



SECTION H

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H. FINE HARNESS DIVISION

Brief `Type' Standard and Common Faults

The Saddle Horse selected for the Fine Harness division must be beautiful, refined and elegant and possess the right conformation through the neck and throatlatch to enable the horse to wear an overcheck. This horse should have great expression and a rhythmical airy movement. Weediness is not to be confused with refinement in assessing the Fine-Harness type.

Horses are judged on:

- Performance
- Presence
- Quality
- Conformation

In Ladies', Amateur and Children's classes primary emphasis is placed on manners first and then performance.

1. Tack Requirements and Rules

Appliances – Training appliances such as chains, stretchers and draw reins are prohibited in the collecting ring and in the show arena. Curb bits are a disqualification. Leg bandages are not allowed unless application has been made to the show committee because of wet conditions.

Boots – Quarter or bell boots are used in the Fine-Harness division. Brushing boots and knee boots are prohibited. Taped hooves are prohibited.

Harness – A light harness with a stainless steel, half spoon cheek, jointed-mouth driving snaffle is required as well as an overcheck bit. A harness must be complete with blinkers, martingale, traces and crupper. **Traces may not be wound around shafts.** Handholds (loops) on reins are optional in an open class but **must be used** in Ladies' and Children's Classes.

Vehicle – An appropriate, light, four-wheeled vehicle, with bicycle type wheels and no top is used. Cushion and floor mat must be included.

Whips – A buggy whip is optional. Lash whips are not allowed.

2. Turn-Out of Horse, Including Shoes

Cleanliness and neatness are the foremost requirements regarding the turn-out of a horse.

Fine Harness horses in all age groups are shown with a full mane and tail.

Ribbons – Horses will be shown with ribbons in their manes. Ribbons in the forelock or attached to the bridle are optional.

Shoes – Horses may be shod with pads and/or wedges according to their needs. Shoeing of hind hooves will be optional, BOTH hind hooves must be shod or BOTH must be unshod. Loss of a hind shoe will be subject to the same rules as the loss of any shoe during a class.

Tails – Tails should be clean, long, healthy, picked and tied. Crooked tails do not make a good impression and every effort should be made to correct them. Unsightly, sore tails will result in disqualification. High tail cruppers, top tails and switches are allowed.

3. Dress Requirements of Drivers

The attire worn by drivers is dictated by tradition and the time of day. To wear formal attire before 6:00 PM is regarded as unsuitable.

Men or Boys Attire

Suit – A Kentucky riding suit, regular dress suit, or blazer and slacks. Tuxedo after 6:00 PM is optional.

Boots or Shoes – Solid coloured leather or patent leather Jodhpur boots of a low-heeled variety or regular dress shoes are worn.

Gloves – Gloves may be worn.

Hat – A tasteful hat is worn, snap-brim, (felt or straw) or the homburg variety.

Whips – Whips are optional. Lash whips are not allowed.

Ladies' or Girl's Attire

Suits – Kentucky riding suits, slack suits, skirts, dresses are acceptable at any time of day in an open fine harness class or children's fine harness class.

Ladies' Divisions –A dress or semi-formal slack suit attire is required in a ladies' class before 6:00 PM. Formal wear is used after 6:00 PM. A Kentucky riding suit constitutes a disqualification. Under certain circumstances and with permission of the Stewards a Kentucky suit will be allowed.

Boots and Shoes – Suitable boots and shoes must be worn.

Gloves – Gloves are optional.

Hat – Suitable hats are acceptable for both day and evening. A derby or homburg is worn with a Kentucky suit.

Handler's Dress – Handlers and attendants shall be neatly dressed, men in solid coloured/white shirts, tie and long pants, women in neat clothing of good taste. There will be no stud names displayed on clothing.

Whips – Whips are optional. Lash whips are not allowed.

4. Classes, Age, Size, Gender and Status Divisions

Classes are divided according to age, size, gender and status. Emphasis is placed on certain aspects or criteria in different divisions.

Age – Horses are divided according to age. Children are divided according to age. Only children 12 years of age and older may compete in this division.

Gender – Gender divisions are made according to the gender of horses and drivers. Classes for stallions, mares and geldings divide the horses. The Ladies and Gentlemen's divisions provide additional classes. The Children's divisions are not divided by gender.

Status – Status divisions are made between Amateurs or Professional Trainers. Professional Trainers are not allowed to compete in the Amateur divisions or Pleasure Horse classes.

Classes available in the Fine Harness division are:

Age Divisions:

- Two-year-old stallion, mare or gelding.
- Three-year-old stallion, mare or gelding.
- Four-year-old stallion, mare or gelding.
- Natural Mane and Tail, four years and under, stallion, mare or gelding.
- Five-year-old and over, stallion, mare or gelding.

Gender Divisions:

- Ladies division (mares and geldings only).
- Gentlemen's division (stallion, mares, or geldings).
- Geldings (five years and over).
- Mares (five years and older).
- Stallions (five years and over)
- Stallions, Geldings (five years and over)

Status Divisions:

- Amateur (stallion, mare or gelding).
- Amateur horse presented by a lady or gentleman 40 years and over.
Stallion, mare or gelding.
- Amateur horse presented by a lady or gentleman 40 years and under.
Stallion, mare or gelding.
- Amateur horse presented by a lady. Mare or gelding.
- Amateur horse presented by a gentleman. Stallion, mare, gelding.
- Amateur Grand Championship.
- Child's Fine Harness Horse, (mare or gelding, driver 12 to 18 years of age).
- Natural Mane and Tail Horses, Fine Harness division. Five years and over.
- Open Grand Championship

Qualification for Championships – Horses qualifying in any of the above classes except the Children's classes are eligible to show in the Fine Harness Grand Championship Class at the South African National Championships. Exhibitors wishing to show backing the Fine Harness Grand Championship Class at the National Championship Show after having 'Bad Luck' in the qualifying class will be required to remain in the line-up if possible, request the permission of the Ringmaster to enter the Grand Championship and pay the equivalent of the eighth place prize money. See 'Bad Luck' in General Show Rules.

Cross-Entries – There shall be no cross-entries between Fine Harness and Single Harness Classes.

Pleasure Horses – For information regarding Fine Harness Pleasure horses see section J.

5. Class Routine

Entrance – All divisions enter the arena at a park trot moving in a counter clockwise direction or the right hand direction through the gate.

Order of Gaits – Horses enter the arena at a park trot then walk, turn around and repeat the two gaits in the opposite direction. Horses will change gaits according to the request of the Judge through the announcer. Some Judges request another trot after the last walk; this is considered acceptable if the circumstances warrant the request. All gaits are judged each time they are performed.

Line-Up –Horses will come in and line-up, when requested to do so by the Judge through the announcer. The Ringmaster will designate the position of the line-up. Handlers are allowed into the arena at this time. Handlers will stand back one pace while the Judge is viewing the horse. Horses will remain checked during the judging in the line-up. They will remain standing until requested and retire to await results.

6. Basic Gaits and Common Faults

Walk – The walk in the Fine Harness division is an animated four beat gait. It is highly collected and slow and performed with great style. It must not degenerate into a common jog and be free of the tendency to amble. The horse's setting and ability to wear an overcheck must be emphasized at all times.

Park Trot – The park trot is a two beat gate performed with balance, collection and style. It is characterized by the horse's ability to drive forward off of a well-placed hock with impulsion but without unnecessary speed. **Any loss of form over-reaching, going wide behind, dragging hocks, mixing gaits, 'shackled' way of going or lack of co-ordination front to back is not acceptable and will be discriminated against.** The inability to wear an overcheck is unacceptable and will be discriminated against.

Transitions – Poor or rough transitions from one gait to another will be discriminated against.

Refer to section C, General Rules and Showing Rules.