

ORANGE COUNTY INTERSCHOLASTIC EQUESTRIAN LEAGUE, INC.

ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

RULES, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES **2025-2026**

All classes at the OCIEL shows will be run under the US Equestrian Federation rules and specifications as modified for equestrian competition. If the rules of the OCIEL do not apply to a given situation, then the rules of the USEF shall govern.

RULE I **MEMBERSHIP**

- SECTION A:** Any school interested in participating in the OCIEL activities and willing to subscribe to the By-Laws and Rules is eligible for membership.
A school team can be made up of one or more riders.
- SECTION B:** At the discretion of the school, the school representative may be a parent or a designated coach. Download the **TEAM REPRESENTATIVE FORM** and submit.
- SECTION C:** An eligible student must apply for membership on the official OCIEL Membership Form, signed by that individual and their parent or guardian. The school is not required to sign the rider membership form. Said application must be filed with the OCIEL before the student can compete. Membership fees are non-refundable.
- SECTION D:** The membership form must be accompanied by the OCIEL Eligibility form, submitted by the trainer, stating which division that individual is eligible to compete in and must be submitted to the OCIEL prior to entering into the rider's first show of the season. New members are welcome anytime throughout the show season.
- SECTION E:** OCIEL staff may require records of their prior show participation from OCHSA, PCHA, GSDHSA, CDS, IEHJA and USEF sanctioned shows along with the membership application in order to be considered. Results from the organization internet sites are acceptable. It is the responsibility of the rider or rider's parents to provide documentation. The show staff is not responsible to download and print off copies of the rider's show records.
- SECTION F:** Any falsification of the membership and eligibility forms may be cause for immediate expulsion of the individual, school and coach from the OCIEL and/or a \$150.00 penalty. Trainers will also receive disciplinary notices.

RULE II REGISTRATION AND FEES

SECTION A: Membership and Eligibility Forms, Team Representative Forms, and Entry Forms may be downloaded from the website.

SECTION B: Checks returned by the bank or credit cards declined for any reason are regarded as a serious offense. Returned checks will be assessed a \$30 fine and must be paid in full; in cash, cashier's check or money order within 5 days of notice to the competitor/trainer that the check has been returned. A declined credit card will be assessed a \$30 fine if the office has to call to obtain a different credit card number. Failure to comply may result in the OCIEL forwarding the information to the competitor's school for further disciplinary action.

SECTION C: OCIEL classes are held at the Oaks at the Rancho Mission Viejo Riding Park.

RULE III PROTESTS

SECTION A: Protests may be made to the Show Committee by a rider, handler, agent, trainer, exhibitor, or parent of a junior exhibitor for any violation of the OCIEL Rules. **It must be:**

- In writing, (no telephone calls) and signed by the protestor.
- Addressed to the Secretary of the OCIEL, stating at which show the alleged violation occurred, citing the said violation, and emailed to ocieloffice@gmail.com or mailed to: OCIEL/ c/o Capistrano Ranch, 31878 Del Obispo St, Ste 118/389, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675.

- Received 2 weeks before the next show.

The Board will review the evidence and respond in writing with their decision within 10 days of receipt of the complaint. **There will be no verbal or anonymous protests accepted.**

RULE IV DIVISIONS

SECTION A: EQUITATION AND JUMPER DIVISIONS:

EQUITATION DIVISIONS

Beginner Equitation: Fences will be set as cross-rails. Simple lead changes will be allowed. This division is open to beginner riders who have **not competed at the 2' level** at any time prior to September 1, 2025 in OCIEL, USEF, PCHA, GSDHSA, OCHSA and IEHJA sanctioned shows.

Novice Equitation: Fences will be set at 2' with no oxers. This division is open to riders who have **not competed at the 2'3" level** at any time prior to September 1, 2025 in OCIEL, USEF, PCHA, GSDHSA, OCHSA and IEHJA sanctioned shows.

Freshman Equitation: Fences will be set at 2'3". Competitors cannot compete in this division if they have competed at the 2'6" level at any time prior to September 1, 2025 in OCIEL, USEF, PCHA, GSDHSA, OCHSA and IEHJA sanctioned shows.

Junior Varsity Equitation: Fences will be set at 2'6". Exhibitors competing at the 2'6" height cannot compete in this division if they have competed at the 2'9" level at any time prior September 1, 2025 in OCIEL, USEF, PCHA, GSDHSA, OCHSA and IEHJA sanctioned shows.

Varsity Equitation: Open to riders who are competent to show over Equitation courses with fences at 2'9".

JUMPER DIVISION

Freshman Jumper fences will be set at .70m with spreads not to exceed the height of the fence. Competitors cannot have competed at .80m or higher prior to September 1, 2025. If rider changes to equitation during show season s/he must compete in Freshman Equitation.

Junior Varsity Jumper fences will be set at .80m with spreads not to exceed the height of the fence. Competitors cannot have competed at .90m or higher prior to September 1, 2025. If rider changes to equitation during show season s/he must compete in Junior Varsity Equitation.

Varsity Jumper fences will be set at .90m with spreads not to exceed the height of the fence.

There will be 3 classes offered. Classes will run under Table II, Sec. 2 (b) (jump off after the buzzer), Table IV Sec.1 (Optimum Time) Table II, Sec.1 (Timed first round). In the Optimum Time class, the winner will be the horse with the fewest faults, including time penalties for exceeding the Time Allowed as indicated by the course designer in the posted course; ties will be broken by determining which horse's time on the course was closest to the Optimum Time, which is defined as four seconds less than the Time Allowed for the course. The Time Allowed on the course shall be determined by measurement and the rate of 382 yards per minute. For all classes, the course designer shall post time and yardage prior to the commencement of classes. It is the rider's responsibility to know the tables in this division.

SECTION B: Any deviations from the criteria for the above divisions would need prior approval from the OCIEL Board and proof of show records from approved associations.

SECTION C: If a horse is being shared, the horse may enter a maximum of four (4) classes over fences at one show. Individual and team points will be counted toward the applicable rider. With the exception of an injury occurring to the horse during the show and with a vet note, an exhibitor may only ride one horse per show.

SECTION D: A rider showing in a class for which he or she is ineligible shall forfeit any points, ribbons and prizes won in such class.

SECTION E: It is the responsibility of the team representative and trainer to accurately enter riders in the proper divisions, according to their individual skill and experience levels and in compliance with the definitions and descriptions of those levels as set forth in the Rules. Discrepancies may require proof from above associations.

SECTION F: Any division entered incorrectly may result in a penalty of \$50.

SECTION G: The top rider in the Equitation and Jumper Divisions must advance to the next division, excluding Varsity. Instances where there was only one rider in the Division the previous year, the rider may continue in the Division for the current year. Trainers may request an exception from the Board in the case where competing over higher fences could be a risk for horse or rider welfare.

SECTION H: A courtesy fence will not be awarded to any exhibitor who has three refusals and/or falls off. Once a rider falls off, they may not remount in the ring.

RULE V CROSS ENTERING

SECTION A: A given Equitation or Jumper horse or rider may only enter one division at a given show. The division entered must be declared at time of membership registration and is the division listed by the trainer on the "Eligibility Form." Only one division may be declared for the show year – there is no cross-entering between disciplines. A rider may advance up a division but may not go back down. Division advancements must be declared in the show office prior to the start of the show by the rider's trainer. The "Eligibility Form" must be changed, signed and dated by the trainer next to the new division. Exhibitors switching divisions will forfeit points earned in the originally declared division. In an emergency, any rider or horse with a different rider may be allowed to enter a second division with permission from the OCIEL management. The class maximum will still apply.

SECTION C: There are (2) regional non-profit chapters of the IEL: Los Angeles and Orange County. There will be no cross entering between the regions. Riders from other counties can choose which IEL they would like to show in and must remain showing in the region throughout the show season.

**RULE VI
COMPETITION OFFICIALS**

SECTION A: Competition staff is hired by the host show.

SECTION B: A Judge for OCIEL classes must be approved by the Board.

SECTION C: Any complaints must be discussed with Show Management.

**RULE VII
CONDUCT AND APPAREL**

SECTION A: APPAREL - ENGLISH: It is in the tradition of the show ring that riders be correctly attired for the classes in question and horses properly presented according to USEF Rules. Riders must wear USEF approved headgear.
JUMPERS: Require a collared, sleeved dress or polo shirt for all classes. The show committee may, at its discretion, bar any entry or person from entering the ring if not suitably presented to appear before an audience. No braiding required.

SECTION B: It is expected that exhibitors, spectators, trainers and school representatives behave in a manner that reflects the dignity of the sport. Ill-mannered conduct will not be tolerated. Show management may expel from the grounds any person whose behavior is deemed dishonest, unethical, unsportsmanlike, or detrimental to the health, safety, or wellbeing of any horse, person, or the League during the progress of the show. USEF Rule 7, Chapter 1, Article GR701 General, page 67 under "General Rules".

SECTION C: NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ALLOWED ON THE PROPERTY.

SECTION D: NO DOGS ALLOWED ON THE PROPERTY WITHOUT A LEASH. No exceptions.

SECTION E: According to USEF Rules: No electronic devices are allowed in performance rings, i.e. cell phones, personal barn communicators. Judges will disqualify an exhibitor found to be carrying an electronic device on their person, unless previously approved due to hearing impediments.

SECTION F: Cruelty and marked lameness will constitute class elimination.

SECTION G: No minors (under age 15) are allowed to operate any motorized vehicle i.e. motorcycle, ATV, scooter, golf cart. Minors (under age 16) with a permit AND an adult may operate a vehicle on the show grounds.

SECTION H: CDFA Drug Rule: The primary goal of OCIEL is to support and develop student equestrian athletes, to encourage knowledge of horsemanship and to promote good sportsmanship and team work in a fair and friendly competition. Because of this mission, OCIEL strongly supports the Equine Medication Monitoring Program administered by the California Drug and Food Administration. OCIEL will follow the rules as prescribed by the California Drug and Food Administration on drug use in all competing horses/ponies at an OCIEL horse show. We encourage all OCIEL riders, trainers and parents to go to the CDFA website to learn more. (http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/Animal_Health/emmp/) In accordance with CDFA procedure there may be random drug testing administered by CDFA employees at any or all OCIEL horse shows. If any horse/pony is found to have a positive result from this testing, the CDFA will contact the owner and trainer of said horse/pony for further investigation. At the conclusion of that investigation OCIEL will be notified by the CDFA if the CDFA finds that a violation of the CDFA rules has occurred. If OCIEL is notified that a horse/pony has been found by the CDFA to be in violation of the California Medication Rule, the rider of that horse will forfeit all points accumulated at the OCIEL horse show where the sample was collected. OCIEL will not conduct any independent investigation and will rely exclusively on the findings of the CDFA.

RULE VIII TROPHIES, RIBBONS AND POINTS

SECTION A: POINTS will be counted for Individual, Division and School. No rider shall be considered for Year-End Awards unless they attend a minimum of three (3) shows.

SECTION B: Ribbons awarded to 6th place and prizes awarded to 1st place in each class.

SECTION C: Points shall be awarded as follows:

Full points will be given for classes with 3 or more exhibitors. Half points will be given for classes with 1-2 exhibitors.

1 st	7
2 nd	5
3 rd	4
4 th	3
5 th	2
6 th	1

SECTION D: Only the top two rider's points from a school will count in each class, which will be used to determine Individual School and Overall School points. Individual points will be counted for all riders.

SECTION E: In case of a tie, the Championship will be awarded to the Overall School, Division and Individual with the most first place ribbons over fences, if there continues to be a tie, the points awarded in the Medal/Classic classes will prevail

SECTION F: Show Division High Point Ribbons:

Points are combined from equitation and jumpers to determine School High Point Champion and Reserve ribbons. The following High Point Champion and Reserve Champion ribbons will be awarded:

- Beginner Equitation (Individual)
- Novice Equitation (Individual)
- Freshman Equitation (Individual)
- Freshman Jumpers (Individual)
- Junior Varsity Equitation (Individual)
- Junior Varsity Jumpers (Individual)
- Varsity Equitation (Individual)
- Varsity Jumpers (Individual)
- Beginner, Novice, Freshman, Junior Varsity and Varsity School

SECTION G: Year-End Division Perpetual Trophies and Ribbons:

Points are combined from equitation and jumpers to determine Year-End School High Point Champion at each level and overall.

Year-End High Point trophies will be:

- Beginner Equitation (Individual)
- Novice Equitation (Individual)
- Freshman Equitation (Individual)
- Freshman Jumpers (Individual)
- Junior Varsity Equitation (Individual)
- Junior Varsity Jumpers (Individual)
- Varsity Equitation (Individual)
- Varsity Jumpers (Individual)
- Beginner, Novice, Freshman, Junior Varsity and Varsity School

All Perpetual Silver and Gold Cup Trophies must be returned to the show office on the last scheduled show weekend. NO EXCEPTIONS!!

SECTION H: Year-End Class Points: All OCIEL Classes will have a year end point rankings listed on the website (ociel.org).

SECTION I: Trainer of the Year Award: Trainers receive points based on what their riders achieved in accordance with RULE VIII, SECTION C of these rules. There will be separate awards for Beginner, Novice, Freshman, Junior Varsity, and Varsity.

RULE IX ORDER OF GO

SECTION A: When an Order of Go is established, it must be posted in a conspicuous place one half hour before the class. The Jumping order must be legible to the mounted rider. Post entries will be placed at the top of the order of go.

**RULE X
DELAY OF CLASSES**

SECTION A: Riders must be ready to enter the ring when called upon. Starters will try to resolve conflicts, providing that those conflicts are presented to the starter before the class starts. Management reserves the right to eliminate a competitor after a one (1) minute gate call. Riders may move up in order to prevent a delay at the ring.

**RULE XI
MEDAL/CLASSIC CLASSES**

SECTION A: There shall be, at each show, Medal classes in Novice, Freshman, Junior Varsity, and Varsity Equitation divisions.

SECTION B: Novice Medal fences will be set at 2' with no oxers. Freshman Medal fences will be set at 2'3". Junior Varsity fences will be set at 2'6". Varsity fences will be set at 2'9".

SECTION C: Qualified exhibitors may be required to perform a work-off which could include elements on the flat and over fences as determined by the judge. At least the top four exhibitors in the division (as determined by the points earned in that show in accordance with RULE VIII, SECTION C of these rules) are qualified.

SECTION D: The Freshman, Junior Varsity and Varsity Jumper Classic will run under Table II, Sec. 2 (b) (jump off after the buzzer). Freshman fences will be set at .70m. Junior Varsity fences will be set at .80m. Varsity fences will be set at .90m. There shall be, at the first three (3) shows, a qualifying round. Attire: A collared, sleeved dress or polo shirt.

**RULE XII
MEDAL/CLASSIC FINAL**

SECTION A: Finals may be held at the last show of the season. Finals include all Medal Classes and Classics. To compete as a medal finalist in the Final, a rider must have attended 3 shows (the Final may be their 3rd show) and placed (1st -6th) in a prior Medal or Classic class.

SECTION B: All English riders are required to perform over at least eight fences not exceeding 2' for Novice, 2'3" for Freshman, 2'6" for Junior Varsity and 2'9" for Varsity.

SECTION C: All Medal winners can continue to compete at each show in the Medal classes for accumulation of points towards the Medal Final.

SECTION D: Jumpers Classic finals will run under Table II, Sec. 2 (b) (jump off after the buzzer) with Freshman fences set at .70m, Junior Varsity fences set at .80m and Varsity fences set at .90m.

**RULE XIV
SENIOR SCHOLARSHIPS**

SECTION A: It is the duty of the OCIEL Board of Directors to award scholarships on an annual basis.

SECTION B: Any 12th grade rider who has been a member in good standing for two seasons or more in the OCIEL and has competed in the required number of three (3) shows during their senior year and meets all of the application requirements is eligible to apply for a Year-End OCIEL Scholarship.

SECTION C: The criteria for awarding scholarships is based on the following: essays, grades, test scores, years riding, character and sportsmanship, community service, extracurricular activities and other relevant factors.

SECTION D: Any Board member is eligible to serve on the Scholarship Committee as long as he/she does not have a 12th grader applying for the scholarship.

**RULE XV
CLASSES**

BEGINNER EQUITATION – CROSS-RAILS

Beginner Equitation Over Fences
Beginner Equitation Over Fences
Beginner Equitation Flat

NOVICE EQUITATION - FENCES: 2'

Novice Working Hunters Over Fences
Novice Equitation Over Fences
Novice Equitation Flat
Novice Hunters Under Saddle
Novice OCIEL Medal – no oxers

FRESHMAN EQUITATION - FENCES: 2'3"

Freshman Working Hunters Over Fences
Freshman Equitation Over Fences
Freshman Equitation Flat
Freshman Hunters Under Saddle
Freshman OCIEL Medal

FRESHMAN JUMPERS - FENCES: .70m

Freshman Jumpers Table IV, Sec.1 Optimum Time
Freshman Jumpers Table II, Sec.1 Timed First Round
Freshman Jumper Classic Table II, Sec.2 (b) Jump-off after the buzzer

JUNIOR VARSITY EQUITATION - FENCES: 2'6"

Junior Varsity Working Hunters Over Fences
Junior Varsity Equitation Over Fences
Junior Varsity Equitation Flat
Junior Varsity Hunters Under Saddle
Junior Varsity OCIEL Medal

JUNIOR VARSITY JUMPERS - FENCES: .80m

Junior Varsity Jumpers Table IV, Sec.1 Optimum Time
Junior Varsity Jumpers Table II, Sec.1 Timed First Round
Junior Varsity Jumper Classic Table II, Sec.2 (b) Jump-off after the buzzer

VARSITY EQUITATION - FENCES: 2'9"

Varsity Working Hunters Over Fences
Varsity Equitation Over Fences
Varsity Equitation Flat
Varsity Hunters Under Saddle
Varsity OCIEL Medal

VARSITY JUMPERS - FENCES: .90m

Varsity Jumpers Table IV, Sec.1 Optimum Time
Varsity Jumpers Table II, Sec.1 Timed First Round
Varsity Jumper Classic Table II, Sec.2 (b) Jump-off after the buzzer

**OCIEL BOARD OF DIRECTORS WILL MAKE THE FINAL
DECISION ON THE INTERPRETATION OF THE ABOVE RULES**

Updated 4/8/2026