

National Capitol Junior Equitation League (JEL) Rules and Procedures

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.
- ii. A Participating school is not required to have access to an indoor ring.
- iii. A Participating school in JEL will compete with teams composed of up to 10 riders, 2 riders per division and designated as such at the beginning of the season. Riders will remain in the division in which they begin the season for the entire season.
- iv. Each participating school competes in 4 regular meets during the season between 10/1 and 2/28, one of which is hosted by that barn. A participating school may choose to defer serving as a host school for one year if such school has not been a member of JEL at any point during the past three seasons, however such school must be able to demonstrate suitability and commitment to conduct a JEL home meet the following year. The season ends in March with a Finale meet to which all barns bring their own horses to compete.
- v. Full payment of the season's league fees, the Finale deposit, and the administrative fee, must be submitted to the league Treasurer prior to the start of the season. The deadline for those payments will be provided by league administration at least two months prior to the start of the season. The participating school's roster including the name, address and phone number of each team member, as well as their signed Participation Agreement and Media Consent Form (which may be found on the ncelus.com website), shall be submitted to the league Administrator prior to the start of the season.
- vi. A rider who has not turned in a completed agreement or a team that has not paid their fees may not compete.
- vii. Participating schools may require a parent or guardian to complete a waiver of liability or release prior to a meet at such participating school. A rider may not be entitled to participate at a NCSSEL meet if the required liability forms or releases have not been complete.
- viii. Any team who decides not to participate after submitting all league fees shall be responsible for the registration fee, but the deposit and administrative fee will be refunded.
- ix. Each participating school must abide by the rules of JEL and must act professionally and respectfully at all JEL activities, shows and events.
- x. Any participating school may be suspended or expelled from active participation in JEL for just cause as determined by the prevailing standards and rules of JEL, which may, but need not, incorporate the standards and rules of other recognized equestrian associations, including but not limited to, the USEF, USDF, AQHA, NRHA, IHSA, IDA and the U.S. Center for SafeSport. Expulsion of a member can also be determined by a vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the Board of Directors, excluding the offending participating school. Written notice shall be given to the member in question ten (10) days in advance of such vote, stating the charges and inviting the member to provide a rebuttal. The Board of Directors shall determine the suspension and/or sanctions, if appropriate. A participating school that is suspended or expelled from active participation in JEL shall forfeit all league fees and administrative fees.

B. Rider Eligibility

- i. Each team member is to be a junior rider who is not older than 18 years of age and has not graduated high school prior to October 1 of the current competition season. An JEL 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. No rider who has ridden on an NCEL team may ever again ride on a JEL team, even if they change barns. A rider may, however, move from NCSSEL to either the 4th or 5th divisions in JEL.
- iii. A rider must move up at least one level (division) each year that they compete on a JEL team. Special circumstances may be reviewed by the board, however, and a waiver for that rider may be granted.
- iv. 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.
- v. All riders must wear secured ASTM-approved helmets when mounted.

C. Division Specifications and Class Procedures

- i. Division 1 – Prior to the start of the first flat class, 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. A coach or assistant may remain in the ring following warm up and lead riders or remain close to riders during all 3 classes.
 - Class 1 – Walk - both sitting and in 2 point
 - Class 2 – Walk/trot one at a time, diagonals do not count
 - Class 3 – Walk or trot over 2 poles on one long side
- ii. Division 2 - Prior to the start of the first flat class, 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. A coach or assistant may remain in the ring following the warm up.
 - Class 1 – Walk/trot as a group, diagonals count.
 - Class 2 – Canter down one side (leads do not count).
 - Class 3 – Trot over 2 very low X rails (12") on one long side ring. May trot both or trot in and canter out.
- iii. Division 3 - Prior to the start of the first flat class, 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. A coach or assistant may remain in the ring following the warm up.
 - Class 1 - Walk/trot as a group, diagonals count.
 - Class 2 - Canter down one long side of the ring (leads do count).
 - Class 3 - Jump over 2 low X rails (18") on one long side of the ring. May trot both or trot in and canter out.
- iv. Division 4 – Prior to the start of the first flat class, 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. Rides will also be allowed to jump 2 fences unjudged and chosen by their coach. Once the warm up is finished and riders have had a chance to confer with their coach, the coaches should exit the ring.
 - Class 1 - Walk/trot as a group diagonals count. Riders are allowed to warm up at the trot for no more than 2 minutes in both directions.
 - Class 2 - Canter one direction as a group (leads do count).
 - Class 3 - Trot or canter over 4 fences set no higher than 18".
- v. Division 5 – Prior to the start of the first flat class, 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. Rides will also be allowed to jump 2 fences unjudged and chosen by their coach. Once the warm up is finished and riders have had a chance to confer with their coach, the coaches should exit the ring.
 - Class 1 - Walk/trot as a group, diagonals count
 - Class 2 - Walk/trot/canter both directions of the ring as a group. (Leads do count).
 - Class 3 - Canter a course of 6 jumps set no higher than 18".

2. HOST SCHOOL

A. Host schools shall:

- 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 the meet.
- iii. Provide suitable, safe tack for all school horses and inform 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 one week after the conclusion of the meet. ***The League Secretary will send the score sheet to the host barn no later than 5 days prior to the meet.*** The Judge's cards are to be scanned and emailed, as well as the 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 JEL procedures, rules and league questions.
- vi. Manage the competition and ensure that it runs in a timely and orderly fashion. To that end, the host school shall:
 - a. Provide clean, adequate facilities for the meet, including rest rooms and a dressing area for each team.
 - b. Provide sufficient personnel for the preparation, tacking and care of the horses and for the efficient management of the show.
 - c. 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 and host barn waivers as needed.
 - d. 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.
 - e. Provide the judge with a packet/clip board which includes prepared judge's cards, courses, and a copy of the pertinent rules.
 - f. Prepare and supervise the draw. In JEL 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.
 - g. Prepare and post jump orders for all classes over fences.
 - h. Post scores and judge's cards after each class.
 - i. Present ribbons.
 - j. 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, BHSA or USEF and has experience judging team competitions formatted in a way similar to JEL is considered qualified.
- ii. A barn may not use the same judge 2 years in a row for an JEL 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 season 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, BHSA 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. The exception shall be if all teams have agreed to an online draw prior to the day of the meet. Coaches will have the opportunity to request changes to the results of the draw during this time if a horse or pony does not match rider suitability. For example, a small pony and a larger rider. All coaches must consent to such change.
- iv. Immediately following the coaches' meeting, all will meet with the judge, and when the judge is ready, the meet may begin.
- v. In the event a visiting team is not present in time for the draw, the host school may draw horses for that team.
- vi. 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.
- vii. 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.
- 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 JEL. If there is not a JEL 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 JEL 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. Flat classes are to be judged on position, hands, seat, legs and control.

- ii. Classes over poles/fences: To be judged on position, hands, seat, legs and control. Riders shall not be penalized for a simple change of lead.
- iii. A rider who falls off during a class (with the exception of the warm up portion) will be eliminated from the class.
- 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. Courses which simply go around the outside of the ring are suitable and encouraged. Fences may be jumped more than once.
- v. In classes over fences (or trot poles), each rider will be allowed to jump 2 fences or trot poles unjudged and chosen by their coach, briefly confer with the coach and then begin their round. The host school may opt to run the warmups and rounds in rotations of 3 or 4. Any rider who jumps more than the 2 practice jumps allotted will be eliminated from the over fences class.

D. 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 5 divisions of 3 classes each in each meet. See Rule 1.C. for a description of the divisions/classes.

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 the entry fee to the host school.

5. FINALE MEET

A. Format

- i. The JEL Finale meet is held in March. Each JEL team will an entry fee to be determined by league Administration. Other fees may 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 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 good standing in the League are invited 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. The specifications and scoring for all Finale classes will be as in regular season meet classes. Riders will be asked to answer questions per the league study guide (as found on the NCEL website). The question portion of Finale will not be factored into individual or team scoring.
- ix. Depending on entries, some or all JEL divisions may be split in the Finale meet.
- x. Braiding for Finale is prohibited.

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. Six ribbons will be awarded in each class for both the Regular meets and Finale meet.

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. *THE HIGHEST SCORING RIDER FROM EACH TEAM IN EACH CLASS WILL EARN POINTS TOWARD THE TEAM SCORE FOR THE MEET THAT DAY.* All points a rider earns count toward their year-end individual point totals.
- 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. Total points for each meet and for the Finale meet will be added together for the year-end totals and high point awards will be awarded accordingly to each team.
- iv. Points are calculated and recorded in the same manner for both regular meets and the Finale Meet.

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

- i. In the event of a forfeiture of a team at a Regular Meet individual and team points shall be calculated as follows:
 - a. If three teams compete then points shall be awarded in accordance with Rule 6.B.i.
 - b. If two teams compete then points shall be adjusted according to the chart below.
 - c. If all teams other than the host school forfeit, then the meet shall be rescheduled.

Two Teams Competing	
1st Place	5.25 Pts
2nd Place	3.75 Pts
3rd Place	3 Pts
4th Place	2.25 Pts

5th Place	1.5 Pts
6 Place	.75 Pt

7. Tie Breakers and Awards

A. Team ties

- i. Team ties in regular season meets and the Finale will be broken by the cumulative point total for a team's highest scoring rider in each division's jumping (or over trot poles) class.

B. Year End Individual and Team Ties

- i. Individual ties will be broken by using the jumping points (or over poles) earned during the regular season and at the Finale. If the individual riders remain tied following the tiebreak both shall receive the same end of the year award, with the subsequent placings remaining in the same order. For example, if two riders tie for champion then the subsequent placings will be third, fourth, etc.
- ii. End of year team ties will be broken by the cumulative point total for a team's highest scoring rider in each division's jumping (or over trot poles) class during the regular season and the Finale.

C. Trophies & Ribbons

- i. **High Point Riders.** High point riders through 10th place will be determined in each of the 5 divisions and these riders will earn ribbons which will be presented at the year-end banquet.
- ii. Team ribbons will be presented to the riders on JEL teams according to their teams' final standings at the year-end awards banquet. A ribbon for each team's coach and for each team's barn will also be presented at this time.
- iii. The **Champion and Reserve Champion** teams at the Finale meet will be awarded ribbons, including ribbons for coach and barn.
- iv. A **Sportsmanship Award** and a Favorite **Coach Award** will be presented at the banquet.
- v. Awardees and/or their associated participating school may be responsible for costs associated with damage or loss of a perpetual trophy while in their possession.

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 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.

- E. A participating school may seek a waiver to a rule at least thirty days prior to the start of a season but submitting such request to the board. The waiver must be submitted in writing to the board for timely consideration. Waivers may be considered once the season has begun on a case-by-case basis.