

Obstacle Driving

- A. The obstacle course must be posted for the exhibitor to view not less than two (2) hours prior to the class.
- B. Horses must be no less than (3) three years of age for Obstacle Driving.
- C. Class to be judged on performance and way of going with emphasis on manners throughout course. Entries will be evaluated on responsiveness and willingness, plus general attitude. Entries should demonstrate the control, calmness, and sensible attitude of an ideal Obstacle Driving miniature horse.
- D. Obstacle horses shall be hitched to cart with wooden or metal spoke wheels or solid wheels with rubber tires. Show carts with a basket and open sided carts are both acceptable.
- E. Course:
 - 1. Must be a minimum of five (5) obstacles and a maximum of eight (8).
 - 2. Care must be used to avoid setting any obstacle in a way so as to be hazardous to the horse or exhibitor.
 - 3. Course to be set to the widest cart.
 - 4. No obstacle should be designed that would require the competitor to lean out of excessively, stand up in, or exit their cart; nor should any obstacle be designed that would require a competitor to remove more than one hand from their reins at a time (but it shall not be considered a "fault" or "penalty" if a competitor does not keep at least one hand on the reins at all times).
 - 5. Suggested Obstacles:
 - a) Drive through or back into/out of obstacle (such as a simulated parking space)
 - b) Drive through water or simulated water
 - c) Drive through narrow passage
 - d) Pick up an object (letter, flag, etc.) and place it at a designated location
 - e) Put on / remove equipment such as raincoat, gloves, etc., from person only (not from horse)
 - f) Drive across bridge or simulated bridge
 - g) Drive pattern created with poles, pylons, (L shape, figure 8, serpentine, cloverleaf, etc.)
 - h) Put wheel in circle, turn complete circle with horse not stepping in circle.
- F. Obstacle Guidelines:
 - 1. The course designer should be readily available to answer questions regarding the course and be available for a walk through the course with exhibitors as well as the judge(s).
 - 2. Judge shall walk obstacle driving course with designer and exhibitors.
 - 3. Ingenuity and originality in adapting and combining various obstacles both to demonstrate a horse's willingness and ability to please exhibitor and audience are encouraged. However, unnatural or "horror" obstacles should be avoided and all obstacles should be safe for exhibitors as well as horses.
 - 4. Judge has the right to alter the course for time and/or safety.
- G. Scoring

1. Each obstacle should receive an obstacle score and is subject to a penalty that should be subtracted. Each obstacle should be scored on the following basis, ranging from plus 1½ to minus 1½.
 - 1½ extremely poor; -1 very poor; -½ poor; 0 correct; +½ good;
 - +1 very good; +1 ½ excellent
2. Obstacle scores are to be determined and assessed independently of penalty points.
3. Penalties should be assessed per occurrence as follows:
 - a) Disqualification from entire class:
 - (i) Equipment failure that delays completion of pattern.
 - (ii) Fall to the ground by horse or driver.
 - (iii) Third refusal, balk, or attempt to evade an obstacle by shying or backing more than two (2) strides away.
 - (iv) Cantering more than two (2) strides.
 - (v) Being “off course”, which is defined as taking an obstacle in the wrong direction; performing outside designated boundary marker of the course; negotiating an obstacle from the wrong side; skipping an obstacle unless directed by judge; negotiating obstacles in the wrong direction.
 - b) One-half (½) point penalty:
 - (i) Each tick of log, pole, cone, or obstacle by horse or cart where contact is not called for by course design.
 - c) One (1) point penalty:
 - (i) Each hit or stepping on a log, pole, cone, or obstacle where contact is not called for by course design.
 - (ii) Break of gait at a walk or trot for two (2) strides or less.
 - (iii) Failing to step into required space, such as a water or water-simulated obstacle.
 - d) Three (3) point penalty:
 - (i) Break of gait at a walk or trot for more than two (2) strides.
 - (ii) Knocking down an elevated pole, cone, barrel, or plant obstacle or severely disturbing an obstacle.
 - (iii) Dropping an object before delivering to designated location.
 - e) Five (5) point penalty:
 - (i) Blatant disobedience of the horse such as kicking out, biting, rearing, striking.
4. Maximum time shall not be set per obstacle; however, judges are encouraged to advance to the next obstacle any horse taking excessive time at an obstacle.