

## 9. APPENDIX 3 - Participation in Horse Trials (MER Requirements)

**Rule Change Intent:** To improve safety and mitigate horse and rider falls in competition by requiring additional experience before moving to the next level of difficulty. Review of data revealed that 1) riders with more experience at a level fall less and 2) riders with more runs at the level below, fall less at the next level of difficulty.

A competitor and/or a horse may be entered in a Horse Trial without having fulfilled the qualifications noted below, provided the qualifications have been fulfilled at least 10 days before the Cross-Country Test of the competition for which it is needed if the MER has been achieved at a Horse Trial or CCI-S or at least 24 days if the MER has been achieved at a CCI-L. For Preliminary, Modified, and Training Classic Three-Day Events, qualifying competitions must be completed within a 24-month period of the start of the competition. **All MERS must be obtained within a 4-year period and one MER within 8 weeks of the competition.**

At the CCI2\* level and above, at least one MER must be obtained in the twelve month period prior to the competition. e.g. a horse and/or rider who have achieved a MER at a CCI4\* level of competition and who have not competed for over twelve months must first achieve a MER at the next lowest height level.

### 3. LEVELS OF HORSE TRIALS AND EVENTS

3.5 PRELIMINARY (P) - Open to competitors from the beginning of the calendar year of their 14th birthday, on horses five years of age or older. The competitor must have obtained an MER at ~~six~~ ~~four~~ Horse Trials at the Training Level or higher. **The horse must have obtained an MER at four Horse Trials at the Training Level or higher: One of the four MERs must be as a combination. Competitors with more than 10 MERs at the Preliminary Level or higher are exempt from one MER in combination.**

3.9 INTERMEDIATE (I) - Open to competitors from the beginning of the calendar year of their 16th birthday, on horses six years of age or older. ~~Both~~ **The competitor must have obtained an MER at six Horse Trials at the Preliminary Level or higher.** ~~and the horse, though not necessarily as a combination, must have obtained an MER at three Horse Trials at the Preliminary Level or higher, plus an additional MER at the Preliminary Level or higher with no more than 20 Jumping Penalties at obstacles on the Cross Country test.~~ **The horse must have obtained an MER at four Horse Trials at the Preliminary Level or higher: One of the four MERs must be as a combination. Competitors with more than 10 MERs at the Intermediate Level or higher are exempt from one MER in combination.**

3.10 ADVANCED (A) ~~3.10.1 UNCATEGORIZED RIDERS~~ - Open to competitors from the beginning of the calendar year of their 18th birthday, on horses six years of age or older. ~~Both the competitor and the horse, though not necessarily as a combination, must have obtained a minimum of one MER with no more than 20 Jumping Penalties at obstacles on the Cross Country test, at either a CCI3\* or Intermediate Level plus three MERs at the Intermediate Level or higher.~~ **The competitor must have obtained an MER at six Horse Trials at the Intermediate Level or higher.** ~~The horse must have obtained an MER at four Horse Trials at the Intermediate Level or higher: One of the four MERs must be as a combination. Competitors with more than 10 MERs at the Advanced Level or higher are exempt from one MER in combination.~~

~~3.10.2 CATEGORIZED RIDERS~~ - ~~Open to competitors from the beginning of the calendar year of their 18th birthday, on horses six years of age or older. Both the competitor and the horse, though not necessarily as a combination, must have obtained a minimum of one MER with no more than 20 Jumping Penalties at obstacles on the Cross Country test, at either a CCI3\* or Intermediate Level plus two MERs at the Intermediate Level or higher.~~

# Rider Experience at the Level

Two concepts presented themselves from the competition data:

1. Riders who have more experience at a level fall less.
2. Riders who have more runs at the level below fall less when they move up to the next level.

Fall Rates by Number of Athlete MERs at the level															
	PRELIM					INTERMEDIATE					ADVANCED				
	Runs	Rider Falls		Horse Falls		Runs	Rider Falls		Horse Falls		Runs	Rider Falls		Horse Falls	
<b>MER &lt;10</b>	10,654	430	4.04%	31	0.29%	3,841	167	4.35%	22	0.57%	1,030	51	4.95%	11	1.07%
<b>MER ≥ 10</b>	12,944	260	2.01%	20	0.15%	3,462	50	1.44%	10	0.29%	499	11	2.20%	7	1.40%

## Fall Rates by Number of Athlete MERs at the level BELOW

Fall rates are reduced by at least half when riders have 6 or more MERs prior to moving up a level. At Preliminary, horse falls go from 1:240 starts (<6 MERs) to 1:556 starts ( $\geq 6$  MERs). Intermediate shows the greatest difference at 1:70 vs 1:251, and Advanced at 1:44 vs 1:88. It is notable that most riders currently follow this practice: 85% of riders moving to Preliminary, 96% of riders moving to Intermediate, and 97% of riders moving to Advanced have least 6 MERs prior to moving up.

In addition to the 6 MER prior to moving up a level, all Riders will be required to have one in combination prior to moving to the next level. Rider experience is the most important factor – having already achieved 10 MERs at a level you have meaningful experience at that level – and therefore there is an exception to the one-in-combination requirement, provided the other qualifications of horse and rider are met.

	PRELIM			INTERMEDIATE			ADVANCED		
	% Rider Falls	% Horse Falls	% of competitors who do +/- 6 MERs	% Rider Falls	% Horse Falls	% of competitors who do +/- 6 MERs	% Rider Falls	% Horse Falls	% of competitors who do +/- 6 MERs
<b>MER &lt; 6</b>	0.038 (135/3597) 1:27	0.004 (15/3597) 1:240	15%	0.058 (16/278) 1:17	0.014 (4/278) 1:70	4%	0.045 (2/44) 1:22	0.023 (1/44) 1:44	3%
<b>MER <math>\geq</math> 6</b>	0.028 (555/20001) 1:36	0.002 (36/20001) 1:556	85%	0.029 (201/7025) 1:35	0.004 (28/7025) 1:251	96%	0.04 (60/1485) 1:25	0.011 (17/1485) 1:88	97%
p-value	<i>P=0.001*</i>	<i>P=0.004*</i>		<i>P=0.005*</i>	<i>P=0.017*</i>		<i>P=0.500</i>	<i>P=0.500</i>	