

COMPETITIVE TRAIL RIDING

Competitive Trail Riding (CTR) is a growing sport and it caters for a wide range of riders. It is an opportunity for an extended ride over forest trails or farmlands in the company of other riders on a regular basis. Rides are open to anyone with a moderately fit and sound horse or pony at least four years old, who can stay in the saddle for a couple of hours. If this sounds like fun, trail riding might be for you.

“Competitive” may be misleading. The aim is not to be the fastest, but to arrive on time with the least stressed horse. There is emphasis on safe and considerate riding. Some riders are seriously into the sport and go on to national and international competition. For others, the aim is to enjoy the ride. WATRC rides cater to both competing and casual riders and a good time is had by all, especially the horses.

The Wellington Area Trail Riding Club (WATRC) has been active since 1987. Its objects are to promote and encourage endurance and competitive trail riding, to organize local endurance and trail rides, to encourage safe and enjoyable outdoor riding and to provide opportunities for horse riders and their families to interact socially

COMPETITIVE RIDES

A trail ride follows a marked course of 15 to 35 kilometers on forest trails and farmland at a pace averaging a slow to medium trot for most classes. Horses are vet checked before leaving and riders are usually sent out in groups of two or three with a set time to finish the course.

Riders are required to keep moving forward at all times they may not stop to rest the horse or circle or zigzag to waste time.

After the ride the horse's heart rate is counted immediately on arrival and again 30 minutes later.

Time penalty points are given for being earlier or later than the set time (two points per minute early, one point per minute late). The score is the sum of the two heart rates plus any time penalties collected. The lowest score wins. Riders can compete in Junior (up to 18 years old), Novice, Intermediate or Open Class. To ride in Open you & your horse must first have completed successfully twice in Intermediate. Open Ride the longest course at the fastest pace. Others ride at a slower pace, often over a shorter course. Competition is intense at the advanced level. Serious riders train hard between events to maintain their horses and their own level of fitness. WATRC is affiliated with the New Zealand Riding Clubs and rides are run in accordance with WATRC Rules.

CASUAL RIDERS

Riders who do not wish to compete are welcome to take part as a casual entry. Casuals are subject to the same safety requirements and regulations as competitive riders but their horse will be vetted at the end of the ride.

WELLINGTON AREA RIDES

About twelve rides are held in a season in the Wellington area ranging from Belmont in the south to Bulls in the North, Wainuiomata in the east to Titahi Bay in the west. They are usually held on Sundays from September through to March.

Some riders also travel to rides organized by clubs in the Wairarapa and Manawatu.

ON RIDE DAY

At the entries table: Sign in, pay for your bib and competitor card. Note your start time. Synchronize your watch with the official clock. Ride rules are available.

Ride Brief: Is usually half an hour before first rider out. If you miss the briefing check with the entries table or the start marshal.

Pre ride Vetting: Present your horse in a halter or bridle only hooves picked. Horses must be well behaved. Wear your bib the vet writer will mark your card.

Groom & Tack up: Prepare for riding out. An approved equestrian safety helmet must be worn. Footwear must have a 10mm heel. Cleated gumboots are not acceptable. Whips and spurs are not allowed.

Groom & turnout: This competition is optional. Report to the start area 10 minutes before riding out if you wish to participate.

Report to start line: The start marshal will check for gear compliance and say when to ride out.

On the trail: Follow markings report to stewards at checkpoints try not to disturb stock. Your bib number must remain visible.

To pass slower riders: Call out ahead as you come up behind them move aside as soon as you can for riders who wish to pass you.

At the finish: Be ready immediately for your horse's heart rate to be counted. The timekeeper will write your final vet time on your competitor card

Untack: Cool and calm your horse you should offer it a drink of water

Final vet check: Return to the vetting area in a halter or bridle only in good time the penalty for lateness is elimination. Your horse's heart rate must fall to 60 beats per minute or less the vet writer will keep your card.

Prize giving: After scores are tallied ribbons will be awarded in the various classes, completion certificates will be issued and competitor cards returned. Ribbons are awarded up to sixth place.

Disappointments: Sometimes you get lost or your horse may go lame or be vetted out. Most riders have suffered the same so will be sympathetic. The ground help are volunteers who may have given up their ride to officiate at yours so remember this At times like these show your character!

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Red Ribbons: A red ribbon in a horse's tail means that it is known to kick.

Colts & Stallions: The club should be advised in advance if colts or stallions are going to be at a ride. Juniors are not allowed to be in charge of colts or stallions.

No Dogs: No Dogs are allowed at any ride. (even if they are left in your car). We can lose our privilege of access over this.

No Smoking: If you must smoke please do it in your car and use the ashtray.

Quiet around the vets area: Listening through the stethoscope is difficult especially in windy conditions. Talking around the vet ring makes the vet's job even more difficult.

The welfare of the horse is paramount: Not arriving on time! If your horse is becoming overworked slow down.

Ride at your own risk: There are risks involved in trail riding and you must accept that neither WATRC nor landowners will be liable if you or your horse suffer any injury or harm.

The following excerpt is from Blyth Tait's
Eventing Insights published by
Kenilworth Press:

- 🐎 Don't let the horse cool out too quickly. Cover him up and keep him waling around gently until his breathing has regained some normality.
- 🐎 Sponge him down and scrape him off and if it is cold cover him up whilst still waling him around.
- 🐎 If he has had a bump and cautionary ice is to be applied, then straight away is the time to do it. Ice will assist in preventing immediate bruising or swelling.
- 🐎 Offer only small drinks to begin with increasing the amounts gradually as the horse recovers more fully.
- 🐎 Don't offer feed too soon after competing. Again a light pick of grass would probably be appreciated.
- 🐎 Finally, brush off and make comfortable with appropriate rugs.

Advantages to WATRC Membership

- 🐎 Reduction in Entry Fees
- 🐎 Newsletter with directions to rides and publication of results
- 🐎 Eligibility to hold club trophies for winning rides or seasonal awards such as Most Improved Rider and Fittest Horse.
- 🐎 NZ Riding Clubs

*Our Motto in competitive trail riding is:
TO COMPLETE IS TO WIN*

Participation improves both horse and rider and gives satisfaction with comes from striving.

What equipment to bring on the day

- Warm Clothing: Jacket and Gloves.
- Refreshments: A BBQ is run but an electrolyte drink is a good idea if its is hot or you are riding longer distances.
- String: Cord to attach your jacket to your saddle when riding.
- A cover: for your horse after the ride.
- Buckets: for drinking and washing water.
- Grooming and Washing Gear: Include old towels.

WATRC Competitive Ride Fees

A \$10 Ground levy applies to every ride.

Member Adult	\$10.00
Member Junior	\$5.00
Non-member Adult	\$15.00
Non-member Junior	\$7.00
Non-member Casual Ride Fee	\$5.00

These rates are subject to change without notice.

WATRC Membership

Families	\$35.00
Individuals	\$25.00
Non-Riding	\$20.00

In general the style is relaxed and informal the rides are supposed to be safe and enjoyable. Newcomers are always welcome and an effort is made to make them feel so.

The Club publishes a newsletter with information about coming rides and social events, results from previous rides, Bye/Sell/Swap notices and other relevant information which might be of interest or entertainment.

A detailed information pack including a full set of rules, registration form and the schedule for the coming season is available from:
Eunice Tyler (06) 3299977 or
Aimee Merrick (06) 3275232

WATRC, PO Box 57-202, MANA



W.A.T.R.C.
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*WATRC Pointing you in the right direction
All you need to know about Competitive Trail Riding*