

Eventing's History

The history of Eventing has its roots in military cavalry training. The sport was originally patterned after the training and testing of military chargers — precision, elegance, and obedience on the parade ground; stamina, versatility and courage on marches and in battle; cross-country jumping ability and endurance in traveling great distances over difficult terrain and formidable obstacles in the relaying of important dispatches; and jumping ability in the arena to prove the horse's fitness to remain in service. Spread over consecutive days, it was a complete test for the Army horse. In fact, when this sport was first introduced in 1912 as an Olympic competition in Stockholm, Sweden it was called "The Militaire". Today, the modern sport of eventing still requires the rigorous training and skills of the military but its appeal has reached far beyond military bases with thousands of riders and competitions worldwide

Dressage tests the gaits, suppleness and obedience of the horse through a series of prescribed movements. The dressage phase consists of an exact sequence of movements ridden in an enclosed arena. The test is judged by one or more judges who are looking for balance, rhythm, suppleness, and most importantly, the cooperation between the horse and rider. The challenge is to demonstrate that a supremely fit horse, capable of completing the cross-country phase on time, also has the training to perform in a graceful, relaxed and precise manner. Dressage work is the basis of all the other phases and disciplines within the sport of eventing because it develops the strength and balance that allow a horse to go cross country and show jump competently. A dressage test consists of a series of different movements which are scored on a scale of 1 to 10. These movements range from basic circles and turns at walk, trot and canter to more sophisticated movements such as shoulder-in, half-passes, and flying changes depending on the level you are competing at. In the end, the fewer "penalties" a horse and rider combo has on their test the better the final score! This phase of competition is beautiful to watch because it truly demonstrates the relationship between horse and rider. The next phase is the stadium jumping portion of the three-phase competition. Here a horse and rider jump a course of jumps in a particular order in an enclosed ring. Show jumping tests the technical jumping skills of the horse and rider, including suppleness, obedience, fitness and athleticism. In this phase, 12–20 fences are set up in a ring. The next phase, cross-country, requires both horse and rider to be in excellent physical shape and to be brave and trusting of each other.

This phase consists of approximately 12–20 fences (lower levels), or 30–40 at the higher levels, placed on a long outdoor circuit. These fences consist of very solidly built natural objects (logs, stone walls, etc.) as well as various obstacles such as ponds and streams, ditches, drops and banks, and combinations including several jumping efforts based on objects that would commonly occur in the countryside. Speed is also a factor, with the rider required to cross the finish line within a certain time frame (optimum time). Crossing the finish line after the optimum time results in penalties for each second over. At lower levels, there is also a speed fault time, where penalties are incurred for horse and rider pairs completing the course too quickly. Prior to the competition, only the rider alone is allowed to walk the course, because one of the biggest challenges is the level of trust the horse places in the rider as they approach each obstacle together.

As our neighbors know, the Cross-Country course at Course Brook Farm is a two mile track bordering on Course Brook Road, Dexter Drive, Oldfield Road, McGregor Drive and Hunting Lane.

COURSE BROOK FARM 39 Brush Hill Rd | Sherborn, MA 01770
Website: www.coursebrookfarm.com