



### Course Distance, Miles, and Rides

The Western Distance Riders Alliance defines a distance ride to be an equine event, taking place over natural terrain, demonstrating the ability of an equine and its rider to perform. A distance ride should be a minimum of 15 statute miles. A distance event may or may not offer competition points.

**Mile:** The WDRA defines a mile as 5280 feet, which is commonly known as a statute mile. The WDRA will record riders' and horses' statute miles completed in recognized events.

**Mileage Points:** The WDRA uses the term "Mileage Points" to describe a ride course or trail over natural terrain. Mileage Points are a measure of distance based on the distance in statute miles adjusted for difficulty. The adjustment considers the amount of time it takes riders to complete a course. WDRA instructs ride managers to assign mileage points for a 50 mileage point course or trail based upon the fastest completion times of five to five and a half hours, and final finishing times of less than 11 hours. Competitive fast riders will ride a course or trail at a pace of ten mileage points per hour. The WDRA assigns the mileage points based on the completion time of fast riders rather than using a quantitative mathematical formula.

A competitive pace of ten mileage points per hour can be used to compare the relative difficulty of different courses and trails. Two courses with equal mileage points are expected to take about the same amount of time to complete even though the distances may differ considerably when measured by statute miles.

The minimum mileage points assigned to a course is the measured distance in statute miles. Many courses will have mileage points that are greater than the course distance measured in statute miles. For example, the modern Western States Tevis Cup trail has been accurately measured at 100 miles. The average winning time on the modern Tevis trail is around fifteen hours. Based on a winning pace of 10 mileage points per hour, the modern Western States Tevis Cup trail would be assigned at least 150 mileage points.

The WDRA will record riders' and horses' mileage points completed in recognized events.

**Competitive Events:** The most common distance events in North America are known as Endurance Rides, although the definition of an endurance ride varies with the different sanctioning bodies. Some endurance rides are in fact endurance races. WDRA recognizes both rides and races and offers ride managers the opportunity to define their event as they wish.

**Competition Points:** Competition points are used to rank riders in some of the WDRA annual awards. Competition points recognize the rider's relative placement in the field of finishers. The WDRA computes points based upon the following formula, using mileage points instead of statute miles:

Place	Premium/Mile	Mileage Point Multiplier
1	1	2
2	0.9	1.9
3	0.8	1.8
4	0.7	1.7
5	0.6	1.6
6	0.5	1.5
7	0.4	1.4
8	0.3	1.3
9	0.2	1.2
10	0.1	1.1
11 & lower	0.0	1.0

The WDRA will record riders' and horses' competition points in recognized events. Competition points are calculated annually and each rider starts the ride year with zero competition points.

**Non-Competitive Events:** The WDRA recognizes events that may or may not be competitive. Riders who complete non-competitive events may have their completions for the event recorded alphabetically instead of by finishing time. Non-competitive events could take place in wilderness areas or other areas that do not permit competitive events. The WDRA will recognize the accomplishments of the riders and horses by recording the statute mileage and mileage points, but there will be no adjustment for placement.

**Control Judge:** An individual with advanced training that is familiar with equines and their ability to continue under the circumstances of an event. Control Judges are utilized by ride managers to ensure the welfare of the equines in the event, not to diagnose or treat the equines.

**Best Condition Horse:** The WDRA encourages ride managers to offer a Best Condition Award although awarding a Best Condition is not necessary. The standard Best Condition Form, used by the AERC, provides a good foundation for ride managers to evaluate Best Condition. Best Condition may be awarded in competitive and non-competitive events.

**Annual Awards:** As a young and growing organization the WDRA recognizes that annual awards are an important motivation for some riders. WDRA is currently keeping records of WDRA members and will offer the following awards as a minimum. The WDRA encourages sponsors to offer other awards and incentives for members. These sponsors will set the rules and requirements for the award they choose to sponsor.

- **Annual Rider Mileage:** An annual mileage award will be given to the WDRA member who has accumulated the highest number of mileage points.
- **Equine Mileage Program:** An annual mileage award will be given to the horse, owned by a WDRA member who has accumulated the highest number of mileage points.

WDRA recognizes the following five competitive divisions for competitive annual awards:

- **Featherweight:** Combined body weight and tack is 160 lbs or less.
- **Lightweight:** Combined body weight and tack is 161 to 185 pounds.
- **Middleweight:** Combined body weight and tack is 186 to 210 pounds.
- **Heavyweight:** Combined body weight and tack is 211 pounds or greater.
- **Junior:** Riders under 18 years of age regardless of weight carried.

**Best of the West:** An annual award going to the WDRA member who accumulates the most competition points in events that are a minimum of three consecutive days using the same horse throughout the year. The horse and rider must complete all consecutive days of the event.

Other awards are being discussed.

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