



# GUIDELINES FOR SCORING EVENTING

Horse Trials, Classic Three-Day Events,  
and CICs/CCIs

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# Guidelines for Scoring Eventing

## Horse Trials, Classic Three-Day Events, and CICs/CCIs

**M**ost sporting competitions provide a scoreboard to announce results and track the competition even when it is clearly visible who crossed the finish line first. In eventing, the scoreboard takes on even greater importance as no one can tell who is winning just by watching an event. Each of the three phases of an event – dressage, cross-country, show jumping – have their own rules for assessing penalty points. It is up to the scorers, following the *U.S. Equestrian Rules for Eventing*, to keep competitors, officials and spectators informed about the progress of the event. They do this by quickly and carefully, calculating the scores during each phase and promptly posting them on a public scoreboard.

### So, where shall we put scoring?

The scorers will need an area with some quiet and privacy. They need to be near where scores will be posted. They will have frequent communication with the secretary for horse and/or rider changes and scratches. The secretary can also be helpful as the first point of inquiry for scoring questions. The dressage area generally makes more frequent deliveries to scoring than either jumping or cross-country since every horse has a dressage test but multiple horses are scored on the same jumping and cross-country forms, so it may be helpful to have the scoring center closer to the dressage area.

Equipment needed by scoring includes tables and chairs; electricity for computers, printer, calculators, copy machine; adequate lighting; copy of the latest *U.S. Equestrian Rules for Eventing*; scoring supplies; and one or more radios.

### How many volunteers will we need for scoring?

If you run all three phases on the same day, you will need a minimum of two volunteers about a half hour after dressage begins, another about a half hour after jumping begins, and a fourth a half hour after cross-country begins. A whole day of dealing with numbers becomes mind numbing; staggering workers with the first to arrive,

to leave when dressage is finished keeps fresh minds at work.

For the Classic (Beginner Novice, Novice, Training and Preliminary) Three-day Events, two volunteers are needed for dressage and one or two for jumping. For endurance day, you will need two people to check and summarize the Roads and Tracks (Phases A and C) gates as well as the cross-country (Phase D) fences. One person at Steeplechase (Phase B) can monitor the steeplechase fences and time penalties and communicate them by radio to the scoring center. One person in the scoring center can receive the start and finish times and calculate the time penalties while a second person monitors the cross-country radio net and keeps a provisional fence penalty total; and one person tracks all the input on the Master Score Sheet.

The chief scorer should be in addition to these numbers. This person needs to be free to trouble shoot, answer questions, consult with the TD, and research rider queries.

### Just what do the scorers do?

Before the competition, the chief scorer or the secretary orders the supplies needed for scoring from the USEA. A few days before the competition, one of them prepares the master score sheet and posting sheets with the horse/rider combinations in each division.

For **dressage**, scores for each movement are added and the penalty points calculated by two people. Some scorers print a tape from the calculator/computer to attach to the test. Others use a check mark beside the numbers to indicate that a second person agreed with the first. The second method saves time, batteries, and paper. Once the tests are scored, the scores must be entered onto the master score sheet and posted. When all the tests for the division are complete, division placing is determined and posted.

For each competition season, check the *U.S. Equestrian Rules for Eventing* for any changes in calculating the dressage score. Below is based upon the formula in the current rules at the time of publication.

## CALCULATING DRESSAGE PENALTIES:

Divide total good marks received (minus any error of course or test) by the maximum possible good marks):

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{Total Good Marks Received:} \quad 117 \\ \text{Maximum Possible Good Marks:} \quad \div 190 \\ \hline = 0.6157 \end{array}$$

Take the total and multiply by 100: = 61.57 (round to two decimal digits).  
*This is the individual mark for the judge.*

Subtract from 100: = 38.43 (round to one decimal digit).  
Penalty Score: = 38.4

For **show jumping**, jump and time penalties must be transferred from the Show Jumping Score Sheet to the Master Score Sheet and added to the other penalties and posted. Again, when all the scores for the division are complete, division placing is determined and posted.

Refer to the current *U.S. Equestrian Rules for Eventing* for the penalty for each fault.

Time penalties: The elapsed time is how long it has taken the rider to complete the course; time allowed is the predetermined time the course should be ridden - only rides that exceed the time allowed are penalized. Timers will mark the elapsed time to the next whole second (e.g. 60.2 seconds is recorded as 61 seconds). Exceeding the time allowed is one penalty point for each second or commenced fraction of a second over the time allowed. Exceeding the time limit (equal to twice the time allowed), the rider is eliminated.

## EXAMPLE OF SHOW JUMPING TIME CALCULATIONS:

Time Allowed: 1 minute, 25 seconds.  
Elapsed Time: 1 minute, 27 seconds.  
Time Penalty: 2 seconds over the time allowed  
= 2 penalty points.

For **cross-country**, the individual obstacle judge sheets must be inspected and summarized on the Master Jump Penalty Score Sheet and a total fence penalty score for each horse/rider calculated. In addition, the elapsed time taken and time penalties must be calculated from the Cross-Country Time Score Sheet. If the timers have calculated the time and penalties, their calculations should be checked. The fence penalties, elapsed time, and time penalties are recorded on the Master Score Sheet and added to previous penalties. Again, when all the scores for the division are complete, division placing is determined and posted. The elapsed time may be needed to determine the final classification.

Time penalties: The elapsed time is how long it has taken the rider to complete the course; optimum time is the predetermined time the course should be ridden. Time is counted in whole seconds, parts of a second counting as the next whole second (e.g. 30.25 seconds is recorded as 31 seconds). Exceeding the optimum time is penalized by 0.4 penalty point per second. Exceeding the time limit

is elimination. Speed faults are applied for Beginner Novice, Novice and Training only. Willful delay as defined in the Rules for Eventing applies to Beginner Novice, Novice, Training and Modified levels.

## EXAMPLE OF CROSS-COUNTRY TIME CALCULATIONS

Optimum Time: 5 minutes, 30 seconds  
Elapsed Time: 5 minutes, 41 seconds  
Time Penalty: 11 seconds over the optimum time  
= 4.4 penalty points.

At some point, especially during a one-day event, dressage, show jumping, and cross-country scores will all require processing at the same time. First process whatever scores are necessary to complete and pin a division. Second, complete the dressage tests of the dressage judge who is waiting to be dismissed.

There are some commonly used symbols to indicate why a competitor does not have a score. They include:

- **E – Eliminated** by the rules
- **TE – Technical Elimination:** Additional term to indicate a specific type of elimination that defines an error strictly related to the actions of the rider; such as, but not limited to: entering the arena with prohibited saddlery; prohibited dress, missing a jump, mandatory flag or finish line, etc. Whether this term should be applied, is at the discretion of the ground jury and technical delegate.
- **RF – Rider Fall:** Officially the competitor has been eliminated from competition; for reporting purposes (score sheets/result forms), RF is the designated term.
- **W – rider chose to Withdraw** before beginning the phase.
- **R – rider chose to Retire** during the phase.
- **MR – Mandatory Retirement** by the rules designates a fall of horse or horse trapped in an obstacle.
- **DQ – Disqualified** by the Ground Jury.
- **DR – Dangerous Riding** determined by the Ground Jury.
- **NA – Not Accepted** by the Ground Jury during one of the horse inspections at the Classic Three-day Events and CIC/CCIs.

## FORMULA FOR REPORTING OF SCORES ON THE MASTER SCORE SHEETS

It has become necessary for both the USEA and U.S. Equestrian to maintain accurate and precise statistics for the benefit of the sport of eventing. Such data not only would present a more realistic (if not truthful) performance record on both horse and rider, but would provide both the USEA and US Equestrian with the necessary information to protect the sport and its participants.

**Jump Penalties incurred prior to a “Lettered” Penalty:** Penalty points incurred are recorded under the Jump Penalty Column for the applicable phase. The “lettered” penalty score is posted under Placing to Date of the applicable phase and carried through to the Final Place Column.

### Index of “Lettered” Penalties:

- Elimination (E); Technical Elimination (TE); Retirement (R); Mandatory Retirement (MR); Rider Fall (RF); Disqualification (DQ); Dangerous Riding (DR):
  - Should 25 penalties be imposed, these penalties are added to the score under the Score to Date Column of the applicable phase. To indicate the phase, under the DR Column, insert one of the following abbreviations: D-Dressage, X-Cross-country and S-Show Jumping.
  - Should the DR incur disqualification, the term DR is placed under the Placing to Date and the Final Placing.

To assist the public in understanding the various designations, it is recommended that a key to these abbreviations are on the score sheets.

*Below is a modified version of a score sheet to illustrate number and letter penalties – it does not include all columns typical of a score sheet.*

Horse	Rider	Dressage	Score to Date	Place	XC Jump	XC Time	Score to Date	Place	SJ Jump	SJ Time	Score to Date	Place	DR	Final Points	Final Place
		30.4	30.4	2	40		70.4	RF							RF
		43.5	43.5	5	60		103.5	TE							TE
		33.0	33.0	4	60		93.0	E							E
		25.2	25.2	1	0	0	25.2	1	4			MR			MR
		32.2	32.2	3	0	0	57.2	2	4	5.0	66.2	1	X	66.2	1
		45.2	45.2	6	20	0.4	65.6	10	8	5.0	103.6	3	S	103.6	3
		46.0	46.0	7	0		46.0	RF							RF
		49.3	74.3	8	20	0	94.3	3	0	2.0	96.3	2	D	96.3	2

### BEGINNER NOVICE & NOVICE FALL OF RIDER SCORING:

**65 Jump Penalties:** At the Beginner Novice and Novice levels, the rules allow the rider to fall once and continue under one condition: the rider remains standing at the time of the fall. This type of fall is penalized by 65 jump penalties. If the rider, under this definition, opts not to continue the letter score is R for retired. The score would read: 65 penalties for the fall and R (retired) as the final score. Should the rider continue and fall again, regardless of standing or not, the rider is eliminated: the scoring designation is 65 jump penalties for the first fall (standing) and RF for the second fall.

Riders who fall and do not land on their feet, receive a final score of RF and may not continue with the course: the 65 penalty points do not apply to this scenario.

#### Rider, falls remains standing and continues - 65 penalties for the fall.

Horse	Rider	Dressage	Score to Date	Place	XC Jump	XC Time	Score to Date	Place	SJ Jump	SJ Time	Score to Date	Place	DR	Final Points	Final Place
		30.4	30.4	2	65	0.00	95.4	6	0	0	95.4	6		95.4	6

#### Rider, falls remains standing and chooses not to continue - 65 penalties for the fall and R for retiring on course.

Horse	Rider	Dressage	Score to Date	Place	XC Jump	XC Time	Score to Date	Place	SJ Jump	SJ Time	Score to Date	Place	DR	Final Points	Final Place
		30.4	30.4	2	65	R	R	R						R	R

**Rider, falls remains standing and chooses to continue, but falls again – 65 penalties for the fall and RF for the second fall.**

Horse	Rider	Dressage	Score to Date	Place	XC Jump	XC Time	Score to Date	Place	SJ Jump	SJ Time	Score to Date	Place	DR	Final Points	Final Place
		30.4	30.4	2	65	RF	RF	RF						RF	RF

**Rider, falls does not remain standing - RF for the fall.**

Horse	Rider	Dressage	Score to Date	Place	XC Jump	XC Time	Score to Date	Place	SJ Jump	SJ Time	Score to Date	Place	DR	Final Points	Final Place
		30.4	30.4	2	0	RF	RF	RF						RF	RF

CICs & CCIS are run under FEI rules and once the competition begins the scoring department is generally responsible for scheduling as well as scoring the competition.

**Following is a list of typical publications from scoring:**

1. Order of Go for First Horse Inspection.
2. Order of Go for Dressage (after Inspection).
3. Dressage Results.
4. Schedule for Cross-Country Day.
5. Results to Date.
6. Order of Go for Third Horse Inspection.
7. Order of Go for Jumping (after Inspection – usually reverse order of standing allowing sufficient warm up for riders with multiple horses).
8. Final Results.

**How do they do that?**

There are almost as many ways to manage scoring, as there are horse trials. Most horse trials are currently using a computer program to assist with scoring. For some it may be a database with remote input of dressage movement scores that drive a scoreboard and simultaneously post to a website. For others, it is as simple as the master score sheet on a spreadsheet. The number of scorers needed may be determined by the computer input. If there is only one computer and all the

data must be entered in to the computer, then you only need one scorer. Unless there are only a few entries, it may take a long time for the results to appear. Most computer scoring schemes do not allow for double data entry to check for errors, so the computer printout should be compared to the original dressage test, Show Jumping Score Sheet, and Cross-Country Master Jump Penalty Score Sheet and Cross-Country Time Sheet before posting.

It is always wise to have enough battery-powered calculators and people who know how to score without the computer that you can continue to score if there is a power outage or computer disaster.

With enough people, space, and radios, you can do provisional scoring over the radio system for cross-country and/or jumping. The person listening to the cross-country fences must be able to concentrate, never touch the talk button, and accept that they will not hear every fence report. From show jumping it is usually one person providing the score after each round. A head set or ear button can help the listener concentrate. A second person is required to post the results, as the listener cannot leave the radio.

**After the ball is over...**

After the event, either the secretary or the scorer must submit the results to USEA. If the competition has a website, they can be posted to the website, as well. It's also a good idea to inventory left over scoring materials so you are ready to plan for the next event.



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