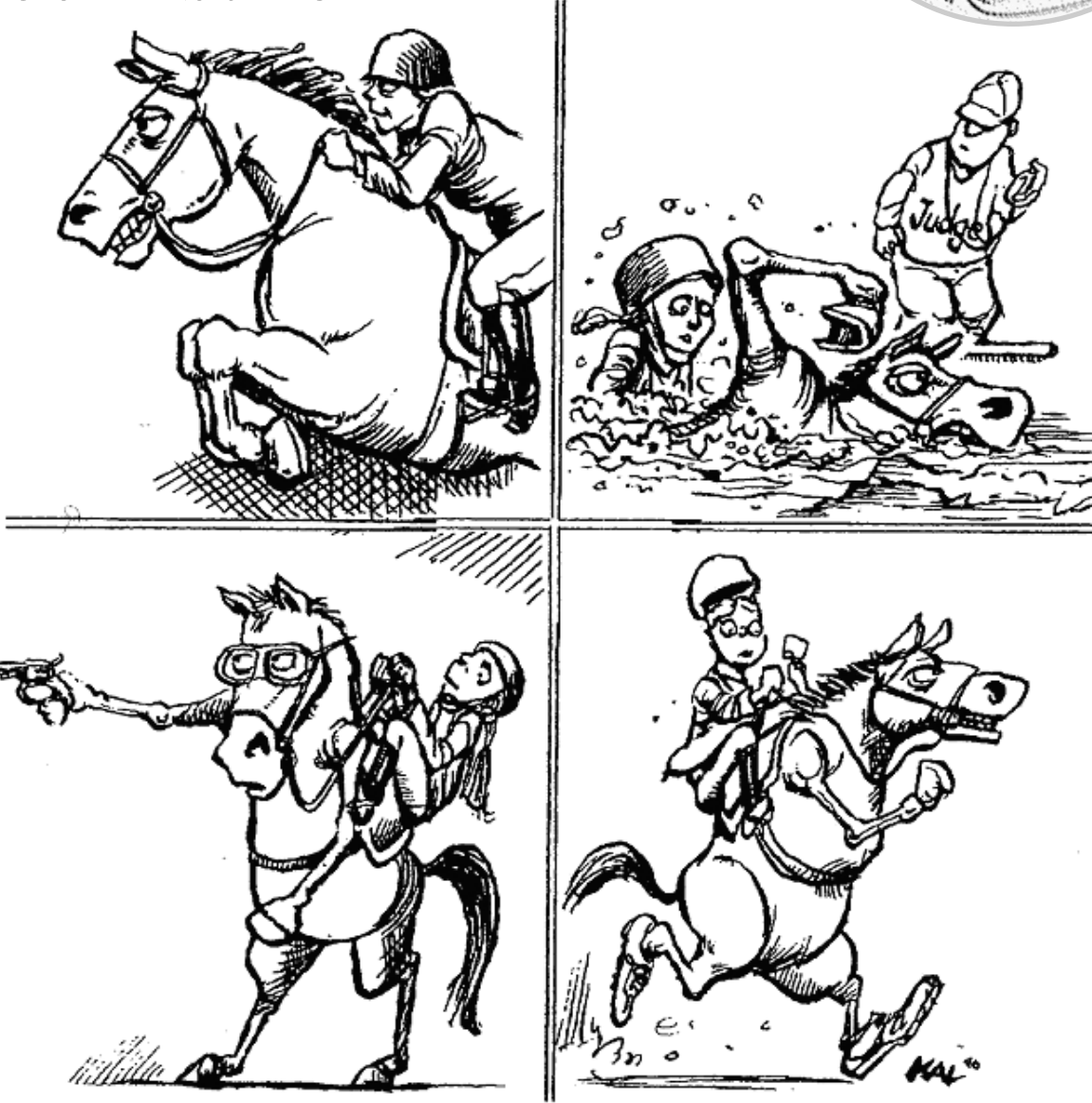


# USPC<sup>®</sup>

## Rally Organizer's Checklist for



# Tetrathlon Competition

2004

## WHY TETRATHLON IN PONY CLUB?

Tetrathlon is a sport that develops a strong body and a strong mind. In Pony Club we spend many hours teaching our young people how important it is to properly care for and condition their mounts. Likewise, we need to impress upon our riders that their physical condition is just as important as their horse's and will greatly influence the performance of their equine partner.

As competitors begin to condition themselves for a Tetrathlon rally, they will gain greater empathy for the horse they are also conditioning. It is a way for both athletes to work towards a great goal, together. As they work toward peak conditioning they will develop a bond perhaps not found in other Pony Club disciplines.

Habits learned when young have the greatest success of staying with a person throughout his or her life. Such is the case with physical fitness. A majority of fit adults were fit children. Tetrathletes are some of the fittest competitors you will find in and out of Pony Club.

## A Timeline to Consider

TASK	NAME	PHONE
<b>10-12 MONTHS BEFORE</b>		
Set a date for the rally.		
Determine suitable locations.		
Find a pool.		
<b>6-8 MONTHS BEFORE</b>		
Choose your volunteers (see the list above).		
Craft a budget and then determine entry fees (see Cost considerations below).		
Establish a closing date.		
Order ribbons and medals.		
<b>3-6 MONTHS BEFORE</b>		
Arrange hold harmless insurance with all venues (done through your region).		
Order Porta Johns.		
Consider manure disposal method and make plans accordingly.		
Notify local EMS personnel about the rally and its dates (tell them who your EMT will be).		
<b>3 MONTHS BEFORE</b>		
Mail entries to those who wish to compete. Begin to construct a pamphlet for your rally that includes, at least, all competitors' names, pinny numbers, dress requirements, club names, divisions and a variety of times: jogs, formals, ride, run, shoot and swim (and heat numbers). Getting local businesses and even parents to place ads will offset your costs.		
Determine who needs stabling and for how long. Coordinate with stabling host(s).		

## SUGGESTED ORDER OF PHASES

There is no prescribed order of phases in a Tetrathlon competition, but locating and booking a swimming pool will likely be a key factor in determining the order. Locating a pool facility should be done as soon as you determine you are going to host a rally. Once that has been done the order for riding, running, and shooting phases may be determined.

However, prior to organizing the phase order, you must give early consideration to your "team." Tetrathlon is heavily dependent on volunteers. Indeed, the number of volunteers directly affects the success of a rally. Here is an example of the positions you will need to fill:

- Technical Delegate
- Chief Horse Management Judge
- Riding Judge who is familiar with Tetrathlon's rules
- Chief Scorer and scorers for each phase
- Written Test coordinator (test comes from the RS)
- Secretary (must be computer literate)
- Warm-up Steward
- Four Phase Stewards
- Volunteer Coordinator to round up the volunteers
- Timers for riding (especially the slip rail and gate), swimming and running
- Spotters for running
- Scribes for riding and running
- Scorers for shooting
- Target placers and retrievers for shooting phase
- Shooting Range Officer
- Swimming Clerk of Course, Referee and Starter
- Concessions Volunteer
- Ribbons & Medals Volunteer
- EMT on site for the riding phase and on call for all other phases
- Farrier (on call)

Of course, the same people will likely fill many of these roles, but nonetheless you must fill these positions early.

It is not unusual to borrow obstacles from our Show Jumping brethren, but the slip rail and gate are unique to Tetrathlon. If you do not possess these obstacles they must be constructed. They are not difficult to built, just time consuming. The dimensions for both the slip rail and gate are found in the rulebook.

Tetrathlon competitions have generally been held over a two day period and this is certainly so when part of a combined rally. When held as a separate competition, the trend now is to have competitors flow from phase-to-phase at a reasonably fast pace, eliminating much of the "down-time," getting everyone through the awards ceremony and on their way home by mid-to late- afternoon of the second day. This is not to say, however, that two events must be done on one day and two the next. On the contrary, if the venue(s) allow for it, it is reasonable to have two of the skills events (riding and shooting) on the same day along with either swimming or running. This allows for a one and one-half day rally.

Ideally, venues for the ride, shoot, and run should be within walking distance of each other, permitting competitors to move easily from one phase to another. This not only saves time and transportation, but it also permits the overlapping of phases to save some additional time. Example: Seniors and Juniors may shoot while Novices and younger non-qualifiers run then they switch phases. A farm, fairgrounds, school or college campus, public recreation facilities, or a combination of these works well, in particular if a swimming pool is part of the complex.

The amount of available stabling is another factor that will determine the order of phases. More often than not, a location picked for the proximity of running, swimming, and shooting facilities will not include stabling. For this reason, many regions start with the riding phase on the first morning and simply use a nearby open field that has trailer parking adjacent to the riding course.

The following is an example of a typical phase order. Again, this may be modified based on the venue, time of year (in the late spring it may be possible to hold an event on Friday night) and any other potential issue.

### DAY 1

Prior to commencing the rally, plan to meet with the CHMJ, TD and phase stewards before your formal briefing to go over any last-minute items and ask for inputs to your briefing.

The Organizer's Briefing is an excellent occasion to set the tone for the competition: introduce yourself and your team and stress the import of having fun and being safe. (After all, this is for the children, not us.) Moreover, this is an opportunity to identify the unique aspects of our sport (like a one-day HM rally) and the logistical issues involved (such as providing maps to the pool and gun turn-in requirements).

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It is highly recommended that riding occur the morning of the first day (usually Saturday). This allows for a "one day HM" rally, per the Horse Management Rulebook, and affords those who live nearby the opportunity to get their pony(ies) home early. Note, if you elect to release the ponies before the end of the rally, the procedures of handling this situation with your horse management judges are addressed in the 2004 Tetrathlon Rulebook, p.6

The written test may be held right after the riding phase. Following the test and lunch everyone should proceed to the pool. It is common, and a lot of fun for the competitors, to have a party at the pool following the swimming phase. This is also a good time to award the ribbons from the first two phases. It will cut the time of tomorrow's award ceremony by a great deal. However, the ribbons/medals volunteer has to be prepared for this short ceremony.

## DAY 2

Early the next morning (Sunday) the competitors arrive for shooting and running. They may be held concurrently as mentioned previously. During this time it is important for the Ribbons/Award volunteer to start organizing the ribbons (more on this in a later chapter). Once the running and shooting are done it is time for the awards ceremony. A well-organized rally will be completed by 2 or 3pm on Sunday and will make many parents happy (*a happy parent is a volunteer*).

## TIMING

Each of the four Tetrathlon phases requires some form of timing, all of which can be done with simple battery operated start/stop/split watches which are available at local electronic or sports equipment stores. The usual cost is generally under \$25.00. The watch must have a start/stop/start button and a return/split button.. If there is a "mode" button at the top center, this can be ignored for Tetrathlon purposes. If available, buy light or bright colored watches, rather than black or dark blue, for the quick spotting of timers. Yellow is good because it takes black permanent marker for the owner's name. The organizer should have at 13-15 such watches lined up for regional or national competitions, most of which are needed for the swim phase. Another reason for the large number is that batteries have a way of running out and watches occasionally malfunction and have to be replaced on the spot.

### Checking Watches

The Organizer, or another knowledgeable person should check the accuracy of the watches well ahead of the competition. Because a watch starts, runs, and stops does not mean that it is timing accurately. To check the watches for accuracy, hold two watches with start buttons-to-start buttons (against each other) and pressing for the simultaneous start of each watch. When the two watches have run for about fifteen minutes, reverse the procedure to stop them. The two recorded times should be within three to five hundredths of a second of each other. If they are not, check each against either of two that have checked out to be the same – or very nearly so. By checking all watches stem to stem, it becomes apparent which ones are not timing accurately. Battery replacement may or may not help. Be a bit wary of wristwatches that have a stopwatch function. You have had no way of checking their accuracy. Additionally, the watch face and start-stop control buttons are usually very small and

difficult to deal with reliably. An exception would be the large-faced timers used by eventers during their cross-country phase.

A word of caution about using stopwatches in bright sun; watches that are left face up on a table in bright sun will often "cloud over" and times will be blurred and unreadable. Avoid this problem by having watches hung on the neck lanyard between uses or turned upside down. Fortunately, blurred watches eventually recover when taken out of direct sunlight.

### Swimming and Running Phases

Timers at most Tetrathlon competitions will be volunteers from the parent and spectator group—some are experienced, others need training. It is probably a good idea, therefore, to have the swimming Referee and the Running Steward conduct a timers' training session before their event. In either case, explain to the group the correct buttons to start, stop and clear their watches. Have the timers practice from a "five-four-three-two-one-go" command.

For the swimming phase, the start button is depressed at the sound of the starter's gun, whistle, or buzzer. It is stopped when any part of the swimmer's body touches the wall at the completion of the final length. There should be a minimum of two watches for each lane in the swim. Both timers' times, to the nearest hundredth, are written on the swimmer's heat-lane card. Times are averaged for two watches, usually by the scorer, and the middle watch time is used if three watches are used per lane. Watches should not be "cleared" (returned to "zero") until the Referee says to do so, in case there is a timing problem. To ensure watches are cleared before the next heat, the Starter will always ask "are the timers ready?" before putting swimmers on the blocks. As a hedge on watch malfunction, two spare watches should be started with the starters signal. If a regular timer's

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watch fails to start on the signal, that timer simply holds up his or her faulty watch and one of the spare watch timers steps in. Times to the hundredth are rounded up to the next full second by the scorer and are converted to points, using the appropriate charts in the rulebook. Heat-lane cards are retained, and the faster times to the nearest tenth or one-hundredth, is used to break ties for swimming phase ribbons.

Timing the running phase is done from a running watch, with runners starting at one-minute intervals. Four to five watches are recommended and a practice session for timers, as described above for swim timers, should be conducted. The Starter lines up the runners, usually numerically by program number, and tells the first runner he or she will start in "about" a minute. The starter then gives the timers the 5-4-3-2-1-go command to start their watches. After checking that all watches are running, the starter then gives the first runner a one-minute count down, starting at 30 seconds, then 15 seconds (45 on the watch), 10 seconds (50 on the watch), and (starting at 55 on the watch) 5-4-3-2-1-go. Note that the first runner starts on minute "one"...not zero. This guarantees that all watches are running for the start and also facilitates simple subtraction of the start minute from the finish time to figure the elapsed time that will be applied to the running rules charts for point scores.

Why extra watches? As in the swimming phase, watches can malfunction. Spares may be needed. Two of the watches, however, will be used to get each runner's "split time" to the hundredth of a second as he or she crosses the finish line. One split timer is designated to take the time and the second is a back-up. (Normally, the left button on the watch is for taking split times.) Once the recorder in the finish time column on the chart records the time, the split button is again depressed to show the watch's elapsed time. Those designated to take splits should practice this function before the race starts. If two runners are finishing close to each other, the two split timers decide who times whom. It's good to have one or two of the spare timers trained to take splits. Another timer should stand near the Starter and double-check that the timer is calling the starts accurately. This person can also substitute while the Starter takes a break.

Still another reason for spare watches is to facilitate the simultaneous timing of a lower-level division on a separate, but usually nearby, 500-meter course. This race is for younger members or those new to Tetrathlon who are not yet ready for Novice or above competition. A one-minute interval start is also recommended at this level to give participants a feel for the unique nature of the Tetrathlon running phase.

## Riding Phase

Timing for the riding phase involves timing each rider from the start line of the course to the finish line of the course, accounting for the time it takes to rebuild a fence a rider must retake, timing each rider's attempt to negotiate the slip rail and gate obstacles, taking the time from the judge's indication (bell,

horn, buzzer, or whistle) to start the course until the rider crosses the start line, and timing "resistance" anywhere on the course. Six watches, which include a spare kept at the judge's table, are needed: two are for the round timers (one is "official" time, the other is back-up), one each for the officials at the slip rail and gate, and one next to the judge to note the time from start signal to the start line crossing, time out to repair or rebuild a fence, and the timing of resistance anywhere on the course. The judge has enough to do and should not be asked to time. Let's look at each timing requirement in detail:

**TIMING THE ROUND** – Unless the start and finish lines (often the same line) are directly in front of the judge's position, the round timers will have to be located near the start-finish and will have to call in or radio, depending on the distance, times to the judge. Another system, probably less accurate, is to have the timers at or near the judge's table and have someone near the start and finish to drop an arm or flag as the rider crosses the lines. Time starts when the horse's chest crosses the start line and stops when the horse's chest crosses the finish line.

**TIME OUT TO REBUILD A FENCE** – If there is a refusal on course that alters a single obstacle that must be re-jumped or if, in a double or triple combination, there is a knock-down followed by a refusal in the same double or triple, the knock-down fence must be repaired before the rider again takes the full combination. The judge, upon deciding that repairs are needed, stops the rider with two sounds of the signaling device. At those sounds, a separate "time-out" watch is started to record the time it takes to make repairs. The over-all round watches continue to run. When the repair is made, the rider is re-started with one sound of the signaling device from the approximate place he or she was stopped. The time-out watch is stopped at this signal and the time taken to repair the obstacle is later subtracted from the rider's over-all time. It is also possible to stop the over-all time watches and restart them when there is a required time-out for re-building.

**SLIP RAIL AND GATE TIMING** – Timers at the slip rail and gate should align themselves with the two cones that have been placed approximately twenty feet apart and ten feet in front of each of these obstacles. Timing of the negotiation starts when the horse's chest passes between the two cones in approaching the obstacle. Time stops when the slip rail has been properly replaced or the rope loop has been properly replaced over the post. If the rider has been unable to negotiate either obstacle in 60 seconds, the rider is told to go on to the next obstacle on course, the rider's number is so noted, and a 60 point penalty will be assessed. If, in approaching either obstacle, the rider fails to cross between the cones but approaches the obstacle from an angle along either wing, the watch should be started when the horse's chest crosses the cone line extended. Again, this outside approach is noted by the rider number on the score sheet and the judge will assess 60 penalty points. A rider who, after dismounting at the slip rail cannot remount after replacing the rail may ask for and receive assistance for a penalty of 60 points.

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**TIMING START SIGNAL TO STARTING LINE** – Each rider has 60 seconds from the time the starting signal is given until the horse's chest must cross the starting line. A separate timer, usually sitting with the judge, takes this time with a spare watch.

**RESISTANCE ON COURSE** – The same timer, sitting near the judge, records resistance.

## Obtaining the Time Allowed (TA) and Time Limit (TL)

This is far easier than it appears. The TL is based on the length and speed of a course by division. Time is added to allow for negotiation of the slip rail and gate (15 seconds each). The TL must be clearly shown on the plan of the course.  $TA = \text{Length of course/speed} + 30 \text{ seconds}$ . Therefore, if a course measures 850 meters and the speed for the given division is 325 meters

per minute the equation would look like this:  $TA = 850/325 + 30 = 3:07$ . (Note: when doing your calculation remember you are dealing with a percentage that must be converted into minutes, base 60. In the above example you will get 2.61 when you divide 325 into 850. That equates to 2 minutes and 61 percent of a minute which really means 2 minutes and 37 seconds [multiply .61 x 60 and you get 37]).

The TL is simply  $TA \times 2$ . In the above example the TL would be 6:14.

## Shooting Phase

The range officer, using a single stopwatch, can handle all timing required in the shooting phase. The rules spell out times allowed for practice rounds and firing for record at levels from Juniors down. Seniors have an allowed time period for practice rounds and then are timed at five seconds per shot for record.

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

It is at the discretion of the Organizer as to how the non-qualifying divisions are setup or for those kids of qualifying age who choose not to qualify. For instance, it's not unusual for Mini-Novices to shoot from five meters instead of ten. If a senior girl does not want to run 3,000 meters let her choose her own distance with the understanding she will not only not be eligible to qualify for Championships but will not be competing against younger competitors for awards. These are only two examples but an imaginative Organizer can come up with myriad ways to allow non-qualifiers to compete at a level they are comfortable.

## RIDING

Ideally, we would like our competitors to ride in an open, cross-country course using Show Jumping obstacles. No fixed obstacles. However, if you have many competitors consider riding your non-qualifiers in a ring and qualifiers on a cross-country course. You can even have them ride concurrently, which will speed things up. If you do this keep in mind you will need two judges and another timer and set of scribes. **Your riding judges MUST be familiar with the Tetrathlon rulebook.** A slip rail and gate must be part of the qualifiers' course.

Always start with the Senior division heights (3' 7") then downward. It is far easier to breakdown a course than to construct one.

## SHOOTING

The issue of shooting comes up at many venues where a Tetrathlon rally has never been held. Many people are unaware of the fact we use air pistols, not involving gunpowder. It is very helpful at times to educate those unaware of the quiet and

relatively harmless nature of our shooting (often it is non-Tetrathlon Pony Club members who "fear" the use of guns!). Your shooting steward ought to be someone who is comfortable around guns and will take control of the range, such as a police officer. While we have had few injuries in our shooting activities it will only take one severe incident to ruin our great reputation within Pony Club. Safety on the range is paramount so find someone who is aggressive in this respect.

Consider pre-labeling each competitor's target with name, pinny number, heat and whether it is a practice heat or for competition.

Seniors should shoot first and will take the longest amount of time. Use the 10-meter Air Pistol Target (NRA B-40). A good website to order targets is [www.championshooters.com](http://www.championshooters.com).

While the USPC Tetrathlon Committee does not recommend any one gun, the following are guns currently being used by many of our competitors. A very good website to order guns is [www.airgunexpress.com](http://www.airgunexpress.com). However, many local gun dealers will either carry air guns or can order them (same with targets).

**FOR BEGINNING SHOOTERS:** Daisy models Power Line 717, 747, 777 and Crossman 1322. They range in price from \$50 to \$185.

**FOR AVERAGE TO EXPERIENCED SHOOTERS:** RWS Diana 5G, RWS Diana Model Match 10, Gamo Compact, Beaman Webley Hurricane, Beaman Feinwerbau and the Bakhail/Izhevsk IZH-46M. They range in price from \$150 to \$800.

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## RUNNING

In regard to running, it is advisable to either acquire the running stakes from a committee member, if possible, or have your running phase steward construct them. The running course must be clearly laid out so that when a runner passes through a set of stakes he or she is able to see the next set of stakes. Also, it is advisable to have spotters along the running course not only to ensure the competitors don't cut corners but also to track, in writing, the sequence in which they pass. It's not unusual for runners to pass one another and if there are timing problems or inquiries these tracking logs will help to resolve them. Finally, have four people at the finish line: two timers, one scribe and one to read the competitor numbers to the scribe as they pass the finish line. This, too, will help resolve inquiries.

Start running the youngest division first while the Seniors are shooting. Ensure that if you choose to run and shoot concurrently that a runner receives at least 45 minutes after the run and before the shoot.

## SWIMMING

Swimming has its own unique considerations, other than finding a venue. Ideally there should be no other swimming event taking place. This will decrease the noise level and subsequent confusion. However, since this is an unlikely scenario ensure your swimming phase steward is able to clearly communicate his or her commands to the competitors and spectators. A bullhorn or starting system with a speaker is very helpful. The Clerk of Course plays a key role in the flow of the phase. He or she must have swimmers ready to go and at the "blocks" when the previous heat is finished. Having the competitor's name, division, distance to swim, heat and lane number on an index card will be very helpful.

Get competitors' previous swim times long before the rally in order to seed them accordingly (fastest swimmers swim in the middle of the pool and when there are multiple heats in a division the faster swimmers swim last).

Determine early on whether the pool is in meters or yards and ensure there will be a lifeguard on duty during the rally.

For more information or help, please contact one the following 2004 Tetrathlon Committee members:

Keith Hutcheson, Chairman	Virginia Region . . . . . keithhutch@aol.com
Scott Dove, Chairman-Elect	Virginia Region . . . . . rdove84054@aol.com
Jaye Bynkard	Intermountain Region . . . . . jayebinkerd@hotmail.com
Caroline Epperly	Mid-Cal Region . . . . . EpperlyC@surgery.ucsf.edu
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Willie Stettinius	Maryland Region . . . . . wstettinius@mintmeadows.com
Blair Sullivan	Cimarron Region . . . . . Bsulli0285@aol.com

## RIBBONS/MEDALS

This can be a daunting task since we compete both individually and as teams. It is up to you how and what awards are to be presented. Here is a typical scenario:

Ribbons: To the top six competitors in each phase by gender (that equals 48 ribbons).

To HM teams placing second through sixth (if four to a team, this equals 20 ribbons).

Medals: First place HM team.

Cup, Plate

or Medal: Equitation Award

Another consideration is to award a plate or cup to the top scoring boy and girl from your region. This is nice recognition to the kids from your region and will encourage greater participation in the future. A recent phenomenon is instead of awarding ribbons for each phase is to craft a nice certificate with either your region's logo in the middle or USPC's. In each corner of the certificate would be the competitor's score and place of each of the four phases. This saves a lot of money.

## COST

It is not unusual to lose money from your first rally. Your major costs will be from renting Porta Johns, renting the facility, paying certain individuals (EMT and riding judge), travel for official(s), ribbons and medals, and concessions. It may even cost you to have the manure removed. Income is derived primarily from two sources: entry fees and selling of concessions. Consider making hats, T-shirts, bags etc. that have the name of your rally on it. DO NOT put the year on any item in case you have any left over...you can sell them the following year.

The key to a well-organized rally is to be flexible. The aforementioned phase order is simply the typical Tetrathlon rally. Do what makes the most sense, logistically, economically and in the best interest of the competitors.