

Appendix 18: The Criteria for BRC Riding Tests

1.Preparation of Movements:

It is important that the competitor shows adequate preparation for movements. This indicates that the rider recognises the fact that the horse/pony must be prepared and balanced before it can undertake its best possible work.

2.Balance of the Horse:

The horse/pony should show a degree of self balance. The rider should not be creating false balance through the strength of their riding aids.

3.Straightness:

The rider should sit as straight and as level as possible. This will assist the horse/pony to find it's own straightness. Crookedness in the rider that has a negative effect on the horse must be noted.

4.Rhythm:

The rider must assist the horse/pony's way of going by maintaining , as far as possible, a regular, forward rhythm that is suitable for the horse/pony, it's balance and level of training. The rhythm should not be rushed thus pushing the horse/pony out of balance and detracting from it's way of going. The rider will, by this, show they have an understanding of the difference between 'forward' and 'speed'.

5.Suppleness:

The rider needs to be as supple as they are able. This will assist the horse/pony to work at it's best, showing a degree of suppleness, balance and rhythm leading to quality paces.

6.Contact:

The rider must show an understanding of riding from the leg to an elastic contact. This contact should be consistent and sympathetic and must not restrict the horse's balance. The horse/pony should show that it wants to seek the bit thus indicating a correct basis of training work.

Definition of Leg Yielding:

The pony/horse is almost straight, except for a slight flexion at the poll away from the direction in which they move, so that the rider is just able to see the eyebrow and nostril on the inside. The inside legs pass and cross in front of the outside legs.

Leg Yielding should be included in the training of the pony/horse before they are ready for collected work. Later on, together with the more advanced movement of shoulder in, it is the best means of making a pony/horse supple, loose and responsive, for the benefit of elasticity and regularity of paces and the harmony, lightness and ease of movements.

Leg Yielding can be performed "on the diagonal", in which case the pony/horse should be as near as possible parallel to the long sides of the arena, although the forehand should be slightly in advance of the quarters. It can also be performed "along the wall" in which case the pony/horse should be at an angle of 35 degrees to the direction in which they are moving.

Definition of a Turn about the Forehand:

The rider will need to contain and keep the walk while asking for the turn by using the inside leg on the girth and the outside leg behind the girth, asking for the inside hind leg to cross over the outside hind leg in the walk. This movement demonstrates the rider's ability to control the walk and the energy of the hind legs, with minimal loss of the outside shoulder. When the turn is complete, the rider must ask the pony/horse to continue straight forwards.