

WSC Gymkhana Rules 2026-2027

NOVICE CLASSES:

1. HELMETS: Leadline and Novice 18 & under are required to wear a helmet at all times while riding. All riders are highly recommended to wear helmets for safety reasons
2. The Leadline class will only compete in the first 2 events and will receive one participant ribbon for the day's events. The leadline class will not start until the end of the first pattern. Leadliners must wear a helmet and be led by a handler 16 yrs or older. The lead should be held no more than 2 ft from halter. Ponying a leadliner is not allowed. In leadline the horse must cross the start/finish line first.
3. The Novice 18 & under classes and the Adult Amateur Novice 19 & over is for NEW and NOVICE RIDERS ONLY. Please do not enter these classes if you do not belong. Trainers cannot ride in the Novice class.
4. Year-end CHAMPIONS and RESERVE CHAMPIONS are not eligible to repeat the same class the following year.
5. NOVICE MEANS: walk, trot and SLOW lope is permitted BUT if the lope is too fast the rider will be disqualified as per the set time of 27 seconds for the cloverleaf barrels and 30 seconds for the poles. An average time will be set for the 2nd pattern at every gymkhana.
6. NOVICE ADULT MEANS: the same as #6 above. The set time for Adult Novice barrels will be 25 seconds and poles 27 seconds. This class is based on the rider's ability not the horse. There are no trainers allowed in this class or any other rider that rides in open barrel racing events such as NBHA, AW etc.
7. Coaches/Trainers are only allowed in the arena during the Novice classes. Exceptions can be made with prior approval from the gymkhana committee.
8. In Novice classes No personal timing or coaching to speed up or slow down during the pattern will be allowed. The rider will be disqualified from the class if we see this. This does not include if a rider is out of control and the trainer/parents/friends, etc. are telling the rider to slow down for safety reasons. Coaching for safety reasons only will be permitted. Committee decision is final.

ALL RIDERS:

9. All riders must wear boots with a heel of ½" or greater, long pants and use a western type saddle.
10. Current rider must enter the arena within 30 seconds of being called or forfeit his/her turn.
11. Time will not be given for major tack changes, please be prepared.
12. Horses are allowed help when entering the arena as long as it is done in a safe manner. No running horses through the entry/exit gates.
13. At the judge's discretion, a rider may be disqualified for horse abuse, unsportsmanlike conduct, lack of control or unsafe situations.
14. A rider may request that a jump be laid on the ground, adding a 5 second penalty to their time.
15. There is a 5 second penalty for knocking over a barrel, pole or jump.
16. A horse cannot be run more than twice (2) and no horse shall be entered more than three (3) times in any division or combination of divisions. There is no limit for leadline.
17. A rider may enter more than one horse for the day but will only collect points, ribbons and high point or reserve on the designated point horse. This horse must be designated at the time of entry and must be ridden in 3 or more events for the day. * Note: all horses other than your point horse will be ridden in the non point horse class.
18. If you enter 2 classes or less you will not receive points or ribbons for the day. You will automatically be entered in the non-point/2nd horse class.
19. One entry form per horse per class is required.
20. No whipping or spurring in front of the cinch and No re-rides for broken equipment or your horse falling.
21. No refunds once entries are paid. Refunds will not be given due to poor weather, dropped patterns, DQ's or lameness.
22. If you move into a different class and intend to carry your points you need to do so by the beginning of the 3rd gymkhana of the year. If you change classes after the 2nd gymkhana you will forfeit your points and start with 0 in the new class. Ties will be broken by a runoff of the affected parties present. Parties not present will default. If one rider wants to run and the other rider does not, the rider that does not will default. If the 2 riders agree, they can also flip a coin to break a tie.
23. No racing or running in the warmup arena or parking lot.
24. Riders must walk their horses at all times when outside the arenas.
25. No horses allowed in the bleacher area or around the announcer's stand or snack bar.
26. The age of the rider as of the 1st gymkhana will determine the age group the rider will ride in for that series.
27. The use of profanity or abusive language by any contestant will result in disqualification from that event and could result in disqualification from the entire gymkhana.

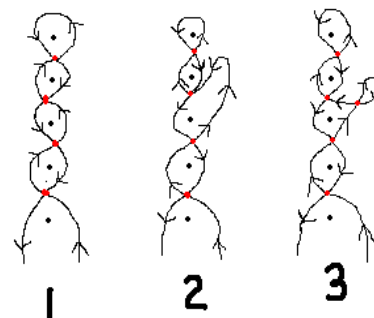
28. Any act of discourtesy or disobedience toward any Gymkhana Committee Member, in and out of the arena including social media, will result in disqualification for the duration of the Gymkhana. It could also result in removal from all WSC events and activities for the remainder of the year or series. Committee decision is final. This includes standard operating procedures.
29. Grievances must be submitted in writing before the end of the gymkhana and may not be discussed at the announcers stand.
30. All Western Saddle Club Arena rules must be followed.
31. If a timer failure occurs, the rider has the option of up to two re-rides. If during the first re-ride an obstacle is knocked over, the rider may take a second re-ride. If the second re-ride is taken, it voids the first re-ride and the rider must take the time given during the second re-ride. When the first re-ride is successful (no obstacles were knocked over) the rider is required to take that time and a second re-ride is not allowed.
32. End of the day high point tie breakers for Novice class will be the lowest total combined points of all 3 events and a no time will count as 99.99.
33. End of the day high point tie breakers for the age classes will be the rider with the fastest time in an event which will be picked at the beginning of the day as our tie breaker event.
34. GYMKHANA POINTS SYSTEM 1st place = 6 pts., 2nd place = 5 pts., 3rd place = 4 pts., 4th place = 3 pts., 5th place = 2 pts., 6th place = 1 pt.
35. A BROKEN PATTERN (being defined as any illegal crossover) constitutes a NO TIME

Explanation of broken pattern:

A broken pattern occurs if the rider fails to complete the designated pattern or if the rider commits any cross over (completed circle) which is not in the specified pattern. Broken patterns often occur during the pole bending patterns when the rider's horse goes past one of the poles in the middle part of the pattern. Therefore, we have used this pattern as an example to explain the right way and the wrong way to correct the pattern, and to illustrate what determines an "illegal crossover". We have included a diagram with these rules. Diagram # 1 illustrates the proper pattern. Diagram # 2 illustrates a rider who has gone past a pole but corrects the pattern in the proper manner and does not commit an illegal crossover. Diagram # 3 illustrates a rider who has gone past a pole and while trying to correct the pattern turns the horse in the wrong direction causing the horse to complete an additional turn that is not specified in the pattern. To explain this further, please note that each designated circle or crossover is highlighted in red on diagram number one, for a total of 4 legal crossovers. In diagram two, although the rider went past the pole, it was corrected in a manner which maintained the "legal" 4 crossovers. In diagram number three the rider turned the horse in a manner which caused the horse to complete an additional turn and you will be able to count "5" crossovers.....hence, a broken pattern.

We use this method so that a broken pattern can be easily defined by everyone. The judge or participants can simply retrace the rider's steps and simply count the number of crossovers that were executed.

This method is no different than if you were running the clover leaf barrel pattern and completed four circles rather than the legal three circles (either by circling a barrel twice, or allowing the horse to complete a turn in front of or past a barrel). Also, please note that in patterns where there are no circles in the pattern, such as the "streaking poles" or "flag race", (which is run in a horse shoe shape), if the rider goes past an obstacle they must again correct the pattern in a manner which does not allow the horse to complete a full circle.....once an illegal turn is completed, a no time will be given. We want to make sure that everyone is able to understand the broken pattern rule, so please feel free to contact a gymkhana committee member if you have any questions.



PLEASE SEE GYMKHANA YEAREND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS ON THE WEBSITE OR PICK UP THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS AT AN EVENT. REQUIREMENTS MUST BE MET TO QUALIFY FOR YEAR-END AWARDS