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HANDBOOK INTRODUCTION

SKIJORING AMERICA (SJA) was created in the fall of 2015 in an effort to bring the skijoring community together and create a united organization to help responsibly grow this exciting sport. The board of directors has assembled this handbook in an effort to unify the races and competition with consistent rules and protocols. SJA has made a list of rules and regulations for all SJA member races to implement, as well as suggested protocols to help races run more efficiently, safely, and fairly.

We welcome all competitors and races that wish to be a part of this community. We seek voices of each to facilitate the intelligent expansion of western-style, equine skijoring. We invite you to become a member of SJA and assist in our effort to take the sport we all love to the next level.

SKIJORING AMERICA MISSION & GOALS

Mission

- Expand the sport of western-style, equine skijoring in North America while keeping athletes, horses, and spectators safe.
- Create a marketing engine for regional and national corporations with products that appeal to people who love the outdoors, extreme sports, great competition, skiing, horses, cowboys, and beautiful mountain towns.
- Continue fostering a positive environment for families, friends, and communities while connecting with others around the world.

Goals

1. Attract and retain loyal competitors, spectators, fans, and sponsors.
2. Build awareness, excitement, and participation in equine skijoring by creating a series of competitive races to be held annually and leveraged through media.
3. Support event infrastructure that are members of SJA with marketing materials to promote their events.
4. Ensure consistency and safety precaution for the athletes, horses and attendees, while encouraging event promoters to build a unique event that fits their town and personality.
5. Support monetarily or lend in-kind support to organizations within the skijoring community that embrace horses, skiing and the outdoors.
ADVANTAGES OF SKIJORING AMERICA MEMBERSHIPS

Race Venue Membership

SJA is an organization that exists for the integrity of the races, the safety of the athletes and the growth of the sport. By enrolling your skijoring event as an SJA member race, your race will be provided:

Credibility

1. SJA is an established non-profit organization for the purpose of assuring a "safe" and "competitively fair" arena for the North America skijoring community.
   a. Established Rules: as a standard of conduct, to help race organizers develop their rules for their own unique race.
   b. Established Methods: to help race organizers build safe courses and develop standardized and proven methods in skijoring race management.
   c. Established Procedures and Protocols: providing a spectator safety plan, horse evacuation plan, and competitor safety plan to reduce organizer and municipal liability.

Support

1. SJA members can guide race organizers on any phase or manner the race organizer chooses to achieve a well-run skijoring event.
   a. Race Management: for sign-ups, run orders, timing, posting times, announcer dialog, sponsors, advertising, non-profit charities, awards, and payouts.
   b. Course logistics: timing equipment, spectator fencing, horse barriers, starting gate, jumps, gates, rings, horse run out and blockers, etc.
   c. SJA membership provides access to shared equipment if available.

Race Memberships

1. In order to set the most intelligent schedule and allow for maximum competitor involvement, the SJA Circuit includes races throughout the entire western United States.
2. Returning SJA Race Members have seniority on dates.
3. No SJA race will be scheduled, within 100 miles, on the same date as another SJA Member race.

4. SJA will reach out to all returning Race Members for a verbal commitment prior to June 30, before the next race season.

5. Beginning July 1, the SJA schedule will be open to new Race Members for the following season.

Insurance

1. SJA is intent on offering a group race liability policy set up just for race venues; subject to attainability and other insurance limitations.
   a. Additional insured capability for organizers, sponsors, and property owners.
   b. Lower Premiums: projected to be half of what an individual policy costs. Once we have the number of races to be insured, premium rates will be known.

2. SJA is offering accidental insurance for each skijoring season to all human competitor members. SJA will coordinate and sell all human members an accidental insurance policy to cover any human competitor comparable to the 2019 competitor insurance, though subject to insurance company changes.
   - 18 Years old +
   - $55 for annual competitor membership
   - $25 for weekend coverage at a member race. After a competitor purchases weekend coverages for three weekend, the competitor will be considered an annual member.
   - $500 deductible, up to $10,000 Maximum benefits.
   - Insurance will only be available at SJA member races.

3. All Pro/Open Sport and Novice competitors are required to sign up with SJA at all member races.

SKIJORING AMERICA Ambassador

SJA Ambassadors have a library of skills and knowledge in the skijoring world. Each Ambassador will be asked to follow their skill set when helping at any SJA event. Specific skills might be, but not limited to, course knowledge & maintenance, race protocol and rules, race registration, media and public relations (PR), volunteers, and safety.
1. SJA will provide Ambassadors to assist race organizers as needed.

2. Training and support for Ambassadors will be provided by SJA.

3. Race Venues are encouraged to house up to 2 Ambassadors.

**Promotion, Sponsorship and Fundraising of Member Events (if additionally purchased)**

1. SJA is an association that will promote your race to the entire equine-skijor community, while educating the general public on this exciting sport.
   
a. To help spread the word and boost attendance by competitors and spectators, SJA will promote member races via SJA website ([www.SkijoringAmerica.com](http://www.SkijoringAmerica.com)), Facebook(@SkijoringAmerica), Instagram (@SkijoringAmerica), and Twitter (@skijoringusa) accounts.
   
b. SJA will actively provide updates for all social media platforms during races as time permits.
   
c. In an effort to help increase local sponsorship dollars for your race, the SJA website will set up a link to your races personal website.
   
d. Note that SJA will not promote your event until the race member fee is paid.

2. SJA seeks to promote the sport of western equine skijoring with the annual SJA Points series. Awards will be given in Open, Sport, and Novice divisions to the top member competitors.

**Communication**

1. SJA will provide centralized media support to all member races, by making sure race venues, results, and rankings are readily accessible on the SJA website ([www.SkijoringAmerica.com](http://www.SkijoringAmerica.com)).

2. SJA will support the creation of new race venues interested in joining their race as a member race venue.

**Competitor Membership**

SJA is an organization that exists for the integrity of the races, the safety of the athletes and the growth of the sport of equine skijoring. By joining SJA as a competitor you will help ensure:
1. Competitors are assured the venue of competition will be equally competitive.

2. Safeguards are in place for the riders, skiers, and equestrian stock.

3. Race venues that are members of SJA allows competitors to acquire points for different SJA Point Series as well as the SJA overall which applies to the Pro/Open Division, the Sport Division and the Novice Division. Depending on the event SJA will work to award Junior and Peewee Divisions as well.

4. A Championship jacket, belt buckle, and additional prizes will be awarded to the North American Champion in the Pro/Open Division. Other overall prizes will be awarded to all other divisions.

5. All SJA venues, race results and SJA Competitor rankings are readily accessible on the SJA website (www.SkijoringAmerica.com)

6. Any competitor under 18, must have parent/guardian sign parental consent forms.

**SKIJORING AMERICA Point Series**

Upon joining SJA, Competitor Members will begin accumulating points for the Skijoring America Point Series Awards. Points will accumulate throughout the year to determine winners of smaller regional series as well a overall Champion in the Open Sport and Novice Divisions. SJA points will not be awarded at non-member races.

**Points**

1. Pro/Open Competitors placing 1st through 8th will receive daily points as follows: 1st = 50 points; 2nd = 40 points; 3rd = 30 points; 4th = 25 points; 5th = 20 points; 6th = 15 points; 7th = 10 points; 8th = 5 points.

2. Sport Competitors placing 1st through 8th will receive daily points as follows: 1st = 30 points; 2nd = 24 points; 3rd = 18 points; 4th = 15 points; 5th = 12 points; 6th = 9 points; 7th = 6 points; 8th = 3 points.

3. Novice Competitors placing 1st through 8th will receive daily points as follows: 1st = 10 points; 2nd = 8 points; 3rd = 6 points; 4th = 5 points; 5th = 4 points; 6th = 3 points; 7th = 2 points; 8th = 1 points.

4. This point system allows Sport and Novice competitors to move up to the next division without giving up the points they have earned. It also allows competitors to continue earning points in multiple divisions.
a. If a rider, horse or skier wants to move up they will bring the points they have won up as well as leaving the same amount in the original division.

i. This allows competitors to continue winning points in the lower division but allows them the opportunity to compete at a higher level. Remember that horses and skiers cannot compete in more than one division at a single race.

ii. For example if Tom has won 60 points in the Sport and moves to the Open he will now have 60 Open points as well as 60 Sport points. Tom now has a chance for the Open overall, or he can drop back to the Sport and still be competitive. If Tom is a rider he can compete at one race for points in multiple divisions (race rules dependent). If Tom is a skier he can only compete in one division per race but has the ability to drop back down if he feels he does not have the skills for a certain track.

iii. Riders that start the season in the Open or Sport can compete in lower divisions but do not have the opportunity to move points up from a lower division.

5. Competitors will only be awarded points for their best placing of the day. For example if a competitor places 1st and 4th they will only be awarded the first place points. The competitor that places 5th will still receive 5th place points and will not get bumped up.

6. In the event of a tie, both teams will receive the same points for the place. For example, if there is a tie for 2nd all six competitors (Horse, Rider and Skier) will be awarded 40 points each in the open, 24 points each in the sport and 8 point each in the novice. There would then be no third place points awarded. The same protocol would be followed if there is a three way tie.

7. SJA Point Series Awards will be given to the top Rider, Skier, and Horse in the Open, Sports and Novice Divisions. Depending on races we will work to award overall prizes for Juniors and Peewees.

8. In the case of a tie breaker for the overall title, overall points from each race will be calculated the same way day points are calculated. After combining the overall points with the day points, the title will go to the individuals with the most points.
SKIJORING AMERICA RULES AND REGULATIONS

Rules and Regulations are put in place to insure safety and competitive fairness to all competitors, riders, skiers, and horses. Rules are also very important for spectator and volunteer safety. All rules are required to be followed by Skijoring America Member Races and Competitors. For additional race rules please refer to each individual race prior to competing.

Insurance

1. Race Liability Insurance is the responsibility of the race organization.
2. Disclaimer is included in the registration forms to hold SJA harmless.*

General Event Safety

1. Veterinarian must be on site at race venue.
   a. The Veterinarian must be there a minimum of 30 minutes prior to the start of the event.
   b. The Veterinarian must stay on site a minimum of 30 minutes after the last contestant has run.

2. E.M.Ts at race venue
   a. E.M.Ts must have an Ambulance on site for the entire duration of the event.

3. Site Plan Regulations
   a. A site drawing or written description must be approved by SJA two weeks prior to an event.
      i. This must explain the use of panels and fencing to create a safe environment that keeps spectators separated from competitors.
   b. If fencing is deemed unsafe SJA holds the right to stop any race to make proper changes.

Competitor Safety (Riders, Skiers and Horses)

1. Riders under 18 are required to wear helmets.
2. All Skiers are required to wear helmets.
3. Water for horses must available on site.
4. Horses can not run more than 2 times per day.
a. Exceptions can be made for Peewee, Junior, and Long Jump divisions at individual race discretion.

5. Use of a standard bit or hackamore is acceptable as long as common horsemanship ethics are applied and mouthpiece and/or headgear does not cause excessive pain to the horse.

6. All performance-enhancing drugs are prohibited and will not be tolerated.
   a. Random drug testing will administered at different SJA races throughout the skijoring season.
   b. If a horse tests positive for prohibited drugs or medication the following consequences will be applied to the horse and rider.
      i. First Offence - Barred from next two races, Forfeit winnings, points, and prizes from the race the horse tested positive at.
      ii. Second Offence - Barred from next three races, Forfeit winnings, points, and prizes from the race the horse tested positive at.
      iii. Third Offence - Barred from SJA for life, Forfeit winnings, points, and prizes from the race the horse tested positive at.
   c. Please familiarize yourself with the SJA Guidelines and Rules for Drugs and Medications at skijoringamerica.com/rules-for-drugs-and-medications/
   d. SJA will follow the guidelines presented by USEF only as they pertain to substances that are internal.

7. Failure to dismount and/or present horse and equipment to the horse official and/or veterinarian, if asked, will result in disqualification for that race.

8. No person may abuse a Horse during an Event or at any other time. “Abuse” means an action or omission, which causes or is likely to cause pain or unnecessary discomfort to a Horse. Competitors will be disqualified upon adequate verification.
   a. Abuse can include, but is not limited to:
      i. Whipping or beating a Horse excessively.
      ii. Subjecting a Horse to any kind of electric shock device.
iii. Jabbing the Horse in the mouth with the bit or any other device.

iv. Abnormally sensitize or desensitize any part of a Horse

v. Leaving a Horse without adequate food, drink or exercise

b. Any person witnessing an abuse must report it immediately. If an Abuse is witnessed during or in direct connection with an event, it should be reported to an official. If the abuse is witnessed at any other time it should be reported directly to Skijoring America via email: info@SkijoringAmerica.com

c. If a horse, rider, or equipment are deemed unsafe the rider and horse can be asked to leave at any time by the Start Gate Official or SJA Ambassador.

Track Safety
1. A skier track drawing or written description must be approved by SJA. This includes track length, description, type of jumps, rollers, banks and estimated distance between gates.

2. If the track is deemed unsafe Skijoring America holds the right to stop any race to make the necessary changes to keep the track safe.

3. A starting gate system must be created to keep competitors, spectators and volunteers safe.

4. The runout must provide consistent footing for the horse.

5. The horse runout must be at least \( \frac{2}{3} \) the length of the skijoring track to allow time for horses to be stopped.

6. A horse track can have no more than a 6 inch punch into the snow.

Competitive Regulation for Fair Competition
1. Competitor rules must be posted 2 weeks prior to an event for all competitors to review.

2. Races must have adequate timing system.
   a. Electronic timing is preferred but not mandatory.
   b. All Electronic timing systems must have a backup.
   c. If hand timing is used the type of protocol must be approved by SJA.

3. Skier Tracks must have stationary gates.
4. Skier ropes must have a certified length for each race.
   a. Ropes brought by competitors must be measured prior to race start.

5. All Judges must be in place before the start of any division.
   a. Arena Judge must brief all gatekeepers prior to race start.
   b. Both ski tips and both boots must go around a gate, or the gate is considered missed.

6. Competitors must be informed of their time and any penalties they may have at the end of their run.

7. Horses and Skiers are not allowed to compete in more than one main division (Open, Sport, or Novice) at any single race. Depending on specific race rules horses and skiers may be allowed to split between main and local divisions.

8. Payouts are to be estimated and advertised two weeks prior to a race.
   a. Estimated division percentage splits need to be included.
   b. Intended number of slots per division to be awarded need to be included.
   c. Estimated added money is to be listed specifically.
   d. Percentage of entry fees paid back needs to be listed.
   e. Other known prizes or awards need to be listed.

9. Individual Race Results must be provided to SJA within 24 hours of competition.

**Division and Competition Criteria**

1. PROFESSIONAL/OPEN DIVISION: (Pro) Teams are considered to be the highest skilled competitors with the fastest horses. A team consists of horse, rider and skier.

2. SPORT DIVISION: (Amateur) Teams are considered to be intermediate level skill participants riding horses that may not be fast enough or experienced enough to be in the Pro/Open Class. A team consists of horse, rider and skier.

3. NOVICE DIVISION (Beginners): Teams are considered to be, new to the sport, beginning level competitors riding horses that may not be
fast enough or experienced enough to be competitive in the Pro/Open Class or the Sport Class.

a. Open/Pro, Sport and Novice classes are required divisions by SJA.

b. All Open, Sport and Novice athletes are required to be SJA members through an Annual Membership or a Weekend Warrior pass.

4. All other classes are considered optional, local divisions. These may include, but are not limited to, Women’s, Century, Snowboard, Juniors, High School, Peewees, and Long Jump.

a. SJA memberships are recommended but not required for these classes.

Sportsmanship

Good sportsmanship is important to the success of every event. Annual Membership and/or Registration signature pledges a competitor’s word to the humane treatment of their horse and respectful relationships to all fellow competitors and volunteers hosting this exciting competition. Failure to comply with the spirit of friendly competition at any of the scheduled events may result in the disqualification of your team or banishment from future competitions.

Race Protocol Recommendations

In an effort to standardize the sport of western equine skijoring and limit respective liabilities, the SJA Board of Directors provide these protocols not as steadfast rules, but rather recommended rules for races. These protocols are based on years of experience from the board members and input from the skijoring community.

General

1. Races need to be vigilant about starting on time.
2. Run Sheets should be posted at the starting line for competitors to see.
3. Race Rules should be available/posted at the sign up location and announced at the competitors meeting for the day.
4. Walkie-talkies should be used at all events for more effective communication. Distribution of communication devices and training for the use of the devices and standard lingo should be provided to all volunteers before race.
5. Ropes are provided by the race, though competitors are allowed to bring their own ropes, but they must be certified by a race official prior to competition.

6. Substitutions are allowed for any team member (horse, skier or rider) prior to the competitor meeting on Saturday. After the competitor meeting on Saturday, there will be NO substitutions for Pro/Open and Sport divisions. Substitutions throughout the event are allowed in the Novice, Snowboard, Women’s, Century and Junior class, but they must be approved by the field judges first, and are not eligible for overall awards.

**Course for Horses**

Safety for the horses should be one of the main priorities of race organizers.

1. A skijoring course IS NOT ALLOWED to have more than 6 six inches of "punch".
   
   a. Punch refers to how deep the horse's hoof punches into the snow upon impact. If the horse course has more than 6" of punch it is deemed dangerous.
   
   b. The competitors and/or the SJA delegate should immediately bring their concerns to the Arena Judge.
   
   c. The Arena Judge should then stop the race and consult with organizers and the SJA delegate on how to remedy the problem. If the course is deemed safe by the arena judge or by a vote of horse riders competing; the race may continue.

2. In most cases the extra snow can be removed down to a firm base - dirt if necessary.
   
   a. If the base is icy, after removing snow, use sand and nitrogen fertilizer or salt to make the horse track safer.
   
   b. Nitrogen fertilizer or salt can also be applied to stiffen up snow and reduce the amount of punch the horse make when the track is deteriorating due to warm temperatures.

3. Most problems can be eliminated the night before the race with proper preparation.

4. To be competitively fair to all competitors that have run the course previously; Any course repair procedures should be done between divisions unless it is deemed unsafe to continue a class. **However;** hand filling, removing and leveling the course may be done if damage
was done by a prior competitor and deemed dangerous and unsafe for competitors by the Arena Judge.

Course for Skiers

1. Holes are areas of wear and tear at landing area of jumps should be filled in between competitors within the same division. Rutts that develop due to soft snow conditions should be raked or shoveled out between competitors.

2. Jumps should be adjusted between divisions to remove excessive “booters” from the top of the jumps. Booters refer to the lip that can be created at the top of the jump that causes the skier to unexpectedly launch off the jump.

Penalty Assessments

The following penalties should be assessed, but this is at the discretion of the race itself.

1. 5-second penalty for each missed jump or gate.
2. 5-second penalty for any horse breaking the plane of any jump, hitting a gate, or hitting a timing device.
3. If rings are part of the course, a 2 second penalty for each missed or dropped ring or dropped Baton.
   a. Use of Batons for ring spearing will be at the discretion of the race.
   b. Missed rings are normally a lower penalty than missed gates due to the time saved when skiers intentionally skip gates as opposed to missing a ring.
4. Gates made by skier that pop out of the snow due to being hit by the skier are not reason for a penalty from officials.

Competitor and Spectator Safety

Horses, skiers and spectators are especially subject to injury at the starting area. The best way to promote safety is the use of metal horse panels to confine and separate horses from the spectators, skiers and unsafe areas.

1. Competitors in the Starting Box Area, should be limited to competitors in the division being run at that time.
2. Spectators are not allowed in any area of competition. Fencing and panels can be used to create a safety barrier.
3. Competitors may be in the staging area with caution and without equipment that may impede, be stepped on or tangled up by horses.

4. Three to Four Starting personnel should be assigned to the starting area to coordinate activity and help ensure safety.

5. The Starting Gate judge can and should disqualify any horse deemed unsafe.

**Race Roles**

It may be possible for a person to fill multiple roles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Task Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Designer</td>
<td>Sets track and tests course. The course designer is ultimately responsible for the designing and building of the skijoring course on the site chosen. The designer should use diagrams; local knowledge from other sources to insure the site is at the right location, with respect to all aspects of the entire event. The location, area, and snow depths are only part of what a good designer has to deal with. Consideration to logistics of how the race will run, will insure a successful race. Timing of course set up and temperatures are key elements to insure the proper snow base for a good safe track, especially for the equestrian stock. Size and design of jumps are very important aspects to give the look of danger to the spectators but built properly can add difficulty and safety at the same time. Distances between jumps, gates, and rings will give skiers a rhythm that will not only make for faster times but have a visual effect of poetry in motion. Speed is everything. A completion rate of 80% of all skiers competing is a good rule of thumb to strive for when setting the course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race Director</td>
<td>Coordinates all aspects of the race. Communicates with all personnel involved. Keeps race running smooth and safe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starting Gate Judge</td>
<td>Communicates with Arena judge that course is clear. Verifies that starting gate area is safe for competitors and separates spectators from horse staging area. Calls false starts. Determines readiness of competitors to start.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timer</td>
<td>Runs timing equipment, communicates with Arena Judge, score keeper, and start gate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scorekeeper</td>
<td>Tracks the times, penalties and communicates with announcer and verifies scoreboard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role</td>
<td>Responsibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>Race Commentary, Sponsorship Announcement, Announces Race to Audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Announcer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finish Judge</td>
<td>Finish line, Ring Collector, Announce Ring penalties to Scorekeeper, Communicate to Skier on time and Penalties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs Radio</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arena Judge</td>
<td>One hour before race start time, Coordinate with technical delegate on competitors meeting and reading of rules and certain protocol. Oversees entire run from best advantage, typically on horse. Oversees gatekeepers, ring stands and judges. Verifies penalties. Communicates with start judge for course is clear signal. Determines if course is safe or needs repair. Advisor to protest committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs Radio</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medic (EMT)</td>
<td>To respond to medical emergencies. Communicates with Arena Judge to come to aid a competitor. Should be central in location.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vet</td>
<td>To inspect horses for health and safety. Notify start judge with any concerns. Should be near start</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start Gate Starter #1</td>
<td>Communicate with Start Gate Judge. Ready horses, Hook rope to horse and verify correct horse and rigging.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start Gate Starter #2</td>
<td>Communicate with Start Gate Judge. Ready Skiers, Hands rope to skiers, verifies correct skier and equipment. Announces Run Order and who is “on deck and in the hole”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gate Judges</td>
<td>Directed by Arena Judge.Communicates with Arena Judge by one flag per gate kept and raise if gate is missed. Verify with Arena Judge missed gate signal and gate was missed. Signal Horse Rider if start gate judge signals false start.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Safety</td>
<td>Someone in place to fill in holes are rough spots during competition. Can be competitors that are racing in different division.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Start Gate Protocol**

1. Starting Judge, Arena Judge and Time Keeper’s should be connected via Walkie Talkies.
2. Run orders need to be called out by the announcer or a designated individual at the start area.
   a. Needs to be loud enough to be heard by competitors
   b. Should include who is up, on deck and in-the-hole

3. After the “Course is Cleared” by the Arena Judge and the Timer is ready, the Starting Judge calls the next horse and rider to the start area.

4. The Sparby Rule; each team is allowed four minutes to complete staging and begin the race. After this allotted time has expired, the competitors will be asked to leave the staging area. The team will be allowed one more attempt to race at the end of the Division. If the staging time is again exceeded, that team will be disqualified from that day’s competition. The allotted four-minute time period will begin at the declaration of a clear track.

5. Starter #1 and Starter #2 hooks rope to horses rigging, makes sure rigging is within rules and provides rope to the skier.
   a. SJA promotes attaching ropes to rigging prior to entering start gate for horses that will not stand calmly.

6. The Starting Judge makes sure that horses start in the defined starting area.

7. The Starting Judge calls any false Starts, run order changes, starting time limits and controls Start Area Ethics.

Race Communication Protocol
- Race Director to Arena Judge - “Everything ready to go?”
- Arena Judge to Race Director - “Everything ready to go”
- Race Director to Announcer - “Announce the start of the race”
- Race Director to Announcer - “Announce to clear the course”
- Announcer to Audience - “Clear the course, horses ready to run”
- Announcer banters about team x
- Race Director to Start Gate Judge - “Team x ready?”
- Start Gate Judge to All Radios - Team x is ready to run”
- Start Gate Judge to Timer - “Timer Ready?”
- Timer to Start Gate Judge - “Timer’s Ready”
- Start Gate Judge to Arena Judge – Is the Course Clear?
● Arena Judge to Start Gate Judge _- Course is Clear
● Start Gate Judge to Arena Judge - “Sending Team X”
● Announcer Banter team X during run
● Timer to all radios - “Time of team x is x”
● Announcer to Audience – Team x time is X

● Arena Judge to Finish gate Judge - “Any Penalties”
● Finish gate Judge to Arena Judge  - “Missing two rings”
● Arena Judge to all radios – Add 3 Penalties, 1 missed Gate & 2 missed Rings”
● Arena Judge to Timer - Timer, COPY THAT?
● Timer to All radios – TIMER COPIES
● Timer to All radios – Gives Team # time, penalties & gives final time
● Timer to Scorekeeper – Copy That?
● Announce to Audience - That’s a total time of x. including x penalties
● Scorekeeper writes this down to share with teams coming back to start line. Then the process starts over again.

Run Dispute Protocol
If a team member has a concern regarding their run, that concern must be brought to the attention of the Finish Judge or Arena Judge as soon as possible after the run. A Protest Committee consisting of 3 non-competing members, experienced in the event, schooled in the rules and selected to have no conflict of interest, will consider the concern presented and make a decision no later than the start of the next run. This committee is usually made up of the Gate Judge, Arena Judge and the Finish Judge. The decision of that committee is final and all involved are ask to accept that decision in the spirit of friendly competition. All evidence is open to review but competitors should be ready to present their case at time of protest. We recommend race’s take measures to ensure competitors know their time and penalties directly after runs.

Registration Protocol
SJA recommends that member races allow pre-registration through online registration, as well as the usual Friday night sign-up at a local bar. Online registration allows races to get a better feel for the number of race competitors signing up for each division.  

SJA has the paperwork to help
assist any SJA races with registration. SJA can handle full race registration and run order creation for $500 or 5% of race entries if needed.

Saturday morning signups should be kept to a minimum and handled as quickly and efficiently as possible. This helps ensure run sheets are available in plenty of time before the race starts, so that any grievances to the order can be addressed. This also allows the award checks to be written for Saturday and Sunday on Friday night.

**COURSE DESIGN**

**Track Types**
1. Round or Oval shaped tracks
   a. Horseshoe
   b. J-Hook
   c. L-Shape
2. Straight Track
3. Keep in mind a track design can be any shape depend on venue. It all comes down to the imagination of the designer. Regardless of shape, the track still needs to be safe for competitors and spectators.

**Length**
1. Approximately 600 to 900 feet from start to finish.
   a. There is no rule on max track length but designers should keep in mind safety of horses.
2. It is a required that the run-out length should be at least 2/3 of the course length with consistent footing.

**Gates**
1. Round Tracks (Horseshoe, J-Hook, L-Shape)
   a. Non-hinged Polyurethane Snowboard Stubby (15”) or Hero/Slalom Stubby (24”) gates with brush or screw in bases are recommended by SJA.
      i. The rubber like shaft bends easily making the gates safer, but still easily seen by gate judges.
2. Straight Tracks
a. If snow depths are deep enough the same gates can be used for straight tracks. However snow depths on straight track are usually much shallower to accommodate horse track safety.

i. In this case we still recommend the Polyurethane shaft but the base must be modified. Please contact a SJA board member to further discuss protocol on base building ideas.

**Track Features**

1. Track Features can be, but are not limited to, jumps, rollers, bank turns, and rings. Features are only limited be the track designers imagination and the ability to build them.

a. Jumps

i. Classic Skijoring jumps are pro style, 3 to 6 feet high with a flat top and a ramp that is not to steep.

ii. Jumps with landings such as table tops and other table top varieties are new to the sport but can be safe and exciting for spectators when built right.

b. Rollers

i. It is very important not to make rollers to steep and to allow plenty of room between rollers. Many different styles of rollers can be created.

c. Bank Turns

i. Many types of banks can be created. Concave, convex, long, short, steep, and shallow can all be different creations of a bank turn.

d. Rings

i. Rings are usually put into straight tracks to add more difficulty for skiers and require more horsemanship and controllability from riders.

ii. Rider rings can also be added on straight tracks to create more difficulty for riders.

**Recommended Rules for Competitors**

Rules and protocol listed below are recommendations to help all member races create safe, fair and competitive events for the competitors. The rules below do contain SJA rules that must be followed. All SJA required rules are listed above under Skijoring America Rules and Regulations.
Division Examples

1. PROFESSIONAL/OPEN DIVISION (Pro) Teams are considered to be the highest skilled competitors with the fastest horses. A team consists of horse, rider and skier.

2. SPORT DIVISION (Amateur) Teams are considered to be intermediate level skill participants riding horses that may not be fast enough or experienced enough to be in the Pro/Open Class. A team consists of horse, rider and skier.
   a. Open and Sport classes are required divisions by SJA.
   b. All Open and Sport athletes are required to be SJA members through an Annual Membership or a Weekend Warrior pass.

3. NOVICE DIVISION (Beginners): Teams are considered to be, new to the sport, beginning level competitors riding horses that may not have speed enough to be competitive in the Pro/Open or the Sport Class.

4. SNOWBOARD DIVISION: Teams consists of a horse, rider, and snowboarder. Snowboard class may need different gate sets to accommodate for the different style of athlete.

5. WOMEN'S DIVISION: Teams consist of a horse, female rider and a female skier.

6. CENTURY DIVISION: Teams consist of a rider and skier whose ages add up to 100 years of age or more.

7. PEEWEE or JUNIOR DIVISION (Kids 12 and under): Teams are considered to be kids not yet old enough for the Novice Class but who want to compete. This also helps build the sport for future years. Both the rider and skier must be 12 and under. There are normally no mandatory gates or jumps for this class. Cones can be set to direct skiers in the right direction.
   a. SJA considers Novice, Snowboard, Women’s, Century, and Peewee to be local divisions. Competitors in these divisions can become a SJA member but it is not required.

Skier-Rider Formats - Match vs Draw

1. Match
   a. Match teams consist of a rider, skier, and horse that must team up on their own in order to sign up at an event.
      i. Most race venues follow this format.
ii. SJA recommends that races follow a match protocol for the Open/Pro division.

2. Draw
   a. Draw format races require that for every match team there is a draw team created (also known as 1 match 1 draw.) The rider and skier that created the match team will go into a draw with all other competitors in that division to create another team.
      i. Other Draw formats may not require a match team to be created before entering the draw.
      ii. Draw teams allow competitors to connect that don’t normally race together.
      iii. The Draw format can work great in Sport, Novice, and Snowboard divisions to allow amateur riders and skiers to meet new competitors. It can also create incentive for athletes to move up to divisions that are all match.
      iv. SJA does not recommend using a Draw format for the Open/Pro.

Skier Rules
1. A skier may compete in only one Division.
   a. This rule is required by SJA in the sport and open.
   b. Exception for this rule are sometimes made for local divisions.
2. All skiers must wear approved snow sport helmets.
   a. Protective Eyewear is recommended.
3. Any Skiers under 18 must have parent/guardian sign parental consent forms.
   a. Parent or Guardian must be present during signup.
   b. Skiers under the age of 18 must wear protective eyewear.

Rider Rules
1. A Horse can compete in only one Division.
   a. This rule is required by SJA in the sport and open.
   b. Exception for this rule are sometimes made for local divisions.
2. A Horse may not run more than two times in a day.
a. Exception for this rule are sometimes made for local divisions. (ie: PeeWee and Long Jump)

3. Horses should be in physical shape to participate in an extreme sport.
4. Horses are not allowed to be opened up during inspection.

**General Competition**

1. No identical teams can be entered more than once at a specific race. Each team consists of a horse, rider, and skier.

2. A skier, rider or horse can choose their division of competition and is not required to advance to the next class if they win their division.
   a. Races that create a bump up rule are recommended to only use finishes from their track to force people and horses to move up. Every track is different and this proves they are ready to move up on that specific track.

3. The Sparby Rule: Each team is allowed 4 minutes to complete staging and begin the race after a clear track is called. After the allotted time has expired the team will be asked to leave the staging area and will be moved to end of that division. They will have one more chance to start successfully or they will be disqualified for that run.

4. Substitutions are allowed for any team member (horse, skier or rider) prior to the competitor meeting on Saturday. After the competitor meeting on Saturday there will be NO substitutions for Pro/Open and Sport divisions. Substitutions throughout the event are allowed in the Novice, Snowboard, Women’s, Century and Junior class, but they must be approved by the field judges.

5. If a horse, rider, or equipment is deemed unsafe the rider and horse can be asked to leave at any time by the Start Gate Official or SJA Ambassador.

6. If the Skier drops the rope BEFORE crossing the start line, he/she will be allowed a restart as soon as possible. If the skier drops the rope on the second attempt to start, that team is disqualified for that run.

7. The skier must finish in an upright position and on at least one ski, with rope in hand when crossing the finish line. Both skier boots must cross the finish line.

8. Both ski tips and both boots must go around a gate, or the gate is considered missed.

9. Penalties will be added to a team’s time for the following
a. 5 second penalty added for every missed gate.
b. 2 second penalty added for every missed or dropped ring.
c. 2 second penalty added for a dropped baton.
d. 5 second penalty for any horse breaking the plane of a jump, hitting a gate, or hitting a timing device.

10. Protests must be voiced by the skier or rider to the Finish Judge or Arena Judge before the start of the next run. The Arena Judge will have the final ruling before the start of the next run.

**Horse Safety and Treatment**

1. All performance-enhancing drugs are prohibited and will not be tolerated. Please refer to the SJA handbook for a list of performance-enhancing drugs and consequences if your horse test positive.

2. No person may abuse a Horse during an Event or at any other time. “Abuse” means an action or omission, which causes or is likely to cause pain or unnecessary discomfort to a Horse. Competitors will be disqualified upon adequate verification.

   a. Abuse can include, but is not limited to:
      i. Whipping or beating a Horse excessively.
      ii. Subjecting a Horse to any kind of electric shock device.
      iii. Jabbing the Horse in the mouth with the bit or any other device.
      iv. Abnormally sensitize or desensitize any part of a Horse
      v. Leaving a Horse without adequate food, drink or exercise

   b. Any person witnessing an abuse must report it immediately. If an Abuse is witnessed during or in direct connection with an Event, it should be reported to an Official. If the Abuse is witnessed at any other time it should be reported directly to Skijoring America via email: info@SkijoringAmerica.com

3. If a horse, rider, or equipment are deemed unsafe the rider and horse can be asked to leave at any time by the Horse Gate Official or SJA Ambassador.

4. Leg protection (boots or polo wraps) and bell boots are strongly recommended.
5. Horses should have a shoe that will increase traction (borium, calks, etc).

**Race Equipment**

1. Ropes will be provided for competitors, though anyone is allowed to bring their own ropes.
   a. Any rope not supplied by the individual race must be inspected and approved by a Starter or his designee prior to the start of the race.
   b. Ropes cannot exceed 50 feet in length on the oval track.
   c. Ropes cannot exceed 33 feet in length on a straight track.
   d. Ropes must be 3/8” or larger in diameter.
   e. Handles are not permitted on ropes.
   f. Rope attachment must be to the saddle horn or behind the saddle. If the attachment is behind the saddle it must be secured to the primary rigging rings of the saddle by a non-elastic attachment so that the pulling rope is within 6 inches of the cantle, carabineer not included. Prior to the race, the Starter, or his designee may inspect any attachment to the saddle. Quick release shackles are highly recommended.

2. Use a standard western bit includes: 1. 8 1/2” maximum length shank. Shanks may be fixed or loose. If curb bit is used it must be free of mechanical device and should be considered a standard western bit. When a curb bit is used, a curb strap or curb chain is required, which must be at least ½” in width, lie flat against the jaw, and be free of barbs, wire, and/or twists.

3. Failure to dismount and/or present horse and equipment to the horse official and/or veterinarian, if asked, will result in disqualification for that race.

**Sportsmanship**

Good sportsmanship is important to the success of every event. Registration signature pledges a competitor’s word to the humane treatment of their horse and respectful relationships to all fellow competitors and volunteers hosting this exciting competition. Failure to comply with the spirit of friendly competition at any of the scheduled events may result in the disqualification of your team or banishment from future competitions.