



**Purpose:** Introduce and add Medallion classes to the NWHHA versatility division.

**Scope:** Reward and acknowledge the top showing NWHHA equitation riders

**Historical Relevance & Importance:**

### **Equitation is the art or practice of horse riding or horsemanship**

More specifically, equitation may refer to a rider's position while mounted, and encompass a rider's ability to ride correctly and with effective aids. In horse show competition, the rider, rather than the horse is evaluated. Equitation covers the rider's performance and control of the horse, use of riding aids, proper attire, correct form, and usually factor in rider poise and the cleanliness and polish of horse, rider and equipment. The performance of the horse is not judged *per se*, but a poorly performing horse is considered to reflect the ability of the rider. Equitation classes occur in the Hunt seat, Saddle seat, Dressage, and Western disciplines. A good equitation rider is always in balance with the horse, maintains a correct position in every gait, movement, and possesses a commanding, but relaxed, presence, able to direct the horse with nearly invisible aids.

Equitation is considered a good teaching tool in preparation for the advanced classes in open divisions and also prepare future generations of horsemen to expect and achieve the best performance from any mount they may encounter during their riding careers. It helps riders to learn to position themselves and ride correctly, use planning and thinking to master difficult situations through use of patterns and/or rider tests. When equitation classes began to be offered in the United States in the 1930s, riders were awarded medals for their achievement in winning a class. The nickname for equitation classes as 'Medal Classes' has stuck almost 80 years later. Competing in equitation classes requires extensive training and practice with an equestrian professional. Many riders begin training in their youth, spending years in the saddle to gain the experience necessary to compete at any year-end final.

**The Intent:**

- To foster interest in the Tennessee Walking Horse Pleasure horse and versatility;
- To promote excellence in Saddle Seat and Stock Seat Equitation;
- To encourage sportsmanship;
- To create wholesome competition among walking horse exhibitors.
- To support qualifications from any NWHHA affiliated event

**Who:** Offered in the following sections:

A: Youth Equitation: Open to riders 17 and under. (canter required) Suggested classes are:

- Walking Seat Equitation, Riders 11& Under (no canter)
- Walking Seat Equitation, Riders 12-14 years.
- Walking Seat Equitation, Riders 15-17 years.
- Walking Seat Equitation Riders 17&Under
- Walking Seat Equitation Championship.

B. Adult Equitation: Open to riders 18 and over. Suggested classes are:

- Walking or Stock Seat Equitation, Riders 18 and Over (no canter required.)
- Walking or Stock Seat Equitation, Riders 18 and Over (canter.)

C. Stock Seat Equitation: Suggested classes are:

- Stock Seat Equitation, Riders 11 and under (no canter required.)
- Stock Seat Equitation, Riders 12-14 years.
- Stock Seat Equitation, Riders 15-17 years.
- Stock Seat Equitation, Riders 17&under
- Stock Seat Equitation Championship

### **Rules and Eligibility:**

- Any NWA affiliated show that chooses to have a medallion class (*any seat / canter required*), must send notification to the NWA Office. NWA Office will provide ribbons / medals to show management (sponsored by Braddock Century 21 Realty).
- Special Note: 2-Gait (no canter) classes will be offered a “medallion”, but are not considered as a qualifier for The National.
- Top (3) placings in any medallion canter class during the current show season qualify for their respective age division at The National.
- The National Medallion Equitation Preliminary class structure. – top (5) placing of each Preliminary class will qualify for Medallion Grand Championship Final
  - *Medallion Equitation Youth 11&Under (any seat / no canter) \*see note*
  - Medallion Equitation Youth 14Yrs & Under (any seat / canter) Preliminary
  - Medallion Equitation Youth 15 - 17Yrs (any seat / canter) Preliminary
  - Medallion Equitation Adult (any seat / canter) Preliminary
  - The National Medallion Grand Championship Equitation Class Finals
    - Must have placed in top (3) of any medallion canter class offered at an NWA Affiliated show AND
    - Must have placed in top (5) of their respective age division preliminary medallion canter class at The National.
    - Grand Championship Medallion Finals MUST have the following
      - Canter required
      - Rail work + pattern
      - Pattern will be posted no earlier than 1 hour before the final class.

- All rules and judging criteria will be followed as per the current NWA Versatility Rule Book.
- *Note: Medallion Equitation Youth 11&Under may compete in either the 2-gait class or 14&Under 3-gait preliminary class at The National – but not both.*