



The

Shetland Pony Grand National

Rule Book

The Management of SPGN reserves the right to add or amend a rule or rules at any time or when the management deems it to be appropriate and without prior notice.



Rules for the Shetland Pony Grand National

1. All ponies (mare and geldings only) must be registered with the Shetland Pony Stud Book Society and must be between 38 and 42 inches in height.
2. All ponies must be between 5 and 22 years old on 1st January. All ponies of the age 17 or over on the first of January must have signed letter from a qualified veterinary surgeon, that the pony is sound in wind, heart, eyes and action.
3. Ponies will need to have a level of fitness and stamina to race effectively whilst still being able to behave during mounting, the start and presentation/lap of honour.
4. A maximum of 2 ponies from one owner/team may be selected for SPGN at The London International Horse Show. Depending on places available, this may be changed to 1 pony from one owner/team.
5. All SPGN LIHS Selected riders must have attained their 9th birthday, but not attained their 14th birthday by 1st January of that season in order to take part.
6. No rider over the height limit of 5'0" will be permitted to ride in any SPGN event. If a rider is selected for LIHS and then grows over the height limit, the owner or if the owner, the parent/guardian will need to withdraw the combination and a wild card will go in their place.
7. It is the responsibility of the parent / guardian to obtain permission from the rider's school for them to be absent from school to take part in the SPGN.
8. Riders must wear the appropriate SPGN racing attire and safety wear for all the SPGN events. Rubber riding boots or Jodhpur boots and chaps are not permitted.
9. The jockey must demonstrate control, an awareness of others, and the ability to follow instructions given by a member of SPGN leadership team.
10. Handlers will need to show that they are capable of controlling the pony whilst parading in the paddock and during presentations. All handlers must be 16 years or over.
11. Ponies/riders will be disqualified if they endanger the safety of other participants during the event.



12. All members of a competing team must be registered with the organiser and the organiser advised of any changes. A member of a team is defined as pony/ ponies, competitors, parents, guardians, owners (as deemed by name in the passport – where ponies are leased for racing there must be written confirmation of this prior to participating in SPGN) and associates.
13. At all SPGN events, all competitors, parents, guardians, owners and associates must adhere strictly to the SPGN Code of Conduct and will be answerable to the SPGN Management.
14. At invitation only events, the combination of pony and rider must be the same as the one that is selected.
15. All teams must be prepared to allow one or two random dope tests on the ponies throughout the season. A qualified person will conduct the dope tests. Pony, jockey, owner, team and their associates will be excluded from participating in SPGN events indefinitely if a positive test is recorded.
16. Ponies may only be flat shod. No studs or any forms of road nails in shoes are permitted. We do advise that front shoes are worn as we race on grass.
17. All ponies must be accompanied by their S.P.B.S. passport containing a full vaccination record against Equine Influenza, endorsed by a veterinary surgeon who is not the owner of the animal. All ponies must have a micro-chip. All ponies racing with SPGN must have equine flu vaccinations according to the British Horse Racing Authority Rules. These regulations can be found via this link <https://rules.britishhorseracing.com/#!/book/34/chapter/s3534-vaccinations-code/content>). You can check your vaccinations are in line with requirements by using the vaccination calculator here <https://vaca.horseracing.software>. For the 2025 trials day, we are accepting 12 month vaccinations, but your pony must adhere to the BHA rules as above by 1st May 2025. Your pony must have had the minimum of 2 vaccines as per the above rules in order to compete at any competition.
18. The SPGN management and any of the events/shows shall have no liability for any loss or damage whatsoever and howsoever caused to or suffered by competitors, exhibitors, invitees or spectators, their property, servants, agents, horses or other animals. Each competitor, exhibitors and invitee shall indemnify and save harmless the SPGN, the organisers and any of the events/shows in respect of damage or injury of whatever nature and howsoever occasioned to any person or property by any such competitor or exhibitor or any horse or other animal for which he or she is responsible.
19. All owners/lessees and jockeys must have personal and public liability cover of at least £2,000,000 to race. In signing the entry form owners/lessees also agree to take full responsibility and have public liability insurance for all riders and handlers with them whilst at and during the SPGN events. It is suggested that personal accident cover is also provided by anyone wishing to enter the ring.
20. All owners and lessees are personally responsible for damages to third parties / persons caused by themselves, their employees, their agents, members of the public, or their ponies.



21. By agreeing to these rules, the team is deemed to have insurance cover to participate in the SPGN for the entirety of when taking part in SPGN. Non-compliance to these rules may mean that insurance held by the organisers for the SPGN events will become invalid for a team.
22. The SPGN management reserves the right to refuse entry to person/s, owner/s, rider/s and /or associate/s. SPGN management decision is final in all circumstances.
23. It is the owners/lessee responsibility to ensure that all SPGN rules, regulations, guidelines, Code of Conduct, contents of Application Pack & Entry Pack are understood fully and adhered to.
24. Under SPGN rules no persons under the age of 18 can own or lessee a pony who he or she wishes to race during the season.
25. Entries must be made by email only to entries@shetlandponygrandnational.co.uk Entries close 5 weeks prior to the first day of the show. We must receive declarations at least 3 weeks prior to the first day of the show. Text and phone calls entries/declarations will not be accepted.
26. No phone calls after 9pm.



The SPGN Racing Rules

The Management will appoint all officials.

Handlers may be asked to observe a fence during a race to ensure the safety of riders. All persons observing a fence are not permitted to film, take photographs during a race or give outside assistance.

The start will be at a walk or a standstill – SPGN management will explain at the meeting before the race, the format.

Should a jockey fall off before the start, the race may be held for the jockey to be given the all clear to ride by a paramedic/doctor. Should the jockey fall again before the start, or the pony leaves the ring this equates to automatic disqualification. Any jockey falling during the race may not re-mount.

Ponies will only race in the heat in which they are originally drawn.

Should a competitor false start once, the jockey will receive a verbal warning and will be disqualified on their 2nd false start and asked to leave the ring before the race can continue.

The starter may, with the agreement of the officials, disqualify a competitor from the start of a race if he/she is impairing a fair start to the race.

Any competitor who fails to go around the outside of the racetrack markers or jump over all jumps will be disqualified. Disqualification can be at any time if deemed that this rule has been broken.

If the management or officials, see a pony kick while participating in the SPGN the jockey will receive an immediate advisory warning and may be asked to go to the back of the line. The management may speak with the owner/trainer after the race to discuss the advisory warning. Should a pony kick a 2nd time in the same race it will be disqualified from that race. If the management, feel that the pony is a danger to others they could be given an automatic lifetime ban.

Organisers reserve the right to permanently disqualify any pony due to unruly behaviour before, during or after a race.

Any objections or complaints before, during or after the race, must be made at the SPGN base and not in the arena or collecting rings.

Any persons involved in SPGN, (owners, jockeys or ponies) who wish to race with SPGN may not participate in any other Shetland racing event (i.e. flat or jump races). Anyone who wishes to participate in any outside events must seek approval by SPGN management.



SPGN Regulations, Guidelines and Information PONIES & TACK

A veterinary surgeon who is not the owner of the animal, must state that the pony has received two injections for primary vaccinations against Equine influenza, given no less than 21 days and no more than 60 days apart, followed by a third after 120 days to 180 days. Thereafter vaccinations must adhere with up-to-date BHA rules (please check your vaccinations against the BHA Vaccine Calculator via this link <https://vaca.horseracing.software/>).

A record of all medication & vaccinations must be recorded in the pony's passport.

SPGN organisers reserve the right to ask for written veterinary proof that the pony is healthy to race.

Condition of all ponies and tack is the responsibility of the person/persons responsible for the pony. Ponies tack that is not in good, safe condition or has tack unpermitted under SPGN rules or whose turnout does not comply with the regulations of SPGN will not be permitted to race.

Only bridles with one noseband can be used. Any suitable bits are permitted excluding Cheltenham (Running) gags and driving bits. Ponies can only be ridden in one rein so Pelham rounding's will need to be used for some bits. Reins should not be long enough to loop over a child's foot when gathered up to racing length. Running Martingales may be used but must be correctly fitted with stops. Standing martingales are not permitted. Only cheek pieces and hoods are permitted. **Whips, spurs or other head gear are not permitted.**

All bridles must be black or brown although coloured brow bands are permitted.

Elastic bands are not allowed to attach the rider's foot to the stirrup. Only safety stirrups with elastic peacock rings are permitted.

A proper secure over girth must be used over the girth; this can be elastic ended but not all elastic.

Number cloths for the ponies will be provided; these are to be returned at the end of each event in a satisfactory condition.

At shows where stabling is provided these will be allocated by the organiser and are only to be occupied by ponies that are taking part in the SPGN. The stables must be mucked out and cleaned to a satisfactory condition throughout each show.



If a competitor enters a show, they must commit to all days. If the rider is participating in other classes at the same show prior permission must be sort to be withdrawn from a race.

All competitors/exhibitors/trainers that are not the owner of the pony/ponies and have them on loan, must have signed confirmation from the pony's registered owner that the pony is on loan and the responsibility of the lessee.

RIDERS

All jockeys will be measured at the trial's day. Thereafter measurements will be taken at the discretion of SPGN management team during the season. Any jockey found to be over 5'0 will not be allowed to race.

Riders must wear: White racing breeches and racing boots (no rubber boots, jodhpur boots and chaps). Jockey's boots must have a solid raised heel of a minimum thickness of 1cm and are worn at the owners/trainer/parent/guardian own risk.

All hats and body protectors must be up to the British Safety Standard. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure that all equipment is in proper order. All equipment must be purchased from an approved retailer and the parent/guardians must ensure that is correctly fitted.

Riders must not wear any jewellery or makeup when racing.

Racing Silks must be worn, in good condition and must be clean and fit correctly. Before the start of the season all new silk colours must be approved by SPGN before racing and the same colours must be worn throughout the whole season.

If the silks are registered with the British Horse Racing Authority, then appropriate permission must be obtained from the current registered owner(s).

Proof of age is required for all riders by means of their passport or birth certificate at the start of the trial's day. Theses must be the originals and not copies.



HANDLERS

Handlers must be over 16 years of age.

All handlers entering the ring must look presentable.

Handlers must wear plain black trousers or jeans, appropriate dark footwear. No flip flops, crocs etc. trainers must be plain black or brown.

Handlers must wear SPGN sweatshirts/Polo Shirts that can be purchased through SPGN management.

PARENT/GAURDIAN ATTENDENCE

We advise that a parent or reliable guardian over the age of 21 years of age accompanies every jockey at each show.

It will be mandatory that all riders who are selected for LIHS must have a parent or guardian (over the age of 25) to be present and responsible for the rider throughout the duration of the show.

The SPGN Code of Conduct

At all SPGN events any competitor, owner, handler, parent, team member or associate/s whose conduct is deemed in any way to have brought the SPGN into disrepute, will result in that person and if applicable their team being asked to leave the event. Their future attendance will be only at the discretion of the SPGN management.

This includes any act of *incivility* or *discourtesy*, any form of *aggressive behaviour*, *verbal* or *physical*, *bad*, or *inappropriate language*, *bullying*, any *shouting* or *swearing* by the adults or children whilst on site, racing (including down to the start) in the accommodation or stables. This may result in being given a warning, if the problem reoccurs this will result in a suspension which is deemed to be fair.

The safety of the children is paramount.



The Organisers in no way support the drinking of alcohol in the sight of minors, they understand that SPGN is enjoyed by adults for the social aspect of the season. If alcohol must be consumed, they strongly suggest this is done in moderation and responsibly, anyone who consumes alcohol prior to a race will not be allowed to enter the ring, any incident arising relating to the consumption of alcohol will not be in any way tolerated and may result in the team being excluded from future competitions and/or result in that team being asked to leave the event immediately.

Anyone who consumes alcohol, depending upon the severity of the incident management may give a verbal warning before a final warning will be issued.

It is the sole responsibility of each person to fund their own participation with the Shetland Pony Grand National.

Owners, handlers, parents, team members and associates will need to show their ability and desire to co-operate with and to behave as an ambassador for the SPGN and our chosen charity/charities.

Any third-party loan/lease agreements between owners, handlers, parents, team members and associates will not be the responsibility of SPGN and SPGN will not take part in any dispute/discussions between third parties.

SPGN are not responsible for any breakdown of relationship between third party owners, handlers, parents, team members and associates. The decision to withdraw jockey/pony combinations will be down to the Owner of the pony.

At any time during the racing season, SPGN have the right to refuse a combination in races without giving notice or details.

Social Media

Appropriate care must be taken by all SPGN Team members with any postings to social media, those which are deemed detrimental to the SPGN, or its participants will not be tolerated and could result in the individual responsible and / or heir team members being disqualified from all future SPGN events.

Any person who are found to have written or shared any derogatory posts, comments or photos involving SPGN, their members, management, or associates, could result in being banned from any involvement in future SPGN events.



The Racing and Selection Process

Any ponies and jockeys wanting to race with SPGN must attend the trials day.

The combinations who are selected for LIHS must raise a minimum of £1000.00 for our nominated charity.

Every effort will be made to allow ponies to race at their requested venues. In the case of excessive numbers prohibiting this, the management will ballot and confirm which ponies/jockeys will be running.

To maintain qualification pony/jockey combinations must attend a minimum of 5 other shows/venues prior to LIHS. Exceptions may be made.

Should during the season a combination be deemed unsuitable to race at LIHS their qualification will be withdrawn, and a new combination nominated by SPGN management.

All combinations that are selected for LIHS may be asked to attend a final display race which will be held in October.

DISPLAY RACES

10 Ponies max to a race (over jumps) at any one time. Venue dependent. Management reserve the right to choose the number of ponies that run.

Numbers for flat racing as space permits or defined by the Racecourse.

Having gained qualification; each combination must demonstrate appropriate behaviour during the rest of the season. Failure to do so will result in the combination being withdrawn from LIHS and replaced by a wildcard.

Should a combination be disqualified for any reason, a wild card will be chosen to replace them.



Media

Any media/publicity about SPGN must be approved before being published. This also includes sponsorship and branding for use in SPGN.

SPGN is a limited company and anyone who wishes to advertise using the SPGN name will need to seek prior approval.

SPGN management reserves the right to refuse any media coverage about the name.

No photography of SPGN can be given to a third party.

SPONSORSHIP

Jockeys can carry sponsorship on their breeches at a minimum annual fee of £300 payable to the SPGN Charity any additional fee can be agreed with the sponsor. You may have up to 4 sponsors, but each sponsor must pay £300 fee.

You must complete and return your sponsorship approval form (available on the website via the link <https://shetlandponygrandnational.co.uk/breeches-sponsorship>) to info@shetlandponygrandnational.co.uk before any sponsorship is paid – failure to do this may result in your sponsorship not being accepted and the money returned. All Sponsorship runs from 1st January to 31st December each year. Sponsorship must be paid for by 1st May via the following.

Payment **must** be made via the Bob Champion Cancer Trust enthuse page:

<https://bobchampion.enthuse.com/pf/breeches-sponsorship-spgn>

******* Please ensure that SPGN + Jockey Name is used as a reference *******

Any sponsorship money paid via other channels will be returned. Please note that until you have received confirmation that your sponsorship money has been received, you will not be able to display this sponsorship on your breeches. Any Jockey wearing breeches with sponsors names on but without this confirmation will be asked to change into a pair of plain breeches – should these not be available; the jockey will forfeit the race. Any sponsorship money raised using the SPGN name must go to the nominated charity, not for funding the participation in SPGN throughout the year.

No alcohol, gambling or tobacco companies are allowed to sponsor.

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