

Mountain Trail or Arena-to-Trail classes are designed to demonstrate the horse's ability to negotiate and maneuver through and around obstacles they may encounter in a natural mountain trail setting. The competition may be held in the arena or out on the trail and can be scored individually or as a team event.

- The horse will be asked to perform multiple maneuvers over a course of obstacles that range from traditional trail obstacles, which may include hills, bridges, ditches, water, ponds, bogs, rocks, and logs.
- The horse may be required to back out of obstacles, side pass over obstacles, complete pivots with belly turns/carousel turns with 45, 90, 180, and 360 degree turns either left or right.
- Horses may be required to maneuver forward and backward and sideways all directions between obstacles at the gait(s) specified on the course map.
- A rider may be asked to dismount, mount, drag or move an object as part of an obstacle, or guide the horse through obstacles while dismounted.
- Mountain Trail (Arena-to-Trail) encompasses two mountain trail experiences, riding natural obstacles on a mountain trail as well as a natural portrayal of obstacles in a course design. Both actual and portrayed mountain trail courses should contain eight and up to eighteen obstacles and test the skill of the horse and rider's performance.
- The difficulty of obstacles or maneuvers should be appropriate for the level, type of class, and or competition. A start and finish marker should be included on the course map.
- The horse should approach obstacles in a forward motion remaining focused, bold, and with a willing attitude. On the line of travel between obstacles, the horse should be moving forward with a balanced, relaxed, natural head and neck position.
- The term "horse" herein, refers to all breeds of equine, horses, ponies, VSE, mules, with no preference given for any type, breed of horse, or style of riding. Scoring penalties and credits are assessed at the discretion of the Judge(s), based on performance, correctness and ease of negotiating obstacles.

a) Age & Technical Categories

- **Youth:** 17 years old and under as of January 1st of the current year. Youth competitors are not permitted to compete with a stallion.
- **Beginner:** The green rider is less experienced and defined as a rider with not more than two (2) wins or to have won a championship in this category. Green riders may not compete in open division at the same competition with no cross entry permitted.
- **Novice:** The novice riders have more experience competing in Mountain Trail (Arena to Trail) classes with not more than five (5) firsts or to have won a championship in this category.
- **Amateur:** 18 years and older as of January 1st of the current year, who participates in equestrian sport for pleasure only, and has not received any payment for training horses or coaching riders in the equine industry.

a) Age and Technical Categories(cont'd)

- **Open:** This category is open to all riders and horses with no restrictions. Obstacles may be of more complexity and or difficulty designed to test skills of advanced horse and rider combinations. No cross entry with green rider division.
- Hors Concours (H/C) entries are not eligible for awards.

b) Attire and Equipment

- Horse Council BC highly recommends that all riders wear properly fitted approved BSI or ASTM protective headgear at all times when mounted.
- Adults may compete in a properly fitted BSI or ASTM approved riding helmet or a western style hat.
- Youth competitors are required to wear properly fitted approved BSI or ASTM protective headgear with safety harness securely attached at all times when mounted on the event grounds.
- English or Western attire is permitted but should be consistent with the style of tack presented.
- Riding boots of any style English or Western with a 1-inch heel are required.
- Raincoats are permitted.
- Gloves are permitted.

Equipment

- The judge may disallow any tack due to safety concerns.
- Competitors may present themselves in clean working style English or Western tack.
- English or Western style bridles, bosal, hackamore, or bit-less bridles are permitted.
- English, Western, Endurance, Australian saddles are all permitted.
- Splint boots and leg protective boots are optional and permitted.
- Draw reins are prohibited.
- halters for riding are prohibited.
- Standing or running martingales and tiedowns are prohibited
- Mechanical hackamores and bitless headstalls that apply compressive pressure are prohibited
- Whips or crops longer than 75cm are prohibited.

Bits: Excessive use of bits will be penalized at the discretion of the judge.

- **Curb:** defined as a solid or broken mouthpiece that has shanks which act as leverage. Free of mechanical device and is 8-1/2" (215 mm) maximum length shank which may be measured. Shanks may be fixed or loose. Mouthpieces, bars must be round, oval or egg shaped, smooth and unwrapped metal of 5/16" to 3/4" (8 mm to 20 mm) in diameter, measured 1" (25 mm) from the cheek. The mouthpiece may be two or three pieces. The port must be no higher than 3-1/2" (90 mm) maximum, with rollers and covers acceptable. Broken mouthpieces are standard. The curb strap may be of leather or chain, must be at least 1/2" in width, and must lie flat against the jaw of the horse. Rommel or split reins are permitted.

Equipment (cont'd)

Bits:

- **Snaffle:** defined as the conventional; O-ring, egg-butt, D-ring, loose ring, full cheek, or western snaffle bit. The inside circumference of the ring must be free of attachments which would provide leverage. The mouthpiece may be two or three pieces. A three-piece, connecting ring of 1" to 1-1/4" (25 mm to 32 mm) or less in diameter, or a connecting ring of 1-1/4" (32 mm) or less in diameter, or a connecting flat bar of 3/8" to 3/4" (10 mm to 20 mm) measured top to bottom, with a maximum length of 2" (50 mm), which lies flat in the horse's mouth is acceptable. Rider will ride two handed.
- **Hackamore:** defined as a braided rawhide or leather bosal which is used in lieu of a regulation snaffle bit. It does not refer to a mechanical hackamore. There must be a minimum of a two finger (approximately 1 1/2") between the bosal and the nose, and absolutely no metal under the jaw or on the noseband or in connection with the noseband. Rider will ride two handed.

c) Course Walk

- This is an opportunity to navigate the course on foot prior to competition to become familiar with the course map. Competitors are encouraged to walk-through the course prior to the judge's official course walk-through. Judge's course walk-through is scheduled prior to the beginning of the class. The judge leads the walk-through with the use of course maps. Each competitor should receive a course map prior to the competition. The judge may give directions at different obstacles. Participants should refrain from talking during the judge's walk-through so all competitors can hear the judge's directions. Questions are answered by the judge following each obstacle on the walk-through. Competitors are not allowed to ask questions during the competition.

d) Definitions

Obstacles / Maneuvers

- **Backing** – Backing obstacles shall be completed in a straight motion without weaving side to side. Backward motion must be performed at a consistent regular pace. The horse/rider will be penalized for hitting obstacles while backing.
- **Beam (Angle or Balance)** – Walk on straight, may be asked to back-off, side pass over, or enter/exit at any part of the beam.
- **Bog / Quicksand** – can be any dimensions, but the depth should not exceed 8". Horses will not be asked to stop.

d) Definitions

Obstacles / Maneuvers (cont'd)

- **Boxes / Tires** – Walking up and over and backing off the box may be asked to Stop & Settle. Turns of 45 to 360 degrees in any direction may be asked of the competitor. Horses front or hind feet on the box and may be asked to turn either direction.
- **Bridge (Rolling or Suspension)** – The horse should approach a bridge squarely and move over the bridge in a forward motion when entering, crossing, and exiting the bridge in a straight path. May be asked to stop and settle, and change directions.
- **Ditches** – enter straight either forward, backwards or sideways. Ditches can be various depths, lengths and directions.
- **Forward** – Throughout the entire course the horse and rider must continue in a forward motion unless the pattern specifies otherwise. The horse's gait should be regular, consistent, and not alter unless the rider is performing a different movement or gait specified in the course plan.
- **Gates** – The rider may be asked to open the gate from either direction, pulling, pushing, or backing through the gate. The rider should have control of the gate at all times. The horse should follow the direction from the rider to stay close to the gate and minimize movement with the rider or handlers' hand controlling the gate.
- **Ground Tie** – Horse should be tied to the ground with a lead or a git-down rope.
- **Hoof Check** – The horse should pick up its leg willingly, and not move around. The rider should keep control of the horse at all times, whether the horse is tied, ground tied, or in hand. Riders may be required to pick up any number of feet including from the opposite side.
- **In Hand or Leading** – may be performed with a halter and lead, or bridle with a git-down rope. The horse should lead willingly, not crowding or lagging behind the handler which results in a lower score.
- **Maze** - Compiled group of obstacles including logs, bridges, tires, etc. Rider/handler can be asked to enter or exit from any direction.
- **Mounting or Dismounting** – Horse should stand quietly while rider mounts or dismount from either side. The rider will easily put the horse in a position of good balance for either the mount or the dismount maintaining control of the reins and sitting down softly. Any movement by the horse will result in a lower score. A mounting block will be provided for mounting and dismounting.
- **Rocks** – Minimum 30 rocks, at a 6" minimum size.

d) Definitions (cont'd)

Definitions of Manner

- **Balance** – Refers to a horse rider combination that is clearly unified as a team while negotiating obstacles or maneuvers, performing smoothly, making it look effortless, simple, vigorous, fun, and easy.
- **Horsemanship** – Refers to the rider's ability to perform with confidence, balance, in harmony with the horse as a unified team, executing obstacles or maneuvers with boldness and ease over the entire course. The rider demonstrates confidence guiding the horse through the obstacles using subtle aids. The rider is penalized severely for instilling fear in the horse, jerking on the bit, and or for excessive use of crop or spurs.
- **Control** – Rider must maintain control of the horse at all times whether mounted or leading in hand.
- **Rider Awareness** – A rider should pay attention to the direction of the course, guiding the horse straight to each obstacle. The rider should evaluate each obstacle with a clear plan in mind demonstrating a safe, correct execution of the obstacle.
- **Overall Awareness** – The horse should respond to the rider without hesitation or resistance. The horse should have an alert expression and focus, demonstrating boldness with a willing attitude. The gait of the horse should be regular and maintained through the entire obstacle.
- **Course Pattern or Plan** – It is important for a rider to stay on pattern. Going off pattern will result in a Zero (0) score for that obstacle.
- If a class is offered with numbered obstacles, going off pattern will result in a minus 10 for that obstacle.

e) Divisions

- **Beginner:** The obstacles should be performed at the walk only, easy to understand, with basic maneuvers or skill techniques required to complete the obstacle.
- **Novice:** The obstacles may be performed at the walk, or jog (or gait). The horse and rider should be in condition to compete over a longer course.
- **Amateur:** Obstacles may be performed at the walk, jog (or gait), lope, or canter. Horse and rider have established skills to negotiate difficult obstacles, and are conditioned to compete over a longer course.
- **Open:** Obstacles may be performed at the walk, jog (or gait), lope, or canter. Horse and rider have established skills to negotiate difficult obstacles, and are conditioned to compete over a longer course.

f) Division Obstacles and Maneuvers

Beginner 8 - 10 Obstacles	Novice 8 - 14 Obstacles (All Green obstacles plus)	Open 8 - 18 Obstacles (All Green/Novice obstacles plus)
Backing Up	Backing with direction	Angled Beams
Barrels	Boxes (turns)	Animal Hide
Beams	Carousel Turn (belly turn)	Back down ditches
Blow Down	Cowboy Curtain	Backing through tunnel
Boxes (no turns)	Ditches	Bog/ Quicksand
Green Rider Bridge (non-moving)	Ground Tie	Cap-gun (noise)
Gate (push only)	Mailbox	Gate (back through)
Ground Tie	Mattress	Log Drag
Hoof Check	Own the Trail	Rope (drag, throw)
Mazes	Driving	Squishy Box
Mounting/ Dismounting	Raise Flag (obstacle)	
Rocks	Ramps	
Sawbucks	Ring the Bell	
Side pass	Rolling Bridges	
Step Over (logs/ poles)	Rope	
Stop and Settle	Slicker (pickup)	
Tires	Suspension Bridge	
Turn on the Forehand	Teeter Totter	
Turn on the Haunch	Tunnel	
	Water	

g) Category and Class Divisions

The following divisions are recognized at competitions.

Local divisions or classes may be included as listed in the Prize list.

Beginner	Novice	Open
Youth Rider	Youth Rider	Youth Rider
Youth In-Hand	Youth In-Hand	Youth In-Hand
In-Hand Mares	In-Hand Mares	In-Hand Mares
In-Hand Geldings	In-Hand Geldings	In-Hand Geldings
Green Horse	Novice Horse	In-Hand Open
Green Rider	Novice Rider	In-Hand Open Jackpot
Green Ranch	Novice Ranch	Open Rider
Amateur Rider	Amateur Rider	Open Ranch
Seek the Trail	Own the Trail	Amateur Rider
Driving	Driving	Driving

g) Category and Class Divisions (cont'd)

- In Hand Class: The handler leads or sends the horse through the course obstacles on foot using a halter.
- Money Classes: if offered are open to all riders.
- Gamblers Choice: 70% of the score will be judged on horsemanship and skill – a timed event where each obstacle is worth a pre-determined number of points.

h) Judging

- The quality of the horse's performance, as well as the horsemanship skill of the rider as they guide the horse through the obstacles over the entire course are scored by the judge. Higher scores are awarded where the horse and rider perform well as a unified team.
- Horses are judged and scored on performance negotiating obstacles carefully, not rushing, responsive to the rider aids, correctly executing with a forward moving tendency throughout the obstacle.
- Judges will score each obstacle considering three phases; the entrance, middle, and exit of the obstacle.
- Judges will consider the approach to an obstacle, the straightness, accuracy, attention, and willingness by which the horse enters the obstacle maneuvers through and exits the obstacle.
- Class score sheets at a competition must be provided for the judge by the competition organizing committee.
- The score sheet keeps a record of each competitor's individual obstacle or maneuver scores on course, with any credit or penalty scores from the Judge noted.
- An experienced scribe may assist the judge recording the scores in the arena, or the Judge may record their own scores.
- Credit or penalty scores are assessed by the judge for each obstacle or maneuver on course with the total final score calculated to determine the class placing results.
- The total penalties and or credits of maneuver and or obstacle scores are added or subtracted according to the system used. This results in a Final score which determines class placing results in descending order from high to low score.
- Calculating the Final scores may be determined by the Judge, or the assistant scribe in the arena, or a scoring secretary in the office.
- All Final score calculations must be verified by the judge.
- Final placings by entry number are recorded on all class score sheets.
- The judge's name, signature, class #, date, competition name, location should be listed on score sheets.
- All Judge Score sheets are available for downloading on the HCBC website at the following link: <http://www.hcbc.ca/index.php/competitions/competition-documents/>

i) Scoring

At the discretion of the Judge, or the competition management, one of two recognized scoring systems may be used at Mountain Trail (Arena to Trail) competitions. Scoring systems are based on the same horse and rider performance criteria stated herein. Credit and penalty scores are assessed for each obstacle or maneuver, and accumulated over the entire course to determine a total Final score for each competitor. The scoring system used is at the discretion of the Judge(s). Whichever scoring system is used at a competition, the same system must be used for all classes of the competition. The final score total determines the class placings.

ii) (0 – 10) Scoring System

- Judges score each obstacle or maneuver on the course out of a maximum possible of 10 points.
- A horsemanship assessment for the rider may be included in each obstacle score, or may be included on scorecard as a separate score with a total score possible from (0 – 10).
- Half marks (.5) may be used.
- Using the (0 – 10) scoring system, the Final score is calculated into a percentage score.
- If a separate score is used for horsemanship skill of rider then 10 points is added to total possible points for final score calculations.
- As determined by the Judge(s) specific obstacles identified prior to class may be assigned a coefficient (x 2) valued twice the points possible for that obstacle.
- A horse that receives a (– 9) at any obstacle for a complete refusal may NOT place higher than a horse with a score for each obstacle. All penalties apply to each obstacle.

Formula to determine percentage final scores is as follows:

- Add the total points (0-10) awarded to the competitor over the entire course.
- Deduct any penalty scores for misuse of tack on course.
- Divide total points awarded by the Judge(s) by the total points possible for the entire course plan.

Example(s) of performance deductions when using the (0 – 10) scoring system are:

- **Minor deductions** of (.5 to 3.0 pts) in a score may result from, but are not limited to; hitting or stepping on a log, plant or a component of an obstacle, incorrect or break of gait, steps (s) taken while ground tying, approaching an obstacle off centered, loss of forward motion, rushing, one-two step (s) going into an obstacle or out of an obstacle.
- **Average deductions** of (3-5.5 pts) in score may result from, but not limited to: dropping or letting go of the gate or object, the horse taking more than 3 steps on a ground tie, tight reins, over bridled, minor disobedience or resistance, loss of attention, willingness or forward movement.

ii) (0 – 10) Scoring System (cont'd)

Example(s) of performance deductions when using the (0 – 10) cont'd

- **Major deductions** of (6-9 pts) in score may result from, but are not limited to: Refusal(s), balking, or evading an obstacle, blatant disobedience (kicking out, bucking, rearing, striking), errors of course, or rider using hand to instill fear in the horse. Refusal or any action taken by the horse to avoid performing an obstacle, any part of a combination of obstacle, or portion of the course. Such actions may include evading or running past an obstacle, complete loss of the required gait, and any blatant action by the horse that demonstrates an unwillingness to approach, negotiate, and or complete an obstacle.
- **Off-Pattern (OP)** obstacles or maneuvers not executed in correct sequence as directed by the judge or course map; missing an obstacle entirely will receive a score of Zero (0) for that obstacle.
- **Zero Score (0)** – After 15 seconds attempting an obstacle, the judge may instruct the competitor to move on to the next obstacle and receive a Zero (0) score for that obstacle. A competitor may choose to bypass an obstacle and receive a Zero (0) score for that obstacle.
- **Tie Breaker** - Competitors will not know the tie breaking obstacles. Obstacles will be chosen by the senior judge at the start of the competition. Three obstacles will be chosen as tie breakers as one, two and three, if the first chosen obstacle does not break the tie then the second and then possibly the third as needed to break the tie will be used.
- **Misuse of tack** - will result in at least a two (2) point deduction for each occurrence. The points deducted will be determined on severity on the misuse of tack. Example: using a rein to instill fear in the equine will result in more than 2 points deduction for each occurrence or at the judge's discretion. Penalties are deducted from total points awarded prior to final score calculations.
- **Disqualification**
 - Fall of horse or rider
 - Abuse or aggressive schooling
 - Improper language to an official or judge

iii) 70 Base Score System

- Judges start with a base score of 70 points and add or deduct points.
- The same judging performance criteria is applied to each obstacle whether it be a bridge, gate, trench, water, logs, rocks or other.
- The judge will make assessments for performance with each obstacle given a value of 9 points. This gives a foundation for scoring if an obstacle is not attempted or incurs penalties

iii) 70 Base Score System (cont'd)

Each obstacle is scored in three phases as follows;

- **Entry into the obstacle - 2 points,**
Two points are given if the horse enters the obstacle straight, acknowledges the obstacle, and maintains forward motion in an alert and willing manner. A horse may stop for up to 3 seconds to examine the obstacle before entry without penalty but will not be eligible for a Bonus score. After 3 seconds it may be counted as a refusal and lack of forward motion.
- **Navigating through the obstacle – 5 points**
Five points are given if the horse picks its way through an obstacle in a willing, confident, bold and safe manner without stumbles, clicks, or breaks in gait.
- **Exiting the obstacle – 2 points**
Two points are given if the horse exits at the same speed that it entered and is straight and on course.
- **Bonus points (optional)** – If the horse and rider navigated the obstacle demonstrating an excellent performance, the judge has the option of adding 3 bonus points to the score for that obstacle.
(1 point for entry – 1 point for body – 1 point for exit.)
- **Horsemanship points – (0 – 5 points)**
- Judge(s) will determine a score for the horsemanship awarded at each obstacle. Half-points may be used.

iv) Scoring Deductions (Obstacle Penalty Deductions)

Entry Deductions

- **1 point** - horse does not enter an obstacle straight one-horse length, willing and/or breaks forward motion with a pause longer than 3 seconds. ("stop" is a break of forward motion longer than 3 seconds on entry only) Does not enter the obstacle centered.
- **2 points** - horse refuses twice (the horse backs up twice) and/or horse has two refusals and is not straight and/or will not enter an obstacle. Jumps into an obstacle
- **9 points** - after three refusals the horse and rider must move on to the next obstacle.

Navigating Deductions

- **½ point** - for each tick of an obstacle, hopping into/out of an obstacle with the front two or back two feet, slight off-center entry, slightly off from entering straight into the obstacle.
- **1 point** - hopping into/out an obstacle, every stride out of gait, every stride off center in an obstacle, missing a required step in an obstacle, break of gait, failure to enter an obstacle straight one-horse length, failure to enter obstacle in the center

iv) Scoring Deductions (Obstacle Penalty Deductions)

Navigating Deductions (cont'd)

- **1 to 1½ points** - horse and rider lose forward motion, Horse steps on or moves an obstacle. Incorrect or break of gait, skipping space or failing to step into required space, 1 step on dismount or ground-tie (except shifting to balance), deviates from center of obstacle and or course pattern.
- **2 to 2½ points** - horse stumbles, rushing, incorrect or break of gait at walk or jog for 2 strides or more, out of lead or break of gait at lope, knockdown, jumping out/in the obstacle entry/exit, steps out of obstacle with one foot, once the foot had entered obstacle, missing one element of obstacle on line of travel with one foot, steps on dismount or ground-tie.
- **3 points** - horse is not listening to the rider or judge's discretion, consistent tight rein.
- **4 points** - a small rearing where the front two feet leave the ground when uncalled for. Unsafe behavior by the horse, but not bad enough to be dismissed from the class or receive a - 5-point penalty.
- **5 points** - all the above. Rider or horse's safety placed at risk. Horse steps out of the obstacle with two or more feet once entered, or falls off the obstacle. Dropping slicker or object, cumulative refusals, balking, or evading obstacle(s). Rider letting go of the gate. Stepping outside the confines of, jumping off, or out of obstacles with more than one foot, once entered an obstacle. Blatant disobediences, 4 or more steps movement on a dismount, or ground-tie, holding onto saddle, except to mount and dismount, or for large step-down obstacles, or large step ups or jump ups. For excessive whipping or spurring, horse rearing or bucking. - 18 - failure to attempt an obstacle.

Exit Deductions

- **1 to 1 ½ points** - hurries or rushes, not straight one-horse length, not centered
- **2 points** - not straight and all of the above and not safe, jumps out
- **9 points** - A rider can't receive a greater deduction than -9 point for any given obstacle, if obstacle attempted

Horsemanship Deductions

- **0 to 5 points** possible for each obstacle. Penalty deductions may be assessed for use of hand or tack to instill fear or praise. Jerking on the bit. Excessive use of spurs or crop, overcorrection of the horse, dirty tack or horse, use of 2 hands other than riding with a snaffle or English style. equipment failure, entering or exiting obstacle from incorrect side or direction, working obstacle the incorrect direction. Riding outside the boundary marker of arena or course hold area, Failure to show correct gait between obstacles as designated. Failure to follow the correct line of travel between obstacles, horse's head consistently carried too low or over flexed. Excessive emotions of anger or praise. Talking in any way inappropriately to a judge. Consistent tight rein.