

2013 CSHA Trail Trials Senior Judge Symposium
Hosted by the CSHA State Trail Trials Committee
January 19, 2013 6:00pm – 8:00pm

Facilitator – Senior Judge Rick Wagner

2 Hour meeting – We must stay on agenda

Topics, issues, & discussion points were solicited from all senior judges and ride management in the regions.

1. A quick review of the 2013 Rule Changes from Convention – Diane Medlock
 - *All riders must cover the same course (no shortcuts) and must ride the same horse along the entire course.*
 - *New age categories: 17 & under; 18-39; 40-59; 60 & over.*
 - *New rule 2.19 regarding contestants challenging obstacles judges.*
 - *New rule 13.4.1 adding definition of "rider control" on score sheet to include items needed to complete obstacle.*
 - *New rules 14.1.1 regarding obstacle assistants or helpers not participating in scoring.*

2. Handling of a Gate! North Vs. South? Rule 12.10 Gate, 13.2.1 Rider Awareness, NEW Amended Rule 13.4.1 – Rick Wagner

Wide discrepancy on how senior judges instructed obstacle judges on the gate obstacle. Consensus, in light of the new rule, to instruct all obstacle judges that points should be added for letting go of the gate as that is defined as losing control. Side note to all senior judges to instruct ride managers to inform all riders before each event that riders should not let go of the gate as this is a change in interpretation. Raising hand off gate to reposition on gate as horse is maneuvered forward or backward on gate ok.

3. Tailing, Rule 12.17, The proper way to tail &/or Instruct tailing, when is it a DQ – Diane Medlock

Tailing entails the horse pulling the rider up the hill with the rider to the rear or slightly to the working side as described in the obstacle rules. A limp tail indicates the rider not being pulled up. A horse circling back or turning away from going up the hill is a refusal. A rider to the side of the horse using the tail as a "butt rope" is not acceptable.

4. Review of Hobbling, proper equipment, proper placement of equipment on mount to achieve hobble, Rule 12.12.1 – Sue Edwards

Anything may be used as a hobble i.e. leadrope, rein, t-shirt or commercial hobbles. Judges not to decide if item is safe, that is up to the rider. Obstacle judge to judge the rider has hobbling equipment

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and the ability to put it on (horse stands quietly) and acceptance of the hobble by the horse as criteria. Some movement ok.

5. Ride Manager's responsibilities Vs. Senior Judges responsibilities Rules Section 7, & whose responsibility it is to enforce rules that aren't part of obstacles, New Rule 2.19 who enforces? - Group discussion by Rick Wagner

Consensus agreement that it is the Senior Judge's responsibility to enforce all rules however since we don't see the contestants sometimes it is a reaction to a complaint or seeing someone after the fact using inappropriate equipment. Important to do so in concert with the ride manager.

6. Completing obstacles – "off course" Rule 13.6 Vs. "Disqualifications" Rule 13.7 & 14.4 – Sue Edwards

Did the rider complete the obstacle as directed? Examples used: "Drag the log....." a rider pulls the log, that is a DQ. "Pull to the cone and drag back" a rider reverses the skill, drags to the cone and pulls back, that is off course and riders awareness since they demonstrated the skills asked for. . If multiple elements in the obstacle they must complete all elements or a DQ (ie 2 gates, completed only 1 gate).

7. Soft Saddle Issue, Does it meet Rule 5.1.1? - Cindy Paine & Lin Thirion

Consensus opinion that the example used was a bareback pad not a saddle. Senior Judges may excuse rider or require them to change equipment before competing. Did not discuss what happens if the senior judge sees illegal equipment after the fact.

8. Advanced horse and rider which have buckled at SCE two times and are now reemerging after long-term absence as novice horse and rider? Rule 9.6.1 – Rick Wagner

Rider may compete in novice at regional trail trials but that does not count as a qualifying ride towards SCE. Consensus that 9.6.1 needs to be relocated so it does not just cover SCE participation, will propose rule change next year.

9. Handling halter/lead on dismount/remount, Rules 13.4, 12.2 – Sue Edwards

Consensus opinion after demonstration of rider on a rock and instructions not to include the word "lead", a rider should not be penalized for not using lead rope or having the lead rope disengaged from the saddle unless the horse's movement (pulling rider off the rock) requires the rider to lead.

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10. High Lining discussion Rule 12.12.1, Safety points, do's and don'ts? – Diane Medlock

This skill has not been used in a sanctioned trail trial yet so no examples were available. Consensus was that if used, the high line should already be strung so as not to slow things down. Line should be high enough so as not to interfere with a saddled horse. Movement by horse on a high line ok but not fighting the tie.

11. As Sr judges, a big part of our job is educating our obstacle judges as to how to use the score sheet appropriately. I would like to develop skills in being a better educator. Maybe we can develop an outline that is used/consulted by us to teach/cover the majority of issue/occurrences an obstacle judge might encounter at their obstacle. – Cindi James McElwain

*A sub-committee might be formed to create?

A subcommittee was formed which will evaluate each Senior Judges list of things covered during the obstacle judges meeting to see if some suggested standardized items can be developed. Subcommittee may focus on individual obstacles (drag, pull, gate, lead, etc.) at a later date. Subcommittee: Cindi James-McElwain, Tami Sandberg, Coral Kane, Diane Medlock.

12. Discussion on Skills: haunch turns Rule 12.18.5, side pass Rule 12.18.4, From a ride manager - I would like to see the judges get together on points like "ride your horse to the cone and stop", what does "TO" mean? The nose of the horse, the shoulder, the rider's leg? Same thing with drag or pull to the cone type of directions. Does that mean drag completely past the cone, or what part should be at the cone? – Sue Edwards & Rick Wagner

It was noted that during the judges symposium in 2010 the consensus agreed upon was "in the vicinity" when asked to "ride your horse to the cone". Reaffirmed that consensus.

Consensus on judging a haunch turn or similar skill was we are not arena trail and that a reasonable effort should be rewarded, not to expect a complete pivot.

13. Ground tie Rule 12.12.1, Safety points. Lead rope on the ground? Lead rope on saddle/secured? Hazard of Lead rope on the ground? Hazard if Lead rope still secured? – Rick Wagner

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Be cautious of a loop in the lead rope that is large enough for the horses hoof to fit through being dropped on the ground. This is a safety issue. Consensus was lead rope, neck rope, split rein or roping rein unclipped on one side ok, some slight movement ok but points deducted.

14. Rider Complaints about "Clinics" at obstacles – Rick Wagner

Consensus that we instruct obstacle judges to NOT ALLOW practice/clinic at an obstacle even if no one is waiting. If they are done send them on or if they DQ send them on. Also that socialization between obstacle judge and rider be discouraged as riders watching may construe as coaching or a clinic. Move things along.

15. "Open Discussion" for ride managers and competitors – Rick Wagner

Consensus was that we need to be consistent so that our "consumers" do not get frustrated over inconsistency. We need to keep in mind that our "consumers" are who we need to market too and make sure they enjoy their event/experience.

Discussed potentially using a map or diagram for difficult directions, consensus was to NOT use maps or diagrams.

Discussed importance for Senior Judges to define rule 2.14.1 to obstacle judges or allow "you are now being judged" to directions.