

2025 Rule Proposals to be moved forward to membership and voted on by NBOD in July 2024.

2025 PROPOSED RULE CHANGES – November 18, 2023 – *Changes are in RED*

#1a: COMBINE DIVISION WEIGHT CLASSES INTO ADULT CLASS (A TEMPORARY ONE-YEAR ACTION)

4.B.1. Heavyweight and Lightweight classes are combined into an Adult class on a temporary basis for the 2025 ride year and will revert to 2022 rules unless extended by the National Board of Directors.

Rationale: Continue current year-to-year approval process. In the 2023 ride season, merging the Heavyweight and Lightweight classes into a single ADULT class yielded the desired results. There were many fewer tiny classes (<3 competitors) and while there were some large classes (>10 competitors), the number wasn't large and was still much less than experienced in NATRC historically. Heavyweights may be at a disadvantage competing with lightweights, but without the merge many classes essentially would have no real competition. By making the change temporary, it is slightly easier to reverse this change if ridership improves.

#1b: COMBINE DIVISION WEIGHT CLASSES INTO ADULT CLASS (MAKE PERMANENT)

4.B.1. Heavyweight and Lightweight classes are combined into an Adult class.

Rationale: Combining weight classes allows competitors to know this is what to expect going forward for some time. In the 2023 ride season, merging the Heavyweight and Lightweight classes into a single ADULT class yielded the desired results. There were many fewer tiny classes (<3 competitors) and while there were some large classes (>10 competitors), the number wasn't large and was still much less than experienced in NATRC historically. Heavyweights may be at a disadvantage competing with lightweights, but without the merger many classes essentially would have no real competition.

#2: VETERINARY JUDGING

SECTION 6 - JUDGING

- A. Procedures: The judges may act together and discuss individual entrants throughout the course of the ride.
 2. Start of Competition
 - a. For the purposes of scoring **maneuvering trail/behavior**, soundness and horsemanship, the horse and rider shall be considered in competition from the moment that the horse is presented to the judges for preliminary examination.
 5. Final Examination: There must be a final examination (including condition, soundness, and **maneuvering trail/behavior**) of all horses by the veterinary and horsemanship judges after the completion of the final day's ride.
- B. Veterinary Judging: Judges shall not discriminate against any animal due to conformation or type as long as the animal performs satisfactorily. Horses are to be evaluated on the following three criteria: condition, soundness and **maneuvering trail/behavior**. Leisure Division does not have to adhere to these scoring categories.
 3. **Maneuvering Trail/Behavior** 15%: The evaluation of **maneuvering trail/behavior** shall include, but not be limited to, the following: disposition, response to rider, kicking, head tossing, prancing, standing for examination and mounting, buddying up, trail wise, etc.
- D. Leisure Division. Horses will be evaluated on **maneuvering trail/behavior**. Riders will be evaluated on equitation and partnership with the horse. Safety may be scored.

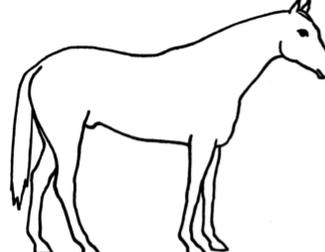
Rationale: Riders have expressed concerns for many years about the heavy scoring in the trail ability/manners section of the horse scorecard. Our veterinarians should focus on what they are expertly and professionally trained to do and that is to judge metabolic conditioning, soundness and behavior. A task force made recommendations for a pilot program which was accepted by the National Board in 2022 to change the name to "Maneuvering Trail / Behavior" and to revise the scoring criteria. The pilot project has been successful. The name of the bottom section of the horse scorecard now needs to be changed in the Rule Book. The scorecard itself will be consistent with the Rule Book.

Horse Scorecard – Front

Condition 40 Points		NORTH AMERICAN TRAIL RIDE CONFERENCE												2016 Revision		10/15/20		CRI		CRI		Condition 40 Points	
		Out	Score	Out	Score	Out	Score	Out	Score	Out	Score	Out	Score	Out	Score	Out	Score	Pulse	Score	Pulse	Score		
Check In P & R	P																	1)		1)			
	R																	2)		2)			
Mucous Membranes	MM	Check In		MM		MM		MM		MM		MM		Final Check									
Capillary Refill Time	CRT	CRT		CRT		CRT		CRT		CRT		CRT		CRT		CRT		CRT		CRT			
Jugular Refill	JR	JR		JR		JR		JR		JR		JR		JR		JR		JR		JR			
Skin Tenting	ST	ST		ST		ST		ST		ST		ST		ST		ST		ST		ST			
Gut Sounds	GS	GS		GS		GS		GS		GS		GS		GS		GS		GS		GS			
Muscle Tone	MT	MT		MT		MT		MT		MT		MT		MT		MT		MT		MT			
Movement, Attitude, Willingness	MAW	MAW		MAW		MAW		MAW		MAW		MAW		MAW		MAW		MAW		MAW			
Soundness 45 Points		Check In																				Final Check	
Lameness	L	L		L		L		L		L		L		L		L		L		L			
Way of Going	WoG	WoG		WoG		WoG		WoG		WoG		WoG		WoG		WoG		WoG		WoG			
Withers Back Loins Girth	WBLG	WBLG		WBLG		WBLG		WBLG		WBLG		WBLG		WBLG		WBLG		WBLG		WBLG			
Sores Plaques Rubs	SPR	SPR		SPR		SPR		SPR		SPR		SPR		SPR		SPR		SPR		SPR			
Legs Interference Wounds Scabbing Pain Tendons Ligaments	Left Front Right Front Left Hind Right Hind	LF RF LH RH		LF RF LH RH		LF RF LH RH		LF RF LH RH		LF RF LH RH		LF RF LH RH		LF RF LH RH		LF RF LH RH		LF RF LH RH		LF RF LH RH		LF RF LH RH	
Maneuvering Trail / Behavior 15 Points		Check In																				Final Check	
Includes, but not limited to: disposition, response to noise, kicking, head tossing, prancing, standing for examination and mount, budding, trail wise, etc.																							
Rider #	Horse Name	Breed		Age		Ride Name		Date		Region		Penalty Point Explanation		SCORE		PLACE							
DO-1 DO-2	TYPE: AA A B1 B2 DIV: Open CP Nov CLASS: Hwt Lwt Jr																						

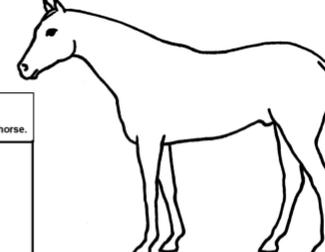
Judges: VERIFY the accuracy of DO-1, DO-2, and appropriate TYPE, DIV and CLASS | Competitors: REVIEW ADDITION AND REPORT ERRORS TO MANAGEMENT SWEEPSTAKES

Horse Scorecard – Back



Scoring Guidelines

2023 MANEUVERING TRAIL/BEHAVIOR PILOT PROGRAM to 2016 Revision



CONDITION 40 Points

GS (Gut Sounds)

Strong to Slight	0	Normal	0
Prolonged	-1 to -2	Cool / Clammy	-2
Silence	-4 or Pull	Cold / Trembling	-4

(Pull horse only if other criteria corroborate)

MT (Muscle Tone)

Normal	0	Normal	0
Slight	-1	Mild	-1
Moderate	-2	Severe	-2
Severe	-3	Severe	-3

CRT (Cap Refill)

0 to 1	Normal	0 to 1	Normal	0 to 1	Normal
2	Mild	2 to 3	Mild	2 to 3	Mild
3	Severe	4 to 6	Severe	4 to 6	Severe
4 & up	Pull	7 & up	Pull	7 & up	Pull

Scoring CRT, JR, & ST

Slight Change (1 degree)	0 to -1
Moderate Change (2 degrees)	-1 to -2
Severe Change (3 degrees)	-2 to -3

MM (Oral Mucous Membranes)

Normal / Moist	0	4	Attentive, good mover, no animation
Injected / Tacky	-1	3	Slow mover, but willing & attentive
Pale / Dry	-2	2	Showing a great deal of fatigue, not very willing to trot out
Dark / Toxic	Pull	1	Refuses to trot out on own

MAW (Movement, Attitude, Willingness)

5	Bold, animated, attentive
4	Attentive, good mover, no animation
3	Slow mover, but willing & attentive
2	Showing a great deal of fatigue, not very willing to trot out
1	Refuses to trot out on own

Pulse: Base = 12 (48 bpm)

Point deduction: -1 per each beat over base

13 -1	1 to 9	0	
14 -2	Holds: Score the first recovery P&R	10, 11, 12, 13	-1
15 -3	For each 10-minute hold, score a -5 in addition to the first recovery P&R score. Pull if not recovered in 2 holds.	14, 15, 16, 17	-2
16 -4		18, 19, 20, 21	-3
17 -5		22, 23, 24, 25	-4
		25+	-5

Hold criteria is at the discretion of the veterinary judge.

CRI: Refer to current protocol and scoring
Colic, Tie-Up, Thumps: Pull - Recommend Immediate Medical Attention

SOUNDNESS 45 Points

Lameness Grades

Questionable Soundness: (Not recommended) -1 to -2

Grade 1: Lameness is difficult to observe and is not consistently apparent regardless of circumstance (e.g. under saddle, circling, inclines, hard surfaces, etc.) -3 to -5

Grade 2: Lameness is difficult to observe at a walk or when trotting in a straight line, but consistently apparent under certain circumstances (e.g. weight carrying, circling, inclines, hard surfaces, etc.) -6 to -10

Grade 3: Lameness is consistently observable at a trot under all circumstances. Do not allow to start the day! A horse observed during ride should be pulled. If observed at final check, Completion Only may be granted at the discretion of the judge with card scored. PULL or COMPLETION ONLY & -11 to -15

Grade 4: Lameness is obvious at a walk. PULL

Grade 5: Lameness produces minimal weight-bearing in motion and/or at rest, or a complete inability to move. PULL

Legs

Heat - each leg	Pain - each leg
Slight -1	-2
Moderate -2	-3
Severe -4 or pull	-5 or pull

Fill

Slight	0 to -1	"Fill" refers to edema of the distal limb that may occur post-exercise.
Moderate	-1 to -2	
Severe	-2 to -3	

WBLG

Withers, Back, Loins, Girth

Discomfort or pain to palpation. Score each side of horse separately; i.e., R loin, L loin, R back, L back etc.

Slight	-1
Moderate	-2
Severe	-3 or pull

SPR

Sores, Plaques, Rubs at girth, cinch, mouth, etc. Interference marks are also scored using this scale.

Slight	-1
Moderate	-2
Severe	-4 or more

WoG

Way of Going - Gait, length of stride, choppy, stumbling, forging, interfering, coordination, winging, etc.

Windpuffs (synovial swelling of joints or tendon sheaths that do not cause heat, pain, or lameness) are not penalized.

MANEUVERING TRAIL/BEHAVIOR 15 Points

Exams, Mounts: (Max. 3 pts/observation)

Excellent (perfect standing)	+ Good
Good standing	-
Balancing step / slight shift or movement	-1/2
Mild Movement (1-2 intentional steps)	-1
Moderate Movement (3-4 steps away, turns)	-1
Profound Movement (multiple steps / walks off)	-2

Maneuvering Trail/Behavior: (Max. 3 pts/observation). Additional points may be taken for safety concerns.

Excellent behavior +

Good behavior Good

Misbehavior:

Slight	-	Anxious, rushing, budding, head tossing, shying, crow hopping, reluctant, resistant, jugging, inattentive, distracted
Mild	-1/2	
Moderate	-1	
Profound	-2	
Dangerous	-5, -10 or DO	

DNC / Pass: -3 or less Did not complete or pass

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR VET JUDGING

- Two on-trail metabolic evaluations per day
- One on-trail soundness evaluation per day
- One evaluation of surface factors per day
- Second and subsequent day soundness check prior to start
- Obstacles: Safe? Appropriate? Affect flow of ride?

Considerations:

- Use CRI as defined, scored & administered by CRI guidelines
- End of day soundness exam at trailer if appropriate

PULL CODES

Strike a diagonal line across the face of the card. Write the words "PULL" and one of the following pull codes:

Lameness: Any degree of lameness
Metabolic: Non-recovery, colic, thumps, tie-up, etc.
Surface Factors: Wounds, sore backs, rubs, etc.
Rider Option: Rider illness, injury, fatigue, weather, etc.
Disqualification: Rule violations, dangerous horse, etc.

#3: MAKE RIDE SWEEPSTAKES AWARD A COMBINATION AWARD AND AWARD POINTS TO HORSE

SECTION 9 - AWARDS

A. Ride Awards

4. The **horse and rider team** with the highest **combined (horse and horsemanship)** score from the Open, Competitive Pleasure and Novice Divisions shall be the recipients of the Open, Competitive Pleasure and Novice Sweepstakes Awards.

C. Point Distribution

4. The Open, Competitive Pleasure and Novice Sweepstakes winners will receive the highest points possible **for their horses' placings** based on the number of starters in the largest class of their respective division.
5. The Sweepstakes winner will receive points to the horse, in addition to other points won for horse, as follows: 3 points for a Type AA ride, 2 points for a Type A, 1 point for a Type B.

Rationale: *Making Sweepstakes a combination award of both horse and horsemanship allows the best team to take high honors. Allowing all extra points to go to the horse follows NATRC tradition. This also enables more points to go to the horse for a National Championship which is a horse award.*

Example: *There is a full class (6) of ADULT competitors and three (3) competitors in the JUNIOR class in a Type-A ride. A JUNIOR who took 1st in horse and 3rd in horsemanship has the highest combined score and wins Sweepstakes. Without the Sweepstakes award, the JUNIOR horse would earn 10 points and horsemanship would earn 6 points. Sweepstakes awards the JUNIOR more points in two ways:*

1. *The ADULT class was larger, and the JUNIOR beat all the ADULT horses. As the top ADULT horse earned 16 points, so did the JUNIOR horse. The JUNIOR horsemanship points are left unchanged at 6.*
2. *Because this is a Type-A ride, the JUNIOR's horse score is increased by an additional 2 points; that is, the final JUNIOR points are 18 (16+2) for horse (1st place) and 6 for horsemanship.*

#4: NATRC'S HIGHEST AWARD

SECTION 9 - AWARDS

B. Annual Awards

1. National Awards

- a. **NATIONAL "JIM MENEFFEE" AWARD (Combined Horse & Horsemanship):** This award will be presented annually to the overall high point horse and rider team in the Open Division.
- b. **PRESIDENT'S CUP:** This award will be presented annually to the overall high point horse in the Open Division.

Rationale: *This changes which award gets top honors and who speaks at national convention. This makes the primary focus of the top award to emphasize the partnership achieved by the horse and rider team. Our highest award would reflect the team that has demonstrated a fit, sound, well behaved equine, which with its rider, can successfully perform all the expected trail tasks better than any other team. The top horse would still receive an important award, but our top award will identify our top horse and top rider team. Historically the winner of the President's Cup is usually, but not always, the winner of the Jim Menefee Memorial Award high combo). This change has our top honor recognizing the best of everything we do in our sport.*

#5: STABLING

SECTION 5 – THE RIDE

B. Stabling

4. Stabling option **not allowed** during competition **as primary containment**.
 - a. Hobbling of any kind
 - b. Portable panels that are not securely anchored to a trailer or a tree
 - c. Electric fencing
 - d. Staking out in any manner
 - e. Stallions in portable panels
5. Stallions: Stallions must be double tied...

Rationale: *NATRC strives to offer the safest means of care to our horses and this rule requires some clarification.*