

DRILL TEAM JUDGING CRITERIA TAKEN FROM IEDTA HANDBOOK AND ALTERED SLIGHTLY FOR THE OPEN/SCHOOLING SHOW EXPERIENCE

UNIT RIDING SKILLS

ENTRY OF THE TEAM:

Is the entrance of the drill team competitors graceful, easy and appealing to the judge and the audience? Is the team's entry onto the floor different or original?

RIDER EQUITATIONAL SKILLS:

Do the riders have the proper seat for their particular riding discipline? Are the riders focused towards the team as a unit or on themselves? Do the riders have proper posture and capable riding abilities? Do the riders use proper leg cues and some rein aids? Do the riders demonstrate overuse of whistle commands?

RIDER CONTROL:

Do the riders properly execute their turns and changes of transition (from the walk, to the jog, to the canter, to the lope and finally to the gallop, *gallop optional*) in the appropriate order with the others as a unit? Are the riders able to give commands to their horses in the proper manner and do the horses obey? Do any horses exhibit bucking or rearing in response to a rider's instruction? Do the riders exhibit excessive use of whips, reins or spurs?

HORSE'S TEMPERAMENT & COMPETENCY:

Does the horse exhibit aggressive behavior towards its teammates, i.e.: biting, kicking, pinning its ears in irritation? Does the horse obey when asked to perform various drill maneuvers, changes of gaits and other rider commands? Does the horse perform transitions smoothly and pick up proper gaits when asked? Once the gait for a particular pattern has been established, does the horse break gait when he/she should not?

ARENA USAGE & MARKERS:

A team may designate a smaller space within the arena for their performance. If a team does so. It should use the WHOLE designated marked area. The area marked off must be in the form of recognizable markers (cones, scenery props, etc...) If a team does not mark off a designated area, then the judge may assume that the team will be using all of the arena. A deduction will be given for horse/rider who goes outside of a marked arena – unless the maneuver calls for such. Smoke Bomb; flares; firecrackers or other items that emit smoke; odors or large sounds are not allowed.

SYMMETRY AND MOTION OF DRILLS:

Are the methods used by the riders symmetrical in the continuity and transition from one drill pattern to the next?

LOSS OF PARAPHERNALIA:

Do any of the riders lose a hat or part of their costume? Do any of the horses experience breakage (i.e.; breast collar, chinch/girth, saddle rigging) or loss of any tack (i.e.; leg wraps or saddlepads)?

RIDER MISHAPS – FALLS AND COLLISIONS:

Do any of the riders or horses fall? Do any of the riders or horses collide with each other? Does the team have to regroup due to falls, collisions, severe tack breakages or medical emergencies?

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY OF DRILLS:

NOTE: Many drill maneuvers/patterns go against the horse's natural instinct; such as any drill pattern that requires individual horses or groups of horses (1) to come towards each other at a high rate of velocity, (2) to pass closely at an accelerated rate of speed, (3) to turn as a unit and, (4) to maneuver in close contact – stirrup-to stirrup or to be sandwiched together.

Does the team's execute unique drills? Does the team perform with props (flags, Lances, spears, swords, etc...) making it a more difficult drill to execute? Does the team perform in close order precision as a unit? Does the team perform drills at high velocities?

NOTE: It is more complex to execute a drill pattern correctly when done at a faster tempo. The precision as a unit should NOT be sacrificed for speed. Velocity is to be used ONLY to compliment and add as a "crowd appeal" factor.

EXIT:

Is the exit of the team from the arena orderly and in continual flow of the drill? Is the exit different in originality?

ENTERTAINMENT FACTOR

EXECUTION OF DRILL:

This is based on the criteria of spacing, alignment, timing, coordination, and choreography. Equal spacing between horses should be maintained at all times, as unequal spacing indicates a lack of proper timing and synchronization. Is the design or plan of the movements (drill patterns) fluid and smooth? When riders receive a command, does the team move as a unit? Is the cohesiveness of the unit maintained? Are the lines straight and the circles evenly round? Is the timing on target with no racing or stopping by riders to make their positions: Are the transitions between maneuvers good? Do the riders respond promptly to whistle commands?

COSTUMING:

Are the costumes/uniforms neat, pressed and clean? There should be no loose threads, stains, rips or tears? Do the costumes/uniforms fit properly, not too tight or loose? Are the colors well-coordinated? Do the colors coordinate well with the horse's tack? Do the colors complement the team's theme? Are the riders' footwear consistent in type or color? (they do NOT have to be uniform in style)

Example 1: If a team intentionally dresses a portion of their team differently than the rest, that should *NOT BE MISCONSTRUED* as non-uniformity; and

Example 2: If a team should dress all riders in blue shirts, then the shirts should match *EXACTLY* with no color or style fluctuations.) A variation is allowed for slight differences due to men/women styles.

UNIFORMITY OF TACK:

Are the saddles and bridles matched in style (all Western or all English)? A team can intermix bits – Western or English within the unit as it is of utmost importance that the bit fit properly and be comfortable in the horse's mouth. Use of Safety equipment (i.e.; martingales, helmets), by individual team members should not be marked against. Uniformity in Saddles and bridles types and bridles are encouraged in the overall score but are not required for the open/schooling show.

MUSIC:

Does the music enhance the performance? Is it appropriate to the rhythm of the drill patters? Either instrumental or lyrical music is permitted in all divisions and events. Does the team finish their ride after the music has ended?

SHOWMANSHIP:

Was the team's performance entertaining to you and the audience? Did the team smile and seem to be enjoying themselves as a unit? Are most of the drills, centered within the "designated" area or the whole area of the arena for viewing ease of the audience?

PROPS HANDLING/CONTROL & POSSIBLE LOSS OF EQUIPMENT:

NOTE: Some drill teams and ALL colorguard teams utilize flags, burgees, and pennants (lances, spears, and swords) in their performance to (1) accentuate the team's appearance; (2) define the team's composition and; (3) evince the team's qualities of ambidexterity, artistry, and mastery.

You shall observe how the flags/burgees/pennants (lances, spears, and swords) are carried. Flags can be carried in either hand and are NOT to touch the ground. The poles must be perpendicular to the ground and the elbow flexed at a right angle. The eagle ornament (if present) on top of the pole faces forward and the flag is to be unfurled at ALL times. **The national flag leads and supercedes all other flags. The national flag is ALWAYS kept to the right in rows, columns, or in a single formation.** Other flags (i.e.; state/provincial, team flag, past award flags) can be posted during maneuvers, but the national flag is duly honored by being kept to the right and posted in the lead formation.

Do any riders lose a flag/burgee/pennant, lance. Spear, sword, etc...? Do they handle their props in a clumsy manner.