

# Jackpacking

History may have been written on the back of a horse, however, it was built on the backs of burros. Burros (donkeys) are historically pack animals and the sport/class of Jackpacking pays homage to their history in the American west.

Jackpacking focuses on the skills of the burro and handler. Burros compete in-hand on a trail course (the course may be in an arena or natural) to showcase the burro's skills as a pack animal and the handler's competency in tacking and handling. The goal is to demonstrate useful skills needed by a burro and handler when packing out on the trails. This includes, but is not limited to: stepping over obstacles, backing, pivoting/turning around, loading and carrying items in panniers.

1. Class is to be judged on both burro and handler.
  - 1.1. Burros will be scored on execution, responsiveness, willingness, and general attitude (in that order).
  - 1.2. Handlers will be scored on the tack and turn-out of their animals (this will take place prior to starting on the course) and evaluated on the way the handler and burro interact.
    - 1.2.1. Tack and turn-out is scored on the fit, adjustment, and maintenance of your tack and grooming and condition of your animal. Excessively soiled or poorly maintained tack, such as dry, cracked leather, will result in a loss of points. Burros need not be shaved or clipped, they may be shown in full coat, however, a burro's coat should be in good condition, reflecting overall good health and husbandry, and free of dirt and debris. Similarly, hooves should be picked, clear of excessive mud or debris, and demonstrating good husbandry, routine trimming, and functional maintenance.
    - 1.2.2. The judge may ask the handler questions about their tack and set up to understand choices in fit or style.
  - 1.3. Time will be recorded but only be a factor in a tie-breaker, in which the fastest completion wins. For example, if there is more than one clean round in a class, the time on course will determine the winner.
2. **Handler Classes/Levels**
  - 2.1. Handler Classes are to consist of open (advanced), amateur (novice), and youth when possible. If classes must be combined, amateur and youth will be combined and follow all youth requirements for obstacles.
  - 2.2. **Open (advanced)** is open to any one over the age of 14 on the day of the event, but is mandatory for a handler who has placed first in four (4) or more jackpacking classes and/or has received compensation for training or guiding/leading packing/hunting trips in the past 24 months.
  - 2.3. **Amateur (novice)** is defined as a handler that has not won first place on more than three (3) occasions in any Jackpacking class.
  - 2.4. **Youth** is defined as any person under the age of 14 on the day of the event.

3. Burros may be no less than four (4) years of age the day of the event.

#### 4. Tack

4.1. Burros are required to wear a pack saddle (of appropriate size). Pack saddles which are not appropriately sized will result in a loss of points in the tack and turn out scoring of the handler. Pack saddles may be of any functional style (sawbuck, decker, or other) so long as they meet the following requirements:

4.1.1. Have a hard/rigid tree. Trees may be of wood, plastic, composite, etc. No tree-less or "soft trees" are permitted. The tree needs to be designed in such a way as to offer vertebrae relief from weight.

4.1.2. Have a cinch or girth. Single, center-fire, or double cinches or girths are all permissible.

4.1.3. Have a breast collar of any style

4.1.4. Have britchin'/breeching

4.1.5. Outfitted with panniers, bags, or baskets. Panniers, bags, or baskets must be suitably sized to the burro. Excessively large panniers may, per the judge's discretion, result in a loss of points.

4.1.6. Shall not have stirrups or a seat for riding.

4.2. Burros must be outfitted with a strap- or rope-style halter. The halter may be leather or synthetic, but must be maintained in good, functional condition.

4.3. A single lead rope connected to the halter tie ring, or tie loop in the case of a rope halter, shall be used. Ropes are not to exceed fifteen (15) feet in length, as measured from end of the rope to tip of the snap.

4.4. Jack chains may be used with a pressure-release technique and will count in the fifteen (15) feet of lead length. The chain cannot be placed in the burro's mouth or over the burro's nose. Violation of this rule will cause disqualification for the class. A judge may disqualify a handler and burro from the class or prohibit the use of a jack chain if it is being misused. Any injury caused as a result of the jack chain will result in disqualification.

4.5. Tack malfunctions, such as (but not limited to) a halter breaking, pack saddle sliding sideways or under the animal, or straps breaking shall result in a disqualification and the handler and burro will be excused from the course.

5. Maximum time is 90 seconds or two (2) attempts per obstacle; over 90 seconds to attempt an obstacle or three (3) attempts shall count as a refusal and shall incur a penalty. Three (3) refusals will result in the handler and burro being excused from the class and a disqualification. A handler and burro may move onto the next obstacle after 90 seconds of attempting and obstacle have passed or after two attempts without penalty but will receive a "did not complete" score of 0 for the obstacle.

5.1. Further clarification via example: The course has an "over" obstacle of crossing over a wooden plank bridge. A handler and burro approach the bridge but the burro stops and does not step on the bridge as asked. This shall count as one attempt. The handler may "reset" their burro and attempt again, which will count as their second attempt. If the burro does not complete the bridge in this second attempt the handler may "reset" their burro a third, and final, attempt. If the burro completes the obstacle in this third, and

final, attempt no penalty shall occur and the handler and burro will receive a score for the obstacle. If the burro does not complete the obstacle this shall count as 3 attempts and count as a refusal, which shall incur a penalty.

6. Positive reinforcement is allowed; treats or food rewards may be used on-course, however, they should not be used to bait the animal (as a willing pack burro will perform tasks without baiting). Baiting is described as: a treat in the hand prior to the task being completed and/or used as a lure to encourage task completion. Baiting shall result in a penalty.
7. Off course will result in elimination. Off course is defined as:
  - 7.1. Taking an obstacle in the wrong direction (for example if approaching a gate the red flag needs to be on the right but the handler and burro approach the gate with the red flag on the left they are off course)
  - 7.2. Skipping an obstacle unless directed by the judge or the 90 second maximum time limit to try the obstacle has passed
  - 7.3. Negotiating obstacles in the wrong sequence
  - 7.4. Off pattern
8. The following will result in a handler being excused from the course and disqualified:
  - 8.1. The handler carrying a whip, crop, or any other apparatus mentioned in section 9.
  - 8.2. Handler physically moving or coercing the burro by touching the burro's body or tack beyond the lead rope.
  - 8.3. Refusals of three (3) obstacles.
  - 8.4. Attendants interfering with the performance of the handler or burro.
  - 8.5. Disrespectful language and/or attitude towards the judge, ring steward, course designer, or any other show official.
9. Any handler mistreating their animal will be disqualified. No needles, electric prods, narcotics, clubs, or whips may be used. Handlers may use only vocal/audible cues, halter/lead rope pressure/guidance, and/or physical movement to cue their burro. Additional apparatuses including, but not limited to flags, bags, noise makers, sorting sticks, rattle paddles, rattle cans, etc. are not permitted. Using fear-based techniques as a primary method of gaining movement is not permitted.
10. Donkeys must be under control at all times. Any animal that is out of control or presents a danger to themselves, the handler, the judge, other participants, or spectators will be dismissed at the judge's discretion.
11. **Handler Attire** - while the dress code for Jackpacking is more casual compared to other disciplines, the goal is still to look as neat, tidy, and workmanlike as possible.
  - 11.1. Shirt - long-sleeved, tailored button-down cotton blouse or western wear shirt (free of "bling" such as rhinestones, text, and logos). In cold weather a plain vest may be worn (free of bling, text, and logos). If the weather is hot then the show steward and judge may allow for long sleeves to be rolled up, exchanged for short-sleeve, trailed button-down shirts, and/or polo shirts.
  - 11.2. Pants - sturdy, full length pants free of stains, rip, or tears.
  - 11.3. Shoes - western boots, hiking boots, or hiking shoes (not sneakers, tennis shoes, flats, etc. Shoes must be western or sturdy, close toed, meant for hiking trails).
  - 11.4. Hat - a hat is optional, handlers may show without a hat. If showing with a hat then only a helmet, felt hat, or straw hat are allowed. Hats need to be free of stains and dirt.

## 12. Scoring System

- 12.1. Scores shall be based on a 0 - 3 point system: 3 points - Excellent, 2 points - Good, 1 point - Poor, 0 points - Did not complete
- 12.2. Penalties shall be based on a deduction system up to 3 points per obstacle or infraction.
- 12.3. Tack shall be scored on a 0 - 3 point system: 3 points - Excellent, 2 points - Good, 1 point - Poor, 0 points - Not functional/extremely poor fit or failure to meet requirements
- 12.4. Turn Out shall be scored on a 0 - 3 point system: 3 points - Excellent, 2 points - Good, 1 point - Poor, 0 points - Soiled animal and/or animal in poor condition

## 13. Course requirements

- 13.1. Must be a minimum of five (5) obstacles and a maximum of ten (10).
- 13.2. Ingenuity and originality in adapting and combining various obstacles both to demonstrate a burro's willingness and ability to please handlers and audience are encouraged, however, care must be used to avoid placing an obstacle in any way that is reasonably and foreseeably hazardous to the burro or handler, a "horror obstacle" as defined in 15.1, or in any way unsafe for handlers and/or burros. The goal is to demonstrate the training and ability of the burro and their handlers, and the manner in which they work together as a team. Obstacles, therefore, must not be designed to "trick", "trap", or "spook" the burro.
- 13.3. A walk through of the course with the course designer and judge must occur prior to the start of the class. Burros are not allowed to be on course for the walk through. Handlers should be allowed to ask clarifying questions either at each obstacle or at the conclusion of the walk through.
- 13.4. At least three (3) different categories of obstacles must be used.
- 13.5. Care must be taken to accommodate different size burros. When designing courses the designer must ensure that the course can accommodate all 3 size categories of burros (miniature, standard, mammoth) appropriately, or the obstacle can be modified for each size. A judge may modify the course or obstacle at their discretion to ensure size-appropriateness and fairness. Handler classes can be divided if there is a need to create miniature, standard, and mammoth classes under Open, Amateur, and Youth (for example: open miniature, open standard, open mammoth, etc).

## 14. Obstacle Categories

The following obstacle categories are not all-inclusive. Other obstacles may be created/used but must fit into one of the categories below as to satisfy 13.4. Categories may be combined to create obstacles and courses, such as walking a figure 8 over ground poles, or backing between two elevated poles.

- 14.1. **Patterns** - Walking or trotting through a specified pattern (serpentine, figure 8, cloverleaf, or other pattern)
- 14.2. **Overs** - crossing over an object, such as a bridge (can have an incline and decline, step up and/or down, or be flat), tarp (edges must be secured), water (not to be used in amateur or youth), carpet, mats, or planks. Cross over/stepping over planks, ground poles (no height/flat on ground), or elevated poles (no higher than 6" in height for crossing over).

- 14.3. **Jumps** - Jumps are not to exceed 12" in height for miniatures, 16" in height for standards, or 20" in height for mammoths, and the obstacle width may not exceed 150% of the height and must be a minimum of 5 feet in length (but no more than 10 feet).
- 14.4. **Under** - crossing under an obstacle that is over or on both sides of the animal, such as tunnels or curtains.

14.5. **Control Obstacles**

- 14.5.1. Backing - backing the burro in a straight line, through a pattern, around/past an obstacle, or backing onto, off of, or through an over or under obstacle. Only backing in a straight line or through a pattern shall be used for youth. Amateur may use backing in a straight line, through a pattern, around/past an obstacle, or with ground poles.
- 14.5.2. Turn on the forehand/turn on the haunches (pivoting) - Burro to turn around the forehand or the haunches.
- 14.5.3. Turn in a box - Burro to turn while remaining inside a box (or circle) defined by poles, cones, or markers. This can be a forehand turn, a haunches turn, or (if not specified) a combination of both.
- 14.5.4. Sidepass (to the left or right)
- 14.5.5. Ground tie - Stand burro at a designated location while the handler moves around or away from and back to their burro.

14.6. **Working**

- 14.6.1. Open, walk through, and close gate
- 14.6.2. Put on/take off overcoat/slicker/blanket
- 14.6.3. Pick up and/or carry an object such as a letter, bucket, flag, etc. This object is to be held by the handler and not placed in the panniers or on the pack.
- 14.6.4. Open and close mailbox
- 14.6.5. Pick up and carry an object in panniers (or on pack saddle) such as letter, jacket, animal hide\*, sticks, pillows, bean bag, etc. Care should be taken in regards to an object's weight - no object will weigh more than 5 lbs individually and, regardless of burro size, a burro may not carry more than 10 lbs.
- 14.6.5.1. \*Animal hides: real or faux hides may be used. Faux hides may be used in all 3 handler class levels. Youth and Amateur can only have slick or hair-on tanned hides. Open may include salted, dried hides.
- 14.6.6. Animal decoys/targets/taxidermy - Burros may walk past, around, or carry these items so long as they meet the weight requirements of 14.6.5 and animal hides in 14.6.5.1. Most taxidermy is hair-on tanned hide.
- 14.6.7. Shooting a "firearm" (only Nerf Guns, Nerf bows, water guns/cannons, rubber band guns, noise simulation toy guns, non-firing prop guns, and/or cap-guns are permitted. Amateur and Youth shall only have Nerf guns, Nerf bows, water guns/cannons, rubber band guns, noise simulation toy guns, and non-firing prop guns. Cap Guns may be used in the Open class) - for example: a handler may be required to attach a holster or scabbard, remove and fire said toy gun, and re-holster it. Points will be deducted for incorrect handling of the 'firearm', such

as pointing the barrel toward your burro, yourself, or the judge. Real fire-arms (live round, blanks, or "air soft" such as pellets or BBs) and paintball guns are NOT permitted. Carrying real fire-arms will result in immediate removal from the course and disqualification.

- 14.6.8. Bicycles - manually operated (no gas powered; ebikes are allowed if able to move using pedals only). The handler classes will have staggered levels of bicycles.
  - 14.6.8.1. Youth shall only be a stationary bike, a person sitting on or standing with the bike is allowed.
  - 14.6.8.2. Amateur shall be allowed to have a person walking the bicycle (not riding).
  - 14.6.8.3. Open shall be allowed to have a person riding the bicycle so long as there is at least three (3) feet of space between the bicycle and handler/burro.
15. Equipment used as obstacles must be safe and free from rough or sharp edges, splinters, hardware, nails, screws, etc which could cause injury. Footing surfaces must not be slippery. All equipment and obstacles must be safe for the handlers as well as the burros. The following equipment is prohibited and shall not be used:
  - 15.1. "Horror Obstacles" - those that are intentionally frightening.
  - 15.2. Obstacles that, by design, do not present the same to each handler and burro (for example: adding balloons to a board without removing balloons after each round - the first handler and burro would have no other balloons on approach, while the second would have one, the third would have two, and so on and so forth. The obstacle in this case is no longer the same for the subsequent handlers and burros).
  - 15.3. Obstacles that require spraying the burro with any substance other than a spray bottle of water to mimic fly-spray.
  - 15.4. Use of feed (such as straw, hay, grain, etc) as part of an obstacle (for example: a bucket of carrots at a ground-tie), especially with the intent of ingestion or sharing amongst competing burros. This does not include course decorations which are not part of any obstacle, such as potted plants or hay bales. Course decorations must be placed so that they do not inadvertently become part of an obstacle/ingested (for example: hay bales being used as a backdrop shall be placed far enough away from a ground tie area so that they do not become a distraction, alter the obstacles as prohibited in as defined in 15.2, or allow for ingestion by a burro).
  - 15.5. Elevated poles that roll (such as PVC poles elevated on flat blocks, board, or similar).
  - 15.6. Trailers in any capacity, including (but not limited to) loading into out, unloading out of, or tying to.
  - 15.7. Use of objects for tying that are not firmly anchored in the ground (for example: tying to a traffic barricade; a resulting spook will cause the obstacle to drag behind the burro).
  - 15.8. Mattresses in any capacity.
  - 15.9. Tires as a step-through object (requiring the burro to step through the center and/or at any point have any hoof in the center. This does not include tires filled, so as to become solid, with a material such as tightly packed sand or footing, used as a step-up/pedestal or tires half-buried as a pass-through).
  - 15.10. Vehicles, including but not limited to cars, truck, quads, side by sides, UTVs, ATVs, golf carts, motorcycles, and dirtbikes shall not have their engines on/running, be moving, or

used as an object for tying (a stationary vehicle in park, engine turned off/not running - including lights, with keys removed from the ignition may be used as a prop or walk-by obstacle only).

