



# Equestrian Handbook



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## **Introduction to the Society Equestrian Handbook**

As our equestrian community marks its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we have chosen to examine how we conduct equestrian activities within our Society. There have been a number of changes made to the Society Equestrian Handbook that reflect the experiences we have had and the tremendous growth of equestrian activities. Please take a moment to note the changes, as they reflect a different approach to how we intend to conduct equestrian activities at our events. The most significant changes are intended to streamline the process of authorizing equestrian activities and to address how we conduct individual equestrian authorizations. It places greater emphasis on individual accountability for equestrians and more opportunity to enjoy equines at events. With proper management the inherent risks associated with equestrian activities can be minimized in order to allow us to enjoy these magnificent animals. Please note that the rules relating to certain equestrian activities, i.e. jousting, mounted combat, etc., that were formerly contained in this handbook have been broken out into a separate set of guidelines in order to allow easier dissemination of information relating to those activities.

### Table of contents

<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
Introduction	3
Part I- Equestrian Program	4
A. Society Equestrian Officer (SEO)	4
B. Kingdom Equestrian Officers (KEOs)	4
C. Equestrian Marshals	5
Part II- Equestrian Authorizations	6
A. Authorization Required	6
B. Authorization Types	6
C. Waiver Required	7
D. Maximum Term for Authorization	7
E. Out of Kingdom Authorizations	7
Part III- Equestrian Requirements	7
A. Equestrian Events	7
B. Equestrian Marshal in Charge (EqMIC)	7
C. Rider Responsibility	8
Part IV- Equipment Standards	9
A. Equipment Standards	9
B. Glossary	12
Appendix 1- Insurance instructions	13

## **I. Equestrian Program**

### **A. Society Equestrian Officer**

1. There shall be a Society Equestrian Officer (SEO) to coordinate equestrian activities and maintain a handbook of regulations with agreement of the governing body within the SCA. The SEO is a deputy to the Society Earl Marshal.
2. The SEO shall oversee the Kingdom Equestrian Officers.
3. The SEO shall have authority to investigate and address incidents involving equestrian activities within the Society. This authority includes the right to sanction individuals who engage in inappropriate behavior, up to and including the removal of equestrian authorizations.
4. The SEO shall have the authority to warrant deputies to assist in conducting equestrian activities. Their authority will be as determined by the SEO, and may include serving as equestrian marshals. Upon the appointment of a new SEO all existing deputy warrants will terminate.

### **B. Kingdom Equestrian Officers**

1. Each Kingdom that intends to conduct equestrian activities shall designate a Kingdom Equestrian Officer (KEO). This designation shall be made by the Kingdom Earl Marshal and Crown and should consider the individual's experience and familiarity with equestrian activities within the Society. Each Kingdom is free to title their KEO as they deem fit.
2. The duties of the KEO include:
  - (a) Oversight of equestrian activities within the Kingdom. The KEO shall have authority to investigate and address incidents involving equestrian activities within their Kingdom. This authority includes the right to sanction individuals who engage in inappropriate behavior, up to and including the removal of equestrian authorizations.
  - (b) Reporting as follows:
    - (1) Quarterly reports- The KEO must generate, at minimum, quarterly reports on equestrian activities to the Kingdom Earl Marshal with a collateral report to the Society Equestrian Officer.
    - (2) Accident reports- In the event of an injury to a person or animal, requiring medical attention, occurring at a Society-sponsored equestrian activity, the KEO will make an oral report to the Kingdom Earl Marshal, Kingdom Seneschal and the SEO within 24 hours of being notified of the incident, followed by a written report to the same within 72 hours delineating the circumstances of the incident. If the injury is to a person, then a copy of the report should also go to the Kingdom Chirurgeon.
  - (c) Maintaining a roster that indicates those individuals warranted as equestrian marshals, as well as those authorized to participate in equestrian activities.
  - (d) Monitoring the mandatory notification of the SCA corporate office of SCA equestrian events and payment of appropriate fees.
  - (e) Maintaining records relating to equestrian matters, including but not limited to all incident reports, and copies of insurance forms after receipt from the Equestrian Marshal in Charge (EqMIC) of equestrian events. The KEO shall verify that waivers are handled in compliance with Kingdom procedures.

- (f) Upon assuming the office of KEO, providing the SEO with current contact information.
  - 3. The KEO shall have the authority to warrant deputies to assist in conducting equestrian activities. Their authority will be as determined by the KEO, and may include serving as equestrian marshals. Upon the appointment of a new KEO all existing deputy warrants will terminate.
- C. Equestrian Marshals.
- 1. General Requirements: There are three near-equal priorities in marshaling; safety, fair witness, and showmanship. Overemphasizing any one at the expense of the others will tend to make the equestrian activities less enjoyable for everyone (although, if you must go overboard on one, pick safety).
  - 2. A Marshal may be authorized after demonstrating the ability to oversee equestrian activities, judge an equestrian's authorization, and inspect weapons and equipment.
  - 3. Unless warranted or rostered by the KEO as an officer of the kingdom, a marshal may not be the Marshal in Charge of an event or sign the paperwork to authorize equestrians.
  - 4. Kingdoms may have other types of Marshals other than Authorized Equestrian Marshals (local Knight Marshals, Constables, etc.) as they see fit. These individuals may be warranted or rostered by the KEO of the Kingdom. However, unless the marshal has undergone a Marshal's Authorization, they shall not give final approval of the suitability of weapons or equipment, or be involved in the authorization of participants.
  - 5. Only the KEO or a designated Deputy may perform a Marshal's Authorization. They must witness the authorization and execute the appropriate paperwork to ensure that the authorization is registered. At a minimum, a Marshal's Authorization shall include the following:
    - (a) The candidate must have a good working knowledge of the Equestrian Handbook and any additional Kingdom rules or conventions.
    - (b) The candidate must be willing to enforce the Equestrian Handbook and any additional Kingdom rules or conventions.
    - (c) The candidate must have a good working knowledge of the Society equestrian equipment standards and any additional Kingdom equestrian equipment standards.
    - (d) The candidate must demonstrate the ability to conduct an inspection of armor, weapons and equipment used in equestrian activities.
    - (e) The candidate must demonstrate the ability to conduct an inspection of equestrians.
    - (f) The candidate must demonstrate an awareness of the risks inherent to equestrian activities.
    - (g.) The candidate must demonstrate the ability to safely control SCA equestrian activities to minimize those risks.
  - 6. The KEO or a designated Deputy may restrict the ability of an Authorized Marshal to authorize equestrians in whole or for certain activities.
  - 7. All warranted or rostered marshals shall be members of the Society for Creative Anachronism Inc.

## II. Equestrian Authorizations

- A. Authorization Requirements. An individual must be an authorized equestrian in order to ride at an event. The only exceptions to this requirement are:
1. An individual in the process of authorizing under the supervision of an Equestrian Marshal.
  2. An individual being led in a processional. The groom leading the horse shall be an authorized equestrian.
  3. Individual[s] demonstrating an activity with the approval of the Kingdom Equestrian Officer. The Equestrian Marshal in Charge of the event (EqMIC) shall oversee the demonstration. This demonstration is subject to the following requirements:
    - (a) Equestrian waiver[s] must be executed prior to conducting any demonstration under this exception.
    - (b) The demonstration must be conducted under the supervision of a warranted equestrian marshal.
    - (c) The EqMIC shall include any waivers signed pursuant to this exception with their event report. Additionally, a description of the demonstration and any comments or concerns should be included in the report.
- B. Authorization Types. Equestrians are authorized to participate according to the activities they engage in. Authorizations shall take place at a SCA activity such as an event and/or practice. See III. Event Requirements.
1. General Riding. An individual may be authorized solely for riding. In conducting an authorization, the Authorizing Equestrian Marshal should consider the following:
    - (a) The individual must demonstrate familiarity with the Society Equestrian Handbook, any Kingdom specific equestrian requirements, and the nature of equestrian activities within the Society.
    - (b) The individual must demonstrate an awareness of the risks inherent to equestrian activities, including recognition of how their current skill level relates to the horse they intend to ride.
    - (c) The individual must demonstrate the ability to safely control their horse while engaging in SCA equestrian activities.
  2. Mounted Games. Additionally, an equestrian may be authorized for participation in mounted games. In addition to the foregoing, the Authorizing Equestrian Marshal should consider the following:
    - (a) The individual must demonstrate familiarity with the equipment used in SCA mounted games.
    - (b) The individual must demonstrate the ability to safely control their horse while engaging in SCA equestrian activities while encumbered by the appropriate equipment.
  3. Youths may be authorized as equestrians subject to the following limitations:
    - (a) Youths must be at least five (5) years of age in order to participate in equestrian activities, and be able to demonstrate the ability to control the equine, unassisted, at the gaits and in the activities covered by the authorization sought. Age restrictions required by individual site owners must be observed.

- (b) Youths are prohibited from participating in activities requiring a helm, namely jousting and mounted combat.
  - (c) A parent or legal guardian must be immediately available to the Equestrian Marshal in Charge when a youth is engaged in equestrian activities, including serving as ground crew.
  - (d) A parent or legal guardian must attend the authorization process and execute a waiver authorizing a youth to participate in equestrian activities. The parent or legal guardian must also sign the authorization form.
  - (e) Youths must wear heeled shoes and approved equestrian riding helmets fitted according to the manufacturer's directions and while mounted.
4. Authorizations shall not be issued to persons residing in other kingdoms unless such persons are defined as subjects of the issuing kingdom by specific royal treaty or by exceptions under parts II.4.a and II.4.b.
- (a) Individuals residing in a Kingdom without an EQ program may be authorized in ONE other Kingdom, providing the KEM of the Kingdom the individual resides in approves, and both the KEO and KEM of the sponsoring Kingdom are willing to sponsor said individual.
  - (b) Individuals residing in a Kingdom that has an EQ program, but does not have specialty activities in their program can authorize for these specialty activities in ONE other Kingdom, providing both the KEO and KEM of the Kingdom the individual resides in approves, and both the KEO and KEM of the sponsoring Kingdom are willing to sponsor said individual.
  - (c) For authorizations done under parts II.4.a or II.4.b, The sponsoring Kingdom Equestrian Officer shall maintain a record of all such authorizations and administer them in the same manner as resident authorizations
- C. Waiver requirement. The "Waiver and Informed Consent to Participate in SCA Inc. Equestrian Activities" shall be signed during authorization with only one signature per form. If a State specific "Waiver" is available it should be used. If there is no "Waiver" for your State, then use the "Society Standard Equine Activity Liability Form". An additional sheet may be attached to contain additional personal information. This requirement does not apply to areas and countries that are covered by affiliate corporations.
- D. Maximum term for authorization. No authorization may be for a period greater than 4 years.
- E. Out of Kingdom Authorizations. Valid authorization cards shall be accepted outside the issuing kingdom as proof of authorizations. Visitors with a valid authorization card from another kingdom must abide by the equestrian regulations of the kingdom they are visiting. Kingdoms may define additional requirements before renewing an authorization card for a person who has moved into that kingdom from another kingdom.

### III. Event Requirements

- A. Equestrian events. An autocrat or event steward wishing to include equestrian activities at an event shall arrange for a warranted equestrian marshal to serve as the Equestrian Marshal in Charge (EqMIC).
  - 1. Any event at which equestrian activities occur is considered an equestrian event.
- B. Equestrian Marshal in Charge. An Equestrian Marshal in Charge shall be responsible for the following:
  - 1. At least 45 days in advance:
    - (a) Determine the suitability of the site for conducting equestrian activities.
    - (b) Notifying the KEO of the intention to conduct equestrian activities at the event.
    - (c) Ensuring that equestrian insurance coverage is activated. Equestrian insurance may be requested by the event steward or by the EqMIC with the event steward's approval. Instructions are contained in Appendix 1.
  - 2. Prior to the event:
    - (a) Confirming that insurance has been activated.
    - (b) Performing a site assessment to determine if there is a need for site-specific requirements.
    - (c) Create a veterinarian contact list to be posted.
  - 3. Day of the event:
    - (a) Verify all required signage has been posted in view at the event. There is a guide to the waivers and signage that may be found at: [http://www.sca.org/officers/equestrian/waiver\\_ann.pdf](http://www.sca.org/officers/equestrian/waiver_ann.pdf). The general and state specific waivers may be found at: <http://www.sca.org/docs/AdultEquestrianWaivers.pdf>. Signage does not apply to areas and countries that are covered by affiliate corporations. Please note these links are subject to change and the EqMIC must use the most current forms.
    - (b) Verify that all required health, safety and transportation documentation has been collected from those participating in equestrian activities. This includes collecting signatures on the appropriate waivers from those who have a high probability of coming into contact with equines. **For any event where equidae are to be allowed outside of a designated equestrian area (i.e., allowed to ridden around the site where general activities and attendees are present), an equestrian waiver must be signed in addition to any other required waivers by ALL event attendees (presumably at the gate as they arrive).**
    - (c) Overseeing the equestrian activities, including issues of equestrian participation and conduct. The EqMIC has authority to suspend an individual's right to participate in equestrian activities for the event where they are serving as EqMIC. If necessary, the EqMIC has the authority to advise the seneschal to withdraw SCA sanction from the equestrian portion of an event as outlined in Corpora.
    - (d) Remain on site throughout the duration of an event, practice or demo where horses are present for SCA activities. An EqMIC's duties may be reassigned to a deputy.
    - (e) Post and/or distribute the veterinarian contact list.
  - 4. Reporting the event:
    - (a) The EqMIC must send a written report of each equestrian event to the KEO within 10 business days after the event. This report shall include the total



- number in attendance, number of equines, number of riders, type of equestrian activities performed, and any concerns or incidents arising from the event.
- (b) In the event of an injury to a person or animal, requiring medical attention, occurring at a Society-sponsored equestrian activity, the EqMIC will make an oral report to the Event Autocrat and the KEO within 24 hours of being notified of the incident, followed by a written report to the same within 72 hours delineating the circumstances of the incident. If the injury is to a person, then a copy of the report should also go to the Kingdom Chirurgeon and Kingdom Seneschal.
  - (c) In the event of a suspension of an individual's right to participate in equestrian activities, the EqMIC should include in their report a description of the circumstance that led to the suspension. The report should also include the names and contact information of parties or witnesses to the incident, as well as any statements relating to the incident.
5. The EqMIC may designate other warranted Equestrian Marshals to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities. In the event of an infraction or incident, an Equestrian Marshal must report to the EqMIC, who shall undertake to resolve the issue as set out in section 3 (c) above.

#### C. Rider responsibility.

1. In order to participate in equestrian activities, each equestrian must accept responsibility for the following:
  - (a) Taking reasonable and prudent steps to ensure the well being of any equines over which they have control.
  - (b) Determining if there is a mount suitable for their use. They should consult the owner of, or person familiar with, any equine that they are not already familiar with prior to mounting.
  - (c) Determining if there is suitable tack or equipment for their use.
  - (d) Limiting their participation to those activities in which they can maintain control of their mount.
  - (e) Exercising discretion when engaging in equestrian activities, recognizing a need to avoid situations that create dangerous conditions. This includes maintaining an appropriate safety zone around the equine.
  - (f) Following the instructions of any equestrian marshals, in particular the instructions of the EqMIC.
2. Failure to fulfill the above responsibilities may result in suspension of the rider's privilege to participate in equestrian activities for the duration of the event.

## IV- Equipment Standards

#### A. Equipment Standards: All equipment must be inspected for use prior to engaging in equestrian combat activities.

1. Armor requirements:
  - (a) Helm.
    - (1) Helms must be of rigid materials (18-gauge mild steel or equivalent).  
Fencing masks are acceptable for mounted crest combat use only.

- (2) Face guards shall prevent a 1-inch (25.4mm) diameter dowel from entering into any of the face guard openings.
- (3) The face guard shall extend at least 1-inch (25.4mm) below the bottom of the chin and jaw line when the head is held erect.
- (4) All movable visors shall be attached and secured in such a way that there is minimal chance that they will become detached or come open in normal mounted combat or jousting use.
- (5) There shall be NO major internal projections; minor projections of necessary structural components shall be padded. All metal shall be free of sharp edges. Face guard bars or mesh should not attach to the interior of the helm, unless of structurally superior design and workmanship.
- (6) All parts of the helm that might come into injurious contact with the wearer's head shall be padded with a minimum of ½-inch (12.7mm) of closed-cell foam or equivalent padding, or shall be suspended in such a way as to prevent injurious contact with the wearer during combat. Additional padding is not required for fencing masks used for mounted crest combat only.
- (7) All helms shall be equipped with a chinstrap or equivalent means to prevent the helm from being dislodged or metal contacting the wearer's face during combat. An equivalent might be, for example, a bevor or a chin-cup suspension system. A "snug fit" is NOT an equivalent. The chinstrap shall be at a minimum a ½-inch (12.7mm) in width and shall not be placed in the helm in a manner that could strangle the wearer.
- (b) Crests for mounted crest combat.
  - (1) Crests shall be at least 5-inches in height.
  - (2) The crest must be constructed so as not to present an undue hazard if a rider should land on it, or a horse step on it.
  - (3) The crest must be attached in such a way so as to be easily dislodged by a minimal force blow. Velcro or similar methods are recommended.
- (c) Neck Armor. The neck, including the larynx, cervical vertebrae, and first thoracic vertebra must be covered by one or a combination of the following and must stay covered during typical combat situations, including turning the head, lifting the chin, etc.
  - (1) The helm.
  - (2) A gorget of rigid material or heavy leather, lined with ¼-inch (6mm) of closed cell foam or equivalent padding.
  - (3) A camail or aventail of mail or heavy leather, lined with ¼-inch (6mm) of closed cell foam or equivalent padding.
- (d) Body. Foam tipped jousting only and suggested for heavy mounted combat - rigid material covering chest and torso. Standard equestrian riding vests are deemed equivalent.
- (e) Groin. Foam tipped jousting only - groin area must be protected by sufficient means including saddle or armor.
- (f) Hands.
  - (1) Heavy mounted combat and mounted crest combat - leather gloves.
  - (2) Foam tipped jousting - hands must be protected. This can include use of a shield, demi or full gauntlets, or equivalent (i.e. vamplate on lance).
- (g) Leg, arm, and shoulder protection - armor recommended, but not required.

- (h) Shields: The shields must be constructed of rigid, non-brittle, materials. Recommended is ½-inch plywood. The edges should be blunt and corners rounded.
  - (i) Horse. Required for mounted combat only and are recommended for jousting.
    - (1) Eye protection - acceptable eye protection should stand clear from the eye in all directions by a minimum of ¾ of an inch. Take care to make opening large enough and pad well.
      - a. A chanfron or other approved eye protection which incorporates pierced metal cups, heavy wire mesh or grillwork.
      - b. Blinker style. The lexan/acrylic eye protection used by jockeys and trainers at the racetrack. The blinker must use transparent full eyecups. Partial eyecups are not an acceptable substitute. Eye protection of this sort may be incorporated into a period horse garment providing the garment ensures proper placement of the eyecups at all times.
      - c. Police Riot gear. Full-faced riot protection made of 1/8 inch lexan attached to the bridle of the horse.
2. Weapon requirements.
- (a) Single Handed weapons.
    - (1) Mounted Crest Combat. "Boffer" weapons are to be used in this activity.
      - a. Base material shall be schedule 40 ½-inch PVC plastic pipe. Both ends must be capped, but accessible to marshals for inspection' to the requirement for end caps to the swords.
      - b. Minimum ½-inch closed cell foam padding over all striking surfaces.
      - c. Minimum diameter of 1 ¼-inch.
      - d. If quillions are used they should not extend more than 1 inch beyond the hand when held.
      - e. Thrusting tips are not allowed in mounted crest combat.
    - (2) Heavy Mounted Combat. Sturdier 'Boffer' style weapons are used in this activity.
      - a. Base material may be 1 inch diameter rattan or schedule 40 ¾-inch PVC plastic pipe. If PVC pipe is used as the base material, both ends must be capped.
      - b. Minimum 1/2 inch closed cell foam padding over all striking surfaces.
      - c. Minimum diameter of 1 ¼-inch.
      - d. Cutting edge shall be marked in a contrasting color.
      - e. Swords shall have a hand guard, such as a basket hilt, quillions, or equivalent.
      - f. Maximum weight should not exceed 4-pounds.
      - g. Thrusting tips are ~~not~~ allowed in mounted combat.
    - (3) Weapons constructed other than as set out above may be approved on a kingdom level basis for use in Mounted Crest Combat or Heavy Mounted Combat. Construction methods for these weapons vary; therefore only weapons equivalent to the weapons described above shall be used. If there is a question regarding equivalency, the KEO shall make the determination.
    - (4) Mounted Games. Riders may use hand held weapons made of non-brittle materials. All tips and edges should be blunted.
  - (b) Lances, spears and javelins.

- (1) Foam tipped lances.
  - a. May be up to 12-feet in total length.
  - b. The lance shall be constructed in three sections including the tip, middle, and base. The tip and the base will socket into the middle section.
  - c. Lances must use a foam tip extending at least 22-inches beyond the middle section. Approved foams are expanded polystyrene foam (Styrofoam) or Extruded Insulation Foam, of 2-inch diameter and 2-lb./ft<sup>3</sup> density.
  - d. The middle section consists of a cardboard tube with a 2-inch interior diameter and a maximum of a 1/8-inch side wall.
  - e. The base section may be made of any non-brittle material. The maximum length of the base section is 45-inches, including a recommended 6 inches extending into the middle section. It is recommended the base section be carved from wood.
- (2) Spears and javelins
  - a. May be up to 9-feet in total length.
  - b. Spears and javelins may be equipped with metal tips.
- (3) Quintain and Ring Lances may be up to 16-feet in length
- (c) Bows
  - (1) Bow poundage is not to exceed 35-pounds for use with target arrows and not to exceed 50-pounds for combat arrows.
- (d) Arrows
  - (1) All arrows should be inspected prior to each use.
  - (2) Combat arrows must be constructed according to Society standards.
3. Tack. Riders are required to use tack sufficient to allow them to maintain control of their equine. Such tack traditionally includes use of a bridle and saddle, however other combinations of tack may be allowed upon demonstration of control of the horse to the satisfaction of the EqMIC.

## B. Glossary.

1. Rigid material:
  - a. Steel of no less than 18 gauge, or aluminum of no less than 1/8-inch (3mm).
  - b. Other metals of sufficient thickness to give similar rigidity to those listed above to include treated steel or aluminum.
  - c. High impact resistant plastics such as ABS or polyethylene of sufficient thickness to give similar rigidity to those listed above.
  - d. Heavy leather (as defined above) that has been hardened in hot wax, soaked in polyester resin (properly catalyzed), or treated in such a manner as to permanently harden the leather.
  - e. Two layers of untreated heavy leather.
  - f. Other materials equivalent to those items listed above (Any armor of unusual construction or material must meet the approval of the Kingdom or Principality Earl Marshal or their designated deputy.)
2. Non-brittle: Shall refer to material that will not break or shatter upon being subjected to a stiff strike.

## Appendix 1- Insurance Ordering Instructions

The Equestrian Marshal in Charge is responsible for ensuring that the SCA equestrian insurance policy has been activated whenever an equine attends an SCA event.

Ordering an Equestrian Insurance Certificate is mandatory for parades and demos where horses and riders are representing the SCA. When ordering the Insurance Certificate, use the name and address of the sponsor of the parade or demo.

### *Definitions*

**Additional insured:** An additional party (other than the SCA, Inc.) to whom some of the protection of the insurance policy is extended for the duration of the event, and who is as a result named in the certificate as being covered by the insurance policy. Normally a site owner will require “additional insured” language as part of the site contract if this is necessary.

**Certificate:** A document provided by the insurance company certifying that the insurance policy has been activated for the event.

**Certificate holder:** The site owner or their agent to whom the certificate is intended to communicate the existence and validity of the insurance policy.

**Event coordinator:** The person requesting the certificate, usually either the Autocrat, Equestrian Liaison, or the EqMIC.

### *Insurance Fees*

Current ordering instructions and fee schedules can be found at [www.sca.org/docs](http://www.sca.org/docs). Scroll halfway down the page and find it under the *Insurance* heading. Read both documents and follow the directions. <http://www.sca.org/docs/pdf/insurancecert.pdf>

### *Insurance Timeline*

*45 days before the event.* The EqMIC should verify that the event coordinator has ordered the equestrian insurance.

*30 days before the event:* Both the request to activate the insurance and the payment must have reached the SCA corporate office 30 days before the event in order to avoid the \$100 late fee.

*Less than 30 days before the event:* It is recommended the EqMIC should send the KEO a copy of the insurance certificate prior to the event.

### *Insurance for Practices*

Multiple regularly scheduled practices may rely on a single equestrian insurance certificate (and a single activation fee) for an entire calendar year. The following restrictions apply in this case, and must be specified when the certificate is ordered:

1. The location of all practices must be the same.
2. The dates for all practices must be specified in advance.
3. The times must be single contiguous time spans of not more than 12 hours occurring on non-consecutive days.

Any variations from the pre-determined practice schedule would constitute a unique event and would require an independent activation of the equestrian insurance policy. For more information: <http://www.sca.org/docs/pdf/eq-insurance.pdf>. For ordering instructions: <http://sca.org/docs/pdf/insurancecert.pdf>.