

# 2021 Rules of the Western States Trail Ride

The philosophy of the Western States Trail Ride (The Tevis Cup Ride) is to ride in the best tradition of good sportsmanship, good horsemanship, and to finish with a mount that is “fit to continue”. The Ride is an amateur sporting event, and entrants are not eligible for monetary rewards. Participants who complete the Ride within the time allotted receive a silver buckle or a certificate of completion. For a safe and successful ride, the Western States Trail Foundation (WSTF) strongly recommends that each rider be thoroughly familiar with the equine he or she will be riding, including the equine’s regular physiology and behavior, especially in crowded conditions and on narrow trails at night. The Ride is committed to the humane treatment of all equines competing in the Ride including the provision of emergency treatment if needed. Entry into the ride constitutes consent to such emergency treatment. The Ride is sanctioned by AERC and follows AERC rules except where the Tevis Ride rules are different, in which case the Tevis Ride rules govern. Toward that end, the following rules governing participation in the Ride have been instituted by the WSTF. Please read them carefully.

## 1. Entry Rules

- a. **Equines:** All horses, mules, donkeys and ponies, except lactating mares and mares in foal, are eligible to enter the Ride provided they are shod or wearing protective footwear (unless exempted under 1.e. below), are at least 72 months old on the day of the Ride, are in compliance with the Ride drug and medications policy, and in the sole opinion of the Ride Veterinary staff are in fit condition to compete. The Veterinary Committee of the Ride strongly recommends that equines entered in the Ride have at least 300 miles of completed distance competition in events of 50 miles or longer. References in these rules to horses include other equines as well.
- b. **Riders:** The Ride is open to all qualified riders 12 years of age and older on the day of the Ride who have paid their entry fees and signed the Ride application and waiver of liability release forms. To be qualified, riders must have completed at least 300 cumulative lifetime miles of competition in events of 35 miles or more sanctioned by AERC, NATRC, or other recognized distance riding organizations, or have completed The Tevis Cup Ride.
- c. **Juniors:** Junior riders under age 18 must be accompanied by one or more responsible adults 21 years old or older who are entered contestants and have agreed in writing to sponsor that Junior throughout the ride. If the sponsor is pulled or unable or unwilling to continue sponsoring the Junior, the Junior may proceed, but only if a new sponsor can be found willing to sponsor, in writing, the Junior rider for the rest of the ride. The new sponsor must be approved by the Ride Director, Cup Committee member or the Head Volunteer at the Ride checkpoint nearest to where the former sponsor is no longer available. A change of sponsor may not be made for the sole purpose of increasing speed or competitive position.
- d. **Safety:** Riders under the age of 18 are required to wear ASTM/SEI certified safety helmets. All other riders are encouraged to wear protective headgear.
- e. **Barefoot horses:** Riding a barefoot horse/mule 100 miles over rocky ground is not recommended and will not be permitted unless special approval to do so is granted by the Ride Head Veterinarian not later than one week prior to the date of the Ride. An

exception requesting that a horse be allowed to enter the ride barefoot will not be considered unless the request is received at the WSTF Office at least 30 days before the Ride and is accompanied by written proof, satisfactory to the Head Veterinarian, that the horse has successfully completed multiple endurance rides of at least 50 miles or more, without shoes or protective footwear, and without injury, within the previous 12 months.

## 2. Ride Start

Riders must assemble with their horses for the start of the Ride as specifically directed by Ride Management at the pre-ride meeting. All riders must attend the pre-ride meeting to get the specific start instructions. All riders must leave the starting line no later than fifteen minutes after the official starting time of the Ride.

## 3. The Trail and Cut-Off Times

The Tevis trail is well marked and well-traveled. Riders must stay on the trail at all times throughout the Ride and meet the cut-off times established for each checkpoint. Finally, riders must reach the Timed Finish line within 24 hours elapsed time from the official starting time to be eligible for a completion. Ride Management may change the trail if necessary due to weather or trail conditions. If possible, a written description of any trail changes will be given to riders prior to the Ride and such changes will be posted on the Tevis website. Any trail changes made too late for written handouts or posting on the website will be announced at the mandatory pre-ride meeting.

## 4. Inhumane Treatment

- a. **No abuse or inhumane treatment of equines**, accidental or deliberate, will be tolerated, nor will violations of the Ride's Medication Policy. In both instances, the penalty is immediate disqualification from the Ride. In extreme cases, a rider may be barred from competing in the Ride in future years.
- b. **The care, comfort and health of the equines** are of concern to the Ride Veterinarians from the time of arrival until horses are in their trailers heading home. Riders are expected to comply with veterinary instructions with regard to the care of their horses before, during and after the Ride until released by a Ride Veterinarian. Failing to provide adequate care including needed veterinary care or otherwise neglecting to care for an equine from the start of the Ride until the horse leaves the Fairground premises may be considered abuse of the equine and grounds for disqualification from the Ride, exclusion from future Rides, or both.
- c. In cases where horses are considered too metabolically unstable to be transported, **it is expected that riders will abide by the opinion of the Ride treatment veterinarian** and allow emergency treatment to stabilize the horse. If a rider chooses to seek treatment elsewhere, and the horse is metabolically stable enough to be transported, the rider must inform the treatment veterinarian and forthwith remove the horse from the Ride venue for such treatment.

## 5. Veterinary Inspections

- a. **Horses shall be considered to have begun competition** in the Ride when initially presented to the Ride Veterinarians for the Pre-Ride Examination. A horse that does not pass the Pre-Ride Examination may be rechecked by Ride veterinarians no later than one-half hour following the initial examination. The horse may not be removed from the vet check area. Only one recheck will be allowed. It is the responsibility of the rider to present the horse for examination only after the rider is satisfied that the equine is loosened up and in sound condition to enter and complete the ride.
- b. **All horses are subject to saliva, urine, and blood tests at any time.** Test samples may be drawn by either California State drug testing personnel or a Ride Veterinarian.
- c. **Each rider, in all cases, must be present with his or her horse at every vet examination** (a crew member can trot out the horse in the presence of the rider and the veterinarian). Each rider is responsible for informing the veterinarian of any problems his or her horse may be having.
- d. **Any conflicts or disputes involving the veterinary judging of an equine** shall be resolved on the spot by the Lead Veterinarian at that stop, whose decision is final.

## 6. Rules for Crews

A crew member is defined as anyone who provides material support for an equine or rider during the Ride Competition. Cooperation by crew members is essential to the safety of the riders, horses, and other crew members, and to the efficient running of the Ride, including limiting congestion in vet checks and in traffic flow.

- a. **Riders will be held responsible for the actions of their crews.** Crew members must comply with all event rules and with all regulations and instructions issued by Ride Management. They must also comply with all parking, traffic and access instructions. Failure to do so may result in sanctions to the individuals involved and/or the rider, up to and including disqualification of the crew's rider.
- b. **Crews are to help the rider and horse only at the checkpoints listed below.** Crews must not meet riders at isolated, out-of-the-way spots or follow the rider along the trail. This kind of extra help is contrary to the "fair competition" spirit of the Ride and may result in sanctions to the individuals involved and/or the rider, up to and including disqualification of the crew's rider.
- c. **Crews are only allowed at the following points on the Ride:**
  - o **Robie Park**
  - o **Robinson Flat** (No overnight camping allowed before the ride)
  - o **Dusty Corners**
  - o **Michigan Bluff** (no vehicles, crews allowed on foot in town only)
  - o **Chicken Hawk** (no vehicles, crews on foot only)
  - o **Bath Road** (No vehicles, crews allowed between beginning of pavement and vet check)
  - o **Foresthill Mill Site to California Street Trailhead**
  - o **No Hands Bridge**

- **Overlook** (crew may proceed with rider directly to McCann Stadium where the horse and rider will cross under the finish banner – Finish)
- **McCann Stadium** (after crossing under the finish banner)

## 7. Sportsmanship and Common Courtesy

Common courtesy and good sportsmanship by riders, crews, and spectators govern all aspects of the Ride including the use of the trail. Violation of any of the following may be considered as violations of sportsmanship and as such may be subject to sanctions including disqualification of a rider.

- a. **Riders must, at the first safe opportunity, give passing room** to an overtaking rider who asks for the "trail please." If a horse kicks, it should have a red tail marking. Yield the right of way to hikers. Watch for mountain bikes.
- b. **No pacing** on horseback, on foot, or on any type of vehicle is allowed.
- c. Because of extreme fire danger, **smoking is prohibited** on the trail and strongly discouraged in camp and at vet stops.
- d. Consumption of **alcoholic beverages** by participants and crew members is discouraged.
- e. **Dogs must be leashed** at all times.
- f. Everyone is required to **comply with the rules** of the Wendell and Inez Robie Foundation with respect to the use of Robie Equestrian Park and with the U.S. Forest Service and other landowners with respect to the use of their lands.
- g. **Use of lights** is subject to the following restrictions:
  - i. **Headlamps & Flashlights:** Lights shall not exceed 250 lumens. Flashing lights are not permitted at any time.
  - ii. **Overtaking or approaching from behind:** Riders shall turn off all lights as they approach and/or pass other horses and riders from behind.
  - iii. **Glow sticks:** Attaching glow sticks to the front of a horse is allowed. It is not permissible to attach glow sticks anywhere from the back of the rider to the tail of the horse.
  - iv. Riders must comply with **requests from other riders to turn light(s) off** when so requested.
- h. **Flags and banners** (other than state or national flags or sponsorship banners put up by ride management) may not be displayed at any ride venue.

## 8. Enforcement During the Ride

These rules will be enforced by Ride Management and the Veterinarians under the direction of the Ride Director. Disqualification for a violation of Rule 4, Inhumane Treatment, may be ordered by the Ride Director or any Ride Veterinarian. With respect to all other rules, only the Ride Director is authorized to disqualify a participant during the Ride.

## 9. Ride Finish

- a. **No ties are allowed.**
- b. **Successful completion of the Ride** entitling a rider to a Tevis buckle or completion certificate requires:
  - i. That a rider arrive at the Timed Finish Line at the Overlook just below the staging area within 24 hours' elapsed time from the official starting time of the Ride; and
  - ii. That a rider proceed without delay from the Timed Finish Line to McCann Stadium to the official Finish Line under the banner; and
  - iii. That the rider's horse meets pulse criteria at McCann Stadium within 40 minutes of arrival at the Timed Finish Line and passes the Completion Vet Check at McCann Stadium within 60 minutes of the arrival at the Timed Finish Line.
  - iv. It is mandatory that not earlier than one hour nor later than two hours after the rider's Completion Vet Check at McCann Stadium, the horse be presented to a Ride Veterinarian for a post-ride final evaluation of the metabolic stability and general welfare of the horse. **No trot out is required and results do not affect completion.** However, failure to present the equine for this mandatory welfare check is grounds for disqualification.

## 10. Post-Ride Protest and Sanctions

Violation of any of the rules or directives of the Ride may, at the discretion of the Board of Governors or the Cup Committee, be grounds for disqualification or other sanctions after the Ride.

Except for drug violations which are found by the State of California or WSTF drug testing or other means, and rule violations observed by members of the Cup Committee or Ride Management, any rule violations alleged by others should be reported under the following guidelines:

- a. Rule violations should be called to the attention of the rider and his or her crew as the incident occurs, if possible.
- b. Rule violations, with the rider's name and number, should be reported to the next available Cup Committee member.
- c. For Rule violations or protests that affect the order of finish, riders or crew **MUST** submit such protests and complaints of Rule violations to a Cup Committee member not later than 10:00 AM Sunday morning following the Ride.
- d. For protest and complaints that affect the order of finish, at the discretion of the Cup Committee, the complainant and the person or persons complained of, as well as any known witnesses, to the extent practicable, will be invited to discuss the complaint of alleged rule violation and/or rider protest at the meeting of the Cup Committee prior to the awards ceremony on Sunday. At that time, a resolution of any issue affecting the order of finish, including whether or not to disqualify the rider or riders complained of, will be made by the Cup Committee. All protests and complaints of rule violations not affecting the order of finish may, at the discretion of the Cup Committee, be deferred for later action.

- e. Rule violations not affecting the order of finish may be reported in writing to the WSTF President provided they are postmarked or delivered in person not later than 30 days following the date of the Ride finish. All protests and complaints of Rule violations shall include the name of the person who is lodging the protest or complaint as well as the names of any known witnesses and details of the alleged violation.
- f. All reported protests and violations deferred for later action will be evaluated by the Executive Committee. If they find a violation occurred and it warrants further action, it will be referred to the WSTF Board of Governors. The rider involved will be notified and afforded an opportunity to appear before the Board and to present any mitigating facts. Determination regarding disqualification, forfeiture of any award, or other penalty will be made by the full Board after presentation of all relevant evidence and shall be final.

## **11. Top Ten Finishers**

- a. Except as provided herein, the top ten finishing equines, whether or not competing for the James Ben Ali Haggin Cup, must remain on the Gold Country Fairgrounds or adjacent parking areas designated by the Ride Director from the completion of the ride until the completion of the Haggin Cup judging on Sunday morning in McCann Stadium. Each top ten equine shall be presented at the Haggin Cup judging to have a blood sample drawn by State drug testing personnel or a Ride Veterinarian for the purpose of testing for prohibited substances. After the blood sample is drawn, those not wishing to present their equines for the Haggin Cup judging may be released by the Ride Veterinarians.
- b. If an equine finishing in the top ten requires veterinary treatment at any time after the Completion Vet Check and prior to the Haggin Cup judging, the Ride treatment veterinarian at the Fairgrounds shall be immediately notified and shall draw a blood sample prior to the administration of any prohibited substances. After the mandatory blood sample is drawn, the equine may be treated and can then be released from the Fairgrounds by the Ride treatment veterinarian. The treated equine will retain the completion and placement but will not be allowed to show for the Haggin Cup.
- c. Leaving the Fairgrounds prior to the mandatory blood test and/or any evasion or avoidance of the testing will be grounds for disqualification.

## **Ride Medication Policy**

The Ride does not allow the use of medications, substances, or treatments that alter, or potentially alter, the natural performance of endurance equines in any manner. Administration of rehydration fluids by intravenous or nasogastric route will be prohibited at any ride venue area 7 days prior to vetting in.

**THE USE OF PROHIBITED MEDICATIONS, SUBSTANCES, AND TREATMENTS IS EXPRESSLY FORBIDDEN DURING COMPETITION. THIS MEANS ONE CANNOT ADMINISTER OR USE PROHIBITED MEDICATIONS, SUBSTANCES, OR TREATMENTS DURING COMPETITION, AND THAT NO PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES SHOULD BE FOUND IN BLOOD OR URINE WHEN TESTED.**

“Competition” means from the time of the Pre-Ride Veterinary Examination on Friday until after the Completion Vet Check at McCann Stadium, OR, for those equines in the top ten, after the Haggin Cup judging on Sunday morning, unless the equine has been released by the Ride Veterinarians under Rule 11a.

The Ride is sanctioned by the American Endurance Ride Conference (AERC) and follows AERC rules except where the Ride rules are different, in which case the Ride rules govern. The Ride Medication Policy uses more general language than AERC’s Rule 13, but our rule with respect to drugs is equally strict. The policy of both organizations is to absolutely ban substances and procedures that would enhance the performance of an equine in competition, and both organizations severely punish any infraction of this policy. However, for the benefit of riders, and to avoid any confusion, be advised that as a practical matter, there are no substances and procedures banned under Rule 13 of the AERC Rules and Appendices A through G that are not also banned under the Ride’s Medication Policy. Likewise, substances and procedures that are permitted by Rule 13 of the AERC rule come within the permissible substances and procedures of the Ride Medication Policy. Please refer to current AERC Rule 13 and current Rule 13 Appendices for specific lists.

California State drug testers are present during the Ride (taking random urine samples) and all equines judged for the Haggin Cup are blood tested. It is the rider’s responsibility to know which substances are prohibited. If your equine requires veterinary care prior to the event, it is your responsibility to advise the treating veterinarian of your intent to compete in the Ride.

Administering certain drug treatments may result in disqualification. Please see Ride rules 5c and 11a, b, and c.

If your equine requires treatment prior to the Ride and you are unsure about whether a treating substance is allowed, consult your veterinarian and the AERC list of prohibited substances and the length of time after administration that they will test positive. **IT IS THE RIDER’S RESPONSIBILITY TO AVOID ARRIVING AT THE RIDE WITH DRUGS IN YOUR EQUINE’S SYSTEM.** For further clarification, refer to AERC Rule 13.2.6 and Appendix E, “Known Detection Times for Substances Used Therapeutically in the Horse”.

## **Drug Violations**

If prohibited substances are found to have been used, as determined by drug testing or other means, the rider will be subject to disqualification.

## **Additional Information**

### **Notice to Entrants**

Regulation §1280.1 of the Bureau of Animal Health, California State Department of Agriculture, requires the collection of \$5.00 from each participant in all endurance and trail ride events (as well as horse shows and any event of public nature) for testing, or random testing, by the Department for drugs or medications prohibited within the meaning of §24001 of the Agriculture Code. This fee is included in the entrant's application fee.

### **Liability**

While the Ride is open to all qualified competitors, the WSTF cannot be, and is not responsible for any diminution in anyone's "professional reputation" or financial loss of any kind which in any way results from entry to, participation in, completion of, failure to complete, disqualification from, or sanctioning in any form following the event.

### **Riding with Junior Riders**

The Ride endeavors to assist Junior riders and their sponsors during the event, but the Ride cannot take responsibility for the custody of these riders if it is necessary for them to withdraw. In most cases, a withdrawn Junior can be returned to Foresthill or Auburn in the custody of an adult who is willing to assume responsibility for the time necessary to reunite the Junior with crew and/or family. However, it is strongly advised that you arrange for a responsible adult to attend as many veterinary locations as possible to ensure the ability of the sponsoring rider to continue in the event a Junior must stop riding. The responsibility for acquiring a new sponsor, should a Junior rider need one, belongs to the Junior and his or her crew and/or family. However, Ride Volunteers, if they have time, will assist in locating sponsors within the vet check where one is needed. Riders are encouraged to become sponsors if needed. Junior riders who attempt the Ride are experienced and well prepared, and their equines are usually carrying less weight and are strong. Juniors are instructed to ride with all the items they need to take care of themselves and compete, including watches, jackets, water and snacks. Riding with a Junior is a unique and positive experience.

Check [www.teviscup.org](http://www.teviscup.org) for updates on all Ride information.

2/21/2021