

# 2010 VENC Rulebook

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## I. Organization

### A. Host School

1. Any school in good standing with the governing bodies, NCAA, Conference, USEF and AQHA is eligible for hosting the competition.
2. Head coaches and/or universities are strongly encouraged to be current members with USEF and AQHA.
3. Host schools shall provide suitable facilities, horses and equipment for all entries.
  - a. Fan-based needs
    1. Bleachers
    2. Rest-rooms
    3. Concessions
    4. PA system
    5. Parking
  - b. Competitor-based needs
    1. Warm-up arena
    2. Competition arena (based on rules herein and USEF)
    3. Dressing area
    4. Information packets for visiting schools
    5. Video of all rides for the judges' review if needed. All attempts should be made to video from the judges' point of view.
  - c. Horses
    1. Safe
    2. Schooled previously in the host arena where the competition is being held
    3. Typed or suited for their particular event
    4. No horse may be used twice in the same bracket on the same day of a tournament and a suitable alternate in each event will be provided.
    5. Horses may only be ridden up to a total of four times per day of a tournament.
    6. Horses may not be re-schooled between competitors within a bracket.
    7. 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.
  - d. Equipment
    1. Safe, in good repair
    2. Jumps are to meet or exceed USEF standards
    3. Proper markers for NCAA equitation arena: minimum letters required are A, K, E, H, C, M, B and F. Visual barriers should be supplied for perimeter of entire testing arena with the exception of entrance at A.
    4. Proper markers for NCAA Horsemanship patterns include cones having a maximum height of 2'.
    5. Arena size is encouraged to be standard size of 20 x 40 meters for Equitation. Due to location, inclement weather, etc. a minimum arena size would be 18 x 36 meters.
    6. Arena size for Reining should be a minimum of 100' x 150'.
    7. Arena size for Equitation over Fences should be a minimum of 100' x 150'.

- e. **Scorecards, Orders of Go and Programs**
  - 1. The same horse cannot appear on the same scorecard, with the exception of Equitation over Fences.
  - 2. Scorecards from the first section of a bracket may not be in the judges' possession during the second section of a bracket with the exception of Equitation over Fences.
  - 3. Scorecards must be written in pen.
  - 4. Standard judging cards are to be used.
  - 5. 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.
- f. **Medical Personnel**
  - 1. 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 and schooling of over fences as well as be on call during all other scheduled performances or schooling.
    - i. Qualified medical personnel is a currently certified or licensed EMT, Paramedic, Physician or Nurse trained in pre-hospital trauma care.
    - ii. 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.

## **B. Entry Requirements**

- 1. The competition must be approved by NGB based on the following of all rules herein. Competing schools must be in good standing with NGB.
- 2. Equitation and Equitation over Fences events will be offered for the Hunter Seat Team competition with four riders per event per team; Horsemanship and Reining events will be offered for the Western Team competition with four riders per event per team.
- 3. Twelve Hunter Seat teams and Twelve Western teams will qualify for the 2010 VENC through the VENC Selection Committee process. Hunter Seat and Western teams will qualify separately.
- 4. Eight individual riders and two alternates per the four events offered above will qualify for the 2010 Varsity Equestrian Individual National Championships through the VENC Selection Committee process. These individuals may, but are not required to, participate in the team competition listed above.

## **C. Event Routine**

- 1. 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 the Hunter Seat Equitation on the Flat and Equitation over Fences, and AQHA for Horsemanship and Reining will govern.
- 2. The 2010 VENC competition will use the stated point system for Varsity Equestrian: Equitation on the Flat—100 pts, Equitation over Fences—100 pts, Horsemanship—70 pt base, Reining—70 pt base.) All schools competing will know the format of the show at least twenty one days prior to the start of the show.
- 3. Competition will be based on the current win/loss point system used for Varsity Equestrian. When 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. For bracket ties, please refer to I.G.2.

4. The twelve Hunter Seat teams and the twelve Western teams will progress separately through the team bracket outlined on page 18 of this rulebook.
5. The Individual National Championship competition will progress separately through the individual competition bracket outlined on page 19 of this rulebook. Refer to Section IV of this rulebook for rules specific to Individual Competition.-
6. All Hunter Seat riders will ride in ASTM/SEI approved helmets with a correctly fitted harness that is fastened when mounted.
7. Care and control of the horses are the prerogative of the host school or designated representative.
  - a. Use of equine medication will adhere to the regulations of USEF therapeutic drug use guidelines for all horses being exhibited at the competition.
  - b. Use of tack, boots and artificial aids will adhere to the regulation of USEF for Hunter Seat Equitation and AQHA for Horsemanship and Reining. Exceptions to be included for use at the discretion of the hosting school shall include: protective boots, running martingales, bits and cavessons 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. All equipment designated for the horses will remain consistent within each bracket.
8. In all events, athletes shall have a timed warm-up on their mount. 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 offending rider at the discretion of the stewards.
  - a. For Equitation, each rider will be given a four minute warm-up. No limit is set on the number of 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. At the completion of the previous ride, the next rider is allowed to school her horse. This time may be used at the rider's discretion as long as she does not enter the arena prior to the start of the test. The only time she can enter the arena early is if there is less than 15 meters on the outside of the arena. An audible and visual 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 enter the competition arena once the signal has been given to enter the arena. If the judge requires more time to finish scoring, the rider will receive extra time at no penalty.
  - b. For Horsemanship, each rider will be given a four minute warm-up. No limit is set on the number of 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 to walk or jog straight towards and into the competition arena for the start of their test. The rider will be allowed to school during this approach to the arena.

- c. For Equitation over Fences, each rider will be given a four minute warm-up. Practice fences will be set up in a separate warm up arena. Practice fence height may not exceed the height or width of the biggest fence being used in 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 number of movements and gaits to be performed. A refusal does not count as a jumping effort during the timed warm-up. In the event a competitor falls off during a warm-up, all timing should 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. 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. An audible and visual 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.
- d. For Reining, each rider will be given a four minute warm-up. No limit is set on the number of movements and gaits to be performed. The steward shall give an initial warning to coaches and/or competitors that they feel are in violation of over-schooling of 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 the discretion of the steward. 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) in the competition arena prior to the start of the test to warm-up their horse.
- e. Due to facility or horse capabilities, time constraints, inclement weather, etc., warm up may be revised as designated by hosting school. Warm-up changes must remain consistent within the competing brackets.
- f. 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 stewards or judges. USEF rules for abuse will apply in these situations.
- g. Coaching is permitted in the warm-up arena.
- h. In the case of a fence being knocked down in the warm-up area, a coach or event management personnel may reset the fence to its original height/width. No time will be added to the warm-up. Coaches may not change height/width of practice fences.
- i. In the event a competitor falls off during their timed warm-up, the warm-up process 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.
- j. 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 competing riders will compete on the alternate horse.
- k. Weather or extenuating circumstances can restart the warm-up as determined by the steward.
- l. Judges may but are not required to watch the schooling of horses by the hosting institution (non-competitive riders).

- m. Judges will physically turn away from the arena if the competitors are participating in their warm up sessions within the competition arena.
- 9. Appeals to Competition
  - a. Only coaches may approach the competition stewards to appeal. The steward is the liaison between the coach and the judge.
  - b. A coach must make appeals within ten minutes of official posting of scores. Scores and score sheets will be posted for all to view outside of draw office as soon as possible after the completion of a bracket. Announcements will be made to this posting.
  - c. Judges will be held at competition until released by show management and hosting school.
  - d. Decisions are made final by the USEF steward.
  - e. Video review for the competition will adhere to the rules outlined within the Judging Requirements section.

**D. Falls, Refusals, Eliminations, Substitutions, Alternates and Forfeits**

- 1. A rider is considered to have fallen when she is separated from her horse that has not fallen.
- 2. 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.
- 3. All falls before the completion of the test will result in elimination; a composite score of zero.
- 4. Three refusals will result in elimination.
- 5. Substitutions can be made to the original roster of competitors anytime prior to the draw of each bracket. No substitutions will occur after the draw of each bracket unless they are made for medical reasons deemed by the medical trainer and approved by the steward. All substitutions must be listed on the entry form and have the appropriate paperwork filled out prior to the start of competition or they will not be able to compete.
- 6. In the event that a horse is removed during the competition by a steward, both schools will ride the alternate horse and those scores will count for the competition. The only exception is if 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.
- 7. In the event of inclement weather, competition shall be halted when there is less than a 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.

**E. Re-Rides**

- a. A re-ride refers to when, by no fault of the rider, the horse is determined to be unsuitable or unsafe by the senior judge and the steward.
- b. A re-ride can be granted by the senior judge in competition and stewards outside the competition arena.
- c. Only coaches may request a re-ride and must go through the steward.
- d. Both coaches of the competing riders should be notified that a re-ride has been requested before the steward approaches the judge.
- e. When a re-ride is granted the competition steward will work with event management to integrate them into the schedule. If a rider that is granted a re-ride has previously ridden the initial horse, their warm-up time will be cut in half when riding the re-ride (second) horse. If a rider that is granted a re-ride has not previously ridden the initial horse, their warm-up time will not be cut in half.

## **F. Seeding and Drawing for Horses**

1. Seeding will be determined prior to competition by the Varsity Selection Committee.
2. 1<sup>st</sup> round placement of competing teams into games/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 to determine starting order of go for riders.
3. 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.
4. Drawings for horses within a bracket will be by lot. Schools are allowed to have one representative present during the draw for all draws subsequent to 1<sup>st</sup> round draws. Within a bracket, both schools will compete on the same horses in each event (i.e. each event is drawn twice).
5. A competition steward and show secretary will be present during all draws.
6. Horse order of go will be determined prior to draw and rider order of go will be determined by the horses drawn.
7. When a competing rider has a personally owned horse in the draw that does not qualify under rule I.A.3.c.7 that rider must draw first with her horse not in the pool of potential draws.
8. A senior judge for each bracket will be randomly determined by event management during the drawing for horses.

## **G. Tack and Aids**

1. No substitution of tack by exhibitors shall be permitted unless approved by event management and the stewards. The visiting teams 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 within each bracket.
2. List of aids, use of spurs and whips
  - a. A list of aids appropriate to each horse must be posted or accompany each horse. Riders must comply with the suggested use of aids.
  - b. 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.
    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 not to exceed one and one-half inch in length. A longer length may be permitted at the discretion of the horse provider only if it is in the interest of the best ride for horse and rider. In the event the provided specialty spur is not suitable an alternate spur must be approved by a steward. Any horse requiring a specialty spur must be designated on the list of aids as such prior to the beginning of the bracket.
    3. Roller ball spurs are allowed for the Hunter Seat horses.
    4. Hunter Seat horses shall be listed as yes, may or no for the use of spurs or crops.
    5. If any horse requires a special type of spur not categorized above, then the spur shall be provided by show management or the provider of that horse. **In the event that a specialty spur is not suitable, the alternate spur must be approved by the steward.**
    6. Riders may opt to not use artificial aids on horses that are listed as needing them.

- c. Scorecards must note simple or flying changes for fences and reining as well as single or two-handed in a curb bit. These riders shall not be penalized for following the list of aids.
- d. 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.
- e. Romal reins will be permitted for western events and should be used in accordance with AQHA rules.
- f. If a Horsemanship or Reining horse is listed to be ridden one-handed, the rider will be required to use only one hand during the testing and the hand must not be changed. The hand is to be around the reins; index finger only between split reins is permitted.
- g. 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, the tails of the reins must be crossed on the opposite side of the neck when riding with two hands on split reins.
- h. The listing and use of aids will remain consistent within a designated bracket. Any changes prior to a bracket will be posted outside of competition arena and announced during the draw and again prior to the start of the bracket.
- i. 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.

#### **H. Scoring/Ties/Awards**

1. Current scoring system used in Varsity Equestrian competitions will be used. Refer to rule I.C.3.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. 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.

#### I. **Personal Conduct of Athletes, Coaches, Show Personnel and Spectators**

##### 1. General

- a. All participants, coaches and personnel must behave in manner that reflects the dignity of the sport.
- b. Stewards may expel from the grounds any person whose behavior is deemed dishonest, unethical, unsportsmanlike or detrimental to the health, safety or well being of any horse or person during the progress of the competition.
- c. 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 who they feel are in violation of this rule. Following the initial warning, subsequent infractions will result in elimination of the offending rider at the discretion of the steward.
- d. On the day of competition, no competing riders may ride any horse prior to competition.

#### II. Competition Officials

##### A. **Event management** is to provide:

1. Qualified medical personnel on the grounds
2. Programs
3. Judges, stewards, master scorer and scribes—competing schools will be provided the names of judges and stewards a minimum of 30 days prior to meet.
4. Horses and schooling riders
5. PA system and announcer for each arena, with scores being announced or posted at the completion of each rider's performance.
6. Music is encouraged; however it must be played soft enough so that competitors are able to hear the signals called by the judges.
7. Arena crews to set-up events
8. Jump crew stationed near jumps (outside of the arena).
9. In-gate and warm-up personnel
10. All applicable patterns/tests to be posted near the in-gate of the performance arena. The specific pattern/test used in each particular bracket will be posted so as to clearly demonstrate which pattern/test is used for that particular bracket.
11. Equipment to post the scores at the completion of each rider's performance.
12. Copies of all judges' score cards shall be posted for all to view as well as providing copies to appropriate schools prior to departure.
13. Video equipment and qualified technicians to ensure that all patterns/tests/runs are videoed and available for judges' review.

##### B. **Event secretary** is responsible for:

1. Providing the Prize list to include all items in the appendices.
2. Providing suitable facilities.
3. Mailing appropriate entries and processing them.

4. Arranging for the competition stewards' and judges' needs with the NGB.
  5. Making an official program to be mailed to the sanctioning bodies.
  6. Running all draw events.
  7. Sending the judges and stewards the following information a minimum of 21 days prior to the competition:
    - a. Current VENC Rulebook
    - b. Equitation tests and/or reining and horsemanship patterns; this will include the written test/pattern as well as a drawn version of the test/pattern.
    - c. Judge's information sheet available on the Varsity Equestrian website.
  8. Providing all score sheets, bracket updates and order of go.
    - a. No horse may appear more than one time on each score sheet.
- C. In-gate personnel**
1. Keep coaches and exhibitors abreast of their order of go.
  2. Keep the event moving on a tight schedule.
  3. Communicate with the announcer for the announcement of each rider as they enter the arena.
  4. Monitor compliance with the optional 45 second ride previous to entering the arena.
- D. Warm-up personnel**
1. Monitor time of warm-ups and monitor the limit set for maneuvers or jumps and fence height and width.
  2. Monitor for excessive application of aids and report to a steward.
  3. Monitor warm-up arena obstacles
    - a. In the case of a fence being knocked down in the warm-up, a coach or event management may reset the fence.
    - b. No time is to be added to the warm-up.
  4. Weather or extenuating circumstances can restart the warm-up as determined by the competition steward.
- E. Judges**
1. Qualifications
    - a. To officiate the Hunter Seat events, an individual must be recognized as a USEF Hunter Seat Equitation judge.
    - b. To officiate the Western events, a person must be an AQHA carded judge. If separate judges are to be used for Horsemanship and Reining, the Horsemanship judge must be AQHA carded and the Reining judge must be carded either by AQHA or NRHA.
    - c. Two judges for each discipline will be used for a total of four judges. The pool of acceptable judges for the VENC will be submitted by the Championship Committee and approved by the Executive Committee.
  2. Responsibilities
    - a. Judges will be provided with score sheets that will include a break down of required maneuvers with appropriate scoring columns. In equitation a judging guideline is recommended where each maneuver is drawn for the judge.
    - b. Judges may, but are not required to, watch the schooling of the horses by the schooling (non-competitive) riders in order to familiarize themselves with the horses.
    - c. Judges, scribes and scorers shall be required to judge and score a minimum of two test rides or demonstrations by a non-competing rider(s) to become more familiar with the test prior to the start of the 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 bracket. A steward shall be present during these demo rides and questions or concerns will be addressed at this time.
- d. Judges are not allowed to watch the warm-up of the horses by the competition riders. It is required that judges turn and face away from the arena if the warm-up occurs within the competition arena.
  - e. Each rider will be scored on the required tests and numerical scores shall be written on each rider's test. Descriptive remarks on maneuvers or collective remarks are highly recommended.
  - f. The scoring for Equitation on the Flat and Equitation over Fences will be based on a 100 point scale, while the scoring for Reining and Horsemanship will be based on a base 70 point scale.
  - g. Judges grant re-rides with communication from the steward during competition. When multiple judges are used, a senior judge will be used to grant a re-ride. Judges may confer when discussing a re-ride situation. The senior judge for each event will be determined by show management prior to the start of each bracket.
  - h. A scribe will be used to record scoring and remarks. A scribe is not required for Equitation over Fences.
  - i. A whistle or bell may be used by the senior judge to stop the competition when off course in Equitation over Fences.
  - j. Each western judge will submit a list of their top ten reining riders of the championship to be considered for the NRHA Reining Derby. Judges may not confer. These lists will be submitted to the selection committee along with the riders' statistics for the year.

#### F. **Competition Stewards**

##### 1. Qualifications

There will be a total of five stewards that are selected and approved by the Championship Committee. The main competition steward shall be a USEF approved steward. The main steward will be assisted by two assistant stewards—one each for the Western and Hunter Seat disciplines. Each of the two assistant stewards will be assisted by one junior steward for each discipline.

##### 2. Responsibilities:

- a. Overall monitoring of Rules and Regulations during the competition and investigating and acting upon any alleged rule violation without waiting for a protest.
- b. Watching the schooling and warm-up of the horses for safety and lameness, keeping the best interest of the horse in mind.
- c. Enforcing all actions for rule infractions as well as granting re-rides after communication with the judge. The judge has the final word on whether a re-ride is granted.
- d. 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, at the discretion of the steward.
- e. 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 the discretion of the steward.
- f. Approving the final scores and official program.

- g. 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. Also the stewards, 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.
- h. At least one steward will be present at all draws.
- i. The assistant stewards or junior stewards shall immediately report any rule infractions, rule enforcements, concerns, etc. to the main USEF competition steward who will have the final ruling power over any discrepancies or appeals.

#### **G. Scribes**

1. Qualifications--an experienced scribe shall be supplied for each judge by the hosting school who is not also a team member.
2. 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. 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 scribes and persons outside of show management until entire event is over.
  - d. Scribes will behave in a professional manner.

#### **H. Master Scorer**

1. Qualifications--An experienced (non-student) master scorer shall be supplied for each competition by the hosting school.
2. 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 printed off a computer 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 score sheets for all events other than Equitation over Fences. It is highly encouraged that the placement of the index-tape does not interfere with ability to review comments or scores on copies of score sheets.
  - d. All original judges' score cards are to be held at the host university for at least a year. Visiting schools must be supplied with copies of all score sheets within their brackets prior to departure.
  - e. Bracket winners are based on the calculations of team scores outlined in I.C.3 and I.G.2.
  - f. The final score of each rider is obtained from adding the composite scores from each of the two judges.

### III. Judging Requirements and Class Routine

#### A. Equitation on the Flat

##### 1. Tests

- a. An appropriate test shall be given that is to include nine written maneuvers (a maneuver may consist of several parts) and one collective mark that are to be scored from 0 to 10 for a total possible score of 100.
- b. Competing schools will be informed of the tests being used a minimum of twenty one days prior to the start of competition. The maneuvers will consist of any combination of USEF Equitation tests listed in the 2010 USEF rulebook (excluding 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 16 & 19).
- c. In equitation patterns, stirrups must be maintained in lengthened canter work.
- d. When the pattern calls for dropped stirrups riders must continue the test and do not have the option of stopping and crossing stirrups.
- e. Each rider from each bracketed 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.
- f. A clearly audible and visual signal will be given to indicate the start of each equitation pattern.
- g. Coaching is not to be allowed during the rider's test.

##### 2. Scoring

- a. Each of the maneuvers within the test shall be scored from 0 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 total score out of a possible 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

Judges are encouraged to utilize the full range of the above scales without using half points.

- c. A scribe will be used to assist the judge in scoring in accordance with the regulations outlined herein. Scribes and scorers are not to discuss any horse or rider that enters the arena.
- d. The rider's composite score will be announced or posted at the completion of the test when the announcer receives a tabulated score. All scores will be unofficial until approved by the master scorer.
- e. Errors
  1. 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.

- a. An error of test is when a rider does not perform a required movement called for in a test.
  - i. Rider never starts the required maneuver
  - ii. Rider starts the pattern before the audible and/or visual signal is given
  - iii. Rider exits the arena before completing the pattern. In competition arenas without clear boundaries the judge should eliminate the rider when they see all four legs outside the markers.
  - iv. Rider turns the wrong direction or performs a maneuver tracking the incorrect direction
  - v. Rider adds or omits a movement or figure (including the halt as a movement).
- b. An error of movement results from the rider's poor or incorrect execution of a movement in a test.
  - i. Rider misses a gait change, lead, sitting versus posting, forgetting to drop/pick up stirrups, incorrect sizing of figures.
  - ii. Rider attempts to complete the figure or movement (examples: leg yield doesn't get to the rail, backs too many steps, fails to get the third lead change, etc.)
- f. Coaches, judges, scribes, other exhibitors, spectators, etc. are not allowed to assist the rider to get back on pattern.
- g. 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 composite score of zero was given.
- h. In the event that one or both judges give a composite score of zero to a competitor or feel that a rider should have received a zero, 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.

## **B. Equitation over Fences**

### **1. Tests**

- a. An appropriate test shall be given that has a minimum of eight and a maximum of twelve jumping efforts (as defined by USEF) with two changes of direction.
- b. The USEF Open Numerical Scoring system will be used for scoring Equitation over Fences. The judges will have a course diagram with measured distances between fences on lines. The judges are encouraged to walk the course.
- c. Competing schools will be informed of the elements of the tests a minimum of twenty one days prior to the start of competition. Due to arena changes, weather, available horses, etc. the test may be altered from the one sent out prior to the competition.
- d. 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.
- e. The following obstacles and maneuvers are acceptable within Equitation over Fences test: low jumps, trot jumps, rollbacks, hand gallop, and all maneuvers previously listed in the Equitation on the Flat.
- f. A maximum jump height 3'6" and width of 3'6" (width measured from the top of the spread) is to be used. For Varsity Equestrian competitions, it is recommended that the minimum height of 2'9" be used.

- g. When setting oxers, breakaway cups must be used on the back rail.
- h. It is recommended that 1<sup>st</sup> round brackets compete at lower fence levels and difficulty and progress upwards throughout the competition.
- i. It is prohibited to call for dropped stirrups in Equitation over Fences.
- j. Coaching is not allowed during the rider's test.
- k. A clearly audible and visual signal will be given to indicate the start of each round of Equitation over Fences.

## 2. Scoring

- a. Judges will utilize a modified USEF judge's scorecard to evaluate the riders based on a USEF score.
- b. Scribes may be used to assist the judge with scoring in accordance with regulations outlined herein. Scribes and scorers are not to discuss any horse or rider that enters the arena.
- c. Horse having only simple changes will be noted on the list of aids as well as on the test scorecard.
- d. The rider's composite score will be announced or posted at the completion of the test when the announcer receives a tabulated score. All scores will be unofficial until approved by the master scorer.
- e. In the event that the rider goes off-course during the test, the rider will be given a composite score of zero. The senior judge shall use a whistle or bell to announce that the rider is off course.
- f. A total of three refusals or a fall of horse or rider will eliminate the rider, resulting in a score of zero.
- g. In the event a rider begins the course prior to the audible and/or visible signal, she will be given a total score of zero.
- h. In the event that one or both judges give a composite score of zero to a competitor or feel that a rider should have received a zero, 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.

## C. Horsemanship

### 1. Tests

- a. An appropriate test shall be given that is to include seven to nine written maneuvers (a maneuver may consist of several parts) and one collective mark that are to be scored from -1.5 to +1.5, using half point increments, with 70 designated as the base score.
- b. The scoring scale is as follows for Horsemanship
  - +1.5 Excellent
  - +1 Very Good
  - +0.5 Good
  - 0 Correct
  - 0.5 Poor
  - 1 Very Poor
  - 1.5 Extremely Poor

Judges are encouraged to utilize the full range of the above scales without using quarter points.

- c. Competing schools will be informed of the tests a minimum of twenty one days prior to the start of competition that will include the measured distances between cones. If no cones are used then perimeter cones must be used to mark the

outside boundaries of the pattern and must have measured distances between them provided.

- d. Each rider from competing brackets shall ride the same test on the same set of horses that was decided during the draw unless a substitution or alternate is approved by the steward.
  - e. The following maneuvers are acceptable within a test: 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; stop; back in a straight or curved line; turn or pivot, including spins and rollbacks on the haunches and/or on the forehand; side-pass, two-track or leg yield; flying or simple change of lead; counter canter; or ride without stirrups. Tests should not include asking riders to mount or dismount.
  - f. Coaching is not to be allowed during the rider's test.
2. Scoring
- a. Each of the maneuvers within the test shall be scored from -1.5 to +1.5, using half point increments, with 70 as the designated base. 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.
  - b. A scribe will be used to assist the judge in scoring in accordance with the regulations outlined herein. Scribes and scorers are not to discuss any horse or rider that enters the arena.
  - c. The rider's composite score will be announced or posted at the completion of the test when the announcer receives a tabulated score. All scores will be unofficial until approved by the master scorer.
  - d. Penalties to be used at the discretion of the judges:
    1. 3 point penalty for horse kicking out during test
    2. 3 point penalty for any contact with cone
    3. 3 point penalty for any break of gait more than 2 strides
    4. 3 point penalty 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.
  - e. In the event that the rider goes off-pattern during the test, the rider will receive a composite score of zero.
    1. Off –pattern results from the rider omitting or adding a figure not designated by the test.
    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. The judge should score these mistakes and possible penalties appropriately.
    4. Coaches, judges, scribes, other exhibitors, spectators, etc. are not allowed to assist the rider to get back on pattern.
  - f. Other ways in which the rider would receive a composite 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. Illegal use of hands on reins. See rules I.F.2.g and I.F.2.h.

- g. Judges shall continue to score all patterns even in the event of a composite score of zero to be given. After the pattern is complete, judge shall designate on the score card that a composite score of zero was given.
- h. In the event that one or both judges give a composite score of zero to a competitor or feel that a rider should have received a zero, 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.

## D. Reining

### 1. Tests

- a. An appropriate test is based on the AQHA patterns with an additional composite box (collective mark) to be added to the scores. All scores are based on the -1.5 to +1.5 scoring scale, using half point increments, with 70 as a designated base score.
- b. Competing schools will be informed of the tests a minimum of twenty one days prior to the start of competition.

### 2. Scoring

- a. Scoring shall follow the guidelines of maneuver scores and penalties as prescribed in the 2010 AQHA Official Handbook with the following exceptions:
  - 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 overall presentation, horsemanship skills, etc.
  - 2. No rider may be given a composite score of zero in the ways outlined in the 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 fault that would normally result in a composite zero score.
- b. Judges shall continue to score all runs even in the event of a composite score of zero (0) to be given. After run is complete, judge shall designate on score card that a composite score of zero was given.
- c. A scribe will be used to assist the judge in scoring in accordance with the regulations outlined herein.
- d. The rider's composite score will be announced or posted at the completion of the test when the announcer receives a tabulated score. All scores will be unofficial until approved by the master scorer.
- e. Horses having only simple changes will be noted on the list of aids as well as on the test scorecard.
- f. Coaches, judges, scribes, other exhibitors, spectators, etc. are not allowed to assist the rider to get back on pattern.
- g. Video review for the reining event will adhere to the standards of NRHA: "Judges may not confer on any penalty or maneuver score prior to submitting a score. If a major penalty (a penalty which results in a no score, a 0, or a 5 point penalty) is unclear, a judge will submit his/her score and ask that the score be held, pending a conference or review of the official video at the next drag or as soon as practical. Should the judges determine via conference or video replay that a penalty was incurred, it should be applied. If however, no penalty occurred, the score will be announced as originally submitted. 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. The use

of video equipment by the judges is only permissible if the judge has the reason to believe that all entries have been videotaped."

- h. In the event that one or both judges give a composite score of zero to a competitor, **feel that a rider should have received a zero** or a five point or great variance exists between the two judge's scores and a video review is not requested by the judges, 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.
- i. Each judge will submit a list of their top ten reining riders of the championship to be considered for the NRHA Reining Derby. Judges may not confer. These lists will be submitted to the selection committee along with the riders' statistics for the year.

## IV. Individual Competition

### 1. Qualification

- a. Eight riders and two alternates will qualify for Individual National Championship Competition for each of the four events that are offered for Team Competition.
- b. Coaches will submit up to eight Varsity Equestrian riders per event that have competed in a minimum of five head-to-head regular season competitions and have compiled a winning record to the Selection Committee. The Selection Committee will evaluate these riders' regular season statistics based on win-loss, win percentage, number of MVPs, point spread, average point spread, scores, average scores, strength of schedule and additional information. Coaches will submit these individuals using the Selection Competition nomination form and statistical spread sheet that is available on the Varsity Equestrian webpage. Deadlines for submission of statistics will be determined by the Selection Committee.

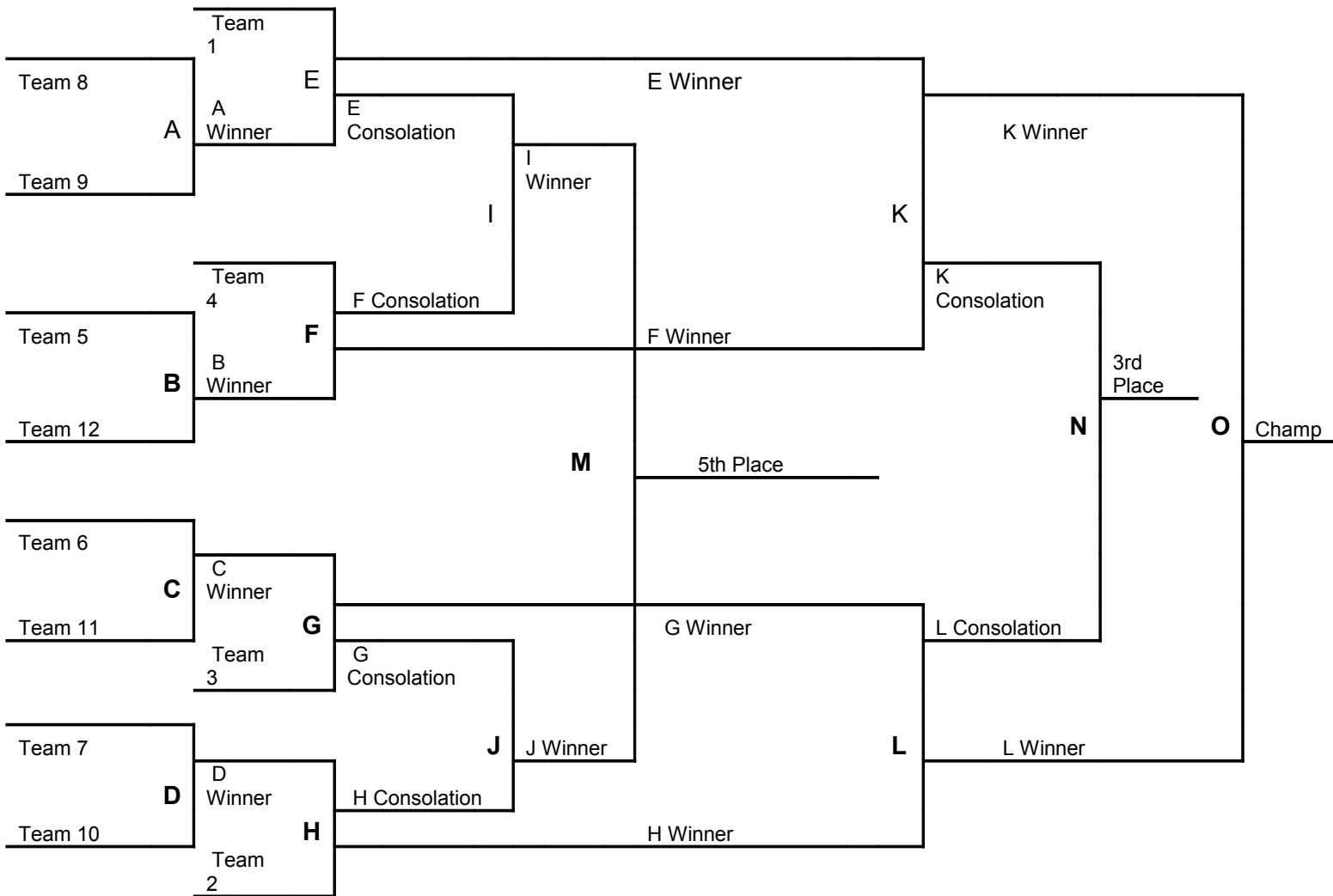
### 2. Event Routine, Scoring and Ties

- a. 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 the Hunter Seat Equitation on the Flat and Equitation over Fences, and AQHA for Horsemanship and Reining will govern.
- b. The 2010 VENC Individual competition will use the stated point system for Varsity Equestrian: Equitation on the Flat—100 pts, Equitation over Fences—100 pts, Horsemanship—70 pt base, Reining—70 pt base.) All schools competing will know the format of the show at least twenty one days prior to the start of the show.
- c. Competition will be based on the current win/loss point system used for Varsity Equestrian. When two riders compete on the same horse, the rider with the highest score will be the winner of the bracket and will move forward to the next round.
- d. Individual National Championship competition will progress separately through the individual competition bracket outlined on page 19 of this rulebook.
- e. Current scoring system used in Varsity Equestrian competitions will be used. Refer to rule I.C.3.
- f. In case of a tie within any individual bracket using the win/loss scoring system, the rider receiving the higher score from the designated senior judge will be declared

the winner of the bracket. If a tie still remains the following process will be used as a second tie breaker:

1. For brackets AA, BB, CC, DD, EE or FF a steward will approach the senior judge to review his/her scorecards and declare a winner. Prior to individual competition, both judges will be asked to denote extra comments on score cards referring to individual competitors in the event that a tie may occur.
  2. For bracket GG (Championship bracket), a ride off will occur. The alternate horse for the bracket will be used and the same tests/patterns that were used in Championship bracket will be re-ridden. Order of go will be determined by a flip of the coin to be conducted by a steward. The steward will be in charge of the event routine (i.e. determining time needed for horse to rest in between runs, etc.)
- g. If a rider is scheduled to compete for both team competition and individual competition within the same bracket, it is highly recommended that the steward schedule the rider to compete first for their team and then compete as an individual.
  - h. Individual competitors in Equitation over Fences in brackets AA, BB, CC, DD, EE and FF will ride a course that will follow a different track than team competitors in brackets M and N.
  - i. All other rules herein that apply to Team Competition will apply to Individual Competition.

## 2010 VENC TEAM BRACKETS



**Day 1/Test 1**

A  
B  
C  
D

**Day 2/Test 2**

G  
H

**Day 3/Test 4**

M  
N  
EE (individual)  
FF (individual)

**Day 1/Test 2**

E  
F

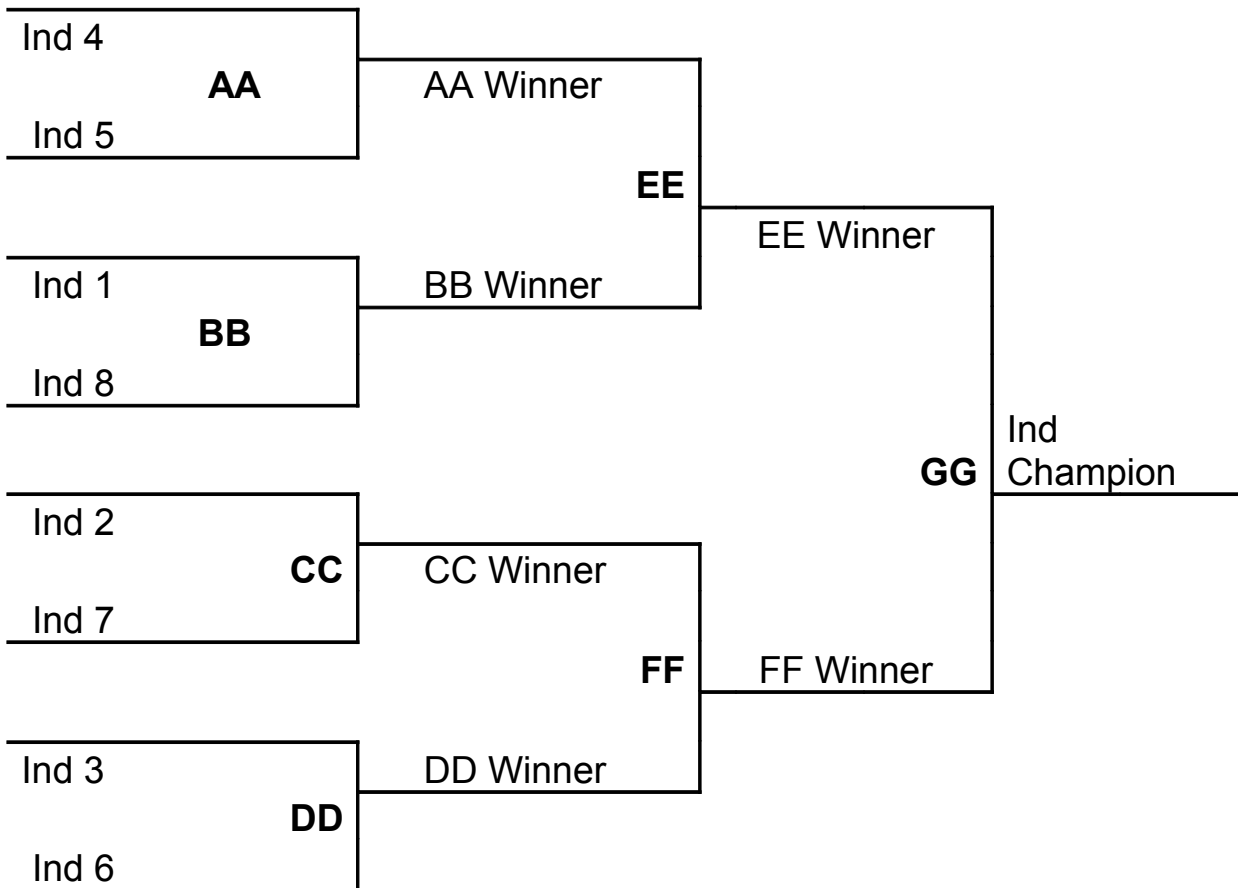
**Day 2/Test 3**

I  
J  
K  
L  
AA (individual)  
BB (individual)  
CC (individual)  
DD (individual)

**Championship/Test 4**

O  
GG (individual)

# 2010 VENC INDIVIDUAL BRACKETS



**2010 VENC Rule Amendment Form**

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

Reason for Change:

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

Rule to read today as:

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Signature of Head Coaches:

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Necessary Information  
For  
Pre-competition Fact Sheet from Host School  
For  
VENC Competition

Date:

Location:

Competition Manager(s):

Judges:

Steward(s):

Competitors: Number of competitors for each division

Divisions Offered and Tests Used:

Competition Schedule (tentative):

Hotel Information:

Directions to Hotel:

Directions to Equestrian Facility:

Contact Information:

Fax Number to send entries: Include entry deadline

Concessions?: If so, what kind of food

This information should be sent out three weeks prior to the date of competition. It should preferably be faxed or emailed. If sent by postal mail it must be mailed in a timely manner so it is received by all competing team three weeks prior to start of competition.