



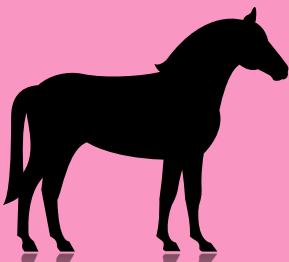
Whatcom County Dressage and Eventing Assoc.

General Meetings

The Board meets regularly and you're invited! We have general membership meetings every few months so check here for dates and locations.

NEXT MEMBER MEETING:

To be determined



Who is WCDEA?

This dressage and eventing (& working equitation) club is an all-volunteer group of local horse enthusiasts committed to furthering our knowledge of our disciplines and providing equestrian-related educational and competitive opportunities in the local area.

President's Corner

by Viki Schimke

Spring is just around the corner so we should all be covered in horse hair soon if not already. The Board has been busy lining up judges for our shows. We will likely have clinics in conjunction with the shows to strengthen our learning.

I'm super excited about the upcoming first-aid educational opportunities we have secured: for at home, on the road and down the trail. These clinics will have something for everyone in every situation; as we well know horses can need help in many different situations!

I hope every one is looking forward to a great year, and enjoying the extra daylight – something all horse owners celebrate with glee!



WHAT'S HAPPENING?!

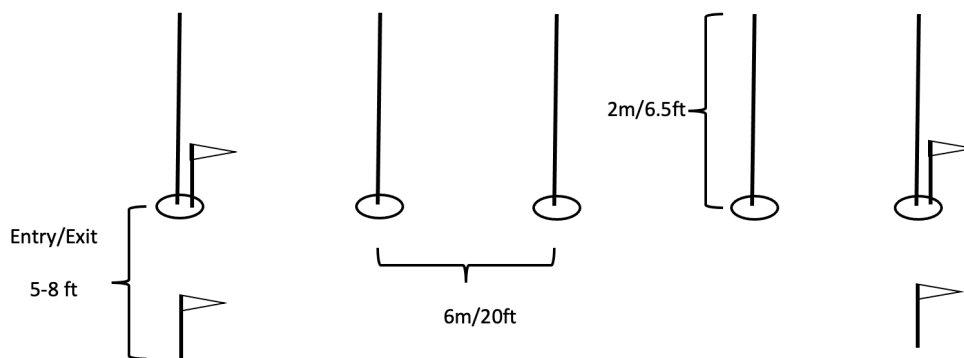
- ✓ **Do you trail ride with your horse?** Ali Maynard will teach us how to pack for longer rides and what to carry in your first aid kit while you're on the trail. **Saturday, April 22nd at 10:00am - noon** in a Bellingham classroom. [Register here!](#)
- ✓ **SOLD OUT:** **Do you and your horse love to trot over poles?** Do you want to learn? If so, join us for our Cavaletti Clinic with local trainer and judge Kim Roe at a covered arena in Bellingham on **Sunday, April 30th**. [Register here \(or add your name to our Waiting List!\)](#)
- ✓ **Ride-A-Test with Feedback and/or a Lesson! Saturday, May 13th** Ride the test of your choice (USDF, USEA, USAWE).
 1. Receive your scores.
 2. Take a 15-30 minute lesson (depending on selection) with Birthe to work on the movements with low scores.
 3. Ride the test again.[Register here!](#)
- ✓ **Does your saddle fit you and your horse?** We are fortunate to have master saddle fitter Hannah Knaebel at Topline Saddles coming up to do a clinic for us on **Saturday, May 20th** at 10am-noon. For more info on what Hannah will teach us about fitting BOTH Western and English saddles, check out her [Topline Saddles website](#). [Register here!](#)
- ✓ **Feel like getting feedback from a judge?** Ride in our low-stress, informal and fun schooling shows! They'll be at the Sunset Farm Horse Park in Blaine on **July 16, August 27th and September 24**. We will offer dressage tests of all disciplines (USDF, USEA and Western) and working equitation Intro and Novice classes. (**Notice date changes**)
- ✓ Stay tuned for a dressage/Working Equitation obstacle schooling opportunity at **Misty River Ranch in June**. Details coming soon!

Working Equitation Obstacle Highlight:

By Deirdra Dong

Single Slalom

Set up: 5 or 7 posts (or similarly shaped objects) in a straight line set at equal distance apart- 6 meters or 20 feet. Entry/exit markers are recommended for this obstacle with red flags on the right and white on the left. Entry can be either on the left or the right side of the first post and entry/exit opening distance is often

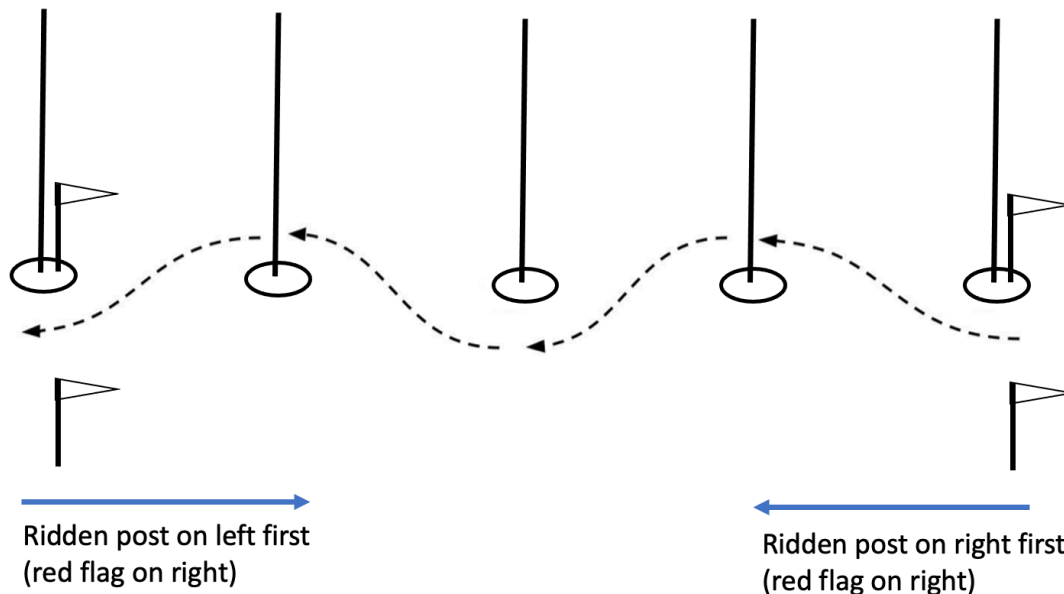


between 5-8 feet.

Ideally, posts are approximately 2 meters or 6.5 feet in height. However, any height is suitable for practice. Any safe object can be used as a stand in for the posts such as cones, jump standards, water buckets, etc. This obstacle can be made pretty simply with PVC or 2x2" wood posts set in concrete or sand in buckets. Some food for thought, if you decide to build the posts for the single slalom; the posts can do double duty for other obstacles such as the switch cup and rounding posts. If that is something you choose to do, make sure your bases are secure and safe for horse legs to be near and build them to the standard 2 meters in height.

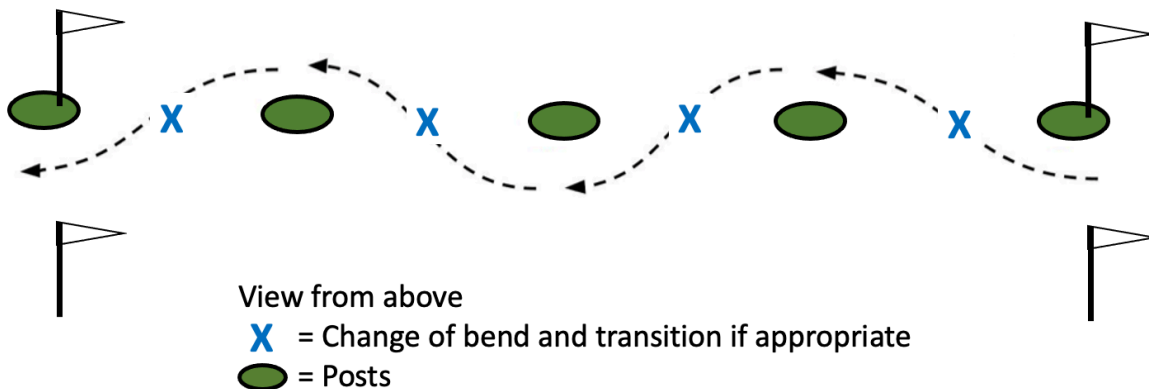
This obstacle pattern is pretty straight forward. Ridden in a weaving pattern where, for example, the first post passes on the right hand side, the following post on the left hand side, repeating right/left until all posts have been ridden past.

Or the reverse where the first post passes on the left, then right, then left and so on. The direction the obstacle is ridden is determined by either the entry/exit flags and/or during a competition, noted on the course map. The purpose of this obstacle is to show changes of bend, suppleness, and changes of lead (if applicable).



What to think about as you practice:

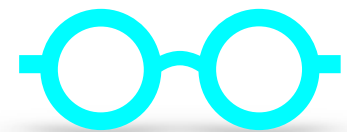
- Geometry!! Find a distance from the post that is comfortable for you and your horse to be able to repeat throughout the whole obstacle. For example, if your distance passing the first post is 5 feet, the remaining posts should be passed at approximately 5 feet.
- When changing bend, aim for it to be in the line and midway between the posts. This means during practice, keep track of how many strides it takes to half halt, rebalance and make the change of bend. A common mistake occurs when the rider does not prepare for the change of bend early enough and gradually the transitions become late and the geometry then gets “stretched” closer to the next post (vs remaining midway between).



- When introducing this obstacle, begin at the walk. Some horses struggle with the quick changes of bend and get frustrated. Take your time, make sure your horse understands the pattern and be sure to reinforce the changes of bend with your seat and legs. If you find you and your horse are still struggling, break it down even more and just do 2, 3, or 4 of the posts, adding more posts as it becomes easier for your horse.
- Once that is comfortable, begin at the trot, focusing on the same items as you did at the walk in addition to maintaining a good tempo, soft changes of bend, and try riding it at both sitting and posting trot. If your horse struggled at the walk, once you speed things up, you may need to go back to introducing fewer posts at the start and add more as your horse gains confidence.
- Ready to step it up? Try it at the canter with transitions through the trot (aim for 2-4 steps of trot). Use simple changes and/or flying changes. Be sure to continue to focus on your geometry, symmetry and suppleness!

What the judge is looking for:

- The horse maintains a calm demeanor, with fluid and continuous movement
- Quality of lead changes (if applicable), changes of bend and the horse's attitude during the changes
- Geometry and symmetry
- Steady rhythm and tempo



For more information be sure to check out usawe.org, the WE rulebook (particularly Appendix B) and feel free to reach out to me with questions, help, or clarification deirdra.d@gmail.com

More good information from the USAWE rulebook- <https://usawe.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/2023-Rulebook-Rev-6.1.pdf>

About our Judges/Clinicians

Birthe Schumann is an FEI dressage rider and trainer who grew up and learned the fundamentals in Germany where from a young age she competed in dressage, jumping and 3-day eventing on a national level. She has competed in dressage internationally through Intermediaire. Birthe has trained and coached young riders to win individual and team gold at NAYR (2001 & 2002); has a USDF bronze and silver medal; was 2003 DASC champion at PSG; and completed the L judge training program. Birthe's training business includes coaching & training of all levels through FEI, clinics, and sales with buying trips to Europe.



Kim Roe grew up riding on the family ranch and competed in Western rail classes, trail horse, reining, working cow, and hunter/jumper. She trained her first horse for money at 12 years old, starting a pony for a neighbor. Kim has been a professional dressage instructor in Washington state for over 30 years, training hundreds of horses and students through the levels. In recent years Kim has become involved in Working Equitation and is a small 'r' Working Equitation judge with WE United. Kim is the editor of the Northwest Horse Source Magazine, and also a writer, photographer, and poet. She owns and manages Blue Gate Farm in Deming, Washington where she continues to be passionate about helping horses and riders in many disciplines.

Sunset Farm Park

Do you know that Whatcom County has an extensive horse park? It's an all-volunteer effort provided by Friends of Sunset Farm.

- All-weather outdoor arena
 - Miles of wooded trails
 - Water element and bank jump
 - Seasonal cross-country course with obstacles from Grasshopper to Training Level
- The park is at 7981 Blaine Road, Blaine, 98230

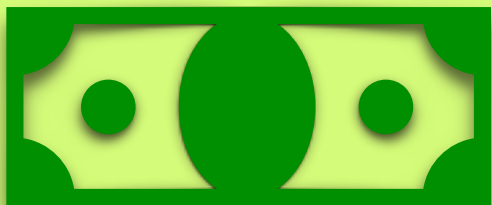


The Friends of Sunset Farm, a non-profit organization, was formed for the purpose of providing assistance to the Whatcom County Parks and Recreation Department in order to support, maintain and fundraise for the Whatcom County public equestrian park known as "Sunset Farm Park." WCDEA hosts regular clinics and schooling shows at the Park. Keep an eye on the Park's FaceBook page and Website for updates!

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Would you like to receive a \$50 educational grant from WCDEA for a lesson, clinic or other equestrian learning opportunity?

Here's what you need to do:



1. Be a member in good standing
2. Fill out an application here at our website
3. Agree to write up a paragraph or two about what you learned to share with the rest of us!

Your grant can be used almost anywhere you'd like to learn, including our own shows and clinics!

