



THE ULTIMATE HORSE COURSE AND EXTREME BACKCOUNTRY TRAIL COURSE

9700 Clarkston Rd. Three Forks, MT 59752 | 406 285-3541 | www.montanahorses.com

Course Mission:

The Ultimate Horse Course is a permanent trail obstacle course located at the Mantle Ranch (home of Montana Horses) and open every summer, Fridays, Saturday, and Sunday according to our event calendar located on the home page of www.MontanaHorses.com. It was designed as a training tool to expose horses to a wide variety of different trail elements – natural and manmade, to help riders improve their trail horsemanship, and to facilitate communication between horse and rider in a challenging environment that simulates many of the natural challenges you will find in the mountains and out on the trail. Throughout the year, in a non-judged, non-timed environment, riders are encouraged to utilize the Course to work on horsemanship, train, and positively improve communication and confidence with their horse. We also encourage people to utilize the Course to showcase sale horses, to train young horses, expose horses to new environments, to conduct training sessions with friends or clients, and to hold club or group outings.

COMPETITIONS may be held from time to time and are an opportunity to showcase your trail horsemanship and your horse's abilities and to earn money. They should be considered suitable for riders and horses that are well trained and comfortable under pressure. Please note: Our Competitions are not intended for beginners. Safety is our #1 consideration. If you are unsure of your competency level, or that of your horse, avoid the competitions and spend some relaxed training time on the Course another day.

BASIC COURSE INFORMATION:

COURSE USE FEE: \$50 per rider (no limit on horses per rider)

The Course is located 14 miles from the services of Three Forks. Be sure to arrive with plenty of fuel, food, and feed. There is no cell reception at the ranch, but the ranch telephone can be used 406 285-3541.

You might want: 1.) Fly/mosquito spray for you and your horse. 2.) Feed and water buckets if you plan to stay awhile. 3.) Raincoat or jacket. 4) Lunch, water, snacks, drinks, etc. 5. Lawn chairs. (There is no food at the ranch, but we're a 10 mile drive to the best steak in Logan and great restaurants in Three Forks.)

There is running water on the Course, and hydrants, hoses, and a wash rack at the corrals. Pens and hitch rails are available, as well as cabins or camping. There is an outhouse at the Course entrance. We have two RV hookups (elec & sewer) with pen for \$40 ea per night. Primitive camping is available at no charge or in your trailers. Pens are \$15 per night—you provide feed and buckets, muck in the morning. Tent cabins are available for \$45 per night with a pen. Cabins are available for \$125 per night and include a pen.

The Course is designed as a backcountry Western trail riding challenge course. Expect to encounter downtimber, branches, trees, brambles, deep water, mud, weather (sun, heat, wind, rain), steep cliffs, slick rock, and possibly rattlesnakes, bees, and poisonous plants. Appropriate clothing and tack should include a long sleeved shirt, heeled boots, hat to keep the sun off your face and branches out of your hair, and a saddle with a horn (if you plan to utilize the dragging portion, a rope is provided). We recommend riding with a halter/lead on, or have the ability to tie your horse away from your trailer. We always recommend horseshoes. We do not recommend using boots because of the thick mud. We encourage riders to wear protective equipment, like helmets and vests.

An Observation Loop runs through the center of the Course. Spectators may walk the Loop and observe most of the Course while remaining outside of the Course progression. Participants may walk the Course prior to riding it.

The Ultimate Horse Course runs concurrent to the **BIG SKY HOUNDS CROSS COUNTRY JUMP COURSE** and some obstacles are used jointly. **PLEASE WATCH FOR TRAFFIC AND YIELD TO CROSS COUNTRY JUMPERS.**

Dogs are not allowed with you on the Courses. Well behaved dogs are welcome off the Course, if they are contained at your trailer or with you at all times off the Course.. **You, your horses, and your dogs WILL come into contact with others. You assume and understand the risks of these encounters. (This could include contagious diseases, unspayed/neutered dogs, and misbehaving animals or people.)**

COURSE RULES -

1. **Ride at your own risk. You must sign a risk acknowledgement form prior to riding.**
2. **Always yield to Cross Country Jumpers.**
3. **Direction of movement should be forward through the number sequence.**
(OK to skip obstacles, but do not move backward.)
4. **Re-set all obstacles you disturb.**
5. **No dogs on the Courses.**
6. **Allow riders to "play through," if you are stopped at an obstacle, yield to others moving along faster than you.**
7. **No motorized vehicles on the Horse Courses, except ranch staff.**
8. **Enter and exit the Course through the designated gate only.**
9. **Please muck your trailer area. (There is a manure spreader near the parking area.)**
10. **Please notify ranch staff of any damaged or unsafe obstacles immediately. Suggestions for improvement are always welcome.**
11. **One horse per rider on the Course, please tie extra horses at your trailer or put in a pen.**



THE ULTIMATE HORSE COURSE AND EXTREME BACKCOUNTRY TRAIL COURSE

COURSE CHALLENGES:

- #1—GATE:** Walk to, open, and close the gate from your horse.
- #2—CAVALETTI:** WALK over first set, TROT over second set, LOPE over third. (This is shared with XC Course)
- #3—BRIDGE:** Walk over bridge over water.
- #4—MAILBOX:** Open mailbox from your horse and take out a plastic garbage bag. Throughout the Course, identify a noxious weed, pull it, and place it in the bag which you will carry to #24.
- #5—RAILROAD TRACKS:** Walk down the railroad tracks
- #6—TARP:** Maneuver your horse to cross over the tarp.
- #7—JUMP DOWN:** Jump down into the water crossing, turn left. (This is shared with the XC COURSE)
- #8—JUMP UP EMBANKMENTS:** Jump up the two levels. (Shared with XC COURSE)
- #9—BARREL BENDING AND FLAG SWAP:** Take flag from first barrel, bend through the barrels, swap flags with the last barrel, bend back through the barrels and place the flag in the bucket.
- #10—HALF BARREL JUMP:** Jump your horse over the depressed tarp and half barrel
- #11—LOG DRAG:** Walk to post with log, dally, drag the log around the two blue barrels and return the log and rope to its place.
- #12—BARREL PATTERN:** Lope your horse in the cloverleaf barrel pattern, using the correct leads.
- #13—JUMP:** Jump over the red and white pole at the jump.
- #14—AGILITY:** Side pass your horse over the front set of logs to the left, back to the next set, side pass over the back set of logs to the right, spin your horse on his hind quarters only in a complete circle, then back through the pattern. Exit to the north, watch for XC traffic. Follow the orange rocks.
- #15—DOWNTIMBER:** Walk through the down timber.
- #16—RAINCOAT:** Put the raincoat on while mounted, ride with it on to #17.
- #17—HITCH AND MOUNT:** Get off your horse, ground tie, or tie to the hitch rail, return the raincoat. Walk back to your horse, using the mounting block, mount from the off side.
- #18—CARWASH:** Maneuver your horse through the hanging tarp. Exit forward and watch for direction signs to #19
- #19—LOG PILE JUMP:** Walk your horse over the logs.
- #20—SLICK ROCK:** Walk down the side walk, turn sharply to the left, then walk up the stairs. Follow the orange rocks.
- #21—DEEP WATER CROSSING:** Walk through the water crossing.
- #22—BAG DRAG:** While mounted, hold the rope with the bag of cans and walk forward to the next obstacles, then back up, dragging the bag in front of your horse on the ground. Replace rope.
- #23—ROPE:** Rope the dummy, heel or head. Replace the rope.
- #24—GARBAGE—**Dispose of the bag of noxious weeds.
- #25—EXTREME BACKCOUNTRY TRAIL—**This is a 2.5 mile loops where you will encounter very rough and steep country – including rimrock, steep cliffs, shale, drastic inclines and declines, and it is all natural.

FOR THE PUPOSE OF COMPETITION, PLEASE USE THE FOLLOWING FOR REFERENCE

Scoring/Judging:

There are 24 judged challenges on the UHC and an Extreme Backcountry Trail Course portion. All challenges can be passed by (avoided). Each challenge has a possible score of 10. 5 points are possible for the rider and 5 for the horse. A perfect score is 300. The Extreme Backcountry Trail portion is worth 60 points (30/30) and may utilize a judge's assistant.

5 EXCELLENT: The horse/pony/mule and rider approach and negotiate the obstacle in correct form with definite style. The horse performs in an efficient manner with curiosity and athleticism. The rider is confident and able and displays familiarity and ease with the obstacle. The horse's/rider's performance over the obstacle is visually impressive.

4 GOOD: The horse/rider approaches and negotiates the obstacle in correct form with noticeable style. They definitely display many qualities of a good trail horse and rider and their performance over the obstacle is visually attractive. This horse/rider may display some qualities of the ideal trail horse/rider, but may lack those qualities to the degree they are exhibited by the Excellent performer.

3 AVERAGE: For the most part, the horse and rider approach and negotiate the obstacle in correct form. Minimal style is exhibited. If the horse's/rider's performance displays any qualities of the ideal trail horse, they are negated by errors in form. The horse's/rider's performance leaves a visually neutral impression.

2 POOR: The horse/rider fails in some way to approach and/or negotiate the obstacle in correct form. There is a noticeable void in some of the qualities of the ideal trail horse/rider. Control may have been compromised but safety was maintained. The horse exhibits noticeable resistance to the rider or the rider exhibits noticeable inability to communicate with the horse.

1 VERY POOR: The horse/rider approach and /or negotiate the obstacle in unacceptable form, but avoids elimination. There is a definite deficiency in the qualities of the ideal trail horse/rider. Safety may have been compromised. This horse's or rider's performance is reckless, careless, and/or dangerous. The horse exhibits significant resistance towards the competitor's commands. The rider exhibits significant inability to convey commands to the horse.

0 REFUSAL: The judge instructs the rider to proceed to next obstacle after 3 refusals to negotiate the obstacle or after the judge determines it is unsafe to continue attempting the obstacle.