

# IHSGB TRACK & TRAIL OBSTACLE DESCRIPTIONS AND TIPS FOR RIDERS

## INTRODUCTION

This document provides a description of the obstacles for Part 2 of the Track and Trail class and some tips for riders on how to ride them.

Please read the Track and Trail Guidance document for a full description of the class, rules and marking criteria.

NB. Only obstacles marked with \* are selected for 2022 and have been described in this version. It is planned to extend this guide over time to include more potential obstacles and further guidance for riders.

## DESCRIPTION

A list of obstacles will be provided prior to the event to allow for training and practice. However, Competition organisers retain the right to vary the obstacles according to local conditions and availability of equipment.

Remember that riding and harmony is also being judged. Completing the obstacle at 'all costs' will not result in higher marks. Extra marks are available for good horsemanship, even if the obstacle is not completed. Please read the Track and Trail Guidance for more details.

The Trail will consist of a minimum of **five elements and a maximum of eight**, and may include the any of following:

### 1. Open and close a gate from horseback (not included for 2022)

### 2. \*Walk backwards between two poles

- Parallel poles (or other markers) are placed on the ground to make a corridor 80cm wide and 4m long.
- Ride forwards between the poles until your horse's front feet exit the 'corridor'. Halt and then ask your horse to walk backwards in a straight line until the front feet exit the corridor.
- Each refusal to enter the corridor, or stepping backwards in the forward phase, is a fault.
- Each touch of pole, or stepping outside of the corridor is a fault.
- Horses should back in a balanced way, using diagonal pairs.

- For the highest marks the horse should back smoothly, without hesitation.
- A correction for slight deviation from a straight line is not a fault, as long as the horse's feet do not touch the pole or step out of the markers.
- Although this manoeuvre is sometimes called a 'rein-back', it is important not to try and pull your horse backwards using the reins. Instead you should teach your horse a clear aid for backing. There are Dressage and Western Video's on line about how to do this. Either approach is acceptable, but be sure not to have your horse 'over-bend' at the poll. The horse should back willingly.

### **3. \*Side-pass along the line of a pole to the markers (3m)**

- A pole will be placed on the ground, with 3 meters marked on the pole.
- Face your horse at one end of the pole, outside the first marker.
- Ask your horse to walk sideways along the line of the pole until you have passed the second marker.
- Keep as close to the line of the pole as possible
- This obstacle is very difficult for horses that have not been taught to side-pass, so practicing this one in advance is important. A more difficult challenge is to have the horse stand with its front feet over the pole. This may be added in future events.

### **4. \*Bending through a line of poles with reins in one hand, in both directions**

- Five poles, or other markers, will be spaced 5 meter apart, with corridor 2 meters either side marked.
- With your reins in *one hand*, ride in a serpentine, passing each pole on alternate sides, without touching a pole or stepping outside the marked corridor.
- Circle the last pole and repeat in the other direction.
- Touching the poles, stepping out of the corridor or correcting with two hands will be a fault for each occasion. Using two hands will count as a fault for each pole passed.
- Successfully riding this obstacle requires that you can steer your horse with your body, and/or neck-rein. It's also useful starting practice for Beer Tölt!

### **5. \*Ride though water in walk.**

- Ride forwards in walk though the water. Exit either via the natural slope or up the step (there are no additional marks for this).
- A refusal - backing up or turning away is a fault for each occasion.

- Use of a whip will be counted as a correction and incur a fault for each use.
- A slight hesitation is not a fault, but for the highest mark the horse should walk willingly through the water without hesitation.

**6. Ride over a footbridge, actual or simulated (not included for 2022)**

**7 \*Ground tying (horse stands in a circle, rider dismounts and goes around the outside)**

- A 4 meter and 5 meter circle will be marked on the ground.
- Dismount (not forgetting to disconnect your air jacket if you wear one!). Position your horse within 4 meter circle and exit the circle to outside the 5 meter marker.
- You can reposition your horse a maximum of three times, but each repositioning of your horse is one fault.
- Walk around the outside of the circle. You are not allowed to reposition your horse once you have started walking. (Fast walking is allowed!)
- If the horse's reins end up on the floor this is a fault (unless they are split-reins and you ground-tie with them). So if your horse might lower its head, consider how you might secure the reins.
- If your horse steps outside the circle the obstacle is failed - but remember you can earn points for how you handle the horse and good horsemanship!

**8. \*Mounting from a block on the right.**

- Lead your horse to the mounting block and position for mounting on the right side.
- Each reposition of your horse is a fault
- Mount your horse safely. You are complete when you are mounted, with your feet in the stirrups, reins in both hands.
- You should aim land lightly in the saddle without unbalancing your horse.
- If your horse moves while you are mounting a fault is incurred for each step taken.

**9. Walk on loose reins - 40 meters. (Not included for 2022)**

**10. Ride through a 'ribbon gate'. (Not included for 2022)**

### **11. \*Ride through an 's-bend' of poles**

- Poles will be laid out on the ground creating a corridor in 80cms wide, in the shape of an 'S'
- Enter one end and walk through the S without touching the sides.
- Each touch of a pole or stepping outside of the corridor is a fault.
- Refusing to enter the corridor or backing up is a fault.
- The highest marks can be scored for walking through smoothly without stopping, but be careful, because if you rush and step out or knock the poles, or are over strong in your corrections you can lose a lot of marks.
- For the best chance of success at this obstacle ensure you can turn your horse 'on the forehand' and 'on the haunches'.

### **12. Ride through a narrow gap**

### **13. \*Move a flag, or other object between two points**

- Details for the 2020 event to be confirmed.
- The ability to steer one handed will assist with this obstacle.

**You can choose to miss any obstacle. You will score zero for that obstacle, but you may wish to do this with an obstacle you know your horse struggles with, or if you are entering an inexperienced or young horse for experience. Just inform the judge and more on.**

**Other similar obstacles may be included, with due regard to safety of design.**