

# Washington Horse Racing Commission

## Exercise Rider/Pony Rider Class C Race Meets Study Guide

# 2010

**Exercise Rider/ Pony Rider Study Guide  
Class C Race Meets  
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## Washington Horse Racing Commission Exercise Rider/Pony Rider Study Guide

The following information is designed to assist applicants applying for an exercise rider/pony rider license for the first time. When applying for an initial license the applicant is required to pass both a written and practical test to ensure that he/she is qualified to perform the duties of an exercise/pony rider. All questions on the written test are covered in this study guide.

As a licensed exercise/pony rider you are expected to understand and follow all the rules of racing (Title 260 WAC). The following rules and policies apply to all licensed exercise/pony riders. Obtaining an exercise license allows you to only exercise horses and to assist with cleaning tack. With a pony rider license you can perform all the duties associated with caring for your pony horse. You **cannot** assist a trainer or groom in other duties such as cleaning stalls, empty wheelbarrows, groom, or paddock horses for the races. You must obtain a grooms license prior to performing any duties other than those allowed by your license. Failure to adhere to these requirements will result in disciplinary action by the board of stewards.

To ensure that you would be covered under state industrial insurance for any injuries both you and the trainer must have a valid WHRC license. You should make sure you have your license and that you are working for a licensed trainer before performing any duties of your license.

**You** are responsible for knowing and understanding all the rules of racing and track rules. **The outriders are racing officials and you must follow their instructions while on the racetrack.** If you have questions regarding any rules, the stewards are available to answer them.

Any violation of the rules that is observed by a racing official (outrider, starter, clocker, investigator, etc.) will be reported to the board of stewards for disciplinary action. The outriders are responsible for ensuring that all safety procedures and rules are followed on the racetrack at all times. Failure to follow the barn rules, track rules and wear required attire may result in disciplinary action by the stewards.

### **Acceptable dress code:**

- An approved safety vest and helmet must be worn when on horseback. The safety vest and helmets must be securely fastened. **This means the vest must be zipped or secured and the chinstraps must be fastened, no exceptions. The safety vests and helmets must meet the safety standards required in WAC 260-12-180.**

- All persons on horseback must wear equestrian footwear that covers the rider's ankle and with a minimum ½ inch heel, except jockeys while riding in a race or immediately prior to riding in a race.
- If these requirements are not met, you will be asked to dismount and/or leave the track until such time as you are in compliance and may be referred to the board of stewards.
- These rules apply while you are on horseback on all the association grounds.

### **Track Rules:**

- Do not attempt to enter the track after the track has closed or before it has opened. There are occasional delays opening the track but you must wait until it is officially opened.
- Walk your mounts onto the track when entering and leaving the track. **Do not run or gallop your horse off the track.**
- The trainer will give you instructions on how he/she wants you to gallop, work or jog the horse. On the track you must understand where it is safe and proper to exercise a horse.
- When galloping a horse you **must** gallop far enough off the rail to allow horses that are working sufficient room to work and pull up safely. **The inside portion of the racetrack is for workers only.**
- Use extreme care when you are getting ready to start the work and will be dropping down to the rail and when you are pulling the horse up after the work.
- When jogging a horse the wrong way of the track, you must do so in a manner that does not create an unsafe condition for other horses and riders.
- If you are ponying or galloping in a manner that creates an unsafe situation for any other horse or rider you will be subject to disciplinary action by the board of stewards.
- If you are exercising a problem horse that needs special attention bring the horse to the track late in the morning when the traffic has diminished.
- When the starting gate is open for schooling, you must use caution when backtracking a horse in front of the gates. If you are instructed to stop your horse by the starter or outrider, you must comply with their request.
- **Licensees are prohibited from using a cell phone while on horseback on the racing surface, except with permission of the board of stewards.**

### **Barn Rules while on horseback:**

- No jogging or galloping through the barns or on the roadways.
- When riding through the barns, respect each trainer's area. Do not create an unsafe situation for individuals that are cleaning stalls, grooming or walking

horses. Whenever possible, do not walk your horse through another trainer's barn area.

- When switching from one horse to another **do not make the change where you are blocking other horses from leaving or entering the racetrack.**

## **Track Layout:**

- The Class C tracks can vary in distance.
- Race and workout distances are usually referred to in furlongs. A furlong is one eighth (1/8) of a mile. (A three-furlong workout would be the same as a 3/8-mile work).
- There are distance poles spaced around the inside rail of the track every 1/16 of a mile. These poles are striped with different colors based on where they are located. The following is the standard colors of the poles:

1/16 Poles = Black and white

1/8 Poles = Green and white

1/4 Poles = Red and white

## **Starting Gate:**

- The starting gate is located in the chute on the front side of the track most of the time at the Class C tracks. The gate will have scheduled hours when it is open. These will change depending on the time of year and the number of horses that are schooling.
- When schooling a horse in the gate, the starter or assistant starter is in charge and you need to follow their instructions. They keep records of each horse and know where the horse is in his/her schooling schedule.
- All horses that have not raced must be approved from the starting gate prior to being entered to race. Usually the starter has three phases that each horse goes through to complete gate schooling.
  1. Introduction to the gate along with standing and walking through an open stall in the gate.
  2. Standing in a closed gate and having an assistant starter hand open the front doors with the horse leaving the gate slowly.
  3. Closing the gates and using the same process as race day by automatically opening the front doors and ringing the bell.Horses learn these lessons at different rates. Some will require going to the gate more often than others.
- Older horses that have raced are often put on the starters list. This usually means that they did not act properly during the loading of the gate prior to the race being run and need additional schooling prior to being allowed to enter another race.

Again the starter is in charge and decides when the horse is off the starters list and can be entered again so you need to follow his/her instructions.

- **You must know the name of the horse, and its trainer's name, that you are on so that you can inform the starter.**

## **Emergency Conditions:**

There are occasions when an incident or spill occurs on the racetrack and a rider and/or horse are down on the track or there is a loose horse. This causes a dangerous situation for everyone on the track at the time. The following procedures apply at all the tracks:

- You need to know the emergency procedures used at the various tracks
- When a situation arises that requires medical attention to a rider or veterinarian assistance to a horse you must go to a location that will not interfere with the emergency vehicles that may need to come onto the track.
- Based on the severity of the situation the racetrack may be closed for an extended period of time. Leave the track in the safest way possible.
- **Do not work horses when an emergency situation exists.**
- If you see a rider or horse down on the track, immediately notify an official, a veterinarian or a horseman to get assistance for the rider and/or horse.
- There are times that there could be a loose horse or horses on the track. You need to know the safe way to respond to this situation.

Examples:

- If a horse is loose and is running toward you, turn your horse around and go the same direction as the loose horse. This could keep you and your horse from a head on collision.
- If there is a loose horse or a horse/rider down on the track you need to either get your horse off the track or go into one of the chutes and wait for the emergency to be cleared.
- If you are taking your horse off the track or to one of the chutes, you need to know where the emergency equipment (ambulance, medic, horse ambulance, etc.) is going and make sure you go in a direction that avoids interfering with them or causes your horse to spook.

## **Workouts:**

The trainers may ask an exercise rider to “work” a horse instead of using a jockey. A work is allowing the horse to run at a speed between a gallop and the actual speed that it runs when in a race. You will probably be told to work the horse 3 furlongs, 4 furlongs, 5 furlongs, etc. To be able to perform this job you will need to know the location of the various distance poles so that you will know where to start the work.

All workouts must be called to the official clocker. Usually the trainer will take care of this task; however, there may be times when you will be asked to “call in the work”. You need to know the procedure and location of the clocker on each track. You must give the clocker the name of the horse, the distance you are going to work and where the workout will start. If possible also give them the name of the trainer. Make sure you call the work in before you actually work the horse.

## **Tack and Equipment:**

Usually the trainer or one of their employees will have the horse tacked prior to you arriving in the barn. Since you are the one riding the horse, you should check both the saddle and bridle to make sure they are on properly and are in good condition. Usually you will have to adjust the stirrups to fit your personal requirements. Knowledge of the various types of bits and equipment used on the racehorse will help you when you are exercising a horse that might have a behavior problem. Understanding the use of various equipment will enable you to work with the trainer to figure out what will work best on each horse.



### **Bits:**

There are many different types of bits that are used on the racehorse. Trainers will use the bit that they feel the horse will respond to the best or may change based on the running style or temperament of the horse. The following are some of the more common used bits.



- D – Bit (Snaffle) One of the most common bits used on racehorses. There are several variations of this bit.
- Ring Bit – Used when more control is needed primarily from side to side such as when a horse is either getting in or out.
- Rubber D – Bit – Used when a horse has a very sensitive or sore mouth.



### **Blinkers:**

Many horses will wear blinkers, which is a hood that fits over the horse’s head with various sizes of cups attached to the side of the eye openings. These prevent the horse from seeing to the side and behind him. The various types of blinkers are french cup, half cup, full cup, extended cup based on the height of the sides of the cup.

The following are some of the reasons a trainer might use blinkers on a horse:

- Horse looks around too much and does not pay attention to racing.
- Horse shies when the rider moves around while mounted or uses his whip.

- When a horse is getting in or out.
- Shies or is intimidated by other horses.

### **What to do when injured:**

- Injuries requiring medical attention need to be seen by the medic on duty.
- Report the accident and injury immediately to your employer (trainer) and to the Washington Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association (WHBPA). The WHBPA will need the following information regarding the injury:
  - Name of person injured
  - Type of injury
  - Employers name
  - Date, time and place of injury

### **Drug & Alcohol Rules:**

WAC 260-34-020 and WAC 260-34-030 clearly state the rules regarding drugs, alcohol and controlled substances. If you have any record of a violation of these rules either in a racing jurisdiction or on your criminal background check you may be subjected to random testing. **Any licensee that tests positive for either an illegal controlled substance or alcohol is prohibited from performing any duties of their license until they provide a clean test.** Also there are other causes and indications that could result in you being tested. You need to know and understand these rules. A violation of these rules will result in your license being suspended or revoked.

In addition the rules now allow drug and alcohol testing of any person riding a horse on the grounds of a licensed racing association. That means all exercise riders, pony riders, outriders and jockeys are subject to testing. The WHRC has implemented a random testing procedure that will place every person holding an exercise rider, pony rider, outrider and jockey license into a random pool and a specific number of these licensees will be tested each week. This list will be computer generated so all persons with these licenses must be aware they could be tested anytime they are performing the duties of their license.

WAC 260-34-020 Drug and alcohol violations:

No licensee or applicant while acting in an official capacity or participating directly in horse racing shall commit any of the following violation:

(1) Be under the influence of or affected by intoxicating liquor and/or drugs, have an alcohol concentration of 0.08 percent or higher, or have within their body any illegal controlled substance while on the grounds of any licensed race meet; **The alcohol concentration for persons on horseback may not be 0.02 percent or higher.**

- (2) Engage in the illegal sale or distribution of alcohol;
- (3) Engage in the illegal sale or distribution of a controlled substance;
- (4) Possess an illegal controlled substance;
- (5) Possess on the grounds of any licensed race meet any equipment, products or materials of any kind which are used or intended for use in planting, propagating, cultivating, growing, harvesting, manufacturing, compounding, converting, producing, processing, preparing, testing, analyzing, packaging, repackaging, storing, containing, or concealing an illegal controlled substance, or any equipment, products or materials of any kind, which are used or intended for use in injecting, ingesting, inhaling or otherwise introducing into the human body an illegal controlled substance; or
- (6) Refuse to submit to blood, breath and/or urine testing, when notified that such testing is conducted pursuant to the conditions of WAC 260-34-030.

Failure to provide a blood, breath and/or urine sample when directed or intentional contamination of the sample by any person tested for the purpose of preventing accurate analysis of the sample, or other actions with intent to subvert the test, shall be considered a refusal to submit to a test.

"Controlled substance" or "drug" as used in this chapter means any substance listed in chapter 69.50 RCW or legend drug as defined in chapter 69.41 RCW. The presence of a controlled substance or drug in any quantity measured by the testing instrument establishes the presence of that substance for the purpose of this section. The fact that a licensee or applicant is or has been entitled to use a drug under the laws of the state of Washington shall not constitute a defense against a violation for being under the influence of or affected by intoxicating liquor and/or any drug.

#### WAC 260-34-030 Testing:

- 1) A steward of the horse racing commission, a commission security investigator or the commission, acting through the executive secretary, may require any licensee or applicant to provide breath blood and/or urine samples for the purpose of drug or alcohol analysis under any of the following circumstances:
  - (a) When a steward or commission security investigator finds that there is reasonable suspicion to believe that the applicant or licensee has used or is under the influence of alcohol and/or any drug.
  - (b) When an applicant or licensee has a documented history of an unexplained positive test which indicates illegal drug usage or has a documented history of violating chapter 69.41, 69.45 or 69.50 RCW, WAC 260-34-020 or similar drug-related violation within five years of conviction or release from a correctional institution for that violation. The

term "correctional institution" shall include any prison, jail or similar institution in this state or elsewhere.

(c) When a steward or commission security investigator decides to test any licensee or applicant as a condition of any conditional or probationary license.