

TRAIL HORSE - ABRA RULES PG. 67-70 AS WRITTEN - March 2008

SECTION 1. No horse shall be allowed to show in more than one (1) (buckskin) Trail Horse class per show, excluding youth and amateur events.

- 1.1 This class will be judged on the performance of the horse over obstacles, with emphasis on manners, response to the rider and quality of movement. Credit will be given to horses negotiating the obstacles with style and some degree of speed, providing correctness is not sacrificed. Horses should receive credit for showing attentiveness to the obstacles and the capability of picking their own way through the course when obstacles warrant it, and willingly responding to the rider's cues on more difficult obstacles.
- 1.2 Horse shall be penalized for any unnecessary delay while approaching or negotiating the obstacles. Horses with artificial appearance over obstacles should be penalized.
- 1.3 Horses must not be required to work on the rail. The course must be designed, however, to require each horse to show the three gaits (walk, jog, lope) somewhere between obstacles as a part of its work, and quality of movement and cadence should be considered as part of the maneuver score. While on the line of travel between obstacles, the horse shall be balanced, carrying his head and neck in a relaxed, natural position, with the poll level with or slightly above the withers. The head should not be carried behind the vertical, giving the appearance of intimidation, or be excessively nosed out, giving a resistant appearance. Gait between obstacles shall be at the discretion of the judge.
- 1.4 The course to be used must be posted at least one hour before scheduled starting time of the class.
- 1.5 Official trail score sheets will be used and must be signed by judge and returned with show results. Scoring will be on the basis of 0-infinity, with 70 denoting an average performance. Each obstacle will receive an obstacle score that should be added or subtracted from 70 and is subject to a penalty that should be subtracted. Each obstacle will be scored on the following basis, ranging from plus 1½ to minus 1½: 1½ extremely poor, -1 very poor, -1/2 poor, 0 correct, +1/2 good, +1 very good, +1½ excellent. Obstacle scores are to be determined and assessed independently of penalty points. Penalties should be assessed per occurrence as follows:
- 1.6 The following **deductions** will result:

0- SCORE

- Use of more than one finger between reins.
 - Use of two hands (except in snaffle bit or hackamore classes designed for two hands) or changing hands on reins; except for junior horses shown with hackamore or snaffle bit, only **one hand** may be used on the reins, except that it is permissible to change hands to work an obstacle.
 - Use of romal other than referred to on page 33.
 - Performing the obstacle incorrectly or other than in specified order
 - No attempt to perform an obstacle
 - Equipment failure that delays completion of pattern
 - Excessively or repeatedly touching the horse on the neck to lower the head
 - Fall to the ground by horse or rider
 - Entering or exiting an obstacle from the incorrect side or direction
 - Working obstacle the incorrect direction, including overtures of more than ¼ turn.
 - Failure to work an obstacle in any manner other than how it's described by the course
 - Riding outside designated boundary marker of the arena or course area
 - Third refusal
 - Failure to ever demonstrate correct gait between obstacle as designed
 - Faults to follow the correct line of travel between obstacles, which will be cause for disqualification,
 1. Head carried too low (tip of ear below the withers *consistently*).
 2. Over-flexing or straining neck in head carriage so the nose is carried behind the vertical *consistently*.
- ½ POINT**
- Each tick of log, pole, cone, plant, or any component of the obstacle

1 POINT

- Each bite of or hit of or stepping on a log, pole, cone, plant, or any component of the obstacle
- Incorrect or break of gait at walk or jog for two strides or less
- Both front or hind feet in a single-strided slot or space
- Skipping over or failing to step into required space
- Split pole in lope-over

3 POINTS

- Incorrect or break of gait at walk or jog for more than 2 strides
- Out of lead or break of gait at lope (except when correcting an incorrect lead)
- Knocking down an elevated pole, cone, barrel, plant obstacle, or severely disturbing an obstacle.
- Stepping outside the confines of, falling, or jumping off or out of an obstacle with one foot

5 POINTS

- Dropping slicker or object required to be carried on course
- First or second cumulative refusal, balk, or evading an obstacle by shying or backing more than 2 strides away
- Letting go of gate or dropping rope gate
- Use of either hand to instill fear or praise
- Stepping outside the confines of, falling, or jumping off or out an obstacle with more than one foot once the foot has entered obstacle, including missing one element of an obstacle on a line of travel with more than one foot
- Blatant disobedience (kicking out, bucking, rearing, striking)
- Faults, which occur on the line of travel between obstacles, scored accordingly to severity:
 1. Head carried to high
 2. Head carried to low (tip of ear below the withers)
 3. Over-flexing or straining neck in head carriage so the nose is carried behind the vertical
 4. Excessive nosing out
 5. Opening mouth excessively

1.7 Management, when setting course, should keep in mind that the idea is not to trap a horse; or eliminate it by making an obstacle too difficult. All courses and obstacles are to be constructed with safety in mind so as to eliminate any accidents. If difficult courses are set, junior trail should be less difficult. When the distances and spaces are measured between all obstacles, the inside base to inside base measurement of each obstacle considering the normal path of the horse, should be the measuring point. Enough space must be provided for a horse to jog [at least 30 feet (9 meters)] and lope [at least 50 feet (15 meters)] for the judges to evaluate these gaits.

1.8 If disrupted, the course shall be reset after each horse has worked. In case that a combination of obstacles are used, the course cannot be reset until the contestant finishes the entire course regardless of where any disruption occurs.

1.9 At least six obstacles must be used, three of which must be from the mandatory list of obstacles and at least three others selected from the list of optional obstacles.

1.10 Mandatory Obstacles:

A. Opening, passing through and closing gate. (Losing control of gate is to be penalized.) Use a gate which will not endanger horse or rider. If the gate has a metal, plastic or wooden support bar under the opening, contestants must work the gate moving forward through it.

B. Ride over at least four logs or poles. These can be in a straight line, curved, zigzag or raised. The space between the logs is to be measured and the path the horse is to take should be the measuring point. Trotovers and lopeovers cannot be elevated in novice classes. All elevated elements must be placed in a cup, notched block, or otherwise secured so they cannot roll. The height should be measured from the ground to the top of the element. Spacing for walkovers, Trotovers, and lopeovers should be as follows or increments thereof.

1. The spacing for walkovers shall be 20" to 24" (40cm CO 60cm) and may be elevated to 12" (30cm). Elevated walkovers should be set at least 22" (55cm) apart.

2. The spacing for Trotovers shall be 3' to 3'6", (90cm – 105cm) and may be elevated to 8" (20 cm).

3. The spacing for lopeovers shall be 6'7" (1.8 to 2.1 meters) or increments thereof, and may be elevated to 8" (20cm).

C. Backing obstacle. Backing obstacles to be spaced a minimum of 28" (70cm). If elevated, 30" (75cm) spacing is required. Entrants cannot be asked to back over a stationary object such as a wooden pole or metal bar.

(1) Back through and around at least three markers.

(2) Back through L, V, U, straight or similar-shaped course. May be elevated no more than 24" (60cm).

1.11 OPTIONAL OBSTACLES, but not limited to:

(A) Water hazard (ditch or small pond). No metal or slick bottom boxes will be used.

(B) Serpentine obstacles at walk or jog. Spacing to be minimum of 6' (1.8 meters) for jog.

(C) Carry object from one part of arena to another. (Only objects which reasonably might be carried on a trail ride may be used.)

(D) Ride over wooden bridge. (Suggested minimum width shall be 36" (90 cm)) wide and at least six feet long. Bridge should be sturdy, safe and negotiated at a walk only.

(E) Put on and remove slicker.

(F) Remove and replace materials from mailbox.

(G) Side pass (may be elevated to 12" (30cm) maximum).

(H) An obstacle consisting of four logs or rails, each 5' to 7' (1.5 to 2.1 meters) long, laid in a square. Each contestant will enter the square by riding over log or rail as designated. When all four feet are inside the square, rider should execute a turn, as indicated, and depart.

(I) Any other safe and negotiable obstacle which could reasonably be expected to be encountered on a trail ride and meets the approval of the judges may be used.

(J) A combination of two or more of any obstacle is acceptable.

1.12 UNACCEPTABLE OBSTACLES:

(1) Tires

(2) Animals

(3) Hides

(4) PVC Pipes

(5) Dismounting

(6) Jumps

(7) Rocking or moving bridges

(8) Water box with floating or moving parts

(9) Flames, dry ice, fire extinguisher, etc.

(10) Logs or poles elevated in a manner that permits such to roll

(11) Ground ties

1.13 The judge must walk the course and has the right and duty to alter the course in any manner.

The judge may remove or change any obstacle he deems unsafe or non-negotiable. If at any time a trail obstacle is deemed to be unsafe by the judge, it shall be repaired or removed from the course. If it cannot be repaired and horses have completed the course, the score for that obstacle shall be deducted from all previous works for that class

1.14 Except for the junior horses shown with hackamores or snaffle it, only one (1) hand may be used on the reins, except that it is permissible to change hands to work with an obstacle.

Hand to be around reins. One (1) finger between reins permitted if split reins are used.

(A) While horse is in motion, rider's hands shall be clear of horse and saddle.

(B) Spurs or romal shall not be used forward of the cinch.

Horse shall be shown with a stock saddle. Silver equipment will not count over good working outfit.

1.15 A Hackamore (refer to pg 33) or curb, snaffle, half-breed, or spade bit is permissible, but must meet the approval of the judge, curb strap or chain must be at least ½ " in width and must lie flat against the jaw of the horse

1.16 No wire curbs, regardless of how padded or covered, nor chin strap narrower than ½ inch will be permitted. A martingale, noseband, or tie-down is prohibited.

1.17 Use of a rope or riata is optional. If used, the rope or riata must be coiled and attached to the saddle.