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*Lauren Kieffer and Veronica  
2015 Carolina International Advanced A  
3rd Place Finish*

# *What is* **EVENTING?**

The equestrian sport of eventing is considered the ultimate horse and rider triathlon, featuring jumping, galloping and precision movements both in an arena and over a series of open terrain obstacles. It is one of the few sports where men and women, professionals and amateurs, all compete as equals. Introduced to the Olympics as a sport in Stockholm, Sweden in 1912, eventing grew out of cavalry activities as the army tested its officers and horses for the necessary movements and challenges of war. It is a sport which highlights the trust and training of horse and rider as they work in partnership through all three phases of the competition. The phases are called dressage, show jumping, and cross country. Together they test obedience, precision, bravery, and stamina.

## **DRESSAGE**

The first phase of the competition is the only one which does not involve jumping obstacles. A dressage test is a series of movements performed in an arena. The rider must memorize a specific test provided by the eventing association with movements performed at markers around the arena. Riders are judged on their position and how accurately they ride their horse through the test. Horses must show obedience and fluid movement to score well.

## **SHOW JUMPING**

Show jumping takes place in an arena. Jumps are poles supported by standards and are relatively easy to knock down if hit by a horse's hoof. Show jumping requires athletic talent to jump height, but also extreme care and agility to clear each fence, turn quickly and complete the exercise within the time allowed.

## **CROSS COUNTRY**

In the cross country phase, horse and rider combinations are tested on speed, endurance and bravery by galloping at high speed over varied terrain and jumping solid obstacles within a set time limit called optimum time. Obstacles can be single fences or combinations, solid tables or logs, water combinations and up banks or down banks. Riders must guide their horses well and horses must be both trusting of their rider and bold enough to quickly assess obstacles as they approach at high speed.

## **ADDING IT ALL UP**

To determine the final placing, all penalties accumulated during the three phases are added, and the rider with the lowest score wins. The objective of the competitors is to accrue as few penalties as possible.