

British Team Chasing – Cross Country Events

Administrative Guidelines

Last amended - July 2016

1. GENERAL

Team Chasing is designed to be for the enjoyment of ordinary hunting and riding people. Thus the course should be within the capabilities of the standard of rider for whom it is designed, both to ride it safely and to enjoy doing so.

2. THE SPORT

Team Chasing is a mounted sport for teams of three or four persons performing as a team over a cross country course against the clock in a certain defined manner. Normally for a team of four the time of one team member can be discarded for their team.

3. SITING

Before choosing and building a course, the following factors require consideration:

- a) Access and egress to and from the course for cars, horseboxes, administrative vehicles, medical and veterinary vehicles.
- b) Proper medical and veterinary access, including Ambulances and other vehicles, to all parts of the course.
- c) Suitable and proper car and horse box parking arrangements.
- d) The safety of spectators, particularly at likely popular viewing places, the start and finish, the collecting ring, practice fences, etc.
- e) A good viewing site for spectators will generally enhance the popularity and financial success of an event.
- f) The ability, both financial and physical, to construct a course suitable for the type of event to be run.
- g) The importance of siting the commentary box in a position most suitable for best vision for the commentator and his assistants.
- h) The importance and difficulty of setting up the organisation to run properly an event of the chosen calibre. It is vital that there should be no lack of help to administer all the various different functions that will be required to make such an event successful.
- i) It is likely that at least 75 volunteers will be required to run a Team Chase safely and successfully.

4. CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The Governing Body will produce a calendar of events for the Autumn and Spring Seasons well in advance. Dates, and postponement dates, must be agreed in advance of publication with the Governing Body. There will be only one Open event on each weekend date, which is entitled to send up to two qualified teams to the BTC National Championship.

5. OPEN QUALIFICATION

Two teams will be entitled to qualify for the Championship from each Open Class, except where four or less teams start when there will be one qualifier. The qualifiers will be the top two teams to complete the Open Class who have not already qualified elsewhere, provided that they finish in the top twelve places in that Class. The team which wins the National

Championship will automatically qualify for the BTC National Championship in the following year.

Any team competing in the BTC National Championship may only run under the same name as the team that qualified save that if that team subsequently receives sponsorship they may add a prefix to include the name of that sponsor. Three riders must have satisfactorily completed an Open Class in the previous two years. The fourth member must be able to demonstrate that he/she is suitably experienced and capable of competing in the BTC National Championship. At least two of the horses similarly must have completed an Open Class in the previous two years and the riders of the other two horses must be able to demonstrate that their horses are suitably experienced and capable of competing in the BTC National Championship.

The decision of the Chairman of the BTC Committee, or his/her nominated deputy, shall be final in all related matters.

6. **PRIZE MONEY**

The level will be dependent on the generosity of Organisers and Sponsors and should be appropriate to the standard of the competition and take into account the entry fees charged. Winners should not normally receive more than one third of the total prize fund and all monetary prizes should be set at a figure which is divisible by four. Large monetary prizes are generally undesirable for Novice and Intermediate Classes.

7. **PRIZES AND MEMENTOES**

Prizes in kind are popular, particularly for Novice Classes. Prizes and rosettes should be well distributed. Where appropriate, a rosette could be awarded for those completing the course. Prizes in kind can often be sought as sponsorship from local businesses. Novice classes would not normally be suitable for monetary prize money.

8. **TIMING**

Very accurate timing is absolutely essential. Either light beams or real-time electronic timing systems (“electronic timing”) can accurately time fractions of a second and consequently shall be used wherever a class based on the fastest time over the course is to be run. It is essential for any such system to be capable of timing down to not less than one hundredths of a second. Stop-watches shall be used for such classes as a back-up only and to record the time of the fourth horse where problems have arisen (e.g. one of the first three team members missing a flag and being eliminated without their knowledge, etc.).

If a flag start is used, the time beam should be set to start when the first competitor crosses the starting line. The beam shall be set to record the time of the third horse in the team as it crosses the finish line. Therefore, the total elapsed time for the team around the course shall be from when the first horse crosses the start line to when the third horse crosses the finish line. The time lapse between the third and fourth horse shall also be recorded and used in the event of a problem arising similar to that described above.

In speed classes, the stopping of teams on the course should be avoided if at all possible. However, if this is required for safety reasons, dedicated stopping points should be provided which are staffed by experienced personnel in radio contact with Control. Stopping procedure shall be given in Appendix A.

In Open competitions, only one team shall be allowed onto the course at any time. However the Stop Procedure detailed in Appendix A should still be implemented and available.

All Open competitions should be electronically timed and be calculated to 100th of a second. There must be proper visible timing mechanism, so that this can be seen by spectators, competitors and commentators during the whole round – it is important that justice needs to be seen to be done. It is also important to time the fourth horse of a team home, as well as the third, in case of later disqualification.

Where a bogey time is employed (which is encouraged in novice classes) it should be based on normal hunting pace (and not other spurious factors) and is expected to be in the region of 450-500 metres per minute.

9. **RESULTS**

Results should be available within a few minutes of the last team completing the course, and prize giving should occur as soon as possible afterwards and certainly within 30 minutes of the conclusion of the event. A large scoreboard displaying results and times is recommended. Competitors and spectators should be encouraged to attend prize-givings in their Team Colours, not least as a compliment to sponsors, landowners and organisation. Prize-givings should be well-presented and properly audible – they are the showcase of the sport.

The organiser of the BTC National Championship is required to showcase the sport to its highest level at the Championship prizegiving. Therefore a backdrop clearly showing sponsors labels, together with an efficient, audible well-presented ceremony is essential. The commentary system for that prizegiving should cover the entire event and not just the immediate locality.

10. **OFFICIALS**

There should be sufficient officials to fill all jobs. On a long day, often relief (particularly for fence judges, etc) will be necessary which can necessitate reserves being available. Officials should be in their allotted place on time. It is essential for them to be well briefed, particularly in respect of the operation of radios, and to know exactly what is required of them. All on-course officials must also be fully aware of the Stopping Procedure.

11. **COMMENTATOR/CONTROL**

The commentator should be kept well informed about participants and their horses. From a public viewpoint, the chosen commentator has a great influence on the success of an event, and he must always strive to maintain interest, not least by giving up-to-date results, times, other background information and matters of interest. He should also mention Sponsors whenever possible. A knowledge of Team Chasing on a national basis is essential for those commenting on Open Qualifiers.

It should be remembered that the commentator is not in charge of scoring, time-keeping or collecting correct results. He is in charge of relaying to the public correct information and results fed to him by the Organisers. .

A Controller is required to run the cross country course. The Controller's duties are as given in Appendix B and in order to be able to fulfil these duties, at least two radio nets will be required. One net should be for fence judges to report the progress of teams around the course. The Controller shall be able to listen and talk on this net and the commentator shall be able to listen only. A second net is required for administration purposes and is commonly used to communicate with emergency services (unless a third net is used for this purpose). The Controller shall be able to listen and talk on this (these) net(s).

12. **PUBLIC ADDRESS**

The public address system should reach as much of the course and area covered by the event as is possible, and **in particular** should cover the horse box parking area. The P.A. system should not be used for event administration.

13. **THE DRAW**

The BTC National Championship should be drawn for starting order; in other classes starting order may be allotted by the Organisers. If an order of competing is drawn or advertised it should be adhered to.

14. **PRESENTATION OF OPEN QUALIFIERS**

It is recommended that OpenClasses should whenever possible take place in the middle of the day (neither at beginning nor end of the day), as competitors often have to travel further.

15. **PROGRAMMES**

All BTC Events should produce a printed or typed programme, produced to the best standard possible commensurate with the classes being run, and containing as much information as it is possible and sensible to give.

16. **TIMELINESS**

It is important for an event to run as close as possible to its advertised or allotted times, which can require considerable additional organisation in a busy period. In the case of competitors, spectators and sponsors, the success or otherwise of a particular event is often partially judged on its timeliness.

17. **ENTRY FEES**

The BTC Committee recommend that, all Events should charge a minimum entry fee of **£130 per team for Open Classes**, and **£100 per team for Intermediate Classes** and **£90 per team for Novice Classes**. This can be divided between an entry fee and a declaration fee on the day, if desired, or not. A late entry fee could be added on top, if appropriate.

The BTC Committee considers that all events should at least cover their own costs (excluding sponsorship), and that sponsorship monies should be utilised for prize money for competitors, and for the promoter's profit.

Clarification of individual event guidelines in respect of entry fee refunds in the event of cancellation or postponement should be made clear in the event schedule.

18. **OBSTRUCTION**

Dogs must be kept on leads at all times and a Notice to this effect should appear in the programme. Small children should remain under the care and be the responsibility of their parents.

19. **SIGNING OF EVENTS**

Routes to and from events should be well signed.

20. **HORSE SIZE**

Except in classes judged on a bogey time, it is recommended that horses should normally be over 14.2 hh.

21. **LENGTH OF COURSE**

This is controlled by class classification (Rule 22), but as a guide a course of 2,414m to 3,219m (1½ to 2 miles) with 25 to 30 fences.

22. **TEAMS ON THE COURSE**

Organisers will have to judge how many teams can safely and prudently be accommodated on the course at any one time. In an Open Class it is recommended that not more than one team should normally be on the course at the same time, except in exceptional but safe circumstances. In other classes, it is suggested that two teams on the course simultaneously will normally be sufficient.

23. **COURSE REPAIR**

Better-built courses require fewer repairs on the day. Hold-ups for course repair should be avoided, but too many vehicles all descending on one fence to repair it can also be counter productive in other ways. Often more than one repair gang is required for course repair during an event, and as a guide one 4WD vehicle with two men, materials and tools is sufficient for every 10-12 fences.

24. **THE RULES**

The BTC Rules are mandatory and should be printed in the event schedule and programme.

25. **WEBSITE**

Team Chasing has its own website (at www.teamchasing.co.uk). Organisers are asked to give full details of their events including course descriptions, start times and results to the website operators, who will try to ensure that these are all included on the website.

26. **TEAM COLOURS**

It is recommended that all Open Teams are encouraged to wear Team colours. Team colours are mandatory in the BTC National Championship final, and are strongly recommended to be worn at all prize-givings.

27. **ACCIDENT REPORT FORMS**

Copies of the Accident Report Form should be given to each Fence Steward and **MUST BE COMPLETED FOR ANY ACCIDENT** and returned to the Event Secretary. A person can sue for three years after an accident (or three years after they attain the age of 18) so it will be necessary for all completed forms to be kept for five years, or longer in the event of an accident involving anyone under the age of 18.

Completed Accident Report Forms should also be made available to the Course Inspector when he/she inspects your course the following year.

Blank forms are available from the MFHA office.

28. **RISK ASSESSMENTS**

Each event is required to complete a Risk Assessment – pro-forma available from the MFHA office – which must be available for the Course Inspector to see when inspecting the course.

29. **CHECKING OF PROTECTIVE CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT.**

Officials should carry out spot checks in all classes to ensure that competitors are complying with the Rules on safety and protection and in particular that hats and body protectors of the required standard are being worn

30. **SCREENS**

Organisers should ensure that at least two sets of mobile screens capable of being transported quickly across the course are available. These are to be used to ensure that any serious incident occur involving a horse and/or rider is screened, so far as is reasonably possible, from members of the public . It is suggested that one set of screens is carried in the horse ambulance and a second set is available to be deployed quickly from a central point. It is essential that both sets are with different officials in different sections of the course for quick attentive action in the event of either an equine or human accident.

31. **COURSE PLANS**

Large scale course plans should be publicly displayed from the moment when the course is available to be walked. Smaller scale course plans should also be available near to the start of each course, or at the first fence.

32. **SERIOUS INCIDENTS**

In the event of a serious incident at any event, it is essential that all important and related communications is taken off the principal radio channels, and either moved to an alternative channel (which can be achieved discreetly via a radio call sign, or a telephone call to a mobile phone); or for such communications to be conducted via mobile phone only. A dedicated emergency channel should be set up in advance on the radio system.

=====END=====

Attachments:

- Appendix A – Stopping Procedure
- Appendix B – Duties of the Controller
- Appendix C – Sample Accident Report Form
- Appendix D – Sample Risk Assessment pro-forma

APPENDIX A

STOPPING PROCEDURE

This Procedure now applies to all Novice, Intermediate, Open and Championship classes run under the auspices of British Team Chasing.

1. On arrival at their dedicated stopping point, the personnel concerned shall establish a permanent stop point marker at least 80m before their stop point location. This may be a coloured peg driven into the ground or even the previous fence.
2. When ordered to do so by Control, the stop point person shall stand in the track; at least 50m further on from their stop point marker, wave a red flag at waist height and shout the word "STOP". As the third horse in the team passes the stop marker, a stop watch shall be started.
3. Once the team has been stopped, the stop point person shall point out the position of the stop point marker to the team and instruct them that, when signalled to do so, they may go as far back along the track from the stop point marker as is necessary to regain a good pace before re-starting. If the stop point marker is the previous fence, competitors must be instructed to bypass that fence in order to re-gain the track.
4. Only when instructed to do so by Control, the stop point person shall instruct the team to re-start. As the first horse in the team passes the stop point marker, the stop-watch shall be pressed and the total stop time of the team recorded. This time shall be communicated to Control as soon as possible so that they may pass it on to the scorers who will deduct this time from the total elapsed time of the team around the course.

APPENDIX B

DUTIES OF THE CONTROLLER

1. Act as the link between the Organiser, Secretary, Start, Scorers and Commentator.
2. Instruct start when to dispatch teams onto the course, having due regard for safety and the location of the previous team on the course. It should be a defined principle that a second team should not be started on the course until the previous team has passed the first dedicated stopping point.
3. Oversee the progress of teams on the cross country course and communicate with fence judges and emergency personnel.
4. In the event of an incident on the course, dispatch emergency services to the correct location and, if required, stop the next team on the course at the dedicated stop point previous to the incident location.
5. Monitor any incident and assist with requests from emergency services, via the dedicated radio net, to provide appropriate back up or additional services if required.
6. Ensure the course is clear of emergency vehicles after any call for their services before issuing an instruction to the appropriate stop point to re-start a held team on the course.