



2024 MIHA Rule Change Proposals

February 10, 2024

Annual Winter Meeting

Dear MIHA Members,

Attached please find 16 proposed rule changes for your consideration. Please review the proposals prior to the February 10th meeting and bring your questions, comments, or concerns (or if you are unable to attend, channel them through your coaches and district chairs). Please refer to the MIHA Constitution found at miha.org for specifics regarding voting eligibility, methods, etc. A few points regarding the proposals:

- A few proposals are marked "\$ due". As usual, there appear to be a few challenges with the mail system. If payment is not received for these proposals prior to the meeting, they will be removed from consideration.
- In the top right corner of each proposal, you'll see the proposal number (24-x), who votes on it (all coaches or senior division coaches only), and the majority needed to pass (>2/3, or >50%). Please note there are no junior team only rule proposals this year. If you coach junior and senior teams, keep that in mind at sign in. You'll want to sign in as a senior division coach. (Junior team coaches, you'll only vote on the proposals marked "all vote".) Rule change proposals that deal with changes to the constitution and bylaws (including changes to the class list) require greater than 2/3 approval to pass. Proposals that deal only with the show rules section require a simple majority to pass, greater than 50% approval.
- Tracker software updates that become necessary due to approved rule changes may delay implementation of those rule changes.

A few points regarding the winter meeting itself:

- The person or district proposing the rule change will introduce the proposal. They will have the floor for up to three minutes.
- All wishing to comment on the proposal, ask questions, or propose a friendly amendment (relatively minor change to the proposal) will need to come forward to the microphone and introduce themselves by name and district. Each person will have up to two minutes to speak. If friendly amendments are proposed, it is up to the discretion of the original proposal writer to accept or reject them prior to the vote.
- Once the vote is called for, the line to speak will be closed. Those already in line will have the opportunity to speak, but no one else will be added. A balance between efficiency and healthy debate should be considered when calling for the vote.
- Coaches or those filling in for coaches with a properly submitted proxy form will be able to vote. There is one vote per active team regardless of the number of registered coaches for that team.

Please feel free to reach out with any questions. We will be reprinting rulebooks this season, and updated rulebooks will also be posted to the website. Thank you in advance for your participation and see you soon!

Lucy Brown
MIHA Rules Chair
miharuleschair@gmail.com

RULE CHANGE PROPOSAL

District Number:

Name:

Caitlin Arthur

Phone Number:

989-430-6233

84-1
All vote
0/3

Please state rule as written (include page number, article, and section):

There is none.

Please state proposed rule change (include page number, article, and section):

Change all instances of the title "Western Equitation" to "Western Horsemanship" in the rulebook, website, facebook and showbills/show info.

Give a brief description of why this rule change is proposed:

To keep MIHA in line with other breed circuits as well as other high school equestrian organizations in their verbiage and descriptions.

Deadline: December 31st of current year

Please submit your rule change and \$10 to:

Lucy Brown, MIHA State Rules Chair

RULE CHANGE PROPOSAL

District Number: 16

Name:

Morgan Weaver

Phone Number:

616-260-1285

24-2
All vote
2/13

Please state rule as written (include page number, article, and section):

p24: Western Performance Classes, C. Western Bareback Equitation 1. *To be judged the same as Western Equitation except there will not be a saddle or pad of any kind. Work-offs in all bareback classes are optional.* 2. *Junior Division performance will be rail work, walk and jog in each direction. In addition, the judge may ask for a walk/jog pattern or test of the top exhibitors. Exhibitors participating in Western Equitation Walk/Trot or English Equitation Walk/Trot are not eligible to enter Western Bareback.*

p32: Saddle Seat Performance Classes, C. Saddle Seat Bareback Equitation 1. *All rules and specifications for Saddle Seat Equitation should also apply to Saddle Seat Bareback classes, with the exception of those which deal with the saddle. Workoffs in all bareback classes are optional.*

³⁵
p37: Hunt Seat Classes, C. Hunt Seat Bareback, *To be judged the same as Hunt Seat Equitation except there will not be a saddle or pad of any kind. Work-offs in bareback classes are optional.*

*Note there are several other pages that reference bareback classes throughout the rulebook, including sections on attire and suggested class orders.

Please state proposed rule change (include page number, article, and section):

Remove bareback classes and all references to bareback classes from the rulebook.

Give a brief description of why this rule change is proposed:

1. Rider Safety

The bareback classes result in many accident reports at the district, region, and state levels of MIHA. Parents, coaches, and judges often indicate nervousness for the bareback classes at meets. We have all seen unsafe, out of control horse & rider combinations who go in bareback classes to fill the slot for their teams and end up falling or causing others to lose control. Bareback classes get especially dangerous when there is rail work, and out of control riders run up on others, causing group accidents. Many of us have observed riders being injured during a bareback class and, as a result, unable to compete in other classes that day or the rest of the season as a result. The various injuries to riders we've all observed in bareback classes at meets also doesn't account for falls and injuries occurring while practicing for these classes at home. As a youth athletic organization, safety of the participants is paramount in MIHA. The MIHA Constitution states that the organization and coaches must *operate "keeping the health, safety and welfare of each rider and mount their first priority"* (p1 2023 MIHA Rules & Regulations). Due to the high number of accidents observed, bareback classes are dangerous for our riders beyond a tolerable level of risk.

2. Equine Safety

We know far more about horse welfare than we used to when bareback riding was popularized and encouraged. There are now scientific studies showing the importance of the saddle tree in distributing a rider's weight to the parts of the horse's back where they can safely bear it. When riding bareback, 100% of the rider's weight impacts the horse in the small surface area directly under the seat bones. In addition to causing pain and muscle atrophy in the areas where the seat bones commonly hit under normal circumstances, as riders slip around and lose balance, the seat bone can also impact the horse in areas vulnerable to serious injury, including the spine itself. Saddle trees exist to distribute the rider's weight away from the spine and over a broader area that the horse can safely support.

A 2011 MSU¹ study compared treed saddles to treeless saddles (essentially bareback pads) using pressure mats, and the results emphasized the importance of riding with traditional treed saddles for the long-term health of the horse. The study found that the absence of a traditional saddle tree *"was an inferior fit on every horse, indicated by the smaller weight-bearing area, focal concentration of pressure under the middle third of the saddle beneath the rider's seat bones, and higher maximal pressures compared with the conventional saddle."* Without the protection of a saddle tree, there was outsized pressure under the points of the seat bone to the extent that injury could result.

A 2012 MSU² study then used pressure mats once again to compare the forces of fully bareback riding versus saddle riding and found that, *"riding bareback is associated with pressure concentration beneath the rider's ischial tuberosities in the area overlying the horse's cutaneous trunci and epaxial muscles, which are particularly vulnerable to pressure-induced injury."* In comparison to riding with a treed saddle, *"the bareback condition was associated with higher average pressure, higher maximal pressure and larger area with mean pressure >11 kPa"*. Pressure injuries from >11 kPa force had been shown in previous studies to cause bruising, loss of circulation, and atrophy of horses' epaxial muscles to an extent that was sometimes irreversible and even career-ending. The 2012 MSU study clearly demonstrates that bareback riding at just a walk and trot can surpass that dangerous threshold of pressure.

We should also consider that the two studies noted used healthy horses with strong, conditioned topline. In MIHA, we see a mix of young horses, senior horses, and others who may not be perfectly conditioned or don't always have ideal topline. For these animals, it is especially important to encourage the use of a well fitted, treed saddle when riding to keep them free from unnecessary pain and injury.

Moreover, there are negative welfare impacts to a horse ridden bareback that go beyond the rider's seat. We have all seen riders balancing on their reins and catching themselves on the horse's mouth when losing balance suddenly, especially when riding bareback. The fact that many horses are kind enough to tolerate this treatment should not overshadow the fact that pain is indeed being inflicted. The long-term effects of excessive bit pressure can include injury to the mouth as well as sourness to the rider's aids or reluctance to enter the arena again.

Bareback classes have become hard to watch for horsemen and women with any basic understanding of equine biometrics, as scientific discoveries continue to support the importance of treed saddles for the long-term health and fitness of the horse.

3. Other Benefits

While not the purpose of eliminating bareback classes, an additional positive side effect beyond enhanced safety for our riders and equines will be to shorten the length of meets or allow for the opportunity to add new disciplines to the current class lineup. Eliminating bareback and shortening meets would benefit horses who already have a long lineup of classes and show committees who struggle to fit everything in at venues that do not have lighting and must get through each meet by sundown. Alternatively, eliminating bareback and adding other classes in its place would allow for new experiences and potentially broaden the scope of MIHA to additional types of riding. There are various possibilities unlocked by this rule change, in addition to the necessity of protecting horses and riders by doing away with the safety hazards created by bareback classes as they exist today.

¹Belock B, Kaiser LJ, Lavagnino M, Clayton HM. Comparison of pressure distribution under a conventional saddle and a treeless saddle at sitting trot. Vet J. 2012 Jul;193(1):87-91. doi: 10.1016/j.tvjl.2011.11.017. Epub 2011 Dec 16. PMID: 22178359.

²Clayton HM, Belock B, Lavagnino M, Kaiser LJ. Forces and pressures on the horse's back during bareback riding. Vet J. 2013 Jan;195(1):48-52. doi: 10.1016/j.tvjl.2012.06.002. Epub 2012 Jul 15. PMID: 22796121.

Please submit your rule change and \$10 to:

Lucy Brown, MIHA State Rules Chair

7737 Big Hand Rd.

Columbus, Michigan 48063

MIHAexecutiveboard@gmail.com

RULE CHANGE PROPOSAL

District Number:

Name:

Madeline Welch

Phone Number:

1-989-600-6063

#24-3
Senior Only
2/3

Please state rule as written (include page number, article, and section):

No rule

Addition to:

B. Western Horsemanship pg 23

Please state proposed rule change (include page number, article, and section):

B. Western Horsemanship pg 23

Western Horsemanship Walk-jog

Performance will be rail work, walk and jog in each direction. In addition, the judge may ask for a walk/jog pattern or test of the top exhibitors. Exhibitors in Walk/ jog may participate in Showmanship and the timed events but may not canter in any class entered. Walk jog exhibitors may not have participated in a walk jog canter competition in the last year prior to competing in the walk jog section.

Give a brief description of why this rule change is proposed:

A walk trot class is highly needed to reflect the dynamic range of riding abilities in our sport. Traditionally all associations with equitation or horsemanship classes have a walk trot class for exhibitors. Including YEDA and IHSA. Our junior high division has this class but does not allow, exhibitors to continue showing at this level. This is not in line with our mission to involve each equestrian student to the extent possible in team competition.

Deadline: December 31st of current year

Please submit your rule change and \$10 to:

Lucy Brown, MIHA State Rules Chair

7737 Big Hand Rd.

Columbus, Michigan 48063

MIHAexecutiveboard@gmail.com

RULE CHANGE PROPOSAL

District Number:

Name:

Madeline Welch

Phone Number:

1-989-600-6063

#24-4
Senior Only
2/3

Please state rule as written (include page number, article, and section):

No rule

Addition to:

Page 34

B. Hunt Seat equitation

Please state proposed rule change (include page number, article, and section):

Page 34

B. Hunt Seat equitation

English Equitation walk trot (hunt seat or saddle seat competitors)

Performance will be rail work, walk and trot in each direction. In addition, the judge may ask for a walk/trot pattern or test of the top exhibitors. Exhibitors in Walk/Trot may participate in Showmanship and the timed events but may not canter in any class entered. Walk trot exhibitors may not have participated in a walk trot canter competition in the last year prior to competing in the walk trot section.

Give a brief description of why this rule change is proposed:

A walk trot class is highly needed to reflect the dynamic range of riding abilities in our sport. Traditionally all associations with equitation or horsemanship classes have a walk trot class for exhibitors. Including YEDA and IHSA. Our junior high division has this class but does not allow, exhibitors to continue showing at this level. This is not in line with our mission to involve each equestrian student to the extent possible in team competition.

Deadline: December 31st of current year

Please submit your rule change and \$10 to:

Lucy Brown, MIHA State Rules Chair

7737 Big Hand Rd.

Columbus, Michigan 48063

MIHAexecutiveboard@gmail.com

RULE CHANGE PROPOSALDistrict Number:

Name:

Caitlin Arthur

Phone Number:

989-430-6233

#24-5
All vote
2/3

Please state rule as written (include page number, article, and section):

p. 2 - Article VII – Competition
D. Points.

In each event the following points shall be awarded:

First place – 8 points

Second place – 7 points

Third place – 6 points

Fourth place – 5 points

Sixth place – 3 points

Seventh place – 2 points

Eighth place – 1 point

Ninth place – Honorable Mention (0 Points)

Please state proposed rule change (include page number, article, and section):

Please replace current rule with sliding scale of points as seen below:

| 1 Rider | 2 Riders | 3 Riders | 4 Riders | 5 Riders | 6 Riders | 7 Riders | 8+ Riders |
|-----------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 1st - 1pt | 1st - 2pts | 1st - 3pts | 1st - 4pts | 1st - 5pts | 1st - 6pts | 1st - 7pts | 1st - 8pts |
| | 2nd - 1pt | 2nd - 2pts | 2nd - 3pts | 2nd - 4pts | 2nd - 5pts | 2nd - 6pts | 2nd - 7pts |
| | | 3rd - 1pt | 3rd - 2pts | 3rd - 3pts | 3rd - 4pts | 3rd - 5pts | 3rd - 6pts |
| | | | 4th - 1pt | 4th - 2pts | 4th - 3pts | 4th - 4pts | 4th - 5pts |
| | | | | 5th - 1pt | 5th - 2pts | 5th - 3pts | 5th - 4pts |
| | | | | | 6th - 1pt | 6th - 2pts | 6th - 3pts |
| | | | | | | 7th - 1pt | 7th - 2pts |
| | | | | | | | 8th - 1pt |

Give a brief description of why this rule change is proposed:

Points given should be based on the number of riders in a class. To keep MIHA in line with other breed circuits and high school associations, it is in total fairness that a rider competing in a class with (for example) two entries should not receive 8 points for winning the same as a rider that wins a class of 20 or more. This opens up the strategy of stacking the less popular classes to win meets.

Point scales are a standard in the horse show industry and are standard for a reason. This keeps teams from loading classes that have lesser entries just to gain more "easy" points.

Deadline: December 31st of current year

Please submit your rule change and \$10 to:

RULE CHANGE PROPOSAL

District Number:

Name:

Executive Board

Phone Number:

mihaexecutiveboard@gmail.com

#24-18
All vote
2/3

Please state rule as written (include page number, article, and section):

No rule

Please state proposed rule change (include page number, article, and section):

p. 6 Article VIII—Organization of Districts—Section A—Add new #5 (bump down and re-number current 5 and 6)

5. Each district is encouraged to have at least one Assistant District Chairperson (registered adult coach or registered adult volunteer) elected by majority vote of the registered coaches in the district or appointed by the District Chairperson, as decided within each district. Responsibilities of the Assistant District Chairperson are to assist the District Chairperson as needed, and to carry out any and all of the District Chairperson responsibilities outlined above, as delegated by the DC, or if the DC position becomes vacant. Contact information for all Assistant District Chairs must be submitted to the Executive Board by December 31st of each year. Should the Assistant District Chair position be vacant, information for a District Emergency Contact must be provided instead.

Give a brief description of why this rule change is proposed:

The District Chairperson role is a big job. For the best continuity of the program in case of emergency, etc., Assistant DCs and/or emergency contacts are necessary.

Deadline: December 31st of current year

Please submit your rule change and \$10 to:

Lucy Brown, MIHA State Rules Chair
7737 Big Hand Rd.
Columbus, Michigan 48063
MIHAexecutiveboard@gmail.com

RULE CHANGE PROPOSAL

District Number:

Name:

Whisper Andrusiak

Phone Number:

248-210-6667

#24-7
senior only
2/3

Please state rule as written (include page number, article, and section):

No current rule.

Please state proposed rule change (include page number, article, and section):

p.8, Article X-Organization of Teams, add new section I (bumping down and re-lettering the current sections I-L accordingly)

I. Two or more schools may elect to form a cooperative program for the MIHA Senior Division, and show as one team, under the following conditions.

1. One of the cooperating schools will be designated as primary, all of the other schools participating in the cooperative program will be considered secondary.
2. The primary school may have any number of riders on the team formed under the cooperative program.
3. A maximum of one (1) rider from any one secondary school may participate in the cooperative program. If there are two (2) or more riders from a single secondary school they will be required to form their own team and will not be permitted to participate in the cooperative program.
4. All riders from the primary school and all secondary schools must participate on the same cooperative program team. Riders attending one school may not participate on different teams, except as noted above for private school and school of choice students.
5. The coach of the primary school will inform the chairman of the district of their intent to form a cooperative program prior to Senior Division registration.
6. The school administration, from any of the cooperating teams recognized by their school as a school activity, club, or sport must approve of the cooperative program.

Give a brief description of why this rule change is proposed:

This rule change would allow single D division riders to combine with another team. The burden of competing as a single individual with all of the classes is unfair especially if as a middle school student that rider was allowed to combine with another team. Reducing the number of riders allowed on a combined team from 2 to 1 (vs. middle school) will keep this fair and will stop from trying to stack their rosters or grow the team to change divisions. The goal in this rule change is to improve the experience of single D team riders, especially the riders who were allowed to compete in a combined manner in middle school.

Deadline: December 31st of current year

Please submit your rule change and \$10 to:

Lucy Brown, MIHA State Rules Chair

7737 Big Hand Rd.

Columbus, Michigan 48063

MIHAexecutiveboard@gmail.com

RULE CHANGE PROPOSAL

District Number:

Name:

Executive board

Phone Number:

mihaexecutiveboard@gmail.com

#24-8
All vote
2/3

Please state rule as written (include page number, article, and section):

p. 12, Article XIII – Team Structure and Slotting Rules

A. Each team will be categorized as either

1. Division A team with 8 or more riders (63 slots)
2. Division B team with 5 to 8 riders (42 slots)
3. Division C team with 2 to 5 riders (24 slots)
4. Division D team with 1 or 2 riders (16 slots)

B. Coaches will assign class slots to each rider. Each rider shall not participate in more than EIGHT EVENTS in any one meet unless one of the following occurs:

1. Division D team exists – 16 total slots
 - a. 2 rider team – no rider may be assigned more than 11 slots.
 - b. 1 rider team – rider is allotted 16 slots.

Please state proposed rule change (include page number, article, and section):

p. 12, Article XIII – Team Structure and Slotting Rules

A. Each team will be categorized as either

1. Division A team with 8 or more riders (63 slots)
2. Division B team with 5 to 8 riders (42 slots)
3. Division C team with 2 to 5 riders (24 slots)
4. Division D team with 1 or 2 riders (15 slots)

B. Coaches will assign class slots to each rider. Each rider shall not participate in more than EIGHT EVENTS in any one meet unless one of the following occurs:

1. Division D team exists – 15 total slots
 - a. 2 rider team – no rider may be assigned more than 11 slots.
 - b. 1 rider team – rider is allotted 15 slots.

Give a brief description of why this rule change is proposed:

Gives more flexibility to D teams, allowing them to opt out of their two weakest classes. Eliminates the pressure for single D riders to participate in equitation over fences in order to be competitive, especially if it's not a safe class for them. Increases competitiveness in the D division and reduces the test of endurance. Decreases physical demand on D team mounts and better accommodates equine welfare, especially for single riders with one horse competing in 2-3 sequential day district meets.

Deadline: December 31st of current year

Please submit your rule change and \$10 to:

Lucy Brown, MIHA State Rules Chair
7737 Big Hand Rd.
Columbus, Michigan 48063
MIHAexecutiveboard@gmail.com

RULE CHANGE PROPOSAL

District Number:

Name:

Tracy Walker

Phone Number:

248-974-8159

#24-9
All vote
750%

\$dae

Please state rule as written (include page number, article, and section):

New Rule

A body protecting or inflatable vest, specifically designed for use in equestrian sport, may be worn in any class and may not affect judgement of equitation or incur a penalty from the judge. Vests of these styles may be worn underneath or outside the proper attire for the class as noted in the "appointment of rider" section of each discipline. They are also allowed when jackets are waived.

Please state proposed rule change (include page number, article, and section):

Pg 18/19

RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING COMPETITION

General Rules for Competition

Would Become Letter Q

Give a brief description of why this rule change is proposed:

When asked this past season if a rider could wear an air vest in two classes at a coach's meeting, the answer it was at the discretion of the judge. No riders should be penalized for prioritizing their safety. Versions of this rule are already in adopted and in place in FEI/USEF/USHJA rules.

Deadline: December 31st of current year

Please submit your rule change and \$10 to:

Lucy Brown, MIHA State Rules Chair

7737 Big Hand Rd.

Columbus, Michigan 48063

MIHAexecutiveboard@gmail.com

RULE CHANGE PROPOSAL

District Number: 16

Name:

Emilv Siriano (DC)

Phone Number:

616-212-9415

#24-10
All vote
7501.
#done

Please state rule as written (include page number, article, and section):

Page 19, Fitting and Showing, A) Appearance of the Horse, 2. Grooming, b. *"Areas around the eyes, ears, muzzle, and nostrils, between the legs and around the tail must be clean."*

Please state proposed rule change (include page number, article, and section):

Page 19, Fitting and Showing, A) Appearance of the Horse, 2. Grooming, b. *"Areas around the eyes, ears, muzzle, and nostrils, between the legs and around the tail must be clean of dirt, stains, and debris. Facial hair, including muzzle whiskers, eye whiskers, and inner or outer ear hair, may be trimmed or left unclipped on any horse, regardless of breed."*

Give a brief description of why this rule change is proposed:

Many American show associations allow for the trimming of horse's facial whiskers, including their muzzles, eye whiskers, and ear hair. However, the FEI, which governs USEF sanctioned competitions and participating associations, has outlawed trimming the whiskers and ear hair of competition horses as of 2020, with any breaches of the rule resulting in disqualification of the horse from the event.

Therefore, horses that are subject to FEI rules in disciplines such as Dressage and Eventing throughout the year are not allowed to have their whiskers trimmed for an MIHA meet. This includes horses of all breeds, since registered stock horses may also participate in events like Dressage or Eventing. We do not believe that participation in FEI sanctioned events the rest of the year should cause a horse any disadvantage in Showmanship classes compared to horses that are not subject to FEI rules.

The rulebook currently does not state that horses MUST be trimmed, however, the rule is ambiguous in not mentioning trimming specifically, and judges or show offices might interpret the word "clean" differently in the rule as currently stated. For example, at a 2023 junior high meet, a judge in District 16 specifically marked down showmanship horses who had nose whiskers, regardless of breed, and said in the coaches' meeting that he did so because, to him, "clean" meant trimmed.

Having this issue addressed in the rulebook would make it more clear to judges that not all horses should be expected to have their whiskers trimmed in the all-breed and multi-discipline show environment of MIHA.

This rule change does not affect riders who do trim their horses' whiskers - they may continue to do so. It simply removes that perception of a *requirement* to do so and makes it clear that all horses are welcomed and encouraged to try Showmanship classes.

RULE CHANGE PROPOSAL

District Number: **10**

Name:

David Cox

Phone Number:

517/581-6081

#24-11
All vote
7501

Please state rule as written (include page number, article, and section):

Page 22. Western Performance Classes. A,2 Appointments of Rider: Rider must wear western hat or protective headgear (not required to be of western style), protective headgear required for Western Bareback, long sleeve shirt with any type of collar...

Page 30.Saddle Seat Performance Classes. A,3 Exhibitors must wear a derby, Homberg, snap brim or protective head gear, protective headgear required for Saddle Seat Bareback.

Please state proposed rule change (include page number, article, and section):

Page 22. Western Performance Classes. A,2 Appointments of Rider: Exhibitors must wear protective headgear for ALL riding classes when mounted (not required to be of western style), long sleeve shirt with any type of collar...

Page 30.Saddle Seat Performance Classes. A,3 Exhibitors must wear protective headgear for ALL riding classes when mounted.

Give a brief description of why this rule change is proposed:

Our riders are in greater danger than football players of sustains a head injuries (1). Equine riders are 20x more likely to sustaining an injury than a motorcycle riders per year. (2) 60 number of deaths/year due to head injury (compared with 8 for Football). (2) 1 in 5 equestrian injuries, are head injuries. (3) 60% of riding fatalities occur from head injuries. 15,000 number of ER admissions for equine-related head injuries in 2009. (3) 2 feet is the number of feet at which head injury can occur. (3) *Head injuries are the most common reason for admission to hospital or death among riders.* According to the Northern Brain Injury Association (NBIA), injuries to the brain are among the most likely to result in permanent disability or death. (4) TBIs are among the most common injuries in equestrians.(5) The risk of an injury is higher for horse riding than for other potentially risky sporting activities, such as football, motor racing or skiing. Riders with head and neck injuries were 44 times as likely to die as those with arm/leg injuries, while those with chest and abdominal injuries were around 6 times as likely to do so (6). Head injuries are the most common reason for admission to hospital or death among riders. Sobering statistics reveal the high percentage of equine-related accidents resulting in traumatic brain injury, and helmets have been associated with reducing the risk of traumatic brain injury by as much as 50 percent. (7) *****If you care anything about your riders wellbeing, this is a no brainer (no pun intended). You'll pass this because you do care about your rides. *****

1. Anna Blake, Horse Network digital publishing 2016
2. Dr. Chambless, Vanderbilt University 2011
3. The American Association of Neurological Surgeons 2014
4. Horse Journals magazine, 2019
5. Gates, BA; Lin, MD, FACSM, *Current Sports Medicine Reports* (American College of Sports Medicine) 2020
6. Insurance Journal, 2021
7. Margaret Evans; Horse Journals, 2023

Deadline: December 31st of current year

Please submit your rule change and \$10 to:

Lucy Brown, MIHA State Rules Chair
7737 Big Hand Rd.

Columbus, Michigan 48063

MIHAexecutiveboard@gmail.com

RULE CHANGE PROPOSAL

District Number:

Name:

Caitlin Arthur

Phone Number:

989-430-6233

#24-12
All vote
7501.

Please state rule as written (include page number, article, and section):

p. 26, E. Western Reining 1. Each contestant will perform the required pattern individually and separately (see appendix for pattern of the year). Horse shall rein and handle easily, fluently, effortlessly and with reasonable speed throughout the pattern. Any horse not following the exact pattern will be disqualified. 2. Each horse and rider combination will be judged on the neatness, dispatch, ease, calmness, and speed with which they perform the pattern. MIHA scores sheets will be used for this class for exhibitor feedback and are available at MIHA.org

Please state proposed rule change (include page number, article, and section):

p. 26, E. Western Reining 1. Each contestant will perform the required pattern individually and separately (~~see appendix for pattern of the year~~). Horse shall rein and handle easily, fluently, effortlessly and with reasonable speed throughout the pattern. Any horse not following the exact pattern will be disqualified. 2. Each horse and rider combination will be judged on the neatness, dispatch, ease, calmness, and speed with which they perform the pattern. 3. The MIHA pattern committee will pick the annual junior and senior division reining patterns from NRHA (National Reining Horse Association) pattern options and will post them at MIHA.org. MIHA scores sheets will be used for this class for exhibitor feedback and are available at MIHA.org.

Remove reining patterns from rulebook appendix.

Give a brief description of why this rule change is proposed:

MIHA should be an organization that pushes kids to succeed and set them up for success, especially if they want to ride at a collegiate level. By choosing NRHA reining patterns, MIHA kids will be learning how to execute a real reining pattern in its entirety, its maneuvers, and how to avoid penalties. By using modified MIHA reining patterns, it is also unfair for kids who have experienced reining horses and could showcase their skills. We do not offer less jumps for less experienced jumpers or make a simplified trail pattern for horses who are not perfect at trail. Please allow patterns to be used that showcase 4 spins and 3 circles each direction, as the NRHA patterns demonstrate.

Deadline: December 31st of current year

Please submit your rule change and \$10 to:

Lucy Brown, MIHA State Rules Chair

7737 Big Hand Rd.

Columbus, Michigan 48063

MIHAexecutiveboard@gmail.com

Updated 11/08/22

RULE CHANGE PROPOSAL

District Number: 16

Name:

Emilv Siriano (DC)

Phone Number:

616-212-9415

\$ due

*#24-13
All votes
7507.*

Please state rule as written (include page number, article, and section):

Page 30, Saddle Seat Performance Classes, A) Clothing and Equipment, 3. "...Boots must be of the jodhpur or Paddock without lacing style and either patent or regular leather."

Please state proposed rule change (include page number, article, and section):

Page 30, Saddle Seat Performance Classes, A) Clothing and Equipment, 3. "...Boots must be of the jodhpur style, and either patent or regular leather."

Give a brief description of why this rule change is proposed:

This rule has no impact to horse or rider safety and welfare, yet banning laced jodhpur boots can be unnecessarily cost prohibitive for riders who already struggle to borrow and purchase all of the necessary equipment for MIHA participation.

The current rule only applies to riding classes, which is confusing and inconsistent. In the Saddle Seat Showmanship class, boots can be zipped or laced. The rulebook states: "Boots must be of the jodhpur style, and either patent or regular leather" (2023 MIHA Rulebook Page 20, Fitting and Showing, B. The Exhibitor, 1. Appearance, b. Saddle Seat Showmanship Appointments). It is only saddle seat riding classes that are currently worded to ban laces.

The rule that jodhpur boots must be zipped and not tied is not consistent with the breed associations most commonly associated with saddle seat riding in America. The American Saddlebred Association has no such rule, nor does the Arabian Horse Association. Additionally, changing this rule would better align with Michigan 4-H rules which simply state, "boots should be jodhpur boots of patent leather or leather in complementary colors" (p4, MI 4-H Horse & Pony Project Show Rules & Regulations, Rev 2022).

Changing this rule could result in a decrease in protestations that the district, regional, and state show offices have to deal with, since laced saddle seat boots are commonly worn and subsequently protested by rival teams.

RULE CHANGE PROPOSAL

District Number:

Name:

Madeline Welch

Phone Number:

989-600-6063

#24-14
Senior only
750-1.0

Please state rule as written (include page number, article, and section):

Page 35-36

D. Equitation over Fences

1. Fence height for horses/equine over 14.2 hands competing on the High School team will be 2'6". 2. Fence height for ponies/equine 14.2 hands and under competing on the High School team will be 2'3", when requested by a coach.

Please state proposed rule change (include page number, article, and section):

Page 35-36

D. Equitation over Fences

1. 1. Fence height for horses/equine over 14.2 hands competing on the High School team will be 2'3". 2. Fence height for ponies/equine 14.2 hands and under competing on the High School team will be 2', when requested by a coach.

Give a brief description of why this rule change is proposed:

Due to the advanced skill level required for this class, the class should reflect a beginner level jumping course height. According to the United States Equestrian Federation rules, beginner level jumping courses start at the 2'3" height for beginner riders. As many of the exhibitors are at a beginner level skill for jumping, the course should reflect this height as recommended by USEF for increased safety of the riders.

Deadline: December 31st of current year

Please submit your rule change and \$10 to:

Lucy Brown, MIHA State Rules Chair
7737 Big Hand Rd.

Columbus, Michigan 48063

MIHAexecutiveboard@gmail.com

RULE CHANGE PROPOSAL

District Number:

Name:

Susan Holman

Phone Number:

989-600-8035

#24-15
All vote
7501.

Please state rule as written (include page number, article, and section):

Page 37 B Number 3

3. A three minute time limit is allowed for the completion of the class. A rider exceeding the three minute time limit is excused but not disqualified and will be scored on that part of the class completed (the obstacle they are currently working will receive a "NO" score (NS) and all subsequent obstacles) within the time limit.

Please state proposed rule change (include page number, article, and section):

Removing the time limit/ rule

Give a brief description of why this rule change is proposed:

No other class is timed. Why are penalizing riders for taking their time on coarse? If a rider is struggling to get through the coarse they will already be marked down with the 3 refusals. Top riders at the State level were NSed and essentially taken out of the placings because of taking their time and hitting the 3 minute time. We should be rewarding the good rides and hard work these riders put in instead of making them rush.

Deadline: December 31st of current year

Please submit your rule change and \$10 to:

Lucy Brown, MIHA State Rules Chair

7737 Big Hand Rd.

Columbus, Michigan 48063

MIHAexecutiveboard@gmail.com

RULE CHANGE PROPOSAL

District Number:

Name:

Caitlin Arthur

Phone Number:

989-430-6233

#24-16
All vote
750-1.

Please state rule as written (include page number, article, and section):

There is none

Please state proposed rule change (include page number, article, and section):

Addition of a rule under "Trail" on page 37: Volunteers are allowed, but not required, to set up the trail course as trail practice the evening before a show. The course will be self-manned and open to all teams and all horses to practice on. Participants will be expected to help with set up and tear down, not show management. This could be set up in a practice area to not disrupt the warmup of other riders and horses.

Give a brief description of why this rule change is proposed:

To keep MIHA more in line with the other breed circuits, a trail warm up that consists of the pattern in its entirety is always available the evening before the class for practice. This allows the riders and horses to see the obstacles and the proposed layout of the pattern which will best set the riders up for success. If someone says "but this is always allowed" I would disagree and encourage it to be put in the rule book as I got in trouble for setting up trail obstacles last year the night before the show for all the kids to practice on.

For perspective: although our "obstacles" are different, we never ask the jumpers to jump without a warmup.

Deadline: December 31st of current year

Please submit your rule change and \$10 to:

Lucy Brown, MIHA State Rules Chair