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PERFORMANCE  
RULES  
HANDBOOK  
— OF —

MINIATURE HORSE ASSOCIATION  
OF AUSTRALIA INC.



SHOW RULES &  
PERFORMANCE

MINIATURE HORSE ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA INC.





# FOREWORD

The Miniature Horse Association of Australia Inc. was founded in November 1989 to provide for an Association dedicated wholly and completely to one breed of horse - the MINIATURE HORSE.

The breed standard states *"if there were no size reference, the Miniature Horse might give the illusion of being a full sized horse... The general impression should be one of refinement, symmetry, agility, and an alert intelligence."* The Miniature Horse is a truly unique and special little horse.

There are two height categories of Miniature Horse:

- Miniature Horse - Not exceeding 34" as an adult, and
- Small Horse - Not exceeding 38" as an adult. There are also height for age requirements.

Membership in MHAA Inc. is available to all persons who subscribe to the aims and objects of the Association. Associate membership is for interested persons who do not own a registered Miniature Horse; Regular membership is open to persons who own registered horses. Only Regular members have voting rights in the Association and only Regular members are eligible to hold management positions in the Association.

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The magazine "Fine Lines" is published by MHAA Inc. six times each year. This publication is an excellent source of information about the breed, the studs involved, the care and management of Miniature Horses, and current events and results.

Miniature Horses are exhibited at many shows throughout Australia. The Association conducts a National High Point Competition and most states also hold an annual State High Point Competition for owners.

This booklet codifies the showing rules of the Association and provides guidelines for the various performance disciplines which have become an integral part of the Miniature Horse show scene.



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# BREED STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE

## THE MINIATURE HORSE

### GENERAL IMPRESSION

*“A small, sound, well balanced horse, possessing the conformation characteristics desirable of most breeds.”*

*“In fact, if there were no size reference, the miniature horse might give the illusion of being a full sized horse. A miniature horse should show refinement and femininity in the mare, boldness and masculinity in the stallion, at the same time displaying an impeccable temperament.”*

The general impression should be one of refinement, symmetry, agility and an alert intelligence. Since the breed objective is the smallest possible perfect horse, preference in judging shall be given to the smaller horse for its age, when other characteristics are approximately equal.

### SIZE

There shall be Miniature Horse and Small Horse Category:-

### MINIATURE HORSE

Height requirements are:-

- (i) Horses 0-6 months of age inclusive shall not exceed 7.2 hands or 30" in height.
- (ii) Horses over 6 months up to and including 12 months of age shall not exceed 8 0 hands or 32" in height.
- (iii) Horses over 12 months up to and including 24 months of age shall not exceed 8 1 hands or 33" in height.
- (iv) Horses over 24 months shall not exceed 8.2 hands or 34" in height.

### SMALL HORSE

Height requirements are:-

- (i) Horses 0 up to including 12 months of age shall not exceed 8.2 hands or 34% in height.
- (ii) Horses over 12 months up to including 24 months of age shall not exceed 9.00 hands or 36" in height.
- (iii) Horses over 24 months up to and including 36 months of age shall not exceed 9.1 hands or 37" in height.
- (iv) Horses over 36 months of age shall not exceed 9.2 hands or 38" in height.



## HEAD

In proportion to the length of neck and body, broad forehead with large expressive eyes set well apart, comparatively short distance between eyes and muzzle, profile straight or slightly concave below eyes, large nostrils, clean refined muzzle.

## TEETH

An even bite is necessary, with no mole than 3mm Variance Overshot or parrot mouth is a disqualification.

## EARS

Medium sized, pointed and alert, tips curving slightly inwards.

## THROAT LATCH

Clean and well defined, allowing ample flexion at the poll.

## NECK

Flexible and lengthy in proportion to body and style, blending smoothly into withers.

## SHOULDER

Long sloping and well angulated, allowing a tree swinging stride and alert head/neck carriage, well muscled forearm.

## BODY

Well muscled with ample bone and substance, without being heavy, balanced and well proportioned, short back and loins in relation to the length of underline, smooth and generally level top line, proportionate depth of girth and flank, trim

## HINDQUARTERS

Long well muscled hip, thigh and gaskin, highest point of croup to be same height as withers, tail set neither excessively high or low, but smoothly rounding of rump.

## LEGS

Lengthy and slender in proportion to the rest of the body, set straight and parallel when viewed from front and back, straight true and squarely set when viewed from the side with hooves pointing directly ahead, pasterns sloping approximately 45 degrees and blending smoothly with no change of angle from hooves to the ground, hooves to be round and compact, trimmed suitably but not excessively for an unshod horse.

## GAIT

Smooth and fluid gait in motion, naturally free flowing.

## COLOUR

Any colour or marking pattern is acceptable, any eye colour is allowed, the coat should be lustrous and silky.

## TEMPERAMENT

Good temperament is of the utmost importance - curious, alert, intelligent and friendly, poor or vicious temperament is considered a fault.



# CODE OF ETHICS

## GENERAL

1. This code of ethics is hereby adopted as part of the Rules and Regulations of the Miniature Horse Association of Australia Inc.
2. If a member or members are found to be in violation of this code or ethics of a nature serious enough, then the matter may be dealt with under the auspices of Rule 18 and Article 9 of the Constitution, Rules and Regulations.
3. In every situation the welfare of the breed and the Miniature Horse Association of Australia Inc shall be paramount over other considerations
4. It shall be considered unethical practice for any member against whom a complaint has been made to attempt to influence the committee of management or any other member by duress or intimidation of a sort, prior to the complaint having been resolved according to the Association, Rules and Regulations

## OWNERS AND BREEDERS

5. Owners and breeders shall avoid false, misleading and misapplied statements, advertisements and the like concerning horses offered for sale or for stud purposes.
6. Owners and breeders shall not publicly disparage the horse of another owner or breeder, nor publicly volunteer an opinion of another owner's horse or a transaction to which he is not a party. If this private opinion is sought, and, he sincerely feels qualified to answer, that

opinion shall be given privately and with courtesy and integrity

7. An owner or breeder and their agents and employees shall use reasonable care in the handling and treatment of his own horses and those horses placed in his care.

## EXHIBITORS

8. Conduct of owners and exhibitors in the ring and on the show grounds shall be exemplary at all times.
9. The ring and show grounds conduct of any exhibitor shall not be such as to adversely affect the exhibition of any other person's horse.
10. Owners and exhibitors shall not attempt to influence judges or appointed judges by any means prior to or after an event.
11. Non winners of an event shall remain in the ring or display area until dismissed in the manner directed by the show organisers.
12. Genuine applause is commendable, but not where it represents less than fair competition to other horses in the event.
13. Owners and exhibitors shall not accuse the judge or favouritism or bribery of any form. If they have a legitimate protest, then it shall be followed in the manner laid out by the show management.

Owners and exhibitors shall support the judge and judging system of the day.



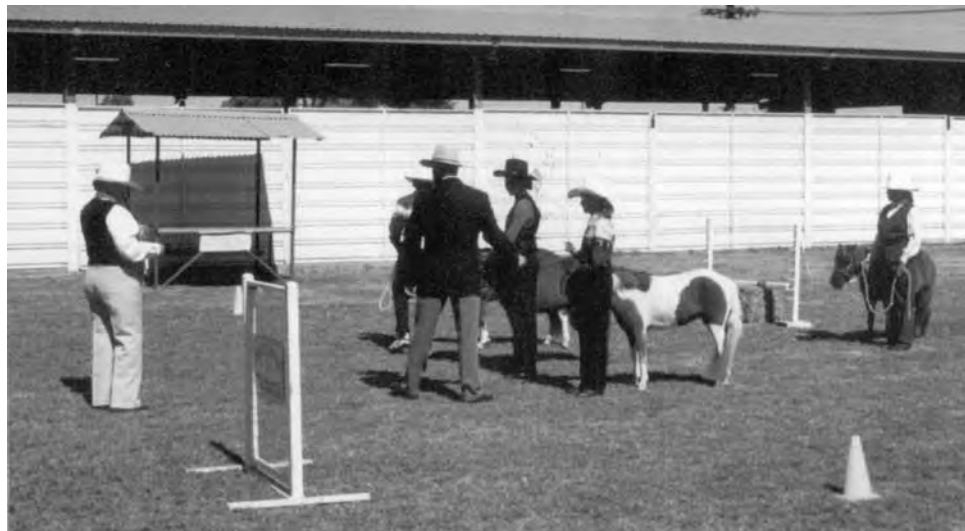
## JUDGES AND STEWARDS

The Miniature Horse Association of Australia Inc shall expect all judges of approved or sponsored shows, and thereby their stewards, to understand and abide by the following

14. The first step of a judge is to exhibit the highest standard of integrity at all times toward the breed, the horses exhibited and then handlers, she/he should avoid decisions arrived at by influence, bias, reputation or ignorance.
15. Judges are responsible for a knowledge and understanding of the Miniature Horse Breed.

16. Judges and Stewards shall make every effort to isolate themselves from exhibitors and handlers until the conclusion of judging for the day or the show.
17. Judges and Stewards shall report to the event management any improper approaches by exhibitors, handlers or owners of any horse shown.

The Miniature Horse Association of Australia Inc. holds that adherence to this code of ethics is important to the integrity of the Miniature Horse Breed and the Miniature Horse Association. Membership to the Miniature Horse Association of Australia Inc. is an agreement to abide by this code of ethics.







# SHOW RULES

## PRESENTATION FOR SHOWING

### Rule I:

The permissible methods of presentation for showing the registered Miniature Horse are:

- (a) In a natural condition; or
- (b) Clipped with the new coat established; or
- (c) Freshly clipped, as long as in all of the above, the horse is neat, healthy and well presented;
- (d) Mane and tail are to be shown free flowing in Halter and In-Hand events;
- (e) Hooves to be unshod in Halter and In-Hand events;
- (f) Plaiting, braiding and suitable decorative trim is permissible in Performance events
- (g) Hooves may be shod in a normal manner for Performance events. Refer to Show Rule VI (f).



General preparation and presentation will be at the discretion of the owner, but the Association states that the horse must be shown to its best possible visual and health advantage, in order to promote the Miniature Horse Breed as one of beauty, intelligence and gentleness.

*Note: 'circus' or 'cute' type presentation is not relevant for any event, other than costume classes.*

## ELIGIBILITY FOR SHOWING

### Rule II:

- A. Shows with classes Registered MHAA Inc. will be open to horses holding current registration certificates are to be available for viewing. Events are open to Registered Miniature Horses owned by members only.
- B. To enter a show, the exhibitor must use the complete name and number of the animal as it is shown on the horse's registration certificate. No substitutions or changes are acceptable. Horses shown under false identity will be automatically and immediately disqualified by the show management.

The protest fee is waived. Entry forms must be completely filled out for all shows, and must not be accepted by the show management until all information has been listed, copies of the registration papers made available if requested, and the entry blank signed by the exhibitor.



- C. Animals with both Miniature Horse and Miniature Pony Registration/s can only be shown in either the Miniature Horse ring or Miniature Pony ring (not both) at any show in any one season.
- D. Horses under the age of 12 months may be shown registration pending providing the owner holds a standard letter from the Secretary stating registration has been received and all is in order.
- E. At shows conducted by the MHAA.Inc or conducted under its rules a Category A registered miniature horse and a Category B registered miniature horse shall not compete against each other for any prize or award, in either halter or performance without the prior permission of the committee, which committee shall not be bound to give, but shall in any event be given only where there is no obvious advantage to one category over the other in competition.
- F. All Stallions of three years of age or over In Future must have submitted a Stallion Certificate of Soundness before being bred with and or entering the show ring.
- G. Young foals in the show ring. Foals under the age of 4 months must be accompanied to the show by their Dam and must be trained to lead on a halter.
- H. Any member or member's agent who either knowingly or inadvertently shows an unregistered horse in an MHAA event at any shows will result in:
- (a) the horse being stripped of any awards and High Points earned at that show
  - (b) the member being suspended from showing at the next MHAA Feature Show in that State.
  - (c) the said horse being ineligible for showing at the next MHAA Feature Show in that State.
- I. Any Multiple or repeat breach by the same member or member's agent will result in a suspension from showing for a period to be determined by National Committee.

## HEIGHT VERIFICATION

### Rule III:

- A. There shall be a A Category and a B Category:
- MINIATURE HORSE height requirements are:
- (i) Horses up to but not including 12 months of age shall not exceed 7.2 hands or 30" in height
  - (ii) Horses 12 months up to and including 24 months of age shall not exceed 8.0 hands or 32" in height.
  - (iii) Horses 24 months up to and including 36 months of age shall not exceed 8.1 hands or 33" in height.
  - (iv) Horses 36 months and over shall not exceed 8.2 hands or 34" in height.
- SMALL HORSE height requirements are:
- (i) Horses 0up to including 12 months of age shall not exceed 8.2 hands or 34" in height
  - (ii) Horses over 12 months up to including 24 months of age shall not exceed 9.00 hands or 36" in height



(iii) Horses over 24 months up to and including 36 months of age shall not exceed 9.1 hands or 37" in height.

(iv) Horses over 36 months of age shall not exceed 9.2 hands or 38" in height.

*Definition: A 'qualified' miniature horse is one which meets the*

- B. Deleted
- C. The show age of the horse is determined from its date of birth or as the Association may decide if the date of birth is unknown except where the Show Organisers stipulate "Age as at August 1st"
- D. Where required, a horse's height must be verified on a hard level surface, preferably concrete or paved, by a show steward and, witnessed by a member of the horse show committee or the organisation sponsoring the show. The measuring device used to measure the first horse must be used to measure all of the horses.
- E. Management shall announce the time and place for height verification.
- F. All miniature horses being shown at Miniature Horse Association of Australia Inc. Championship or Feature Shows in all states to be officially measured prior to entering the show ring. The official measurer's decision is final unless a protest is lodged in writing accompanied by the appropriate fee within 30 minutes of measuring. No person shall measure his own horses or horses owned by members of his family or spouse.



- G. Horses holding permanent registration may hold a valid height recording card to be valid for a maximum period of one year.
  1. Horses holding Permanent Registration may use height recording cards to avoid the necessity of being Measured at every show. These Cards will be valid for a maximum period of one (1) year from the date of measurement.
  2. Miniature Horses measuring 33 inches and under and Small Horses measuring 37 inches and under may hold a Height Recording Card which is valid for a maximum period of one (1) year from the date of measurement.
  3. Height recording cards may be validly used at all MHAA shows except for State and National Shows.
  4. On payment of the appropriate protest fee, any member has the right to lodge a protest querying the height of a horse holding a height recording card.



5. Height recording cards can only be issued by a State Delegate or an Official Measurer (being someone nominated by a State or National Committee for that purpose).
- H. Where height splits to classes occur or are contemplated show committees at both State and National level, must adhere to that at no time may a split be greater than 2" in height difference these splits are to start at the top of the height range and move lower by two inches at a time as there is no minimum heights set down.
- I. Any horse officially measuring over 34" in height at an MHAA Show and the owners accepts that measurement by showing the horse in the small ring the owner then also accepts that the horse registration papers will be recalled and altered to the small horse immediately following that show. (If the horse in question has measured under 34" in height and is subject to purely a height for age requirement then this does not apply as any adjustment will be made at the horses next official upgrade.

## JUDGES

### **Rule IV**

- A. Where possible, Miniature Horse In-Hand and Halter events will be judged by recognised or accredited horse judges. Only if a horse judge is unavailable will a pony judge be utilised.
- B. Approved judges may be nominated by a member, whereby the judge will be invited to actively learn about miniature horses as a distinct and identifiable breed. Any judges hired to judge a miniature horse show or class are required to acquaint themselves with the breed standards and the official show rules, and must comply with those rules.
- C. A judge shall not attend a show, exhibitor's party, or any other activity connected with a show on the day previous to the show at which he/she is officiating, where that party or activity may cause the said judge to have contact with a breeder, owner or exhibitor of a miniature horse entered in the following day's show.
- D. A judge shall not visit the horse's stall area, nor speak with owners, trainers, exhibitors, or owner's representatives, nor inspect or discuss any horse entered in the show before judging, nor shall he/she review the programme until after judging has been completed.
- E. Judges may be asked to give fair and reasonable commentary on placings and decisions after each class.



- F. No horse may be shown before a judge that has been sold by said judge or by his/her employer within a period of one year prior to the show. No horse may be shown before a judge that has been trained by said judge within one year period prior to the show. No horses owned by the family members of the judge may be shown and family members of the judge are ineligible to be exhibitors

## STEWARDS AND OFFICIALS

### Rule V

- A. Any reputable person may act in the capacity of ring steward. The ring stewards must help the judge, not advise him/her. The steward shall carefully refrain from discussing, or seeming to discuss, the horses or exhibitors with the judge. It is mandatory that show managers, ring stewards and any paid employees of that show and their immediate family or entities refrain from showing or having horses shown that are registered in the above persons' names, where they are officiating or employed.

## DRUGS AND ARTIFICIAL APPLIANCES AND IRRITANTS

### Rule VI:

- A. The use of stimulants or depressants or any drug affecting the showing of a horse in halter or performance is strictly forbidden. Penalties for positive evidence of such drugging will include barring of the exhibitor, owner or trainer from showing at said show and will include barring of all horses exhibited, owned, or trained by them. All points received at said show will be forfeited for any horses shown, owned or trained by them.
- B. Any horse showing evidence of the use of ginger or other irritants to produce a higher tail carriage than normal shall be disqualified.
- C. Switches, artificial tails or manes, and high spoon cruppers are prohibited.
- D. No horse having had surgery for purely cosmetic purposes will be permitted to show. Similarly, no horse having had surgery to correct faults will be permitted to show.
- E. Ribbons, braids, all decorative appurtenances and stallion tack (excluding bits) are not allowed in halter and conformation classes.
- F. Horses must not be shod except where provided in Show Rule 1(g). No pads, wedges, chains, nor weighted ankle boots are allowed.



## RING PROCEDURE

### Rule VII:

- A. Dress - it is a tradition of the show ring that all handlers and drivers be correctly attired for the classes. Management may bar any entry or person from entering the ring if not suitably attired to appear before an audience. No farm, individual, or horse names may be displayed on an exhibitor, horse or vehicle, except where the class demands. (eg: harness - authentic- type turnout).

Western style turnout is allowed, as are quality, dress slacks or trousers, when worn in combination with the following - plain short or long sleeved blouse (with collar), or a plain short or long-sleeved shirt. Ties, hats, and jackets or coats are to be worn at the discretion of the exhibitor, in accordance with the particular show entered into. Suitable footwear is a necessity - only boots or closed-in flat shoes will be allowed.

Alternate dress would allow for smart trousers, or skirts. At all times, the exhibitor of a registered miniature horse must be aware that both horse and handler are on display,

and hence present themselves in a neat, appropriate manner, in order to promote the Breed and the Association in an appealing and proper way.

- B. All horses should be handled and shown through an entire class by the same person. Should additional handlers be required due to physical limitations or emergencies, approval must be obtained from the ring steward. At no time will handler let horse stand unattended except when class calls for it.
- C. Names of horses being exhibited will not be made known to the judge prior to the show. Exhibitors will be issued a number for each horse to be displayed on the back (or arm) of the handler whenever the horse is in the ring. This number will stand for the entire show.
- D. Conduct designed to distract a horse or otherwise interfere with the showing of an exhibitor's horse will not be tolerated. Offenders will be asked to leave the show area. If the offender is an exhibitor, he/she will be excused from the ring and barred from the show area for the duration of the show. His/her horses, however, may compete.



- E. An unruly horse may be excused from the ring by the judge or ring steward for safety reasons.
- F. Cruelty, abuse or inhumane treatment of any horse in the show ring or in the stable area will not be tolerated by the show management, and the offender will be barred from the show area for the duration of the show.
- G. Conduct by an exhibitor, trainer, owner, or immediate family member of an unsportsmanlike, abusive, or detrimental nature will not be tolerated by the show management, including but not limited to threatening, abusive, or intimidating conduct, physical, verbal or written, toward any show official or fellow exhibitor. Any person(s) guilty of such conduct should be reported immediately to management by the judge, steward or show committee member.
- The show management must suspend the offender for the duration of that show. Any person accused of such unseemly behaviour may appeal his/her case to the Committee of the Association, which shall render a decision. If found guilty, such a person may be barred from future participation in MHAA show activities. This decision will be published in the official publication of the Association.
- H. Exhibitors and/or owners may not protest to the judge directly or by inference, the placing of any horse. Any person(s) guilty of such conduct will be excused from the show and forfeit any awards received at that show, and the right to show in any additional classes at the show. No entry fees will be refunded.
- I. Horses eligible and entered must show unless excused by the manager or judge.
- J. Upon application on the MHAA Inc approved form, youth members (15) years or over may receive National Committee permission, subject to Committee approval, to show colts under two (2) years of age at MHAA conducted shows. Such approved Youth will be issued with cards authorizing them to show colts under two (2) years of age. These cards must be carried at all times and be available for show organizers to view on request.

## HARNESS & DRIVING CLASSES

### Rule VIII:

For Harness and Driving Classes the Association has adopted the guidelines set by the Australian Carriage Driving Society Inc .

Rules and regulations for performance classes including trail, hunter and jumping to be accepted into the constitution with any further changes required to these rules only being changed at an AGM.

The committee of M.H.A.A. is required to compile a handbook of jumping, hunter and harness show reules. This book is to be made available to all members who request a copy. The handbook to contain general rules and sample courses. Handbook to be updated by committee from time to time.



## **PROTESTS**

### **Rule IX:**

All protests shall be handled according to the procedure laid down by the Royal Agricultural Society in the state concerned.

## **ROYAL AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY (INC.)**

### **Rule X:**

The Association recognises the position, rulings and directives of the Royal Agricultural Society (Inc.) in all matters relating to Society Shows, and will follow their guidelines in situations where no rule has been provided for in the above Rules of the Association.





# SHOWMANSHIP AT HALTER

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### WESTERN AND ENGLISH DIVISIONS

- (i) In the Showmanship Class, the horse is the means through which the contestant exhibits his or her ability to show a horse at halter; therefore no consideration should be given to the horse other than fitting and grooming. To be judged strictly on the contestants to fit and show in a Halter Class.
- (ii) Judging techniques and procedures will vary according to individual judge's preferences. The purpose of the Showmanship Class is to train and prepare contestants as to the proper manner of showing horses at halter regardless of the procedure required by the judge. Because of these individual judging procedures, no specific judging form or pattern is given in these rules. All showmanship rules will apply to any judging pattern.
- (iii) It is permissible for a judge, if he so desires, to ask (in showmanship classes) the Contestants questions concerning horsemanship and conformation. Questions should be in accordance with the contestant's age and knowledge potential.
- (iv) Regardless of where the judge stands in the ring for travelling the horses to and away from him, the following principles shall always apply:
  - (a) The exhibitor shall always lead the horse from the horse's left (near) side.
  - (b) All turns shall be to the right with the exhibitor walking to the right around the horse except at judge's instructions.
  - (c) Youth are not required to look back in the Showmanship classes, excessive looking back will constitute over showing.
  - (d) The exhibitor must use the lead to stand the horse correctly - and will be penalised if they touch their horse with any of their body parts ie legs or hands.
- (v) Class to be judged:
 

|                      |       |
|----------------------|-------|
| Exhibitor            | - 10% |
| Fitting and Grooming | - 10% |
| Showmanship          | - 80% |
- (vi) Showmanship 50% - be able to walk, trot, turn, stop and back your horse as directed by the judge. Keep your horse posed and know where the judge is at all times and what he wants. A good showman always gives the judge the best view of his horse. Make it easy for the judge to see your horse to his best advantage.
- (vii) Note the shaded area in the drawing. This is the safe area used by experienced horsemen when handling strange or unschooled horses. When using the safe area you are out of the direct line of a sudden lunge, a strike from the front legs, or a kick from the back leg. Since the horse uses its head and neck to balance its body, you are in a position to exert maximum control by pulling its head to the side, forcing the horse off balance in hopes of preventing further action if the horse becomes unruly.
- (viii) Halter showing and showmanship customs today, especially in Showmanship Classes are encouraging



the showing of horses by the exhibitor MOVING TO EITHER SIDE. This is safe only if the horse is properly trained before entering the show ring. Your horse acts independently on each side. Therefore, you must train it to lead, stand, and show from each side. Experienced horsemen will always handle a strange or untrained horse from the near (left) side since the majority of horses are started and handled from this side.

- (ix) The shaded areas indicate the safe areas for showing your horse FROM EITHER SIDE. Note the danger area directly in front of the horse. Learn to stand "toward the front" (not in the danger zone but out of the direct line of action of a strike or a lunge). It is permissible to cross the danger zone to get from one side of your horse to the other. However, remaining in the danger zone is considered a fault and will be scored accordingly.
- (X) Enter the ring at a brisk walk in counter-clockwise direction and watch the Ringmaster for instructions on where to line up. Lead from the left side of your horse with your right hand on the lead strap about 8 to 12 inches from the halter. Smaller exhibitors may need to use a longer hold on the lead strap. Hold the excessive lead strap in your left hand in a safe manner.
- (xi) Train your horse to walk out at the same rate you are walking. You should walk out together so that your body is even with the horse's neck and halfway between the head and the shoulders. Move in a brisk, alert manner.

- (xii) When lining up stand your horse squarely on all four feet. There are two recognised methods of showing a horse.

a) **THE HALF METHOD**

An imaginary line is drawn through the horse from poll to croup and the handler must always be on the OPPOSITE side of the horse from the judge. Stand in the SAFE ZONE at 45' to the horse facing between the ears and the withers. In this position both the horse and the judge can be watched. As the Judge crosses the line either in front of, or behind the horse, the showman should move smartly and neatly through the danger zone to the opposite side. Maintain the position OPPOSITE the Judge even when he moves on down the line of horses.

b) **THE QUARTER METHOD** Another imaginary line is added crossing that described in

(a) This line runs across the horse just behind the withers. The area round the horse is now divided into four. A - the near front quarter, B - the near hindquarter, C - the off hindquarter, D - the off front quarter. When the Judge is in A, the handler should stand in D. As the judge moves to B, the handler should return to A (the same side as the judge). When the Judge moves to C, the handler moves to D, the handler returns once more to A. This method is based on safety as the handler can keep the horse's hindquarters from swinging towards the Judge should the horse become restive.



c) The class shall be judged as follows. A combination of both these methods shall be used in competition as follows:-

**The Half Method** shall be used whilst the Judge is walking up and down either in front of, or behind, the line of entries. No practical or safety purpose can be served by using the Quarter method in these circumstances. In fact it could be considered as over showing.

**The Quarter Method** shall be used whilst the judge is moving round an exhibit, either in the line-up or when the horse has been led out from the line-up. The practical, safety, reason for this should be obvious as outlined in (xii) (b).

**NOTE:** In either Method, the competitors should NEVER have their backs to the judge.

- (xiii) From the line each exhibitor will be called upon to travel his horse individually. When travelling the horse at a walk or a trot toward or away from the judge, remember to keep your body to one side so you do not block the judge's view of your horse's legs. Hold your lead arm so that the horses head and neck are in a direct line with the rest of his body and the line of travel. Do not get in front of your horse or try to pull it into a trot. ALWAYS TURN YOUR HORSE TO THE RIGHT except at the judge's instruction. This will cause your horse to pivot in a collected, safe manner. Hold your right arm straight out, gripping the lead strap close to the halter and begin walking to the right around your horse. This will force the horse to turn its head and then its

body within the circle you are walking. Hold the horse back slightly to force it to pivot on the hind legs. If the turn is made properly you will complete the turn with your horse standing squarely in his own track facing in the return direction. At this point the exhibitor should not stop but rather move his or her horse on out in a freemoving, straight line of travel directly in front of the judge.

- (xiv) Keep your proper position in line and allow reasonable space (at least five feet) between your horse and the horses on either side. If asked to change positions in the line, back your horse out of the line and approach the new position from behind. If the judge requests you to line up head to tail with other horses, do not crowd the horse in front of you. Contestants should be prepared to correctly reverse positions in line in case the judge should request them to do so. Contestants should also be prepared to follow any request made by the judge.
- (xv) Judges and Ring Stewards should follow class procedures that make certain there is sufficient space for the exhibitor to move into any position requested by the judge or ring officials. Particular caution should be given to the distance between the class line up and the arena fence.

**Faults Against The Showman**

- (xvi) Failure to recognise and correct faults of the horse's position. (xvii) Visiting or conversing with other contestants in the arena during judging of the Showmanship Class.
- (xviii) Kicking horse's leg into position (actual contact with horse's leg).
- (xix) Failure of the horse to lead up properly.
- (xx) Failure to stop before turning when showing at the walk or trot.
- (xxi) Loud voice commands to the horse.
- (xxii) Over-showing through unnecessary actions.
- (xxiii) Blocking the judge's view of the horse.
- (xxiv) Turning horse in the wrong direction.
- (xxv) Causing the judge to move to avoid being bumped or stepped on by the horse.
- (xxvi) Improperly fitting equipment.
- (xxvii) no stallions shall be permitted in Showmanship Classes, with the exception of adult classes.

**SHOWMANSHIP - WESTERN DIVISION**

- (i) Exhibitor 10%.
  - (a) Personal appearance of exhibitor: neat, clean, well groomed, attentive and courteous.
  - (b) Suitable western clothes.
  - (c) **Equipment:** Halter - leather or nylon, clean and adjusted to fit. The lead strap or lead should be 6 or 7 feet long. No whips, bats or quirts will be permitted in Showmanship Classes.
- (ii) A Judge will disqualify an Exhibitor/youth for the use of the chain over the nose or through the horse's mouth in Showmanship at Halter. Use of the chain under the horse's jaw as a restraint is permissible.
- (iii) The horse's feet should be trimmed. The feet should be clean.



# MHAA YOUTH RULES AND REGULATIONS

With the growing numbers of youth membership within MHAA Inc. There is a need to set rules and regulations to govern how our youth events are run within the Association Australia wide. In 2004 a youth section was introduced to the National Highpoints program therefore these age groups needs to be uniform across Australia.

## YOUTH AGE GROUPS FOR ALL MHAA SHOW PROGRAMS

When running youth events at all MHAA shows the following age groups will need to be used as a number of youth are entered into the youth section of the National Highpoints program.

- 8 years and Under
- 9 years to 12 years
- 13 years and Under 18 years

## YOUTH SHOW PROGRAM

The following youth events will be offered at all MHAA shows:

- 8 years and Under Youth Showmanship
- 9 years to 12 years Youth Showmanship
- 13 years and Under 18 years Youth Showmanship
- 8 years and Under Youth Trail
- 9 years to 12 years Youth Trail
- 13 years and Under 18 years Youth Trail
- 8 years and Under Youth Hunter
- 9 years to 12 years Youth Hunter
- 13 years and Under 18 years Youth Hunter

## *Youth may use a miniature or a small horse for all youth events*

A youth entered in National Highpoints may only gain points for the Youth Highpoints from these three (3) events. These are Youth Showmanship, Youth Trail and youth Hunter.

A youth may enter their horse in other events and gain points for other Highpoint categories:

For example Halter mare or gelding but only the above stipulated three events are to be used for youth points towards nations highpoint youth.

Youth entered in National andlor State highpoints must use the same horse on the day for all three youth events Youth can participate once only in youth events.

## PARENTAL ASSISTANCE

A Parent andlor Helper may enter the ring with a younger child, to stand by and intervene if the child experiences difficulty in controlling the horse, but must not actually do the event with the child. Assistance is allowed but must be kept to the minimum.



# TRAIL PROGRAM AND RULES

## DESCRIPTION OF EVENT

Trail is not an obstacle race. Trail is a disciplined event designed to test the exhibit's ability and willingness to obey implicitly the commands of the handler without hesitation and with precision.

The exhibit should move through the set course fluently and correctly.

The course will comprise a minimum of six obstacles. At least three of the obstacles will be selected from the list of "mandatory obstacles" detailed in the following chart.

This class will be judged on the performance of the exhibit over obstacles, with emphasis on manners, response to the handler and attitude of the exhibit.

## COURSE LAYOUT

When setting courses, show management should keep in mind that the idea is not to trap an exhibit, or eliminate it, by making an obstacle too difficult.

All courses for Trail must be displayed prior to the scheduled starting time of the class. For MHAA State and National Shows they should be displayed at least one hour prior to the scheduled starting time of the class. Course diagrams must show with arrows the direction each obstacle must be approached from.

Show management should be available to answer questions regarding the course

and be available for a walk through of the course with exhibitors and the judge prior to the commencement of the event.



A start and finish line must be established at least 12 feet from the first and last obstacle, indicated by two markers at least 4 feet apart.

Horses must cross the line in the proper direction to start and complete the course.

All courses and obstacles are to be constructed with safety in mind so as to minimise the risk of any accident occurring.

The judge has the right and duty to alter the course in any manner to remove any obstacles which in their opinion, is unsafe.

## EXCLUSIONS

JUNIOR TRAIL horses under 1 year (12 months) of age are not eligible to compete and Senior horses are also ineligible.



## OBSTACLES

(Refer to Appendix)

| OBSTACLES                          | JUNIOR TRAIL | SENIOR TRAIL |
|------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| <b>Mandatory</b>                   |              |              |
| Backing                            | ✓            | ✓            |
| Gate                               | ✓            | ✓            |
| Trot Over                          | ✓            | ✓            |
| Walk Over                          | ✓            | ✓            |
| <b>Optional</b>                    |              |              |
| Bending Cones                      | ✓            | ✓            |
| Bridge                             | ✓            | ✓            |
| Hurdles                            | ✓            | ✓            |
| Lungeing                           | ✓            | ✓            |
| Pivot                              | ✓            | ✓            |
| Sidepass                           | ✓            | ✓            |
| Straddle                           |              | ✓            |
| Tarp                               | ✓            | ✓            |
| Any other safe negotiable obstacle | ✓            | ✓            |

**SENIOR TRAIL** horses under 3 years (36 months) of age are not eligible to compete.

The sequence of the obstacles may vary and two or more of any of the obstacles may be combined.

Every course must include at least three (3) mandatory obstacles.

The following obstacles are prohibited.

- tyre and stair obstacles
- logs or poles elevated in such a manner that permits them to roll
- rocking or moving bridges

## JUDGING AND SCORING

The judge will assess the exhibit/handler on (it is the combination which is being judged):

- manners
- performance and style
- responsiveness of the exhibit
- competence of the handler and exhibit

Trail is scored on a mathematical basis with points being awarded from zero (0) to ten (10) per obstacle.



## LEGAL CUEING

Handlers are permitted to cue their exhibit by the use of:

- voice or mouth commands.

However, handlers will be penalized up to three (3) points every time they illegally cue their horse.

## ILLEGAL CUEING

- hitting the exhibit with a lead rope or other object.
- physically pushing the exhibit in any direction.
- deliberate body or hand contact with the exhibit.
- any obvious intimidation of the exhibit e.g. aggressively twirling the end of the lead rope.
- holding the exhibit by the halter rather than the lead.
- stepping on or in an obstacle with the exhibit (i.e. walk on the bridge or step into the poles) unless the course layout requires it or by the direction of the judge.
- Backing horse by shaking lead rope (horse should be backed in a controlled manner).

Failure to complete an obstacle is not a disqualification but it should be severely penalized.

An exhibitor may attempt any obstacle up to three ( 3 ) times but then they must move onto the next obstacle. However, the judge may, at their own discretion, send the horse onto the next obstacle at any time.

Exhibits shall be penalized for:

- any unnecessary delay in approaching an obstacle.

Each of the following occurrences will lead to the automatic disqualification of the exhibit.

- negotiating obstacles in the wrong
- sequence (off course)
- failing of the horse or the handler
- Horse running free from the handler
- wilful abuse of the horse by the handler
- carrying a whip
- leaving arena without permission of the judge or steward.

The judge may take into account the age and size of a junior handler in assessing penalty points in youth trail events

The final score allocated by the judge for each

- manners
- performance and style
- responsiveness of the exhibit
- competence of the handler and the exhibit
- \* penalties.





ILLEGAL



ILLEGAL



NO KNOT OR BUCKLE

## EQUIPMENT USED BY EXHIBITOR

Preferably the exhibit should be shown in a leather, plastic (PVCIZilco) or webbing headstall, which sits flat against the exhibit's nose. Rope halters are allowed provided that there are no knots on the noseband of the halter or elsewhere designed to exert pressure to sensitive areas of the horse's face. The lead may be flat or rounded and should attach directly to the head collar (under the chin) with a swivel clip or similar. The other end of the lead must be without a loop.

The lead must not be shorter than 6 feet. If the handler uses a standard lead rope they will find it an advantage to carry with them to all shows an alternative longer lead rope to use in trail when jumping or lungeing is part of the course.

The following equipment is prohibited:

- whips or similar objects
- chain either over or under the exhibit's face, or through the exhibit's mouth, or attached to the lead
- roller or similar object to keep the head under control
- wrapping either soft or rigid on the halter.

## EXHIBITORS DRESS

It is mandatory for an exhibitor to wear appropriate attire. Management may bar any person from entering the ring if not suitably attired in accordance with Rule VII of the Show Rules of the Miniature Horse Association of Australia Inc.



# APPENDIX - TRAIL

Normal trail equipment can be used. The poles should be a maximum of 4 inches (10 cms) in diameter and should be four (4) to five (5) feet long.

Split poles should be used for walk overs and trot overs that lie on the ground.

## BACKING

### Goal

The exhibit must reverse through a preset pattern of poles or markers. The poles could be set in any pattern, for instance, a "L" shape, "V" shape, "U" shape or parallel lines.

### Specifications

Backing obstacles to be spaced a minimum of 30 inches apart. Handlers will be penalized for holding the exhibit by the halter rather than the lead or if they make deliberate body or hand contact on the exhibit.

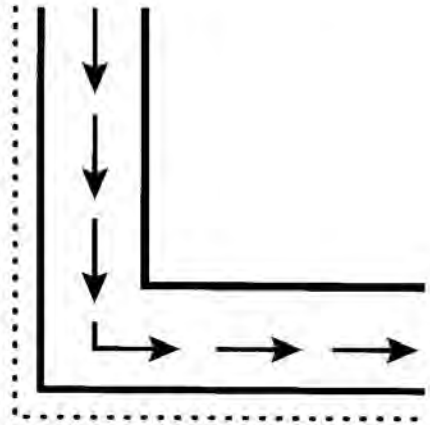
The handler should never walk inside the obstacle but rather to the side.

If negotiating an "L" shape, the handler should stay on the outside of the "L" so it is easier to make the turn.

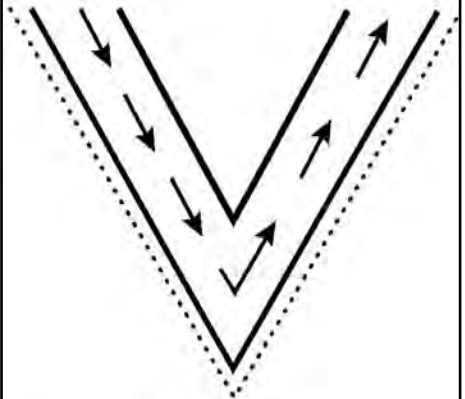
If negotiating a "V" shape the handler should again stay on the outside of the "V" so it is easier to make the turn.

The handler should ensure that the exhibit is outside the obstacle before they commence backing.

## EXAMPLES OF BACKING



*"L" Shaped Back Through*



*"V" Shaped Back Through*



## TROT OVER

### Goal

The exhibit must trot through a sequence of split poles without touching the poles. The poles can be set out in a straight line, original in a curved or zigzagged pattern.

### Specifications

|                                 |              |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Number of split poles (maximum) | 6            |
| Distance between poles          | 24 inches    |
| Length of poles                 | 4 - 5 feet   |
| Diameter of poles               | 3 - 4 inches |

The path the exhibit should take is the measuring point for determining the space between the poles.

### Tips for the Handler

The exhibit must trot over the poles.

The handler is not permitted to walk or run on or over the obstacle.



*Poles set on the ground 24 inches apart for a straight line trot over while the top photo shows a horse and member in action.*



## LUNGEING

### *Goal*

The lungeing obstacle is used to test the exhibit's ability to display correct and fluent movement in the natural gaits of the horse. i.e. walk, trot or canter.

## THE GATE

### *Goal*

The exhibit/exhibitor must go through the gate and close the gate behind them.

The idea of the Gate is to open and close Gate, with out letting sheep/cattle out. So there for the Gate should be kept as close to the exhibit/handler as safety permits.



## WALK OVER

### Goal

The exhibit must walk through a sequence of split poles without touching the poles. The poles can be set out in a straight line or in a curved or zigzagged pattern.

### Specifications

|                                  |              |
|----------------------------------|--------------|
| Number of split poles (maximum)  | 6            |
| Distance between poles (minimum) | 8 inches     |
| Length of poles                  | 4 - 5 feet   |
| Diameter of poles                | 3 - 4 inches |
| Height*                          | 8 inches     |

\* Poles may be raised provided they are elevated in a manner that does not permit them to roll. (ie: use grooved supports)



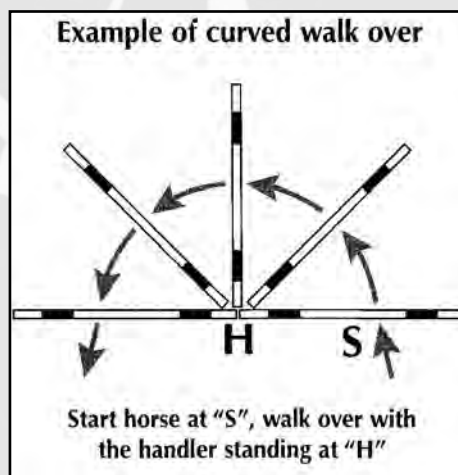
Raised Walkover (with grooved supports)

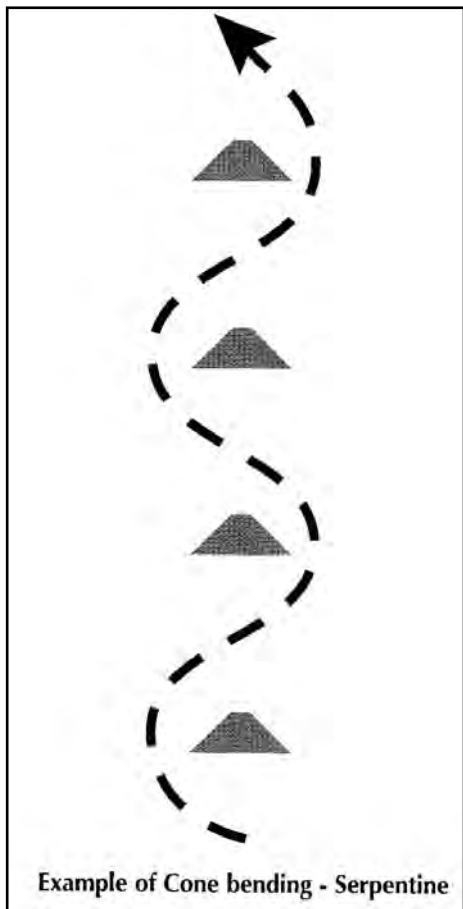
The path the exhibit should take is the measuring point for determining the space between the poles.

### Tips for the Handler

The exhibit must walk over the poles.

The handler is not permitted to walk on or through the obstacles.





Example of Cone bending - Serpentine

## BENDING CONES

### Goal

The handler and the exhibit have to walk or trot through a sequence of cones spaced equidistant apart.

### Specifications

Number of cones 4 - 6

Distance between cones (maximum)  
8 feet

### Tips for the Handler

Ensure you follow the course outline and approach the cones on the correct side.

## PIVOT

### Goal

The objective of this obstacle is to pivot the front end of your horse while not moving his back end (your horse completes a turn on his haunches). Alternatively you may be required to pivot the back end while not moving the front end.

### Specifications

Diameter of circle (maximum) 24 inches

### Tips for the Handler

Handlers will be penalized if they make deliberate body or hand contact on the exhibit

If the exhibit is asked to pivot on his front legs ensure that you position the exhibit's front legs in the middle of the circle.

If the exhibit is asked to pivot on his back legs ensure that you position the exhibit's back legs in the middle of the circle.



An Example of Pivot



## BRIDGE

### Goal

The horse must walk over a wooden bridge.

A horse should gain more points for showing expression and should lose points for fear/intimidation.

### Specifications

Bridges should always be sturdy and safe without sides. Rocking or moving bridges are prohibited.

The design and construction of the bridge may vary from state to state but all bridges must conform to the following specifications:

|                  |           |
|------------------|-----------|
| Height (maximum) | 12 inches |
| Width (minimum)  | 2 feet    |
| Length (minimum) | 5 feet    |

### Tips for the Handler

The handler is not permitted to walk on the bridge.



*Examples of horses and handlers taking part in the 'bridge' event.*



*An example of jumps*

## **JUMPS**

### **Goal**

The exhibit must jump the jump(s) without touching the jump.

### **Specifications**

|                           |            |
|---------------------------|------------|
| Number of jumps (maximum) | 4          |
| Height of jump (maximum)  |            |
| Junior Trail              | 16 inches  |
| Senior Trail              | 24 inches  |
| Width of jump             | 5 feet     |
| Distance between jumps    | 20 feet    |
| Ground poles              | compulsory |

### **Tips for the Handler**

Handler is not permitted to jump the hurdles.

If the handler uses a standard lead rope they will find it an advantage to carry with them to all shows an alternative longer lead rope to use in trail when jumping or lungeing is part of the course.

## **SIDE PASS**

### **Goal**

The exhibit must sidepass over a pole. Credit will be given for exhibits that cross their legs back and front. Horse should stay straight.

### **Specifications**

|                           |              |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| Number of poles (maximum) | 2            |
| Length of pole            | 4 - 5 feet   |
| Diameter of pole          | 3 - 4 inches |

### **Tips for Handler**

Handlers are reminded that physically pushing the exhibit or hitting the exhibit constitutes illegal cueing and could be disqualified.





## STRADDLE

### Goal

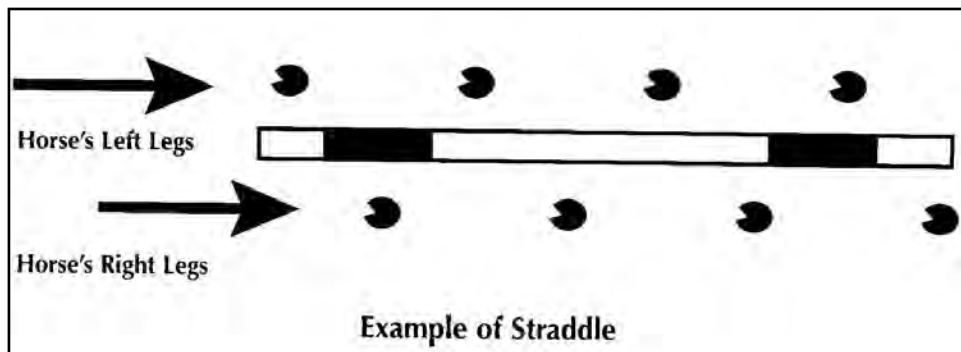
The exhibit must walk over a pole laying on the ground so that the off-side legs stay on the right side of the pole and the near side legs stay on the left of the pole.

### Specifications

|                           |            |
|---------------------------|------------|
| Number of poles (maximum) | 2          |
| Length of poles           | 4 - 5 feet |
| Diameter of poles         | 3 inches   |

### Tips for the Handler

It is strongly recommended you practice this before you attend a show. To train your horse start with a short broom stick. Then place two broomsticks together as you increase the length of the obstacle. When your horse has mastered this, increase the diameter of your poles to 2 inches and then 3 inches as the horse grows in confidence.



## TARP

### Goal

The exhibit is to walk over a coloured tarp.

### Specifications

|                              |           |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| Colour of tarp (recommended) | Blue      |
| Length of tarp               | 5 feet    |
| Width of tarp (minimum)      | 24 inches |

### Tips for the Handler

The exhibit must walk over the tarp. The handler is not permitted to walk on the tarp.





# HUNTER

## DESCRIPTION OF EVENT

In this event exhibits are judged not solely on the number of jumping or course faults but on their style, manners and way of going.

There will be a minimum of four obstacles and horses are to make a minimum of six jumps.

Jumps should simulate those found in the hunting field. Horses shall not be required to re-jump the course (i.e. this event requires a single workout of the course only).

When all horses have completed the course each horse in turn will be required to walk and/or trot before the judge to enable the judge to assess the soundness of the horse.

## COURSE LAYOUT

All courses for jumping must be displayed prior to the scheduled starting time of the class. For MHAA State and National shows they should be displayed at least two hours prior to the scheduled starting time of the class.

Course diagrams must show with arrows the direction each obstacle must be approached from (see the following sample of a hunter course)

An in-and-out obstacle should be clearly identified on the diagram with each element separately labelled. An in-and-out should never be placed at the beginning of the course.

A start and finish line must be established at least 12 feet from the first and last obstacle, indicated by two markers at least 4 feet apart.

Horses must cross the line in the proper direction to start and complete the course.

Courses must include at least one, but no more than four, changes of direction.

Once a course has been set by the show committee the course should be tried out so as to ensure that turns are not too sharp for an exhibitor or horse (horses should maintain the same gait throughout the course and this is impossible if turns are too sharp).

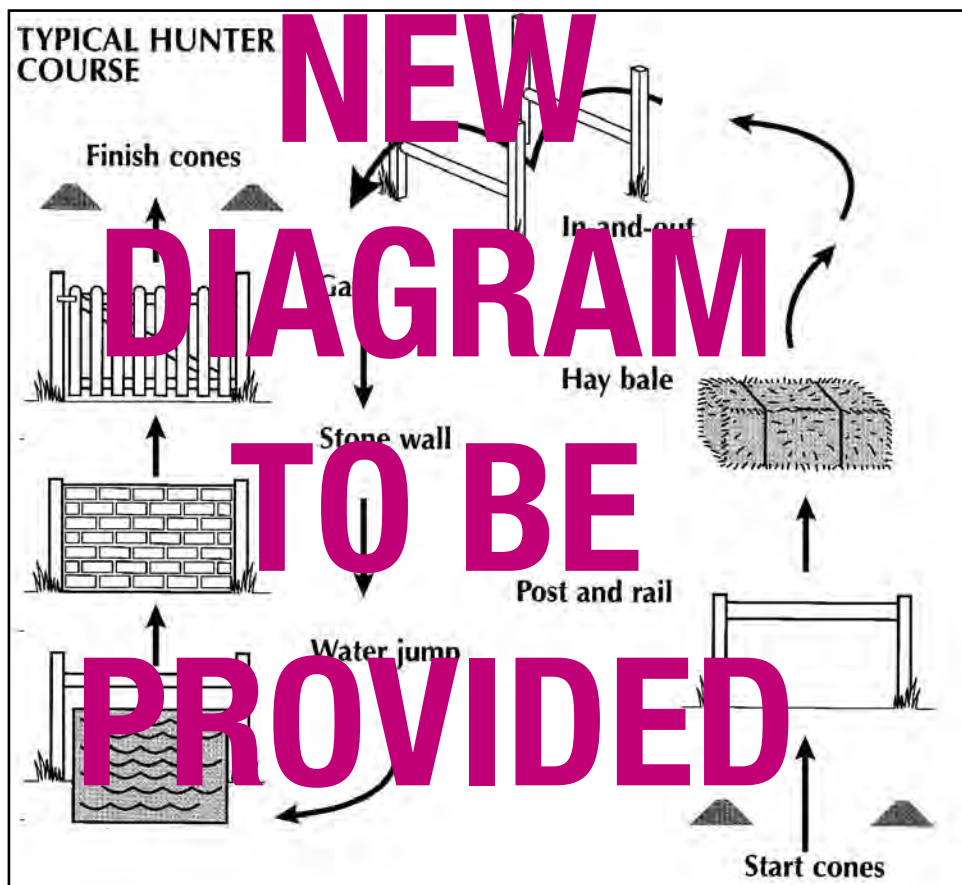
Judges are responsible for the correctness of the course after it has been set and should bring to the show committee's attention any errors that would tend to result in unfair or inappropriate courses.

Circling once upon entering the ring and once upon leaving the ring is permissible but any circling once the exhibit has crossed the starting line will be subject to disqualification.

## WARM-UP FACILITIES

It is mandatory that a schooling area with at least one practice jump or practice time in the arena be provided to exhibitors.

Schooling over obstacles in the arena or over any obstacles in an area established outside the arena is permitted only at the time(s) designated by show management.



## EQUIPMENT

Preferably the exhibit should be shown in a leather, plastic (PVCIZilco) or webbing headstall, which sits flat against the exhibit's nose (or face).

Rope halters are allowed provided that there are no knots on the noseband of the halter or elsewhere designed to exert pressure to sensitive areas of the horse's face.

The lead may be flat or rounded and should attach directly to the head collar (under the chin) with a swivel clip or similar. The lead must not be shorter than 8 feet.

The use of chains and bits is prohibited as are any objects which are designed to apply pressure to the exhibit's face.

Exhibitor's footwear is optional but footwear must be enclosed, (i.e. no sandals or thongs).

## EXCLUSIONS

JUNIOR HUNTER horses under 1 year (12 months) of age are not eligible to compete and Senior horses are also ineligible.

SENIOR HUNTER horses under 3 years (36 months) of age are not eligible to compete.



## JUMPS

Jumps will be made of PVC piping or other suitable lightweight material. Jumps should simulate obstacles found in the hunting field, such as natural looking post and rails, stone wall, hay bale, oxer, gate and in-and-out. All jumps must be at least 5 feet wide.

Jumps must be a minimum of 20 feet apart with the exception of an in-and-out.

An in and-out' is considered one obstacle and its use is restricted to Senior Hunter events only.

An in-and-out' is considered to be one obstacle comprising two elements In-and-outs should be set no less than 6 feet apart. The bar on the first element of an in-and-out should be set at a lower height than the bar on the second element of an in-and-out.

The maximum height of the bar on the second element of an in-and-out must not exceed 24 inches.

For a Junior Hunter event the jumps must be a minimum of 8 inches and a maximum of 16 inches high.

For a Senior Hunter event the jumps must be a minimum of 16 inches and a maximum of 24 inches high.

Ground poles are required for all jumps and should be placed under or immediately in front of each jump. (Less than 12 inches).

## JUDGING AND SCORING

In this event exhibits are judged not solely on the number of jumping or course faults but on their style, manners and way of going.

However, no horse with jumping or course faults shall ever place higher than a sound horse with a clear round.

When all horses have completed the course, each horse in turn will be required to walk and/or trot in a circle before the judge, to enable the judge to assess the soundness of the horse.



Each of the following jumping or course faults will incur penalties as shown:

|                        | FAULT POINTS |
|------------------------|--------------|
| • Knockdowns           | 4            |
| • Refusals             | 4            |
| • Unnecessary Circling | 4            |
| • Run Out              | 4            |
| • Broken Tack          | 4            |
| • Touching Obstacle    | 2            |

*Refer to the following definitions for an explanation of these terms.*

Each of the following occurrences will lead to the automatic disqualification of the exhibit.

- Two refusals at the same obstacle
- Three disobediences over the course A disobedience is a refusal, a run-out or circling
- Failure to keep proper course (off course)
- Falling of the horse or the handler
- Handler jumping obstacle with the horse
- Jumping of an obstacle before it has been reset
- Horse running free from the handler
- Wilful abuse of the horse by the handler
- Carrying a whip
- An unsound horse
- Leaving arena without permission of judge or steward
- Pulling, "lifting" or dragging of the horse over an obstacle



Where exhibits do not incur any jumping or course faults (or where exhibits have incurred an equal number of jumping or course faults) the exhibits will be ranked according to the judges assessment of the following:

**WAY OF GOING:** Credit will be given to those horses that cover the course at an even pace, with free flowing strides, as in a brisk trot or canter Penalties will be incurred for any change of gait whilst on course.

**STYLE:** Credit will also be given to horses with correct jumping style that meet the fences squarely, in stride (with no interruption to their rhythm) and jump at the centre of the fence. Penalties will be incurred for unsafe jumping and bad form over fences.

**MANNERS:** Penalties will also be incurred for bad mannerisms e.g. rearing, bucking, spooking or shying, or wringing tail.

## DEFINITIONS

**KNOCKDOWNS:** An obstacle is considered knocked clown when in jumping an obstacle, a horse or handler, by contact, lowers the established height of the fence in any way.

**REFUSALS:** Stopping at an obstacle without knocking it down and without backing followed by jumping from a standstill is not penalized.

However, if the halt continues or if the horse backs even a single step, side steps, or circles to retake the fence, a refusal is incurred.

After a refusal, if the horse is moved forward towards the obstacle but does not attempt to jump, it is considered another refusal.

Two refusals at the **same** obstacle causes elimination. A refusal at an in-and-out obstacle requires the retaking of both elements of the obstacle.

**UNNECESSARY CIRCLING:** Any form of circle or circles whereby the horse crosses its original track between two consecutive obstacles anywhere on the course.

However, circling once upon entering the ring and once upon leaving the ring is permissible but not after crossing the starting line.

A horse that has been penalised for circling cannot then be penalised for crossing its own path at the same obstacle when it is attempting to retake an obstacle after a refusal or run-out.

**RUN-OUT:** A run-out occurs when the horse evades or passes the obstacle to be jumped, jumps an obstacle outside the limiting markers, or when a horse or handler knocks down a marker limiting the obstacle.

**BROKEN TACK:** In cases of broken gear the handler may stop and correct the difficulty, in which case a 4 fault penalty will apply However, if the horse runs free from the handle) because of broken equipment this is an elimination

**TOUCHING OBSTACLE:** Any contact of the obstacle by the horse (except brushing with the horse's tail) or the handler will incur a 2 fault penalty.



# SHOW JUMPING

## DESCRIPTION OF EVENT

There will be a minimum of four obstacles the course with horses to make a maximum of eight jumps.

After the first round of jumping, only those habits without fault can participate in the next round. However, if there is no clear round, those exhibits with the lowest number of faults can compete.

Each round the number of jumps is decreased and the height of every jump increased until a winner is determined.

## COURSE LAYOUT

All courses for jumping must be displayed at least two hours prior to the scheduled starting time of the class. For MHAA State and National shows they should be displayed at least 2 hours prior to the scheduled starting time of the class.

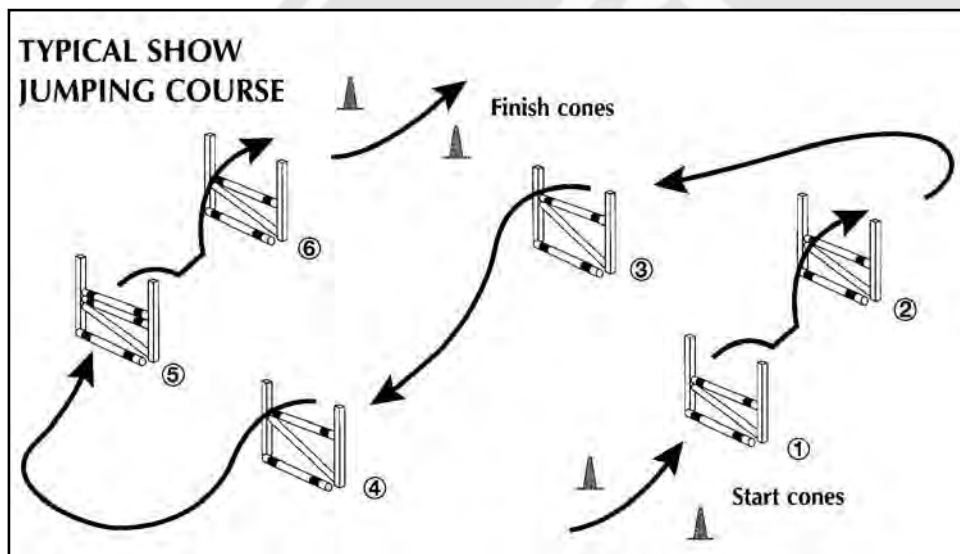
Course diagrams must show with arrows the direction each obstacle must be approached from. (See sample jumper course below).

All jumps will be consecutively numbered in the sequence they should be addressed.

An in-and-out obstacle should be clearly identified on the diagram with each element separately labelled. An in-and-out should never be placed at the beginning of the course.

A start and finish line must be established at least 12 feet from the first and last obstacle, indicated by two markers at least 4 feet apart. Horses must cross the line in the proper direction to start and complete the course.

Circling once upon entering the ring and once upon leaving the ring is permissible but any circling once the exhibit has crossed the starting line will be subject to penalty.





## WARM-UP FACILITIES

It is mandatory that a schooling area with at least one practice jump or practice time in the arena be provided to exhibitors.

Schooling over obstacles in the arena or over any obstacles in an area established outside the arena is permitted only at the time(s) designated by show management.

## EQUIPMENT

Preferably the exhibit should be shown in a leather, plastic (PVC/Zilco) or webbing headstall, which sits flat against the exhibit's nose (or face) Rope halters are allowed provided that there are no knots on the noseband of the halter or elsewhere designed to exert pressure to sensitive areas of the horse's face The lead may be flat or rounded and should attach directly to the head collar (under the chin) with a swivel clip or similar.

The lead must not be shorter than 8 feet.

The use of chains and bits is prohibited as are any objects which are designed to apply pressure to the exhibit's face.

Exhibitors' footwear is optional but footwear must be enclosed. (ie. No sandals or thongs).

## EXCLUSIONS

Horses under 3 years (36 months) of age are not eligible to compete.





## JUMPS

Jumps will be made of PVC piping or other suitable lightweight material. They should be attractive and varied and could include brush, triple bar, water or similar jumps.

Brush jumps must have a visible bar.

All jumps must be at least 5 feet wide.

Jumps must be a minimum of 20 feet apart with the exception of an in-and-out.

An in-and-out is considered to be one obstacle comprising two elements. In-and-outs should be set no less than 6 feet apart.

The bar on the first element of an in-and-out should be set at a lower height than the bar on the second element of an in-and-out.

The maximum height of the bar on the second element of an in-and-out must not exceed 24 inches.

For the first round of jumping the minimum height for jumps must be 18 inches and the maximum height must not exceed 28 inches.

Ground poles are required for all jumps and should be placed under or immediately in front of each jump. (Less than 12 inches).

Jumps 32 inches or more in height must have a second rail added and if a post and rail jump they must also have a ground line (pole placed at an angle under the bottom rail).

## JUDGING AND SCORING

Before commencing each round of jumping and/or when a horse completes a round of jumping, the horse will be required to walk and/or trot a circle before the judge, to enable the judge to assess the soundness of the horse.

Jumpers are to be scored on a mathematical basis and each of the following will incur four (4) fault points:

- Knockdowns
- Refusals
- Run Out

*Refer to the following definitions for an explanation of these terms.*

Each of the following occurrences will lead to the automatic disqualification of the exhibit.

- Two refusals at the same obstacle
- Three disobediences over the course.
- A disobedience is a refusal, a run-out or circling.
- Failure to keep proper course (off course)
- Falling of the horse or the handler
- Handler jumping obstacle with the horse
- Jumping of an obstacle before it has been reset
- Horse running free from the handler
- Wilful abuse of the horse by the handler
- Carrying a whip
- An unsound horse
- Leaving arena without permission of judge or steward
- Pulling or dragging of the horse over an obstacle.



## JUMP-OFFS

If after flip first round of jumping two or more exhibits are equal the placements in the class will be determined by a jump-off(s). The number of jumps will be decreased to four and the height of the jumps will be increased by not less than 2 inches and not more than 4 inches.

After the first Jump-off the number of jumps will be decreased to three and the height of the jumps will be increased by not less than 2 inches and not more than 4 inches.

If subsequent Jump-offs are needed the number of jumps will be reduced to a minimum of two and the height of the jumps will be progressively increased by not less than 2 inches and not more than 4 inches each round.

If necessary, jump-offs may continue until two or more exhibits complete the two obstacles set at the maximum height of 42 inches. If this occurs the judge shall award equal placings.

If an exhibit is disqualified in a round of jumping, it can never finish in a lower place than any exhibit eliminated in an earlier round of jumping.

## DEFINITIONS

**KNOCKDOWNS:** An obstacle is considered knocked down when in jumping an obstacle, a horse or handler, by contact, lowers the established height of the fence in any way.

**REFUSALS:** Stopping at an obstacle without knocking it down and without backing, followed by jumping from a standstill is not penalized.

However, if the halt continues or if the horse backs even a single step, side steps, or circles to retake the fence, a refusal is incurred.

After a refusal, if the horse is moved forward towards the obstacle but does not attempt to jump, it is considered another refusal.

*Two refusals at the same obstacle causes an elimination.*

A refusal at an in-and-out obstacle requires the retaking of both elements of the obstacle.

**UNNECESSARY CIRCLING:** Any form of circle or circles whereby the horse crosses its original track between two consecutive obstacles anywhere on the course. However, circling once upon entering the ring and once upon leaving the ring is permissible but not after crossing the starting line.

A horse that has been penalised for circling cannot then be penalised for crossing its own path at the same obstacle when it is attempting to retake an obstacle after a refusal or turn-out.

**RUN-OUT:** A run-out occurs when the horse evades or passes the obstacle to be jumped, jumps an obstacle outside the limiting markers, or when a horse or handler knocks down a marker limiting the obstacle.

**BROKEN TACK:** In cases of broken gear the handler may stop and collect the difficulty, in which case a 4 fault penalty will apply.

However, if the horse runs free from the handler because of broken gear this is an elimination.



# THE SIX BAR

## DESCRIPTION OF EVENT

In this event six identical obstacles are placed in a straight line 12 to 16 feet apart.

If insufficient space or equipment is available then instead of the Six Bar a Lightning Five (five identical obstacles) may be used.

After the first round of jumping, only those exhibits without fault can participate in the next round. However, if there is no clear round, those exhibits with the lowest number of faults can compete.

There shall be a maximum of four rounds of jumping in a competition. After each round the height of each jump is increased until a winner is determined.

## COURSE LAYOUT

A start and finish line must be established at least 12 feet from the first and last obstacle, indicated by two markers at least 4 feet apart.

Horses must cross the line in the proper direction to start and complete the course.

Circling once upon entering the ring and once upon leaving the ring is permissible but any circling once the exhibit has crossed the starting line will be subject to penalty.

Each jump must have a ground pole and a ground line (a pole placed at an angle under the bottom rail). As the jump gets higher more bars may be added (jump 3) or the ground line should be adjusted (jumps 4-6). (See illustration opposite)

## WARM-UP FACILITIES

It is mandatory that a schooling area with at least one practice jump or practice time in the arena be provided to exhibitors.

Schooling over obstacles in the arena or over any obstacles in an area established outside the arena is permitted only at the time(s) designated by show management.

## EQUIPMENT

Preferably the exhibit should be shown in a leather, plastic (PVCIZilco) or webbing headstall, which sits flat against the exhibit's nose (or face).

Rope halters are allowed provided that there are no knots on the noseband of the halter or elsewhere designed to exert pressure to sensitive areas of the horse's face. The lead may be flat or rounded and should attach directly to the head collar (under the chin) with a swivel clip or similar.

The lead must not be shorter than 8 feet.

The use of chains and bits is prohibited as are any objects which are designed to apply pressure to the exhibit's face.

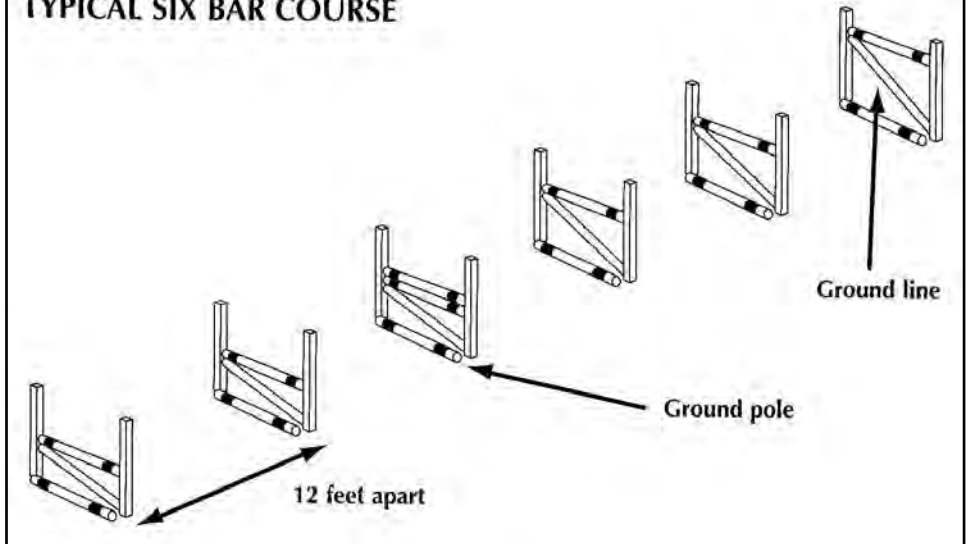
Exhibitor's footwear is optional but footwear must be enclosed. (i.e. no sandals or thongs).

## EXCLUSIONS

Horses under 3 years (36 months) of age are not eligible to compete.



## TYPICAL SIX BAR COURSE



## JUMPS

Jumps will be made of PVC piping or other suitable lightweight material.

All jumps must be at least 5 feet wide and must be set at 12 to 16 feet apart.

Each jump must be identical and the jumps must be arranged in a straight line.

No jump shall ever exceed 42 inches in height

A ground pole should be placed under or immediately in front of each jump. (Less than 12 inches).

Each jump must have a ground line (a pole placed at an angle under the bottom rail).

As the jump gets higher more rails may be ridded or the ground line should be adjusted.

## JUDGING AND SCORING

Before commencing each round of jumping and/or when a horse completes a round of jumping, the horse will be required to walk and/or trot a circle before the judge, to enable the judge to assess the soundness of the horse.

Jumpers are to be scored on a mathematical basis and each of the following will incur four (4) fault points:

- Knockdowns
- Refusals
- Unnecessary Circling
- Run Out
- Broken Tack

*Refer to the following definitions for an explanation of these terms.*

Each of the following occurrences will lead to the automatic disqualification of the exhibit.



## JUMP-OFFS

- Two refusals at the same obstacle
- Three disobediences over the course A disobedience is a refusal, a run out or circling
- Failure to keep proper course (off course)
- Falling of the horse or handler
- Handler jumping obstacle with the horse
- Jumping of an obstacle before it has been reset
- Horse running free from the handler
- Wilful abuse of the horse by the handler
- Carrying a whip
- An unsound horse
- Leaving arena without permission of judge or steward
- Pulling or dragging of the horse over an obstacle

If, after a round of jumping, two or more exhibits are equal, the placements in the class will be determined by a jump-off(s). If an exhibit is disqualified in a round of jumping it can never finish in a lower place than exhibits eliminated in an earlier round of jumping.

After the 4 the Round first 3 jumps are removed and Jumps 4, 5 & 6 are raised.



## DEFINITIONS

**KNOCKDOWNS:** An obstacle is considered knocked down when in jumping an obstacle, a horse or handler, by contact, lowers the established height of the fence in any way

**REFUSALS:** Stopping at an obstacle without knocking it down and without backing, followed by jumping from a standstill is not penalized. However, if the halt continues or if the horse backs even a single step, side steps, or circles to retake the fence, a refusal is incurred.

After a refusal, if the horse is moved forward towards the obstacle but does not attempt to jump, it is considered another refusal.

**Two refusals at the same obstacle cause elimination.**

The rule concerning the re-jumping of the whole obstacle does not apply in 6-Bar. If the horse refuses or runs out the handler may resume the course at the Bar where the fault occurred. The handler is permitted to make his approach from outside the space between the two bars where the fault occurred.

**UNNECESSARY CIRCLING:** Any form of circle or circles whereby the horse crosses its original track between two consecutive obstacles anywhere on the course.

However, circling once upon entering the ring and once upon leaving the ring is permissible but not after crossing the starting line.

A horse that has been penalised for circling cannot then be penalised for crossing its own path at the same obstacle when it is attempting to retake an obstacle after a refusal or run out.

**RUN OUT:** A run out occurs when the horse evades or passes the obstacle to be jumped, jumps an obstacle outside the limiting markers, or when a horse or handler knocks down a marker limiting the obstacle.

**BROKEN TACK:** In cases of broken gear the handler may stop and correct the difficulty, in which case a four (4) fault penalty will apply. However, **if the horse runs free from the handler because of broken gear this is an elimination.**



# FAULT AND OUT

## DESCRIPTION OF EVENT

There is only one jump in this event.

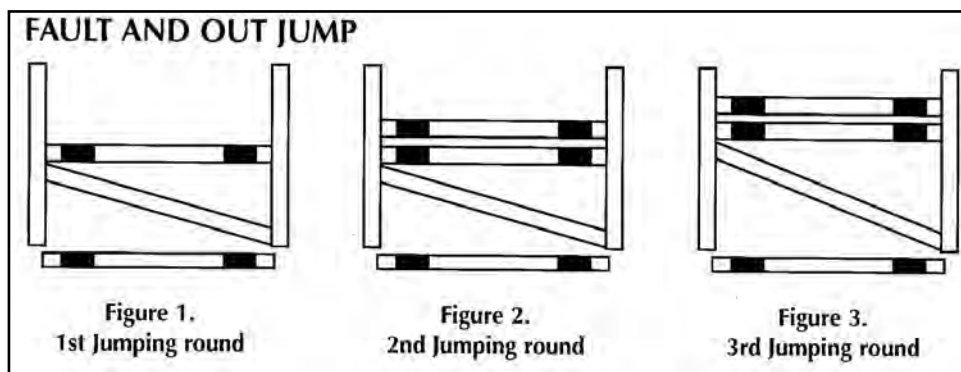
After the first round of jumping, only those exhibits without fault can participate in the next round. However, if there is no clear round, those exhibits with the lowest number of faults can continue competing.

After each round the height of the jump is increased by 4 inches and this routine is continued until a winner is eventually determined.

## WARM-UP FACILITIES

It is mandatory that a schooling area with at least one practice jump or practice time in the arena be provided to exhibitors.

Schooling over obstacles in the arena or over any obstacles in an area established outside the arena is permitted only at the time(s) designated by show management.



## COURSE LAYOUT

A start line and finish line must be established at least 12 feet from the obstacle, indicated by two markers at least 4 feet apart.

The jump must have a ground pole and a ground line (a pole placed at an angle under the bottom rail) As the jump gets higher more rails may be added (see figure 2 ) or the ground line should be adjusted (see figure 3).

## EQUIPMENT

Preferably the exhibit should be shown in a leather, plastic (PVCIZilco) or webbing headstall, which sits flat against the exhibit's nose (or face) Rope halters are allowed provided that there are no knots on the noseband of the halter or elsewhere designed to exert pressure to sensitive areas of the horse's face.

The lead may be flat or rounded and should attach directly to the head collar (under the chin) with a swivel clip or similar. The lead must not be shorter than 8 feet.



The use of chains and bits is prohibited as are any objects that are designed to apply pressure to the exhibit's face.

Exhibitors' footwear is optional but footwear must be enclosed (ie. No sandals or thongs).

## EXCLUSIONS

Horses under 3 years (36 months) of age are not eligible to compete.

## JUMPS

The jump will be made of PVC piping or other suitable lightweight material.

The jump must be at least 5 feet wide for the first round of jumping the minimum height for the jump must be 20 inches.

A ground pole should be placed under or immediately in front of each jump. (Less than 12 inches).

The jump must have a ground line (a pole placed at an angle under the bottom rail).

## JUDGING AND SCORING

Before commencing each round of jumping and/or when a horse completes a round of jumping, the horse will be required to walk and/or trot a circle before the judge, to enable the judge to assess the soundness of the horse.

Jumpers are to be scored on a mathematical basis and each of the following will incur four (4) fault points:

- Knockdowns
- Refusals
- Run Out
- Broken Tack

*Refer to the following definitions for an explanation of these terms.*

Each of the following occurrences will lead to the automatic disqualification of the exhibit.

- Two refusals at the same obstacle
- Falling of the horse or handler
- Handler jumping obstacle with the horse





- Jumping the obstacle before it has been reset
- Horse running free from handler
- Wilful abuse of the horse by the handler
- Carrying a whip
- An unsound horse
- Leaving arena without the permission of judge or steward
- Pulling or dragging of the horse over an obstacle.

If more than one horse in the same round incurs faults, then those horses must jump off for placings at that height before continuing the competition.

Competitors with a clear round progress to the next height level and placings are determined by a process of elimination as those horses who incur faults drop out. If an exhibit is disqualified in a round of jumping it can never finish in a lower place than exhibits eliminated in an earlier round of jumping.

## DEFINITIONS

**KNOCKDOWNS:** An obstacle is considered knocked down when in jumping an obstacle, a horse or handler, by contact, lowers the established height of the fence in any way.

**REFUSALS:** Stopping at an obstacle without knocking it down and without backing, followed by jumping from a standstill is not penalized.

However, if the halt continues or if the horse backs even a single step, side steps, or circles to retake the fence, a refusal is incurred.

After a refusal, if the horse is moved forward towards the obstacle but does not attempt to jump, it is considered another refusal.



*Two refusals at the same obstacle cause elimination.*

**RUN-OUT:** A run-out occurs when the horse evades or passes the obstacle to be jumped, jumps an obstacle outside the limiting markers, or when a horse or handler knocks down a marker limiting the obstacle.

**BROKEN TACK:** In cases of broken gear the handler may stop and correct the difficulty, in which case a four (4) fault penalty will apply. However, **if the horse runs free from the handler** because of broken gear **this is an elimination.**



# HARNESSES AND DRIVING

The Miniature Horse Association of Australia Inc. Show Rule VIII requires that the Association follows the Rules and Regulations for Harness and Driving classes as adopted by the Australian Carriage Driving Society Inc. (previously known as the Australian Driving Society Inc.)

The rule book of the Australian Carriage Driving Society Inc. (ACDS) can be obtained from the Society.

*Email: [webmaster@acds.org.au](mailto:webmaster@acds.org.au)*

*Web Page: <http://www.acds.org.au/>*

The following details are provided as general information only to members:

- (a) Horses must be sound.
- (b) Correctly fitting breaching is compulsory in all classes except where "Tilbury" or "French" tugs are used. Vehicles fitted with open tugs must have breaching.
- (c) An appropriate whip shall be carried at all times, the maximum length of which can reach the horses shoulder.
- (d) Running martingales and overchecks are not permitted.
- (e) Accepted driving bits are compulsory for all classes.
- (f) Blinkers are compulsory for all classes.
- (g) Boots or wraps and earplugs are prohibited.
- (h) Change of vehicle for classes in same division is prohibited.

## SAFETY DRIVING RULES

- (a) All persons participating in driving competitions should have safety foremost in their minds.
- (b) A horse must never be left unattended while hitched or being put to a vehicle.
- (c) Competent adult co-drivers are recommended for all Youth classes.
- (d) No Youth driver may drive a stallion.



*Buggies do not need to be elaborate to have fun in Harness classes*



*Harness is a combination of horse and driver skills*



- (e) Passengers must enter the vehicle after the driver is seated with the reins in hand and the passengers must dismount first.
  - (f) The arena layout shall have safe "Entry" and "Exit" gates and a collection area of appropriate width.
  - (g) If the number of entries exceeds safety for the size of the arena, the class will be divided by the Show Manager into sections from which the best horses per section will return for a final drive off.
  - (h) No horse is to be hitched to a cart and driven for it's first time at a show.
- RING RULES AND MANNERS**
- (a) A ten (10) minute maximum warm up period must be offered in the ring before the commencement of judging.
  - (b) One adjustment of equipment by an attendant is allowed in the ring before judging commences.
  - (c) The judge may excuse from competition any unsafe vehicle or equipment or any unruly horse.
  - (d) Headers are optional in all classes but compulsory for Youth.
  - (e) Horses should enter the ring clockwise at a trot.
  - (f) After entering the ring drivers should take an inside track until all other competitors have entered.
  - (g) Driver must drive on the rail - i.e. the outer side of the ring as safely as possible.
  - (h) Drivers must drive at a safe distant behind the horse and vehicle in front.
  - (i) Driving between another competitor and the judge is deemed bad manners and should be avoided whenever possible.
  - (j) Passing is permitted by the inside or crossing the ring into space to ease congestion, but the driver must return to the rail immediately.
  - (k) A driver is permitted to talk quietly to [their horse, but shouting, loud talking or whistling is not permitted.
  - (l) At the completion of judging and on instruction of the steward, the drivers should exit the ring at a trot in order of placings, after a circuit of the ring, all in an orderly manner.



# LUNGELINE

## THE OBJECTIVE

Three of the horses natural gaits are the walk, trot and canter. The MHAA Standard of Excellence states that horses should exhibit smooth and fluid gait in motion with naturally free flowing movement.

The Lungeline event tests the horses' ability to display correct and fluent movement in the three gaits.

## DESCRIPTION OF EVENT

Each exhibit must be shown to the judge working on a lungeline in each of the three gaits, preferably in both directions.

A one and a half minute time limit will apply and be denoted by a whistle to begin, another whistle when 30 seconds remain for the work out, and a final whistle will cease the judging of the exhibit. At the end of the 90 seconds the exhibitor shall leave the arena. All horses shall return at the completion of all the workouts for placing.

## EXCLUSIONS

Horses under 1 yr (12 mths) of age are not eligible to compete. Credit will be given to the exhibit that displays correct and fluent movement along with a pleasant and obedient temperament. Credit will be given to the "quality" of movement (e.g. exhibits demonstrating collected movements, extended trots etc) and the fluency of transitions in the workout. Credit will also be given to exhibits that can display the three gaits working in each direction.

Penalties will be incurred if the handler or any object the handler is holding makes contact with the exhibit or if the lungeline becomes entangled in either the exhibit or the handler.

At the judges discretion incorrect headgear may result in a disqualification of an exhibit.

In the event of a tie, the judge's assessment of the exhibits' conformation will determine the placings.

## LUNGELINE EQUIPMENT

Preferably the exhibit should be shown in a leather, plastic (PVC/Ziico) or webbing headstall, which sits flat against the exhibit's nose (or face). Rope halters are allowed provided that there are no knots on the noseband of the halter or elsewhere designed to exert pressure to sensitive areas of the horse's face. The lungeline may be flat or rounded and should attach directly to the head collar (under the chin) with a swivel clip or similar.

The lunge lope must not be shorter than 10 feet in length.

Whips are optional. The use of any other equipment is prohibited including the use of chains and bits or other objects which are designed to apply pressure to the exhibit's face.

## LUNGELINE ROUTINE

- 1 Enter the arena and walk to the centre of the circle
- 2 Acknowledge the judge
- 3 Send horse to circumference of ring
- 4 Walk horse at least one complete circle
- 5 Trot horse at least one complete circle
- 6 Canter horse at least one complete circle
- 7 Turn horse on circumference of ring to face anti-clockwise
- 8 Walk horse at least one complete circle
- 9 Trot horse at least one complete circle
- 10 Canter horse at least one complete circle
- 11 Halt
- 12 Acknowledge the judge
- 13 EXIT



# LONG REINING

*The outline below relates to basic skill level in the discipline of long reining.*

## THE OBJECTIVE

The MHAA Standard of Excellence states that a miniature horse should be an intelligent animal, well balanced in appearance, with good conformation and possessing an impeccable temperament.

The collected movements of a horse in long reins enables a judge to assess these attributes in our horses. Like the Lungeline event it also tests the horse's ability to display correct and fluent movements at the walk and the trot.

## DESCRIPTION OF EVENT

*(Refer Appendix)*

The judges workout would normally require the execution of a number of different movements at a walk and a trot designed to indicate the degree of co-operation between horse and handler, (eg. Negotiating obstacles, backing up etc).



At a walk, or when trotting in a straight line, the handler should stay behind the exhibit or slightly to one side. When trotting in a circle the handler should either stand still in the centre of the circle or walk in a small circle.

Although preference will be given to exhibits that can demonstrate collected movements members are encouraged to enter even if their exhibits have not yet "learnt" to collect.

## EXCLUSIONS

Horses under 2 years (24 months) of age are not eligible to compete.

## JUDGES GUIDELINES

Credit will be given to an exhibit that displays correct and fluent movement along with a pleasant and obedient temperament.

Credit will be given for the "quality" of movement (exhibits demonstrating collected movements) and the fluency of transitions in the workout.

Penalties will be incurred for resistance whether subtle or obvious eg: rearing, bucking, kicking, squealing, open mouth etc.

However, an exhibit that collects but shows some small resistance should be placed higher than an exhibit that does not collect at all.

Presentation maybe taken into account but this is considered to be of lesser importance.



## LONG REINING EQUIPMENT

Any equipment not specifically mentioned is prohibited from use. The use of prohibited equipment will lead to an automatic disqualification (either before or after judging)

### Compulsory Equipment

- Standard Bridle (no blinkers)
- Bits - eggbut, loose ring or torn thumb (snaffles either jointed or straight)
- Reins - length to suit made of any safe material
- Harness Saddle or Standard Roller with D-rings (padded or plain)

### Optional Equipment

- Whips
- Cavesson Noseband
- Saddle Cloth
- Leg Wraps
- Crupper (recommended)

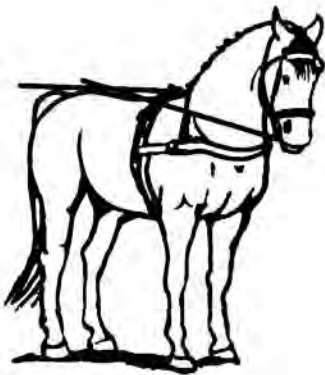
Members are reminded that the Show Rules of MHAA allow plaiting, braiding and suitable decorative trim in Performance events (Rule 1 (f)) but "circus" or "cute" type presentation is not acceptable for any event other than a costume class.

# APPENDIX - LONG REINING

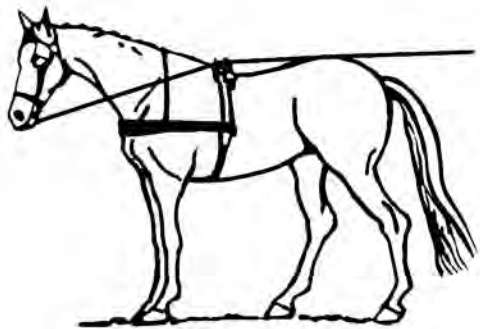
NOTE: Blinkers are only permitted in harness classes. Not in long reining competitions.

## THE HALT

At the halt the horse should be motionless, yet attentive, ready to respond promptly to the driver's aids. He should stand straight, his weight distributed evenly on all four legs, fore and hind legs side by side.



*Good example - square and attentive*



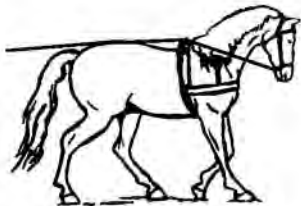
*Poor example - not square*



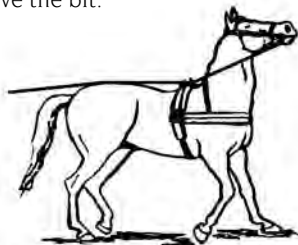
## THE REIN BACK

The aids for the reinback, or backing up, in harness are the verbal command, “back”, and a light pull on the reins. In a correct rein back the horse engages its hindquarters and takes clearly defined backward steps.

To do this well the horse must first be on the bit and at least “thinking forward” at the halt. If the horse is inattentive at the halt and not on the bit, he is likely to back crooked and get above the bit.

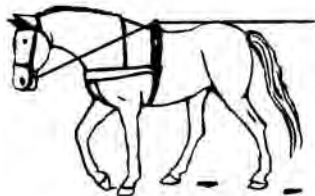


The rein back properly executed

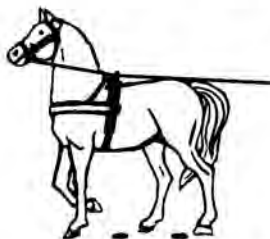


The rein back typical resistance

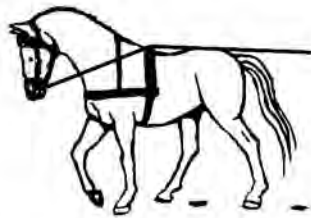
## THE WALK



The free forward walk, hind foot oversteps print of front foot



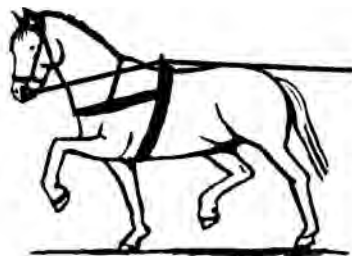
Example of short restricted walk; No relaxation, hind foot does not step into or over print of front foot.



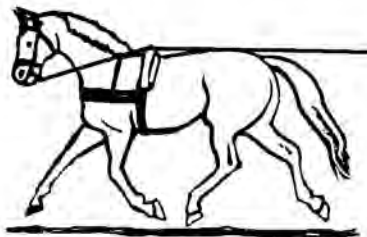
The collected walk hind foot oversteps print.

## THE TROT

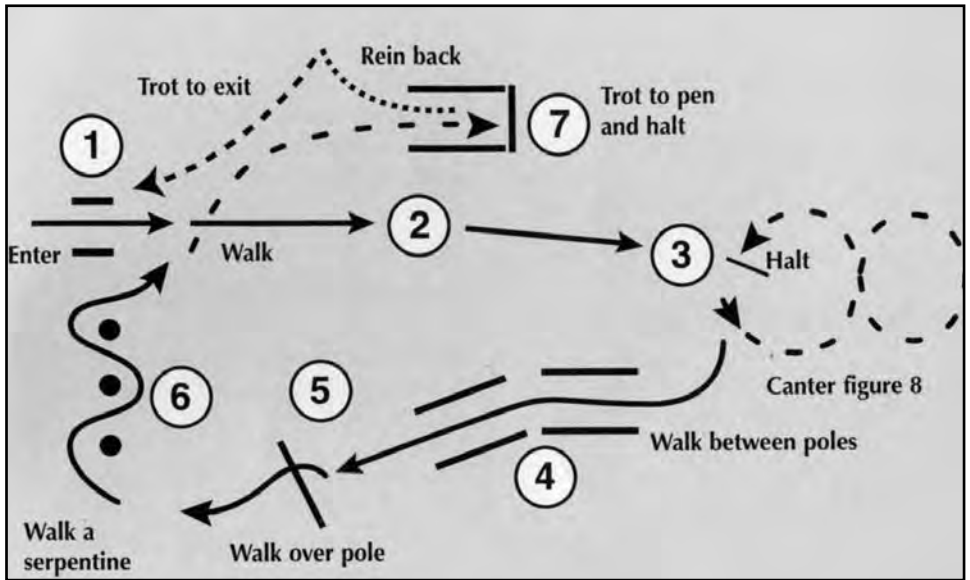
Should be forward moving straight and even with knee action. Plenty of hind leg action using hocks to complement front movement and not just appearing to be running behind.



The collected trot



The working trot.



Example Long Reining Course Only.

Enter at 1 and walk to 2

Halt at 2 and acknowledge the judge

Walk from 2 to 3

From 3 at a walk, do a figure 8 starting to your left and ending at 3

Halt at 3

From 3 at a trot do a figure 8 starting to your right and ending at 3

Halt at 3 - walk to 4

Walk between the poles at 4

Walk over the pole at 5

At walk, bend around cones at 6 entering with the first cone on your right (Serpentine)

Trot to the enclosed area at 7 and walk into the enclosed area

Rein back until deal of the enclosed area and trot to exit at 1

Acknowledge the judge EXIT

*Credit will be given for collected movements around the course.*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: The Committee of Management of MHAA Inc. wishes to thank the Australian Carriage Driving Society Inc. for their permission to reproduce parts of their Handbook in the preparation of this section of the MHAA Performance Rules Handbook.





# LIBERTY

**Liberty is Freedom. In liberty your horse is set free to perform.**

## THE OBJECTIVE

*The Liberty event allows a horse to demonstrate it's "natural beauty" as a judge assesses the horse's style, grace, animation, gaits and presence as it "performs" to music.*

## ARENA REQUIREMENTS

Liberty may only be offered at shows where the facilities include an enclosed arena of suitable size, and where the conditions would not be hazardous to the exhibitor and/or horse.

The designated arena requires the following safety standards to be met:

- The surface must be "safe", it must be even and not have any holes, surface water or mud present.
- The use of electric fencing, wire, tape or rope to mark the arena is prohibited.
- The walls of the arena should be a minimum height of 42 inches and of suitable construction so as to safely contain a miniature horse.
- Entry and exit gates must also be suitably constructed to ensure the arena is completely enclosed at all times during the performance.
- The arena must be "cleared" for example, items such as poles and jumps/jump stands are prohibited inside the performance arena.
- It is strongly recommended that the arena be blacked out.

The Show Management may cancel the Liberty at anytime if they believe the conditions are unsafe for horses or exhibitors. (i.e. slippery surface due to rain etc).

## DESCRIPTION OF EVENT

Exhibits are released in an enclosed arena to perform to a selected piece of music.

The time of the "Liberty" is 90 seconds and the exhibitor must catch the exhibit within 2 minutes of the music stopping or the exhibit is disqualified.

Only one exhibitor (who will wear a number) and one assistant will be allowed in the arena with the exhibit.

The exhibitor and their assistant are permitted to use whips and shaker bottles etc. to encourage movement.

The assistant may also assist the exhibitor in catching the exhibit but if the assistant touches the horse with aids or hands at any time the exhibit will be disqualified.

Likewise, the exhibitor may not touch the exhibit with aids or hands as this will result in instant disqualification.

However, the exhibitor is allowed to use their hands to catch and halter the horse after the music has stopped.

All horses must be safely haltered before leaving the arena.



## PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Announcer, or Show Official, shall publicly announce 10 minutes prior to the commencement of the Liberty that:

*“There is no outside assistance allowed, silence must be observed throughout each performance and while the exhibitor is attempting to catch the exhibit.*

*Applause is permitted only after the exhibit has been haltered at the conclusion of it's performance.”*

The Announcer, or Show Official, shall repeat the above statement immediately prior to the commencement of the first performance.

## EXCLUSIONS

Horses under 1 year (12 months) of age are not eligible to compete.

## JUDGE GUIDELINES

Horses will be judged beginning when the halter is removed by the exhibit of (the individual wearing the number) and until caught by the exhibitor.

In assessing each exhibit the judge will consider the following criteria:

|                        |     |
|------------------------|-----|
| Style and grace        | 30% |
| Animation and presence | 30% |
| Gaits                  | 20% |
| Music and suitability  | 10% |
| Catch                  | 10% |

Each of the following occurrences will lead to the automatic disqualification of the exhibit.

- If the assistant touches the exhibit with their hands or any aid they are using
- If the exhibitor touches the exhibit with their hands or any aid they are using (exception - the use of hands to catch and halter the exhibit after the music has stopped)
- Failure to catch and halter the exhibit within two minutes of the music stopping
- Any assistance from outside of the arena unless the judge feels that the outside action was taken in an attempt to cause the exhibitor's horse to be disqualified or if the judge believes the outside assistance was completely unintentional (eg public spectator touching the horse)
- Assistant catching the horse
- Inappropriate dress of the exhibitor or assistant Refer to Show Rule - Rule VII (A)



## LIBERTY EQUIPMENT

Music is required to be provided by the exhibitor.

- The exhibitor must set the tape to the exact place for the announcer/show personnel to play
- The tape must be clearly marked with the exhibitor's name, the exhibitor's number and side of recording
- No reruns will be allowed for incorrect setting of tapes (not set at start of song)

It is recommended that the exhibitor has only the song they wish to use recorded on the tape.

Whips are optional.

Shaker bottles, garbage bags and other aids to encourage movement are allowed.

Exhibits are prohibited from wearing boots and bandages and should not be shod.

## EXHIBITOR'S DRESS

It is mandatory for an exhibitor to wear appropriate attire. Management may bar any person from entering the ring if not suitably attired in accordance with Rule VII of the Show Rules of the Miniature Horse Association of Australia Inc.





# DEFINITION OF AN 'A' CLASS SHOW

The 2001 AGM included a resolution from the membership requiring the Committee of Management to define what constitutes an A class show. This definition brings uniformity to show programs in different States and ensures the integrity of the National High Point awards.

## EXCLUSIVITY

To qualify as an A class show, only exhibits registered with MHAA can be eligible to compete and show must be run under MHAA rules.

## PUBLICATION

All A class shows must be advertised in Fine Lines prior to the closing date of entries for the show. Failure to inform members in this way will result in the loss of A class status for the show unless

- (a) the State Committee concerned can convince the Committee of Management that exceptional circumstances existed which prevented the show's publication
- and
- (b) that the State Committee took all reasonable steps to publicise the show to the members in their State.

Each State Committee is responsible to ensure that the results of A class shows (including the number of exhibits in each class) are provided to the Editor for publication in Fine Lines and to the National High Point Co-ordinator

## SHOW PROGRAMMES

An A class show must offer as a minimum the following classes:-

**Miniature Horse Halter classes**  
(compulsory)

**Performance classes:** all MHAA State Championship and Feature Shows must also offer performance classes in Trail, Hunter, Harness and Showjumping.

## SMALL HORSE

The inclusion of Small Horse classes is optional. Any classes offered should be based on the number of B registered horses likely to attend. The show classes offered for Category B registered horses can never outweigh the show classes offered for Category A registered horses.

## HALTER CLASSES - CATEGORY C

There are no restrictions on the number of halter classes that can be offered with age and/or height divisions. However, common sense should prevail and classes should be set taking into account the number of horses in the area that are likely to attend the show.

As a general rule it is preferable to aim for no less than three horses per class.

The show program may offer a maximum of six (6) Champion ribbons and six (6) Reserve Champion ribbons in the halter classes for fillies, mares, colts, stallions and geldings. The show program must offer a minimum of three (3) Champion ribbons and three (3) Reserve Champion ribbons to qualify as an A Class show.

The following classes are recommended:

**Champion Filly and Champion Colt  
Champion Mare and Champion Stallion  
Champion junior Gelding and  
Champion Senior Gelding**



The show program must not include more than two Supreme ribbons. If geldings are not eligible to compete for Supreme Category A horse then they must be offered a Supreme Category A Gelding award.

### **HALTER CLASSES - SMALL HORSE**

The inclusion of Category B classes is optional. Any classes offered should be based on the number of B registered horses likely to attend. The show classes offered for Category B registered horses can never outweigh the show classes offered for Category A registered horses.

Where numbers warrant, the following classes are recommended:

**Champion Filly and Champion Colt**  
**Champion Mare and Champion Stallion**  
**Champion junior Gelding and**  
**Champion Senior Gelding**

The show program must not include more than two Supreme ribbons. If geldings are not eligible to compete for Supreme Category B horse then they must be offered a Supreme Category B Gelding award.

### **PERFORMANCE CLASSES - MINIATURE HORSE**

The inclusion of Category A classes is optional.

It is strongly recommended that as a minimum the following performance classes should be included whenever possible.

**Trail**  
**Hunter**  
**Harness**

All MHAA State Championship and Feature Shows must also offer performance classes in Trail, Hunter, Harness and Show Jumping.

Trail and Hunter classes cannot be divided into more than two (2) categories. If they are split a junior and Senior class should be offered. If only one class is offered in each discipline the courses must cater for both junior and senior horses.

Other performance disciplines such as 6-Bar, Lungeline, Longreining etc. are also encouraged but not compulsory.

### **PERFORMANCE CLASSES - SMALL HORSE**

The inclusion of Category B classes is optional. Any classes offered should be based on the number of B registered horses likely to attend. The show classes offered for Category B registered horses can never outweigh the show classes offered for Category A registered horses.

### **OTHER CLASSES**

There are no restrictions imposed on the number and content of other classes that can be offered e.g. handler, novelty, colour classes, best head, etc.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

Generally the responsibility for setting of show dates and programmes rests with:

National Committee for the National Show (including supporting shows)

State Committees for State shows

However, National Committee has the overall responsibility for all shows conducted under the MHAA banner.

Both National and State Committees must observe the above guidelines, as to notification, publication and format of their shows, when setting their programmes.



# NOTES

NOTES



# NOTES





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