

Allegan County 4-H Horsemaster Gymkhana Division A & B Leader Guide



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Division A – Gymkhana Knowledge Answer Key

Passing the Horsemaster Level 2 Test is a prerequisite to the Division A Gymkhana Test. Refer to State 4H Rule book for specifics.

1. T/F Coming to a stop while running a pattern is okay and you may proceed without penalty. *No loss of forward motion.*
2. T/F When running the cloverleaf pattern, the contestant must always start with the right-hand barrel. *The pattern can be run either direction, the choice is up to the horse and rider.*
3. What is the proper 4H dress code for speed event competitors? *Riders must wear long pants, long sleeve shirt, SEI approved helmet, proper riding boots and a tie or pin at the neck. Shirt collars must be buttoned. If pants have belt loops a belt must be worn.*
4. Knocking over or touching an obstacle with your hand is considered a penalty by:
a. Disqualification b. **5 seconds** c. 10 seconds d. reride
5. Which of the aides listed below is illegal under 4H rules?
a. Spurs b. bat c. **over & under** d. voice encouragement
6. What approval rating must a safety helmet have for use in 4H speed events?
SEI - ASTM
7. Explain how a safety helmet should fit.
The helmet should fit so that if you shake your head the helmet doesn't shift around on your head. The chinstrap should fit snugly for proper safety value.
8. How must a contestant enter and exit the arena?
*When entering the rider must be mounted and unassisted past the gate.
When exiting, the rider must first dismount.*
9. Please explain why the following gear is protective to the rider.
*The long sleeve shirt is worn to protect the skin on the rider's arms in case of falling or scraping an obstacle.
A properly fitting safety helmet will protect the head from serious injury if the rider falls off the horse.
Shin guards protect the rider's shins when rounding a barrel or obstacle from bruising.
Riding with boots with a heel helps prevent the riders foot from slipping forward through the stirrup and to free the riders' foot from the stirrup in case of a fall.*

10. How do you test for dehydration in your horse? *With thumb and index finger, grab the skin on the horse's neck and form a tent. When you let go and the tent remains, there is a good chance that the horse is lacking fluids.*

11. What are the benefits of using one piece reins for speed events? *One piece reins allow the rider to hold the horn with one hand and the reins with the other hand. The one-piece reins will not fall loose on the ground during an event if dropped by the rider. Some one piece reins are designed for speed events including knots to help the rider with correct hand placement.*

12. How many poles are in the pole bending event for horses and what is the spacing between the poles? *There are 6 poles spaced 21 feet apart.*

13. Explain the following patterns:

Down & Back – *A single barrel placed at the end of the arena opposite the starting line. The rider runs down, turns the barrel and returns across the starting line.*

Indiana Flag – *Three barrels are set in a triangle pattern. The two side barrels have buckets on them. The starting bucket contains a flag, which the rider must pick up, go around the end barrel and place in the last bucket and cross the timer line without loss of forward motion.*

Keyhole - *This is a circle with a 5 foot opening and slight aisle way for entry made of a chalk line. The rider must ride into the circle, turn and run back across the timer line without stepping on or over the chalk line.*

Gymkhana – *The gymkhana event is made of three barrels in a straight line. The rider must do a complete circle around the first barrel, weave the second barrel, round the third barrel, weave the second barrel and circle the first barrel and cross the timer line.*

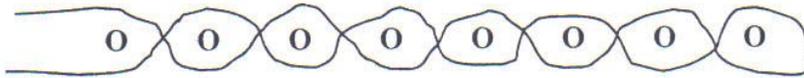
14. When is a re-ride allowed? *A reride is allowed if the timer fails and there are no backup timers.*

15. Where can you not hit your horse? *You cannot hit your horse forward of the cinch in any 4H competition.*

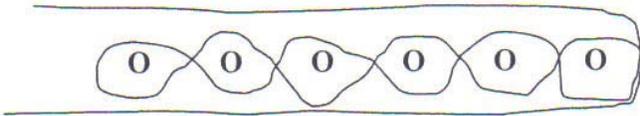
16. How often is it recommended to have your horse trimmed by the farrier and why? *As often as necessary, generally recommended every 6 to 8 weeks.*

17. Draw the proper pattern for the following events:

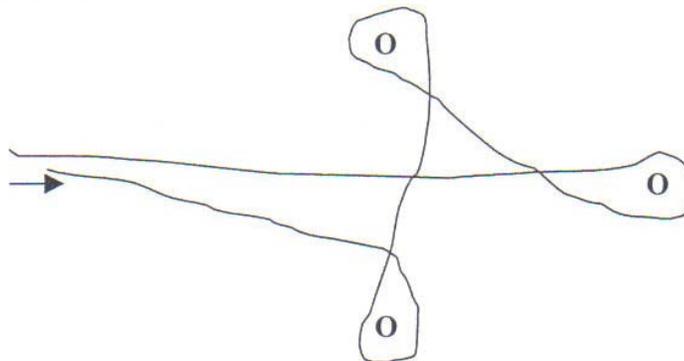
a. Kegs



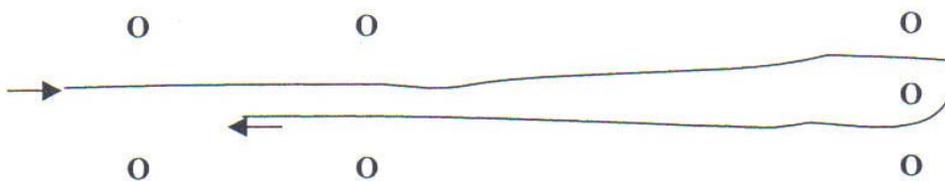
b. Pole Bending



c. Clover Leaf



d. Speed & Action



Division A Mounted Skills Test.

In addition to completing the Horsemaster Level 2 Mounted Skills test, the rider should be able to demonstrate the following.

- Yes / No** Is the rider familiar with 4H Gymkhana rules and patterns?
- Yes / No** Is the rider able to control the horse at the Walk/Trot/Canter and STOP?
- Yes / No** Does the rider strive for a balanced position?
- Yes / No** Is the rider able to trot and canter a circle(s) and stop without excessive force?

References: 4H State Rules and Guidelines, The Horse Industry Handbook, 4H Horse and Horsemanship book. Many other references by industry experts are available at your local tack store.

Division B – Gymkhana Knowledge Test Answers

Completion of Division A Gymkhana Knowledge Test is required before completing this test.

18. Please explain what the term **pocket** is and what it's used for. *The pocket is the space that you create between your horse and the barrel at the approach. You want a pocket on the approach to the barrel so you can come around the back side in a smooth, tight turn.*
19. What does the term **rate** mean and what is it used for? *Rate is regulating your speed as you approach the barrel so you can properly enter the pocket and come around the barrel under control. Rate is also referred to as getting your timing right, control and speed.*
20. Explain why the barrel saddle is built different than a pleasure saddle. Name two distinct differences. *Acceptable differences include: some barrel saddles have round skirts; less to no silver; the horn is more slender to provide a better handhold; stirrups are built different, the fenders are made to allow more range of motion than a pleasure saddle; most barrel saddles have a 5" cantle (higher is acceptable); barrel saddles are lighter weight.*
21. Explain why a tie-down is sometimes used on a gymkhana horse. *The correct usage of a tie-down on a barrel horse would be to allow the horse to balance against it. The tie-down will help the horse focus on the pattern.*
22. What kind of bit are you using on your horse and why? *The bit might be one that helps the turn and that the animal is responsive to. The bit should be well suited to the horse and riders skills. Hackmores fall into the bit category. The response should indicate that the member is aware of how their bit selection is working and why it's been chosen.*
23. Explain the protection that each type of leg gear provides the horse.

***Splint boots** protect the splint bone and provide some support to the leg.*

***Bell boots** protect the horses hooves, especially the heel bulbs from getting clipped by the back feet and the coronet band from cross over clipping.*

***Skid boots** protect the horses hind fetlocks from ground burn.*

***Sport boots** provide support for the horses legs, protect the splint bone and fetlock and can be found in combination with the bell boot or without. Sport boots provide the best support and protection for the competitive horse.*

***Shipping boots** protect the horses' legs while shipping. They also keep the horses' legs warm.*

24. It's safe to say that most arena footings differ. Give two examples of different arena footings and how you would run the pattern on that footing. *The response should indicate the members awareness of different footings such as deep sand, hard ground, muddy ground etc. The response should also indicate that the member would adjust their approach to the pattern knowing that in deep sand or the deep trench around the barrel from previous runs the horse could trip more easily, hard ground the pattern runs faster, muddy ground is more slippery.*
25. T/F A horse that is in good physical condition will become winded more quickly than a horse that is out of condition. *Conditioning will help build the horse stamina, he may get sweaty but his breathing should recover normally.*
26. What is the average temperature of a healthy adult horse at rest? *99-101.5 F*
27. What is the average resting pulse rate of an adult horse? *30-40BPM*
(beats per minute)
28. What is the average resting respiration rate of an adult horse? *8-20 BRpM*
(breaths per minute)
29. How do you listen for gut sounds? *Listen for rumbling in the barrel to flank area.*
30. T/F A horse's greatest loss of minerals is electrolytes. *You should be giving your horse electrolytes as part of the conditioning plan.*
31. Why do you need to know your horse vital signs? *You need to know what is normal for YOUR horse so you will know more readily when something is not normal and Call the Vet.*
32. How long does it take your horse to recover back to its resting pulse rate after a work out? *It's important for the horse to recover back to its resting pulse rate after a work out or they aren't in good condition. We want the kids to be thinking about their horses' condition when they are training and competing. The average is 10 minutes.*
33. Please outline the conditioning plan you have for your gymkhana horse. *The conditioning plan should include daily exercise (walking/trotting, bending/flexing) geared to loosen the horse up and build stamina. The plan should indicate that the workouts last for about half an hour, three times a week up to a much longer workout on a daily basis.
Be realistic about the amount of time, conditioning and physical stamina this sport(s) will take to build up to a competitive level & maintain this level. These sports should not be done if you are only wanting or willing to work with your horse on conditioning once every couple of weeks.*
34. Please explain why a horse might balk at the arena gate. *The horse could be excited, afraid or in pain. The horse could be responding to the riders apprehension, nervousness or fears.*

35. Please outline the training plan you have for your gymkhana horse. *The training plan should focus on teaching the horse the patterns at a slow pace. The horse should be taught to turn well, respond to your cues (voice and physical), lead changes and stopping. The training plan should include the rider working on their center of balance, rate, building a pocket and control of the horse. The training plan should include variety to avoid the horse becoming arena sour.*
36. What are the benefits of good confirmation in a barrel horse? *Clean movement, balance, less interference and injury.*
37. How would you select a good barrel horse? *Check the horse's breeding, age, training. Watch it move, check it's speed. Check it's temperment. Put the horse through a workout and check it's breathing. Check out how the horse recovers, physically and emotionally from a workout.*

Division B Mounted Skills Test

In addition to performing all the requirements for Division A, the rider should be able to demonstrate the following.

- Yes / No Can the rider run a pattern without breaking gait?
- Yes / No Does the rider know their correct leads?
- Yes / No Can the rider perform a figure 8 with simple or flying lead changes at the canter?
- Yes / No Can the rider maintain a balanced seat throughout the pattern?



References: 4H State Rules and Guidelines, The Horse Industry Handbook, 4H Horse and Horsemanship book. Many other references by industry experts are available at your local tack store.