steward then has the right to deem the appropriateness of the equipment for competition.
- (b) No substitution of tack by exhibitors shall be permitted unless approved by event management and the stewards. The visiting team must be alerted to any tack

changes that occur after host school has completed the initial schooling. All equipment designated for the horses will remain consistent for that event.

(c) In the event that a horse's equipment breaks, malfunctions, etc. and the competition stops, the coaches and steward will work together to determine if the current ride will continue, or if a re-ride is necessary. If no agreement can be made, both riders will compete on the alternate horse.

### **5.3.11 LIST of AIDS, USE of SPURS and CROPS.**

(a) A list of aids appropriate to each horse must be posted or accompany each horse.

(b) Riders must comply with the suggested use of aids.

(c) Artificial aids (crops, whips, bats and spurs) may be carried and/or used only when specified by the event management and listed on the list of aids.

(d) Spurs not provided by the host school must be approved by host school coach of the particular discipline prior to the warm-up.

(1) Western spurs shall be listed as ball, rowel or none. "Rock-grinders" will not be allowed.

(2) Hunter seat spurs will be non-roweled spurs.

(3) Hunter seat spurs will not exceed 1 ½ inches in length.

(4) Roller-ball spurs are allowed.

(5) Hunter seat horses shall be listed as *yes*, *may* or *no* for the use of spurs or crops.

(6) If any horse requires a special type of spur not categorized above, the spur shall be provided by show management or the owner of that horse.

(7) Riders may opt to not use artificial aids on horses that are listed as needing them.

(8) In the event that a specialty spur is not suitable, the alternate spur must be approved by the steward.

(e) Scorecards must note simple or flying changes for all events as well as single or two-handed in a curb bit. These riders shall not be penalized for following the list of aids.

(f) It is recommended that as many horses as possible be provided that can be ridden one-handed in a curb bit for Horsemanship and Reining.

(g) Romel reins will be permitted for western events and should be used in accordance with AQHA rules.

(h) If a Horsemanship or Reining horse is listed to be ridden one-handed during the testing the hand must not be changed. The hand is to be around the reins; index finger only between split reins is permitted.

(i) If a Horsemanship or Reining horse is listed to be ridden two-handed, the rider will be required to use two hands on the reins during the testing. In Horsemanship and Reining, the tails of the reins must be crossed on the opposite side of the neck when riding with two hands on split reins.

(j) The listing and use of aids will remain consistent within each event.

(k) All violations are to be reported to a steward. Riders not adhering to the list of aids during either warm-up or competition will be disqualified by the steward, except in the use of hands in Western warm-up.

### **5.3.12 EVENT ROUTINE.**

(a) Each rider from each team shall ride the same test/pattern on the same set of horses that was decided during the draw unless a substitution or alternate is approved.

(b) Coaching, by coaches, student-athletes or spectators, is not to be allowed while riders are competing.

(c) The rider's score will be announced, or posted at the completion of the test when the announcer receives a tabulated score.

- (d) A scribe will be used to assist the judge in scoring in accordance with the regulations outlined below. Scribes and judges are not to discuss any horse or rider that enters the competition arena.

## **Competition Rules**

### **6.1 FALLS, REFUSALS, SUBSTITUTIONS, ALTERNATE HORSES, RE-RIDES and WEATHER RELATED ISSUES.**

#### **6.1.1 FALLS.**

- ~~(a)~~ A rider is considered to have fallen when she is separated from her horse that has not fallen.
- ~~(b)~~ A horse is considered to have fallen when the shoulder and haunch on the same side have touched the ground or an obstacle on the ground.
- ~~(c)~~ All falls before the completion of the test/pattern/course will result elimination; a total score of zero.

#### **6.1.2 SUBSTITUTIONS.**

- (a) Substitutions can be made to the original roster of competitors any time prior to the draw without penalty to any warm-up times, etc.
- (b) No substitutions will occur after the draw unless they are made for medical reasons deemed by the medical trainer and approved by the steward.
- (c) All substitutions must be listed on the entry form and must have completed the appropriate paperwork (i.e. release form) previous to the start of competitions or the substitute will not be able to compete.

#### **6.1.3 ALTERNATE HORSES.**

- (a) In the event that a horse is pulled during the competition by the steward, both schools will ride the alternate horse and those scores will count for the competition.
- (b) The only exception is when the first rider was eliminated by fault of rider, they would not be granted a re-ride. Fault of rider is to be determined by the judge.

#### **6.1.4 RE-RIDES.** A re-ride refers to when, by no fault of the rider, the horse is determined to be unsuitable or unsafe by the judge or steward. A Re-ride is defined as a student-athlete who is riding an additional mount in the event. A rider who has not had a warm-up receives the full warm-up time.

- (a) A re-ride can be granted by judges in competition and stewards outside the competition arena.
- (b) Only coaches may request a re-ride and must go through the steward.
- (c) Both coaches should be notified that a re-ride has been requested before the steward approaches the judge.
- (d) When a re-ride is granted the competition steward will work with the event management to integrate them into the schedule.
- (e) If a re-ride is granted during the first riders timed warm-up, both riders will get full warm-up time on the re-ride horse.
- (f) If a re-ride is granted while the first rider is showing then the first riders' warm-up time will be cut in half on the re-ride horse and the second rider will receive the full warm up time on the re-ride horse.
- (g) If a re-ride is granted during the second riders timed warm-up, the first riders' warm-up time will be cut in half on the re-ride horse and the second rider will get full warm-up time on the re-ride horse.
- (h) If a re-ride is granted while the second rider is showing then both riders warm up time will be cut in half on the re-ride horse.
- (i) In the event of a re-ride in Equitation over Fences, time is cut in half and the rider will be limited to four fences in two minutes

#### **6.1.5 WEATHER REALATED ISSUES.**

- (a) In the event of inclement weather, competition shall be halted when there is less than 30 second "flash to bang lightening to thunder. Competition shall resume when weather conditions are satisfactory to the hosting school's standard severe weather

policy. If competition is unable to continue, the meet will be considered complete if 50% of the meet has been completed. If rescheduling is possible, it will be done, otherwise the scores will stand. The competition will be called by the steward after consulting with event management.

## **Hunter Seat**

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**7.1 HELMETS.** All Hunter Seat riders will ride in ASTM/SEI approved helmets with attached harness that is fastened when mounted.

### **7.2. EQUITATION ON THE FLAT.**

**7.2.1 Tests.** An appropriate test shall include eight written maneuvers.

- (a) A maneuver may consist of several parts.
- (b) It will also include one judge's maneuver and one collective mark to be scored from 0 to 10 for a total possible score of 100.
- (c) The judge's designated maneuver will be announced during the Judges and Coaches meeting to both schools. It is composed of any combination of USEF tests (excluding 6,7,8,10,11,16 and 19 from the Current USEF Rule Book) and directly follows the completion of the eight written maneuvers in the competition arena. It remains the same during the tests.
- (d) In equitation patterns, stirrups must be maintained in lengthened canter work.
- (e) When the pattern calls for dropped stirrups riders must continue the test and do not have the option of stopping and crossing stirrups.
- (f) Each rider from each team shall ride the same test on the same set of horses that was decided during the draw unless a substitution or alternate is approved.
- (g) A clearly audible and visual signal will be given to indicate the start of Equitation.
- (h) If a rider begins the test prior to the judge's signal, she will be eliminated.

#### **7.2.2 Scoring.**

- (a) Each of the maneuvers within the test shall be scored from 1 to 10. An additional score of 1 to 10 shall be given as a collective mark for overall presentation, equitation skills, etc. Scores shall be added together for a possible total of 100 points.
- (b) The scoring scale is as follows for Equitation on the Flat:  
10 Excellent  
9 Very Good  
8 Good  
7 Fairly Good  
6 Satisfactory  
5 Sufficient  
4 Insufficient  
3 Fairly Bad  
2 Bad  
1 Very Bad  
0 Not executed
- (c) Judges are encouraged to utilize the full range of the above scales without using half points.
- (d) A scribe will be used to assist the judge in writing scores and comments in accordance with the regulations outlined herein. Scribes and scorers are not to discuss any horse or rider that enters the arena.
- (e) Judges shall continue to score all tests even in the event of a composite score of zero to be given. After test is complete, the judge shall designate on the score card that a total score of zero was given.
- (f) In the event that a judge gives a total score of zero to a rider, a video review may be requested from a coach through a steward.
- (g) The rider's total score will be announced or posted at the completion of the test or when the announcer receives a tabulated score. All scores will be unofficial until approved by the master scorer.

#### **7.2.3 Errors.**

- (a) Errors in Equitation on the Flat are divided between two categories; error of movement and error of test. An error of test shall result in a composite score of zero.

An error of movement shall be penalized at the judge's discretion for that particular movement in a test.

- (b) Error of test. An error of test is when a rider does not perform a required movement called for in a test.
  - (1) Rider never starts the required maneuver.
  - (2) Rider starts the pattern before the audible and/or visual signal is given.
  - (3) Rider exits the arena before completing the pattern. In competition arenas without clear boundaries the judge should eliminate the rider when s/he sees all four legs outside the markers.
  - (4) Rider turns the wrong direction or performs a maneuver tracking the incorrect direction.
  - (5) Rider adds or omits a movement or figure (including the halt as a movement.)
- (c) Error of movement. An error of movement results from the rider's poor or incorrect execution of a movement in a test.
  - (1) Rider misses a gait change, lead, sitting versus posting, failure to drop/pick up stirrups, incorrect sizing of figures.
  - (2) Rider attempts to complete the figure or movement (examples: leg yield doesn't get to the rail, backs too many steps, fails to get a third lead change, etc.)

**7.2.3.1** Judges shall continue to score all tests even in the event of a composite score of zero to be given. After test is complete, the judge shall designate on the score card that a total score of zero was given.

**7.2.3.2** In the event that a judge gives a total score of zero to a rider, a video review may be requested from a coach through a steward.

## **7.3 EQUITATION OVER FENCES.**

### **7.3.1 Tests.**

- (a) An appropriate test shall be given that has a minimum of eight and a maximum of twelve jumping efforts with two changes of direction as defined by the USEF.
- (b) Judges will have a course diagram with measured distances between fences on lines, and are encouraged to walk the course.
- (c) A clearly audible and visual signal will be given to indicate the start of each round of Equitation over Fences.

### **7.3.2 Scoring.**

- (a) The USEF Open Numerical Scoring system will be used for scoring Equitation over Fences.
- (b) Judges will utilize a modified USEF judge's scorecard to evaluate the riders based on a USEF score.
  - (1) Horses having only simple changes will be noted on the list of aids as well as on the scorecard.
- (c) Scribes may be used to assist the judge writing scores and comments in accordance with regulations outlined herein.
- (d) The rider's composite score will be announced or posted at the completion of the test or when the announcer receives a tabulated score. All scores will be unofficial until approved by the master scorer.
- (e) In the event that the judge gives a total score of zero to a rider, a video review may be requested from a coach through a steward. No judge shall be required to change his/her score following a conference or video replay. Each judge's decision is an individual call and based on individual decision from a conference or video

#### **7.3.2.1 Elimination in Equitation over Fences.**

- (a) A total of three refusals or a fall of horse or rider will eliminate the rider, resulting in a score of zero.
- (b) In the event that the rider goes off course during the test, the rider will be given a composite score of zero. The judge shall use a whistle or bell to announce that the rider is off course.
- (c) In the event a rider begins the course prior the audible and/or visible signal, she will be given a total score of zero.

### **7.3.3 Courses and Fences.**

- (a) When setting oxers, breakaway cups must be used on the back rails.

- (b) Courses may be altered during schooling only by agreement by both schools, and in concurrence with the steward and judge.
- (c) The following obstacles and maneuvers are acceptable in Equitation Over Fences test: low jumps, trot jumps, rollbacks, hand gallop, and all maneuvers previously listed in the Equitation on the Flat.
- (d) A maximum jump height 3'6" and width of 3'6" (width measured from the top of the spread) is to be used. It is recommended that a minimum height of 2'9" be used.
- (e) It is prohibited to call for drop stirrups in Equitation over Fences.

## **Western**

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### **8.1 HORSEMANSHIP.**

#### **8.1.2 PATTERNS.**

- (a) An appropriate pattern shall include seven to nine written maneuvers (a maneuver may consist of several parts) and one collective mark.
- (b) The following maneuvers are acceptable within a pattern:
  - (1) walk, jog, extended jog, lope or extended lope in a straight line, curved line, serpentine, circle, or figure 8, or a combination of these gaits and maneuvers;
  - (2) stop, back in a straight or curved line;
  - (3) turn or pivot, including spins and rollbacks on the haunches and or on the forehand;
  - (4) side-pass, two-track or leg yield;
  - (5) flying or simple change of lead;
  - (6) counter canter; or ride without stirrups.
- (c) Patterns should not include asking riders to mount or dismount
- (d) Patterns can be designed without the use of cones. When such patterns are used the outside boundaries of the pattern must be marked by cones, including distances between cones.
- (e) When cones are used, the distance between cones must specified on the pattern.

#### **8.1.3 SCORING.**

- (a) Judges are encouraged to utilize the full range of the scale.
- (b) Each of the maneuvers within the pattern shall be scored from -1.5 to +1.5 using half point increments, with 70 as the designated base.
- (c) An additional score using the same scale of -1.5 to +1.5 will be given for the collective mark. The collective mark is for overall presentation, horsemanship skills, etc.
- (d) The Scoring scale is as follows:
  - +1.5 Excellent
  - +1 Very Good
  - +0.5 Good
  - 0 Correct
  - 0.5 Poor
  - 1 Very Poor
  - 1.5 Extremely Poor
- (e) A scribe will be used to assist the judge in writing scores and comments in accordance with the regulations outlined herein.
- (f) The rider's total score will be announced or posted at the completion of the pattern or when the announcer receives a tabulated score. All scores will be unofficial until approved by the master scorer.

##### **8.1.3.1 Penalties.**

- (a) A three point penalties may be given at the discretion of the judge for each of the following:
  - (1) For a horse kicking out during test.
  - (2) For any contact with cone.
  - (3) For any break of gait more strides than 2 strides.
  - (4) For being on the wrong lead for more than 2 strides.
  - (5) For failure to drop or pick up stirrups where designated in the pattern. The three point penalty will be assessed for every maneuver in which the rider fails to ride with or without stirrups as written in pattern.
- (b) In the event that the rider goes off pattern the rider will receive a total score of zero.

- (1) Off pattern results from the rider omitting or adding a figure not designated in the pattern.
- (2) It is at the judge's discretion to determine if the rider or the horse omitted or added the figure.
- (3) Riders missing gaits, leads, extended gaits versus regular gaits, etc. are not considered off pattern. Judges are to score these mistakes and possible penalties accordingly.
- (4) Coaches, judges, scribes, other exhibitors, spectators, etc., are not allowed to assist the rider to get back on pattern.
- (5) Other ways in which the rider would receive a total score of zero would be the following:
  - (1) Rider never starts the required maneuvers;
  - (2) Rider and horse exit arena prior to the completion of the test;
  - (3) Rider demonstrates illegal use of hand(s) on reins;
- (c) Judges shall continue to score all patterns even in the event that a total score of zero may be given. After the pattern is complete, judge shall designate on the score card that a total score of zero was given.
- (d) In the event that a judge gives a total score of zero to a competitor, a video review may be requested from a coach through a steward.

## **8.2 REINING.**

### **8.2.1 PATTERNS. NRHA/AQHA patterns 1-10 must be used.**

#### **8.2.2 SCORING.**

- (a) Scoring shall follow the guidelines of maneuver scores and penalties as prescribed in the current AQHA Official Handbook with the following exception:
  - (1) In addition to the seven or eight maneuver scores, an additional score on the same scale (-1.5 to +1.5) shall be given as a collective mark for an overall presentation, horsemanship skills etc.
- (b) No rider may be given a total score of zero in the ways outlined in the AQHA Official Handbook unless it is at the fault of the rider. It is the judge's discretion to determine if the rider or the horse was at fault for the error that would normally result in a total zero score.
- (c) Judges shall continue to score all runs even in the event that a total score of zero may be given. After the run is complete, judge shall designate on the score card that a total score of zero was given.
- (d) A scribe will be used to assist the judge in writing scores and comments in accordance with the regulations outlined herein.
- (e) The rider's total score will be announced or posted at the completion of the pattern or when the announcer receives a tabulated score. All scores will be unofficial until approved by the master scorer.
- (f) Horses having only simple changes will be noted on the list of aids as well as on the scorecard.

#### **8.2.2.1 Penalties.** Standard AQHA reining penalties should be utilized.

- (a) In the event that the rider goes off pattern, the rider will receive a total score of zero.
- (b) Off pattern results from the rider omitting or adding a figure not designated in the pattern.
- (c) It is at the judge's discretion to determine if the rider or the horse omitted or added the figure.
- (d) Riders missing gaits, leads, speed differences, etc are not considered off pattern. The judge should score these mistakes appropriately.
- (e) Coaches, judges, scribes, other exhibitors, spectators, etc. are not allowed to assist the rider to get back on pattern.
- (f) Other ways a rider could receive a composite score of zero:
  - (1) Rider never starts the required maneuvers.
  - (2) Rider and horse exit arena prior to the completion of the test.
  - (3) Riders who over spin or under spin by more than  $\frac{1}{4}$
  - (4) Riders who back more than five steps when not prescribed by the test or when no back is ridden in a test that prescribes a back. It is at the discretion of the judge as to whether it is rider or horse error.

- (g) Obvious horse errors do not result in a total score of zero.
- (h) Coaches, judges, scribes, other exhibitors, spectators, etc. are not allowed to assist the rider to get back on pattern.
- (i) In the event that the judge gives a total score of zero to a competitor, a video review may be requested from a coach through a steward. This review will occur as soon as is practical. No judge shall be required to change his/her score following a conference or video replay. Each judge's decision is an individual call and based on individual decision from a conference or video replay. (See 5.3.6)

## **Specialty Competitions**

**9.1 NRHA Reining Derby.** During VENC, the western judges will submit a list of their top ten reining riders to be considered for the NRHA Derby. Judges cannot confer, but must determine their list independently. These lists will be submitted to the selection committee along with individual statistics for the year.

**9.2 WEF.** Winter Equestrian Festival - Collegiate Equitation Challenge

Invitations are extended to 16 riders who currently participate in collegiate equestrian programs from across the United States. Riders will compete in Equitation over Fences with fence heights up to 3'6" and spreads not to exceed 3'6".

- (a) Event Routine: Class routine will follow the current Varsity Equestrian head-to-head bracketed format. Riders will be paired at random for the preliminary rounds where they will compete head-to-head on the same set of horses. There will be single elimination through three rounds to determine the final round.
- (b) The top two individuals will ride-off on the same horse to name the champion.
- (c) Horses and tack will be provided by area professionals and will be unfamiliar to the competitors.
- (d) Riders will be given a four minute warm-up in which they are allowed four fences.

## **Appendix**

1. Coaches Code of Conduct
2. Sample Visiting Team Guide
3. Competition Form
4. Stewards Report Form
5. Amendment Form
6. Coaches Meeting Checklist
7. Judges Information Sheet



## **VARSITY EQUESTRIAN COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT**

I, as a Coach of Varsity Equestrian recognize the tremendous growth that has been made in the past few years and the need to maintain that positive momentum. I must continue to attract more interested fans, student-athletes and sponsors to our sport. I must do so in a professional manner, and interact with the public, our colleagues, and lead my student-athletes with the highest degree of integrity. I therefore pledge to uphold the following Code of Conduct and to report violations on a Competition Report and report to the steward immediately.

### **I, as a representative of Varsity Equestrian will:**

- Maintain ethical standards and NCAA compliance when coaching, exhibiting, watching, and/or officiating competitions
- Adhere to the most recent Varsity Equestrian manual and Championship rulebook
- Adhere to professional standards of the NCAA, USEF, AQHA, and my Institution
- Demonstrate control and treat everyone with dignity and respect (student-athletes, horses, colleagues, officials, opponents, administrators, parents, spectators, media, etc....)
- Conduct all competitions with integrity and accuracy in an open and forth right manner
- Refrain from engaging in any contact with the judges beyond contracting and orienting them for the competition
- Behave in a manner that is consistent with the promotion of Varsity Equestrian
- Act as a positive role model for all student-athletes
- Educate the student-athletes, parents, spectators, etc. regarding permissible conduct at a Varsity Equestrian event

### **I understand the following consequences may be applied if I violate the above Code of Conduct:**

- Reported on Competition Report
- Reported from the Standards and Ethics Committee on the Executive Committee conference call agenda and recorded in the minutes
- Additional violations may result in a letter from the Standards and Ethics Committee to my Sport Administrator
- Repeat violations may result in a letter from the Standards and Ethics Committee to my Sport Administrator and/or Athletic Director and/or Conference Office
- Major infractions may result in fines and/or suspension from future competitions

**Coaches Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**All signed forms need to be turned into Standards and Ethics Committee Chair  
before the start of each season.**

Team A University vs. Team B University

**Host School:** Team A University

**Date:** MM/DD/YYYY

**Show Manager(s):** Name: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Location:** Facility Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Officials:** Western Judge: \_\_\_\_\_; Cards: \_\_\_\_\_

Hunter Seat Judge: \_\_\_\_\_; Card: \_\_\_\_\_

Steward(s): \_\_\_\_\_; From: \_\_\_\_\_

**Events:** Classes: Countable Rides: Exh.

Rides:

Equitation over Fences	_____	_____	_____
Equitation on the Flat	_____	_____	_____
Horsemanship	_____	_____	_____
Reining	_____	_____	_____

**Tests:** AQHA Reining Pattern # \_\_\_\_\_

Horsemanship: pattern attached/enclosed

Equitation on the Flat: attached/enclosed

Equitation Over Fences: to follow in one week

**Fence Height:** Countable Rides: \_\_\_\_\_ Exh. Rides: \_\_\_\_\_

**Contacts:**            **Head Coach:** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_  
                         **Phone Number(s):** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Asst. Coach:** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_  
                         **Phone Number(s):** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Asst. Coach:** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_  
                         **Phone Number(s):** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Director of Operations:** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone**  
   **Number(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Entries Due:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Event Schedule:**

**Draw:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Hunter Seat Coaches Meeting:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Western Coaches Meeting:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Class Schedule:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Concessions:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**First Aid:**

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\_\_\_\_\_

**Area Hotels:**

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\_\_\_\_\_

**Area Food:**

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\_\_\_\_\_

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*This Visiting Team Guide how bill is to be sent to the visiting school(s) by 5 p.m. of the earliest time zone of schools competing in the event 15 days prior to the competition. Included with the Visiting Team Guide should be: Horsemanship pattern with cone measurements, Reining pattern #, Equitation on the Flat test, and Entry Form. Equitation over Fences course will be sent 8 days prior to the competition.*

# Competition Form

**Date of Competition:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Start Time:** \_\_\_\_\_ **End Time:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Competition Site (host school):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Schools Competing:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Events offered:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Number of Competitors per event:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Complaints (if any): (How it came about? What happened? How was it handled at the show?)**

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\_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Hunter Seat Judge:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Poor** \_\_\_\_\_ **Excellent** \_\_\_\_\_  
1 2 3 4 5  
**Would you hire them again:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Western Judge:** \_\_\_\_\_ 1 2 3 4 5  
**Would you hire them again:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Steward:** \_\_\_\_\_ 1 2 3 4 5  
**Would you hire them again:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Coach Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **School:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Steward Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

***Submit to the Varsity Equestrian Chairperson within two business days of competition***

*Varsity Equestrian Competition Steward Report*

Competition Name:

Competition Date:

Host School: Representative

Away School: Representative

Judge:

Please indicate that the following tasks were handled properly. If an infraction occurred, please indicate with an X next to the item, and include an explanation.

- Start Time:
- Draw of Horses
- Condition of Horses
- Condition of Tack
- Competition Management Personal (present and appropriate for assigned positions).
  - o Scribe
  - o Scorer(s)
  - o Ring Crew
  - o Announcer
  - o Judge
- Competition Management -Equipment
  - o Was stop watch or timing system available for warm ups
  - o Score Cards
  - o Communication system (hand held radios, PA )
- Competition Management - General
  - o Was the draw handled properly
  - o Was scoring handled properly and in a timely manner
  - o Were any re-rides requested?
    - What was the issue?
    - What was the end result?
  - o Was there any penalties given ?
    - If so why?
- Other:
  - o Was anyone being disruptive to the competition (athlete, coaches, parents, etc...)
  - o Did this person have to be removed?
  - o What was the infraction?
- Stewards questions or comments: Please indicate areas of improvement, applaud and recognize good procedures:

Competition Steward Name:

Contact info:

Signature Date

\* Please fax, mail or email this report and an official score sheet to the current Varsity Equestrian Chair person within two business days of competition.

## Amendment Form

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Competition:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Rule to be amended:** \_\_\_\_\_ **page #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Reason for Change:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Rule to read today as:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Head Coaches:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Representing School** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Representing School**

## ***Coaches Meeting Check List***

### **General Information**

- Welcome and introductions of coaches, staff, and officials
- Steward – must be liaison between coaches and judge for duration of the show
- Discuss mode of communication with the steward during competition (location, walkie-talkie, etc)
- Judges may not watch the competitors' warm-up; will be asked to physically turn away from arena
- MVP selection
- Scribe will be provided for you :
  - Used to write scores/comments for Horsemanship, Reining, and Flat
  - Alert you when not to watch riders warm-up
  - Cannot discuss any matters pertaining to the competition
  - Cannot have cell phone/ communication during scribing
  - An additional scribe from the opposing school will sit with you as well

### **Re-rides**

- Only coaches can request a re-ride through the steward
- Competition should stop briefly while the judge is approached

### **Video Review**

- Set up from judges perspective and all runs will be recorded
- Available to judge for any reason
- Coaches can request review in the event a rider was, or should have been, given a score of 0 *only*
- Score is to be held until the ride is reviewed
- Review will be done between by the end of the event

### **General Scoring**

- Judge to a standard
- Do not try to break ties
- Write in pen
- Score all the way through the round, even if the composite score will be zero
- Changes to scores need to be initialed
- Scorecards will be picked up after each round of horses (**EXCEPT Fences**), you can have them back at the end of the class to review the riders for MVP selection

### **Horsemanship**

- Demo ride
  - 2 demo rides
  - Can see demo again if requested
  - Both coaches will be present to ask questions, answer questions, and make adjustments
- 45 second warm-up
- Do not penalize the rider for not being ready at the cone
- Adopted 3 point penalties

- Listed on scorecard
- Kicking out, making contact with cone, Breaking gate for more than 2 strides, Wrong lead for 2 or more strides, Failure to drop stirrups

### **Reining**

- AQHA scoring system
- Horse details (i.e. 2 handed, simple changes) will be noted on scorecards
- Warm-up circle may be used

### **Equitation Over Fences**

- USEF open numerical standard of scoring
- Please judge to a standard
- Off course, three refusals, or a fall of horse or rider will result in a score of zero
- Whistle/bell plus a visual aid to start the course
- After signal, rider has 45 seconds to start course
- Simple changes denoted on scorecard
- Encouraged to walk the course

### **Equitation on the Flat**

- USEF standard of scoring (10 to 0)
- Warm-up
  - Can riders use the 45 seconds before ride begins to warm-up inside or pass through the arena?
- Demo ride
  - 2 Demo rides, can request more
  - Can see demo again if requested
  - Both coaches will be present to ask questions, answer questions, and make adjustments
- Seated at 'C'
- Whistle/bell plus a visual aid to bring the rider into the arena
- After signal, rider has 45 seconds to enter the arena
- When riding across a diagonal of the dressage arena at the lengthened trot, riders should not change their diagonal until the end of the movement (not at X)
- How would you like the riders to exit the arena? (if not stated)
- Judges Test

## OFFICIALS INFORMATION SHEET

### Format

- One rider representing each team is judged on the same horse. Each rider's goal is to beat the other rider's score on the same horse, not everyone in the class. Since the end result is the comparing of riders on the same mount, judging to a standard is very important.
- Horses are assigned based on a random draw.
- There are four main events; horsemanship, reining, equitation over fences, and equitation on the flat. In each only one rider competes at a time for judge's scores.
- Timed warm ups take place before the judging begins. Timed warm ups may not be watched by the Judge but are watched by the Steward.

### Steward responsibilities

- Overall monitoring of the rules and regulations during competition
- Presence at Coaches Meeting prior to competition; involves all schools' coaches and officials
- Investigating and acting upon any alleged rule violation without waiting for a protest
- Observing and enforcing rules in the schooling (by non competitors) and warm-ups (by competitors) for: safety, lameness, suitability, adherence to time, use of correct natural and artificial aids, and limits of elements allowed during warm-ups.
- Granting re-rides or replace horses with alternates if a horse is unsound or unsuitable in schooling or warm-up
- Communicating with the judges during competition, but after a competitor's ride, to seek a coaches' request for a re-rides (stopping competition during communication)
- Working with event management to integrate alternate horses into the schedule
- Give initial warning to coach, competitor, and/or spectators they feel are in violation of minor infractions (coaching during competition, schooling outside of warm-up, etc) and eliminating the offending rider on a second same infraction
- Approve the final scores
- Complete a stewards report at the completion of competition

### Judges responsibilities

- Monitoring of the rules and regulations during competition rides
- Presence at Coaches Meeting prior to competition; involves all schools' coaches and officials
- Investigating and acting upon any alleged rule violation without waiting for a protest
- Giving a standardized numerical score to each ride
- Providing an additional test for equitation of the flat the day of competition; do not send to early (7.2.1.c)
- Grant re-rides or replace horses with alternates if a horse is unsound or unsuitable in the competition arena
- Selecting an MVP for each event
- Remain of the grounds until released by show management after verification of scores

## Frequent Topics

### General

- Professional attire meeting AQHA and/or USEF rules is requested. You are asked not to wear clothing representing any collegiate institution or to show favoritism in any way to competing institutions.
- Conversation with coaches should be kept to a minimum during the competition day.
- Plan to arrive at least 1 hour prior to the actual start of competition. You may be requested by the host school to arrive earlier. This time will give you the opportunity to watch the horses in their initial schooling and attend the coaches meeting (required).
- Please let the host school know if you have any special need during the competition.
- When there is a break in the action feel free to use your scribe to get food or drinks for you.
- You will be asked to remain on the show grounds until dismissed by the host school. There is an inquiry period after the score sheets have been dispersed. Your assistance may be required at this time.
- We value your feedback. We welcome your thoughts on our format and what we can do to improve our competitions.
- Please no smoking or smoke in a designated area only. Please do not use your cell phone while judging. You can make calls during between events if there is a break.
  
- **Horses**
- All horses should be safe, schooled previously in the competition arena, typed and suited for their particular event
- No horse may ridden in competition more than four times in a day or re-schooled between competitors.
- Horses may be medicated under USEF therapeutic drug guidelines.
- Tack and aids follow USEF Hunter seat Equitation guidelines and AQHA rules with exceptions to allow protective boots, running martingales, bits and cavesons at the discretion of the horse provider. The Steward will make final approval if a school protests non-regulation equipment.
- All riders must adhere to the posted horse list which details allowed spurs, crops, one or two handed, lead changes, etc.
  
- **Warm-ups**
- For Equitation on the flat the rider receives 4 minutes with no limitations on movements or gaits. They can begin schooling again at the completion of the previous ride, and they have 45 seconds to enter the dressage arena after the bell and visible signal are given.
- For Horsemanship the rider receives 4 minutes with no limitations on movements or gaits. They can begin schooling again at the completion of the previous ride, and they have 45 seconds to enter the competition arena.
- For Equitation on the over fences the rider receives 4 minutes with no limitations on movements or gaits, but only 4 fences. Combinations of two strides or less are considered one jumping effort in warm-ups. Refusals do not count as fences and no time is added for fences knocked down. They can begin schooling again at the completion of the previous ride, and they have 45 seconds to start their course after the bell and visible signal are given.
- For Reining the rider receives 5 minutes with no limitations on movements or gaits. The steward may limit a rider's maneuvers, after a warning, if they believe the rider is misuses the 5 minutes to the horses' detriment. Each rider is allowed an additional large circle (half the arena) prior to the start of the pattern to warm-up their horse.

- Coaching is permitted during warm-ups.
- If a competitor falls during a warm-up, time is stopped to adequately check the safety and status of both rider and horse. If the rider is not injured, she may remount and continue her warm-up.

### **Scoring and Event Routine**

- **General**
- Judges may watch the horses being schooled up by the riders who are not competing and read the comments to get a feel for the horses, lines, jump course, etc. Horses are to be judged to a standard. Though the horses may have different abilities, the score should be reflective of the ride seen by the judge.
- A scribe will be provided to the judges. In addition, the visiting school is allowed to sit a representative with the judge to assist in scribing. Judges and scribes are asked not to converse with the scribe about riders, competitors or elements of the performance. Scribes may not answer questions nor make comments about the competitors and/or horses that are being ridden.
- Scores are assigned based on similar industry standards of the USEF and AQHA with a few additions as noted in this document and the Varsity Equestrian rulebook.
- Do not worry about splitting ties or ranking the riders in each event. Riders should NOT be compared, instead they should be judged as you see them and to your standard.
- An MVP should be chosen for each event. This is the rider you believe to be the best in the class. You can use any criteria you would like to determine this individual. She does not have to be the highest scoring rider in the class. You are encouraged to pick an MVP from a winning ride and may review your scorecards at the end of each event in order to do so.
- Please use the comment area and your scribe, the rider and coaches learn a great deal from this area. You may want to comment on rider position, how the horse is handles and/or the pair's performance though out the test. By making comments, you are giving rationale as to why they received the score they received.
- **Equitation on the Flat**
- The judge will be placed at 'C' unless another arrangement is met and agreed upon by the judge/steward and both coaches.
- Judges signal with a bell or whistle to tell rider when to enter the ring. There will also be a visual signal given by the scribe to signal when the judge is ready. This is to ensure the judges have enough time to make all the comments they want about the previous rider.
- If a rider enters the arena before judge's signal, the rider will be disqualified.
- If there is less than 15 meters around the entire outside of the dressage arena, the competitor may enter and exit the arena at will during the 45 seconds. Once the signal is given, the rider must exit the arena and begin her test.
- The scoring range is from 0 to 10 using whole point increments. Half points are not allowed.
- Tests will include 9 written maneuvers and one collective mark, for a total possible score of 100. You will be asked to provide the 9th maneuver by creating a judge's test. It can contain multiple elements but should not be longer than any one maneuver already in the test. Judge's may use any 2007 USEF equitation test excluding tests 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 16 and 19.
- There may be more than one element per maneuver. Please consider and allow the score to reflect all the elements.
- The collective box is for overall performance and effectiveness of a rider.

- Each rider will be scored on the required test and numerical scores shall be written on each rider's test. Consistency is necessary.
- The scoring scale is as follows:
  - 10 Excellent
  - 9 Very Good,
  - 8 Good,
  - 7 Fairly Good,
  - 6 Satisfactory,
  - 5 Sufficient,
  - 4 Insufficient,
  - 3 Fairly Bad,
  - 2 Bad,
  - 1 Very Bad,
  - 0 Not executed
- The rulebook requires 2 demonstration rides to occur before the competitors enter the ring. This is to familiarize the judge, scribe, and scorer with the test. Coaches and stewards are present during this ride to help make clarifications, answer and ask questions. The judge may request the demo rider to perform the test as many times as they need to be comfortable with the test.
- Errors in equitation on the flat are divided between two categories: error of movement and error of test. An error of test shall result in a composite score of zero. An error of movement shall be penalized at the judge's discretion for that particular movement in the test.
  - An error of test is when a rider does not perform a required movement called for in the test
    - Rider never starts the required maneuver
    - Rider starts the pattern before the audible and/or visual signal is given
    - Rider exits the arena before completing the pattern In competitions without clear boundaries the judge should eliminate the rider when they see all four legs outside the markers.
    - Rider turns the wrong direction or performs a maneuver tracking the incorrect direction
    - Rider adds or omits a movement or figure (including the halt as a movement)
  - An error of movement results from the rider's poor or incorrect execution of a movement in at test
    - Rider misses a gait change, lead, sitting vs. posting, forgetting to drop/pick up stirrups, incorrect sizing of figures
    - Rider attempts to complete the figure or movement (examples: leg yield that doesn't get to the rail, backs too many steps, fails to get the third lead change, etc)
- **Equitation over Fences**
- Judge according to USEF open numerical standards.
- An appropriate test shall be given that has 8-12 jumping efforts with two changes of direction
- There will be an whistle/bell and a visual given by the scribe to signal when the judge is ready, indicating the rider to start the course.
- In the event that the rider goes off-course during the test, the rider will be given a composite score of zero.
- A total of three refusals or a fall of horse or rider will eliminate the rider, resulting in a score of zero.

- Horses with simple lead changes will be noted on the scorecards.
- You will be given a diagram of the course with the measured distances between lines. Please note that no tall distances are set standard to USEF distances. Because of this, you are encouraged to talk the lines on the course to form your own opinion of how the course should ride.
- **Horsemanship**
- A scorecard adopted by Varsity Equestrian will be provided to you with the breakdown of maneuvers in the pattern. There may be more than one element per maneuver. Please consider and allow the score to reflect all the elements.
- Each maneuver within the pattern shall be scored from -1.5 to +1.5 using half point increments with 70 as the designated base.
- Penalties in horsemanship are as follows:
  - 3 – kicking out
  - 3 – contact with cone
  - 3 – breaking gait for more than two strides or wrong lead for two or more strides
  - 3 – Failure to drop stirrups
- A scorecard adopted by Varsity Equestrian will be provided to you with the breakdown of maneuvers. There will be no rail work.
- The collective mark box is for overall performance and effectiveness of the rider.
- Riders have 45 seconds to additionally warm their horse up before they are expected to be ready at the cone. Riders shall not be penalized for not being ready to start their pattern on time.
- Any rider going off pattern will receive a composite score of zero. It is up to your discretion whether or not it is the rider's fault for going off pattern.
  - Off pattern results from the rider omitting or adding a figure not designated by the test
  - Riders missing gaits, leads, extended gaits vs. regular gaits, etc are not considered off pattern. The judge should score these mistakes and possible penalties appropriately.
- Two demonstration rides will be performed before the competitors enter the arena. This is to familiarize the judge, scribe, and scorer with the test. The judge can request the demo rider to perform the test as many times as they need to be comfortable with the test.
- **Reining**
- The collective mark box is for overall performance and effectiveness of the rider.
- Over riding should be penalized appropriately. An aggressive ride is not considered over riding.
- Riders may make one courtesy circle ½ the width of the arena before starting the pattern. They must still walk or stop prior to starting their pattern.
- A rider should be given a composite score of zero only when the judge determines it was the rider's fault.
- **Appeals, Substitutions, Alternates, Re-rides**
- Only coaches may approach a steward for an appeal or re-ride.
- Substitution can be made to competitors any time prior to the draw; after this time, only a medical reason deemed by the medical trainer and approved by the steward will be allowed
- Judges shall continue to score all rides even in the event of a composite score of zero is being given.
- Judges have the authority to grant or not grant re-rides at their own discretion or at the request of a coach.

- After a re-ride is granted, both riders will be allowed a timed warm-up before competing on the alternate horse. Only the scores from the alternate horse will count.
- In the event of an extraordinary circumstance, the judge has the discretion to use their common sense to resolve the situation. If the resolution contradicts this manual it must be noted in the steward's report.
- **Video Review**
- A video review may be requested by the judge at any time during the competition. The steward will determine the time and place to watch the review before the end of that particular event.
- A video review request by a coach is only in the event that a disqualification occurred or should have occurred. These are requested through the steward.
- No judge is required to change his/her score following the video replay.
- The use of video equipment during a competition is permissible only if the judge and steward have reason to believe that all rounds have been videotaped and were videotaped from the same position.
- In the event video equipment fails during the competition, no video review will be used.