

St. Clair County

4-H

Miniature Horse

Rules

(Taken from the AMHR rule book)

Showmanship

A. In Showmanship classes, exhibitors are to show to the presiding Judge only. Below are points on which showmanship classes are to be judged. Only the handler is judged. The horse is merely a prop to show the showmanship ability of the handler. Management must choose and post the showmanship patterns.

B. Appearance of exhibitor:

1. 10 points – clothes and person neat and clean. **Suitable clothes: hats, boots, long sleeve shirts and gloves are required.**

C. Appearance of horse:

1. 40 points – conformation not to be a factor.

a. 15 Points – conditioning b. 15 points – grooming of horse c. 5 points – trimming d. 5 points – tack

D. Showing horse in ring: 50 points. The Judge will use one of the following three ring patterns in judging this class. Judge will discuss the selected pattern with contestants prior to class. The selected pattern must be posted two hours before the start of the class.

1. Leading: 15 points

Enter ring leading animal at an alert walk in a counter-clockwise direction. Walk on animal's left side, holding lead shank in right hand near halter. The remaining portion of the lead is held neatly and safely in left hand. Animal should lead readily at a walk. After Judge has lined up the class in front of spectators, he or she will call on each exhibitor individually to move his or her horse individually. When moving horse, be sure that the Judge gets a clear, unobstructed view of the horse's action. Allow the horse sufficient lead to move freely the required distance, stop, and turn to the right around the horse. Exhibitor should perform the showmanship pattern as directed by the Judge or Ring Steward.

2. Posing: 15 points

When posing your horse, stand toward the front facing the horse, but always in a position where you can keep your eye on the Judge. Pose your miniature with his feet squarely under him. Do most of your showing with the lead strap. Never touch or kick the horse's leg into position. Do not crowd the exhibitor next to you when in a side-by-side position, or in front of or behind you when lined up head to tail. When Judge is observing other animals, let yours stand if posed reasonably well. Be natural. Over showing, undue fussing, and maneuvering are objectionable.

3. Poise, alertness, and merits: 20 points

Keep alert and be aware of the position of the Judge at all times. Do not be distracted by persons or things outside the ring. Show the animal at all times. Be courteous and sportsmanlike at all times. Recognize quickly and correct faults of your horse. Respond quickly to requests from Judges and

officials. Keep showing until the entire class has been placed and excused from the ring. A Judge may ask an exhibitor questions (Example: exhibitor number, horse's age, body parts of horse, etc.) At his/her discretion a Judge may ask an exhibitor for an additional test after completion of one of the set patterns.

E. The half system will be used in exhibiting your horse.

F. Patterns for Showmanship may be selected from the Pattern Section of the Rulebook. See Individual Pattern diagrams below.

Exhibitor's Dress for In Hand Obstacle, Hunter, Driving, and Driving obstacle:

It is the tradition of the show ring that handlers and drivers be correctly attired for their classes. Horse and handler must look their best. No farm, individual or horses names may be displayed on exhibitor. Dress for the youth exhibitor should be appropriate for purpose. Dress should be safe, neat, and clean for the Rider, Driver, or Exhibitor. Boots are required. No T-shirts, shorts, skirts above the knee, or strapless tops allowed.

Horse shall be shown with full mane and tail (no full roach). Mane and tail length shall be left to the decision and discretion of the exhibitor. Thinning, pulling, shortening, etc., of a mane and tail is permissible.

The Miniature Horse is to be shown to its best advantage. It is preferred that the horse stand square. The Judge at his or her discretion may ask to have the horse stand square, which means all four feet are flat on the ground and at least one front and one rear cannon bone perpendicular to the ground.

Horses may be clipped or shown in full coat.

Horses may be shown with or without polished hooves.

Obstacle Halter/Driving

A. General Rules:

1. The obstacle course must be posted at the Show Office not less than two hours prior to the class.
2. Horses must be at least one year old for halter obstacle and three years old for obstacle driving.
3. An exhibitor may not show before a Judge in classes where he/she (the exhibitor) has designed the course in that class.
4. Horse can only be shown by one exhibitor per class.
5. All obstacles must be numbered on the course in order of sequence.

B. Classes will be judged 100% on the manner of horse's performance through the course.

C. There is a sixty second time limit to complete each obstacle. After time is used, the exhibitor will be directed to the next obstacle. Refusals of three (3) obstacles shall be cause for disqualification.

D. Canterng is penalized in obstacle driving.

E. Obstacle requirements:

1. Must be a minimum of 5 and maximum of 8 obstacles.
2. Tires and stair steps are prohibited.
3. Jumps are prohibited.
4. Round pipes or rails are prohibited for ground rails in the in-hand classes unless they are secured. Flat or square rails can be used.

In shows where more than one obstacle class is offered, at least three of the obstacles must be different or the manner of performance through obstacles must be varied for the class.

Edible treats to encourage an animal to perform one of the obstacles are not allowed.

All obstacles should be safe for exhibitors as well as for horses.

I. The following will result in elimination from the class and no points, ribbons or awards will be presented.

Off course – defined as:

- a. Taking an obstacle from the wrong side.
 - b. Negotiating an obstacle from the wrong direction.
 - c. Skipping an obstacle unless directed by judge.
 - d. Negotiating in the wrong sequence.
2. Attendants interfering with the performance of the individual or equine. .
 3. Miniature horse leaving the obstacle course.
 4. No physically moving, or coercing the horse by touching. It is to be the judge's discretion to disqualify.

Hunter Jumping

A. General Rules

1. The courses for hunter classes must be posted at least two hours prior to the scheduled time of the class.

2. Course diagrams must show, with arrows, the direction each obstacle must be taken, and markers or a line must indicate the start and finish of the course.

3. All jumps in hunter courses must be numbered on the course in order of sequence.

4. The minimum age for a horse to enter the hunter class is 3 years old.

5. The person showing a hunter cannot jump the course with the horse.

6. Hunters may show with braided manes and tails in the manner of their larger counterparts.

7. Judge(s) and Steward shall walk Hunter course with designer and exhibitors prior to start of class. 8. All jumps used in performance classes must be collapsible.

1. Hunters are to be judged on:

a. Style, manners, and way of going.

b. Preference given to those horses that cover the course at an even pace, with free flowing strides, such as a brisk trot or canter, must maintain same gait throughout the entire course.

c. Circling once upon entering the ring and once upon leaving the ring is permissible.

d. Charging fences or not maintaining the same gait throughout the entire class should be penalized.

e. Finalists to be trotted past the Judge(s) for soundness check. Any unsound horse will be eliminated.

f. Horses shall not be required to re-jump the course.

2. Jumps:

a. There will be a minimum of four fences and a maximum of six fences.

b. The fences can range in height from twelve to twenty-four inches (in the jump-off this will change to a minimum of twelve to a maximum of thirty inches).

c. Jumps should be of attractive design but constructed of a material so as not to cause danger to the horse.

d. All jumps must be at least five feet in width, no wider than six feet, with a minimum of twenty feet between jumps, with the exceptions of an in and out.

e. All jumps must have a ground pole.

f. Jump standards may not be higher than 40".

g. No wings or additions are allowed outside the jump standards.

h. All jumps in hunter courses must be numbered on the course in order of sequence.

i. An In and Out Jump is considered one obstacle and scored as such. Refusal of one element of an In and Out Jump requires the retaking of both elements. The distance between the two jumps of an In and Out Jump should be 10-12 feet. An In and Out Jump should never be the first jump in the course.

j. Fences – Obstacles should simulate those found in hunting, such as natural post and rail, brush, stone wall, white board gate, hedge, oxer, etc.

Causes for elimination in Hunter classes:

- a. Three (3) refusals
- b. Off Course
- c. Crossing your own path (as in circling between fences, not as in retaking a fence from a refusal or when following a course design).
- d. Fall of horse or exhibitor
- e. Jumping of obstacle by exhibitor
- f. Carrying a whip
- g. An unsound horse

Major faults to be scored:

- a. Knockdowns
- b. Touches
- c. Refusals
- d. Bucking or Kicking
- e. Spooking or shying
- f. Wringing of tail
- g. Showing an obstacle to horse
- h. Not maintaining an even pace

Driving Safety - The following are considered best practice guidelines for Safety and will serve as rules for shows and ASPC/AMHR/ASPR sanctioned events.

A. All persons involved in driving – drivers, grooms, competition officials, spectators, etc., should place safety first.

1. Horses should never be left unattended while hitched to a vehicle.
2. A driver should never allow passengers to enter a vehicle until driver is seated with reins in hand and driver must never dismount while passengers are in the vehicle.
3. Header- Must be 16 years or older. Enter the ring when the line-up is called, May assist in setting up the animal, Stands two paces back from the horses head and will remain there, except in emergency, until the Judge's card(s) are turned in, The header should not step back to allow judge in between horse and header, Headers are Required in all youth driving classes, and All headers should be appropriately attired.
4. For safety reasons any unruly pony/horse, unsafe vehicle, unsafe equipment or unsafe hitching of horse(s) may be excused from the ring by the judge, ring master, or Steward. An exhibitor cannot protest this action.
5. All rules of the road should be observed unless officials direct otherwise.
6. Excessively large classes may be divided by management or Judge, as conditions warrant.
7. All driving horses shall show on the rail at all times except while passing. The Judge is to take this into consideration while judging and horses shown off the rail shall be penalized.
8. Exhibitor numbers may be worn on the back of the exhibitor or attached to the back and/or sides of the cart in an easily visible position for all driving divisions, except Roadster which the number must be worn on the back of the exhibitor.
9. It is permissible for a driver to talk to a horse in a subdued tone of voice, although a driver should strive to control the horse's movement with a minimum of vocal aids. Talking loud, whistling, or shouting at a horse is not acceptable.
10. No entry may leave the ring after judging has begun without the permission of the Judge or ring steward.
11. During the class, minor adjustments to harness may be made upon permission from the Judge. A groom may assist with the adjustment without penalty (a time out). See Current USEF Rule Book, General Rule (GR)833.
 - a. The time out shall be clocked and the adjustment or repair is not to exceed 5 minutes.
 - b. Only one time out per class per entry is allowed and must not exceed the 5 minutes allowed.
 - c. After the class has begun no groom may enter the ring without permission of the Judge.
12. If the class or ring size justifies the Judge may ask the horses to reverse on the diagonal for safety reasons. The Judge may ask for a reverse on the diagonal at a walk or collected trot.
13. Any exhibitor may wear protective headgear (Certified ASTM/SEI Equine Helmet) in any division or

class without penalty from the judge(s)

Driving Division – General Rules- All Three types of driving will be Shown together See below to find what your horse is best suited for: Pleasure, Country Pleasure, or Western Country Pleasure.

A. Guidance: The driving division was founded for the purpose of developing and furthering the art and sport of driving for pleasure. A complete knowledge of and compliance with the rules are essential.

B. The only person to handle the reins, under penalty of elimination, is the driver. No change of driver is permitted during any class.

C. In Youth Driving, an attendant 16 years of age or older is allowed in the vehicle with the youth, but not required. The youth shall be in full control of the horse without assistance.

D. Dress Code: Headers, Drivers and their passengers should be dressed appropriately. Dress in the show ring is to complement the overall appearance of the unit, not take away from the appearance.

1. Hats may or may not be worn by gentlemen, except when in formal attire.

2. Formal wear should not be worn before 5 p.m. unless stake classes are held in an afternoon performance session.

3. No strapless dresses in any driving class.

4. No sandals or open toed shoes to be worn by driver or header.

5. No T-shirts or shorts.

6. No farm, individual, or animal names may be displayed.

E. Horses must be serviceably sound.

F. All driving horses must show with full manes and tails

G. Driving whips, if used, must be of suitable style, and the tip of the lash must not reach past the shoulder of the horse.

J. Safety:

1. All driving horses must be at least 3 years old.

2. Cavessons or nosebands may or may not be used in the Driving Division.

K. General Rules for Pleasure, Country Pleasure and Western Country Pleasure Classes

1. Boots, wraps, etc. of any description are prohibited.

2. Driving whips, if used, must be of suitable style, and the tip of the lash must not reach past the shoulder of the horse.

3. All pleasure driving vehicles must be of the two wheel type and have a basket.
 - a. Bike tires or wooden wheels are permissible.
 - b. Undue noise created by a vehicle will be a reason to excuse the entry from the ring.
4. Harness in the pleasure, country pleasure, and western country pleasure division must be:
 - a. Of the light type with breast collars.
 - b. No full hames allowed.
 - c. Blinders are required. (1) Round or square blinders are permissible.
 - d. Side or over-checks are required.
 - e. Check must be hooked.
 - f. Breeching is optional
 - g. No other appliances may be used on a driving horse other than the harness. (Example: no fly nets on the ears, face, or body).
5. Bits in the pleasure driving division shall be of the snaffle type. No Liverpool bits, curb chains or curb straps are allowed.
6. Martingales and Check Bits are optional.
7. Headers - Must be 16 years or older and enter the ring when the line-up is called. May assist in setting up the animal. Stands two paces back from the horses head and will remain there, except in emergency, until the Judge's card(s) are turned in. The header should not step back to allow judge in between horse and header. Required in all youth driving classes. All youth exhibitors, in any non-youth driving class must have a header. All headers should be appropriately attired. In Versatility Classes a "groom" is a header.

Pleasure Driving

A. Class Conditions

1. Ring Procedure: Pleasure driving horses are to enter the ring counter-clockwise (to the right) at a pleasure trot. To be shown both ways of the arena at a walk, pleasure trot, and extended trot. To stand quietly and to rein back. To be judged 60% on performance, manners and way of going; 30% on the condition, fit and appropriateness of harness and vehicle; and 10% on neatness, appropriateness of attire, and overall impression. Excessive speed will be penalized.
 - a. Walk: A free, regular and forward moving four beat gait. The horse should walk energetically, but calmly, with even and determined pace.

b. Pleasure Trot: The horse should maintain forward impulsion while showing submission to the bit. The trot is slower and more collected, but the horse should indicate willingness to be driven on the bit while maintaining a steady cadence.

c. Extended Trot: This is a clear, but not excessive, increase in gait and length of stride. The horse goes forward freely, engaging the hind legs with good hock action, on a taut but light rein, the position balanced and unconstrained.

2. Braids, matching the stable colors, one in the foretop and one immediately back of the bridle path as seen on the larger pleasure driving horses are optional.

Country Pleasure Driving

A. Class Conditions

1. Ring Procedure: Country Pleasure Driving horses are to enter the ring counterclockwise (to the right) at a country pleasure trot. To be shown both ways of the arena at a walk, country pleasure trot and an extended trot. To stand quietly and to rein back. To be judged 60% on performance, manners and way of going, 30% on the condition, fit and appropriateness of harness and vehicle, and 10% on neatness, appropriateness of attire and overall impression. Over checks and side checks should be slightly loose, not snug. The head set should appear natural for the horse. Excessive knee action and speed to be penalized.

a. Walk: A free, regular and forward moving four beat gait. The horse should walk energetically, but calmly, with an even and determined gait.

b. Country Pleasure Trot: A balanced, easy moving, relaxed two beat gait demonstrating forward movement.

c. Extended Trot: A clear increase in gait and length of stride. The horse should move freely on a taut, but light rein, while maintaining a balanced gait and forward movement. Excessive knee action and speed shall be penalized.

Western Country Pleasure Driving

A. Class Conditions

1. Ring Procedure: Western Country Pleasure driving horses shall enter the ring counterclockwise (to the right) at a Country Pleasure Trot. To be shown both ways of the arena at a walk, country pleasure trot and extended trot. To stand quietly and rein back. To be judged 60% on the horse's performance, manners and way of going, and suitability for assuring a pleasurable drive, 30% on condition, fit and appropriateness of harness and vehicle, and 10% on neatness, appropriateness of attire and overall impression. Over checks and side checks should be slightly loose, not snug. Excessive knee action and speed to be penalized.

a. Walk: A free regular and forward moving four beat gait. The horse should walk freely and calmly, with

an even determined gait.

b. Western Country Pleasure Trot: A balanced, easy going, relaxed two beat gait demonstrating forward movement with a flat knee and little hock flexion.

c. Extended Trot: A clear increase in gait and length of stride. Excessive knee or hock action and speed to be severely penalized. The horse should move freely on a taut, but light rein, while maintaining a balanced gait and forward movement with low strides and little flexion of knees and hocks.

2. A Western Country Pleasure Driving horse should carry himself in a natural, balanced position with a relaxed head and neck. The horse will be free moving with straight, low strides that have little flexion of the knees and hocks.

3. The horse shall be severely penalized if his poll is more than 3" above the level of the withers or below the withers; the crest of the neck is bowed or arched; is behind the vertical or over flexed; is excessively nosed out; exhibits excessive knee action and speed; or shows lack of control by the exhibitor

4. All gaits to be performed in a smooth, relaxed, balanced manner. Consistently showing too far off the rail and excessive noisemaking by exhibitors during the class shall be penalized according to severity. Each horse shall be required to back readily and straight and stand quietly.

5. Western Country Pleasure Driving Attire: Ladies should wear jackets and blouses with slacks or skirts or dresses of the Western type. No bare shoulders. Hats are optional but should be of the Western type if worn. Gentlemen should wear Western attire with or without a Western hat.