



January 2026

RULES & REGULATIONS

THE GRAND SHOWDOWN

The Grand Showdown Skijoring rules are designed to create a fair, competitive event as well as to ensure safety for spectators and competitors, horse and human alike.

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GENERAL RULES

- 1) All competitors (riders, skiers, and snowboarders) must be present at the competitor meeting each morning.
- 2) Races will start on time. Please be ready.
- 3) Impaired competitors will not be allowed to compete. Determinations will be made at the discretion of event staff.
- 4) Horse/Rider Safety:
 - a) If a horse, rider, or equipment is deemed unsafe, the rider and horse can be asked to leave at any time by the Start Judges or the Head Race Official.
 - b) Horses must be in sufficient physical condition to participate in the extreme sport of skijoring. Our on-site veterinarians will have the authority to scratch a horse for health reasons or concerns pertaining to



the safety of the horse. Any member of the organizing committee can require a horse to be examined by our veterinarian prior to racing or at any time during the race.

- c) No person may abuse a horse while on the event premises, during the event, or at any other time. "Abuse" means an action or omission which causes or is likely to cause pain or unnecessary discomfort to a horse, including but not limited to:
 - Whipping or beating a horse excessively
 - Subjecting a horse to any kind of electric shock device
 - Using spurs excessively or persistently
 - Leaving a horse without adequate food, drink, or exercise
 - d) Any person witnessing an instance of abuse should report it immediately to an Event Official.
 - e) All horse warm-ups will be done in the designated warm-up areas as shown on the event map.
 - f) No horses are allowed in the event village or spectator areas.
 - g) Helmets and protective bodywear (safety vest) are recommended for the rider.
 - h) Leg protection and bell boots are recommended for the horse.
 - i) Horse shoes with traction are recommended.
- 5) Skier/Snowboarder Safety:
- a) All skiers and snowboarders must wear approved snow sport helmets.
 - b) Protective eyewear is recommended.
 - c) Protective gloves are recommended.
 - d) It is strongly suggested that bindings be tested by a professional prior to competing.
- 6) Minor Competitors:
- a) Any rider, skier, or snowboarder under 18 must have a Parent or Guardian sign a parental consent form. That Parent or Guardian must be present during signup AND competition.
 - b) For skiers/boarders under 18, protective eyewear and helmet should be worn during competition.
- 7) All performance-enhancing drugs are prohibited and will not be tolerated. Random drug testing may take place on either day of the event. Teton Valley



Skijoring will follow the protocol of our on-site veterinarian when it comes to performance-enhancing drugs.

- 8) Sportsmanship and Conduct Toward Volunteers and Event Staff: Good sportsmanship is essential for the success of every event. By signing the registration, participants pledge to treat their horse humanely and maintain respectful relationships with fellow competitors, volunteers, and event staff. Yelling, swearing, or using disrespectful language toward any volunteer or event staff member will result in immediate disqualification. This ensures a positive, respectful, and safe environment for all involved. Any behavior that fails to comply with the spirit of friendly competition, including mistreatment of others, may also result in disqualification or a ban from future events. The severity of the conduct will be determined by event officials at their discretion.
- 9) Changes/substitutions of any team member (horse, skier, or rider) are permitted through the close of the registration confirmation period on the Wednesday prior to the event. After this deadline, substitution requests will be considered only in emergency situations and approval is at the sole discretion of race organizers.
- 10) In the event that a rider, skier, or horse is unable to complete a second run—or additional runs as part of another team—due to injury or an issue sustained during the event, substitutions for exhibition runs may be permitted if approved by field judges; however, approval is not guaranteed. Exhibition runs do not count toward official placing.
- 11) Course Inspection:
 - a) The plan for timing of each division's track inspection will be announced during the morning competitor meeting each day.
 - b) During course inspection, skiers will not ski off the top of the jumps.
 - c) Riders will be allowed to walk their horse down the track one time from start to finish only.

RUN LIMITS



- Horses:
 - Horses are limited to a maximum of 3 total runs per day across all adult/teen divisions (Open, Sport, Novice, Snowboard, Women's, Youth). Horses will be allowed 1 additional run per day if they also compete in the Junior division.
 - Example A: Horse A wants to enter twice in Open, once in Snowboard, and once in Junior. This is allowed.
 - Example B: Horse B wants to enter twice in Sport and twice in Women's. This is not allowed; the horse can only run 3 times in adult divisions per day, so they will have to choose either 2 runs in Sport and 1 run in Women's, or 1 run in Sport and 2 runs in Women's.
 - There are also run limits within each division listed in the division criteria below.
- Riders:
 - Riders are limited to a maximum of 6 total runs per day.
 - There are also run limits within each division listed in the division criteria below.
- Skiers/snowboarders:
 - Skiers are limited to a maximum of 4 total runs per day.
 - Snowboarders are limited to a maximum of 3 total runs per day.
 - One person participating as both a skier and a snowboarder benefits from separate run limits for each.
 - Example: Person A skis 4 times in Open and also snowboards 3 times in Snowboard. This is allowed.
 - There are also run limits within each division listed in the division criteria below.
- Teams:
 - Competitors cannot enter an identical team (skier/snowboarder, horse, rider) more than one time within a single division.
 - Competitors cannot enter a team consisting of the same skier/snowboarder and horse more than one time within a single division.



- Competitors cannot enter a team consisting of the same skier/snowboarder and rider more than two times within a single division.

DIVISION CRITERIA

- OPEN SKI DIVISION:
 - Teams will consist of a horse, rider, and skier.
 - Open teams are considered to be the highest-skilled competitors with the fastest and most skilled horses.
 - Horses and skiers entered in the Open division cannot cross-enter in other skill level-based skiing divisions, so they cannot compete in the Sport or Novice divisions.
 - Skiers and riders are each limited to 4 entries within the Open division.
 - Horses are limited to 2 entries within the Open division.
 - This division will be capped at 45 teams.
- SPORT SKI DIVISION:
 - Teams will consist of a horse, rider, and skier.
 - Sport teams are considered to be intermediate-level skill participants.
 - Horses and skiers entered in the Sport division cannot cross-enter in other skill level-based skiing divisions, so they cannot compete in the Open or Novice divisions.
 - Skiers and riders are each limited to 3 entries within the Sport division.
 - Horses are limited to 2 entries within the Sport division.
 - This division will be capped at 35 teams.
- NOVICE SKI DIVISION:
 - Teams will consist of a horse, rider, and skier.
 - Novice teams are considered to be new to the sport, beginner-level competitors riding horses that may be brand new to the sport. The Novice class is not intended to support experienced competitors who happen to be slower; those teams should move up to the Sport division.



- Horses and skiers entered in the Novice division cannot cross-enter in other skill level-based skiing divisions, so they cannot compete in the Open or Sport divisions.
- Skiers and riders are each limited to 2 entries within the Novice division.
- Horses are limited to 2 entries within the Novice division.
- This division will be capped at 25 teams.

- SNOWBOARD DIVISION:
 - Teams will consist of a horse, rider, and snowboarder.
 - Teams may be of a variety of skill levels.
 - Snowboarders and riders are each limited to 3 entries within the Snowboard division.
 - Horses are limited to 2 entries within the Snowboard division.
 - Horses entered in the Snowboard division can also compete in any other division.
 - This division will be capped at 20 teams.

- WOMEN'S DIVISION:
 - This division is offered to teams where both the rider and skier are female. Horses may be of any gender.
 - Teams will consist of a horse, rider, and skier.
 - Teams may be of a variety of skill levels.
 - Skiers and riders are each limited to 2 entries within the Women's division.
 - Horses are limited to 2 entries within the Women's division.
 - Horses entered in the Women's division can also compete in any other division.
 - This division will be capped at 15 teams.

- YOUTH DIVISION:
 - This division is offered to teams including youth ages 17 and under; BOTH the rider and skier/boarder must be age 17 or younger.
 - Teams will consist of a horse, rider, and skier OR snowboarder.
 - Skiers and riders are each limited to 2 entries within the Youth division.
 - Horses are limited to 2 entries within the Youth division.
 - Horses entered in the Youth division can also compete in any other division.
 - This division will be capped at 10 teams.



- JUNIOR DIVISION:
 - This division is offered to teams including kids ages 12 and under; in order to be eligible for awards, BOTH the rider and skier/boarder must be age 12 or younger.
 - Teams will consist of a horse, rider, and skier OR snowboarder.
 - Skiers and riders are each limited to 2 entries within the Junior division.
 - Horses are limited to 2 entries within the Junior division.
 - Horses entered in the Junior division can also compete in any other division.
 - If this division does not fill with prize-eligible teams by a date determined by the event committee, we will then welcome mixed adult/kid teams competing for the experience, though teams including a participant aged 13 or older will not be eligible for awards.
 - This division will be capped at 5 teams.

- A note on division selection:
 - The Open, Sport, and Novice divisions are skill level-based skiing divisions. For these, the skier and horse/rider are trusted to choose the division of competition most in line with their skill level, with consideration to good sportsmanship.
 - A team, skier, and/or horse/rider are strongly encouraged to advance to the next division up if they have already won in the lower division prior to completing registration.

PENALTIES/DISQUALIFICATIONS

- 1) Timing:
 - Timing technology will be buried where the skier start & skier finish are. Horses MUST stay clear of that marked area. Any horse interference with the timing setup, even unintentional, will be grounds for disqualification.
 - Any run made without a timing chip will be considered a DNF (the team will not receive a time for that run). It is the skier's responsibility to make sure they acquire their chip before their run.



- If a timing chip is worn but malfunctions or falls off during the run, the team will be given a time via the backup timing mechanism.
- 2) Start Line:
- If the skier/snowboarder drops the rope BEFORE crossing the start line when the rider and horse have clearly started down the track, the team will be allowed one restart. If the skier/snowboarder drops the rope on the second attempt to start, the team will be disqualified for that run.
 - Horses must stay clear of the skier starting area as the timing equipment will be buried there; any interference with the timing equipment will constitute a disqualification.
 - The Sparby Rule: After “Clear Track” is declared, each team has two (2) minutes to stage and start. If time expires, the team must leave the start area and may take one additional attempt at the end of the division. Exceeding time again results in a DNF (no time) for that day.
- 3) Finish Line:
- Skiers/snowboarders must finish with rope in hand, have at least one ski or snowboard on, and be in an upright position when crossing the finish line.
 - Horses must stay clear of the skier finish line as the timing equipment will be buried there; any interference with the timing equipment will constitute a disqualification.
- 4) Gates:
- There will be a 2-second penalty assessed for every missed gate.
 - i) For skiers, both ski tips and both boots must go around a gate, or the gate is considered missed.
 - ii) For snowboarders, the board tip and both boots must go cleanly around a gate or the gate will be considered missed.
 - There will be a 2-second penalty assessed if a horse hits a gate.
- 5) Rings:
- There will be a 2-second penalty assessed for every missed ring.
 - The skier/boarder must carry the rings through the finish in order to consider it “caught.”
 - If a ring falls or is missing from the stand prior to the skier/boarder approach, no penalty will be assessed for the “missed” ring.
 - If a ring comes apart or is broken, no penalty will be assessed for the “missed” ring.
- 6) Jumps:



- There will be a 5-second penalty assessed if skier/boarder misses a jump.
 - There will be a 5-second penalty assessed if a horse breaks the plane of any jump.
- 7) Ropes:
- If a skier/snowboarder drops the rope after starting and before crossing the finish line, that will result in a DNF or “no time.”
- 8) Protests:
- All protests must be voiced to the finish judge immediately after the run is finished, before the skier exits the race course.
 - The decision of the race jury is final.
- 9) The following will result in a disqualification:
- Infraction of any state or federal law which exists pertaining to the exhibition, care, and custody of horses within the state or country
 - Abuse of an animal on the track and/or evidence that an act of abuse has occurred at any time on the Teton County Fairgrounds premises
 - Failure to dismount and/or present horse and equipment to any official or Veterinarian

RACE EQUIPMENT

- 1) Ropes:
- a) Teton Valley Skijoring will provide several ropes available for competitors to use, though competitors are allowed and encouraged to bring their own ropes.
 - b) Any rope not supplied by Teton Valley Skijoring must be inspected and approved by the Start Master or their designee prior to the start of the race.
 - c) Ropes should be a maximum of 33 feet in length.
 - d) Ropes must be 3/8” or larger in diameter.
 - e) Handles are not permitted on ropes.
 - f) Knots are not permitted on ropes, except for:
 - i) One single knot at the very end of the rope, and
 - ii) Any knots necessary to secure the rope to the carabiner or saddle/rigging attachment point.



- g) Attachments to the saddle:
 - i) Attachment must be to the saddle horn or behind the saddle.
 - ii) If the attachment is behind the saddle, it must be secured to the primary rigging rings of the saddle by a non-elastic attachment so that the pulling rope (including quick release, if in use) is within 6 inches of the cantle. Prior to the race, the Start Master, or his designee may inspect any attachment to the saddle. Attachments found that are longer than 6 inches will require the competitor to fix the length or a disqualification for that run will occur.
 - iii) Quick release shackles are highly recommended.
- 2) Competitor equipment failure will not result in a re-run.
- 3) Electronic timing and backup timing will be provided to ensure accurate competition times.

PRIZES & PAYOUTS

- 1) Payouts:
 - a) **Day Money:** Paid based on the times from each division on Day 1 and Day 2 of the competition. Each day's results are rewarded separately.
 - b) **Overall Money:** Paid based on the combined times from both Day 1 and Day 2 for each team in their respective division. This reflects their total performance over both days.
- 2) Prizes: Unless otherwise specified, prizes will consist of buckles for the overall winners of each division.