

EXPLANATION OF COMPETITION

THE ENDUROSTYLE CHALLENGE (hereby referred to as 'The Challenge') is an Endurance based competition featuring a sequence of challenges along a marked course. A horse may only compete once on any given day in the challenge.

The Challenge Rules are based loosely on The Pony Club Endurance rulebook, as instructed by The Pony Club Endurance Committee in conjunction with other Pony Club Committees.

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- Michelle Macauley (2027)
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RULES & SCORING OF COMPETITION

A new competition combining the speed and skill of Endurance riding, along with the horsemanship qualities required to accomplish these rides successfully. We encourage Members to give this competition a try in a supportive and encouraging environment. The aim is the enjoyment of hacking and time spent with the horse.

Riders should not prioritise speed, but ending the course with a happy and content horse.

Class 1: The Endurostyle Challenges Elite.

2 loops with a total distance of between 16 and 20km, judged using the Novice Performance Formula with a maximum speed of 12 k.p.h.

Class 2: The Endurostyle Challenge

1 loop with a total distance of between 8 and 10km, judged using the Novice Performance Formula with a maximum speed of 11 k.p.h.

The Endurance Performance Formula.

A combination of speed achieved plus the final heart rate of the horse.

POINTS = $\frac{(2 \times \text{Speed} - 8) \times 100}{\text{Heart Rate}}$

Then the following skills receive faults if not completed in the required time or in the right way.

Challenges and Obstacles on Course

1. First vet gate Up to 3 faults if not performed correctly.

A standard Endurance vet gate. Riders will be expected to trot their horses up correctly. It is highly recommended that all riders have a supporter to assist them with this part. Saddles will be removed but bridles should remain on.

2. Open and Shut a gate. 3 faults if not completed in 60 secs.

Should the rider not manage to shut the gate within the time allowed, they will be asked to move on by the judge.

3. Go through water complex **3 faults if not completed in 60 secs**

Should the rider not manage to shut the gate within the time allowed, they will be asked to move on by the judge. **There will be no jumping involved.**

4. Go through the river **3 faults if not completed in 30secs**

Should the rider not manage to shut the gate within the time allowed, they will be asked to move on by the judge.

5. Look at map

3 faults if you cant I.D. where you are

Riders should be familiar with the map of the course (released prior to the competition). When question, they should be able to identify where on the map they might be.

6. Midway vet gate (Endurostyle Challenge Elite only) Saddle off, horse cooled down, h/r below 64 bpm.

No faults, just time lost if it takes you a long time to get to the vet.

7. Zig Zag up and down a steep hill.

3 faults if not completed.

Riders should control the pace and balance of their horse up and down a marked course of a bank.

8. Use of slosh bottle

3 faults if not completed.

Riders should effectively cool their horse with a slosh bottle at the cooling station. Failure to make a significant attempt to cool the horse will result in penalties.

9. Mystery Challenge

3 faults if not completed.

An additional challenge demanding control and good horsemanship practices. Details of the mystery obstacle will be available to the riders before commencing the course.

10. Final vetting

5 faults if not performed correctly.

Riders have 30 minutes after crossing the finishing line to present to the vet gate. This is where the final heart rate for the scoring will be taken.

ADMINISTRATIVE RULES FOR THE CHALLENGE

ELIGIBILITY

The District Commissioner is required to certify the eligibility of horse and rider as follows. Should a breach of eligibility subsequently be discovered, then the Endurance Committee may disqualify that competitor.

Horses must be 5 years of age or over to participate in Pony Club Events. In their first eligible year, they must be at least 60 months old to compete. Their next birthday will be on 1st January thereafter. e.g. A horse born on 1st August 2020 is 5 years of age on 1st August 2025. From this date, they may then attend pony club events. They will be deemed 6 years of age on 1st January 2026.

There is no height limit.

Stallions can only be ridden by Members if they have obtained written permission from their District Commissioner/Centre Proprietor and must wear identifying discs on their bridles in the interests of safety.

The Challenge (8-10km)

Members must be aged 10 or over on the day of the event to compete and must be able to ride independently.

Individual competition only.

The Challenge (Elite) (16-20km)

Members must be aged 10 or over on the day of the event to compete and have attained at a minimum, The Pony Club C Test **OR** completed at least one Endurance GB ride in 2026.

Individual competition only.

DRESS

New equipment is not expected, but what is worn must be clean, neat, tidy and safe. It is the competitor's responsibility to ensure their dress complies with the Rules. Contravention may incur disqualification.

- a) **Hat and Hair Rule Hair:** Must be tied up and back (preferably in a hairnet) and securely, in a safe manner to reduce the risk of hair being caught and to prevent scalp injuries
- b) **Hats:** Members must always wear a protective hat when mounted. Only hats to the following specifications are acceptable at any Pony Club activity. The Pony Club is consistent with fellow BEF (British Equestrian) Member bodies in

its Standards for Riding Hats. Individual sports may have additional requirements with regard to colour and type. It is strongly recommended that secondhand hats are not purchased. The hat standards accepted as of 1st January 2026 as per The Pony Club Health & Safety and Endurance Rulebooks.

No recording device is permitted (e.g. hat cameras) as they may have a negative effect on the performance of the hat in the event of a fall.

- ▶ The fit of the hat and the adjustment of the harness are as crucial as the quality. Members are advised to try several makes to find the best fit. The hat should not move on the head when the head is tipped forward. The Pony Club recommends you visit a qualified BETA (British Equestrian Trade Association) fitter.
- ▶ Hats must be replaced after a severe impact as subsequent protection will be significantly reduced. Hats deteriorate with age and should be replaced after three to five years depending upon the amount of use.
- ▶ Hats must be worn at all times (including at prize-giving) when mounted with a chinstrap fastened and adjusted so as to prevent movement of the hat in the event of a fall.
- ▶ The Official Steward / Organiser may, at their discretion, eliminate a competitor riding in the area of the competition without a hat or with the chinstrap unfastened or with a hat that does not comply with these standards.

Hat Checks and Tagging

The Pony Club and its Branches and Centres will appoint Officials, who are familiar with The Pony Club hat rule, to carry out hat checks and tag each hat that complies with the requirements set out in the hat rule with an Pony Club hat tag. Hats fitted with a Pony Club, British Eventing (BE) or British Riding Club (BRC) hat tag will not need to be checked on subsequent occasions. However, the Pony Club reserves the right to randomly spot check any hat regardless of whether it is already tagged.

Tagging is an external verification of the internal label and indicates that a hat meets the accepted standards. The tag does NOT imply any check of the fit and condition of the hat has been undertaken. It is considered to be the responsibility of the Member's parent(s) / guardian(s) to ensure that their hat complies with the required standards and is tagged before they go to any Pony Club event. Also, they are responsible for ensuring that the manufacturer's guidelines with regard to fit and replacement are followed.

For further information on hat standards, testing and fitting, please refer to the British Equestrian Trade Association (BETA) website: British Equestrian Trade Association - Safety and your head (beta-uk.org)

b) Body Protector Rule

A body protector is compulsory for all Pony Club Cross Country riding (including Arena Eventing) and Pony Racing activities whether it be training or competition. A body protector for these activities must meet BETA 2018 Level 3 Standard (blue and black label).

For general use, the responsibility for choosing body protectors and the decision as to their use must rest with Members and their parents. It is recommended that a rider's body protector should not be more than 2% of their body weight. When worn, body protectors must fit correctly, be comfortable and must not restrict movement. BETA recommends body protectors are replaced at least every three to five years, after which the impact absorption properties of the foam may have started to decline.

Air Jackets

If a rider chooses to wear an air jacket in Cross country or Pony Racing, it must only be used in addition with a normal body protector which meets BETA 2018 Level 3 standard (blue and black label). Parents and Members must be aware that riders may be permitted to continue after a fall in both competitions and training rides for Cross Country and / or Pony Racing if the First Aid provider has no concerns about their welfare. In the event of a fall, an air jacket must be fully deflated or removed before continuing, the conventional body protector must continue to be worn. Air jackets must not be worn under a jacket. Number bibs should be fitted over the air jacket loosely or with elasticised fastenings.

c) Jewellery: Wearing jewellery while handling or riding a horse or pony is not recommended. To reduce the chance of injury, **necklaces, bracelets** (except medical bracelets), **and large or dangling jewellery — including items attached to piercings — must be removed.** The following are allowed: a wristwatch, a wedding ring, a stock pin worn horizontally, and a tie clip. For cross-country, it is advised to remove stock pins. If a Member chooses to wear any other type of jewellery at a Pony Club event, it is at their own, or their parent/guardian's risk.

d) Jerseys/Shirts

Shirts with long sleeves and collars are recommended. As a minimum shoulders must be covered.

e) Jodhpurs/Breeches: Any plain/coloured breeches or jodhpurs are allowed.

f) Footwear:

Only standard riding or jodhpur boots with a well defined square cut heel may be worn. Plain black or brown half chaps may be worn with jodhpur boots of the same colour. Tassels and fringes are not allowed. No other footwear will be permitted, including wellington boots, yard boots, country boots, "muckers" or trainers. Boots with interlocking treads are not permitted, nor are the boots or treads individually.

Stirrups should be of the correct size to suit the rider's boots (see the Stirrup rule).

If boots without heels or trainers are worn for comfort reasons are used, then caged stirrups **MUST** be used.

g) Spurs: Are not permitted in Pony Club Endurance.

h) Whips: No rider may carry, use or permit to be used a whip greater than 75cm. At all times, the whip must only be used:

- ▶ For a good reason, as an aid to encourage the horse forward.
- ▶ At an appropriate time, namely when the horse is reluctant to go forward under normal aids of seat and legs.
- ▶ In the right place, namely down the shoulder or behind the leg but never overarm.
- ▶ No more than twice for any one incident.

Excessive use of the whip anywhere at the event will result in elimination of the rider from any competition which has already taken place and disqualification of the rider from competing for the rest of the day. The following are always considered excessive and will result in immediate elimination:

- ▶ Use of the whip to vent a competitor's anger.
- ▶ Use of a whip which causes injury e.g.. Broken skin or a weal.
- ▶ Use after elimination or retirement.
- ▶ Use on a horse's head, neck etc.
- ▶ Using the whip from the ground after a rider fall or dismount.
- ▶ If the rider's arm comes above the shoulder when using the whip

i) Electronic devices:

Not allowed whilst the rider is competing (e.g. headphones etc. enabling another person to communicate with the rider). No recording device is permitted (e.g. head / bridle/ body cameras etc.).

Permitted items are a mobile phone, for use in case of an emergency. GPS systems are also permitted, this may be through systems such as Equilab or What Three Words.

j) Medical Arm/Leg bands: It is compulsory for all Pony Club Members to wear a medical band when participating at the Endurance Championships. Any Pony Club Member seen riding without one will be disqualified. It must contain the rider's details where indicated on the card.

k) Map Case: A map of the ride route, in a suitable protective cover, may be carried at all endurance rides.

5. SADDLERY

a) Saddles: Type optional. If stirrup leathers are attached permanently to the tree, which is often the case in specialised Endurance saddles, then caged stirrups must be used.

b) Stirrups: should be of the correct size to suit the rider's boots. They must have 7mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ ") clearance on either side of the boot. To find this measurement, tack checkers should move the foot across to one side of the stirrup, with the widest part of the foot on the tread. From the side of the boot to the edge of the stirrup should not be less than 14mm.

There are now many types of stirrups marketed as 'safety stirrups'. All riders must ensure that their stirrups are suitable for the type of footwear they are wearing and the activities in which they are taking part and that the stirrup leathers are in good condition.

There are no prescribed weight limits on metal stirrups, however with the advent of stirrups of other materials, weight limits are frequently given by manufacturers. Any person buying these stirrups, should comply with weight limits defined on the box or attached information leaflets. Neither the feet nor the stirrup leathers or irons, may be attached to the girth, nor the feet attached to the stirrup irons.

It is strongly recommended that the design of the stirrup chosen allows the foot to be released easily in the event of a rider fall. Specific rules for individual sports can be found in the respective sports rulebooks.

Particular focus should be on ensuring that the boot and stirrup are the correct size for the rider taking part and used in line with the manufacturer's guidance.

For the avoidance of doubt, at Pony Club events:

- ▶ stirrups which connect the boot and the stirrup magnetically are not allowed
- ▶ Interlocking boot soles and stirrup treads are not allowed If boots without heels or trainers are used for comfort reasons, stirrup cages MUST be used.

c) Numnahs/Saddle Cloths: Any solid colour is permitted. Contrasting piping is permitted. Branch logos are allowed when competing for the Branch; logos must not exceed 200 sq. cm. This does not preclude the wearing of clothing for horses or

riders that has been presented by sponsors of the Championships in the current or previous years.

d) Bridles: Black, brown or coloured bridles can be used and may be leather or synthetic.

e) Nosebands: Only one may be worn unless using a standing martingale with a combination, Kinton, drop noseband or similar in which case the addition of a cavesson is allowed. Nosebands must be correctly fitted and should not cause discomfort. Must not incorporate chain or rope. Sheepskin nosebands are permitted.

f) Fly hoods, nose nets and ear covers: Are permitted for all competitions, and may also provide noise reduction. The ear cover/ fly fringe must not cover the horse's eyes.

Ear plugs are not permitted and spot checks may be carried out. Nose nets are permitted. Nose nets must cover the nose only leaving the mouth and bit visible.

g) Bit guards: Only entirely rubber and smooth on both sides are permitted.

h) Martingales: The only martingales permitted are Irish, Standing, Running or Bib only one of which may be worn at the same time. Standing Martingales may be attached only to the cavesson portion of the noseband fitted above the bit.

i) Reins: Market Harboroughs, running, draw or check reins of any kind are forbidden.

j) Blinkers: Blinkers or any attachment to the horse/pony or bridle, which may affect the animal's field of vision are prohibited. Sheepskin may be used on the cheek pieces of the bridle providing the sheepskin does not exceed 3cms in diameter measured from the horses face.

The following are NOT allowed/permitted:

- ▶ The use of string, twine or cord in or round the horse's mouth is forbidden.
- ▶ Ernest Dillon reins, Split reins and Bridge reins.
- ▶ Tongue Straps and Tongue Grids.
- ▶ Weighted Boots.
- ▶ Humane Girths (having non-independent straps that will loosen if one of the straps were to break). Humane girths pose an increased risk as many common designs may have complete girth failure if a single strap was to break. Humane girths are not permitted in any Sport, whether during training or competition.

It is the competitors' responsibility to ensure that their tack is in accordance with the rules and that they present themselves for inspection. Any competitor who presents

to compete in the wrong saddlery/equipment will not be allowed to compete until they decide to re-present in the correct saddlery/equipment.

Any competitor who then changes their tack after the Tack Inspection will be disqualified from the competition. The Official Steward has absolute discretion to forbid the use of any bit, gadget, spur or boot which he considers cruel or misused. Saddlery and equipment used during the Tack and Turnout Competition must be the same as that worn throughout the competition, except by permission of the Official Steward/Organiser.

Any equipment not covered in these Rules must be referred at least two weeks in advance of the competition to The Pony Club Office to allow time for the Chairman of the Endurance Committee to be consulted. All tack must be correctly fitted. Disabled riders are welcome to apply to The Pony Club Office to use special equipment.

6. ACTION AFTER A FALL

Any competitor who has a fall on the course MUST report this to the next steward they pass. The competitor should be allowed to continue unless the steward feels they are unfit to do so, in which case the competitor must remain at the stewarding area until passed to go on by a medical authority.

7. HEAD INJURY AND CONCUSSION

If a person is diagnosed with a concussion, they must not ride or take part in any Pony Club organised activity that involves close contact/handling or riding of horses or ponies for 21 days. This may need to be extended if symptoms persist, on the advice of the treating doctor. All concussion must be reported to Head Office using the online accident report form or by email if it occurred outside of The Pony Club. Concussion advice should be followed without exception.

Head injuries and concussion can be very serious and life changing. Serious head injuries are usually obvious, but concussion can be very subtle. It may not be immediately apparent but should be taken very seriously. Recovery from concussion should be managed carefully. This rule should be read in conjunction with:

- ▶ The Pony Club Concussion Advice
- ▶ UK Government Concussion Guidelines

Please contact safety@pcuk.org for further support and advice Please see Appendix C for the Head Injury and Concussion Flowchart.

8. MEDICAL SUSPENSION

If a Member has been suspended from taking part in any activity/ competition/sport for medical reasons, this suspension must apply to all Pony Club activities until such time the Member is passed fit by a medical professional to take part. It is the Member and parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure this rule is adhered to.

Medical letters are required, following a suspension for medical reasons, to allow a Member to take part in any activity again. The letter should be issued by either the hospital or specialist(s) involved in treating the injury, where appropriate.

9. UNSEEMLY BEHAVIOUR

Unseemly behaviour on the part of riders, team officials, or team supporters will be reported as soon as possible by the Official to The Pony Club Office, and they may be penalised by disqualification of the Branch or Branches concerned for a period up to three years. Any competitor who in the opinion of the Official Steward, or Organiser, has been extremely rude or aggressive towards any officials at a competition or who has behaved in an aggressive or unfair manner to their horse may be disqualified.

10. PERFORMANCE-ENHANCING DRUGS

All performance-enhancing drugs are strictly forbidden and The Pony Club supports 100% clean sport.

a) Equine – Controlled Medication

It is essential for the welfare of a horse/pony that appropriate veterinary treatment is given if and when required. Some medication, however, may mask an underlying health problem so horses and ponies should not take part in training or competition when taking such medication and any Therapeutic Use Exemptions (TUE) should be confirmed in writing by a Vet.

For more information, please refer to the Welfare of Horses and Ponies at Pony Club Activities Policy, available on The Pony Club website.

b) Human

Performance-enhancing drugs are forbidden. The Pony Club supports the approach taken by the UK Anti-Doping Agency in providing clean sport. The Pony Club disciplinary procedures would be used in cases where doping may be suspected including reporting to the UK Anti-Doping Agency.

Testing

All competitors should be aware that random samples may be taken for testing from both themselves and/or their horse/pony. The protocol used will be that of the relevant adult discipline. Competitors and their horses/ponies at national or international level may be subject to blood tests in line with the Sports Council Policy on illegal and prescribed substances. All young people competing at these levels should be made aware of this

Reporting

- i) Anyone who has reasonable grounds for suspecting that a Member is using or selling an illegal substance must report their concerns to the District Commissioner/Centre Proprietor as soon as practicable. If there is an immediate risk to the health, safety or welfare of one or more Members then the Police must be informed as soon as possible. The person reporting their concerns must ensure that any material evidence is retained and should not influence any police investigation.
- ii) Upon receiving a report of suspected use or selling of an illegal substance, the District Commissioner/Centre Proprietor should carry out an immediate investigation of the incident and the circumstances in which it occurred, and then decide upon the appropriate action to be taken. This will include:
 - ▶ Informing the Member's parents/guardians
 - ▶ Informing The Pony Club Area Representative who in turn will inform The Pony Club Office
 - ▶ Informing the Police
 - ▶ Suspending the Member concerned while investigations are completed ▶ Awaiting the completion of Police investigations and actions

Disciplinary Action

The normal disciplinary procedure should be followed in cases relating to alcohol or drugs, which can be found in The Pony Club Handbook

11. DISQUALIFICATION

The Official Steward may disqualify a competitor at any stage of the competition for:

- ▶ Dangerous riding.
- ▶ If, in their option, the horse is lame, sick or exhausted.
- ▶ Misuse of whip, bit, or ill-treatment of the horse.
- ▶ Breach of the rules.
- ▶ Unseemly behaviour, including bad language.

12. SPONSORSHIP

In the case of the competitors and horses, no form of advertising, and this includes a sponsor's name, may appear on the competitor's or horse's clothing and equipment at any Pony Club competition. This does not preclude the wearing of clothing for horses or riders that has been presented by sponsors of the Championships in the current or previous years. Any advertising material that is used by sponsors, whether it is in the form of display banners or programme material, must be tasteful, and not inappropriate to the image of The Pony Club.

13. INSURANCE

The Pony Club 'Public and Products Liability Insurance' Policy includes cover for all the official Area Competitions and the Championships. Details of this insurance are available on The Pony Club website. In the event of any accident, loss or damage occurring to a third party or to the property of a third party (including the general public and competitors) no liability should be admitted, and full details should be sent at once to The Pony Club Office.