

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE FEBRUARY 2011

I have always believed and was taught by Bert Bonnett, that it is the responsibility of a true trail boss to pre-ride the designated trail and be as well equipped and prepared for any happenstance that may occur. The other night I went to a gathering of equestrians where Dr. David Robinson and Dr. Renee Wanner spoke on horse care and trail emergency care. With spring on the horizon and wonderful trail rides planned, I thought I would share my new knowledge.

Even though it is wonderful to have everything, but the kitchen sink, you can be prepared for most trail emergencies with a few basic items. These items relate basically to the care and stabilizing of your horse if an accident occurs. For the care of your horse, your trail kit could include: 12" - 18"

plastic tubing that you can cut to size and insert in your horses nostril in case of a rattle snake bite to the face, Alushield for wound coverage, non stick gauze, small sponge or rags, small bottle of Ivory soap to clean the wound, Vet Wrap, ace bandage or large handkerchief, collapsible small bucket, banamine to administer only if severe inflammation, butte for severe injury. They cautioned against administering too many drugs, which would camouflage the symptoms when you did reach a veterinarian.

We all think safety first, but being prepared for even the smallest incident, only ensures that we all arrive home to venture out again.

If you are interested in learning more on trail first aid, ETI National, would be pleased to sponsor a clinic that would teach basic triage for you and your horse.

Please let us know if you are interested in participating by contacting Debbie, ETI office at 818 698 6200, or me, by email.

Happy Trails,

Linda

For complete article see Feb 2011 National Presidents message.

ETI Calendar



February 27, 2011 Corral 38, High Point Horse Show, Burbank, Contact Mary O'Brien (818) 352-4230 www.Corral38eti.com
March 4 - 6, C 86 Camping Caspers call Irving (661) 268-0098
March 5, C 9 Trail Ride Littlerock Contact Val (661) 264-4163
March 6, C 22 Santa Rosa Valley Ride Contact Gusie (661) 268-0754
March 6, C 126 High Point show Thousand Oaks, Conejo Arena Contact Danelle Williams somanypaints@yahoo.com (805) 644-7094 www.eti126.org
March 12, C 20 trail ride Saddleback Butte (Antelope Valley) Randy
March 12, C 88 Pinon Hills Matt Sheridan Clinic contact Alberta (760) 868-3316
March 12, C 357 Play Day O'Neill Park Contact Jim (949) 459-7742
March 13, 2011 Trail Trial Junior Ambassador's at Vasquez Rocks MS benefit Call Debbie (661) 309-7371 FosterFamilyBF@aol.com
March 18-20, C 22 ride Danielson Ranch, Pt. Mugu Call Tiffanie (818) 522-9923
March 19 High Point Gymkhana at Eastern Riders, Canyon Country Call Pechez (661) 702-9422 sephri@earthlink.net
March 19, C 9 ride Mojave River Forks, Apple Valley call Kaye (661) 944-4927
March 19, C 66 Ride Crystal Lakes/Newberry Springs call Beth (760) 255-4767
March 19, C 83 Tehachapi trail ride Indian Wells call Sue (661) 821-5414
March 19, C 86 Ride in Malibu contact Karen (661) 268-8771
March 19, C 138 ride Acton KOA contact Sue (661) 268-1145
March 20, C 99 Lake Success Ride Contact Jan jibreech@ymail.com
March 26, C36 Malibu Cyn. Natural Horsemanship Ground Skills Workshop with Pat Mitchell / Contact debbie@malibuoaks.com
March 26, C 65 Trail Trial Bakersfield Helen (661)837-2766 heordway@gmail.com
March 26, C 83 ride Tehachapi, Indian Wells, Sue (661) 821-5414
March 26, C 357 Swallows Day Parade Capistrano, Contact Jim (949) 459-7742
March 27, Junior Ambassador High Point Show, Thousand Oaks, Contact: Debbie (818) 698-6200 eti@etinational.com or www.etinational.com

ETI Trail Trial Obstacle Rules



Backup - horse should back willingly and in control with the rider being observant by checking all directions prior to and during backing.

Bridge - horse should walk over calmly.

Downhill - check cinch; saddle should stay in place; horse and rider to remain balanced; rider's legs should not contact horse's legs; horse should be on light contact or less; horse should walk calmly in a straight manner, except when necessary to follow trail; however, on a wide trail a traverse is okay; forward position or Cavalry style will be penalized.

Gate - safe and smooth while mounted; contact with gate should be maintained; judge will state if gate can be opened dismounted without penalty (as for a ranchers gate of wire & sticks); horse to remain calm.

Hoof Check - horse to stand quietly; far side not to be checked from near side with hoof tool; rider to have a hoof tool; control of horse to be maintained.

Lead - horse to follow willingly, not crowd or lag; rider not to coil rope around hand; if halter is in place on animals head, it should be used as opposed to reins.

Log Drag - check cinch; horse's hindquarters should not face log before mounting (judge may hand rider rope to save time); control of horse to be maintained; rope not to be wrapped around hand or coiled; rider should not dally (wrap rope around horn) more than one full turn unless mounted (dallying is optional) - **NO TYING TO SADDLE**; English riders may use hand pull; horse to pull evenly and quietly; unless specified, the direction of a turn shall not be penalized so long as the rope does not contact the horse below the hocks.

Mounting - check cinch, stirrup does not need to be put over saddle; horse to stand quietly; rider to mount smoothly with reins in hand without unbalancing horse; style of mount not to be considered; rider should not be penalized for using available assistance to mount, i.e. rock, log, etc.

Moving Obstacles (i.e. bike, backpacker, etc.) - horse should walk quietly by; a horse's look of interest is okay. Think safety! **No Pop-Up, Spooky, Obstacles!**

Stationary Obstacles (i.e. slicker, staple gun, map, etc.) - horse to stand still and calm; control of horse should be maintained with reins in hand.

Step Over - horse to walk over cleanly; relative size of horse and obstacle should be considered; controlled hop with small animal may be okay.

Stop - horse should stop on command and stand quietly for a specified time.

Tack Check - horse to stand quietly; rider should have a safe way of securing horse (halter and leadline or hobbles); rider should have some type of hoof tool; equipment should be in safe repair; anything beyond this should not be considered.

Tie - tie should be as high as reasonably possible for the rider; keep safety in mind for the horse; any type of quick release is allowed.

Turnaround - horse to turn willingly and in control; always face downhill side to reverse.

Uphill - check cinch; saddle should stay in place; rider should be forward and in balance with horse; holding mane is rider's preference; horse should be on a light contact or less; rider's legs should not contact horse's legs; horse should walk calmly; stopping to let horse blow is at rider discretion.

Water Crossing - horse should walk through water calmly; rider may allow horse to drink - to be without penalty it must be rider indicated.

It is not allowed for a competing horse and/or rider to participate in pre-riding, marking, or to follow a marked trail route before the day and time of competition.

ETI NATIONAL TRAIL TRIAL GUIDELINES FOR RIDERS

Welcome and thanks for coming to our Trail Trials. We have done our best to find natural obstacles on the trail. You may not come across some of these things very often but it will help you to be prepared when you do.

The ride time (not counting performing the obstacles) is about 2 hours of easy to moderate trail.

The trail route is marked with bright colored ribbons; turns are a cluster of ribbons. They will usually be on the right side of the trail unless there is absolutely nothing to clip the ribbon onto. A different color ribbon (usually blue) will be used for overlapping or returning trail if necessary.

At Equestrian Trails, Inc. (ETI) Trail Trials a perfect score is 0 (zero), each obstacle has a maximum of 10 points.

It is your responsibility to have the judge's attention before starting any obstacle. Once you have started, it is the judge's responsibility to keep their eyes on you. This is your test and your moment of glory.

Please refrain from calling out your procedures to the judge when performing an obstacle. "I'm checking my cinch" Make sure you have eye contact and that the judge sees you.

No coaching is allowed to any riders while they are performing an obstacle. ALL parties involved will be given penalty points. You'll only be separated for a few moments and then you can partner up again.

There is **NO SMOKING** allowed on the Trail Trial route. No dogs or foals at side are allowed on trail; stallions may be ridden by those over 18 with permission from management.

If you are riding with several competitors, please encourage smaller groups or those riding alone to pass you. We want to keep backups at a minimum, and this will help.

This Trail Trial is a TEST of you and your horse's ability to accomplish the obstacle in good form. Everyone should be able to complete the obstacle. **You are being judged on how well you do it.** If for some reason you and/or your horse are having difficulty with an obstacle, the judge will ask you to stop and continue your ride to the next obstacle.

If you come to an obstacle and you think it may be unsafe for you and/or your horse, please DON'T do it. Better to take the points. **Safety and common sense are Trail Trial priorities.** We want you and your horse to go home in the same good condition you arrived in.

Please bring all questions or comments regarding the trails, obstacles or judges to the management. Please remember that everyone involved in putting this event on for YOU is a **VOLUNTEER**.

We encourage all competitors to be a Trail Trial judge in order to see the Trail Trials from another perspective. The best judges are those who have competed. It will also help make you and your horse a better team.

GOOD LUCK TO YOU. A list of obstacle guidelines can be found on the ETI web site. <http://www.etinational.com>

What Are Trail Trials?



Trail Trials are a competition on a marked trail, on mountain trails, park trails, and in desert areas with natural or simulated obstacles that can be found on trails. The ride is usually 2-3 hours long. There is a volunteer judge for each of the 10 to 12 obstacles evaluating safety, performance, and control of each horse and rider team. Scoring is by points; zero is the best, with 10 being, well, you need to work on it. Families and friends can ride together at Trail Trials; they only need to separate at each obstacle. Trail Trials are meant to be fun and enjoyable for everyone. There are three divisions: Open, Novice, and Junior. Trail Trials are open to all disciplines of riding: Western, English, Gaited and to all breeds of equines from Draft Horses to Mules to Ponies. Any attire normally worn for trail riding is accepted. Enclosed footwear is required boots are recommended. Approved safety helmets are also recommended. Any type or combination of tack may be used - a saddle and bridle are a must.

ETI has an Instructional DVD Filmed at a Demonstration

The Complete Trail Trial Guide From Planning, to Set Up, to Implementation to Judging and How To Win!

Learn how to maneuver through obstacles encountered at Trail Trials!
Everything You Wanted To Know About Trail Trials But Were Afraid To Ask!

Every equestrian discipline has rules: **Trail Trial Rules can be found on**
<http://etinational.com/trailtrialrules.html>
This DVD explains how to interpret those rules.

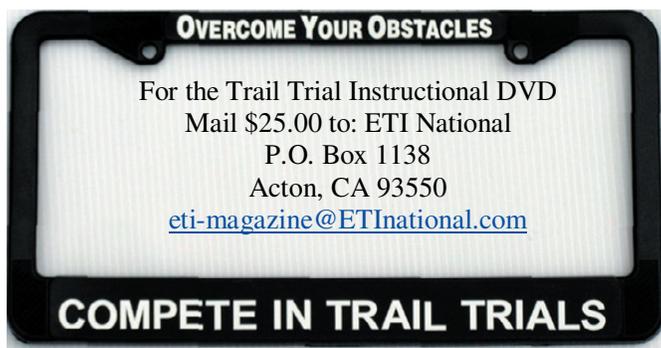
Produced by Cynthia Shaheen, for a preview go to

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=epNGL1pikHo>

Included with the DVD are Entry forms, Tally sheets
Judges scoring sheets and completed samples.



ETI, Equestrian Trails Inc. started writing the rule book on
Trail Trials about 25 years ago. Other organizations have
copied the rules with some variation and promoted the sport.
Enjoy them all.



2011 ETI Trail Trial Dates

March 13, Vasquez Rocks MS benefit contact Debbie (818) 698-6200 eti@ETInational.com
March 26, C 65 Bakersfield contact Helen (661) 837-2766 heordway@gmail.com
April 3, Corral 138 Antelope Valley contact Kimberly ldwight@aol.com (661) 478-2770
April 17, Corral 12 Sylmar/Stetson Contact Patty (818) 367-2056 pattyhug@verizon.net
May 22, Corral 54 Chatsworth contact Lynn (818) 709-7433 leonard@social.r.com
July 17, Convention/Invitational Trail Trial TBD ETI-magazine@ETInational.com

More dates could be added.

Contact the ETI office eti-magazine@ETInational.com
if you would like to host an ETI Sanctioned Trail Trial.

JUDGING GUIDELINES

We encourage you to be very critical in your judging. Don't forget that 0 = Perfect. When we say "perfect," we do not mean "pretty good." You will see many horses and riders come through looking good, but in order to keep ties to a minimum we need to distinguish "pretty good" from "perfect." The judge's sheet has several columns to help you. Study the point criteria carefully and decide what you will be looking for in your perfect horse and rider team. Watch the team while they are performing the obstacle. Then write any flaws on the judge's sheet.

At most Trail Trials, the first rider will start at 9:00 a.m. and the last rider should be out by 11 a.m. Bring water, snacks and something to read while you wait. If you put up an umbrella by your chair, it must remain for all riders so everything is consistent.

Put your "wait here" sign about 20-30 feet from your obstacle, around a corner and out of sight of your obstacle if at all possible. You can say, "This is your uphill", or whatever the name of your obstacle is. **Do not tell them what they need to do to get a good score though. Knowing that, as well as being able to perform it, is what they are being judged on.** Ask the rider to proceed when ready and you start judging them at that point. Observe the normal walk of that equine, ears and head height. Each breed carries itself differently. If the horse refuses to leave his buddy and the next horse needs to start, note that as a refusal for the earlier horse. Riders are allowed three attempts. Each refusal is 3 points. If they quit at any point before three refusals those points are added. In other words if they attempt the obstacle, can't do it and come back for their score, they don't JUST get those 3 points, they get ten. Do not let any distractions take your concentration from the team that is performing your obstacle once you have given them permission to start. (This is their moment of glory).

A perfect score at any obstacle is a 0 (zero). But they must be absolutely perfect. If you give a zero to a really good rider but someone smoother comes through, you have no way of giving them better than zero. Maximum score is 10 (ten) points. Judging hard and **CONSISTENT** is very crucial in helping to eliminate ties at the end and helps the rider learn. This is their test.

Verbal cues are to be regarded the same as leg and hand cues. A rider needs to cue their animal in some manner in order to communicate with it. The amount of cueing needed is what is judged. A small squeeze of the legs, subtle weight change, easy pull on the reins, or a small sound should be enough for the horse to respond. A squeeze and click or "come on" is normal.

Each type of horse carries itself a little differently and the size of the animal may make a difference in how the obstacle can be performed. Watch the attitude and carriage of the equine and rider performing the obstacle as well as the approach and departure. Examples: Arabs usually carry themselves higher and faster than a Quarter Horse. But, all animals can act as calmly on the trail as they would in their own corral.

If someone is having a lot of difficulty with an obstacle - taking a lot of time or having 3 (three) refusals - please excuse them from your obstacle. Riders behind will back up quickly at your obstacle if they are given too much time at it. This is not their training ground, but their TEST. If we keep backups at a minimum, the ride will flow and everyone will be happier.

To determine **refusals**, look to see if the horse and rider are not able to maintain forward motion. A stop and **lack of forward motion by sidestepping, turning around or backing up is a refusal.** They are permitted 3 attempts before you should ask them to find another way around. They need to be penalized for each attempt according to your judge's sheet.

If you want to explain to a contestant what they did wrong, and there is time, (no line of contestants waiting) according to your guidelines and judgment, make sure you **FACE AWAY FROM THE REST OF THE CONTESTANTS AND SPEAK SOFTLY.** Your voice carries a long way and all waiting riders will be tuned into your comments in order to acquire clues on how to do your obstacle better. You can tell a rider why they did not get a perfect score in one or two sentences. Do NOT get into any longer of a conversation if you see a rider waiting to compete. **Long waits are a rider's nightmare.**

Wait for the drag rider to get to your obstacle before leaving. Bring back everything you took so we will have it for next time.

Adapted from the excellent Trail Trial committee at Corral 54, Chatsworth and Corral 12, Sylmar.

If a rider looks like they could be in danger tell them to STOP. Don't encourage a rider to 'try' an obstacle if they don't think their horse can handle it.

Riders, remember the judges are volunteers you may not agree with them but their time is appreciated.