

Split String Format

All I/I Tournaments and Qualified Games will be played using a "Split String" format.

The intent and purpose of mandating split horse strings in I/I Polo is to create a fair opportunity for both teams to play the same horses under the same conditions. Therefore, all horses shall use the same tack as originally issued in the first period of the game they are played. All tack shall remain the same through out the entire game except in the case of breakage, in which case similar type tack must be provided (i.e. gag for a gag, pelham for a pelham). Draw reins and straight reins must also stay consistent.

It shall be determined whether whips and spurs are allowed on all mounts prior to the start of the game. This determination must stay consistent for both teams (i.e. if spurs are not allowed on a particular mount in the first chukker, then spurs will not be allowed on that mount in the third chukker).

A string is made up of six horses (plus a spare). Each string plays two chukkers - one chukker for Team A, one chukker for Team B. Strings will have a chukker of rest between playing.

The horse owner/manager shall balance each string of six horses as accurately as possible, so that neither team has a horse advantage in any given chukker. Team A plays three of the horses while Team B is playing the other three horses within a string. For example, the handiest horses should be placed opposite one another as should the two best bumpers or the two slowest or two hottest horses.

Split String Forms are provided in the I/I Info Packet or can be obtained from the USPA. Split String Forms shall be used at all USPA I/I Tournaments.

The following information is required on the Split String Form:

1. **Event:** Name of the event
2. **Match:** The two teams competing
3. **Date, Time, Place:** Include host location
4. **Horse string owners:** In tournament play, one string will generally come from one team, one string from another team.
5. **Horse names:** Balanced horses shall be placed opposite each other.
6. **Position:** The horse owner shall recommend the position horses should play, although it is not required to line the horses up in that order unless the horse owner states it is required (i.e. some horses do not line up in the #1 position for throw-ins).
7. **Spare:** The string's substitute horse to be used in case a horse within that string needs to be replaced. Substitutions are at the discretion of the tournament/event manager with consideration of all factors, including input from the string owner/manager and Equine Welfare Representative.
8. **No spurs/No whips:** These boxes should be checked if the horse owner does not allow whips or spurs on a particular horse. If they are not recommended, the horse owner should inform the players during the pre-game horse description talk. *All spurs are subject to approval by the Host Tournament Committee.*

The Tournament Manager conducts two coin tosses before the game as outlined on the USPA Split String Sheet.

Horse scores are used to determine the Best Playing Pony and Best Playing String at all USPA I/I Tournaments. Split String Forms have a box in which horse scores are to be entered.

- Players will score horses played in each tournament game immediately after each game. Horses shall be scored 1 – 10, 10 being the best score. The tournament manager/RHTC reserves the right to request more accurate horse scores if, in their opinion, a player or team is manipulating the scoring in any way.
- The horse receiving the highest average score shall be named Best Playing Pony (BPP) of the tournament. Horses must have played at least two games in the tournament to be eligible for BPP. IC tournaments will award a men's and women's BPP. All tied horses will be recognized as BPP.
- All total scores of horses within a string shall be added and divided by the number of games played by that string. The string with the highest average shall be named Best Playing String (BPS) of the tournament. String must have played at least two games in the tournament to be eligible for BPS. IC tournaments will award a men's and women's BPS. All tied strings will be recognized.