

Ski-Joring Rules 2025

Open – Sport – Novice – Junior – Snowboard - Pee Wee Divisions

1. The Ski-Joring Races will have 2 go-rounds. Competitors compete for day payouts and overall.
2. The course length will be a minimum of 600 feet, 12 gates and 3 jumps.
3. In an effort to allow riders to develop up and coming horses for Ski-Joring, riders will be permitted to compete in more than one division. However, no horse or skier will be allowed to compete in more than one division. Exceptions apply for Snowboard and Switcharoo divisions.
4. A rider is limited to four (4) entries for the entire event (a 5th entry is allowable for Switcharoo division). A skier is limited to four (4) entries, but may only compete in one division (a 5th entry is allowable for Switcharoo division). Each horse is limited to two (2) entries and may only compete in one division with the exception of Snowboard and Switcharoo divisions. A horse may run a third time if the third run is in the Snowboard, Junior, or Switcharoo divisions. A Rider/Horse/Skier team may only enter once in that combination. Exceptions apply for Snowboard and Switcharoo divisions. A snowboarder is limited to three entries in the Snowboard division.
5. If you (horse, rider or skier) have won two or more times overall in a division you must bump up a division. The organization rules state “All entries are subject to Board Approval and competitors will be urged to compete in the appropriate division.” If your team is subject to the bump rule and you wish to appeal you may make the request in writing in advance of registration night or by notifying race organizers at registration. The appeal should provide reasons for justification as to why Rule #5 is inappropriate for your team.
6. Time starts and stops when the Skier crosses the start and finish lines.
7. The skier must be in an upright position and on at least one ski with rope in hand when crossing the finish line. Both skier’s boots must cross the finish line.
8. A “DNF” will be issued to a skier/boarder who is dragged in the designated horse racing track.
9. There is a five (5) second penalty for each gate or jump missed. Both tips of skis and both boots must go around the gate, otherwise it is considered missed.
10. If the horse or rope displaces a gate prior to skier negotiating it, the gate is considered missed.
11. If the rider, skier or horse is unable to complete their second run, a replacement exhibition run may be considered but requires board approval. The Board may in its discretion deny the exhibition run in order to keep the pace of the event moving along.
12. Written parental consent is required for participants under 18 years of age. Parent must be present at registration.
13. Prior to race time, participants will be allowed to examine the course from inside perimeter of the track only.
14. Rope length shall not exceed 50 feet. A single knot is permitted at the end of the rope, but no loops or handles are permitted.
15. Skiers will be required to wear snow sport approved helmets. Eye protection is recommended. Helmets are required for all competitors under the age of 18.
16. Any protests from a competitor must be made verbally to the Chief of Race prior to the commencement of the next competitors run.
17. Unsportsmanlike behavior is grounds for immediate disqualification. Furthermore, good sportsmanship is important to the success of the event and the image of the community of Red Lodge. Your registration signature pledges your word to the humane treatment of your horse and respectful relationships to all fellow competitors and volunteers hosting this exciting competition. Failure to comply with the spirit of

friendly competition at any of the scheduled events may result in the disqualification of your team or your banishment from future events.

18. Competitors under the age of 18 are required to compete in the junior or peewee division. Exceptions to this rule can be made, with parental consent proof of prior race experience within the current season.
19. A junior aged competitor may not compete a junior and a higher division unless they are competing in a different role. Example. A junior age competitor who rides a horse in Sport but does not ski in Sport is able to compete in the junior division as a skier. These roles may be reversed or in any combination. The entry is subject to RLSJA approval and the decision of appropriateness is final.
20. All entries are subject to Board Approval and competitors will be urged to compete in the appropriate division.
21. The decision of the Judges is final.

Switcharoo Division

The Switcharoo division is a unique division where the skier and rider must trade places for one go round. Times are collected daily and combined for overall. A horse that has entered in Snowboard, Novice, Sport and Open timed divisions is eligible to run a third run in the Switcharoo Division. All applicable rules from the prior section apply (Rules 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 16, 17, and 18).

1. A horse that has entered in the Open, Sport, Novice, or Snowboard timed divisions is eligible to run a third run if it is entered in the Switcharoo Division.
2. A Rider/Horse/Skier team may only enter once in any combination.
3. If the rider, skier, or horse is unable to complete their second run, they may not find a replacement. They are disqualified from the combined (Saturday, Sunday) competition.
4. Skiers will be required to wear snow sport approved helmets. Eye protection is recommended.
5. The decision of the Judges is final.

Additionally:

1. All horses must exit through the gate by the timing shack.
2. Competitors will have the opportunity to walk the course prior to the start of the first day's competition. Teams choosing not to participate and advising a Red Lodge Ski-Joring Association (RLSJA) committee member or the event organizer, prior to the start of any competition, will be given a full refund of fees. Once the first competitor starts a run no further refunds will be given.
3. Money will be added to the purse. Purse amounts for each division will be announced at the event.
4. There will be a veterinarian on site who has the authority to disqualify an animal for medical reasons.
5. Judges reserve the right to invoke THE SPARBY RULE, WHEREIN: Competitors will be allowed 2 minutes from the time they enter the arena to stage their horse for a start. First infraction will result in that team being moved back in the start order. In the event they are unable to start their horse a second time, within the 2-minute time frame, that team will be disqualified for that go-around.
6. Alcohol consumption prior to competition is grounds for disqualification for that competitor, and ultimately that team! (Including Horses)

7. No refunds of entry fees or Calcutta monies will be given if horse, rider or skier is not able to compete due to injury or other reasons. This also applies to later runs on same day.
8. Calcutta monies are paid to the top 3 finishing "Purchased" teams.
9. A DNF will be issued if a skier or snowboarder drops the rope AND the horse is required to stop forward motion in order for the skier or boarder to regain control of the rope
10. Completing an online registration form does not guarantee would-be competitors entry. RLSJA reserves the right to review and approve or disapprove registrations at its discretion, and further reserves the right to refuse entry to the competition to any person who has registered at any point in time, for any reason RLSJA determines proper. If registrants are denied entry in the competition, RLSJA will refund the entry fee within 10 business days.
11. RLSJA reserves the right to amend these rules at any point, for any reason RLSJA determines proper in its sole discretion. Any additions or changes to existing rules will be made available during registration and competitor meeting.
12. RLSJA offers several divisions, some of which are subject to age restrictions. RLSJA reserves the right to waive the age restrictions for any division on a case-by-case basis as it determines proper, in its sole discretion.
13. RLSJA needs to be able to run the race as efficiently as possible to accommodate all divisions and teams. In effort to do so, horse saddle changes in the PeeWee and Junior divisions is prohibited. Example. A peewee or junior rider who may be riding two horses is not permitted to change saddles during the race. The two horses will need to be outfitted with proper tack as to not slow the race.