

NATIONAL SPORT PERFORMANCE PONY REGISTRY

Driving Performance Division Rules

6.1 NSPPR Driving Performance Division

A. Pleasure Driving

A pleasure driving class in which entries are **judged primarily on the suitability of the horse to provide a pleasant drive**. 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**. All entries chosen 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 of eight. To be **judged 70% on performance, manners and way of going of the pony. 20% on the condition and fit of harness and vehicle. 10% on neatness of attire**.

B. Style of Driving

1. The Drivers - The driver should be seated comfortably on the box so as to be relaxed and effective. Either the one or two handed method of driving is acceptable. Common to both methods, the elbows and arms should be close to the body with an allowing, but steady hand enabling a consistent “feel” with the pony’s mouth. Drivers should not be penalized or rewarded for using one style over another. In all pleasure driving classes, it is preferred that the driver sit on the right hand side of the vehicle, unless construction of vehicle prevents this.
2. Juniors Under 14 - Junior drivers under 14 years of age must be accompanied in the carriage by a knowledgeable adult horseman. Failure to comply will incur elimination.

C. Use of the Whip

An appropriate whip shall be carried in hand at all

times while driving. The thong on the whip must be long enough to reach the shoulder of the pony. A driver not in compliance with the above shall be severely penalized. In Pleasure Driving Competition, a whip with its thong tied in a manner which renders it incapable of reaching the pony is not allowed. Failure to comply must be severely penalized.

D. Outside Assistance

1. Only the driver may handle the reins, whip, or brake during a competition. Failure to comply will incur elimination.
2. No change of driver is permitted.
3. Drivers receiving outside assistance after the judging has begun will be disqualified at the judge's discretion unless that assistance has been specifically allowed (example: assistance of groom/passenger heading a pony in a line up or a groom).
4. Outside assistance which requires elimination includes, but is not limited to the following:
 - a. The use of communication devices of any kind between the driver and anyone else.
 - b. The use of electrical devices on the carriage intended to give the driver an advantage.
 - c. Directing the driver in any way during a dressage test or on an obstacle course.

E. Dress of Driver and Passengers

1. Drivers and passengers should be dressed conservatively according to the style of the present day. Any attempt to introduce period costumes or gaudy trappings is discouraged.
2. Dress for the driver should conform to the type of turnout (i.e. Formal, Park, Country, Sporting).
3. 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.

4. Ladies must wear a conservative dress, tailored suit, or slacks. Floppy hats are discouraged.
5. Unless otherwise specified, the driver shall wear a hat, an apron or knee rug and gloves.

F. Grooms and Attendants

1. One groom is required for a pair or tandem to assist in the event of difficulty.
2. A groom is optional for a single horse turnout.
3. Where grooms or passengers are required at least one groom is required to be in attendance and capable of rendering assistance at all times, failure to comply could incur elimination at the discretion of the judge.
4. Grooms of either sex may wear stable livery.
5. Stable Livery consists of one of the following:
 - a. A conservative suit, white shirt, dark tie, derby, dark shoes and leather gloves.
 - b. A conservative jacket, jodhpurs or drill trousers, jodhpur or paddock boots, white shirt, stock or four-in-hand tie, leather gloves, derby or conservative cap.
 - c. Hunting attire with a hunting derby or bowler.
 - d. Hard hats or helmets are acceptable in all classes.

G. The Pony

1. In Pleasure Driving Competitions, the minimum age for a pony to be allowed to compete is three (3) years of age.
2. As a minimum requirement, all ponies must be serviceably sound for show purposes. Any pony showing evidence of lameness, deformity in feet,

cryptorchidism or broken wind shall be refused an award.

3. Complete or partial loss of sight in either eye will not be a disqualification if the loss of sight results from a traumatic injury. A licensed Veterinarian must verify the etiology of the sight loss as traumatic and such copy must accompany pony's papers.

H. Turnout for Pony

1. If shod, ponies should be suitably shod for pleasure driving.
2. Braiding of the mane is optional. Tails are not to be braided.
3. The application of artificial hair to mane or tail is prohibited. A tail set or use of any foreign substance to induce a high tail carriage is prohibited.
4. Tails tied to vehicles or traces are prohibited.

I. Style of Harness

1. Bridles should fit snugly to prevent catching on the vehicle or other pieces of harness. A throatlatch and a noseband or cavesson is mandatory.
2. Black harness is considered appropriate with painted vehicles, with shaft and pole trimmings done in black. It is also considered appropriate with a natural wood vehicle with iron parts painted any color except brown. Shaft and pole trimmings, dash and fenders are done in black. Russet harness is considered appropriate with: A) natural wood vehicle with brown or black iron, B) painted vehicle with natural wood panels with any color iron or C) vehicle that is painted brown with brown iron. Shaft and pole trimmings should match the harness.
3. All metal furnishings should match, be secure and polished.

4. Breast collars are appropriate with lightweight vehicles. Full collars are suggested for heavy vehicles such as coaches, brakes, phaetons, dog carts, etc.
5. A correctly fitting harness saddle is important for the comfort of the pony. A wide saddle is suggested for two wheeled vehicles as more weight rests on the ponies back. Narrower saddles are more appropriate for four wheeled vehicles.
6. Martingales are permitted only if appropriate for the vehicle being used, (e.g. a standing martingale is appropriate only for a Stanhope Gig or George IV Phaeton).
7. Martingales and overchecks are prohibited in dressage and obstacle classes for all vehicles. Failure to comply will incur elimination. Side-checks are optional. In pleasure driving classes (turnout, working and reinsmanship) overchecks may be appropriate in road carts and four wheeled buggies.
8. Tying down of tongues is prohibited.
9. In pleasure driving classes, the collars of four-in-hand leaders are not to be tied together.
10. Flash nosebands are strongly discouraged in pleasure driving classes.
11. Snaffle bits and other types of traditional driving bits are allowed. Bits may be covered with rubber or leather. Burr, gag and twisted wire bits of any type are not permitted in driving competitions.

J. The Vehicle

1. Drivers should strive to present an appropriate turnout. "Appropriate" indicates the balance and pleasing appearance of the combination of horse and vehicle. Factors determining the above include compatible size, type and weight of pony and vehicle. The way of going of the pony may also affect the overall appearance, i.e. a high ac-

tioned pony is more suitable for a formal vehicle; the low going ground covering horse presents a more pleasing appearance put to a road or country type vehicle.

2. Wire wheeled and pneumatic tired vehicles may be permitted in the following classes at management's discretion.
 - a. Permitted in all pleasure driving classes if the vehicle is an antique wire wheel vehicle (long wire spokes, hard rubber tires).

K. Competition Rules for Pleasure Driving

1. Drivers Responsibility - It is the responsibility of the driver to see that he/she and all attendants and passengers are appropriately attired for the class in question and that the ponies are properly presented. Excessive use of the voice, shouting or whistling to the pony may be penalized at the judge's discretion. The driver should strive to control the pony's movements with discreet use of vocal aids. The driver must be prepared to enter the ring or obstacle course area when his/her class is called. After a reasonable wait, management may announce that a one minute time limit will be invoked.
2. Equipment Failure - In the case of an accident or equipment failure which necessitates repair or readjustment all grooms or passengers carried on the vehicle must dismount the vehicle. They should not remount until the problem has been corrected or the turnout deemed fit to continue. The exception would be in the case of a minor adjustment (i.e. trace down) only the necessary groom need be put down. Appropriate penalties will be assessed according to class specifications.
3. Whip - An appropriate whip shall be carried in hand at all times while driving. The thong on the whip must be long enough to reach the shoulder of the pony. A driver not in compliance with the above shall be severely penalized. A whip with its

thong tied in a manner which renders it incapable of reaching the pony is not allowed. Failure to comply must be severely penalized.

4. Leaving Arena. - No entry may leave the arena after judging has begun without permission from the judge and/or ringmaster, EXCEPTION: in the event of an accident and/or equipment failure which requires either medical attention or repair, the turnout must leave the arena or obstacle course as soon as possible.
5. Excused - If asked to leave the ring by the judge and/or ringmaster, the turnout must do so as soon as possible.

L. Grooms & Passengers

1. The term groom used herein refers to the person who in the opinion of the judge is capable of assisting in the event of difficulty.
2. In Pleasure Driving Competitions, 4-in-hands and unicorns are required to have two grooms or passengers on the vehicle to assist in the event of difficulty. Pairs or Tandems are required to carry one groom or passenger. A groom/passenger is optional for single horse turnouts. Where grooms are required at least one groom is required to be in attendance and capable of rendering assistance at all times, failure to comply could incur elimination at the discretion of the judge.
3. Passengers must be appropriately dressed and must wear a hat.
4. Grooms or passengers are not allowed to leave their respective positions on the vehicle while it is put in motion or attempt to correct a problem without being put down. Exceptions: grooms dismounting to head the horses immediately prior to a halt and shifting weight to aid balance to prevent an accident are permissible. Failure to comply will incur elimination. Minor adjustments to harness may be made upon permission from the

judge. A groom/passenger riding on the vehicle may be put down to assist with the adjustment without penalty except in dressage and obstacle classes.

5. After judging begins, no attendant may enter the arena without the permission of the judge except in the case of accident or to prevent an accident.
6. Leading a turnout into the ring or obstacle course start is considered outside assistance and not permitted.
7. Grooms may not stand behind the driver. If the vehicle does not permit the groom to sit behind the driver, permission must be obtained to allow the groom to sit beside the driver in obstacle classes. In pleasure driving classes, a groom/passenger may sit beside the driver.
8. When a groom or passenger is put down to head the horse or horses during a line-up, he or she must remount when the driver moves off. This includes individual tests. Failure to comply should be penalized.
9. A knowledgeable adult horseman must accompany Youth drivers.

M. Description of Gait

1. **WALK:** A free, regular and unconstrained walk of moderate extension is ideal. The ponies should walk energetically, but calmly, with even and determined pace. The walk is a four beat gait.
2. **SLOW TROT:** The pony should maintain forward impulsion while showing submission to the bit. The trot is slower and more collected, but not to the degree required in the dressage collected trot. However, the horse should indicate willingness to be driven on the bit while maintaining a steady cadence.
3. **WORKING TROT:** This is the pace between the strong and the slow trot and more round than

the strong trot. The horses go forward freely and straight; engaging the hind legs with good hock action; on a taut, but light, rein; the position being balanced and unconstrained. The steps should be as even as possible. The hind feet touch the ground in the foot prints of the fore feet. The degree of energy and impulsion displayed at the working trot denotes clearly the degree of suppleness and balance of the horses.

4. **STRONG TROT:** 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. Light contact to be maintained. Excessive speed will be penalized.
5. **HALT:** Ponies and vehicle should be brought to a complete square stop without abruptness or veering. At the halt, ponies 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.
6. **REIN BACK:** Rein back is defined as a backward movement in which the legs are raised and set down simultaneously in diagonal pairs with the hind legs remaining well in line. To be performed in two parts:
 - a. The pony must move backward at least four steps in an unhurried manner with head flexed and straight, pushing the carriage back evenly in a straight line. The driver should use quiet aids and light contact.
 - b. Move forward willingly to former position using the same quiet aids.
7. **BREAK IN GAIT:** In pleasure competitions, cantering is not allowed unless clearly stated in the prize list. Management is strongly encouraged not to allow cantering in any class unless it

is held in a securely enclosed area. If cantering is not allowed, a break to a canter is defined as three full strides if an advantage has been gained, or six short strides (an example: hopping around a cone) if advantage is not gained. A break to canter will be penalized by the judge, if in the opinion of the judge; the entry is gaining an advantage. Prolonged cantering will be penalized according to class specifications. A break to a walk should not be penalized unless it gains an advantage (walking will be penalized in a progressive obstacle class). In a multiple turnout all ponies must break for a penalty to be assessed.