

CHAPTER 4

DIRECTIVES FOR ROUTE PLANNING AND MARKING

In laying out and marking of courses the first objective should always be the safety of horse and rider. Riders that are not familiar with specific routes should be able to complete the ride without finding themselves in a situation where they do not know where to ride nor what is required. Course markings should comply with the following wherever possible.

The Course

The type of terrain and altitude differentials must be clearly indicated in the schedule of the competition. In principle, the course should not contain more than 10% of hard surface roads intended for vehicular use if possible. In general, the more demanding part of the course should not be near the end. The finish must be long and wide enough to enable several horses to finish at speed without interfering with each other.

Marking of the Course

1 Definition

The marking of the course must be done in such a manner that there is no doubt on how to proceed along the course. The markings can be flags, ribbons, indicators, dolomite, paint etc. The competitor must complete the entire course in the direction as marked on the map. Any error of course must be corrected from the place where the error has started under penalty of elimination.

2 Red and white Boundary Flags

Entirely red or white (on both sides) boundary flags or indicators must be used to mark defined sections of the entire course, to define the hazards, and to mark the start and finish lines. They are placed in such a way that a competitor must pass a red flag on his right and a white flag on his left. Such red or white flags or indicators, etc. must be respected wherever they may occur in the course under penalty of elimination (unless the competitor corrects himself). Whenever on the course a short cut is possible the Organising Committees must place a steward to control that the obligatory passage is respected.

3 Marks, Signs, etc

Direction flags or signs are intended to show the general direction to be taken and to help the competitor to find his way.

They must be placed so that competitors can recognise them without loss of time. A distance marker must be placed every 5 km.

4 Start and Finish

The start and finish of each phase must be clearly and distinctly marked by red and white flags as well as the appropriate signs.

Hazards

1 Definition

A hazard is a naturally occurring obstacle such as ditch, steep, climb, descent or water crossing and not constructed just for the ride. A hazard is considered only as such if it is marked by a red and a white boundary flag.

2 Nature of Hazards

As far as possible the hazards must be left in their natural state. If necessary, they should be reinforced so that they remain in the same state throughout the competition.

3 Alternative Route

Refusal at the hazards shall not entail elimination of the competitor. At each hazard an alternative route must be provided for competitors who prefer to avoid the hazard. The alternative route must be clearly marked and communicated at the pre-ride briefing. The alternative route shall not add more than 500 meters to the course (whenever possible).

Access to the Course and Outline of Hazards

- 1 A map should be available to competitors when the course is established.
- 2 The course of an Endurance competition will be officially established at least a week before the competition begins.
- 3 All hazards, red and white flags and indicators which have to be observed by competitors shall be exactly in position the day before the competition. Thereafter, they may not be moved nor altered by competitors under penalty of elimination.
- 4 In principle, the day before the competition, a briefing for competitors must be held.

Modification to the Course

After the course has been officially established, no alteration shall be made without the approval of the Organizing Committee. In exceptional circumstances, such as heavy rain or hot weather which make one ore more hazards or any part of the course unpracticable, unfair or dangerous, the Organizing Committee is authorised to reduce the severity of or to bypass such hazards or such parts of the course, or to reduce the distance or the speeds demanded.

If necessary, the start of the competition may be postponed or cancelled. In such case, every competitor must be officially and personally informed of the alteration before the start of the phase concerned.

Method of Starting

- 1 The Start and finish lines should be marked by red and white flags and with the appropriate signs.
- 2 Horses must not cross the starting line before the signal is given.
- 3 An official may be stationed at a convenient distance from the start. By waving a red flag, he can halt a competitor whose start is in any way false. Under penalty of elimination, the competitor must, return and re-cross the start line. But his starting time will be recorded as if he had started when originally given the signal.

Speeds and Distances

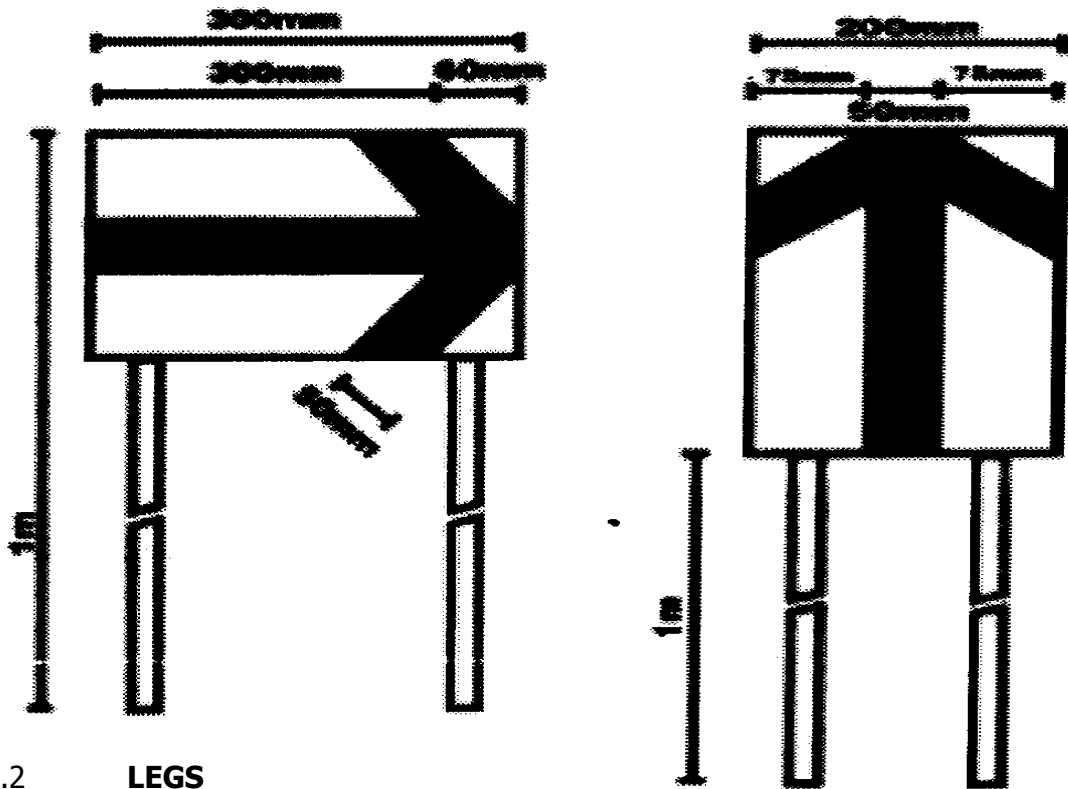
A minimum speed of 10 km/h will be applicable at all NERA rides.

4.1 ROUTE INCICATORS

- 4.1.1 Route indicators (arrows) must not be more than two kilometres (2 km) apart on all routes. Depending on the terrain the distances apart could be smaller.
- 4.1.2 Arrows should be placed nearer each other if necessary.
- 4.1.3 Additional arrows are to indicate every change of direction or any point along the route where riders could be confused.
- 4.1.4 Arrows should be placed one metre above the ground, grass or rough (depending on the circumstances).
- 4.1.5 At any specific point on a course where riders could be confused about directions, despite the presence of route indicators, that point should be manned.
- 4.1.6 At any point en route where riders could either deliberately or accidentally take a short cut, that point should be manned.
- 4.1.7 Route indicators should be made of a steel plate (or any other durable material) of a minimum A4 size (± 200 mm x 300 mm). This should be attached to steel droppers or any other suitable

material. Depending on the terrain other material like for instance tyres may be used in very sandy and / windy areas.

- 4.1.8 The background of the route indicator must be painted white with a good quality paint.
- 4.1.9 The arrows of the route indicators must be painted blue, yellow, red, green white and orange. (see 2.1) at least 50 mm wide extending over the entire surface of the background.
- 4.1.10 Where circumstances dictate or where it is easier or more logical, the arrows can be painted on other backgrounds (e.g. stones, walls, etc.) These arrows must, however, comply with the minimum size requirements. Where ever there is a road crossing, the road which does not form part of the course should be blocked off with a solid lime line over the entire road. It is always a good practice to place additional indicators about 10 to 20 meters from crossings or turn offs on the course.
- 4.1.11 **Examples**



4.2 LEGS

4.2.1 The colour of the arrows on the legs of a ride are as follows:

- Leg 1 – Blue
- Leg 2 – Yellow
- Leg 3 - Red
- Leg 4 – Green
- Leg 5 – White
- Leg 6 - Orange

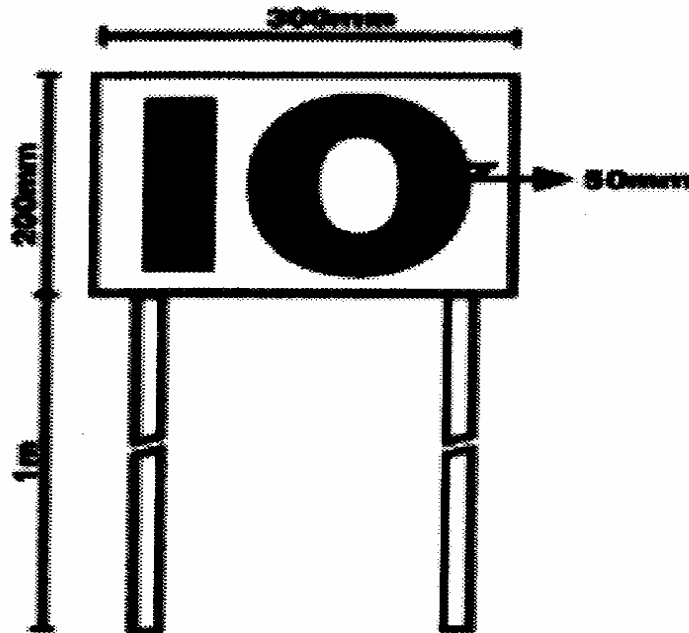
All courses throughout the country are to be colour coded accordingly.

4.2.2 Continuous courses are marked with a single colour.

4.3 DISTANCE INDICATORS

4.3.1 Distance indicators (black digits against a white background or the same material and format as the direction indicators) must be precisely 5 km apart, starting at the point of departure.

4.3.2 **Example**

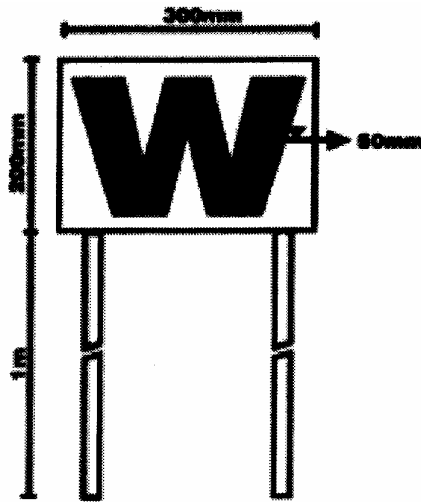


4.4 WATERING POINTS

4.4.1 Watering points should not be further than 5 km apart.

4.4.2 At each watering point a water sign (a black or blue W against a white background or written WATER of the same material and format as the direction indicators) must be placed 20 metres before the watering point.

4.4.3 **Example**



- 4.4.4 Watering points that are not natural sources with ample water must be manned continuously.
- 4.4.5 There must be sufficient drinking troughs to prevent a conge of horses at any one time.
- 4.4.6 All water must be clear and pure. All drinking troughs must be clean and free of sharp protruding edges.
- 4.4.7 Drinking water for riders to be available at one point per leg.

4.5 **ROUTE MAP**

A map (minimum size A4) of the whole route must be placed at a central point at the starting line and must indicate the following:

- 4.5.1 Total distance of the route to the first decimal. (This exact distance must also appear on the result forms that are forwarded to the Council).
- 4.5.2 Distance of the various legs indicated to the first decimal.
- 4.5.3 Watering points with the distance between them to the nearest kilometre and first decimal.
- 4.5.4 Roads, camps, gates, hills, mountains, streams, water courses, rivers, structures (houses, sheds, pumps, etc.) and any other distinguishing aspects of the route.
- 4.5.5 Dangerous areas that riders need to take note of e.g. railway lines, ditches, dongas, rocks, etc. (Public roads are always potentially dangerous to horse and rider and should be avoided whenever possible).
- 4.5.6 The current handicap of the course.
- 4.5.7 The colour of each leg.
- 4.5.8 Maximum completion time of course.

4.5.9 Maximum completion time per national championship participation. (Refer 3.1.32.3)

4.6 **GATES**

4.6.1 Should there be any gates on the route and they cannot remain open during the ride then they should be manned for the duration of the ride.

4.6.2 Where applicable, all gates must be unlocked at the beginning of the ride.

4.7 **PRE-RIDE SESSION**

4.7.1 It is compulsory that before commencement of a ride, a guidance / rider briefing session should be conducted for all riders, grooms and assistants. During this session the route map and any important aspects of the specific ride need to be addressed.

4.7.2 The availability of a programme detailing the day's activities will help reduce the number of enquiries (and sometimes frustrations).

4.8 **IMPLEMENTATION**

4.8.1 It is recommended that clubs implement the above requirements as soon as possible.

4.9 **EXEMPTIONS**

4.9.1 Clubs may apply to the executive before the ride to be exempted from these rules, where course marking is impossible. (i.e. Nature Reserves).

Reserved for future use

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