

ACWA

Equine Safety Rules and Regulations

General Declaration

These Rules and Regulations are in conjunction with PACWR rules and the most stringent rules will prevail.

Section One

General Rules and Regulations

1. Equine Safety Officer (ESO): Is appointed by the ACWA Board of Directors and serves a term of one year. The ESO, or his/her designee, is responsible for all equine related safety.

2. RIDER CERTIFICATION: Each mounted rider and his horse will be considered a team. Both, together, must take and pass a mounted safety course administered by a recognized umbrella California organization such as PACWR or an ACWA approved alternative before taking part in an event. This certification is good for one (1) reenactment season (January to December). The rider must be certified by the ACWA ESO or his/her designee. This certification applies to all riders military or civilian. Rider and Horse must pass this certification whenever rider intends to ride a new horse. The following must be completed before a rider and mount may take the battlefield in battle or ride in civilian camp.

a. Determination of a qualified rider and horse will be made by the ACWA ESO.

b. The Rider Certification consists of passing the PACWR Equine Written and Ground Test.

c. The following are further clarifications of the Equine Ground Test:

i. Rider will present horse with all required equipment to ESO for inspection.

ii. Rider must mount, perform mounted tests, return to ESO and dismount their horse under normal battlefield conditions.

a. From the halt, step off at a walk; transition to a trot; transition to a lope; transition back to a trot; halt. Reverse direction and repeat as rider returns to the ESO.

b. Same as above, however demonstrate safely firing a pistol to the right and left.

iii. Rider must also prove that the horse is tolerant of cannon fire.

iv. Rider must demonstrate that the horse is tolerant of saber clashing, unless arrangements are made with the ESO and the Brigade Commanders in advance.

d. Mounted reenactors who own more than one horse may loan their extra horse(s) to another mounted reenactor, however, both the horse and rider must still pass the mounted rider certification together.

3. SAFETY INSPECTION: Each company commander, along with the ESO or his/her designee, will perform an equipment safety check/inspection on each mounted member of his/her unit prior to the start of each event.

a. This inspection will ensure that each horse is properly saddled and that all tack is in serviceable condition properly adjusted, and that both horse and rider are ready and capable of safely participating in the planned activity.

b. Unserviceable or questionable equipment must be repaired or replaced before the rider is allowed to take the field.

c. The MCC/ESO will confer with the unit commander(s) concerning any problems and will conduct inspections and perform spot checks as he feels appropriate for the safety of the horse and rider, other reenactors and spectators.

- d. Differences of opinion regarding serviceability of horse equipment will be settled by the ESO and the ACWA Board of Directors.
- e. Inspection includes the rider's equipment that may affect safety of rider and horse.

4. SAFETY

- a. **DISTANCE:** Mounted troops will maintain a minimum safety distance of twenty (20) yards from the spectators/safety ropes and infantry.
- b. Any serious safety violation will result in immediate removal from the field, and possibly from the event.
- c. A serious mounted safety violation may be noted by anyone, mounted or on foot, and a "Cease Fire" called if necessary. All reports of safety violations, after the fact, will be submitted in writing to the ESO and the ACWA Safety Officer for follow up by the ACWA Board of Directors.
- d. No mounted rider is to perform any maneuver he/she cannot perform in a manner safe to horse, rider and others. If a rider feels that they or their horse cannot safely perform a task, he should withdraw from the formation and go to a safe location off the battlefield. Safety of the horse, rider and others is the primary concern.
- e. Unsafe riders will be dismissed from the field
- f. All mounted activity will cease if a rider is unhorsed or injured on the battlefield as well as if a cease fire is called anywhere on the battlefield.

5. PERIOD CIVILIANS: Civilians wishing to portray a mounted impression will apply to the ESO, who will then determine the qualifications of the horse/rider or team and determine when and where they may ride.

6. ABUSE:

- a. Abuse or neglect of horses will not be tolerated.
- b. Fitness and obvious health of horse. Visual health issues will result in horse denied participation.
- c. The use of unreasonable force in disciplining the horse (particularly when this action is accompanied by a display of overly emotional behavior on the part of the horseman).
- d. Excessive or over-zealous application of spurs.
- e. Striking the horse about the head or face.
- f. Applying any foreign object in a manner that would be perceived as "beating" the horse.
- g. Any correction which results in drawing the horse's blood.
- h. Disciplining a horse while it is secured to a picket line or other object.
- i. Any handling or treatment likely to be perceived as inhumane by the general public.

7. MOUNTED SOLDIERS:

- a. Will only be allowed on the field as mounted officers, staff, scouts, or unit couriers, or as part of an organized mounted unit. No dismounted riders are allowed on the battlefield, they will remove themselves completely from the vicinity of the battle.
- b. All mounted horsemen must be subordinate to a specific unit commander. No independent riders are allowed on the field.
- c. Unit commanders shall ensure that cavalry under their command follow specific scripted activity for the event.

d. The only time cavalry will be allowed to override infantry lines is if the infantry makes an opening through their lines and a safe distance is available per ACWA and PACWR rules. This will be accomplished in organized columns and at a safe speed.

e. ONLY walk or trot in areas where there are “casualties.” Better yet, stay well away from “casualties.”

f. All close-contact fighting between cavalry and infantry or artillery will be coordinated and scripted between the ESO, Division Commander, and unit commanders prior to the battle. Any altercation or dispute between individuals, on or off the field, will be brought to the ACWA ESO and the ACWA Safety Officer.

8. REMOVAL FROM THE FIELD: Grounds for the expulsion of mounted riders will include:

- a.** Safety violations.
- b.** Abuse or neglect of horses.
- c.** Conduct unbecoming to a gentleman.
- d.** Willful disobedience to regulations or orders.
- e.** Carelessness and negligence.
- f.** Fighting.

The decision to remove a mounted rider from the battlefield will be made by the ACWA Equine Safety Officer.

Section Two

Equipment Safety Inspections

1. EQUIPMENT SAFETY: Inspections will be looking for, but not limited to, the following.

- a.** Dry rot, worn, cracked or split leather
- b.** Old leather which has not been kept properly oiled
- c.** Surcingle – REQUIRED
- d.** Any obviously unsafe tack that could place the horse, rider or other riders in danger.

2. HORSES:

- a.** Each horse will be inspected for soundness or obvious sickness and injury by the ESO. Horses with open cuts, bad feet (including overdue trimming or shoeing), saddle sores, or infections may be removed from the picket line and denied use in the event.
- b.** Horses will be kept on company (or larger) picket line when not in use. The company(s) will provide picket line guard(s) during the hours of darkness or when necessary to keep the public from entering the picket line during the daytime.
- c.** Any horse that cannot stand with the rest of the horses will be removed from the picket line and his owner will be responsible for his security at an alternate site in close proximity to the picketing area. No horses are to be picketed anywhere within the camp unless in the designated picket area.
- d.** Unruly and uncontrollable horses will be ordered from the field.
- e.** Only geldings and mares will be used — **NO stallions** will be permitted.
- f.** Bays, blacks, chestnuts, sorrels, buckskins, true roans, palominos, grays duns and gruellas will be accepted. Appaloosas, paints, or pintos are discouraged unless approved by the ESO.
- g.** New horses shall be teamed with veteran horsemen using the "herd method" during drills and on the battlefield. The new horse is kept between two seasoned horsemen until the new horse accepts the

battlefield's confusing environment. **h.** New horsemen shall not draw weapons on the field until their commander is confident the horse and rider can perform in a safe manner.

i. No unattended horses may remain on the field. This includes simulated hits. The rider or another rider will retain control of the mount at all times.

3. SADDLES:

a. The following saddles are acceptable

i. 1859 McClellan

ii. Grimsley

iii. Period Plantation Saddle

iv. Jennifer

v. Texas "Jennifer"

vi. 1833 Dragoon Style

vii. Ringgold

viii. Hopes (correct reproduction or reworked)

ix. Modern western saddles are acceptable only if camouflaged to lessen the appearance. Contact the MCC/ESO prior to the event if you have any questions regarding this.

4. HORSE FURNITURE:

a. All horse furniture and equipment must be correct military issue for the period.

i. Period breast collars – *REQUIRED*

ii. Surcingle - *REQUIRED*

iii. Blankets- Period Schabraques or wool blanket sufficient size to cover non-period saddle pads. Such as gray, red, or dragoon saddle blankets, or any issue blanket of the period. Modern Indian saddle blankets are NOT acceptable.

iv. Period stirrups (No 1904 iron stirrups)

v. Valise, 1859 saddlebags, true copy CS saddlebags

vi. Crupper (optional)

vii. Acceptable period saddle.

viii. Pommel holsters of the period.

ix. Modern western bridles are NOT allowed.

x. Horses must have a leather halter, Cavalry model 1859 with a Leather (period) or rope lead.

xi. Period Military bits are encouraged and must include a curb chain.

xii. Link straps are required for cavalry to fight dismounted.

xiii. No "makeshift" or "rag-tag" equipment will be allowed.

Section Three

Cavalry Weapons

The mounted troops are bound by the same rules and safety standards in regard to weapon safety as all other participants at all ACWA events, as well as any other safety rules in effect when mounted.

1. PISTOL:

- a. ALL pistols and spare cylinders will be inspected prior to taking the field.
NO EXCEPTIONS!
- b. All pistols will be loaded with the appropriate charge of powder and topped off with instant cream of wheat or crumbling floral foam.
- c. When firing to the front while mounted, the muzzle will be elevated above the horse's head so as not to cause harm to the horse or his hearing.
- d. Pistols may be fired to the flanks and rear in a more realistic/aimed manner; so long as safe distances are maintained.
- e. Once the pistol is drawn, from the holster, it will be held in the raised/ready position, muzzle up and hand at shoulder level, until just before firing.
- f. The hammer will not be cocked until the pistol is brought to bear and fixed.
- g. Pistols may not be re-loaded while mounted. Cylinders may be changed while on the battlefield.

2. CARBINE:

- a. Carbines will be inspected by the company commander prior to taking the field.
- b. Once drawn from the thimble or boot, the carbine will be kept pointing muzzle up, with the butt resting on the leg, until ready to fire. The same precautions exist as were noted with the pistol. When not in use the carbine will be returned to the thimble or boot.
- c. When re-loading, the carbine will be held in the hand at the fore stock, muzzle pointing slightly forward and downward.
- d. The hammer will be placed in the half-cock position during loading and until ready to fire.

3. SABER:

- a. Saber clashes may only occur after careful scripting and approval from both Brigade Commanders.
- b. Scabbards will be attached to the saber belt or solidly attached to the saddle.
- c. Never Allow the point to drop below 45 degrees from vertical, or lower than the saber hand when the blade is carried horizontally (as when positioned over the head in preparation to make a cut) NOTE: There is one exception to this rule: in a charge – point extended toward, but in front, at commanders order only.
- d. NEVER strike an opponent's horse with any part of the saber.
- e. NEVER grab or hold any portion of your opponent's body, uniform, accoutrements, or horse equipment.
- f. NEVER continue an attack after any participant in the immediate vicinity has been unhorsed.
- g. No hacking or flailing without apparent concern for the proper execution of accepted moves.

h. Sabers are to be used only to the front and sides when clashing, never to the rear or over the back. Reproduction sabers can and will cause serious damage as they were originally intended.

i. Never draw a saber unless ordered to, and never engage in a dismounted scenario with a saber unless it is well scripted and approved prior to the engagement by the Brigade Commanders.

j. It should be clearly understood that handguns are to remain holstered throughout the charge and melee. There is simply no excuse to be wielding a firearm at close quarters.

k. Company commanders should make their counterpart aware of new riders or horses prior to engaging on the battlefield. If riders or horses are new to re-enacting, and do not feel comfortable with engagement or an activity; they will not be forced into it. They will be allowed to lay back and observe or enter into the fray and announce “new man” if anyone tries to engage them.

Section Four

1. Visiting Equine Reenactors

All visiting Equine Reenactors (Cavalry or Civilian) must present proof of safety certification by their respective PACWR member club. If they cannot prove that they have passed the safety certification or are not members of a PACWR club they must pass the ACWA approved tests as stated above.

2. Disclaimer

These rules and regulations are designed to protect both the members of the ACWA, visiting reenactors and the general public from any possible injury or harm.