

PRE-RIDE

- Take your horse for a good walk or a short ride before or after vetting – a walk may also encourage your horse to wee and drink
- Have an idea where the exit point of the ride base is for your particular distance
- Make sure you know where your marshalling area is. Your pre-ride talk will be conducted here while you are on horseback before you head out the gate. The pre-ride talks have information on hazards, checkpoints, what colour arrows to follow, start time, maximum and minimum ride times etc
- Take note of where the time-keeper tent is because that is where you will come in from your ride and collect your time slip.
- Get your tack together ready to saddle
- Organise your strapping gear so that when you return, you have everything ready
- Have your ride bib, ride card or logbook ready for when you go to vetting with your horse (*NOTE: the vets will keep your card/logbook for when you return*)
- Trot your horse out before you leave your camping area to double check soundness
- Clean out your horse's hooves before vetting in case of stones or sticks

DURING THE RIDE

- Remember you must keep control of your horse at all times
- Make sure you give your number at the gate to the steward before you leave
- You can leave up to 15min after the start, but make sure you warm your horse up whatever time you leave
- Follow the road rules, ride on the left
- 20km riders: When you come to the Canowindra Road crossing, the marshals will stop the horses for traffic, **not** the traffic. You must wait until it is safe to cross.
- Don't let your horse rush up behind other horses, let the rider know you are there
- Take notice of red and blue ribbons (red means horse will kick – blue means stallion)
- When passing, give the rider plenty of notice eg call out "passing on your right" and wait for the rider to find an appropriate place and move over, do not rush pass as this can upset other horses especially inexperienced ones
- If you notice the horse is playing up, ask the rider if they are ok for you to and give the horse a wide berth
- When being passed, move over when an appropriate area becomes available – do not block the track
- Generally, give way to faster horses going downhill.
- Be considerate at water points, don't barge in while other horses are already drinking. Wait your turn.
- Don't let your horse nose up to other horses – use your common sense
- Be friendly and polite to other riders and thank checkpoint/gate stewards.
- Please offer your assistance to any riders in distress if you are able to
- The check points will have horse water and hay (take time to let your horse eat)
- Carry your mobile phone with you
- When you arrive at the check point call your number out and make sure it is repeated back to you or check the stewards have your number.
- Do not strap your horse out of any horse troughs on track – if there is a separate strapping water container available then use that
- Try to maintain a steady pace eg don't gallop and then walk and so on
- Remember to change your diagonals – this ensures your horse stays balanced

- It is good practice to make time when the going is good and slow down when the going is less so eg hills or hard ground
- If you have a problem when you are on track and you are unable to continue, please call for a rescue float. You must stay where you are until the float arrives. You will then need to attend the vetting area upon your arrival back at base.
- When you are approximately 1-2kms from base, slow down and walk in. Remember you are not in a race, social rides are not competitive. Coming in slowly helps your horse relax and lowers the heart rate. Let them have a pick of grass on the way back in if possible.
- Go straight to timing tent to get your time slip
- Check the details on the time slip are your own
- The time will show what time you came in and what time you will need to present your horse to vetting

AFTER THE RIDE

- Take your horse back to your camp
- Unsaddle
- Strap your horse being careful to leave his rump dry if the weather is cold
- Check your horse's heart rate – remember your horse will need to be under 55 bpm
- Feel your horse's tummy – if it still feels hot – you may need to keep strapping
- Once you are confident your horse's heart rate is low enough, it is good practice to let them have some alone time in their yard. This will encourage them to pee and have a relaxing drink and pick.
- Be aware of the cold – put your horse's rug on once they are suitably cool especially if there is a cold breeze (this can cause your horse's muscles to stiffen and potentially vet you out)
- Keep an eye on your time to present back to the vet (if you are late you will be disqualified)

VETTING

- Leave your camp in time to quietly arrive at the TRP a little before the VET time. This gives your horse time to relax before being TPR'd.
- Check your horse for a loose shoe or stone wedge
- Don't forget to wear your bib when going to vetting
- Leave your horse's rug on to go to vetting unless it is hot weather
- There is no feed or stethoscopes allowed in the TPR/Vet ring
- *TIP: Once the TPR has finished with your horse, keep them moving if the weather is cold. This can mean the difference between a completion or vet out.*
- Trot out, stop at the end and walk around the cone before recommencing your trot back
- Thank the vet and TPRs no matter what the outcome
- Take your horse back to camp and make them comfortable before you sit down