

## **DONKEY SHOW RULES**

Effective 2/15/07

Updated 2011

These rules have been established in an effort to promote the showing of donkeys and to keep it as safe, simple and fun as possible. These rules serve as a guide to anyone new to showing, as well as seasoned exhibitors, and to ensure that every exhibitor is on a level playing field. These rules will, hopefully, encourage more youth and new donkey owners to become involved in showing by creating a more relaxed atmosphere.

These rules apply only to those shows that are not NMDA approved. NMDA has it's own rules which are much more complex and strict. Anyone that shows in NMDA approved shows is responsible for knowing NMDA's rules.

These rules have been developed in part by using guidance from rules adopted by the Missouri Miniature Donkey Breeders Association (MMDBA) and by the National Miniature Donkey Association (NMDA).

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## GENERAL RULES

1. Shows will be open to both registered and non-registered donkeys.
2. If a class is designated for a miniature donkey, maximum height is 36 inches. If another exhibitor feels that a donkey is being shown that is not within that limit, Show Officials may measure said animal to verify height. If found taller than limit, the donkey will not be allowed to participate in any classes designated for “miniatures” and will forfeit any entry fees paid.
3. Judges and Exhibitors must be aware of current rules and, if in doubt, receive clarification from the Show Chairman.
4. Current Coggins (within 12 months or less) papers are required and if owner/exhibitor is unable to furnish said papers, the animal will not be allowed to remain on the show grounds. Tennessee State Law requires this.
5. All animals must appear disease free and in good physical condition in order to compete.
6. Treatment of animals must be humane and in the best interest of the animal at all times. The mistreatment of any animal will eliminate you from the show and require your immediate departure from the show grounds.
7. The use of any substance or product to improve performance of a donkey is prohibited.
8. The age of the donkey will be actual birth date. Donkeys must be at least 3 years old to compete in jumping and harness classes.
9. Youth Classes are for Exhibitors age 17 and under. The age of an Exhibitor on January 1<sup>st</sup> will be maintained throughout the show year.
10. Exhibitors age 17 and under are not allowed to show a jack age 2 years and over. Jacks must be shown with a stud chain worn over the nose or under the chin.
11. Show Chairman and/or Judge may excuse any donkey acting in a manner as to be unsafe for other donkeys and/or exhibitors while in the arena.
12. Exhibitor must have control of donkey at all times while in the arena. The Exhibitor will not be allowed to lose control of the lead line or the reins.
13. Exhibitor may not approach/talk to the Judge unless the Show Chairman approves it. The Show Chairman must be present during any discussion.
14. Donkey is to be shown in a well fitting halter. No preference will be given for using a leather halter over a rope or nylon halter. Equipment must be humane and in good condition.

15. Edible treats to encourage a donkey to perform are not allowed in the show arena.
16. Whips are not allowed except in harness classes.
17. Obstacles are not to be set up in a way as to be hazardous to the donkey nor the Exhibitor.
18. The pattern(s) used in pattern required classes must be posted when the registration office opens.

## **SHOW ATTIRE**

1. Show attire is to be neat and in good taste.
2. Footwear must be solid – no open toes. Boots are preferred. In “game” classes, tennis shoes are allowed (example: panty race, lead race, coon jumping, etc.).
3. Short sleeve or sleeveless shirts may be worn, especially in very hot conditions. No T-shirts are allowed.
4. Pants must be long (ankle length).
5. Hats may or may not be worn. Ball caps are not allowed.
6. Gloves are strongly recommended, but are not required.
7. Show attire for a Costume Class does not have these restrictions. However, no skimpy or revealing clothing may be worn.

## HALTER CLASSES

1. Halter classes will be divided as the Show Chairman sees fit.
2. Exhibitors may not touch the donkey below the shoulder or stifle with either hand or foot.
3. Squatting or kneeling down by the Exhibitor is not allowed. Waving a hat, throwing dirt/sand, etc. will not be allowed. Exhibitors are not to be disruptive to other donkeys or other Exhibitors.
4. No whips, crops or other devices are allowed in this class.
5. Donkey must be well groomed. Body clipping is not required, especially in inclement weather, such as early spring, fall or winter.
6. Each Exhibitor is to enter the arena with his/her donkey and stop until the Judge gives the signal to continue. The Exhibitor will then walk the donkey toward the Judge and then trot the donkey as he/she passes the Judge. Donkeys are to be lined up nose to tail, with appropriate room between each donkey. Each donkey will be judged individually, standing squarely and naturally. A donkey is not to be stretched.
7. The donkey will be judged on conformation, quality, presence, and way of going. Disposition and manners shall also be considered.
8. Donkeys that have overbites/underbites that exceed 1/4" will be penalized. Exhibitor will show the donkey's teeth to the Judge when requested. The Judge should not touch the donkey's mouth.

## IN HAND PERFORMANCE CLASSES

1. *In Hand Trail* – To be judged on performance and way of going with emphasis on manners throughout the course. Entries will be evaluated on responsiveness and willingness, plus general attitude.
  - A. Minimum of 5 obstacles; maximum of 8.
  - B. The Judge will walk the Exhibitors through the course prior to the class. No donkey is allowed.
  - C. Each obstacle is assigned a score, with 10 being the highest possible score. The Judge will be given a score card for each entry.
  - D. The following will result in a “no score” for that particular obstacle:
    - a. 60 second time limit is used up without completing the obstacle;
    - b. taking an obstacle in the wrong direction;
    - c. negotiating an obstacle from the wrong side;
    - d. negotiating obstacles in the wrong sequence;
    - e. skipping an obstacle (unless directed by the Judge);
  - E. Canter will be penalized.
  - F. Obstacles, including but not limited to:
    - Back up through or out of obstacle.
    - Walk through water or simulated water.
    - Put on or remove equipment from Exhibitor or donkey.
    - Pick up object and return to another location.
    - Walk across a bridge.
    - Walk pattern created with poles, cones, etc.
    - Stand donkey in circle, ground tie, walk around donkey.
    - Side-pass, pick up one or more feet, walk over branches, etc.
    - If a jump is used, it may not be over 12 inches high.
  
2. *In Hand Jumping* – To be judged on willingness, responsiveness and general attitude of the donkey in executing the jumps. This is a timed event. Time and accumulated faults will determine the winner. Jump offs will only be used to break a tie. Canter is allowed.
  - A. Minimum of 4 jumps; maximum of 6.
  - B. The Judge will walk the Exhibitors through the course prior to the class. No donkey is allowed.
  - C. The Judge will be given a score card for each entry.
  - D. Faults:
    - Refusal = 4 faults (any backward motion)
    - Fall of Exhibitor or Donkey = 4 faults
    - Knockdown = 3 faults
    - Circling more than once to attempt a jump = 2 faults
  - E. Placings: Awarded first to donkey(s) with a clean round as determined by time. Then, by donkey(s) with faults to be determined by time and total number of faults.
  - F. No time will result in taking jumps in the wrong order.

G. Jumps must be a minimum of 18” and a maximum of 28”.

3. Coon Jumping – The pole for the jump must be a pvc or plastic pipe for safety purposes – a wooden pole is not allowed. The height begins at 18 inches unless there are donkeys in the class that are “inexperienced” jumpers. In that case, all Exhibitors may agree to begin at a lower level. Each round is increased by 2 inches.

Donkey must enter the jump area (10’ by 10’ box) and come to a complete stop before attempting the jump, or will not be allowed to count the jump nor continue to next round.

Each donkey will be given 2 attempts or a time limit of 45 seconds, whichever comes first. An attempt is either stepping out of the box or knocking down any part of the jump.

If donkeys cannot complete the highest height, winners will be placed according to the length of time used in previous round and the cleanness of the jump. Example: a donkey that cleared the jump in two attempts cannot place in front of a donkey that only took one attempt to make the jump. If same amount of attempts are made to clear the jump, time will determine the placings.

4. Lead Race – This is a timed event where the donkey is led around an obstacle. Canter is allowed.

No Score/No Time: Knocking over the obstacle or losing grip of the lead rope.  
Donkey not landing in an upright position.

## **HARNESS CLASSES**

### **General Driving Rules:**

- A. Harness and vehicle are to be in good repair and structurally sound. Equipment failure will result in being excused from the arena.
- B. Harness may be of collar and hames type or breast collar type. Any type harness may be used (leather, biothane, etc.). Cavesson or nosebands are required.
- C. Snaffle bits and other types of traditional driving bits are allowed. Twisted, burr and wire bits of any type are not permitted.
- D. Youth drivers are allowed to have an adult ride with them. However, unless the donkey cannot be controlled by the youth driver, the adult is not allowed to take the reins or drive in any way.
- E. Youth drivers are required to wear a helmet while driving.
- F. A whip is to be carried at all times. A whip is optional for Snigging.
- G. When possible, classes for teams will be split from single classes. However, if team classes are not offered, a team may participate in any of the Harness classes.
- H. Driver will be required to rein back at Judge's orders.

### **Clarification of Gaits**

*Walk* – A free, regular and unconstrained walk of moderate extension. The donkey should walk energetically, but calmly, with an even and determined pace.

*Slow Trot* – Should maintain forward impulsion while showing submission to the bit while maintaining a steady cadence. Slower and more collected than the working trot.

*Working Trot* – Moving forward freely and straight; engaging the hind legs with good hock action; taut, but light rein; the position being balanced and unconstrained.

*Halt* – Donkey and vehicle should be brought to a complete stop without abruptness or veering. The donkey should stand attentive and only be ready to move off when a cue from the driver is given.

*Back* – The donkey must move backward at least 4 steps in an unhurried manner while pushing the vehicle back evenly in a straight line. The donkey must move forward willingly to former position.

Classes:

1. Pleasure Driving – Entries are judged primarily on the suitability of the donkey to provide a pleasant drive. Judged as follows: 70% performance, manners and way of going; 20% condition and fit of harness and vehicle; 10% neatness of attire.
2. Pleasure Driving Reinsmanship – Entries are judge primarily on the ability and skill of the driver. Judged as follows: 75% handling of the reins, whip, control, posture, and overall appearance of driver; 25% condition of harness and vehicle and neatness of attire. Judge may request exhibitor to execute a figure eight and/or perform other appropriate tests.
3. Obstacle Driving – Entries are judged on performance, way of going, manners, responsiveness and willingness to complete obstacles.
  - A. Minimum of 5 obstacles; maximum of 8.
  - B. The Judge will walk the exhibitors through the course prior to the class. No donkey is allowed.
  - C. Each obstacle is assigned a score, with 10 being the highest possible score. The Judge will be given a score card for each entry.
  - D. The following will result in a “no score” for that particular obstacle:
    - a. 60 second time limit is used without completing the obstacle;
    - b. taking an obstacle in the wrong direction;
    - c. negotiating an obstacle from the wrong side;
    - d. negotiating obstacles in the wrong sequence;
    - e. skipping an obstacle (unless directed by the Judge).
  - E. Canterng will be penalized.
  - F. Obstacles, including but not limited to,:
    - a. Back thru or out of obstacle
    - b. Drive thru water (or simulated water)
    - c. Drive thru narrow passage way
    - d. Stop, open and close a mailbox
    - e. Drive across a bridge
    - f. Drive a pattern created with cones, poles, etc.
    - g. Place wheel in circle and turn complete circle without donkey stepping in box or moving wheel outside of circle
    - h. U-turn

Note: Using live animals is prohibited.

If at all possible, time will be allowed after the class for the Exhibitors to discuss his/her performance with the Judge. Hopefully, this will help the Exhibitor/donkey to improve.

4. Cart Races – These are timed events; however, cantering is not allowed. In any of these races, a 5 second penalty will be added each time a donkey breaks into a canter.

- a. Cloverleaf Barrels – Three barrels placed in a triangle. Knocking over a barrel will add a 5 second penalty. Distance between barrels does not have to be measured but must be in the same position for each exhibitor. Starting line must be between 2 cones. If you do not know how the pattern is run, ask the Show Chairman, Ring Steward or Judge to explain it. No time will be given if pattern is not followed.
  - b. Single Stake Race – One single obstacle (barrel, pole or cone) is placed in the arena. Starting line must be between 2 cones. The Exhibitor may drive around either side of the obstacle. Knocking it down will be a 5 second penalty. No time will be given if pattern is not followed.
  - c. Keyhole – The course is laid out like a “keyhole”. The opening of the keyhole will be 4 and ½ ft wide and 10 ft long. The broken circle will be 20 ft in diameter. Lines will be clearly visible for each entry. The donkey will cross the start line, drive thru the opening, turn around in either direction of the circle, and exit the same way as entered. No time will be given if the donkey steps out or on any of the lines. No time will be given if vehicle wheel(s) are on or outside any of the lines.
  - d. Pole Bending – 5 poles are in a straight line with 2 cones placed at the entrance for a starting line. There will be 20 ft from starting line to first pole. There will be 16 ft. between each pole. Exhibitor may start either on the left side or on the right side and must weave in and around each pole, both going away from starting line and coming back to starting line. A 5 second penalty will be added for each pole knocked down. No time will be given if pattern is broken.
5. Snigging – This class tests how quickly and carefully a donkey and his/her handler can move a log thru cones (which represent trees). The Exhibitor will ground drive behind the donkey.

The harness traces are attached to an evener which is attached to a log. The log should weigh approximately 30 to 40 lbs and not be over 7 ft in length and no more than 8 inches in diameter. Each donkey must pull the same log. The equipment will be furnished by the Show Chairman.

2 cones will mark the starting line with the first cone placed 15 ft away in the center. There will be a total of five cones, placed 12 ft apart. Once the donkey passes the start line, the donkey/Exhibitor must serpentine through the cones – both going and returning. Any cone that is displaced or knocked down will have a 5 second penalty added to time. No time will be given if pattern is broken. Canter is allowed.

NOTE: Pattern sizes may be adjusted for standard/mammoth donkeys. The previous sizes listed are for miniatures.

### **ADDITIONAL CLASSES**

Other classes may include, but are not limited to, the following:

*Open Spotted Color Class*

*Open Solid Color Class*

NOTE: Color class is judged only on color

*Panty Race* – This is a timed event. Exhibitor leads the donkey past a specified point, puts a pair of panties on the donkey and returns to the start line. Cantering is allowed.

*Musical Buckets* – This is played the same way as the child's game. Exhibitor must maintain grip on the donkey's lead at all times.

*Showmanship* – Judged on the Exhibitor and his/her ability to present the donkey. The donkey is not to be judged; however, the way a donkey is or is not groomed is a factor. Judge will instruct Exhibitors on what to do.

*Best Matched Pair* – Judged on the same size, color, structure and other physical characteristics of the pair.

*Costume Class*