

**Traditional Track Standard's Riding and HM Test Expectations
Transcribed from the USPC Standards of Proficiency, 2012**

D1:

- Candidates should ride in an enclosed area without lead line, demonstrating basic balanced position at the halt and walk, and control at the walk and trot.
- The candidate is a beginning -level horse manager, willing to learn the simple routine necessary for safe handling of quiet, well trained horses. His or her knowledge will vary widely depending on age, education level, and experience.

D2:

- Candidates should ride in an enclosed area without lead line, demonstrating control while maintaining a safe basic balanced position at the walk and trot, and should begin to develop the canter and jumping position. No need to canter over fences.
- The candidates should be able to demonstrate simple skills, with assistance if necessary, and should understand the basic reasons for the everyday routine of caring for his her her own mount.

D3:

- Candidate should ride in a basic balanced position with control at the walk, trot, and canter. Candidates should maintain a secure base of support while developing balance and a steady position over fences.
- The candidates should be able to demonstrate simple skills without assistances, and then discuss care of the mount using common horse terms.

C1:

- Candidates should ride with confidence and control on the flat and over fences, demonstrating a basic balanced position and the use of natural aids. The candidate should begin riding mount freely forward in balance and rhythm while developing a light contact.
- The candidates should show a developing awareness of cause and effect in the care of own mount. He/she should be familiar with the local common horse terms. Assistance is recommended in the demonstration of bandaging.

C2:

- Candidates should ride with confidence and control on the flat and over fences, demonstrating a secure balanced position and progress toward and independent seat and coordinated use of aids. The Candidate should begin to initiate free forward movement, establishing balance and rhythm while developing a light contact.
- The Candidates should show a solid awareness of cause and effect in horse management skills. Assistance/ supervision is allowed in the demonstration of bandaging, longeing and loading mount.

C3

- The candidate should maintain a basic balanced position with a secure base of support. Rider should demonstrate the development of an independent seat and coordinated use of aids on the flat, over fences, and in the open. The candidate should initiate and maintain free forward movement with smooth transitions and a steady, light feel of the mount's mouth. The candidate should discuss and evaluate the aids used. The candidates should show confidence and control at all gaits on the flat, over fences, and in the open. Candidates should be familiar with the training pyramid.

Instruction Program Definition of USPC Riding Test Expectation Terms

Basic Balanced Position

This is the universal basis of specialized riding. It is the foundation used to develop balance for any rider pursuing any equestrian discipline and is the foundation for the development of an independent seat and coordinated use of the aids.

On the flat, this is a position, when viewed from the side, which permits a vertical line to be drawn from the top of the rider's head, through the ear, point of shoulder, hip joint, and ankle. As stirrups are shortened for work over fences, the upper body inclines forward with a flat back to bring the shoulder towards the knees while the ankle remains flexed downward and under the hip. In jumping position a line may also be drawn from the rider's knee to the rider's toe.

Base of Support

When riding on the flat a rider's base of support is the seat and inner thigh (the weight-bearing surfaces) supplemented by the inner calf and the foot when posting. Galloping and over fences, the base of support is predominantly the inner calf supplemented by the sinking down into the heels with relaxed joints offering a grounding effect for the rider and the horse. The width of this base is dependent on the length of stirrup. Long stirrups have a very narrow base of support, concentrating weight in a small area requiring an independent seat and excellent balance and tactful aids. Only more experienced, well balanced riders should ride with long stirrups. A shorter stirrup offers a wider base of support, improving stability of the upper body and is more appropriate for jumping and novice riders.

Independent Seat

Progress towards and development of an independent seat can be demonstrated when the rider has developed sufficient core strength capable of maintaining a balanced position and his/ her joints are relaxed and flexible allowing the rider's body to flow with the movement of the horse. This position remains unchanged when applying separate actions of the aids. Tension and bracing in any joint of the rider's body prohibits development of an independent seat.

Coordinated Use of the Aids

Use of seat, legs, and hands independently and/or in coordination with each other and coordinated with the movements of the horse. An independent seat is the basis of coordinated use of the aids.

Free Forward movement

The horse's strides are free; the horse is relaxed in his back and balanced. His movement is unencumbered by resistance caused by rider's lack of independence or uncoordinated aids. The horse moves forward purposefully and will likely track up.

Demonstrate Aids

Aids are correctly applied but may not yet be sufficiently coordinated or strong enough to produce the desired response in the horse. Demonstrating use of the aids requires an appropriate response from the horse.

