

USPC Policies and Guidelines

Governing Rules

With regards to Qualifying Rallies this Rulebook is a precise specification of rules that MUST be followed. For Non-Qualifying Rallies/Divisions this Rulebook should be viewed as a general guideline that can be modified by the Rally Organizer/Regional Supervisor to best meet the needs of the Region. Additional governing documents for all Rallies are the following:

- USPC Horse Management Handbook and Rules for Rallies (current edition)
- Annual Newsletters & Clarifications from USPC.
- USEF Rulebook (current edition). However, since USPC does not always follow USEF rules, where there is a disparity between Rulebooks, this Rulebook will be followed.

Since Rules cannot provide for every eventuality (unforeseen or exceptional circumstance), it is the obligation of the Ground Jury to make decisions in a sporting spirit and to follow as closely as possible the intention of these Rules. If there is an inconsistency, the Discipline Rulebook takes precedence over the Horse Management Handbook.

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REMINDER: This is an updated Rulebook for 2018. Additions, deletions and changes have been made since the last Rulebook was issued. Be sure to read the entire publication carefully so you will be aware of all the rules for the upcoming competition season.

These rules are based on copyrighted Rules of the U.S. Equestrian Federation (USEF) and are printed with the permission of USEF, which neither sponsors nor is responsible for their publication or implementation at any United States Pony Clubs event.

Responsibility

A competitor is ultimately responsible for knowing these rules and complying with them. The appointment of a steward or official, whether or not provided for in these rules, does not absolve the competitor from such responsibility.

Participating Member Code of Conduct

The United States Pony Clubs, Inc. is proud of its reputation for good sportsmanship, horsemanship, teamwork and well-behaved members. The USPC expects appropriate behavior from

all members, parents and others participating in any USPC activity. Inappropriate behavior may include, but is not limited to: possession, use or distribution of any illegal drugs or alcohol; profanity, vulgar language or gestures; harassment (i.e., using words or actions that intimidate, threaten or persecute others before, during or following USPC activities); failure to follow rules; cheating; and abusing a horse.

Any USPC Member or parent not conforming to the Code of Conduct is subject to the following action: The Officials of the competition may immediately suspend or expel an individual from the competition upon consulting with the Ground Jury.

Championships Competitor Age and Certification

Each discipline/division has minimum age and certification requirements for participation in Championships. Championships competitors must meet the age requirement based on January 1, of the Championships competition year. They must have competed at the minimum or higher certification level at the Qualifying Rally and have achieved the minimum certification level by the closing date of the Championships. Therefore, any fall Qualifying Rallies should base their division entry status on the competitor's age for the following year and take into account planned advancements in certification level.

Exceptions to Minimum Age and Certification Requirements for Championships: Exceptions to the minimum age and certification requirements are occasionally granted and the process for requesting an exception is outlined on the Championships Competition Information page of the USPC website. All requests for exceptions must come from the RS to the appropriate Discipline Chair.

Member In Good Standing

Members are considered in Good Standing if they are current with all dues and fees owed the Registered Club/Riding Center Program, Region and USPC and when available participate in one or more of the following:

1. They show evidence of sincere interest in the activities of Pony Club at the local, regional or national level.
2. They assist younger members in the learning process.
3. They participate in Pony Club activities at the local, regional, or national level when and where appropriate, according to age, experience, and suitability of mount.

Cruelty to and Abuse of a Horse

1. Cruelty to or the abuse of a horse present on the grounds of any competition is forbidden, and renders the offender subject to penalty. The Organizing Committee must bar violators from further participation for the remainder of the competition.
2. USPC or the Judge, Steward, or TD may appoint a veterinarian to inspect any animal on competition grounds or entered to compete. Refusal to submit an animal for examination by an authorized veterinarian after due notification shall constitute a violation.

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3. The following are included under the words Cruelty and Abuse but are not limited thereto:
 - a. Excessive use of a whip on any horse in a stall, runway, schooling area, competition ring or elsewhere on the competition grounds, before or during a competition, by any person. Except in emergency situations, any striking of the horse's head (on the poll and forward of the poll) with the whip shall be deemed excessive.
 - b. Any evidence of cruel or abusive training techniques.
 - c. Rapping the legs of a horse with the butt end of a riding crop or other implement.
 - d. Use of any substance or method to induce temporary heat.
 - e. Manual poling with any object.
 - f. Use of a wire or chain in conjunction with any schooling jump.
 - g. Use of electric device in schooling or showing.
 - h. Use of shackles, hock hobbles and similar devices (not to be construed as rubber or elastic exercising devices).
 - i. Showing a horse with raw or bleeding sores around the coronets, pasterns or legs.
 - j. Use of any explosive (e.g., fire crackers, torpedoes, fire extinguishers except in case of fire, etc.) or laser beam devices anywhere on the competition grounds, except in an exhibition or if required in class specifications.
 - k. Withholding of feed and water for prolonged periods.
 - l. Letting blood from a horse for other than diagnostic purposes.
 - m. Inhumane treatment of a horse in a stall, runway, schooling area, competition ring or elsewhere on the competition grounds, by any person.
 - n. Use of any object that prevents the horse's ability to close his mouth. (Exception: use of an oral speculum by a veterinarian or equine dentist to provide legitimate dental/oral medical care.)
 - o. Soring of any horse, including but not limited to the application of caustic chemicals to a horse's legs or hooves, in order to cause pain and/or affect a horse's performance, and/or used as a training technique. (For the purposes of this rule, the term "soring" is defined by the Horse Protection Act, 15 U.S.C. §1821.)
4. Any action(s) against a horse by a competitor or an exhibitor, which are deemed excessive by a judge, steward, technical delegate or competition veterinarian, in the competition ring or anywhere on the competition grounds may be punished by official warning, elimination, or other sanctions which may be deemed appropriate by the Organizing Committee. Such action(s) could include, but are not limited to excessive use of the whip or spurs.

Mounts

Suitable mounts are defined as follows:

1. Stallions are not considered suitable mounts.
2. Mounts must be serviceably sound, in good overall health and in condition for the activity in question.
3. Mounts must be appropriate for the certification level of the rider and must be at a level of training to participate safely in the activity.
4. Except as noted below, mounts must be at least five (5) years of age in order to participate in USPC competitive, instructional, and recreational programs and activities. In establishing the age of mounts, the first year is considered to be January 1 following the date of foaling.
5. Members holding a Riding Certification of C-1 and above may participate in all USPC activities on an appropriate mount at least four (4) years of age (See A.3 above). A mount must be excused from any activity if in the opinion of the instructor, examiner, or appropriate authority, it is unsafe either to its rider or to other riders or mounts.

Protective Headgear

USPC requires members participating in mounted and some unmounted activities to wear a properly fitted equestrian helmet, securely fastened, containing certification that it meets the criteria established by the following international or national safety bodies: ASTM F1163 (North America), AS/NZ 3838 (Australia and NZ), PAS 015 (UK). (See USPC Policy 0800A)

Medical Armbands and Bracelets

USPC requires that members participating in any USPC affiliated mounted or un-mounted activity, must wear either a Medical Armband or Medical Bracelet while participating in the activity. The member may choose which one to wear.

1. Medical Armbands must include a current completed copy of the individual's USPC or USEA Medical Card. It must be worn on the upper arm. If the member has small arms, he/she may safety pin the armband to his/her upper sleeve. (Armbands are available for purchase from Shop Pony Club.)
2. Medical Bracelets must visibly list these five items on them: Name and Date of Birth, Contact Information, Known Allergies, Current Medications, and Existing Medical Conditions. More information is acceptable, but these five items are required to be on the bracelet.

All officials on site at the USPC mounted or un-mounted activity are encouraged to work with the competitors to remind them of this requirement.

Any member at a USPC affiliated mounted or un-mounted activity* found not wearing either a Medical Armband or Medical Bracelet must be removed from the activity until the member conforms to the policy requirements.

- * Tetrathlon competitors will not be required to wear them while actually shooting or swimming, but must have them visible and next to them for these activities and must wear them at all other times.