

MASTER RULEBOOK

2026-2027 INAUGURAL SEASON

Golden State Pole Bending Association (GSPBA)

Owner: Savannah Chance

INAUGURAL GSPBA STATE FINALS

October 2027 - Date & Location TBD

California Born. Pole Bender Built.
One California. One Championship.

1. PURPOSE & MISSION

GSPBA exists to create more opportunities for pole benders throughout California and to provide a flexible path to a statewide championship. The ultimate goal is the GSPBA State Finals. Qualifiers, sanctioned jackpots, co-sanctioned events, and approved outside-event opportunities are intended to help riders get there without requiring them to abandon high school rodeo, rodeo associations, barrel jackpots, or other commitments.

2. MEMBERSHIP

GSPBA memberships are issued to ONE individual rider and are not family or household memberships. A rider must be a current member before a run can earn GSPBA points or qualifying-run credit.

Membership / Add-On	Rate	Purpose
Single-Horse Membership	\$65	One rider / 1 scoring horse position
Multi-Horse Membership	\$125	One rider / up to 4 scoring horse positions
Youth Add-On	+\$35	Optional sidepot eligibility for riders 12 & under
Senior Add-On	+\$35	Optional sidepot eligibility for riders 50 & over

Both membership options cover ONE rider only. A Multi-Horse Membership may not be shared by a spouse, child, sibling, parent, or any other rider. If multiple family members compete, each rider must purchase their own GSPBA membership. Youth and Senior points begin accumulating only after the applicable add-on is purchased; points are not retroactive.

3. THE GOLDEN 100 - FOUNDING MEMBERS

The first 100 paid inaugural members will be recognized as the Golden 100 Founding Members. Founding Members may select an available number from #001 through #100 on a first-paid, first-claimed basis.

- Once a Golden 100 number is claimed, it is permanently associated with that Founding Member.
- Golden 100 numbers may not be transferred or changed after assignment.
- The inaugural \$65 Individual Membership rate is grandfathered for Golden 100 members who renew annually without a lapse.
- Optional add-ons, Multi-Horse Membership pricing, event fees, and Finals entry fees are separate from the grandfathered \$65 Individual Membership rate.

4. OFFICIAL OPEN 5D FORMAT

The Open is run as a 5D based on the fastest clean time of the class.

Division	Time Behind Fastest	Example if Fastest = 20.000
1D	0.000 - 0.999	20.000 - 20.999

Division	Time Behind Fastest	Example if Fastest = 20.000
2D	1.000 - 1.999	21.000 - 21.999
3D	2.000 - 2.999	22.000 - 22.999
4D	3.000 - 4.999	23.000 - 24.999
5D	5.000 and slower	25.000 and slower

5. YOUTH & SENIOR SIDEPOTS

Youth: 12 & under. Senior: 50 & over. Both are optional sidepots. An eligible rider's Open time may carry into the applicable sidepot; a separate run is not required unless specifically advertised. For consistent age eligibility, age is determined as of January 1 of the competition year.

6. OFFICIAL POLE PATTERN

The official pole bending pattern consists of six poles in a straight line. Poles are spaced 21 feet apart, with the first pole 21 feet from the starting line. Riders may begin from either side and must correctly complete the prescribed pattern.

7. KNOCKED POLES, BROKEN PATTERNS & NO TIMES

At GSPBA-run events, a knocked pole is a No Time (NT). A rider may touch a pole in an attempt to keep it standing; if it remains standing, no penalty is assessed. A broken pattern is also an NT. At sanctioned or co-sanctioned outside events, the host organization's established pole-down and penalty rules may be honored.

A legitimate competition attempt that results in an NT still earns the eligible member 50 participation points and one qualifier credit. Scratches, draw-outs, ghost entries, and entries in which no competition attempt is made do not count.

8. TIMING & RERUNS

Electronic timing should be used whenever available, with times recorded to the thousandth. If the official timer fails and no acceptable backup time exists, a rerun will normally be granted for verified timer/equipment failure or outside interference.

Timer malfunction with a knocked pole: At an event where a knocked pole is an NT, a rider who knocks a pole during a run in which the timer malfunctions will receive an NT and will not receive a rerun. At an event where a knocked pole receives a time penalty, the rider will receive a rerun and the penalty from the original run will carry forward and be assessed against the rerun time. Any additional penalties on the rerun are assessed under the host's rules.

Reruns are not otherwise granted for rider error, horse refusal, broken patterns, lost equipment, or poor performance.

9. RIDER-BASED POINTS

GSPBA year-end standings belong to the rider. Every eligible competition run earns 50 participation points and one qualifier credit. When an event offers a cash payout, the rider also earns 1 additional point for every \$1 of official eligible money won. A payout is not required for an event to count as a GSPBA qualifier.

When a member makes multiple eligible runs at the same qualifier, those runs fill the rider's scoring positions according to the points earned on each run - not draw order and not the order in which the horses were ridden. Points from separate runs remain separate scoring runs. The number of scoring positions available is determined by the rider's paid membership coverage.

10. QUALIFIER CREDITS

Qualifier credits are earned through participation at approved GSPBA events. Each enrolled horse may earn one qualifier credit per approved event. A clean time is not required: an eligible run that results in a knocked pole, time penalty, or No Time still earns the 50 participation points and qualifier credit, provided a legitimate competition attempt is made.

For Multi-Horse members, each enrolled horse that participates may earn its own qualifier credit at the same event, up to the rider's paid membership limit.

11. STATE FINALS HORSE QUALIFICATION

Under a Multi-Horse Membership, the rider's first enrolled horse requires 10 qualifier credits to qualify for the GSPBA State Finals. Each additional enrolled horse requires 8 qualifier credits. Qualifier progress is tracked per enrolled horse.

12. SANCTIONING OPTIONS

Prime Sanctioned Events: The mandatory \$5 GSPBA fee is collected from every competition run at the Prime-sanctioned event, regardless of membership status.

Co-Sanctioned Events: The \$5 GSPBA fee is collected from each current GSPBA member who elects to have that run count toward GSPBA standings and qualification.

Sanctioned and co-sanctioned events do not have to offer a cash payout to qualify. Approved opportunities may include jackpots, gymkhanas, buckle or award series, club shows, youth events, association events, and other approved pole bending competitions when official participation/results can be verified.

Host organizations may continue using their established competition and pole-penalty rules. Whether the host uses an NT, 2-second penalty, 5-second penalty, or another established penalty does not change the eligible member's base 50 participation points or qualifier credit.

13. THE \$5 GSPBA FEE

Allocation	Amount Per Applicable Run
Year-End Awards	\$2
State Finals Added Money	\$3

The \$5 GSPBA fee is separate from the advertised race entry fee. When a payout is offered, the fee is not included when calculating the event's advertised payback.

14. OPEN PAYOUT

A cash payout is not required for an approved GSPBA sanctioned or co-sanctioned event to count for participation points and qualifiers. When a GSPBA race advertises a cash payout under the GSPBA 5D payout format, it pays back 70% of the advertised race entry fee unless a higher payout is advertised. Added money is added to the contestant purse after the entry-fee payback is calculated.

Division	Share of 5D Purse
1D	30%
2D	25%
3D	20%
4D	15%
5D	10%

If a D is empty, that division's purse is redistributed among the populated divisions while preserving the intended higher-to-lower D weighting. Contestant purse money may not be retained by the producer merely because a D is empty. **5D Minimum Payout Guarantee:** The last paying position in the 5D must receive at

least the regular Open race entry fee.

15. YEAR-END & FINALS AWARDS

The Top 10 eligible riders in the final GSPBA year-end standings will receive Year-End Awards. The Top 4 eligible contestants at the GSPBA State Finals will receive Finals Awards. Finals Awards are separate from Year-End Awards.

16. LUMBERJACK YEAR-END AWARD

Because poles are hard, GSPBA may track knocked poles for the fun Lumberjack Year-End Award. Each pole knocked completely to the ground during an eligible qualifying run counts as one Lumberjack point. Lumberjack points do not affect regular GSPBA standings.

17. PRIME PRODUCER BENEFITS & AWARDS

- Approved Prime Producers receive one complimentary GSPBA base membership for the qualifying season.
- A Prime Producer who successfully hosts 5 completed GSPBA Prime qualifiers earns one free Open entry at the GSPBA State Finals, provided the producer/rider otherwise satisfies normal qualification requirements.
- The Top 3 Prime Producers receive Year-End Producer Awards.
- Top 3 Prime Producer rankings are determined by the total mandatory \$5 GSPBA fees actually generated and submitted from that producer's Prime-sanctioned runs during the qualifying season.
- Only GSPBA fees received by the required deadline count toward Producer standings.

18. PRIME PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Follow the current GSPBA competition rules and approved event format.
- Collect the required \$5 GSPBA fee from every Prime-sanctioned competition run.
- Accurately record and submit entries, official times/results, payouts when applicable, and run counts.
- Submit GSPBA fees and required paperwork by published deadlines.
- Provide safe and reasonably consistent competition footing and equipment.
- Apply applicable GSPBA and approved host-event rules fairly and consistently.

19. SPORTSMANSHIP, HORSE WELFARE & BIOSECURITY

GSPBA expects good sportsmanship and a family-friendly environment. Horse welfare is paramount. Event management may prohibit an injured, lame, distressed, or otherwise unsafe horse from competing. Competitors should not bring horses displaying signs of contagious illness, and producers may establish reasonable health and biosecurity requirements.

20. PROTESTS & OFFICIAL RULINGS

Event management has authority over immediate competition decisions. GSPBA retains final authority over association rules, membership status, rider standings, qualifying-run records, sanctioning status, and year-end/Finals eligibility. Any protest procedure or filing deadline published for a specific event must be followed.

21. RULE CHANGES

GSPBA may clarify or amend rules when necessary for safety, fairness, administration, or growth of the association. Once paid competition begins, substantial membership, qualification, or scoring changes should generally be reserved for a future season unless a change is necessary to correct an error or protect fair competition. Official updates will be published through GSPBA.

22. OFFICIAL CONTACT

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THE RACES ARE THE ROAD. THE FINALS IS THE DESTINATION.