

HX3: Novice Hunter Trials

A Hunter Trials competition is a test of the pony/horse and rider to negotiate a piece of hunting country well, at a fair hunting pace. ***BRC will be holding one annual championship which will be direct entry. This will be a team only competition with each team made up of two horse and rider combinations taking part in each section. Teams may be made up of seniors and juniors in any combination i.e. all seniors; all juniors; one senior and three juniors or vice versa; or two juniors and two seniors. Three teams from each area will be permitted to enter. A ballot will be carried out if necessary.***

The championships may be run as an optimum time class where the whole course is timed and the combination which finishes the course closest to the optimum time with the least penalties wins. Or, it may be run as a fastest time class, where the winner is the rider with the least number of penalties who has the fastest time for the timed section of the course.

HX3.1: ELIGIBILITY OF PONIES/HORSES AND RIDERS

See Appendix 2.

Horses taking part in the intermediate section of the Novice Hunter Trials may compete in the Novice Horse Trials and the Novice Festival of the Horse Challenge.

A pony or horse may compete from 1 January in the calendar year that it becomes five years old.

Downgrading of winnings: Applications will be considered on an individual basis.

Reserves: Up to two reserves may be used per team. Reserves must be eligible.

Horses practicing over obstacles: Any pony or horse, which competes at the championships, may not have been ridden over ***or through any cross-country fences, elements, obstacles, ditches, steps or water jumps at the same venue as the championship course during eighteen days*** prior to the championships.

HX3.2: SADDLERY, TACK AND DRESS

Full details are at Appendices 4, 5, 6 and 7

HX3.3: THE COURSE

HX3.3.1: Heights

Maximum heights of obstacles will be ***70cm*** for the Novice section and for the Intermediate section will be ***80cm***.

HX3.3.2: Plan

A plan of the course shall be displayed by the time it is open for inspection. It must include:

- The course to be followed and its length
- The numbering of the fences
- Any compulsory turning points
- Fences with alternatives
- Test of skill, e.g. hunting gate to be opened and closed
- The time allowed for any test of skill (if any)
- The beginning and end of the timed section (if any)
- Details of timing e.g. an optimum time class or fastest through the timed section

HX3.3.3: Inspection of the Course

The cross-country course must be completed and ready for inspection by competitors by 9am on the day of the competition. Competitors may view the course on foot only, after

2pm on the day preceding the competition, but the course will not be finalised until 9am on the day of the competition. Unauthorised tampering with fences or direction markers on the course is strictly forbidden and may be penalised by elimination.

HX3.3.4: Marking the Course

See Rule HX1.5.5

HX3.3.5: Modifications to the Course

See Rule HX1.5.6

HX3.3.6: Alternative Fences

See Rule HX1.5.7

HX3.3.7: Fences See Rule H.1.5.8

- Fences should be similar to those likely to be met when hunting
- Fences should be strongly built with a good ground line and should look imposing
- A proportion may be capable of being knocked down. Such fences should be clearly labelled for the benefit of those walking the course. All other fences should be fixed
- All fences must be flagged and numbered
- Any fence at which a pony/horse, in falling, is liable to be trapped or to injure itself, must be secured by cord in such a way that parts of the fence can be quickly dismantled and rebuilt exactly as before

HX3.3.8: Measurement of Fences See Rule HX1.5.9

Drop fences: The depth of a drop is measured from the highest point of the obstacle, including from the top of the brush, to where the average pony/horse would normally land. The maximum depth of the drop must not exceed the following:

Novice 0.8m Intermediate 1m

Water: Where a pony/horse is required to jump a fence in or out of water, or where there is a fence in the water, the depth of the water is measured from firm ground where the pony/horse would normally take off or land. Elsewhere the water should not greatly exceed the maximum depth. In order to discourage a pony/horse from attempting to jump over it, any water crossing ought to be as long as possible and should ideally be not less than 6m from point of entry to point of exit. The maximum depth of the water in a drop in/out of water must not exceed the following:

Novice 0.2m Intermediate 0.3m

Overhead Obstructions: Any roof or other fixed and solid barrier over a fence must be not less than 3.36m above ground level.

HX3.3.9: Dimensions of Fences:

Details of the dimensions of cross country fences are in Appendix 8. Fences do not have to be uniform in terms of height, spread etc throughout their length, or that these dimensions may never be exceeded anywhere between the red and white flags marking the extent of the fence. It is sufficient if all parts of the fence, where the average pony/horse and rider could reasonably and conveniently be expected to jump; do not exceed the maximum permitted dimensions.

HX3.4: TESTS OF SKILL

A Test of Skill should be placed early in the course for fastest time competitions and in sight of the starter (who can then regulate the starting to avoid congestion) and there should be a maximum time allowed for any such test. The test should be either:

- opening and shutting a gate, or
- removing a slip rail, riding through and closing it again, or
- it may include four or five elements in a short timed section

For example, a test may include a knockdown rail followed by a short turn to a gate to be opened and shut, followed by another short turn to a second knockdown fence. It may consist of up to six fences and it should test the handiness of the pony/horse rather than its galloping ability. The start and finish of the test should be clearly marked by flags. It is essential that the test can be controlled and timed.

A test of skills can be very time consuming when there are a large number of competitors.

If a competitor fails to complete the test of skill they should be sent to the next fence and penalised as per Rule HX3.7.1

HX3.5: METHOD OF STARTING See Rule HX1.7
(Order of starting for teams is not relevant).

HX3.6: FAULTS

HX3.6.1 Penalties

These penalties are cumulative:

Knocking down a fence	10 penalties
First disobedience at a jump	20 penalties
Second disobedience at the same jump	40 penalties
Third disobedience at the same jump	Elimination
Fourth disobedience on the whole course	Elimination
Failing to negotiate the Test of Skill correctly	20 Penalties
Missing out Test of Skill	Elimination
Fall of rider at a fence	65 penalties
Second fall of rider on the course	Elimination
Fall of pony/horse at a fence	Elimination
Error of course (omission of jump, boundary flag etc) not rectified, retaking an obstacle already jumped	Elimination
Trapped pony/horse	Elimination
Inappropriate or dangerous riding	Discretionary Elimination
Riding improperly dressed	Discretionary Elimination
Starting early	Discretionary Elimination

Faults will be penalised only if in the opinion of the fence judge, they are connected with the negotiation of one of the numbered obstacles.

HX3.6.2: Definition of Faults See Rule HX1.8.2

HX3.6.3: Double, Treble or Multiple Fences See Rule HX1.8.3

HX3.6.4: Elimination & Retiring See Rule HX1.8.4

HX3.6.5: Medical Suspension See Rule HX1.8.5

HX3.7: COMPETITOR IN DIFFICULTY See Rule HX1.9

HX3.8: OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE See Rule HX1.10

HX3.9: OVERTAKING See Rule HX1.11

HX3.10: TIME KEEPING

Time is counted from the signal to start until when the pony's/horse's nose passes the finish. If running with a timed section only the recorded time starts when the horse or pony's nose passes through the flags marking the start of the timed section and likewise the time finishes when the horse or pony's nose passes through the flags marking the finish of the timed section. Time is counted in whole seconds, fractions being taken to the next second (ie 30.4 seconds is recorded as 31 seconds). Periods when a competitor has been held by a fence judge or an official will be deducted from the total time on the course in order to give the actual time for completing the course.

In the event of a timing error the Official Steward is allowed to make an accurate estimate of a competitor's time utilising official times taken in the timed section.

Periods when a fence judge or an official has held a competitor will be deducted from the total time on the course in order to give the actual time for completing the course.

Competitors are free to choose their pace whilst on the course, but should be aware that any sudden slowing down in the final third of the course may be categorised as inappropriate riding and penalised accordingly.

HX3.11: SCORING

HX3.11.1: Total Score

The total team score is obtained by taking the best three scores in which ever format is chosen.

HX3.11.2 Ties

In the event of a tie ***for any team place, the total marks for each team will be considered*** in the following order:

- lowest total cross country penalties (jumping and test of skill)
- nearest over the optimum time ***if held under optimum time rules; or fastest time through the timed section***
- nearest under the optimum time ***if held under optimum time rules***

HX3.12: AWARDS

See Appendix 10 for championship awards.