



# Midwest Extreme Obstacle Association Official Rulebook

Revised 2023

[www.midwestextremeobstacleassociation.com](http://www.midwestextremeobstacleassociation.com)

## **MEOA Mission Statement**

MEOA strives to provide a safe and fun environment for participants to enjoy their horse, exhibit excellent sportsmanship, and enrich member's experiences with their horse. We encourage members of all levels and abilities to strive for improvement and excellence.

## **Midwest Extreme Obstacle Association Stance on Animal Welfare and Code of Ethics**

MEOA and its members are committed to ensuring all aspects of Animal Welfare are of top priority. Producers, Judges, spectators, and exhibitors are expected to keep the policy in mind that all horses and other animals will be treated humanely and with respect at all times.

Unsportsmanlike conduct or any other conduct that would be considered irresponsible, illegal, profane, or abusive will not be tolerated at any MEOA event. Show management and show officials will be expected to enforce this standard.

Show management and show officials will be responsible for requiring all individuals to comply with the above statements. If individuals are violating these guidelines they will be asked to discontinue the conduct. If they fail to discontinue inappropriate conduct, they may be asked to leave the show grounds and forfeit entry fees and/or awards.

## **Information and Requirements for Joining Midwest Extreme Obstacle Association (MEOA)**

- 1. Eligibility for point submission.** All members of MEOA have the opportunity to earn scores at any MEOA sanctioned event. See [www.midwestextremeobstacleassociation.com](http://www.midwestextremeobstacleassociation.com) for more info on the scoring system. Contestants must be members in good standing of MEOA. Horse and rider must have received a valid score at any MEOA sanctioned event. Show management must submit scores to MEOA within 7 days of show date. Member's scores will be added throughout each calendar year (January-December) to a year-end amount. Individual show fees must be paid in full the day of each show for points to accrue and for a member to remain in good standing.
- 2. Application for membership.** Applications may be submitted online via [www.midwestextremeobstacleassociation.com](http://www.midwestextremeobstacleassociation.com). An annual membership due of \$30 must be paid at the time of application in order to participate for awards/points. Membership must be sent in before any MEOA sanctioned event in order to receive points. If a rider is NOT an MEOA member and places at a show, those points will be discarded.

## **MEOA APPROVED SHOW**

MEOA does not approve shows. MEOA approves its judges and the implementation of the MEOA rulebook. For members to submit qualified scores, the show must be judged by an MEOA judge and the class must follow the MEOA rules.

Show management may add classes not included in the MEOA rulebook, or can modify the class. Wins from those classes would not qualify for MEOA points. Classes that do comply with judging/rule standards at the same show would qualify. Producers/show management are responsible for carrying their own insurance.

### **Requirements for Sanctioning**

- Sanctioning fee(\$30) paid via MEOA website/check via mail
- Show Bill sent to MEOA at time of payment
- Logo added to show bill
- Pattern(s) sent to MEOA and judge 7 days prior to show date
- Show posted on MEOA site minimally 7 days prior to show date

## **LIABILITY**

1. All property of any kind entered for display or any other purpose shall be subject to the control of Show Management, but in no case shall MEOA, its directors, or volunteers, be held responsible for any loss, damage, or injury of any character. If property owners or others interested in property desire protection against damage or injury from fire or from any other cause, they must make their own arrangements. Though MEOA and its judges will take reasonable precautions to ensure safety of articles or property from injury, loss or theft, MEOA will give all the assistance in its power toward the recovery of the same, but will not make any payment for losses, damage or value thereof. Exhibitors desiring insurance must give the matter their personal attention.
2. If any damage, loss or injury to person or property shall be caused by reason of any neglect, or willful act of any person, firm, or corporation, or their agents, representatives, servants or employees having liability, all persons causing the same, or liable therefore, shall indemnify the MEOA.
3. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary herein contained, it is understood that each entrant, entry or exhibiting, waives all claims against MEOA, for any and all injury, loss, or damage which he, his employees, helpers and/or property may sustain, arising in any way out of the operations or activities of MEOA and indemnifies MEOA from and against any loss, or damage sustained by the said MEOA by reason of any claims made by any of his helpers, or employees or their executors, administrators, or assigns, and that

## **LIABILITY CONT.**

any helpers or assistants introduced to or engaged by entrant, exhibitors, or concessionaires through the said MEOA, it's officers, or agents shall be at the sole risk and responsibility of such entrant, exhibitors or concessionaires.

## **SCORING SYSTEM**

### **Individual Obstacle Scoring:**

Each obstacle has a possible score from 0-10 points, 10 being the highest possible score. Judges will use the following score system as a guideline:

0 points - complete refusal or skipping an obstacle entirely. Little to no attempt was made at the obstacle.

1-5 points - an incomplete obstacle with one/multiple attempt(s) with varying degrees of success but without full completion of obstacle.

6-10 points - obstacle has been completed with varying degrees of fluidity and speed. Horse shows little to no hesitation.

### **Horsemanship Scoring:**

Horsemanship scores will be divided into two sections; 10 possible points for general horsemanship and 10 points for tack.

### **Tack Deductions - Safety is the first priority in choosing tack.**

A rider should choose the tack to show the highest level of training and difficulty of their or their horses capability. Riders will not be disqualified for using non-ideal tack, but it will be deducted from their horsemanship score. To score the highest in the tack portion, tack used will be legal in a "show ring"(pleasure, reining, etc). One point will be deducted for each non-ideal piece of tack.

- Ideal Reins-
  - Western - leather split rein is preferred.
  - English - A leather loop rein with buckle is preferred.
  - Western Snaffle/Bosal - A two handed ride using a bosal or smooth snaffle bit, (conventional D-ring, O-ring or egg butt) is permissible provided the horse is five years old or younger. \*See picture on pg. 5
    - Use of a metal noseband in a bosal is illegal and will result in a disqualification

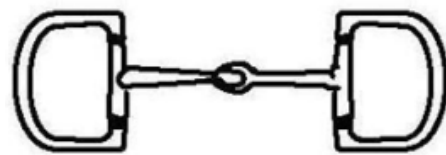
\*Photo below depicts acceptable snaffle bits for horses 5 and under. Photo is of a few examples, but the rule is not limited to the examples below.



EGGBUTT SNAFFLE BIT



O-RING SNAFFLE BIT



D-RING SNAFFLE BIT

- Ideal Bits/Curb Straps
  - Riders will not be disqualified for using non-ideal bits, but are subject to point deductions in their tack score
  - Western - fixed shank and no twisted wire mouthpieces
  - English - any english bit without training aid(eg noseband, etc.) that does not contain twisted wire. Use of a cavesson is permissible.
  - Ideal curb may be a flat strap or double flat chain. Anything beyond those options may be subject to point deductions.

**Acceptable Curb Chains/Straps**



Legal-Flat leather-over 1/2" wide



Legal-Flat nylon-over 1/2" wide



Legal-Double link flat chain-over 1/2" wide nylon end straps.



Legal-Double link flat chain-over 1/2" wide leather end straps



Legal-Double welded chain links-over 1/2" wide



Legal-Very wide flattened chain links-Hunt & Polo

**Unacceptable Curb Chains/Straps**



Not Legal-Braided leather (rawhide)-Too narrow and too rough



Not Legal-round braided leather-wide enough, but rough and not flat



Not Legal-round leather-Too narrow all across, not flat

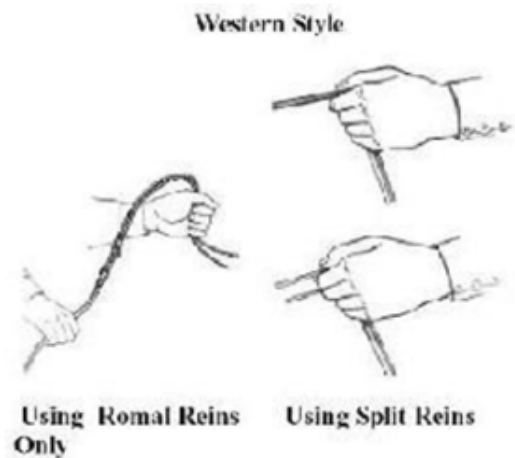
- Point deductions
  - Horse older than 5 in a snaffle bit
  - Roping or barrel reins
  - Gag bits or war bridles
  - Training aids (martingales, nose bands, etc.)
  - Ill fitting tack
- In-Hand competitors may choose to show in English or Western attire. Horse should wear a well fitted flat leather or nylon halter that fastens under the jaw. Rope halter/training halters are allowed but will be subject to point deductions. Horses may not be saddled. A chain on the lead is permissible, but the chain may not be touching the horse's body in any way.
- Leg boots/wraps are up to the discretion of the rider. They will not be judged for or against a rider's score. However, if leg boots/wraps are ill fitted they are subject to point deduction.

**General Horsemanship** - Riders will be judged on seat, hands, legs, and ability to control and show horse.

- 1-5 points - Rider shows minimal to average control and ability to show horse. Riders seat, hands or legs are consistently out of position or inappropriately used. Communication and trust between horse and rider varies.
- 6-10 points - Rider shows varying exemplary ability to control and show horse. Display varying horsemanship positions up to maintaining the perfect horsemanship position in their saddle for the entire course. Eg: shoulders, hips, heels maintain one line and hands/feet maintain position without swinging. Western riders maintain only one hand on the reins for the entirety of the course.

**General Horsemanship - Body Position**

- Western Ideal Rein Hold - To score the highest, western riders will use and maintain one hand for reining throughout the entirety of the course. Completing specific obstacles notwithstanding. The arm used in reining shall be bent at the elbow. Free hand shall be partially closed and relaxed. Reins are to be carried immediately above or slightly in front of the saddle horn. Excess rein is to lay on the same side as the reining hand.



- English Ideal Rein Hold - The reins come into each hand between the third and little fingers, go up through the hand and come out between the thumb and index finger.
- Ideal Body Position - When profiling the rider, rider's shoulder, hip, and heel should align vertically. Rider should have head held high, square shoulders, good posture, lower back relaxed and flexing with the horse's movements, proper stirrup length depending on discipline with feet only in stirrup as far as the ball of the foot.
- In Hand Ideal: To score the highest, In Hand competitors should maintain minimum of 6 inches between halter and hand. Excess lead needs to be held accordion style. Handler to be on left side of horse unless course notes otherwise.
  - Point deductions for touching your horse, switching hands, horse getting to far ahead or behind of handler, etc.

**Time Brackets:**

Times will be added into scores in a bracket system with 20 second breaks. No scores can be marked until every rider in the class has completed the course. The top time of each class, and any rider within the next 20 seconds of that time, will receive a score of 10. Any times within the next 20 seconds will get a score of 9, and so on.

For example, if the fastest qualifying time is 120 seconds:

- 10 points - 120-140 seconds
- 9 points - 140.1-180 seconds
- 8 points - 180.1-210 seconds

- If a rider hits the time limit of the class they will receive a zero for their time score.

**Penalty zero:**

These events will cause a rider to receive a penalty zero and not be allowed to place in the class. Any rider who receives a penalty zeros will be scored for each subsequent obstacle after the penalty, but will not be allowed to place or earn money/awards.

- Going off pattern
- Performing obstacles in wrong order
- Being on wrong side of obstacle if specifically noted in course map/description

**Disqualification:**

These events will cause a rider to be disqualified from the class. Judges may ask the rider to exit the arena and the rider will not be scored.

- Willful abuse of horse
- Excessive schooling
- Loss of control or disobedience that endangers the exhibitor, other exhibitors, or judge.
- Horse becoming separated from exhibitor
- Illegal equipment (bats, whips, crops, metal noseband bosal, etc)

**Tiebreakers:**

Show management must declare 2 tie breaker obstacles before the class begins. The rider who scores higher at the first tiebreaker obstacle will take the higher placing. If there is a tie at the first tiebreaker obstacle, then placings will be determined at the second tiebreaker obstacle. In the event that two riders have the exact same scoring for all tiebreakers, the rider with the faster time will place higher.

**GENERAL RULES**

1. Rulebook changes will be made once per year at the fall MEOA meeting. Rulebook suggestions can be sent to [MEOA.director@gmail.com](mailto:MEOA.director@gmail.com) and will be discussed with the MEOA Board.
2. Dress code: Western attire in all western events. Events will be specified on each show bill. Contestants must wear western boots, western hat or helmet, western long or short sleeved shirt with collar, western pants or jeans. Vest, coat, sweater, belt, and chaps are optional.  
English attire in all English events. Events will be specified on each show bill. Contestants must wear english boots, shirt with collar and sleeve (polo shirt permitted), coat, and breeches. Tie, vest, belt, and half chaps are optional.  
\*All dress codes may be relaxed in event of severe weather by judges discretion.
3. No re-rides permitted due to breakage/failure of tack or fall of horse and/or rider once the contestant has entered the course. The course is defined as from the time the timer starts running and continues until the time stops.
4. No bats, whips, crops or split rein whipping allowed.
5. No abuse on any level will be tolerated, in or outside of the arena. Competitors will be asked to leave at judge's and show management's discretion.
6. Use of the saddle horn over jumps (in western classes) is permitted/encouraged.
7. Before each class, riders will have the option to walk the course on foot with the judge/show management and ask questions. Questions about tack, horsemanship, and scoring may all be asked at this time. Meetings are encouraged to run 15 minutes or less.
8. A horse may only participate in the course once. Riders may compete on more than one horse.



## **GENERAL RULES CONT.**

9. If a competitor exceeds the time limit of the class, they will be asked to excuse the arena whether or not they have completed the course.
10. Western and English riders will not compete against each other, with the exception of In-Hand classes. Disciplines must be separated by classes. Show bills must state which discipline is required for the class.
11. Lead line entries may not be placed in any MEOA qualifying class.
12. If a rider hits the time limit in their class, they may still place in their class but cannot place higher than any rider who finished the full course.
13. ALL JUDGES DECISIONS ARE FINAL. NO EXCEPTIONS.
14. Patterns must be posted minimally one hour before class begins but no sooner than 12am the day of the event.
15. There should be provisions for running water or water for horses on the grounds. If no water is available, it should be noted in the show bill. There should be clean restroom facilities.
16. Producers/show management can choose to allow exhibitions. If a horse is entered twice, the first attempt at the course is the only attempt that may count for points/scoring.
17. If a class has multiple judges, the judges' scores will count as double points and can be submitted as double points for MEOA.
18. If a producer/show management wishes to add extra classes, they must be at the end of the show bill to avoid "practice rides" before MEOA scored classes.

## **APPROVED SAFETY EQUIPMENT**

1. Barrels - Rubber or plastic barrels only
2. Jumps - Plastic(pvc preferred) or wooden jump poles only. Jumps are to be set at no more than 3 ft tall.

**EXPLANATION OF CLASSES** - All classes listed below must use the same scoring system as stated above.

**Class Routine** - One horse will navigate the course at a time. Course will be timed. Time limits will be applied to each class. Riders will be excused if they hit their time limit. Scores will be a combination of individual obstacle scoring, tack score, general horsemanship, and time. Contestant is to pass the starting line, maneuver the course, and cross the finish line.

### **Peewee(Western or English)**

- Peewee competitors must be 10 years of age and under by January 1st of the current year.
- Course shall consist of 8 obstacles with a 5 minute time limit.

**Youth(Western or English)**

- Youth competitors must be 17 years of age and under by January 1st of the current year.
- Course shall consist of 10 obstacles with a 5 minute time limit.

**Novice(Western or English)**

- Any age rider may compete.
- Course shall consist of 10 obstacles with a 5 minute time limit.

**Open(Western or English)**

- Any age rider may compete.
- Course shall consist of 10 obstacles with a 3 minute time limit.

**In-Hand(Western and/or English)**

- Any age rider may compete.
- Course shall consist of 8 obstacles with a 5 minute time limit.

- ❖ Each horse may only complete an MEOA scored course one time regardless of age division.