



PLAYDAY RULE BOOK
&
COURSE PATTERNS

UPDATED 2025



Meridian Riding Club

PLAYDAYS

This Rule Book is being written in the best interest of Meridian Riding Club members and all others who would be interested in competing at the Club Playdays. The Rule Book is based on the Washington State Horsemen Games Division Rule Book. The rest are common sense, safety inspired regulations made specifically for our club. All rules are subject to review and change; review to be done by the Playdays Committee, with the final decision to be made by the Playdays chairperson(s) and executive board members. These Playday functions are meant to be fun for everyone, but must have rules to be adhered to at all times. Rules must be enforced fairly and consistently with patience and compassion. Anyone, Member or Non-Member, not observing these written rules is subject to dismissal, and/or disqualification, to be determined by the Playday Chairperson(s).

Updated 2025

GENERAL RULES

1. Unsportsmanlike conduct, profanity, intentional repetitive striking of the horse (not to include over/under or crop during a run), striking in front of the cinch (touching or patting ahead of the elbow shall not be construed as striking, therefore not a disqualification), unsafe horses or riding, disrespecting other competitors or show volunteers and officials can result in disqualification from that event or for the entire day, final decision to be left to the judge and Playday Chairperson(s).

2. Dress Code: Jeans or riding pants, boots or approved riding shoes with heel are required for all mounted riders. No Crop-tops or shorts while riding. One warning will be given prior to dismissal.

3. Helmets are required for riders 17 years and under and are encouraged for all other riders. Helmets must be properly fitted and secured when on course (bicycle helmets are acceptable). One warning will be given prior to dismissal.

4. The horse must be sound (i.e. not lame). Documentation from a veterinarian approving participation (such as for a horse that is sound, but permanently limps) may be accepted by the chairperson(s).

5. Parent or guardian must sign entry forms for minors (17 and under).

6. There will be NO refund given, with the exception of injury to horse or rider.

7. Rider will remain in the same age group the whole year (the age as of April 1st of the year). An exception is a rider moving from Leadline to another age group, or from another age group to Leadline. If a rider elects to move up to the next age group after a birthday, the rider will forfeit the points accumulated in the prior group.

8. Age groups:

- Leadline: any age
- Buckaroo: 8 and under
- Junior: 9-12
- Intermediate: 13-17
- Senior: 18-29
- Super Senior: 30-44
- Silver Spurs: 45+

9. No clip-on spurs. All spurs must be fully secured (tape and rubber-bands are not classified as secure).

10. No stallions permitted on the grounds.

11. Riders must enter the arena with their age group, unless the rider has been given permission by the Playday Chairperson(s) to wait outside the arena for their turn to ride or has been given permission by the Playday Chairperson(s) to enter the arena late.

Riders who are not ready when their age group is called due to equipment failure or repair, may ride at the end of the Silver Spurs age group.

12. Riders will enter and exit on their designated lane side.

13. In all events except Texas Barrels, two poles 30 feet apart shall designate the start and finish line. In Texas Barrels, the starting poles shall be 60 feet apart. A horse must pass between these poles at the start and finish, or they will be considered off course. Timers to be on the off course side of the line.

14. Start and Finish. The judge is the person of authority on course and will signal when the course is ready, announcer will indicate that the course is ready. The rider has 2 minutes to start, after their name is called to ride. In the event of a dispute, complaint, or discrepancy, all issues must be brought to the attention of the Playday Chairperson(s) only, not the judge. All decisions will be made with the judge's and rider's input, but the Playday Chairperson(s) will have the final decision.

a. There will be a 2 minute time limit to get your horse on course. If you do not start within the 2 minutes, you will be put at the end of the class, if you do not start in time again you will receive a no time, and a refund will not be issued.

b. Crossing over the start/finish line while judge or arena crew is on course will result in a disqualification.

c. Crossing over the start/finish line before your name has been called will result in a disqualification, at the judge's discretion.

15. When 2 timing lanes are being used for an event, riders must stay in their own lane, until their horse has come to a stop. Horses must come to a stop before exiting the arena. Running into the other lane or running into horses in the other lane will result in a disqualification, at the judge's discretion. One warning will be given, after the judge may disqualify rider, resulting in a no time.

16. Rider must leave the arena at the completion of their run, before the next rider starts.

17. Failure of equipment (timers, gaming and event equipment, or horse equipment) will constitute a re-ride.

18. Times announced are tentative; official times will be posted in the office after the next age group.

19. Ties. It shall be optional to the riders to accept a run off or let the placing stand as is. In breaking a tie, slower time takes the next lower placing. If during the run off the first contestant is disqualified, the second horse must complete a qualifying run to be declared the winner. In the event of a disagreement the decision shall be left to the Chairperson(s).

20. It is the rider's responsibility to check all scoring results sheets as they are posted. If there are errors it must be corrected at the show. If a protest is to be made it must be presented to the Chairperson before the end of the show.

21. Show officials are the only people allowed upstairs in the announcer booth or behind the registration counter.

22. Disputes will be brought to the attention of a Playday Chairperson(s) only, not a judge or announcer. All decision will be made with the judge's and rider's input, but the Playday Chairperson(s) will have the final decision.

23. All decisions made by the judge and/or the Playday Chairperson(s) are final. If there is a dispute with the ruling, it must be presented in writing to a member of the board before the next MRC board meeting.

24. Consequences of breaking the rules

- 1st offense results in a verbal warning. *
- 2nd offense results in disqualification of next event. *
- 3rd offense results in dismissal from grounds.
- * If offense occurs during an event, run will be disqualified.
- All consequences are at the discretion of the Playday Chairperson(s).

DISQUALIFICATIONS

1. Any infraction of the general rules by horse or rider.
2. Whipping the horse with the equipment of the event (flags. .etc.).
3. Intentional striking of the horse in any manner while on MRC grounds.
4. Unsportsmanlike conduct on MRC grounds. The judge can disqualify riders for use of profane language, unnecessary roughness, abusing the horse, show officials or volunteers. Disorderly conduct of any kind. The judge will also disqualify an unmanageable horse for safety reasons. Decisions by the judge and Chairperson(s) will be final.
5. Teams will be disqualified if the horse waiting its turn crosses the starting line before the horse finishing the course crosses the finish line completely.
6. In all events the rider must be mounted when crossing the start/finish line.
7. The general rules written in the guideline will apply to any and all events run at our shows. Individual events presented as replacement or surprise events will be run as close to this guideline as possible with the final decision left to the Judge and/ or Chairperson(s).
8. KNOCK DOWN – NO TIME - If a barrel or pole is knocked down in any event it will be considered a no-time (for age groups Junior & above). The riders time will be given but will not count for daily or year end points. (Exception to this rule: Leadline and Buckaroo age groups will be given the 5 second penalty option for each barrel or pole that is knocked over.)

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POINTS

DAILY POINTS:

A. All riders who participate in a MRC Playday are qualified to earn points in their age group, based on a single horse and rider combination. Points based on placing: 1st place = 5 points, 2nd place = 4 points, 3rd place = 3 points, 4th place = 2 points, 5th place = 1 point. Whoever has the most points at the end of the show wins the high point award in each age group, (Buckaroo, Junior, etc.). A tie for high point in an age group will be broken by counting the number of first place finishes. If there is still a tie, then the tie will be broken by counting the number of second place finishes. If there is still a tie, the tie will be broken with a coin toss.

B. Riders are responsible for keeping track of their own points (refer to General Rule #20).

C. You may only make one run in each event for points. Additional runs may be paid for and run for time only.

D. If your horse is injured during the day, you may substitute another horse, (only at the approval of the Playday Chairperson(s), in order to keep the points you have already earned for that day.

YEAR END HIGH POINTS:

A. You must be a current member of MRC and participate in at least half of the season's playdays as a member to be eligible for Year End Awards. Year End Points will be effective on the start date of your membership.

B. Points for the year (and for the day) are based on a single horse and rider combination. If the rider competes on more than one horse he/she must pay a second entry fee for additional horse for points to qualify.

C. If the horse you began the year with is unable to complete the year because of injury, a second horse may be substituted with approval of the Playday chairperson. A written note from a veterinarian on the condition of the horse is required. If the first horse recovers before the end of the season, you may switch back to that horse (with written vet approval). You may not switch to more than one horse unless the second horse is also injured. Points for year end awards will be the points earned on the first horse plus the points earned on the second horse. If the second horse is not injured, but a third horse is ridden, points earned on the third horse will not count toward year end awards.

D. Year end awards are given for each age group (Leadline, Buckaroo, etc.). At each playday, playday points are awarded for 1st-5th place in each age group. Year End points are also awarded for 1st-5th place, but are only awarded to members. Playday points count for high point for the playday, and Year End points count for Year End awards. 1st = High Point, 2nd = Reserve High Point. NOTE: Year end award points are

recalculated from playday times removing non-members and rescored for members only.

High point is earned just as it sounds - the horse and rider combination with the most Year End points at the end of the year in each age group wins. Reserve goes to the rider with the next highest number of Year End points. This goes for all age groups.

E. The award for overall high point for the year is given to the member with the most playday points for the year. In case of a tie, the award will go to the member with the most Year End points.

LEADLINE: The Leadline class is for all ages, especially the younger riders that are just starting out. Any horse may be led through the course, with or without rider. Horses that do not have a rider mounted will not be eligible for ribbons and awards. It is not considered Leadline for a parent-helper to be on course for assistance if needed for the younger Buckaroos.

PATTERNS

The following pattern descriptions, measurements, and basic rules for each event. There may be some events added to any show as a surprise or replacement, which are not present in this publication. They will be run as close to these guidelines as allowed. Any final decisions will be made by the Judge and Chairperson(s).

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