

What is CTR (Competitive Trail Riding)?

- CTR is a scored event based on riding to an optimum time and your mount having the lowest possible heart rates.
- Riders are given time to complete a marked course, and penalty points are given for arriving at the finish early or later than the optimum time (double faults for being under time). The horse's heart rate is taken upon crossing the finish line and (up to) 30 minutes later. These heart rates are added to any time faults from finishing early or late to produce a final score. Lowest score wins.
- If the class starts at 1pm say, then you can vet your horse from 12.00pm, then the first ones head off from 1pm, in pairs, singles or threes, generally 5 mins apart.
- You follow a marked trail (you'll be told what colour tags to follow and also what your optimum time is), mostly on a vehicle or 4WD track, over farmland, forest, etc. There may be some gates, which are to be left as found.
- The main rules are that you can't "waste time", ie zig zag or weave or stand around passing time. So you follow the marked track, mostly at a trot. You can let your horse drink at any of the water on the trails. You cannot use a GPS (or other navigational device – including apps on your mobile phone) to assist you find your way, you can only follow the markers that are in front of you and “guess” as to how far you have completed in distance. You can practice at home first though – try riding a set distance and see how long it takes you and how fast your horse travels at each gait (ie trot is usually around 12-14kph). You cannot ride with onboard heart rate monitors or carry a stethoscope.



- Elimination will be for the following:
 - a) Lameness.
 - b) Missing a checkpoint or being late for a vetting phase.
 - c) Pulse rate does not meet the criteria as stated in rule. 2.4.4.
 - d) Physical or verbal abuse of horse or person.
 - e) Being more than 30 minutes under the set optimum time.
 - f) At the presiding vet's discretion.
 - g) Contravention of competition rules.
 - h) Time wasting.
 - i) Circling and zig zagging

- The vet ring is located quite close to the start/finish line, normally between some cones and signed. You present your horse to our vets to make sure they are fit to start. Ideally the heart rate pre-ride should be no more than 64 bpm (paddock resting heart rate can be as low as 26 in some horses, around 36-42 in most though). Then you will trot your horse out, in a straight line, for 40m (around a cone) and back, giving them a nice loose lead. Providing they are not lame (or any other obvious fault), they will be fine to start. Again, it's a good idea to practice trotting them out at home so they are used to this as it can be something different for them. Lead them beside the shoulder so you don't have to "drag" them along.
 - This process is repeated again at the final vet inspection (30 mins after finishing) to make sure the horse finished in good shape. Again, the final heart rate needs to be 64 or less to qualify.
 - When you cross the finish line at the end, our officials take the heart rate and the time keepers will give you a sticker or time slip which tells you what time you have to have your final vetting by (not more than 30 mins after crossing the finish line). So, in that 30 mins you have time to go back to your float, untack, cool your horse and offer water.

Please note: You need to be mounted to cross the start and finish line, but can dismount your horse to have the heart rate taken over the line when finished.

Also: if there is a bottleneck of people getting heart rates taken when you cross the finish line, you must remain mounted and continue to walk your horses until a vet becomes available.



- Horses need to be presented in halter and rope only (stallions a bridle), no boots or rugs but you can leave a rug on right up until the final inspection if it is cold. The main thing here is to keep the horse calm and cool, trying to get the heart rate as low as possible (some horses will come right back to a resting rate in this time). You can't be late for this final vet inspection but you don't want to hurry your horse either so give yourself a few minutes to walk quietly over to the vet ring.
- Novice classes are expected to ride at a speed of 8-10kms per hour to achieve optimum time (depending on the terrain and conditions on the day). Time faults in all grades are given as one fault

per minute (or part thereof) over time and two faults per minute (or part thereof) under time. You cannot be more than 30 minutes under time.

- CTR is favoured by riders who have limited time to train horses and are not able to maintain the levels of fitness required in the higher classes of Endurance. Many CTR riders do compete in both sports, and the same goes for Endurance riders who also enjoy the extra challenge of riding to an optimum time.
- Horses need to be a minimum of 4 years of age.



- No whips or spurs. No Market Harboroughs. Martingales (standing or running) may be worn and it's common to see breastplates as many rides are run over hills.
- Otherwise you are free to use whatever gear you wish – bitless, treeless, barefoot, there have been one or two known to turn up without a saddle. Just make sure your tack is comfortable to both you and your horse as you will be spending up to a couple of hours at once in the saddle so a good fit is vital.
- Helmets (ESNZ approved) and heeled boots (or caged stirrups) must be worn. Many endurance and CTR riders favour tights for riding in and dark colours are preferable – but you can absolutely wear your light coloured jodhpurs or whatever is most comfortable. You'll need a collared shirt – long or short sleeved is fine. Gumboots are not ok as they are a bit too loose for long distances and not great for getting off and running your horse out.

Keen to find out more about this discipline:

<https://www.nzequestrian.org.nz/disciplines/endurance-ctr/>