

RULES AND REGULATIONS

SAN JUAN SKIJORING 2026

San Juan Skijoring rules are designed to create a fair competitive event, as well as to ensure safety for competitors, horse and human alike.

DIVISION AND COMPETITION CRITERIA

- OPEN (PRO) SKI DIVISION: Teams are considered to be the highest skilled competitors with the fastest and most skilled horses. The Open Division will consist of all **DOUBLE MATCH** teams. (Double Match means that each team that signs up will run two times each day and take their best time for the combined overall.) Open teams will compete 2x per day on Friday Night, Saturday, and Sunday. Their best time from each day will be combined to determine the Overall Awards. Skiers are limited to **2 Ski entries (4 runs per day)** (excluding Switch-A-Roo). Competitors **cannot** enter an identical team (skier, horse, rider) more than one time in the Open Division. -capped at 20 teams
- OPEN (PRO) SNOWBOARD DIVISION: Teams are considered to be the highest skilled competitors with the fastest and most skilled horses. The Open Snowboard Division will consist of all **DOUBLE MATCH** teams. (Double Match means that each team that signs up will run two times each day and take their best time for the combined overall.) Pro Snowboard teams will compete 2x per day on Saturday, and Sunday. Their best time from each day will be combined to determine the Overall Awards. Snowboarders are limited to **2 Snowboard entries (4 runs per day)** (excluding Switch-A-Roo). Competitors **cannot** enter an identical team (boarder, horse, rider) more than one time in the Open Snowboard Division. -capped at 15 teams
- SPORT DIVISION (Amateur): Teams are considered to be intermediate level skill participants riding horses that may not have the experience to be in the Open Division(s). Sport class will consist of all match teams. Skiers are limited to **3 entries** in the Sport class. Competitors entered in the Sport Class **can enter the Open Ski Division with only 2 entries in the Sport**, so long as no horse runs more than twice per day with exception for Switch-A-Roo, Slope Style, or Junior Division, and Skiers do not compete more than 4 times per day (does not include Switch-A-Roo or Slope Style Division). Sport competitors may enter the Open Division with a new team so long as they are not entered in the Sport Division more than twice. Competitors **cannot** enter an identical team (skier, horse, rider) more than one time in the Sport Division. – capped at 40 teams

- NOVICE/EXHIBITION DIVISION (Beginners): Teams are considered to be new to the sport, beginner level competitors riding horses that may be brand new to the sport. Novice class will consist of 1 match, 1 draw format. Skiers are limited to **2 entries** in the Novice class and one of those entries **must be a draw**. Teams entered in the Novice that finish in the Top 3 places will have the option of competing on Saturday and Sunday in the Sport Division free of charge.
– capped at 25 teams – total of 50 runs
- SNOWBOARD LITE DIVISION: Teams are considered to be new to the sport, beginner level competitors riding horses that may be brand new to the sport. Snowboard Lite class will consist of 1 match, 1 draw format. Boarders are limited to **2 entries** in the Snowboard Lite class and one of those entries **must be a draw**. Teams entered in the Snowboard Lite that finish in the Top 3 places will have the option of competing on Saturday and Sunday in the Open (Pro) Snowboard Division free of charge. – capped at 25 teams – total of 50 runs
- JUNIOR DIVISION: (Kids 12 and under): Teams are considered to be kids not yet old enough for the Novice Class but who want to compete. This also helps build the sport for future years. Both the rider and skier must 12 and under to be eligible for awards. There will be mandatory gates for this class and all teams will be match format. -no team caps
- TWISTED SWITCH DIVISION: Team members must switch spots half way through the track on both Saturday and Sunday. If you start with skis/snowboard on Saturday, you have to switch half-way through your run on Saturday and vice-verse on Sunday. You must start on the other end of the team on Sunday. The same horse must be ridden each day. All "RIDERS" Skis/Boards must be located at a designated spot halfway through the course before the division starts, and you must go get them after dismounting your horse. Your "Switch" must also happen at this place on the course between the two marked lines. You will NOT be allowed an extra person to "hold the horse." There will also be a two-minute time limit for the "Switch". If the team goes over two minutes, they will be disqualified and asked to exit the course. The Twisted Switch class will consist of all match teams. The track will be set to accommodate all levels of skiers and snowboarders. There is a 2 entry limit for Twisted Switch and you **cannot** enter an identical team (skier/snowboarder, rider, horse) more than once. -capped at 10 teams

SKIER, RIDER FORMAT– MATCH & DRAW RULES

1. All teams in the Open Ski, Open Snowboard, Sport, and Twisted Switch Divisions will follow a Match and or Double Match format. Skiers and Riders must have a team created to enter competition.

2. The Novice and Snowboard Lite Divisions will follow the 1 Match, 1 Draw format. For every Match team entered there will also be a Draw team created. Teams that choose not to compete in the draw cannot match for a second run.
3. All teams in the Junior Division will follow the Match format. We will work to make sure every interested junior gets the chance to compete. If we are short on Junior Riders or Skiers, an adult will be allowed to fill in, but that run will not be eligible for the buckle.

SKIER/SNOWBOARDER RULES

1. No Skier may compete more than 4 times per day, exception for Twisted Switch / Slope Style.
2. No Boarder may compete more than 4 times per day, exception for Twisted Switch / Slope Style.
3. A skier/snowboarder can choose their division of competition and is not required to advance to the next class if they win their division.
 - a. However, if they win a division, they must be able to take grief from other competitors for not moving up.
4. A skier or snowboarder must follow the division and competitor criteria for number of entries per division.
 - a. Skiers and snowboarders cannot compete with an identical team more than once in each class.
5. All skiers and snowboarders must wear approved snow sport helmets.
 - a. Protective Eyewear is recommended.
6. Any skier/snowboarder under 18 must have parent/guardian sign a parental consent form.
 - a. Parent or Guardian must be present during signup and competition.
 - b. Protective Eyewear and helmet must be worn during competition.

RIDER RULES

1. A Horse may not run more than two times in a day.
 - a. One exception can be made for horses in the Junior, Twisted Switch or Slope Style divisions.
2. Horses should be in physical shape to participate in the extreme sport of skijoring.

RULES OF COMPETITION – GENERAL

1. Races will start on time. Please be ready.
2. The Sparby Rule: Each team is allowed **3 minutes** to complete staging and begin their run. After the allotted time has expired the team will be asked to leave the staging area. They will have one more chance to start successfully or they will be disqualified for that run.
 - a. Teams that are drawn to compete at the beginning of their division will not be allowed to roll to a position further down the order if their Sparby time runs out. Their 2nd try will

begin immediately, and disqualification will occur if they cannot start by the end of the second Sparby time.

3. Substitutions are allowed for any team member (horse, skier or rider) prior to the competitor meeting on Friday (Open/Slope Style) or Saturday (Pro Snowboard/Sport/Twisted Switch). After the competitor meetings there will be NO substitutions. Substitutions for exhibition runs can be allowed, if approved, but not guaranteed by the field judges. Exhibition runs will not count towards placing.
4. If a horse, rider, or equipment is deemed unsafe the rider and horse can be asked to leave at any time by the Start Judges or the Arena Judge.
5. If the Skier/Snowboarder drops the rope BEFORE crossing the start line when the rider and horse has clearly started down the track, he/she will be allowed a restart. If the skier/snowboarder drops the rope on the second attempt to start, the team will be disqualified for that run.
6. Skiers/Snowboarders must finish with rope in hand and have at least one ski or snowboard on when crossing the finish line.
7. Skiers - Both ski tips and both boots must go Right of Red or Left of Blue gates, or the gate is considered missed.
8. Open Snowboarders – Board Tip and Boots must go Right of Red or Left of Blue gates, or the gate is considered missed.
9. Snowboarder Lite and Switch-A-Roo Boarders must go cleanly between both brush gates or the gate will be considered missed.
10. There will be a 5 second penalty added for every missed gate.
11. Timing Equipment hit by a horse at the start will be given one warning for that run and hitting it a second time will result in a disqualification for that run. Timing Equipment hit by a horse at the finish will result in a disqualification for that run.
12. If a horse goes through the finish but does not hit the timing equipment a 5 second penalty will be added.
13. All performance-enhancing drugs are prohibited and will not be tolerated. Random drug testing may take place on either day of the event. San Juan Skijoring will follow the protocol of our on-site Veterinary when it comes to performance-enhancing drugs.
14. Protests must be voiced by the skier/boarder or rider to the Finish Judge or Arena Judge before the start of the next run. The Arena Judge will have the final ruling before the start of the next run.
 - a. If a team loses a protest during the race, they have the right to re-protest that night with "clear, 100% footage" to overturn the protest.
 - b. Any competitor has the right to throw a flag before the next run begins if they believe that the previous team has a penalty that wasn't called and the Arena Judge will assess.

- c. If a gate is missed that isn't flagged, competitors have the right to protest that night with "clear, 100% footage" to assess a penalty for the missed gate. A unanimous decision must be reached by the protest committee for a penalty to be assessed.
 - i. This rule is put in place to keep competition fair, and integrity at the highest level. Any competitor can "call out" any other team.
 - ii. **Protests must be made at the Ouray County Event Center by 6:00 p.m. on Saturday night for Saturday's runs, or 5:30 p.m. on Sunday night at Ouray Elks Lodge 492 for Sunday's runs. Protests after this time will not be heard.**

15. The following will result in a disqualification:

- a. Infraction of any state or federal law which exists pertaining to the exhibition, care, and custody of horses within the state or country.
- b. Abuse of an animal on the track and/or evidence that an act of abuse has occurred at any time on the Ouray County Fairgrounds premises.
- c. Failure to dismount and/or present horse and equipment to any official or Veterinarian.

16. All horse warm-ups will be done in the horse arena. Unless otherwise announced, there will be no restrictions against horses inspecting the skijoring track.

17. Please do not open your horse up beyond a slow lope during inspection.

18. No horses are allowed on the racetrack.

HORSE SAFETY & TREATMENT

- Water for horses will be available and easily accessible at the race venue.
- The on-site veterinarian will have the authority to scratch a horse for health reasons or concerns pertaining to the safety of the horse. Any member of the organizing committee can require a horse to be examined by the veterinarian prior to racing.
- No person may abuse a Horse during an Event or at any other time. "Abuse" means an action or omission, which causes or is likely to cause pain or unnecessary discomfort to a Horse, including, but not limited to:
 - Whipping or beating a Horse excessively
 - Subjecting a Horse to any kind of electric shock device
 - Using spurs excessively or persistently
 - Leaving a Horse without adequate food, drink or exercise

Any person witnessing an Abuse must report it in the form of a Protest, without cost immediately. If an Abuse is witnessed during or in direct connection with an Event, it should be reported as a Protest to an Official.

RACE EQUIPMENT

- San Juan Skijoring will provide ropes for competitors, though competitors are allowed to bring their own ropes.
- Any rope not supplied by San Juan Skijoring must be inspected and approved by the Start Master or his designee prior to the start of the race.
- Ropes cannot exceed 50 feet in length.
- Ropes must be 3/8" or larger in diameter.
- Handles are not permitted on ropes.
- Attachment must be to the saddle horn or behind the saddle. If the attachment is behind the saddle it must be secured to the primary rigging rings of the saddle by a non-elastic attachment so that the pulling rope (including quick release if in use) is within 6 inches of the cantle. Prior to the race, the Start Master, or his designee may inspect any attachment to the saddle. Attachments found that are longer than 6 inches will require the competitor to fix the length or a disqualification for that run will occur.
- Quick release shackles are highly recommended.
- Electronic timing and backup timing will be provided to ensure accurate competition times.

SPORTSMANSHIP

Good sportsmanship is important to the success of every event. Registration signature pledges a competitor's word to the humane treatment of their 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 banishment from future competitions.

FINAL RULING

All entries are subject to Board Approval.