

## **CHAPTER EN ENDURANCE RIDING DIVISION**

- EN101 Preamble
- EN102 Introduction
- EN103 The Course
- EN104 Marking of the Course
- EN105 Modification to the Course and Rescheduling/Delay  
or Abandonment of Events
- EN106 Method of Starting
- EN107 Time and Record Keeping
- EN108 Competition and Fair Play
- EN109 Schedule of the Competition
- EN110 Dress Code
- EN111 Saddlery and Equipment
- EN112 Minimum Weights
- EN113 Classification
- EN114 Categories of Endurance Rides
- EN115 Eligibility
- EN116 Entries
- EN117 Veterinary Control
- EN118 Veterinary Inspections and Examinations of Horses
- EN119 Best Condition
- EN120 Awards

# CHAPTER EN ENDURANCE RIDING DIVISION

## EN101 Preamble

### 1. GENERAL

- a. The following rules and regulations have been adopted from those of the Federation Equestre Internationale (FEI) and the American Endurance Ride Conference (AERC), the official Federation affiliated endurance discipline organization.
- b. USEF National Endurance Rides may vary in distance from 50 miles to a maximum distance of 300 miles, and are approved through sanctioning by AERC and the Federation. Ride organizers shall be responsible for fees assigned by each organization for sanctioning of said rides. See GR309.8.
- c. Organizers of Endurance Competitions must comply with current Federation and AERC competition licensing requirements and must apply directly to both the Federation and AERC for competition recognition and licensing.
- d. In order to compete in any Endurance Competition at USEF licensed competitions as a rider, a person must be a member of the AERC, or pay a nonmember day fee to the AERC.
- e. All riders and horses must be entered in the concurrent AERC competition, if one is so offered. Riders and horses entered in the concurrent AERC Competition must abide by the AERC Rules.

### 2. RESPONSIBILITY

- a. While it is assumed that most participants are responsible and caring, it is recognized that a highly competitive and demanding sport requires regulation. The primary concern in establishing rules and regulations is to assure that competition occurs within standardized parameters considered fair and reasonably safe for equine and rider. At all times, the safety and well being of the horse is paramount. The Federation services the requirements of the competitor by promulgating and establishing rules and regulations, recording and publishing results of events, and providing awards; but the competitor is totally responsible for self and mount before, during and after an endurance ride. These Rules and Regulations provide minimum conditions and directives for managing and competing in National Rides. Each competitor is ultimately responsible for knowing these rules and complying with them.
- b. The appointment of a steward, veterinarian or official, whether or not provided for in these rules, does not absolve the competitor from such responsibility.

### 3. CIRCUMSTANCES NOT COVERED IN THESE RULES

- a. For any circumstances not specifically covered in these rules, reference should be made to the following publications: (Listed in order of precedence.)
  - FEI Approved Definite Schedule
  - FEI Statutes
  - FEI General Regulations
  - FEI Veterinary Regulations
  - FEI Rules for Endurance Riding
  - FEI Endurance Guidelines and Clarification (if published)
  - AERC Rules
  - AERC Veterinarian's Handbook
  - AERC Ride Manager's Handbook
- b. Every eventuality cannot be provided for in these Rules. As a result, this edition of the Rules is designed for flexibility to adapt to an evolving discipline. In any unforeseen or exceptional circumstances, it is the duty of the Organizing Committee and the Veterinarians to make a decision in a sporting spirit and approaching as nearly as possible to the intention of these Rules the Rules of the Federation and the AERC. Officials shall give the

competing horses' well being the highest priority when making decisions during a competition.

- c. The detailed Rules for the USEF/AERC concurrently sanctioned Endurance Rides must be read in conjunction with the USEF General Regulations.

## **FOR THE WELFARE OF THE HORSE**

The USEF expects all those involved in national level endurance rides to adhere to the USEF Code of Conduct and to acknowledge and accept that at all times the welfare of the horse must be paramount and must never be subordinated to competitive or commercial influences.

At all stages during the preparation and training of competition horses, welfare must take precedence over all other demands. This includes good horse management, training methods, farriery and tack, and transportation.

Horses and competitors must be fit, competent and in good health before they are allowed to compete. This encompasses medication use, surgical procedures that threaten welfare or safety, pregnancy in mares and the misuse of aids.

Events must not prejudice horse welfare. This involves paying careful attention to the competition areas, ground surfaces, weather conditions, stabling, site safety and fitness of the horse for onward travel after the event.

Every effort must be made to ensure that horses receive proper attention after they have competed and that they are treated humanely when their competition careers are over. This covers proper veterinary care, competition injuries, euthanasia and retirement.

### **EN102 Introduction**

1. Endurance Riding is a competition to test the competitor's ability to safely manage the stamina and fitness of the horse over an endurance course in a competition against the track, the distance, the climate, the terrain and the clock. Therefore, the most important responsibility of the Organizing Committee (OC) and the Veterinary Commission and ultimately the rider is to ensure the health and welfare of the horse by diligent application of their skill together with a caring, knowledgeable attitude by the rider. To be successful, the competitor must have knowledge of pace and efficient and safe use of the horse across country. In an Endurance Ride any member of the Genus Equus counts as a "horse."
2. The competition consists of a number of phases.
  - 2.1 No phase may exceed 25 miles (40 km) and should, in principle, be not less than 12 miles (20 km) in length.
  - 2.2 At the end of each phase, there will be a compulsory halt for veterinary inspection. President of the Veterinary Commission (PVC) should be consulted on the distance of each phase and the hold times in each Vet Gate(s).
  - 2.3 In a 100 mile (160 km) ride there must be at least five Vet Gates plus the final inspection. (6 phases)
  - 2.4 Phases may be spread over one or more days.
  - 2.5 Each phase of an Endurance competition must be separated by a compulsory rest period, or hold time.
  - 2.6 Each day of an Endurance competition must be divided into at least two phases, separated by a veterinary inspection and a compulsory rest period, or hold time.
  - 2.7 In every Endurance competition, there shall be at least one hold no shorter than 40 minutes.
  - 2.8 In 3-Star events, total hold time for the event must at least meet a ratio of 1 minute per 1 km (1.6 minutes per mile), e.g.: for a 160 km (100 mile), a minimum hold time total of 160 minutes.
  - 2.9 The maximum scheduled hold time for a single hold in a one-day event shall be 60 minutes, and in 3-Star events there shall be at least one hold of at least 50 minutes.
  - 2.10 Also, hold times in vet gates requiring recovery inspections must be a minimum of 40 minutes, and for such recovery inspections horses should be allowed to present up to 15 minutes prior to their departure time.
3. Whatever the order and rules for starting, each competitor must carry out the whole competition as if he/she were

alone and competing against the clock.

4. An Endurance Ride is a competition against the clock. The combination that finishes the course in the shortest time will be classified as the winner of the competition after successfully completing all final Veterinary Inspections and medication control as well as other protocols in place for the safety of the horse and rider under these Rules, the USEF General Regulations and the AERC Endurance rules. Competitions shall be organized to allow competitors to establish their own pace to compete against the clock, subject to:

4.1 Due to the conditions of the course or other considerations which might adversely affect the opportunity to safely complete a course, the Organizing Committee (OC) may establish a maximum time for a section of the course or a phase of competition and/or the closing times for one or more Vet Gates, in order to ensure competitors are not falling too far behind the actual pace of the ride in order to ensure horse safety.

4.2 Conversely, due to circumstances related to trail safety, the OC may establish sections of a course where controlled gaits of the horse and/or maximum speed apply. However, this will depend on the given circumstances of a specific course as well as time of day and generally should not exceed 3 miles (5 km) at any one time or 5% of the course. Generally, there should not be more than one section under controlled speed and/or set pace per phase of the course, and never in the final phase.

### **EN103 The Course**

1. The Organizing Committee (OC) shall select a technically challenging course across country within the limits provided by the terrain. They should attempt to implement technically challenging factors including, but not limited to: changes in footing, changes in terrain, changes in altitude, changes in direction.
2. The type of terrain and altitude differentials must be clearly indicated in the schedule of the competition.
3. In principle, the course should not contain more than 10% of hard surface roads intended for vehicular use.
4. In general, the more demanding part of the course should be earlier in the ride.
5. The distance of the phases shall be determined by the OC and should be published in the Prize List.
6. Technical challenges within the course may include naturally occurring obstacles such as ditches, steep climbs or descents, or water crossings, but may not be something specially constructed to add additional technical challenge to the course.
7. As far as possible those technical challenges must be left in their natural state. If necessary, they should be reinforced so that they remain in the same state throughout the competition.
8. The finish must be long and wide enough to enable several horses to finish at speed without interfering with each other, and must provide sufficient run-out to allow competitors to safely come to a stop after crossing the finishing line in any potential sprint or gallop. It must be situated as close to the Vet Gate as possible.

### **EN104 Marking of the Course**

1. General Requirement: The marking of the course must be done in such a manner that there is no doubt on how to proceed along the course. The markings can be flags, ribbons, indicators, lime, paint etc.
2. Order of Course: The competitor must complete the entire course in the direction as marked on the map referred to in EN103.8.
3. Errors on Course: Any error of course must be corrected from the place where the error has started under penalty of disqualification. Alternatively, if correcting a course error is not feasible and/or in the best interest of the horse, the Organizer may determine an alternative which will require the competitor to complete an equivalent distance over the same type of terrain, such distance to be made up within a single phase thereby ensuring the competitor still passes through each Vet Gate in the correct order and within the time limits in force. In such cases the competitor will receive a completion classification only. The competitor may not be considered for the Best Condition award

or for contribution to team scoring or individual classification for placing.

4. **Boundary Flags:** Boundary flags or other acceptable indicators must be used to mark defined sections of the course, and to mark the start and finish lines. Such flags or indicators, etc. must be respected wherever they may occur in the course under penalty of disqualification. . Whenever a short cut is possible on the course the Organizing Committee must place a steward to control that the obligatory passage is respected.
5. **Trail Markers:** Direction flags or signs are intended to show the general direction and path to be taken to help competitors to find their way. They must be placed so that competitors can recognize them without loss of time. A distance marker should be placed every at least every 6 miles (10 km).
6. **Plan of the Course:** Each competitor will in advance be given access to a map or plan showing the track of the course and the location of any compulsory halts or obligatory obstacles.
7. **Start and Finish:** The start and finish of each phase must be clearly and distinctly marked with the appropriate signs.
8. **Map:** A map in a scale of at least 1:50,000 should be available to competitors when the course is finalized, preferably at the ride briefing and certainly before the start of the ride.

## **EN105 Modification to the Course and Rescheduling/Delay**

### **or Abandonment of Events**

1. **Course Modification:** After the course has been officially established, no alteration shall be made without the approval of the Organizing Committee.
2. **Rescheduling/Delay of Event:** In exceptional circumstances, an event may be rescheduled or delayed in start by the OC.
  - 2.1 Organizing Committees are encouraged in all event planning to anticipate the possibility of the need to either delay the start of an event by up to 30 hours and/or to reschedule completely.
  - 2.2 **Exceptional Circumstances:** Such Exceptional Circumstances are those which arise on short notice and can be reasonably foreseen to produce unreasonable and unfair risks to riders and/or horses during the conduct of the event.
3. **Abandonment of Event:** When catastrophic occurrences or circumstances arise at or during an event, an event may be abandoned by the OC.
  - 3.1 Organizing Committees are encouraged in all event planning to anticipate the possibility of the need to abandon an event and evacuate the venue.
  - 3.2 **Catastrophic Occurrences or Circumstances** are those which arise on short notice and are determined to dangerously risk rider and/or horse safety, and which cannot be avoided through Course Modification, Rescheduling or Delay of the Event.
4. **Nature of Endurance:** In all cases it should be remembered that this discipline anticipates competition over and in challenging terrain, weather and circumstances as a test of endurance, and so delay, rescheduling and abandonment should be used only as extraordinary remedies.
5. **Notifications:** In any case noted above, the riders should be officially and personally informed as soon as practicable of the decision, certainly before the start or before the phase concerned.

## **EN106 Method of Starting**

1. Horses must not cross the starting line before the signal is given.
2. If a competitor makes a start which is in any way false, under penalty of disqualification the competitor must return and re-cross the start line. However, their starting time will be recorded as if they had started when originally given the

signal.

3. The starting time of any competitor who does not present himself/herself on time for start is recorded as if they had started on time. No competitor may start later than 15 minutes after their starting time under penalty of disqualification.

### **EN107 Time and Record Keeping**

1. As timing plays such an important part in the competition, Organizing Committees must ensure that each competitor's start and finish time for each timed phase is accurately noted and recorded by properly qualified persons using synchronized timekeeping methods.
2. Each competitor will be issued a time card or acceptable and reliable alternative for each event.
3. Organizing Committees must arrange for alternative power sources and back-up record-keeping for timing and all recorded information when electronic systems are the primary methodologies. Time keeping systems with timekeepers are required at the start and finish of each timed phase to record the times of each competitor.
4. Total Time is counted from the instant the signal is given to start until the instant when a competitor crosses the finish line. Riding Time is the Total Time less the sum of the printed compulsory hold periods.
5. The veterinary gate system at compulsory halts must be used.
6. At vet gates, the timing of the competitors must be performed in such a manner to avoid any delay to a competitor's timing caused by the arrival of several horses simultaneously for inspection.

### **EN108 Competition and Fair Play**

1. A rider may lead or follow their horse on course, but must be mounted to pass through the start of any day and the finish line of the day's final phase under penalty of disqualification.
2. A competitor who does not respect any given time limits will be penalized by disqualification.
3. On the course, no other person may lead or ride the horse once the competitor has started under penalty of disqualification.
4. Willful obstruction of an overtaking competitor by a slower competitor may be penalized by disqualification. This is not to prevent competition between riders on course for placing, but is intended to apply in situations where the slower competitor is being lapped or passed due to travelling at a significantly slower pace or because of other problems of refusal or equipment issues.
5. A competitor who fails to qualify for the next phase of competition or is disqualified for any reason must leave the course at once and has no right to continue unless there is no viable alternative and only after being approved by the OC
6. Permitted Assistance During Event or On Course:
  - 6.1. The Event Schedule shall specify where assistance is allowed both within vet gates and on course during an event.
  - 6.2. Competitors must have access to water on course at least every 6 miles (10 km).
  - 6.3. In any case including while on course, for example after a fall or if the competitor is separated from their horse, or in the case of loose or lost horseshoes, a competitor may be assisted.
  - 6.4. For other Permitted Assistance, the Event Schedule shall be determinative for each event.
7. Forbidden Assistance: In general terms the following types of activities are forbidden, subjecting offending riders to the possible receipt of yellow card warning(s) or disqualification, including but not limited to:
  - 7.1. Being followed, preceded or accompanied on any part of the course by any vehicle, bicycle, pedestrian, or a rider not in the competition.
  - 7.2. Providing aid on any part of the course not specifically designated for such aid.

- 7.3. Accepting aid on any part of the course by someone not authorized to provide it.
- 7.4. Being followed, preceded or accompanied on any part of the course by an unauthorized vehicle.
- 7.5. A third party encouraging a horse to trot in a vet gate.
- 7.6. Someone on course encouraging the horse(s) by any means whatsoever.
- 7.7. Cutting wire fences, or altering a part of an enclosure on or within the course so as to clear away or to cut down trees or eliminate challenges or alter technical aspects of the course.
- 7.8. Accepting any intervention by a third party, whether solicited or not, with the object of giving advantage to the competitor or their horse.

### **EN109 Schedule of the Competition**

1. In the schedule which is published by the Organizing Committee of any CEI event, there is no necessity to repeat the Rules. Any exception to the Rules must be specifically listed.
2. It is sufficient to give the category of the competition, the distances, the speeds, total time limit, the possible time limit for each phase, entry fees and deadlines, plus any other items required by the Federation General Rules.

### **EN110 Dress Code**

1. Protective headgear, of a recognized equestrian/endurance standard and adequately secured, is compulsory for all persons at all Endurance events while mounted.
  - 1.1. The protective headgear must be properly fitting protective headgear which passes or surpasses ASTM (American Society for Testing and Materials)/SEI (Safety Equipment Institute) standards for equestrian use and carries the SEI tag. Harness must be secured and properly fitted.
  - 1.2. It is the responsibility of the rider, or the parent or guardian of the junior rider to see to it that the headgear worn complies with appropriate safety standards for protective headgear intended for equestrian use, and is properly fitted and in good condition, and the Federation, Organizing Committee, and Officials or volunteers are not responsible for checking headgear worn for such compliance.
  - 1.3. The Federation makes no representation or warranty, express or implied, about any protective headgear, and cautions riders that death or serious injury may result despite wearing such headgear as all equestrian sports involve inherent dangerous risk and as no helmet can protect against all foreseeable injuries.
2. Safe riding footwear with heels of 12 mm (1/2 inch) or more, or alternatively caged/boxed stirrups/equestrian safety stirrups are required to compete in a CEI event.
3. Dress, that is appropriate and not detrimental to the image of Endurance Riding, is expected and required at all Endurance events.

### **EN111 Saddlery and Equipment**

1. In principle, there is no restriction on saddlery; however Draw (Running) Reins/French Reins are forbidden, but saddlery must be in safe condition and should fit the horse.
2. Specific safety equipment, such as reflective items or otherwise, may be required as indicated in the schedule of the competition.
3. Whips (or the use of any other item as a whip) and Spurs are prohibited.
4. The use of mobile phones and GPS devices are permitted for safety reason. All other forms of communication devices must be approved by the Organizing Committee prior to competition.

### **EN112 Minimum Weights**

1. Riding Weight is the total weight of the rider plus all tack except bridle, reins, and bit. Water bottles must be empty.
2. At all 2\* and 3\* events the minimum Riding Weight is 165 lbs. (75 kg).
3. At all 1\* events the minimum Riding Weight is 154 lbs. (70 kg).

4. There shall be no minimum Riding Weight in Young Rider and/or Junior competitions, unless specified in the Definite Schedule.
5. Weight control must be carried out before the start and, where applicable, after the finish, and may take place at random during the event.
6. The competitor must maintain the minimum Riding Weight at all times during the riding phases under penalty of disqualification. It is the rider's responsibility to weigh in immediately after crossing the finish line if requested to do so.
7. Organizers must provide a reliable weighing machine.

## **EN113 Classification**

1. Individuals: In an endurance competition, the winner is the combination with the shortest elapsed riding time who successfully passes or complies with all protocols and requirements, including but not limited to the final veterinary examination.
2. Teams: The winning team is the team with the best time after adding the final classification of the three highest placed competitors in the team. In the case of a tie, the winning team will be the one whose third competitor has the best time. In the event there are fewer than 3 members of a team who are classified, such teams are not eligible for team placing.
3. Dead Heat: When two or more competitors, who started together, have the same total elapsed riding time, they are classified according to their respective passage across the finish line. Dead Heats (Ties) between Individuals are permitted.
4. Disqualification, Retirement or Failure to Qualify for the next Phase:
  - 4.1. Disqualification: Occurs when a competitor is removed from further competition for a violation of these Rules.
  - 4.2. Failure to Qualify for the Next Phase: Results when a competitor is removed from competition for failure to successfully pass a veterinary examination, to complete the full course as required, or to meet all time requirements for presentation or completion.
  - 4.3. Retirement: Results when a competitor voluntarily withdraws from competition, but may only be considered voluntary and a Retirement when: the competitor has correctly finished all phases to that point; the competitor has completed its most recent phase by passing all required veterinary inspections following that phase, including compulsory recovery inspection or veterinary requested recovery inspection; and has not otherwise provided for removal from competition.
5. All horses removed from competition, voluntarily or otherwise and at any point within the event, must be presented for veterinary inspection within 30 minutes of removal. If removal occurs on course the horse must be inspected by a member of the veterinarian panel as soon as it is returned to the ride base and the horse's veterinary records updated accordingly.

## **EN114 Categories of Endurance Rides**

1. CEI Events
  - 1.1. These events must comply with the requirements of the Federation and the AERC.
  - 1.2. Where there is a team competition, the number of teams which can be accepted is at the discretion of the Organizing Committee. Teams may consist of three to five competitors, not necessarily grouped by nationality or regionality, details to be indicated in the approved schedule.
  - 1.3 CEIs are defined in the USEF and FEI Calendar. National level CEIs are divided into three different star levels as follows:
    - 1.3.1. 3 Star: All rides of 140 km - 160 km (87 - 100 mi.) in one day, or 90-100 km (55 -62) over 2 days, or 70- 80 km (43 - 50) over 3 days or more. Maximum Pulse at Vet Gates: 64 bpm within 20 minutes.
    - 1.3.2. 2 Star: All rides between 120 km and 139 km (74 - 86 mi.) in one day or between 70 km and 89 km (43 - 55



mi.) over two days. Maximum Pulse at Vet Gates: 64 bpm within 20 minutes.

1.3.3. 1 Star: (Low Level Event) All rides between 80 km and 119 km (50 - 74 mi.) in one day. Maximum Pulse at Vet Gates: 64 bpm within 20 minutes.

1.4. At Final Exams, the Maximum Pulse shall be 64 bpm within 30 minutes.

1.5. The pulse criteria may be reduced during the ride if, in the opinion of the President of the Vet Commission and the Organizing Committee, they believe there is a danger to the safety of the horses.

## **EN115 Eligibility**

### 1. Riders:

1.1. Entry is open to all USEF/AERC members age 16 or over (as of January 1st), and those having reached the age of 14 years old and up to the age of 16 if they ride sponsored or have a letter from the American Endurance Ride Conference (AERC) granting them permission to ride unsponsored.

1.2. Ride management may choose not to honor the 'unsponsored young rider' concept and may require all persons less than 16 years of age to have sponsors.

### 2. Horses:

2.1. For 1-Star and 2-Star events, horses must be at least 6 years old to participate.

2.2. For 3-Star events, horses must be at least 7 years old to participate.

2.3. Mares obviously in advanced pregnancies, meaning over 120 days, or with foal at foot cannot be entered in an Endurance event.

2.4. All ages are determined as of January 1st of the year of the event for which eligibility to participate is sought, and must be confirmed either through reliable registrations or written veterinary opinion.

## **EN116 Entries**

1. Entry forms for Horses must include the name/names, breed, sex, age, color, AERC Number, and USEF Horse Recording Number, if applicable.

2. At an Event, a competitor may withdraw any or all his Horses from a Competition, but he may not add a Horse not previously entered for that Competition without the Approval of the OC.

## **EN117 Veterinary Control**

1. The Veterinary Commission has absolute control on all matters concerning horse safety.

2. There must be a minimum of one Treatment Veterinarian present at the event from the pre-vet through awards.

3. The series of inspections and examinations required by these Rules are established in the interest of the health, safety and welfare of the horse in the competition.

4. Should an entered horse die for any reason during the period between the first inspection and the final inspection, the Organizing Committee in consultation with the Veterinarians is obliged to write a report on the circumstances to the USEF and AERC.

5. Only competitors whose horses have passed all the inspections and examinations are entitled to be classified in the final list of results.

6. All the relevant information required at the inspections and examinations must be recorded on an individual veterinary record for each competitor and must, in principle, be available at all subsequent inspections and examinations. Such records may be produced electronically (with back up) or by hard copy. Competitors are entitled to see and copy the record referring to their horses immediately after the inspection or examination. Veterinary cards may be retained by the Organizing Committee.

7. The arrival time into the Vet Gate must be recorded and the horse must be presented to the veterinary commission for inspection within the presentation time (recovery time).

7.1. The presentation time (recovery time) is the length of time (usually 20 to 30 minutes) as defined in the ride

schedule (prize list) or at the ride briefing, which is the maximum allowable time from each horse's arrival time to the time crossing into (the pulse area of) the veterinary inspection area.

8. The compulsory halts are operated by establishing a vet gate with an inspection area that the competitors/grooms enter with the horse when they decide that the horse is ready to pass the veterinary inspection. When handlers have entered the inspection area, they must proceed with the horse directly to the nominated vet at a reasonable pace showing constant forward motion.
9. Once a horse has successfully passed the pulse control, its timed hold, starting from the moment the horse was presented to the Veterinary Commission, continues for the stated period. During the timed hold, all the other aspects of the inspection, including trotting the horse, will be carried out.
10. The Organizing Committee together with the Veterinary Commission can decide to modify the length of timed holds according to extreme weather conditions or other exceptional circumstances. Modifications must be announced to all competitors before the start of the phase concerned.

## **EN118 Veterinary Inspections and Examinations of Horses**

### 1. Horse Inspections:

- 1.1. First Inspection: In principle, it should take place on the day preceding the start of the competition and is performed by the Veterinary Commission. It will be conducted according to the standards for all inspections, as outlined below, to include: Heart Rate, Respiratory System, General Condition, Gait Evaluation, Soreness, Lacerations, Wounds, Range of Motion and other matters and items which from time to time may be added to the Veterinary Card.
- 1.2. Inspections Generally: There are no differences between the Veterinarians responsibilities to evaluate a horse between the First Inspection and the Final Inspection. The same standards apply to judging fitness to continue both metabolically and in terms of gait evaluation.
- 1.3. Inspection Decorum: The inspection areas should remain politely quiet in respect to riders and horses under the stresses of intense competition.
- 1.4. Compulsory Recovery Inspections (Exit Exams): The Veterinary Commission, in consultation with the organizing committee, will establish prior to the pre-ride briefing, at which Vet Gates they will require horses to be presented for a compulsory recovery inspection. This inspection will be at up to 15 minutes before that competitor's scheduled departure time from that Vet Gate.
- 1.5. Requested Recovery Inspections: The examining veterinarian may ask a competitor to present their horse for re-inspection up to 15 minutes prior to its scheduled departure if after passing the horse, the veterinarian retains concerns about the horse's continuing stability. This rule is in place to provide the benefit of the doubt for the opportunity to continue to the horse.
  - 1.5.1. Failure to represent within the hold time for that horse will result in failure to qualify for the next phase.
- 1.6. Vet Gate Inspection (Pulse gate): The first mandatory inspection of the horse at the end of each phase.
- 1.7. Vet Gate Re Inspection (Pulse Re-tries): If during the Vet Gate Inspection the horse's heart rate is higher than the parameters defined for that Inspection, the horse may be represented during the presentation time (recovery time).
- 1.8. Final Inspection: The final inspection which takes place after the horse crosses the finish line of the competition must be within the time allowed as defined.
- 1.9. Heart Rates: Horses with abnormally high pulse rates, or pulse rates higher than the parameters defined upon recommendation from the Veterinary Commission, will not be allowed to continue in the competition and will be deemed to have failed to qualify for the next phase. Any abnormal heart sounds must be recorded.
- 1.10. Respiratory System: Abnormalities in rate or character of the breathing deemed by the Veterinary Commission to be of such a nature as to endanger the safety of the horse will be cause for failure to qualify for the next

phase.

- 1.11. General Condition: Temperatures may be recorded and mucous membrane will be examined. Horses in a generally poor condition or with an abnormally high temperature will fail to qualify for the next phase.
- 1.12. Irregularity of Gaits: At the first or the final inspection or any inspection during the course, a horse with an irregularity of gait; which must be consistently observable at trot, or an equivalent gait; and is observable through evaluation by trotting the horse on a loose lead in hand straight out and back, without prior flexion or deep palpation; which must be observed to cause pain, or threaten the immediate ability of the horse to safely perform athletically; will be removed from competition and will fail to have qualified for the next phase.
  - 1.12.1. In principle the inspection should be run on a flat firm surface.
  - 1.12.2. If, after having once trotted the horse, the observing Veterinarian questions the horse's fitness to continue, the horse will be re-trotted by a three-vet panel, if possible.
  - 1.12.3. Any unusual feature about a horse's gait must be noted on the veterinary card of the horse, whether it is deemed grounds for failure to qualify for the next phase or not.
- 1.13. Soreness, Laceration and Wounds: Any evidence of soreness, lacerations and wounds in the mouth, on the limbs and on the body, including girth and saddle galls, must be recorded. If participation in or continuation of the competition is bound to seriously aggravate any such soreness, lacerations or wounds, the horse will not be allowed to qualify for the next phase.
- 1.14. Shoes and Feet: Horses may be ridden without shoes, but if shod they must be correctly shod and the shoes must be in a suitable condition for the competition. Horses which are shod at the first inspection may cross the finish line without one or more shoes. Equi-boots and pads are allowed. However, in all cases, the ongoing condition of the horse's feet and its adverse effect on the horse's immediate ability to perform athletically or which is observed to be causing the horse pain in proceeding shall be grounds for failure to qualify for the next phase.
2. Individual Veterinary Cards: The individual veterinary cards (vet cards) must be issued before the first inspection and be completed during each inspection.
3. Final Inspection
  - 3.1. To qualify for presentation to the veterinary commission at the final inspection the horse's heart rate must have attained 64 bpm or less within 30 min of crossing the finish line. Horses that do not meet these criteria will not be classified and must still be presented to the veterinary commission for inspection at 30 min after crossing the finish line.
  - 3.2. In any case, pulse must be taken and registered on the vet card within the time limit shown in the schedule.
  - 3.3. The Final Inspection is to determine whether the horse is still fit to continue, to be ridden after a normal rest period for another full phase and it will be performed in the same manner as previous inspections with the same control and criteria as the inspections during the course with the exception that only one opportunity to qualify for presentation is allowed. Each horse shall also be checked against its vet card.
4. Other Inspections: Other inspections may be carried out by any member of the veterinary commission on all or any horses selected at random at any time during the course of the competition.

## **EN119 Best Condition**

1. The OC should organize a Best Condition Award.
2. The purpose of this Award is to find the horse which is in the best condition having completed the event and been classified among the best horses (maximum the first ten horses).
3. Horses which enter the Best Condition Award are deemed to be still in the competition and subject to medication

control until after completion of Best Condition Judging.

4. Competitors are not obliged to enter their horse in the Best Condition Award.
5. The AERC Best Condition form may be used to establish the Best Condition Award.

### **EN120 Awards**

1. An award must be given to all competitors who successfully complete the course.
2. There is no minimum value for awards in Endurance Rides.
3. The Veterinary Commission should exclude any unfit horse from participation in the prize-giving ceremony.