

National Capitol Short Stirrup Equitation League (NCSSEL) 2021 Season

1. PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS & TEAMS

A. Participating Schools

- i. A "Participating School" or "Host School" is defined as an entity which has a regular lesson program with a sufficient number of school horses suitable for this level to run a meet. Membership in this league does not require access to an indoor ring.
- ii. Participating schools in NCSSEL will compete with teams composed of up to 9 riders, 6 of these will be designated as Primary or "Point riders" when visiting schools send in their entries, and a team may have up to 3 "Alternate riders", also designated as such on the entry form.
- iii. Each participating barn (team) competes in 4 regular meets during the season between 10/1 and 2/28, one of which is hosted by that barn. *New barns are exempt from this rule during their first season*. The season ends in March with a Finale meet at Prince George's Equestrian Center to which all barns bring their own horses. (See <https://ncelus.com/> for more information on the Finale).
- iv. Full payment of the season's league fees, (\$270.00), the Finale deposit, (\$270.00), and the Admin fee, (\$50.00), is due by 9/15 of the current season. The participating school's roster including the name, address and phone number of each team member, as well as his/her signed Participation Agreement and Media Consent Form must accompany a team's league fees:

<https://ncelus.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/NEW-NCSSEL-Participation-Agreement.pdf>

<https://ncelus.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/NCEL-NCSSEL-JEL-Media-Release.pdf>

The above forms must accompany a team's league fees and can be sent to the NCEL Treasurer:

Judi Novak
18447 Lickey Mill Rd
Purcellville, VA 20132

- iv. A rider who has not turned in a completed agreement or a team that has not paid their fees may not compete.
- v. Any team who decides not to participate after submitting all league fees shall be responsible for the registration fee, but the deposit and Admin Fee will be refunded.

B. Rider Eligibility

- i. Each team member is to be a junior rider who has not reached his/her 18th birthday prior to October 1 of the current competition season. An NCSSEL rider may not have shown at any formal or rated show where fence heights exceed 2'6". A formal show is defined as any competition open to any rider and managed by a sponsoring organization. Informal events open only to riders from their home barn and designated as part of the regular schooling program are not considered formal shows.
- ii. Once a rider who has ridden on an NCEL team, he/she is ineligible to ride on an NCSSEL team, even if they change barns.
- iii. Each team member must be enrolled at their home barn as a student in a regular lesson program (at least weekly) as of October 1 of the current competition season.
- iv. All riders must wear secured ASTM-approved helmets when mounted.

C. Division Specifications

- i. **Primary or "Point" Riders and Alternate Riders**
A team may have up to 6 **Point riders** who will compete for team points and up to 3 **Alternate Riders** who will compete with other Alternates for year end points.
Point riders may enter 2 classes, at the coach's discretion; either 2 flat classes or 1 flat and 1 jumping class.
Alternate riders may ride in 2 classes; either 2 flat classes or 1 flat and 1 jumping class.
- ii. Flat classes

- A **Point rider** may ride in 1 walk/trot class or 1 walk/trot/canter class, (or both flat classes and no jumping class). In the event that more than 8 riders enter a flat class, the class will be split.
- An **Alternate rider** may ride in 1 walk/trot or 1 walk/trot/canter class, (or both flat classes and no jumping class). In the event that more than 8 riders enter a flat class, the class will be split.
- iii. Jumping classes
- A **Point rider** may ride in either the 4 fence jumping class or the 6 fence jumping class which must include a halt and a trot fence. Fences will be set at 18". Any jumping class which has more than 12 entries will be split. Jump courses are intended to be cantered - 4/F includes 1 Trot Fence and a Halt, unless otherwise specified.
- An **Alternate rider** may trot or canter in the 4-fence jumping class. Fences must be cross rails and may not exceed 18".
- iv. Each rider will ride in 2 classes at the coach's discretion.
- v. ***All points earned by point riders at a regular meet will accumulate toward that team's final score for the meet that day. When an Alternate rider moves up to fill in for an absent point rider, that rider's points will be added to the team's overall score for the day and also added to that rider's total individual Alternate points for only one meet in the season. In the event an Alternate must ride again for team points, those points will apply only to the Team's score and to that rider's Yearend Primary score total but not to the individual Yearend Alternate points.***

2. HOST SCHOOL

A. Host schools will:

- i. Send out a "welcome" email no later than 1 week before their scheduled meet to the visiting teams confirming meet address, coaches'/judge's meeting time and stable policy on the use of outside saddles (see Rule 3B vi).
- ii. Provide an adequate number of school horses. (See Rule 3B which describes suitable horses and tack). Warm up horses as necessary prior to start of meet.
- iii. Providing suitable, safe tack for all school horses and notify visiting teams if they may bring their own saddles.
- iv. Report the results of the meet by returning the score sheet back to the Secretary within 48 hours after the conclusion of the meet. The League Secretary will send the score sheet to the host barn no later than 1 week prior to the meet. The Judge's cards are to be scanned and emailed, as well as the Sportsmanship nomination forms to the Secretary at: admin@ncelus.com
- v. Provide and compensate a qualified judge (see Rule 2.B) and ensure that the judge is familiar with NCSSEL procedures, rules and League Study Guide:
<https://ncelus.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/NCSSEL-Nomination-Form.pdf>
- vi. Manage the competition and ensure that it runs in a timely and orderly fashion. To that end, the host school shall:
 1. Provide clean, adequate facilities for the meet, including rest rooms and a dressing area for each team.
 2. Provide sufficient personnel for the preparation, tacking and care of the horses and for the efficient management of the show.
 3. Provide each coach with a packet which includes the description of each horse and whether or not a crop and/or spurs may be used. Also include copies of the courses, nomination forms, (see NCEL website: <https://ncelus.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/NCSSEL-Nomination-Form.pdf>) and host barn waivers as needed.
 4. Provide adequate space for coaches and one assistant to gather for a coaches' meeting prior to the start of the meet. This meeting should be followed by a brief meeting with the judge.
 5. Provide the judge with a packet/clip board which includes prepared judge's cards, courses, a copy of the pertinent rules and the league study guide. <https://ncelus.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/NCSSEL-Questions-2019.pdf>
 6. Prepare and supervise the draw. In NCSSEL coaches draw for the riders during the coaches' meeting.
BARNs MAY OPT FOR AN ONLINE DRAW WHEN ALL COACHES AGREE TO THIS USING THIS METHOD AT A PARTICULAR MEET.
 7. Prepare and post jump orders for all classes over fences
 8. Post scores and judge's cards after each class.
 9. Present ribbons.
 10. Provide sufficient food/drinks for snacks/lunch that may be purchased by participating teams.

B. Qualified Judges

- i. A judge who works locally or is recognized by VHSA, MHSA, BHS or USEF and has experience judging team competitions formatted in a way similar to NCSSEL is considered qualified.
- ii. A barn may not use the same judge 2 years in a row for an NCSSEL meet and once a judge has judged a regular season meet, he or she is ineligible to judge the season end Finale. A judge may, however, judge more than one regular seasons meet that year, so long as it is at a different barn.
To avoid possible conflicts, teams should choose the Finale meet judge at the season opening meeting.
- iii. A year end Finale judge must be recognized by either VHSA, MHSA, BHS or USEF and may not judge the Finale 2 years in a row.

3. REGULAR MEETS

A. Procedure at Regular Meets

- i. The schedule for the regular season will be organized in a way which allows each team to play against all others in the league at least once during the season whenever possible.
- ii. Visiting teams should arrive at the host school within 15 minutes of the scheduled coaches' meeting but no earlier than 30 minutes before the scheduled start of the meet.
- iii. At the scheduled coaches' meeting, approximately 30 minutes before the first class, coaches will draw the horses by lot for each rider in all classes. A draw will be held to choose the 2 riders from each team who will ride in the Finale class. Horses will then be drawn for that class. Immediately following the coaches' meeting, all will meet with the judge, and when the judge is ready, the meet may begin.
- iv. In the event a visiting team is not present in time for the draw, the host school may draw horses for that team.
- v. A host school may, but is not required, to delay the start of a meet for up to one hour if a visiting team is running late.
- vi. If the start of a meet is not delayed for a tardy visitor, once that team arrives, they will be allowed to participate in all remaining classes, but no classes will be repeated.
- vii. If a large rider draws a small horse or a small rider draws a very large horse, they may, with consent of all coaches present, draw again. No rider shall ride a horse other than the horse drawn by lot without the consent of the host school and all participating coaches.
- viii. If a majority of the coaches at any meet agree that a particular horse appears unsafe or unsound, then the host school shall withdraw that horse from competition and substitute with another suitable horse/pony. Priority shall always be given to the safety of both riders and horses.
- ix. All meets shall be governed by the rules established by NCEL. If there is not an NCEL rule addressing an issue, then USEF rules shall apply and if there is no USEF rule, then the decision shall be made in accordance with the usual and customary practices at regular recognized shows.

B. Horses and Tack

- i. All horses and ponies used in NCSSEL meets must be school horses or horses which are used regularly in the host school's lesson program. A rider on the host school's team may not compete on a horse that they own or lease which is used in the regular lesson program.
- ii. Horses must be suitable for use and high strung or extremely difficult horses shall not be used. Horses with a tendency to kick must wear a red tail ribbon. No horse shall be used which has been administered a tranquilizing substance.
- iii. If a host school cannot provide the necessary number of horses, they may borrow or lease horses from another barn.
- iv. Horses may be ridden in the tack they are accustomed to, including drop nose band type cavessons; martingales are permitted in **all** classes. Bridles and reins must be made of leather or leather-like material. All saddles should be jumping or all purpose saddles. Dressage saddles should not be used.
- v. No bit or tack adjustments will be allowed unless approved by the host school.
- vi. At the discretion of the host school, riders may use their own saddles. The host school shall provide saddle pads and girths.
- vii. Crops and spurs may be used at the express discretion of the host school.

C. Regular Classes

- i. Equitation on the flat: Riders to be judged at the walk, trot and canter both ways of the ring. Riders may not be

- asked to sit the trot in NCSSEL.
- ii. To be judged on position, hands, seat, legs and control. A team may have riders who ride in 2 flat classes and do not jump.
 - iii. Equitation over fences: To be judged on position, hands, seat, legs and control.
 - iv. Jump courses should be built of traditional materials and include single fences and measured lines. Courses should be straight forward hunter-type courses; no combinations, roll backs, skinny fences or end fences. Lines of fewer than 3 strides are not permitted and oxers are not permitted.
 - v. There will be 2 jump courses offered to primary riders, one 4 fence jump course and one 6 fence jump course. The 4 fence jump course should include a halt and one trot fence. Riders may not ride in 2 jump classes.
 - vi. One 4 fence jumping class is offered to any Alternate rider that will be jumping. The course must be composed of cross rails no higher than 18" and should go in one direction around the outside of the ring.

D. Finale Class

- i. Riders in the Finale Class to be judged at the walk, trot (no sitting trot) and canter with stirrups both ways of the ring .
- ii. Riders to be tested over 2 fences. The judge will design the test using jumps which were included in regular class courses, and the jumps must only be jumped in the direction previously jumped. Jumps may be set no higher than 18" in the Finale Class.
- iii. Riders will be asked to respond to one question selected by the judge from the NCSSEL Study Guide: <https://ncelus.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/NCSSEL-Questions-2019.pdf> Each rider will be asked the same question; no follow up question may be asked.
- iv. To be judged on position, hands, seat, legs, control and response to the question.
- v. Placing of the class is determined after weighting each rider's performance as follows: 33.3% for flat work, 33.3% jumping test, 33.3% response to question.
- vi. A rider may not win the Finale Class if she/he answers the question incorrectly or has a refusal during the jump test. By themselves, however, these mistakes are not necessarily enough to preclude a rider from placing in the class when other aspects of the performance are exemplary.
- vii. Points earned by a rider in this class are applied only to that rider's overall team score and not to their individual score. In NCSSEL all points earned by riders in the Finale will be applied to their team's score. (See Rule 1.C.v.).

E. Regular Meet Format

- i. A regular season meet will be a 3 or 4 team meet. 8 – 12 horses/ponies will be needed to do a meet. There are 8 classes in each meet, including the Finale Class. Flat classes with more than 8 riders will be split and jump classes with more than 12 will be split. The host school may determine the order of classes and must notify visitors of the order no later than 1 week prior to the meet.
- ii. The classes are as follows:
 - Walk/Trot
 - Walk/Trot/Canter
 - Alternate Walk/Trot
 - Alternate Walk/Trot/Canter
 - Four Fence Course
 - Alternate Four Fence Course
 - Six Fence Course
 - Finale

F. Class Procedures

- i. In all flat classes, there will be a short, (no more than 2 minutes), warm up in both directions under the supervision of the coaches in order to acquaint the riders with their horses. At the completion of the warm up and a brief conference with their riders, the coaches will leave the ring and the class will begin.
- ii. In classes over fences, each rider will be allowed to jump 2 fences unjudged and chosen by their coach, briefly confer with the coach and then begin their round. The host school may opt to run the warm ups and rounds in rotations of 3 or 4, in which case a rider will come out of the ring after their warm up and wait until all warm ups in that rotation are finished before returning to the ring for their judged round.
- iii. No warm up on the flat or practice fences are allowed in the Finale class. Coaches are asked not to coach from the rail once the Finale class is underway.

G. Sportsmanship Award

- i. Before the commencement of the Finale Class, all coaches must turn in their Sportsmanship nomination form to the host school. The 3 riders nominated for this award should be riders from the other teams participating that day, and not from the team which is submitting the nominations.

4. VISITING TEAMS

A. Coaches

- i. Coaches should email their team's entry in to the host school as soon as possible, but no later than 1 week prior to the meet. Details of any very small or large riders should be included for the host's planning purposes.
- ii. See to the transportation and timeliness of their riders.
- iii. Ensure sportsmanlike behavior of their riders and parents.
- iv. Make prompt payment of entry fee of \$45/rider to the host school.

5. FINALE MEET

A. Format

- i. The NCSSEL Finale meet is held on the second weekend of March at Prince George's Equestrian Center. Each NCSSEL team should have a \$270.00 credit toward their team entry fee, and that amount will be approximately one half of the total entry fees. Other fees will apply and will be announced in a timely manner once the season is underway.
- ii. The final prize list for each season's Finale will be announced once the regular meets have begun and will look very very much like the list of classes in the regular meets.
- iii. A schooling period in the Finale ring will be assigned to each team prior to the start of the show. After that, no schooling by riders in the show ring is permitted.
- iv. All teams in the League will participate. A team which chooses not to participate in the Finale will not receive any refund of fees.
- v. Each participating school will bring its own horses as described in Rule 3.B. Schools may make arrangements to borrow/lease another participating school's horses.
- vi. Coaches will designate which horses their riders are to show.
- vii. If a horse is privately owned or leased, the owner or lessee may not ride that horse in the Finale meet.
- viii. Each coach will choose 2 riders to ride in the Finale class out of their top 3 high point riders from that season.
- ix. If there are more than 20 riders in the Finale class, it will be divided.
- x. The specifications for the Finale Class and all other classes will be as in regular season meet classes.
- xi. Regular Flat or Jumping classes with more than 16 entries will be split.

6. POINTS AND AWARDS

A. Awards

- i. Ribbons for all meets will be secured by the Treasurer and provided to the host school at the opening meeting prior to the start of the new season.
- ii. At Regular Meets six ribbons will be awarded in each class. At the Finale Meet, 8 ribbons will be awarded in each class.

B. Points

- i. Individual points will be valued as follows:

- 1st Place – 7 Points**
- 2nd Place – 5 Points**
- 3rd Place – 4 Points**
- 4th Place – 3 Points**
- 5th Place – 2 Points**
- 6th Place – 1 Point**

- ii. All points an individual earns at Regular meets or at the Finale meet, **except Finale class points**, (see Rule 3.D.vii) will accumulate and be applied to the calculations for Year End High Point Rider awards.
- iii. After adding together each team’s points from each class in a meet, the team with the most points in that calculation is the winner of the meet and their points will be recorded as shown above.
- iv. Points are calculated and recorded in the same manner for both regular meets and the Finale Meet.
- v. Points from each meet including the Finale Class points will accumulate and be added to the yearend points in order to determine the yearend team placing.

C. Point adjustment in the event of a forfeiture at a regular meet:

Point adjustments when a team forfeits at a Regular Season Meet

One Team Forfeit		Two Team Forfeit	
1st Place	5.25 Pts	1st Place	3.5 Pts
2nd Place	3.75 Pts	2nd Place	2.5 Pts
3rd Place	3 Pts	3rd Place	2 Pts
4th Place	2.25 Pts	4th Place	1.5 Pts
5th Place	1.5 Pts	5th Place	1 Pt
6 Place	.75 Pt	6th Place	.50 Pt

7. Tie Breakers and Awards

A. Team ties

- i. Team ties in regular season meets and the Finale will be broken with total team points in that day’s Finale class.

B. Year End Individual and Team Ties

- i. Individual ties will be broken by using the jumping points earned during the regular season.
- ii. End of year team ties will be broken by the total Finale Class points earned during the season and in the Finale Meet.

C. Trophies & Ribbons

- i. **High Point Team.** The NCSSEL team which accumulates the most points during the season will receive a perpetual trophy. The team may retain possession of the trophy until the next season’s Finale meet and must return the trophy to NCEL Admin prior to the start of the Finale meet in order to compete in that year’s Finale.
- ii. **High Point Rider.** The individual rider in NCSSEL who earns the most points during the season will receive a year end challenge trophy. The rider may retain possession of the trophy until the next season’s Finale meet and must return the trophy to NCEL Admin prior to the start of the Finale meet in order to compete in that year’s Finale. If the winner of this trophy will graduate out of the league before the next season, the coach for his or her team is responsible for

- the return of the trophy before their team may compete in that year's Finale meet.
- iii. Team ribbons will be presented to the riders on NCSSEL teams according to their teams' final standings at the yearend awards banquet. A ribbon for each team's coach and for each team's barn will also be presented at this time.
 - iv. A **Sportsmanship** award will be presented at the banquet.
 - v. The **Champion and Reserve** Champion teams at the Finale meet will be awarded ribbons, including ribbons for coach and barn.
 - vi. An award will be presented to the horse at the Finale meet which the judge chooses as the **Best Turned Out Horse**. *Braiding for the Finale meet is prohibited.*
 - vii. A **Stable Management** award will be presented to the team chosen by the Finale judge as having the best organized and managed barn area on the weekend of the Finale.

8. PROTEST AND GRIEVANCES

- A. **All protests and grievances must be presented to the Coach of the school hosting the meet, or to a member of the board at a Finale Meet.**
- B. **The person receiving the complaint shall then privately discuss the complaint, protest or grievance with all participating coaches and attempt to reach a consensus decision.**
- C. **If no decision can be reached by the coaches, the officiating judge shall make the decision which shall be final and accepted by coaches and riders in a sportsmanlike manner.**
- D. **Appeals from any decision made pursuant to this section may be made in writing and shall then be considered and resolved by the board in a timely manner.**