

Equestrian Australia Limited

NATIONAL INTERSCHOOL RULES

SHOW HORSE RULES



EQUESTRIAN
AUSTRALIA



www.equestrian.org.au

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To be read in conjunction with the EA General Regulations and other EA policies and By-Law available on the EA website www.equestrian.org.au

These rules are effective from 1 January 2026. From this date on, all other texts covering the same matter are superseded.

PREAMBLE

The National Interschool Show Horse Rules are to be read in conjunction with the current EA General Regulations, EA National Interschool Rules and other EA policies and by-laws available on the EA web site www.equestrian.org.au

Interschool Show Horse consists of classes for Show Horse, and Show Hunter.

Show Horse and Show Hunter has three (3) phases:

- Ridden Phase (judged on the horse)
- Rider Phase (judged on the rider)
- In-Hand Phase (judged on in-hand presentation)

The rules for Interschool Show Horse have been designed to correspond with the EA National Show Horse Rules wherever possible, however, some variations have been necessary to meet Interschool competition requirements.

Interschool competitions are governed under [Equestrian Australia's Safeguarding Children & Young People Policy](#) and relevant State or Territory Child Safe Legislation. All organising committees, judges, officials, competitors and parents must abide by these policies. All EA events are subject to the EA Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct can be accessed on the EA website [here](#).

Interschool is comprised of a competition and educational pathway for young athletes to participate in equestrian sport during their primary and secondary school years. The State Branches of Equestrian Australia co-ordinate the organisation of Interschool competition and training, with the aim of promoting education and sportsmanship to student athletes, educating athletes in horsemanship and horse management, and creating a competitive sporting environment

Interschool competitions provide a structured, graduated selection of events from local school competitions through to the Australian Interschool Championships. The educational pathway of Interschool forms part of Equestrian Australia's athlete's pathway and provides an introduction to elite competition as well as a "horsemanship" component of equestrian sport. It is designed to provide a strong foundation for our future competitive athletes, coaches and officials while offering non-riding equestrian enthusiasts and those wishing to pursue a career in the horse industry an entry level competition to become involved in.

These rules cannot provide for every eventuality. In any unforeseen or exceptional circumstances, it is the duty of the appropriate official(s) (including but not limited to the Organising Committee, Technical Delegate, Ground Jury or Chief Steward) to make a decision in a sporting spirit and adhere as closely as possible to the intention of these rules.

Notwithstanding anything stipulated in these rules, the Equestrian Australian Interschool Committee (EAIC) has full discretion and complete authority to omit, amend and interpret these rules in their absolute discretion and to give or to withhold any explanation of its decision.

DEFINITIONS

Below is a list of definitions of commonly used terms:

Athlete – the term used for a rider or horse in equestrian sport.

Business Partner – an association of two or more person engaged in a business enterprise in which an economic benefit is derived.

Class – the classification of a competition by athlete and level (i.e. Primary Preliminary Dressage, or Secondary Showjumping 1.00m)

Competition – Refers to each individual class in which Athletes are placed in an order of merit and for which prizes may be awarded.

Event – A complete meeting, "Show", "Championship" or "Games". Events may be organised for one or more than one Discipline.

Family – spouse, brother, sister, child, uncle, aunt, parents, grandparents, grandchildren, nephew, niece or cousin (including in-law, step and de-facto relationships).

Intermediate Competition – is for those enrolled in year/grade 7, 8 and 9 inclusive in the year of competition.

Official - An official is an EA accredited person who oversees a competition, or aspect thereof, by applying the rules of the sport. These may be rules directly relating to judgments on performance, time, scores and/or upholding the principles of fair play and welfare of the horse.

Participant – refers to all those involved in a competition, including athletes, parents, spectators, horse owners, organising committees and officials.

Phase – Refers to separate parts of a Competition at the same Event which are taken together to arrive at the final classification.

Primary Competition – is restricted to riders enrolled up to and including year/grade 6 in the year of competition.

School - riders must be currently enrolled in a registered primary or secondary school or registered with the state or territory's education system in the case of home schooling or distance education. Secondary school riders may compete in their final year of secondary study (Year 12) or up to the end of the year they turn 19, whichever comes first.

Secondary Competition – is for those enrolled in year/grade 7 to 12 inclusive in the year of competition.

Section - the individual elements of a competition that may be included in the calculation of a Championship (i.e. Secondary Elementary 3.2 - Dressage, or Primary 80cm Combined Training)

Senior Competition – is for those enrolled in year/grade 10, 11 and 12 inclusive in the year of competition.

SECTION 1 ~ INTERSCHOOL SHOW HORSE CLASSES AT AUSTRALIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

Classes will be offered in Primary and Secondary Sections.

Secondary may be divided into Intermediate (Year/Grade 7 to 9) and Senior (Year/Grade 10-12).

Class	Phases
Show Horse Primary	Ridden, Rider and Led
Show Hunter Primary	Ridden, Rider and Led
Show Horse Secondary	Ridden, Rider and Led
Show Hunter Secondary	Ridden, Rider and Led

SECTION 2 ~ GENERAL CONDITIONS

Judged under current EA National Show Horse rules located at <https://www.equestrian.org.au>

Riders must complete all phases in the class on the same horse to place in the Championship.

Rider and Horse/Pony combinations may compete in one class only and must choose between Show Horse, and Show Hunter.

The Show Horse competition is a judged exhibition of horses and ponies. A Show Horse competition consist of a series of different performances, called phases wherein a group of horses with similar training or characteristics compete against one another for awards.

Each class will have a timed draw, and all riders will complete an individual workout for each phase.

Safety of all Interschool athletes is paramount. The Organising Committee (O.C.) has the right to determine in which order the phases will be held.

Ribbons will be awarded for In-Hand, Rider and Ridden classes and also Championship (combined score across phases). To place in the Championship riders must complete all the phases. The Championship (total score earned over all phases) will determine the overall ranking of riders with the top four (4) riders in each class to qualify for Australian Championships. States may however adopt an alternative selection process or competition for the purpose of Australian Interschool Championship selection.

2.1 WORKOUTS

The OC will provide set workouts for all phases prior to the event. Examples of workouts (not necessarily the workout selected by the O.C. for an event) have been included in the Appendix of this document as a reference.

2.2 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The O.C. will publish the appointed Judges names in advance of the event. Competitors are obliged to find out the appointed Judges for their class. A Competitor/Exhibitor may not exhibit before a judge if:

- the athlete is a member of the Judge's family.

- the athlete has represented the Judge or competed on a horse owned by the Judge within the previous 6 months.
- the athlete or his/her family are providing billeted accommodation to the Judge at the competition they are judging at.

The athlete has employed, has been employed or has been a business partner of the Judge within the last 12 months. the Judge is a regular trainer/coach of a horse and/or rider taking part in the competition.

- the competitor has given privately arranged tuition to the Judge or trained a horse owned or leased by the Judge within the last 6 months.
- the horse or any horse was owned or leased within the last 12 months by –
 - the Judge;
 - any member of the Judge's family;
 - the Judge's employer, employee or business partner.
- the Judge has held a riding clinic within two (2) week prior to the event and a horse and/or rider who has participated in that clinic will be in the competition.

A Judge shall not visit the horse lines, nor the exhibitors, nor inspect or discuss any horse entered in the show for the duration of the show, except where permitted by the rule below.

No person shall approach a Judge for the duration of the show unless they first obtain permission from the Committee.

2.3 JUDGES

Judges will be selected from the EA Show Horse National Judges List at the Australian Interschool Championship event.

2.4 DRESS, SADDLERY AND EQUIPMENT

Will largely be as per National Show Horse Rules with some exceptions specifically for Interschool Show Horse competitions.

- At State Championships Riders may wear the designated school/state equestrian uniform, school saddle blankets and school coloured browbands in all classes and will not be penalised or disadvantaged.
- At the Australian Interschool Championships Hacking/Riding Jackets are permitted. State saddle blankets or a natural sheepskin half or full numnah and state coloured browbands may be used in all classes and will not be penalised or disadvantaged.
- A number must be displayed at all times in each phase.
- Short boots with heels should be worn in the rider phase unless the rider is over 18 years; in other phases long boots, gaiters/chapettes are permitted.
- Saddle changes are permitted between jumping and ridden phases. Dressage, Show Jumping or All-purpose saddles are allowed. Please check with the OC as scheduling constraints may not allow changes.
- Martingales, bearing, side or running reins of any kind are not permitted.
- Bridle changes will be allowed for In-Hand and Ridden but at OC discretion due to time scheduling constraints.
- Spurs may be worn but must be removed for the In-Hand phase.
-

2.5 ASSISTANCE

Timed Draws will assist tack and gear changes. OC have the right to hold phases in the order that best suits scheduling. At events where OC have tight time scheduling to uphold, Parent/Guardian assistance in relation to gear change between phases will be allowed.

SECTION 3 ~ CATEGORIES OF COMPETITION

Refer to the current EA National Show Horse rules located at <https://www.equestrian.org.au> for full details. OC follow the National Show Horse Rules in most instances for this discipline, however, some variations have been necessary to meet Interschool competition. A description of judging expectations within the categories follows. In Interschool competition, it is not essential that all phases are completed sequentially. OC may determine the order that the phases are run due to scheduling and safety factors.

3.1 IN-HAND CLASS

An In-Hand competition to determine the most correct horse/pony considering the attributes described in National Show Horse rules for the relevant category e.g. Show Horse, or Show Hunter. The ringcraft demonstrated by the handler and the presentation will also be considered.

3.2 RIDER CLASS

A riding competition or rider class is a competition between riders to determine the most correct rider position and application of the aids in an efficient and elegant manner. This class will not be judged as a Smartest on Parade or Turnout class.

3.3 SHOW HORSE CLASS

A Show Horse is a quality, comfortable, well mannered, educated riding horse that is sound. The horse should be excellently presented and give the appearance of being a pleasure to handle watch and ride. It is entirely up to the talent of the rider and those connected with the horse to prepare and show it in the way in which it looks and performs best.

The Show Horse should work with a nicely rounded back, naturally elevated in front and head flexed at the poll. The contact should be light and even.

A Show Horse must give the impression of covering the ground easily and fluently. The horse must be well balanced and work without any obvious effort by the rider or any untoward resistance from the horse. The whole picture should be pleasing to the eye. The Show Horse should go forward with controlled free forward movement, the correct bend and an even rhythm in all paces at a tempo chosen by the rider.

3.4 SHOW HUNTER CLASS

The main criteria for a Show Hunter are that it exhibits correct conformation, 3 clear paces and faultless education. Each individual should therefore be able to 'cover the ground' in a workout which should always include a hand gallop or gallop, depending on the age of the children. Manners are extremely important and small misdemeanours, which may be overlooked on a Show Horse, should be penalised in Show Hunter.

SECTION 4 ~ JUDGING AND SCORING

OC's may determine the order that the phases are run. It is not essential that all phases have to be completed sequentially. A timed draw will be made available for all athletes in each phase. Athletes will present at their assigned time to complete their individual workouts.

For the purpose of scoring, each phase should be referenced and scored as described in this section. At State and Regional level, OC's may determine the maximum number of competitors in each class. At Australian Interschool Championship level, each class will accommodate four (4) riders from each state and at the OC's discretion, a fifth rider from a State may be considered.

4.1 IN-HAND

This phase is designed to test the ringcraft of the athlete and their independence to handle a horse calmly and confidently. It will also assess the horse as per the National Show Horse Rules for the Category of Competition.

The ability to take direction from the judge, to stand the horse up for the judge, to control the horse's line and speed to utilise the area provided and to show the horse effectively will be assessed.

The workout could be a standard triangular pattern (refer example in the appendix). The horse is walked directly away from the Judge, trotted out on a straight line, turned and trotted directly towards and past the Judge before being halted and represented to the Judge.

CRITERIA	MAXIMUM MARKS
Conformation and Soundness	30 marks
Manners and Paces	30 marks
Ringcraft	20 marks
Presentation	20 marks

In the event of equality of marks in this phase the athlete with the highest Confirmation and Soundness score will be placed highest. If there is still equality, Manners and Paces, then Ringcraft, followed by Presentation will be used to break the tie. If a tie still exists, equal placing will be awarded.

4.2 RIDER

The workout to be performed in the Rider phase will be appropriate to the Category of Competition as per the National Show Horse rules. It will be provided prior to the competition and must be ridden from memory, although the athlete may confirm the required elements and the pattern with the Judge.

In this phase, the athlete's correctness of position and application of invisible and effective aids, applied in an elegant manner and how the rider handles disobediences/mistakes will be considered. Ringcraft will also be marked. The athletes should make good use of the space available for the workout. Circles should be of equal size; lines should be straight, and corners ridden correctly. Transitions should be smooth and well prepared. The right

trot diagonals should be used, and canter leads correct (or corrected promptly). This class will not be judged as a Smartest on Parade or Turnout class.

The rider should be outfitted correctly (as per Interschool Rules) with appropriate clean and well fitted clothing. Hair should be contained neatly under the helmet and boots should be well polished.

CRITERIA	MAXIMUM MARKS
Riding Positions	50 marks
Rider Effectiveness	10 marks
Ringcraft	20 marks
Presentation	20 marks

In the event of equality of marks in this phase, the athlete with the highest combined Riding Positions/Rider Effectiveness score will be placed highest. If there is still equality, Ringcraft followed by Presentation will be used to break the tie. If a tie still exists, equal placings will be awarded.

4.3 RIDDEN ~ SHOW HORSE OR SHOW HUNTER

This workout to be performed in the Ridden phase will be appropriate to the Category of Competition as per the National Show Horse rules e.g. Show Horse or Show Hunter. It will be provided prior to the competition and must be ridden from memory, although the athlete may confirm the required elements and the pattern with the Judge/s.

Confirmation and Soundness, Manners and Paces will be marked according to National Show Horse/Show Hunter rules. Presentation marks will require the horse/pony to be clean, well groomed and trimmed, with a neatly plaited mane and forelock and a neatly plaited or pulled tail (false tails are acceptable). Hooves may be blackened, may be oiled or a clear, waterbased hoof polish used. The saddle and bridle must fit well and appear clean and well cared for.

CRITERIA	MAXIMUM MARKS
Manners and Paces	50 marks
Conformation and Soundness	20 marks
Ringcraft	20 marks
Presentation	20 marks

In the event of equality of marks in this phase, the athlete with the highest Manners and Paces score will be placed highest. If there is still equality, Confirmation and Soundness, then Ringcraft, followed by Presentation will be used to break the tie. If a tie still exists, equal placing will be awarded.

4.5 AUSTRALIAN CHAMPIONSHIP SCORING

The total marks for each athlete in each phase will be converted to points based on the number of riders per class. For example, if there are 28 riders, the rider with the highest marks will be allocated 28 points, the second highest mark will receive 27 points working sequentially in descending order until all are allocated points. The scores for each phase are then added together to determine the overall Championship placings.

Riders eliminated in one phase are not eligible for Championship placing for that class.

Phase 1 Scoring Example – 5 riders in the Class

Rider Number	Marks Confirmation & Soundness Max 30	Marks Manners & Paces Max 30	Ringcraft Max 20	Presentation Max 20	Total Marks Phase 1	TOTAL POINTS Phase 1
106	24	25	17	16	82	5
503	17	22	15	16	70	4
89	22	20	11	16	69	3
509	18	25	12	12	67	2
9	17	24	11	12	65	1

Refer to individual phases for resolution of equal marks

Australian Championship Scoring Example – 5 Riders in the Class

Rider Number	Marks Phase 1	Points Phase 1	Marks Phase 2	Points Phase 2	Marks Phase 3	Marks Phase 3	Total Points	Championship Placing
106	82	5	79	3	67	1	9	4 th
503	70	4	83	5	69	2	11	2 nd
89	69	3	83	5	73	4	12	1 st
509	67	2	76	2	79	5	9	3 rd
9	65	1	75	1	70	3	5	5 th

Note: Categories in the table above reference the following:

- Phase 1 relates to the In-Hand class
- Phase 2 relates to the Rider class
- Phase 3 relates to the Ridden class

In the event of equality of points in the Championship, the Rider Class will be used to split ties. If there is still equality, the Ridden class and then the In-Hand class will be used in that order.

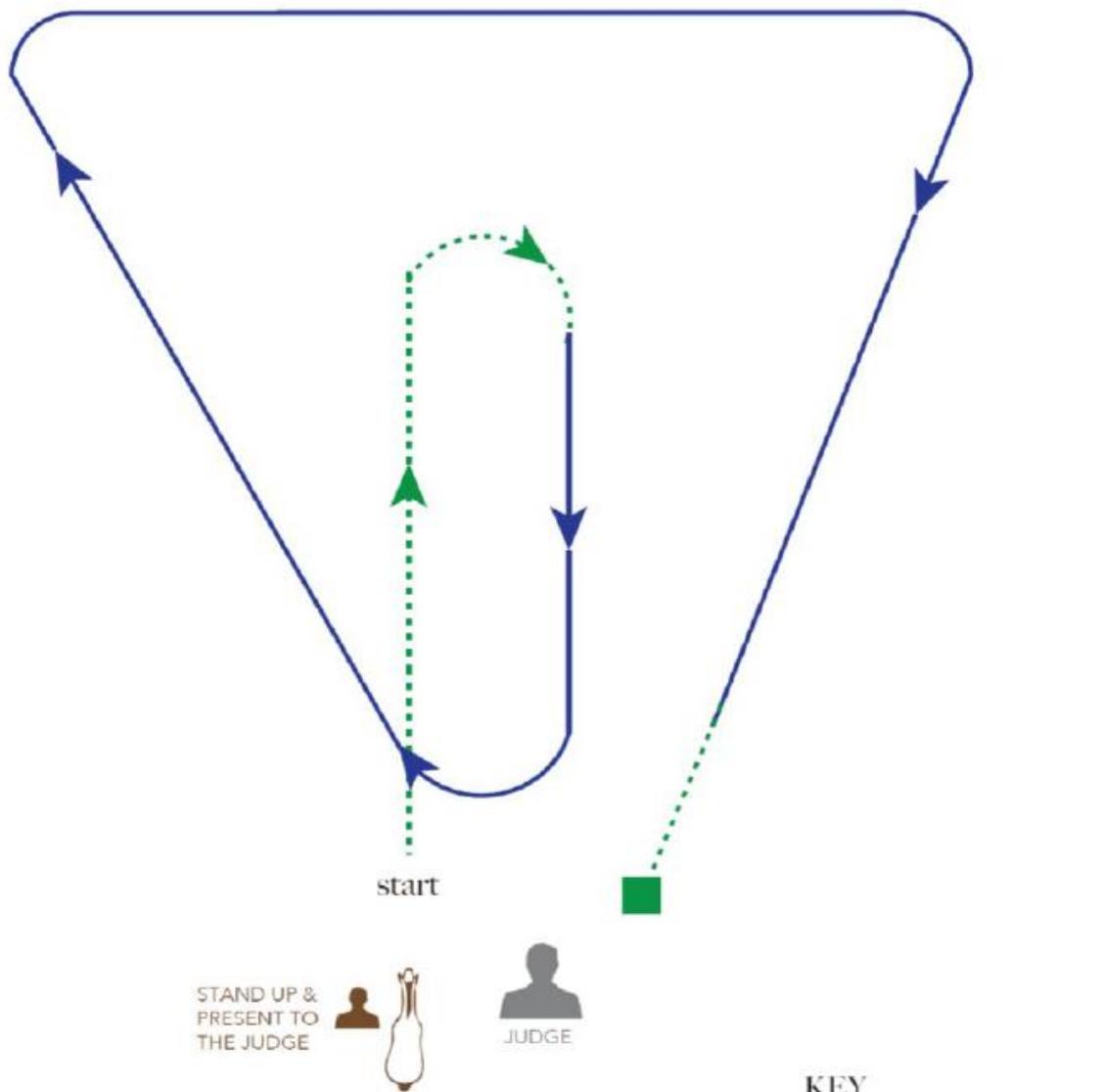
There can be NO equal placings in the Championship result.

ANNEXURES

ANNEX 1 – IN-HAND PHASE

Examples of a workout for the In-Hand phase of Interschool Show Horse. O.C.'s are under no obligation to use this exact example but will provide the required workout prior to the event.

Example 1.



1. Stand and present to the judge
2. Walk out straight towards the end of the arena and turn straight back.
3. Trot straight back towards the judge.
4. Veer past judge
5. Strong trot along top
6. Trot back towards judge
7. Walk and then halt in front of the judge.

ANNEX 2 – RIDER PHASE

Example of a workout for the Rider phase of Interschool Show Horse. O.C.'s are under no obligation to use this exact example but will provide the required workout prior to the event.

Primary Rider class example

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Stand and present to the judge | 7. Transition to rising trot at corner |
| 2. Proceed in rising trot | 8. Transition to walk |
| 3. Sit trot across the long side | 9. Halt in front of the judge |
| 4. Rise trot half circle left | 10. Leave arena at walk |
| 5. Pick up canter through centre, circle right | |
| 6. Simple change through centre, canter half circle left | |



Stand and present to the judge



Simple Change



Halt



Walk



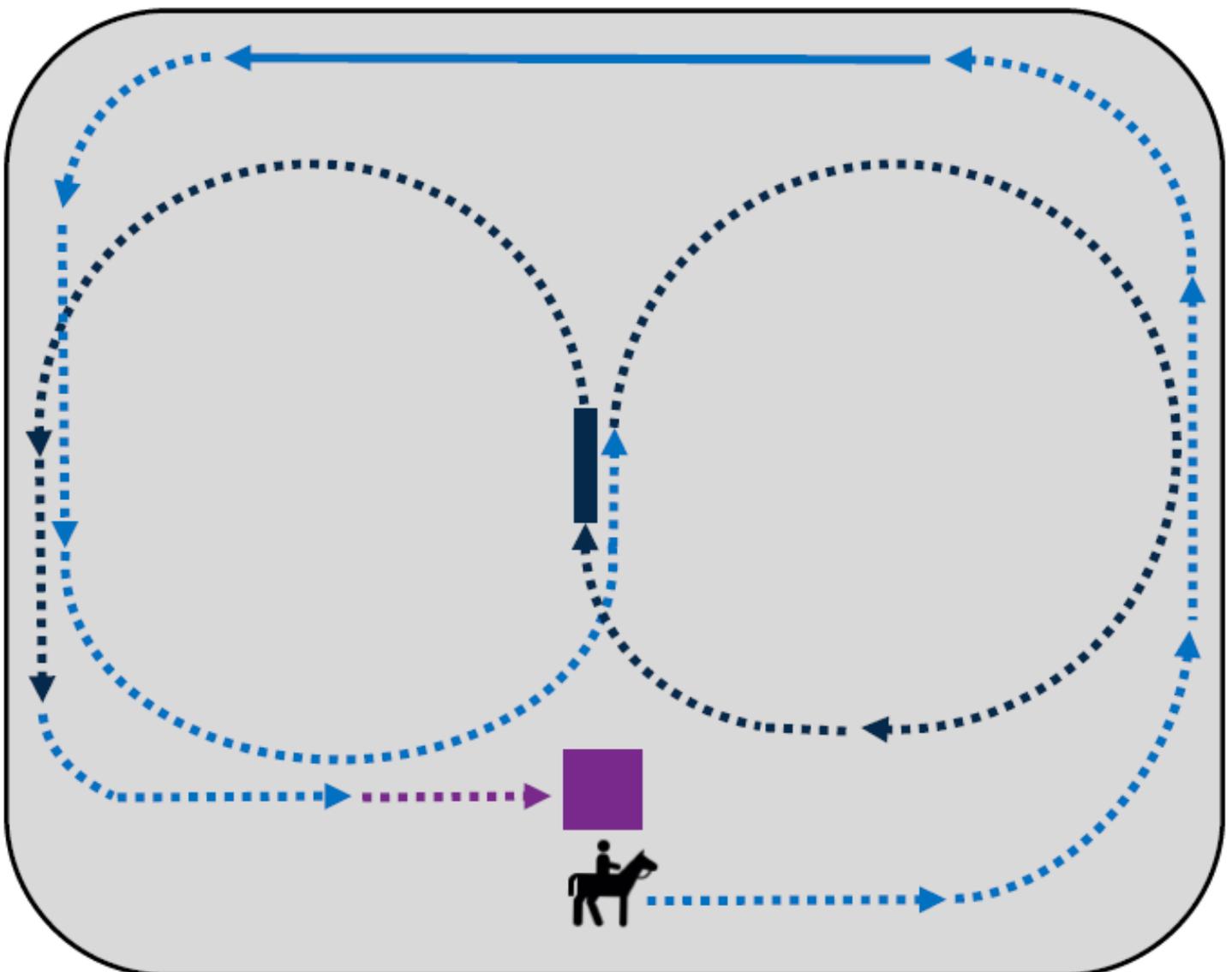
Trot (Rising)



Trot (Sitting)

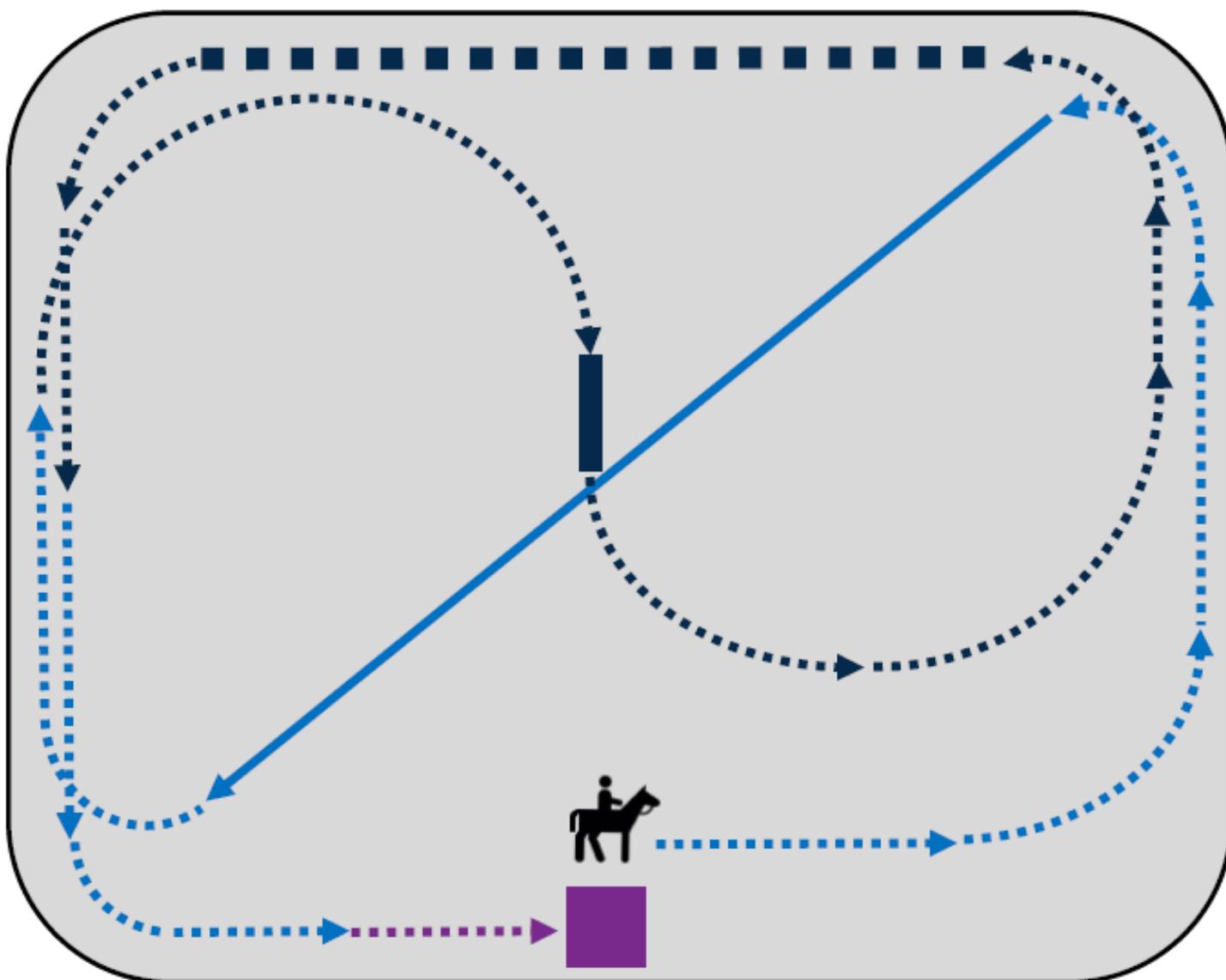


Canter



Secondary (Intermediate & Senior) Rider class example.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Stand and present to the judge | 7. Lengthen canter across the long side |
| 2. Proceed in rising trot, track left | 8. Return to canter at corner |
| 3. Sit trot across the diagonal | 9. Transition to rising trot halfway across short side |
| 4. Rise trot right at corner | 10. Transition to walk |
| 5. Pick up canter in corner, canter half circle right | 11. Halt in front of the judge |
| 6. Simple change through the centre, canter half circle left | 12. Leave arena at walk |



ANNEX 3 – SHOW HORSE RIDDEN PHASE

Example of a workout for the Show Horse Ridden phase of Interschool Show Horse. O.C.'s are under no obligation to use this exact example but will provide the required workout prior to the event.

Primary Show Horse Ridden class example.

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Stand and present to the judge | 10. Return to canter at corner |
| 2. Proceed in walk | 11. Transition to trot before corner |
| 3. Transition to trot | 12. Transition to walk |
| 4. Lengthen trot across long side | 13. Halt in front of Judge |
| 5. Pick up canter in the corner | 14. Leave arena at walk |
| 6. Canter half circle to the right | |
| 7. Simple change through the centre, canter half circle left | |
| 8. Canter across long side | |
| 9. Lengthen canter across long side | |



Stand and present to the judge



Simple Change



Halt



Walk



Trot



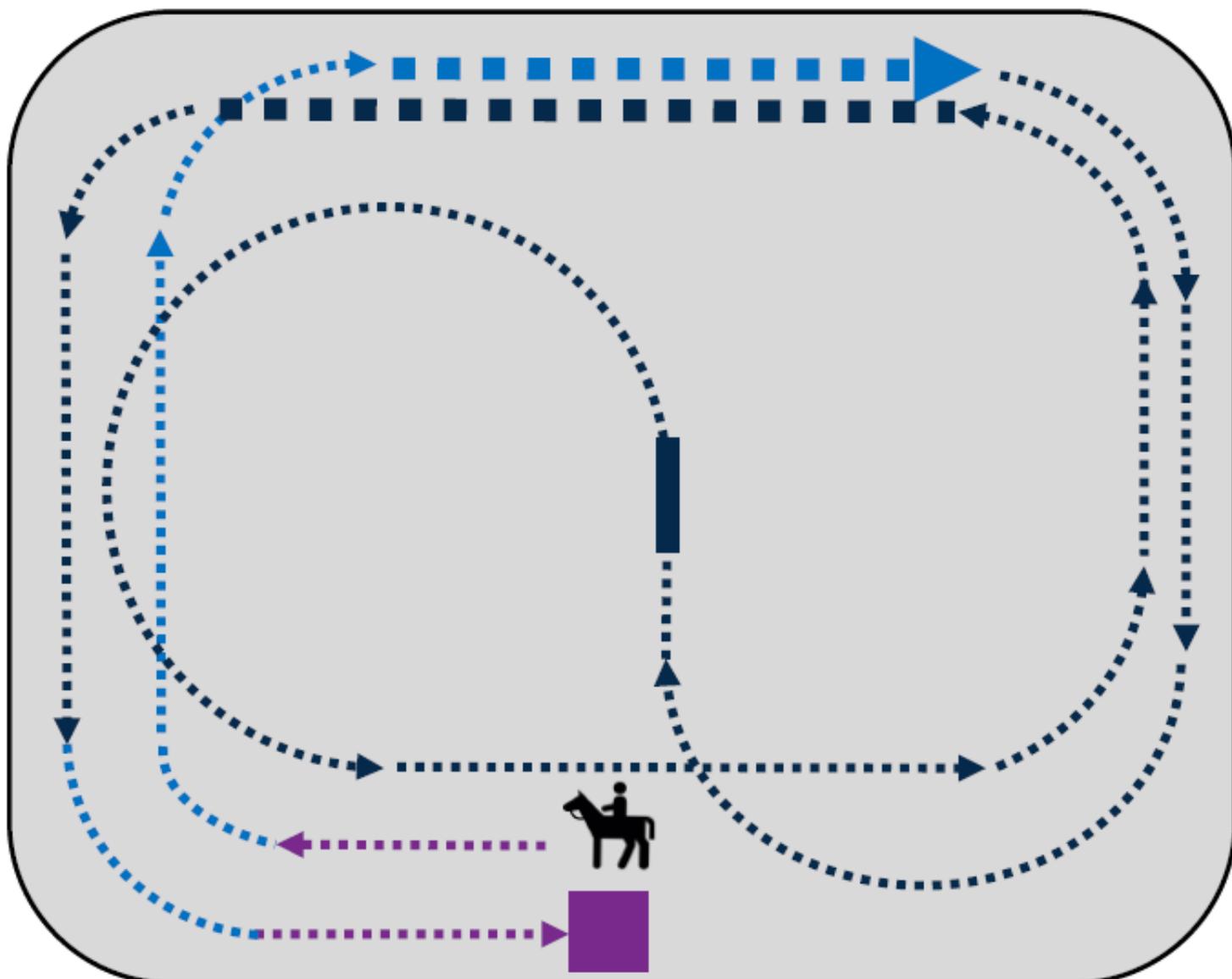
Lengthened Trot



Canter



Lengthened Canter



Secondary (Intermediate & Senior) Show Horse Ridden class example

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Stand and present to the judge | 8. Simple change through centre, canter half circle right |
| 2. Proceed in walk | 9. Lengthen canter across diagonal |
| 3. Before corner transition to trot | 10. Transition to trot at corner |
| 4. Trot half circle right | 11. Transition to walk |
| 5. Change rein through centre, trot half circle left | 12. Halt in front of the judge |

ANNEX 4 – SHOW HUNTER RIDDEN PHASE

Example of a workout for the Show Hunter Ridden phase of Interschool Show Horse. O.C.'s are under no obligation to use this exact example but will provide the required workout prior to the event.

Primary Show Hunter Ridden class example.

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Stand and present to the judge | 9. Canter across the long side |
| 2. Proceed in walk | 10. Pick up hand gallop in the corner |
| 3. Trot half circle to the right | 11. Hand gallop across long side |
| 4. Trot half circle to the left | 12. Return to canter at corner |
| 5. Trot across the long side | 13. Transition to trot before corner |
| 6. Pick up canter in the corner | 14. Transition to walk |
| 7. Canter half circle to the left | 15. Halt in front of judge |
| 8. Simple change through the centre, canter half circle right | 16. Leave arena in walk |



Stand and present to the judge



Simple Change



Halt



Walk



Trot (Rising)



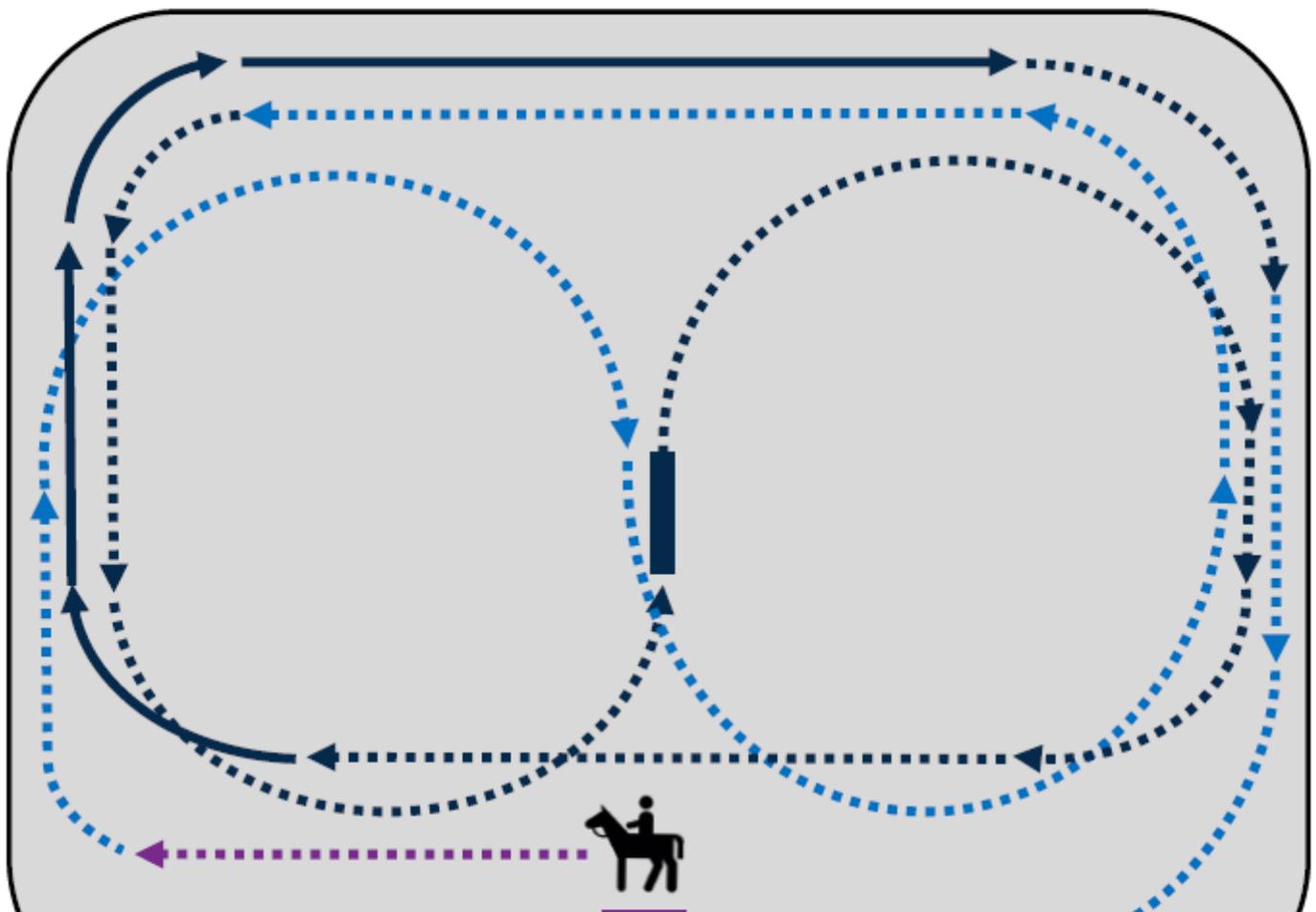
Trot (Sitting)



Canter



Hand Gallop



- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Stand and present to the judge | 9. Hand gallop across the arena |
| 2. Proceed in walk | 10. Return to canter at corner |
| 3. Transition to trot. circle to the right | 11. Transition to trot before corner |
| 1. Stand and present to the judge | 10. Pick up canter half circle left |
| 2. Proceed in walk | 11. Commence jumping efforts 1-8 |
| 3. Before corner transition to trot | 12. Canter half circle left |
| 4. Change rein through centre | 13. Return to trot, track left |
| 5. Pick up canter right | 14. Transition to walk |
| 6. Hand gallop across long side, track right | 15. Halt in front of the judge |
| 7. Return to canter before corner, half circle right | 16. Leave arena at walk |
| 8. Simple change through the centre, half circle left | |
| 9. Transition to trot at corner, half circle left | |

Walk

Separate score sheet for each Phase and Championship sheet that combines the phase points.

Rider Phase example.

STATE NAME INTERSCHOOL SHOW HORSE CHAMPIONSHIP						
RIDER PHASE CLASS NAME			JUDGES NAME JUDGES SIGNATURE			
Rider Number	Riding Position (50)	Rider Effectiveness (10)	Ringcraft (20)	Presentation (20)	Total	Points

Show Horse/ Show Hunter Ridden Phase example.

STATE NAME INTERSCHOOL SHOW HORSE CHAMPIONSHIP						
RIDDEN PHASE SHOW HORSE/SHOW HUNTER CLASS NAME			JUDGES NAME JUDGES SIGNATURE			
Rider Number	Manners and Paces (50)	Confirmation and Soundness (20)	Ringcraft (20)	Presentation (20)	Total	Points

In-Hand Phase example.

STATE NAME INTERSCHOOL SHOW HORSE CHAMPIONSHIP						
IN-HAND PHASE CLASS NAME			JUDGES NAME JUDGES SIGNATURE			
Rider Number	Confirmation and Soundness (50)	Manners and Paces (30)	Ringcraft (20)	Presentation (20)	Total	Points

Show Horse Championship example.

This may be scored via an online system.

STATE NAME INTERSCHOOL SHOW HORSE CHAMPIONSHIP							
CHAMPIONSHIP NAME							
Rider #	Rider Name	Horses Name	Ridden Phase Points	Rider Phase Points	In-Hand Phase Points	TOTAL POINTS	CHAMPIONSHIP PLACE
						0	
						0	
						0	
						0	
						0	