

TEXAS TRAIL CHALLENGE

COMPETITIVE TRAIL CHALLENGE

RULES AND GUIDELINES

2012

A Texas Trail Challenge CTC is an obstacle course laid out on a trail located on public or private land. The horse and Rider are tested for their trail skills in a natural setting over the course of several miles and in camp. Obstacles are natural to their region and are ones typically encountered while on a trail ride. A Judge at each obstacle evaluates the way both Rider and horse negotiate each obstacle. Obstacles are both while riding and in-hand. The Riders are judged by keeping common sense and safety in mind. A Texas Trail Challenge is not a race. Any breed of horse or any style of riding makes this an excellent individual, club and family activity.

CONTENTS

- Section 1: Management of Rides
- Section 2: Terms
- Section 3: General Rules
- Section 4: Rider
- Section 5: Equipment
- Section 6: Divisions & Classes
- Section 7: Scoring
- Section 8: Points Towards Year End Awards
- Section 9: Obstacle Judging & Scorecard Standards
- Section 10: Obstacles & Skills

Contact Information:

www.texastrailchallenge.com
texastrailchallenge@gmail.com

SECTION 1 - MANAGEMENT OF RIDES

- 1.1 Ride Manager - responsible for all matters pertaining to the ride.
 - a) This position is the chief executive of the ride.
 - b) The Ride Manager can also be the Trailmaster.
 - c) The Ride Manager can also judge obstacles.
 - d) Fill out the proper documentation for Judge's evaluation and send into the TTC Judges Committee Chairperson.
- 1.2 Trail Master - responsible for all trail matters pertaining to the ride.
 - a) Have a well marked trail of varied terrain prepared in advance for the TTC.
 - b) Provide a map for Riders with the trail direction visibly marked and various landmarks recorded clearly.
 - c) Evaluate the obstacles and determine if they allow adequate space for multiple horses waiting and room to negotiate the obstacle.
 - d) Evaluation of the obstacles will include considering the terrain, especially as it pertains to the skills of the Tenderfoot participant.
 - e) Each obstacle will have a suitable and safe means of bypassing the obstacle while providing a smooth transition to the next obstacle.
- 1.3 Ride Secretary - responsible for all ride information, payments from Riders, assigning numbers at the rides and being familiar with the scoring process by either administering the Judges remarks or overseeing this phase of the ride.
 - a) Shall administer the score cards in the "Rider Cards Workbook"
 - b) Shall send in all reports to TTC and Webmaster after each ride.
 - c) Shall provide information to ride management with figures for the TTC membership fees to be sent to TTC Membership Chair.
 - d) Follow other items seen in the Ride Manager's Manual.
- 1.4 Sr. Judge - Must be recognized as such by TTC. Sr. Judges must be familiar with all TTC rules in addition to being in good standing with other trail competitive horsemanship events (example: NATRC, AQHA, CHA). Must be one of the following: 1) current horsemanship Judge for other trail competitive events, 2) riding or horsemanship instructor, 3) CTR Regional Championship recipient. Each TTC will have one Sr. Judge.

Qualified Judges can Judge all obstacles associated with a TTC.

 - a) Shall preview the course prior to the event. Approval of the course design is contingent on obstacles being category appropriate. Typically this is done the day prior to the ride.
 - b) Shall create or approve the obstacles for the Tenderfoot, Maverick & Horseman categories. The obstacle information will then be placed in a folder with the directions, location and score sheets for each Judge to use. (Management will turn these folders in to the TTC Board with the scores and comments made by the Judges)
 - c) Has the authority to disqualify any participant from an obstacle, or if appropriate, from the entire ride for unsportsmanlike conduct, or conduct that may reasonably result in physical harm to any person, animal or property. (Section 9.2.e)
 - d) Is responsible for selecting the Judge that will determine the soundness check on the horses before leaving camp and the backup Judge to consult with in case a lame horse is detected. The Sr. Judge's decision is final.
 - e) Is responsible for making a final ruling if there is a grievance from a competitor.
 - f) Shall consult with ride management on respective obstacles to be sure none of them are unsafe or artificial.
 - g) Follows all procedures listed in 1.5 – Judge (see below)

TEXAS TRAIL CHALLENGE RULES 2012

- 1.5 Judge - Must be one of the following: 1) current horsemanship Judge for other trail competitive events, 2) riding or horsemanship instructor, 3) Regional Championship recipient. Each TTC will have two or more Judges. All Judges from the 2007 to 2010 TTC events are grandfathered in.
- Qualified Judges can judge all obstacles associated with a TTC.
 - Judges shall review the obstacles with the Sr. Judge that has assigned them. Typically viewing the location and what will be judged on the day before the ride. Showing up the morning of the ride is not adequate time to prepare a Judge for an obstacle.
 - Writing the Rider's instructions down in the folder is essential. Each Rider will need the exact same explanation of the obstacle they are to complete.
 - Do not allow Riders to interrupt the instructions. Start with "These are your instructions" or "Listen carefully".
 - All Judges are responsible for the placement of their team's belongings. The belongings are not to become part of the obstacle or impact the Rider's way of going, unless so intended.
 - Stay in communication and adhere to the times set by the Trailmaster on the Riders' maps.
 - After each obstacle is complete the folder with the Rider's results is taken to the Ride Secretary to be transferred to the Rider's Card.
 - Judges are responsible for staying in contact with the score card transcribers; the Judge may be needed to dictate the scores or answer questions.
 - After the results from each Judge's obstacle is transferred to the score cards, each Judge is required to sign off on their "Judge's Folder"
 - Following this there will be a 'Debriefing Meeting' of the obstacles. Each Judge is responsible to review their obstacle and give some constructive comments.
 - Awards are held afterwards, the Riders will receive their score card. Judges are encouraged to stay for this portion in case there are any questions about their obstacles.
- 1.6 Provisional Judge - Must be one of the following: 1) current horsemanship judge for other trail competitive events, 2) riding or horsemanship instructor, 3) Regional Championship recipient, 4) competed in 2 or more competitive trail venues for 3 or more years. Qualified Judges can judge timed challenges, equipment checks, horsemanship questions and basic skill obstacles.
- Provisional Judges shall review the obstacles with the Sr. Judge that has assigned them. Typically viewing the location and what will be judged on the day before the ride. Showing up the morning of the ride is not adequate time to prepare a Judge for an obstacle.
 - Provisional Judges are limited to judging timed obstacles or visual checks not to exceed 5 point obstacles. (i.e. tack or map check, timed accuracy obstacle or determined by management).
 - Writing the Rider's instructions down in the folder is essential. Each Rider will need the exact same explanation of the obstacle they are to complete.
 - Do not allow Riders to interrupt the instructions. Start with "These are your instructions" or "Listen carefully".
 - All Judges are responsible for the placement of their team's belongings. The belongings are not to become part of the obstacle or impact the Rider's way of going, unless so intended.
 - Stay in communication and adhere to the times set by the Trailmaster on the Riders' maps.
 - After each obstacle is complete the folder with the Rider's results is taken to the Ride Secretary to be transferred to the Rider's Card.
 - Judges are responsible for staying in contact with the score card transcribers; the Judge may be needed to dictate the scores or answer questions.
 - After the results from each Judge's obstacle is transferred to the score cards, each Judge is required to sign off on their "Judge's Folder"
 - Following this there will be a 'Debriefing Meeting' of the obstacles. Each Judge is responsible to review their obstacle and give some constructive comments.
 - Awards are held afterwards, the Riders will receive their score card. Judges are encouraged to stay for this portion in case there are any questions about their obstacles.

SECTION 2 - TERMS

- 2.1 Whenever the word horse is used it also refers to mules and ponies.
- 2.2 Whenever the word he is used it also refers to she.
- 2.3 Texas Trail Challenge will be referred to in this document as TTC.
- 2.4 Riders under the age of 14 will be referred to as Junior Riders.

SECTION 3 - GENERAL RULES

- 3.1 Trail
- A TTC-CTC is a one day event starting at approximately 8 am and ending by approximately 5 pm.
 - Riders will be moving down the trail between 3 to 4.5 mph.
 - Each Rider will have a map with any special instructions indicating direction of travel, landmarks and management's phone numbers in case of emergency.
 - The trail will be well marked and between 7 to 12 miles long.
 - Ten plus obstacles will be observed on the trail and in camp.
 - The Rider Card will equal no more than 100 points plus any extra credit earned.
 - All obstacles must be those that might naturally occur on the trail ride. Obstacle should reflect the riding conditions typical of the local environment with the goal being to maintain the character of an authentic trail ride.
 - Indiscriminate overuse of inappropriately placed man-made materials designed only to increase the challenges (spook or startle) will not be allowed. (Section 9.2.e)
 - Obstacles can be viewed by a hidden Judge, these will be called observations. These can include but are not exclusive to: going down the trail, uphill, downhill, transitions, water crossings, water stops, waiting for an obstacle, etc.
 - Competitions can have two obstacles that will be timed, this time might be noted on the Rider Card as well as the score for that obstacle, this type of obstacle can determine a tie breaker. (Example: opening a gate, maneuvering a course with best clean run)
 - To ensure the Judges are able to get to their obstacles for judging before the Riders pass that point of the trail a cone or other

TEXAS TRAIL CHALLENGE RULES 2012

marker can be posted on the trail. This will be discussed at the ride meeting prior to ride out on Saturday morning. Other places on the trail can have written instructions for Riders to complete.

- l) The ride will go on rain or shine; however, the Ride Manager has the option of delaying the start time of the ride, shortening the length of the ride and/or taking away obstacles as they see fit and to ensure the safety of the Riders, horses, Judges, and the management team.

3.2 Rider

- a) Events are open to all Riders. Ownership of a horse is not required; however, the horse must be listed on the membership application.
- b) All Riders and Buddy Riders will sign a liability form at check-in.
- c) Riders may be observed by a Judge riding or in-hand obstacles.
- d) Riders receive instructions from a Judge or assistant explaining how to complete an obstacles; this can be either verbal or written. (excluding the hidden observations)
- e) Riders may ask the instructions to be repeated or ask questions requiring yes or no answers.
- f) Riders are not to be 'coached' through an obstacle by another Rider or bystander.
- g) The Rider will not interrupt the instructions given; doing so may result in a miscommunication.
- h) Each obstacle is designed to evaluate the Rider or horse or both.
- i) Each Rider will receive their Scorecard after all awards are presented. (Section 7 - Scoring)
- j) Any type of cruelty to animals such as excessive use of spurs, crops, etc. will be penalized. A Rider will be subject to dismissal if it continues.
- k) TTC points will be accrued for the year, Year End Awards will be posted on the TTC website.
- l) Each Rider is responsible for his own safety and the safety of his mount. Earned points and resulting awards are to be considered secondary to safety.
- m) Each participant must maintain control of their horse throughout the ride. Failure to do so could result in disqualification.
- n) Riding double, ponying an animal with or without a Rider, or a loose foal on the side is not allowed. Ponying a horse as part of an obstacle shall not be allowed.
- o) Junior Riders must have written consent of a parent or guardian in order to participate in a TTC.
- p) Junior Riders 13 and under must be accompanied by a sponsor on the trail. A maximum of 4 Jr. Riders shall be allowed for each sponsor.
- q) Junior Riders shall wear a helmet at all times when mounted either in camp or on the trail.
- r) All Riders are encouraged to wear a helmet when mounted either in camp or on the trail.
- s) Riders may dismount and walk their horses at any point in the trail unless otherwise instructed for an obstacle. The Rider should be aware by doing so they could be subject to missing a hidden observation.
- t) Each Rider is judged on their trail ability, negotiating obstacles, or observations on the trail.

3.3 Horse

- a) Horses may be of any breed but must be at least three years of age (36 months) at the time of competing. It is the Rider's responsibility to ascertain if the horse is capable of competing.
- b) Horses are allowed to wear any type of leg protection or hoof protection including leggings, bell boots, shoes and/or boots (Example: Boa Boots, Epic Easy Boots).
- c) Horses that kick must be tagged with a red ribbon in the tail. For the sake of this sport the horse should be socialized and be respectful to the Rider. Horses that show aggression on the trail are frowned on. It behooves the Rider to work on this at home, demanding the same respect on the ground, as in the saddle. (Section 9.1.f & 9.2.e)
- d) Stallions will be identified by a yellow ribbon in their tail and forelock at all times. Behavior that is deemed potentially dangerous or unsafe will result in dismissal from the ride.
- e) Horses that are considered 'Green' should wear a green ribbon in their tail. This identifies them as a 'new to the trail' horse and could help with some safety issues.
- f) Horses will be observed for soundness before leaving on the trail. This exercise is considered an obstacle and will be graded on the scorecard, generally for horsemanship abilities. Each Rider will trot their horse by the Judge, either in-hand or mounted, to determine soundness.
 - i. Grade 1 = the rider will receive a 5 point deduction. In addition the horse will be reevaluated at the end of the ride to be certain the lameness has not worsened.
 - ii. Grade 2 or 3= the horse will be dismissed from the ride.
- g) All horses are subject to drug testing. If drugs are found the Rider/horse will lose all points and/or awards earned at the event. Typical drugs to avoid are pain relievers like Bute, MSM or drugs like Ace.

3.4 Camping

- a) Management will provide a place for competitors to camp overnight. This may be primitive camping or with facilities like water, electric & a meeting location. Management will note on the "Ride Page" what facilities are available.
- b) Fees are unique to each facility that a TTC is held. This fee is generally taken by ride management to pay the ranch owner. Details will be on the "Ride Page".
- c) Horse can be housed in pens, tied to the trailer, high lined with sliding tether or kept in an electric fence. Electric fences can not be more than 14 x 14. This ensures that there is room for all competitors to house their horse in the camp.

SECTION 4 – RIDE ENTRY

- 4.1 Ride fees for participants are \$50.00 for Adult/Senior and \$40.00 for Junior (ages 8 to 17) per ride. Double rides (two single rides in one weekend) are \$85.00 for Adult/Senior and \$65.00 for Junior.
- 4.2 Buddy Rider fee is \$25.00 per ride, double rides are \$35.00
 - a) Buddy Riders do not participate in obstacles and must position themselves clear from a line leading up to an obstacle.
 - b) Buddy Riders are not to interfere with the other Riders and are required to follow all safety and trail rules.
 - c) Buddy Riders do not wear a number for identification.
- 4.3 Management determines whether a deposit is necessary to hold your entry or camp site. All money is due at check-in.

TEXAS TRAIL CHALLENGE RULES 2012

- 4.4 Check-in
- Starts on Friday typically at 3 p.m. and the day of the ride at 7 a.m. (for those that are not camping overnight). All Riders able to check-in on Friday are encouraged to do so; this will ensure the ride starts as scheduled Saturday or Sunday mornings. These times can be adjusted by each Ride Manager if needed.
 - Each Rider will receive a number for identification.
 - Horses do not need to be present for check-in; however, some rides may start their obstacle observations after checking for Riders that are present. The Riders arriving the following day will complete those same obstacles with the same Judge on the morning of the ride.
- 4.5 Camping and ranch fees are separate and will be noted by ride management for each ride.
- 4.6 Points will be kept in a database and available online. Points for full members will accumulate each year for Year End Awards presented at the Final Follies in December.
- 4.7 TTC's are unlimited; however, if management chooses they can choose the following: if more than 60 Rider entry forms are received a second day of competition will be added (typically Sunday). Riders will be informed before the event if the ride is filling and a second day is added.
- 4.8 Each Rider/horse combination is considered a team and will be awarded points as such. If the Rider changes horses mid-year they will be considered a new team.

SECTION 5 - EQUIPMENT

- 5.1 Any type of saddle or bridle, halter, sidepull, or hackamore is allowed. No bareback pads are allowed. It's the Riders responsibility to determine the appropriateness of his tack and to ensure that such tack is fitted and used properly. Horses that cannot be controlled with the tack being used are subject to dismissal of the event. (Section 9.2.e)
- 5.2 A halter and lead rope or halter bridle must be carried on the ride.
- 5.3 A hoof pick must be carried on the ride.
- 5.4 A knife capable of cutting a lead rope or tack must be carried by all adults on the ride.
- 5.5 As mentioned earlier: All Junior Riders are required to wear a helmet at all time while mounted and on the trail or in camp. Helmets are recommended for adults as well.

NOTE: Your horse may not be the normal trail horse you are used to riding. During an event such as this many horses will become excited while moving down the trail. Please be aware the tack you ride with will impact the way you are able to control your horse in this situation (i.e. - rope halters used as bridles)

SECTION 6 - DIVISIONS & CLASSES

- 6.1 There are three levels of difficulty: Tenderfoot, Maverick & Horseman. (see website "Ride Divisions" for obstacle examples.)
- Tenderfoot: Basic obstacles, Rider working on horsemanship skills.
 - Confident with horse on trail.
 - Rider has no competitive trail ride experience or maximum experience is no more than 3 Tenderfoot rides.
 - Horse can have previous competitive trail ride experience.
 - Can complete primary skills listed on the Obstacle Skills (Section 10).
 - No dragging / pulling objects, or tailing a horse up a hill will be allowed.
 - Maverick: Rider has horsemanship skills and comfortable on the trail.
 - Experienced trail riding team
 - Rider has competed in trail events.
 - Is ready for most obstacles and can accomplish skills listed on the Obstacle Skills (Section 10).
 - Able to complete multiple tasked obstacles.
 - This more advanced team may be asked to complete variations of the trail.
 - Some obstacles performed will be of the Tenderfoot level and others the Horseman level.
 - Tenderfoot Riders that received Year End Awards 1st to 6th place will move to Maverick.
 - Competitive trail ride level equal to NATRC Novice.
 - Horseman: Accomplished Rider and horse team, trainers and instructors.
 - Accomplished trail Rider and horse team.
 - Can complete all skills listed on the Obstacle Skill sheet.
 - Can complete multiple tasks as directed by a Judge over demanding terrain and/or challenging environment.
 - Maverick Riders that received Year End Awards 1st to 6th place, if riding the same horse will move to Horseman. The same Rider starting a new horse can stay in the Maverick division.
 - Competitive trail ride level equal to NATRC Competitive Pleasure and Open.

NOTE: All categories and divisions will follow the same trail with little deviation to perform obstacles.

- 6.2 Ride managers shall endeavor to design the majority of obstacles with all levels of directions and they shall design obstacles that are category appropriate.
- 6.3 The Junior division is for ages 8 to 17.
- 6.4 Tenderfoot & Maverick will be divided into these three classifications:
- 8 – 17 = Junior
 - 18 - 54 = Adult
 - 55 plus = Senior

NOTE: See 6.6 for clarification on splitting a class.

- 6.5 A Riders age for the purpose of determining category, shall be the Riders' age as of January 1 of the current ride year.
- 6.6 There must be at least 4 Riders in each classification within each division or the classifications of Adult and Senior will be grouped together. In other words, if there are only 3 entries in an Adult class it will be combined with the Senior class within that division.
- 6.7 Riders that receive Year End Awards 1st to 6th must move up to the next level if riding the same horse for the following year. If a Rider meets or exceeds three first placings in one category they shall be required to move up a level the following ride year. Tenderfoot Riders must move up to Maverick if they have competed in more than 3 TTC's.

TEXAS TRAIL CHALLENGE RULES 2012

SECTION 7 – SCORING

- 7.1 Riders will be scored on negotiating an obstacle under the direction of a Judge. The individual areas of evaluation are outlined in Obstacle Skills (Section 10).
- 7.2 Each Rider/horse team will earn points by completing obstacles.
- 7.3 Each obstacle is worth either 5 or 10 points. The Rider and horse are judged as individuals or as a team.
- 7.4 Any judge may dismiss a participant from their obstacle for safety reasons. (Section 9.2.d)
- 7.5 The obstacles must be executed as stated in the Judge's directions
- 7.6 If any horse refuses at an obstacle, the participant will be allowed a total of three attempts to complete. The team is subject to deduction for each unsuccessful attempt. If the horse refuses a third time, the participant is dismissed from the obstacle receiving points for attempting the obstacle. (If the obstacle needs to be completed in a certain amount of time the Judge can call when that time runs out)
- a) The definition of a refusal is a horse that moves their feet away (any direction) from the obstacle. Looking and snorting are not considered a refusal.
- b) Pausing at an obstacle, water crossing or log crossing, to sniff or investigate is allowed as long as the Judge assess that the horse is not balking.
- 7.7 If the Rider is asked a question (i.e., where are we on this map?), perform a specific skill, tie a specific knot to a hitching rail, or lead their horse, and the Rider does not perform the skill correctly, the Judge may use this category to assess points.
- 7.8 Missing an obstacle: If the Rider misses an obstacle due to being too early, tardiness to an obstacle marked on the map or being off trail, the Rider will not receive points.
- 7.9 Scorecards will not always reflect a comment on the horse and Rider lines. It is at the discretion per obstacle what will be noted on the Scorecard.
- 7.10 Scoring values will be assessed per each section of judging per obstacle as follows:
- 10 or 5 pts - Excellent, smooth and effortless
 - 8 or 4 pts - Good, no discernible mistakes
 - 6 or 3 pts - OK, above average with very minor mistakes
 - 4 or 2 pts - Fair, obvious mistakes
 - 2 or 1 pts - Poor, made effort but skills need development
 - 0 - Passed, Rider chose to pass obstacle
- 7.11 Judges have the option of awarding a '+' reflected on the Rider's scorecard. This is used to complement the Rider on a job well done, not always reflected with a perfect score. This can also be used to break a tie at the end of a ride.
- 7.12 Ride management has the option of adding "Extra Credit" obstacles. These obstacles should be of a higher difficulty and /or introducing a new skill set for future rides.
- +3 Completed: exceptional performance
 - +2 Completed: adequate performance
 - +1 Attempted
 - 0 Did not attempt

SECTION 8 - POINTS

- 8.1 Rider/horse teams will accumulate points throughout the year. (Dates and locations posted on the TTC website).
- 8.2 Points are awarded to all Rider/horse teams both for placing and completing a ride per division as follows.
- | <u>Tenderfoot</u> | <u>Maverick</u> | <u>Horseman</u> |
|-------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 14 = 1st placing | 19 = 1st placing | 24 = 1st placing |
| 12 = 2nd placing | 17 = 2nd placing | 22 = 2nd placing |
| 10 = 3rd placing | 15 = 3rd placing | 20 = 3rd placing |
| 8 = 4th placing | 13 = 4th placing | 18 = 4th placing |
| 6 = 5th placing | 11 = 5th placing | 16 = 5th placing |
| 5 = 6th placing | 10 = 6th placing | 15 = 6th placing |
| 4 = Completion | 9 = Completion | 14 = Completion |
- 8.3 Bonus points will be awarded to Maverick at 5 points per placing and for Horseman at 10 points per placing.
- 8.4 In addition to the points earned for placing in individual divisions the Maverick Riders will receive 5 bonus points for each placing and, Horseman will receive 10 points for each placing, (See 8.2).
- 8.5 Rider/horse teams can move up or down in divisions and are eligible for Year End awards with accumulated points in the highest division they competed in. Each Rider/horse team will accumulate individual points. If the class is not full points will be adjusted to 1st place receiving no less than 10 points
- 8.6 Year end awards will be presented at the last TTC ride of the season. An overall award of High Point and Reserve High Point and each division's top Riders will receive awards 1st through 3rd.
- 8.7 Texas Trail Challenge will compile all results for all of the rides; Riders need to be TTC full members to receive TTC year end awards.

SECTION 9 - OBSTACLE JUDGING - SCORECARD STANDARDS

- 9.1 Rider awareness:
- a) Be courteous on the trail, announce when you are ready to pass, "Rider number 21, may I pass on your right?".
 - b) After completing an obstacle, wait for the next Rider to complete it before moving down the trail. The horse behind you may become excited at the site of your horse leaving and have difficulty completing the obstacle.
 - c) When at a watering spot, wait for the other horses to finish, leaving while another horse is drinking can cause that horse to stop drinking.
 - d) Be careful not to crowd other horses. Riding or standing abreast is acceptable but when following or standing behind another horse leave a full horse length between your horse's nose and the other horse's tail. You should be able to see the horse's hocks in front of you between your horse's ears.
 - e) A sponge to wet your horses neck on a hot day is a good way to cool your horse down, but don't dip that sponge in a trough in which other horses will drink.
 - f) If the Rider is having difficulty controlling their horse they should step off the trail, out of line to restore calmness to the horse.

TEXAS TRAIL CHALLENGE RULES 2012

- This can be done mounted or dismounted.
- g) Pay attention to the Judge's directions with the horse positioned at a safe distance from the Judge. Repeating the directions or asking the Judge to repeat them for clarification is acceptable.
 - h) The Rider should evaluate the obstacle for potential cautions before and during the obstacle before proceeding.
- 9.2 Horse can be faulted or dismissed as reads below:
- a) It is the fault of the horse if it is too aware by spooking, shying, and/or spinning. The Rider can lose points for this infraction.
 - b) If a horse clips or stumbles because of lack of awareness. (see Balance in Section 9.5).
 - c) If the horse moves while being examined by a Judge while the Rider is mounted or dismounted.
 - d) If a horse takes an obvious bite or kick at a Judge, Rider or another Rider or horse, the team will receive a -5 or -10 point deduction to be determined by the attending Judge. Rider is subject to dismissal if infraction is severe.
 - e) If a horse is fractious, unruly, or dangerous (bites, kicks, and threatening to others), the Rider is subject for dismissal.
- 9.3 Horses' response to cues: When the Rider applies aids or cues the horse, the horse is to react appropriately. The Rider should not have to resort to very strong aids to obtain a response from the horse, nor should cues create a reaction whereby the horse over reacts. (i.e.. side passing or back too far). The horse should approach an obstacle as cues (i.e. straight on, side pass) and not avoid direct approach. the horse should stand quietly while mounted (no movement of feet). If the horse is tied, the horse should stand quietly and not pull back.
- 9.4 Rider's control: The Rider must maintain control of the horse at all times. This will be maintained by having the Rider control either with the reins or lead rope. Rider's control of the horse is whether mounted or in-hand. The Rider should also control the horse by knowing HOW to ask for their horse to execute the obstacle as well as keep the horse under control if the horse shies or spooks. When in-hand the Rider shall lead the horse slightly to the side of them with the horse's head even with the Rider's shoulder. While leading the horse the Rider should not let the horse crowd or lean on them.
- 9.5 Judge's instructions: Be courteous to the Judge and their crew. Listen carefully to the instructions, if you have questions after they have been completely read you may ask for clarification. Be considerate of other Riders and give them the opportunity to have their full attention on the person giving obstacle instructions. Do not crowd or step on the Judge, the crew or any of their supplies. In addition Riders cannot be coached by other Riders, Buddy Riders or the Judge's crew.
- 9.6 Balance: This applies to both Rider and horse. The Rider should be well balanced in the saddle. For uphill, the Rider should be in line with the trees, vertical to horizon, with legs balanced under Rider and not hitting horse's flanks. Lifting out of the saddle to relieve pressure on the horses back. The Rider can take hold of the mane to gain balance but not hitting the back of the cantle. For downhill, the Rider should lean slightly back, staying light in the saddle. The Rider is not to lean excessively forward, back or sideways. The horse is to be balanced while negotiating obstacles. For downhill obstacle hindquarters should be under the horse and the horse should not lean on the forehand. While negotiating stepovers, the horse is to be balanced and pick up feet and avoid clipping and stumbling. The Rider can stay balanced by looking ahead and not at the horse feet while negotiating obstacles.
- 9.7 On course: The Rider is to follow directions as given and stay on course. Excessive response, avoidance or Rider's misunderstanding of the direction will be penalized. The participant must remain within the boundaries of the obstacle as marked. Avoiding or going outside marked boundaries constitutes being off course.
- 9.8 Passing on an obstacle: It is the Rider's responsibility to pass an obstacle they deem as beyond their team's skill level. Safety and common sense should always be kept in the participant's mind. The Rider has three opportunities to attempt an obstacle; demerits to be assessed for each attempt. After the horse refuses three times the Rider is disqualified for this obstacle.

SECTION 10 – OBSTACLE SKILLS

- 10.1 Horse shall following willingly when lead, not crowding or lagging behind. Excess rope shall be held in the non-lead hand, looped over hand and not coiled around it.
- a) The horse can be lead with a halter and lead rope. If doing so the reins should be secured to the horn of a Western saddle, or appropriately secured, if no saddle horn is available. The Rider does not have to lead with a separate halter but can unclipped the reins from the bit rings and correctly fastened them to the leading-ring of the halter bridle.
 - b) Stirrups without fenders on saddles such as English, Endurance, Austrian, etc., shall be secured by running the stirrups up the leathers, or secured by crossing over the saddle.
 - c) A Rider ground handling his horse through challenging terrain, over logs, through tight spaces shall secure a safe position prior to asking this horse to negotiate the obstacle.
 - d) If the Rider is instructed to lead the horse on a narrow path the (in-hand) will give out enough lead for the horse to follow behind them at a safe distance.
 - e) Riders are also evaluated on their horsemanship skills when leading a horse which includes but is not limited to not allowing the horse to pull on the handler, crowding, lagging behind, rushing ahead, over-reacting to cues by jumping around.
- 10.2 Mounting and dismounting: Horse will stand quietly and not move off when mounted. Style of mounting is not considered, only a smooth mount that does not unbalance the horse or land hard in the saddle. A Rider must have the reins in hand while mounting. Mavericks and Horseman may be asked to execute an offside mount or dismount.
- 10.3 Hoof check: Horse will stand quietly. The criteria for this obstacle is a safe leg pick up, not the method of cueing the horse to pick up the leg. The Rider can hold or tie the horse, letting go of the lead rope will be penalized unless the horse stands still demonstrating being ground tied.
- 10.4 Water crossing: Horse should walk quietly through the water. Horses will not be penalized for stopping to drink. Horses will not be penalized for acknowledging the obstacle before entering it.
- 10.5 Uphill: A Rider is to be positioned appropriately, maintaining the center of balance. No penalty for holding the mane or neck to secure the forward position. Horse to negotiate a slope in a safe manner and not rushing. If the Rider is asked to stop on a uphill and there is sufficient room, the Rider shall rest their horse so that all four hooves are on ground that is as level as possible. The location of the stop shall be clearly marked and given in the directions for the uphill. At no time should a Rider position his mount, haunches toward a drop off.
- 10.6 Downhill: The Rider to be positioned appropriately maintaining the center of balance. Horse to negotiate the slope in a safe manner and not rushing. If the Rider is asked to stop on a downhill and there is sufficient room, the Rider shall rest their horse so that all four hooves are on ground that is as level as possible. The location of the stop shall be clearly marked and given in the directions for the downhill. At no time should a Rider position his horse with haunches toward a drop off.

TEXAS TRAIL CHALLENGE RULES 2012

- 10.7 Stepover: This is a forward motion obstacle. Horse to look at an obstacle and proceed over carefully, avoiding striking the obstacle. Size of an animal relative to an obstacle to be considered. Small horses and ponies not to be penalized for hopping very tall stepovers, if they otherwise negotiate the obstacle calmly and with deliberation. For consecutive, in stride stepovers ride management will endeavor to select obstacles with are no higher than approximately 12 inches. The Rider should look forward as not to off balance the horse.
- 10.8 Bridge: Horse should walk across quietly. No penalty for acknowledging the obstacle before starting to cross. Horse should step on and off the bridge quietly.
- 10.9 Gate: Competitors may be required to negotiate a gate either mounted or in-hand. The horse and Rider combination will move through the obstacle quietly, deliberately and under the Rider's direction. If mounted or in-hand the Rider must keep hand contact on the gate at all time unless otherwise instructed by the Judge..
- 10.10 Drag or pull: This is an advanced obstacle, Tenderfoot class will not complete. The Rider shall hold the rope in their right hand. No tying hard and fast or dallying. The Rider should demonstrate awareness by looking at both the drag object and the direction they are going. The horse or Rider should never become entangled in the rope. Horse to stand quietly during preparation ,then pull or drag an object quietly and in control. Wrapping the rope around the Rider's working hand is to be severely penalized.
- 10.11 Tailing: This is an advanced obstacle, Tenderfoot class will not complete. The Rider shall instruct the horse to go uphill while controlling the horse with a single rein and holding onto the horse's tail. This demonstration is typically used when an 'uphill' is too steep for a Rider to navigate safely on horseback (i.e. - low branches), not safe to lead a horse or difficult for a Rider to go up the hill without assistance (being pulled by the horse).
- 10.12 Standing tied: Some obstacles may require Riders to tie their horse. Horses will be tied with the halter and lead rope or correctly configured halter-bridle, using a knot that is safe and appropriate for the situation and horse. The knot must be secure and the horse must be tied in a location that is safe for the horse, the Rider and any bystanders, other tied horses and their handlers. Horses will stand quietly while tied. NOTE: A quick release knot should be used, the rope should be "locked" before leaving the horse.
- 10.13 Stationary Obstacles: These are such things as slickers, balloons, maps, trash, etc. A Rider is to maintain control of the horse as he acknowledges the obstacles.
- 10.14 Moving Obstacles: These are such things a backpackers, bicycles, vehicles and carts. A Rider is to maintain control of the horse as he acknowledges the obstacles. Safety of all parties, including those persons providing the obstacle, is the primary concern.
- 10.15 Jumping: When asked to trot or canter over a log or "jump" the Rider should instruct the horse to continue with the same gait used when approaching unless otherwise instructed by the Judge.
- 10.16 Stopping: At a walk a horse should stop with little aid from the Rider. Effort will increase slightly for the trot/gait, and again for the canter. The horse should stand quietly after the stop. Judges are looking for resistance from the horse, tossing head or gaping mouth.
- 10.17 Sidepassing: Your horse should be able to sidepass straddling a log, over a log, into the water, up or down hill, as a half pass at a walk, trot or canter or on the fore or hind.
- 10.18 Transitions: A transition from one gait to another may be requested. Your horse should be able to complete a smooth transition from a trot to canter, canter to trot, walk to trot, trot to canter and for Horseman walk to canter.
- 10.19 Backing up: You may be asked to back your horse up either while riding or in-hand. This might involve backing over a log, up or down hill, in a pattern around a tree, cone or terrain.
- 10.20 Sending: A horse should be able to perform sending exercises. This may include sending a horse up or down an incline, over a log, rock or between objects. Sending is an in-hand obstacle.
- 10.21 Terrain: Riders should be able to negotiate challenging terrain according to their division. This may include navigating your horse through trees, water, mud, rocky areas, up and down transitions. Riders will not be asked to negotiate hazardous objects like wire or sharp stobs or stumps.
- 10.22 Skills: The following abilities will help Riders negotiate obstacles successfully. This list is meant only to provide a reference for Riders.
Riders may be asked to perform the following skills in the negotiation of trail obstacles or in-hand:
- a) Stop - responds to halt cues without argument, i.e. gaping mouth, tossing head, harsh hands.
 - b) Be able to ask horse to stand quietly on level ground or a raised surface.
 - c) Execute all gaits calmly and as directed. All gaits natural to a breed are acceptable.
 - d) Be able to move the horse laterally (side to side).
 - e) Make turns on the forehand and/or the hindquarters.
 - f) Be able to back a horse in a straight line and/or around corners. When backing, the Rider should demonstrate awareness by first looking in the direction to be traveled.
 - g) All Riders should be prepared for a tack check which includes halter or halter bridle, lead line, hoof pick, knife (for adults), helmet (mandatory for Juniors). Tack should fit horse properly, i.e. breast collars that are too loose or tight, loose rear cinches.
 - h) Your horse should be clean and free of any debris that could cause rubs.
 - i) Horses should have well fitted tack, no rubs or abrasions from the tack should be evident.
 - j) Horse should be able to complete obstacles mounted as well as in-hand.