



ALBERTA  EQUESTRIAN
— F E D E R A T I O N —

2025 Wild Rose Competition Program Rule Book Section 4 – Driving

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Preamble



The Alberta Equestrian Federation (AEF) is recognized by the Government of Alberta as the only recognized organization for equestrian sport in Alberta.

Aims, goals, and objectives:

To provide a provincial level of competition that will increase the participation in many areas of horse sport within the province of Alberta.

To create a safe and standardized environment for grass-roots level participants to enter the competitions environment and have a positive competition experience.

To provide a feeder system for the development of athletes and disciplines. This will be accomplished additionally through education and participation opportunities in the Wild Rose Competition Program.

To encourage interest in a grassroots level of officiating within the province of Alberta.

To align with the concepts and levels of the Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD) program.

New to 2024

Tiered sanctioning for hunter/jumper shows:

Year end awards offered for competitors attending Wild Rose Hunter/Jumper Provincial Circuit Sanctioned shows.

Year end awards offered for competitors attending Wild Rose Dressage sanctioned shows.

AEF Wild Rose sanctioned competitions are to run in accordance with the AEF Wild Rose rules.

Every eventuality cannot be provided for in these rules. It is the duty of the officials and the competition management to make a decision in the spirit of sport, approaching the intention of these rules as near as possible, and protecting the reputation of the sport and the welfare of the horse.

Competition organizers should be familiar with the AEF Wild Rose rules and policies and should have copies available for all individuals present.

Competitions may expand upon the rules, provided notification of changes is printed in the competition prize list. Under no circumstances may any changes contradict the AEF rule requirements pertaining to safety.

All AEF Wild Rose sanctioned competitions are restricted to AEF members in good standing. All competitors must have a current AEF membership, including riders in lead line classes. Out-of-province competitors are eligible to compete, however, they must provide proof of membership with their home Provincial/Territorial Sport Organization (PTSO) or will be required to purchase an AEF membership.

Disrespectful behavior or abuse to horse or others of any kind may result in membership suspension.

Any major change from the format of the Wild Rose Competition Program must receive the approval of the AEF Board of Directors prior to implementation.

If it is found that the Wild Rose rules require further interpretation for the level of competition present, the Equestrian Canada (EC) rules will prevail.

Safety and Risk Management

Statement of Safety

The Alberta Equestrian Federation ("AEF") has a fundamental obligation and responsibility to protect the health, safety, and physical and mental well-being of every individual participant that is involved in AEF affiliated activities, competitions, or clinics. AEF takes situations involving misconduct or maltreatment very seriously. For this reason, AEF is committed to enacting and enforcing strong, clear, and effective policies and processes for preventing and addressing all forms of misconduct or maltreatment. AEF's policies are intended to promote a safe sport environment in a manner that allows for consistent, immediate, appropriate, and meaningful action should any issues arise. They are also intended to be proactive in preventing issues from arising by communicating expected standards of behaviour. For more information on the AEF's obligations and guidelines for safe sport, please reference the Safe Sport Policy. The AEF urges all members to develop a "Safety Awareness" program for each event to benefit participants, spectators and management involved. All equestrian activities, including competition, are vulnerable to accidents. The show committee has a responsibility to provide an event that is run as safely as possible.

Animal Welfare

The inhumane treatment of an equine at any AEF Wild Rose sanctioned competition by any individual (competitor, owner, trainer, etc.) must not be tolerated anywhere on the grounds, under any circumstances.

Cruelty can be defined as intentionally causing pain or unnecessary discomfort to a horse. The standard by which such conduct will be measured is the determination of cruel, excessive, or inhumane treatment by a reasonable person who is informed and experienced in generally accepted equine training and procedures.

The AEF recommends every competition have a statement in their prize list regarding the stance on the abuse of horses and the commitment of the event to the humane treatment and welfare of horses. In addition, note the penalties to be imposed (such as elimination or disqualification) for the confirmed abuse of horses at the event.

The following acts are considered cruel, abusive and inhumane (acts are not limited to this list):

- a. Excessive use of a whip on a horse by a person. NOTE: Except in emergency situations, any striking of the horse's head (on the poll and forward of the poll) shall be deemed excessive.
- b. Rapping the legs of a horse with the butt end of the riding crop or other implement.
- c. Use of any substances to induce temporary heat.
- d. Use of a wire or chain in conjunction with any schooling jump.
- e. Use of electric device to create a shock in schooling or showing.
- f. Use of shackles, hock hobbles and similar devices (not to be confused with rubber or elastic exercising devices).
- g. Showing a horse with raw or bleeding sores on body.
- h. Withholding feed and water for prolonged periods.
- i. Cruel treatment of a horse in a stall, runway, schooling area, competition ring or elsewhere on the competition grounds, by any person.

In any performance event, the judge shall have the authority to request the removal or alteration of any piece of equipment which, in their opinion, would tend to give the horse an unfair advantage or which they believe to be inhumane.

Roles and Useful Definitions

Competition manager/organizer: This individual(s) is/are responsible for the organization of the competition up until the event begins. The competition organizer must be a current AEF member in good standing.

Competition secretary: This individual performs duties as assigned by the event directors, manager or committee chairpersons. Regular duties may consist of (but are not limited to): keeping records of class entries, scratches, additions, placements and payment of fees.

Official: Includes all competition judges, stewards, course designers and technical delegates, who are recognized and licensed by a governing body and hold up-to-date certificates.

Steward: An equestrian competition steward is a licensed official tasked with the responsibility of interpreting and enforcing the rules of the organization that has sanctioned the event.

Learner official/judge: An individual who is in training and/or shadowing an official.

Junior: Individuals are "junior" until the end of the calendar year in which they reach the age of 18. Except as modified by discipline/breed sport rules.

Amateur: An individual over the age of 18 who does not get paid for riding or coaching. Certain scholarships, bursaries and sponsorships are allowed.

Professional: Anyone who is paid to ride a horse(s), or who coaches students for a fee.

Course designer: A professional responsible for creating the layout and design of courses used in hunter and jumper horse shows. The course designer's role involves designing courses that test the horse and rider's abilities while adhering to the specific rules and regulations of the discipline. They must consider factors such as the terrain, space available, the skill level of competitors, and safety standards when creating their designs. Additionally, they may need to adjust the course layout based on weather conditions or other unforeseen circumstances to ensure fair competition and the welfare of the horses and riders.

Person responsible: The person(s) responsible (PR) for a horse must be an adult who has, or shares responsibility for the care, training, custody, and performance of the horse and who has official responsibility for that horse under AEF Rules. The PR is liable under the penalty provisions of the applicable AEF Rules for any rule violations. Every entry form for an AEF sanctioned competition must identify the PR and be signed by the PR. The person(s) responsible are ultimately responsible for the condition, fitness, and management of the horse and are alone responsible for any act performed by themselves or by any other person with authorized access to the horse in the stables, elsewhere on the grounds, or while the horse is being ridden, driven, or exercised. For adult entries into AEF sanctioned competitions, the PR shall be either the trainer, the owner of the horse, or the competitor who rides or drives the horse during the AEF sanctioned competition. For Junior entries into AEF sanctioned competitions, the Junior competitor cannot be the PR. For Junior entries, the PR may be either the trainer, the owner of the horse, or a parent/guardian of the Junior competitor.

Wild Rose drug test technician (WRDTT): an official responsible for conducting drug tests on horses participating in Wild Rose sanctioned competitions. This program aims to ensure the integrity of equine competitions by enforcing rules and regulations related to the use of medications and substances in horses. WRDTT follows established protocols and procedures to collect samples from horses, such as blood or urine, for analysis. They ensure that the collection process is conducted in a fair, ethical, and accurate manner, maintaining the chain of custody to preserve the integrity of the samples.

1. General Performance Pleasure Driving

1. Safety

- a. All persons involved in the competition should keep safety foremost in their minds.
 - i. Having the horse under control at all times not only is a safeguard for a driver and passengers, but for everyone present and involved.
- b. In the case of an accident, the judge or management may require a safety inspection of the vehicle and/or harness involved before allowing either to be used in succeeding classes.
- c. It is the responsibility of each driver to ensure the harness and vehicle are in good repair and structurally sound.
- d. Drivers should strive to maintain a safe distance from other vehicles both during the competition and in the warmup and parking areas.
- e. All rules of the road should be observed unless uniformed officials direct otherwise.
- f. Bridles should be adjusted to fit snugly to prevent catching on a vehicle or other pieces of harness and under no conditions shall a bridle be removed from a horse while it is still put to a vehicle.
- g. Failure to comply will incur elimination.
- h. The horse must never be left unattended while put to a vehicle.
- i. Failure to comply will result in elimination.
- j. All junior drivers must wear approved helmets (see 1.5.f). The AEF encourages the use of protective headgear for drivers of all ages.

2. Style of Driving

- a. The driver should be seated comfortably on the box so as to be relaxed and effective. The elbows and arms should be close to the body with an allowing, but steady hand enabling a consistent "feel" with the horse's mouth.
- b. Drivers should not be penalized or rewarded for using one style over another.
- c. In a reinsmanship class, in order to evaluate a driver's versatility, the judge may request an appropriate test involving driving with one hand.

3. Use of Whip

- a. While driving, an appropriate driving whip shall be carried in hand at all times.
- b. Failure to carry a whip in hand in an obstacle driving class incurs elimination.
- c. The whip salute is used to acknowledge the judge at the start and finish of an individual test.

4. Outside Assistance

- a. Only the driver may handle the reins, whip, or brake during a competition.
 - i. Failure to comply will incur elimination.
- b. Drivers 14 years of age and under must be accompanied in the vehicle at all times by an adult capable of rendering assistance if needed.
- c. No change of driver is permitted.
- d. Drivers receiving outside assistance after the judging has begun will be eliminated at the judge's discretion unless that assistance has been specifically allowed.

5. Dress

- a. Drivers should be dressed conservatively according to the style of the present day.
 - i. Period costumes or gaudy trappings are discouraged.
 - ii. Dress for the driver should conform to the type of turnout (i.e., formal, park, country, sporting).
- b. Gentlemen must wear a coat or jacket while appearing in any class unless excused from doing so by the judge and/or show management. When accepting awards, gentlemen are requested to remove their hats.
- c. Ladies must wear a conservative dress, tailored suit, or slacks. Floppy hats are discouraged.
- d. Unless otherwise specified, the driver has the option of wearing a hat, an apron or knee rug.
- e. Drivers must wear gloves.
- f. Junior drivers must wear ASTM/SEI, BSI/BS, EN, AS/NZS, or CE VG1 01.040 2014-12 (provided they are BSI Kitemarked) approved protective headgear at all times, with chin strap fastened.

6. The Horse

- a. A horse may be of any breed or type, colour, or size as long as it is capable of performing the gaits required.
- b. Braiding of the mane is optional.
- c. If shod, it should be suitable for pleasure driving.

7. Bits

Snaffle and other types of traditional driving bits are allowed. Burr, gag, and twisted wire bits of any kind are not permitted.

8. Gaits

- a. **Walk:** a free, regular, and unconstrained walk of moderate extension is required.
 - i. The horses should walk energetically, but calmly, with even and determined pace.
- b. **Slow trot:** the horse should maintain forward impulsion while showing submission to the bit.
 - i. The trot is slower and more collected, but not to the degree required in the dressage collected trot.
 - ii. The horse should indicate willingness to be driven on the bit while maintaining a steady cadence.
- c. **Working trot:** this is the pace between the strong and the slow trot and rounder than the strong trot.
 - i. The horses go forward freely and straight, engaging the hind legs with good hock action, on a taut, but light, rein.
 - ii. The position being balanced and unconstrained and the steps even. The hind feet touch the ground in the footprints of the fore feet.
- d. **Strong trot – “trot on”:** This is a clear, but not excessive increase in pace and lengthening of stride while remaining well balanced and showing appropriate lateral flexion on turns.
 - i. Light contact to be maintained. Excessive speed will be penalized.
- e. **Halt:** horses and vehicle should be brought to a complete square stop without abruptness or veering.
 - i. At the halt, horses should stand attentive, motionless, and straight with the weight evenly distributed over all four legs and be ready to move off at the slightest indication from the driver.
- f. **Rein back:** a backward movement in which the legs are raised and set down simultaneously in diagonal pairs with the hind legs remaining well in line.

- i. The horse must move backward at least four steps in an unhurried manner with head flexed and straight, pushing the vehicle back evenly in a straight line.
- ii. The horse must move forward willingly to the former position using the same quiet aids.

9. Classes

9.1. Turnout Class

A pleasure driving class where entries are judged primarily on the performance and quality of each turnout.

- a. To be shown both ways of the arena at a walk, slow trot, working trot, and strong trot, to stand quietly and to rein back.
- b. Entries may be selected for a workout and are to be worked both ways of the arena at any gait requested by the judge and may be asked to execute a figure eight and/or perform other appropriate tests.
- c. Judged:
 - i. 70% on the condition, fit, and appropriateness of harness and vehicle, spares and appointment, neatness and appropriateness of attire, and overall impression.
 - ii. 30% on performance, manners, and way of going.

9.2. Working Class

A pleasure driving class in which entries are judged primarily on the suitability of the horse to provide a pleasant drive.

- a. To be shown both ways of the arena at a walk, slow trot, working trot and strong trot, to stand quietly, both on the rail and while lined up, and to rein back.
- b. All entries selected for a workout may be worked both ways of the arena at any gait requested by the judge and may be asked to execute a figure eight.
- c. Judged:
 - i. 70% on performance, manners, and way of going of horse.
 - ii. 20% on the condition and fit of harness and vehicle.
 - iii. 10% on neatness of attire.

9.3. Reinsmanship

A driving class in which entries are judged primarily on the skill and ability of the driver.

- a. To be shown at walk, slow trot, working trot, and strong trot. Rein back will be required.

- b. Entries may be selected for a workout and are to be worked both ways of the arena at any gait requested by the judge and may be asked to execute a figure eight and/or perform other appropriate tests.
- c. Either the one-handed or two-handed method of driving is acceptable, entries should not be rewarded or penalized for using one method over the other.
- d. Judges may request drivers to drive with one hand, as a test of driver versatility.
- e. Judged:
 - i. 75% on handling of reins and whip control, posture, and overall impression of driver.
 - ii. 25% on condition of vehicle, harness and neatness of attire.

Benefits of Alberta Equestrian Federation Membership

Through Acera Insurance Services, Alberta Equestrian Federation Individual Adult or Youth Membership includes the following insurance coverage:

- \$5,000,000 Personal Liability insurance related to the ownership and personal use of horses. Liability insurance for the non-commercial transport of non-owned horse(s) (limits apply); personal liability includes non-commercial care, custody, and control of up to a maximum of three non-owned horses (limits apply). Coverage will not respond to commercial use of the horse or commercial transportation of non-owned horses.
- \$40,000 Accidental, Death and Dismemberment (AD&D) for permanent injuries arising from equine-related activities.

Members also receive highly discounted rates on optional insurance offered by Acera Insurance Services including weekly accident indemnity insurance, members named perils, additional accidental death and dismemberment (including limited benefits for fracture and dental arising from equine related activities), out of country/province travel, and members' tack coverage. (Personal auto/home, disability, horse mortality, and business and professional insurance – including coaching and official's insurance – is also available directly through Acera Insurance Services).

- Members receive "Alberta Bits" the AEF full-colour magazine.
- Members Priority Program – AEF members receive discounts at a number of AEF business partners. Visit the website for a full list of participating business partners.
- An AEF member may apply to receive funding from the AEF scholarship program to assist with equine related educational pursuits (see AEF website for full details).
- AEF membership is required for certification as a provincial official, to participate in the Ride and Drive or Live Outside the Box rewards programs as well as the "Win Your Entry" draw held at Wild Rose sanctioned competitions.

Benefits of NCCP Certification

In the world of equestrian sports, coaching excellence, safety, and proficiency are of utmost importance. The National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) is a robust initiative developed in collaboration with esteemed organizations such as the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP), Coaching Association of Canada (CAC), and Sport Canada. This program is the definitive benchmark for sport coaching, including equestrian sport, setting exacting standards for safety and proficiency both in Canada and internationally.

NCCP certification provides a meticulously structured pathway for the professional development of equestrian instructors and coaches. Whether you're an aspiring coach or a seasoned practitioner, this comprehensive program offers a clear path for ongoing growth and advancement. Through its modular framework, from foundational principles to advanced techniques, coaches can continuously refine their skills and augment their knowledge base.

One notable hallmark of NCCP certification is its emphasis on safety standards. Recognizing the inherent risks associated with equestrian pursuits, the program furnishes coaches with the latest safety protocols and risk mitigation strategies. By prioritizing safety, coaches not only safeguard their students, but also instill a culture of vigilance within the equestrian community.

Moreover, NCCP certification presents benefits that go beyond the individual coach, serving to elevate the overall standard of equestrian instruction in Canada. By adhering to a nationally recognized certification program, coaches contribute substantially to the credibility and professionalism of the sport, attracting a wider group of participants and ensuring a heightened level of instruction. For more information on how to become an NCCP Instructor/Coach, please contact coaching@albertaequestrian.com.