



**CHALLENGED HORSEMAN AND AMERICAN PAINTS PROGRAM  
COMPETITION  
FOR INDEPENDENT & SUPPORTED EXHIBITORS (CHAMPS)**

**GENERAL RULES.** To provide show management with the option to include Challenged Horseman and American Paints Program (CHAMPS), APHA has adopted these rules and provided a points and awards system for participants. In doing so, APHA does not assume responsibility for safety of participants. Since it is show management, which conducts these events and controls both the physical facility and all aspects of the events, responsibility for participant's safety remains solely with show management.

- A.** Each participant or their parent or guardian by allowing participation, assumes all risk of personal injury or property damage occurring as a result of the participation and does hereby release and discharge the APHA and show management, their respective officers, directors, representatives and employees from any and all liability, whenever or however arising, from such participation, except for the negligent act or omission, if any, of an indemnities. Further, as parent or legal guardian, they agree to indemnify and hold harmless APHA and show management from such liability to the minor.

**SHOW APPROVAL.** Show management applies for APHA-approval of these events on a voluntary basis and assumption of responsibility for safety by show management is required by APHA as an express condition for APHA to grant approval for these events.

- A.** CHAMPS classes may be held at APHA-approved shows, US Para-Equestrian events or can be stand-alone events.

**AWARDS AND RECOGNITION.** Points to be awarded in each class. Points will be awarded to horse/exhibitor combination with the points being recorded on both the horse and exhibitor's individual APHA records. A year-end high-point award will be available for the highest point earning exhibitor in the Supported Walk-Jog/Trot division, Independent Walk-Jog/Trot division and Independent Walk-Jog/Trot-Lope/Canter division.

**CLASS ENTRY GUIDELINES.**

- A.** Once an exhibitor competes in Walk-Jog/Trot-Lope/Canter classes, they cannot return to Walk-Jog/Trot classes at that same horse show.
- B.** Exhibitors may show in only one showmanship class per show.

**APHA APPROVED CHALLENGED HORSEMAN AND AMERICAN PAINTS CLASSES:**

- A. Showmanship**
  - a. CHAMPS Showmanship – Walk Only (CSW)
  - b. CHAMPS Showmanship – Walk-Jog/Trot (CSWT)

## **B. Supported Walk-Jog/Trot**

- a. CHAMPS Barrel Racing (CBRS)
- b. CHAMPS Hunt Seat Equitation on the Flat (CHES)
- c. CHAMPS Hunter Under Saddle (CHUS)
- d. CHAMPS Trail (CTRS)
- e. CHAMPS Western Horsemanship (CWHS)
- f. CHAMPS Western Pleasure (CWPS)

## **C. Independent Walk-Jog/Trot**

- a. CHAMPS Barrel Racing (CBRI)
- b. CHAMPS Hunt Seat Equitation on the Flat (CHEI)
- c. CHAMPS Hunter Under Saddle (CHUI)
- d. CHAMPS Trail (CTRI)
- e. CHAMPS Western Horsemanship (CWHI)
- f. CHAMPS Western Pleasure (CWPI)
- g. Para Reining (CRI)

## **D. Independent Walk-Jog/Trot-Lope/Canter**

- a. CHAMPS Barrel Racing (CBRC)
- b. CHAMPS Hunt Seat Equitation on the Flat (CHEC)
- c. CHAMPS Hunter Under Saddle (CHUC)
- d. CHAMPS Trail (CTRC)
- e. CHAMPS Western Horsemanship (CWHC)
- f. CHAMPS Western Pleasure (CWPC)
- g. Para Reining (CRC)

**DIAGNOSIS.** In order to be eligible to participate, an exhibitor must have a medically diagnosed condition that causes a permanent impairment that can be measured objectively. Examples of conditions, diseases or disorders that may lead to permanent impairment are: paresis, amputation (partial to full joint), ankylosis, upper motor neuron lesions, vision impairment, and intellectual disability. Eligible conditions include: amputation, arthrogyrosis, Asperger syndrome, autism spectrum disorder, Batten disease, cerebrovascular accident (stroke), cerebellar ataxia, cerebral palsy, Coffin-Lowry syndrome, cystic fibrosis, Down syndrome, dwarfism, fragile X syndrome, Friedreich's ataxia, Guillain-Barre syndrome, hearing impairment, Hunter syndrome, juvenile rheumatoid arthritis, mental retardation, microcephaly, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, post-polio syndrome, Prader-Willi syndrome, Rett syndrome, spina bifida, spinal cord injury, Tourette syndrome, traumatic brain injury, trisomy disorders and visual impairment. Additional diagnosis will be considered upon request.

**A. Diagnosis Form and Acceptable Adaptive Equipment Form.** In order to participate in CHAMPS events, a special diagnosis form and special adaptive equipment and riding ability form must be submitted to the APHA prior to the show results being processed. Once the forms are received by APHA, a letter will be sent to the exhibitor stating their CHAMPS eligibility. The special diagnosis form must be completed and signed by a licensed medical physician. The special adaptive equipment and riding ability form must

be completed and signed by a certified instructor or coach of Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH Intl.), Special Olympics, US Para-Equestrian, Certified Horsemanship Association or IRD or a certified therapeutic riding instructor, indicating the riding ability and adaptive equipment that is required.

**OWNERSHIP.** Neither the exhibitor nor their immediate family is required to own the horse.

**HORSE REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS.** Any breed of horse may be shown at the same event, and may be run concurrently. However in order to be eligible for APHA year-end awards and notation of results on the horse's record the horse must be registered with the APHA. Judges would only reflect the number of entries in the class, which are registered with the APHA.

**A. Stallions** are not eligible to be shown in any CHAMPS activities.

**WELFARE OF THE HORSE.** The welfare of the horse is outlined in the rulebook, however, horses with a slight disability or lameness may be used at the discretion of the judge.

**EXHIBITING MULTIPLE HORSES.** An exhibitor may show more than one horse in individually worked classes as outlined in the rulebook, but horses cannot be shown by more than one exhibitor in the same CHAMPS class.

**GENERAL RULES FOR TACK AND EQUIPMENT.** English and western equipment and attire will follow rules as set forth in the rulebook with the exception of CHAMPS acceptable adaptation equipment.

**A. Helmet.** Exhibitors must wear a properly fitted ASTM approved protective helmet fastened with harness. A western hat may be affixed over the helmet in western events. Equipment should conform to the riding ability of the competitor and be suitable for the horse.

**B. Halter.** All horses when ridden must wear a halter in a manner that does not interfere with reining of the horse. A halter must be on the horse either over or under the bridle for use by the handler if needed. All exhibitors should be able to hold reins.

**C. Bits or bosal.** A snaffle bit, curb bit or bosal/hackamore may be used regardless of the age of the horse.

**D.** Exhibitors are allowed to ride with one or two hands at any time during the class.

**E.** Exhibitors are allowed to hold the saddle with either hand without penalty.

**F. Acceptable adaptive equipment includes but not limited to:**

**SADDLE**

Raised pommel

Raised cantle

Hard hand holds

Soft hand holds

Seat saver

Knee rolls/blocks  
Thigh rolls/blocks  
Padded saddle flaps

### **STIRRUPS**

Rubber bands around foot and stirrup  
Enclosed stirrups  
Strap from stirrup leather to girth/cinch  
Strap from stirrup to girth/cinch  
No stirrups  
One stirrup

### **BRIDLE/REINS**

Looped rein/s  
Connecting bar reins  
Bridging rein  
Ladder reins  
Rein guides (rein through ring on saddle)  
Elastic insert in reins  
Side pulls

### **WHIPS**

One or two whips  
Strap attaching whip to hand

### **RIDING ATTIRE**

No boots if using safety stirrups (Peacock, S-shaped irons or Devonshire stirrups)  
Modified riding boots  
Gaiters  
Half chaps  
Off set spurs  
Safety vest

### **POSTURE, POSTURAL SUPPORTS & ORTHOSES**

L or R Arm sling  
Neck collar  
Ankle foot orthoses  
Prosthesis  
Wrist brace  
Back support  
Trunk support  
Gait belt

## **OTHER AIDS**

Commander using sign language  
Enlarged arena letters  
Audio Communications (for hearing impaired)  
Voice  
Bareback Pads  
Surcingles  
Other equipment will be considered upon request

**HANDLER.** Required for all independent exhibitor classes: one handler per entry to facilitate the safety of the exhibitor. The handler must be 16 years of age or older. The handler must have a lead line without a chain in their hand in case of safety issues.

- A.** Handlers shall stand quietly in a designated area, not obscuring the judge's line of vision, unless their assistance is required and requested by the judge or ring steward in the event of a safety issue. The handler may either take a position behind, beside or in front their respective exhibitor's horse or quietly walk forward and snap onto the horse's halter after the exhibitor's pattern is completed or the class has come in to line up.
- B.** A blind or deaf exhibitor may have an assistant who communicates via verbal or sign language or cue cards to the competitor so they may hear the judge's directives or pattern instructions. This assistant will be outside the ring and their position known to the judge and ring steward.

**LEADERS AND SIDEWALKERS.** The supported exhibitor must have a leader with a loose lead without a chain, attached to the halter in a manner that does not interfere with reining of the horse. The supported exhibitor may need the assistance of one or two side walkers. Once the class has started, unauthorized assistance from horse leaders, spotters and side walkers will result in penalties. Side walkers may not give verbal commands or extra physical prompting, except in case of emergency.

- A.** Handlers, leaders, side walkers, or extra spotters other than the required horse handler are not considered tack or equipment.

**ARENA SET UP.** Markers must be used and may be numbered or lettered. People shall not be used as markers.

**PATTERNS.** All patterns must be posted one hour before the class. It is recommended that one of the CHAMPS patterns(s) be used, however a judge in concert with the show management may utilize a different pattern in the showmanship at halter, walk-trot-canter hunt seat equitation and walk-jog-lope western horsemanship, trail and reining using the acceptable maneuvers or obstacles.

**GO ROUNDS OR SPLITS.** Classes may be split at the discretion of show management. If go rounds are necessary, in the interest of successful implementation of the approved show, the number of go-rounds to be held and the number of horses to be shown at each go round should be based on safety and/or physical constraints of show premises when applied fairly and

uniformly by a procedure in which all qualified entries are included in a random draw. When necessary to split large classes by running more than one go-round, finalists must rework the specified class requirements EXCEPT any scored class.

#### **JUDGING THE CHALLENGED HORSEMAN SUPPORTED EXHIBITOR.**

- A.** Classes shall follow these guidelines:
  - a. Reversing only at the walk and omitting all extended gaits.
  - b. Horses should be backed in the line-up, not on the rail.
  - c. Horses should be worked for the amount of time necessary to evaluate each gait in each direction, taking into account the stress on the exhibitor and/or leader-side-walkers. The judge could chose to have the horse(s) walk briefly before resuming the jog/trot and completing the judging.
  - d. The horses in the CHAMPS supported classes are judged doing their jobs in spite of the challenges that may be presented due to the type of support or adaptive equipment that is required.
  - e. Neither the amount of support and type of CHAMPS acceptable adaptive equipment nor the unique characteristics of a specific exhibitor's disability should enter into the judging criteria.

**CHAMPS SHOWMANSHIP AT HALTER – Walk Only or Walk-Jog/Trot .** CHAMPS exhibitors may show in only one showmanship class per show.

- A. Equipment and Attire.** Class can be shown English or western attire but must be one way or the other. There will be no mixing of attire or equipment on a horse/exhibitor. It is recommended to use a plain leather halter and plain lead for English attire. A plain leather halter or sterling silver mounted leather halter with leather lead is recommended for western attire. The use of a chain is permitted but discouraged. No bridles and/or bits and/or lip chains may be used.
- B.** Refer to the showmanship at halter for rules on exhibiting and how the class is judged.
- C. Class Procedure.** All exhibitors may enter the ring and then work individually or each exhibitor may be worked from the gate individually.
- D. Individual Workout.** The judge may select an appropriate CHAMPS pattern. In the event that the judge in concert with the show management develops a walk-trot/jog level 3 showmanship at halter pattern instead of using existing CHAMPS pattern(s) maneuvers found in showmanship at halter are acceptable, however the following are unacceptable: back in a curved line, pull turns. No exhibitor will be disqualified except for safety reasons at the judge's discretion. Exhibitors going off pattern will be penalized and placed at the bottom of the class.
- E. Scoring.** Exhibitors are to be scored from 0 to 100, in ½ point increments.

#### **CHAMPS HUNT SEAT EQUITATION ON THE FLAT – WALK-TROT Independent or Supported.**

- A.** Refer to the hunt seat equitation for rules on attire, exhibiting and how the class is judged.
- B. Class Procedure.** All exhibitors must enter the ring and then work individually, or each exhibitor may be worked from the gate individually. When exhibitors are worked

individually from the gate, a working order is required. Exhibitors should be instructed to either leave the arena, fall into line, or fall into place on the rail after their individual work. The whole class, or just the finalists, may work at the appropriate gaits at least one direction of the arena.

- C. **Individual Workout.** The judge must select an appropriate CHAMPS pattern.
- D. **Scoring.** Exhibitors are to be scored from 0 to 100, in ½ point increments.

**CHAMPS HUNT SEAT EQUITATION ON THE FLAT – WALK-TROT-CANTER, Independent.**

- A. Refer to the hunt seat equitation for rules on attire, exhibiting and how the class is judged.
- B. **Class Procedure.** All exhibitors must enter the ring and then work individually, or each exhibitor may be worked from the gate individually. When exhibitors are worked individually from the gate, a working order is required. Exhibitors should be instructed to either leave the arena, fall into line, or fall into place on the rail after their individual work. The whole class, or just the finalists, may work at the appropriate gaits at least one direction of the arena.
- C. **Individual Workout.** The judge may select an appropriate CHAMPS pattern. In the event that the judge in concert with the show management develops a walk-trot-canter hunt seat equitation pattern instead of using existing CHAMPS pattern(s) maneuvers found in Hunt Seat Equitation are acceptable however the following are unacceptable: mount or dismount or drop or pick-up irons without stopping, address reins, hand gallop, or counter-canter.
- D. **D Scoring.** Exhibitors are to be scored from 0 to 100, in ½ point increments.

**CHAMPS HUNTER UNDER SADDLE WALK-TROT – Independent or Supported.**

- A. Refer to Hunter Under Saddle for rules on attire, exhibiting and how the class is judged.
- B. **Class Procedure.** Exhibitors will compete on the rail at a walk and trot both ways of the ring, line up. No extended gaits. Exhibitors will back in the line up not the rail.

**CHAMPS HUNTER UNDER SADDLE WALK-TROT-CANTER – Independent.**

- A. Refer to Hunter Under Saddle for rules on attire, exhibiting and how the class is judged.
- B. **Class Procedure.** Exhibitors will compete on the rail at a walk, trot and canter both ways of the ring, line up. No extended gaits. Exhibitors will back in the line up not the rail.

**CHAMPS WESTERN HORSEMANSHIP WALK-JOG – Independent or Supported.**

- A. Refer to western horsemanship for rules on attire, exhibiting and how the class is judged.
- B. **Class Procedure.** All exhibitors must enter the ring and then work individually, or each exhibitor may be worked from the gate individually. When exhibitors are worked individually from the gate, a working order is required. Exhibitors should be instructed to either leave the arena, fall into line, or fall into place on the rail after their individual work. The whole class, or just the finalists, may work at the appropriate gaits at least one direction of the arena.
- C. **Individual Workout.** The judge must select an appropriate CHAMPS pattern.

**D. Scoring.** Exhibitors are to be scored from 0 to 100, in ½ point increments.

**CHAMPS WESTERN HORSEMANSHIP WALK-JOG-LOPE – Independent.**

- A.** Refer to western horsemanship for rules on attire, exhibiting and how the class is judged.
- B. Class Procedure.** All exhibitors must enter the ring and then work individually, or each exhibitor may be worked from the gate individually. When exhibitors are worked individually from the gate, a working order is required. Exhibitors should be instructed to either leave the arena, fall into line, or fall into place on the rail after their individual work. The whole class, or just the finalists, may work at the appropriate gaits at least one direction of the arena.
- C. Individual Workout.** The judge may select an appropriate CHAMPS pattern. In the event that the judge in concert with the show management develops a walk-jog-lope western horsemanship pattern instead of using existing CHAMPS pattern(s) maneuvers found in western horsemanship are acceptable however the following are unacceptable: mount or dismount or ride without stirrups, back in a curved line, spins, rollbacks on the haunches and/or on the forehead.
- D. Scoring.** Exhibitors are to be scored from 0 to 100, in ½ point increments.

**CHAMPS WESTERN PLEASURE WALK-JOG – Independent or Supported.**

- A.** Refer to western pleasure for rules on attire, exhibiting and how the class is judged.
- B. Class Procedure.** Exhibitor will compete on the rail at a walk and jog both ways of the ring, line up. No extended gaits. Exhibitors will back in the line up not the rail.

**CHAMPS WESTERN PLEASURE WALK-JOG-LOPE – Independent.**

- A.** Refer to western pleasure for rules on exhibiting and how the class is judged.
- B. Class Procedure.** Exhibitor will compete on the rail at a walk, jog and lope both ways of the ring, line up. No extended gaits. Exhibitors will back in the line up not the rail.

**CHAMPS TRAIL WALK-JOG/TROT – Independent or Supported.**

- A. Equipment and Attire.** Class can be shown English or western attire but must be one way or the other. There will be no mixing of attire or equipment on a horse/exhibitor.
- B.** Refer to trail for rules on exhibiting and how the class is judged.
- C. Course.** Refer to trail for acceptable and unacceptable obstacles. Safety should be the first consideration in designing and setting up the course. All maneuvers found in trail are acceptable however the following are unacceptable: carrying an object, water hazard, slicker, mailbox.
- D. Class Procedure.** This class will be judged on the performance of the horse and while maneuvering a minimum of 5 obstacles for walk, trot/jog trail. Exhibitors are to work individually. There will be no rail work.
- E. Scoring.** Scoring will be on the basis of 0-100, with 70 denoting an average performance. Each maneuver will be scored from a plus 1 ½ to a minus 1 ½, in ½ point increments. An obstacle missed, refused or taken out of order will result in a score of zero for that obstacle but will not disqualify entry.



**CHAMPS TRAIL WALK-JOG/TROT-LOPE/CANTER – Independent.**

- A. Equipment and Attire.** Class can be shown English or western attire but must be one way or the other. There will be no mixing of attire or equipment on a horse/exhibitor.
- B.** Refer to trail for rules on exhibiting and how the class is judged.
- C. Course.** Refer to trail for acceptable and unacceptable obstacles. Safety should be the first consideration in designing and setting up the course. All maneuvers found in trail are acceptable however the following are unacceptable: carrying an object, water hazard, slicker, mailbox.
- D. Class Procedure.** This class will be judged on the performance of the horse and while maneuvering minimum of 6 obstacles for walk, trot/jog, canter/lope trail. Exhibitors are to work individually. There will be no rail work.
- E. Scoring.** Scoring will be on the basis of 0-100, with 70 denoting an average performance. Each maneuver will be scored from a plus 1 ½ to a minus 1 ½, in ½ point increments. An obstacle missed, refused or taken out of order will result in a score of zero for that obstacle but will not disqualify entry.

**PARA REINING WALK-JOG- Independent.**

- A.** Refer to reining for rules on exhibiting and how the class is judged.
- B.** This class is to be run with walk in patterns only.
- C. Scoring.** Scoring will be on the basis of 0-100, with 70 denoting an average performance. Each maneuver will be scored from a plus 1 ½ to a minus 1 ½, in ½ point increments.

**PARA REINING WALK-JOG-LOPE- Independent.**

- A.** Refer to reining for rules on attire, exhibiting and how the class is judged. This class is to be run with walk in patterns only.
- B. Scoring.** Scoring will be on the basis of 0-100, with 70 denoting an average performance. Each maneuver will be scored from a plus 1 ½ to a minus 1 ½, in ½ point increments.
- C. The following are allowances made for all CHAMPS Reining classes only:**
  - a. Exhibitors are allowed to choose the size and speed of the circles. Excessive speed will result in a maneuver deduction.
  - b. **Lead Changes.** Simple lead changes are allowed and the ideal change is to jog for one stride to change leads. Any deviation from the ideal change that takes place in the lead change area as described by the rulebook would not incur a penalty but deserves less credit. In order of decreasing difficulty would be jogging more than one stride, walking rather than jogging, stopping during the change and finally more than one attempt to execute the change. Penalties would apply if the lead change was early or late just as they would for a flying lead change.

- c. Judges should allow one-quarter circle coming into the change and one-quarter circle going past the change as an allowable simple change area (safe zone), with only the out of lead penalties applying. For example, a horse that comes across and takes 3 strides past “center” to complete the simple change, but before the end of the first quarter, would not get a break of gait penalty but would incur a one point out of lead penalty. The same logic would apply for changes before reaching center. All penalty applications would apply out of that “safe zone.”
- d. **Break of Gait.** Simple lead changes are allowed therefore, no break of gait penalty should be applied during the lead change. CHAMPS classes may use altered patterns and if simple lead changes are specified, no break of gait penalty should be applied during the lead changes.

**CHAMPS BARREL RACING WALK-JOG/TROT – Independent or Supported.**

- A. Refer to barrel racing for rules on exhibiting and how the class is run.
- B. The horse must break the start/stop line first, not the handler or it will be a no time.
- C. If exhibitor or handler knocks down a barrel it will be a five (5) second penalty.
- D. If a horse breaks into a lope/canter/gallop for more than three (3) consecutive strides during the class, the entry shall receive a no time.

**CHAMPS BARREL RACING WALK-JOG-LOPE – Independent.**

- A. Refer to barrel racing for rules on exhibiting and how the class is run.
- B. The horse must break the start/stop line first, not the handler or it will be a no time.
- C. If exhibitor or handler knocks down a barrel it will be a five (5) second penalty.