SHOW JUMPING-AUS

Hobby Horse Riders
FUN • FANTASY • FITNESS

Modified and edited for use in Australia
By Hobby Horse Riders
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Instructions and rules

Used in the 2023 Finnish Championships, related qualifiers, championship classes and are recommended for use in show jumping competitions organized by others.
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3 General information about show jumping

Hobby horse show jumping borrows a lot from show jumping with real horses.

Among other things, penalty points and evaluation criteria come from the rules of equestrian show jumping.

However, we replace the body of the real horse with the human rider, and with a hobby horse as a vehicle to emulate the sport. Therefore, hobby horse show jumping, technically measures the rider's show jumping abilities. These are assessed on individual **effort, speed, balance, memory, endurance and jumping technique, skill and strength.** However, when riding a hobby horse, several enthusiasts also consider the skill level and nature and confidence of their hobby horse. It can also be said that a certain height is the measurement level of a jumping horse.

A horse's temperament may give more expression to the ride and when something goes wrong, for example, it will be expressed in saying that the horse wasn't at its best today. This personality-based sport is one of the dimensions of hobby horse riding that is rarely seen in other hobbies.

In a show jumping event that is based on time, the rider with the hobby horse rides a predetermined course plan (set for the number and height of the fences) and the aim is to ride for a clean (= penalty free) in the fastest possible time.

Different Classes of events are presented in the program and riders choose and nominate to ride at the level of their horses' training and ability.

4 Fences

4.1 General information about fences

A fence consists of two elements: post and a pole. The posts are used in pairs and a pole or poles are placed between them. Obstacles can also include other elements, e.g. the most common are numbers, blocks, panels, planks and water mats. In addition, decorations can also be part of obstacles e.g. flower pots and different constructs representing stone or brick walls.

There is no standard for the proportions of obstacles. The most important thing is that there is a pole and/or a gap between the posts long enough for the rider to safely jump over it. However, narrower fences can be used to make the course more challenging and testing the jumping style.

What is important is the safety of the rider ensuring the right kind of elements.

The poles should be light and thin. The recommended material is PVC plastic, conduit or plumbing pipe. Metal, wood, and other hard, unyielding or heavy materials are not used due to the possibility of injury. Bamboo poles are acceptable, but thick wooden poles used on real horse fences, for example, should not be used.

Planks are placed in the same way as poles on brackets or on their own feet and be safe and fall easily if knocked. **The posts should remain firmly upright.** They should be able to tolerate wind and small bumps, but still fall over if knocked by a solid collision with the rider, as in the case of a fall, to avoid a severe impact. Attention should also be paid to the legs of the posts. Overly long legs or insufficient support for the post is also safety risk.
Varied materials can be used for the jump cups/or pole holder brackets. Nails or screws are probably the most popular option, but various metal and wooden brackets are also suitable. The most important thing is that the supports keep the pole stable enough to be used for purpose and the pole drops from the brackets when the rider touches it. Therefore, the pole must be on top of the bracket, e.g. not placed firmly or too deep on the brackets. The pole must be able to drop in the direction the rider is traveling on the course. The pole must be stable enough not drop from the slightest gust of wind. The brackets should be blunt-ended and not too protruding. The pole must not drop too deeply into the bracket (e.g. the curve of a wooden bracket must not be too deep).
Fences are **numbered in the order to be jumped**. This facilitates learning the course as well as, guiding the rider to the next correct obstacle to be negotiated.
The height of the fence is measured to the centre top of the highest pole. In general, the aim is to keep the height of the obstacle even across the space, e.g. 40 cm, 60 cm, 80 cm, etc. **The width of the fence** is usually the length of the pole and the depth of the fence is measured front to back in the direction of travel over the jump. For example, the depth of the oxer is measured from the outer edge of the first pole to the outer edge of the second pole from the centre of the poles.

4.2 Types of fences

Vertical The most common type of fence used. The poles are positioned so the vertical fence has no depth. Thus, the vertical fence consists of a pair of posts and a pole or poles. Planks can also be used for fill with or instead of poles.

Spread As the name implies, this fence has a horizontal span. In the direction of riding, several elements are placed in the fence. In competitions, it is recommended that the span does not exceed the height.

Oxer This fence has two consecutive parts, i.e. two pairs of posts with poles. The front must not be higher than the back. Either the poles of both parts are the same height, or the front is lower.

Triple Spread fence with three consecutive parts. The first part should be the lowest to the rear being the highest. The two rearmost parts may in some cases also be the same height.

Wall Solid camouflaged fence, eg decorated as a brick wall. However, the tops must be able to give way if knocked. Construction suggestions are e.g., cardboard boxes. The wall therefore also has some horizontal depth.

Water fence Fence with a water depression/shallow pool or water tarp. Fence (e.g. a vertical obstacle) may have been placed in front of, on top of or behind the pool/tarp.

Water Jump A depression filled with water or a tarp simulation with no actual fence. A pop-up element (less than 30 cm) can be placed in front of the water obstacle. The pop-up element does not actually belong to the fence and its disturbance does not include penalty points. The penalty point comes from stepping into the water or the tarp.

4.3 Single fences and combinations

Single fence Fence is one that is crossed by one jump.

Combination Consists of two or three single fences. Obstacle spacing is not standardized for hobby horses, but one to three steps must be provided between obstacles. In some cases, even in normal show jumping classes, the fence can or must be ridden as a "singular obstacle". Fences are marked with numbers and letters e.g. **5a** must be jumped first, then **5b** and **5c**. Combination must be jumped in its entirety, so a denial on any part of combination obliges you to ride the whole combination again.

5 Course

There are considerably less restraints in building and designing the course plans for hobby horses than when designing for real horses. Fence spacing, distances, arena size, or obstacle types are not standardized - there are only recommendations. This gives the course plan designer creative freedom to design the track to the limits of the space where it will be ridden. Various fences can also be used more freely. Approaches can be a bit riskier than with real horses. However, safety must always be given priority.

5.1 Size of the arena

Recommended arena size is about 10 x 20 m. Qualified show jumping may be built for smaller dimensions. However, larger field allows for longer fence distances, which also encourages speed. It is recommended but not necessary to fence the arena, but sufficient to mark the outer edges so that no one steps onto the course during the rider's performance. Marking entrances and exits is also recommended.

At show jumping qualifiers, we recommend a minimum field size of 7 x 10 m.

5.2 Course plan

Course plan (diagram) must be available to the competitors before the start of the class. An opportunity to walk the course is a recommendation. Course plan must include the locations and jumping order of the fences, the starting and finishing lines, direction markers on the obstacles (arrows/flags/numbering on the approach side of a fence) and any dangerous shortcuts should be blocked. The fences should be drawn to indicate the type of fence. For example, a vertical fence can be a straight line, an oxer, two lines with one number, special obstacles a rectangle, etc. It is advised to mark decorations etc. on the course plan, and riding tracks, approaches to fences and more precisely the appearance of fences. If changes to the course are made just before the class, competitors must be notified and given time to learn the changes to the course plan and/or a completely new course drawing be made available.

The maximum time and judging method must also be indicated on the course plan (especially if it is other the usual event criteria) As Ideal time events or High Jump and in Equitation where the pace between jumps may be dictated.

Obstacles are numbered in the course plan and on the course itself, starting with fence No. 1, which is jumped first. Combinations are numbered with the same number and letter: the first part is e.g. 5a, the second 5b and the third 5c.

The height of fences shall not exceed the height indicated in the course plan or elsewhere. Individual fences may be lower than the stated height without the obligation to inform competitors, but if several fences are 5 cm lower than the declared height, competitors must be informed in good time. In this case, the height can be marked, for example: 40-50 cm. Once the course is designed and built, **it is good to do a test ride**. The test rider must not be a competitor or otherwise all competitors must have access to test ride the course. If a rider of sufficient quality is not available, the height of the obstacles can be dropped during the test ride. The most important thing is to make sure that the distances are appropriate, approaches are possible and sensible riding paths between fences are unobstructed e.g., decorations on the track that may cause accidents.

Fences should be marked with numbers and letters, and flags especially on long courses. On shorter courses (e.g., six jumps) this is only a recommendation. In addition to numbering, fences can be marked with flags/tiles with white on the left and red on the right. These flags indicate the jump direction and width of the fence.
You can also tell the direction of the jump by placing the number on the side from which the fence is jumped. There will be no penalty points for overturning or moving obstacle signs while riding. For example, if a flag drops from a post when a rider knocks the pole down, the

penalty points only come from the pole falling. Similarly, bumping, tipping, or moving other course decorations will not incur any penalty points. In general, however, such elements on the course and in fences are intended to be avoided. Only if the decoration is placed to represent a danger warning, and blocks a pathway, ignoring it can be cause for elimination. If the **outer edges of the arena** are marked with an element (e.g., ropes, pole or fence), crossing, moving or knocking them will be penalised. This is considered an infringement. During the performance, the jump arena course must not be left or entered by anyone other than the performer, the course stewards, and the judge.

The construction and maintenance of the course during and between the class is the responsibility of the course stewards. They raise poles and fallen elements and set and move fences. Sometimes the same course personnel can also be timekeeper and/or judge. However, course stewards, timekeepers and judges must stay out of the way of the performer. The course begins from the start line and ends at the finish line. It may also start when the rider ascends the first fence and descends from the last. The judge has the power to choose the start and end of the course. Competitors must be informed of the Judges' decision in this matter.

6 Signals

Judge's signals: Audible signals are used to mark the beginning and end of a course and can also be used to get attention from competitors. Often, however, speech is used in hobby horse competitions because the distances are not so great that the voice is not heard. However, it is recommended that a signal be used to start the rider/horse.

A signal can be a bell or a whistle. The rider has **45 seconds** to start the course, i.e. to cross the starting line, or to attempt the first fence. The chosen method is announced prior to the competition beginning.

Elimination is indicated by **two signals** (e.g. two whistles).

During the course, if one whistle is sounded. This may occur in situations where the rider needs to be stopped. Possible reasons are: the collapse of the fence without rider involvement or a safety issue.
If the timekeeper is competent and has the correct equipment the time can be paused at this point, the performance can be allowed to resume with one beep when the situation is corrected, and the time continues.

The same is done when the horse/rider refuses, and the pole falls off the fence or moves and needs reconstructing.

7 Staff

The official staff shall include, at a minimum, a judge, a timekeeper and a steward. There may also be more officials to perform various tasks. Or one person to perform more than one task. For example, the timekeeper may also be course steward and raise fallen poles between performances. In addition, staff may include an announcer, writer/scribe, practice ring steward, and other personnel. The most important thing is that each official knows which task they are undertaking and responsible for. The minimum number of persons, at all times, is two people in order to ensure fairness in situations of dispute.

8 Rider's and hobby horse's equipment

There are no mandatory rules for the rider's attire, unless otherwise stated. However, **shock-absorbing shoes and sportswear are recommended for show jumping**. Shoes are compulsory at indoor and at championships. Various aids may be used, but it is advisable to use only those aids for which a doctor, physiotherapist or other professional has given as a report/request for approval.

Hobby horse should have at least some kind of bridle with reins, unless otherwise stated. Auxiliary handlebars, chest straps and guards are allowed in show jumping. Exceptions to the equipment rules must be applied for prior to event. The whip is allowed. Safety equipment used on real horses, such as a helmet or safety vest, does not provide additional safety for hobby horse riding, and therefore a helmet or safety vest is not recommended. Such heavy safety equipment can even interfere with performance.

Irregular equipment can lead to elimination. Number plates on hobbyhorses will only be accepted if they have been authorised by the organizer. Otherwise, they can cause confusion. The equipment must be presented for inspection to the judge if requested.

9 Judging Event/Classes and Rules

In show jumping, the most common event class is A.2.0 (see below). The event type and maximum height for each class and judging method must be stated in the competition program.

9.1 A level events

Judging criteria **A = based on penalty points only**

A.0 All riders who have completed the course or jump-off without any faults are equal. Time is not considered, so those who ride without faults will be awarded equally. There is no second round for this level.

A.0.0 No jump-off

A.0.1 One jump-off (see jump off rules)

A.1 Those who received same number of faults or penalty points on the course or jump-off are equal and proceed to Jump-off.

A.2 Those who received the same number of faults or penalty points on the course or jump-off will rank based on the **times** recorded

A.2.0 No jump-off

A.2.1 One jump-off

9.2 Jump-off

If a jump-off is marked in the judging method, then the jump-off must either be performed immediately after the track or when all riders have completed the course. Jump-off is performed according to the same rules as on the course.

9.2 Penalty points

First disobedience	4 penalty points
Second disobedience	elimination
Dropping the pole	4 penalty points
Disobedience causes pole to fall	4 penalty points
Falling off:	
When the stick slips from between the legs completely	elimination
Trotting/Running the whole course, canter is required	elimination
Starting before the judge's signal	elimination
Max. time exceeded (if stated)	1 penalty/4 seconds
Max. time exceeded in jump-off	1 penalty/1 second
Max. time exceeded twice	elimination

Causes for Elimination in Jumping Events

Second refusal, or passing a jumpable obstacle or extra circle	**elimination**
One or both hands come off the reins a second time	**elimination**
The rider's hand is off the reins throughout the course	**elimination**
Falling when the rider's knee or hand, body part feet to the upper body hits the ground	**elimination**
Falling, when the hobby horse stick is not between the legs completely	**elimination**
Obvious lameness or other injury during the course or at competition	**elimination**
Trotting (running) the entire course (must be in canter unless indicated}	**elimination**
Starting before judge's signal or starting more than 45 seconds after the signal	**elimination**
Exceeding the maximum time twice	**elimination**
Jumping the wrong obstacle or jumping the obstacle from the wrong direction	**elimination**
Taking a dangerous shortcut	**elimination**
Hobby horse breaking, such as the head coming off the stick	**elimination**
Violation of equipment requirements	**elimination**
Failure to follow officials' instructions	**elimination**
Changing a fence without permission or moving obstacles while walking the course	**elimination**
Interfering with another competitor	**elimination**
Participating in an age or level restricted class	**elimination**
Leaving the designated course area in the middle of performance	**elimination**
Continue to ride after stop request (one signal)	**elimination**
Entering the course during another competitor's performance	**elimination**
Failure to arrive at the arena after the second call	**elimination**

9.4 Jumping Equitation - Style over Jumps

Jumping equitation is judged on the the rider's position and balance as the horse approaches at a suitable tempo and steady rhythm along a pre-set obstacle course.
The purpose of this event is to develop the rider, in strength and body control, and show the need for the correct approach to clear each obstacle in a smooth stylish manner over the highest or most difficult obstacle courses.
This test of jumping ability encourages riders to strive for a flawless performance.

The same rules apply to the equitation classes as general jumping rules in Level A, without taking into account the time of the performance.

The judge gives marks (the same as in Dressage) for each obstacle with scores from 0-10. The grading scale is as follows:

Excellent 10
Very good 9
Good 8
Fairly good 7
Satisfactory 6
Sufficient 5
Insufficient 4
Fairly bad 3
Bad 2
Very bad 1
Not shown 0

9.4.1. Evaluation Collective Judges Marks and remarks

9.4.1.2 The rider's expression and body position
The rider's body is relaxed during the performance and flows smoothly over the jumps

9.4.1.3 Riding the course
Correct lines of travel and approaches, tempo, rhythm, balance and canter strides

9.4.1.4 Overall impression
Overall picture of the entire performance of the horse and rider

9.4.1.5 Errors or disobedience
3 points will be deducted for the first disobedience. Another disobedience leads to rejection.

9.4.1.6 Obstacle falls
2 points are deducted for each obstacle fall.

9.4.1.7 Time errors
2 points are deducted for exceeding the maximum time.
In addition to the marks, the judge gives comments to the performance if necessary to assist the rider to improve in the future.

9.5 High jumping (refer also to High Jump Rules document)

In high jumping, one obstacle is used, the width of which is at least 150 cm.

The start and finish line must be clearly marked 1 meter from the start and the finish line 1 meter after the obstacle.
If the competitions' event venue does not have a separate obstacle in use during the warm-up, the riders can practice on the obstacle before the first round from a height determined by the competition management.

The recommended starting height is 80 cm. (Min jump height is determined by the organisers and advised on the program in advance)
The height is measured from the centre of the top pole before the start of each round.
Each height must be announced to the competitors.

The recommended increase every round is 10 cm, up to 120 cm, after which the height is increased every 5 cm. The top two poles can also be used as a cross to get the right height spacing.

In each round, **the rider has two attempts to jump the obstacle cleanly**. Riders must successfully complete all rounds and heights in order to continue in the competition.

Disobedience or falling between the start and finish line is counted as an attempt. In high jumping, time is not taken. After the starting signal, the rider has 1 minute to start the performance.

9.5.1 Evaluation criteria

Dropping an obstacle causes 1 error point. Disobedience incurs 2 error points. Two unsuccessful attempts in the same round will result in the rider being eliminated from the competition.
A clean performance does not result in fault points, i.e. the performance is marked with 0 error points.

9.5.1 Determining the winner.

The rider who completes the highest jump without fault points wins. Error points of lower heights are not considered
If the riders do not exceed the maximum height without fault points, the riders are placed according to the fault points they have received from the same round. If the riders have received the same fault points, these riders are placed based on the faults they received from the previous obstacle height. If the fault points are still the same, the faults of the

previous obstacle height are taken into account, etc. If the fault points are the same for each round, the first place is divided among the riders with the same number of fault points.

The table below illustrates how to determine the rankings:

The riders and error points (ep) they received	Jump round 80 cm		Jump round 90 cm		Jump round 100 cm		Results
Rider A	1. attempt 0 ep	2. attempt →	1. attempt 1 ep	2. attempt 1 ep ×			**3.**
Rider B	1. attempt 1 ep	2. attempt 0 ep →	1. attempt 0 ep	2. attempt →	1. attempt 1 ep	2. attempt	**1.**
Rider C	1. attempt 1 ep	2. attempt 0 ep →	1. attempt 1 ep	2. attempt 0 ep →	1. attempt 1 ep	2. attempt 1 ep	**2.**

9.6 Team show jumping

In team show jumping, teams of 3-5 riders compete in each team. One team can have 3-5 riders and there must be at least two teams in a class.
Judging method A is used in team show jumping.
Riders complete a pre-set obstacle course on their own starting in turn, one horse at a time.
The three riders with the (3) least error points from the performances and after that the riders with the fastest times are taken into account in choosing the best riders in each team.
The times and fault points of the three (3) best riders are added together.

The team with the lowest combined error score and total time of the three best riders is the winner.

The table below illustrates the assigned rankings:

Team 1:	**Team 2:**
Rider A 54.59 seconds / 0 error points **Rider B** 55.35 seconds / 0 ep **Rider C** 53.27 seconds / 4 ep **Rider D** 55.84 seconds / 4 ep	**Rider E** 52.83 seconds / 0 ep **Rider F** 54.75 seconds / 0 ep **Rider G** 55.21 seconds / 0 ep **Rider H** 55.84 seconds / 0 ep **Rider I** 53.54 seconds / 4 ep

Results: 1. **Team 2** 162.79 seconds / 0 ep 2. **Team 1** 163.21 seconds / 4 ep

The rules only apply to show jumping on the course and jump-off.

Equitation classes and other special classes will have their own rules or existing policies and rules will apply