



**Special Olympics**  
South Dakota



# ATHLETE HANDBOOK

## Equestrian

2021

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**Dear Special Olympics Athlete,**

Congratulations on becoming a part of Special Olympics South Dakota (SOSD)!

Through your commitment to Special Olympics and its programs, we challenge you to train and compete in all sports you desire. We also challenge you to find your voice and to help us shape and grow SOSD. There are many exciting ways to be an athlete and a leader, so be sure to ask your coach or the Special Olympics office for more resources.

By participating in sports, physical fitness, and health education programs, you will increase self-confidence and social skills, improve physical and motor skills, and have more opportunities to grow as a person. This handbook is designed to introduce SOSD to you and to provide general information needed as an athlete.

We wish you luck, and can't wait to see you out on the field and in the community!



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## 1. Competition

The state is divided into four Areas. The city in which you live will determine which Area competitions you attend.

Northeast (NE) - Aberdeen, Huron, Watertown, and the surrounding communities

Southeast (SE) - Brookings, Mitchell, Sioux Falls, Yankton, and the surrounding communities

Black Hills (BH) - Custer, Rapid City, Spearfish, and the surrounding communities

Central (C) - Pierre, Mission, Winner, and the surrounding communities. These delegations do not have dedicated Area competitions to attend. In other words, you can choose where you wish to go.

For those who qualify, there are also State competitions held in the following sports:

**State Basketball Tournament** - Team (Traditional & Unified), Cheerleading (Traditional & Unified), and Skills (Individual & Team)

**State Summer Games** - Swimming (Traditional & Unified), Powerlifting, Volleyball, Soccer (Traditional & Unified), Soccer Skills, Racewalking, and Track & Field (Traditional & Unified)

**State Equestrian**

**Fall Classic** - Bocce (Traditional & Unified), Softball (Traditional & Unified), and Softball Skills

**State Traditional Bowling**

**State Unified Bowling**

Eligibility to participate in these events will depend on you meeting all of the training requirements and rules developed by your Delegation or Team.

Please Note: Delegations and Teams may choose to NOT participate in events. There could be many reasons for this, including the availability of coaches, finances, and roster numbers.

## 2. Practices / Training Requirements

The time, place, duration, and content of your practices will be established by your program leadership and can vary rather significantly from program to program. However, rest assured your coaches have completed the required certification course work and have demonstrated competence in coaching their sport. The following are general training expectations set forth by the State Office:

- Bowling: A minimum of five 3-game series or a total of 15 games over a minimum of 8 weeks.
- Winter Games: A minimum of 15 hours over a minimum of 8 weeks.
- Basketball: A minimum of 15 hours over a minimum of 8 weeks.
- Summer Games: A minimum of 15 hours over a minimum of 8 weeks. The number of hours required would be divided among the number of sports in which you are participating; for example 3 sports - 5 hrs persport / 2 sports - 7.5 hrs per sport / 1 sport - 15 hours.
- Equestrian: A minimum of 15 hours over a minimum of 8 weeks.

- Fall Classic: A minimum of 15 hours over a minimum of 8 weeks. The number of hours required would be divided among the number of sports in which you are participating; for example 2 sports - 7.5 hrs per sport / 1 sport - 15 hours.

### 3. Unified Sports

There are two kinds of teams in Special Olympics, Traditional and Unified. Everyone on a Traditional Team is a Special Olympics Athlete. On a Unified Team, some of the players have a disability and some do not.

### 4. Athletes Code of Conduct

Special Olympics is committed to the highest ideals of sport and expects all athletes to honor sports and Special Olympics. All Special Olympics athletes and Unified Sports Partners are expected to observe the following code:

#### **Sportsmanship**

I will practice good sportsmanship.

I will act in ways that bring respect to me, my coaches, my team, and Special Olympics.

I will not use bad language.

I will not swear or insult other persons.

I will not fight with other athletes, coaches, volunteers, or staff.

#### **Training and Competition**

I will train regularly.

I will learn and follow the rules of my sport.

I will listen to my coaches and the officials and ask questions when I do not understand.

I will always try my best during training, divisioning, and competitions.

I will not “hold back” in preliminary competition just to get into an easier finals division.

#### **Responsibility for My Actions**

I will not make inappropriate or unwanted physical, verbal, or sexual advances on others.

I will not smoke or vape in non-smoking areas.

I will not drink alcohol or use illegal drugs at Special Olympics events.

I will not take drugs for the purpose of improving my performance.

I will obey all laws and Special Olympics rules.

I understand that if I do not obey this Code of Conduct, I will be subject to a range of consequences by my Program or a Games Organizing Committee for a World Games, up to and including not being allowed to participate.

### 5. You Know What I mean?

People often use short-cuts when speaking and writing about Special Olympics.

DQ = Disqualification. An athlete will receive only a participation ribbon when, during competition, a judge determines a rules infraction has occurred.

GOC = Games Organizing Committee. For every State event we host, there is a group of people from the host city who help organize the event.

HA = Healthy Athletes. At our State Summer Games, we provide health screenings to athletes.

HOD = Head of Delegation. This is the person in charge of your delegation/team.

ID = Intellectual Disability. All athletes participating in Special Olympics have an ID.

LETR = Law Enforcement Torch Run. These are people who help raise money for SOSD.

SO or SOI = Special Olympics and Special Olympics, Inc. The preferred name is Special Olympics.

SOSD = Special Olympics South Dakota. SOSD is a state program of Special Olympics. The State Office is located in Sioux Falls.

UP = Unified Partners. These are players on teams who do not have an ID.

YA = Young Athletes. These are future Special Olympics athletes who are ages 2 - 7.

## **6. Application for Participation in Special Olympics South Dakota**

To participate in Special Olympics, you must complete Form A: Application for Participation in Special Olympics South Dakota. This form contains the following components:

- ⇒ Your contact information
- ⇒ Contact information for a parent/guardian
- ⇒ Health insurance information
- ⇒ Physical exam that must be completed by a medical professional every three years
- ⇒ A release signed by either you or a parent/guardian
- ⇒ Once this form is completed, you should give it to your HOD. They will give a copy to the State Office.
- ⇒ If you should get injured or become ill at a Special Olympics event and should require the care of a medical professional, your HOD should bring this document with you.

## **7. Concussions**

### **Defining a Concussion**

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury caused when you get hit on the head or from a bunch of smaller blows to the head. Concussions can also occur from a blow to the body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth—causing the brain to bounce around or twist within the skull. Although concussions are usually not life-threatening, their effects can be serious, therefore, proper attention must be paid to individuals suspected of sustaining a concussion.

### **Suspected or Confirmed Concussion**

If a coach or official thinks you have sustained a concussion in a practice, game, or competition, you will be removed

from practice, play, or competition at that time. If a qualified medical professional is available on-site to render an evaluation, that person shall have final authority as to whether or not a concussion is suspected. If applicable, your parent or guardian should be made aware that the participant is suspected of sustaining a concussion.

### **Return to Play**

If you have been removed from practice, play or competition due to a suspected concussion, you may not participate in Special Olympics sports activities until either of the following occurs A) at least seven consecutive days have passed since you were removed from play and a currently licensed, qualified medical professional\* provides written clearance for the participant to return to practice, play and competition or B) a currently licensed, qualified medical professional determines you did not suffer a concussion and provides written clearance for you to return to activities immediately. Written clearance in either of the scenarios above shall become a permanent record.

\*A qualified medical professional is defined as a person who is registered, certified, licensed, or otherwise recognized in law, by the State of South Dakota, to provide medical treatment and is trained and experienced in the evaluation, management, and care of concussions.

## **8. Abuse**

Your health, safety, and well-being are of the highest concern to those in your Special Olympics family (Coaches, chaperones, staff, and volunteers). If you should ever feel unsafe or mistreated, we urge you to seek the assistance of a family member or a trusted member of your Special Olympics family.

## **9. Competition Readiness**

To compete at your best you need to be prepared!

1. Proper sports equipment: For example, you will need a softball glove that fits your hand.
2. Uniform or sports clothing: Blue jeans are not appropriate for competition. Your shoelaces should be tied and you should be wearing sports socks.
3. Proper sports shoes: If you wear cowboy boots while competing in basketball, for example, the possibility of injuring an ankle is quite high. Plus, you won't look like a serious athlete.
4. Minimal or no jewelry.
5. Hair is out of your face.
6. Sunscreen on exposed skin.
7. Eat a healthy snack or meal within 2-3 hours of the event.
8. Drink one bottle of water within an hour of the event.
9. Warm-up before the event.

## **10. Year-round Fitness**

Staying fit and healthy should not end when your latest State event is over. It is very important for you to set fitness goals and strive to fulfill them. Here are some ideas:

1. Work out or go for a walk at least 5 times per week.

2. Eat fast food no more than 3 times per week.
3. Get 8 hours of sleep per night.
4. Drink 5 large glasses of water per day.
5. Do not drink soda... even diet soda.
6. Eat 5 fruits and/or vegetables every day.

## 11. Athlete Leadership

Inclusion starts with Athlete Leadership! What does the word “inclusion” mean? Many things, but as it applies to Special Olympics it means:

- A. You should have the opportunity to enjoy the same experiences as people without an ID, and;
- B. You should have the same opportunities to contribute to SO through the sharing of your talents and gifts outside of competition.

The following are roles athletes can and should be filling:

1. Athlete Leadership Council
2. Coaches
3. Committee Members
4. Fund-raisers
5. Games Organizing Committee Members
6. Global Messengers (Giving Speeches)
7. Health Promoters
8. Officials
9. Photographers
10. Reporters
11. SOSD Board of Directors
12. Volunteers

For more information regarding any of these roles, contact the state office at 605.331.4117.

## 12. Fundraising

It takes a lot of money to put on Special Olympics events. You can help your local program as well as the State with this. We strongly encourage you to attend fundraising events in your community and actively help out when applicable.

**For you to perform at your best, you need to know the rules of the game. Look for Athlete Handbooks for all of your sports.**

# Special Olympics South Dakota Sports Rules - Equestrian

## SOSD Official Equestrian Events

### EVENTS OFFERED:

English Equitation

Western Equitation

Flat Surface Equitation

Working Trails

Barrel Racing

Showmanship with Halter

Showmanship at Bridle Classes

## General Rules

1. An athlete with Down Syndrome who has been diagnosed with Atlanto-axial instability may not participate in equestrian events.
2. Riders are assigned to a division according to their ability to safely negotiate any movements required in the class. This ability is indicated on the Equestrian Sports Rider Profile Form (found in competition guide/registration forms) by the Special Olympics coach before competition and submitted with the athlete entry form.
2. All athletes compete according to ability and age. Equestrian athletes are not separated by gender. If there are less than three athletes in an age group, groups may be combined to make a competition but levels may not be combined.

### Definitions:

1. Support: The rider needs the physical support of one or two sidewalkers and/or the presence of a leader. Any help in the arena is considered "support".
2. Independent: An independent rider may not be helped while competing.
3. Physical limitations: Any rider that is unable to post a trot or sit the job (medical documentation required).

### Divisions:

A Level: Walk, Trot/Jog, Canter/Lope-Independent only. The rider is expected to compete with no modifications to NGB rules.

A: Can perform any class requirements.

A-P: Riders that have a physical disability prohibiting them from posting a trot or sitting the jog.

B Level: Walk and Trot/Jog.

B-I: Independent, can perform class requirements.

B-IP: Independent riders that have a physical disability prohibiting them from posting the trot or sitting the jog.

B-S: Supported, can physically perform any class requirements.

B-SP: Supported riders that have a physical disability prohibiting them from posting the trot or sitting the jog.

C Level: Riders ride at the walk only.

C-I: Independent

C-S: Supported

## **General Attire:**

1. Local Program shirts, t-shirts, etc. are acceptable attire.
2. Shorts are not allowed.
3. Clothing should be workmanlike and neat. There can be NO advertisements, logos, etc. on the rider's shirt.
4. All riders are encouraged to wear a heeled boot appropriate to the tack style in which they are competing. Safety stirrups must be used if the rider is not wearing a heel.
5. Riders who must wear other footwear as the result of a physical disability must have a physician's statement submitted with their entry form.
6. All riders must wear approved helmets with full chin harness which must be fastened at all times riders are working around horses.
7. Competitors must wear their number prominently displayed on their back during competition, practice at competition, and while in the competition "holding area".
8. During practice, athletes must adhere to the helmet, boot, and long pants rule but may wear short-sleeved shirts.

## **The information below regarding attire is the optimal outcome**

### **English Tack Style Attire:**

1. A short, dark-colored riding coat.
2. A solid color, preferably white, riding shirt or Oxford-style long or short-sleeved shirt.
3. Tie or choker.
4. Breeches or jodhpurs.
5. Gloves and spurs are optional.
6. Athletes will be permitted to wear a hat cover or conservative raincoat in the case of inclement weather.
7. In extreme heat (above 80 degrees), the judges may permit athletes to show without riding coats.

### **Western Tack Style Attire:**

1. Pants/Jeans.
2. A long-sleeved shirt of conservative color with a collar.
3. A belt under loops.
4. Neckties, kerchiefs, bolos, chaps, and gloves are optional.
5. Chaps are prohibited in all gymkhana events and showmanship classes.
6. Western-type hat worn on an approved helmet is optional.

## **General Tack Rules:**

1. Saddles must fit the horse.
2. An athlete may use his/her own saddle as long as it fits the horse he/she is riding.
3. Adapted saddles must be approved by the Event Director before the competition.
4. Halters are required for all supported classes. The lead line must be attached to the halter and not to the bridle.
5. The halter may be over or under the bridle so long as it doesn't interfere with the use of the bit or the reins.

## **PROHIBITED Tack and Equipment (applies to the warm-up area as well as competition):**

1. Earplugs of any kind
  2. Martingales of any kind
  3. Bearing, side, or running reins
  4. Seat covers – if an athlete needs it, it must be declared on the Rider Profile and approved
  5. Boots, bandages or blinders
  6. Nose covers
  7. Bit guards
- ⇒ Riders may use adaptive equipment without penalty but they may, in no way, be attached to the horse or saddle. Adaptive equipment must be declared on the Rider Profile.
- ⇒ Bridles must be appropriate to the class entered and meet the rule requirements.
- ⇒ In International, National, and Chapter competition, it is mandatory to have the bits dropped and inspected on all horses. Riders must be dismounted for this inspection.

## **General Rules of Competition:**

1. All Riders must have had a minimum of 15 hours of training over a minimum of 8 weeks.
2. No post entries are allowed.
3. No dogs will be permitted on the show grounds, except Seeing Eye dogs or assistance dogs.
4. During World Games, all athletes will compete on horses provided by the Games Organizing Committee.
5. Under no circumstances should sedatives be used on horses for Special Olympics Equestrian Sport.
6. Change of horse is only allowed for safety reasons or if a horse is sick or unsound.
7. Unsoundness does not penalize a competitor unless it is sufficiently severe to impair the required performance. In such cases, the imposition of a penalty is at the judge's discretion.

## **Judging the Classes:**

The following points (where appropriate) have equal consideration in judging all classes:

1. Rider's balance
2. Rider's seat
3. Use of aids
4. Ability to follow directions

5. Ring etiquette and safety
6. Sportsmanlike conduct
7. Results as shown by the performance of the horse are not to be considered more important than the method used in obtaining them.

### **Rider's Position – English Tack Style:**

1. Rider should have a workmanlike appearance... seat and hands light and supple, conveying the impression of control, should any emergency arise.
2. Basic position: The eyes should be up and the shoulders back. The upper body should be straight, but not stiff or hollow-backed. Toes should be at an angle best suited to the rider's conformation. Ankles should be flexed in and heels down. The calf and leg should be in contact with horse and slightly behind the girth. Stirrup should be on the ball of the foot and must not be tied to the girth.
3. Position in motion: At the walk, sitting trot, and canter, the body should be a couple of degrees in front of or on the vertical; during the posting trot, inclined forward or on the vertical; galloping and jumping, same inclination should be present as the posting trot.

### **Rider's Position – Western Tack Style:**

1. Riders will be judged on seat, hands, the performance of the horse, appointments of horse and rider, and suitability of horse to rider.
2. Basic position: The body should appear comfortable, relaxed, and flexible. The rider should sit in the center of the saddle with legs hanging to form a straight vertical line, from the ear, dropping down through the center of the shoulder and hip, touching the back of the heel. The stirrup should be just short enough to allow the heels to be lower than the toes with a slight bend in the knee and toe directly under the knee. Feet should be placed in the stirrup with the weight on the ball of the foot. Consideration should be given to the width of the stirrups, which vary on Western saddles. If stirrups are wide, the foot may have the appearance of being "home" when, in reality, the weight is being carried properly on the ball of the foot. Arms are held in a relaxed, easy manner, shoulders back and down and upper arm in a straight line with the body, the one holding reins bent at the elbow forming a straight line from elbow to horse's mouth.
3. Hands: Only one hand is to be used for reining and hands shall not be changed. The hand should be around the reins. The rein hand is to be above the horn and as near to it as possible. Bracing against the horn or coiled reata is penalized. When split reins are used and the ends of the rein fall on the same side as reining hand, one finger between reins is permitted. No finger between the reins is allowed when using romal, or when ends of the split reins are held in hand not used for reining. The position of the hand not being used for reining is optional, but it should be kept free of the horse and equipment and held in a relaxed manner straight with the rider's body at all times. Riders can hold the romal or end of the split reins to keep from swinging and to adjust the position of the reins, provide it is held at least 41 cm (1' 4 1/4") from reining hand.
4. Position in motion: The rider should sit to jog and not post (unless otherwise specified in division rules). At the lope, he/she should be close to the saddle. All movements of the horse should be governed by the use of imperceptible aids and the shifting of the rider's weight is not desirable.

## **Unauthorized assistance from horse handlers and sidewalkers will result in penalties:**

1. Sidewalkers may not give verbal commands or extra physical prompting except in the case of an emergency.
2. Special consideration will be given to riders with visual or auditory impairments or severe physical disabilities.
3. Coaches may not act as horse handlers, sidewalkers, or spotters for their own athletes at any time while the athlete is being judged.

## **EQUITATION**

1. General: Riders must maintain the same mount throughout all phases of a class. Any rider not having his mount under sufficient control will be excused from the ring and disqualified.
2. If the health and safety of the rider is in jeopardy while on a horse supplied by and borrowed from the venue management or any borrowed horse outside of the athlete's regular training program, the coach may request a change.
3. Attendants are not allowed in the ring except at the request of the judge(s) or when specified in the class requirements.
4. Outside assistance/railside coaching will be penalized at the judge's discretion. Electronic communication devices used for coaching, etc., between riders and individuals outside the ring shall be prohibited.
5. In cases of broken equipment or loss of a shoe, the rider may continue or be excused from the ring at the request of his/her coach.

## **Judging:**

Riders will be judged on seat, hands, and ability to control and show the horse. Results, as shown by performance of the horse, are not to be considered more important than the method used by the rider.

The following are the class specifications for judging equitation classes. Level A riders are expected to compete with no modifications to the NGB rules of each class entered.

## **All Divisions – Class Routines and Expectations:**

1. All riders will ride around the ring in both directions at all required gaits, in a group and/or individually at the command of the judge.
2. Riders will perform the gaits appropriate for their division.
3. All riders will be asked to back their horses.
4. All riders may be required to execute any appropriate tests determined by the judges and the Event Director.

## **English Equitation Class Routine:**

1. Competitors shall enter the ring at a called-for gait.
2. They must be worked both ways of the ring. They must always be on the correct diagonal if appropriate.
3. Entries then line up and back their horse on command.
4. Any or all riders may be required to execute any appropriate tests included in the class requirements. All tests used must be on the flat. Tests may be performed either collectively or individually, but no other tests may be used. Instructions must be publicly announced.

## **Tests from which the judges may choose to include:**

1. Halt (4 to 6 seconds);
2. Figure eight at the trot, demonstrating change of diagonals;
3. Figure eight at canter on the correct lead, demonstrating simple change of lead; demonstrating simple, interrupted, or flying change of lead;
4. Work collectively at the walk, trot, or canter;
5. Hand gallop to a halt (4 to 6 seconds);
6. Execute serpentine at a trot demonstrating change of diagonal;
7. Change leads on a line demonstrating a simple, interrupted, or flying change of lead
8. Perform circles at any gait appropriate for the division;
9. Turn on forehand and/or haunches; and
10. Reverse direction at the halt, walk, trot, and/or canter.

## **Western Equitation Class Routine:**

1. Competitors shall enter the ring at a walk or a jog and are judged at a flat-footed, four-beat walk, two-beat jog, and a three-beat lope per the division specifications.
2. They must always be on the correct lead.
3. Entries then line up and back their horse on command.
4. Any or all riders may be required to execute any appropriate tests included in the class requirements. Tests may be performed either collectively or individually, but no other tests may be used. Instructions must be publicly announced.

## **Tests from which the judges may choose for Western Equitation:**

1. Large circle at the walk, jog;
2. Perform a halt;
3. Reverse direction from a halt or walk or jog or lope;
4. Lope stop;
5. Demonstrate a sliding stop;
6. Rollback or haunch turns or spins;
7. Figure 8 at a jog;
8. Figure 8 at a lope on correct lead demonstrating simple, interrupted, or flying change of lead; and
9. Change of leads down the center of the ring demonstrating at least three changes of lead.
10. Judges are encouraged to call for at least two tests to be performed. Riders will not be asked to change horses.

## **Working Trail**

1. The winner will be the rider incurring the fewest penalty points who also executes the course the most competently.

2. Entry will be evaluated on:
  - ⇒ Responsiveness
  - ⇒ Willingness
  - ⇒ General attitude
  - ⇒ Rider's ability to guide the horse through a designated obstacle course
  - ⇒ While the horse is in motion, the rider's hands shall be clear of the horse to avoid cueing
  - ⇒ Western riders may use only one hand on the reins except that it is permissible to change hands when working an obstacle.
3. Judges are encouraged to advance to the next obstacle any horse taking excessive time at an obstacle.
4. Horses should be penalized for any unnecessary delay when approaching an obstacle.
5. Off course is defined as:
  - ⇒ Taking an obstacle in the wrong direction or from the wrong side;
  - ⇒ Taking an obstacle in a manner other than described in the pattern;
  - ⇒ Skipping an obstacle unless directed by the judge;
  - ⇒ Negotiating obstacles in the wrong sequence;
  - ⇒ Failure of rider to attempt obstacle per judge's instructions;
  - ⇒ The above constitutes no score for that obstacle, but not necessarily elimination from the class. Those riders having the above errors place below all other entries following the prescribed courses.
6. Various obstacles will be required in specific divisions.

### **SHOWMANSHIP AT HALTER AND BRIDLE CLASSES:**

1. The emphasis of these classes should be on the athlete's ability to handle and show the horse with safety as the major consideration. The horse is merely a prop to show the ability of the showman.
2. Show Management will post individual test patterns a minimum of one hour before the class is to be held.

### **Class routine:**

1. Enter the arena leading the animal at an alert walk in a counter-clockwise direction (unless otherwise directed by the judge). The horse should lead readily at a walk or trot.
2. After the class has been lined up, the judge will call on each exhibitor to move his horse individually. When moving the horse, be sure the judge gets a clear, unobstructed view of the horse's action.

### **Judging:**

#### **Appearance of Horse Totals: Total = 20 points**

1. Condition and thriftiness: 5 points
2. Grooming: 5 points
  - ⇒ Clean, well-brushed hair coat (dust and stains are objectionable)
  - ⇒ Areas which must be clean include around the eyes, ears, muzzle, nostrils, between the legs, and around the tail
  - ⇒ Mane, tail, foretop and wither tufts are to be free of tangles and clean. It is prohibited to use any ornaments on the

aforementioned. Manes, foretops, and wither tufts may be English braided or Western braided if the exhibitor so desires.

⇒ Hoofs should be trimmed properly and be clean. If shod, shoes must fit properly, and clinches should be neat.

### 3. Trimming: 5 points

⇒ Manes may be roached, but foretop and tuft over withers must be left.

⇒ Inside of ears may be clipped.

⇒ Long hair on jaw, legs, and pasterns should be clipped.

### 4. Tack: 5 points

⇒ Tack should be neat, clean, and in good repair.

⇒ Horses shown Western must be in halter of leather or nylon.

⇒ Horses shown English may be in either bridle or halter of leather or nylon.

## **Appearance of Exhibitor: Total = 10 points**

1. Clothes and person should be neat and clean.
2. Appropriate Western tack-style clothes.
3. Appropriate English tack-style clothes; jackets are optional.

## **Showing Horse in Ring: Total = 60 points**

### 1. Leading: 40 points

⇒ The athlete should lead from the left side of the horse with the lead shank/reins held with the right hand about 20-30 cm (8-12 inches) from the halter/bit; the hand shall not be on the chain portion of the shank. Athletes may be penalized for this at the judge's discretion. Smaller athletes may need a longer hold.

⇒ The athlete should stay in position by the left side of the horse's head, "eye to eye" with the horse.

⇒ Excess lead shank/rein should be held safely and neatly in the left hand. A tightly coiled/rolled lead shank or reins wrapped around the athlete's left hand will be cause for points to be deducted from the athlete's score.

⇒ A loose, flapping lead shank or rein will be considered a fault.

⇒ Emphasis should be placed upon the light control of the horse with a minimum of pressure on the lead shank/reins, to allow the horse to hold its head naturally. The horse should move out and continue readily, freely, and quietly at the walk, jog/trot, with a minimum of urging by the athlete.

⇒ It is permissible for the athlete to pass between the judge and the horse as the judge moves around the animal, but the athlete should avoid blocking the judge's view beyond the movement required to step between the horse and judge. The athlete should step quickly and quietly to the zone where both horse and judge can be observed.

⇒ It is to be remembered that the athlete is also being judged on safety. The athlete shall not crowd the competitor next to him/her when positioned in a side-by-side line-up, or in front of him/her when lined up head to tail.

⇒ If the judge or ringmaster requests a change in position, the athlete should first look around to see that nearby athletes have their horses under control, then move out promptly as indicated.

### 2. Posing: 20 points

⇒ When posing your horse, stand toward the front and facing the horse, but not directly in front of the horse and always in a position where you can keep your eye on the judge.

- ⇒ Pose the horse with his feet squarely under him. Do the showing with the lead shank/reins. Never kick a horse's leg into position.
  - ⇒ When a judge is observing other horses, let your horse stand, if posed reasonably well.
  - ⇒ Be natural. Over-showing, undue fussing, and maneuvering are objectionable.
3. Poise Alertness and Merits: 20 points
- ⇒ Athlete's awareness of the position of the judge at all times.
  - ⇒ Athlete shows animal at all times and is not distracted by persons and things outside of the ring. He/she shows the entire time until the class has been placed and excused from the ring.
  - ⇒ Athlete remains attentive to any instructions from the judge or ringmaster and cooperates readily with them.
  - ⇒ Athlete is businesslike yet friendly and courteous and maintains sportsmanlike conduct towards officials and other athletes.

## **GYMKHANA EVENTS:**

### **General**

1. All are timed events and the winner will be the competitor with the fastest time.
2. Riders shall be required to start the course inside an enclosed ring and may not start until all gates are closed and secured. Gates may not be opened until the rider has completed the course and returned to a walk or halt.
3. Each athlete will begin from a running start, and time shall begin and as the horse's nose crosses the line.
4. Time will be complete when the horse's nose crosses the finish line.
5. A five-second penalty will be added to the time for each of the following:
  - ⇒ Knocking over a pole or barrel (an athlete may touch a pole or barrel with his/her hand).
  - ⇒ For every three strides over the allowed gait for that division
6. A disqualification will be assessed for the following:
  - ⇒ Failure to follow the course
  - ⇒ Failure to cross the start and finish line between the markers
  - ⇒ If the helmet chin strap is not properly fastened on the athlete's head for the entire time the rider is in the arena
  - ⇒ Recrossing the start/finish line after completing the course
  - ⇒ The judge, at his/her discretion, may disqualify an athlete for excessive use of a bat, crop, whip, or rope.
7. In the event of a tie, there will be a run-off using the same course. The competitor declared the winner in the runoff must re-run the pattern within five seconds of his/her original time or the run-off must be held again.

### **Barrel Racing:**

1. Judging – At the signal from the starter, the athlete will:
  - ⇒ Run barrel number 1, pass to the left of it and complete an approximately 360 degree turn around it.

- ⇒ Then the rider will go to barrel number 2, pass to the right of it, and complete a slightly more than 360 degree turn around it.
  - ⇒ The rider will then go to barrel number 3, pass to the right of it, and do another approximately 360 degree turn around it.
  - ⇒ The rider will then sprint to the finish line, passing between barrels number 1 and 2
2. The barrel course may also be run to the left. For example, the competitor would start at barrel number 2, turning to the left of this barrel. He/she would then proceed to barrel number 1 and turning to the right, continue to barrel number 3, turning again to the right, and completing the event with a final sprint to the finish line.

## **AWARDS**

1. Individual medals will be awarded to athletes in the first three places in each division. Ribbons will be presented to athletes in 4th-8th place.
2. Awards will be presented immediately following the completion of each division in each event.

## **SPORTSMANSHIP**

Good sportsmanship is both the coaches' and athletes' commitment to fair play, ethical behavior, and integrity. In perception and practice, sportsmanship is defined as those qualities which are characterized by generosity and genuine concern for others. Below we highlight a few focus points and ideas on how to teach and coach sportsmanship to your athletes. Lead by example.

### **Competitive effort**

1. Put forth maximum effort during each event.
2. Practice the skills with the same intensity as you would perform them in competition.
3. Always finish a game/event. Never quit.

### **Fair play at all times**

1. Always comply with the rules.
2. Demonstrate sportsmanship and fair play at all times.
3. Respect the decision of the officials at all times.