

1st Colorado Top Hands

2024 Rider's Handbook

Member Requirements

1. Provide your own horse(s) (May be leased or borrowed, but the Top Hands will not provide one)
2. Show up to all practices and performances with a horse, unless injured and/or approved by the Drill Master to sit out and observe.
3. Provide your own practice tack.
4. Dues paid prior to riding.
5. On time to practice roll in:
 - a. Horse is adequately warmed up and
 - b. Rider is arena ready.

Alternate Rider

1. A member of the team that participates in all practices, parades, and/or community events.
 - a. This person is not yet qualified to perform the drill and/or run a grand entry or sponsor flag.
 - b. They also may choose to be a parade only member.
2. Will attend all performances and serve as an emergency standby performer:
 - a. Rider is in costume.
 - b. Horse is in performance tack.
 - c. Both join the team at arena gate.

Performing Member Dues

1. Includes insurance, arena usage, and costumes.
2. A total of \$160.00 for the year.
 - a. Payment Options:
 - i. Pay in full prior to 1st April practice.
 - ii. Pay monthly \$32 (April, May, June, July, August).
 - iii. A rider may raise \$160 in team donations
 - b. In order to participate in any team activities, monthly dues must be paid by the 1st of the month.
3. Members are required to have an arena membership at the Black Forest Saddle Club (\$50 for individuals, \$75 for a family).
4. Special Winter Events: riders may need to pay an additional arena fee if Black Forest Saddle Club is unavailable. Cost determined upon acceptance from venues.

Alternate Member Dues

1. Includes insurance, arena usage, and costumes.
2. A total of \$50.00 for the year.
 - a. Payment Options:
 - i. Pay in full prior to 1st April practice.
 - ii. Pay monthly \$10 (April, May, June, July, August).
 - iii. **A rider may raise \$160 in team donations**
3. Members are required to have an arena membership at the Black Forest Saddle Club (\$50 for individuals, \$75 for a family).
4. Special Winter Events: qualified riders would pay an additional arena fee if Black Forest Saddle Club is unavailable. Cost determined upon acceptance from venues.

Additional Expected Costs

1. One pair of blue and black jeans (~\$50-\$100 each)
2. One white button down shirt (~\$30)
3. One white felt cowboy hat (~\$90-\$200)
4. If the rider is using a helmet, they must use a white cover (~\$20)
5. One team jacket (~\$70-\$80)
6. Hat Rain Cover (clear ~\$6-\$13)

New Riders

1. Required to attend 3 of 4 practices within a 30 day time period.
 - a. Immediately following the 3rd practice, the rider will stay after to perform a riding test and interview with the Drill Master and Captain. You will then be informed if you are a performing or alternate member.
 - b. A mandatory practice before a performance will not be included as one of the three practices.
2. Must have a signed liability waiver and rider application turned in prior to first ride.
 - a. Additionally, a completed Black Forest Saddle Club Waiver and payment of their arena dues.
3. Upon membership acceptance, dues need to be paid by the next practice.
 - a. Dues will be prorated if acceptance doesn't fall at the beginning of the month.

Attendance Requirements

1. Attendance will be taken at the start of practice by the Captain.
2. Mandatory Practice:

- a. Required to attend 3 of 4 practices in the 4 weeks just prior to a performance date.
- b. The practice immediately prior to a performance will be one of the mandatory 3.

Practice Location/Day/Time

Location(s)

Primary

Black Forest Saddle Club - 6460 Old Ranch Rd, Colorado Springs, CO 80908

Alternate Locations

2-Hawks Ranch -

Crazy Lady Ranch - 13802 S. Perry Park Road, Larkspur, CO 80118

Norris Penrose - 1045 Lower Gold Camp Rd, Colorado Springs, CO 80905

Day(s)

Saturdays and Sundays (see Practice & Performance Schedule)

Time(s)

Saturday: 9am roll in - must warm up your horse prior to team circle at 10am

Sundays: 2pm roll in - must warm up your horse prior to team circle at 3pm

Attendance will be taken

Practice Expectations

1. Follow the chain of command:
 - a. Drill Master
 - b. Captain
 - c. Quad Leaders
2. No cross talk (talking to others while someone else is speaking).
3. Breaks are to be taken only when initiated by the Drill Master.
4. Practice safe arena etiquette.
5. Be polite to all riders.
6. If you are unable to make it to practice you must email the Drill Master no less than 2 weeks before the scheduled practice.

Performance Expectations

Term Clarification

1. Arena Grounds - anywhere on the property of the rodeo.
2. Team Headquarters - where the team parks all vehicles and trailers.

The following expectations are when a rider is on rodeo grounds and/or while wearing anything in public that could associate you with the 1st Colorado Top Hand (i.e. shirts, jackets, etc.).

1. No tattoos showing.
2. No excessive piercings; questionable piercings must be approved by the Drill Master.
3. No drinking, marijuana, or tobacco use.
4. No illegal drug use.
5. Must act in a professional manner this includes, but not limited to, no swearing, no stealing, no vandalism, and no littering.
6. No inappropriate interactions with rodeo staff, contestants, performers, or guests.
7. Return all uniform pieces (rider and horse) to its correct home.
8. Report any uniform damage to the Captain immediately.
9. Arrive on time to all scheduled team events.
10. Participates in all community outreach/photo signing.

Trick Riding Expectation

1. Have a signed trick riding waiver.
2. Must practice on the horse you will use at performances.
3. The trick must be able to be performed with no assistance.
4. Must be a horse that you use regularly/ own.
5. Horse must have been used during one other Top Hand performance.
6. The above expectations also apply to the pick up rider.
 - a. Pick up riders must ride independently.
 - b. If a lead rope is used it must be able to break away.
7. Must be approved to perform by the Drill Master.

Practice Attire

1. Jeans
2. Boots
3. Helmets or hats encouraged,
 - If a helmet is not worn they must fill out Black Forest Helmet Waiver
4. Long sleeve button down, t-shirt, or tank top.
 - No spaghetti straps

Performance Attire at Arena Grounds

1. Jeans, belt (brown) and buckle
2. Boots (brown bottom)
3. Shirts
 - a. At team headquarters:
 - Solid shirt (no straps or belly showing shirts) and/or button down collared

- shirt.
- b. Anywhere beyond team headquarters:
 - Button down collared shirt, tucked in, with belt, and non-performance cowboy hat.
- 4. No phones when you are performing, or interacting with the public.
- 5. If a saddle bag is used it must be neutral in color

Performance Team Lodging

1. Can stay on rodeo grounds in a trailer or tent.
2. Beyond rodeo grounds, riders are responsible for their own lodging accommodations.
3. If the team finds team lodging, it is encouraged that you stay with the team.

Performance Arrival and Departure

1. All riders will assist with either setting up or breaking down of the Team Headquarters.
2. Riders must sign up ahead of time for the set up crew or the breakdown crew.

Performance Horse Care

1. Each rider is solely responsible for the care, feeding, watering, bathing, and grooming of their own horse.

Performance Transportation

1. Each rider is responsible for getting to the performance location on their own.
2. Minor riders traveling to a performance with someone other than their legal parent(s)/guardian(s), must first provide the Drill Master with a signed copy of the Authorization Rider Release Form.

Chain of Command

People currently holding a position must reapply annually. All positions are open for new/old applicants between February 1st to February 15th annually. The meeting immediately following February 15th the current Board of Directors will vote on all applicants. The new board will officially begin March 1 annually.

1. Board of Directors (over the age of 18)
 - a. Oversees the 1st Colorado Top Hands.
 - b. Collect and determine dues.
 - c. Schedules practices & performances.
 - d. Holds monthly meetings.
 - e. Discusses and votes on topics brought forth by Committee Heads and Leadership Team.

2. Team Leadership:

a. Drill Master (over the age of 18)

- Attends pre-performance meetings
- Point of contact for appearances
- Sends team related emails
- Creates drill and leads practices
- Will make a decision on cancelation of practice due to inclement weather by 6am the day of practice.

b. Ground Captain (over the age of 18)

- Non-riding member.
- Attends pre-performance meetings.
- Coordinates behind the scenes needs at the performances including, but not limited to; arena practice time, plans grand entry with rodeo coordinator, point of contact for rodeo coordinator and announcer.
- Responsible for time management at performances.

c. Captain

- This position will have an additional assessment including but not limited to a riding test.
- Applicants must be members for at least a year before applying for this position
- In charge in the arena during a performance, including setting speed.
- Mentored by the Drill Master.
- Responsible for quads costume inspections.
- Assist the Vice-Chair with uniform and equipment dispersal.
- Gets the team ready while the Drill Master is in a performance meeting.