



ESA Challenger Series 2023

Course design and building

Introduction

The purpose and approach we take for this series is that we want as many riders and horses as possible to come home with clear rounds. To this end we layout the course so it is as fair and easy for the horse/pony to understand the questions.

Layout of the jumps.

1. The cross-country course consists of 8 jumps and are to be jumped in the following order:
 - 1.1 Wooden Planks (4 m wide in two sections)
 - 1.2 Green Picket fence (4m wide in two sections)
 - 1.3 Sloping Wood Box (2,4m wide one section)
 - 1.4 Flower Garden (4m wide in two sections)
 - 1.5 Water Jump (4m wide in two sections)
 - 1.6 Red House (2,4 M wide in one section)
 - 1.7 Bales (to be provided by the venue (Approx. 3 to 4 m wide with standing bales on the outside)
 - 1.8 Pole Skinny (2m wide in one section)
2. The course must measure between 500m and 800m in total length (to be done with the Course walk App) and the jumps should be spaced evenly throughout the course where possible.
3. The course will be ridden at 350 meters per minute.
4. Jump No 1 must be between 20m and 30m from the start
5. Jump 8 must not be more than 20 from the finish.
6. When deciding the placement of the jumps try to keep most if not all on a level approach with a level landing.
7. Avoid placing jumps off corners shortly before and after the jump.
8. Use trees, Bushes, pole fences and other natural hazards as wings for your jumps to make it easier for the rider to present to the fence.
9. As can be seen from the design of the jumps, when changing the course from 35cm to 55cm all that needs to be done is the jumps must be flipped over and the flags replaced on the higher side. This can be done in the space of 10 minutes and the next competition can continue.

It makes it easy to manage if all or certainly most of the jumps can be seen from the start so the starter can not only start and finish the riders, do the time keeping as well as judge the scores at the jumps of the competitors on the course.

Building of the jumps

Overview

- In an effort to standardise the courses throughout the country for this series to be judged on a “like for like” basis, we have to make as far as possible the jumps to be dimensionally the same and presentation wise also as similar as possible. We understand that the materials will differ from venue to venue but where possible let’s try to standardise where we can.
- I have used a welded metal frame for the jumps because these sets that are available from ESA for the competitions will need to be robust due to continual moving from venue to venue. When building for yourself the frames need not be made from metal but from wood which will make them less expensive.
- In most cases the heights will differ because of the surfaces that the jumps will be placed on so a 35cm jump could sometimes measure 37 or 38cm if it is an uphill approach and the opposite will be the case on a downhill approach. This is because for eventing we measure a jump from where the average horse/pony will take off and not the actual height of the obstacle. For this ESA Challenger Series courses we consider the jumps to be 35cm and 55cm but could differ slightly from course to course and jump to jump.

General Designs

Overall The challenge was to design and build a set of jumps that could be easily moved to multiple venues that are robust and will accommodate two height variations for two different courses. This method can be altered for a “Home” set of jumps where necessary. This set can be loaded on the back of a back of a bakkie or on one side of a two berth horse box.



Frames - I have used **RE Bar** for the end triangles to give them strength and **Square tube** 2mm x 25mm and 2m in length. These are then welded as per diagram.



Specific Designs

Jump 1 – Wooden planks – 4m wide in two sections

Starting with the metal frames I have cladded it with horizontal planks attached with Tek screws to the metal frames and then with normal screws added the vertical cladding. All the wood was taken from pallets wood that was stripped.









Jump 2 – Green Picket fences – 4m wide in two sections

Same as in 1 above I have attached horizontal planks onto the frames and then screwed the picket fences I purchased from my local hardware store. Painted green.





Jump 3 – Sloping box – 2,4m wide in one section

Using sheets of shutter board that measure 1,2m x 2,4m x 19mm I cut the required exterior planks and with the use of roofing timber 35mm x 72mm I build a frame for the box and then clad with the shutter board. When standing up with the slope on top to measure 55cm and then laid flat with the slope in the front measure 35 cm. The box is then painted with varnish – dark oak colour





Jump 4 – Flower Garden - 4m wide in two sections

Using two metal frames clad with shutter board 35cm x 2m on one side and 55cm x 2m on the other using Tec screws. Paint green with lots of colourful flowers.







Jump 5 – Water jump – 4m in two sections

AS above for no 4 but the top gets curves on it to resemble waves and painted blue with lots of fish







Jump 6 – Red House - one 2,4 m length

As with jump 3 above build frame with not poles but roof timber then clad with shutter board. Complete with red roof and white below including the base as this is the front for the 35cm jump.





Jump 7 – Bales

This material will be provided by the venue in the form of 8 small square bales. Using two for each jump wing on the outsides and then 4 bales flat tight together on the floor for 35cm and then stand them on their side for 55 cm.



Jump 8 – Skinny thin poles – one section of 2m

As per diagram, clad the frame with garden edging purchased from your local Garden shop is the quickest. I have tried to do a home job with the poles and it was a fail.





Flags.

Using 2m lengths of electrical conduit 20 mm and one roll of red and one white duct tape we constructed a set of flags for less than R 450.00





Numbers

They are just A5 printed and laminated and using a staple gun attached to the jumps on the Right Hand side next to the red flag.

Summary:

In total the group of 7 jumps, set of flags and all the required sundry of paint, nails Tek screws and cable ties cost me less that R 14 500.00 excluding labour.