**District Chairperson Info Packet**

**Items to Consider:**

* Determine Show format (mix all divisions together, separate by divisions, use more than 1 ring)
* Have district elect a secretary, treasurer, and/or assistance District Chair
* Have a score keeper keep scores during the show using the MIHA Tracker program
* Determine source of patterns for shows (Showmanship x 3, Trail, Equitation Class patterns)
* Acquire equipment for shows (jumps, trail equipment, poles, barrels, 2-man relay baton, flag race buckets, flag race flags, cones, electronic timers, district laptop, walkie talkies, printer, stop watches)
* Registration paperwork required from a team at Registration:
  + Horse and Rider Registration *(1 per horse per rider) (Maximum of 2 horses)*
  + Medical Treatment form *(1 per rider/groom)*
  + Negative Coggins *(1 per horse)*
  + Team Roster *(2 copies per team)*
  + Registration fee *(1 per rider)*
  + Coach/assistant coach/volunteers forms *(1 per person)*
  + Parent/Athlete Concussion Form *(1 per rider)*
  + Co-op application (optional and for Junior High only) *(1 per team)*

**Schedule:**

* **January:**
  + Turn in Previous year’s Team Financial reports to State Treasurer
  + Turn in Previous year’s District Financial report (JH and HS) to State Treasurer
  + Determine District fees for Junior High and let your coaches know
  + Attend monthly Board of Director’s meeting or send representative
  + Send 1st Vice Chair Dates and Locations of Junior High and High School Meets (for insurance)
  + Review proposed rule changes with district coaches to prepare to vote on at Winter Meeting
* **February:**
  + Attend Winter Meeting with coaches
* **March:**
  + Set Registration date for Junior High and let coaches know
  + Attend monthly Board of Director’s meeting or send representative
* **April:**
  + Collect registration paperwork and fees for Junior High
  + Collect coach/assistant coach/volunteer forms for all coaches
  + Assign jobs for duties at meets to teams
  + Complete CSC check for all coach/assistant coach/volunteers
  + Remind Coaches and Riders about logo contest, due June 1st.
  + Attend monthly Board of Director’s meeting or send representative
* **May:**
  + Turn in District roster, Copy of coach/assistant coach/volunteers forms, registration fee to State at Registration meeting
  + Collect payback check from State Treasurer
  + Enter rider, coach, and team information into MIHA District Tracker software
  + Verify equipment needed for shows (flour, batteries, laptop, printer, ink/toner, paper, pens, walkie talkies, clipboards, electronic timers, stop watches)
  + Determine patterns to be used at Junior High Show (Showmanship, trail, equitation patterns)
  + Hold Junior High meet(s) (Optional)
  + Attend monthly Board of Director’s meeting or send representative
* **June:**
  + Hold Junior High meet(s) (Optional)
  + Determine District fees for High School and let your coaches know
  + Set Registration date for High School and let coaches know
  + Attend monthly Board of Director’s meeting or send representative
* **July:**
  + Start collecting Junior High Team Financial Reports
  + Set date for year-end Banquet/meeting
  + Attend monthly Board of Director’s meeting or send representative
* **August:**
  + Collect registration paperwork and fees for High School
  + Collect coach/assistant coach/volunteer forms for all coaches
  + Assign jobs for duties at meets to teams
  + Complete CSC check for all coach/assistant coach/volunteers
  + Determine patterns to be used at High School Show (Showmanship, trail, equitation patterns)
  + Hold meet(s) for High School Season (optional)
  + Work with other District Chair’s in your Region to determine tasks needed for Regional
  + Attend monthly Board of Director’s meeting or send representative
* **September:**
  + Turn in District roster, Copy of coach/assistant coach/volunteers forms, registration fee to State at Registration meeting
  + Collect payback check from State Treasurer
  + Enter rider, coach, and team information into MIHA District Tracker software
  + Verify equipment needed for shows (flour, batteries, laptop, printer, ink/toner, paper, pens, walkie talkies, clipboards, electronic timers, stop watches)
  + Hold meets for High School Season
  + Give out trophies to the 2 highest placing teams in each division as well as the sportsmanship trophy
  + Export team information from MIHA Tracker Program and email to Regional Chairperson
  + Bring team registration paperwork for all teams advancing to Regionals to the Regional competition
  + Attend Regional and help run the meet with other 3 DC’s
  + Meet with DC’s in your region for show responsibilities
  + Remind coaches and riders about MIHA Scholarship applications, due November 1st.
  + Attend monthly Board of Director’s meeting or send representative
* **October:**
  + Attend Regional and help run the meet with other 3 DC’s
  + Attend State Championship and help out Executive Board (optional)
  + Attend monthly Board of Director’s meeting or send representative
* **November:**
  + Hold year-end banquet/meeting
  + Give out Patches/year bars to riders, grooms, an d coaches
  + Hold District Chair vote and make sure ballot is filled out and turned into the State before December 31st.
  + Complete District Financial Report for Junior High and High School
  + Complete Judge Payment form for both Junior High and High School and turn into State Treasurer
  + Book fairgrounds/show location for Junior High and High School for the next season
  + Start booking judges for Junior High and High School meets and make sure to receive signed contracts for all judges
  + Create Budget for the coming season
  + Attend monthly Board of Director’s meeting or send representative
  + Finish collecting Junior High & High School Team Financial Reports
* **December:**
  + Attend monthly Board of Director’s meeting or send representative

**Tips for Running a Meet:**

There are two accepted formats for running meets with regard to divisions. One method is to combine all divisions together. The other method is separating divisions and running each class 4 times, once for each division. Larger districts tend to separate divisions; smaller districts tend to combine divisions. It is recommended to consult your coaches when choosing a meet format as there can be strong feelings for and against each method.

There are several jobs needed to be filled to run a district (announcer, announcer’s aid, ring masters, gate people, computer score keeper, setup crews for different classes, grounds cleanup, etc). Most districts assign these jobs to volunteers/teams.

Many districts have coaches meetings at the start of the meet to go over rules, introduce judges, give an opportunity to ask questions about patterns, etc. You should also have meetings before speed classes to discuss speed-specific questions (as outlined by the rulebook).

Patterns need to be selected for at least the 3 fitting and showing classes and trail. Some districts also do equitation patterns for the non-pattern equitation classes. If you do these, patterns for these classes also need to be selected. Patterns can be chosen from the MIHA State suggestions found on the website, from your judges, or selected by the District Chairperson. Patterns found in the rule book must be used for the specified classes (Saddle Seat Pattern, Jumping, Western Riding/Reining, Speed classes). The State will select which pattern number is to be used for the season. These same patterns are used at Regionals and the State Championship.

For score keeping it is strongly recommended to have a computer and printer that can be used to keep scores electronically. Teams will select their rider entries in their slot sheets and turn them in prior to the meet. These should be entered in the computer to be able to print class sheets and judge’s cards. During the meet scores from the judge’s cards can be entered directly into the computer to keep an up-to-date points standings for the teams.

**How Regionals Work:**

There are 5 Regions, each with 4 participating districts. To find out which region a district is in, please consult the MIHA website. The region a district is assigned to can change from year to year. As a District Chairperson you are expected to also work with the other 3 District Chairpersons from the other 3 districts to run the Regional competition. It is expected each Region elects a Regional Chairperson that heads up the organization of this meet, however all District Chairpersons are expected to attend the Regional and help run it. This includes but not limited to hiring regional judges, booking the fairgrounds, assigning volunteers, collecting regional registrations and money, assigning camping and stalls, keeping scores, securing hotels for judges, feeding the judges, sending the regional team information from the district tracker to the State score keeper, and providing information to all the teams attending. Regionals are all held on the same date in all 5 Regions. The top 2 teams in each division from each district advance to the Regional competition. Also, the top 2 teams in each division from each regional advance to the State Championship.

**Monthly Board of Directors Meetings:**

District Chairpersons are encouraged to make as many Board of Directors meetings as possible. 100% attendance is not required. Important information about the organization is discussed at each meeting which you as a Chairperson are expected to take part in and disclose to your coaches. The more meetings you attend, the better informed you are and the better informed your coaches are. These take place on Saturday’s during the Winter and Spring and then move to Wednesday evenings during the summer and fall.

**Hold District Meetings:**

A minimum of 2 district meetings are recommended. One for Junior High Registration and one for High School registration. Other districts also get together as frequently as monthly to discuss various issues that affect the districts. Many districts elect to have an “end of the year” banquet to celebrate the accomplishments of the teams and riders and give out awards.

For registration meetings, coaches turn in rider registrations, medical releases, coach/adult volunteer forms, team rosters, concussions forms, coggins, and registration money. These should be collected and verified for accuracy. Use this information to put together your District roster to be turned in at the Board of Director registration meetings. It is recommended to hold these registration meetings at least one month before your first meet.

Some districts opt to elect additional District board members such as Treasurer, score keeper, assistant District Chairperson, secretary, etc. All elections for additional board members should be documented in meeting minutes and voted on by a quorum of coaches.

It is strongly encouraged to keep minutes of each District meeting to keep a record on items that are voted on, especially items that relate to expenditures.

**Winter Meeting:**

The winter meeting is an opportunity for all MIHA members to participate in molding how MIHA operates for the future. At these meetings, executive board members are elected, rule changes are voted on, the past year’s operating expenses are reviewed, and the next year’s operating budget is approved. Encourage your coaches to attend if possible, this meeting is very important.

**District Funds and Expenditures:**

Try to limit the cost of district fees to your riders each year. Make sure your district fees are enough to cover all your expenses for the season. If there are any non-standard expenditures, make sure these are voted on and documented in district meeting minutes. Avoid taking cash out of the district account to pay for items. Keep receipts for every expenditure.

**District Website:**

Each district has their own webspace on the State’s website. These can be reached via the Junior High/High School page on the State’s website as well as directly with the district number (i.e. <http://d1.miha.org> or <http://d12.miha.org>). Login information to your district website can be obtained by the State Webmaster. This space is intended as an easy location to distribute district show dates, registration fees, patterns, etc. The use of Social Media to help distribute information to your teams is also encouraged.

**Concussion Information:**

Michigan now has a law with respect to concussions and school sports. This law stipulates that all coaches have to go through online concussion training every 3-4 years. It also requires parents and athletes (MIHA members) review and sign a concussion info sheet every year. It is recommended you keep records of which coaches have taken the online training. It is also recommended you collect the parent/student concussion info sheet for all teams at rider registration.

If a rider at a meet falls or hits their head and there is any possibility of a concussion, that rider cannot participate in any further MIHA classes until seen by a doctor and cleared for participation. Many times this could mean a rider cannot participate for the remainder of a meet. As District Chairperson, you need to be aware of the situations.

If there is an injury/accident at a MIHA meet, please make sure the accident form (available on the MIHA website) is filled out.

**Junior High Co-Ops:**

Unlike the High School teams, Junior High teams have the ability to form a Cooperative (Co-op). Each co-op has a primary school and a secondary school. Each school involved in the co-op must have a registered coach. The primary school has no limit to the number of riders on its team, however the secondary school can only have as many as 2. If a secondary school ends up having 3 or more riders from that school, they can no longer form a co-op and must compete as their own team. A co-op form must be downloaded from the MIHA website and filled out by both school coaches and submitted to the District Chairperson. The District Chairperson then submits this to the Junior High Steering Committee. All Junior High Co-ops must be approved by the Steering Committee before the Co-op team is official. A primary school may have a co-op with more than one secondary school as long as the secondary school’s still meet the normal requirements of number of riders and the co-op form is submitted and approved. The purpose of the steering committee is to make sure riders from the same school are not forming co-ops with different schools in different districts as you as the District Chairperson may be unaware of. It is recommended these forms be filled out and submitted to the District Chairperson well in advance of the District’s registration meeting so the District has formal approval of the Co-ops before the Registration of teams begins.

**Handling New Teams:**

New teams from schools that have never participated in MIHA or have not participated in a while are strongly encouraged by MIHA. Forming a new team is simple. If a potential coach approaches the District Chairperson about forming a new team, please ask them to give you a written request to start a team. This request should then be sent from the District Chairperson to the MIHA Executive Board for formal approval.

**Team/District Rules:**

For any teams or districts that create their own rules, in addition to the MIHA rulebook, these are expected to be submitted in writing to the MIHA executive board. MIHA’s Board of Directors or Executive board will not back or enforce any rules that have not already been submitted in writing and approved. For example, if a team has a rule regarding the required qualifications to be on a team, and a prospective rider does not meet those qualifications and is denied access to ride on the team. If that rider files a complaint against the team to the Executive Board, if those qualifications have not been submitted in writing beforehand, the Executive Board will have no choice but to side with that rider and overrule the team.

**Awards:**

MIHA is unique for a horse show where ribbons and awards are not given to individual riders after each class. Instead the focus is on the team and the overall team performance. The State provides trophies for the top 2 teams in each division for Districts and Regionals. At State, the top 2 teams receive a traveling trophy that return the next season as well as individual team trophies. The State also provides a sportsmanship trophy for each district for both Junior High and High School. It is up to the District Chairperson to come up with a way to select the team deserving of the sportsmanship trophy. Even with the focus on the team, most districts award top ten rider awards at the end of the year banquet. There are numerous ways you can use to identify the top ten riders in your district. This is an optional award and the trophies, plaques, or ribbons for this award are purchased by the District Chairperson with district funds.

**Conflict Resolution:**

The role of the District Chairperson is to foster a good environment for good sportsmanship for all teams in as much of an unbiased way as possible. District Chairpersons can also be coaches, parents, or have business relationships with teams, parents, and riders. It is good to think about the perception of potential conflicts of interests before an issue arises. The best way to avoid conflict is to lead by example as someone who sees sportsmanship as important and someone who doesn’t get caught up in team or personal drama. Of course with the combination teenagers, parents, and competition there is always the potential for drama and unsportsmanlike behavior. The Board of Directors meetings are great opportunities to bring up issues with teams, coaches, riders, or parents. These issues can be discussed while reviewing the rule book to determine the best course of action while staying in compliance with the goals and rules of MIHA. Of course, issues with teams, riders, parents, and coaches don’t have to wait until the next Board of Directors meetings. If you need advice on how to handle an issue, email or call the executive board with the details and they can help. With all conflicts, use the MIHA rulebook and constitution as your guide on how to handle the situation. Be careful not to overstep your authority as a District Chairperson. If a situation gets bad enough where you feel the removal of the coach is the only way to resolve a situation, please review the Removal of a Coach Standard Operating Procedure on the MIHA website. The rulebook does outline in some detail was is unacceptable behavior for riders, coaches, parents, and guests. Review this ahead of time so you know how to handle a situation if it arises.

**Accidents/Injuries:**

Accidents and injuries will happen at some point while you are a District Chairperson. As the District Chairperson, you are responsible for overseeing the safety of all persons that attend a meet. When an accident occurs and there is a potential injury, be sure to get an Accident Form filled out at the time of the injury (found on MIHA.org). This form does require a section to be filled out by a witness to the accident as well as a parent or legal guardian, so its imperative you do not procrastinate with getting this form filled out at the time of the accident. MIHA does carry accident insurance on all registered riders and grooms. Coaches and Adult Volunteers may optionally pay for an be covered under the accident insurance for MIHA as well. There is a form that must be given to the parent/legal guardian/person to make a claim for the insurance. Send in a request to the Executive Board for this form if you do not have it on file yet. There is a time limit on how long after the accident, that a claim can be made so for this as well, do not delay.