

Level 2 Equestrian

The Level 2 Wellness training is designed for Special Olympics Minnesota coaches who would like to become a Level 2 Equestrian coach. This training counts as Level 2 certification and/or recertification for three years from the date this training is completed.

This training will cover Special Olympics Minnesota's equestrian events, rules, competition details and training information.

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Coaching Special Olympics Athletes

Coaching Special Olympics Athletes prepares Special Olympics coaches to use their sport-specific knowledge in coaching athletes with intellectual disabilities. This course meets the Special Olympics standards and competencies for coach certification. For veteran Special Olympics coaches, this course serves as a reminder of the essentials sometimes forgotten after years of coaching. For new Special Olympics coaches, this course will help prepare you for your first role in coaching Special Olympics athletes.

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Coaching Special Olympics Athletes

*The better the coach ...
the better the experiences ...
the better the athlete!*



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Course Overview

This course will cover specific topics related to:

1 - The Athlete

3 - Preparing for
& Coaching During
Competition



2 - Teaching &
Training

4 - Managing the Program



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Unit 1 - The Athlete

Important Considerations concerning Special Olympics Athletes

Psychological Issues
(*Learning*)

Medical
Issues



Social
Issues

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Unit 1 - Psychological Considerations

Motivation – helping athletes maintain interest

- May have shorter attention span; harder to keep independently “on task”.
- May be motivated more by short-term rather than long-term goals.
- May learn better with more frequent positive reinforcement.

Perception – helping athletes understand the sport in which they are participating

- May have impairments in sight or hearing.
- May have difficulty focusing attention on the appropriate object or task.



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Unit 1 - Psychological Considerations

Comprehension – helping athletes remember and perform the skill they have learned (*Understanding*)

- May find it difficult to understand purely verbal explanations of new skills. Often find it easier to learn through visual demonstrations and physical prompts.
- May have difficulty in understanding complex, multi-part actions or explanations.
- Often take a longer time between learning one piece of information and the next (learning plateau)
- Less able to generalize skills learned in one situation to a different situation.
- Use of written instructions may be more helpful than verbal, depending on the situation

Memory/Flexibility

- May need frequent repetition and reminders in order to remember a concept or skill



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Unit 1 - Psychological Challenges

Each psychological item has its challenge and action:

Psychological Item	Challenge	Action
Perception	Easily distracted by noise	Control surroundings
Motivation	Easily discouraged, or having a feeling of failure	Focus on positive, appropriate reinforcement, catch the athlete doing well
Memory/Flexibility	Difficulty applying skills in different environments	Practice skills in different settings or different orders
Comprehension	Difficulty learning through verbal explanation or lengthy instructions	Add demonstrations, hands-on walkthroughs of skills, keeping instructions clear and concise

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Unit 1 - Medical Considerations

Down Syndrome

- Approximately 10% of individuals with Down Syndrome have a condition called Atlanto-axial instability, which is a mal-alignment of the cervical vertebrae C-1 and C-2 in the neck. This condition may cause possible injury if they participate in activities that hyper-extend or radically flex the neck or upper spine.
- Prohibited sports – equestrian, gymnastics, diving, pentathlon, butterfly and dive starts in swimming, high jump, alpine/snowboarding, squat lift and soccer.

Medications

- Understand that athletes may be taking medications that have physical side effects
- Consult with head coach / HOD if concerns arise



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Unit 1 - Medical Considerations



Seizures

- The number of Special Olympics athletes with seizure disorders is higher than traditional athletes
- Assist athlete to safe space around them, protect their head and neck, lay on side

Physical Disabilities

- Some athletes also have physical disabilities which may affect the sports they can participate in or the methods of teaching a coach must use. Special Olympics has events for individuals who use wheelchairs, walkers or other assistance.
- Muscle strength may be needed for particular sports and some athletes may not have the strength for those sports. This might be due to lack of use or a permanent disability.

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Unit 1 - Medical Considerations

Autism

- Approximately 20% of athletes have an autism diagnosis
- ~50% of people with autism are non-verbal



Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

- These athletes consistently function better on performance tasks compared with verbal tasks. The more concrete the task, the better the performance.
- Tend to have poor verbal comprehension skills, despite being comfortable and chatty around people. These athletes will also tend to have attention and memory deficits and often display poor judgment in distinguishing right from wrong.

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Unit 1 – Medical Consideration for each Diagnosis

Diagnosis	See the challenge that correlates with the appropriate diagnosis.
Down Syndrome	Family should ensure the athlete is screened for Atlanto-axial instability (see medical if necessary)
Seizure Disorder	Be prepared to protect and observe the athlete should a seizure occur and minimize adverse affects
Autism spectrum disorder	Understand that athletes will engage in self-stimulatory behavior (hand-flapping, jumping, etc.), and that it is not necessarily a problem
Attention deficit/hyperactivity	Shorten drills and provide one-to-one assistance when needed
Fetal alcohol syndrome	Demonstrate concrete performance tasks

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Unit 1 - Social Considerations

Social Skills

- May lack basic social/interactive/adaptive skills
- May lack language interpretation

Recreation at Home

- May lack physical activity
- May lack encouragement/motivation

Economic Status

- May lack financial means
- May not have access to independent transportation



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Unit 1 - Social considerations

All the following social consideration(s) may impact an athlete's participation in Special Olympics:

- Inappropriate responses to social situations
- Lack of at-home support
- Extreme lack of endurance
- Lack of access to transportation

Our challenge as coaches is to develop a full understanding of our athletes and the strengths and weaknesses they bring with them to a Special Olympics program. By doing so we can begin to develop a training and competition program that they will benefit from and enjoy.

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Unit 2 – Teaching & Training the Athlete



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Unit 2 - Teaching & Training the Athlete

There are many ways to organize a training session for Special Olympics athletes. Because of some of the things previously identified concerning comprehension and memory, there is considerable value in developing a consistent training routine that provides familiarity, stability, and comfort.

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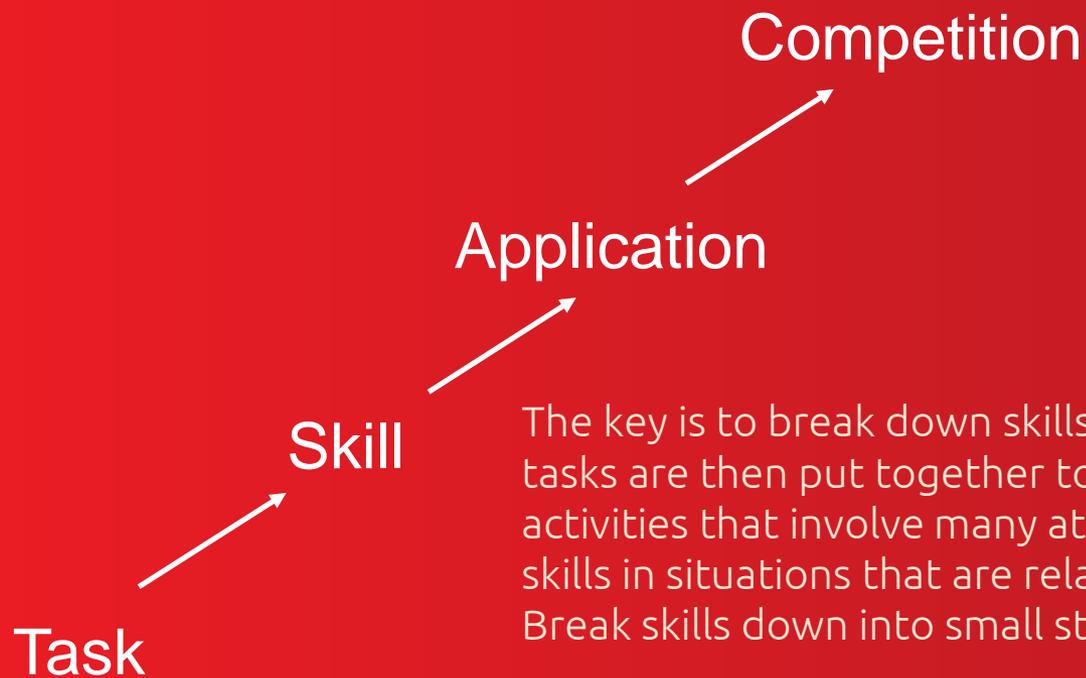
Unit 2 - Organizing a Training Session

Component and Details	Layout of Drill or Activity
Warm-Up & Stretching	Specific to the sport, repetitive and involve athletes in leading activity
Skills Instruction	Break skills into smaller tasks, involve many athletes at a time and practice skills related to event situations
Competition Experience	Scrimmage, simulate event/game situations and work towards what the competition will look like
Cool-Down, Stretch, & Reward	Playing a game related to that sport and ending each training with a cool down activity and stretch

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Unit 2 - Training Sequence



The key is to break down skills into small tasks or steps; tasks are then put together to form skills. Use drills and activities that involve many athletes at all times. Practice skills in situations that are related to the game or event. Break skills down into small steps.



Unit 2 - Training Sequence

What's the challenge and how to fix it?

Training Sequence Element	Challenge	Action
Application	Acquire ability to repeatedly demonstrate sport competencies in different situations & environments	Provide gamelike drills or situations
Skills	Acquire ability to perform series of sport competencies effectively and necessary to perform a sport	Work on essential sport competencies to perform the sport
Competition	Acquire ability to put essential sport competencies into practice	Provide scrimmage opportunities in practice
Tasks	Acquire ability to perform essential sport competencies	Break essential sport competencies down into individual parts

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Unit 2 - Communication

Communication is key to immediately reinforcing desired behavior; there are several key words that begin with a “C”, which address what a coach should say.

- Clear
- Concrete
- Concise
- Consistent
- Command-oriented



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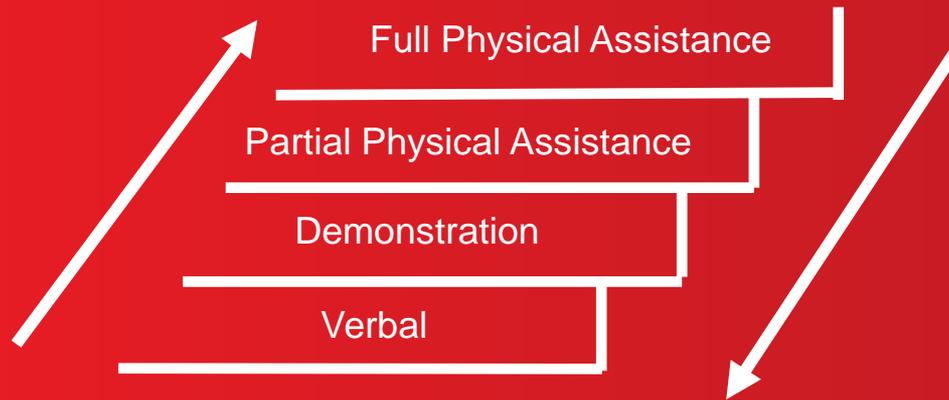
Unit 2 - Communication

Communication Criteria	Description	Sport Example
Concise	Use a few key words that cue a desired action	"Go to the free throw line" Showing an athlete where to stand on defense
Consistent	Use the same word or phrase for the same action	Coach constantly say "Breathe" – teaching an athlete when to take a breath in aquatics
Clear	Use easy to understand words that have one meaning	"Swing the bat" teaching how/when to swing.
Command-Oriented	Use words that elicit or reinforce a desired action	"On your mark. Set. Go." Using this phrase for starts in athletics.
Concrete	Connect words to something defined or tangible	"Jump forward" when coaching an athlete in the long jump.

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Unit 2 - Levels of Assistance



Each athlete needs to be met where he or she is and with what each individual is ready to do. It is important to use the appropriate level of instruction and assistance.

- The lower the ability athlete, the more assistance may be required
- Verbal should always be accompanied by demonstration
- Partial physical assistance may be needed to help the athlete get positioned properly
- When all else fails, take the athlete through the complete motion



Unit 2 - Level of Instruction or Assistance

Level of Instruction or Assistance	Description	Sport Example
Full Physical Assistance	Help the athlete through the entire motion of the skill	Volleyball: coach makes an adjustment to the athlete's arm swing by moving the athlete's arm through the entire spiking movement
Verbal	Tell the athlete what to do	Footwork: "run forward to the line; then return, running backward"
Demonstration	Show the athlete the proper technique	Soccer: one athlete shoots on goal while another watches
Partial Physical Assistance	Place the athlete's hands in the proper position	Golf: coach physically adjusts the athlete's hands on the golf club with the correct grip

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Unit 2 - Managing Athlete Behavior

The goal is for coaches to meet each athlete where he/she is and treat him/her accordingly. However, a coach may often have certain expectations of an athlete that may not be realistic ... not because the coach does not care, but because the coach does not understand or appreciate the differences that may exist.

When an athlete exhibits what is generally perceived as inappropriate behavior, the inappropriate behavior may not be defiance, acting out or silliness. These behaviors may simply be a reflection or part of the person and/or what is operating in the moment.

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Unit 2 - Managing Athlete Behavior

Athlete Behavior Characteristics	Strategies to Improve Learning
Swimmer has a short attention span	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Dwell on a stroke or activity for short periods of time; provide numerous activities focusing on same task2. Provide different opportunities for repetition and review, which is the key to gaining new skill.3. Work one-on-one to gain full attention.
Basketball athlete yells if he/she misses a shot	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Emphasize the other aspects of the game besides shooting2. Work on shooting drills without a hoop3. Begin to shoot at a hoop but in a non-game setting with a one-on-one coach
Bowler doesn't wait their turn	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Have a coach at the lane help with the order of bowlers, explain whose turn it is2. Have the bowler wait with a coach behind the bowling area until their turn is up3. Emphasize the order and that the bowler will always follow the same individual

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Unit 3 - Preparing & Coaching for Competition

- A key goal of Special Olympics is to provide an opportunity for all athletes to experience success in competitions.
- A Special Olympics athlete can benefit from many aspects of a competition (including meeting new people, participating in the festivities of Opening Ceremonies and other social events, the excitement of traveling to new places and staying away from home, etc.). None of these things, however, should be as important to the coach as the focus on the participation in the competition itself.

This section highlights ways to improve the quality of an athlete's competition experience.

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Unit 3 - Preparing for Competition

▪ Registration

- Provide accurate entry and team roster information, qualifying times, and skills assessment scores.
- Help the Competition Committee prepare a successful competition for your athletes by meeting their registration deadlines.

▪ Official competition rules

- A good Competition Committee will instruct its officials/referees to enforce the Official Special Olympics Rules. Make sure you know them.
- Teach your athletes the rules and, during training, phase out your verbal reminders about rules. At competition, coaches may have little or no opportunity to assist athletes when they are not following the rules. (A coach cannot be on the track with them!)



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Unit 3 - Preparing for Competition

▪ Supervision

- Discuss the challenges associated with participating in competition away from home, and why adequate, non-coaching support personnel are needed.
 - Transportation
 - Lodging (need for same-sex supervision)
 - Social activities
 - Coaches meetings (who will supervise athletes during these?)
 - Multiple events to supervise, awards ceremonies, etc.
- Design a supervision worksheet with the essential elements covered.



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Unit 3 - Preparing for Competition

Travel and overnight

- Discuss overnight concerns with parents or group-home supervisors.
- Write up a simple checklist of items to bring and distribute to athletes and parents
- Make sure that all special medication needs are understood. Coaches may have to assist with handling medications. Have all medical forms and information readily available at all times.
- Work out the most effective rooming arrangements, taking into account athlete choice, behavioral and personality clashes, etc.

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Unit 3 - Competition-Day Coaching

Guidelines for success:

Teach responsibility & independence

- Assist athletes in dressing appropriately, understanding what is happening at the competition site, maintaining a focused attitude and appropriate behavior.

Arrive early

- Allow time for putting on uniforms, warm-up and stretching routine and focusing on the competition.

Encourage maximum effort in divisioning & competition

- Applying the “honest-effort” rule from the Special Olympics Rule book

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Unit 3 - Competition-Day Coaching

Guidelines for success:

Let athletes compete without direct supervision

- Not running down the side of the track shouting instructions, allowing the competition officials to conduct the competition and allowing athletes to make mistakes and helping them learn from their mistakes.

Make any official protests calmly

- If you think there is a valid reason to protest the outcome, do so in a calm manner, following the competition guidelines and not involving athletes in disputes with officials.

Help athletes learn from winning & losing

- Deal graciously and realistically with winning and losing. Focus on effort made, recognize accomplishments and new skills that were performed and taking something positive away from the experience.

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Unit 3 - Competition-Day Coaching

The coach can be the key person who makes any competition experience a good one. Taking time to adequately prepare for competition and plan for on-site supervision and that coaching is time well spent.

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Unit 4 – Managing the Program

The successful Special Olympics coach:

Is sports and coaching knowledgeable

- Special Olympics is a sport organization
- Technical knowledge of the sport and how to teach it is essential if coaches are to effectively help athletes improve their sport skills and truly benefit from Special Olympics.
- Successful coaches are constantly looking for opportunities to learn more about the sport.

Is Special Olympics knowledgeable

- Special Olympics has a clearly defined mission, philosophy, and rules that have been developed through years of worldwide experience with athletes with intellectual disabilities.
- A better understanding of these will benefit your athletes.

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Unit 4 – Managing the Program

The successful Special Olympics coach:

Recruits and trains assistant coaches

- Individualized coach-athlete teaching is key to successful training in Special Olympics.
- Assistant coaches can be recruited to help provide individualized attention.
- Assistant coaches are useful only if they are trained and coordinated at practice.

Recruits and trains athletes

- A coach is also a promoter and recruiter; always tries to expand participation

Assists with appropriate sport selection

- Age appropriate, is the athlete able to participate safely and successfully and does the athlete have a choice of participating in a different sport or event.

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Unit 4 – The Successful Special Olympics coach:

Offers activities for all abilities

- In order to accommodate a range of abilities

Puts a priority on safety

- This is the coach's number one priority

Conducts high-quality training and competition

- Appropriate training, activities such as training days or camps, helps develop pride in being an athlete and organizes competition opportunities if none exist

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Unit 4 – The Successful Special Olympics coach:

Involves families

- Educates families and group-home providers about the benefits of Special Olympics, appropriate nutrition and food choices and training at home.

Assists with community inclusion

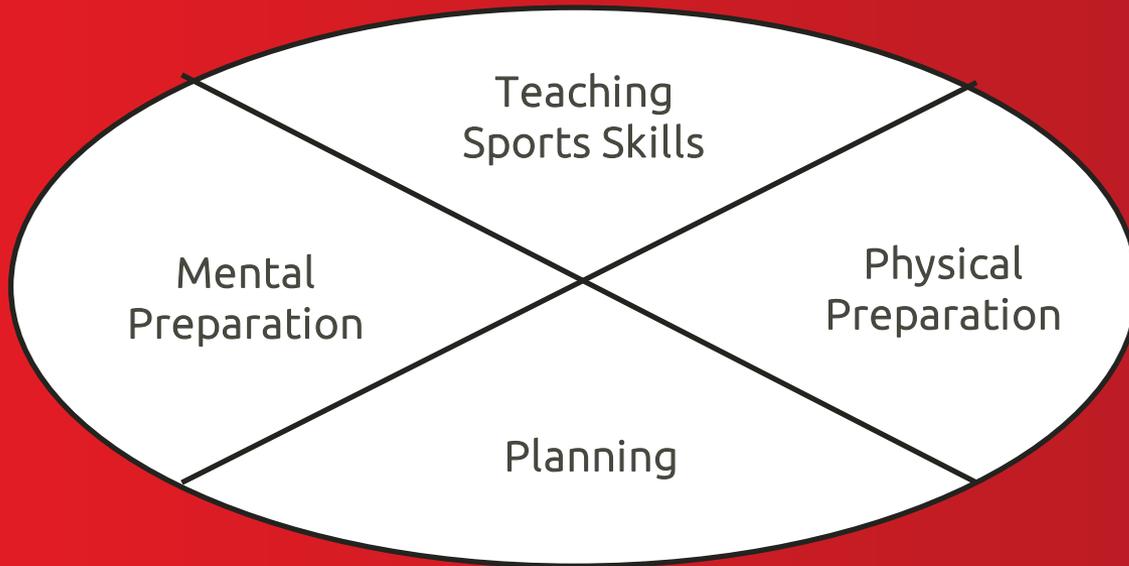
- Improves social and communication skills, opportunities to talk about Special Olympics at civic functions and assistance in joining non-Special Olympics sports opportunities

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Unit 4 – Area of Focus

Athlete Safety



Coaching Philosophy

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Unit 4 – Preparation

Assessment



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Improved Performance & Well-Being

- TRAINING ⇒ the key
- COMPETITION ⇒ the means
- OUTCOMES ⇒ skill, confidence, courage, & joy
- GOAL ⇒ better preparation for life
- RESULTS ⇒ lifelong skills, acceptance & increased independence



Let's Get After It and Get It Done!

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Level 2 Equestrian

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Competition Rules

Equestrian athletes are separated by age and class-level. All athletes compete according to ability. A maximum of eight riders are allowed per class. All riders must have had at least 10 riding training sessions within the six months prior to competition with a minimum of 10 hours of training. Entries must be received by the event management on or before the entry deadline. No post entries will be allowed. No dogs will be permitted on the show grounds, except service dogs. Service dogs must be approved by event management, confined to a 6 ft. leash and not permitted within 20 ft. of riding arena or horses.

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Spotters

Spotters, appointed by the event director, will remain in strategic places in the competition area to act in case of emergency for unassisted riders. Other attendants are not allowed in the competition ring except at the request of the judge(s) or when specified in the event requirements.

Assistance

Outside assistance (rail side coaching) will be penalized at the judge's discretion. Electronic communication devices used for the purpose of communicating between riders and individuals outside the ring are prohibited. Cue cards may be used for hearing impaired athletes. In order for the cues to be universal, they should be designated as follows:

1=Walk, 2=Sitting Trot/Jog, 3=Posting Trot, 4=Canter/Lope, 0=Reverse, Universal Stop Sign=Halt.

*A reader may be requested for C supported riders at coaches meeting but needs to be provided by delegation.

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Horses

A rider must use the same horse in all events during the entire competition if it's their own.

Change of horse is only allowed for safety reasons or if a horse is sick or unsound. The official veterinarian's decision, if called by the judge, as to the serviceable soundness of a horse will be final for the purpose of awarding medals and ribbons in the class for which the vet was called. Otherwise, the judge(s) and the equine director will make the final decision regarding a horse's ability to compete.

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TACK

All personal horses must provide their own tack.

Saddles must fit the horse. Appropriate equipment is provided by the competition management in agreement with the horse owner. An athlete may use his/her own saddle only if it fits the horse he/she is riding. If a rider plans to use his/her own saddle, it must be declared in the Rider Profile. Adapted and personally owned saddles must be approved by the event director and horse owner prior to the competition. Western tack for Western riders and English tack for English riders is allowed.

Bridles must be appropriate to the class entered and meet the rule requirements. A lead line must be attached to the halter and not to the bridle. The halter may be over or under the bridle as long as it doesn't interfere with the use of the bit or the reins.

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Riders may use adaptive equipment without penalty. (Note: Riders may in no way be attached to the horse or saddle.) Adaptive equipment must be declared on the Rider Profile. English riders must provide their own stirrups leather and irons.

Prohibited Tack and Equipment (applies to warm-up as well as competition):

- Bearing, side or running reins.
- Seat covers—if an athlete needs a seat cover, it must be declared on the Rider Profile.
- Blinders
- Nose covers

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State Competition

Athletes should have completed at least 10 training sessions with a minimum of 10 hours prior to state.

Bib numbers must be worn by athletes

Practice runs will be available the Thursday prior to competition.

Stalling is available for competition (\$20/stall, \$8/bag of shavings). Contact [Dani Druse](#) if you need stalls or bedding. Delegation must bring hay, grain, blankets, etc. for stalling.

Athletes will be separated by ability and age.

Delegations will need to provide their own horses for competition, no horses will be provided from the stable. Athletes who are from the same delegation and compete in the same event and age group will need to compete on different horses.

Athletes may enter up to three events in either Western or English style.

No dogs are allowed near arena (with exception to service dogs). Dogs must be leashed at all times and kept by personal trailers.

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Judging

Riders will be judged on:

- Control of horse
- Balance and seat
- Proper use of aids
- Ability to follow directions
- Ring etiquette
- Safety awareness
- Sportsmanlike conduct
- Walk, trot, and canter (when appropriate)
- Stop
- Turn
- Backup

Obstacles are judged on:

- Proper execution of obstacles and pattern
- Control of the horse
- Balance and seat
- Safety awareness
- Sportsmanlike conduct

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Credit is given to the horses navigating the obstacles correctly while responding to the rider's cues. If an excessive amount of time happens between obstacles, the judge will move the horse to the next obstacle. Unauthorized assistance by horse handler/coach/side walkers may result in penalty to riders.

In order to provide a true horse show experience, penalties will be assessed based upon judge's discretion. Penalties will occur if horses are three strides off their gait within their designated class. Leaders are meant to keep horses in the patterns and not to lead through a pattern.

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Attire

All riders must wear riding boots. Riders who need to wear other footwear must have a physician's statement submitted prior to competition. . Riding boots, a sleeved shirt, long pants, and a helmet are the only required attire. See the extended list of attire for both riding classes.

All riders must wear protective SEI-ASTM or BHS approved helmets with a full chin strap which must be fastened at all times when the riders are working around horses.

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English

- A short, dark colored riding coat.
- Riding shirt or Oxford style long or short sleeved shirt.
- Tie or choker optional.
- Breeches or jodhpurs.
- Gloves are optional.
- Spurs are optional and must be approved by the horse owner.
- In case of inclement weather, athletes will be permitted to wear a hat cover and a conservative raincoat.
- In extreme heat (above 80 degrees), the judges may permit athletes to show without riding coats.
- Boots with heels.
- Approved helmet.

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Western

- Pants/Jeans
- A long-sleeved shirt
- A belt under loops
- Neckties, kerchiefs, bolos, chaps and gloves are optional.
 - Chaps are prohibited in all gymkhana events and showmanship classes.
 - A western type hat worn on an approved helmet is optional.
- Boots or shoes with a slick sole and heel are recommended.
- Spurs are optional

Bitless bridles may be used for Western competition. Otherwise, bit must consist of a metal bar varying from the straight bar to the jointed mouthpiece. Nothing may extend below the horizontal plane of the mouthpiece other than a roller attached to the center of the bit. 8 ½ inch shank maximum. Hackamores are only allowed in game class (barrel & pole). Reins must be attached to each shank. If using shanked bit, a one-handed ride is preferred. A snaffle bit may be used regardless of the horse's age. In this instance a two-handed ride is acceptable.

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Game (Barrel & Poles)

English & Western Event

General Information

- Only A1, B1 and C1 riders may register for barrel racing or pole weaving. Athletes must provide their own horse for these events.

Tack

- Saddles and bridles as required in Equitation classes.
- Prohibited equipment:
 - Lariat or reata
 - Hackamores
 - Tie-downs
 - Draw reins
 - Bosals
 - Wire, metal or rawhide device as part of leather chin strap
 - Shoes other than standard horseshoes

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Execution of Gymkhana Events

- All events are timed. The winner will be the competitor with the fastest time.
- Riders are required to start the course inside an enclosed ring and may not start until after all gates are closed and secured. Gates may not be opened until the rider has completed the course and returned to a walk or halt.
- Time begins as the horse's nose crosses the starting line.
- Time is complete when the horse's nose crosses the finish line.
- A 5 second penalty will be added to the time for each of the following:
 - Knocking over a pole or barrel. (An athlete is allowed to touch a pole or barrel with his/her hand with no penalty as long as the pole or barrel stays upright.)
 - Each 3 strides over the allotted gait for that division.
- A disqualification will be assessed for the following:
 - Failure to follow the course.
 - Failure to cross the start/finish line between markers.
 - Failure to have the chin strap on the athlete's helmet properly fastened for the entire time he/she is in the arena.
 - Recrossing the start/finish line after completing the course.
 - Excessive use of a bat, crop, whip or rope, as determined by the judge

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Execution of Game Events cont.

In the event of a tie, there will be a run-off using the same course. The competitor declared the winner in the run-off must re-run the pattern within 5 seconds of his/her original time or the run-off must be held again.

Facilities and Set-up

Whenever possible, starting line markers or electric timers should be placed against the arena wall.

The start/finish line must be clearly marked.

The course must be measured exactly.

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Showmanship

English & Western Event

General Information

- Athletes must provide their own horse for showmanship events.
- The emphasis in the Showmanship class should be on the athlete's ability to handle and show the horse, with safety as the main consideration. The horse is merely a prop to show the ability of the showman.
- Athletes showing horses under Western Tack Style may use a halter and lead shank made of leather or nylon. Chain leads are acceptable. Western attire, including an approved safety helmet, is appropriate.
- Athletes showing horses under English Tack Style may use a suitable English bridle or halter of either leather or nylon. English attire, including an approved safety helmet, is appropriate.

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The Quarter method of showmanship will be used. The following suggested guidelines of movement are meant to serve as an illustration of movement around the horse while showing in Showmanship classes and are for the exhibitors'/coaches' information.

- Imaginary lines bisect the horse into 4 equal parts, as seen in the figure. (Note: The quadrants will be numbered I, II, III and IV for ease of identification).
- One line runs across the horse just behind the withers.
- The other imaginary line runs from head to tail.
- The athlete should move around the horse in the following manner:
 - When the judge is in I, the handler should be in IV.
 - As the judge moves to II, the handler should move to I.
 - When the judge moves to III, the handler moves to IV.
 - As the judge moves up the horse to IV, the handler returns once more to I.

This method of showmanship is based on safety, as the handler can keep the horse's hindquarter from swinging toward the judge should the horse become fractious

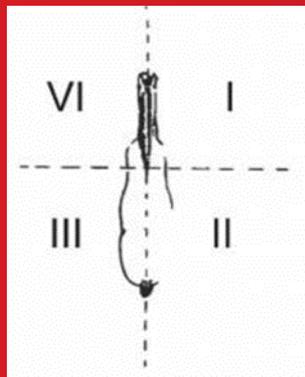
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Show management must post individual test patterns a minimum of one hour before the class is to be held.

The following maneuvers are considered acceptable elements for individual test patterns:

- Lead the horse at a walk or jog/trot
- Back in a straight or curved line
- Halt
- Pivot or turn—quarter, half or full (360 degrees)
- Set up square



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Barrel Racing

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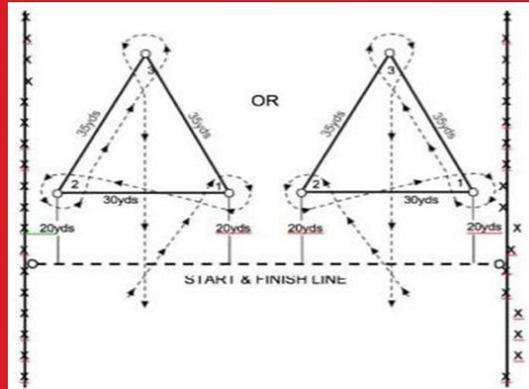


Facilities and Set-up

- Three barrels are set in a triangle, using the following measurements:
 - Barrels 1 and 2 are set 27.43m (90') apart and 18.29m (60') from the start/finish line.
 - Barrel 3 is set in the center (as the top of a triangle) 32m (105') away from barrels 1 and 2. See layout diagram.
- If the course is too large for the available space, the pattern should be reduced in increments of 4.57m (15') until it fits into the arena. Remember to leave adequate space between barrels and any obstacles. The distance from Barrel 3 to the finish line need not be reduced by these increments if there is sufficient room for the horse to stop.
- When measuring the area for the barrel course, remember to leave ample room for horses to complete their turns.
- Allow at least 13.77m (25') from the start/finish line to the end of the arena.
- Upright poles should mark the start/finish line.
- Brightly colored 55-gallon plastic or metal drums may be used.

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Execution of the Course

The barrel course may be run either right or left. The instructions are written right.

At a signal from the starter, the athlete will:

Run barrel number 1, passing to the left of it and completing an approximately 360 degree turn around it.

Go to barrel number 2, passing to the right of it and completing a slightly more than 360 degree turn around it.

Go to barrel number 3, passing to the right of it and completing an approximately 360 degree turn around it.

Then, sprint to the finish line, passing between barrels 1 and 2.

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Stock Seat Equitation

General Information

- Any or all riders may be required to execute appropriate tests included in the class requirements. Tests may be performed either collectively or individually.
- Individual patterns consisting of a combination of elements may be called for.
- Judges are encouraged to call for at least two tests to be performed. 15.5.1.4 Riders will not be asked to change horses.

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Guidelines Only				Mandatory
	Good	Minor Faults	Major Faults	Elimination
Seat	Keeping center of balance Complete contact with saddle Straight Back	Sitting off center Sway back Round back Losing center of balance	Excessive body motion Popping out of saddle	At judges discretion Fall to the ground of horse or rider
Hands	Quiet light hands Maintaining consistent head position	Unsteadiness Restrictions causing untrue gaits	Horse's mouth gaping Heavy hands Constant bumping	At judges discretion Fall to the ground of horse or rider
Legs	Secure leg position Proper weight in stirrups Controlling motion Weight evenly on ball of foot Heels lower than toes	Uneven stirrups Motion in legs Insufficient weight in stirrups	Interfering with another rider Excessive spurring Loss of contact between legs & saddle foot & stirrup Coming in contact with fence or other riders	At judges discretion Fall to the ground of horse or rider
Control	Maintaining horse in good form at consistent gaits Ability to maintain horse under adverse conditions	Breaking from walk to jog Breaking from jog to lope Not standing in line up	Breaking from jog to walk Breaking from lope to jog Allowing horse to back crooked Missing leads	At judges discretion Fall to the ground of horse or rider
Overall Appearance	Suitable well-fitted outfit Well-groomed horse Clean equipment	Saddle not suitable to rider's size Unfitted outfit Dirty boots	Unclean equipment Ungroomed horse Untrimmed horse	At judges discretion Fall to the ground of horse or rider
General	Good attitude towards horse and judge Consistency of riders form	Equipment not fitting horse Failure to use corners and rail Suitability of horse and rider	Excessive voice commands Excessive circling Major delays in transitions	At judges discretion Fall to the ground of horse or rider

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Western Trail

General Information

- This contest is neither a stunt nor a race but should be performed with reasonable speed.
- Western riding is a competition in the performance and characteristics of a good, sensible, well-mannered, free and easy moving horse.
- Horses will be judged on riding qualities of the gaits and change of lead (simple, interrupted or flying), and the athlete's ability to influence the horse.

Special Olympics
Minnesota



WESTERN TRAIL JUDGING GUIDELINES

	Guidelines Only			Mandatory
Trail	Good	Minor Faults	Major Faults	Elimination
Walk Jog/Trot Lope/Canter (on the course)	Consistency of gait Clear transitions	Inconsistency of gait Wrong lead at lope or canter	Break of gait Failure to perform gait called for	At judges' discretion Fall to the ground of horse or rider
Control Obstacles Gates Back thru Side passes Turns on forehand and hindquarters Serpentine	Smooth Good position Responsive	Slight touches Slant side passes Wide positions Slow response Backing crooked	Knock down elevated elements Stepping out of confining elements Losing gait Fussiness and extreme tension Refusals	At judges' discretion Fall to the ground of horse or rider
Agility Obstacles Walk overs Trot or lope Cavaletti Bridges	Attentive Careful Willing Low poll	Slight touches Too hesitant Failure to stay on center lines	Knock downs Refusals Failure to maintain gaits Off side of bridge	At judges' discretion Fall to the ground of horse or rider
Calmness Obstacles Plastic Brush Plants Carrying objects	Steady going Alert Careful but willing Low poll Calm when carrying objects	Tense over or thru obstacles Spooking when carrying objects	Jumping over or stampeding thru obstacles Refusals	At judges' discretion Fall to the ground of horse or rider

16.3

All horses with clean or minor faults trips will be considered before major fault horses

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Equestrian Divisions

It should be noted that all riders compete according to ability. Equestrian athletes are not separated by gender or by age. According to the Special Olympics Sports Rules, divisions should consist of 3–8 riders.

Athletes are divisioned based upon their ability to perform a series of patterns with their horse Our divisions:

- A1: Can perform walk, trot and canter independently
- B1: Can perform walk and trot independently
- BS/B3: Can perform walk and trot supported
- C1: Can perform walk independently
- CS/C2: Can perform walk supported

Please note that all B1 independent riders that have a physical disability prohibiting them from the trot will be listed as C1 riders. The same for BS riders- they will be in CS/C2

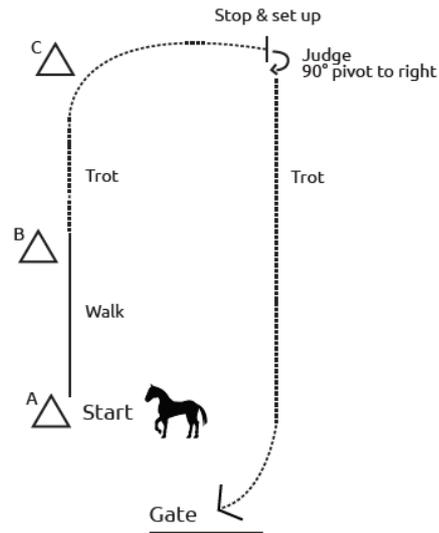
Special Olympics
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SHOWMANSHIP A & B1 LEVEL RIDERS

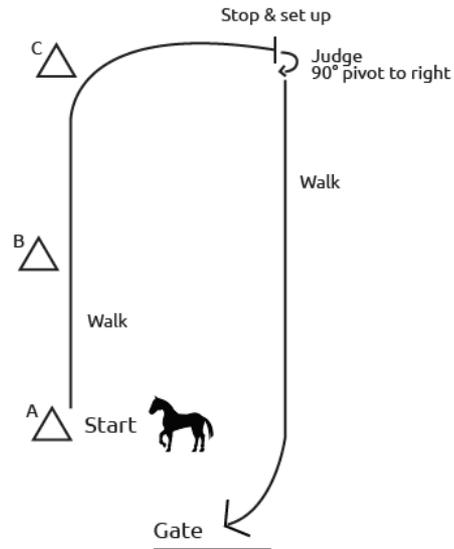
1. Start at cone A
2. Walk to cone B
3. Trot to cone C and continue trotting to the judge
4. Stop and set up for inspection
5. When released, do a 90° pivot to the right and trot back to exit gate



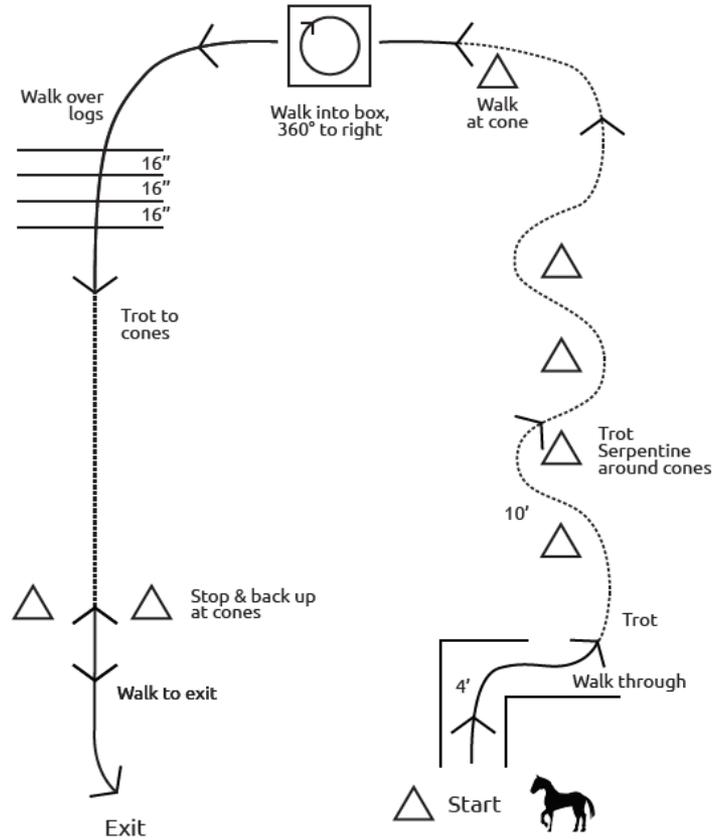


SHOWMANSHIP B3, C1 & C2 LEVEL RIDERS

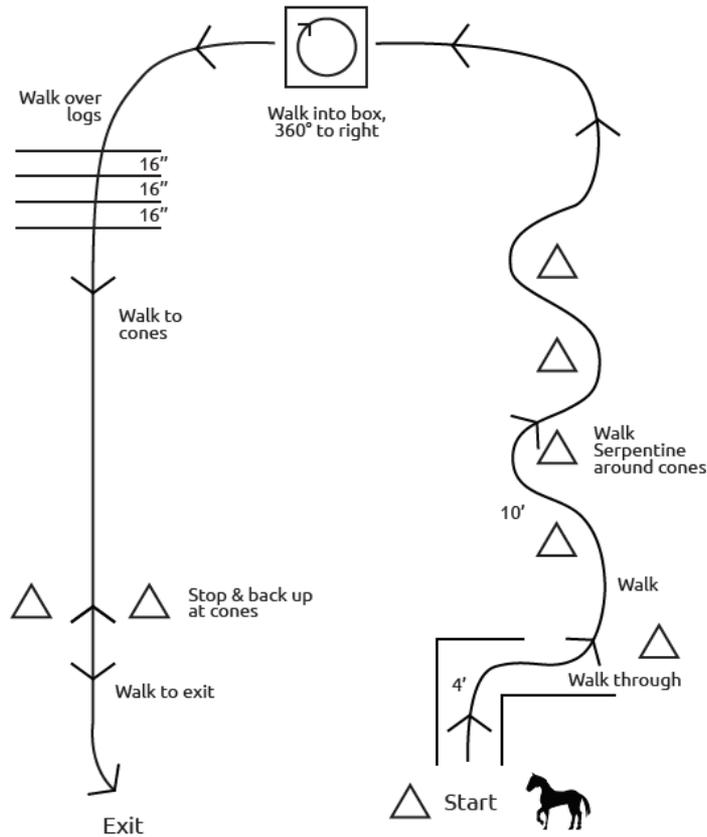
1. Start at cone A
2. Walk to cone C and continue walking to the judge
3. Stop and set up for inspection
4. When released, do a 90° pivot to the right and leave the arena at a walk



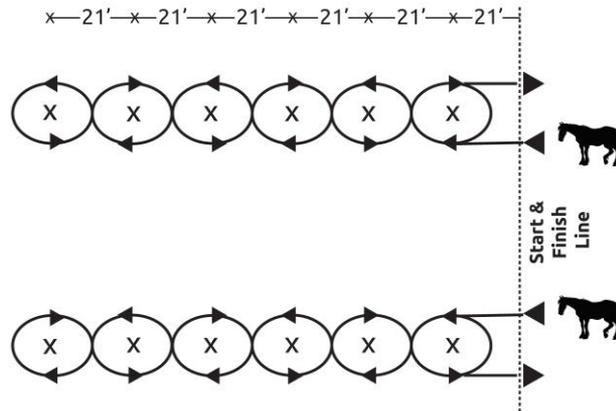
A & B1 WALK/TROT PATTERN



B2, B3 & C WALK PATTERN



Pole Weaving



Key:

Start & Finish Line

Upright Pole x

Weave

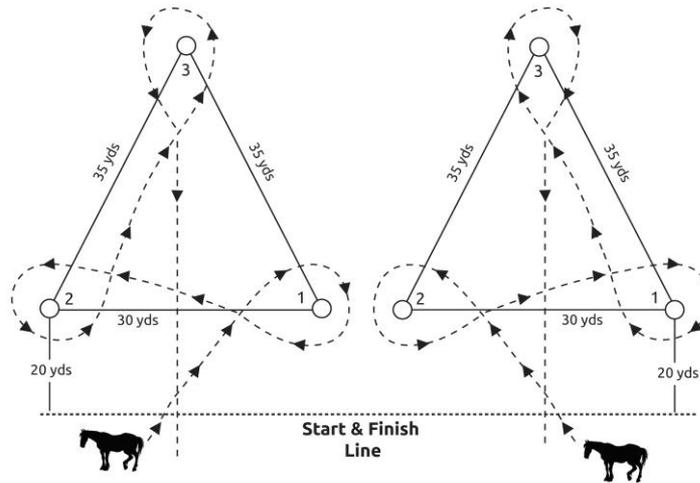
A horse may start either to the right or to the left of the first pole and then run the remainder of the pattern accordingly. These instructions are written for a horse starting to the right of the first pole. At the signal from the starter, the athlete will:

1. Start to the right of the first pole.
2. Weave the poles, passing them alternately left to right until reaching the last pole.
3. Turn the last pole to the right.
4. Weave the poles, passing alternately right then left until reaching the first pole and cross the finish line.

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Barrel Racing (Western Only)



Key:

Start & Finish Line

Trot -----

Barrel ○

The barrel course may be run either right or left. The instructions are written right.
At a signal from the starter, the athlete will:

1. Run barrel number 1, passing to the left of it and completing an approximately 360 degree turn around it.
2. Go to barrel number 2, passing to the right of it and completing a slightly more than 360 degree turn around it.
3. Go to barrel number 3, passing to the right of it and completing an approximately 360 degree turn around it.
4. Then, sprint to the finish line, passing between barrels 1 and 2.

Special Olympics
Minnesota



2022 Equestrian Competition

	Date	Location	City	Quota Due	Registration
State	August 19	Northwest Saddle Club	North Branch	July 10	July 31

For any questions or comments about competitions,
please contact sports@somn.org

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Coach Recognition Item

Each coach that becomes Level 2 certified or recertified is able to order one coach item per calendar year. Information can be found [HERE](#).

Please note that if you have not completed a Level 2 training or recertification course, or you have already received an item for the year, you will not be shipped an item.

Special Olympics
Minnesota



Level 2 Equestrian Quiz

Level 2 certification is not processed until you have completed the Level 2 quiz.

To take the Level 2 Equestrian quiz please [click here](#).

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