

Le Trec

Le Trec - as the name suggests hails from France and is made up of three different phases. The phases are quite different and test calmness, boldness, willingness/trust and accuracy.

The three phases are set out as below:

Phase 1 – Orienteering or POR (Parcours d'Orientation et de Regularite)

An orienteering course is set out (virtually the same as on foot human orienteering) whereby clues are given to get the sites of the next site and clue. They can be done in groups or pairs. For a younger horse it may be a little less hectic/stressful to do it with a buddy. Then as you would expect points are given for all correct answers.

Phase 2 – Control of Paces or CoP (Maitrise de Allures)

There would be marker points at which specific gaits would need to be performed. e.g, three markers in a 50m circle would need to be trotted in and optimal time then the same markers would need to be cantered between in a similar time. A mark would be given for how well it was done (points may be deducted if trotting is needed and some cantering is performed). It would be done individually.

Phase 3 – Obstacle Course or PTV (Parcours en Terrain Varie)

A variety of different obstacles would be set out. Usually 10 or so and would be marked say out of ten and every mistake would have a point deducted. Obstacles could be; walking over a jump fill, opening and/or closing a gate, walking through a skinny set of poles on the ground, walking through a tight pole formation, up/down a bank, getting on/off without the horse moving a foot/tail/head and the list goes on. Points would be deducted for touching poles and knocking things over etc.

As an Equine pursuit it is not big in NZ, but is surprising as it is lots of fun. The venue needs to be safe and inviting/calming for horses.

The great thing about Le Trec is that it's good for all horses, it has no discipline bias. If you're into Eventing, Dressage, Western, pure SJ or SH or a happy hacker (to name only a few equine pursuits) it helps our equines see and experience new things. My philosophy is that we should do lots of cross-training. Though I don't think we should go to the extreme of scaring ourselves every time we ride, it should be more like pushing the comfort zone. Scaring ourselves will quite possibly scare our steed (not ideal and um why??) and most likely anyone else in close proximity too. To aim towards giving our mounts a successful experience is what it's about. Even if it means doing it initially inhand/on the ground is okay. New and interesting experiences has got to be a good thing, plus having fun is our ultimate goal.

Le Trec UK also have a website (www.letrecuk.com) with a little more info too.