

Rocky Mountain Rated Trail Program (RM RTP)

OPR: Rated Trail Program Director
Current as of: 01 April 2011

Mission

The Rocky Mountain Horse was founded on basic principles such as sure-footedness, willingness to please, and versatility unmatched by any other breed. The Rocky Mountain Rated Trail Program (RM RTP) is designed to use a series of obstacles in a natural trail environment. This will allow the horse to demonstrate its athletic skill, coordination, confidence, intelligence and gait. Given the growing popularity of trail horses, the RM RTP will showcase the superiority of the Rocky Mountain Horse®.

Program Overview

The trail course is designed in a natural trail environment fashioned to accommodate any level of rider and will allow sufficient time for course completion. There will be a minimum and maximum time for each ride.

The monitor will send riders and horses to the trail at intervals so as not to create congestion. Riding in pairs or small groups is allowable provided there is enough space between riders at the judged areas.

Within the trail, each horse and rider will encounter five judged obstacles, which may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Water crossing
- Bridge crossing
- Down tree (or other) obstruction
- Unnatural object, such as a construction barrel
- Maneuver around a log or other object
- Obstacle to show backing ability of the horse
- Area to demonstrate a proper gait

There will be a judge at each location to score each horse on an established scale based on the horse's attitude, manners, style and willingness to perform each task.

At the completion of each competition, judges will submit their score sheets to the registrar who will tally the results and forward to the RM RTP Secretary.

At the completion of the year's competition, the RM RTP Committee Secretary will calculate and disseminate total accumulated points for each competitor. The committee will arrange for recognition of the participants.

RULES for RM RTP

A. Event Eligibility:

1. Events are open to all RMHA members in good standing.
 - a. Participants 17 years of age must compete in the Junior Division.
 - b. Members over 60 years may participate in the Senior Division.
 - c. All other applicants will compete in the General Division.
 - d. A horse may compete in **one** division--Senior, Junior or General.
2. Riders must apply for RM RTP card to be eligible for points or payouts.
3. Rides are open to all Registered and Certified Rocky Mountain Horses, 36 months of age and older, including registered & certified Grade Mares.

B. Registration:

1. Pre-Registration: The committee will publish on the appropriate web sites downloadable application forms that participants may submit between 30-90 days in advance of any scheduled event. Supporting documents (see below) must accompany all applications.
2. Day of Event Registration: Applicant must present their application, along with required documentation (see below), to the registrar at least **one hour** before the scheduled start time of the event.

C. Required Documents & Information:

1. Completed registration form.
2. Payment of entry fees per ride: \$25 per adult rider; \$5.00 per youth.
3. Original copy of horse's registration papers. If the rider submitted a copy with pre registration, they must still show the original to the registrar on the day of the event.
4. Registration papers must show horse Certification as all horses must be certified to compete for awards.
5. Horse must be 3 years old (36 months of age) by event day.
6. Current RMHA Membership Card.

7. Current negative Coggins test.
8. Current State Health Certificate indicating horse is free of disease. Kentucky certificates are good for one year or until Coggins expires. Out-of-state heal certificates must be within 30 days.
9. For youth, a signed release for the rider and the horse.

Event Management

The RM RTP director will assign the following personnel to manage an event.

A. Registrar:

1. The RM RTP Committee and/or Director will appoint a Registrar for each ride.
2. Registrar will be familiar with the rules of registration and the process of recording and compiling scores.

Registrar's Duties:

1. Accept/record all registrations.
2. Give each applicant a trail map.
3. Issue a back number to each participant.
4. Record assigned back number in the records of the ride along with the completed registration forms.
5. At completion of the event, the registrar will:
 - a. Collect the score sheets from each judge.
 - b. Record completion time as each participant returns.

B. Timer: The Timer will:

1. Assign the starting order of the participants.
2. Record starting time for each rider on a score sheet.
3. Record completion time as each participant returns.
4. Notify the Trail Master of any minimum/maximum time violations.

C. Trail Master: The Trail Master's determination is **FINAL**. They will be responsible for all aspects of the event on the trail including:

1. Laying out trails with directions along the way.

2. Setting up trail obstacles.
3. Advising participants of the following prior to the ride:
 - a. Review of the trail map.
 - b. Identification of trail marks.
 - c. The minimum and maximum times for ride completion.
 - d. Water locations.
 - e. Safety requirements while on the ride.
4. Announcing trail changes during the ride.
5. Enforcing the rules of the ride. (All participants must fully comply with the Trail Master's instructions.)
6. Submitting ride results and information to the RM RTP Committee Secretary.

D. Judges:

1. The RM RTP Committee will recruit and train judges.
2. Judges will assess scores based on a scale of 0 to 5.
 - 0 = Bypass obstacle
 - 1 = Insufficient, beyond skill level
 - 2 = Made effort, skills need development
 - 3 = Adequate job, obvious mistakes
 - 4 = Above average, very minor mistakes
 - 5 = Perfect, no discernible mistakes
3. After all Riders have completed an obstacle, the judge will promptly submit the score sheets to the Registrar.
4. Complaints/Evaluations same as Show Rules – see RMHA website for rules and form.

General Rules of the Ride

- Horses with a history of kicking must have a red ribbon tied to their tail.
- Bits will be optional for all horses except stallions. If using a curbed bit, shanks shall not exceed 8¼ in—no twisted wire bits.
- No tie-downs.
- No protective devices, ice boots, or wraps on the legs and/or feet.
- Junior riders must wear a helmet—strongly recommended for all others.

- Saddles may be English or Western.
- A bare back saddle is acceptable.

Shoes:

- Horses may be shod with simple factory made keg shoes with modest amounts of borium (or drilltech) not to exceed 5/8 inch.
- Caulked shoe total thickness should not exceed 7/8 inch.
- Natural toe length must not exceed 4½ inches, including the shoe.
- Horses may go bare foot. Easy boots are allowed.

Stallions:

- Stallions will have a yellow ribbon tied in their bridle and around their tail.
- Stallions **must have** a bridle and bit.

Post Registration:

- Riders and their mounts must remain in the designated assembly area and may leave only to attend the Pre-Ride Meeting and when called to begin the ride.
- Horses in the assembly area must be tied at all times, unless in motion either by lead or when rider is mounted.

Rules On the trail

- Practicing an obstacle before the competition will result in zero point disqualification.
- A horse or rider not completing any part of the trail will result in assessing one point per violation.
- The rider must be on the horse when in forward motion. (Rest stops are permitted but there must not be any forward motion without the rider in the saddle.)
- The horse and rider may proceed at any speed they desire keeping in mind the minimum and maximum times allotted to complete the course.
- Any violations of the minimum and maximum ride time window will result in a one point penalty for every 15 minutes up to 5 points.
- When the rider approaches a designated obstacle, they will await the judge's signal to proceed. They will complete or bypass the obstacle, as desired, then continue down the trail.

- Riders may address questions (about safety or trail conditions) to the safety riders or the trail master before they make any deviation of the assigned route, except in instances of extreme danger.
- No "accidental" shortcuts are permitted. If a rider accidentally gets off the trail, they must return to the trail at the point they departed the trail to return to the ride.
- Scores will be final only after the RM RTP director reviews and makes the final determination.
- At the completion of the ride and following time-in recording by the timer, riders are free to leave.
- The RM RTP director will post final results on the RMHA web site.
- Riders have 2-minutes to complete an obstacle; the judges will penalize excessive force of a horse to complete an obstacle.
- Only a team of one horse and rider is allowed through an obstacle at a time. Participants who go through an obstacle together will receive a zero point penalty.
- Judges will excuse any horse they consider unsound or out of rider control.
- The RM RTP encourages rider participants to bring a lunch and water for themselves and their horses.
- The RM RTP Director will hold rides rain or shine **EXCEPT** in extreme weather conditions. \

AWARDS

- All registered and certified Rocky Mountain Horses participating in the Rated Trail Program will be eligible to win one of three award levels:

Gold	85 – 100 points
Silver	70 – 84 points
Bronze	55 – 83 points

- Horses that achieve one of the three award levels, will receive a Certificate of Achievement.
- There are five Rated Trail Rides in Kentucky for 2009. The Committee will use a participant's four highest scores for eligibility toward award levels.