

# 2026 AERC Rules & Regulations



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P.O. Box 6027, Auburn, CA 95604 • 866-271-2372 • 530-823-2260

Website: AERC.org • E-mail: office@aerc.org

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The following rules and regulations have been adopted by the Board of Directors of the AERC and are binding on AERC sanctioned rides.

While the AERC assumes that most participants are responsible and caring, it is recognized that a highly competitive and demanding sport requires regulation. The AERC's concern in establishing rules and regulations is to assure that competition occurs within standardized parameters considered fair and reasonably safe for equine and rider. The AERC services the requirements of the competitor by promulgating and establishing rules and regulations, recording and publishing results of events, and providing awards; but the competitor is ultimately responsible for self and mount before, during and after an endurance ride. AERC Rules and Regulations provide minimum conditions and directives for managing and competing in AERC sanctioned endurance rides. Additional measures may be taken by any ride to provide greater safety for equine and rider.

All entrants in any distance of a ride know and agree that their entry into the ride is with the stipulation that all activities that relate to the ride are subject to use by AERC for analysis of ways to improve and educate all concerned be they riders, ride managers, control judges or treatment veterinarians.

The following documents complement and provide additional information for AERC Rules and Regulations: AERC Ride Manager's Handbook, AERC Control Judge's Handbook. These publications are available through the AERC office.

## GENERAL RULES

**1. The ride must be at least 50 miles in length per day, up to a maximum distance of 150 miles in three days. For special sanction rides, see rule 16.2 and 16.2.1. Mileage is expected to be measured accurately. A 5% variance is acceptable due to human and mechanical error.**

**1.1** Rides are sanctioned for a certain number of miles.

**1.1.1** Mileage over 50 must be a multiple of five, ending in a 0 or 5, whichever is the nearest whole number to the actual ride mileage (e.g., 52.4 miles = 50, 52.5 miles = 55).

**1.2** Endurance rides which are sanctioned for more than one distance (such as a 50 and a 100 held over the same course at the same time) have the option of allowing riders to "elevate" from one ride into the other, subject to the following restrictions: The rider may only elevate from a shorter distance into a longer distance; the rider may elevate only once; upon elevating, the rider is no longer considered to be a starter or a finisher in the shorter ride; and the rules on reduced Bonus Points for rides with fewer than five starters in a one-day 100 or eleven starters in any other distance apply.

**1.2.1** Elevator rides must be indicated on the sanction application and advertised as such.

**1.2.2** The rider must state which mileage he will enter if a multiple mileage ride; e.g., 50 mile, 100 mile.

**1.2.3** A rider who elevates is eligible for completion only.

**1.2.4** If the starting times are not the same, elevating riders must have the time limits of Rule 5 applied to their original ride's starting time.

**1.3** The sanctioned ride mileage(s) cannot be changed later than 60 days before the ride; points and miles will be awarded according to the mileage for which the ride is sanctioned (see Rule 16).

**1.3.1** The exception to this policy is the case where an emergency forces a last-minute trail change, in which case points and mileage are awarded according to the actual mileage reported to the AERC.

**1.3.2** A change in mileage and/or ride results certified by AERC may be mandated by the Protest and Grievance Committee or the Board.

**2. The equines must be under the control of control judge(s) experienced with equines or endurance rides.**

**2.1** The ride must employ at least one control judge whose services will be exclusive to that event, pre-ride, during the ride, and post-ride (at least one control judge must be at the ride site for at least one hour after the last equine crosses the finish line or has returned to ride camp).

**2.1.1** The most current version of the AERC Ride Manager's Handbook, AERC Control Judge's Handbook, and the AERC Rules and Regulations must be provided by AERC to the Ride Manager. These books must be provided to the control judges by

the Ride Manager prior to the ride, and must be available for reference at the ride.

**2.1.2** Control judges are veterinarians employed by ride management to monitor the equines and counsel riders and ride management on equine welfare as well as to uphold the AERC rules. Control judges are persons that have graduated with a Degree in Veterinary Medicine from an institution of recognized standing. A control judge will provide judgment as to an equine's ability to remain in competition. Control judges are not to provide a diagnosis and will refer equines identified as requiring diagnostics to a veterinarian legally licensed to practice. A control judge who is also a veterinarian legally licensed to practice may perform concurrent duties outside the role of control judge such as providing a diagnosis and/or medical treatment. A control judge must be an AERC member, prior to the publication of the ride results, either as a regular member or as a control judge. A veterinarian supplying treatment only is not required to be an AERC member. Licensed veterinarians are prohibited from acting as either control judges or treatment veterinarians during any period of licensure suspension or revocation in any state. The Head Control Judge must be/have been an AERC member for a minimum of two months prior to the ride. Both regular Adult or Control Judge memberships are acceptable. Exceptions are allowed if the scheduled head control judge must cancel due to emergency circumstances that do not allow them to attend the ride. In such case, the Ride Manager must notify the AERC Office of the change who shall then notify the AERC Veterinary Committee.

**2.1.3** A veterinarian who is serving as ride manager of an AERC sanctioned event is prohibited from serving that same event as a control judge.

**2.1.4** Each equine will receive a substantive physical examination of metabolic and mechanical parameters before the ride, at control points within the ride and after the ride. All AERC sanctioned rides must use an AERC approved rider card for the control judge(s) to record the results of their examinations.

**2.1.5** The control judge is responsible for making decisions in relation to all matters concerning equine health and welfare at events. The control judge may immediately disqualify an equine for health, dangerous behavior, and/or welfare issues, including violations of AERC Rules 11 and 13.

**2.1.5.1** The ride manager may not overrule a control judge's decision on equine judging, welfare, or veterinary matters, including disqualifications.

**2.1.5.2** Equines disqualified by the control judge must not continue on. This practice by a rider is considered grounds for barring that rider from future rides.

**2.1.5.3** The rider/owner of an equine disqualified by a control judge should be notified immediately by that control judge or the ride manager.

**2.1.6** Management must be confident that there is complete understanding with the control judge(s) regarding P&R criteria, any other disqualification criteria, and particularly post-ride criteria for completion.

**2.1.6.1** The setting of judging parameters, including but not limited to pulse rate and respiration, shall be determined by the head control judge. Since the ambient conditions are of prime concern in the setting of parameters, these parameters should not be finalized more than 24 hours prior to ride start.

**2.1.6.2** Any equine not meeting pulse rate criteria within 30 minutes of arrival at a control checkpoint will be disqualified. The exception to this rule is when the post-finish line time to meet pulse criteria has been officially extended per Rule 6.2.1.

**2.1.7** All control checkpoints must be staffed by a control judge who will provide the required control. The type of checkpoint and duration of the hold will, in all cases, be designated by the head control judge. The duration of the hold time will be uniform for all riders entering the hold. There must be at least one checkpoint and hold during all rides of 25 miles or more. It is recommended that all checkpoints be of the "gate into a hold" type.

**2.1.8** Equines that are treated or die at rides shall be reported on a form with ride results to be completed by the control judge and submitted with ride results. This information will be kept permanently on file at the AERC office.

### **3. The ride must be open to any breed or type of equine.**

**3.1** The equines entered in distances of 50 or more miles must be at least 60 months of age at the time of the ride with the exception of those entered in single day 100 mile rides. Equines entered in single day 100 mile distances must be at least 72 months of age at the time of the ride.

**3.1.1** Age is figured from actual date of birth. In cases of no papers on an equine, a control judge's opinion and discretion must prevail.

**3.2** Rides may limit the number of competitors provided that prior publicity states the limitation and that all spaces and vacancies are filled on a first-come, first-served basis.

**3.3** An equine which constitutes a clear danger to other equines and/or persons may be disqualified at any time from competition, by the ride manager or control judge.

**3.4** Equines shall have a body condition score of no less than 3.0 and no greater than 8.0 to start an endurance ride. Control judges will use the Henneke Body Condition Scoring Guide in determining body condition score. Body condition score will only

be judged during the pre-ride veterinary examination.

**4. Entry to a ride may be refused for cause, however:**

**4.1** Entry may not be denied if to do so would violate Federal and State civil rights laws.

**4.2** Entry may not be denied if the sole purpose is to intentionally provide an unfair competitive advantage to one rider over another.

**5. The ride must provide a specific amount of time (total competition time) which will include all stops and holds, and within which competitors must complete the ride to qualify for placing or completion.**

**5.1** There may be no minimum time limit for completion.

**5.2** Maximum competition time will be according to the following prescription: 12 hours for 50 miles, 24 hours for 100 miles, and other distances to be according to the chart in Appendix A. In the case of 2-day 100s and similar events, the total completion time allowed is based on daily mileage.

**5.3** Riding time is the time used by the competitors to complete the course, excluding all hold times, and is the time used for AERC ride results.

**5.4** There must be a pre-designated marked finish line perpendicular across the trail.

**5.5** All riders must be notified in writing of cut-off times no later than the pre-ride meeting.

**6. Completion requires meeting all of the following criteria:**

**a.** All riders and mounts must be present and accounted for at the start of the ride.

**b.** Properly entered in the ride.

**c.** Obeying all the rules.

**d.** Following the prescribed course, and doing multiple loops in the correct order.

**e.** Passing all control points.

**f.** Passing control check requirements.

**g.** Finishing within the prescribed maximum time.

**h.** Not being disqualified.

**i.** Meeting criteria at post-finish line check.

**j.** Meeting any other criteria prescribed by ride management.

**k.** Not having been paced or prompted by an un-entered, withdrawn, or otherwise unauthorized equine, vehicle, or a person other than another entrant. This does not preclude the ordinary support services of attendants or pit crews. A crew may accompany their rider down a public road in a support vehicle (unless there is a ride management prohibition against it) provided they do not push or haze the equine.

**l.** Whenever mounted, all Young Riders below the age of 18 must wear properly fastened helmets.

**6.1** A competitor must pass all control judge criteria for completion; a competitor who fails any of the other completion criteria may be allowed a completion, but with no placing, if, in the opinion of ride management, the violation was not intentional and did not result in making the course easier or shorter.

**6.2** Each AERC sanctioned ride must have a post-finish line control check, which the equine must pass for a successful completion. The post-finish-line control check is where the final criteria for completion must be met; an equine has not completed the ride until it has passed this check. The post-finish-line control check also serves as a safety check to monitor for late-developing problems (so that they can be treated if necessary) as well as extending control over the last leg of the ride. Because an equine at the finish line is not, in actuality, going on—and not going into the wilderness far from veterinary aid—the standards for completion need not be as strict as those on the trail, but they must meet the minimum standards below. See the Control Judge's Handbook for more information.

**6.2.1** The minimum criteria for the post-finish-line control check are as follows. The head control judge of any ride may adopt more stringent criteria, including the final pulse rate criteria, as part of the setting of the judging parameters under Rule 2.1.6.1. Additionally, the ride manager may increase the maximum time to meet the final pulse rate by up to 30 minutes after crossing the finish line if circumstances dictate a need for additional time to reach the final control check. Notice of any change in the maximum time to meet the final pulse rate criterion and notice of any other more stringent criteria for the post-finish line control check must be provided to competitors by written notice posted in a conspicuous location at the ride camp at least 12 hours prior to the start of the ride and shall also be presented by the ride manager or head control judge at any pre-ride briefing or meeting.

**6.2.1.1** Each equine must pass the post-ride control check within one hour of crossing the finish line. Each equine is required to pass the final pulse rate criterion alone in 30 minutes but shall have the full hour from finish to pass other completion criteria. After meeting the final pulse criterion, riders may present their equines for the final examination for other completion criteria at a time of their choosing during the one-hour period. An equine that does not meet the established pulse and completion criteria

shall be disqualified. Once a competing equine has passed the post-ride examination, it may not be removed from completion for veterinary reasons.

**6.2.1.2** The equine must reach a reasonable pulse recovery based on ambient conditions. The maximum final pulse criterion is 64 beats per minute; however, the control judge(s) may allow a higher final pulse criterion in documented extreme weather conditions. Respiration should be evaluated on its own merit. Ambient temperature and humidity effects need to be recognized and their effects on respiration rate are considered.

**6.2.1.3** The equine must be metabolically stable, sufficient to demonstrate fitness to continue.

**6.2.1.4** There will be no gait aberration that is consistently observable under all circumstances that results in pain or threatens immediate athletic performance. This examination will be conducted at a trot, or an equivalent gait, straight out and back, without prior flexion or palpation. It must be recognized that we are dealing with a risk sport with its inherent wear and tear. Control judges must also be flexible enough to evaluate the equine injured after completing the course, etc. This is posed as a very minimum criterion not designed to disqualify legitimate stiffness and "leg weariness" but to discourage over usage between the last control checkpoint and the finish line.

**6.2.1.5** Soreness, lacerations, and wounds on the limbs and body—including the mouth—must be noted on the rider card. Lesions that are aggravated to a degree that affects the equine's ability to continue may be a cause for failure to complete the ride. It must be recognized by control judges that lesions caused by tack and interference may be from mild to severe and need to be evaluated on their own merit.

**6.2.1.6** Evaluation of other monitoring parameters must indicate the equine is not in need of any medical treatment. It must be borne in mind that pulse rate, respiration and soundness are but three of the important parameters considered in the state of condition evaluation.

**6.2.1.7** The equine may not have received prohibited treatment as defined in Rule 13 by a veterinarian or layman prior to the final examination.

**6.3** All riders who successfully complete the ride must receive a completion award.

## **7. Placements will be determined by the order of finish of those who have met the completion requirements.**

**7.1** AERC accepts ties. In the case of ties, the points to be awarded shall be the sum of the positions divided by the number of people who tied. There would never be more than 10 equines in the top ten unless the last place in the top 10 would bring the total in excess of 10 equines.

## **8. The AERC will record points and mileage for AERC members.**

**8.1** Points are calculated on the basis of actual finishing position regardless of whether other competitors are AERC members or not. Equines that are entered in an AERC sanctioned event must be registered prior to the event with AERC in order for the rider to receive points and the equine to receive mileage.

**8.2** Members whose dues are not paid by February 1st will receive no points or miles for rides held between December 1st and the date their membership is restored.

**8.2.1** These points cannot be recovered, but the miles may be recovered for career mileage credit by contacting the AERC office.

**8.3** A new member will be able to obtain mileage credit for miles ridden prior to the date of joining by contacting the AERC office.

**8.4** Career mileage credit only for AERC members and equines who participate in endurance rides in a foreign country at least 50 miles long and sanctioned by an AERC recognized organization to be confirmed, in advance of the rider's participation, through the AERC office.

### **8.5 Points**

**8.5.1** The AERC has two divisions (Senior and Junior) based on the age of the rider, independent of any ride management rules governing junior and senior riders.

**8.5.2** There are weight divisions and a Young Rider division within the Senior Division. Competitors are recorded in weight divisions or the Young Rider division as indicated in the ride results. Weight division riders and Young Riders earn points per mile and bonus points based upon the charts in Appendix A, "Points Per Mile, Senior Division." The number of year-end award recipients for riders in weight divisions and in the Young Rider division are determined by the number of riders in each region.

**8.5.2.1** Heavyweight, consisting of riders whose combined body weight and tack is 211 pounds or more.

**8.5.2.2** Middleweight, consisting of riders whose combined body weight and tack is from 186 to 210 pounds.

**8.5.2.3** Lightweight, consisting of riders whose combined body weight and tack is from 161 to 185 pounds.

**8.5.2.4** Featherweight, consisting of riders whose combined body weight and tack is 160 pounds or below.

**8.5.2.5** Young Rider, consisting of riders who are between 16 and 21 years of age as of the first day of the AERC ride sea-

son (December 1). This division also includes any Juniors (under 16 years of age) who have been granted permission to ride unsponsored per rule 10.3.

**8.5.2.6** For a rider to stay within a weight division, they must meet the minimum requirement but need not stay under the maximum parameter.

**8.5.3** Each rider riding for weight division points may be weighed at any ride.

**8.5.3.1** Any other rider has the right to challenge the weight of a competitor and request a weighing.

**8.5.3.2** Management must exercise reasonable discretion in making allowances for normal weight loss of rider during competition and inaccuracy of ride scales. (A 4% allowance applied evenly to all competitors would be reasonable.)

**8.5.4** Ride results list all completing riders in order of finish along with their division.

**8.5.4.1** The AERC will disqualify any members found to have deliberately given AERC fraudulent information regarding weight, age or any matter affecting national or regional awards. No points or miles awarded for entire year.

**8.5.5** AERC computes points within each division except the Junior division based on the following formula (one point per mile, plus bonus points per mile for Top Ten, equals total points per mile):

Place	Bonus/ Mile	Total Points/Mile
1	2.0	3.0
2	1.5	2.5
3	1.2	2.2
4	1.0	2.0
5	0.8	1.8
6	0.6	1.6

**8.5.5.1-a** Where there are fewer than five Senior starters (all weight divisions added together) in a one-day 100-mile ride, all bonus points (overall and weight division) are reduced by the following methods.

**8.5.5.1-b** Where there are fewer than eleven Senior starters (all weight divisions added together) in any distance less than 100 miles, all bonus points (overall and weight division) are reduced by the following methods.

**8.5.5.2** Junior starters for a ride shall not be counted in the overall count for starters.

**8.5.5.3** Bonus points that would have been earned by the place equal to the total number of Senior starters are subtracted from every finisher's points.

**8.5.5.4** Points are calculated in the Junior Division based on Top Five placing, according to the following formula:

Place	Bonus	Total Points/Mile
1	2.0	3.0
2	1.2	2.2
3	0.8	1.8
4	0.4	1.4
5	0.2	1.2
6 & lower	0.0	1.0

**8.5.5.5** Where there are fewer than six junior starters, bonus points are reduced by the same method as for the Senior riders.

**8.6** Members completing one-day rides of 100 or more sanctioned miles receive 1.5 times the number of points listed above. Members competing in rides from 75 to 95 miles receive 1.25 times the number of points listed above.

**8.7** If a member moves to a different AERC Region prior to June 1, all points and mileage will be recorded in the Region to which that member moves; in a move on or after June 1, all points and mileage remain in the original Region.

## **9. An award will be available for the equine judged to be in the Best Condition.**

**9.1** The award does not have to be given.

**9.1.1** The control judge(s) may feel that none of the equines in contention for the award deserve to receive it.

**9.2** Use of the AERC Best Condition System is optional with ride management.

**9.2.1** Only equines selected as Best Condition using this system (with Best Condition forms returned along with the ride results) are recognized by the AERC.

**9.2.2** Rides have the option of giving other best conditions besides the AERC Best Condition if they wish.

**9.2.3** The AERC recognizes only one Best Condition equine at any one ride.

**9.3** Under the AERC system, all equines placing in the top ten will be eligible for the Best Condition award.

**9.3.1** The control judge(s) will be the sole judge of the equine scoring portion of the award.

**9.3.2** Ride management determines the weight and time portion of the awards.

**9.3.3** Procedure in the event of a tie (best condition score), the equine among those tied with the highest equine scoring sec-

tion will be the winner. If there is still a tie, the equine among those still tied that finished ahead of the other(s) will be the winner.

**9.4** The AERC recognizes a National Regional Best Condition Champion Equine, according to the following system:

**9.4.1** Each member owned equine receiving a Best Condition by the ride shall receive one point per mile of sanctioned ride length (in the Best Condition point system—those points do not go into the overall point system).

**9.4.1.1** If there are fewer than ten starting equines, the points are reduced by 10% for each starter fewer than ten; that is, if there are nine starters, the points are reduced by 10%, for eight starters, by 20%, and so forth. However if there is only one starting equine, no Best Condition points shall be awarded.

**9.4.2** At the end of the ride season, the member-owned equine in each Region with the highest number of points in this system, irrespective of the number of different riders which may have ridden the equine, shall be the Regional Best Condition Champion. The member owned equine with the highest number nationally shall be the National Best Condition Champion.

**9.4.2.1** Equines must receive two Best Condition awards or a minimum of 100 Best Condition points during the ride season to qualify for these awards.

**9.5** Overt hazing is prohibited during Best Condition judging. Overt hazing is defined as, but not limited to, the use of any object used directly or indirectly to strike, threaten or otherwise stimulate an equine to move or behave with more animation than might otherwise be produced. The use of a crop or lunge whip is prohibited. Reasonable signals to cue a trot-out gaiting to the equine are acceptable.

**10. All Junior riders must be accompanied by an adult sponsor (18 years or older) through the completion of the ride. The Junior and sponsor must ride together at all times, including entering and leaving all control checks at the same time; the only exception being that at the finish a Junior riding a 50-mile or greater distance ride may finish within the same minute or within the one minute on either side of the sponsor's finishing time.**

**10.1** A Junior is a rider who was under the age of 16 as of the first day of the ride season in which the ride is held.

**10.1.1** When mounted, all juniors (whether sponsored or unsponsored) must wear properly fastened helmets.

**10.2** Junior riders may participate in AERC competition only with the written consent of a parent or guardian. This consent shall imply:

**10.2a.** Acceptance of all AERC rules, particularly the ability of a Junior to substitute a sponsor during a ride as allowed by AERC rules and regulations; and,

**10.2b.** Prior consent to any emergency medical treatment or aid.

**10.3** An AERC member 14 years or older who has completed 500 miles or more in the AERC rider mileage program may ride unsponsored, but will compete in the senior division.

**10.3.1** Such unsponsored young rider must have on file in the AERC office a letter by parent or guardian which consents to and requests unsponsored status.

**10.3.2** The AERC office will then provide a letter for this unsponsored young rider verifying 500 miles in AERC rider mileage program, which letter must be presented to ride management at check-in or earlier.

**10.3.3** Management may choose not to honor the "unsponsored young rider" concept and require all persons under 16 years of age to have sponsors.

**10.4** The sponsor must be an adult and must be duly entered as a competitor in the event, and sponsorship must be documented on the ride entry form.

**10.4.1** Junior and/or sponsor normally may suspend their sponsorship agreement only at regular stated checks and then only with the knowledge and consent of ride management, and management's documentation of the change when it occurs.

**10.4.1.1** Sponsorships may change between checks only in the event that either competitor or either competitor's mount is unable to continue safely to a checkpoint.

**10.4.1.2** In the event that the pre-registered sponsor of the Junior is unable to continue, and if no other willing entered adult sponsors in any distance and on the same loop of trail are available, the Junior may be sponsored by un-entered adult rider(s) through the completion of the ride with ride management and control judge approval. The Junior would receive a completion only. The un-entered sponsor will receive no points or credit for mileage. The Junior may also be sponsored by an adult on foot with the approval of ride management. Any un-entered sponsor must be either a current member or a Single Event Member (also commonly known as "day member").

**10.4.1.3** In order to ensure equine welfare and in accordance with the provisions of Rule 2, any equine being ridden by an un-entered sponsor shall receive a substantive physical examination by the control judge of metabolic and mechanical parameters at all control checks and, if practical, before the equine is ridden by the un-entered sponsor. Any equine being ridden by an un-entered sponsor may be disqualified from participation during the ride by the control judge. Any equine being ridden by an un-entered sponsor must also receive a veterinary safety check at the finish.

**10.5** Infraction of the sponsorship shall result in either the sponsor and/or the Junior being disqualified.

**10.6** AERC points must be submitted and recorded per the above regulations independent of ride management's local ride rules governing Junior and Senior riders.

**11. While the welfare of an equine participating in an endurance ride is the primary responsibility of the rider, it is also the responsibility of everyone participating in an endurance ride whether as a rider, crew member, ride official, control judge or spectator to protect the welfare of equines at the ride.**

**11.1** No one participating in an endurance ride shall abuse an equine present at a ride. Abuse of an equine includes but is not limited to:

Beating, striking, excessively whipping, or otherwise inflicting cruelty upon an equine.

Recklessly overriding an equine or riding in a manner likely to cause harm or injury.

Failing to provide adequate care or otherwise neglecting an equine.

Conduct towards an equine which is prejudicial to the sport of endurance riding and puts the sport in a negative light.

**12. It is the duty of everyone participating in an endurance ride whether as a rider, crew member, ride official, ride volunteer, control judge or spectator to act in a manner which does not disrupt the ride or reflect poorly on the sport of endurance riding.**

**12.1** No one participating in an endurance ride shall engage in abusive behavior towards any other participant or member of the public at an endurance ride. Abusive behavior towards people includes but is not limited to:

Verbal abuse.

Physical assault.

Causing or threatening injury.

Unreasonably endangering the safety or life of others or their equines.

Damaging or trespassing on property.

Unsportsmanlike conduct.

Conduct prejudicial to the endurance ride or to the sport of endurance riding.

**12.2** Owners/riders must adequately restrain or contain their equines at the ride venue. The owner/rider is responsible for ensuring secure restraint of equines under their care and supervision from the time of arrival at the venue until final departure, whether the equines are entered into competition or not.

### **13. Prohibited Substances and Treatments: General Provisions:**

**13.1** The purpose of this rule against the use of Prohibited Substances or Prohibited Treatments in equines during endurance rides is both to protect the equines from harm and to ensure fair competition. Endurance equines should compete under their natural abilities without the influence of any drug, medication or veterinary treatment.

**13.1.1** Prohibited Substances or Prohibited Treatments as defined in this rule shall not be administered to or used in an equine competing in an endurance ride. No equine in which a Prohibited Substance or its metabolite is present shall compete in an endurance ride, regardless of when the Prohibited Substance was administered to it.

**13.1.2** For purposes of this rule, an equine shall be considered to be competing in an endurance ride from the time it passes its pre-ride control check until the time it either has been pulled during a ride or is examined for its post-ride control check after finishing a ride. If the equine stands for best condition judging, it will be considered to be still competing until the end of its post-ride control check or the end of the best condition judging. Each day of a multiple day ride shall be considered a separate ride for purposes of this rule, except that equines competing on consecutive days shall be considered to be competing during the entire time between the rides on those days.

#### **13.2 Prohibited Substances:**

**13.2.1** The products identified in Appendix A to this rule are Prohibited Substances.

**13.2.2** A substance which is not identified by name in 13.2.1 above is a Prohibited Substance if it falls within the categories identified on Appendix B to this rule.

**13.2.3** Notwithstanding any other provision of this rule, the products or categories of substances identified in Appendix C to this rule are not Prohibited Substances.

**13.2.4** If a substance is not identifiable as a Prohibited Substance under 13.2.1 or 13.2.2 above or is not specifically allowed under 13.2.3 above, it is a Prohibited Substance if it is (a) either an exogenous substance or an endogenous substance administered in abnormal amounts, and is (b) potentially harmful to the equine or performance enhancing.

**13.2.5** The AERC recognizes that trace amounts may be detected of some substances which are commonly used for treating equines and which are considered not to influence equines during competition when present under certain threshold levels.

The AERC also recognizes that trace amounts may also be detected of substances which have no legitimate use in equines but which are present at extremely low levels from unintentional and unavoidable exposure to environmental contamination. Accordingly, notwithstanding any other provision of this rule, the following specific substances only are not Prohibited Substances if detected in concentrations below the threshold amount corresponding to the substance in the table shown in Appendix D to this rule.

**13.2.6** General guidelines for the length of time selected substances remain in an equine's system are set out in Appendix E to this rule. These detection time guidelines are advisory only and are not a part of this rule governing Prohibited Substances. The detection time for a Prohibited Substance varies with the size and health of the equine, the method of administration, dosage, the testing method and the detection limits used by the testing laboratory, among other factors. Accordingly, these detection time guidelines shall not affect the determination of whether or not there has been a violation of this rule. Reliance on these detection time guidelines does not guarantee compliance with this rule.

**13.3 Prohibited Treatments:**

**13.3.1** The treatments or procedures identified in Appendix F to this rule are Prohibited Treatments if administered to an equine while it is competing in an endurance ride.

**13.3.2** Prohibited Treatments while an equine is competing in an endurance ride shall also include any diagnostic procedures involving the use of a needle, syringe or other device or instrument except for a stethoscope, heart rate monitor, rectal or skin temperature thermometer, or syringe for the oral administration of permitted substances. Drawing blood or measuring blood parameters by any means including, but not limited to, transdermal methods from an equine while it is competing in an endurance ride is a Prohibited Treatment unless it is done for diagnostic or research purposes and access to results or other information from measuring blood parameters is withheld from the equine's rider, owner and crew from the time the ride starts until after the equine has finished competing in the ride. The intention to draw blood or measure blood parameters by any means from an equine for diagnostic or research purposes must be declared in writing to the head control judge at the time of the equine's pre-ride control check so that there is no misinterpretation during competition of the purpose for using the needle and syringe necessary for drawing blood or instruments needed to measure blood parameters.

**13.3.3** The following veterinary procedures are considered Prohibited Treatments even if performed prior to time the treated equine is competing in an endurance ride:

**13.3.3.1** Shockwave therapy is a Prohibited Treatment unless performed more than seven days prior to the time the treated equine is competing in an endurance ride.

**13.3.3.2** Surgical or chemical neurectomy, whenever it is performed, is a Prohibited Treatment. No equine which has been the subject of a neurectomy at any time after the effective date of this rule shall compete in an endurance ride.

**13.3.4** Notwithstanding any other provision of this rule, the treatments or procedures identified in Appendix G to this rule are not Prohibited Treatments even if administered to an equine while it is competing in an endurance ride.

**13.4 Revision of Appendices:**

**13.4.1** The appendices referred to in this rule shall be periodically updated by the AERC upon the advice of its Veterinary Committee and shall be published on an annual basis with the AERC Rules.

**13.5 Enforcement Procedures:**

**13.5.1** Any equine and rider violating this rule at an endurance ride shall forfeit any completion or placing for the ride. The AERC may impose additional penalties for violation of this rule on any person responsible for the violation. Normally, the rider of the equine and its owner shall be considered the persons responsible for its custody and care at a ride. Accordingly the rider of the equine and its owner shall avoid liability for additional penalties for violation of this rule only by showing by clear and convincing evidence that: (a) some other person outside of the rider or owner's control was responsible for the violation and (b) the rider or owner bore no fault for the violation.

**13.5.2** Every rider or other person in control of an equine at an endurance ride shall upon request by an AERC approved veterinarian or governmental testing representative permit a specimen of urine, saliva, blood or other substance to be collected from the equine for testing. Refusing to allow or cooperate with testing for Prohibited Substances at an endurance ride shall be considered to be the same as the administration or use of a Prohibited Substance and shall be grounds for immediate disqualification from the event as well as the imposition of additional penalties by the AERC.

**13.5.3** The AERC shall with the advice of the Veterinary Committee establish and publish procedures for the testing for Prohibited Substances. Upon receipt of a laboratory report from an approved laboratory showing the presence in a test sample from an equine competing in an endurance ride of a substance which may be a Prohibited Substance under this rule the following shall occur:

**13.5.3.1** The Executive Director shall promptly forward, by electronic transmission, copies of the laboratory report to the Veterinary Committee and the Legal Committee (hereinafter the "Notification Documents"). The date of transmission of the



Notification Documents is the "Notification Date."

**13.5.3.2** The Veterinary Committee and the Legal Committee shall, within 10 business days of the Notification Date, each notify in writing the Executive Director with the opinion to either proceed with the filing of a Protest for a violation of this Rule 13 or request additional time and resources to independently verify material concerns regarding the Notification Documents (hereinafter the "Independent Investigation Period").

**13.5.3.3** If both the Veterinary Committee and the Legal Committee affirm the Notification Documents meet the criteria of a Rule 13 violation then the Executive Director shall initiate a Protest on behalf of AERC.

**13.5.3.4** If either the Veterinary Committee or the Legal Committee requests an Independent Investigation Period then a 30 business day period shall commence during which the respective committee may conduct a confidential investigation governed by the professional ethics and best practices guidelines of their licensing bodies. The Independent Investigation Period commences with notification to the Executive Director by the respective committee of the request for additional investigation into the possible violation of this Rule 13.

**13.5.3.4.1** If either the Veterinary Committee or the Legal Committee seeks additional information which can only be obtained by direct communication with the alleged violator then a letter of Independent Investigation request shall be issued (hereinafter the "Notice of Independent Investigation").

**13.5.3.5** If after the Independent Investigation Period has ended both the Veterinary Committee and the Legal Committee confirm that the Notification Documents together with the findings of the Independent Investigation Period conclude that a possible violation of Rule 13 occurred then the Executive Director shall initiate a Protest on behalf of AERC.

**13.5.3.6** If after the Independent Investigation Period has ended the Veterinary Committee and the Legal Committee are not in agreement on whether a Protest should be filed, then the AERC Executive Committee shall be the final arbiter to either allow a Protest to be initiated or to disallow a Protest to be initiated. For the avoidance of doubt, if one committee says a Protest should be filed and the other committee says a Protest should not be filed, then the AERC Executive Committee shall, based on the Notification Documents together with the findings of the Independent Investigation Period, cast the final vote as to whether a Protest shall be filed.

**13.5.4** The Executive Director shall at all times and with all communication maintain the confidentiality and anonymity of the individual named in the Notification Documents and all communications related to a possible Rule 13 violation. The Legal Committee and Veterinary Committee shall be bound by their respective codes of professional conduct and ensure all means necessary are taken to maintain the confidentiality of any proceedings related to this Rule 13.

**13.5.5** Ride managers that are in receipt of information regarding laboratory results from testing agencies outside of AERC are to treat this as confidential information and are to forward such information directly to the AERC office.

## **14. Protests**

**14.1** Introduction. Any AERC member, other than a single event member as defined in the AERC Bylaws, may bring a protest with the AERC Protest and Grievance Committee alleging violation of AERC Rules by anyone participating in any manner at an AERC sanctioned ride, including, but not limited to, a rider, equine owner, crew member, control judge, treatment veterinarian, ride manager or other ride management personnel. Anyone contemplating a protest must first attempt to resolve his or her complaint informally by discussing the alleged violation with the person committing the violation and/or the ride manager. In all cases, and in order to provide an additional opportunity to facilitate the resolution of a complaint, a regional director or a director-at-large from the region involved must be notified in writing of the intention to file a protest at least five (5) days prior to the filing of the protest. All filings, submissions and other communications relating to the protest shall be in writing and transmitted electronically (email) unless requested otherwise by any of the involved parties, in which case communication shall be by certified mail, return receipt requested.

The Protest and Grievance Committee and, in the case of an appeal, the Board of Directors shall apply the AERC Rules and Bylaws in deciding the protest.

### **14.2** Protest Procedures.

**14.2.1** Time of Filing. Any person bringing a protest (the "protestor") shall file it with the AERC office, either by electronic transmission (preferred) or by certified mail, return receipt requested, no later than 30 days after the ride in question. If an alleged violation does not come to light until the ride results are printed in Endurance News, the protest must be filed no later than 30 days after the mailing of Endurance News. The date the AERC office receives the protest shall be considered the date of filing. The deadline for filing a protest in an individual case may be extended by the AERC President in his or her sole discretion for good cause shown for a period of no more than 60 days from the original deadline. Any such extension shall be memorialized by the AERC President in writing and filed with the AERC office. Any protest filed after the applicable deadline shall be rejected by the AERC and shall not be considered on its merits. The AERC office shall also notify the ride manager and all affected regional

directors of the filing of the protest.

**14.2.2 Content of Protest.** Every protest must be filed using the complaint form attached as Appendix 14A to the AERC Rules. The complaint form may be amended from time to time by the AERC Board of Directors. The complaint form shall at a minimum require the protestor to state:

- a. The full name and address of the person accused of the violation of AERC Rules (the “respondent”);
- b. The name, date, location, and manager of the ride where the alleged violation occurred;
- c. A summary of the acts of the respondent which constitute a violation of AERC Rules;
- d. The AERC Rules, identified by Rule number, allegedly violated by the respondent. The complaint form must be fully completed and signed by the protestor. The protestor shall file with the complaint form all evidence which the protestor believes to support the protest. Evidence must be in written form and may include witness statements by the protestor or other witnesses, photographs, ride records, maps and other relevant documents. Hearsay evidence will be accepted, but will be accorded less weight than first-hand evidence.
- e. Documentation of attempts to resolve the issue before the formal protest was filed.
- f. The action which the protestor requests the Protest and Grievance Committee take as authorized under rule 15. The Committee may take the request into consideration in its deliberations but is not limited by the request in determining an appropriate sanction, if any.

**14.2.3 Filing Fee.** A filing fee of \$150 must be paid by the protestor to the AERC by check, credit card or cash when the protest is filed. The AERC shall refund the filing fee if the protest is granted.

**14.2.4 Invalid Filing.** Any protest filed after the applicable deadline or which fails to include the required complaint form or filing fee shall be rejected by the AERC and shall not be considered on its merits.

**14.2.5 Respondent's Opposition.** Upon receipt of a properly initiated protest, the AERC office shall immediately transmit the complaint form and all supporting evidence to the Protest and Grievance Committee. The AERC office shall also notify the Regional Directors of the region involved in the protest that a protest has been filed, identifying the parties and the ride, if any, which is the subject of the protest but not including any further documentation. Upon receipt of the protest with supporting evidence, the Chairman of the Protest and Grievance The Chair of the Protest and Grievance Committee shall serve the respondent either by electronic transmission or, at the request of the respondent, by certified mail, return receipt requested, written notice of the filing of the protest and with a copy of the complaint form and all supporting evidence. The respondent shall have 30 days after the date of the electronic delivery or of mailing of the notice of the protest to file written witness statements and other documents in opposition to the protest. If no response from the respondent is received by the AERC office within the 30-day period, the AERC office shall attempt to make contact with the respondent by telephone and email and will report the results of the attempted contact to the Chair of the Committee. In the absence of a response from the respondent, the Protest and Grievance Committee may conclude that all well-supported facts of the protest may be considered true. The Chair of the Committee shall provide the protestor with copies of all witness statements and other documents filed by the respondent in opposition to the protest. The Chair of the Committee may in his or her sole discretion allow the protestor and respondent to file additional written materials within a time period selected by the Chair not to exceed 30 days from the time for filing of the respondent's initial opposing papers.

**14.2.6 Independent Investigation.** The Chair of the Committee may in his or her sole discretion decide to perform, or direct other members of the Committee to perform, independent investigation of the alleged rules violation(s) by interviewing the ride manager or other relevant witnesses. The Chair of the Committee shall decide how to share the information from any such investigation with the protestor and respondent so that they will have an opportunity to respond.

**14.3 Mediation.** At the discretion of the Chair of the Committee, the protest may first be referred to nonbinding mediation to provide the protestor and respondent an opportunity to voluntarily settle the matters in dispute. If the protest is referred to mediation, the Chair of the Committee shall select the time during the protest process to refer the protest to mediation. A protest filed by the Executive Director for possible violation of Rule 13 shall be excluded from the mediation process requirement. The mediation shall be conducted by a mediator from a panel of mediators approved by the AERC Board of Directors. The mediation shall be conducted telephonically unless the protestor and respondent make arrangements to meet personally with the mediator. The mediation will be conducted in confidence and no position taken or statement made by anyone at the mediation shall be submitted or considered as evidence in any following protest proceedings. Once mediation has concluded, the mediator is responsible for filing a report with the AERC office stating either 1) mediation was successful and the protest is considered withdrawn or, 2) mediation was unsuccessful and the protest has been referred back to the Committee for decision. The AERC office shall inform the Board of the results of the mediator's report.

Once a protest has been referred to mediation by the Chair of the Committee, all time periods for filing written materials will be suspended for 30 days to allow the mediation to occur. If a settlement is reached through the mediation, the protest shall be considered to have been withdrawn and the filing fee paid by the protestor shall be refunded by the AERC office. If the protest is

not resolved through mediation, the protest proceeding shall resume after the termination of the 30-day suspension of proceedings.

**14.4 Decision.** After each of the members of the Committee has reviewed all of the evidence timely submitted by the protestor and respondent, the Committee shall prepare a written decision no later than 90 days after receipt by the Chair of the final written materials submitted under this Rule. The decision shall summarize the Committee's findings, state whether the protest is granted or denied in whole or in part, assess any penalties and direct any required amendment of the ride results, standings, and rider and equine records or other actions by the AERC necessary to implement the decision. The protestor and the respondent shall be identified by name in the title and text of the written decision. The Chair of the Committee shall serve the written decision upon the protestor, the respondent and the AERC office either by electronic transmission or by certified mail, return receipt requested. The AERC office shall copy each member of the Board of Directors with the written decision by email. The President of the AERC may in his or her sole discretion extend in writing the deadline for preparation of the written decision by no more than 60 days for good cause shown. Any failure of the Protest and Grievance Committee to meet the deadline for preparation of the written decision shall result in referral of the protest to the Board of Directors to decide the protest acting in substitution for the Protest and Grievance Committee.

**14.5 Appeal.**

**14.5.1 Initiation of Appeal.** The protestor or respondent may appeal the decision of the Protest and Grievance Committee to the AERC Board of Directors by filing (either by electronic transmission or by certified mail, return receipt requested) with the AERC office a notice of appeal within 30 days after the date of electronic transmission or mailing of the written decision by the Chair of the Committee. Every appeal must be filed using the notice of appeal form attached as Appendix 14B to the AERC Rules. The notice of appeal form may be amended from time to time by the AERC Board of Directors. The notice of appeal form must be fully completed and signed by the party filing the appeal. The notice of appeal must include the following:

- a. A filing fee of \$250 paid to the AERC by check, credit card or cash.
- b. A written statement of the grounds for the appeal.

A notice of appeal which is not timely filed or fails to include any of the above described items shall be rejected and shall not be considered by the AERC Board of Directors.

**14.5.2 Submittals to the Board.** Upon receipt of a valid notice of appeal, the AERC office shall serve the protestor, respondent and the Chair of the Protest and Grievance Committee either by electronic transmission (preferred) or by certified mail, return receipt requested, with a copy of the notice of appeal and the written statement of the grounds for appeal. Any party to the protest who chooses to oppose the appeal may file with the AERC office a statement of opposition to the appeal within 30 days following the date of delivery of the electronic transmission or within 30 days of mailing of the copy of the notice of appeal by the AERC office. After the time to file a statement of opposition to the appeal has expired, the AERC office shall transmit to each member of the Board of Directors a copy of the complete record of the protest, including the original complaint form, all witness statements and other written materials submitted by the protestor and the respondent, all correspondence from the Chair of the Committee, any written extensions of time period for filing, any record of investigation or hearing by the Committee and the written decision of the Protest and Grievance Committee, together with all documents timely filed by either party to initiate the appeal or to oppose the appeal.

**14.5.3 Record on Appeal.** The appeal shall be based only upon the information contained in the record of the protest considered by the Protest and Grievance Committee. The statements of the parties in support of or in opposition to the appeal shall only comment on the record of the protest and shall not contain any new factual information. No additional witness statements or new factual information shall be considered by the members of the Board of Directors in deciding the appeal. The Board may seek an explanation of the Protest and Grievance Committee's decision from the Chair of the Committee to respond to any points raised in support or in opposition to the appeal.

**14.5.4 Decision by Board.** The members of the Board of Directors shall have at least 15 days after the complete record of the protest is transmitted by the AERC office to consider the appeal. The Board of Directors shall decide the appeal at the earliest convenient special or regular meeting after the consideration period. The action of the Board of Directors shall be reflected in its minutes. The AERC office shall serve notice of the Board of Director's action by first class mail to the protestor, the respondent and the Chair of the Protest and Grievance Committee. There shall be no appeal from the Board of Director's decision.

**14.6 Official Record.** The AERC office will maintain a complete record of the protest, including but not limited to, the complaint form, all written materials submitted by all parties to a protest, correspondence from the Chair of the Protest and Grievance Committee, any written extensions of time for filing, any record of investigation or hearing by the Protest and Grievance Committee, and the written decision of the Committee as well as any action by the Board of Directors on any appeal. The AERC office will publish the Protest and Grievance Committee's decision and any action by the Board on appeal, including a description of any penalties assessed, in the next two issues of Endurance News following the expiration of the time to appeal the Protest and Grievance Committee's decision or, if there is an appeal, following the Board of Director's action on the appeal.

The AERC Office will correct ride results, standings, and equine and rider records to correspond with the protest decision.

## **15. Violations and Penalties**

All participants in AERC sanctioned endurance rides must abide by the rules of the organization. Failure to do so may result in disqualification from competition by the ride manager, or the control judge for health, dangerous behavior, and/or welfare issues, including violations of AERC Rules 11 and 13, of the ride where the violation occurred and/or a protest being filed with AERC. In the event that a protest is filed for a rule infraction, the penalties listed below and any other that may be deemed appropriate may be applied by the Protest and Grievance Committee and the Board of Directors.

**15.1 Violations:** Violations include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Infraction(s) of AERC Rules and Regulations.
- b. Failure to obey any penalty imposed by the AERC.
- c. Knowingly permitting a suspended person to participate in any manner.
- d. Failure to honor agreements with any ride officials, employees or AERC.

**15.2 Penalties:** If found guilty, the party will be subject to such penalty as the Protest and Grievance Committee, or the Board, may determine, including but not limited to:

### **15.2.1 Individuals**

- a. Warning: A letter to the accused which may contain a warning without further penalty.
- b. Censure. A public reprimand that serves to warn the guilty party that further violations will subject the defendant to heavier penalties.
- c. Forfeiture of completion and/or placement in a competition and/or forfeiture of any awards or prizes won in connection with the offense committed.
- d. Suspension : A suspended person is forbidden for the time specified in the decision from holding or exercising any office in the AERC and/or participating in any way whatsoever in any AERC sanctioned ride.

### **15.2.2 Ride/Ride Manager Penalties**

- a. Censure: A public reprimand that serves to warn the ride and its management that further infractions will subject the ride and its management to heavier penalties.
- b. Fine(s).
- c. Suspension from the privilege of sanctioning. (May apply to the ride and/or ride management.)

**15.3** The Protest and Grievance Committee or the Board of Directors may apply more than one penalty to an infraction.

**15.4** When assigning penalties the Protest and Grievance Committee or the Board may take into consideration any pertinent information including but not limited to such things as the severity of the infraction(s), whether the infraction was intentional and the number of infractions.

**16. Sanction requests for new rides, ride date changes, or changes in the ride length must be received for approval by the Regional Director at least 90 days before the actual ride date, and received by the AERC Administrative Office at least 60 days before the ride—so that proper notification of the ride can be made to AERC members. Sanctioning directors may allow, with the approval of the other regional director and the Executive Committee, sanctioning or ride change requests that are received after the 90/60 day period for emergency purposes only. However, sanctioning directors may allow, with the approval of the other regional director and the Executive Committee, a request for the inclusion of an additional distance to an already sanctioned ride if the request is submitted at least 30 days before the ride date to the Sanctioning Director.**

**16.1** A non-refundable fee is required with ride sanction or re-sanction applications.

**16.2** Pioneer rides are series of rides on consecutive days, totaling three days or more, and a minimum of 150 miles. Sanctioning of such rides must be sent to the AERC Executive Director for distribution to the Sanctioning Committee at least 90 days before the ride date. Pioneer rides shall require approval of the Sanctioning Committee for the first two years or at any time a request to change the date of the ride is made.

**16.2.1** Special Qualification rides are rides with entry qualifications other than those contained in Rule 3. A petition for approval of a Special Qualification ride must be sent to the AERC Executive Director for distribution to the Sanctioning Committee where the event is to be held at least 90 days before the ride date. Upon approval the petition will be distributed to the Board for comments. Such petition must include clear rationale for the qualifications and justification for this specialty ride. The board will render its decision within 60 days. The equines must be under the control of control judge(s) experienced with equines and endurance rides from pre-ride control checks through the post-ride final control check. Special Qualification rides shall require approval of the AERC Board of Directors for the first two years.

**16.3** The Ride Manager must be an AERC member.

**16.3.1** An alternate manager must be appointed in the event of incapacity of a ride manager or in the event a ride manager chooses to ride his/her own ride. An alternate manager must be an AERC member. The ride results must report and name the alternate manager.

**16.4** The AERC ride season runs from December 1st through November 30th.

**16.5** The starting time of the ride must be included on the sanctioning/re-sanctioning application.

**16.6** Rescheduling rides in an emergency: The ride must meet all 90/60 day deadlines, except that a one-day delay, allowing those already at the site to stay over, can be used in an emergency with the approval of the Sanctioning Director.

**16.7** The ride manager must include a plan for providing emergency treatment for equines entered in the event. This plan must be indicated on the sanctioning/re-sanctioning application.

**16.8** A ride offering any single prize valued in excess of \$1,000, with the exception of futurities and other contributory schemes supported by an organization recognized by the AERC, shall engage an AERC steward to monitor the event and shall pay the steward's expenses.

**16.8.1** Said steward shall not be: a rider in that event, of any familial relationship to any rider, ride management, control judge or treatment veterinarian in that event or own or have had any financial interest in an equine entered in the event within two years prior to the event; and said steward shall not have any additional responsibilities within the event.

**16.8.2** Said steward shall be selected at the time of sanctioning by the ride manager from a list of three nominees prepared by the Regional Directors of the region of the event and approved by the Executive Committee of the Board.

**16.8.2.1** Said steward must be a current member of the AERC who has both 1,500 career miles and experience as a key member in ride management.

**16.8.3** Duties shall be, but are not limited to: Said steward shall clearly understand that he/she is not to be involved in the management or judging of an event, but rather is present to insure that the event is run in accordance with AERC Rules and Regulations. The steward must be available to competitors and management at all times to clarify the application of rules and investigate any infractions. The steward must submit a written report to the AERC Executive Committee within five days of the event.

**16.9** Sanctioning Directors may withhold or remove sanctioning before or during the competition if a ride does not meet AERC standards, including but not limited to AERC Rules and Regulations and measures dealing with equine and rider safety.

**17. Ride Results must be submitted to the AERC Administrative Office within two weeks after the ride date and must be accompanied by a starting rider fee. (Fee subject to change. Check with the AERC office.)**

**17.1** There is a minimum starting rider fee equivalent to that of four starting riders.

**17.2** Ride results received by AERC more than 30 days after the ride incur a penalty of \$50.00 plus \$2.00 per day over 30 days.

**17.3** Thirty days after the mailing of the AERC Endurance News, the ride results printed therein become official and are not subject to change, unless intentional fraud is proved.

## LIMITED DISTANCE RULES

AERC ride managers may elect to host rides sanctioned for less than 50 miles. These rides are designated as "Limited Distance Rides." These rides must be included on the sanction form and held in conjunction with an AERC endurance ride. Limited Distance rides are subject to AERC general rules with the following exceptions and/or additions:

**L1. Limited Distance rides must be at least 25 miles but not exceed 35 miles in length. These rides must be sanctioned into the Limited Distance Program and held in conjunction with or within an adjacent 24 hour time period of an AERC Sanctioned Endurance Ride.**

**L1.1** Mileage must be a multiple of 5, ending in 0 or 5, whichever is the nearest whole number to the actual ride mileage (e.g. 27.4 = 25 miles, 27.5 = 30 miles.)

**L1.2** Limited Distance rides which are sanctioned for more than one distance (such as a 25 and a 35 held over the same course at the same time) have the option of allowing a rider to "elevate" from one ride distance into the other, subject to the following restrictions: The rider may only elevate from a shorter distance to a longer distance; the rider may only elevate once; upon elevating, the rider is no longer considered a starter or a finisher in the shorter ride.

**L1.2.1** Elevator rides must be indicated on the sanction application and advertised as such.

**L1.2.2** The rider must state which distance he will enter, if a multiple mileage ride; e.g. 25 mile, 30 mile, or 35 mile.

**L1.2.3** A rider who elevates is eligible for completion only.

**L1.2.4** If starting times are not the same, elevating riders must have the time limits of Rule 5 applied to their original ride's starting time.

**L1.2.5** A Limited Distance rider may elevate to the lowest Endurance distance (in sanctioned elevator rides) for completion only, if the equine is 60 months old or older.

**L1.2.6** A rider may not elevate from any ride sanctioned for less than 25 miles.

**L1.2.7** In order for a rider to elevate, the equine he is riding must meet the age requirements for the distance he is elevating into as stated in rules L2.1 and 3.

**L1.3** The sanctioned ride mileage(s) cannot be changed later than 60 days before the ride: points and miles will be awarded according to the mileage for which the ride is sanctioned (see Rule 16).

**L1.3.1** An exception to the policy is the case where an emergency forces a last minute trail change, in which case points and mileage are awarded according to the actual mileage reported to the AERC.

**L1.3.2** A change in mileage and/or ride results certified by AERC may be mandated by the Protest and Grievance Committee or the Board.

**L1.4** Limited Distance rides must be regulated by the AERC Ride Rules.

**L1.4.1** Limited Distance competitors must be offered a separate and specific briefing on the special features and requirements of Limited Distance Rides.

**L1.5** LD Pioneer rides are series of rides on consecutive days, totaling three days or more, and a minimum of 75 miles. Maximum mileage per day to be awarded is 35 miles. Sanctioning of such rides must be sent to the AERC Executive Director for distribution to the Sanctioning Committee at least 90 days before the ride date. Pioneer rides shall require approval of the Sanctioning Committee for the first two years or at any time a request to change ride dates. A Pioneer ride hosting more than one LD ride in a day must indicate on the sanctioning form which LD ride is to be included in the pioneer division. Equines must be a minimum of 60 months of age to be eligible for the AERC LD Pioneer award.

**L2. The ride must be open to any breed or type of equine.**

**L2.1** Equines must be at least 48 months old at the time of the ride. If a ride offers more than one Limited Distance ride per day, in order to meet the age requirements intended under rules L1.2.5 and L1.2.7, equines under 60 months of age may only be ridden in one Limited Distance ride per calendar day.

**L2.2** Age is figured from actual date of birth. In cases of no papers on an equine, a control judge's opinion and discretion must prevail.

**L3. The ride must provide a specific amount of time (total competition time) which will include all stops and holds, and within which competitors must complete the ride to qualify for placing or completion.**

**L3.1** There may be no minimum time limit for completion.

**L3.2** Course completion time, which is the maximum time competitors are allowed complete the specified course from start to finish, will be according to the Limited Distance chart in Appendix A.

**L3.3** Riding time is the time used by competitors to complete the course and reach criteria, excluding all hold times. This is the time used for AERC ride results.

**L3.4** At the finish, ride time of the competitor continues until a preset judging criteria of 60 heartbeats per minute or less is met. (Finishing time is recorded as the time at which the rider asks for and subsequently meets this preset criteria.)

**L4. Completion requires meeting all of the criteria used for endurance rides with the exception of maximum pulse criteria upon completion of the course (see L4.1.2).**

**L4.1** All equines must stand a mandatory post-ride evaluation within one hour of crossing the marked finish line. Riders may present their equines for the final examination at a time of their choosing during the one-hour period. An equine that does not meet the established criteria within one hour of arrival time shall be disqualified. Once a completed equine has passed the post-ride examination, it may not be removed from completion for veterinary reasons.

**L4.1.2** The equine must meet a reasonable pulse recovery based on ambient conditions within 30 minutes of arrival at all control points. Maximum pulse criteria upon completion of the course is 60 beats per minute, and must be met within 30 minutes of arrival at the finish line. Respiration should be evaluated on its own merit. Ambient temperature and humidity effects need to be recognized and their effects considered.

**L5. Placements must be determined using the procedure described in L3.3 and L3.4. The ride results will be posted in this order, but no points for placement or for completion will be awarded.**

**L6. The AERC shall record Best Condition points and mileage for members in Limited Distance rides. All Best Condition points and all miles remain in the Limited Distance Program and are not transferable. Best Conditions will be published.**

**L6.1** Members whose dues are not paid by February 1st will receive no points or miles for rides held between December 1st

and the date their membership is restored.

**L6.1.1** These points cannot be recovered, but the miles may be recovered by contacting the AERC office.

**L6.2** A new member will be able to obtain mileage credit for miles ridden prior to the date of joining AERC by contacting the AERC office.

**L6.3** Ride results list all completing riders in order of finish.

**L6.4** If a member moves to a different AERC Region prior to June 1st, all Best Condition points and mileage will be recorded in the region to which that member moves; in a move on or after June 1st, all points and mileage remain in the original region.

**L6.5** The AERC has two divisions (Senior and Junior) based on the age of the rider, independent of any ride management rules governing junior and senior riders.

**L7. An award will be available for the equine judged to be in the Best Condition.**

**L7.1** The award does not have to be given.

**L7.1.1** The control judge(s) may feel that none of the equines in contention for the award deserve to receive it.

**L7.2** The same best condition judging system used in the endurance category at any given AERC sanctioned ride must be used in the limited distance category at that ride.

**L7.2.1** Only equines selected as Best Condition using this system (with Best Condition forms returned along with the results) are recognized by the AERC.

**L7.2.2** Rides have the option of giving other Best Conditions besides the AERC Best Condition if they wish.

**L7.2.3** The AERC recognizes only one Best Condition equine at any one ride.

**L7.3** Under the AERC system, all equines placing in the top ten will be eligible for the Best Condition award. Keep in mind that the order of finish for Limited Distance riders is determined using recovery time as described in rule L3.4.

**L7.4** The AERC recognizes a Regional Best Condition Champion Equine (Limited Distance) according to the following system:

**L7.4.1** Each member owned equine receiving a Best Condition by the ride shall receive one point per mile of sanctioned ride length (in the Best Condition point system—those points do not go into the overall point system).

**L7.4.1.1** If there are fewer than ten starting equines, the points are reduced by 10% for each starter fewer than ten; that is, if there are nine starters, the points are reduced by 10%, for eight starters, by 20%, and so forth. However if there is only one starting equine, no Best Condition points shall be awarded.

**L7.4.2** At the end of the ride season, the member owned equine in each Region with the highest number of points in this system, irrespective of the number of different riders which may have ridden the equine, shall be the Regional Best Condition Champion for Limited Distance.

**L7.4.2.1** Equines must receive at least two Limited Distance Best Condition awards during the ride season to qualify for this award.

## **INTRODUCTORY RIDES**

AERC ride managers may elect to host rides which are sanctioned for less than 22.5 miles. These rides are designated as "Introductory Rides." Intro rides must be included on the sanctioning form and be held in conjunction with an AERC endurance ride or an AERC endurance clinic.

1. Ride managers have flexibility with introductory rides to make them a better tool for education (examples are riding with mentors and longer time limits).

2. No placing or Best Condition will be awarded.

3. No control checkpoint is required during introductory rides sanctioned for 15 miles or less. This does not preclude the pre-ride or post-ride exam.

4. All introductory rides must have a pre-ride and post-ride exam completed by a control judge. These exams are to have the same requirements as any other AERC-sanctioned distance.

5. All equines must be at least 48 months old at the time of the ride.

6. Riders may not elevate from an introductory ride.

7. No points or miles are recorded for the equine or owner.

8. Ride results for these distances should not be reported to AERC and will not be published.

# APPENDIX A

## Charts

### Limited Distance Maximum Course Time

Hours : Minutes

(Time rider must be off the marked course,  
including all holds and checks)

Ride Length, Miles	25	30	35
Maximum Time:	6:00	7:15	8:30

### Endurance Maximum Ride Time

Hours : Minutes

Including All Holds and Checks

Ride Length, Miles	50	55	60	65	70	75
Maximum Time:	12:00	13:15	14:30	15:30	16:45	18:00

Ride Length, Miles:	80	85	90	95	100	105
Maximum Time:	19:15	20:30	21:30	22:45	24:00	25:15

Ride Length, Miles:	110	115	120	125	130	135
Maximum Time:	26:30	27:30	28:45	30:00	31:15	32:30

Ride Length, Miles:	140	145	150
Maximum Time:	33:30	34:45	36:00

### Points Per Mile

Senior Division

Place	11+	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
1	3.0	2.9	2.8	2.7	2.6	2.4	2.2	2.0	1.8	1.5	1.0
2	2.5	2.4	2.3	2.2	2.1	1.9	1.7	1.5	1.3	1.0	
3	2.2	2.1	2.0	1.9	1.8	1.6	1.4	1.2	1.0		
4	2.0	1.9	1.8	1.7	1.6	1.4	1.2	1.0			
5	1.8	1.7	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.2	1.0				
6	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.0					
7	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.0						
8	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.0							
9	1.2	1.1	1.0								
10	1.1	1.0									
11+	1.0										

### Junior Division

Place	6+	5	4	3	2	1
1	3.0	2.8	2.6	2.2	1.8	1.0
2	2.2	2.0	1.8	1.4	1.0	
3	1.8	1.6	1.4	1.0		
4	1.4	1.2	1.0			
5	1.2	1.0				
6+	1.0					

### Points for Common Ride Lengths

50 Mile

Number of Starters

Place	11+	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
1	150	145	140	135	130	120	110	100	90	75	50
2	125	120	115	110	105	95	85	75	65	50	
3	110	105	100	95	90	80	70	60	50		
4	100	95	90	85	80	70	60	50			
5	90	85	80	75	70	60	50				
6	80	75	70	65	60	50					
7	70	65	60	55	50						
8	65	60	55	50							
9	60	55	50								
10	55	50									
11+	50										



### 75 Mile

Number of Starters

Place	11+	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
1	281.250	271.875	262.500	253.125	243.75	225.000	206.250	187.500	168.750	140.625	93.750
2	234.375	225.000	215.625	206.250	196.875	178.125	159.375	140.625	121.875	93.750	
3	206.250	196.875	187.500	178.125	168.750	150.000	131.250	112.500	93.750		
4	187.500	178.125	168.750	159.375	150.000	131.250	112.500	93.750			
5	168.750	159.375	150.000	140.625	131.250	112.500	93.750				
6	150.000	140.625	131.250	121.875	112.500	93.750					
7	131.250	121.875	112.500	103.125	93.750						
8	121.875	112.500	103.125	93.750							
9	112.500	103.125	93.750								
10	103.125	93.750									
11+	93.750										

### 100 Mile One-Day

Number of Starters

Place	5+	4	3	2	1
1	450.0	300.0	270.0	225.0	150.0
2	375.0	225.0	195.0	150.0	
3	330.0	180.0	150.0		
4	300.0	150.0			
5	270.0				
6	240.0				
7	210.0				
8	195.0				
9	180.0				
10	165.0				
11+	150.0				