

Minutes

2026 Trail Trials Judges Symposium

January 31, 2026, 8-10 am, Mission De Oro, Santa Nella

Cortez Room 2nd Floor, NE wing

Present: ~~Carri Gunn~~, Maria Hines, Charlotte Johnson, ~~Cindi James McElwain~~, Diane Medlock, Cindi Paine, Victor Pedroza, Deb Waters, Kelly York, Ellen Liebenberg

Meeting will be available via Zoom for those that can't make the trip:

Topic: TT Senior Judges Symposium

Time: Jan 31, 2026 09:00 AM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81879340827?pwd=euIGbu35O7Z3bFoFQ1awGPr0VElkyl.1>

Meeting ID: 818 7934 0827

Passcode: 95370

Riders, ride managers and others interested may sit in on the meeting but discussion is limited to the Senior Judges unless time allows.

Rule Changes: Please bring a 2026 copy with you. Available at www.trailtrials.com Calendar of Events or from CSHA website under information.

Resolution #1 – Added Rule 2.22: Any person or persons that have participated on the pre-ride with the Senior Judge or assisted in design or assembly of obstacles may not compete for points or awards except in a schooling class. **Discussion: or assisted in design or assembly of obstacles**

Resolution #2 – Added Rule 2.9.1: If at any time a rider comes off their horse, whether being bucked off or simply falling off unexpectedly, that will end their obstacle judging and the obstacle judge will assess disqualifying points. **Discussion: After end of obstacle they are ok.**

Resolution #3 – Added Rule 5.1.1: Advanced riders must carry official hobbles while riding in a Trail Trial.

Resolution #4 – Added “with a heel” to rule 5.2.1: Any type clothing suitable for riding is acceptable. Appropriate riding footwear, with a heel, is required. Helmets are recommended. **Discussion: Emphasize at riders meeting, sendout person or first obstacle check, points off at every obstacle.**

Resolution #5 was rejected (limiting buckles at SCE to first and second only)

Resolution #6 Removed 11.1.5: When a horse is asked to “send” in an obstacle a halter and lead rope must be used. (This was missed last year when we added wording to allow mecate with a leading hitch, fiador, etc.)

Resolution #7 Amended rule 11.12.1 to allow high lining for Intermediate: **Advanced only**. Some obstacles may require riders to secure their horse other than tying which may include ground tie or, hobbles. Rider will have the option of removing the saddle and/or bridle before performing this skill(s) and will be judged accordingly. Rider is responsible for providing their own hobbling equipment. Hobbling and ground tying **must** be performed in an area where the horse may demonstrate the skill, but not be in danger of escape (round pen, corral, arena, etc.)” High lining may be performed by Intermediate and Advanced only.

Resolution # 8 Removed the last sentence in Rule 11.12.3: “It is the rider’s discretion to determine what may be used to hobble as long as it is deemed safe e.g. lead rope, rein, t-shirt or commercial hobbles.”

Judges Commission #5 - Added new rule to expedite TT judges adding Obstacle Challenge Judging license. 4.1.3.2 A CSHA Trail Trials Senior judge in good standing wishing to apply for an Obstacle Challenge license may submit a resume outlining their experience in judging the Obstacle Challenge discipline including one Jr judging. Resume to be evaluated at the next scheduled meeting of the Judges Commission. If approved they will be invited to test at the next Quarterly.

Judges Commission Resolution disposition sent as an attachment.

Submitted Issues for Discussion, Consensus or Resolution Development

1. Obstacle was read and required you to say something at end. Points were given if statement not verbatim. **Discussion: Depends on the situation, if it’s close maybe, relate it to counting, if asked to count to five and they only get to three, points off.**
2. When an obstacle is thrown out for a class, what to put. Not NS or 0. TO for thrown out? **Consensus for TO**
3. Ropes gates and “fencing”. Educate members there is “invisible fencing” or make written directions clear so they don’t go around to opposite side and “cheat”. **Discussion: Assess situation to make clear there is a fence. Make sure instructions are clear.**

4. Bridling and unbridling while sitting on a log. **Discussion: If you like this obstacle, don't hire Maria as a senior judge.**

5. Pre riding trail, only day of required. Does this need to change? **Discussion: Don't change rules, do best we can. New ride manager will take extra effort, make sure you have obstacle ideas/directions in advance. Make sure they get Ride Manager Guidelines in advance.**

6. New ride manager. Is there a difference in how we handle ie pre ride, obstacles in advance, etc. **Discussion: Several ideas as above.**

7. Level of authority in CSHA. **Discussion: Difference of opinion, some felt example used was not a senior judge responsibility, no consensus.**

8. Protests and outcomes, notification of protests to the senior judge. **Discussion: Ellen will write a resolution.**

9. Roles of Ride Management and Senior Judge. **Discussion: Some senior judges have issues with specific obstacle judges, can they refuse to use them. Consensus was yes but maybe use them as a reader.**

10. At State we had to dismount on log, then walk on log to ice chest, LOG WAS BIG (TALL)
Then take apple out of ice chest and then cut apple The cutting board was on log, , (so I guess you were supposed to bend over? So I cut in hand, dangerous....and slice my hand on the apple. (I hid from KIP) so I didn't get DQ....but thought it super dangerous, To stand on log, and bend over and cut apple all while holding your horse in front of a ice chest with apples??
Discussion: Those present and at SCE thought it was a good obstacle.

11. Quite often obstacle judges state that other senior judges instructed them to judge on items not in the rules, i.e., on a drag or pull the excess rope must be in the non working hand. The obstacle judge was told that the excess needed to be between the fingers in a certain way. We should not be instructing obstacle judges to judge on things not in the rules. **Discussion: Don't use personal preferences in/on obstacle instructions.**