

The Australian Stock Horse Society Limited

EVENTS HANDBOOK

Conformation, Movement, Tack and Attire

Section 3

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This Handbook contains the Rules and Regulations for Australian Stock Horse Events and Competitions for THE AUSTRALIAN STOCK HORSE SOCIETY LIMITED, as approved by the Board of Directors, and is effective from 1st April 2004.

Please note that from 1st April 2004, all prior regulations will be superseded and are null and void. The Board shall determine any question not provided for by these regulations. Alterations to the regulations by addition, deletion or amendment will be effected by resolution of the Board.

NOTICE

Branches and Management Councils may only conduct the events listed in this Handbook. The Board of Directors must approve any other event being considered by a Branch or Management Council prior to advertising the said event. The Society's Public Liability Insurance Cover will not cover Branches and Management Councils that act outside Approved Events or run events in conjunction with other committees or organisations.

STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE

1. STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE

- 1.1. The following "Standard of Excellence" is based on the original ASHS description of 'The Australian Stock Horse' from 1971.
 - 1.1.1. Head alert and intelligent with broad forehead, full, well-set eyes, wide nostrils. A fine, clean gullet, allowing plenty of breathing room.
 - 1.1.2. A good length of rein, well set into the shoulder.
 - 1.1.3. Sloping shoulder, not too heavily muscled, a well-defined wither slightly higher than the croup.
 - 1.1.4. Deep chest, not too wide in proportion, but showing plenty of heart room.
 - 1.1.5. Ribs well sprung and back strong and of medium length in proportion.
 - 1.1.6. In forelegs, forearms well developed, cannon bones slightly flat, pasterns short and slightly sloping.
 - 1.1.7. Hindquarters strong, rounded and well muscled, nicely sloping to give a full line from croup to hock. Hocks broad, flat and clean, the cannon relatively short with well-defined tendons. The hind legs well under when standing.
 - 1.1.8. The Hooves hard and in proportion to the size of the horse, with a wide heel and feet straight.
 - 1.1.9. The whole of these component parts to be in balance according to the size.
 - 1.1.10. Preferred heights between 14 and 16 hands.
- 1.2. A painting of the Standard of Excellence has been commissioned and it hangs in the boardroom at Head Office. A painting can also be viewed on the Australian Stock Horse Society's website at www.ashs.com.au.

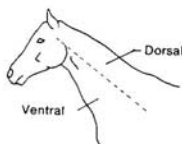
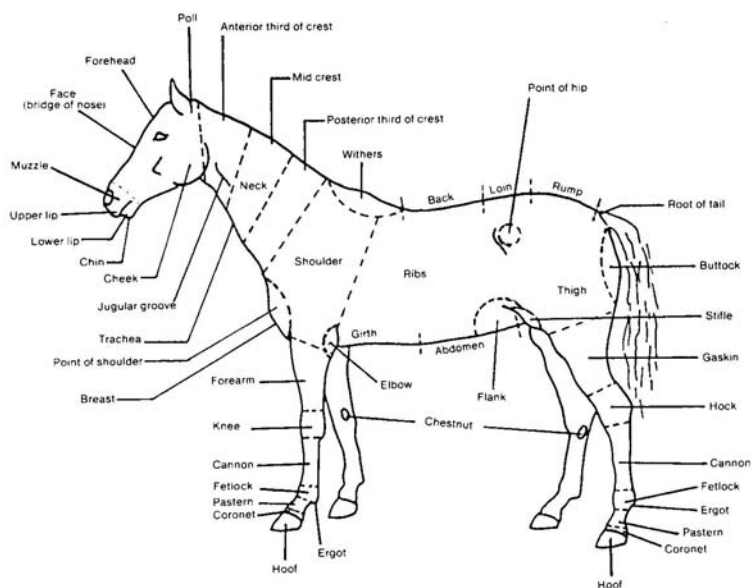
CONFORMATION

2. DESIRABLE CHARACTERISTICS

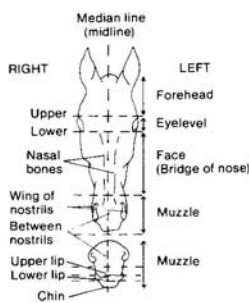
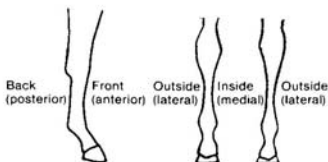
- 2.1. Good conformation is where function and appearance are seen to be in harmony. Desirable characteristics for Australian Stock Horses are as follows:
 - 1.1.1. **Head** - The head should be proportionate in size, well set, hard and clean-cut. The muzzle should be neat, the lips firm and even, the nostrils big and soft and the front line of the face almost straight. The forehead should be broad, with the eyes clear, prominent and set well apart. The cheeks should be free from fleshiness, with plenty of room between the branches of the jaw and the width from the gullet to the poll. The width between the ears should be clean-cut. Overall the horse should appear alert and with a kind, intelligent expression.
 - 1.1.2. **Neck** - Good length of rein, well set into the shoulders and slightly arched.
 - 1.1.3. **Shoulders** - The shoulders should be flat, long and sloping back, so that the saddle is carried behind and not over the forelegs. The shoulders should slope into a well defined wither.
 - 1.1.4. **Wither** - The wither should be slightly higher than the croup and extending well back, giving plenty of length from the mouth to the wither. (Known as a "good rein").
 - 1.1.5. **Chest** - The chest should be muscular, but not too wide, as width will cause the horse to roll in his action.

- 1.1.6. **Ribs** - The ribs should be well sprung, of medium length, and carried well back. There should only be a short space between the last rib and the point of the hip.
- 1.1.7. **Back** - The back should be short, well muscled, strong and horizontal.
- 1.1.8. **Loin** - The loin should be short, wide and well muscled.
- 1.1.9. **Forearms** - Forearms should be rather upright, muscular and well developed.
- 1.1.10. **Knee** - The knee should be big and clean cut and, the back should stand well out.
- 1.1.11. **Cannon Bone** - The cannon bone should be strong and clean-cut and relatively short and when compared with the forearm and the back tendons should stand well out from and parallel to the bone pasterns, ie, not too long and slightly sloping. The tendons and ligaments should be well defined and free from any thickening or puffiness.
- 1.1.12. **Fetlock** - The fetlock joint should be clean-cut, big and strong and free from any puffiness.
- 1.1.13. **Pastern** - The pastern should be strong and free from any bony growth such as ringbone. The pastern acts as a spring – if the pastern is too straight it jars the leg, if too long, it is weak and puts too much strain on the back tendons.
- 1.1.14. **Hock** - The hock should be large, strong, clean-cut and well defined. The horse should stand straight when viewed from behind or, to the side. Hocks with too much bend are a weakness known as sickle hock.
- 1.1.15. **Gaskin** - The gaskin should be powerful, with plenty of width to give it strength. The distance from the stifle to the hock should be long compared with that from the hock to the fetlock.
- 1.1.16. **Thigh** - The thigh should be rather upright, well covered with muscles, wide and powerful.
- 1.1.17. **Croup** – Commonly known as **rump**, lies between the loin and the tail. The rump should be long and muscular, with an adequate slope - a slight dropping is not a defect.
- 1.1.18. **Hoof** - The hoof outline on the ground surface should be almost round in the front feet and more oval in the back feet. They should be proportionate in size to the weight of the horse, rather bigger in the front than the hind as the front legs carry the larger part of the weight.
- 1.1.19. **Tail** - Size and substance of the tail should be in proportion to the horse's conformation, which is a good indication of the metabolism of the horse. Allowances should be made where tail loss has occurred accidentally.
- 1.1.20. **Temperament** - Quiet and intelligent with the ability to relax after competition.
- 1.1.21. **Athletic Ability** - Agility is desirable.
- 1.2. Allowances should be made for **minor blemishes** due to previous injuries – provided they are not breeding defects.
- 1.3. The whole body to be **balanced** according to the size of the horse.

3. POINTS OF HORSE



Avoid using the terms 'upper' and 'lower' to describe the side of the neck.



MOVEMENT

4. STANDARD PACES

- 4.1. For more detailed definitions of paces and movements please refer to Federation Equestre Internationale (FEI) Rules for Dressage Events (Equestrian Federation of Australia - EFA).
- 4.1.1. **Walk** - A four beat pace with regular rhythm, light rein contact and soft frame. Hind feet should come in front to the track of the front feet. NO jogging or ambling.
- 4.1.2. **Trot** - A two beat pace with regular rhythm. Feet move in diagonal pairs and hind feet come close to, or in front of the print of the front feet.
- 4.1.3. **Canter** - A three beat pace with regular rhythm. No running. Horse should lead with the inside foreleg, with the outside fore and inside hind moving together as a diagonal pair; if not the horse is disunited/cross firing.
- 4.1.4. **Gallop** - Is an increased canter as the horse lengthens his stride and stretches himself into a gallop; the pace becomes a four beat as the diagonals split.

5. VARIATION OF PACES

- 5.1. **Slow** - Slower rhythm, shorter stride, impulsion maintained.
- 5.2. **Medium** - Normal travelling speed, well balanced.
- 5.3. **Fast** - Faster rhythm, longer stride, horse should be visibly working to maintain its balance in a circle.
- 5.4. **Extended** - Rhythm should be maintained at medium pace, stride should be lengthened to cover more ground.
- 5.5. **Collected** - A horse should work on a light rein with a soft responsive mouth, with its nose angled slightly in front of vertical.

6. CLARIFICATION OF TERMS

- 6.1. **Long Rein** - Reins are lengthened to allow the horse to stretch his neck and take up the slack.
- 6.2. **Light Rein** - Reins lengthened to allow horse to move freely with light contact only.
- 6.3. **Loose Rein** - Sufficient length of reins to allow more slack than a horse can take up.
- 6.4. **Circles** - Unless otherwise specified a circle is approximately 20 metres in diameter. A small circle is 10 metres in diameter. A horse must bend its body and flex its neck to follow the line of the circle; ie, look where it is going and be balanced.
- 6.5. **Figure of Eight** - Two equal circles on opposite reins – starting, changing rein and finishing at the same point in the middle of the working area. After completing the last figure of eight and unless instructed otherwise by the Judge, competitors should change rein and continue with a half circle in the opposite direction and return to the Judge.
- 6.6. **Simple Change** – Through the trot, canter down to trot for two or three well defined trot steps.
- 6.7. **Flying Change** - Change of leads at canter in a single stride in the air, calmly, smooth and straight, in both hind and front legs.
- 6.8. **Halt** – Coming down through transitions. Not abrupt but obedient.
- 6.9. **Stop** - An immediate cessation of forward movement where a horse will elevate slightly in front prior to engaging hindquarters to come to a controlled yet complete stop in a short distance.
- 6.10. **Settle** - Stand still and relax.
- 6.11. **Haunch Turn** – A turn in motion where the energy of the horse is not stopped but is redirected in the opposite direction. The horse commences to turn before it ceases forward motion taking most of the weight on the inside hind leg which becomes the pivot point for the body while the other legs propel the horse with forward impulsion in the intended direction.
- 6.12. **Roll Back** – The horse comes to a complete stop engaging both hind legs, only then does the horse turn 180 degrees over its hocks, moving out on the same line as it entered.
- 6.13. **Spin** - A movement of 360 degrees or more with the inside hind foot pivoting on the same spot.
- 6.14. **Pivot** - Halt, turn slowly on hind feet, usually through 90 degrees.
- 6.15. **Rein Back** – Two time diagonal movement, even rhythm for required number of steps.
- 6.16. **Side Pass** - At walk, lateral pair of feet step to the side one step, the other pair cross over to make a second step. Note: Should always be from a halt.

- 6.17. **Forehand Turn** - From halt, hind feet move to describe a circle around the front feet, which mark time on the spot. In a turn to the right, the horse's head looks to the right and swings that way as his hind feet move to the left.
- 6.18. **Hand Gallop** - A controlled four beat pace, not a fast gallop. Riders seat out of saddle.

TACK AND ATTIRE

7. GENERAL PRESENTATION

- 7.1. Presentation of horse as follows:
- 7.1.1. The horse, at the very least, should be clean.
 - 7.1.2. The horse's chin, ears, legs, mane and tail should be trimmed or be neatly presented.
 - 7.1.3. In Led and Hack classes, bandages and boots are not permitted.
 - 7.1.4. False tails are permitted.
- 7.2. Presentation of tack as follows:
- 7.2.1. Tack does not have to be new or extremely expensive. Older tack, well cared for, usually looks and fits better.
 - 7.2.2. Ensure that the tack is correctly fitted and does not rub or disturb the horse.
 - 7.2.3. Make sure the tack used is suitable for the event.
 - 7.2.4. In Led classes, a show whip is permitted and must not exceed 77 centimetres in length. In Working classes, a riding whip is not permitted.
- 7.3. Presentation of handler or rider as follows:
- 7.3.1. The handler or rider's attire should be neat – understated dress always gives a more professional appearance. The handler or rider who conveys a neat, workmanlike impression will probably score higher in the Judge's initial mental assessment than that of a less tidy or flamboyant combination.
 - 7.3.2. The handler or rider's attire should be suitable for the type of class in which the combination is competing.
 - 7.3.3. Jewellery is out of place in the show ring and can be dangerous. If you must wear earrings, the tiniest of plain, discreet studs only are suitable.
 - 7.3.4. The handler/rider should have neat and tidy hair.
- 7.4. When competing in Led ASH and ASH Hack classes, the horse and handler/rider may be presented in either the Australian Stock Horse style or the English style, unless stipulated otherwise on the programme. In Working ASH classes, the horse and rider must be presented in the Australian Stock Horse style.

8. AUSTRALIAN STOCK HORSE STYLE

8.1. TACK

- 8.1.1. Australian style bridle, with single leather or webbed reins. Closed or split reins may be used. In Led classes, fillies, mares and geldings may be presented in a halter, but colts and stallions, 2 years and over, must have a bit in their mouth and be under the control of the bit at all times while being handled by Members 18 years and over.
- 8.1.2. Plain snaffle bit. The bit may have loose rings, egg-butt style, D shaped or tom thumb. The mouthpiece may be straight, single or double jointed. Gag and

twisted bits are not permitted. Riders under 13 years may use a Spanish snaffle bit with a curb chain.

- 8.1.3. The horse must have free use of its head - no head check, running reins, standing or running martingales may be used. Hackamores and bosals are not permitted.
- 8.1.4. Cavesson and nosebands may be used.
- 8.1.5. Australian style stock saddles are preferred (stirrups and leathers optional style). Fender saddles are permitted. Western saddles or saddles with a horn are not permitted.
- 8.1.6. Stockman's breastplate (optional).
- 8.1.7. Square cut saddlecloth (ASH preferred).
- 8.1.8. Spurs (optional).

8.2. ATTIRE

- 8.2.1. Australian style felt hat or equestrian helmet approved by the current Australian Standards Association or international equivalent. Competitors under 18 years – refer to regulations on protective headgear.
- 8.2.2. Plain or light coloured shirt (ASH preferred).
- 8.2.3. Tie (ASH preferred).
- 8.2.4. Plain coloured or tweed hacking jacket (not leather or suede) or ASH v-neck jumper or vest.
- 8.2.5. Plain coloured (brown, fawn or white), stockman cut trousers, jodhpurs or jeans are permitted.
- 8.2.6. Elastic sided riding boots or boots worn inside trousers. Safe riding boots (as per Code of Practice for the Horse Industry – July 2003) must be worn at all times.
- 8.2.7. A coat is optional in extreme weather conditions.

9. ENGLISH STYLE

9.1. TACK

- 9.1.1. English style hack or dressage saddle.
- 9.1.2. English style saddlecloth (numnah) or square cut saddlecloth (ASH preferred).
- 9.1.3. English style double rein bridle with pelham or bit and bridoon or single rein bridle with snaffle bit.
- 9.1.4. Cavesson nosebands may be used. Dropped nosebands are not permitted.
- 9.1.5. English style spurs and hacking cane (optional).

9.2. ATTIRE

- 9.2.1. Velvet covered English style hat, bowler hat or equestrian helmet approved by the current Australian Standards Association or international equivalent. Competitors under 18 years – refer to regulations on protective headgear.
- 9.2.2. Plain or light coloured shirt.
- 9.2.3. Tie (ASH preferred) or stock.
- 9.2.4. Plain coloured or tweed hacking jacket (not leather or suede).
- 9.2.5. Waistcoat and gloves (optional).
- 9.2.6. Fawn or plain, light coloured jodhpurs.
- 9.2.7. Elastic sided short riding boots or top boots. Safe riding boots (as per Code of Practice for the Horse Industry – July 2003) must be worn at all times.
- 9.2.8. English style spurs.