



**Manitoba
Horse Council**

**2024 Prairie Crocus Competition
Rule Book**

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Western Dressage – *Please refer to the links below for rules and patterns:*

- WSDAC: <http://www.westernstyledressage.ca/>
- WDAA: <https://www.westerndressageassociation.org/>

Preamble



The Manitoba Horse Council (MHC) is recognized by Sport Manitoba as the governing body for equestrian sport in Manitoba.

Aims, goals, and objectives.

To provide a provincial level of competition that will increase the participation in many areas of horse sport within the province of Manitoba.

To create a safe and standardized environment for grass-roots level participants to enter the competitions environment and have a positive competition experience.

To provide a feeder system for the development of athletes and disciplines. This will be accomplished additionally through education and participation opportunities in the Prairie Crocus Competition Program.

To encourage interest in a grassroots level of officiating within the province of Manitoba.

To align with the concepts and levels of the Long-Term Equestrian Development (LTED) program.

General

MHC Prairie Crocus sanctioned competitions are to run in accordance with the MHC Prairie Crocus Competition rules.

Every eventuality cannot be provided for in these rules. It is the duty of the officials and the competition management to decide in the spirit of sport, approaching as near as possible the intention of these rules, and to protect the reputation of the sport and the welfare of the horse.

Competition organizers should be familiar with the MHC Prairie Crocus rules and policies and should have copies available for all individuals present. Competitions may expand upon the rules, provided notification of changes is printed in the competition prize list. **Under no circumstances** may any changes contradict the MHC rule requirements pertaining to safety.

All MHC Prairie Crocus sanctioned competitions are restricted to MHC members in good standing. **All competitors must have a current MHC membership, including riders in lead line classes.** Out of province competitors are eligible to compete, however, they must provide proof of membership with their home Provincial/Territorial Sport Organization (PTSO) or will be required to purchase an MHC membership.

Any major change from the format of the Prairie Crocus Competition Program must receive the approval of the MHC Board of Directors prior to implementation.

If it is found that the Prairie Crocus rules require further interpretation for the level of competition present, the Equestrian Canada (EC) rules will prevail.

Safety and Risk Management

The MHC urges all members to develop a “Safety Awareness” program for each event to benefit participants, spectators and management involved. All equestrian activities, including competition, are vulnerable to accidents. The show committee has a responsibility to provide an event that is run as safely as possible.

Safety committee

- a. Name a chairperson who is responsible for all safety precautions during the event.
- b. Have the show committee approve the safety guidelines for each event.
- c. Record and report to the MHC any incidents or accidents that occur during sanctioned events. MHC provides a form in approval packages.
- d. Ensure that adequate emergency medical personnel are available for every event.

Liability waiver

- a. The MHC requires that all Prairie Crocus equestrian competitions use an “Acknowledgement of Risk and Release of Liability” form. This form must be signed by each participant attending each event.

First aid and emergency medical help

- a. It is essential that every equestrian competition has a plan in place for medical emergencies.
- b. At minimum a competition must have, on hand during the entire event, a person(s) who is trained and knowledgeable in first aid / emergency medical treatment. Depending on the event, this individual may be a first responder, a registered nurse, an EMT, a ski patrol officer or a similar individual who holds a first aid designation.
 - i. Ambulance: If not present at the event, know how to reach an ambulance on short notice. Ensure that the person calling the ambulance has specific directions, if needed, and asks for the ambulance to come in quietly (without sirens). If aid is required urgently, and sirens are warranted, then all competition should be halted until the ambulance has arrived.

- c. A back board and collar should be available at all events. **Only trained personnel should use a back board and collar.**
- d. If a person is rendered unconscious, or complaining of back pain, **under no circumstances should that person be moved.** Wait until qualified medical help is present prior to moving such a person.

Medication Control

Medication rules are in place to ensure competition safety, a level playing field, and to protect the welfare of the equine. For information regarding medication control, please refer to Equestrian Canada Rule Book A Section 10.

Animal Welfare

The inhumane treatment of an equine at any MHC Prairie Crocus sanctioned competition by any individual (competitor, owner, trainer, etc.) must not be tolerated anywhere on the grounds, under any circumstances.

Cruelty can be defined as intentionally causing pain or unnecessary discomfort to a horse. The standard by which such conduct will be measured is – the determination of cruel, excessive, or inhumane treatment from a reasonable person who is informed and experienced in generally accepted equine training and procedures.

The MHC recommends every competition have a statement in their prize list regarding the stance on the abuse of horses and the commitment of the event to the humane treatment and welfare of horses. In addition, note the penalties to be imposed (such as elimination or disqualification) for the confirmed abuse of horses at the event.

The following acts are considered cruel, abusive, and inhumane (acts are not limited to this list):

- a. Excessive use of a whip on a horse by a person. NOTE: Except in emergency situations, any striking of the horse’s head (on the poll and forward of the poll) shall be deemed excessive.
- b. Rapping the legs of a horse with the butt end of the riding crop or other implement.
- c. Use of any substances to induce temporary heat.
- d. Use of a wire or chain in conjunction with any schooling jump.
- e. Use of an electric device to create a shock in schooling or showing.

- f. Use of shackles, hock hobbles and similar devices (not to be constructed as rubber or elastic exercising devices).
- g. Showing a horse with raw or bleeding sores on body.
- h. Withholding feed and water for prolonged periods.
- i. Cruel treatment of a horse in a stall, runway, schooling area, competition ring or elsewhere on the competition grounds, by any person.

In any performance event, the judge shall have the authority to request the removal or alteration of any piece of equipment which, in their opinion, would tend to give the horse an unfair advantage or which they believe to be inhumane.

Administrative Rules

Completed applications (including a prize list, certificate of insurance etc.) must be submitted at least 14 days prior to the start date or the competition will be subjected to a non-refundable \$100 CAD fee.

All MHC Prairie Crocus sanctioned competitions must adhere to the prize money cap of \$5,000 CAD per show. This cap represents cash prizes only – excludes ribbons and other prizes (saddle pads, trophies, etc.).

All MHC Prairie Crocus sanctioned competitions must provide proof of commercial general liability insurance in effect during the event. The show certificate of insurance form is provided by the MHC and must be returned completed for sanctioning approval. Insurance is available through Acera Insurance Services, the official insurance provider of the MHC.

- a. The policy **must** contain all clauses as laid out on the show certificate of insurance form and must be completed entirely to be accepted.

Competition organizers **must** forward the post-competition forms, a list of entries for the “Cover Your Costs” draw, and all MHC membership applications (including collected fees) to the MHC within 10 days of the end of the competition.

Prairie Crocus competitions that are run concurrently with an Equestrian Canada (EC) competition must designate which rings are EC and which are Prairie Crocus. Each of these competitions must have separate sanctioning certificates from the corresponding organizations. All competitors in these rings must have the appropriate membership.

INDOOR TOURNAMENTS: divisions run as EC in Prairie Crocus competitions can run in the same ring but must be designated as a separate show.

Cancellation policy: competitions who cancel 14 days or more prior to the start of the event will receive a full refund or credit for their next sanctioning application (may be subject to an administration fee). Competitions who cancel within 14 days of the start date will receive no refund or credit.

- a. In the event of a cancellation, the MHC must be notified in writing no later than the scheduled date of the competition.
- b. Competitions that cannot be approved due to the failure to submit required documents before the event occurs will forfeit their sanctioning fee.

Each MHC Prairie Crocus sanctioned competition will receive a show permit certificate. This certificate should be displayed at the event office.

All MHC Prairie Crocus sanctioned competitions must require all competitors to hold a current MHC membership (or PTSO equivalent) to ensure each entry is protected by their own individual liability coverage.

Roles and Useful Definitions

Competition organizer: This individual(s) is/are responsible for the organization of the competition up until the event begins. The competition organizer must be a current MHC member in good standing.

Competition secretary: This individual performs duties as assigned by the event directors, manager, or committee chairpersons. Regular duties may consist of (but are not limited to): keeping records of class entries, scratches, additions, placements, and payment of fees.

Official: Includes all competition judges, stewards, course designers and technical delegates, who are recognized and licensed by a governing body and hold up-to-date certificates.

Steward: An equestrian competition steward is a licensed official tasked with the responsibility of interpreting and enforcing the rules of the organization that has sanctioned the event.

Learner official/judge: An individual who is in training and/or shadowing an official.

Junior: Individuals are “junior” until the end of the calendar year in which they reach the age of 18. Except as modified by discipline/breed sport rules.

Amateur: An individual over the age of 18 who does not get paid for riding or coaching. Certain scholarships, bursaries and sponsorships are allowed.

Professional: Anyone who is paid to ride a horse(s), or who coaches students for a fee.

1 General Rules of Competition

1.1 MHC Helmet Policy

All riders, regardless of age or level, must wear ASTM/SEI, BSI/BS, EN, AS/NZS, or CE VG1 01.040 2014-12 (provided they are BSI Kitemarked) approved protective headgear at all times, with chin strap fastened, when mounted at any MHC sanctioned Prairie Crocus competition unless specifically exempted by the rules of the discipline.

1.2 Stallions

Well-mannered stallions may ONLY be shown by junior A and adult competitors.

1.3 Age Categories

Age categories shall follow Equestrian Canada's guidelines, based on the individual's age as of January 1 of the competition year:

- a. **Adult:** 18 years and over
- b. **Junior "A":** The beginning of the calendar year in which they turn 16 until the end of the calendar year in which they turn 18.
- c. **Junior "B":** The beginning of the calendar year in which they turn 13 until the end of the calendar year in which they turn 15.
- d. **Junior "C":** Until the end of the calendar year in which they turn 12.

1.4 Electronic Communications

Earphones or earbuds and/or other electronic communication devices are strictly prohibited in the competition arena, and as such, usage is penalized by elimination. One earphone/earbud is allowed when mounted everywhere except in the competition arena.

1.5 Competition Number

The competition number designated to the horse/rider combination by the show secretary, must be worn by the horse or the rider/handler from the time it is issued, whenever the horse is not in its stall or trailer, to facilitate identification by officials. A warning will be issued the first time the horse is seen without its designated number. The second offence may result in elimination or disqualification as determined by the ground jury, steward, or show committee.

1.6 Officials

MHC-sanctioned competitions may use MHC or other provincially approved officials, EC officials or officials carded with another organization (i.e., breed officials, USEF etc.). Un-carded, experienced individuals may be permitted to officiate at MHC sanctioned events but will require a guest card and are subject to MHC approval. *Guest card applications are available from the MHC website or by contacting the MHC office.*

1.6.1 Conflict of Interest Situations

- a. Judges and stewards shall not officiate in any division in which a member of their family or a horse owned by the immediate family is competing.
- b. No judge who owns or is employed at an establishment may judge any horse or competitor that boards, is trained or takes instruction at said establishment.
- c. A judge may not judge any classes where a competitor is the owner of an establishment at which said judge boards, trains or takes instruction.
- d. Judges may not discuss the purchase, sale or lease of any horse during the continuation of a competition at which they are officiating.
- e. Judges may not, the day preceding and during the period of a competition at which they are judging, be the house guests of any person who is exhibiting and/or competing or whose family is exhibiting and/or competing at such competition.
- f. A husband and wife and/or members of their immediate family may not officiate as a judge and steward in the same division at the same competition.
- g. Neither competition managers nor members of their families are eligible to serve as judges, stewards, course designers, or technical delegates at any competition they are managing.
- h. In addition, the following persons are ineligible to serve as judges or stewards at a recognized competition: the president, chairman, secretary, other officers, committee members, or employees of the competition.
- i. Course designers may not compete over any course which they have constructed or designed.
- j. Ring masters shall not officiate at any divisions of a competition in which they or any member of their family or any of their clients are competitors.

- k. No horse may be shown before a judge that has been owned, trained, or sold by that judge or a member of the judge's immediate family within a period of three months prior to the start of the competition, excepting a judge that a competition has had to substitute due to circumstances beyond their control.
- l. No horse may be shown before a judge that has been leased by that judge unless the lease was terminated at least three months prior to the start of the competition.
- m. An individual may not compete in a class officiated by an official who has coached, instructed or tutored that individual with or without pay within the last 30 days.

1.6.2 Judges

- a. No judge shall be required to officiate longer than eight hours in one day and cannot be required to be on the competition grounds longer than 10 hours.
- b. Judges must be given 45 minutes (minimum) for a lunch break.
- c. Judges are to arrive at the competition site 20 minutes in advance of their first class and present themselves to the competition organizer in charge dressed in a conservative and respectful fashion.
- d. Judges are responsible, along with the show steward (if present), for ensuring that the competition ring is correctly set up.
- e. Judges are expected to be knowledgeable about the rules and requirements of any class they have agreed to judge.
- f. Judges may have a reasonable expectation of privacy. Only the competition steward or organizer may approach the judge to discuss their results. Judges are not required to give any reasons for their decisions other than those shown on the score sheet.
- g. A competitor may **ONLY** make an inquiry through the show steward or member of the show committee regarding a decision. Should the competitor not be satisfied with the result of the enquiry, an official protest must be lodged. **At no time may the judge be approached directly by anyone other than the steward or competition organizer.**
- h. Judges must maintain a degree of safety in the competition ring and may excuse any horse/rider deemed to be unruly, unsafe or a danger to others.
- i. It is the responsibility of the show management to ensure that judges are conversant with the MHC Prairie Crocus rules and that any relevant tests are made available well in advance.

1.6.3 Stewards

Prairie Crocus competitions do not require a steward but are encouraged to have one present. A safety officer or knowledgeable person should be appointed by the show when a steward is absent.

- a. The purpose of the steward is to ensure a fair competition which respects the MHC principles of fair play and sportsmanship.
- b. Stewards fulfill their duty by:
 - i. Helping both competitors and organizers clearly understand the rules.
 - ii. Ensuring optimum conditions in both the competition and schooling areas.
 - iii. Upholding the welfare of the horse and acting on all reports of abuse.
 - iv. Supervising schooling areas.
 - v. When possible, making checks to the stabling area.
 - vi. Reporting infractions to the competition organizing committee and/or the ground jury (judge).
 - vii. Acting as liaison between competitors and officials (with permission from the judge or veterinarian).
 - viii. Confirming that the Prairie Crocus rules are upheld.
- c. The steward, if present, is responsible for completing the tack check either prior to or immediately after the competitor has entered or left the competition ring, if required, in accordance with the prize list.

1.6.4 Veterinarian

- a. All Prairie Crocus sanctioned competitions must arrange to have a veterinarian available either on location or on-call for the duration of the competition.
- b. The on-call veterinarian is available on an as needed basis and has committed to being within communication and commuting range for emergencies.

1.6.5 Ground Jury

- a. Under various circumstances, different groups of officials are responsible for various decisions. For clarity, the ground jury shall make all such decisions at MHC Prairie Crocus sanctioned competitions.
- b. The ground jury shall consist of three members with at least one judge. These members may be selected from the panel of judges,

the competition organizer, the competition steward if present, and the competition veterinarian.

- c. The decision of the ground jury shall be final and is not open for appeal.
- d. The responsibility of the ground jury is to deal with protests and disqualifications that fall within the guidelines described in the Prairie Crocus Rulebook.

1.7 Disputes

1.7.1 Protests

A protest can only be related to a decision made during the process of a class. Protests can only be made by a competitor, coach, parent, or owner.

- a. Protests related to technical objections arising from the competition must be made to the show secretary of the competition in writing and accompanied by a deposit of \$50 CAD payable to the MHC. They shall be made no later than half an hour after the occurrence which gave rise to the objection, or where marks are concerned, within one hour of the issue of such marks. The deposit is forfeited unless the protest is upheld.
- b. The decision of the ground jury or the individual judge is final.
- c. If a protest arises due to a lack of clarity in the MHC Prairie Crocus Rulebook, it should be forwarded to the Manitoba Equestrian Federation. **The decision of the ground jury will not be overturned**; however, a valid observation or comment may lead to a clarification of the MHC Rulebook by the MHC rules committee.

1.7.2 Complaints

- a. For complaints regarding an MHC Prairie Crocus sanctioned competition, officials, coaches, or athletes, an [MHC Formal Complaint Form](#) must be submitted to the MHC office with the required fee. **The decision of the MHC Complaint Committee will be final.**

1.8 Ponies

- a. Measured at the withers, on a smooth and level surface, height must not exceed 14.2 hands.
- b. All pony riders are required to provide proof of EC or USEF measurement an MHC measurement card signed by two MHC officials, or in the form of a document signed by a veterinarian to the show office before permission is granted to compete in pony

classes. Riders who fail to produce proof of measurement are required to have their pony measured at the competition for eligibility to compete in pony classes.

- i. The measurement may be performed by any two of the following event or competition officials: veterinarian, steward, technical delegate, or judge, none of whom can be the owner of the horse or pony.
 - ii. Proof of measurement may be provided to the person responsible as long as the pony competes at the competition.
- c. Pony class/division riders are restricted to being juniors, however, adults may ride ponies in classes other than those designated for ponies or juniors.

1.9 English Performance Classes

1.9.1 Gait Terminology

Class-specific rules may apply and will supersede these general rules.

- a. Walk: forward working walk, rhythmical and four-beat gait.
 - i. Extremely slow or fast walks will be penalized.
- b. Trot: ground covering, definite two-beat gait and balanced stride.
 - i. Smoothness and evenness of pace desired over speed.
- c. Extended trot: a definitive lengthening of the two-beat trot stride.
 - i. Cadence and balance important.
 - ii. Lengthening should be an elongation of frame and stride, not necessarily speed.
 - iii. Excessive speed should be penalized.
- d. Canter: smooth free-moving, three-beat gait, relaxed and straight on both leads.
 - i. Stride should be consistent and ground covering.
 - ii. Over collected or four-beat canter should be penalized.
 - iii. Excessive speed should be penalized.
- e. Hand gallop: a definitive lengthening of stride with a noticeable difference in speed.
 - i. Horses should appear to be in control at all times.

1.10 English Tack

Class-specific rules may apply and will supersede these general rules.

In all English classes, a bridle (single or double) of brown or black colour with a plain leather cavesson noseband and brow band must be used. An English

snaffle, pelham or kimberwick bit may be used. All bits must be humane in nature. An English saddle in black or brown with appropriate style saddle pad must be used. Girth may be of leather, web, or nylon.

1.10.1 Optional Equipment

- a. Spurs: must be smooth (any rowel must be smooth, not sharp, and a minimum of 3mm thick)
- b. Crop
- c. Gloves
- d. English breastplate (NOTE: martingales are **NOT** permitted in hack classes)
- e. Braiding of the mane and tail
- f. Standing and running martingales with rein stops (up to 1.15m)
 - i. NOTE: martingales are **NOT** permitted in hack and hunter under saddle classes. See specific discipline rules for further details.
- g. Boots (permitted in warmup and in some classes as specified by class-specific rules)
- h. Rein converters (for use on pelhams).

1.11 English Attire

In all English classes competitors and judges should bear in mind that entries are being judged on ability rather than personal attire. However, riders should wear hunt coats of traditional hunt style in a conservative colour, breeches of traditional shades, and black or brown tall English boots or paddock boots with matching half chaps. Boots/shoes worn while riding anywhere on the competition grounds must have a distinguishable heel. An ASTM/SEI, BSI/BS, EN, AS/NZS, or CE VG1 01.040 2014-12 (provided they are BSI Kitemarked) approved helmet with a permanently affixed harness is compulsory. Hair must be neat and should be contained in a net or braid. For English pleasure and equitation, saddle seat attire is allowed.

NOTE: A showmanship competitor may wear either western or English attire unless specified.

1.12 Western Performance Classes

1.12.1 Gait Terminology

The following terminology shall apply in western division classes whenever a specific gait is called for:

- a. Walk: a natural, flat footed, four-beat rhythm.
 - i. The horse must move straight and true at the walk
 - ii. The walk must be alert, with a stride of reasonable length in keeping with the size of the horse.
- b. Jog: a smooth, ground covering two-beat diagonal gait.
 - i. The horse works from one pair of diagonals to the other pair.
 - ii. The jog should be square, balanced and with straight forward movement of the feet.
 - iii. Horses walking on their back feet and trotting on their front are not performing the required gait.
 - iv. When asked to extend the trot, the horse moves out causing an elongation of outline and stride while maintaining the same smooth way of going.
- c. Lope: an easy, rhythmical three-beat gait.
 - i. Horses moving to the left should lope on the left lead.
 - ii. Horses moving to the right should lope on the right lead.
 - iii. Horses travelling at a four-beat gait are not performing the required gait.
 - iv. The horse should lope with a natural stride appearing relaxed and smooth.
 - v. The horse should be ridden at a speed that is in keeping with their natural way of going.

1.12.2 Junior Horse

A junior horse is defined as a horse five years of age and under as of January 1 of the competition year. Junior horses competing in western pleasure, reining, western riding, trail and western horsemanship may be shown in a snaffle, hackamore or curb. If shown in a snaffle or hackamore, two hands may be used on the reins.

1.12.3 Senior Horse

A senior horse is defined as a horse six years of age and over as of January 1 of the competition year. Senior horses must be shown in an accepted curb bit and be ridden with one hand.

1.12.4 Conduct

- a. Competitors may ride more than one horse in classes requiring only individual work, regardless of age, up to a maximum of three entries. However, a horse can only be entered once in each class

- at a show. If there is a ride-off, each horse must be ridden by the same rider who rode it in the class.
- b. No two-year-old may be shown in any performance class prior to July 1 of their two-year-old year. Prior to July 1 of the two-year-old year, horses may be shown in showmanship classes.
 - c. All horses are to be ridden astride in performance.
 - d. In any class or event requiring equipment, (trail class, pole bending, etc.) contestants **MUST NOT** use the show's equipment for practicing before the class or event begins, on penalty of disqualification.
 - e. The management of any competition shall determine whether an elimination is necessary, the number of go-rounds to be held, and the number of horses to be shown at each performance.
 - f. The final placing of each horse is to be determined by totalling their scores in the final plus elimination and/or go-rounds.
 - g. In all classes, any rider and/or horse which falls during the performance is automatically eliminated. A rider has fallen when they have to vault or mount in the ring. A horse has fallen when both the shoulder and haunch touch the ground. A rider who has a fall inside or outside of the competition ring must be assessed and cleared by the emergency medical services or a medical doctor to continue riding on the competition grounds.
 - h. In all performance classes that are judged on the rail, horses are to reverse to the inside (away from the rail). At a halt, a pivot on the rail may be required. A reverse at the walk or jog (loop) will be at the discretion of the judge but shall not be asked to reverse at the lope.
 - i. In trail classes, it is permissible to change hands on the reins to work an obstacle.
 - j. Arenas must have a safe gate or door that will open and shut, with ease.
 - k. Obvious sideline coaching or obvious ringside assistance while rider is being judged may result in the disqualification of the competitor.
 - l. Reruns are not permitted in cases of equipment failure. In the event the failure causes a delay or a run to be discontinued, the entry shall be eliminated.
 - m. Competitors are warned that any act of discourtesy or disobedience to the officials on the part of the owner, groom, rider, driver, or member of the family participating in the show, will disqualify the horse and competitor. The management of the show has the right to remove any individual from the show without being liable for compensation or damages.

1.13 Western Tack

In all western classes, horses **MUST** be shown in a western stock saddle. Australian stock saddles are not permitted. Silver additions will not count over a good working outfit. The reins may be split or of the romal type. The index finger is allowed between spilt reins but not with romal reins. When using romal reins, the braided extension is allowed to be carried in the free hand with 16 inches of space between the free hand and the reining hand. The romal is not to be used forward of the cinch or used to signal the horse in any manner.

- a. Senior horses (definition above) **MUST** use a western bridle with a western curb bit and the reins may only be held in one hand.
- b. Junior horses (definition above) may be shown in a snaffle bit, hackamore (bosal) or curb bit. Two hands on the reins are permitted when using a snaffle or hackamore.

1.13.1 Bits

- a. Snaffle bits: in western performance classes, "snaffle" may apply to the conventional, smooth mouthed, broken O-ring, D-ring, or eggbutt with a ring not to exceed 4", and not less than 2" across. The ring must be free of attachments that would provide leverage action. Mouthpiece should be comprised of a smooth metal. Inlays are permitted; however, they should be smooth, or latex wrapped, not metal wrapped. The bars must be a minimum of 5/16" diameter, measured 1" from the cheek, and have a gradual decrease to the centre of the snaffle. Bits may be two- or three-piece. A three-piece, connecting ring of 1" – 1 1/4" or less diameter, or a connecting flat bar of 3/8" to 3/4" (measured top to bottom with a maximum length of 2") which lies flat in the horse's mouth is acceptable.
- b. Curb bits: in western performance classes, 'bit' refers to a curb bit with a solid or broken mouthpiece, shanks, and leverage action. Shank length will not exceed 8 1/2" and may be fixed or loose. In regard to mouthpieces, bars must be round, of a smooth metal 5/16" to 3/4" in diameter, and measured 1" from the cheek. It may be inlaid, but must be smooth or latex wrapped, not metal wrapped. On solid mouthpieces, nothing may protrude below the mouthpiece (bar). The mouthpiece may be solid, two- or three-piece. A three-piece, connecting ring of 1" to 1 1/4" or less in diameter, or a connecting flat bar of 3/8" to 3/4" (measured top to bottom with a maximum length of 2") which lies flat in the horse's mouth is acceptable. The port must be no higher than 3 1/2", rollers and covers are acceptable. Slip or gag bits, donut and flat polo

mouthpieces are prohibited. Curb straps or curb chains are required when using a curb bit and must be at least ½" in width and must lie flat against the jaw of the horse.

- c. Hackamore (bosal): in western performance classes, "hackamore" shall refer to a flexible, braided rawhide, leather, or rope bosal (noseband) which is used in place of a snaffle bit. Mechanical hackamores and horsehair bosals are not permitted. A minimum of two-finger (approx. 1 ½") spacing between the bosal and the nose, and absolutely no metal under the jaw, on the noseband, or in connection with the noseband.

1.13.2 Optional Equipment

- a. Rope or riata attached to the saddle.
- b. Hobbles attached to the saddle.
- c. Spurs (exception: spurs are not to be worn in showmanship classes).
- d. Protective boots, leg wraps or bandages (**ONLY ALLOWED** in western speed events, reining and western horsemanship).
- e. Martingales and ties downs (**ONLY ALLOWED** in western speed events).

1.14 Western Attire

Junior competitors are required to wear ASTM/SEI, BSI/BS, EN, AS/NZS, or CE VG1 01.040 2014-12 (provided they are BSI Kitemarked) approved helmet at all times, regardless of discipline or class, while mounted. The MHC **highly recommends** that senior riders wear approved helmets as well. Competitors must wear appropriate western attire, including a shirt with long sleeves and collar, western hat (adults only) or helmet, western pant with belt, and cowboy boots. If worn, the western hat must be on the rider's head when the competitor enters the arena. Spurs, chaps, and gloves are optional. Showmanship competitors may wear either western or English attire. Boot/shoes worn while riding anywhere on the competition grounds must have a distinguishable heel.

2 Western Performance Division

2.1 General

A good pleasure horse has a free-flowing stride of realistic length in keeping with its conformation. It should cover a reasonable amount of ground with little effort. Ideally, it should have a balanced, flowing motion while exhibiting correct gaits that are of proper cadence. The quality of movement and the consistency of gait is a major consideration. It should carry its head and neck in a relaxed natural position, with its poll level with or slightly above the level of its withers. It should not carry its head behind the vertical (appearance of intimidation) or be excessively nosed out (appearance of resistance). Their head should be level, with the nose slightly in front of the vertical having a bright expression with alert ears. It should be shown on a reasonably loose rein, with light contact and control. It should be responsive and smooth in transitions when called for. When asked to extend, it should move out with the same flowing motion. Maximum credit should be given to the flowing, balanced and willing horse that gives the appearance of being fit and a pleasure to ride.

2.2 Class Conduct

- a. This class will be judged on performance, manners, condition, and conformation of the horse. A minimum of 20% of the judging shall be placed on condition and conformation.
- b. Horses must work both ways of the ring at all three gaits to demonstrate their ability with different leads. At the discretion of the judge, horses may be asked to extend the walk, jog, or lope, on one or both ways of the ring. The judge may ask all or just the top eight horses to extend at the jog, however, not more than the top eight horses may be asked to extend at the lope. The rider should sit at the extended jog.
- c. Horses are required to back easily and stand quietly.
- d. Horses are to be reversed to the inside (away from the rail). At a halt, a pivot on the rail may be required. A reverse at the walk or jog (loop) will be at the discretion of the judge but shall not be asked to reverse at the lope.

2.3 Western Pleasure Junior Horse

Western pleasure junior horse is open to any horse five years of age or younger as of January 1 of the competition year. The class is shown in regular western tack. Any western bit may be used, but a snaffle or hackamore (bosal) is

preferred. When a snaffle or hackamore (bosal) is used, the rider may use two hands on the reins.

2.4 Scoring

1. Faults (scored according to severity):
 - a. Breaking gait
 - i. Including not walking when called for.
 - b. Being on the wrong lead
 - c. Head carried too low, poll below the withers
 - i. Severity to be considered the same as the wrong lead.
 - d. Excessive speed at any gait
 - e. Loss of momentum or excessive slowness at any gait
 - f. Failure to take the appropriate gait when called for;
 - i. During transitions, an excessive delay will be penalized.
 - g. Touching horse or saddle with free hand
 - h. Opening mouth excessively
 - i. Stumbling or falling
 - j. Use of the spurs or romal forward of the cinch
 - k. A horse who appears dull, sullen, lethargic, emaciated, drawn or overly tired
 - l. Excessive nosing out
 - m. Quick, choppy or pony-like stride
 - n. If reins are draped to the point that light contact is not maintained
 - o. Head carried too high.
2. Faults that may be cause for elimination (at the discretion of the judge):
 - a. More than one finger between the reins
 - b. Changing hands, or two hands on the reins (except when using a hackamore or snaffle)
 - c. Head carried too low, poll below the withers for more than five strides
 - d. Execution of four or more simple lead changes and/or failure to change leads.

3 Reining

3.1 General

Reining is a judged western event designed to show the athletic ability of a western-type horse in the confines of the arena. Athletes are required to run patterns to demonstrate small slow circles, large fast circles, flying lead changes, rollbacks over the hocks, 360-degree spins performed in place, back-ups, and sliding stops.

- e. Each horse may only compete in one competition level per day.
- f. During warmup, horses must not be closer than two metres to the boundary of the arena at the completion of a sliding stop.
- g. During warmup, horses cannot spin more than eight consecutive times. Horses that are stressed or exhausted cannot be spun.
- h. The maximum time for a mounted reining exercise session for one horse is 90 minutes.

3.2 Class Conduct

- a. Each competitor will perform the required pattern individually and separately. All horses will be judged from the moment they enter the arena to the end of the last maneuver.
- b. Any fault incurred prior to the commencement of a pattern will be scored accordingly.
- c. The best reined horse should be willingly guided or controlled with little or no apparent resistance.
 - i. Any movement on their own will be considered "lack of control."
 - ii. All deviations from the exact written pattern will be considered "lack of or temporary loss of control", and therefore faulted accordingly.
 - iii. Credit will be given for smoothness, finesse, attitude, quickness and authority in performing the various maneuvers while using controlled speed.
- d. Following the performance, all riders must drop their bridle. The bridle will be checked by the designated judge in the arena or in close proximity of the arena.

3.3 Scoring

Scoring will be on a basis of zero to infinity, with a 70 denoting an average performance. The individual maneuvers are scored in ½ point increments from a

low of -1½ to a high of +1½ with a score of 0 denoting a maneuver that is correct with no degree of difficulty. Neither a "no score" or a "zero score" can place.

Judges must have the use of a secretary/scribe when judging reining.

1. No score:
 - a. Infraction of any provincial or national law
 - b. Abuse of an animal in the arena and/or evidence of abuse occurring prior to or during the exhibition of a horse (e.g.: blood on the sides/mouth)
 - c. Use of illegal equipment
 - d. Use of illegal bits, bosals or curb straps
 - e. Use of tack collars, tie downs or nosebands
 - f. Use of whips or bats
 - g. Use of any attachment that alters the movement or circulation of the tail
 - h. Failure to dismount and present horse and tack to the appropriate judge
 - i. Disrespect or misconduct by the competitor
 - i. The judge may excuse any horse at any time while in the arena for unsafe conditions or improper exhibition pertaining to both the horse and rider.
 - j. Closed reins (except when used as standard romal reins)
 - k. Excess free rein may be straightened at any time during the pattern, provided the athlete's free hand remains behind the rein hand. Any attempt to alter tension with the free hand ahead of the rein hand will be considered using two hands, and a penalty score of 0 will be applied.
2. '0' Score:
 - a. Use of more than the index or first finger between reins
 - b. Use of two hands (except snaffle bit or hackamore classes) or changing hands
 - c. Use of romal except as outlined in rules (see [Article 1.13](#))
 - d. Failure to complete pattern as outlined
 - e. Performing maneuvers out of order
 - f. Inclusion of maneuvers not specified, including (but not limited to):
 - i. Backing more than two strides
 - ii. Turning more than 90 degrees. (Exception: a complete stop in the first quarter of a circle after a lope departure is not considered an inclusion of a maneuver. A -2-point break of gait penalty will apply.

- g. Equipment failure
- h. Balking or refusal of command where the pattern is delayed
- i. Running away or failing to guide, where it becomes impossible to discern if the entry is on pattern
- j. Jogging in excess of half a circle or half the length of the arena
- k. Over spins of more than a quarter turn
- l. Fall to the ground by the horse or rider
- m. Dropping a rein which contacts the ground
- n. Failure to have the correct number displayed
- o. Failure to wear correct western attire.

3.4 Penalties

- a. '5' Points:
 - i. Spurring in front of the cinch
 - ii. Use of either hand to install fear or praise
 - iii. Holding saddle with either hand
 - iv. Blatant disobedience including kicking, rearing, biting, bucking or striking
 - v. The act of a horse dropping to its knees or hocks.
- b. '2' Points:
 - i. Break of gait
 - ii. Freezing up in spins or rollbacks
 - iii. On walk in patterns, loping prior to reaching the centre and/or failure to stop or walk before executing a canter departure
 - iv. On run in patterns, failure to be in a lope prior to reaching the first marker
 - v. If a horse does not completely pass the specified marker before initiating a stop position
 - vi. Jogging beyond two strides but less than half a circle or half a length of the arena.
- c. Circles, figure eights, spins and run-around penalties:
 - i. '1' point penalty: each time the horse is out of lead
 - ii. Accumulative penalties will occur from being out of lead on a circle
 - The judge will add '1' point of penalty for each quarter circle or any part that the horse is out of lead
 - iii. '½' point penalty: delayed change of lead by one stride where the lead change is required by the pattern description
 - iv. '½' point penalty: starting a circle at a jog
 - v. '½' point penalty: exiting a rollback at a jog up to two strides

- vi. '½' point penalty: over or under spinning up to one-eighth of a turn
 - Over or under spinning up to a quarter turn will incur a '1' point penalty
- vii. '½' point penalty: failure to stay 20 feet from the wall when approaching a stop or rollback
- viii. For "run-around" patterns, failure to be on the correct lead when rounding the end of the arena will incur the following:
 - '1' point penalty: for half of the turn or less
 - '2' point penalty: for more than half the turn.

NOTE: If there is any doubt regarding a penalty, credit will go to the competitor.

3.5 Maneuvers

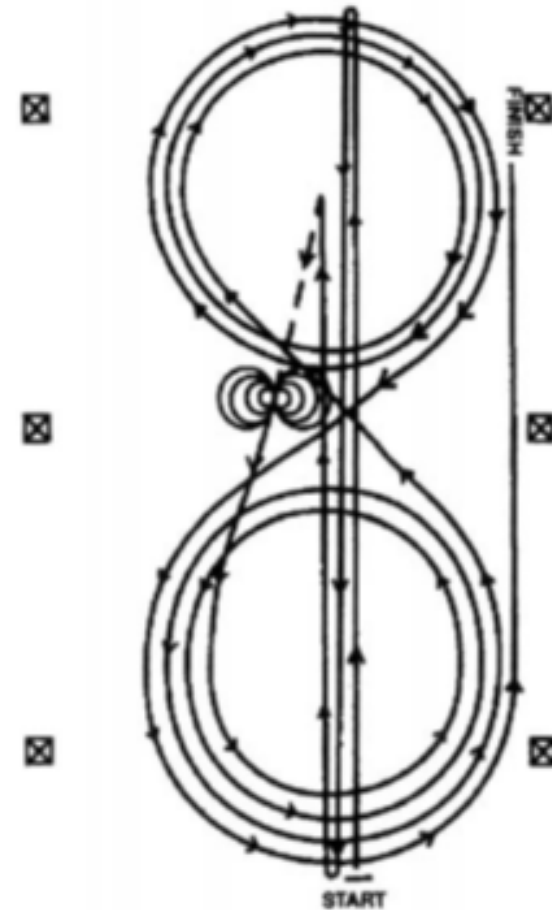
- a. General point distribution
 - i. Extremely poor: -1½
 - ii. Very poor: -1
 - iii. Poor: -½
 - iv. Average or correct: 0
 - v. Good: +½
 - vi. Very good: +1
 - vii. Excellent: +1½
- b. Hierarchy of concern
 - i. On pattern
 - ii. Correctness
 - iii. Level of difficulty.

3.6 The Work

- a. Credit
 - i. Authority of execution
 - ii. Smoothness
 - iii. Finesse
 - iv. Quickness
 - v. Speed control.
- b. Discredit
 - i. Lack of control
 - ii. Resistance.

Pattern 1:

- a. Run at speed to the far end of the arena past end marker and do a left rollback – no hesitation.
- b. Run to opposite end of the arena past end marker and do a right rollback – no hesitation.
- c. Run past centre of the arena, do a sliding stop, back up to the centre of the arena at least 10' (3 m) – hesitate.
- d. Complete four spins to the right.
- e. Complete four and a quarter spins to the left, so that the horse is facing left wall or fence – hesitate.
- f. Beginning on the left lead, complete three circles to the left: first circle – large and fast; second circle – small and slow; third circle – large and fast. Change leads at the centre of the arena.
- g. Complete three circles to the right: first circle – large and fast; second circle – small and slow; third circle – large and fast. Change leads at the centre of arena.
- h. Begin a large, fast circle to the left but do not close this circle. Run straight up the right side of the arena past the centre marker and do a sliding stop at least 20' (6 m) from wall or fence – hesitate to demonstrate the completion of the pattern.
- i. Exhibitor must dismount and drop bridle to the designated judge.

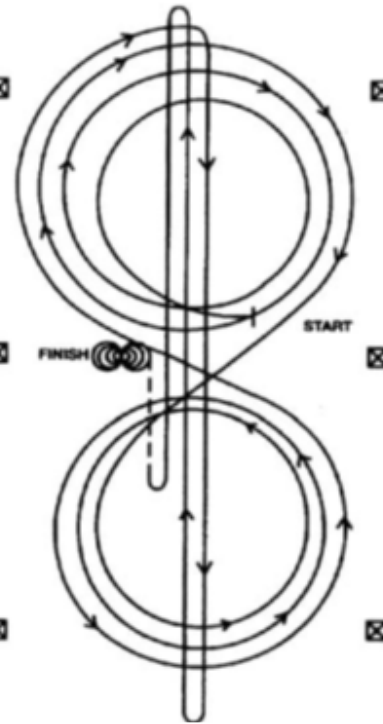


PATTERN 1

Pattern 2:

Horses may walk or jog to the centre of the arena. Horses must walk or stop prior to starting the pattern. Beginning at the centre of the arena facing the left wall or fence.

- Beginning on the right lead, complete three circles to the right: first circle – small and slow; the next two circles – large and fast. Change leads at the centre of the arena.
- Complete three circles to the left: first circle – small and slow; the next two circles large and fast. Change leads at the centre of the arena.
- Continue around previous circle to the right. At the top of the circle, run down the middle to the far end of the arena past the end marker and do a right rollback – no hesitation.
- Run up the middle to the opposite end of the arena past the end marker and do a left rollback – no hesitation.

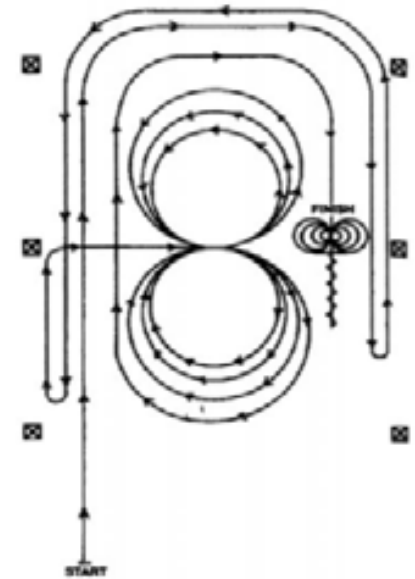


PATTERN 2

- Run past the centre marker and do a sliding stop. Back up to the centre of the arena or at least 10' (3 m) – hesitate.
- Complete four spins to the right – hesitate.
- Complete four spins to the left – hesitate to demonstrate the completion of the pattern.
- Exhibitor must dismount and drop bridle to the designated judge.

Pattern 3:

- Beginning, and staying at least 20' (6 m) from the walls or fence, lope straight up the left side of the arena, circle the top end of the arena, run straight down the opposite or right side of the arena past the centre marker and do a left rollback – no hesitation.
- Continue straight up the right side of the arena staying at least 20' (6 m) from the wall or fence, circle back around the top of the arena, run straight down the left side of the arena past the centre marker and do a right rollback – no hesitation.
- Continue up the left side of the arena to the centre marker. At the centre marker, the horse should be on the right lead. Guide the horse to the centre of the



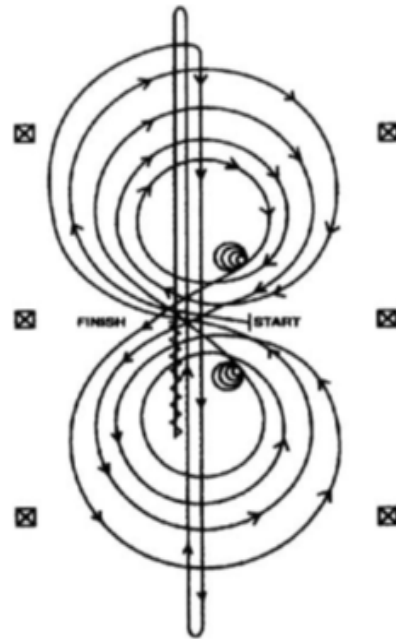
PATTERN 3

- arena on the right lead and complete three circles to the right: first and second circles – large and fast; third circle – small and slow. Change leads at the centre of the arena.
- Complete three circles to the left: first and second circles – large and fast; third circle – small and slow. Change leads in the centre of the arena.
- Begin a large fast circle to the right but do not close this circle. Continue up the left side of the arena staying at least 20' (6 m) from the wall or fence, circle the top of the arena, run straight down the opposite or right side of the arena past the centre marker and do a sliding stop. Back up at least 10' (3 m) – hesitate.
- Complete four spins to the right – hesitate.
- Complete four spins to the left – hesitate to demonstrate the completion of the pattern.
- Exhibitor must dismount and drop bridle to the designate judge.

Pattern 4:

Horses may walk or jog to the centre of the arena. Horses must walk or stop prior to starting the pattern. Beginning at the centre of the arena facing the left wall or fence.

- a. Beginning on the right lead, complete three circles to the right: first and second circles – large and fast; third circle – small and slow. Stop at the centre of the arena – hesitate.
- b. Complete four spins to the right – hesitate.
- c. Beginning on the left lead, complete three circles to the left: first and second circles – large and fast; third circle – small and slow. Stop at the centre of the arena – hesitate.
- d. Complete four spins to the left – hesitate.
- e. Beginning on the right



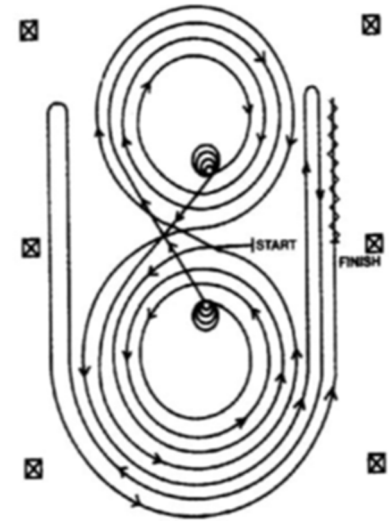
PATTERN 4

- lead, run a large fast circle to the right, change leads at the centre of the arena, run a large fast circle to the left, and change leads at the centre of the arena.
- f. Continue around previous circle to the right. At the top of the circle, run down the middle to the far end of the arena past the end marker and do a right rollback – no hesitation.
- g. Run up the middle to the opposite end of the arena past the end marker and do a left rollback – no hesitation.
- h. Run past the centre marker and do a sliding stop. Back up to the centre of the arena or at least 10' (3 m) – hesitate to demonstrate

Pattern 5:

Horses may walk or jog to the centre of the arena. Horses must walk or stop prior to starting the pattern. Beginning at the centre of the arena facing the left wall or fence.

- a. Beginning on the left lead, complete three circles to the left: first and second circles – large and fast; third circle – small and slow. Stop at the centre of the arena – hesitate.
- b. Complete four spins to the left – hesitate.
- c. Beginning on the right lead, complete three circles to the right: first and second circles – large and fast; third circle – small and slow. Stop at the centre of the arena – hesitate.
- d. Complete four spins to the right – hesitate.



PATTERN 5

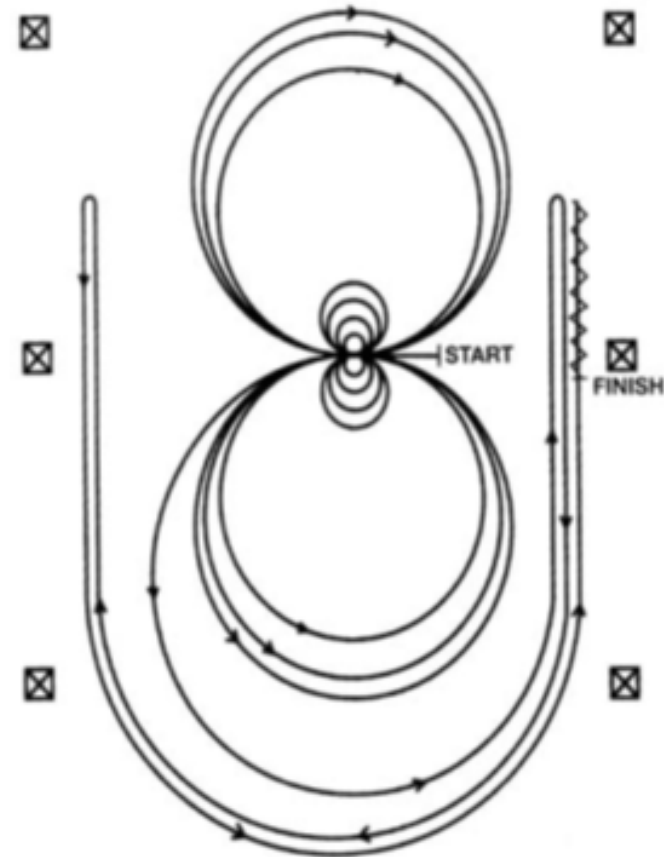
- e. Beginning on the left lead, run a large fast circle to the left, change leads at the centre of the arena, run a large fast circle to the right, and change leads at the centre of the arena.
- f. Continue around previous circle to the left but do not close this circle. Run up the right side of the arena past the centre marker and do a right rollback at least 20' (6 m) from the wall or fence. completion of the pattern.
- i. Exhibitor must dismount and drop bridle to the designated judge.

- g. Continue around previous circle but do not close this circle. Run up the left side of the arena past the centre marker and do a left rollback at least 20' (6 m) from the wall or fence – no hesitation.
- h. Continue back around previous circle but do not close this circle. Run up the right side of the arena past the centre marker and do a sliding stop at least 20' (6 m) from the wall or fence. Back up at least 10' (3 m) – hesitate to demonstrate completion of the pattern.
- i. Exhibitor must dismount and drop bridle to the designated judge.

Pattern 6:

Horses may walk or jog to the centre of the arena. Horses must walk or stop prior to starting the pattern. Beginning at the centre of the arena facing the left wall or fence.

- a. Complete four spins to the right – hesitate.
- b. Complete four spins to the left – hesitate.
- c. Beginning on the left lead, complete three circles to the left: first and second circles – large and fast; third circle – small and slow.
- d. Complete three circles to the right: first and second circles – large and fast; third circle – small and slow. Change leads at the centre of the arena.
- e. Begin a large and fast circle to the left but do not close this circle. Run up the right side of the arena past the centre marker and do a right roll back at least 20' (6 m) from the wall or fence – no hesitation.
- f. Continue back around the previous circle but do not close this circle. Run up the left side of the arena past the centre marker and do a left roll back at least 20' (6 m) from the wall or fence – no hesitation.
- g. Continue back around previous circle but do not close this circle. Run up the right side of the arena past the centre marker and do a sliding stop at least 20' (6 m) from the wall or fence – hesitate to demonstrate completion of the pattern.
- h. Exhibitor must dismount and drop bridle to the designated judge.



PATTERN 6

4 Western Riding

4.1 General

Western riding is an event where the horse is judged on the quality of gaits, lead changes at the lope, response to the rider, manners and disposition. The horse should perform with reasonable speed and be sensible, well-mannered, free, and easy moving.

Each competitor will individually perform a pattern selected by the judge. The judge is responsible for ensuring the pattern is set up correctly. The horse will be judged on quality of gaits, change of leads, response to the rider, manners, disposition, and intelligence.

It is recommended that a scribe be provided for western riding classes.

Credit shall be given for, and emphasis placed on:

- a. **Smoothness:** even rhythm of gaits (i.e., starting and finishing pattern with the same rhythm), and the horse's ability to change leads precisely, easily and simultaneously both behind and in front at the centre markers.
 - i. NOTE: the horse should cross the log at the jog and lope without breaking gait or radically changing stride.
- b. **Balance:** in order to have balance, with quality lead changes, the horse's head and neck should be in a relaxed, natural position with the poll level in line with or slightly above the withers.
 - i. They should not carry their head behind the vertical (appearance of intimidation) or be excessively nosed out (resistant appearance).
- c. **Head Carriage:** the horse should have a relaxed head carriage showing response to the rider's hands, with a moderate flexion at the poll.
- d. **Contact:** horses may be ridden with light contact or a reasonably loose rein.

4.2 Pattern

- a. It is recommended that the eight small circles are represented with pylon markers. These should be separated by a uniform measured distance not less than 30' (9m) or succeeding 50' (15m) on the sides with five markers (see diagram). In pattern one, the three markers on the opposite side should be set adjacent to the appropriate markers. It is recommended that markers be set a

minimum of 15' (4½m) from the fence and with a 50 to 80' (15 to 24 m) width in the pattern, as the arena permits.

- b. A solid log or pole should be used and be a minimum of 8' (2.5 m) in length.
- c. The long serpentine line indicates the direction of travel and gaits at which the horse is to move. The shaded area represents the lead changing area between the markers. The dotted line (...) indicates walk, the dash line (---) jog, and the solid line (—) lope.

4.3 Class Conduct

- a. Except for junior horses (five years and under) shown with a hackamore or snaffle, only one hand must be used on the reins and may not be changed.
 - i. Horses six years and older, must be shown in a curb bit.
- b. When a romal is used, it shall be carried as per [Article 1.13](#).
- c. Elimination resulting from "going off pattern," constitutes the following:
 - i. An incomplete pattern
 - ii. Passing on the wrong side of the markers or missing the log
 - iii. Incorrect order of maneuvers
 - iv. Knocking over a marker.
- d. Penalty faults:
 - i. Excessive opening of the mouth
 - ii. Stumbling
 - iii. Raising head during maneuvers
 - iv. Losing a stirrup or hold onto the saddle
 - v. Anticipating signals or making early lead changes
 - vi. Unnecessary talking, petting, spurring, quirkering or jerking of the reins by the rider.

4.4 Scoring

4.4.1 Maneuvers

- a. Scoring will be on a basis of zero to 100 with 70 denoting an average performance.
- b. Scoring guidelines to be considered – points will be added or subtracted from the maneuvers on the following basis ranging from +1½ to -1½: (-1½ extremely poor, -1 very poor, -½ poor, 0 average, +½ good, +1 very good, +1½ excellent).
- c. Maneuver scores are to be determined independently of penalty points.

4.4.2 Penalties

A contestant shall be penalized each time the following occur:

1. '5' point penalty:
 - a. Out of lead beyond the next designated change area (note: failure to change, including cross-cantering. Two consecutive failures to change would result in two five-point penalties)
 - b. Blatant disobedience, including kicking out, biting, bucking and rearing
 - c. Holding the saddle.
2. '3' point penalty:
 - a. Not performing the specific gait (jog or lope) or not stopping when called for in the pattern, within 10' (3 m) of the designated area.
 - b. Simple change of leads
 - c. Out of lead at, or before, the marker prior to the designated change area or out of lead at, or after, the marker after the designated change area
 - d. Additional lead changes anywhere in pattern (except when correcting an extra change or incorrect lead)
 - e. In patterns 1 and 3: Failure to start the lope within 30' (9 m) after crossing the log at the jog
 - f. Break of gait at the walk or jog for more than two strides
 - g. Break of gait at the lope.
3. '1' point penalty:
 - a. Hitting or rolling the log
 - b. Out of lead more than one stride either side of the centre point and between the markers
 - c. Splitting the log (log between the two front or two hind feet) at the lope
 - d. Break of gait at the walk or jog up to two strides.
4. '½' point penalty:
 - a. A tick or light touch of the log
 - b. Hind legs skipping or coming together during lead change
 - c. Non-simultaneous lead change (front to hind or hind to front)
 - d. Out of lead for one-half to one stride.

5. Reasons for disqualification (overall score of 0):

- a. Illegal equipment
- b. Willful abuse
- c. Off course
- d. Knocking over markers
- e. Completely missing the log
- f. Major refusal – stop and back up more than two strides or four steps with front legs
- g. Major disobedience or schooling
- h. Failure to start lope prior to end cone in patterns 1 and 3
- i. Four or more simple lead changes and/or failure to change leads
- j. Overturn of more than ¼ turn.

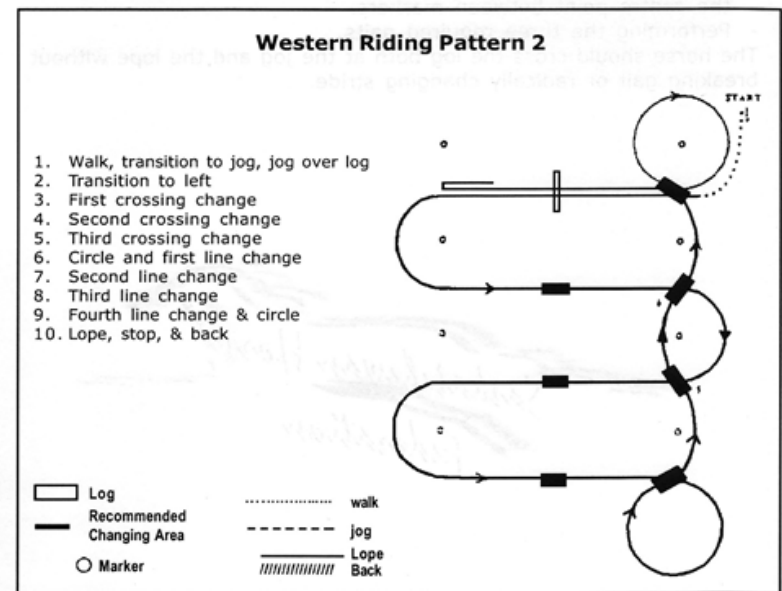
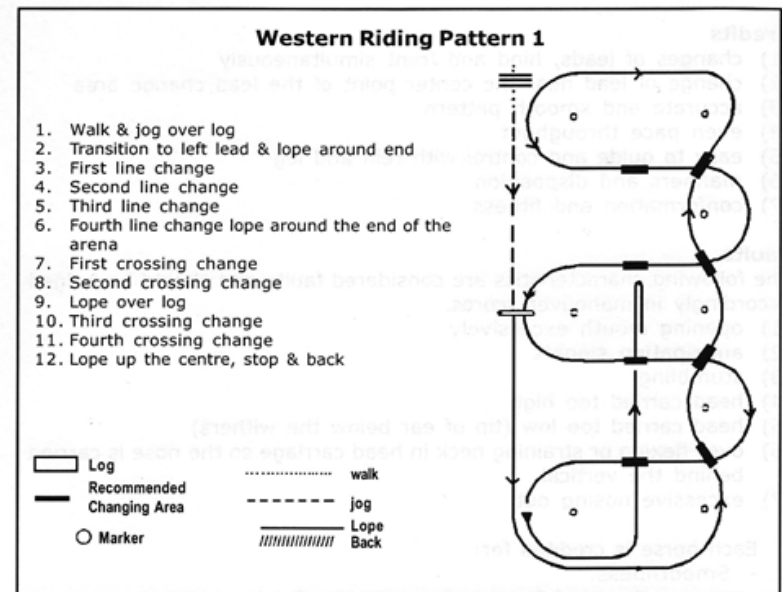
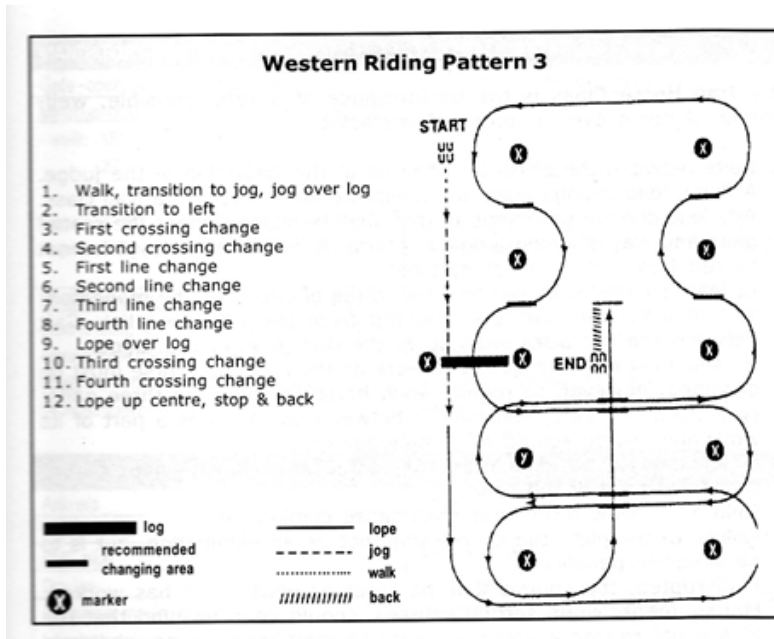
4.4.3 Credits

- a. Change of lead precisely and easily, both front and rear, at the center point between markers
- b. Accurate and smooth pattern
- c. Even pace throughout
- d. Easy to guide and control with rein and leg
- e. Manners and disposition
- f. Conformation and fitness.

4.4.4 Faults

The following characteristics are considered faults and should be judged accordingly in maneuver scores:

- a. Excessive opening of the mouth
- b. Anticipating signals
- c. Stumbling
- d. Head carried too high
- e. Head carried too low (poll below the withers)
- f. Over flexing or straining neck in head carriage so the nose is carried behind the vertical
- g. Excessive nosing out.



5 Trail

5.1 General

The trail horse class is a performance of a safe, sensible, well-mannered horse over a course of obstacles. The trail class will be judged on the performance of the horse over the obstacles with emphasis on manners, response to rider, and attitude.

- a. A flying lead change does not constitute an obstacle in a trail class. Any lead change or change of gait shall be judged under the scored gaits and way of going judging criteria. A flying lead change cannot be required, but it can be optional.
- b. At least six obstacles will be used, three of which will be mandatory and at least three others selected from the approved list. Gaits between the obstacles shall be at the discretion of the judge.
- c. Horses must not be required to work on the rail. The course must be designed, however, to require each horse to show the three gaits: (walk, jog and lope) somewhere between obstacles as a part of its work and will be scored as maneuvers.
 - i. Demonstration of both leads at the lope will be added by the judge where applicable.
- d. The course to be used must be posted at least one hour before scheduled time of the class.
- e. Failure to follow the course shall cause elimination.
- f. Failure to complete the course shall not incur elimination but is to be severely penalized.
- g. If disrupted, the course shall be reset as each horse has worked.
- h. Management, when setting courses, should keep in mind that the idea is not to trap a horse or eliminate it by making an obstacle too difficult. If difficult courses are set, junior trail should be less difficult.
- i. Enough space must be provided for a horse to jog at least 30' (9m), and to lope at least 50' (15 m), for the judge to evaluate these gaits.
- j. The judge must walk the course. They have the right and duty to alter the course in any manner. The judge may remove or change any obstacle they deem unsafe or non-negotiable.

5.2 Scoring a Trail Class

- a. Scoring will be on the basis of zero to infinity, with 70 denoting an average performance.
- b. Each obstacle will receive an obstacle score which will be added or subtracted from the initial score of 70. Additional penalties will be subtracted when applicable.
- c. Each obstacle will be scored as follows – ranging from +1½ to -1½ (-1½ extremely poor, -1 very poor, -½ poor, 0 average, +½ good, +1 very good, +1½ excellent).
- d. Obstacle scores are to be determined and assessed independently of penalty points. Penalties should be assessed per occurrence in accordance with section 5.3.

5.3 Penalties

The following deductions will result:

1. '5' point penalty:
 - a. Holding the saddle
 - b. Failure to follow the correct line of travel within or between obstacles
 - c. Dropping slicker or object required to be carried on course
 - d. First refusal, balk, or attempting to evade an obstacle by shying or backing more than two strides away
 - e. Second refusal
 - f. Letting go of gate or dropping rope gate
 - g. Use of either hand to instill fear or praise
 - h. Stepping outside the confines of, falling, or jumping off or out of an obstacle with more than one foot
 - i. Blatant disobedience (kicking out, bucking, rearing, striking)
 - j. Failure to complete obstacle
 - k. Faults, which occur on the line of travel between obstacles, scored according to severity:
 - i. Head carried too high
 - ii. Head carried too low (tip of ear below the withers)
 - iii. Over-flexing or straining neck in head carriage so the nose is carried behind the vertical
 - iv. Excessive nosing out
 - v. Opening mouth excessively.
2. '3' point penalty:
 - a. Break of gait at walk or jog for more than two strides

- b. Out of lead or break of gait at lope (except when correcting an incorrect lead)
 - c. Knocking down an elevated pole, cone, barrel, plant obstacle, or severely disturbing an obstacle
 - d. Stepping outside the confines of, falling, or jumping off or out of an obstacle with one foot.
3. '1' point penalty:
- a. Each hit of or stepping on a log, pole, cone, plant, obstacle, or component of an obstacle
 - b. Incorrect gait at walk or jog for two strides or less
 - c. Both front or hind feet in a single stride slot or space
 - d. Skipping over or failing to step into required space
 - e. Split pole in lope-over
 - f. Failure to meet the correct strides on a jog-over and lope-over log.
4. '½' point penalty:
- a. Each tick of a log, pole, cone or obstacle.
5. Reasons for disqualification (overall score of zero):
- a. Use of more than one finger between reins
 - b. Use of two hands or changing hands on reins
 - i. Except for junior horses shown with hackamore or snaffle bit, only one hand may be used on the reins
 - ii. Except that it is permissible to change hands to work an obstacle
 - c. Use of romal other than as outlined in [Article 1.13](#)
 - d. Performing the obstacles incorrectly or other than in specified order
 - e. No attempt to perform an obstacle
 - f. Equipment failure that delays completion of pattern
 - g. Excessively or repeatedly touching the horse on the neck to lower the head
 - h. Fall to the ground by horse or rider
 - i. Failure to enter, exit, or work obstacle from correct side or direction, including overturns of more than a quarter turn
 - j. Failure to work an obstacle in any manner other than how it is described by the course
 - k. Riding outside designated boundary marker of the arena or course area
 - l. Third refusal

- m. Failure to demonstrate correct lead or gait, if designated
- n. Faults that occur on the line of travel between obstacles, which will be
- o. Cause for disqualification, except in novice amateur or novice youth classes, which shall be faults scored according to severity:
 - i. Head carried too low (tip of ear below the withers consistently)
 - ii. Over-flexing or straining neck in head carriage so the nose is carried behind the vertical consistently.

5.4 Mandatory Obstacles

- a. **Gate:** opening, passing through and closing the gate. Use a gate that will not endanger horse or rider. If the gate has a metal, plastic or wooden support bar under the opening, contestants must work the gate moving forward through it.
- b. **Logs or poles:** ride over at least four logs or poles. These can be in a straight line, curved, zigzag or raised. The space between the logs is to be measured and the path the horse is to take should be the measuring point. All elevated elements must be placed in a cup, notched block, or otherwise secured so they cannot roll. The height should be measured from the ground to the top of the element. Spacing for walkovers, jog-overs, and lope-overs should be as follows, or increments thereof:
 - i. Walkovers: 40cm (15.8") to 60 cm (23.6") and may be elevated to 30 cm (11.8"). Elevated walkovers should be set at least 55 cm (21.7") apart
 - ii. Jog-overs: 90cm (35.4") to 105 cm (41.3") and may be elevated to 20 cm (7.9")
 - iii. Lope-overs: 4.8m (15.7') to 2.1 m (6.9'), or increments thereof, any may be elevated to 20 cm (7.9").
- c. **Backing obstacle:** backing obstacles to be spaced a minimum of 28" (71 cm). If elevated, 30" (76 cm) spacing is required. Entrants cannot be asked to back over a stationary object such as a wooden pole or metal bar. Examples:
 - i. Back through and around three markers
 - ii. Back through L, V, V straight or similar shaped course, it may be elevated no more than 24" (60 cm).

5.5 Optional Obstacles

- a. Water hazard (ditch or small pond). No slick-bottomed boxes will be used.
- b. Serpentine obstacles at walk or jog – spacing a minimum of 6' (1.8 m) for jog.

- c. Carry object from one part of arena to another (as might be found on a trail ride).
- d. Ride over wooden bridge – minimum of 36" (91 cm) width and 6' (1.8 m) length. Must be sturdy and safe.
- e. Slicker – put on and remove.
- f. Mailbox – remove and replace materials from mailbox.
- g. Side pass – may be elevated to 12" (30 cm) maximum.
- h. Square obstacle – four logs or rails, 5' (1.5 m) to 7' (2.1 m) long, laid in a square. Contestant enters the square by riding over log or rail as designated. When all four feet are inside the square, the rider should execute the indicated turn and exit the square.
- i. A combination of two or more of any obstacle is acceptable.

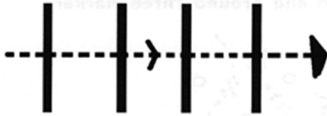
5.6 Trail Course Examples

5.7 Prohibited Obstacles

- a. Tires
- b. Animals
- c. Hides
- d. PVC pipe
- e. Dismounting
- f. Jumps
- g. Rocking or moving bridges
- h. Water box with floating or moving parts
- i. Flames, dry ice, fire extinguisher, etc.
- j. Logs or poles elevated in a manner that permits such to roll
- k. Plastic tarps
- l. Ground tying.

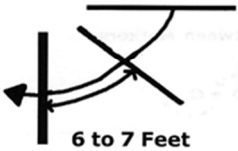
The judge may remove or change any obstacles they deem unsafe or non-negotiable.

Trot Over Poles



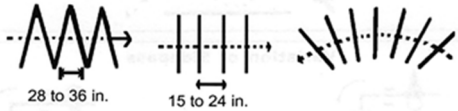
Spacing Between Pole 36 to 42 inches

LOPE OVER POLES



6 to 7 Feet

WALK-OVERS

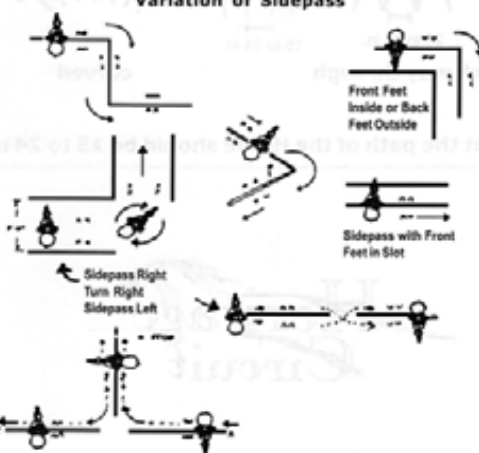


28 to 36 in. 15 to 24 in.

pick way through curved

Spacing at the path of the Horse should be 15 to 24 inches.

Variation of Sidepass




Sidepass Right
Turn Right
Sidepass Left


Front Feet
Inside or Back
Feet Outside

Sidepass with Front
Feet in Slot


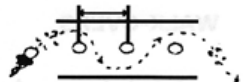
Back Through and Around Three Markers



28 in. Min.



28 in. Minimum Between Markers

6 Western Speed Division

Speed events are races. Each competitor is attempting to negotiate the course as quickly as possible, therefore, safety should be of utmost importance for both horse and rider. Both the judge and show committee may use their discretion and experience when considering a rider and horse pairing (i.e., discourage or disallow entries where the mount is “too much horse” for the rider).

The judge is the ultimate authority and is responsible for the proper administration of speed events. If a judge is given permission by the show committee to leave the premises for speed events (e.g., the competition is running over the allotted time), the responsibility of the judge falls to the show committee.

6.1 General

- a. Competitors in any individual event should compete in the same arena, on the same day, on the same measured course, and as nearly as possible, under the same conditions.
- b. Western tack must be used; however, choice of bit is at the competitor's discretion. Mechanical hackamores are permitted. Judge may prohibit the use of bits or equipment they deem severe. If a tie down or martingale is used, a halter may not be used in place of a proper noseband.
- c. The order of go of the competition shall be determined by drawing lots, or by computerized random sorting.
- d. Each contestant shall be ready when called or may be eliminated at the judge's discretion.
- e. If there is an elimination heat, each horse must be ridden in the main round by the same rider who rode it in the elimination(s). Substitution of horses between heats is not permitted.
- f. Ties will not be broken, except to determine class and championship winners. Any prize money will be split equally between tied entries. A coin may be flipped to determine allocation of ribbons or other awards.
- g. In the event of a run-off for a tie, the contestant declared the winner of a run-off must re-run the pattern within two seconds of his/her original time or the run-off must be re-staged.
- h. Contestants must wait for direction from the ring steward, or activation of the green starting light before entering the arena or starting to run the pattern. Contestants must ensure they understand and obey all starting signals designated by the organizing officials.

- i. The judge, at their discretion, may eliminate a contestant for excessive use of a bat, crop, whip, or rope in front of the cinch.
- j. Changing hands or using two hands during competition shall not be penalized in speed events.

6.2 Courses

- a. The show committee must keep in mind that a properly prepared speed event horse will negotiate prescribed patterns correctly, at speed.
- b. No element of a pattern should be adjacent to a fence or wall, if avoidable, as this will “hold in” a horse that is incompletely trained.
- c. Each course should be measured, element to element, and from the starting line.
- d. Fences or walls should not be used as the starting point for measuring the course, unless the arena is too small for the standard pattern.

6.3 Timing Line

- a. Poles indicating the timing line, the event officials, and equipment that are not part of the course should be as unobtrusive as possible.
- b. Where practical, they should be outside of the arena enclosure. Otherwise, timing equipment, officials and start/finish line markers should be as close to the sides of the arena enclosure as is feasible. Barrels should not be used to mark the timing line, or to support the timing equipment.
- c. Electric timers are strongly recommended. If manual stop watches are used, it is recommended to have two people timing.

6.4 Ground Conditions

- a. As each competitor is attempting to negotiate the course as quickly as possible, the arena surface must have secure footing at speed. If the surface is hard and/or slippery, it should be worked deeply enough to provide good footing. Any rocks, glass, sticks or other debris that might impair safety or injure the horses must be removed.
- b. Periodic arena grooming (rakes or drag) should be provided, where the surface is subject to excessive pitting, to give the same footing to each horse.
- c. Sufficient stopping distance should be provided beyond the finish line. See the individual event diagrams for recommended stopping distances.

6.5 Entry and Exit

- Most speed event horses today are trained to run in and out of a chute, or "alley", or alternatively to "set up and finish" in the arena.
- When a course is arranged to set up and finish in the arena, the minimum distance from the timing line to the end of the arena shall be 50' (15.2 m).
- Adequate space must remain between barrels and any obstacle. Refer to the individual event diagrams for recommended measurements.

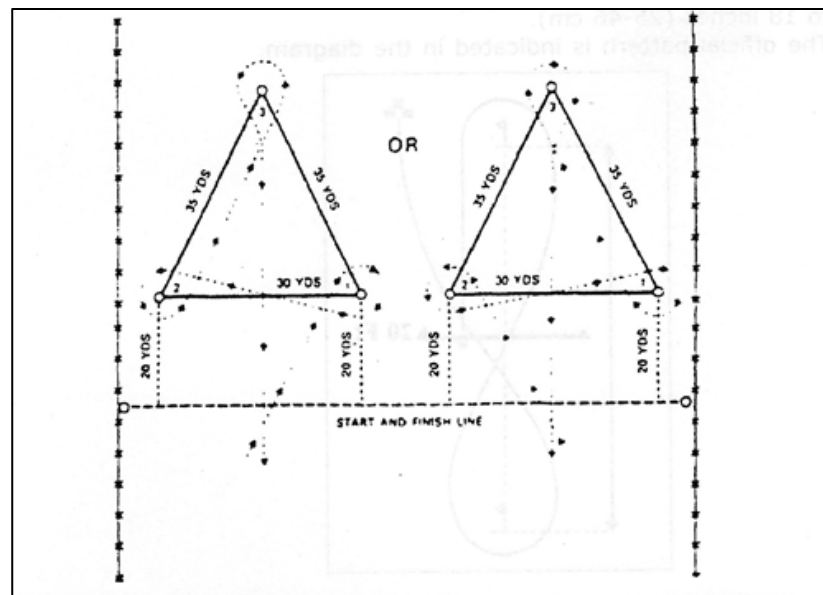
6.6 Attire

- Tidy western dress to be used at all times. Refer to 'western attire' ([Article 1.14](#)).
- In any speed event class adult competitors are encouraged to wear protective headgear, junior competitors are required to wear approved helmets in the practice area and competition arena (see [Article 1.1](#) and [1.13](#)).
- Deliberate discarding of a hat by the competitor, anywhere in the arena, may incur elimination at the judge's discretion.
- Bats, crops, scat bats, spurs, over-and-unders, tie-downs and mechanical hackamores are permitted.
- Excessive spurring or cropping may incur elimination at the judge's discretion. Use of any other equipment that the judge considers too severe, or abusive striking of the horse around the head, will result in immediate elimination.

6.7 Barrel Race

- The official obstacle of barrel racing shall be brightly-coloured 55-gal (200 L) steel drums or heavily weighted plastic barrels (unweighted plastic or rubber barrels are not permitted), with both ends closed. Rusty or damaged barrels that might provide a hazard for horses or riders must not be used. No padding (or a tire) which might change the diameter, height, or balance of the barrels may be used.
- The course must be measured exactly according to the diagram and must not exceed the dimensions stated. If the course is too large for the available space, the pattern should be reduced 5 yd (4.5 m) at a time until the pattern fits the arena.
- Knocking over a barrel carries a five-second penalty. Failure to follow the course shall cause disqualification. A contestant may touch the barrel with his or her hands in barrel racing.

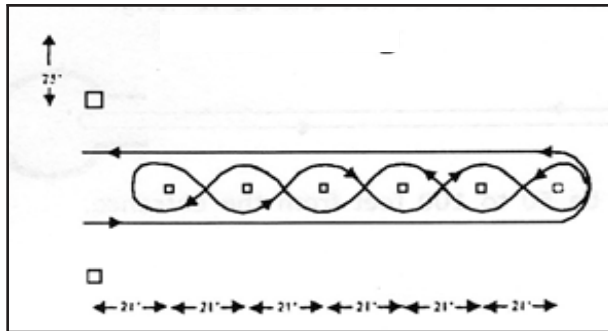
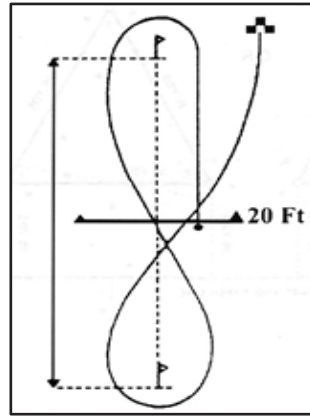
- Contestants are allowed a running start. At the signal from the starter, contestants will run to the first barrel, pass to the left of it and complete an approximate 360-degree turn around it before proceeding to barrel number two. Contestants will pass to the right of barrel two and complete an approximate 360 turn around it before heading to barrel three, passing to the right of it and completing another approximate 360-degree turn around it, then sprint to the finish line (passing between barrels one and two). The barrel course may also be run to the left (i.e. starting with barrel two, proceeding to barrel one and ending with barrel three followed by a sprint to the finish).



6.8 Pole Bending

- The official pole bending course is indicated in the diagram. The six poles are placed on the centre line of the arena, starting 21' (6.4 m) from the timing line, with each successive pole 21' (6.4 m) from the last pole. Poles shall be set on top of the ground, measure 6' (1.8 m) in height and have a base no larger than 14" (35 cm). The position of each pole must be precisely marked or measured allowing the course to be restored after knockdowns. Poles must always line up exactly.

- b. The course may be run starting to the left or the right of the pattern, following the line of travel indicated on the diagram.
- c. Failure to follow the correct course shall cause a disqualification.
- d. Poles may be touched, but may not be held, carried, or relocated by contestants.
- e. Each pole knocked down carries a five-second penalty.
- f. A five-second penalty will be assessed if the hat or protective headgear is not on the competitor for the entire time the competitor is in the arena on pole bending.
- g. A contestant may touch the pole in pole bending, however intentionally grasping the pole will incur a five second penalty.
- h. The pattern may be run from right to left or left to right at the competitor's discretion.



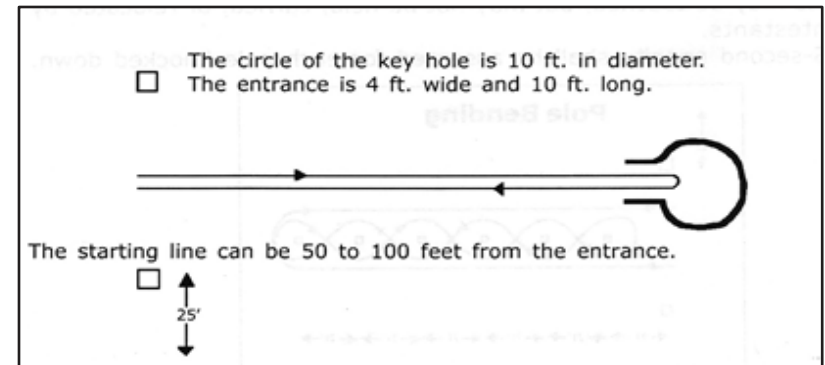
6.9 Figure Eight Stake Race

- a. The official obstacle of the stake race shall be a pole, 6' tall (1.8 m).
- b. Timing begins and ends when the horse's nose crosses the timing line.
- c. Horses must start from the same end of the arena.
- d. Running starts are permitted. Contestant may begin their run from either the left or right side of the first pole. Start by passing between the upright markers, turn around the second pole, cross

- back between the markers and turn around the first pole running back across the finish line.
- e. The start and finish line is 20' (6 m) wide and should be marked with upright markers 10' (3 m) on either side of the centre line. The two poles mark the centre line and are placed 40' (12.1 m) from the start/finish line, a total of 80' (24.3 m) apart.
- f. No time shall result from:
 - i. Failure to pass between the markers between circling poles;
 - ii. Failure to cross the finish line between the markers;
 - iii. Knocking down a marker or pole.

6.10 Keyhole Race

- a. The official obstacle of the keyhole race is a circle with a 20' (6.2 m) diameter. The entrance will be 4' (1.2 m) wide and 10' (3.3 m) long.
- b. The starting line may be 50' (15.2 m) to 100' (30.4 m) from the entrance to the circle. The rider must turn the horse around in the circle.
- c. The horse is not permitted to touch or cross over the line when completing the keyhole. Failure to follow the course or to step on or out of the keyhole (circle or wings) line will result in elimination.



7 Hack Division

7.1 General

- a. The hack division has been created to show the versatility of a horse or pony on the flat. A well-rounded hack horse or pony shows the versatility to perform well and adjust their way of going in each of these classes.
- b. Horses or ponies in this division may be of any breed or combination of breeds and must display natural action (not artificially high and/or weighted down).
- c. Removal of sensory hair from the face will not be penalized.

7.2 Tack

1. An English saddle of any type is required.
2. Bridles may be double, pelham, kimberwick, or snaffle.
 - a. Permitted snaffles:
 - i. Loose ring snaffle
 - ii. Eggbutt snaffle
 - iii. D-ring snaffle
 - iv. Full cheek snaffle
 - v. Double jointed snaffle with roller
 - vi. Snaffle with rotating mouthpiece
 - vii. Snaffle with jointed mouthpiece where middle piece is smooth, without sharp edges.
 - b. Permitted double bits:
 - i. Loose ring bridoon
 - ii. Bridoon with jointed mouthpiece
 - iii. Eggbutt bridoon.
 - c. Permitted curb bits:
 - i. Half-moon
 - ii. Weymouth (curb bit with port and sliding mouthpiece)
 - iii. Curb with straight cheeks and port
 - iv. Curb chain (metal or leather construction or combination thereof)
 - v. Leather or rubber curb chain cover.
3. Martingales, breastplates, boots of any kind and/or bandages are not allowed.
4. Browbands shall be leather of any description but not solid white, coloured or sequined.
5. Dropped, figure eight and flash nosebands are prohibited.

7.3 Attire

- a. Permitted attire: black jacket or dark coat, white or light tan breeches, jodhpurs, white hunting stock or chokers, black boots. Black or brown half chaps are permissible providing they match the paddock boot colour. Tweed jackets are permitted at the option of the competition organizing committee.
- b. Spurs are optional.

7.4 Whips

Whips are not permitted in any hack class.

7.5 Show Hack Horse or Pony

In show hack, the most important judging criteria is PERFORMANCE which makes up 55% of the score followed by quality at 20%, conformation at 15% and manners at 10%.

7.5.1 Type and Characteristics

- a. Head should be neat, finely drawn and elegant
- b. Mane must not be roached and may be braided
- c. Neck of sufficient length with a trim throatlatch, neck to blend into shoulders which are medium width and not too heavily muscled
- d. Medium high and well-defined withers the same height as croup
- e. Chest well developed but in proportion
- f. Forearm not too heavily muscled
- g. Back moderately short but well-proportioned with height
- h. Moderately deep girth and well-shaped proportionate quarters
- i. Sloping pasterns of good length, feet of proportionate size.

Show hacks must have vitality, animation, presence, balance and clean fine limbs showing supreme quality. Soundness is required and blemishes may be penalized. Braiding of mane and tail is optional.

7.5.2 Gaits

- a. Walk: straight, four beat and flat-footed.
 - i. Collected
 - ii. Normal
 - iii. Extended.
- b. Trot: free, light and crisp, may be required as follows:
 - i. Normal, on contact with a more upright frame
 - ii. Collected with the rider sitting

- iii. Extended, on contact with medium speed, legs moving forward with impulsion and the rider posting or sitting.
- c. Canter: the canter may be required as follows:
 - i. Collected
 - ii. Normal.
- d. Extended (Hand Gallop).

7.5.3 Class Routine and Judging

- a. Horses to enter the ring at a walk.
- b. To be shown at a walk, trot, canter and hand gallop. Only eight horses to hand gallop at a time.
- c. Collected and extended gaits to be called for.
- d. Expected to stand quietly. May be asked to back.
- e. Judges may require a horse to be stripped for conformation judging at the end of the class.

7.6 Road Hack Horse or Pony

In Road Hack the most important judging criteria is PERFORMANCE which makes up 55% of the score followed by substance at 20%, conformation 15%, and manners at 10%.

7.6.1 Type and Characteristics

- a. Head well shaped, attractive and proportionate
- b. Mane may be roached, but must have a natural (not set) tail
- c. Strong, well-shaped neck with good length and good strong sloping shoulders
- d. Medium high withers the same height as the croup
- e. Chest indicative of strength
- f. Moderately muscled forearm
- g. Back well-proportioned with height and is powerful across the loin
- h. Good depth of girth with well-shaped proportionate quarters showing strength
- i. Sloping pasterns of good length with feet of proportionate size.

The horse and/or pony must present an appearance of overall substance with refinement. Soundness is required and blemishes may be penalized. Braiding of mane and tail is optional.

7.6.2 Gaits

- a. Walk: straight, four beat and flat-footed with medium contact.
- b. Trot: straight and true. May be required as follows:

- i. Normal on light to medium contact
- ii. Strong trot.
- c. Canter: normal on light to medium contact.
- d. Hand gallop: under control.
- e. Expected to stand quietly. May be asked to back.
- f. Judges may require a horse to be stripped for conformation judging at the end of the class.

7.7 English Pleasure

In English pleasure the most important judging criteria is QUALITY OF MOVEMENT which makes up 45% of the score followed by manners at 40% and conformation at 15%.

7.7.1 Type and Characteristics

- a. An English pleasure horse should have the distinct appearance of being a pleasure to ride.
- b. The horse should be relaxed and display impeccable manners.
- c. It should be forward moving and show a willing way of going at all gaits.
- d. The horse should have a bright expression and alert ears.
- e. It should be obedient on light hand and leg contact.

7.7.2 Gaits

- a. Walk: straight, four beat and flat-footed, alert and with a stride which matches the size of the horse.
- b. Trot: straight and true, should seem effortless, be rhythmical and balanced.
- c. Canter: smooth with rhythmic and fluid strides, should flow without excessive speed. Not to hand gallop.

7.7.3 Class Routine and Judging

- a. To be shown both ways in the ring at a flat-footed walk, normal trot and easy canter, but not to gallop. Light contact to be maintained.
- b. Horses must be asked to back and are expected to stand quietly.
- c. Tack and appointments to be appropriate to the seat being ridden.
- d. Classes may be divided into hunter seat and saddle seat. All horses to be ridden astride.
- e. **Penalties for:** break of gait, incorrect diagonal or lead, excessive speed at any gait, horses that are over flexed (behind the vertical),

resistance or failure to take the appropriate gait when called for, sour ears, tail wringing, excessive chewing, and failure to back in the lineup.

8 Hunter Division

8.1 General

Above all, a good hunter provides a safe, comfortable ride over the fences. It must be sound.

- a. A hunter is intelligent, obedient, with staying ability, canters at an even pace throughout the course, and adjusts its leads accordingly.
- b. A hunter is alert, relaxed, possessing good manners at all gaits, while working on a light contact.
- c. A good hunter completes the course with cadence, balance and style in a manner that is comfortable and safe.
- d. An open hunter is a horse of any age that is not restricted by its eligibility for this division.
- e. Prairie Crocus hunter divisions/classes are run according to the height classification of the class/division. All hunter classes are judged according to conformation, or working hunter rules, or a combination of both. A horse show holding classes over fences must provide a safe warmup arena with a minimum of one spread and one vertical fence for practice. Flags are required over these fences to indicate direction fence is to be jumped (red on the right, white on the left).
 - i. The **MAXIMUM HEIGHT** for Prairie Crocus over fences classes/divisions is 0.9m (3').
- f. No horse or pony will be allowed to show "hors concours" in any hunter class or divisions.
- g. Removal of sensory hairs from the face will not be penalized.
- h. Placing poles may be used in the warmup ring, provided there is room, are sufficient poles, and with permission of the steward.
- i. Earphones or earbuds and/or other electronic communication devices are strictly prohibited in the competition arena, and as such, usage is penalized by elimination. One earphone/earbud is allowed when mounted everywhere except in the competition arena.
- j. The show committee has the right to limit the number of jumping classes a horse can compete in, in one day.

8.2 Rapping

It is forbidden to rap a horse at any time on the show grounds. Confirmation of rapping results in disqualification from the show and the forfeit of all awards and prizes won at that event.

8.3 Headgear

- a. Proper protective headgear (helmet) with safety harness permanently affixed to the helmet is compulsory for everyone riding over fences anywhere on the competition grounds.
- b. It is mandatory that the protective headgear meets the ASTM/SEI, BSI/BS, EN, AS/NZS, or CE VG1 01.040 2014-12 (provided they are BSI Kitemarked) standard at any MHC sanctioned Prairie Crocus competition.

8.4 Medical Services

It is mandatory that **ALL** MHC Prairie Crocus competitions have on-site emergency medical services with a minimum of advanced first aid and basic life support training. A crisis response plan should be prepared in advance of the competition by the show committee.

A rider who has a fall inside or outside of the competition ring must be assessed and cleared by the emergency medical services or a medical doctor to continue riding on the competition grounds.

Competitions where participants are required to jump obstacles are particularly prone to accidents. Additional safety measures may be required. The judge is the ultimate authority and is responsible for the proper administration of all classes. The judge may request additional measures where they see fit to ensure the safety of all participants.

8.5 Appointments and Attire

Hunter classes (both under saddle and over fences) have requirements for classic, plain tack that demonstrates that the hunter is easy to ride and attentive and responsive to its rider.

Competitors should be neatly and suitably dressed in an approved helmet, hunt coat of conservative colour, white or light pastel coloured shirt, breeches or jodhpurs (traditionally beige or tan in colour), and tall boots (paddock boots with half chaps of the same colour may be worn). Riding jackets are optional at the discretion of the show committee. Hair must be neat, with a tidy braid or ponytail being acceptable for riders with long hair.

- a. No bandages or boots are allowed. Exception: medal and equitation classes as per 11.4.1(9). In inclement weather, the judge, steward, or show committee may choose to allow tendon, ankle, or bell boots.
- b. Whips must be no longer than 75cm and unweighted.
- c. All bits must be humane in nature. Snaffle bits may be with or without cheeks. Wire snaffle bits, either single or double are permissible. It is permissible to use a snaffle with fixed slots for cheek pieces and/or reins. Bit guards are not permissible.
- d. Reins should be entirely leather, or leather-like. Rubber reins may be allowed at the discretion of the judge, steward and/or show committee in the case of inclement weather.
- e. Leather bridle may be a double, pelham, single (snaffle) or kimberwick, with a cavesson noseband, and must be simple without colour or adornment.
- f. Browbands cannot be coloured, sequined or have any other decoration. Hunting breastplates are optional.
- g. Nosebands must have a smooth inner surface and consist of leather only. Nosebands over the bridge of the nose may be used but drop nosebands below the bit are not allowed. Nothing else is permitted.
- h. Standing or running martingales (with rein stops) are optional and may **ONLY** be used in 'over fence' classes and are not permissible in hunter hack or under saddle classes.
- i. English saddles, typically "close contact" type with a white saddle pad shaped to fit the saddle are traditionally used.
- j. Girths can be dark coloured (typically brown) leather, synthetic, web or nylon. Sheepskin on girths is permitted.
- k. Horses must be neatly presented. Manes may be braided (if this is not possible, manes should be at least neatly pulled and lying flat on the horse's neck). Tails may also be braided if desired.

8.6 Conduct of a Hunter Class

- a. All hunters are judged on their jumping style, manners, and their way of going (moving) according to the conformation or working hunter scoring rules.
- b. A performance starts when a horse enters the ring and ends when the horse leaves.
- c. A hunter under saddle or hunter hack class must never be the first class of a division. Horses must have competed in at least one over fences class to be eligible for hunter under saddle classes.
- d. If the competition management allows back-to-back classes, the first course must be ridden first and the second, second.

- e. Competitions may not require judges to keep more than four cards open at a time.

8.7 Judging Working Hunters

- a. To be judged on jumping style, manners, and way of going. Conformation will not be considered.
- b. Hunters are to work on light contact and maintain an even rhythmical pace throughout the class.
- c. Horse must enter and exit the ring at a walk.

8.8 Judging Conformation Hunters

To be judged 40% on conformation, 60% on performance.

- a. Model: shown in hand and judged on conformation, way of going and soundness.
- b. Hack, under saddle, over fences, open: judged on conformation, way of going and soundness.

8.9 Scoring

Applies to both conformation and working hunter classes.

- a. An obstacle is considered knocked down when the height is lowered by the horse or rider, through contact with the rail or standard, including if the whole fence is knocked over.
- b. Fall of horse and/or rider will result in elimination. The rider may not remount until assessed and cleared by the show medical personnel or a medical doctor. A fall by the rider is considered to have occurred when the rider is separated from their horse and touches the ground or is required to use some form of support or outside assistance to return to the saddle. A horse is considered to have fallen when both the shoulder and the quarters have touched the ground at any one given moment.
- c. Second cumulative refusal, run-out or bolting on course shall result in elimination. It shall be deemed a run-out or refusal when a horse avoids an obstacle it is supposed to jump. Unless the horse is brought back and successfully jumps the obstacle it shall be eliminated.
- d. Circling before the first fence and after the last fence is permissible. Any other circling, except to retake a fence after a run-out or refusal, shall be deemed disobedience.
- e. Elimination will also result from:

- i. Jumping a downed obstacle before it is reset (unless it is a ring crew error)
 - ii. The horse bolts from the ring
 - iii. Going off course.
- f. Horses will be credited for maintaining an even hunting pace while covering the ground with free-flowing strides. Preference will be given to horses that meet the fence squarely, centered, and jump with a correct jumping style.
- g. Horses will be penalized for:
 - i. Unsafe jumping and/or bad form, whether or not they touch the fence
 - ii. Twisting, incorrect leads, and cross cantering
 - iii. Short quick vertical strides
 - iv. Cutting corners.
- h. Excessive use of spurs will be penalized.
- i. Excessive use of the whip will be penalized or incur elimination. The whip is not to be used after elimination or after the horse has jumped the last fence on course.
- j. Refusals, knockdowns and breaking gait will be heavily penalized.
- k. Scoring:
 - i. **90s**: Excellent, great performer and exceptional quality
 - ii. **85-89**: Very good, solid performance and good quality
 - iii. **80-84**: Good, quality horse or rider, perhaps a minor error
 - iv. **75-79**: Fairly good, an average horse with a minor error or a high-quality horse with a couple of minor errors
 - v. **70-74**: Sufficient, an average horse with a few minor mistakes or errors
 - vi. **65-69**: Insufficient, poor performance with some more serious errors or poor quality
 - vii. **60-64**: Fairly bad, very poor quality, adding strides in lines, poor jumping
 - viii. **56-59**: Bad, bad performance, bolting, very dangerous jump, kicking out, extreme speed, running away
 - ix. **55**: Trotting on course, breaking gait
 - x. **45**: Rail down (for hunters and equitation deduct four faults for each rail down from original base score)
 - xi. **40**: First refusal
 - xii. **20-30**: General lowest score for all deductions, but horse and rider has finished the course.

8.10 Hunter Under Saddle

Shown on the flat. Horses must compete in the over fences portion of the division in order to ride in the under-saddle class for that division. Placing in the under-saddle class is used to break division ties when calculating Champion and Reserve Champion.

8.10.1 Judging Criteria

- a. To be judged mainly on performance.
- b. Horses should move with long low strides reaching forwards with ease and smoothness, be able to lengthen their stride and cover ground with relaxed, free-flowing movement, while exhibiting correct gaits of the proper cadence.
- c. Horses should look alert, and be obedient, responding willingly to the rider's light leg and hand contact.
- d. Transitions should be smooth and on cue.

8.10.2 Scoring

- a. Quality of movement and consistency of gait is the major consideration.
- b. Maximum credit shall be given to the flowing, balanced, willing horse.
- c. Faults:
 - i. Quick, short, or vertical strides
 - ii. Being on the wrong canter lead
 - iii. Breaking gait
 - iv. Excessive speed or slowness in any gait
 - v. Failure to take the appropriate gait when called for
 - vi. Head carried too high or too low (poll above or below the withers) or carried behind or excessively in front of the vertical
 - vii. Failure to maintain light contact on the rein
 - viii. Stumbling
 - ix. Horse that appears dull, lethargic, emaciated, drawn or overly tired.

8.11 Order of Go

If a starting order is drawn, it must be posted a minimum of a half hour before the start of the class.

8.12 Types of Classes

A typical hunter division will be comprised of three or four classes, under saddle, working hunter, and a stake class, with handy hunter an optional fourth class. A division will run with the working hunter first, and the stake class last.

8.12.1 Hunter Under Saddle

Class routine

- a. Shown at the walk, trot and canter in both directions.
- b. Change of direction will be done at the walk or trot only.

8.12.2 Handy Hunter

A handy hunter class tests the obedience and training of the horse and may have the addition of an optional inside turn, a trot fence, or broken line. Please note: if a trot jump is used as a test, this fence must be a vertical and should be set lower than the other jumps.

8.12.3 Stake Class

A stake class runs the same as a working hunter class but has additional prize money or prizes to the top horses.

8.12.4 Hunter Derby

The purpose of the hunter derby is to:

- a. Return hunters to their hunt field roots
- b. Promote hunters as a spectator sport
- c. Revive traditional horsemanship and add excitement to the hunter ring.

Derby courses are designed to closely resemble the hunt field. There are fewer ground lines, taller, narrower fences, ditches, gates, banks, walls and hedges. Maximum height for hunter derby classes is 0.9 m (3').

In a hunter derby, the approach to the jump varies greatly. There may be lines that are short, long or serpentine and the decision on how to ride these is completely negotiable. Riders are rewarded for choosing more difficult routes, which can include optional jumps.

Hunter derbies differ from traditional hunter classes primarily in the construction of the fences and the track between them.

8.12.5 Hunter Classic

This class is open to horses that have shown in at least one other hunter class at the competition. Competitors may walk the course prior to jumping.

The class is to be shown over two hunter rounds. The first round will consist of approximately 10 fences and each participant will be given a numerical score (out of 100). For the second round, the total number of placings offered for the class, plus two more horses will return in reverse order of their numerical score achieved in the first round (the lowest will go first). If placings go to eighth for example, then the top ten horses will return for the second round. The second round is conducted over a shortened course. Final placings will be determined by adding the scores of both rounds.

Horses must be jogged for soundness at the end of the second round.

8.12.6 Hunter Special

The hunter special is a class that is run similarly to the hunter classic except that it is only one round. Scores will be announced after each round and awards will be given after all competitors have completed their course.

8.13 Course Design

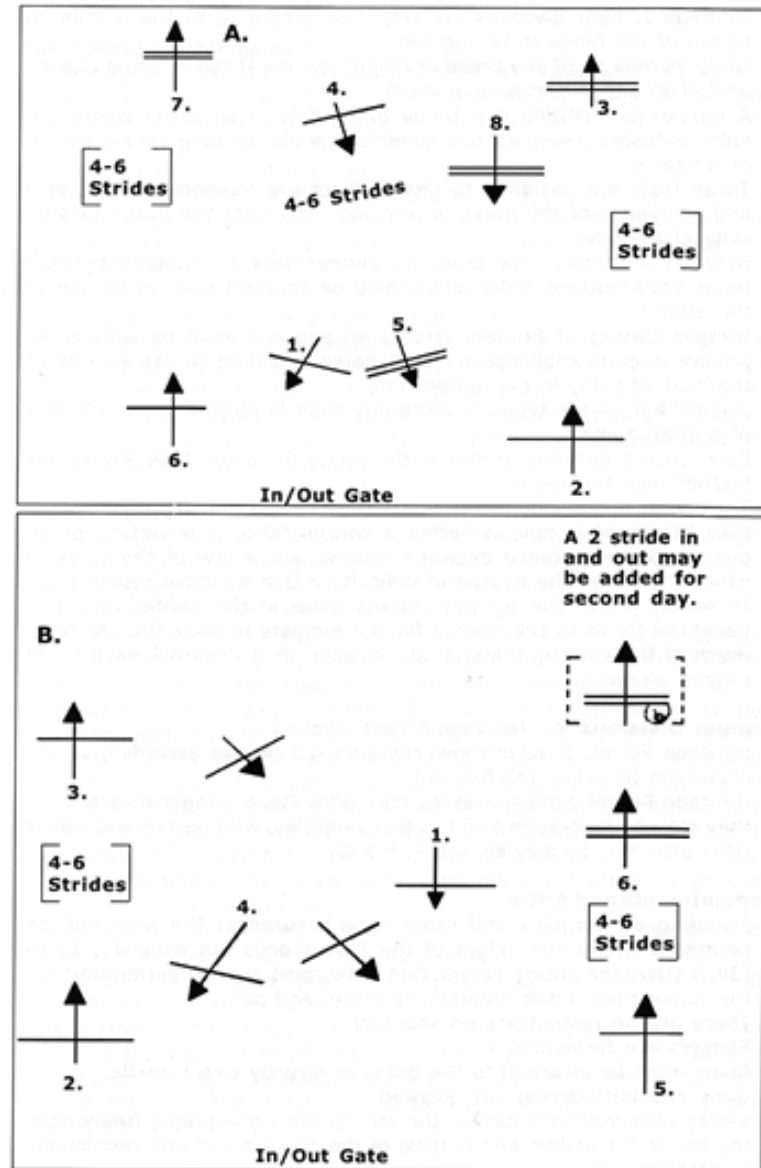
A typical hunter round should be flowing and rhythmic.

- a. The course should be simple and inviting encouraging horses and riders to present their best round.
- b. Fences with considerable fill so as to appear solid, with lots of ground line are easiest to jump.
- c. **Obstacles should include:** verticals and ascending oxers (back rail higher than front. Fences should be natural colours (brown, green, beige and white), with natural fill such as brush and flowers.
- d. The fence height will not exceed what is listed for the class:
 - i. E.g., in a 2'6" hunter class, the back rail of an oxer must not exceed that height and must be ramped.
- e. Distances between fences should be set with weather, footing, slope of the ring, and direction (i.e., going towards or away from home) in mind. Typical hunters have a 12' stride, however, courses may be set below or above this the day of the competition to accommodate horses, riders, terrain, etc.
- f. Starting a course going in the "home" direction over a single jump, encourages the horse to move forward and establish course

pace. Lines starting with a vertical fence and finishing over an oxer, encourages a more forward ride and is the easiest line to ride. Only verticals may be used as the first fence in a line.

- g. A hunter course shall be any course the management deems a "fair test of a hunter", and which requires the horse to jump fences. All jumps shall have wings or be of sufficient width to simulate obstacles in the hunting fields.
- h. Except in the case of inclement weather, broken equipment or similar emergency, a course shall not be altered once posted, except by written permission of all competitors in that class.
- i. A horse must be able to knock down the top element of hunter fences; solid coops or walls without poles as the highest element are not allowed.
- j. Horses shall be shown over a course of eight to 10 fences. The course shall include at least one change of direction and the course designer should try to have close to an equal number of fences from each lead.
- k. At least 75% of the obstacles must be at the maximum height, as long as conditions allow.
- l. Courses must be posted a minimum of 30 minutes prior to the start of the class.
- m. Course designers must include distances of lines in feet for each posted course.
- n. All Prairie Crocus sanctioned competitions must use breakaway cups (plastic cups and pins or plastic cups on tracks) on the top element of all fences on the show grounds. Steel or wooden pegs on uprights to hold any poles, gates, planks, or any top element are not permitted. Shows may use standards with tracks or standards with drilled holes, in which case standards must be drilled in a maximum of three-inch increments.

SAMPLE COURSES - WORKING HUNTER



9 Jumper Division

9.1 General

- a. For the purposes of Prairie Crocus sanctioned competitions, jumper divisions are classified according to the maximum height of the fence to be jumped. The MAXIMUM HEIGHT for Prairie Crocus over fences classes/divisions is 0.9 m (3').
- b. Jumpers may be of any breed or height (except those entering classes limited to either horses or ponies).
- c. A jumper competition is an event with a time allowed and a time limit held in an arena where the entry is tested under various conditions while jumping over a course of obstacles.
- d. Jumper classes are designed to demonstrate the freedom, energy, skill, and obedience of the horse while testing the horsemanship skills of the rider.
- e. Safety is of primary importance. All equipment should be in good working order and should be checked prior to use at the show.
- f. Jumper classes at Prairie Crocus sanctioned competitions should be simple yet provide enough challenge for both horse and rider to get the 'feel' of being in the jumper ring.
- g. Jumper fences are typically airier than hunters and provide less of a ground line.
- h. The degree of difficulty of a simple pattern can be changed significantly. How the fence is built, whether a certain fence is a vertical or an oxer, and the distance between fences, are a few of the ways in which to change the degree of difficulty.
- i. In competitions where the jumper classes show in the hunter ring, it is beneficial for all to use as much of the existing material as possible, so it does not have to be moved elsewhere.
- j. "Hors concours" entries may be accepted at the competition committee's discretion but are subject to the same rules as a regular entry. "Hors concours" may not participate in any jump off. A horse or pony that competes "hors concours" is not allowed to ride again in the same ring on the same day.
- k. Removal of sensory hairs from the face will not be penalized.
- l. Placing poles may be used in the warmup ring, provided there is room, are sufficient poles, and with the permission of the steward.
- m. If using a predetermined "order of go," it must be posted at least 30 minutes before the start of the class. Where a rider has more than one horse in the class, the order of go should provide at least five horses between the rider's horses. The other horses will be

- moved up in order to satisfy this rule. A rider with multiple horses in the class must ride the horses in the sequence posted.
- n. An obstacle may be one single jump, or a series of jumps in a line.
 - o. The maximum distance between two fences in a combination is 36'. A combination may consist of two or three fences in a line.
 - p. The second and third (if present) elements of the combination must be designated with letters rather than jump numbers (i.e., Jump 2, A, B, and C).
 - q. Timing begins and ends when the horse's chest crosses the start and finish lines. Time is interrupted only if a fence needs to be rebuilt following a refusal. Time is not interrupted in the event of a deviation from the course, run-out, or a refusal not resulting in altering the jump.
 - r. Electronic timing should be used if possible.
 - s. At least one back-up timer with a stopwatch must record every jumper round.
 - t. A judge acting alone cannot act as the timekeeper as well.
 - u. Late and post entries go first in a class when they are accepted after the order-of-go is drawn. Entries cannot be accepted once the class has started.
 - v. The judge's whistle or bell invites the athlete to start a round. Following the signal, a horse has 45 seconds to cross the starting line before the time starts on the clock.
 - w. A whistle or bell is used to communicate with the riders to:
 - i. Start the round, and
 - ii. Stop the clock during a knockdown following a disobedience or other incident on course.
 - x. Flags are used on the jumps to indicate the approach to be taken. Red flags indicate the right-hand side and white flags the left-hand side of the jumps. If the fences are numbered, the number should be in front of the right standard.
 - y. An eliminated competitor may take one attempt to jump a single fence on course before leaving the ring.

9.2 Warmup Areas

- a. Warmup areas or scheduled warmup time in the competition ring must be available for all divisions at the competition.
- b. All warmup fences must have flags.
- c. Flags must be used in the right way (red flags on the right and white flags on the left).
- d. Breakaway cups must be placed on the back of oxers.
- e. No Swedish oxers are permitted.
- f. No walk jumps are allowed.

9.3 Appointments and Attire

- a. Standing martingales attached to a cavesson noseband, running martingales with rein stoppers and/or breastplates are allowed.
 - i. NOTE: standing martingales are only allowed up to 1.15 m.
- b. Draw reins are not permitted.
- c. Leather, sheepskin, or similar material may be used on each cheekpiece of the bridle, providing it does not exceed three centimetres in diameter measured from the horse's cheeks.
- d. Reins must be attached to the bit(s) or directly to the bridle.
- e. Gags and hackamores are allowed.
- f. Stirrup irons must hang freely from the bar of the saddle and outside of the flap without any restrictions or attachments.
- g. Riders may carry unweighted whips not longer than 75 cm (30") when jumping fences.
- h. Earphones or earbuds and/or other electronic communication devices are strictly prohibited in the competition arena, and as such, usage is penalized by elimination. One earphone/earbud is allowed when mounted everywhere except in the competition arena.
 - i. Leg wraps and/or boots are permitted.
- j. It is mandatory that the protective headgear meets the ASTM/SEI, BSI/BS, EN, AS/NZS, or CE VG1 01.040 2014-12 (provided they are BSI Kitemarked) standard at any MHC sanctioned Prairie Crocus competition.
 - i. Proper protective headgear (helmet) with safety harness permanently affixed to the helmet is compulsory for everyone riding over fences anywhere on the competition grounds.
- k. Officials have the authority to ask a competitor to remove any equipment that is deemed unsuitable, providing an unfair advantage, harmful, etc.
- l. Riders should be dressed neatly, with polo shirts, neatly tucked into breeches, or riding shirts with or without chokers/ties being acceptable in lieu of a hunt coat.

9.4 Medical Services

It is mandatory that ALL MHC Prairie Crocus competitions have on-site emergency medical services with a minimum of advanced first aid and basic life support training. A crisis response plan should be prepared in advance of the competition by the show committee.

A rider who has a fall inside or outside of the competition ring must be assessed and cleared by the emergency medical services or a medical doctor in order to continue riding on the competition grounds.

Competitions where participants are required to jump obstacles are particularly prone to accidents. Additional safety measures may be required. The judge is the ultimate authority and is responsible for the proper administration of all classes. The judge may request additional measures where they see fit to ensure the safety of all participants.

9.5 Course Design

- a. Good course design is the primary requirement for a good jumper class. A properly designed course should demonstrate the capability and training of both horse and rider. **It is recommended that knowledgeable course designers are used or consulted.**
 - i. There should be a reasonable percentage of clean first rounds. If this is not the case, the course is deemed "not well suited" to the caliber of horse and rider combinations competing. This could result in no jump off rounds, or many time-consuming jump off rounds to determine a winner.
- b. Variety is an important factor in course and jump design. Competitions should include as many different types of obstacles as possible, changing and rearranging them for various classes.
- c. Show committees and course designers should ensure that all equipment used in the show is in good repair and meets the most current safety requirements.
- d. All Prairie Crocus sanctioned competitions must use approved breakaway cups (plastic cups and pins or plastic cups on tracks) on the top element of all fences on the show grounds. Steel or wooden pegs on uprights to hold any poles, gates, planks or any top element are not permitted. Shows may use standards with tracks or standards with drilled holes, in which case standards must be drilled in a maximum of three-inch increments.
- e. All jumps should be built so the highest element is able to fall in case of a hit. E.g., a wall or brush box must have a rail higher than the highest element of the solid object.
- f. Distances between jumps are traditionally based on an average 12' stride and must include a 6' take off and 6' landing distance. The relationship of the jumps (whether or not they are singles or in a combination) will affect the horse's natural jumping arc, the length of its stride and its speed. This may be slightly shortened to

accommodate green horses or a small arena. Distances may not be changed during the class.

- g. Should the condition of the ground become bad, the show and course committees, in consultation with the judge, may alter the speed of the course before the start of the competition.
- h. The total length of the course, in metres, may never exceed the number of obstacles in the competition multiplied by 60.
- i. The course shall consist of a minimum of eight jumps.
- j. Fences not being used for the current class should have flags removed and it should be obvious that the jump is not to be jumped.
- k. Oxers may be used in 2'6 (0.80 m) and over.
- l. The course must be posted at least 30 minutes before the start of the class.

9.6 Measuring the Course

- a. The course is the track the competitor must follow between the starting flag and the finishing flag.
- b. The length should be measured to the nearest metre, taking into account the normal line to be followed by the horse, passing through the centre of each obstacle on course.
- c. The total length of the course in meters may never exceed the number of obstacles in the course multiplied by 60.
- d. The starting line may not be more than 15 m and not less than 6 m from the first obstacle.
- e. The finishing line may not be more than 15 m and not less than 6 m from the last obstacle.
- f. The start and finish lines must be marked with an entirely red flag on the right and an entirely white flag on the left side.
- g. "Time Allowed" is based on the actual length and speed required to complete the course. It should be generous and must be posted on the course diagram. "Time Limit" is equal to twice the time allowed and should also be posted.
- h. Time is recorded in seconds and one-hundredths of a second.

9.7 Knockdowns

An obstacle is considered knocked down when the height is lowered, or the width is altered by the horse or rider through direct contact with a rail or standard.

9.8 "Table A" Penalties

Penalties for disobediences accumulate not just at the same obstacle, but throughout the entire round.

First disobedience	4 penalties
Obstacle knocked down while jumping	4 penalties
One or more feet in water jump or on lathe	4 penalties
Fall of horse, rider or both in class	Elimination
Refusal, plus knocking down an obstacle	4 penalties plus 6 seconds added (time correction)
Second refusal/disobedience	Elimination
Exceeding the time allowed	1 penalty for each second or fraction over
Exceeding the time limit	Elimination

9.9 Disobediences

- a. Refusal:
 - i. When a horse halts in front of an obstacle which it must jump whether the horse knocks it down or displaces it
 - ii. Stopping in front of an obstacle without moving backwards and without knocking it down followed immediately by a standing jump is not penalized
 - iii. If the halt is prolonged, if the horse steps back, either voluntarily or not, even a single step, it counts as a refusal.
- b. Run-out: when a horse evades or passes the obstacle to be jumped.
- c. A halt anywhere on course or stepping back.
- d. Unnecessary circling on course: when a rider circles their horse in such a manner that its original track between two consecutive obstacles (anywhere on course) is crossed.
 - i. The exception to this is if the horse is re-taking an obstacle after a refusal or run-out.

9.10 Elimination

- a. Two disobediences including refusal, stop, run-out or extra circle.
- b. Bolting from the arena.
- c. Off course.
- d. Jumping an obstacle before it is reset.
- e. Fall of horse and/or rider.

- i. A horse is considered to have fallen when shoulder and haunch of the same side touch the ground. Rider may not remount until they have been assessed and cleared by the event's medical personnel or a medical doctor.
- f. Taking more than 45 seconds to jump the first obstacle after the time of the round has started.
- g. A horse resisting for 45 consecutive seconds during the round or taking more than 45 seconds to jump the next obstacle.
- h. Exceeding the time limit.
 - i. The time limit is equal to twice the time allowed for competitions in which a time is provided.
- i. Starting (or continuing) on course before the signal to proceed.
- j. Jumping an obstacle before crossing the start line.
- k. Leaving the arena before finishing the course.
- l. Use of whip after the horse has jumped the last fence on course. Riders should not use the whip after being eliminated.

9.11 Types of Jumper Classes

9.11.1 Table A Jumper Class

- a. This is the most common type of class and consists of a first round of seven to 12 jumps, which may include a combination and a second jump off round.
- b. The first round is both timed and scored.
- c. Ties for first place based on penalties are broken by a jump off, with remaining placings based on penalties and time incurred in the first round.

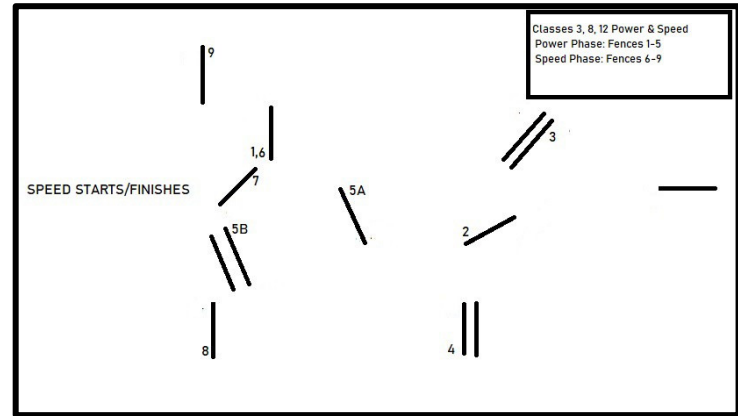
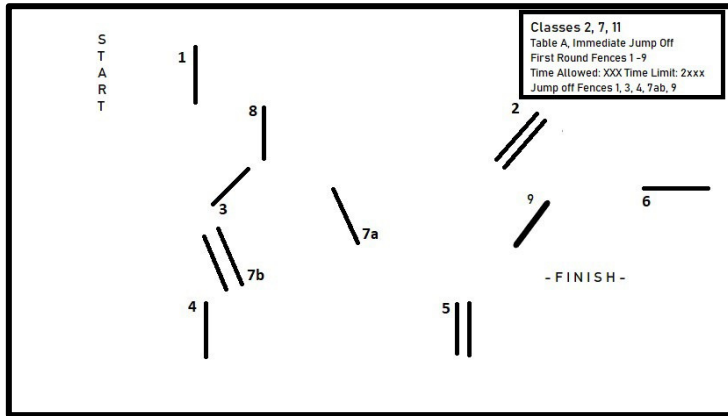
- d. If there are more placings than horses in the jump off, remaining placings are based on penalties incurred, with ties broken based on times in the first round.

9.11.2 Jumper Classics

A Jumper Classic is run as a Table A Jumper Class, but would not have an immediate jump off, and typically has additional prize money as well as a special prize for the winner.

9.11.3 Power and Speed Class

- a. This competition comprises of two phases run without interruption, the finish line of the first phase being identical to the starting line for the second phase.
- b. The first phase is a course of five to seven obstacles with or without combinations. The second phase takes place over four to six obstacles, which may include one combination.
- c. Athletes incurring penalties in the first phase are halted by ringing the bell after they have jumped the last obstacle, or when the time allowed for the first phase has been exceeded. Athletes must not continue to the second phase if rung out. If a show can only time one phase, it is more important that the second phase is timed.
- d. Athletes not incurring in the first phase continue to the second phase.
- e. The second phase must be timed, with competitors placed based on faults, with time used to break ties.
- f. Used Table A scoring to calculate penalties



9.11.4 Match the Clock (Optimum Time)

- a. Match the clock or optimum time classes are designed to help developing riders learn the skill of riding a course at the posted speed, rather than with the fastest time. Competitors with equal faults will be placed according to how close their time is to the optimum time, which is based on the course being ridden at the posted speed.
- b. Scoring will be under Table A. Optimum time may be used in the first round, the jump off, or a combination of both. Optimum time should be four seconds less than the time allowed. The course designer will calculate the optimum time based on the posted speed.

9.11.5 Clear Round Class

- a. A clear round class consists of seven to 12 jumps, which may include a combination.
- b. Clear round classes are often used for the first day of the show to allow horses and riders to get used to the arena. As such, the course is often more friendly and inviting with generous turns and approaches.
- c. Competitors are not placed, rather any competitor who completes the course under the time allowed and with no penalties receives a clear round ribbon.
- d. Clear round class results do not count towards championships.

9.12 Jump Off

- a. Only competitors who are in equal first place after one or several preliminary (class dependent) rounds of the same competition, may take part in a jump off.
- b. If specified, the organizing committee may decide that competitors who have completed their preliminary round without penalties, must immediately proceed to the jump off. In this case, the bell must be rung again to signal the competitor to start the jump off course, during which the 45-second rule set forth in 9.10(f) applies.
- c. If the jump off is not immediate, the order of starting in the jump off must remain the same as the order of starting for the original round.
- d. The obstacles in a jump off may only be increased in height and spread if they were not previously set at the maximum height and spread for that class, and only if the competitors jumped clear.
- e. The course may be shortened to a minimum of six fences.

- f. The jump off must be conducted under the same rules as the original class.
- g. A maximum of two additional single obstacles may be added to the course of a jump off. Both obstacles must be on the course during course inspection. These obstacles may consist of two oxers or two verticals or one oxe and one vertical.
- h. Competitors are placed firstly based on faults, and then on time.

10 Dressage Division

10.1 Tests

It is recommended that Prairie Crocus sanctioned competitions use EC dressage tests. Please contact the MHC program manager for access to tests. All EC tests are subject to the EC test user fee policy. Organizers may choose to source tests from other organizations but must indicate the tests to be used in their competition prize list.

10.2 Horses/Ponies

- a. Any horse entered in a Prairie Crocus sanctioned dressage competition must be a minimum of three years old. Ponies must be a minimum of four years old.
- b. Horses may be schooled and lunged by the rider, owner or coach/instructor. Lunging may only be done in designated lunging areas:
 - i. Lunging is not permitted in the general schooling area with mounted riders.
 - ii. Lunging with a rider is not permitted on the competition grounds.
- c. Horses and equipment are to be clean and neat out of respect for officials, volunteers and other competitors.
 - i. Decoration with extravagant items (i.e., flowers or ribbons) is prohibited. Exception: simple red ribbon may be used in the tail for safety reasons.
- d. Measured at the withers, horse height must exceed 148 cm without shoes.
- e. Completely blind horse/ponies are not eligible to enter dressage competitions.
- f. Decisions as to the manageability of stallions are at the discretion of the judge or steward. Unmanageable stallions must be excused from the ring and/or warmup ring.
- g. Judges are required to eliminate from the arena any unruly horse whose actions threaten competitors, officials or spectators.

10.3 Rider Apparel

10.3.1 Safety Headgear

- a. It is mandatory that the protective headgear meets the ASTM/SEI, BSI/BS, EN, AS/NZS or CE VG1 01.040 2014-12 (provided they

are BSI Kitemarked) standard at any MHC sanctioned Prairie Crocus competition.

- i. NOTE: at a tack check following the test, the steward may ask the rider to dismount so that the helmet may be inspected.

10.3.2 Boots

- a. Riders must wear dark or colour coordinated riding boots (plain, laced or with zippers) with a heel (tall boots or jodhpur/paddock boots).
- b. Half chaps may be worn with paddock boots if they are of matching colour to the boots, are without decoration of any sort, and are well-fitted.
- c. Juniors are permitted to wear jodhpurs and jodhpur boots.

10.3.3 Breeches/Jodhpurs

Breeches or jodhpurs must be worn. White, light or dark coloured breeches or jodhpurs with jodhpur boots may be worn; bright colours or patterns are not permitted. Contrast piping is allowed.

10.3.4 Shirts/Jackets

- a. Shirts may be long or short sleeved with a collar. Contrasting collars, points, piping, or crystal decorations are allowed. Tie, bow tie, hunting stock or choker may be of any colour.
- b. Short jackets, cutaway with short tails, or tailored dressage vests, may be single colour with subtle pin-stripping, check or tweeds. Striped or multicoloured jackets are not permitted. Tasteful and discreet accents such as a collar of a different hue, modest piping, or crystal decoration are acceptable.
- c. Safety vests, including an inflatable vest that is attached to the saddle, are permitted provided they conform to the rules governing jacket colours.

10.3.5 Gloves

Gloves must be worn at all times when mounted or lunging, and should be white, light-coloured, or any solid colour.

10.4 Spurs

- a. Spurs are optional at all levels but must be a matched pair of conservative colour.

- b. Spurs must be metal and have smooth arms, although plastic knobbed (Impuls spurs) are allowed.
 - i. The shank of the spur must be straight or slightly curved down, point backwards and must be centered on the arms.
 - ii. The neck may be curved directly back, but not upwards or in towards the horse. Exception: swan neck spurs are allowed, as are dummy spurs with smooth arms and no shanks.
- c. Protective bands that keep spurs in place are permitted.
- d. Rowels must point directly back from the center of the spur and be vertical. If rowels are used, they must be blunt/smooth and free to rotate.
 - i. Spurs with horizontal rowels are prohibited.
 - ii. Metal spurs with rotating knobs or balls are permitted and they can rotate vertically or horizontally.
- e. Any spur found to be sharp by the tack check steward must be removed and may be replaced with an appropriate spur.
- f. Use of illegal spurs anywhere on the competition grounds will result in elimination.
- g. Acceptable spur lengths are as follows:
 - i. For adults the maximum spur length is 5 cm.
 - ii. For juniors the maximum spur length is 3.5 cm.

10.5 Whips

- a. Dressage whips may be carried in all levels.
 - i. Exception: whips may not be carried in championship classes.
- b. Ladies riding sidesaddle may always carry a dressage whip.
- c. The total length of the dressage whip (including lash) may not exceed 120 cm. Whips for ponies in all classes may not exceed 100 cm.
- d. A whip must not be used in a way that disturbs other riders and may not be picked up if dropped during a test.
- e. When saluting, the whip, along with the reins, should be taken into one hand. The free hand should be lowered to the rider's side.
- f. Dressage whips are always permitted in the warmup and schooling areas.
- g. Excessive use of a whip at any time while on the competition grounds is forbidden and constitutes abuse. A whip should never be carried or used in a manner that affects other horses.
- h. Telescoping whips are not permitted.

- i. The use of a lunge whip is prohibited except when lunging in a prescribed lunging only warmup area.

10.6 Extreme/Inclement Weather Conditions

- a. Protective hat covers and transparent or conservative-coloured overcoats may be worn in wet or cold weather.
- b. Judges may excuse jackets in extreme heat or humidity.
 - i. Appropriate notice must be given so that all competitors in any one class ride under the same conditions.
 - ii. Competitors have the option of wearing either short or long-sleeved shirts with a collar (no t-shirts, tank tops etc.) that tuck neatly into the breeches. Sleeveless shirts are not permitted. Shirt collar may be opened.
 - iii. A cooling or tailored dressage vest may be worn over a long or short sleeved riding shirt. The vest colour must conform to the rules for jacket colours.
 - iv. Stock ties must be removed unless pinned to the rider's shirt.
 - v. Regulation safety helmet is still required.

10.7 Saddlery and Equipment

10.7.1 Saddles

- a. A plain English type saddle must be used – dressage, hunter, jumper, all purpose, etc. as opposed to endurance, Australian, military, bareback pad, western or stock saddle.
 - i. NOTE: dressage saddles are required in FEI classes.
- b. Saddle must be a dark-coloured English saddle.
- c. Saddle may be made of leather or synthetic material
 - i. Saddle covers are not allowed.
- d. Girths may be of leather, fabric (natural or synthetic) or string and may be used with a girth cover in a conservative colour.
- e. Stirrups (standard or safety) are compulsory at all levels. The rider's boots may not be fixed to the stirrup, nor may the stirrups be fastened to the girth or each other. The foot must not be fully or partially enclosed. Safety stirrups may have an opening on the outside branch. Kvall stirrups are not allowed.
- f. Saddle pads may be solid white, off white, grey, black, or another conservative colour. It may have piping of a different colour to the pad and may carry barn logo.
- g. Pommel straps are allowed.

10.7.2 Bridles

- a. Bridles must be of leather and be a conservative brown or black in colour.
 - i. Padding of the brow and nose bands is allowed for comfort and modest decorative features are allowed on the brow band.
- b. Micklem bridles, without clips only, are allowed.
 - i. Reins must be brown or black in colour.
- c. Reins may be laced, plain, rolled or rubber lined on both sides. Reins may have hand stops.
- d. Reins with elastic inserts are not permitted.
- e. Bitless bridles are not allowed.

10.7.3 Nosebands

- a. Nosebands must be used and may be any of the following type:
 - i. Cavesson
 - ii. Dropped
 - iii. Flash
 - iv. Figure eight (grackle)
 - v. Crescent noseband
 - vi. Comfort noseband.
- b. A bridle throatlatch or jowl strap is required except when a combined noseband or Micklem bridle is used.
- c. Drop nosebands and flash straps must lie in the chin groove.
- d. Nosebands must not cause discomfort or be overtight. It must be possible to place two fingers between the horse's cheek and the noseband.

10.8 Bits

Bits must not apply mechanical restraint to the tongue. Bits must be such that the diameter of the bit (snaffle or bridoon and/or curb) do not hurt the horse. Only bits described below are permitted:

1. Snaffle and bridoons:
 - a. Mouthpiece: is to be smooth (no twist or wire) of metal, durable plastic, or synthetic material (not flexible rubber).
 - i. May be covered by rubber or normally accepted material, may not be wrapped
 - ii. May have a single, double or no joint
 - iii. May have a rotating mouthpiece

- iv. May not have outstanding edges, odd curves or unrounded joints
 - v. The surface of the center piece must be solid with no moveable parts other than a roller, must not have a port
 - vi. Minimum bit diameters where the bit connects to the cheek or ring:
 - Ponies: 10 mm for snaffles.
 - Horses: 10 mm for snaffle and bridoons, 12 mm for curbs.
 - b. Rings: may be free (loose, German) ring, eggbutt, D-ring.
 - i. Snaffle and bridoon rings: the inside dimensions must be between 3.5 cm and 10.16 cm.
 - c. Cheeks: may be a full cheek, half cheek (oriented up only), a hanging cheek. Full cheeks can be used with or without "keepers;"
 - i. Is not required to be part of the ring (i.e., fulmer or loose ring with cheeks).
 - d. Fit: comfortably – not too tight in width, hanging too low or pulled too high in the mouth.
 - i. Not too thick as to disallow comfortable closure of the mouth, not too thin to cause damage to the corners of the mouth.
 - Particularly bridoons must not be too thick
 - ii. Mouthpiece must not pinch the lips where joining with the cheeks and rings.
 - e. **EXCEPTION:** Dr. Bristol snaffles are not permitted – defined as a snaffle with a flat centre link that does not lie in the same place as the rest of the bit.
 - f. Snaffle bridles are required at Introductory, Training, First and Second Levels. Optional at Third Level through Grand Prix.
2. Curb:
 - a. Mouthpiece: is to be smooth (no twist or wire) of metal, durable plastic, or other synthetic material (not flexible rubber).
 - i. May be half-moon, have a port, may not be jointed, may not be wrapped
 - ii. May have a sliding mouthpiece (Weymouth)
 - iii. Minimum diameter of 10 mm measured adjacent to the cheeks of the mouthpiece.
 - b. The upper cheekpieces must not exceed 5 cm or be longer than the curb lever arms measured below the mouthpiece which should not be more than 10 cm when the mouthpiece is in the uppermost position.

- c. Curb chain: may be leather or metal or a combination of the two.
 - i. Curb chain must be adjusted in such a way that the bit may rotate in the mouth without pinching up to 45 degrees.
 - ii. May be left exposed or covered with leather or rubber for comfort.
 - d. Lip strap: is permitted and is to remain loose.
3. Bit guards and/or burrs are not permitted at any time.

The following pages are illustrations for acceptable bits and bridles. Directly below are captions for the illustrations.

10.8.1 Various Snaffle Bridle Bits

(Referencing pictures on next page)

1. Loose (free, German) ring snaffle with a single joint
2. a. b. c. Double jointed snaffles with rounded edges on middle pieces
3. Eggbutt snaffle
4. D-ring (racing) snaffle
5. Full cheek eggbutt snaffle
6. Fulmer (loose ring with cheeks) snaffle
7. Snaffle with upper cheeks only
8. Hanging cheek (Baucher) snaffle
9. Straight bar snaffle, may have mullen mouth or eggbutt ring
10. Snaffle with rotating mouthpiece
11. Snaffle with rotating middle piece
12. Tongue relief snaffle
13. NS Verbindend.

10.8.2 Various Bridoon Bits

(Referencing pictures on next page)

1. Loose ring bridoon with single joint
2. a. b. c. Double jointed bridoon with rounded edges on middle pieces
3. d. Bridoon with rotating middle piece
4. Eggbutt bridoon
5. Hanging cheek bridoon.

10.8.3 Various Curb Bits

(Referencing pictures on next page)

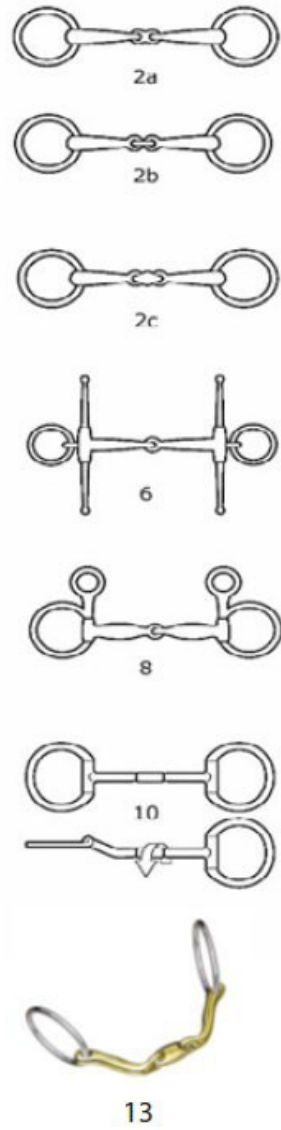
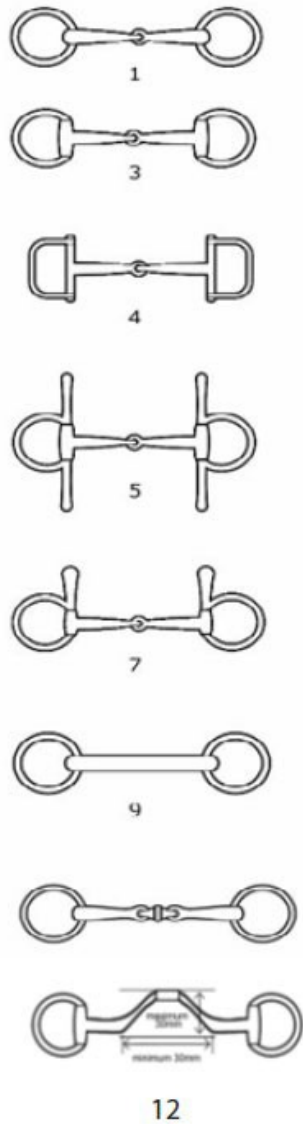
6. Half-moon curb
7. Curb bits with straight cheeks and various ports
8. Curb bit with port and sliding mouthpiece (Weymouth)
9. N.B. rotating lever arm is also permitted
10. Variation of bits 6, 7 and 8 above
11. Curb bit with s-curved cheeks.

10.8.4 Various Parts of a Double Bridle

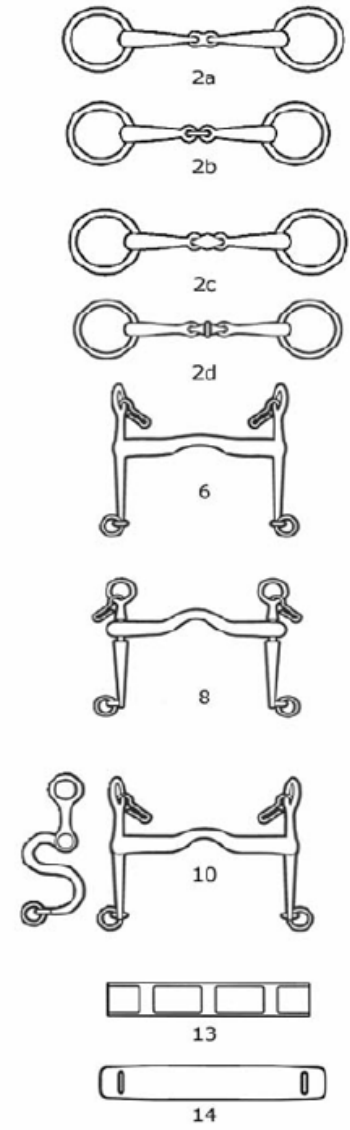
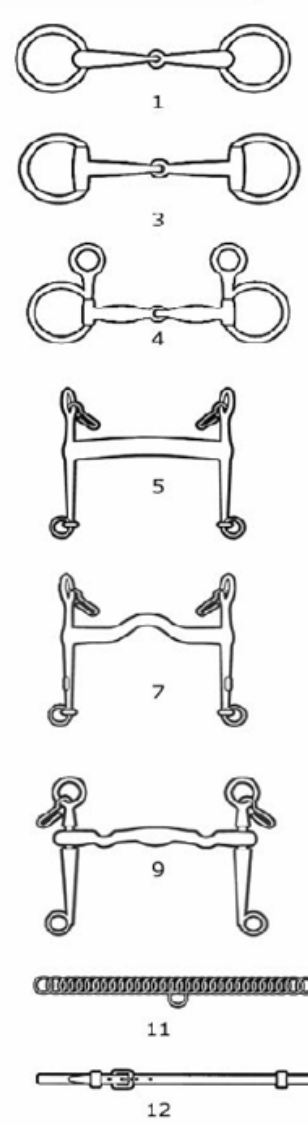
(Referencing pictures on next page)

12. Curb chain (metal or leather or a combination);
13. Lip strap
14. Leather cover for curb chain
15. Rubber cover for curb chain.

Various snaffle bridle bits







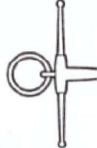


Various double bridle bits




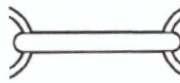




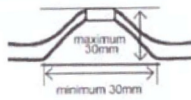


The following cheekpieces and mouthpieces may be used interchangeably with the allowable bits shown.

Cheek Pieces:

		
Ex. of Loose Ring cheek	Ex. of Eggbutt cheek	Ex. of D-Ring cheek
		
Ex. of upper cheek	Ex. of full cheek	Ex. of hanging cheek
		
Ex. of Fulmer cheek		

Mouthpieces:

		
Ex. of single jointed mouthpiece	Ex. of double jointed mouthpiece	Ex. of double jointed mouthpiece
		
Ex. of unjointed mouthpiece	Ex. of barrel joint	Ex. of ball joint
		
Ex. of double ball joint	Ex. of centre piece with a roller	Port deviation measurements

Permitted nosebands

1. Dropped noseband



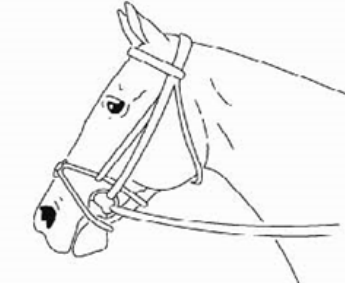
2. Cavesson noseband



3. Flash noseband



4. Crossed noseband / Mexican noseband

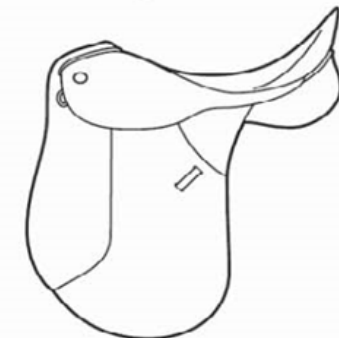


1, 3 and 4 are not permitted when a double bridle is used.

Article 428.1

Example of Double bridle with cavesson noseband, bridoon bit and curb with curb chain

Example of permitted Dressage saddle



10.9 Other Tack and Equipment

- a. The following equipment is forbidden to be used at any time on the show grounds and may result in elimination if used:
 - i. Martingales
 - EXCEPTION: running martingales are allowed in designated warmup and/or schooling areas if attached to the snaffle rein only
 - ii. Gadgets which are designed to improve the performance of the horse (bearing, running or balancing reins)
 - iii. Bit burrs, bit guards, tongue ties, etc.
 - iv. Telescoping whips
 - v. Blinkers, ear plugs, hoods
 - EXCEPTION: comfort of the horse is a priority in the stabling area (e.g., ear plugs would be allowed in the stabling/trailer parking area), away from the warmup or competition rings
 - vi. Illegal spurs
 - vii. Belly bands.
- b. Any piece of tack or equipment that holds the horse's ears in a fixed position.
- c. Lunging equipment including line, whip, cavesson, surcingle, single or double direct side reins are permitted only in designated, supervised lunging areas.
- d. Protective boots and/or bandages may be used anywhere on the competition grounds including in the competition ring.
- e. Show stewards are entitled to request the removal of ear nets and nose fly guards as part of the compulsory tack check.
- f. Breastplates, foregirths, girth covers, sternum relief girths, sternum relief pads, ergonomic girths, cruppers, and any tack or clothing which is intended to improve the comfort of the horse or safety of the rider is permitted in the designated schooling areas and competition rings.
- g. The hearing disabled may use two-way communication devices in the competition arena under the supervision of a committee member.
- h. Earphones or earbuds and/or other electronic communication devices are strictly prohibited in the competition arena, and as such, usage is penalized by elimination. One earphone/earbud is allowed when mounted everywhere except in the competition arena.

- i. Non-restrictive ear nets, which do not cover the eyes and non-restrictive nose fly guards are permitted in the schooling and competition rings.

10.10 Arena

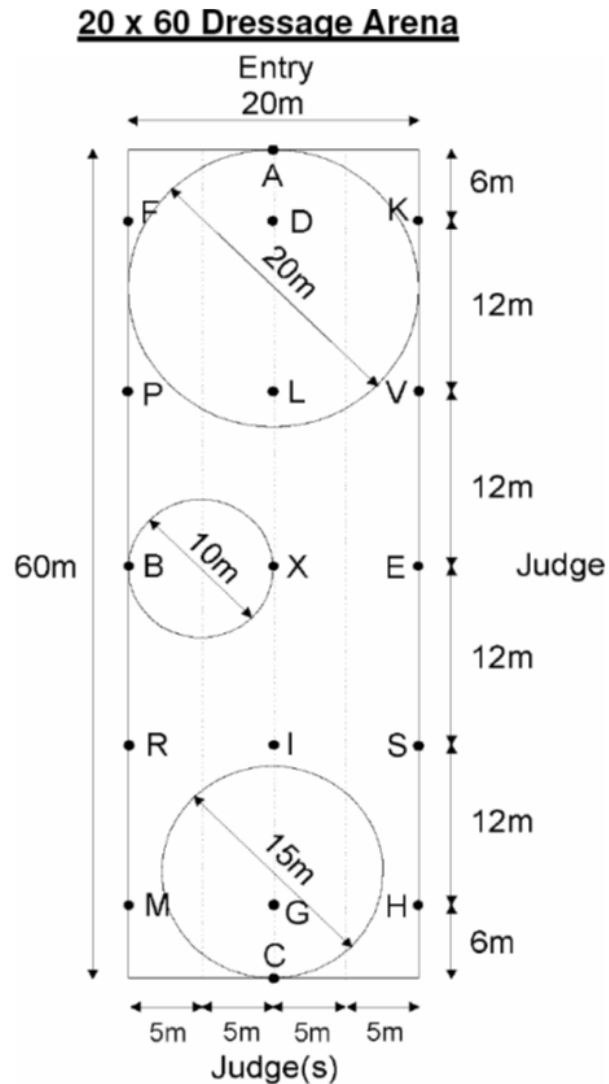
10.10.1 Arena Construction

- a. Arena should be situated on level ground and measure 20 m x 60 m for all tests above Training Level.
 - i. Walk/Trot to Training Level: classes may be ridden in a 20 m x 40 m arena.
- b. Arena enclosure should be marked by wooden fencing, or other safe suitable material, about .30 m high (approx. 1'), and should be constructed in such a way so as a horse's hooves cannot get caught.
- c. Arena fence conditions must be the same for every competitor in a class.
- d. At outdoor competitions, where space permits, spectators should be situated 15 m from the arena.
- e. At indoor competitions spectators should be situated 3 m from the arena.
 - i. If possible, the arena should be situated 2 m from the walls.
- f. Judges should be placed a minimum of 3 m and a maximum of 5 m from the arena enclosure.
 - i. The judge is to be situated at "C". If there is more than one judge, the second judge may be placed either at "E", "B", "H," or "M," whichever is convenient for the competition.
 - In the event there is a third judge, one judge should be at "C" and the other two placed at either "M" and "E" or "H" and "B".
- g. Judges and stewards are responsible for checking the correctness of the arena setup.

10.10.2 Arena Letters and Gate

- a. The letters should be placed 0.5 m from the fence and be clearly marked.
- b. The letter "A" should be placed 5 to 15 m back to allow the horse to make a straight entry. The gate at "A" should be easy to remove and replace.

- c. Arena lettering should be in accordance with the example provided within this rulebook.



10.10.3 Warm-up Arena

- Whenever possible the footing in the warm-up arena should match that of the competition arena.
- The warmup arena should be the same size as the competition arena.
 - Should this not be possible, competitors should be permitted to warm up their horses in the competition arena.
 - A schedule of permitted warm-up times should be posted.
- Warm-up arena must be supervised by a knowledgeable safety officer/ steward.

10.11 Execution of Tests

- Unauthorized assistance, deemed to be any external influence (use of voice, signals, electronic transmission, etc.) intended to assist the competitor upon entering the competition arena is cause for elimination.
- All freestyle tests are to be executed from memory.
- A test begins when the horse enters at "A" and ends when it moves off after the final salute. No incidents prior to the start or after the completion of the test, shall affect the test score.

10.12 Readers

- Competitors may arrange for a suitably (conservatively) dressed individual to call or read the test.
- Competitors are responsible for any error made by the designated reader of the test.
- Any command or instruction which is repeated more than twice (i.e., read three times) or which is embellished in any way to assist the competitor, will cause the elimination of the competitor.
- Designated readers are to be placed at either "E" or "B" so that they do not disturb nor obstruct the view of the judge(s).
 - If readers are unable to be placed at "E" or "B", they must stand at a location designated by the judge at "C".

10.13 Salute

- The salute is to be performed with the reins in any one hand.
- Helmets are not to be removed.
- The arm is to be dropped in a relaxed manner along the body and the head inclined towards the judge at "C".

- d. Failure to salute is an error of test and will incur a penalty of two points.

10.14 Tack Check

- a. A show may opt to hold mandatory or random tack checks. If the show opts to do random tack checks, at least 30% of competitors from each class must be checked.
- b. If a tack check is required, immediately upon leaving the competition arena, riders must report, still mounted, for a tack check. No equipment or clothing is to be removed before the inspection.
 - i. EXCEPTION: a rider feeling ill, or faint is permitted to dismount and remove their helmet and jacket.
- c. A rider who is eliminated during the course of their test must still report for a tack check if required.
- d. Riders are welcome to ask for dress/saddlery rule clarification from the steward or appointed competition monitor prior to entering the competition ring.

10.15 Errors and Penalties

10.15.1 Inappropriate Voice

Error of voice: a competitor using voice in any manner (including using a loud voice, clucking repeatedly, or tongue or throat sounds):

- a. Incurs a penalty of two points from the movement being performed for each occurrence, with "voice" being indicated in the comment section of the score sheet.
- b. There is no maximum limit to errors of voice, nor is it limited to once per movement.
- c. Error of voice should not be scored as an error of course or test.
- d. Repeated offences are not cause for elimination.

10.15.2 Error of Course

Error of course: an error in the execution of the test, which prohibits the rider from continuing on with the next movement (e.g., turning the incorrect direction or omitting an entire movement). At such time the judge at "C" shall ring the bell in order to lend the competitor the assistance necessary to return to the correct course.

- a. An error of course which does not require the bell to be rung is one in which interrupting the test will have a negative effect on the

flow of the test since the rider is able to continue the test without impediment (e.g., transition takes place at the wrong letter).

- i. If the bell is not rung and the rider makes the same error again, because the same movement is to be repeated in the course of the test, only one error is recorded.
- b. If a rider performs a rising trot when a sitting trot is called for the judge must ring the bell and warn the rider that this error is accumulative, if repeated, and may lead to elimination after the third occurrence.
- c. A competitor is not permitted to repeat a movement or put in an extra circle, unless the judge decides that an error of course has been made. If the rider has started a movement and tries to do the same movement again, the judge must consider the first movement only, and at the same time, penalize for an error of course.

10.15.3 Penalization

- a. The first error of course or test is penalized by two points.
- b. The second such error is penalized with four points.
- c. The third such error is cause for elimination, although competitors are permitted to finish their tests and further movements are marked.

10.15.4 Error of Test

These errors, each of which incurs two penalty points, are not cumulative and therefore do not result in elimination.

- a. Not taking the reins in one hand at the salute.
- b. Early entry before signal.
- c. Entry between 45 and 90 seconds after the signal.

10.15.5 Unnoticed Error

- a. Should the judge not observe the error then the competitor is given the benefit of the doubt.
- b. Should the judge at "C" not observe the error, the panel may bring it to the attention of the other members and the judge at "C" shall determine whether the error shall be incurred.

10.15.6 Early Entry

- a. Entry into the ring before the designated signal has been sounded by the judge shall be penalized by two points.

- b. The judge may choose to ask the competitor to exit and re-enter the ring.

10.15.7 Late Entry

- a. A competitor has 45 seconds in which to enter the arena after the bell has sounded.
- b. Failure to enter the arena within the permitted time shall result in a penalty of two points per judge.
- c. Failure to enter within 120 seconds will result in elimination.
- d. In the event that the horse starts to defecate or urinate, after the judge rings the bell but before the start of the test, the clock will be stopped until the horse is ready to continue, at which point the clock will be restarted.

10.15.8 Re-Riding a Test

Under unusual circumstances, which may interfere with the test, the judge may stop the test and allow the competitor to restart.

10.15.9 Falls

- a. A fall by the rider is considered to have taken place when the rider is separated from the horse in such a manner that they must remount the horse to regain contact with the saddle.
- b. A fall by the horse is considered to have taken place if both the shoulder and quarters of the horse have touched the ground simultaneously.
- c. A fall of horse and/or rider in the competition ring will result in the immediate elimination from the class. All falls must be reported immediately to the safety officer and the required paperwork must be submitted to the MHC office.
- d. A rider who has a fall inside or outside of the competition ring must be assessed and cleared by the emergency medical services or a medical doctor to continue riding on the competition grounds.

10.15.10 Dismounts

- a. An athlete dismounting after entering the arena will be eliminated.
- b. A competitor who dismounts due to broken equipment and/or loss of a shoe will be excused from the class.

10.15.11 Leaving Arena During a Test

A horse whose four feet leave the arena during the course of riding the test, between the start and finish of the test, shall be eliminated.

10.15.12 Resistance

- a. Any resistance that exceeds 20 seconds in length and prevents the continuation of the test shall be cause for elimination.
- b. If the resistance is of a nature that may endanger horse, rider, spectators or judges, it shall be deemed a safety hazard and is cause for immediate elimination without regard to the length of the resistance except when leaving the arena.

10.15.13 Lameness

- a. It is the responsibility of the judge to call attention to any case of marked lameness, in which case the judge may ring the bell and eliminate the competitor.
- b. If there are multiple judges, the judge at "C" shall make the determination.
- c. Lameness must be indicated on the score sheet as the reason for elimination.

The decision of the judge may not be appealed. Judges are circumspect with regards to making such a critical decision and unless absolutely certain will tend to give low marks rather than eliminate. This difficult decision must be respected.

10.16 Elimination and Disqualification

10.16.1 Elimination

An elimination results in a no score or elimination being posted for the class in question due to any of the following – as perceived at the judge's discretion:

- a. Any three errors of course or test.
- b. Illegal equipment.
- c. Failure to report to tack check.
- d. Carrying a whip into the competition ring at competitions that specify in the prize list that whips are not permitted.
- e. Unauthorized assistance.
- f. Exceeding 120 seconds to enter the arena after the bell/whistle or start of music (20 seconds) in a freestyle.

- g. Resistance lasting longer than 20 seconds which prevents the performance of the required movements of the test.
- h. Safety – resistance that may endanger the rider, horse, judge or spectators is cause for elimination at discretion of the judge (may be less than 20 seconds).
- i. Leaving the arena with all four feet of the horse during the test
- j. Lameness
- k. Fall of horse or rider
- l. Performing movements above the required level of the freestyle could result in elimination – see [Article 10.20.2\(g\)](#)
- m. Excessive use of the whip and/or spur
- n. Receiving a score of less than 40%
- o. Inappropriate dress
- p. Evidence of blood or welt marks on the horse other than environmental (bee stings, insect bites)
- q. Dangerous or unruly behavior of the horse
- r. Failure to finish the test.

Note: any of the grounds for disqualification shown below may also result in elimination from classes already completed. This determination shall be made by the ground jury and is not open to appeal.

10.16.2 Disqualification

Disqualification bars the competitor from taking part in any further classes in the competition. The ground jury may require the competitor to leave the competition site. Grounds for disqualification include but are not limited to:

- a. Failure to display a competition number, having incurred a warning for the first offence
- b. Misrepresentation of entry
- c. Failure to provide documentation and/or payment
- d. Abuse/cruelty
- e. Offensive behavior and/or language towards officials, volunteers, competitors, or spectators.

10.17 Judging the Test

- a. The responsibility for marking the tests lies with the judges.
- b. Judges may not be influenced by any previously held knowledge or information from any individual other than members of the ground jury.
- c. The mark for each movement should indicate whether the movement was performed sufficiently (5 or above) or insufficiently (4 or below).

- d. Movements should be carried out at the point in which the rider's body arrives at the specified point.
 - i. EXCEPTION: movements which the horse approaches the letter from a diagonal or perpendicular line. In this case, the movement should be initiated when the horse's nose reaches the track to maintain straightness for the transition.
- e. A horse that grinds its teeth but is otherwise happy to work shall not be penalized.
 - i. If the horse does not appear to be happy to work and displays stiffness and tension, then one point must be deducted from each of the movement and submission marks.
- f. Horses that get their tongue over the bit or that perform with an open mouth must be marked down.
- g. A test begins with entry at "A" and concludes with the final salute.
 - i. Anything occurring outside this time period shall have no bearing on the marks.
- h. No competitor shall be required to ride before their posted time.
 - i. Competitors should be aware that to facilitate the efficient running of the competition, they may be asked, with due notice, to alter their start time.
- i. Marking scale: the judging scale of marks is:
 - i. Half marks from 0.5 – 9.5 may be used for movements and collective marks.
 - ii. Half marks may be used for all marks in freestyle tests.
- j. Collective marks are given upon the completion of the test based on overall impression given by the horse and the rider. If competitors are tied at the end of the class, the competitor with the higher collective marks will be the winner. If the collective marks are tied, then the competitors remain tied.

10.18 Scoring

After each performance, marks from each judge's score sheet are tabulated, factoring in the coefficient multiple where applicable. Penalty points are then

deducted. The show committee should make the tabulated results available to the competitor as soon as possible at the completion of the class.

10.18.1 Awarding Marks

Marks awarded for each movement are from 1 to 10:

10	Excellent	5	Sufficient
9	Very good	4	Insufficient
8	Good	3	Fairly bad
7	Fairly good	2	Bad
6	Satisfactory	1	Very bad
0 – Not executed (practically nothing of the movement was executed)			

- a. Each mark has an assigned co-efficient and must be multiplied.
- b. The marks given for each movement and general impression, or collective marks are added together and penalties for errors/other occurring during the test are deducted:
 - i. This is the positive score for the test.
 - ii. These points are converted into percentage scores.
- c. If a rider is eliminated during the test, that rider receives no score and is ineligible for an award.
- d. To obtain the percentage of the test:

Example: 220 = Possible Marks
 133 = Achieved Marks (Total Points)
 - 2 = Penalty for Error
 131 = Total Points (Final Total)

131 divided by 220 (total possible marks) and multiplied by 100 = 59.545%

The final score = 59.545% (must be to three decimal points)

Note: that although errors of voice are unlimited, errors of course and test are limited to two. On the third such error, the rider is eliminated. Judges should NOT continue to mark such a test but often do in order to offer the rider an opportunity to learn. Upon elimination or disqualification, scores should not be posted.

- e. Scorers must ensure that all movements are marked, the sheets are signed, and any changes are initialed.
 - i. If any of the above is missing, sheets must be returned to the judge for completion.
- f. Marked sheets are considered to be the confidential property of the competition until they are handed over to the competitor.

- i. At that time, they become the private property of the competitor.
 - ii. The show organizers are obliged to post total points and percentages from the tests.
- g. In order to maintain a record of marks, scorers must retain all individual marks from each test on a master sheet, to be available for queries.
- i. This master sheet may be on paper, or if a computer program is used it may be retained within the program.
 - ii. Tests may be released to riders immediately after the final ride of the class.
 - iii. It is recommended that awards not be presented for an hour after the class in order to allow riders to confirm their scores.
 - iv. Corrections of errors in math may be made at any time, however awards will not be changed after the show is formally over with the exception of Champion and Reserve Champion.
- h. Should more than one judge be used, the total positive points and percentages from each judge are posted and the average of these is posted as the final score.
- i. Should there be only one horse in the class, the competitor must compete against the rule book, which declares that in order to achieve a placing a particular score must be achieved as shown below:
- | | |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|
| First Place | requires a score of 60% or higher |
| Second Place | requires a score of 57% to 59.9% |
| Third Place | requires a score of 54% to 56.9% |
| Fourth Place | requires a score of 51% to 53.9% |

No ribbons or prizes will be awarded for scores less than 51% or to placings lower than fourth.

10.19 Ties

- a. Should a tie occur at a dressage competition, the competitor achieving the highest marks in the general impression/collective marks is declared the winner.
- b. If the tie still exists, they shall remain tied. The next placing shall be omitted (i.e., if tied for third, the next placing shall be for fifth, not fourth place).

10.20 Freestyles

The freestyle test is a competition of artistic equitation to music. Recorded music is mandatory. It includes all the school paces and the fundamental movements as in the technical test of the same level. The athlete is, however, absolutely free to choose the choreography within the stated time allowed. The test should clearly show the unity between the athlete and horse, as well as harmony in all the movements and transitions.

10.20.1 Freestyle Movements

- a. Prairie Crocus freestyles can be at any level.
- b. It is the responsibility of the athlete to put their ride together and to incorporate all the required movements in the time allowed.
- c. Compulsory and forbidden technical movements for each level of freestyle can be found on the “freestyle score sheets” available from the EC website or by contacting the MHC Program Manager.
- d. The test time will start as the athlete moves forward from the halt.

10.20.2 Freestyle Penalties

- a. Athletes are not required to submit a written copy of their freestyle and since the ride is judged as a whole, no errors can occur.
- b. An athlete must enter the arena within 30 seconds of the music starting.
 - i. Exceeding 30 seconds will incur elimination.
- c. The music must cease at the final salute.
 - i. If the music does not cease, a penalty of 0.5 points is applied to the mark for music.
- d. At the beginning and end of the freestyle test, a halt for the salute is compulsory.
 - i. The initial and final salutes must be made inside the arena and with the horse and rider facing the judge at “C”.
- e. Movements performed before the initial halt and salute are not scored.
- f. Movements performed after the maximum time allowed in a freestyle will not be considered by the judge. Timing starts in the first stride after the salute and ends after the final salute.
 - i. The rider will also be penalized after the multiplication of the coefficient for the artistic impression by the deduction of one point.
- g. An athlete performing higher movements than the level called for (clearly forbidden movements, will be penalized by four points

from the total technical execution for each illegal movement, but not for recurrences of the same illegal movement. Judges must be fair by taking into consideration whether the movement was accidental or intentional.

10.20.3 Music

- a. Recorded music is mandatory.
- b. The athlete must provide the show organizer with two functioning copies of their music at least two hours prior to the start of the class.
 - i. The athlete is responsible for knowing what type of media is required by the show committee (i.e., CD, tape, computer file).
 - ii. Organizers are encouraged to list their sound requirements and acceptable media formats in their prize list.
- c. The athlete is responsible for making sure they do a sound check at a time convenient to the show organizer.
- d. In the case of an athlete’s music failing during the freestyle test and in cases where there is no back-up system, the athlete should leave the arena immediately.
 - i. There should be a minimum of interference with the starting times of other athletes and the affected athlete should return to complete or restart their test during a scheduled break.
 - ii. The judge will confer with the athlete and determine when the athlete will return to the arena.
- e. The athlete may decide whether to restart the test from the beginning or from the point where the music failed.
- f. Marks will continue from the point where the music failed.

10.20.4 Freestyle Scoring

- a. Half and full points are used for technical execution. Half, full and one tenth marks may be used for artistic impression.
- b. Scoring of freestyle tests is out of a total of the maximum possible points at each level, the same as for scoring of all technical tests.
- c. Scorers must apply the relevant coefficients to each movement as marked by the judge in both the technical and the artistic sections separately.
- d. Once the technical and artistic totals are prepared, scorers must then add the total of the technical and artistic scores together.

This number is divided by the total possible score to calculate the final percentage to three decimal points.

- e. All scores in both technical and freestyle dressage tests must be calculated to the third decimal point.
- f. In the case of a tie, the higher score for artistic presentation will be determined the winner.

11 Equitation/Horsemanship

Division

on top and fingers closed around the reins. One finger

11.1 General

In this division, only the rider or handler is judged on their way of riding or handling the horse. It is their skill that is being assessed and judged and not that of the horse. The horse is merely the tool used to help the person perform. This division allocates points to the rider or handler only.

11.2 Western Horsemanship

11.2.1 General

- a. Riders will be judged on seat and hands, ability to control and show the horse.
- b. Results as shown by performance of the horse are NOT to be considered more important than the method used by the rider.
- c. The competitor's overall poise, confidence, appearance, and position throughout the class, as well as the physical condition of the horse, will be evaluated.

11.2.2 Position

- a. Riders should sit in centre of saddle with legs under rider forming a straight vertical line through ear, centre of shoulder, centre of hip and back of heel.
 - i. Stirrup length should allow heels to be lower than toes, with slight bend in knee, and toe directly under knee.
 - ii. Body should always appear comfortable, relaxed and flexible, and back should be nearly flat. Stiff and/or arched lower back should be avoided.
 - iii. Feet may be placed home in the stirrup, with boot heel touching the stirrup, or may be placed with ball of foot in the stirrup. Riding with toes only in stirrup will be penalized.
- b. **Hands:** Both hands and arms shall be held in a relaxed easy manner, with the shoulders back and down, and upper arm in a straight line with the body, the arm holding the reins bent at elbow forming a straight line from the elbow to the horse's mouth.
 - i. When using a romal, the rider's off hand shall be around the romal with at least 40 cm of rein between the hands.
 - ii. Wrists are to be kept straight and relaxed, with thumb

between the reins is permitted when using split reins, but not with a romal.

- iii. Some movement of the arm is permissible, but excessive pumping will be penalized.
- iv. Reins are to be carried immediately above or slightly in front of saddle horn.
- v. Only one hand is to be used for reining, and hand shall not be changed.
- vi. Reins should be carried so as to have light contact with the horse's mouth and at no time shall reins be carried with more than a slight hand movement.
- vii. Horses five years of age or younger are shown with a snaffle bit or hackamore.
- viii. It is legal for a rider to show with two hands on the reins, in accordance with [Article 1.12.2](#).

- c. **Position in motion:** rider should sit to jog and not post.

At the lope, the rider should remain seated.

- i. Rider should maintain a vertical position at all gaits.
- ii. All movements of horse should be governed by the use of imperceptible aids.
- iii. Exaggerated shifting of the rider's weight is not desirable.
- iv. Moving of the lower legs of riders who are short shall not be penalized.

- d. **Mounting and dismounting:** judges shall not ask riders to mount or dismount.

11.2.3 Appointments

- a. Clothing must be clean, work-person like and neat.
- b. The saddle must fit the rider. It may be slick or swelled fork, having a high or low cantle, but most definitely sized to the rider.

11.2.4 Class Routine and Conduct

The judge will ask each rider to work individually. The individual works any of the maneuvers the judge feels are necessary to determine the horsemanship ability of the rider.

- a. Tests: individual work may be composed of any of the following:
 - i. Walk, jog, trot, lope or gallop in a straight line, a curve, a circle, or any combination of these gaits and patterns, such as a figure eight, etc.
 - ii. Stop

- iii. Backup
 - iv. Side pass
 - v. Counter canter
 - vi. Turn on the haunches, including spins and rollbacks, or turn on the forehand
 - vii. Simple change of lead through the trot, walk, halt, in a straight line, figure eight or any other pattern
 - viii. Flying change of lead in a straight line, figure eight, or any other pattern.
- b. Use of markers helps to standardize patterns and guide riders, but they also increase the degree of difficulty somewhat, so their placement should be carefully planned and indicated in the posted pattern, and their placement in the arena well supervised.
 - c. The judge must post the pattern they will ask for at least one hour prior to the class commencing.
 - d. Judging of individual work will begin at the indication of the judge, and it stops at the end of the 30-second time period, indicated by a signal from the ring steward or timer.
 - i. Competitors shall leave the arena at the signal, regardless of whether or not they have completed work prescribed by the judge.
 - e. Failure to complete the pattern will not incur elimination, but shall be scored accordingly:
 - f. The whole class, or just the finalists after the individual work, must work at all three gaits at least one direction of the arena. A back up should be asked for at some time during the class.

11.3 Western Equitation

11.3.1 General

- a. Riders will be judged on seat, hands, performance of horse, appointments of horse and rider, and suitability of horse to rider.
- b. Body should appear comfortable and relaxed.
 - i. Stirrups should be short enough to allow the heels to be lower than the toes, with the weight carried on the ball of the foot.
- c. Gaits should be consistent and the horse manageable and under control.
- d. The position of the hand not being used for reining is optional but should be kept free of the horse and equipment and held in a relaxed manner with the rider's body straight at all times.
- e. Bandages or boots of any kind are not permitted.

1.3.2 Class Conduct

- a. Riders may enter the ring at a walk or jog and are judged at the walk, jog, and lope both ways of the ring.
- b. All competitors are required to back up in a straight line.
- c. Results shown by performance of the horse are not to be considered more important than the method used by the rider in obtaining them.

1.3.3 Scoring

- a. Minor faults:
 - i. Seat:
 - Sitting off centre
 - Sway back, round back.
 - ii. Hands:
 - Unsteadiness
 - Incorrect position.
 - iii. Legs:
 - Uneven in stirrups
 - Motion in legs
 - Insufficient weight in stirrups
 - Incorrect position.
 - iv. Control:
 - Breaking from jog to lope or walk to jog
 - Not standing in line up.
 - v. General:
 - Poorly fitting equipment, untidy/unclean equipment
 - Failure to use corners and rails
 - Suitability of horse and rider
 - Overall appearance untidy, poor grooming.

- b. Major faults:
 - i. Seat:
 - Excessive body motion
 - Popping out of saddle.
 - ii. Hands:
 - Heavy hands, constant bumping
 - Horse's mouth open
 - Restrictions causing less than 40 cm of rein slack between hands
 - Touching saddle to prevent a fall.
 - iii. Legs:
 - Excessive spurring
 - Loss of contact between legs and saddle or foot and stirrup.
 - iv. Control:
 - Breaking from jog to walk or lope to jog
 - Backing up crookedly
 - Missing leads
 - Failure to backup.
 - v. General:
 - Improper appointments
 - Excessive voice commands
 - Excessive circling
 - Major delays in transitions.

1.3.4 Elimination

- a. Seat: falling from horse
- b. Hands:
 - i. Two hands on reins, except if riding a junior horse
 - ii. Finger between romal reins
 - iii. More than one finger between split reins.
- c. Legs: touching in front of cinch.
- d. General:
 - i. Fall of horse
 - ii. Going off pattern.

1.3.5 Tests

Judge may choose tests to administer. Tests can be performed individually or collectively. Instructions should be publicly announced. If a pattern is used, it must be posted before the class (pattern is defined as two or more tests performed in conjunction).

- a. Backup
- b. Individual performance on the rail
- c. Figure eight at a jog
- d. Lope and stop
- e. Figure eight at a lope, with correct leads:
 - i. Simple change of lead (horse is brought to a walk or jog before restarting lope on the new lead)
 - ii. One figure eight demonstrates two changes of lead and is completed by closing up the last circle and stopping on the centre of the eight.
- f. Figure eight at a lope using flying change of lead
- g. Change of lead down the centre of ring, using simple lead changes
- h. Riding a serpentine, demonstrating flying lead changes
- i. Sliding stop
- j. Rollback
- k. Spins (360-degree turns).

11.4 Hunt Seat Equitation

Includes flat and over fences classes. Riders will ride with hunter tack and attire.

11.4.1 Tack and Equipment

- a. Only regular cavesson nosebands permitted.
- b. **Permitted Bits:**
 - i. Snaffles, pelhams, double bridles, or kimberwicks
 - Pelham converters are only permitted in junior B and C classes.
- c. Reins must be made entirely of leather.
- d. Whips are permitted but may not exceed 75 cm in length.
- e. Spurs are permitted.
- f. Running or standing martingales are not permitted in flat classes but are optional over fences.
 - i. EXCEPTION: in classes where tack change is not permitted between rounds, martingales are not permitted.
- g. Conservative coloured boots and bandages are permitted.

11.4.2 Classes

- a. Junior and adult classes are not to be combined.
- b. Maximum heights over fences for junior B and C competitors:
 - i. Small ponies – 0.7 m (2'3)
 - ii. Medium ponies – 0.75 m (2'6")
 - iii. Large ponies – 0.85 m (2'9")
 - iv. Horses – 0.9 m (3').
- c. Maximum heights over fences for junior A competitors – 0.9 m (3').
- d. Shows are encouraged to offer Hunt Seat Equitation classes at a height that will encourage participation while sufficiently testing riders, and do not need to be set at the maximum. Heights being offered must be specified in the prize list.

11.4.3 Judging Criteria

- a. To be judged on rider ability alone.
- b. Riders will be judged on seat, hands, legs, and their ability to control and show their horses in a hunt or forward type seat.

11.4.4 Class Routine on the Flat

- a. The class will proceed at least once around the ring at each gait: walk, trot and canter – and on command will reverse and repeat.
- b. Following the rail work, the class will line up and perform individual tests at the judge's discretion.
- c. As part of the individual testing, the judge may pose questions related to horsemanship, horse anatomy, tack, stable management, and other related topics.
- d. Judge must specify if a change of lead is required when requesting a change of direction at the canter.

11.4.5 Class Routine Over Fences

- a. Course shall consist of not less than eight jumps. The course should be similar to a basic hunter course, It should allow the rider to test his/her skills while keeping to the standards of a good hunter round. The course may include a bending line or a rollback. It may be set up so that the rider can elect to approach the fence from two different lines, If the rider chooses the route with the higher degree of difficulty, he/she may earn extra points, however, the overall picture must remain rhythmic and flowing.
- b. Riders shall keep an even pace throughout the course.

- c. Elimination shall result from:
 - i. Fall of horse or rider
 - ii. Second disobedience.
- d. Individual tests may be selected at the judge's discretion from tests listed in Article 11.4(g) (below).

11.4.6 Tests

- a. The judge must choose a minimum of two individual hunter equitation tests (see below). No other tests may be used.
- b. If any test or part of a test is to be ridden without stirrups over fences, the rider must remove stirrups completely before commencing the test.
- c. For restrictions on use of tests, see [Article 11.4.7](#).
- d. Judges must state specific requirements for each test.
- e. Additional test requirements must be announced publicly. The announcement must be given twice to ensure it is heard by all competitors
- f. If any qualified riders do not participate in the ride-off, they will be placed after all riders that do participate in the ride-off.
- g. The approved tests for hunt seat equitation are
 - i. Dismount and mount
 - ii. Rein back
 - iii. Individual performance
 - iv. Figure eight at trot, demonstrating change of diagonals
 - v. Figure eight at canter with simple change of leads through the walk or trot
 - vi. Gallop and stop
 - vii. Extended trot
 - viii. Turn on haunches through the walk
 - ix. Trot and canter without stirrups
 - x. Change leads on a straight line down centre with simple change through the walk or trot
 - xi. Counter canter
 - xii. Demonstration of about one minute on own mount. Rider must advise the judge beforehand what they plan to demonstrate
 - xiii. Pull up between fences except in a combination
 - xiv. Jump low fences, trot or canter
 - xv. Jump without stirrups (stirrups must be removed from the saddle when over fences)
 - xvi. Change of leads with flying changes.

11.4.7 Limitations for Junior Classes

Above listed tests are not applicable to all classes. Limitations apply for junior classes as below:

Class	Flat Tests	Tests Over Fences
Junior C	a – d	a – d, plus l and n
Junior B	a – h	a – h, plus l and m
Junior A	a – l, plus p	a – p
Adult/Amateur	a – l, plus p	a – p

12 Showmanship at Halter

12.1 General

The showmanship class shall be judged strictly on the competitor's ability to fit and show a horse at halter. The horse is merely a prop to demonstrate the ability and preparation of the competitor.

The ideal showmanship performance consists of a poised, confident, neatly attired competitor leading a well-groomed and conditioned horse that quickly and efficiently performs the requested pattern with promptness, smoothness, and precision. The showmanship class is not another halter class and should not be judged as such.

12.2 Patterns

It is mandatory that the judge post any patterns to be worked at least one hour prior to the commencement of the class, however, if the judge requires additional work of competitors for consideration of final placing, the finals pattern may not be posted.

Patterns should be designed to test the showman's ability to effectively present a horse to the judge. All ties will be broken at the judge's discretion.

12.3 Attire

For the purpose of Prairie Crocus classes, competitors in showmanship classes may be dressed in either western or English attire. English competitors may show in a bridle.

If a competition is offering both western and English showmanship, the details must be displayed within the prize list. Juniors must wear ASTM/SEI, BSI/BS, EN, AS/NZS, or CE VG1 01.040 2014-12 (provided they are BSI Kitemarked) approved protective headgear at all times, with chin strap fastened.

12.4 Conduct

- a. All exhibitors may enter the ring and be worked individually, or each exhibitor may be worked from the gate individually.
- b. The following maneuvers may be asked of the contestants:
 - i. Lead the horse at a walk, jog, trot or extended trot
 - ii. Back in a straight, curved line or a combination thereof
 - iii. Halt.

- iv. Turn 90 (1/4), 180 (1/2), 270 (3/4) or 360 (full turn) degrees or any combination or multiple of such turns:
 - For turns of less than 90 degrees the horse should be turned to the left.
 - For turns of 90 degrees or greater the horse should be turned to the right, pivoting on the hind right leg while stepping across and in front of the right leg with the left front leg.
- v. All horses must be set up squarely for inspection.
- vi. Horses must be led, backed and turned from the left side.
- vii. Handler should never leave the head of the horse, nor stand directly in front of the horse.
- viii. At no time should the handler touch the horse with either their hands or feet, nor visibly cue the horse by pointing to their feet during set up.

12.5 Scoring

Competitors are to be scored from zero to 20, half point increments are acceptable. Ten points should be allocated toward the overall appearance of the handler and the horse, and ten points allocated toward performance.

12.5.1 Overall Appearance

- a. The handler should be poised courteous and confident, conducting themselves in a businesslike manner.
- b. The use of any artificial aids shall cause elimination.
- c. The handler must be positioned between the eye and the midpoint of the horse's neck and lead on the horse's left side, holding the lead shank (or reins) in their right hand near the halter (or bridle) with the rest of the lead loosely coiled or folded in the left hand.
 - i. The excess lead should never be tightly coiled or rolled.
- d. The handler's arms should be bent at the elbows with the forearms held in a neutral position, with the elbows held close to the handler's side.
 - i. Arms should never be held straight out with locked elbows.
- e. When turning the horse to the right, the handler shall remain in the same position as leading the horse but shall turn and face the horse and have the horse move away from them.

- f. When backing, the handler should turn to face the rear of the horse with the right hand extended across the handler's chest and walk forwards beside the horse with the horse backing up.
- g. Appearance of the horse:
 - i. Body score and fitness should be assessed. Coat should be well brushed and clean. Manes may be braided or banded but should not contain any adornments. Tails should be neat, clean and free of tangles. Bridle paths, and long hairs on the head and legs should be trimmed. Sensory hairs may be left on the horse for their comfort and safety
 - ii. Hooves should be neat and properly trimmed. Horses may be shown shod or barefoot.

12.5.2 Performance

- a. The handler should perform the work accurately, smoothly, precisely, and with a reasonable amount of speed.
 - i. Accuracy should not be sacrificed for speed.
 - ii. Horse should obey willingly with minimal visible or audible cuing.
 - iii. Failure to follow the pattern, or severe disobedience shall not result in elimination but shall be penalized severely.
- b. The horse shall be led directly to and away from the judge in a straight or curved line and track freely at the prescribed gait, as described in the assigned test. The horse should travel straight with head in line with the body.
- c. The stop should be prompt and smooth with the horse's body remaining in line with its head and neck.
- d. The horse should back up readily, maintaining straightness through its body.
- e. The horse should be set up quickly with feet squarely underneath the body (breed specific discipline may vary).

12.6 Faults

Faults can be classified as minor, major or severe. The judge will determine the appropriate classification of fault based upon the degree and/or frequency of the infraction.

A minor fault will result in a half to four-point deduction from the competitor's score. A major fault will result in a deduction of four and a half points or more from the score.

An entry that incurs a severe fault avoids elimination but should be placed below all other entries that complete the pattern correctly. A minor fault can become a major fault and a major fault can become a severe fault when the degree and/or frequency of the infraction(s) merits.

12.6.1 Faults in Overall Appearance

- a. Poorly groomed, conditioned or trimmed horse.
- b. Dirty, ragged, or poorly fitted halter, lead or bridle.
- c. Poor or improper position of competitor.
- d. Excessively stiff, artificial or unnatural movement around horse or when leading.
- e. Continuous holding of the chain portion of the lead, or lead shank tightly coiled around hand or dragging the ground.
- f. Changing hands on the lead except when preparing to show the horse's teeth.

12.6.2 Faults of the Performance

- a. Drifting of horse while being led.
- b. Horse stopping crooked or dropping a hip out when stopping, setting up, or standing.
- c. Backing, leading, or turning sluggishly or crooked.
- d. Horse not set up squarely or excessive time required to set up.
- e. Failure to maintain a pivot foot during turns or stepping behind right front leg with left front leg when turning to the right.
- f. Horse holding head and/or neck crooked when leading, stopping, or backing.
- g. Failure to perform maneuvers at designated markers, but horse is on pattern.

12.6.3 Severe Faults in Overall Appearance

Avoids disqualification but should be placed below others that do not incur a severe fault.

- a. Leading on the off or right side of the horse.
- b. Complete failure to move around horse by competitor and obstructing judge's view.
- c. Competitor touching the horse or kicking or pointing their feet at the horse's feet during set.
- d. Standing directly in front of the horse.
- e. Competitor wearing spurs or chaps.

12.6.4 Severe Fault of the Performance

Avoids disqualification but should be placed below others that do not incur a severe fault.

- a. Omission or addition of maneuvers.
- b. Knocking over a cone.
- c. Working on the wrong side of the cones.
- d. Severe disobedience including rearing or pawing, horse kicking at other horse, competitors or judge, or horse continuously circling the competitor.

12.6.5 Disqualification

- a. Loss of control of horse that endangers handler, other horses or handlers, or judge including the horse escaping from the handler.
- b. Failure of competitor to wear correct number in a visible manner.
- c. Willful abuse.
- d. Excessive schooling or training, or use of artificial aids.

12.6.6 Suggested Scoring Breakdown

20: Excellent performance. Pattern completed accurately, smoothly, and precisely. High level of professionalism demonstrated. Horse is fit and well groomed. Handler is neat, clean and appropriately dressed.

18 – 19: Generally excellent performance. One or two minor faults in the execution of the pattern or appearance. Handler is highly professional.

16 – 17: Good pattern execution. One or two minor faults in performance or appearance. Handler is reasonably professional in presentation.

14 – 15: Average pattern work. Lacks quickness and precision or commits two or more minor faults in performance or appearance. Horse is not presented to its best.

12 – 13: One major fault or several minor faults in the performance and or appearance that prevent effective presentation.

10 – 11: Two major faults or many minor faults.

6 – 9: Several major faults or one severe fault. Handler shows a complete lack of professionalism.

1 – 5: Handler commits one or more severe faults but completes the class and avoids elimination.

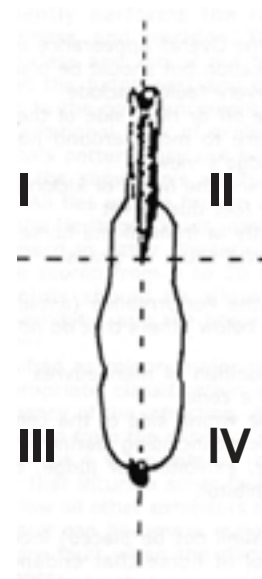
12.7 The Quarter Method

The following guidelines are meant to serve as an illustration of movement around the horse while showing in showmanship at halter and are for information purposes:

Imaginary lines bisect the horse into four equal parts as seen in Figure A (below). (Note: the quadrants will be numbered I, II, III, IV for ease of identification). One line runs across the horse, just behind the withers. The other imaginary line runs from head to tail.

When the judge is in quadrant II the handler should be in quadrant I. As the judge moves past the shoulders into quadrant IV, the handler should move to quadrant II. When the judge moves across the tail into quadrant III, the handler moves back into quadrant I. As the judge moves up the horse to quadrant I, the handler returns once more to quadrant II. When the judge returns to the front of the horse, the handler should step back into quadrant I.

Figure A



13 Command Class

13.1 General

The command class is neither a race nor is it a gymkhana event. It is a competition which exhibits the abilities of a well-trained, responsive performance horse.

13.2 Attire

Riders must be neatly dressed in discipline-suitable attire.

13.3 Conduct

Entries are eliminated, one at a time at the discretion of the judge as commands are not executed correctly. At no time are horses to be judged individually or one at a time to decide the class. At no time are ring stewards allowed to partake in the judging or placings of the class.

Suggested commands are as follows: stop, jog/trot, lope/canter, hand gallop, reverse (at any gait), backup, 360-degree turn on the haunches, 180-degree turn on the forehand, side pass (left and right), counter canter, reverse, flying change of leads (no more than eight horses), reverse simple change of leads (no more than eight horses), roll back, walk, etc.

NOTE: The command to stop from the lope/canter or hand gallop can be given only once in each direction.

Examples of elimination are as follows: failure to execute the command correctly, wrong leads, disunited, excessive speed, breaking gait, hanging up or turning sideways at the back up, circling for better position without being commanded to do so, moving when stopped, moving when mounting or dismounting, etc.

At the judge's discretion, entries may be eliminated for poor execution of the command, i.e., taking too long to execute transition (more than three seconds) from one gait to another, horse opening mouth excessively at the back up, etc.

14 General Performance Pleasure Driving

14.1 Safety

- a. All persons involved in the competition should keep safety foremost in their minds.
 - i. Having the horse under control at all times not only is a safeguard for a driver and passengers, but for everyone present and involved.
- b. In the case of an accident, the judge or management may require a safety inspection of the vehicle and/or harness involved before allowing either to be used in succeeding classes.
- c. It is the responsibility of each driver to ensure the harness and vehicle are in good repair and structurally sound.
- d. Drivers should strive to maintain a safe distance from other vehicles both during the competition and in the warmup and parking areas.
- e. All rules of the road should be observed unless uniformed officials direct otherwise.
- f. Bridles should be adjusted to fit snugly to prevent catching on a vehicle or other pieces of harness and under no conditions shall a bridle be removed from a horse while it is still put to a vehicle.
 - i. Failure to comply will incur elimination.
- g. The horse must never be left unattended while put to a vehicle.
 - i. Failure to comply will result in elimination.
- h. All junior drivers must wear approved helmets (see [Article 1.1](#)). The MHC encourages the use of protective headgear for drivers of all ages.

14.2 Style of Driving

- a. The driver should be seated comfortably on the box so as to be relaxed and effective. The elbows and arms should be close to the body with an allowing, but steady hand enabling a consistent "feel" with the horse's mouth.
- b. Drivers should not be penalized or rewarded for using one style over another.
- c. In a reinsmanship class, in order to evaluate a driver's versatility, the judge may request an appropriate test involving driving with one hand.

14.3 Use of Whip

- a. While driving, an appropriate driving whip shall be carried in hand at all times.
- b. Failure to carry a whip in hand in an obstacle driving class incurs elimination.
- c. The whip salute is used to acknowledge the judge at the start and finish of an individual test.

14.4 Outside Assistance

- a. Only the driver may handle the reins, whip, or brake during a competition.
 - i. Failure to comply will incur elimination.
- b. Drivers 14 years of age and under must be accompanied in the vehicle at all times by an adult capable of rendering assistance if needed.
- c. No change of driver is permitted.
- d. Drivers receiving outside assistance after the judging has begun will be eliminated at the judge's discretion unless that assistance has been specifically allowed.

14.5 Dress

- a. Drivers should be dressed conservatively according to the style of the present day.
 - i. Period costumes or gaudy trappings are discouraged.
 - ii. Dress for the driver should conform to the type of turnout (i.e., formal, park, country, sporting).
- b. Gentlemen must wear a coat or jacket while appearing in any class unless excused from doing so by the judge and/or show management. When accepting awards, gentlemen are requested to remove their hats.
- c. Ladies must wear a conservative dress, tailored suit, or slacks. Floppy hats are discouraged.
- d. Unless otherwise specified, the driver has the option of wearing a hat, an apron or knee rug.
- e. Drivers must wear gloves.
- f. Junior drivers must wear ASTM/SEI, BSI/BS, EN, AS/NZS, or CE VG1 01.040 2014-12 (provided they are BSI Kitemarked) approved protective headgear at all times, with chin strap fastened.

14.6 The Horse

- a. A horse may be of any breed or type, colour or size as long as it is capable of performing the gaits required.
- b. Braiding of the mane is optional.
- c. If shod, it should be suitable for pleasure driving.

14.7 Bits

Snaffle and other types of traditional driving bits are allowed. Burr, gag and twisted wire bits of any kind are not permitted.

14.8 Gaits

- a. **Walk:** a free, regular and unconstrained walk of moderate extension is required.
 - i. The horses should walk energetically, but calmly, with even and determined pace.
- b. **Slow trot:** the horse should maintain forward impulsion while showing submission to the bit.
 - i. The trot is slower and more collected, but not to the degree required in the dressage collected trot.
 - ii. The horse should indicate willingness to be driven on the bit while maintaining a steady cadence.
- c. **Working trot:** this is the pace between the strong and the slow trot and rounder than the strong trot.
 - i. The horses go forward freely and straight, engaging the hind legs with good hock action, on a taut, but light, rein.
 - ii. The position being balanced and unconstrained and the steps even. The hind feet touch the ground in the footprints of the fore feet.
- d. **Strong trot – “trot on”:** This is a clear, but not excessive increase in pace and lengthening of stride while remaining well balanced and showing appropriate lateral flexion on turns.
 - i. Light contact to be maintained. Excessive speed will be penalized.
- e. **Halt:** horses and vehicle should be brought to a complete square stop without abruptness or veering.
 - i. At the halt, horses should stand attentive, motionless and straight with the weight evenly distributed over all four legs and be ready to move off at the slightest indication from the driver.

- f. **Rein back:** a backward movement in which the legs are raised and set down simultaneously in diagonal pairs with the hind legs remaining well in line.
 - i. The horse must move backward at least four steps in an unhurried manner with head flexed and straight, pushing the vehicle back evenly in a straight line.
 - ii. The horse must move forward willingly to the former position using the same quiet aids.

14.9 Classes

14.9.1 Turnout Class

A pleasure driving class where entries are judged primarily on the performance and quality of each turnout.

- a. To be shown both ways of the arena at a walk, slow trot, working trot, and strong trot, to stand quietly and to rein back.
- b. Entries may be selected for a workout and are to be worked both ways of the arena at any gait requested by the judge and may be asked to execute a figure eight and/or perform other appropriate tests.
- c. Judged:
 - i. 70% on the condition, fit, and appropriateness of harness and vehicle, spares and appointment, neatness and appropriateness of attire, and overall impression
 - ii. 30% on performance, manners, and way of going.

14.9.2 Working Class

A pleasure driving class in which entries are judged primarily on the suitability of the horse to provide a pleasant drive.

- a. To be shown both ways of the arena at a walk, slow trot, working trot and strong trot, to stand quietly, both on the rail and while lined up, and to rein back.
- b. All entries selected for a workout may be worked both ways of the arena at any gait requested by the judge and may be asked to execute a figure eight.
- c. Judged:
 - i. 70% on performance, manners and way of going of horse
 - ii. 20% on the condition and fit of harness and vehicle
 - iii. 10% on neatness of attire.

14.9.3 Reinsmanship

A driving class in which entries are judged primarily on the skill and ability of the driver.

- a. To be shown at walk, slow trot, working trot, and strong trot. Rein back will be required.
- b. Entries may be selected for a workout and are to be worked both ways of the arena at any gait requested by the judge and may be asked to execute a figure eight and/or perform other appropriate tests.
- c. Either the one-handed or two-handed method of driving is acceptable, entries should not be rewarded or penalized for using one method over the other.
- d. Judges may request drivers to drive with one hand, as a test of driver versatility.
- e. Judged:
 - i. 75% on handling of reins and whip control, posture, and overall impression of driver
 - ii. 25% on condition of vehicle, harness and neatness of attire.

Benefits of Manitoba Horse Council Membership

Manitoba Equestrian Federation (MHC) Membership: Adult or Youth.

Through Acera Insurance Services, Individual Adult or Youth membership includes the following insurance coverage:

- \$5,000,000 Personal Liability insurance related to the ownership and Personal use of horses. Liability insurance for the non-commercial transport of non-owned horse(s) (limits apply); personal liability includes non-commercial care, custody and control of up to a maximum of three non-owned horses (limits apply). Coverage will not respond to commercial use of the horse or commercial transportation of non-owned horses.
- \$40,000 Accidental, Death and Dismemberment (AD&D) for permanent injuries arising from equine-related activities.

Members also receive highly discounted rates on optional insurance offered by Acera Insurance Services. (Weekly Accident Indemnity Insurance, Members Named Perils, additional Accidental Death and Dismemberment which includes limited benefits for fracture and dental arising from equine related activities, out of country/province travel, members' tack coverage (personal auto/home, disability, horse mortality, and business and professional insurance – including coaching and official's insurance – is also available directly through Acera Insurance Services).

- Discounts – MHC members receive discounts at several MHC business partners and sponsors. Please visit the website for a full list.
- An MHC member may apply to receive funding from the MHC scholarship program to assist with equine related educational pursuits (please see MHC website for full details).
- MHC membership is required for certification as a provincial official, to participate in the Ride and Drive rewards programs, as well as, the "Cover Your Costs" draw held for Prairie Crocus sanctioned competitions.