

2026 Big Bear Cowboy Challenge

Los Vaqueros de la Montañas, 440 Cascade St. Big Bear City CA 92315

www.losvaquerosriders.com

Registration

Description: The Cowboy Challenge is a competition of skill that measures a rider's horsemanship and encourages horses to develop a partnership based on trust. A rider's partnership is scored on an obstacle course which is designed to challenge their ability level yet allows good horsemanship. A rider will navigate through an obstacle course set up inside and outside of an arena. Cattle work will be an obstacle for all divisions except In Hand. Bonus points are given for showing good horsemanship.

Purpose: This event will give you the opportunity to set goals, measure progress, expose horses to new scenarios, as well as gaining confidence in creating a safer trail horse. The Challenge is about having fun, promoting good horsemanship and taking riders to new levels.

Schedule & Fees:

- **Saturday: Workshops** 9:00am-Noon & 1:00pm-4:00pm
\$125/Members \$135 Non-members, \$30 Audit (9 rider max, \$50 non-refundable deposit required)
- **Saturday: Ranch Sorting Workshop & Jackpot** 6:00pm-8:00pm
\$50/Member \$60 Non-member
- **Sunday: Cowboy Challenge** 7:00am Gates Open, 8:00am Check In & Registrations, 9:00am Entries Close & Start.
\$40/In Hand
\$60/Green Horse, Novice, Senior, Youth, Amateur, Open. Additional 1 time \$25/ member or \$35/non-member cattle fee.

All Workshop participants must pre-register and submit \$50.00 non-refundable deposit. Registration deadline for the Challenge is the Monday prior to the event. Late entries will be accepted with a \$20 late fee.

Online registration: <https://forms.gle/sXouKGRSUzCG95Vb6> QR Code:

Club Memberships & Overnight Stalls and Dry Camping are available.

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Event Contact: Mary Rose Anderson 714-721-2220 bbcboychallenge@gmail.com



Divisions

The Cowboy Challenge welcomes all levels of riders and breeds. **No Stallions allowed!** Riders are encouraged to enter in any division in which they are qualified. Exhibitor Order will be determined by show management 24 hours prior to the event. Riders first to have entered will be last to go. Accommodation is made for exhibitors with multiple horses.

- **In Hand:** Open to any horse and rider team. Horses are led in hand at the walk/trot and by halter or bridle. Saddle not required.
- **Green Horse:** For horses at the walk/trot, in their 1st and 2nd year showing.
- **Novice:** For beginning level riders of 18 years and over at the walk/trot. A Novice has not placed 1st -3rd in any obstacle or trail competition or any similar event prior to the year. A novice has never been paid to ride, train or give lessons.
- **Senior:** For riders 55 years and over.
- **Youth:** For riders 17 years of age and under.
- **Amateur:** For horses and riders of any level of 18 years of age and over. An Amateur rider does not receive payment to ride, train or give lessons.
- **Open:** Open to all ages. Riders under 17 years old are allowed with guardian permission.

Courses

1. In Hand & Green Horse: Suitable courses for all horses that have never shown before. Courses consist of 8 obstacles. Obstacles are worth 10 points each.

2. Novice: Beginning level courses, suitable for all horses. The course consists of 10 obstacles; no water, no jumping. Obstacles are worth 10 points each.

3. Youth & Senior: Intermediate level suitable for all horses. Courses include loping, jumping and more challenging obstacles. The course consists of 13 obstacles worth 10 points each.

4. Amateur & Open: Advanced level suitable for all horses. Courses include loping, jumping and a higher level of difficulty and skilled obstacles. The course consists of 13 obstacles worth 10 points each.

NOTES: Course maps will be posted 1 hour before the start of the challenge. A course walk through with the judge for competitors on foot will be held before each division starts. It is the competitor's responsibility to fully understand the course and rules at this time.

Attire & Tack

Attire: Boots with a heel are mandatory. Dress should be appropriate: jeans, long sleeved button collared shirt (tucked in), belt, and Cowboy hats. No ball caps allowed. For adults, helmets are encouraged.

Helmets are required for age 17 and under.

Tack: Must be safe, humane and in good working condition. If show management determines an item to be unsafe or not humane the exhibitor has 10 minutes to correct the problem and return to the course.

Snaffle Bits and Bosals: Any horse may be shown 2 handed using a snaffle or bosal.

Horses that are shown in bits with a shank should be ridden one-handed. Use of two-hands is allowed but will be penalized.

Discouraged Equipment: Mechanical hackamores, side pulls, gag or twisted wire bits, cavessons, tie-downs, draw reins, martingales, and wire chinstraps strongly discouraged.

Safety

All safety concerns must be brought to the attention of the show staff prior to the event. Obstacles are designed with safety in mind. However, if a rider feels an obstacle is beyond their abilities, then the rider may skip that obstacle after acknowledging the obstacle and penalties will be applied.

Helmets are required for age 17 and under. For adults, helmets are encouraged. Competitors and parent/legal guardians of children under 18 years of age assume all responsibility when on the grounds and participating in this event.

Rules

1. All riders must sign a liability release. Riders 17 years of age and under must have a parent/guardian signature.
2. A rider may exhibit multiple horses in a division.
3. Horses may only enter a division only once. Horses may be shown in any division if they and/or the rider is eligible for the division.
4. Horses may not be on the course prior to competition; on competition day.
5. Horses must be serviceably sound and in good condition as determined by the judge.
6. Entry fees are non-refundable after the start of the event.
7. Riders will be given 1 minute to start their course. If a rider fails to be ready and does not start within that time frame, they will be disqualified.
8. Each contestant will perform the required obstacle pattern individually.
9. Obstacles will not be numbered and must be completed in the designated order.
10. If riders choose to lead a horse through an obstacle they must remount before moving toward the next obstacle. This will result in a low obstacle score.
11. If a rider comes off their horse, they will have 1 minute to catch their horse and remount, or it will result in a disqualification.
12. It is permissible to change your rein hand to work with an obstacle.
13. Failure to attempt an obstacle will result in a zero score for that obstacle.

14. The judge will blow a whistle and ask the contestant to move on to the next obstacle upon the third refusal or after 30 seconds of not completing an obstacle. The rider **MUST** move on to the next obstacle or be disqualified.

15. Riders may not consume alcoholic beverages before or during their ride. A rider will be disqualified if it appears that the rider is using drugs or alcohol.

16. It is expected that each horse shall be treated humanely with kindness and respect at all times. Horses should have the opportunity to display their great natural ability not hindered by drugs, surgical alterations or inhumane treatment. Our position is to hold the highest standard of integrity in treatment and care of the horse.

17. The judge always has the option of disqualifying an exhibitor for safety reasons, disrespect or misconduct.

18. No whining, moaning, or complaining. The object is to have fun and to improve our horsemanship. Suggestions are welcome.

19. Show management has the right to add additional rules if necessary. Rule additions will be posted at the registration table prior to the event.

20. Riders will abide by the ruling of the judge. All judges' decisions are final.

21. Please respect the facility, treat it well and clean up before leaving the facility

Obstacles

Show management has the right to be creative in designing the obstacles used for the challenge.

Obstacles may come from this list of examples:

- **Animals** (live or stuffed animals which would normally be encountered in an outdoor setting may be used but not to be used in an attempt to spook a horse.)
- **Archery Shoot**
- **Backing** (backing thru U's, L's, and Z's, around obstacles or up and down a hill.)
- **Carry** (carrying slicker, bucket, ball, flag, saddlebag, tarp, etc. from one point to another.)
- **Cache Hoist** (using a rope to hoist an object above the horse's head.)
- **Circles or Straight Lines** (trot or lope, slow and/or fast.)
- **Cow Work** (cutting out cattle from its herd and maneuvered it into a catch pen.)
- **Crossings** (stepping over poles, logs, deadfall, various bridges, ditch, trash or tarps.)
- **Double Rider**
- **Drag** (dragging a log, tire, tarp, pallet, etc. from one point to another.)
- **Hoof Check**
- **Gate** (opening, passing through and closing of a standard panel gate, rope, or swing pole.)
- **Ground Tie**
- **Gun Shot** (black powder mounted shooting blanks, fired at balloons. Open riders only.)

- **Jump** (trot or lope over a jump consisting of logs, hay bales or half/full barrels. A jump obstacle whose center height is not less than 14 inches high or more than 25 inches high. Holding the saddle horn is permissible for this obstacle.)
- **Lead Horse** (dismounting and leading horse over obstacles or at a trot.)
- **Mailbox** (remove and replace materials.)
- **Moguls**
- **Mounting** (from the ground, block, log, fence, or other stands.)
- **Pony Horse**
- **Ride Through** (curtains, tunnels, and ravines.)
- **Rollbacks**
- **Roping:** (swinging and throwing a rope with either livestock or a dummy.)
- **Serpentine** (weaving cones or poles spaced a minimum of 6ft apart or lope at 21ft apart.)
- **Slicker** (put on slicker or coat.)
- **Side Pass** (straddling an object, raised poles or barrels.)
- **Spins/Turns** (rotating on the forearm or haunches.)
- **Spearing Rings** (collecting rings using a long jousting pole.)
- **Smoke** (crossing by flares or campfire.)
- **Straight Line** (holding a straight line at a trot or lope.)
- **Tunnels** (made out of barrels, hay bales, tarps, or decorated panel walls.)
- **Trailer Loading**
- **Water** (waterfalls, bogs, sprinklers, or crossing contained water in boxes.)

Judging

This event is intended to display the versatile working ability of each horse and rider. A good horseman will never endanger themselves or their horse. Therefore, a good working relationship between horse and rider shall be rewarded. The best horse will be willfully guided with no apparent resistance. Any movement made by the horse on its own or deviation from the pattern must be considered a lack of control. Credit will be given for horsemanship, smoothness, calmness, finesse, forward motion, control, attitude, quickness and authority in performing the various obstacles.

All runs begin upon entering the area of competition and any infractions are subject to penalty at that time and up until the end of the pattern. The rider has the option of eliminating any obstacle, however this will result in a score of 0 for the obstacle. If the rider in a division chooses to bypass an obstacle, without acknowledging the obstacle, they will be considered off pattern and the horse/rider team may not place above others who have completed the pattern correctly.

A judge may ask a horse to pass on an obstacle after three refusals or at any time for safety concerns. Additional points are given for efficiency. However, sacrificing horsemanship for speed will not give you a better score.

Scoring

Each obstacle will be worth 10 points. Points can be given in 0.5 increments. Bonus points or .5 may be added for any obstacle. **Scoring System:**

- 0- Not attempted
- 1- Attempt made, uncooperative horse, 3 refusals
- 2- Attempt made, uncooperative horse, 2 refusals
- 3- Attempt made, uncooperative horse, 1 refusal
- 4- Obstacle compete with hesitation, rough but done
- 5- Obstacle completed with slight deviation or hesitation
- 6- Obstacle completed as expected
- 7- Obstacle completed smoothly and willingly
- 8- Obstacle completed willingly with finesse
- 9- Obstacle completed willingly with a higher degree of difficulty
- 10- Obstacle completed willingly with a higher degree of difficulty and extreme finesse

In the event of a tied score in any division, the better horsemanship score OR a judge's picked obstacle will determine the winner.

Awards & Buckle Sponsors

- **Ribbons:** Places 1st - 6th in each division.
- **Daily Reserve Champion:** Awarded ribbon and prize in each division.
- **Daily High Point Champion:** Awarded ribbon and prize in each division.
- **Division Champions:** Awarded buckles for the best score from either show.

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In Hand: **High Country Insurance**
Green Horse: **M.R. Anderson Horsemanship**
Novice: TBA
Youth: **BJ's Restaurant**
Amateur: **High Country Insurance**
Senior: TBA
Open: TBA

****All details are subject to change****