

## **Trumbull County Goat Pack Class**

**Each participant should review all pack materials before the Trumbull County Fair, and understand the scorecard**

**Each participant should complete 2 Hike logs per year to obtain the 4 points on the scorecard**

**Each participant should complete the written questions and the pack part diagram for a total of 11 points on the scorecard**

**Each participant uses the same goat year after year. 2 entries per level max. Example: In 2020 Steve showed Lily in pack class one. In 2021 Steve showed Lily in pack class 2, In 2022 Steve showed Lily in pack 3. ( The Goat progresses through the levels).**

**Hike Logs and written questions and diagrams to be turned in at the fair before the class begins. Make sure to put your name and date on the papers!!!**

**The Pack trail course will be posted on the day of the show in the Goat Barn at the Fair**

# 4-H Pack Goat



This handbook is intended to teach members what to look for when selecting a pack animal and tips for training. The pack goat project is a long term project that will involve years of working with your chosen pack goat. In order to pack you will want to start training your goat early and build on the training as they grow.

This handbook also outlines what is the rules and requirements for showing in the pack goat class at the fairs in Ottawa County.

### **What to Look for When Selecting a Pack Goat**

The first thing to consider is how you intend to use your goat. Will you be taking short day hikes or going on long overnight hikes. For short day hikes you can use a smaller goat with little problems. If you are planning to go on long overnight hikes you are going to want to get a larger dairy or meat breed so that it is able to carry more weight.

You will also want to look at the friendliness of the goat. If you are training a goat at a young age you will want to spend lots of time with the kid, hugging, etc. This is called imprinting. If you are training a goat from an older age you will still want to bond with your goat. Look for goats that seem friendly and aren't afraid of people.

You will want to look for a healthy and alert goat no matter what age goat you are selecting. Make sure it is muscular with a wide deep chest. Since the goat will be doing a lot of walking and will be carrying weight strong legs and pasterns are a must. Also look for a strong, level topline. Horns are not allowed for 4-H pack goats so you will want to disbud kids or purchase an adult without horns.

### **Necessary Equipment**

In addition to the standard equipment required to raise and maintain goats you will also need packing equipment.

You will need a collar or halter and a lead. While not all trails will require you to have your goat on a lead you should always have one with you. You will want to familiarize your goat with being tied and led.

There are two types of saddles/packs. The first is a soft pack which can be pretty much any type of soft bag that can get secured comfortably on the goat's back. This will be used during training and can be used when you only need the goat to carry a small weight. Soft packs can typically carry up to 10% of the goat's weight. Make sure that you do not overload your goat. It can injure their back.

The second type of saddle is the cross buck saddle. These are typically made of wood or aluminum. They are a miniature version of what is often used on horses and mules. These require a saddle pad between the saddle and the goat's back and use panniers (bags) that are attached to the saddle. With this type of saddle a goat can typically carry approximately 25% of their weight. Make sure to include the weight of the saddle and bags when you are calculating the weight they can carry.

Due to the fact that pack goats are often walking it is especially important that their feet are well maintained. Be sure that you keep them properly trimmed and cleaned.

### **Tips for Training Your Pack Goat**

While kids are too young to begin carrying any weight it is still advisable that you begin training while they are young if you can. Start by getting them used to being on a collar and lead. Work on getting them to follow you. You do not want to have to drag your pack goat along the trail whenever you go on a hike. They should also learn to stay behind you and not run ahead.

It is a good idea to teach your goat commands for when you go on hikes. Consider commands like "let's go", "whoa", "stand/wait" and "up" so that they will know when you want them to walk (let's go), stop (whoa), stand still so you can saddle them or get something out of the pack (stand or wait) and get into a truck or jump over a log (up). You may come up with other commands that you find useful as you are training them.

It is also a good idea to teach them to walk through water while they are still at a young age. Goats don't like to do this normally and teaching them while they are young is much easier than trying to convince a full grown pack wether that you need him to cross a stream.

Teach them how to load into your vehicle. This is especially important if you are going to be traveling with only a pickup truck. You may not always have something for your goat to climb up on to get in the truck and teaching them to jump into the truck as they grow is easier than lifting a 150 lb. goat into the truck.

You will also want to get them used to being tied up. It is much easier to saddle a goat that isn't moving around or fighting the lead. Some camps will also require you to tie your goats at night. For safety reasons you want them to be used to this before you go on a trip. Start by tying them on a short rope attached to the fence at about back level. Don't leave them alone. You will want to supervise to make sure that they don't get hurt as they get used to being tied.

While kids are not able to carry weight you can start getting them used to a pack by placing a lightweight empty pack on them. Have them carry it for short distances and praise them when they do well. Make it fun for them right from the start. Once your goat is a year old you can begin carrying light loads in the packs.

A goat reaches maturity around 4 years of age. A good size for a pack goat that will be used for long trips is about 36" tall at the shoulder. Your goat could weigh up to around 200 lbs. depending on the breed. Large goats like this can carry about 25% of their weight (including the saddle and packs) and can walk for about 5-15 miles per day. When you switch your goat from the soft pack to a cross buck saddle it is a good idea to let them get used to the saddle before adding any weight to the packs. You will not want to go from no weight right to 25% of the weight. Gradually increase the weight that they carry in their packs. Always make sure that it is balanced between the two sides.

## Packgoat Conformation

Conformation is what a packgoat looks like. That is, nice top line, good chest, wide ribs, etc. Packgoats need to look like they will work for you. There are a number of items that we look for in a packgoat. These include:

- **Level top line** – the back should be more or less a straight line with no bumpiness.
- **Proportion** – the measurement from the shoulder to the ground should be approximately the same as the measurement from the base of the neck to the base of the tail.
- **Chest** – the chest should be wide and deep.
- **Ribs** – on an adult packgoat, one should be able to put a finger width between each rib.
- **Legs** – legs should be thick with the front cannon bone and foreleg being approximately the same length, pasterns should be perpendicular to the ground; elbows should not “wing” out (come away from the body) when the animal is on the move; large hooves are a plus; hockiness (hocks are turned toward the inside) is also a plus.
- **Body type** – the packgoat should look muscular in appearance (not a dairy goat type) with thigh/gaskin muscles well defined; shoulders and neck should also show good muscle tone.

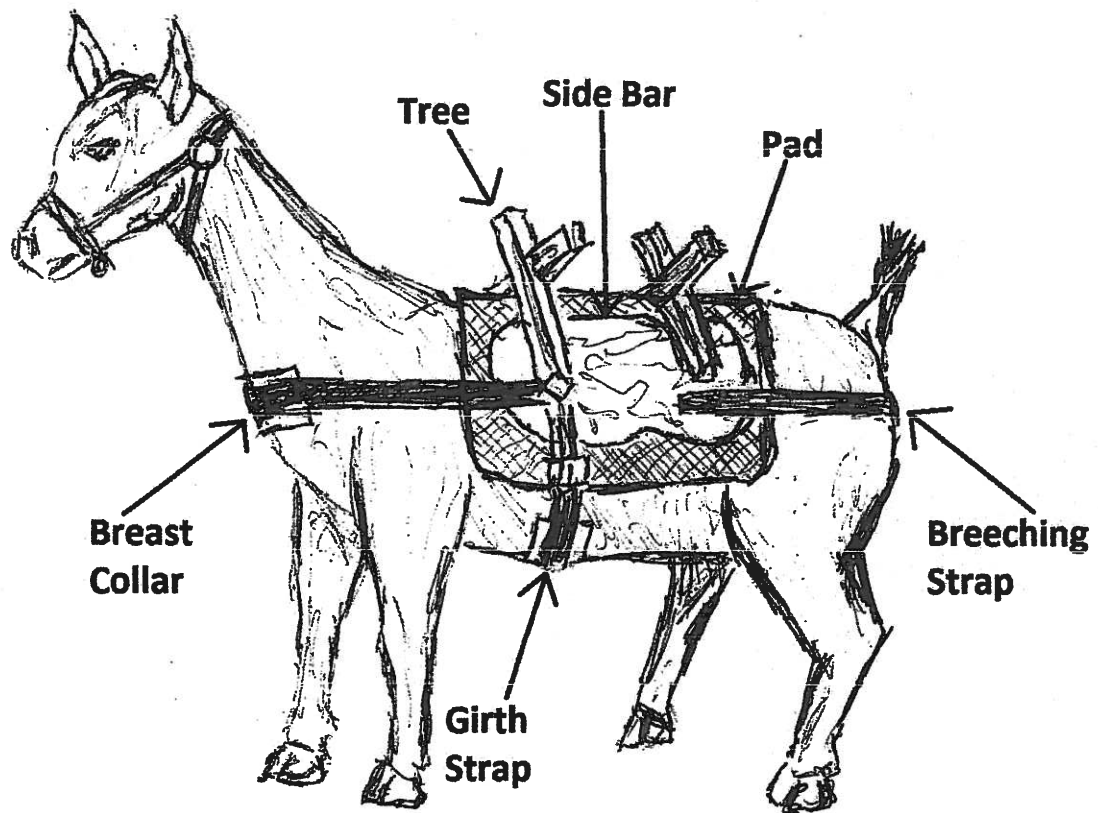
A packgoat does not have to be huge to be a good packer. A strong, well muscled goat is more of a plus than a huge goat. The packgoat body should not be out of proportion; that is, legs not proportioned to its body, or the chest too small for the size of the goat, or the goat too fat. When picking out a kid goat, the best thing to do is look at its parents or older brothers or sisters to see what their conformation is. If this is not possible, look for a kids that is well proportioned for its size. This means good size head; neck and chest for the size of the goat; legs that are thick with good-sized hooves; pasterns that are up high; ribs that are wide; thick thigh area; straight back. What we look for in a kid goat is a “strong” looking goat, a “sturdy” goat.

“Attitude” plays an extremely important part in a packgoat. Choose a goat that is friendly, curious, doesn’t mind being touched in all areas of his body, and one that has an alertness and brightness to its character.

### **Rules and Requirements for Showing in the Pack Goat Class**

1. The member should know the parts of a pack saddle
2. The member should be able place a saddle/pack on their goat.
  - a. For kids the pack can will be removed before starting the course. For goats over a year the pack should remain on the goat throughout the entire course. Points will be deducted if it slips or falls off.
  - b. Yearlings will not carry any weights.
  - c. Goats two years and older will be required to add weight to their packs as they go through the course. Weight should not exceed 20% of the goat's weight. Points will be deducted if the weight is not balanced.
3. The goat should stand still while being saddled and while weight is being added. Points will be deducted for excessive movement.
4. The goat should follow on a loose lead (no dragging or pulling the goat) through the obstacle course. Points will be deducted if the member drags the goat or has an excessively taunt lead.

### **Parts of a Saddle**



## **Obstacle Course**

The course will consist of 5-10 obstacles that simulate what a hiker and their pack goat might come across on the trail. The final obstacle will be loading your goat into a truck or trailer. There will also be an obstacle that tests to ensure your goat handles distractions well. The scorecard on the last page of this manual will be used for judging.

## **Possible Obstacles**

- Plank – A board wide enough for the goat to walk across.
- Pond/Stream with Bridge – A small area of water with a bridge. The member crosses the bridge and the goat should either walk in the water or across the bridge.
- Jump – Some sort of jump to simulate a tree that might have fallen across the hiking trail.
- Weave – Weave poles that the goat should follow the member between. Tennis balls can be added to the top for additional difficulty level (points deducted for knocking them off).
- A-Frame – The goat would be required to climb calmly up and then walk down the other side, not jump.
- Teeter Totter - The goat should calmly cross the teeter totter without jumping off as it lowers.
- Balance Board – A wide teeter totter where the member and goat are required to stand on the board and balance with both ends off the ground.
- Backing Up – The goat would be required to back up on command.
- Distraction (required) – Some sort of distraction that the goat should accept calmly. Possibly loud noise, approach by another animal, etc.
- Loading (required) – The last obstacle will require the animal to load into either a trailer or truck.

## **References**

Working Goats: <http://www.workinggoats.com/>

National Pack Goat Association: <http://www.napga.org/>

Frederick County 4-H Packgoat Page: <http://www.4hpackgoats.org/resources/project-documents>

Edel Weiss Acres: <http://home.comcast.net/~edelweissacres/ewacres5.htm>

Sheboygan County Extension: [sheboygan.uwex.edu/files/2010/08/PackgoatProjectHandbook.pdf](http://sheboygan.uwex.edu/files/2010/08/PackgoatProjectHandbook.pdf)

University of New Hampshire Extension: <http://extension.unh.edu/4-H-Animal-and-Ag-Science/4-H-Working-Goat-Page>

Northwest Pack Goats & Supplies: <http://northwestpackgoats.com/>

Wind River Pack Goats: <http://www.goatpacking.com/goatpackingSupplies.htm>

## 1<sup>st</sup> year Requirements

**Leading:** For the first year your goat will *not* be required to wear a pack for this class. He will, however, be expected to lead willingly with either a halter or collar and a lead strap. The goat should not have to be pulled around the ring but should walk calmly and willingly by your side. This is an important thing to teach your animal. On the trail a stubborn will not only be a waste of your time but can also be a dangerous and will make your packing experiences unpleasant.

**Go and Stop commands:** The goat must also know the commands go and stop. You should not have to pull on the lead to get the goat to go forward or to make him stop. He should know the commands. This can come in very handy if you don't have a lead on your goat while you are hiking. By teaching him these basic commands you can make your goat move and stop when you aren't beside him or can't get to him.

**Tarp:** The tarp is used to teach the animal to walk on unfamiliar items. It is very important that your goat will lead anywhere you ask him to while on the trail. By teaching him to walk over a tarp it helps to "desensitize" the animal to walking on strange objects. Your goat should not plant his feet when asked to walk over the tarp, but should walk willingly.

**Pick up foot:** That last requirement for you first year is that your goat will stand quietly while he allows you to pick up his foot. You will stand inside of a marked circle with your goat to perform this step. The animal should stand still and shouldn't step out of the circle at any time while you are doing this. You may ask, "Why is this important for him to know?" Actually, it is more important than what you think. What happens if your goat begins to limp while you are on the trail? You probably are first going to assume that something is wrong with his foot. You don't want a goat that is moving around trying to get away while you attempt to examine his hoof. A goat that willingly allows you to handle him and remains quiet while you are doing it is a necessity while on the trail.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Requirements

***Must do 1<sup>st</sup> year requirements as well as the following:***

**Wear pack saddle and panniers:** This year your goat will be required to wear a pack saddle along with panniers or a day pack with no weight in them. (No other packing gear permitted.) This is just showing that your goat is accustomed to saddle and pack and is in the beginning stages of becoming an experienced packer. We require no weights this year for the fact that the goat is still young and growing.

**Up/jump command:** Your goat should know the *up/jump* command, as it will be used quite frequently on the trail. You can use whichever command you wish as long as your goat knows what he is being asked to do. We don't recommend using them interchangeably as it may confuse the animal. For the 4-H pack class your goat will need to know this command for both the ledge jump obstacle and the jumps. You are expected to give this command when you are performing an obstacle, which requires your animal to jump over or onto something.

**Ledge jump:** You will be required to jump your goat up onto a pallet that will be elevated by bricks. You will walk your goat over to that pallet and give the up/jump command. Which ever you prefer. Your goat should then jump up onto the pallet with no further urging from you. Make your goat stand there for a brief moment before asking him to jump off of the pallet and back to the ground. The ledge jump is used to simulate a goat jumping onto a ledge while in the wilderness or loading him into your vehicle for transporting. While hiking, being able to jump up onto a ledge can be a form of protection for your goat trying to escape a predator. It is natural for a goat to jump onto a ledge for protection and is something that even wild goats do. Because goats are by nature good jumpers, we don't think you should have too much trouble teaching your goat this maneuver.

**Tie:** For this you will 1) need to know how to tie a slip knot or some other knot that can be untied quickly in case of an emergency. 2) Your goat must stand still while you tie it and after you have finished. You will first walk your goat over to the post and tie him to it. Then you will walk all the way around your goat while he is still tied and back to the position where you started. Your goat should stand quietly the whole time you are walking around him. A goat absolutely must know how to stand still when he is tied. There will be many instances when you will have to tie your goat while out packing. Putting on and taking off that pack is just an example. A goat that will not stand still can be quite difficult to saddle. It is also a way of keeping your goat from wandering off. Teaching a goat to tie well is something that you will definitely benefit from.



**Bridge:** This obstacle you will simply walk your animal to the bridge and then walk over it. We put this into the course to not only show your goat will walk over a bridge if you ever come to one, but also that your animal is willing to follow you over any obstacle that you may encounter while on the trail. Teaching your goat to get used to different situations and obstacle will be a great help to you while packing.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Year Requirements

**Must do 1<sup>st</sup> - 2<sup>nd</sup> year requirements as well as the following:**

**Wear a pack saddle and the panniers with weight:** Your goat will be required to wear a pack saddle and panniers or day pack with equally distributed weight in the panniers. Once again the pack is showing that your animal is accustomed to carrying something on its back, and by adding weight it is showing that your animal will carry a load willingly.

**Back command:** This year your goat will be required to know the **back** command. You will start by leading your goat to the back obstacle and turning him around so he is ready to back through the course. Begin by giving the back command. You should not have to pull forcefully on the lead to get your animal to back. Gentle backward tugs on the lead are permitted as you give that command. When you get to the turn, carefully continue backing your animal around that turn and through that rest of the obstacle. When you reach the end, give your goat a pat for a job well done and continue on the rest of the course. Teaching your goat to back is another one of the few commands that will be profitable to you on the trail. It can come in handy if you are confined to an area and the only way you can go is back! Be patient when teaching this command. It usually is one of the hardest to teach your pack goat, but with practice and time he'll get it.

**Remove and replace pack:** This obstacle will be performed along with the "tie" obstacle. First you will tie your goat to the post where the "tie" obstacle is done. Then you will walk around your animal and stop back in the position where you started. You have just performed the required "tie" step. Now you will perform the "remove and replace pack" step. For those of you who are using a pack saddle and panniers, start by removing just the panniers; do not remove the saddle. Walk to the other side of the goat and put the panniers back on your animal. For those of you that are using a day pack, remove the pack and walk to the other side of the goat and put it back on. If your day pack cinch is on only one side, then walk all the way around the goat before placing the pack on the goat and re-cinch it. It is probably very obvious why your goat should learn how to stand still while being saddled and unsaddled. If he didn't, you would have quite a hard time getting that saddle on him. It will be to your benefit to make sure your animal stands patiently.

### 4<sup>th</sup> Year Requirements

**Must do 1<sup>st</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> year requirements as well as the following:**

**Wear pack saddle and panniers with weight:** Your goat will be required to wear a pack saddle and panniers or day pack with equally distributed weight in the panniers. Once again the pack is showing that your animal is accustomed to carrying something on its back, and by adding weight, it is showing that your animal will carry a load willingly.

**Jumps:** For the jumps; walk or trot your animal up to the obstacle and give the **up** or **jump** command. Once the goat has jumped over the obstacle, continue on with the rest of the course. You will have two jumps that your goat will have to master in the course. A goat that will jump on command is important when on the trail. A fallen tree or small ditches are obstacles that would usually hinder your progress on the trail; however, a goat that will jump these will save you time trying to find another route out around such obstacles.

**Water:** Walking through water is one of the most important things that you can teach your goat to do. Most goats will try to jump small creeks and streams, as most do not like water. However, jumping will not work when you come to a river or other larger water source. Your goat is going to have to wade or swim through it, and you will not want to drag him the whole way. For the obstacle in the pack program you will not be required to swim any rivers. However, you will have to make your goat walk through a pool of water. A pool will be set up with a couple of inches of water in it. When you come to the pool, walk beside of it as your goat wades through the water.

**Teeter Totter:** The teeter-totter is just another example of teaching your animal to walk over unstable ground. For this obstacle, simply walk your animal up and over the teeter-totter.

## 5<sup>th</sup> Year Requirements

**Must do 1<sup>st</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> year requirement as well as the following:**

**Wear a pack saddle and panniers with weight:** Your goat will be required to wear a pack saddle and panniers or a day pack with equally distributed weight in the panniers.

**No lead:** For the 5<sup>th</sup> year, you will have to go through the whole course without a lead rope on your goat. Walking without a lead and still having control over your animal is an absolute must while on the trail. You may leave the lead clipped to your goat's halter or collar but the end of it **must** be draped over the saddle and at no time while going through the course are you to use it to help guide your animal in any way.

## 6<sup>th</sup> Year Requirements

**Must do 1<sup>st</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> year requirement as well as the following:**

**Wear a pack saddle and panniers with weight:** Your goat will be required to wear a pack saddle and panniers or a day pack with equally distributed weight in the panniers.

**Add a goat:** This year you will be required to add a goat to your pack string. You will continue to use the previous goat and will do the same obstacle as before. The only difference is that you will have an extra goat tied to your saddle that will follow behind your other goat through the course. You will lead your original goat as in year 1-5 and again the course will be the same. Your "add-on" goat is to be tied to your other goat with another lead rope and should follow the lead goat willingly. Your lead goat should not have to pull your add-on goat through the course. Your add on goat can be any age. No packing gear is required on your add-on goat, but is allowed. Only your original goat **must** be wearing packing gear.

## Advanced

Goat of 1 year and up may be used, **but can not be used in classes 2-6**. This class is for advanced pack goats doing requirements of classes 1-4. Advanced obstacles will be added and determined at the fair. Pack saddle and weight are required for the age of the goat.

## Acknowledgements:

*The Pack Goat* by John Mionczynski  
*4-H Harness Goat Project Manual*  
Vicki Reed, Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development  
Adam Black and Meagan Bennett  
Muskingum County Goat Committee

Updated 2015



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# Trumbull County Pack Goat Fitting and Showing Scorecard

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Total Points \_\_\_\_\_

## FIRST YEAR

1. APPEARANCE OF ANIMAL -20	POINTS	SUBTOTAL
-Goat Condition- Showing normal growth neither too fat or to thin	5	
-Hair--Clean and properly groomed	5	
-Hoofs—Clean and trimmed to enable the goat to walk naturally	5	
-Cleanliness—Clean body, legs, feet, tail area, nose, and ears.	5	
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2. APPEARANCE OF EXHIBITOR -5		
-Clothes and Person—Neat and clean wearing appropriate hiking clothes and shoes.	5	
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3. STRUCTURAL CORRECTNESS -30		
-Structural Correctness includes a wide chest and brisket -	5	
- Length of body in proportion to height	5	
-Topline straight	5	
-Strong Pasterns and feet	5	
-Elbows do not wing out on the move	5	
-Strong and easy gait with no lameness	5	
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4. SHOWING THE GOAT IN THE RING -15		
-Leading—Enter leading the goat at a normal walk around the ring Goats should lead readily and respond quickly.	5	
-Goat must not get out of control, he must stay calm and respond quickly to your requests for maneuvers	5	
-Pose the goat with front and rear feet squarely beneath it. When The judge is observing the goat. If it moves quickly replace.	5	
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5. ATTITUDE AND COORDINATION -11		
-The pack goat shall show a 'pet quality' attitude be friendly and willing to work.	5	
-Coordination over obstacle course	6	
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**6. QUESTIONS -11**

-Questions from the skillaton and parts of the pack

11

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**7. HIKE RECORD SCORE -4**

-Complete two hikes during the project year.

4

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**8. PACK GOAT TRAIL TEST – 4**

-Trail test consist of four obstacles that the goat will go over.

1. Leading, and the stop and go command. -1

2. Walk over logs -1

3. Cross over a tarp -1

4. Pick up front foot for the judge -1

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**TOTAL POINTS FOR THE FITTING AND SHOWING**

**100**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Points Front \_\_\_\_\_ Back Points \_\_\_\_\_ Total Points \_\_\_\_\_

1. A goat who is friendly with a good attitude makes a perfect pack goat  
 True or False
2. Name two commands you need to teach your goat \_\_\_\_\_ and  
 \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Conformation is what a pack goat looks like, name two conformation points  
 we look for in a pack goat.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Two types of packs are a soft pack and a cross buck saddle, True or False.
5. If your goat weights 200lbs how much weight can he carry, 20%, 25%, 30%,  
 Of his body weight. Circle one percentage.

**Word Bank for Parts of a Pack:**

Cantle

Pad

Back Strap

Girth Strap

Skirt

Billet Strap

Tree

Breast Collar

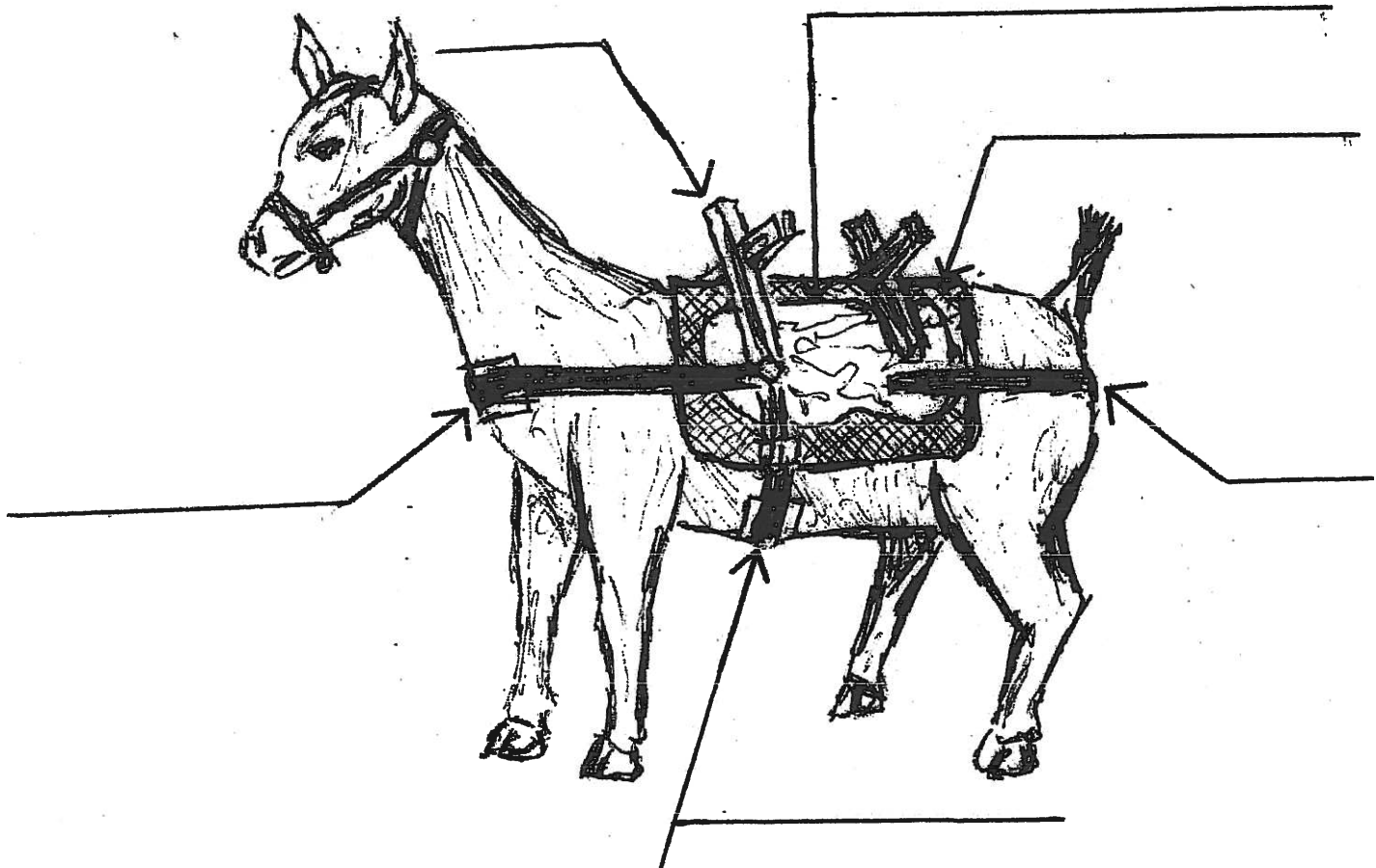
Breeching Strap

Gullet

Pommel

Side Bar

**Parts of a Saddle**



## Hike Log Record for Your Pack Goat Project

Date\_\_\_\_\_

Trail Type\_\_\_\_\_

(Park, Woods, Pasture, around the yard, etc.)

How Long of a hike \_\_\_\_\_

Description of the hike like obstacles you practice or came across in hike

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Weather \_\_\_\_\_ Temperature\_\_\_\_\_

Time Started\_\_\_\_\_ Ending Time\_\_\_\_\_

Condition of the Trail\_\_\_\_\_

Did you and your Goat enjoy this hike: YES / NO

Other Comments:

Please complete two hikes with a picture during the project year. One sheet per hike.

# 2019 Pack Goat Course

