



Virtual Horse Showcase Considerations

Coordinating a virtual horse exhibition for youth will be much different than coordinating an in-person event. It is important to consider several elements before getting started.

AS YOU PLAN

- Be encouraging and enthusiastic when posting rules and suggestions to inspire riders of all experience to try the new virtual format.
- Follow the Michigan 4-H Horse & Pony Rulebook with variations or adjustments as needed to provide the same opportunities for all exhibitors (i.e. pattern size and equipment required).
- Provide minimum and or maximum measurement requirements for patterns when needed.
- Trail patterns can be designed to reuse obstacles for different elements to minimize riding arena/space requirements (i.e. pole box for trot over and turn inside).
- Provide instructions for camera placement and required elements to provide consistency from a judge's perspective.
 - Lighting should provide the judge with an entire, clear view of the horse and rider with attention given to backlight, shadows and sunlight glare.
 - Rail classes should show each gait, both ways, plus stop and back.
 - Exhibitors should follow 4-H guidelines regarding show clothes
- Consider returning scorecards with judge's feedback via an online link or email.

JUDGING CONSIDERATIONS

The Danish System of judging is highly recommended for the horse division within the digital exhibition platform. By using the Danish System of judging, exhibitors are judged against standards set for specific competitions and not against other exhibitors. This system provides both an opportunity for recognition and education, allowing exhibitors to receive feedback on what skills they are doing well and what skills they may need to adjust for improvement. As the mission of 4-H is to assist youth in gaining knowledge and further develop life skills, this educational assessment of an exhibitor's performance is the primary reason that this type of judging system is recommended. Additionally, this type of judging system will simplify the tremendous task judges have of trying to rank large number of exhibitors, as well as the criteria used for judging specific classes with large and time-consuming patterns. This process also provides opportunities for all exhibitors to exhibit their equine, including those that may not have access to a large arena, for example.

Potential options for exhibiting and judging horse classes with these types of patterns (i.e. dressage, gymkhana, reining, trail) are set forth below.

- Patterns could be downsized considerably to include only the important or required elements of the class. Performance and execution of these elements would provide the criteria for the judge to assess for grouping in the Danish System and/or place accordingly.
- Exhibitors may video elements of the class or riding pattern that display the rider's ability and performance of the horse.

To contact an expert in your area, visit extension.msu.edu/experts or call 888-MSUE4MI (888-678-3464)



For additional information, visit extension.msu.edu

- Gymkhana riders may provide a video showing turns around barrel, poles or cones, without completing the entire pattern.
- Riders in reining classes may videotape the required elements of the pattern such as rollback, spin, sliding stop, and lead changes within one video without completing the entire pattern.
- Specific trail obstacles could be performed by rider vs. having a large pattern videotaped.
- Instead of a trail pattern, certain obstacles could be identified and sent to exhibitors prior to entry and they would complete all obstacles in one video.



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