

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
Standard	12/1/2024	1/31/2024	

Rule Change Intent

This change to the marathon charts helps follow the written rule more closely, especially taking into account equine fitness and weather conditions in the Controlled Warmup. Adjustments made the the Obstacle numbers, gate numbers, and obstacle markers sets the standard of usage for all licensed competitions.

Proponent Details	Contact Information
Driving	Anna Brooks Thomas abthomas@usef.org

Linked Rules	Comments
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Committee Actions

DC944 The Course

1. General

1.1 Maximum Distances and speeds must not be exceeded.

1.2 These speeds may be reduced by the Technical Delegate and the President of Jury in the case of adverse weather or ground conditions.

1.3 The Marathon Course must consist of two sections (A and B or Controlled Warm-up and B) and a Cool Down in all classes and levels. The Beginner division will not use a Section A, but can use a Controlled Warm-up.

1.3.1 At Short Format Driving Events, a Modified Marathon will consist of an optional Controlled Warm-up and Section B with 3-5 obstacles. No formal Cool Down section is required.

1.4 The total distance in Section B should be approximately one km per obstacle and preferably not less than 700m between two consecutive obstacles. The total distance in Section B must include the distances through the obstacles.

1.4.1 At Short Format Driving Events, the total distance in a Modified Marathon Section B should be approximately one kilometer per obstacle and preferably not less than 500m between two consecutive obstacles.

1.5 The distances between the end of one section and the start of the next must not be included in the total length and time of the course.

1.6 As an alternative option to the Section A, there can be a controlled warm-up with a maximum time allowed of 30 minutes in a designated warm-up arena of minimum 5000 square meters, properly supervised, with a judge in attendance.

1.6.1 At Short Format Driving Events, when using the Controlled Warm-up, it can be reduced to a minimum of 20 minutes and an official is not required to be present. The Technical Delegate can approve a Warm-up area of any adequate size to accommodate 3 or more entries at a time and the warm-up obstacle is optional.

1.7 Before the start of Section B, a marathon-type warm-up, made of any material and situated in a separated area, must be provided. Each athlete may use the Warm-up obstacle for a maximum of 2 minutes. Grooms must be on the Carriage during the Warm-up Obstacle, failure to comply will incur a Yellow Warning Card. Grooms may dismount when the turnout is standing still with no penalty.

2. Marathon: Combined Driving Event sections

Section A	Controlled	Section B
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DIVISION	Warm-up												# of Gates in an Obstacle	Course Marker
	Distance km	Horse Speeds	Pony Speeds	Sm. Pony	VSE	Time	Distance km	Horse Speeds	Pony Speeds	Sm. Pony	VSE	# Obstacles		
Open Advanced	5-9	12-14	11-13	11-13	8-10	25-Up to 30 minutes	5-9	14	13	13	8-10	6-8-7	7	Blue Triangle
Novice Advanced	5-9	11-13	10-12	10-12	8-10	25-Up to 30 minutes	5-9	12-14	11-13	11-13	8-10	5-7-6	7	Orange Keystor e
Intermediate	5-8	10-12	9-11	8-10	6-8	25-Up to 30 minutes	5-8-5-9	12-14	11-13	10-12	8-10	5-7-6	6	Red Circle
Preliminary	4-6	10-12	9-11	8-10	6-8	25-Up to 30 minutes	5-7	12-14	11-13	10-12	8-10	5-6	4	Green Square
Training	3-5	9-11	8-10	7-9	5-7	25-Up to 30 minutes	4-6-5-7	11-13	10-12	9-11	7-9	4-5	3	Black Diamond
Beginner						25-Up to 30 minutes	4-6	11-13	10-12	9-11	7-9	4-5	3	White Square
Para	5-8	10-12	9-11			25-Up to 30 minutes	5-8-5-9	12-14	11-13			5-7-6	6	Red Circle

2.1. Pace in Section A, B, and Controlled Warm-up is free for all divisions, except the beginner and training division must only walk or trot in Section B including obstacles. In the Cool Down area, turnouts must only walk or halt.

3. Short Format Driving Events – Modified Marathon Section(s)

Division	Controlled Warm-up (optional)	Distance km	Horse speeds	Pony speeds	Sm. Pony speeds	VSE speeds	# of Obstacles	# of Gates in an Obstacle	Course Marker

Open Advanced	20-Up to 30 minutes	3.5 – 7	13-14	12-13	12-13	8-10	3-5 5	7	Blue Triangle
Novice Advanced	20-Up to 30 minutes	3.5 – 7	12-14	11-13	11-13	8-10	3-5 5	7	Orange Keystone
Intermediate	20-Up to 30 minutes	3.5 – 7	12-14	11-13	10-12	8-10	3-5 5	6	Red Circle
Preliminary	20-Up to 30 minutes	3 – 6	12-14	11-13	10-12	8-10	3-5 4	4	Green Square
Training	20-Up to 30 minutes	3 – 6	11-13	10-12	9-11	7-9	3-5 4	3	Black Diamond
Beginner	20-Up to 30 minutes	3 – 6	11-13	10-12	9-11	7-9	3-5 3	3	White Square
Para	20-Up to 30 minutes	3.5-7	12-14	11-13			3-5	6	Red Circle

4. Compulsory rests

The In-Harness Inspection and safety check must be performed before the start of the Marathon, as described in DC 920. At Short Format Driving Events, for the Modified Marathon the in-harness inspection and safety check are optional at the discretion of the Technical Delegate.

4.1 There must be a halt of 10 minutes in the designated Neutral area prior to the start of Section B. When Section A is a 'controlled Warm-Up', the halt must be reduced to 5 minutes.

4.2 The Neutral area of the halt should, if possible, provide some shade and must be large enough to accommodate three turnouts at once and have room for additional motor vehicles.

4.3 Water must be provided at the Neutral area for the horses.

4.4 A farrier must be available at the start of the Marathon. At Short Format Driving Events, a farrier can be on-call rather than on-site for a Modified Marathon.

4.5 Para Driving: quick release systems to secure a wheelchair and lap belts or 4 points belts with a quick release system must be checked by the Technical Delegate before the start of the marathon.

4.6 In exceptional circumstances, the minimum time required for the halt may be increased by the President of the Jury in consultation with the Technical Delegate.

4.7 Turnouts may stand, walk, or trot within the Neutral area.

5. Section and direction signs

5.1 The beginning and end of each section must be marked with a pair of red and white flags.

5.2 The entire course must be clearly marked with yellow direction markers placed, wherever possible, on the right hand side of the track to be clearly visible to the approaching athlete. A confirmation directional arrow must be placed after every significant turn.

5.3 Sections A and B must have a marker at every kilometer. In Section B the measurement of the kilometers must include the distances through the obstacles.

5.4 The marker for a kilometer occurring within an obstacle should be placed on the post supporting the red exit flag.

5.5 When multiple divisions/levels are offered, the kilometer markers on the Marathon shall be color-coded and/or shaped.

6. Compulsory turning flags

6.1 Sufficient red and white compulsory turning flags must be positioned on the course to ensure that all athletes follow the designated track. Athletes must leave the red flags on their right and the white flags on their left. These compulsory turning flags must be numbered consecutively in each section and they must be placed so they are clearly visible to athletes from a reasonable distance.

6.2 The location and number of the flags must be marked on the map of the course to clearly indicate the correct route to be driven between the compulsory turning flags before and after each obstacle. In addition, a list showing the order for driving compulsory turning flags and obstacles must be provided for athletes and officials.

6.3 Ground Observers must record the athlete's track through the compulsory turning flags; if any compulsory turning flags are missed out or passed in the wrong sequence, the details must be reported to the member of the Ground Jury or Technical Delegate as soon as possible.

6.3.1 At Short Format Driving Events, ground observers are not required. See DC 948.2.1 for penalties on compulsory turning flags.

7. Paces

7.1 The finish of Section B must not be more than 300m from the exit of the last obstacle unless the Technical Delegate grants an exception. If the last obstacle is situated within 300m of the finish, the Athletes may stop within 30m of the out gate of the obstacle to repair a broken or detached harness without penalty. A 30m marker will be placed on the track to indicate this point if the last obstacle is within 300m of the finish.

7.2 Between the 30 meter sign of the last obstacle (or 300m) and finish, pace must be trot or walk only. The athlete will accumulate one penalty point for each 5 seconds the turnout is not at the walk or trot.

8. Cool Down Area

8.1 At the end of the Section B, a Cool Down area (Arena, Loop or track) of between 800 m and 1200 m in size must be installed. The In-Harness examination, as per DC 920 must be performed between ten and fifteen minutes after the athlete has entered the cool down area. The groom(s) may walk besides the carriage, and additional support personnel may be present in this area. The only penalty that can be incurred in the Cool Down Area is elimination, if the athlete leaves the area before presenting their horses. Brushing boots and bandages may be removed from the horses. After the horses have been examined and cleared by the veterinarians, turnouts must leave the Cool Down Area.

8.2 At Short Format Driving Events, a formal Cool Down Area is not required.

