



HELPFUL INFO FOR NEW ENDURANCE RIDERS

November 2023 V1.3



This info pack is designed to help riders who are preparing for and attending their first endurance event.

Endurance is a sport for every horse and rider, and all healthy and sound horses are capable of completing introductory and intermediate distance rides. There is no special equipment, breeding or bells and whistles required.

The key ingredients for success are a solid training foundation, gear (particularly saddle) which is comfortable and allows your horse to be free moving; and providing your horse with some mental training.

For many horses things such as:

- being at the potentially busy ride base
- being checked by the TPR / vet
- being around, and likely being overtaken by, other horses on course can be as challenging as completing the distance. So wherever possible, expose your horse to being handled by strangers, and being around other horses.

That might sound intimidating, but really it's just about understanding what an event might look and sound like for your horse. Endurance is open to everyone, and everyone is encouraged to give it a go. Most horses adapt very quickly to an event, and many love endurance riding.

HANDY TIP:

Attend a ride as a volunteer or strapper for an experienced rider. This is the best way to learn what's expected of you and your horse - and you'll meet some friendly people too.

We encourage you to read the following Australian Endurance Riders Association information about endurance. Clicking on the links will take you to the relevant AERA (aera.asn.au) or NSWERA (nswera.asn.au) website page.

- [AERA Rulebook](#)
- [AERA Biosecurity](#)
- [Horse Health Declaration Forms](#)
- [AERA Ride Etiquette Policy](#)
- [Starting out in Endurance](#)

Our [Endurance NSW website](#) includes:

- [NSW Ride Calendar](#) with Ride Descriptions, Contacts, and maps to ride Bases, and links to Nomination Platform
 - [NSW Forms](#) for Horses & Riders
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For more info and ride calendar: www.nswera.asn.au
to complete is to win



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NEW MEMBERS

You could find a ride that is close to you offer to volunteer to learn more about endurance. Contact the Ride Secretary beforehand so they can have a job ready for your experience for you. Not only will you meet great people, you will get a great introduction to the sport and how it flows so that you can feel a little more confident for your first ride. Ride nominations are all online now and all the contact details should be available. A link to the online platform is usually on the nswera.asn.au calendar.

Day Membership

To take part in an Introductory (1-30km), Intermediate (40- 60km) or micro-marathon (3 x 15-25km/day) ride you only need to take out Day Membership and sign a Day Membership Waiver at the event. Riders under 17 in the year of the ride will need to have the Parent/Guardian Declaration section and Person Responsible sections of the entry form filled out. You can enter a micro-marathon on Day Membership and use 3xDay Cards supplied at the ride. (horse does not require a logbook).

Intermediate Membership

This enables you to take part in unlimited introductory rides (1-30km), intermediate rides (40-60km), micro (3 x 15-25km) and mini-marathons (3 x 40km or 50km) without paying day membership each entry. If you are aiming at doing several rides (and not aiming at 80km rides) over the season this is a more economical membership option. To enter a mini-marathon (3x40km or 3x50km) the rider must complete 2 x 40km prior to entering and must be a member (Intermediate or Senior) and the horse must have a Logbook.

Full Riding (Adult/Junior) Membership

This enables you to take part in any ride provided you have completed your novice requirements - the rider must complete 2 x 40km prior to entering any 80km or above ride.

You are a Novice Rider until you successfully complete three Endurance rides (three rides of 80km to 120km). Until you upgrade you must still compete under novice rules ie ride with time restrictions and limited in ride length (cannot enter rides of greater than 120km or marathon rides). Once you have upgraded to Endurance status you may then enter any endurance or marathon ride.

Membership is going online in 2024 on AERAonline and membership cards will not be required as you will manage your event entries through your AERAonline account.

TRAINING FOR YOUR FIRST RIDE

What Do I Need To Do To Train for a 20km Ride?

You should ride 2-3 times a week in the 3-5 weeks leading up to the ride.

Your most important ride will be your final long ride, in which you should cover around 15 kms in one session. This should be done 1-2 weeks before the ride and completed at around your race pace. Remember, you generally need to take a minimum 1 hour 45 minutes on course (confirm your minimum and maximum ride times with the chief steward). This could equate to roughly 30% walking, 60% trotting and 10% cantering. So there's no need to train excessively, just enough that you and your horse can comfortably complete the distance.

Your longer rides can be done quite slowly, with shorter rides being speed or hill work sessions. Cross training - riding in the arena or jumping - is also great to include in your routine, as it develops a well rounded and balanced horse, and this counts as training too. Learn how to change diagonals in the trot and leads in the canter.

What Do I Need To Do To Train for a 40km Ride?

You should ride 3-4 times a week in the 4-6 weeks leading up to the ride. There are a few different approaches to longer distance training, but generally it's advised that it isn't necessary to cover 40kms in one hit to be fit for the distance. Rather you can build your distance cumulatively (ie, cover 40kms over 5 days or so).

So around two weeks before the ride you might have built to a maximum training load of:

- 10km faster session (averaging 14km per hour)
- 15 - 20km steady session (competition pace or a bit slower, averaging 10km per hour)
- 5 - 10km quiet ride and / or arena / cross training ride

Don't increase your distance or speed too quickly or you risk injuring your horse. In the week before the 40km event aim to ride 2-3 times up to approximately 10km at a nice steady pace.



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Slow and steady is the best way to compete, complete, and set your horse up for a long career in endurance. REST is also vital. Rest is when your horse builds muscle and gets stronger - don't be tempted to overdo it.

Your longer rides can be done quite slowly, with shorter rides being speed or hill work sessions. Cross training - such as riding in the arena or jumping - is also great to include in your routine, as it develops a well rounded and balanced horse, and this counts as training too.

Remember, you can not travel faster than 3 hours in a 40 km event, ie a maximum of 14km per hour (10km in 40 minutes). This could equate to roughly 10% walking, 70% trotting and 20% cantering (that's the fastest you can go, you can of course travel slower).

WHAT SHOULD I PACK FOR THE RIDE?

For the Rider:

- Food, drink
- Riding gear - don't forget your helmet (no helmet, no ride!)
- Cash food from the canteen, or raffle tickets, etc as EFTPOS may not be available
- Any medications or painkillers you may need and a basic first aid kit
- If camping then tent, bedding, etc.

HANDY TIP:

Don't use your new gear for the first time at a ride - this goes for horse and rider! Make sure you've tested everything so you don't get any nasty surprises.

WHAT SHOULD I PACK FOR THE RIDE?

For the Horse:

- Saddle
- Clean saddle blanket (important to be clean, dirty gear can rub)
- Headgear (bridle, hackamore, headstall and leadrope)
- Leg boots if usually used
- Hoof boots if usually used / as a spare if shoe is thrown
- Rugs as required
- Sponges, scrapper and clean towel for strapping with
- Hoof Pick
- Grooming brushes
- Stethoscope or heart rate monitor & thermometer
- Feed and water buckets
- Plenty of fresh hay
- Horse feed (keep grains or high carb feeds to a minimum prior to the ride and save these for after the ride)
- Any supplements you typically use, the most important being an electrolyte
- If staying overnight you MUST bring a yard which will adequately retain your horse. Practice at home first.



Don't forget to watch our You Tube videos - www.nswera.asn.au/get-started
For more info and ride calendar: www.nswera.asn.au
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I'M AT THE RIDE - WHAT NOW?

When you first arrive:

You may be required to show your Horse Health Documents (Temperature log) to a Gate Steward so make sure you have those handy. Otherwise take them to the office when you are up to enter. All nominations and entries are done online before the event and the Nomination information will tell you whether to bring a hard copy of your Entry Form or not.

Firstly, find a space to park your float and offload your horse. Take them for a short walk and offer them food and water to let them unwind after the float trip. If you're setting up a yard, do so now. If not make sure your horse is safe and secure and then head to the Ride Office. Take your HDD and a digital copy of membership card (if you are a member).

The ride organisers will give you a riding bib with a number on it, which you must wear on the outside of all other clothing (even if it's raining) and possibly an ETS Tag, and a vetting card for your horse. You can ask them any questions you may have. Now you are entered and you can head back to your horse. You should wear your bib when you take your horse up for the pre-ride Vetting.

HANDY TIP:

Before entering trot your horse up and down to make sure they haven't injured themselves on the way to the ride.

STARTING THE RIDE - PRE-RIDE TALK

You will get a verbal briefing before starting your ride. You must attend pre-ride talk. You will also be given a phone number for contact if required. Make sure you put this in your phone.

You must also give your rider number to the chief steward or ride organiser before leaving the ride base.

You can leave up to (but no later than) 10 minutes after the official start time if you are worried your horse will get very excited at the start. But do not leave without having your number checked off.

HANDY TIP:

You're working hard too! Don't forget to take care of yourself by eating, drinking and taking electrolytes if needed. Your horse can only be as good as you are.

FOLLOWING THE COURSE

A rider should not get lost due to course marking, however you must also be aware that there is a degree of personal responsibility on you to go the right way. It is easy to get distracted and miss a turn, follow other competitors, or become disoriented when tired.

There should be an arrow to indicating a turn, an arrow on the turn, and a confirmation arrow after the turn. Don't look backwards as some tracks run both ways.

If you think you are lost consider if there is evidence of other horses having travelled this way. If so, continue for a short distance and check if there is a marker ahead. Call the mobile number supplied at pre-ride but make sure you can explain where you are first, ie what event you are in, what colour arrow you are following, the last check point you went through was (Check Point 2) and that was roughly (4km/20) mins ago, or give GPS co-ordinates if possible.





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RIDER ETIQUETTE

While out riding please be polite and friendly to the volunteers at the check- points and gates as they are helping to run the ride for your pleasure.

When giving numbers at a checkpoint call your number out and wait for the number to be called back before continuing. It is the RIDERS responsibility to ensure checkpoints record your number. Failure to do so can result in elimination.

Remember also that checkpoint people can help you – if you or your horse are not able to continue wait at a checkpoint and they will get help to you. If you are unable to make it to a checkpoint ask another rider to pass the message on and stay where you are. Endurance riders look after each other, so don't hesitate to ask for help and don't leave a rider in trouble!

Horses who may kick should wear a **red ribbon** in their tail to warn other riders to give that horse plenty of personal space on the trail. Riders who have horses who kick must also manage their horses behaviour. You must not put other people or horses in danger through the behaviour of your horse.

Stallions wear **blue ribbons** in their tails. Most endurance stallions are extremely well behaved but as a courtesy it's best not to ride too close. (particularly if you have a in-season mare).

If you want to pass a rider or group of riders in front of you, call out to the rider/group that you wish to pass on the left or the right, whichever is most suitable – if there is more than one horse passing call out the number as well, i.e. "3 horses passing on your left when you're ready". The other riders should then move to the side and acknowledge your request, so you can pass and move on out of their way.

Ride to road rules – if on a road do not ride in the middle or on the wrong side of the road. This is an important safety note to ensure you are visible to cars.

When at water stops on course, be mindful of other horses. Allow your horse to drink as much as it needs, but move on quickly once done to allow others access.

In essence, have a wonderful time, use common sense and be friendly to volunteers and other riders.

HANDY TIP:

All your hard work has paid off - now don't forget to enjoy yourself!

AFTER THE RIDE - STRAP YOUR HORSE

Strap your horse and present to the vets within 30 minutes of crossing the finish line. Your ride is not over yet!

Even if you needed a float ride back to base, everyone has to present to the vet for a final time. As you cross the finish line your time will be noted and a vetting slip written up. Make sure you pick it up. That will have your finish time and a vetting time 30 minutes later written on it. Most rides allow "early vetting" within 30 minutes but you **MUST** present at the vet ring by 30 minutes or you will be disqualified.

Take your horse back to camp, put on a halter and take all the tack off including any brushing boots or bandages. You can leave hoof boots on if you wish.

If it's hot even moderate exercise is probably going to raise your horses' temperature and heart rate. Your horse must have a heart rate of 55 bpm or less to pass the vet check. Cooling your horse down to a normal temperature will aid in lowering the heart rate. But if you make your horse too cold the heart rate will go up - so you are aiming for a normal temperature.



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AFTER THE RIDE

Water heats up very quickly and gets trapped in the hair of a horse, so you need to scrape water off soon after putting it on. Then put more water on if needed. If the HR is over 55 or your horse is still obviously hot, strap some more.

If electrolytes are a routine for you, after vetting is a good time to administer those.

Cooling down too much can also cause stiffness or cramping, particularly in the hindquarters. If there is any chill in the air, a towel or light strapping rug over the rump is a good idea. If you are able to monitor the HR then great, do so, otherwise once you have the heart rate right go to the Vets. Offer water, hay (not hard feed as this elevates heat rate) or grass and do some slow walking to make sure your horse doesn't get stiff. Encourage your horse to wee as this also lowers HR.

Watch the time and leave enough so you can slowly walk to vetting. Let the horse pick along the way, and make sure you're still wearing your number bib. Vetting is the same as pre-ride except temperature and respiration are not required. TPRs will record the HR and the vet will do the rest. If you can't run then your strapper or any other helper can trot your horse out. Remember to trot with a loose lead.

Hopefully now you have vetted through successfully and you're all done except for attending the Presentation and receiving your completion prize and handing in your bib.

CONGRATULATIONS. You've completed your first endurance ride. Believe us - it's addictive!

HANDY TIP:

If you have to leave before presentation please bear in mind the office will be very busy processing all the ride data from every event so enquire as to what time you could receive your book/card and completion prize and don't forget to hand in your bib.

Endurance NSW
congratulates Jennifer Gilbertson and Webbs Creek Cattle Baron

Endurance NSW legend Jennifer Gilbertson and Webbs Creek Cattle Baron (St Albans Statesman/ Sparkle) on their way to 11th LWT at Mountain Lagoon 80km yesterday. Jennifer has now completed 330 open rides: **33,922km**, not including her other rides and her overseas km whilst representing Australia, and "Dave" has completed 27 open rides and 600km in other rides. Go you good things.

Endurance NSW
congratulates the sensational sisters Allix & Shelley Jones...

26,700km
233 Open Rides

Allix (left) & Shelley Jones enjoying themselves at Central Ranges 10 Top Up 80km ride 4th June 2023. Allix is riding the 6 year old Anglo Arabian mare Sheila Ellie in her first 80km event and they placed 3rd LWT in 8:16:31. Allix has now completed a whopping 233 Open Rides - or 26,700km and 37 Other Rides - or 1,682km. Is she our youngest rider to assess to many kilometres? Photo: Animal Focus

Shelley Jones rode the 6 year old Anglo Arabian gelding Shellal Blue. Shelley and Blue completed in 8:16:31. Shelley has now completed 46 Open Rides - or 4,210km and 18 Other Rides (27km). Shellal Blue has completed 32 Open Rides (2480km) and 15 Other Rides (609km). We understand Shelley & Blue are TQ23 bound and we wish them the best of luck.

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Endurance NSW
congratulates Modena Schofield & Fortaleza Abbe Rose on their 1st Place LWT & Line Honours in 4:27mins at Johns River Endurance Ride. In Modena's first season out of Junior Division this combination has had a cracking season so far picking up:

- 1st LWT Johns River 80km
- 1st LWT Kiwarrak 84km
- 1st LWT TQ23 160km
- 2nd LWT Stirlings 100km
- 2nd LWT Killaree 80km

Modena has completed 48 rides and 4949km (+13/485km in other rides). Fortaleza Abbe Rose (Abbeline Raphael/Waves of Gold) is a ten year old Anglo mare who has completed 1468km/16 rides (+5/290km other). Last year they took out 1st Place Junior at Johns River as well. The future is bright. Congratulations to you and your support team.

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A FEW OF OUR ENDURANCE NSW LEGENDS

For more info and ride calendar: www.nswera.asn.au
something for everyone



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FOR ALL MEMBERSHIP ENQUIRIES PLEASE CONTACT OUR REGISTRAR:

Jacky Barlow: 02 4938 0081 or email: registrar@nswera.info

Mail Address: NSWERA C/109 Sandy Creek Road MT VINCENT NSW 2323

AERA INC. RULEBOOK

45. HORSE ELIGIBILITY

45.1: Table 16 indicates the minimum age and dentition requirements for a horse to enter each ride type:

TABLE 16: MINIMUM HORSE AGE & DENTITION CRITERIA ON THE DAY OF THE RIDE

To enter any ride the horse shall satisfy **both the minimum age and the dentition criteria** for that ride. Failure to satisfy both criteria shall render the horse ineligible to enter that particular ride.

RIDE	MINIMUM AGE	MINIMUM DENTITION CRITERIA
Introductory	3.5 years	Must show the central incisor teeth erupted and in full wear with the middle incisors erupted but need not be in wear.
Intermediate	4.5 years	Must show a full mouth of permanent teeth erupted but the corner incisors need not be in wear.
Micro-marathon	4.5 years	
Mini-marathon	5 years	Must show a full mouth of permanent teeth erupted and the permanent incisors are in wear.
Endurance <=120km	5 years	
Endurance >120km <160km	5 years	
Endurance >160km	6 years	
Marathon	5 years	