

Catch Riding in Endurance

Overview • Considerations • Finding a Match

Overview: Traditionally the term “Catch Riding” comes from the horse show world. Catch-riding refers to riding a horse that you don’t own or train (or regularly ride) in a show or at an endurance ride. An owner may be looking to have extra horse ridden or the owner may not be able to physically ride their own horse. A rider may not have a horse at the present time or their horse may be sidelined or not ready to compete. Either way, finding a good match can be a beneficial experience for both parties.

Considerations for the Owner:

What is your current situation?

- Are you looking for someone to ride with you or are you looking for someone to ride your horse alone?
- What are your expectations? Riding to finish, place or top ten?
- Will the Catch Rider be able to ride your horse prior to the event?

How would you describe your horse?

- Breed? Age? Height? Temperment? Can this horse ride peacefully with others?
- Does this horse need a red ribbon? Will the horse behave in the vet check?
 - Experienced compliant endurance horse?
 - Green but well trained?
 - Needs experienced rider who can ride potential spooks, bucks or high excitement level?

What type of rider and experience level are you looking for?

- Experienced endurance rider? (AERC or EDRA ride record available?)
- Experienced rider who may have not done much or any endurance riding?
- Lengths/placings of completed rides
 - For this horse
 - For the perspective catch rider
- What type of riding skills are you looking for?
 - Experienced english rider (direct rein) or
 - Experienced western rider (indirect rein)
 - Experienced with hackamore/bitless bridle?
- What weight class and rider fitness level is best for this horse?
 - Do you expect the rider to dismount and walk or jog downhills?
- What type of saddle and size does this horse currently wear? May the catch rider use their own saddle?
- If applicable; does the Catch Rider have experience riding a Gaited horse? A stallion?

What are your expectations for a potential Catch Rider?

- * When should they arrive at ridecamp? When should they leave ridecamp?
- Do you expect help with: setting up camp (water, feed), corrals, walking the horses before/after the ride?
- What personal supplies should the rider bring? Water? food? rain gear? Saddle? Crew bag for outcheck?

Considerations for the Catch Rider:

- What are your goals for this Catch Ride?
- Review the above “Considerations for the Owner”
- What is your weight and height?
- Who are your emergency contacts?

Considerations for Both the Owner and the Catch Rider:

- Who will pay for the entry fee for this ride? Is there a lease fee?
- Who will pay for emergency horse treatment at the ride if needed?
- Does the Catch Rider know how to follow a map and/or use Ride w GPS?
- Does the Catch Rider know how to present a horse at a vet check?
- Does the Catch Rider know how to take the horse’s pulse? Know how to use a heart monitor?
- Does the Catch Rider know how to put on a hoof boot?
- Does the Catch Rider know how to electrolyte a horse? What is owner’s electrolyte protocol?
- Does the Catch Rider know basic first aid for horse while on trail? How to apply emergency pressure bandage?
- If riding together and the owner gets pulled leaving Catch Rider to finish alone, what is the game plan?
- Insurance and/or Liability concerns: you may want to check with your attorney and/or your insurance agent to determine if you need additional protection in the form of waivers or endorsements.

Finding a Match:

If you are an owner seeking a catch rider or a rider seeking a horse, probably the best way to initiate a search is to read the Considerations listed above as a basis to provide the relevant information for your query. After contact has been made, these Considerations can be a guideline for further dialogue.

A good place to post or look for Catch Riding opportunities is on our PNER FaceBook page or by word of mouth.

DISCLAIMER: PNER in no way endorses any particular horse, horse owner, or rider; PNER only offers these topic suggestions for parties to consider and discuss as they independently make catch riding arrangements.