



**PONY CLUB**  
AUSTRALIA



**HORSE ARCHERY**  
**RULE BOOK**  
**2022**



Caitlyn Blumenthal at Horse Archery Australia's annual Bow Camp.

*Photo: Katy Driver*

First published in Australia in 2022

by Pony Club Australia Ltd

ABN 95 090 080 265

[www.ponyclubaustralia.com.au](http://www.ponyclubaustralia.com.au)

This publication can be downloaded for Pony Club purposes.

## Contents

Horse Archery – the Sport.....	4
Background .....	5
1. General rules.....	6
1.1 Riders .....	6
1.2 Horses and desensitising.....	6
1.3 Grading.....	7
1.4 Led horses .....	7
1.4.1 Mounting.....	8
1.5 Practising.....	8
1.6 Spectator and official safety .....	8
1.7 Fitness .....	9
1.8 First Aid .....	9
1.9 Equipment.....	9
1.9.1 Gear check.....	9
1.9.2 Reins and rein ties.....	10
1.9.3 Quivers, arrows and bows .....	11
1.9.4 Targets.....	13
2. Coaching requirements.....	14
3. Courses and tracks .....	14
3.1 Track Rules .....	15
3.2 Scoring.....	16
3.3 Timing.....	17
3.4 Time bonus.....	17
3.5 Time penalties.....	17
3.6 Sample courses .....	18
Arena 30, Walk Course (30m; fits in 40m arena).....	18
Arena 50m, Walk Course (fits in a 60m arena) .....	20
4. More Information for Clubs .....	23
Rally and muster suggestions .....	23
5. Grading.....	24
Grading Assessment sheets: .....	24

## Horse Archery – the Sport

Horse Archery has seen a huge surge in interest around the world in the last 20 years, leading to a vibrant worldwide community today.

There are several themes running through the sport, which can overlap:

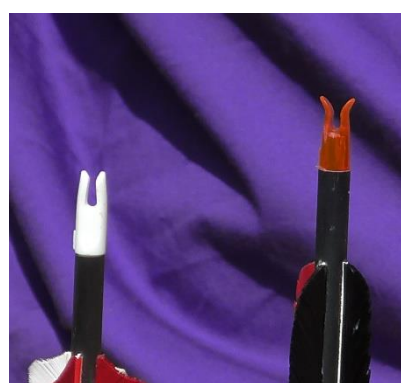
- The research, revival, and practice of traditional horse archery as a martial art
- The development of it as a modern sport. This strand is relevant to horse archery as a Pony Club® sport in Australia.
- Horse archery is also gaining traction as an emotional regulation tool by mental health practitioners.

The modern sport can involve riding a horse along a straight or curved track, or a 'cross country' type course with a rider able to pick their own path. The reins on the horse's neck are attached to stretchable rein ties and the rider is loading arrows into a bow and taking several shots at targets along the track. This can be at walk, trot, canter or gallop depending on the experience level of horse and rider, as well as the style of track.

Mastery of horse archery involves the ability to nock\* arrows onto the string without looking, whilst riding with the horse and keeping your eye on the target, then aiming whilst subconsciously adjusting for variation in distance from and location of the target and the speed of the horse, wind and other variations. Participants say it's a lot to think about, but when it all comes together the feeling really is addictive!

There are some inherent dangers in the sport - you are handling weapons on a moving platform (the horse) - so adherence to safety protocols is mandatory. When properly conducted with a qualified person in charge, it is a thrilling sport to both compete in, and watch.

\* When you put an arrow on the bow string, that's called 'nocking the arrow'.



Photos:  
Left: Pony Club SA.

Above: The end of arrows showing the nock. (Animal Instincts Australia)

## Background

These rules take into account the rules of the [Australian Horse Archery Association \(AHAA\)](#) and the [International Horseback Archery Alliance \(IHAA\)](#)

The AHAA is a national governing body for Horse Archery in Australia for rules, grading and competitions, including the running of State and National Championships and international tournaments held here in Australia. It is responsible for the selection of any invited Australian team to represent Australia in international tournaments. Australia also has a Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA), which studies and recreates mainly medieval European cultures.

The AHAA is affiliated with the International Horseback Archery Alliance (IHAA), the World Horseback Archery Federation (WHAF) and the national horse archery bodies associated with these groups.

Australia was one of the original eight founding countries of the IHAA back in 2014.

NOTE: Ground archery rules and skill sets are not always applicable to horse archery; coaches for this discipline at Pony Club® must be experienced in teaching horse archery. *See Section 2 Coaching.*



Photo: Bianca Stawiarski

## 1. General rules

**Please read ALL rules to ensure you and your Club can enjoy this sport safely.**

**A safety briefing must be held for all participants and helpers on the day, prior to the start of a training session or event.**

### 1.1 Riders

Riders must be a current riding member of a Pony Club® or PCA accredited riding centre. There is no minimum age, but the rider **MUST** be able to demonstrate an independent seat (ie: not balancing themselves with their reins), and show they are able to follow detailed instruction and shoot on the ground safely before being considered suitable for mounted archery.

### 1.2 Horses and desensitising

Riders may use a horse other than their own for horse archery. Previous rally attendance on a borrowed horse is not required, given that each horse requires different levels and lengths of time for appropriate desensitisation to be suitable for this sport. However riders must comply with 1.3 below.

When a horse or pony is loaned to a rider:

- The horse can have a maximum of two riders per day.
- Under 14hh - the rider must be 75kg or under.
- Under 12.2hh – the rider must be 53kg or under.

#### Desensitising

Horse archery is a very new experience for most horses. A horse has to get used to many things, such as being ridden without reins, moving down a track, seeing targets, the rider carrying a bow and arrow and shooting, the sound of the arrow leaving the bow, the changes in rider's body tension that may occur when shooting, and the sound of arrows hitting the target.



*Photo: Bianca Stawiarski  
desensitises a horse to the sound of  
an arrow leaving a bow and hitting a  
target, while the rider rides without  
reins and simulates the shot.*

Desensitising a horse to all this is vital and must be done with every new horse and rider combination, with the help of an experienced horse archery coach. When competing, horses cannot be competed at a level that they have not trained or been desensitised. (ie: If only trained at walk,



cannot enter a trot class). During an activity or lesson, if the horse is found to be insufficiently desensitised for use on that day, or becomes stressed, or the match between horse and rider isn't considered safe for mounted archery, the horse and rider will be placed in a lower group and run through the desensitisation again, or removed from the session for safety reasons.

The process of desensitising can be broken into seven steps. A horse must pass each step. This process is all done at a walk.

Riders will need to know some of these steps to gain proficiency certificates.

They are conducted first from the ground (rider unmounted) and then on horseback.

1. Horse is led by the rider or adult, with coach shooting next to horse
2. The rider mounts and holds the horse's reins while the coach shoots next to rider
3. Rider has the reins tied and uses no hands while coach shoots next to the horse
4. The coach rubs the horse all over with the bow
5. The rider carries the bow down the track with no hands on reins
6. The coach walks with horse, holding one rein, while the rider attempts a shot.
7. The coach can then decide if both the horse and rider are ready for the rider to shoot unassisted at a walk (or led by a parent).

### 1.3 Grading

For a training session, rally or competition, horse and rider combinations must be:

- Graded under PCA rules, (see *Section 4 for Grading*)  
OR
- Assessed prior to the day or on the day, before taking part in horse archery. This allows for riders to use desensitised loan horses.  
Assessment can be at a rally, muster or special training session, by a suitably qualified coach (see *Section 2 Coaching*). This assessment will most often be for the beginner level of Grade 3 Walk or Grade 4 Walk-Led.

Graded riders must:

- Have passed a grading assessment (See grading sheets in *Section 4 - Grading*)
- Be capable of riding the horse they are using for horse archery without reins (led or not led) within the run set up, without posing any significant risk to the rider or other participants.
- Be on a horse that has been properly desensitised.
- Be able to follow direction well (this is more important than age).
- Be able to demonstrate safety procedures for disarming if encountering an issue.

### 1.4 Led horses

Horses can be led at the walk only, (or for short strides at the trot). The person leading must determine the best position for leading depending on the horse's reaction. At times this may be offside and at times this may be nearside. In all cases, safety is paramount. No person leading is allowed to be underneath the shooting position when the rider is loading and shooting.



*Photos: Pony Club SA and Cockatoo Pony Club, Vic.*

#### **1.4.1 Mounting**

Archery bows or arrows cannot be held in the hand or in the quiver when handling a horse on the ground or mounting. Bows and arrows should be handed to the rider once mounted, and the reins secured in a knot through a stretchy strap attached to the saddles dees or a monkey grip. Before dismounting, the rider hands the bow and arrows over as well. (See 1.9.2)

#### **1.5 Practising**

Riders must be supervised at all times when they are holding a bow and arrow. They cannot shoot an arrow while on or off a horse, unless in a designated practice area (if supplied) or on the course itself. Any separate practice area must meet all the safety requirements of a proper course.

#### **1.6 Spectator and official safety**

Riders must not start a run unless the person in charge (usually a field marshal but could be the coach) has designated that the area is clear, and the rider is called to take their turn. For starting procedure, see 3.1.10.

Appropriate separation (recommended distance 5m) between any spectators and riders must be marked out. Anyone found to be shooting towards spectators will be asked to dismount and not be allowed to continue with the session.

*For all distances see Section 3 - Courses and Tracks*

All horses and riders waiting to participate must be in a designated area. Once a run is complete, the horse and rider must go to wait where directed. Non-riding participants (field marshal, other leaders, horse handlers etc ) must wear covered footwear if they are in proximity to horses.



### 1.7 Fitness

Any horse found to be insufficiently fit, injured or under stress will be removed from the training session or competition. It is the rider's responsibility to ensure that their horse has been appropriately desensitised, fit for the task and able to be ridden without rein contact, to undertake the activity.

### 1.8 First Aid

An accredited First Aid Officer must be in attendance at any horse archery training or competition. Larger events with >50 competitors will require enhanced medical services.



*Early training can begin on foot, sitting on drums instead of horses, even with suction cup arrows.  
Photos: Pony Club SA, and Horse Archery Australia.*



### 1.9 Equipment

#### **Buying Horse Archery Equipment**

If Clubs or individuals are considering buying gear, they should contact an expert horse archer beforehand as most archery stores do not understand the specific requirements of the mounted discipline. Clubs and coaches are urged to message, email or call the contacts listed at the end of this Rule Book, or the PCA website under Sports, for advice or purchases.

*See Section 5 – More information.*

#### **1.9.1 Gear check**

Riders and horses must undergo a gear check as per [PCA National Gear Rules](#) before the start of a training session or competition. Horse Archery is one of the Gear Check 'Group E' Disciplines. The rules can also be found on the PCA website [www.ponyclubaustralia.com.au/sports/nationalgearrules](http://www.ponyclubaustralia.com.au/sports/nationalgearrules)

Horses that have an exemption for bitless bridles (see the National Gear Rules) and produce it at gear check can be ridden bitless for horse archery.

### 1.9.2 Reins and rein ties

All saddles must have an additional piece of safety equipment - stretchable rein ties - to secure the reins within reach of the rider at all times. Tarp or canopy bungee cords with toggle balls from a hardware store like Bunnings make good stretchable rein ties.

Reins must be knotted at a length that allows for the horse to be stopped/steered with one hand eg just in front of the wither. The bungee cord will allow the horse can stretch out without being pulled in the mouth, and long enough to allow the horse to be able to recover from a stumble. If the reins are quite short anyway the bungee strap can be the link between the rein ends (the wither end) and a monkey grip (right photo)

Normally a set of dressage length reins knotted is ideal, with a second knot at the bungee strap or monkey grip. This keeps them in reach of the rider and stops them falling down



A stretchable rein tie can be made from tarp or canopy bungee cords from a hardware store.



A bungee cord is attached to the saddle dees and the end of the reins knotted around it. See next page for length of rein.



Can I just use a monkey grip to tie the reins to?

A monkey grip can be used to help secure the rein ends, but only with a stretchable bungee cord looped between the monkey grip and the knotted rein ends to allow the horse to stretch forward and down, or recover from a stumble.



This photo shows an appropriate length of rein when the rein ends are tied off around a stretchable rein tie, or bungee cord. The bungee cord is attached to the dees at the front of the saddle, or to a monkey strap.

*Photo: Bianca Stawiarski.*

### 1.9.3 Quivers, arrows and bows

#### Quivers:

Quivers for horse archery are specifically made for the sport and have a variety of styles; the thigh quiver is shown at right. Quivers are adjustable in length for the height of the rider.



#### Arrows:

Arrows must only be carried in a hand or a quiver. Strictly NO arrows will be allowed to be held in boots. Arrows are made from various materials. Commonly used are carbon or aluminum. The arrow's spine (the flexibility of the arrow shaft) must be matched to the bow poundage. Arrow length is usually 4-6cm longer than draw length. Fletching (the fin-shaped aerodynamic stabilisation device attached on the end of arrows) should be feathers, and not plastic.



*Photos of quivers - Left: Animal Instincts Australia; above Horse Archery Australia*

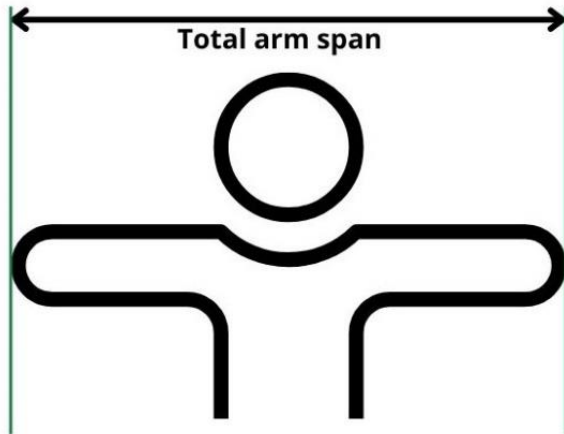
#### Bows

Bows made from various materials are permitted. No sights or arrow rests are allowed for competition, so it is best to train with this in mind. However an exception for walk and trot levels can be the little plastic handles on the training fibreglass bows which can be easier for young riders to use.

Bows are strung with different weight or 'poundage'. Poundage is the weight you are drawing at a measured **draw length** – usually 28 inches or 71cms) Poundage for horse archery is much lower than that used in ground archery. It is better to have a lighter poundage bow when first learning than a



heavier poundage bow, as it may encourage poor form if choosing the later. Generally 20 - 40 pounds is sufficient for children, (15 pounds for small children) while 30-40 pounds+ is being used by many archers in international competitions. Horse archery coaches for Pony Club® level will use 20-25 pound bows. Appropriately matching bow poundage to the archer is another reason qualified coaches are needed when learning this sport.



**Draw length:**

The draw length is calculated using this formula:

Total arm span minus 38cm divided by 2 = draw length.

Eg if total arm span is 150cm, draw length would be 56cm.

**Left or right handed?**

Interestingly, eye dominance is important. You can have a left handed person who is right eye dominant for example. Riders need to shoot according to their dominant eye as they are shooting 'bare bows' that have no sights on them.

**Three positions of the bow whilst rider is mounted**

1. When mounted with no arrow on the string, the bow is held across the wither.
2. (Pictured) When arrow is nocked on the string but rider is not shooting, the arrow should be pointing directly towards the ground, with the bow parallel to the horse's body. This way if the horse turns its head the arrow won't stab him.
3. When shooting, with the rider's hand on the string, the bow should be held vertically and at right angles to the horse with the arrow pointed at the target.



*Photo: Position 2. Bianca Stawiarski. (Open riders are permitted to use costumes when competing.)*

**Safely releasing the bow and arrow if in trouble**

Things can always go wrong, (eg horse shying) and the rider will not have much time to respond. All riders must learn early on how to safely release the bow and arrow(s) if in trouble. They should not get on a horse until they know how to do this.

Step 1: Take a quick look around for any people/horses.

Step 2: Throw the bow and arrows as far away as possible. (You do not want them under the horse's feet).

### 1.9.4 Targets

Targets at Pony Club® level are generally set seven (7) metres from the inside barrier, and normally at around 90cm (at direct centre or bullseye height) above the ground - but they can be at ground level.

Targets shall be angled on the horizontal plane so that the target faces the position indicated on the track diagram, and inclined on the vertical plane so that the face is perpendicular to an archer mounted on an average size horse.

The target faces shall be either:

- a. As standard, a FITA80 x 80cm square target face, divided into five evenly spaced concentric zones.
- b. A round target face with a diameter of 80cm, divided into five concentric circular zones (ie. This is a standard WA80(FITA80) target).

The zones are concentric circles or squares with a diameter of 16cm, 32cm, 48cm, 64cm and 80cm. For training, the colour order does not matter as long there are five different colours.



Examples of easy to make, printable targets.

All targets score as follows (inner ring outwards):

5, 4, 3, 2, 1 points.

These top two photos show targets smaller

than the standard 80 x 80cms, and are for target support ideas.





## 2. Coaching requirements

2.1 Until Pony Club® coaches have some training in horse archery (see 2.2) when using proper arrows, PCA requires Clubs to use qualified AHAA coaches, or other suitably experienced horse archers with a recognised coaching certificate. These coaches are needed to run clinics, training sessions and competition for this sport given the potential risks involved. A current list of these coaches is on the [PCA website](#) and will be updated as required.

2.2 In 2022 current PCA coaches will be able to access training for this sport from horse archery coaches (2.1) either at clinics in their State or online. For access to some qualified coaches, please see *Section 5 – More Information*, or contact your State Office.

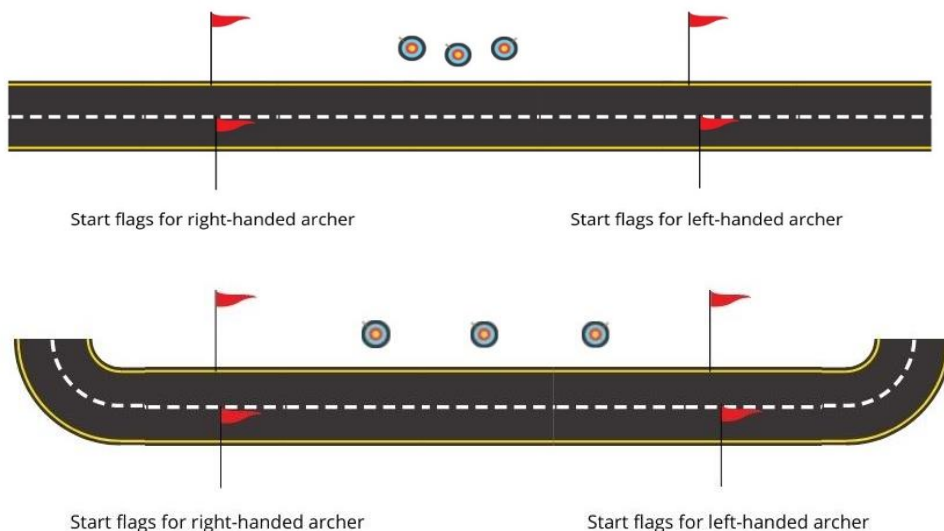
2.3 PCA Insurance cover is in place for members participating in training, fun activities and events complying with these rules, including gear rules, and supervision by PCA coaches or horse archery coaches (as per 2.1).

## 3. Courses and tracks

The most common way horse archery is conducted in Australia is on a straight 90m track, with multiple targets set up along the side; the number depends on the track length. They will be either facing the track, or angled so the rider shoots forward, sideways then backward. The type of track will dictate the length of track, and the type, size, number, and positioning of targets. Pony Club® training tracks can start at 30m (see track set up examples in this section).

The use of shortened tracks for Walk and Trot is encouraged. A slight gradient is also acceptable. Below are two tracks showing start and finish flags and possible positioning of targets.

Tracks can have curved ends, to turn in and out. These can be useful if the area is a bit small for a straight track. The first track below shows targets angled so the rider shoots forward, sideways and then backward (more difficult). They would be spaced further apart than shown here.





Pony Club Australia advises 30m, 50m and 90m tracks for walk and trot runs.

For beginners, the Arena30 track (30m long) can easily fit inside a 40m long arena, and is only run at the walk or the trot. It means you can use the arena fence as the outside edge of the lane, and just have one run of roped fence 1.5 to 3m in. For fence requirements, see Track Rules, below.



One type of course for experienced riders, that is not run on a straight or curved line, is **Hunt Track**. This is like a cross country course, which is generally tackled at canter or gallop and requires crossing a variety of terrain and sometimes over jumps. These courses have a variety of targets along the route and are timed.

### 3.1 Track Rules

3.1.1 All shooting must be towards your own property (not a neighbour's fence or towards a road). You should set a safe clear zone behind the targets of a minimum of 50 metres. This is not possible in all circumstances so when that is the case the targets should be placed much lower, so there is a more acute angle of the shot and, should the archer miss, less chance of the arrow travelling past the target. It will usually bury itself in the ground or skid along it.

3.1.2 The barrier on each side of the track should be constructed so that it is safe for both horse and archer and effective in keeping horses within the track. The suggested height is 50-80cm tall.

3.1.3 Targets are set seven (7m) from the inside barrier, and normally at around 90cm above the ground (90cm is centre of target height) - but can be at ground level especially if you do not have a full 50m clear behind the target (3.1.1.)

3.1.4 If rope is used to mark the track then it shall be suspended in a way that does not present a hazard to horses or riders. It should have multiple easy-break points to avoid entanglement if a horse goes through it. One way is to join rope sections using something like plastic shower curtain rings. Any posts used for this purpose must not present a significant risk of injury to a horse or rider should they fall onto them.

3.1.5 Ideally, the track boundary should widen slightly in a funnel-like manner at both ends, to assist the horse in entering the delineated track for both right handed and left handed riders. Riders can hold the reins when entering and exiting the runway; they are not held between the start and finish flags.

3.1.6 There shall be adequate space beyond the start and finish lines for the horse to enter the run smoothly, and to slow and stop safely. This is not usually an issue at walk and trot.

3.1.7 Unless otherwise specified by the rules for a specific event, the track shall be 1.5m – 3m wide (faster events can be 2m – 4m wide) and both boundaries of the track shall be clearly delineated, usually by a rope barrier or raised earth. The first 5m of track prior to the start / beyond the finish flags, must be straight.

3.1.8 A 25m run-in/out with delineated boundaries, beyond the timing gates at both ends of the track, is suggested for straight track events at the faster paces. The run-outs do not have to be a straight line but should not curve too tightly (the minimum inside curve radius is 10m). If they curve, the direction of the curve should (if possible) be towards the target to assist horses in selecting the canter-lead towards the target (see diagram page 12).

3.1.9 If left-handed riders are in the group, the track set-up must be equally fair to both left-handed and right-handed competitors. The targets must be at the same distances along the track both ways and a safe stopping space must be assured for both directions.

#### 3.1.10 STARTING THE COURSE

When the field marshal/steward is satisfied the run is clear, they will point an arrow at the next rider. The rider will acknowledge by raising their bow over their head.

This is particularly important if riders are entering the run from both directions.

### 3.2 Scoring

Scoring and timing are not essential while riders and horses learn about the sport. But this explains how it is done.

An event is a series of runs scored together. Arrows must be shot only between the start line and finish line.

All targets score as follows (inner ring outwards): 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 points.

The remaining arrows must be in a quiver, belt or sash (never in the rider's boot).

If riders were competing not training, they would be scored zero (0) for a run if:

- They fail to start within 60 secs of starter giving signal to go
  - The horse leaves the track other than through the exit
  - There is a prolonged or tactical break in pace during a run (ie in a trot run, trot must be used between start and finish)
  - The rider falls while on the track \*
- Two falls means withdrawal from a competition and training.

\* A rider must be checked by a first aider or paramedic after a fall, including a concussion check, and can only continue with the medic's approval.

### 3.3 Timing

At walk and trot level, runs are NOT timed. The emphasis is on learning skills.

Canter runs are the only runs timed, and the run needs to be at least 90m. A par time is set for each track length:

- 14s on a 90m track,
- 18s on a 120m track and
- 23s on a 150m track

### 3.4 Time bonus

(Canter level only) Speed points are awarded for completing a run faster than the par time, provided an arrow hits each target. Speed points shall be awarded equal to one point per second (or part thereof) that the run is faster than the par time.

### 3.5 Time penalties

(Canter level only) A time penalty is incurred for exceeding the par time for the track, regardless of the number of targets hit. The time penalty incurred is equal to one point per second (or part thereof) that the run's time exceeds the par time.

*Photos from clockwise:*

*A rider shoots backwards after passing a target  
(Photo: Animal Instincts Australia)*

*Pony Club SA members enjoy a lesson  
(Courtesy PCASA)*

*An arm guard and gloves  
(Photo: Animal Instincts Australia)*





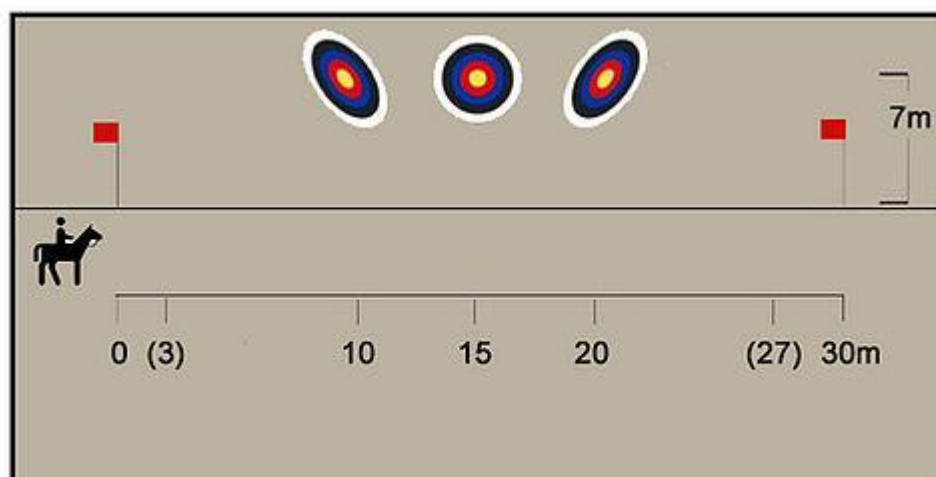
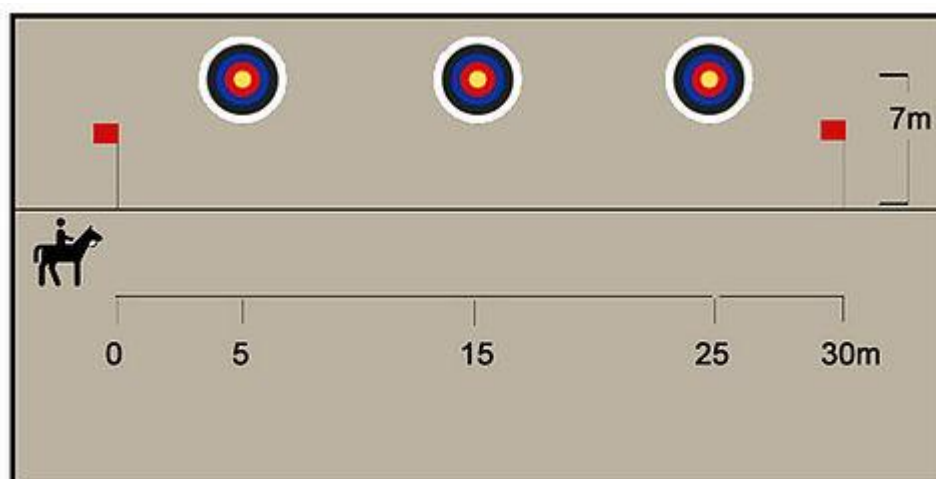
### 3.6 Sample courses

The next pages show sample courses which can be used for walk and trot training.

## Arena 30, Walk and Walk-Led course

### Arena 30, Walk Course (30m; fits in 40m arena)

Course diagram:



**Track required:** 30m track, 1.5m to 3m wide, designed to fit in a 40m long arena

**Equipment required:** Three targets with FITA80 target faces

#### Rules:

- Six runs in total: three runs of the straight-target track and three runs of the angled-target track.
- Targets are set back 7m from the edge of the demarcated run.
- FITA80 target faces (ie 80cm diameter round, 5-zone). Five zone scoring.
- Arrows may be carried in the hand or a quiver.
- A helper may walk with or lead the horse as required.



- No timing. Try to stay in walk, but no penalty for trotting by accident.
- On the straight-target track you may shoot one arrow at each target
- On the angled-target track unlimited numbers of arrows may be shot, the best two hits on each target will score.(Must walk throughout, no halting)

**Scoring:**

- Five zone scoring: (5-4-3-2-1; see target diagrams under ‘Targets’)
- Three bonus points are awarded if a rider scores on all three targets.
- No time constraints; ie. no points lost or gained for rider’s time.

**Developed by:** Claire & Dan Sawyer for HorseBack UK. Source: Pony Club South Australia.

**Benefits:** The 10m spacing between targets ensure that even at walk there is some urgency with nocking. The angulation of targets on the angled track variant is not severe so the course is possible for disabled riders with limited ability to turn in the saddle.

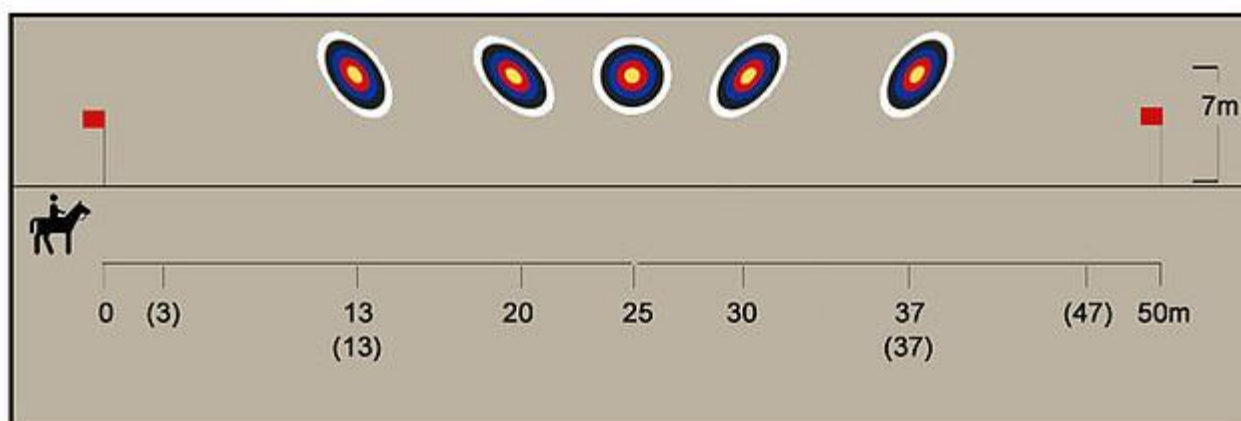


*Photo: Cockatoo and District Pony Club*

## Arena 50, Walk course

**Arena 50m, Walk Course (fits in a 60m arena)**

**Course diagram: (Note left-handed riders start from the other end of the course)**



**Track required:** 50m track, 1.5m to 3m wide, designed to fit in a 60m long arena or be set up in an open field

**Equipment required:** Five targets with FITA80 target faces

### Rules:

- Six runs in total: three runs of the straight-target track and three runs of the angled-target track.
- Targets are set back 7m from the edge of the demarcated run.
- FITA80 target faces (ie 80cm diameter round, 5-zone). Five zone scoring.
- Arrows may be carried in the hand or a quiver.
- A helper may walk with or lead the horse as required.
- No timing. Try to stay in walk, but no penalty for trotting by accident.
- On the straight-target track you may shoot one arrow at each target
- On the angled-target track unlimited numbers of arrows may be shot, and the best two hits on each target will score (must be walking throughout; no halting or trotting)

**Scoring:**

- Five zone scoring: (5-4-3-2-1; see target diagrams)
- Three bonus points are awarded if a rider scores on three consecutive targets.
- Five bonus points are awarded if a rider scores on all five targets
- No time constraints

**Developed by:** Claire & Dan Sawyer for HorseBack UK. Source: Pony Club SA.

**Benefits:**

Possible to set up in a 50m arena. The 10m spacing between targets ensure that even at walk there is some urgency with nocking. The angulation of targets on the angled track variant is not severe so the course is possible for disabled riders with limited ability to turn in the saddle.

*Photo: Cockatoo and District Pony Club*



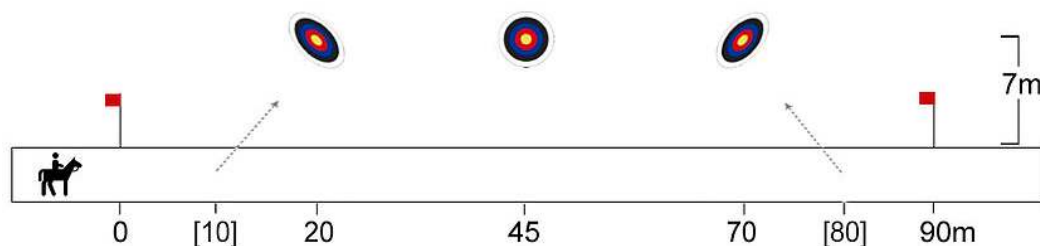
## Australian ('Aussie') Track

### Aussie Track 90m

For walk and trot.

**Course diagram:**

**Track**



**Required:** 90m track 1.5m to 3m wide. Easier to safely set up in an indoor school with several participants as all shooting is directed towards the middle of the 90m run.

#### **Equipment required:**

Three targets with either FITA80 targets (ie 80cm diameter round, 5-zone), stopwatch or timing gates

#### **Rules:**

Bullet Arrows can be held in the hand or in a quiver

- The track set up for the triple shot is different: comprising a forward first shot, a perpendicular 2nd shot, and backwards 3rd shot. The targets are set 7m from the edge of the track, and #1 and #3 are angled towards the track 10m away.
- The Aussie set used in grading and postal matches is six runs in total - three runs of double and three runs of 3-shot

#### **Scoring:**

- Five zone scoring: 5-4-3-2-1 starting at inner circle.
- Three bonus points awarded on the 3-shot if all targets are hit.
- No time constraints; rider should try to stay in the pace they start at (walk or trot) but no penalty for breaking.

Developed by Katrina Kruse – Horse Archery Australia.



## 4. More Information for Clubs

There are experienced horse archery coaches in several states who have been teaching Pony Club® riders and offer everything from:

- Online introductory courses
- Videos
- Coaching clinics
- Clinics with riders' own horses; some also supply horses
- Rally or muster instruction, eg morning session on the ground; afternoon session riding
- Horse archery equipment sales and advice

The current coaches' list is a pdf on the [PCA website under Sports/Competition Rules](#) and is updated as required.

### Rally and muster suggestions

Please see the [Pony Club Australia Discipline of the Month](#) – Horse Archery on the PCA website under 'Sports' for plenty of great ideas and suggestions on how to start your Club's Horse Archery journey.

<https://ponyclubaustralia.com.au/sports/discipline-of-the-month/>





## 5. Grading

There are four levels of PCA grading: These are the recommended track requirements for each.

Level 4 – Walk-Led (30-50m track)

Level 3 – Walk (30-50m track)

Level 2 – Trot (50-90m track)

Level 1\* – Canter/gallop (150m track)

\* NOTE: Level 1 is not yet available to Pony Club Australia members due to the required coach training, which begins in 2022. (See 2.2)

Riders must be tested for grading by an experienced horse archery coach, or a Pony Club® coach who has received introductory training in teaching horse archery (eg through a horse archery clinic) (See Section 2 – Coaching)

### **Grading Assessment sheets:**

The assessment sheets on the following pages for Levels 4, 3 and 2, (Level 1 pending) are based partly on Pony Club SA's Patch (proficiency badge) system.

### **With Thanks**

PCA thanks PCASA and the horse archery coaches Bianca Stawiarski from Warida Wholistic Wellness, Hayley Chambers from Animal Instincts Australia, (Animal & Equine Assisted Learning, Life Skills and Leadership Programs) and Katrina Kruse from Horse Archery Australia and Medieval Sports, all listed on our website, for their assistance with this rule book.

# Horse Archery

## Assessment Sheet: Level 4 Walk - Led

*This Level must be taught and tested by a recognised\* Horse Archery Instructor.*

*The run used for the test course should be 30m long minimum and set up safely according to the PCA Horse Archery Rule Book.*

*Competent riders can skip Level 4 Walk - Led and do Level 3 Walk*

*The Level 4 Walk – Led, and the Level 3 Walk certificates are equivalent to the PCASA Horse Archery Walk Patch*

<b>RIDER NAME</b>		<b>HORSE</b>	
<b>CLUB/CENTRE</b>		<b>VENUE</b>	
<b>EXAMINER</b>		<b>DATE</b>	

Examiner to use C = Competent; NYC = Not Yet Competent

Presentation and Equipment		C	NYC	Examiner Notes
Presentation	Pony Club® uniform as per Pony Club® rules for rallies. It is essential long hair be tied back. The rider's mount must be suitable, as per Rule 1.2 of the PCA Horse Archery Rule Book 2022 which can be found on the PCA website. Mount must be clean with hooves in good condition.			
Extra Safety Wear	Rider to wear an archery glove or thumb ring, depending on shooting style, on the hand holding the string. An arm guard on the forearm of the hand holding the bow is essential at this level and until rider's form is sufficient.			Need to avoid the bow string injuring the rider's forearm.
Reins	Reins must be correctly attached to a stretchy safety strap, which secures reins to the saddle.			The stretchy strap can be attached to saddle D rings, or to a monkey strap or to the breastplate strap over the wither . Reins cannot be directly attached to anything other than the stretchy strap. To allow 'give' if the horse stumbles.
Horsemanship	Rider must demonstrate consideration and kindness to the horse throughout all parts of the assessment.			

Level 4 Walk - Led page 2 of 3

Knowledge of the sport		C	NYC	
Rider's understanding of the basic rules	Rider must know how target points are scored. (Occasionally target colours may vary)			5 points: gold    4 points: red 3 points: blue    2 points: black 1 point: white

	How far from the track will the targets be set?			Seven (7) metres is the standard distance
	Why must you wait for the field marshal (or steward) to start you?			To ensure the track is clear from both directions and spectators are safe.
	Rider to name three track lengths used at Pony Club			Pony Club Australia advises 30m, 50m or 90m tracks for walk and trot runs. (30m and 50m tracks fit in a typical 40m or 60m dressage arena, with room for entering and leaving the track)
	Rider must know at least two stages of desensitising their horse for horse archery.			From the Horse Archery Rule Book, section 1.2
	Rider to explain why you don't mount carrying a bow and arrow.			Legs can get caught in the bow as you mount and horse might take fright. For safety reasons, the rider mounts and then is handed the bow and arrow.

Rider to demonstrate the following		C	NYC	
Safety	Rider to demonstrate the three positions of the bow.			From the Horse Archery Rule Book, section 1.9.3
	Rider must demonstrate how to safely release the bow and arrow(s) if in trouble.			From the Horse Archery Rule Book, section 1.9.3
Proficiency	The unmounted rider to stand in the roped off run, and demonstrate how to correctly shoot at a target seven (7) metres away with a bow and arrow.			It is not necessary for the candidate to hit the target as long as the style is correct, the arrow heads in the right direction and covers several metres.



	Rider must demonstrate capacity to be balanced and safely ride without hands on the reins or saddle (with the horse led).			Rider to walk down the run course while being led, and simulate shooting, At this level rider can halt to shoot.
	Rider must be able to shoot a minimum of one arrow with correct form, from horseback while led at a WALK			Not necessary to hit the target as long as the arrow is in the right direction and covers several metres.
Experience	Rider must have attended at least one instruction session/day. The horse must have been desensitised for horse archery prior to the testing session.			This may be a session prior to testing (eg a half day clinic) or at a previous rally or muster or clinic with a recognised Horse Archery coach.

Examined by:

(Print)	(Sign)	Date

\* A recognised Horse Archery Coach is a Pony Club coach who has completed an approved online horse archery course or a coaching clinic with one of the recognised coaches as per the Horse Archery Rule Book and/or the approved list on the PCA website.



# Horse Archery

## Assessment Sheet: Level 3 Walk

*This Level must be taught and tested by a recognised\* Horse Archery Instructor.*

*The run used for the test course should be a minimum of 30m long and set up safely according to the PCA Horse Archery Rule Book.*

*Competent riders can skip Level 4 Walk - Led and do Level 3 Walk*

*The Level 4 Walk – Led, and the Level 3 Walk certificates are equivalent to the PCASA Horse Archery Walk Patch*

<b>RIDER NAME</b>		<b>HORSE</b>	
<b>CLUB/CENTRE</b>		<b>VENUE</b>	
<b>EXAMINER</b>		<b>DATE</b>	

Examiner to use C = Competent; NYC = Not Yet Competent

Presentation and Equipment		C	NYC	Examiner Notes
Presentation	Pony Club® uniform as per Pony Club® rules for rallies. It is essential long hair be tied back. The rider's mount must be suitable, as per Rule 1.2 of the PCA Horse Archery Rule Book 2022, which can be found on the PCA website. Mount must be clean with hooves in good condition.			
Extra Safety Wear	Rider to wear an archery glove or thumb ring, depending on shooting style, on the hand holding the string. An arm guard on the forearm of the hand holding the bow is essential at this level and until rider's form is sufficient.			Need to avoid the bow string injuring the rider's forearm.
Reins	Reins must be correctly attached to a stretchy safety strap, which secures reins to the saddle.			The stretchy strap can be attached to saddle D rings, or to a monkey strap or to the breastplate strap over the wither . Reins cannot be directly attached to anything other than the stretchy strap. To allow 'give' if the horse stumbles.
Horsemanship	Rider must demonstrate consideration and kindness to the horse during all parts of the assessment.			

Knowledge of the sport		C	NYC	
Rider's understanding of the basic rules	Rider must know how target points are scored.  (Occasionally target colours may vary).			5 points: Inner gold ring 4 points: red 3 points: blue    2 points: black 1 point: white

	How far from the track will the targets be set?			Seven (7) metres is the standard distance
	Why must you wait for the field marshal (or steward) to start you?			To ensure the track is clear from both directions and spectators are safe.
	Rider to name three track lengths used at Pony Club			Pony Club Australia advises 30m, 50m or 90m tracks for walk and trot runs. (30m and 50m tracks fit in a typical 40m or 60m dressage arena, with room for entering and leaving the track)
	Rider must know at least two stages of desensitising their horse for horse archery.			From the Horse Archery Rule Book, section 1.2
	Rider to explain why you don't mount carrying a bow and arrow.			Legs can get caught in the bow as you mount, and horse might take fright. For safety reasons, the rider mounts and then is handed the bow and arrow.

Rider to demonstrate the following		C	NYC	
Safety	Rider to demonstrate the three positions of the bow.			From the Horse Archery Rule Book, section 1.9.3
	Rider must demonstrate how to safely release the bow and arrow(s) if in trouble.			From the Horse Archery Rule Book, section 1.9.3
Proficiency	The unmounted rider to stand in the roped off run, and demonstrate how to correctly shoot at a target seven (7) metres away with a bow and arrow.			It is not necessary for the candidate to hit the target as long as the style is correct, the arrow heads in the right direction and covers several metres.



	Rider must demonstrate capacity to be balanced and safely ride without hands on the reins or saddle (cannot be led).			The mounted rider to walk down the run course and simulate shooting.
	Rider must be able to shoot a minimum of one arrow with correct form, from horseback at a WALK (cannot be led)			Not necessary to hit the target as long as the arrow is in the right direction and covers several metres.
Experience	Rider must have attended at least one horse archery instruction session/day. The horse must have been desensitised for horse archery prior to the testing session.			This may be a session prior to testing (eg a half day clinic) or at a previous rally, muster or clinic with a recognised Horse Archery coach.

Examined by:

(Print)	(Sign)	Date

\* A recognised Horse Archery Coach is a Pony Club® coach who has completed an approved online horse archery course or a coaching clinic with one of the recognised coaches as per the Horse Archery Rule Book and/or the approved list on the PCA website.

# Horse Archery

## Assessment Sheet: Level 2 Trot

*This Level must be taught and tested by a recognised\* Horse Archery Instructor.*

*The run used for the test course should be a minimum of 30m long and set up safely according to the PCA Horse Archery Rule Book.*

*Riders must have completed Level 3 Walk before attempting Level 2 Trot certificate.*

*Many safety requirements are repeated at this level to ensure rider's understanding.*

*This Level 2 Trot certificate is equivalent to the PCASA Horse Archery Trot Patch.*

<b>RIDER NAME</b>		<b>HORSE</b>	
<b>CLUB/CENTRE</b>		<b>VENUE</b>	
<b>EXAMINER</b>		<b>DATE</b>	

Examiner to use C = Competent; NYC = Not Yet Competent

Presentation and Equipment		C	NYC	Examiner Notes
Presentation	Pony Club uniform as per Pony Club rules for rallies. It is essential long hair be tied back. The rider's mount must be suitable, as per Rule 1.2 of the PCA Horse Archery Rule Book 2022, which can be found on the PCA website. Mount must be clean with hooves in good condition.			
Extra Safety Wear	Rider to wear an archery glove or thumb ring, depending on shooting style, on the hand holding the string. An arm guard on the forearm of the hand holding the bow is essential at this level and until rider's form is sufficient.			Need to avoid the bow string injuring the rider's forearm.
Reins	Reins must be correctly attached to a stretchy safety strap, which secures reins to the saddle.			The stretchy strap can be attached to saddle D rings, or to a monkey strap or to the breastplate strap over the wither . Reins cannot be directly attached to anything other than the stretchy strap. To allow 'give' if the horse stumbles.
Horsemanship	Rider must demonstrate consideration and kindness to the horse during all parts of the assessment.			



Knowledge of the sport		C	NYC	
Rider's understanding of the basic rules	Rider must know how target points are scored.  (Occasionally target colours may vary).			5 points: (Inner gold ring) 4 points: red 3 points: blue 2 points: black 1 point: white (outside)
	How far from the track will the targets be set?			Seven (7) metres is the standard distance
	Name two popular ways a three target course is set up, including distances			From the Horse Archery Rule Book, section 3.6
	Why must you wait for the field marshal (or steward) to start you?			To ensure the track is clear from both directions and spectators are safe.
	What is the purpose of an (1) arm guard and (2) archery glove?			(1) To protect the archer's arm from damage from the string of the bow. (2) to protect the fingers from the bow string
	Rider must know at least three stages of desensitising their horse for horse archery.			From the Horse Archery Rule Book, section 1.2
	Rider to explain why you don't mount carrying a bow and arrow.			Legs can get caught in the bow as you mount, and horse might take fright. For safety reasons, the rider mounts and then is handed the bow and arrow. If the rider is wearing a quiver, it may be fine to mount with the arrows (coach decides).

Rider to demonstrate the following		C	NYC	
Safety	Rider to demonstrate the three positions of the bow.			From the Horse Archery Rule Book 1.9.3
	Rider must demonstrate how to safely release the bow and arrow(s) if in trouble.			From the Horse Archery Rule Book, section 1.9.3
Proficiency	The unmounted rider to stand in the roped off run, and demonstrate how to correctly shoot at a target seven (7) metres away with a bow and arrow.			It is not necessary for the candidate to hit the target as long as the style is correct, the arrow heads in the right direction and covers several metres.

	Rider must demonstrate the capacity to be balanced, and safely ride without hands on the reins or saddle, at the trot (cannot be led).			The mounted rider to trot down the run course and simulate shooting. (May do a practice walk run first)
	Rider must be able to shoot a minimum of one arrow with correct form, from horseback at a TROT (cannot be led)			Not necessary to hit the target as long as the arrow is in the right direction and covers several metres.
Experience	Rider must have attended at least one horse archery instruction session/day. The horse must have been desensitised for horse archery prior to the testing session.			This may be a session prior to testing (eg a half day clinic) or at a previous rally, muster or clinic with a recognised Horse Archery coach.

Examined by:

(Print)	(Sign)	Date

\* A recognised Horse Archery Coach is a Pony Club® coach who has completed an approved online horse archery course or a coaching clinic with one of the recognised coaches as per the Horse Archery Rule Book and/or the approved list on the PCA website.



Pony Club Australia  
E: [info@ponyclubaustralia.com.au](mailto:info@ponyclubaustralia.com.au)  
W: [www.ponyclubaustralia.com.au](http://www.ponyclubaustralia.com.au)