

Hobby Horse Competition & Participation

Ages: Mini 7 & Under Junior 8-14 Senior 15+ **Fees:** Free to enter

When: Saturday February 21 10AM – 2 PM

Where: Jen's Market at the Howard Community Club 5645 Forsyth Road Macon GA 31210

Prizes: Ribbons will be presented to 1st through 6th placings after each event.

The Hobby Horse Competition encourages people of all ages to buy, borrow or make their own Hobby Horse and participate in this fun-for-all competition. This section is open to everyone and allows elements of creativity and athleticism combined with a love for horses. We welcome horse owners but also hope to attract competitors who do not have access to real horses or traditional equestrian activities. Competitors with the fastest time and best performance will be awarded with a ribbon to celebrate their participation and success. Join in and have a laugh.

Core Rules and Requirements

Equipment: A hobby horse (stick horse) must be used. Shorter sticks are often recommended for jumping to prevent interference. The hobby horse must be held in one hand (or both) and remain between the thighs throughout the course.

Mounted Status: The competitor must be "riding" (mounted) at all times while on the course. Carrying the horse to the side is not allowed. The stick must be held between the thighs throughout the performance.

Attire: Comfortable, athletic clothing and shoes are required. Helmets are usually encouraged but not always mandatory.

Disqualifications

Competitors can be disqualified for: Dismounting during the course. Refusing a jump (two unsuccessful attempts). Going off-course. Excessive time taken to complete the course. Poor sportsmanship. Using the horse for any other purpose than riding. (like whacking an opponent)

Schedule

10 AM – 11:30 AM Practice and Register for Events

11:45 Showmanship/ Flat - All ages in Arena

Riders will be called to enter the arena by name and age group. The announcer will instruct the group to go through basic gaits and maneuvers with their hobby horse.

GAITS

Walk resembles human walk. At least one foot is touching the ground all the time (= there is no flight between steps). In most western events the ideal is a slow, smooth and collected walk.

Jog, aka slow trot, resembles slow human jogging. Steps are shorter and lower than in dressage trot, but jog still has to be clear trot and not fast walking. In extended jog the step stretches longer but the pace remains as normal or slightly elevated.

Lope, aka slow canter, must have a distinct rhythm. Steps are shorter and slower than in dressage canter. Lope is either left or right depending on the leading leg (i.e. left canter = left leg is leading). One should ride on the right lead lope when riding clockwise and vice versa, unless requested otherwise (=counter canter). The counter canter should be performed with no change in pace or stride. In extended lope the step stretches longer but the pace remains as normal or slightly elevated.

MANEUVERS

Stop, halt - A good halt is performed with both feet together with a good posture. The horse's head/neck should be straight when stopping.

Back-up - Backing up should be performed readily with the horse's head and neck aligned in a straight or curved line as instructed by the announcer.

12:30 **Jumping** Mini Course is poles on ground Junior/Senior Course is poles 1 ft to 2 ft height

The Course: Riders must follow a predetermined path, navigating jumps in the correct, numbered order.

Jumping Technique: The stick must remain in contact with the thigh, and the horse should not be lifted high above the head or held out to the side.

Faults & Penalties:

Knockdown: A rail or obstacle component knocked down typically results in penalty points.

Refusals/Disobedience: If a competitor stops before a jump, runs around it, or refuses to jump, it is a fault. Two or more consecutive refusals often lead to elimination.

Off-Course: Missing a jump or taking them in the wrong order.

Dismounting: The rider must not lose their "mount" (let go of the stick) during the round.

Time: The fastest time with the fewest penalties wins.

1:15 Barrel Racing

Barrel racing is a speed event. The course consists of three barrels in a triangular "cloverleaf" pattern. Contestants must choose either the right or left barrel, circle it, and go to the next barrel, completing the course after circling the third barrel and running to the finish line.

Timing begins and ends when the rider crosses the start and finish lines. The course is performed in canter/gallop, and the lead changes or the lack of them are not taken into account in the judging. The contestant is allowed a "running start"; picking up the speed before the start line when they have received the start signal. The start signal is given by whistle or verbally. A tie leads to a rerun.

Penalties

+3 seconds - Touching a barrel or a marker - Running for more than few steps

+5 seconds - Knocking over a barrel - Running for several steps but less than half of the course

Disqualification

- Wrong course pattern - Running for more than half of the course pattern. Each step is counted as one, and the last step should land next to the other foot.

Circles - Circles should be round and performed at the appropriate speed, size and location as requested in the pattern. The horse is positioned inwards. The horse is not bent unless the diameter of the circle requires it.