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**PREMIER**

**Mount N Trail**

**Standards, Guidelines, Rules, and Regulations**

Welcome all Parks, Competitors, and Trail Riders!

We are so very excited that you have decided to join us on this journey of promoting, competing, and trail riding your way into Mountain Trail, one of the fastest growing sports in the equine industry! Here at Premier Mount N Trail, we are dedicated to and pride ourselves on offering the highest of standards in obstacle competitions. This, along with some of the best parks and courses, phenomenal awards programs, and a trail riding awards program available for everyone at all levels of experience, truly make this a fun and encouraging environment for all equine enthusiasts.

**Mission Statement for Premier Mount N Trail:**

To provide incentive to horse owners of all levels and disciplines, horses of all breeds and sizes to build partnership and skills while utilizing natural obstacles and trails for competition and recreation, while promoting a family friendly atmosphere for the equine industry.

In order to preserve and maintain structure and consistency throughout Premier Mount N Trail (PMT) for our park owners, competitors, trail riders, and judges we have put together the standards, guidelines, rules, and regulations for all to peruse. This will allow for everyone involved, from park owners to competitors, to uphold the given standards and therefore provide consistency amongst the parks, judging, and competitions. All of the parks and competitions, along with their judging, while being promoted under Premier Mount N Trail will be expected to uphold the following standards and rules as outlined throughout the handbook to allow the best opportunity for our competitors to be judged and scored fairly and consistently to earn awards and prizes.

It is at the pleasure of PMT to bring together and offer these programs to encourage Mountain Trail competitions along with trail riding to riders of all levels and disciplines. These standards and guidelines have been put together to encourage safe and fun opportunities to grow your equine partnership and skills. It is the responsibility of competitors and members to be knowledgeable of and honor all of the rules and regulations in the handbook, as well as follow the specific rules at individual parks to allow for a great experience for all.

Premier Mount N Trail is both honored and privileged to be a part of the journey in the growth of your equine partnership, the enjoyment of equine related activities with your family, and the development of lifelong friendships. We look forward to seeing everyone's success, accomplishments, and growth throughout the year!

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## **Park Guidelines:**

1. Each park must offer a minimum of 6 mountain trail obstacles to hold a certified PMT competition.
2. All obstacles whether in a stationary park or a travelling park must be made in a natural looking manner as if you were on a trail ride. No "trail trash" permitted (ex. Pool noodles, inflatables, kiddie pools, etc.) See list of potential obstacles on page 13.
3. The Course layout must allow for competitors to compete at different levels (ie. Level 1, 2, and 3) and must allow for all gaits walk, trot, and canter.
4. All obstacles must offer the opportunity to show at all 3 levels of difficulties, with different maneuvers in or on the obstacle to accommodate for the Rookie to Advanced level.
5. Each individual park can offer their own seasonal High Point awards, along with being a part of the yearly High Point Class awards and the All Around High Point awards for In Hand and Riding offered by PMT.
6. All listed Divisions and Classes in the handbook must be offered and awarded by a PMT certified park. Parks may also offer a variety of extra divisions or classes as they see fit to compliment the dynamics of the competitors at their particular park. Examples of such classes would include but are not limited to Gambler's Choice, Mini classes, Pony classes, Age 55yrs and over classes, Junior Horse classes, Lead Line, any Fun classes, etc. Any class that a park chooses to add beyond the PMT required Divisions and Classes listed in the handbook will be determined, run, and awarded by the individual park.
7. Parks must use certified PMT judges for PMT competitions, as these will be awarded by PMT for year end High Point Class awards and All Around Division awards. Parks must also supply pencils, clipboards, etc. to judges and scribes.
8. Each PMT park will be given and should use the PMT Computer Scoring Program. Parks should also use the PMT judging score sheets for each competition.
9. Each PMT park has the authority under their own insurance and liability to require helmets and implement COVID-19 standards and precautions that they deem necessary. (see each park for helmets and COVID-19 requirements)
10. PMT parks will abide by tack, equipment, and bit standards as outlined in the handbook during competition.
11. Trail Patterns must be released to competitors at a minimum of at least 1 hour before the start of the competition.
12. Each PMT park may have their own separate park rules (non judged rules) included along with that of PMT. Competitors must read and familiarize themselves with each individual park's rules and requirements as they may differ from park to park.
13. A park owner reserves the right to disqualify and/or excuse from the course or facility any competitor who is being abusive or aggressive to any equine, or who is being disrespectful, argumentative, or showing unsportsmanlike conduct to the judge or any other competitor.

## Judging Standards and Expectations:

1. Each certified and carded PMT judge will go through a 2-day training course to be certified and they must pass a written test. (For more information on becoming a judge, certification requirements, and maintenance of judge's card please contact PMT board members)
2. Judges should arrive at the PMT park a minimum of 1 hour prior to the start of the competition to inspect obstacles for safety, verify patterns, or address any weather or footing issues that may arise on the day of the competition.
3. A judge has the right to pull and/or change the pattern, maneuver, or obstacle that they deem unsafe for any reason.
4. A judge may prohibit the use of any equipment or bits that he/she considers dangerous, severe, or inhumane.
5. Certified PMT judges should be dressed in professional attire that represents PMT in an honorable fashion. A cowboy hat or sun hat is acceptable (no ball caps or visors). Long or short sleeve button up shirts or blouses are acceptable, as well as PMT logoed polo shirts depending on weather. Long sleeve jackets and overcoats are preferred but are not required in exceptional weather. Jeans and/or dress pants are acceptable; they must be free of any tears or fraying. Standard boots for equine show are acceptable; they must be clean and/or polished.
6. Please be prepared for inclement weather. Judges may bring umbrellas, chairs, rain coats etc.
7. A Rerun may be offered to a competitor if a judge feels that this is necessary due to an interruption while on the course or if there is an equipment failure.
8. If a judge notices a tack or equipment discrepancy, the judge will address the competitor either before or after the pattern. At no time will a competitor be stopped during their pattern while on the course to address an issue unless it is deemed unsafe or dangerous. The competitor will be scored through their pattern completely and the tack issue may be addressed after being scored. If a judge has a concern with a bit, they may ask the rider to drop their bridle before the pattern begins or after the competitor completes their pattern.
9. A judge has the right to disqualify and or excuse from the course any competitor who is being abusive or aggressive to any equine. Competitors may also be disqualified or excused from the competition if they are being disrespectful, argumentative, or showing unsportsmanlike conduct to the judge or any other competitor.
10. Judges should minimize any conversations with competitors on the day of the competition. They should not eat with or take breaks with any competitors.
11. A certified PMT Judge should uphold the PMT standards, rules and regulations, scoring, equipment and attire with professionalism, truth, and integrity to the best of their abilities.

## **Divisions for Competitors:**

1. Required Divisions to be offered by PMT Parks
  - a. Rookie – This division is shown in hand and/or under saddle for any first or second year partnership (horse/rider) who has either never participated in a Mountain Trail competition, or who has not received more than 3 blue ribbons in the first year of competition. Any size equine may be shown in this division. Any competitor that receives 3 blue ribbons in their first year must move up to the next level (ie. Level 1) the following year. If a competitor does not receive 3 blue ribbons in the first year, they may choose to compete at the Rookie level for a second year. After competing in the Rookie division for 2 years with the same horse/rider partnership, then a competitor **MUST** move up to Level 1. An experienced competitor that has competed in upper levels that starts a new partnership with a new horse may compete in the rookie level. A new competitor to mountain trail may compete with an upper level mountain trail horse in rookie level as a new partnership. Any partnership competing in the Rookie Division may not compete in the Open Division.
  - b. Youth – This division is for any youth 18 and under (as of January 1<sup>st</sup>). Any size equine can show in this division. This division is shown in hand and/or under saddle. All youth at every park will be **REQUIRED** to wear a helmet for both in hand and while under saddle. Stallions are not permitted in the youth division.
  - c. Adult – This division is for any amateur adult 19 years of age and older (as of January 1<sup>st</sup>). This division is shown in hand and/or under saddle. Any size equine may be shown in this division.
  - d. Open – This division is for all competitors except for those showing in the Rookie Division. This includes Youth, Adults, Amateurs, and Professionals. Any size equine may be shown in this division. This division is shown in hand and/or under saddle.
2. A competitor may compete in as many divisions as they and their equine partner qualify for.
3. Stallions are permitted to be shown by an adult handler only. Competitors, please refer to each individual park on what their specific stallion policy is, as this may differ from park to park.

## Levels for Competitors:

1. Levels
  - a. Rookie –In this level a competitor will be asked to complete a pattern consisting of 6-8 obstacles and will include only non-moving obstacles. At this level the competitor will only be asked to walk. A Rookie competitor may have a “reader.” If a Rookie competitor prefers a reader, that reader stands with a park official and may call out each obstacle to the rider as they maneuver their pattern. The caller may only state the next obstacle; they may not coach or give specific directions to the handler/rider. For the Rookie level In Hand classes the competitor has the option to use a training aid such as a handy stick, crop, or dressage whip to guide the horse while completing the obstacle. The competitor may not touch the horse with the training aid or this will result in horsemanship point deductions for the handler.
  - b. Level 1 – In this level a competitor will be asked to complete a pattern consisting of 6-10 obstacles. These patterns will include moving and non-moving obstacles. At this level, the competitors will only be asked to walk. Competitors may NOT have a “reader” at this level.
  - c. Level 2 – In this level a competitor will be asked to complete a longer pattern consisting of 9-12 obstacles. These patterns will include moving and non-moving obstacles. At this level, the competitors will be asked to walk and trot. The trot will be judged as its own “obstacle” and may be included anywhere throughout the course. There is no limit on how many trots may be in a pattern. The Level 2 competitor will be asked to back, sidepass, perform 180 degree turns and/or 360 degree turns in their pattern. Competitors may NOT have a “reader” at this level.
  - d. Level 3 – In this level a competitor will be asked to complete a longer pattern consisting of 12-16 obstacles. These patterns will include moving and non-moving obstacles. At this level, the competitors will be asked to walk, trot, and canter. The trot and canter will be judged as their own “obstacles” and may be included anywhere throughout the course. There is no limit on how many trots and canters may be in a pattern. The Level 3 competitor may be asked to do a simple or flying lead change. They will be asked to back, sidepass, perform 180 degree turns and/or 360 degree turns in their pattern. Competitors may NOT have a “reader” at this level.
2. Each competitor may compete in two levels moving upwards. For example, a competitor may show in the Rookie level classes as well as the Level 1 classes. A competitor may show in Level 1 and Level 2 classes. A competitor may show in Level 2 and Level 3 classes. However, a competitor may not compete in a walking only class and a canter class (ie. Rookie and Level 3 or Level 1 and 3).

## **Expectations for Horse and Handler for the In Hand Classes:**

1. In hand – The judge is looking for a forward moving, relaxed, and bold horse that does not hesitate and maneuvers the course and obstacles in a confident and natural way at pace with the handler and on a relaxed lead. The horse should not break gait, or pull on the handler, nor should they be nervous, calling, or distracted as this could result in a loss of horsemanship points for the horse.
2. Leather halters, rope halters which must be properly tied, and nylon halters are all acceptable. It is recommended, but not required, to have a 12-14 foot lead line for the in hand classes to be able to safely maneuver some of the obstacles. Lead ropes with chains are not permitted. Saddles and tack may be worn in the in hand class; this will not count for or against the handler. A competitor may not compete in a bridle for the in hand classes; leading with a bridle is not permitted for safety reasons. A Rookie level competitor may use a training aid such as a handy stick, crop, or a dressage whip to assist and guide the horse through the pattern, but they may not touch the horse with it; if they do, then this will result in loss of horsemanship points for the handler. Levels 1, 2, and 3 may not use a training aid during competition.
3. There will be no touching of the horse by the competitor while showing in hand; this includes with the hand, the lead, or any training aide if allowed by that level.
4. The lead line shall not touch the ground as the competitor moves throughout the course; they must show proper lead line management or this may result in horsemanship point deductions for the handler.

## **Expectations for Horse and Rider for the Riding Classes:**

1. The horse and rider will be judged as an overall team and partnership as they travel the course and maneuver each obstacle.
2. Horses will be awarded for a forward moving natural gait along with a natural head set for the breed standard. Judges are looking for a relaxed rein. Contact is allowable, but an excessively tight rein may result in horsemanship point deductions for the rider.
3. The horse and rider should move boldly and confidently forward through the obstacles; there should be no break of gait while entering the obstacle, performing maneuvers on the obstacle, travelling through the obstacle, or exiting the obstacle.
4. Horses should not bolt, spook, be excessively calling, buck, rear, balk, or appear distracted.
5. A rider is permitted to ride in any bridle one or two handed on any age horse. However, if a rider starts one handed or two handed, then they should complete the pattern how they started, or they will receive a deduction in horsemanship points. A

rider may subtly loosen and take up rein as they maneuver the obstacles and course with no deduction.

6. While riding, a competitor may grab the horn or the cantle of the saddle when stepping up or down a steep obstacle or hill without risk of penalty.
7. A horse under the age of 2 may not be shown in any riding classes.

## **Tack and Equipment**

1. English, Western, Endurance, Australian, or other breed-specific saddles are permitted. Bareback pads are not permissible. English, Western, or breed-specific bridles, bosal, hackamore or bitless bridles are acceptable. The style of bridle and bit should match the style of saddle being used. These must be safe and acceptable by the judge(s) and show committee.
2. Romel reins may be used with a shank bit ONLY.
3. Excessive bling or silver is discouraged.
4. Spurs, gloves, chaps, crops, and dressage whips are all acceptable and optional for riders.
5. Breast collars and back cinches are acceptable if fitted properly. If these are ill fitting or improperly adjusted, then deductions may be incurred.
6. Leg Boots, splints, or polo wraps are highly recommended on all four legs, but are not required.
7. A braided mane and tail are not required for English riders.
8. **Prohibited Equipment:**
  - a. Wire curb straps
  - b. draw reins, martingales, or tie downs
  - c. Fake tails
  - d. Double-twisted mouthpieces or any type of chain mouthpieces
  - e. No wire or chain over the poll or nose of the horse
  - f. Bits of any style featuring mouthpieces with cathedrals, donuts, prongs, sharp edges, or rough sharp material are not permitted
9. The judge may prohibit the use of equipment or bits he/she considers severe or inhumane. A Rider at any time before or after their pattern may be asked to drop the bridle if in question.

## **Attire**

1. The style of the rider's attire should match the tack used, i.e. only western attire should be worn when riding with western tack, and only English attire is to be worn when riding with English tack.

2. Western handlers/riders should be dressed clean and neat in jeans with no tears. A long or short sleeve collared button up shirt or polo is acceptable. Youth must wear a helmet. Adults may ride in a cowboy hat, helmet, ballcap or visor (see individual park rules if helmets are required). Proper western riding boots or other safe and appropriate equestrian footwear are required.
3. English handlers/riders should be dressed clean and neat in breeches and a collared shirt with sleeves. Jackets are not required. Youth must wear a helmet. Adults may ride in helmet, visor, or ball cap (see individual park rules if helmets are required). Proper English riding boots or other safe and appropriate equestrian footwear are required.

## **General Rules and Scoring**

1. Each horse and rider team will start with a score of 70.
2. Each obstacle is worth 9 points. Every obstacle is broken down into three sections which will be judged separately.
  - a. Approach – is worth 2 points
  - b. Obstacle - is worth 5 points
  - c. Departure - is worth 2 points
3. If a horse and rider complete the obstacle with average success, they will be awarded zeros for each judged section. Approach will be 0 points, Obstacle will be 0 points, and Departure will be 0 points.
4. If a horse completes the obstacle in an outstanding manner, with ease, and it is considered exceptionally well done, then the horse and rider team can be awarded a +1 point for each section of the obstacle. Thereby giving the team an opportunity to score a +1 point on the Approach, a +1 point on the Obstacle, and +1 point on the Departure. This will result in a +3 total points for that obstacle.
5. A horse and rider partnership can also earn up to 10 horsemanship points. These points will be split, 5 points to the rider and 5 points to the horse. This will be added to your final overall score.
  - a. Possible horsemanship point deductions for the rider include but are not limited to: dirty tack, a dirty horse, excessive use of spurs, excessive use of crop or whip, excessively heavy hands, hitting or abusive behavior to equine, improper attire, switching how the reins are held (1 or 2 handed) during the pattern (with the exception of when operating a gate as an obstacle or log drag), being off pattern, tack or equipment on incorrectly or not adjusted to be properly fitting, mis-matched tack (ex. using an English bridle while riding in a western saddle, using a western bridle while riding in an English saddle, etc.), overly tight rein, or any touching of the horse while showing in hand with either the hand, lead line, or training aide.

- b. Possible horsemanship point deductions for the horse include but are not limited to: excessive calling, rearing, bucking, balking, shying or backing in between obstacles, being overly distracted, bolting, spooking, refusing to go forward, or any other disobedient behavior during pattern.
- 6. The deductions for each obstacle are broken down into three sections as well; these would be the Approach, Obstacle, and Departure. Therefore, the competitor can potentially lose a total of 9 points for the obstacle. The maximum deduction for a completed obstacle would result in a -2 points on the Approach, -5 points on the Obstacle, and -2 points on the Departure.
- 7. Approach Deductions include:
  - a. -1/2 point per each tic or if crooked
  - b. -1 point for being off center, break of gait (longer than 3 seconds), hop on an obstacle (based on equine size and obstacle height), rush, each refused attempt (up to 3 attempts), or foot over the edge of obstacle
  - c. -1 ½ points for a stumble, trip, bigger jump/hop on or off of an obstacle (based on equine size and obstacle height)
  - d. -2 points excessive jump, picking up incorrect lead, or 2 refused attempts of an obstacle
    - i. After 3 failed attempts the judge will ask the horse and rider to move on to the next obstacle. The refused obstacle will be marked with an “I” for incomplete on the scoresheet and will result in a -9 points for that obstacle. **A competitor who receives an Incomplete (I) CANNOT place higher than any other competitor who did not receive an Incomplete.** An Incomplete obstacle is defined as the horse approaching an obstacle but is unable to get any foot in or on the obstacle (revised 02/21/2021).
- 8. Obstacle Deductions include:
  - a. -1/2 point per each tic or if crooked
  - b. -1 point for break of gait, each stride off center, stepping on log or over edge of obstacle with one foot, one foot out of the obstacle, hop, slight stumble or trip, each stride of incorrect gait or lead, rolling a log, missing a step (ex. stepping over a box in the ladder), break of gait during mount or dismount
  - c. -2 points for rushing, bigger stumble, crossing in front of the horse while in hand to switch sides either at a stop or while moving
  - d. -3 points if the horse appears disobedient to the rider (ex. popping up, kicking out, etc.)
  - e. -4 points for excessive behaviors such as an overreaction of jumping or leaping through an obstacle, running with log pull, bolting through the cowboy curtain, etc.
  - f. -5 points for 2 feet off or out of an obstacle, letting go of or dropping the rope or gait, knocking down a raised back thru log, extreme disobedience or

reaction by horse (ex. rearing or bucking), or does not accomplish gait in trot or canter

9. Departure Deductions include:
  - a. -½ point per tic or if crooked
  - b. -1 point if off center, break of gait (longer than 3 seconds), hop off obstacle (based on equine size and obstacle height), rush,
  - c. -1 ½ points if stumble, trip, or bigger jump or hop off of an obstacle
  - d. -2 points for excessive jump, picking up incorrect lead, or doesn't exit off the designated end of the obstacle
10. Off Pattern occurs when a handler/rider completely misses an obstacle in the order of the pattern without the acknowledgement of that obstacle. Off pattern will be marked on the scoresheet with an "OP" and result in a -12 score. If the rider passes the obstacle but realizes before starting the next obstacle, then they have the opportunity to go back and complete the almost forgotten obstacle and this will only result in a loss of horsemanship points. However, if the competitor has started the next obstacle then they may not go back and be scored on the missed obstacle. If a rider adds an additional obstacle into the pattern this will also be considered Off Pattern and -12 will be scored in the place of the obstacle that should have been completed in the correct order of the pattern. If the rider goes back and completes that obstacle the score will still remain -12. The competitor will not be interrupted and will be allowed to finish and be scored through the rest of the pattern. **Any competitor who receives an Off Pattern (OP) CANNOT place higher than anyone in the class.** In the case of two competitors receiving an Off Pattern in the same class, the placings will then be determined by score (revised 2/21/2021).
11. Possible Disqualification (DQ) of a competitor:
  - a. Rider with an unscheduled dismount during a pattern or if they fall off at any time
  - b. Inappropriate comments made to judges, scribes, park officials, other competitors
  - c. Inappropriate and excessive corrections or abusive behavior made to equine by handler/rider
  - d. Equipment Failure
12. Any PMT competitor who receives a disqualification in any class will receive a PMT point of zero for that class. The zero point will be given to ensure that any competitor who has competed in the 5 minimum qualifying shows will still receive credit for showing in the class in which they received the disqualification or "DQ". This zero then allows the competitor to remain qualified for year end awards and prizes (revised 02/21/2021).

## OBSTACLE LIST

LOGS

WATER BOX ABOVE GROUND

WATER BOX IN GROUND

WATER, RIDE THROUGH

DISMOUNT ROCK IN WATER

FLAT BRIDGE

RAISED BRIDGE

TRESTLE BRIDGE

CROSS BUCKS

COWBOY CURTAIN

JACOB'S LADDER

DOWN HILL

SWITCHBACK

SIDE PASS FLAT

SIDE PASS UP/DOWN HILL

PINWHEEL

LADDER

TRENCH

CAKE BOX

TEXAS 2 STEP

HILLS

SPRING BRIDGE

CANTER POLES

NARROW BRIDGE

WATER FALL

BARREL PUSH

WEAVE LOGS

RAISED BALANCE BEAM

45 DEGREE BALANCE BEAM

BALANCE BEAM

ROLLING BRIDGE

SMALL TURN BOX

LARGE TURN BOX

SOLID GATE

ROPE GATE

FLAT BACK THROUGH

RAISED BACK THROUGH

ROCK GARDEN

TEETER TOTTER

TUNNEL