

## Instructions for Obstacle Observers

The object of the Marathon Obstacles is to drive the prescribed “gates”, identified by red and white lettered markers, in the correct alphabetical sequence (A, B, C, D, etc) and the fastest time. When going through the “gate” the red must be on the right and the white on the left in order to complete it correctly.

- Please remember your job is to OBSERVE and RECORD correctly the sequence that the gates are driven.
  - DO NOT pre-number your obstacle sheets. As the competitor enters the obstacle, you will see the Competitor Number on the carriage. Sometime, the Navigator will call out the number, but this is not required.
  - To drive the obstacle correctly, the entire turnout must pass through each pair of red and white lettered gates in the correct sequence and direction.
  - If the competitor passes part-way through a gate, then stops and backs out of the gate, it is not considered completed.
  - You have been provided with Obstacle Judges’ Sheet. This is where you will record the gate sequence. Please record every gate the competitor goes through, every time they go through it either forward or backwards. If a competitor goes through a gate backwards, you may either circle that gate or you may use parenthesis around that gate to indicate it was driven backwards. See example below.
  - **RED DOTS:** If an error occurs in an obstacle, put a RED DOT on the Obstacle Judges’ Sheet, use your radio to call for a Jury Member and advise them of the error. The jury member will come to your obstacle and discuss it with you. You will also use the individual Obstacle Drawing Sheet (the one with the drawing of the obstacle on it) to make note of what occurred in the obstacle. You will also put a RED DOT on this sheet, and the Jury Member will sign it and then you can send the next time to score runner comes to you.
- 
1. Example of correctly driven obstacle: Competitor enters obstacle through IN gate with red flag on right, white flag on left. Proceeds to Gate A, then B, then C, then D, then leaves the obstacle through the EXIT, again with red flag on right, white flag on left. This is a correctly driven obstacle.
  2. **Once a gate has been driven correctly, it is considered “dead” or “free”. Therefore, the competitor may drive the gate again in any sequence or direction.**
  3. Example of correctly driven obstacle: Competitor enters obstacle through IN gate with red flag on right, white flag on left. Proceeds to Gate A, then B, then A again, then B backwards, then C, then D, then leaves the obstacle through the EXIT, again with the red flag on the right, white on the left. This is a correctly driven obstacle, Gate A was dead the second time, as was Gate B. Therefore, they could be driven again in any direction.
  4. Example of incorrectly driven obstacle: Competitor enters obstacle through the IN gate with red flag on right, white flag on left. Proceeds to Gate A, then B, then C backwards, then D, then leaves obstacle through the EXIT with the red flag on right, white flag on left. This is an incorrectly driven obstacle, because the competitor went through C backwards before he/she went through it forwards (correctly). This is called a wrong course. In this instance, you will record the gate sequence on the Obstacle Judges Sheet, and put a RED DOT next to it. THEN, you will use the Obstacle Drawing Sheet to note what occurred, IE competitor went through A, B, then C backwards, then D, then left the obstacle. You will also put a RED DOT on this sheet. Then you will call for a Jury Member and explain to the Jury Member when they arrive what occurred.

5. Example of incorrectly driven obstacle: Competitor enters obstacle through the IN gate with red flag on right, white flag on left. Proceeds to Gate A, then B, then C backward, then D, then C forwards (correctly), then D, then leaves the obstacle through the EXIT with the red flag on the right, white flag on the left. This is a corrected course, because although the competitor did Gate C wrong the first time, he/she realized it before leaving the obstacle, went back and drove through it forwards (correctly) then continued on the correct course by completing D correctly, and then left the obstacle. Then you will follow the same process for recording the error as explained above.

- Thus, in Example 1 above, the gate sequence would be recorded as follows:

A	B	C	D		
---	---	---	---	--	--

- In Example 3 above, the gate sequence would be recorded as follows:

A	B	A	B	C	D
---	---	---	---	---	---

To indicate that the gate is driven backwards, put a circle around it.

- In Example 3 above, the gate sequence would be recorded as follows:

A	B	C	D		
---	---	---	---	--	--

- In Example 4 above, the gate sequence would be recorded as follows:

A	B	C	D	C	D
---	---	---	---	---	---

These are the most common errors type of errors that you will encounter in an obstacle.

#### Other common errors in obstacles:

- Groom Down** – groom/navigator must have BOTH feet on the ground at the same time. If grooms get down, they are not required to re-mount the carriage until the competitor reaches the 30 meter mark outside of the obstacle.
- Break of Pace** – Training level competitors may only WALK or TROT in obstacles. If you observe a break of pace to the canter, it must be for a 5 second interval. Each 5 second interval is 1 penalty.
- 5 Minute Limit** - There is a 5 minute time limit per competitor in the obstacle. If they are in the obstacle more than 5 minutes, blow 2 blasts of the whistle and ask them to leave the obstacle, assist them if necessary.
- Knockdown** – Some obstacles will have a cup and ball on top of a post. These are referred to a knockdowns. If the ball falls off the post, it is recorded as follows: In the “Comment” section of the Obstacle Judges Sheet, put 1 KD, or 2 KD, or however many balls fall off. Also record it on the Obstacle Drawing Sheet, and put a RED DOT on both.