

NCWC EQUINE ACTIVITY EVALUATION

Instructions to Evaluators

This document describes the *performance standards* (what the rider must actually demonstrate or do) and *evaluation criteria* for the NCWC Evaluation for Horses and Riders. Evaluators will date and initial the evaluation form as each area of evaluation is completed satisfactorily. For Level 3 (battlefield) and above, at least three NCWC approved evaluators must be present.

Level 1: Basic Horsemanship (Required to bring mount to event)

1.1 Basic Horse Knowledge

A) Knowledge of your horse. Describe name, age, sex, and breed of horse you are testing with.
B) Understanding of NCWC's definitions of Cruelty and Minimum Standard of Condition (Code of Conduct, VIIC). Answer the following questions:

- 1) Give at least 2 examples of unreasonable use of force to discipline a horse that is misbehaving
- 2) Give at least 2 examples of cruelty to a horse

1.2 Horse's Condition and Health

Horse meets NCWC's Minimum Standard of Condition, Code of Conduct VIIC 2(b).

Note any health conditions, old injuries etc. that may limit the use of the horse on evaluation form. If horse is unable to perform certain gaits or movements, but is otherwise qualified, the evaluator may specify "Conditional Pass for Limited Use." The evaluator may require the rider to perform any elements not performed on this horse, on a different horse to ensure that he has the necessary skills to participate.

1.3 Grooming

- A) Groom horse with brush and curry.
- B) Pick up all four feet, check and pick out each foot.

Evaluation Criteria: Participant demonstrates how to move around the horse safely when grooming and picking hooves. Horse is quiet and well mannered. Participant grooms horse confidently and thoroughly, demonstrating correct use of the brush, curry, and hoof pick. Horse's coat is free of dirt and crusted sweat, especially in the saddle and girth area. Hooves are clean, and checked for stones and loose shoes.

1.4 Ground Handling

- A) Lead the horse at a walk away from evaluator group at a walk, pick up a trot. Stop and back up a minimum of one horse length. Turn around, walk back to instructor, and halt.
- B) From a halt, move the horse's haunches to the right, and then the left. Move the horse's forehand to the right, and then the left.
- C) Tie the horse with a quick release knot.

Evaluation Criteria: Participant leads from near side, holding lead rope or reins correctly. Horse leads willingly with little or no coaxing and yields to pressure.

Horse should be tied to post or tree at horse's eye level or higher. Horse should never be tied to a fence rail, stock panel, etc. Excess slack should be taken out of rope so horse cannot step over it. Quick release knot should stay tied when pulled by horse, but release easily at the free end.

Level 2: Basic Riding Skills (Required to ride horse outside of battle, & parades)

2.1 Saddling and Bridling

Saddle and bridle the horse. Describe the saddle and bit you are using, and any additional tack, to the evaluator.

Record Type of Equipment Used on evaluation form:

Record Recommended changes on evaluation form:

Evaluation Criteria: Rider understands type of bit and other tack they are using. Tack fits the horse and is correctly adjusted. Saddle blanket is properly folded and placed on horse correctly. Saddle is properly positioned. Cinch, breastplate (if used), and crupper (if used), and surcingle (if used) are securely fastened and adjusted for the horse's conformation. Bit is seated correctly and the curb chain is flat. Tack is clean and in serviceable condition.

2.2 Mounting and Dismounting

Lead the horse out, mount, and dismount.

Evaluation Criteria: Rider checks cinch before mounting, and mounts/dismounts without assistance. (A mounting block may be used.) Rider settles in the saddle gently. Horse stands quietly. Rider has control of horse while mounting and dismounting.

2.3 Basic Drill at Walk and Trot (Required for Parade) (Perform in a squad of at least 3 riders, with horse being evaluated in middle of squad)

A) Front into line, MARCH

B) By file, MARCH

Trot, MARCH (at least one circuit around arena or drill field)

C) Form twos, MARCH (continue trotting at least one circuit around arena or drill field)

Form fours, MARCH (at least one circuit around arena or drill field)

D) Extend intervals (from the center)

To the right, MARCH

To the left, MARCH

To the left about

Close intervals

Squad, Walk

Squad, HALT

Evaluation Criteria (Individual Rider): Rider demonstrates the ability to control the horse at the walk and trot without holding onto the pommel or grabbing the reins for balance. Rider either sits the trot without bouncing or losing balance out of the seat, or performs rising trot with stable lower leg. Rider's body position is correct, not tipped forward or back. The legs are relaxed and the rider is not drawing the calves/heels upward. The rider's heels are level with or below the tread of the stirrups. The hands are relatively low, not up in the air. The rider reins correctly considering the style of bit he/she is using (e.g. reins/hands should not cross over the horse's neck if riding with a snaffle).

Evaluation Criteria (Horse):

Horse changes from one gait to the other willingly, with little or no difficulty, and without use of excessive force on the part of the rider.

Horse steady and calm standing in line (boot to boot) between two other horses, and when walking and trotting boot to boot with other horses (by twos and fours).

Horse maintains *pace* with other horses in file, at the walk and trot; does not crowd horse in front, or lag behind.

Horse maintains *dress* with other horses in line, by twos, and by fours.

Horse maintains *intervals* between horses after extending intervals, performing to the right, to the left

Serious misbehaviors (e.g. bucking, bolting, kicking) that would endanger other horses/riders are grounds to fail this portion of the evaluation.

If rider satisfactorily completes 2.3 at the walk but not the trot, note "GREEN" under "Rider Level" on evaluation form.

If rider satisfactorily completes 2.3 at the walk AND trot, but self-reports that they are unable to canter and will not be proceeding to section 3.1, note "BEGINNER" under "Rider Level" on evaluation form.

Level 3: Battlefield Skills (required to participate in battle scenarios)

3.1 Drill at Canter (Perform in a squad of at least 3 riders)

A) After excusing riders who cannot canter, continue drill as follows:

Front into line, MARCH (*form into line facing the long side of the arena/drill field no less than 15 feet from the wall to the rear.*)

B) By file, MARCH, Left TURN (*track left in arena/drill field*)

Trot, MARCH

Gallop, MARCH (*at least one circuit around arena or drill field, preferably on the left lead*)

Trot, March. Left TURN. Right TURN (*track right in arena/drill field*)

Gallop, MARCH (*at least one circuit around arena or drill field preferably on the right lead*)

Trot, MARCH

Walk, MARCH

Front into line, MARCH

Evaluation Criteria: As in 2.3, but also: Rider maintains pace/intervals with other horses at the canter. Horse is under control and well behaved when cantering with others. Rider's seat secure in the saddle at the canter, without bouncing or leaving the saddle due to the movement of the horse. Rider performs trot to canter and canter to trot transitions without excessive use of bit or spurs. Rider is not required to change leads, however if the horse is counter cantering, it should not be out of balance.

3.2 Individual Performance at Walk, Trot, Canter (with *option* for pistol test. See pattern, attached)

When given the signal each individual participant shall leave the line at the trot, and execute the following pattern as a continuous sequence (See last page of document for diagram):

1. A. Ride a small (Approximately: 15 meter or 50 foot) **figure eight** with flat center at the trot, starting with a circle to the **right**. Rising trot with correct diagonals permitted.
B. Ride a large (Approximately: 20 meter or 65 foot) **figure eight at the canter**, preferably with correct leads for their respective circle (*Rider option for simple change of lead, through the trot, or a flying change at the intersection of the eight. Rider may test with pistol by firing once on the outside of each circle at point F.*)
2. On a left lead, canter past the marker. (*All straight work shall be parallel to and at least 20 feet from any existing fence or rail.*)
3. Make a balanced stop. (*Rider may test with pistol by firing pistol to the right.*)
4. Make a small left turn (*About on the haunches is desired.*) Start on a left lead and canter past the marker. (*Canter through the trot is permissible*)
5. Make a balanced stop. (*Rider may test with pistol by firing pistol to the left.*)
6. Make a small right turn (*About on the haunches is desired.*) Start on a right lead and canter to midway between the markers. (*Canter through the trot is permissible*)
7. Make a balanced stop; stand 10 seconds; back straight two horse lengths; walk to 20 feet from and facing the Ride Commander.
8. When dismissed return to original position in line. (Enter the line from the rear.)

Evaluation Criteria: Rider's seat secure in the saddle at the canter without bouncing or leaving the saddle due to the movement of the horse. Rider performs trot to canter and canter to trot transitions without excessive use of bit or spurs. Simple changes of lead (through the trot) at the center of the figure eight are acceptable. Rider is not required to change leads, however if the horse is counter cantering on the figure eight, it should not be out of balance. Rider performs turns without excessive use of reins or "yarding" the horse. Horse leaves other horses with little or no resistance. Horse returns to other horses without rushing.

3.3 Reaction to crowds, drums, flags (Required for Parade)

- A) Approach ground troops (that are not shooting) and/or groups of civilians within 15 feet.
- B) Approach drummer(s) to within 15 feet.
- C) Approach a flag to within 5 feet.

Evaluation Criteria: Horse will approach groups of people (e.g. ground troops; ladies in hoop skirts) and drums playing at typical field volume within 15 feet without fear or flight. These do not create unreasonable fear in the horse, causing independent action or disobedience. Horse will approach flags closely. (Flag may be carried or planted in the ground.)

3.4 Reaction to weapons fire from others

- A) Ride in file with other horses at the walk and trot while a person on the ground fires small arms from approximately 50 feet away.

Evaluation Criteria: Horse maintains pace when gun is fired, or if it does react (startles or speeds up) the rider re-establishes control quickly.

- B) Walk horse to within 50 feet of small arms fire from ground troops.

Evaluation Criteria: Weapons fire does not cause unreasonable fear, independent action, disobedience, or panic. Rider maintains control at all times.

- C) Stand horse approximately 75-100 feet from artillery fire.

Evaluation Criteria: Artillery fire at this distance does not cause unreasonable fear, independent action, disobedience, or panic. Rider maintains control at all times.

3.5 Maneuvering around simulated casualties

Walk horse within 10 feet of simulated casualties. (Use props to test, e.g uniforms placed on the ground)

Evaluation Criteria: Horse may be wary of casualties, however, casualties at this distance should not cause unreasonable fear, independent action, disobedience, or panic. Horse may look at casualties and rider should allow or encourage this. Rider should never allow the horse to turn away from casualties until he is well clear. (Allowing the horse to turn away in close quarters would put the casualty outside the horse's field of vision and moreover, bring the horse's hindquarters closer to the casualties.)

If rider satisfactorily completes ALL of Section 3, including canter work, note "INTERMEDIATE" under "Rider Level" on evaluation form.

Level 4: Weapons Skills

Note: Evaluation of carrying pistol, saber, and carbine, and shooting pistol, can be done while performing individual riding elements 3.2 above.

4.1* Carrying and shooting pistol (If not tested as part of 3.2)

A*) Draw pistol. Ride at walk, trot, and canter with pistol drawn.

*Canter required for Advanced certification

B) Fire at least 4 shots from pistol while horse is in motion.

Note gaits demonstrated on evaluation form

Evaluation Criteria: Rider maintains balance and correct position. Rider demonstrates ability to effectively rein the horse one handed. Rider keeps finger on the trigger guard until ready to shoot. Rider keeps muzzle up until ready to shoot, and when shooting elevates fire. Rider shows consideration of the horse, not firing too close to horse's ears (45 degree angle or greater). Horse maintains gait during firing. Horse may react slightly to firing (e.g. head toss), but firing does not cause unreasonable fear, independent action, disobedience, or panic. Rider maintains control at all times.

4.2 Carrying and shooting carbine

A) Carry carbine, both in sling and at the Advance position, with horse in motion.

Note gaits demonstrated on evaluation form

B) Fire carbine mounted from a halt. Reload and fire again with horse at walk, trot, or canter.

Note gaits demonstrated on evaluation form

Evaluation Criteria: As for pistol, except that muzzle of carbine is pointed down when slung.

4.3* Carrying and using saber

A) Draw, present, and return saber.

B) Ride at walk, trot, and canter with saber in scabbard.

C*) Carry saber at Shoulder Arms while horse is in motion, performing right and left turns.

Note gaits demonstrated on evaluation form

*Canter required for Advanced certification

D) Exchange head and side cuts and parries with an opposing rider.

Evaluation Criteria: Rider maintains balance and correct position. Rider demonstrates ability to effectively rein the horse one handed while maintaining control of the saber, not letting the point drop below the wrist when engaging with another rider. Rider stays upright (not leaning to the side) when using saber.

Horse does not react to the saber in the scabbard, or to the saber being drawn, returned, or used. Horse is not panicky or on edge when rider engages another rider.

4.4 Linking and horse holding (to fight on foot)

A) In a squad of at least three, dismount to fight on foot and link horses.

Evaluation Criteria: Riders dismount safely and correctly. Horses are linked correctly (horse-holder holds reins of No 3; link straps of Nos 1 and 2 attached to halters, not bits; no linking by reins.) Horses stand quietly when linked.

B) Horse holder: Maintain control of at least 2 linked horses while dismounted troopers advance and fire carbines 50 feet in front of the line

Evaluation Criteria: Horse-holder maintains control of linked horses. His horse should be even with or slightly ahead of linked horses. Horses should stand when linked; however, if they do move, the horse-holder should stay slightly ahead of linked horses to maintain control. He may circle them if necessary.

Level 5: Specialized Skills

5.1* Flag Bearer

Carry flag while horse is in motion.

Note gaits demonstrated on evaluation form. *Canter required for Advanced certification

Evaluation Criteria: Rider maintains balance and correct position while carrying flag. Rider demonstrates ability to effectively rein the horse one handed while maintaining control of the flag. Horse does not react to the flag.

5.2* Courier

A) Leave evaluator/other horses. Pick up canter or gallop. Ride out at least 80 feet. Perform canter to halt transition. Return to evaluator at the canter, perform canter to halt transition.

Evaluation Criteria: Horse is obedient to rider's commands to increase/decrease pace. Horse rates from speed (canter or gallop) with little or no resistance. Excessive use of reins or spurs is grounds for not passing this element.

B) Perform the following movements:

(1) Side pass horse both directions (left and right).

(2) Perform 360 degree turns left and right within an 8 foot square of poles or rails placed on the ground.

Evaluation Criteria: Rider demonstrates correct use of seat/leg/rein aids to demonstrate lateral control (side-pass). Rider shows ability to turn the horse in a tight space; horse does not step on or over the poles. Rider may perform a turn on the forehand, turn on the haunches, or a turn

on the horse's center, at his discretion. Rider is able to obtain the desired response with minimal effort, and horse is responsive to seat and leg aids. Excessive use of spurs or reins or "yarding" the horse around is grounds for not passing this element.

C) Approach ground troops that are firing, from the side or rear. Approach closely enough that you can address an officer. Halt, stand 10 seconds.

Evaluation Criteria: Ground troops that are firing do not create unreasonable fear in the horse, causing independent action or disobedience. Rider displays excellent control of horse. Appropriate distance may vary, but one to two horse lengths is a good rule of thumb. Horse will stand quietly near ground troops that are firing. (May be dismounted cavalry, infantry, or artillery.)

5.3 Jumping

Horse and rider jump obstacles (e.g. rail fence, log, ditch) willingly and in harmony.

Note type(s) and height/spread of jumps on evaluation form

Evaluation Criteria: If in McClellan or Western saddle (classical seat), the rider stays deep in the saddle but leans slightly forward and gives the hand in the takeoff phase of the jump (not before). Rider maintains balance and has a stable lower leg position, keeping heels down. Rider does not hit the horse in the mouth. Rider is allowed two refusals; a third refusal is grounds for not passing this element.

5.4 Hit Taking

A) Take a hit from horse at a halt or in motion. *Note gaits demonstrated on evaluation form*

Evaluation Criteria: Rider shows ability to dismount safely while maintaining control of the horse (reins or lead strap). Rider may dismount from the side or off the rear of the horse. Horse stands quietly after rider has dismounted.

B) Horse allows himself to be led by the pickup rider

Evaluation Criteria: Horse demonstrates good manners and leads with little or no resistance.

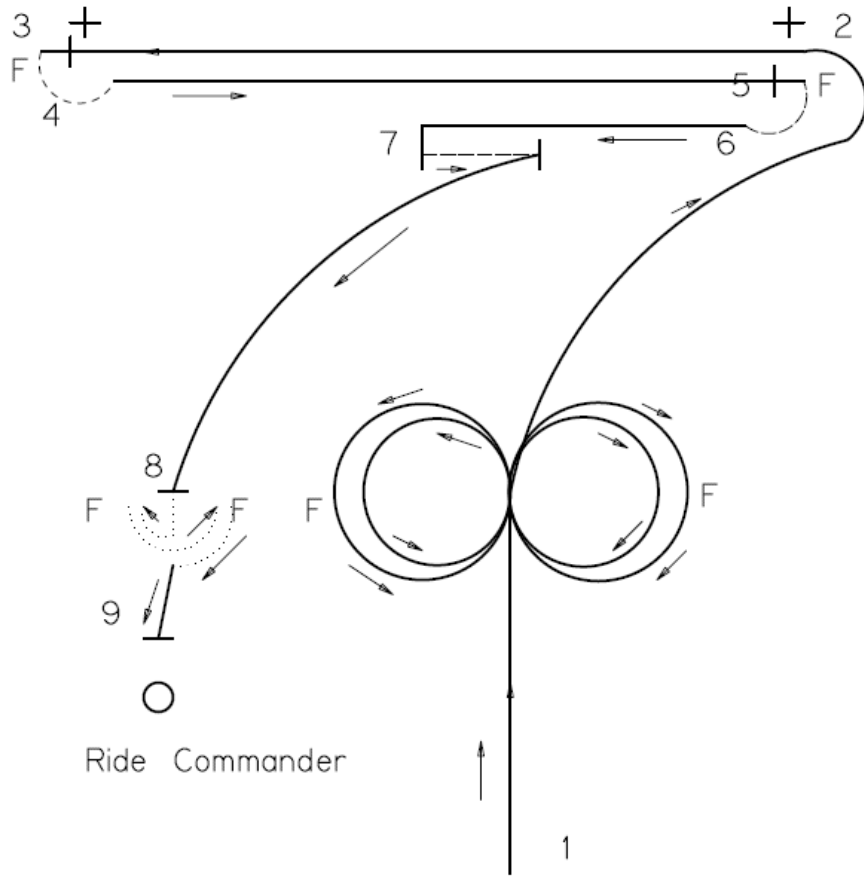
5.5* Pickup Rider

Pony another horse at the walk and trot, performing turns to the right and left.

Evaluation Criteria: Rider demonstrates ability to effectively rein the horse one handed while maintaining control of the ponied horse. Rider demonstrates ability to effectively control speed and direction of both the ridden horse and the ponied horse, keeping the ponied horse's head at his knee. Rider demonstrates ability to effectively correct misbehavior.

If rider satisfactorily completes ALL of Section 3, including canter work, PLUS Level 4 and 5 elements indicated with an *, note "ADVANCED" under "Rider Level" on evaluation form.

Diagram of equitation pattern for Element 3.2 (Individual)



Squad Line

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