



New Zealand Miniature Horse Association Inc

Please Note: These guidelines are a draft that is available for members to use if they are competing in a Specialty Event. They will remain as Draft Guidelines for approximately two years and are subject to review in May 2007. If you use these Draft Guidelines Please provide feedback to NZMHA c/- Cara Scott, NZMHA Council Specialty Committee Chairperson. Thanks to Kay Dance and others for the development of these Draft Guidelines.

Also Note: Diagrams are still to be inserted.

Draft Guidelines for Competitors

for the Specialty Events of

- ~ Inhand Dressage and Dressage in Longreins
- ~ Inhand Showjumping
- ~ Combined Training (eg: Dressage with Show Jumping)
- ~ Inhand Eventing (Horse Trials/One Day Event)

1: INTRODUCTION

- (a) The Rules and procedures for these events, modeled on the 'Olympic' disciplines and Pony Club and Riding Club events for full sized horses and ponies, have been tailored specifically for Miniature Horses. Whilst it is recognised that, unlike ridden competition, the limiting factor in Miniature Horse competition is the fitness, ability, and positioning of the handler of the Miniature Horse, the principles in training for, competing in, and judging of these disciplines has been retained.
- (b) The primary objective of these disciplines is to encourage a harmonious relationship between horse and handler in an enjoyable environment, yet still provide sufficient challenge within the capabilities and competitiveness of the individual competitor. Any sound and suitably trained horse of sufficient age should be able to participate, most handlers will be able to participate to their own level of physical ability.
- (c) This Guide provides a summary of the Rules and some helpful hints. Competitors should familiarise themselves with the applicable rules to ensure themselves and their horses are suitably prepared, especially with regard to minimum ages, dressage movements, jump dimensions/type, and compulsory/prohibited equipment. The majority of the rules and procedures are provided for application by organizing committees of any level of experience to ensure the running of the event is achieved in a safe, fair, and enjoyable environment, the Rules in full are available to competitors on request.

2: GENERAL

- (a) (i) All competitors are bound by Rule G03.01 – Eligibility for Showing of the General Rules in the Show Rule Book for Breed Shows.
- (ii) Special Considerations for Stallions with regard to minimum handler/driver ages as applicable to showing under the General Rules in the Show Rules Book shall apply.
- (iii) All horses must be registered with NZMHA, unless otherwise permitted in classes run under Introductory conditions or where the competition is held as a "Non-Grading" event, all of which must be clearly stated on the schedule.
- (iv) All horses must have a valid NZMHA Height Certificate at the time of competing.
- (v) No horse which has been grazed, exercised, or trained (other than warmup for a previous competition) in the competition area within the 30 days preceding the competition may compete in any class at that event other than as *hors concours* (refer 5c)
- (b) To obtain the most enjoyment from any Performance event horses should be trained to a level suitable for the competition and horse and handler be suitably fit.
- (c) On the day competitors are responsible for being ready to compete on time, and in the event of scratchings competitors should be prepared to compete earlier than their advised approximate start times. All competitors will be listed in start order on the score board, in competitions where horses may not be competing in 'back number order' (such as Dressage with more than one class or Show Jumping in 'blackboard' order) competitors need to be aware of the number of the horse immediately proceeding their own in the competition.
- (d) Plan to arrive at the event early enough to have sufficient time to collect your back number, prepare your horse, and have him suitably warmed up and worked in for the first class. If you are competing late in the class draw at a One Day Event you may even have time to have a first walk of the jumping courses before the dressage phase.
- (e) In some competitions a 'guinea pig' competitor may be employed, to go first in the draw to get the judge's eye in.
- (f) Attend the competitors briefing if one is offered, this is where additional information may be given by officials and is a good opportunity to ask questions and clarify proceedings.
- (g) Many venues will be on private property, some of these may be working farms. Make yourself familiar with any areas which are 'out of bounds' and any identified hazards (eg. creeks/rivers, beehives, livestock, electric fences).

(h) DRUGS AND ARTIFICIAL IRRITANTS

All competitors are bound by Rule G08 – Drugs and Artificial Irritants of the General Rules in the Show Rule Book for Breed Shows.

(i) UNSPORTSMANLIKE BEHAVIOUR/ABUSE

All competitors are bound by Rule G10 – Ring Procedure of the General Rules in the Show Rule Book for Breed Shows.

(j) PRESENTATION

(i) At all times the exhibitor of a Miniature Horse must be aware that both horse and handler are on show. Competitors are reminded that they are required to be neatly and safely attired and their horses presented to a standard suitable to appear before an audience. Closed front shoes or boots with a low heel and long trousers/pants are required for all disciplines, in all jumping classes/events smart sports shoes/trainers are recommended. Flashy turnout and 'silver' on gear will not place over a better performance in workmanlike attire. Partial clipping (eg trace high clip) and plaiting the mane/tail is permitted in any class.

(ii) Prohibited Equipment - Any auxiliary equipment not specifically mentioned as compulsory or optional should be considered prohibited. The use of prohibited equipment, including whip substitutes, will result in automatic disqualification.

(k) PROTESTS

All Protests are bound by Rule G09 of the General Rules in the Show Rule Book for Breed Shows. In addition, all protests regards marking and scoring of Dressage Tests must be lodged within 30 minutes of the Test Sheets being available to Competitors.

3: DRESSAGE

- (a) Dressage aims to produce a horse suitably trained and conditioned so as to be able to perform the movements required with both grace and the minimum of effort, with obedience to a respectful handler/driver, so that the combination of horse and handler/driver is working in harmony. In competitive Dressage, horses must complete a set pattern of movements in an arena at markers as defined by the Test. General impression and ability of horse and handler/driver are also scored. Conformation of the horse is not judged.

- (b) All tests take place in a lettered arena either 12m x 24m, or 12m x 36m for more advanced tests.
 - (i) 12m x 24m (3 loop serpentine)
 - (ii) 12m x 36m (4 loop serpentine)
 - (c) Try to learn your test/s in advance, even if you plan to use a Commander to call the test rather than rely on your memory. Commanders must stand outside the arena at E or B and recite the test exactly as it is written, and should recite movements one in advance to give the competitor warning of what is required.
 - (d) Horses are not restricted to competing in their own Grade but do ensure your horse is suitably trained to be able to perform the movements required of the higher grade.
 - (e) You may work your horse around the arena before you enter at A as long as the previous competitor has finished their test and exited the arena. When the judge signals that you may start (bell, horn, or whistle) make your way to A. Turning a circle at the pace you are to enter and in the direction of your first turn at C will assist in getting your horse lined up to the centreline and prepare him for the first turn.
 - (f) When working up the centreline the horse should be on the centreline, with the handler at his shoulder/driver behind.
 - (g) When working on circles, turns, and serpentines the horse is required to maintain the same pace and rhythm as he would if working in a straight line. To avoid the horse speeding up to match the handler or being dragged behind on a left hand turn/circle the handler should shorten his own strides to keep at the horse's shoulder. To avoid the horse slowing down to match the handler or pulling ahead on a right hand turn/circle the handler should lengthen his own strides to keep at the horse's shoulder.
 - (h) Circles should be round, avoid egg-shaped circles by the handler/driver looking around the circle rather than at the horse. A 12m circle is the full width of the arena, 6m is half arena, 9m is $\frac{3}{4}$ arena.
 - (i) Serpentine start and end at A/C, each loop is a half circle with a straight line crossing the centreline parallel to A/C. Each loop goes to the side of the arena but the horse is not worked into the corner on the first and last loop (see b above).
 - (j) Inhand Equipment – as per Halter Obstacle in the Show Rules Book. Additionally, the lead must be attached directly to the headcollar/headstall under the horse's jaw, not off the ring on the side of the noseband or via a chain.
 - (k) Longreining Equipment – as per Longreining in the Show Rules Book.
 - (l) Minimum Ages - Handlers must be 5 years and over to compete in Inhand tests under Novice conditions (ie: Novice, Youth). Competitors must be 9 years and over to compete in Open Inhand tests and any Longreining test. Drivers in Advanced Open Longreining tests must be 13 years and over.
 - (m) All Inhand Dressage horses must be 12 months and over. All horses in Dressage in Longreins must be 24 months and over
 - (n) Specialty Tests – Freestyle, Pairs, Quadrille
- (i) These events are designed to add a different dimension to the discipline of Dressage by encouraging creativity and a departure from the routine of training and standard competition. They also provide an opportunity for a display feature as used in an intermission at other events.
- (ii) Specialty Tests are arranged by the competitor(s) and are performed from memory. Each Test will begin with entry to the arena at 'A' and shall end with a halt and salute on the centreline. Horses are required to show work at all paces and work in both directions with any number of movements and figures normally required in Official Tests of the corresponding Open Grade. Music for Freestyle to Music Tests is the responsibility of the competitor.
- (iii) Where Costume is permitted for Specialty Tests this will be stated in the schedule. All articles of costume shall be fastened safely and securely, no part of a costume may be dragged. Suitable footwear is required for all exhibitors. Horses may only wear leg wraps/bandages as part of costume in Pairs/Quadrille. Live animals may not be used as props. Hand-held props are not permitted.
- (iv) Freestyle/Freestyle to Music max. 3 minutes in a 12m x 24m arena, or 4 minutes in a 12m x 36m arena
 - Pairs (2 horses and 2 handlers/drivers) max. 3 ½ minutes in a 12m x 24m arena.
 - Quadrille (4 horses and 4 handlers/drivers) max. 5 minutes in a 12m x 36m arena.

Timing shall commence as the competitor/s enters the arena at 'A'. If the performance exceeds the Time Limit the judge will signal by bell, whistle, or horn when time is up and the competitor must immediately bring the performance to a close with a turn down the centreline, halt, and salute. Any movements attempted after this signal is given will not be judged.

(v) The performance will be judged on the correctness of execution of each of the movements attempted, the choreography and aesthetic appeal, suitability of the music to the horse, costuming if permitted, and the scoring of the general Collective Marks as would be required in an Official Test. Pairs and Quadrille are also judged on the ability of the individual horses and handlers/drivers to execute these movements and the ability of individual horses and handlers/drivers to work together as part of a team performance.

4: JUMPING

- (a) Attend the official course walk for jumping classes, especially for the cross country phase. The cross country course will initially be flagged for the first class 'on course' which will be the most advanced class/highest jump heights (eg Open B), any changes to the course for less advanced classes (eg Youth, Introductory) will be posted beside the relevant jump/s but having the course designer explain where you are required to go and any simpler alternatives to challenging jumps (such as water, combinations, jumps on slopes) can be very valuable.
- (b) Walk the course on the route you intend to take with your horse, don't forget to walk through the start and finish lines, it is very disappointing to complete a round only to find out that you are Eliminated on the score board for failing to Finish.
- (c) All jumping classes are timed. Speeds required for Novice and Open classes have been calculated at a working trot, 150m/min. Slightly less demand is placed on Introductory, Masters, and Youth competitors, 130m/min. Speeds are the same for both Category A and Category B horses as it is the handler which is the limiting factor in how far/fast the combination can go.

- (d) Distances will always be measured on a natural track, no trick distances are permitted.
- (e) Novice jump heights/spreads do not exceed those for Novice/Open Hunter. Open jump dimensions are increased. Maximum jump heights for Introductory classes are similar to Introductory Hunter.
- (f) A warmup jump will always be made available in the collecting area for competitors to use. This jump is not provided for teaching horses to jump, and for safety reasons must be jumped from one direction only.
- (g) **Compulsory Equipment** – Headcollars/headstalls and leads as per Hunter for all classes. In all Introductory competitions the lead must attached directly to the headcollar/headstall.

Optional Equipment – the horse may wear protective leg wraps or boots in any class.

- a slip lead or chain under the horse's lower jaw may be used for additional control in Show Jumping competitions run under Open Show Jumping conditions (excludes show jumping phase of Eventing and Combined Training) and the cross country phase of Eventing under Novice and Open conditions.
- a whip with a flapper on the end, total length not exceeding 30in (eg riding crop), may be carried in the left hand as an extension of the hand in all jumping events. A whip is an aid, useful for maintaining impulsion in front of a jump or to keep his shoulder straight on approach to a combination or after a turn, etc. Incorrect use/misuse will not be tolerated, including in the collecting area, and no substitutes for a whip may be carried.

(i) **Minimum Ages** - Handlers must be 9 years and over to compete in classes run under Introductory and Novice conditions. Handlers must be 13 years and over to compete in Open classes. Horses must be 24 months or older to compete in classes run under Introductory conditions, and 36 months or older to compete in classes run under Novice and Open conditions.

(j) **SHOWJUMPING**

Show Jumping tests the ability of horse and handler to negotiate a course of faultable jumps of varying style and appearance within a set time frame. The competitor is penalised for faults on course, jumping style is not a consideration. In Standard competition horses shall jump once over a set course of 6-10 jumps, with a jumpoff against the clock to decide the winner if necessary. Unlike a Hunter course, where the track is flowing and the jumps are more ordinary with no less than 3 canter strides (6.4-7m) apart, a show jumping course will be brightly coloured with at least one combination where the jumps are only 1 stride (2.8-3m) or 2 strides (4.6-5m) apart. A show jumping course is also timed but cutting corners in a jumpoff can be as effective as increasing speed. Specialty Classes which may also be offered:

- (i) **DERBY** - The course consists of 8 to 12 jumps with a mixture of approx. 50% show jumping jumps and the balance natural/rustic 'cross country' style jumps. A Jumpoff over a shortened course shall determine the winner if necessary.
- (ii) **MYSTERY TIME** - Horses jump a single round of 6 to 10 jumps, dimensions set relative to the level/Grade of the class. Jumping Penalties are incurred and scores calculated in the usual manner, but no Time Penalties are incurred. The round with the least faults closest to the Time Allowed (which is not posted) shall be declared the winner, subsequent placings determined by lowest faults closest to the Time Allowed (ie closest to the 'Mystery' time is the deciding factor where faults are equal).
- (iii) **GAMBLER STAKES (Accumulator)** - 10 jumps are provided for the first round. Jump number 1 must be the smallest and simplest, Jump 10 the most challenging. Each Jump carries a Points value equivalent to the Jump Number (ie Jump 1 = 1 point). The competitor sets his own course of 6 jumps. With each jump cleared at the first attempt the competitor accumulates points equal to the Jump Number, for a maximum possible high score of 45 (jumps 5-10). Should a jump be knocked down, no points will accumulate for that jump. Should a horse refuse or run-out no points will accumulate for that jump, but that same jump must be re-attempted - no substitutions are allowed. Eliminations are recorded in the usual manner. Unless Eliminated the competitor may choose to attempt the *Joker*, which shall be a most challenging jump. A successful first attempt shall add 20 points to the accumulated score, however faulting at the *Joker* will cause 20 points to be deducted. The combination with the highest total score shall be declared the winner. If scores are equal the quickest times shall determine the placings.
- (iv) **TWO JUMP CHALLENGE** - A variation on 'Fault and Out', horses must be 36 months or older and can be any Grade. Two jumps are placed in a direct line 3 strides apart. The height of the first jump is not altered, the second jump will be raised in subsequent rounds in increments of Minimum 1 inch and Maximum 4 inches after each competitor has jumped once, and continue until only one horse remains in the competition.
- (v) **TAKE YOUR OWN LINE** - This is a speed event, horses must be 36 months or older, and can be any Grade. The competitor sets his own course and must jump all jumps in the arena in the order of their choosing, each jump may be jumped from either direction once but can be jumped only once. Competitors must start through the Start line and finish through the Finish line, but may do so in either direction. The round is timed, the quickest round with the least faults is the winner, minor placings being determined by quickest time for their faults.
- (vi) **JIGSAW JUMP** - This is a pairs speed event, horses must be 36 months or older, and can be any Grade. Category A and B horses may compete in the same pair. The pair of horses are on course at the same time, Competitors must each jump half of the jumps in the arena in the order of their choosing. The round is timed, the quickest round with the least faults is the winner, minor placings being determined by quickest time for their faults.

(k) **INHAND EVENTING**

- (i) In Inhand Eventing the combination of horse and handler are tested for training in Inhand Dressage, jumping ability in Show Jumping, and conditioning and confidence/partnership over natural fences in the open in Cross Country.

- (ii) The competition always starts with the Dressage phase, the marks are converted to a penalty score and the aim is to finish on this penalty score.
- (iii) Show Jumping is often held before the cross country phase, which allows horses to warm up to jumping before the demands of the cross country. The course will be similar to that for a Standard Show Jumping class, but there is no jumpoff.
- (iv) Cross Country is usually considered the most enjoyable part of the competition for competitors and spectators alike. A variety of natural jumps can be expected – rails, logs, gates, banks, ditches, brush, water, and any combination of these situated on flat or lightly rolling terrain. The maximum jump heights for Novice and Open are 2 inches smaller than those for the show jumping phase, and height is measured at lowest point of ground, either takeoff or landing, to the highest solid part of the jump. Cross country maximum distances are designed to enable a suitable distance between jumps without unfairly disadvantaging any handler, maximum distances of 350m for Open, 300m for Novice, and 250m for Introductory, Masters, and Youth will apply. Time is calculated based on a steady trot, there is no requirement to canter the entire course. On parts of the course it may be necessary to slow the horse to safely negotiate a combination or jump on a slope (or for the handler to catch their breath), lost time can be made up on latter parts of the course either by slightly increasing speed or cutting across open areas.
- (v) Arrive at the cross country collecting area in plenty of time, warm your horse up but do not tire or stale him by repeatedly jumping the warmup jump. If your horse is wearing leg wraps/bandages or boots double check the ties/buckles are secure but that the wraps/boots are not too tight on his legs. Ensure the clip on the lead will not come undone if caught on your glove. (vi) Wait to be called to the Start. Don't leave the Start until given the 'go', if you are called back to the Start after you have gone you must return immediately. Start out on course at a quiet steady pace, the first jump will be relatively small and inviting but inexperienced horses may find it challenging as they are being taken away from the security of the other horses into an unfamiliar open area and excessive speed will add to his apprehension.
- (vii) If you are stopped on course by an official for any reason (eg damaged jump further on still being rebuilt) keep your horse walking until given instruction to resume, you will be shown where your time will be taken from but may start as far behind that point as necessary to regain the same pace and attitude as before you were stopped. No stoppage time will be recorded for time taken on course to correct gear failure.
- (viii) Ease back to walk after crossing the Finish, and walk your horse around until you have recovered your breath enough to talk normally, a light cover over the horse's loins will prevent him chilling if the weather is cold.

(I) COMBINED TRAINING

- (i) In Combined Training the combination of horse and handler are tested for training in Inhand Dressage and jumping ability in Show Jumping. This event is useful as an introduction to the demands of Eventing or as a substitute for Eventing when weather/ground conditions/fitness levels make cross country jumping undesirable, as in pre-season competition. The horses Grading for Combined Training is determined by his Grading level for Eventing.
- (ii) Some novelty variations of Combined Training which may be offered:
- Substitute Standard course in Show Jumping phase with Derby course.
 - Substitute Standard course in Show Jumping phase with Gamblers stakes, dressage phase not converted to penalty score and best total score wins.
 - Substitute Show Jumping phase with Halter Obstacle (refer Rule P of Show Rule Book), horses 12 months and over eligible to compete, dressage phase not converted to penalty score and best total score wins.

5: GRADING, ENTRIES, COMPETING HORS CONCOURS

(a) The following Grades apply:

Novice (N) - horses with no more than six (6) wins in the corresponding discipline.

Open (O) - horses with more than six (6) wins in the corresponding discipline.

Grading applies to the horse only, not to the handler or horse-handler combination. Grading of a horse for one type of competition will not effect its Grading in another. (eg horse may be Open Inhand Dressage and Novice Dressage in Longreins). Wins will accumulate in NZMHA registered 'closed' Novice and Open Grade classes only.

(b) Novice horses may be entered in Open Grade competition, unless these classes are specifically restricted in the schedule to Open Grade horses. Only Open Grade horses may be entered in Advanced Open Dressage in Longreins.

(c) Open horses may not be entered in Novice Grade except in age-restricted classes (eg Youth/Masters classes, Performance Futurities) or as a Non-Competitor (*hors concours*). Any horse may be entered *hors concours* in any class at any competition, including events of their own Grade. Although not eligible for any placings/awards/points horses entered as *hors concours* shall be entered in the usual manner, and be bound by the Rules as if they were eligible for placings/awards/points.

(d) Any horse may be entered in Introductory competition, irrespective of Grade. As well as introducing inexperienced horses to these events, Introductory is a useful class for horses returning to jumping after a spell, for inexperienced handlers to learn the ropes with a 'schoolmaster', and for new handlers of experienced horses to consolidate a partnership.

(e) Entries will be by postal entry, late entries may or may not be accepted. For all Combined Training and Eventing competitions you will be notified in advance of your draw (start order), Dressage competitions may also run in this manner.

(f) Each horse may be entered only once per class for Dressage and Show Jumping, (ie no multiple entries for the same horse in the same class with different handlers/drivers). Each horse may be entered once in only one class for Combined Training and Eventing (ie. no multiple entries for the same horse in the same/ different class with the same/different handlers).

(g) Horses may compete with a different handler/driver than that notified at time of entry without penalty. Substitution of a handler during a class is not allowed (ie: different handler for Showjumping jumpoff) except with the express permission of the organising committee on medical grounds (eg sprained ankle, asthma attack after first round). Substitution of horses after close of entries and/or changing of classes to accommodate a different handler (eg Youth/Masters eligibility altered) shall be at the discretion of the Organising Committee.