

4 Season Equine Association

Rule Book 2024

Show Rules and Regulations

- A- All shows will be held, rain or shine.
- B- If a judge stops a show, because of dangerous ring or weather conditions and then resumes the show, all classes will re-start where they left off, i.e., if a Hunt Seat Pleasure class has walked and trotted the first direction but did not canter before the show was stopped, then the class will resume with cantering the first direction and complete the walk, trot and canter in the second direction. Another example would be if three trail exhibitors had finished the pattern and three had not when the show was stopped, it would resume with the last three and be pinned as usual. If the show is stopped in the middle of a class and not restarted, that class will not be pinned.
- C- Awards are to be given thru 6th place in all classes except jackpot/sweepstakes or fun classes.
- D- Trail, Jumping, Dressage and sport horse in-hand may be judged in a separate arena or area.

Exhibitors

- A- The term "Exhibitor" when used herein refers to:
 - a. Handler of a horse in a class where the merits of the horse are considered
 - b. In Horsemanship and Equitation classes the "exhibitor" is the rider
- B- No exhibitor may show before a judge any horse under said judge's ownership or lease.
- C- An exhibitor may present to 4SEA in writing any legitimate complaints concerning the judge, show committee, ringmaster, etc.
- D- No exhibitor may compete in a class before a judge by whom within three months of the show
 - a. He/She has been instructed, coached, or tutored (with or without pay)
 - b. He/She or parents, guardian, or instructor have had financial transactions relative to the sale, lease, board or training of any horse. The conducting of clinics or assistance in-group activities will not be considered instruction, coaching or tutoring.
- E- Age of exhibitors to be determined as of January 1st.
- F- If an exhibitor or his representative wishes to speak to the judge, he/she must do so with the permission of and in the presence of a show official.
- G- Exhibitors may not speak with the judge pertaining to their performance until Exhibitor has completed their last class of the day.
- H- Exhibitors are notified that any act of discourtesy or disobedience to the judges, officials, or other exhibitors on the part of owner, rider, or groom shall disqualify the horse and exhibitor. The owner shall forfeit entry and other fees. No points or awards may be given to said exhibitor or horse. Such acts will be determined by the judge and/or show officials.

Walk/Trot Division

- A- walk/trot exhibitors may be any age.
- B- A horse entered in a walk/trot class may not be ridden by the same rider in a Walk/Trot/Canter class.
- C- A walk/trot rider may show a different horse in a walk/trot/canter class.
- D- A different rider may show a walk/trot horse in a walk/trot/canter class.
- E- A walk/trot rider may show two-handed in a NON SHANKED BIT regardless of the horse's age. The bit needs to be a snaffle mouth piece and may NOT have any shank to it.

Complaints

All formal complaints must be made in writing to a 4SEA Officer within ten days of the incident.

Judges Information

- A- A judge shall not judge a show within 50 miles of his/her residence, with the exception of Trail judges.
- B- A judge may judge only one 4SEA show per year.
- C- The judge must be qualified to handle all judging assignments.
- D- Judges must be prompt and appropriately attired.
- E- The decision of the judge is final (in all cases ending each class).
- F- No lame horses will be allowed to show. Lameness is to be determined by the judge.
- G- Exhibitors will be allowed 7 minutes to repair or replace a piece of broken equipment.
- H- Exhibitors will be allowed a 5 minute tack change as long as the ringmaster is notified in advance.
- I- A rider may not dismount, or in any way be separated from his horse at any time except at the discretion of the judge or under extenuating circumstances and the show delegate is contacted. If the rider is thrown off, falls off, etc., the rider will be disqualified from placing, but may continue to ride in the class at the discretion of the judge.
- J- The judge or ring steward shall have the obligation and authority to ask an exhibitor to remove his horse from the ring for the safety of the other horses or spectators.
- K- The judge or ring steward has the authority to remove unsportsmanlike exhibitors.
- L- Draft horses and ponies are allowed in open halter classes such as Stallions or 2 year olds. They may show in pleasure type Mares, Geldings, or Weanling/Yearling.
- M- The use of an equitation or horsemanship pattern will be at the judge's discretion, but highly recommended and may be mailed in advance.

N- Classes of 20 or less MAY be split at the discretion of the judge. All classes 21 or more must be split into 2 or more equal groups. Those who make the cut in each split group must be brought back for a final run and 6 places awarded.

Trail Judge's Guide

See Michigan State 4H Horse and Pony Rules

Ring Steward Information

- A- Any reputable person who is familiar with the rules and is capable through ability or experience may act as ring steward.
- B- Duties are to assist the judge, not advise him/her.
- C- Shall not discuss or seem to discuss the horses or exhibitors with the judge.
- D- Shall not take part or seem to take part in the judging.
- E- Shall not stand in a position that interferes with the judges' view of the exhibitors.
- F- May be asked by the judge to move and place horses as he/she advises.
- G- Is empowered to stop the class and alert the judge of any dangerous or unsportsmanlike conduct.

General Rules

- A- Proper attire is to be worn in all classes.
 - English Attire:
 - 1- English style jacket, shirt with ratcatcher or tie. Appropriate styled, heeled English type boots, riding breeches, belt and helmet.
 - 2- Helmets are considered proper attire and are recommended for youth 18 and under, in such classes as Hunt Seat, On the Flat and is required for all ages in any Gymkhana and Over Fences classes.
 - 3- Slip-on spurs are not allowed, only securely buckled or strap-on spurs are allowed.
 - 4- Crops and bats are optional.
 - Western Attire:
 - 1- Long sleeved shirts, western hat, western heeled boots and a belt.
 - 2- Spurs and chaps are optional.
- B- Stallions
 - 1- A stallion is an unaltered, (non-castrated) male horse 1 year of age or older.
 - 2- Stallions must be shown and handled by a person 19 years of age or older. Exceptions are horses foaled in the current year.
 - 3- A Walk/Trot showman 18 and under is restricted from showing a stallion in hand or in performance classes. Walk/Trot exhibitors 19 and over may show a stallion.
- C- Tie downs and martingales are prohibited except in Jumping, Gymkhana or Driving classes.
- D- Nosebands are prohibited in Western classes.
- E- Flat curb chains and leather curbs are allowed.
- F- A horse is determined to be one (1) year of age as of January 1st the year following its foaling date.
- G- Bits
 - 1- Senior horse (6 years and older) must be bitted with a breed/discipline specific bit.
 - 2- Junior horse (5 years and younger) may be ridden with a bosal or non-shanked snaffle. Example- Ring snaffle
- H- Reins
 - 1- Senior horse: one hand, no change of rein hand. Rein ends shall drape over the horse's shoulder on the same side as the rein hand.
 - 2- Junior horse: two hands with split reins if using a non-shanked bit or mecate and bosal.
 - 3- Romel reins: No finger between the reins. The free hand may be used to hold the Romel provided that it is in a relaxed position and is held at least 16" from the rein hand.
- I- No lame horse will be allowed to show. Lameness is to be determined by the judge, provided the lameness is consistently observable at a trot under all circumstances.
- J- All exhibitors conforming to 4SEA rules will be allowed to show.
- K- Exhibitors will be allowed 7 minutes to repair or replace broken equipment and 5 minutes for tack changes, provided that the ringmaster is notified in advance.
- L- A rider may not dismount or in any way become separated from their horse at any time except at the discretion of the judge or under extenuating circumstances. If the exhibitor is separated from their horse (fall off, thrown off, etc.) they will be disqualified from placing, but may finish the class at the discretion of the judge.
- M- Drugging horses for any reason is prohibited.
- N- Draft horses and ponies will be considered a pleasure type horse and are allowed in open halter classes such as stallions at halter or weanling/yearling at halter or color classes.

Class Descriptions

See Michigan State 4H Horse and Pony Rules for overall descriptions. See below for additional information.

A- Lead-Line

- 1- Riders may not ride in any other class.
- 2- Rider's age is to be six and under.
- 3- Riders are to be judged on seat, legs and hands.
- 4- Chaps are optional in Western attire.
- 5- Horses are to be shown at the walk only.
- 6- Horses must be held by a handler.
- 7- The back-up may be asked for at the judge's discretion.
- 8- All exhibitors to receive 1st place ribbons

9- There will be no entry fee for lead-line riders.

B- Walk/Trot

- 1- A horse entered in a walk /trot class may not be ridden by the same rider in a walk/trot/canter class.
- 2- A walk/trot rider may show a different horse in a walk/trot/canter class.
- 3- A different rider may show a walk/trot horse in a walk/trot/canter class.
- 4- Circuit end or Year end awards will be given just as in other age divisions.
- 5- The rider is judged on seat, hands, legs and skills of the horse.
- 6- Horses are shown at the walk and trot/jog only.
- 7- The back-up may be asked for at the judge's discretion.
- 8- Regardless of the horse's age, a walk/trot rider MAY ride two handed with a broken snaffle mouthpiece in a NON SHANKED bit.

C- Green Horse Classes

- 1- The Green horse English Pleasure (Saddleseat or Huntseat) and Western Pleasure classes are walk/trot only for any age horse or rider.
- 2- These horses may also enter walk/trot/canter classes.
- 3- Exhibitors showing in the walk/trot division may not enter green horse classes.
- 4- First through sixth place ribbons will be awarded, although no year end points will accumulate from these classes.

D- Junior Horse English Pleasure

- 1- Horses must be five (5) years old and under
- 2- Horses may be ridden in a snaffle or a standard breed/discipline specific English bit.

E- Senior Horse English Pleasure

- 1- Horses six (6) years and older
- 2- Horses may be ridden in a snaffle or a standard breed/discipline specific English bit.

F- Junior Horse Western Pleasure

- 1- Horses are to be five years old and under.
- 2- Junior western horses may be ridden in a bosal, snaffle or standard breed/discipline specific bit.
- 3- Two hands may be used if using a bosal or snaffle bit according to Michigan State 4H Horse and Pony Rules or NSBA Rules

G- Senior Horse Western Pleasure

- 1- Horses are to be six years old and over.
- 2- Horses must be ridden in a standard breed specific shanked western bit with proper use of reins.

H - Bareback

- 1- Chaps are not allowed.

Optional Classes

Optional Classes may be added or removed yearly pending board approval and guidelines will follow the standard set forth via the Michigan State 4H Rules or the respective entities

Award Programs

A- Circuit End or Year End High Point Program

1- General Rules

- a. Jackpot/Sweepstakes & Championship classes do not count.
- b. an exhibitor cannot show the same horse in more than one age group. Your age is determined as of January 1st of the current year. Example: If you earn points in both 35 & over and Walk/trot 20 & over, you would get circuit end/year end points in one (1) of those age groups, not both if using same horse/rider combination but changed in the middle of the year.
- c. Points are calculated from 4SEA approved shows only.
- d. Must show at least 2/3 of our annual 4SEA shows. Exception: any foal born after April 1st of the current year.
- e. All exhibitors must be current members of 4SEA to qualify for circuit end or year-end high point awards.
- f. The High Point and Show Committees will review the entire High Points Program, including Makin' Tracks, on an annual basis.

2- Point Accumulation

- a. All points will accumulate from the time 4SEA dues are paid and will be awarded as follows:
 - 1st place = 6 points
 - 2nd place = 5 points
 - 3rd place = 4 points
 - 4th place = 3 points
 - 5th place = 2 points
 - 6th place = 1 point

3- Award Categories

a. Circuit-End or Year-End Awards for current year will be given in the following divisions: **This is subject to change and will be reviewed after the current year 4SEA showbill has been approved.

PeeWee Walk/Trot 10 and Under

Walk/Trot 11 -18

Walk/Trot 19 and over

Rider/Handler 13 & Under

Rider/Handler 14-18

Rider/Handler 19-39

Rider/Handler 40 & Over

Ranch Open

Pony/Mini Handler Open

4- ***Special Awards***

A- *Overall Horse and Overall Reserve Horse*: The horse accumulating the most points in all exclusive classes. Halter classes that will count for this are Stock Type Geldings/Mares, Pleasure Type Geldings/Mares, Stallions. No other halter classes will count for the Overall Division. These will be One Horse/One Rider combinations.

Points qualify from 4SEA approved shows only.