

BRITISH TEAM CHASING COMMITTEE

THE RULES

(Taking effect from 1st March 2018 onwards)

1. **ACCEPTANCE OF RULES**

All Events run under the auspices of the MFHA Governing Body shall be run in accordance with these Rules and shall accept and be bound by these Rules. Such events shall be referred to at all times as British Team Chasing or “BTC” events. All competitors at such events shall also accept and be bound by such Rules. Individual BTC event organisers or committees may not impose their own Rules for their event but may impose administrative regulations as they see fit.

2. **RIDERS RESPONSIBILITY**

In the case of any Rule affecting riders or their horses, the rider shall be held responsible. In particular riders will be held responsible for adhering to Rules 7 (Protection), 9 (Age), 13 (Horse Welfare), 14 (Abuse of Horses), 15 (Exchanging Horses) and 20 (Personal Accident Insurance).

3. **STEWARDS AND APPEAL BODY**

There shall be one or more Stewards appointed by each BTC event organiser whose decision in respect of these Rules and of Discipline at that event shall be final, except by later appeal to the Governing Body on payment of a deposit of £50. Where any such appeal is submitted, the Chairman of the BTC Committee will appoint a panel of not less than 3 people with appropriate skills and experience (with a nominated Appeal Chairman) to determine the matter finally and with any appropriate sanction, and in such manner as the panel deems appropriate. The Stewards at a BTC event shall also have the right to refer any matter at their event to the Governing Body for final determination and sanction in a similar manner the appeal process. Local Mounted Stewards will be on the course at BTC events with authority to stop any competitor continuing on an exhausted horse or ill treating their horse. If they are not obeyed the whole team may be eliminated.

4. **TEAMS**

Each team shall consist of a maximum of four horses and riders and at least three horses and riders shall complete the course successfully for that team to finish.

5. **MEDICAL MATTERS**

No event shall commence unless one Doctor, two Paramedics (which for the purposes of this rule shall include such other professionally qualified and trained medical personnel of the same or an enhanced standing) and two Ambulances are on duty on the course. All BTC event organisers should be aware of and adhere to the medical safety Rules:

- a) No team shall be allowed to start unless either a fully equipped 4 wheel drive Ambulance and a paramedic, or an appropriately staffed Rapid Response vehicle, or another Ambulance and a Doctor are available on the course (as one Ambulance may be off-site or travelling to hospital with an earlier casualty). In such circumstances the organiser must be satisfied that the remaining on-site event medical cover is sufficient to handle a further competitor accident.
- b) The medical team must have radio links around the course to Control.
- c) The medical team must be familiar with the course and know the quickest route to any part of it.

- d) A suitable level of medical equipment, including stretchers for moving injured persons, must be available on the course and at least one 4WD vehicle with driver capable of carrying such stretchers should be available.
- e) The local Accident and Emergency Unit and Air Ambulance Unit should be informed of the event at least 2 working days in advance of the event, and provision for telephone contact be known.
- f) Ambulances should not be used as transport for uninjured persons, or for hospital transit of patients with minor injuries only, unless authorised by the on-duty Doctor.

6. CONCUSSION

Any rider who sustains concussion shall under no circumstances compete again for at least the remainder of that day, or until fully satisfied thereafter that there are no lingering effects from concussion. It is strongly recommended that competitors seek the advice of a qualified Doctor before competing again.

7. SAFETY AND PROTECTION

It is compulsory for all competitors and grooms to wear crash helmets to current recognised Safety Standards at all times when mounted at any Team Chase course. Such hats must not have a fixed peak. Such hats will be identified by a BTC, BE, BRC, or Pony Club approved Hat Tag. I.e. Hats must meet one of the following standards:

British All PAS015 1998/2011 with kitemark; VG1 with kitemark; All ASTM F1163: 2004 onwards with SEI mark; SNELL E2001 or E2016 with Snell label and number, or Australian and New Zealand All AS/NZS 3838 2006-onwards hats.

Competitors are strongly recommended to check their hats regularly and to replace them if damaged or following a fall.

All those mounted at a BTC event (including grooms and helpers) must wear a hard hat complying with the above standard.

All competitors must also wear a British Equestrian Trade Association (BETA 2009) approved and appropriately labelled Level 3 (purple label) body protector, manufactured in the year 2009 or after. A body protector of this nature is also required when competitors are wearing air jackets of any make.

Competitors are strongly recommended to check their body protectors on a regular basis and replace them if damaged or following a fall and are advised that the body protector should impede neither flexibility nor balance.

All horses being ridden at an event, including riding in exercise areas, must be ridden in a bridle with reins directly attached to a bit or leather 'D' rings or attached as per the manufacturer's specification to a purpose designed bitless bridle (such as a mechanical or jumping hackamore, Dr Cook, Sidepull or Scawbrig).

Any persons riding a motorcycle, Quad Bike or similar at an event may only do so with the organiser's express consent in advance, and providing that the operator wears a helmet at all times when the vehicle is in use. Passengers must not be carried on the vehicle at any time.

8. ACCIDENT REPORT FORMS

An Accident Report Form is to be given to each fence steward (blank forms available from the MFHA Office) and must be completed for any Accident and returned to the Event Secretary (or Organiser). Such completed forms must be kept by the Organiser for a period of five years, or in the case of a person under the age of 18, four years after they become 18. These forms must be made available to the Course Inspector in subsequent years.

9. RIDERS AGE AND EXPERIENCE

No person shall ride until they have attained the age of sixteen in any BTC Open, Intermediate or Novice Classes which are run against the clock and all riders competing in such classes should ensure that they have had appropriate experience of cross country riding. At the discretion of Organisers riders under the age of sixteen may be permitted to compete in classes judged against the "bogey" time. Any rider who is found to be in violation of this rule is deemed to be riding entirely at the risk of themselves and their parents or guardian, and will be subject to immediate disqualification from the event at the BTC event organiser's discretion.

10. VETERINARY MATTERS AND PAYMENT FOR SERVICES

There must be at least two Vets available on course at each BTC event. The decision of the course Vet to put a horse down on humane grounds must be accepted by all competitors. Competitors will be expected to pay for any services received from the veterinary surgeon, farrier, horse ambulance, doctor or any other medical services.

11. HORSE CASUALTIES

Organisers shall make adequate arrangements to deal with horse casualties, which will include the provision of suitable screens, appropriate methods to euthanase a severely injured horse, at least one horse casualty wagon, and a separate vehicle suitable for use as a Horse Ambulance and towed by a 4WD vehicle.

12. EXHAUSTED HORSES

A nominated Steward or Stewards, who must be mounted, shall be appointed to stop unfit or exhausted horses from continuing. Such an official or officials, who must be readily identifiable, shall be appointed at every BTC event.

13. HORSE WELFARE

The whip should only be used for good reason, not excessively, in the right place and at the appropriate time. Spurs must not be used to reprimand a horse and a bit should never be used to abuse or reprimand a horse. Horses competing in BTC Intermediate and Open Classes must be five years old or over.

14. ABUSE OF HORSES

Any act or series of actions, which in the opinion of the Stewards constitutes abuse of a horse shall be considered to be a breach of these Rules and will incur elimination.

15. EXCHANGING HORSES

No rider may exchange horses once a team has started. No horse may start more than once in any class or more than once in any speed classes on a single day.

16. FALLS - ELIMINATION

(a) Horse Falls - When a horse falls during any BTC class, the competitor is immediately eliminated and must retire. If the competitor does continue on the course following a horse fall their team will be eliminated. A horse is considered to have fallen when at the same time its shoulder and quarters have touched either the ground or the obstacle and the ground, or when it is trapped in a fence in such a way that it is unable to proceed without assistance or is liable to injure itself. This does not prevent horses which stumble or refuse, thus unseating the rider, from being remounted to continue, subject to rule 16 (b).

(b) Rider Falls - After two falls which are not Horse Falls the competitor is immediately eliminated and must retire. If the competitor does continue on the course following two Rider Falls their team will be eliminated.

It is recommended that competitors who suffer a heavy fall should see an on-duty Doctor before leaving the event; however competitors and their team members are to take their own responsibility in doing so.

17. REFUSALS

The number of refusals shall not exceed three at any one fence, or five on the course per horse, when the competitor shall be eliminated and must leave the course at once. The Team will be disqualified for an abuse of these rules by any individual member.

18. COURSE INSPECTION

All BTC courses will be inspected prior to an event by an Inspector appointed by the BTC Committee, who will need to be satisfied that the course meets the necessary Rules, safety standards and Course Construction Guidelines before permitting the event to go ahead. Organisers must ensure that they permit Course Inspectors early access to allow time for making any alterations required. The appointed Course Inspector should contact the Course Organisers to arrange an inspection date.

19. UNAFFILIATED EVENTS

No rider may compete in the BTC National Team Chase Championship, who has taken part in an unaffiliated cross country team event during the current season. Events sanctioned by the Governing Body, the British Horse Society, the Riding Clubs and the Pony Club are exempt from this Rule.

20. INSURANCE

All events shall ensure that public liability insurance cover for at least £10m is in place.

Personal Accident Insurance: The following wording MUST BE printed on all entry forms:

“It is a requirement that all participants carry Third Party insurance for not less than £5m. It is also strongly recommended that all participants have Personal Accident Insurance.”

21. ORGANISER’S RIGHTS

The Organiser of any BTC event reserves the right to cancel any class or event, to transfer competitors between classes, to refuse any entry, to alter advertised times, to withhold all or any prize money, and to eliminate or prevent any competitor from competing who is adjudged not to be adhering to the Rules or who is deemed to be wearing or using inappropriate dress, saddlery and/or equipment.

22. DISCLAIMER OF LIABILITY

Save for death or personal injury caused by the negligence of BTC event Organisers for which they are legally responsible, neither the Organisers of any event to which these Rules apply, nor any representative of these bodies or the Governing Body of Team Chasing accepts any liability for any accident, loss damage, injury or illness to horses, owners, riders, spectators, land, vehicles, contents or accessories or any other person whatever, whether caused by their negligence or in any other way.

23. CLASSES

Only the following terms shall be used to define classes at BTC Events:

- a) Novice. Fixed obstacles which are a minimum height of 80cm (2'8") but not to exceed 100cm (3'3"). Length of course to be approximately 2,414m (1.5 miles).
- b) Intermediate. The majority of fixed obstacles to be approximately 107cm (3'6"), but not to exceed 115cm (3'9"). Length of course to be approximately 2,816m (1.75 miles).
- c) Open. The majority of fixed obstacles to be not less than 107cm (3'6") but generally not more than 120cm (3'11") other than in specific and safe circumstances. Length of course to be approximately 3,219m (2 miles) and not less than 2,414m (1.5 miles).

Organisers should also note:

- i) If the term "Allcomers" is used, it must be preceded by the word "Novice", "Intermediate" or "Open", whichever best describes the course.
- ii) Only "Open" or "Open Allcomers" classes may be considered as qualifiers for the BTC National Team Chase Championship.
- iii) Events that have an Open Qualifier must run their Intermediate class against the clock (but can run part of the class or another similar class against a Bogey Time).
- iv) A "Fun" class may be held entirely at the Organisers discretion, but must be decided by a "bogey" time.

24. THE PEN

The first three horses entering the pen should have twelve feet on the floor before anyone jumps out. The penalty for failing to observe this rule to be the addition of 20 seconds per team. There should be at least one fence judge purely to watch for this.

25. ELIMINATION ON COURSE

If at least 3 members of the team have not completed the course within 8 minutes of the team starting, the team will be eliminated.

26. DEPOSIT FOR NUMBER BIBS

A refundable deposit of £10 per team shall be payable to the event secretary for number bibs.

27. COMPLAINTS AND OBJECTIONS

Any complaint or objection in relation to an alleged breach of these rules shall be lodged with the event secretary within 10 minutes of the last horse completing the class in which the alleged breach occurred together with payment of a deposit of £40 which will be refunded if the complaint or objection is upheld. The stewards shall use their best endeavours to investigate and hold an enquiry into the complaint or objection within a reasonable time, which will ideally be within 30 minutes of the objection being formally lodged.

28. REPORT TO COLLECTING RING

All teams must report to the collecting ring steward at a reasonable time before their running order.

29. JUMPING ORDER

Competitors must jump the fences in numerical order and leave red flags on their right and white flags on their left. Any competitor who misses a fence must either return and jump that fence and subsequent fences in the correct order or shall be eliminated and must retire from the course.

30. NATIONAL TEAM CHASE CHAMPIONSHIP

The BTC National Team Chase Championship shall take place in March/April each year on a specific date at an affiliated Team Chase to be nominated from time to time by BTC, on terms to be agreed between BTC and the organising committee.

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