

Trail Mileage and Saddle Hour Program

Program Overview

Our Trail Mileage and Saddle Hour Program has three goals.

1. To provide The Ohio Horseman's Council with documented and quantified support to maintain, improve, and expand the trail systems/facilities in Ohio.
2. To recognize individuals who have reached various levels of enjoyment and/or accomplishment with their horse(s) that all horsemen respect and admire.
3. To recognize the wide variety of interests and activities that our members and their horses are involved in.

On an annual basis, members report their mileage and hours logged to their county representative, who in turn submits a consolidated report to the State Trail Mileage and Saddle Hour Committee Chairperson. The committee chairperson compiles all county reports and compiles all statistical information.

Records are kept for all reporting members. Members can qualify for and purchase patches based on the levels of achievement throughout their lifetime. In addition, annual awards are given in the following categories:

Individual Awards

- Top Ten Overall Trail Riders
- Top Ten Youth Trail Riders
- Top Ten Saddle Hours
- Top Ten Youth Saddle Hours
- Top Ten First Time Reporters
- Rider of the Year
- Trail Riders' Hall of Fame

County Awards

- Top Mileage County
- Top Percentage County

With the exception of the Trail Riders' Hall of Fame, all annual awards are presented during the March Membership Meeting.

Definitions

Saddle Hours and Trail Mileage are different from each other. Time on the trail is reported as MILEAGE and time in the saddle not on the trail, is reported as HOURS. See below for more detailed definitions.

a. Trail Mileage Definition

Our state, national and county parks and forests provide many miles of trails for riding and driving. Our state agencies have an interest in knowing where we are riding and how much the trails are being used. Reportable trail mileage is miles ridden on trails that traverse multiple types of terrain. Because some areas of the state have only limited trail systems, miles ridden on county and state roadways are reportable trail miles. Miles ridden in an arena, small field, or on a track do not qualify as trail mileage but can be **reported under “riding hours”**.

b. Riding Hours Definition

Our members have a wide variety of equine interests. Hours in the saddle showing and competing, pleasure driving, riding in parades and schooling can all be counted toward the member’s lifetime achievement record.

Trail Mileage and Saddle Hour Reporting

a. Validation

The Trail Mileage and Saddle Hours Program is an “honor” based system based on self-reporting from each member. Mileage/hours are to be reported to each County designee for validation prior to submission to the state. Mileage/hours sent by each county is considered validated by the county designee once they are sent on. Any discrepancies or disputes regarding mileage/hours submitted should be addressed to the county designee.

b. Trail Mileage

There are three categories for trail mileage—PK/FRST, PUB/PRV and STX.

1. **PK/FRST:** Park and forest trail miles are miles ridden on a legally designated trail in any park or forest owned by a city, a county, the state of Ohio, or the federal government within the state of Ohio.
2. **PUB/PRV:** Public and private trail miles are miles ridden on a trail that is open to the general public and is owned by an individual or organization. A fee to use these trails may or may not be required. Miles ridden on rails-to-trails, county and state roadways are also considered public trail miles. Private trail miles are miles ridden on a trail that is NOT open to the general public and is owned by an individual or organization.
3. **STX:** Out-of-state trail miles are miles ridden on trails that match any of the above criteria but, are ridden in a state other than Ohio.

How to calculate Trail Mileage

Unfortunately, horses don't come with odometers and no genius has come up with one yet that we know of. The only way to determine miles ridden is to estimate. Good estimating skills come from having accurate references. The best way to obtain that is to ride your horse on several types of trails where you can accurately assess the number of miles ridden. Keep track of the time that it takes you to ride this distance (do not include breaks and the time it may take you to get your horse to cross the water obstacle!). This should help you get a pretty good estimate of your MPH (miles per hour).

Most seasoned trail riders estimate MPH at 2.5 to 5 miles per hour depending on the gait ridden. The typical horse walks at 3-4 MPH, trots at 8-10 MPH and lopes at 10-17MPH. If you have a good mile stretch of area that you can practice the following table will help you estimate your horses MPH.

Minutes to go 1 mile	Speed in MPH
30	2 MPH
20	3 MPH
17	3.5 MPH
15	4 MPH
13	4.5 MPH
12	5 MPH
11	5.5 MPH
10	6 MPH
9	6.5 MPH
8.5	7 MPH
8	7.5 MPH
7.5	8 MPH
6	10 MPH
5	12 MPH

c. Saddle Hours

There are three primary categories for saddle hour reporting--Competing, Schooling and Pleasure Driving.

1. **Competing:** Keep track of any hours that you spend in the saddle competing. This may be at any type of show or competition. Breed shows, open shows, ranch horse competitions, extreme cowboy races, etc are all examples of what would fall into this category.

2. **Schooling:** Many of us work daily with our horses to continuously improve their performance or to keep them (and us!) in shape. This category would include clinics, lessons and working in your home arena.
3. **Pleasure Driving:** This category is for members that enjoy their horses from the on top a cart or rig. Hours reported in this category are for any hours spent driving for pleasure--whether schooling, competing or just enjoying the trail

d. Trail Mileage and Saddle Hour Reports

Trail Mileage and Saddle Hours are reported and tallied on an annual basis by the state. There is one form to submit both trail mileage and saddle hours. This form is available via the OHC website or through the newsletter. A new form for 2009 will be available later in the year.

NOTE: Members will submit their miles to their county designee on by whatever method that designee deems appropriate. There is a standard form available on the OHC website to assist with individual member reporting.

County designees are to compile all miles/hours for their members and submit one report to the State Committee Chairperson, Beth Bardash. The preferred method for submission is the excel spreadsheet program via email. The excel workbook makes it very simple to report mileage per location, helping us provide insight into where our members are riding (goal number 1 of the program).

For more detailed information on the reports available and for prior year's standings, refer to the OHC website.

