



The United States Pony Clubs, Inc. **STANDARDS OF PROFICIENCY**

(Revised January 1, 2004)

The United States Pony Clubs has established Standards of Proficiency within the framework of the international Pony Club movement as the curriculum for a program of instruction and testing of its members.

D Rating

The D ratings are an introduction to the fun and challenge of riding, establishing a foundation of safety habits and knowledge of the daily care of a mount and tack. The D-1 through D-3 Pony Club member learns to ride independently and with control, maintaining a reasonably secure position at the walk, trot, and canter and over low fences. All D ratings are awarded at the club level.

B, H/H-A, and A ratings are scheduled on a national basis and require a greater depth of knowledge and proficiency than the earlier ratings. Successful candidates are competent, all-around horsemen, active and contributing members of USPC, who participate in a variety of Pony Club activities. They are also thoughtful leaders who set an example for all levels.

B Rating

The B rating is for the active horseman and Pony Club member who is interested in acquiring further knowledge and proficiency in all phases of riding and horse care. The B is able to ride experienced mounts with confidence and control on the flat, over fences, and in the open. The B should be able to ride and care for another person's experienced mount, maintaining proper mental and physical condition without undoing any of the mount's education. The B understands and is able to explain the reasons for what he or she is doing and to contribute to the education of younger Pony Club members.

C Rating

The C is a Pony Club member learning to become an active horseman, to care independently for mount and tack, and to understand the reasons for what he or she is doing. The C shows development towards a secure, independent seat, and increasing control and confidence in all phases of riding. The C-1 and C-2 ratings are awarded at the club level. The C-3 is a regional rating and reflects a basis of competence in riding and horse care that will make possible a lifetime of pleasure with horses.

A Rating

The A, the highest rating, is divided into two parts: the H/H-A, which covers horse management, teaching, and training, and the A, which tests the riding phase. The H/H-A has the knowledge, experience, and maturity to evaluate and care for a mount's needs efficiently and in a variety of circumstances, and to teach riding and horse care to others. The A is able to ride mounts at various levels of schooling with judgment, tact, and effectiveness; to train young mounts; and to retrain spoiled mounts.

In addition to its instructional programs, USPC offers a variety of activities at club, regional, inter-regional and national levels for team and individual participation. These activities include Eventing, Dressage, Foxhunting, Quiz, Mounted Games, Show Jumping, Tetrathlon, Polocrosse, and Vaulting.

Achieving a rating does not necessarily qualify the Pony Club member for competition in any horse sport.

Further study and preparation for a particular activity, including working as a team member, may be necessary.

Dimensions of Fences D to A*

Rating	Height	Width at Top		Width at Base	
		CC	SJ	CC	SJ
D-2	18"	1'	1'	1'6"	1'6"
D-3	2'6"	2'6"	2'6"	4'3"	4'3"
C-1	2'9"	2'9"	2'9"	4'3"	4'3"
C-2	3'0"	3'3"	3'3"	4'7"	4'11"
C-3	3'3"	3'11"	3'9"	5'3"	5'7"
B	3'7"	4'7"	4'3"	6'7"	6'3"
A	3'9"	5'3"	4'9"	7'10"	6'11"

*Based on USPC Eventing Rules and US Equestrian Eventing Rules. When a second height is required at any one level, use appropriate dimensions shown on the chart above.

'B' STANDARD

RIDING

Expectations

Candidates should demonstrate an independent seat and effective tactful use of aids on the flat and over fences. Candidates should ride each mount forward while establishing and maintaining a regular pace with the mount accepting the aids; be confident in coping with disobedience; be able to explain the application and reasons for aids and to discuss the basic principles of dressage.

Riding On The Flat

Demonstrate warm-up for work on the flat.

Discuss the reasons for warm-up, the amount of time required for the mount being ridden, and why.

Be prepared to ride the following movements, demonstrating accurate and smooth transitions and correct use of aids:

Serpentine, 3 loops, sitting and/or posting at trot

Change of rein across diagonal

10-meter half circle, walk and/or trot

20-meter circle, sitting trot and/or canter

Canter change of lead through walk and/or trot

Lengthening of stride, at trot and/or canter

Leg-yielding, walk and/or trot

Reinback

Evaluate and discuss performance with Examiner, including strong and weak points of the mount being ridden.

Ride on the flat without stirrups at all gaits.

Demonstrate ability to ride different mount with confidence and tact at all gaits while performing basic schooling figures

Discuss performance, including whether or not each mount was balanced, supple, and moving forward with rhythm and impulsion

Riding Over Fences

Discuss the benefits of cavaletti/trotting poles and know how to adjust distances for own mount.

Demonstrate warm-up for jumping, including work over cavaletti.

Demonstrate ability to ride over fences at height not to exceed 3'7".

Course to include combination fences.

Critique performance in relation to the effectiveness of the riding plan.

Ride without stirrups over a grid while showing a secure and independent seat.

Ride without stirrups over 2 or 3 fences.

Demonstrate ability to ride different mount over fences with tact and confidence.

Critique performance, showing understanding of causes of any disobediences.

Riding In The Open

Demonstrate a knowledge of pace, and galloping position when appropriate, for an estimated 240 m/m, developing to 350 m/m and 450 m/m.

Ride own mount over a variety of cross country fences at height not to exceed 3'7".

Candidates may be asked to demonstrate ability on a different mount over several natural fences.

Critique performances, showing understanding of causes of any disobediences.

Time allowing and terrain suitable, ride safely in a group at a controlled trot and canter to include several natural fences if available.

HORSE MANAGEMENT

Expectations

Candidates must demonstrate sound judgment and maturity in the care of mounts and equipment and an understanding of the reasons for what they are doing. They must show, through discussion and demonstration, knowledge of veterinary care, longeing, and teaching principles.

Presentation of Horse and Rider

Correct formal or informal attire.

Candidate should demonstrate effective presentation and control while standing facing and slightly to the side of, rather than directly in front of, the mount. The candidate will hold the reins, one in each hand, close to the bit. Thumbs should not be hooked into bit rings.

Mount to be clean, showing results of effective daily grooming.

Tack to be safe and clean, indicating consistent care.

Discuss the purpose and correct fit of own mount's equipment, as well as different types of bits, bridles, nosebands, saddles, pads, girths, martingales, breastplates, cruppers and boots.

Nutrition

Relate feeding principles to their effect on the mount's digestive system.

Discuss the 6 classes of nutrients and why they are needed.

Discuss the nutritive value of own mount's feed and supplements.

Discuss seasonal variations in planning a mount's ration.

Evaluate hay, grain, and bedding as to suitability and safety.

Stable Management

Discuss the life cycle of internal parasites and the preventive measures for strongyles, bots, ascarids, lungworms, Strongyloides (threadworms,) tape worms, Haemonema (Summer Sores) and pinworms.

Record Book

(Health, Maintenance, Immunizations)

Purpose: To supply an accurate and detailed outline of candidate's (or borrowed) mount's health care, feed schedule, hoof care, conditioning and competitive schedule so, in case the candidate were laid up or called away for a prolonged period, the mount could be properly maintained. The candidate needs to present a written outline supplying the above information. Candidates may use the USPC Pony Health & Maintenance Record Book or, preferably, their own record system. Records should reflect the appropriate depth of knowledge for this level. Must have records for at least 1 year prior to test.

Conformation and Lameness

Discuss the anatomy of the front and hind leg from shoulder and hip down, to include principal bones, tendons and ligaments.

Discuss conformation, both good and not so good, of mount being presented.

Discuss how good conformation relates to long term soundness of the mount.

Discuss conformation of the mount as it relates to interfering, overreaching, forging.

Discuss the following common causes of lameness, giving location and inner structure involved: navicular, sidebone, ringbone, splints, osselets, bog and bone spavins, curb, bowed tendon, bucked shins, cracks, corns, suspensory problems.

Health Care and Veterinary Knowledge

Determine and discuss age by teeth on presented mount. Discuss special problems such as over- or under-shot mouth, cribbing, and reasons for floating periodically.

Discuss in depth your annual immunization and parasite prevention schedules for your horse.

Discuss causes, signs and preventive measures for colic, laminitis/founder, azoturia/tying up, flu, strangles, tetanus, encephalomyelitis,, rhinopneumonitis, heaves, choking, skin and tooth problems.

Discuss signs of mount in distress (including vital signs) and care needed.

Teaching

Discuss the care of D and C Pony Club members to keep them safe, interested, and happy during a lesson situation.

Discuss and compare courses suitable to be ridden by a D, C, or B Pony Club member.

Present a written mounted lesson plan to be included in the front of your record book. Discuss it with examiners.

Longeing

Discuss how to teach a mount to longe.

Discuss benefits and dangers of longeing the mount.

Discuss benefits and dangers of longeing the rider.

Discuss and demonstrate proper fit and use of equipment, to include side reins.

Longe own mount, appropriate to mount's ability, at the walk, trot and/or canter, at the discretion of the examiner; to include free forward movement and to establish regular rhythm. Be prepared to use side reins.

Foot & Shoeing

Discuss the structure and function of the hoof.

Discuss shoes, different types for specific reasons, fit to hoof, and removal.

Bandaging

Demonstrate shipping, stable, and tail bandages; discuss materials used, reasons for wrapping, potential dangers.

TESTING INFORMATION

Requirements for Candidates

- Be a Pony Club Member in Good Standing as defined in club policy, having paid local, regional and national dues and fees for at least the current and preceding years.
- Have a record of regular attendance and participation.
- Be at least 14 years of age **prior to** January 1 of the year of application.
- Be recommended by the District Commissioner and Regional Supervisor.
- Have held the C-3 rating for at least 90 days before taking the B rating.
- Fulfill the active participation criteria set by the region.
- Compete in at least one mounted rally on a mounted or unmounted basis.
- Have a thorough knowledge of requirements for the B rating and be able to discuss and/or demonstrate any requirements from all previously attained standards.
- **Any special testing requests must be submitted to the USPC National Office, through the RS. These requests will be reviewed on an individual basis and the final decision for any exception will be the responsibility of the National Testing Committee Chair and the VP of Instruction.**

Attire

Safe workman-like attire, including proper foot wear, should be worn in barn area and when working around mounts. Proper informal attire (boots and breeches) are required for the longeing phase. Refer to USPC HM Handbook, USPC Rules for Eventing, and the USPC Manuals of Horsemanship I, II and III.

ASTM/SEI approved headgear with full harness and with chin strap in place must be worn.

Equipment

Saddlery and bitting for USPC Testings should comply with the Horse Management General Rule on Saddlery and Bitting and with the USPC Eventing Rules for Saddlery and Bitting. Whips, no longer than 48 inches including lash, will be allowed in the flat section of testings although they are not allowed at the C level and above at

Eventing rallies. Any discipline rule change following publication of the current Horse Management Handbook will supersede these rules.

All bits with more than one point of attachment (i.e. gag, Pessoa, elevators) must have one rein attached so that the snaffle action of the bit is in effect. If other bit actions are to be used, two reins will be required. All pelham bits will require two reins. If the Pessoa type bit is used, a single rein may be attached to the first or second ring. If a third or lower ring is used, a second rein must be attached higher so that the snaffle action can be in effect.

General

- Candidates may apply for the B and the H-A in the same year as long as both applications are mailed by the April 15th deadline.
- Candidates may apply for the H and the B in the same year as long as both applications are mailed by the April 15th deadline.

Test dates are established by the National Testing Committee in response to anticipated demand. B candidates are usually tested in their own region or in an adjacent region by arrangement with the Regional Supervisor. Applications for a test, which include a self-evaluation, medical release, code of conduct and club check for the test fee, must be made through the DC to the RS and forwarded to the USPC National Office, postmarked no later than April 15th.

The B test shall be conducted over a period of 2 days. An evening session may be held, during which some of the oral questioning will be covered. The Regional Supervisor or test organizer will notify each candidate of the schedule and location of the testing.

The testing shall be a constructive working session. The candidate shall be required to demonstrate and maintain adequate ability in performance and knowledge for the level tested.

Candidates should discuss with the Examiner any problems with the mount being used, should ask questions, and request permission to repeat any performance if so desired.

The attitude and maturity of the candidate shall be considered throughout the testing. Respect for other people and handling of the mounts shall be considered a direct reflection of the candidate's maturity level.

Candidates should be prepared in all phases through study, outside reading, and practical experience, and be ready to communicate their knowledge to the Examiners. However, it is at the discretion of the Examiners as to what is covered during the test.

No candidate shall be allowed to take the test "just for the experience."

To achieve the rating, candidates must pass all phases of the test.

Candidates not passing the B test may be retested after six months if recommended by the District Commissioner and Regional Supervisor, and if age restrictions are met. The entire test must be taken again. B, H, H-A and A candidates may attempt each test only three times.

Appropriate Horse

It is the responsibility of the candidate and his/her parent(s) or guardian to bring an appropriate horse to the testing. The conditioned mount(s) must be capable of completing the flat, longeing and jumping phases at the heights indicated at the appropriate levels, this would include a course at 3'7". The mount(s) must also be available for change of riders. Embracing USPC's commitment to safety for all horses and riders is of utmost importance. Failing to follow these guidelines may make it difficult for the candidate to meet the standard on that given day.

READING LIST FOR B CANDIDATES

**Note: Item numbers denoted are those found in the current USPC Catalog. For availability and pricing please contact the USPC National Office. Candidate is also responsible for knowledge of information contained in recommended sections of reading lists for all preceding levels.*

Recommended for B Candidates

No.	Title
1330	United States Pony Clubs Manual of Horsemanship, Volume I
1340	United States Pony Clubs Manual of Horsemanship, Volume II
1350	United States Pony Clubs Manual of Horsemanship, Volume III
1040	United States Pony Clubs Standards of Proficiency
2000	Horse Management Handbook & Rules for Competition
9070	USPC Guide to Longeing Video
9032	USPC Guide to the C3 Standard Video
2123	Grooming to Win
2129	Horse Gaits, Balance & Movement
2180	Safe Horse - Safe Rider
9010	Every Time - Every Ride Video
1030	USPC Guide to the D Standard
2010	USPC Guide to the Health & Maintenance Record Book
7042	Horse Owner's Veterinary Handbook
7062	Understanding Equine Medications
2215	Pony Club Safety Information Packet
7084	Veterinary Notes for Horse Owners

USPC Discipline Rule Books for:

No.	Title
5000	Eventing
6000	Dressage
3000	Games
2001	Quiz
3500	Polocrosse
5500	Show Jumping
4000	Tetrathlon

Enrichment for B Candidates

No.	Title
7041	Horse Foot Care by Butler
2124	Determining the Age of the Horse
2126	Handbook of Riding Essentials
2160	Feeding and Care of the Horse, 2nd Edition
2162	Thinking Riding Volume I
2163	Thinking Riding Volume II
7010	Coloring Atlas of Horse Anatomy
2141	Maximum Hoof Power
7043	Practical Guide to Lameness in Horses
5530	School Exercises for Flatwork & Jumping
2199	Horsefeathers: Facts Versus Myths About Your Horse's Health
7083	The Equine Body
2256	Horse Owners Field Guide to Toxic Plants
2257	No Foot, No Horse
6073	Progressive School Exercises
8121	Teaching the Child Rider
2038	Conformation and Performance

Local Resources: Veterinarian, farrier, feed stores, local professionals and Cooperative Extension

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The United States Pony Clubs, Inc.

4041 Iron Works Parkway • Lexington, KY 40511

Phone (859) 254-7669 • Fax (859) 233-4652 • email uspc@ponyclub.org • website www.ponyclub.org