

# Tent Pegging

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Subedar Ajay Anant Sawant from the **Army's 61 Cavalry** has been conferred the **Arjuna award for the equestrian sport of tent pegging**. Subedar Sawant joined the Army in 1993 and had no prior background in equestrian sports. Subedar Sawant has won several medals over the years. He won his **first international participation in 2002 and won the team silver in the 2018 World Cup in Abu Dhabi**.

## Tent Pegging

Tentpegging **originated in the North West frontier of India and was taken up by the soldiers of the British Cavalry to use as practice for mounted warfare**. The term 'tentpegging' is related to a **battle tactic used by cavalry where a pre-dawn raid on an enemy camp would take place with riders severing or uprooting tent pegs**, thus collapsing the tents on their sleeping occupants, and reaping havoc and terror in the camp. Today, the sport is practised in many countries, mainly by civilians and light horses. It involves a **mounted horseman riding at a gallop, and using a sword or a lance to pierce, pick up and carry away a small ground target (a symbolic tent peg) or series of small ground targets**.

The targets used for tent pegging have several variations, such as:

- a ring – a rider's weapon should successfully pass through the ring without making contact
- a lemon – where, a rider is required to stab or slice a suspended lemon
- a mannequin – where a rider should attack at a certain fixed part of the target.

Tent pegging competitions vary based on a few factors like, the **size and shape of targets, number of consecutive targets,**

**types of weapons allowed, the duration in which the course has to be completed, and the manner in which the target has to be attacked.** In competitions, riders are awarded points for each target based on the execution, with penalties enforced for violations. The rider with the most points at the end of the competition is declared as the winner. There are several tent pegging competitions conducted at a national level. The most popular and highest level of international competitions for the sport are the **Tent Pegging World Cup and the World Championships.**

## Equestrian Sports

Equestrian sports involve many types of **horse competition from classical types such as Dressage to intense types like cross-country sports.** These types of activities have been around for many years with the first Olympic event being held in 1912. Equestrian sports **combine the beauty and power of the horse with the skilful manipulation of the course by the rider.** The successful rider works in harmony with the horse to master the obstacles. Horses are trained and ridden for practical working purposes such as in police work or for controlling herd animals on a ranch. They are also used in competitive sports including, but not limited to dressage, endurance racing, eventing, reining, show jumping, tent pegging, vaulting, polo, horse racing, combined driving, and rodeo.