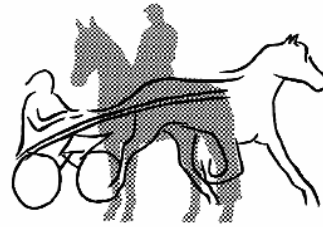


S.P.P.H.A.



The Standardbred Pleasure & Performance Horse Association

of New South Wales Inc.

A.B.N. 11 407 812 669

STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE FOR THE STANDARDBRED

INTRODUCTION

Standardbreds are registered with the appropriate harness racing body or Standardbred Pleasure and Performance Horse Association (any state). They are identifiable by the unique freezebrand on the offside upper neck. The breed ranges in height from 14hh to 17+hh, and body type can vary widely, from stocky to refined. Overall, a Standardbred should present the picture of a well-conformed, athletic horse that is well-suited to its versatility as a harness-racing horse and general pleasure riding horse.

LED

The Standardbred should be of good athletic type with a robust build. They should have strong, straight legs, a long sloping shoulder, a croup that may be as high as the wither, and broad, sloping hindquarters. The Standardbred should stand over a good amount of ground, and therefore tend to have some extra length to the back. They should also have a long underline, strong neck and a wide brow. The Standardbred should have a noble, honest head with a kind eye. There should be no height or colour bias when judging the Standardbred conformation.

The trot should be well-balanced, with strong movement from the shoulder required for pulling a racing sulky, and no visible evidence of forging or knee-knocking, as these are detrimental to the horse at racing speed. A strong, even length of stride with no wasted action, in front and behind, no paddle or extravagant knee lift, is preferred.

In judging the led Standardbred it is not uncommon to see horses pacing. Ideally, all horses should trot in their led classes, but this may not be possible for horses that are currently racing or recently retired and, therefore, horses should not be penalised for pacing. A pace should be judged with the same criteria as a trot – with a strong, even length of stride, a rhythmic action without rushing, and cleanness of gait. The pacing or square-gait trotting (i.e. race-trotting) Standardbred may demonstrate wide action behind.

Some horses may be in race condition and therefore should have a sleeker but well-muscled body shape. Do not hesitate to ask if the horse is currently in race training.

Bumps, injuries and scars may also be evident with horses that have raced and should not be discriminated against. As long as it is not a conformation or breeding fault, it should not go against them.

RIDDEN

The ridden Standardbred should be judged as any hack presenting for a ridden class. Horses should be judged on their gaits, manners and athletic ability. Ideally, transitions should be clean with no evidence of pacing, but this may be dependent on the stage of training (refer to recommendations for specific levels below). All horses should carry themselves in a nice outline, with a degree of rounding, not above or below the bit and not overbent, through all gaits.

Beginner: Horses in Beginner Ridden classes are not required to canter. A horse that paces in a beginner class should not be penalised for pacing during its workout.

Novice: Horses in Novice Ridden classes should be able to perform basic manoeuvres in walk, trot and canter, with adequate time for progressive transitions. Allowances can be made for a few pace strides occurring in the workout. The Novice is not expected to be fully educated, but should be able to complete a basic workout in a reasonable manner.

Open: Horses in Open Ridden classes are expected to demonstrate their ability at walk, trot and canter and are expected not to pace. More advanced movements, for example, serpentines, simple changes, lengthened strides, rein-back, may be requested as part of the workout.

PRESENTATION

The Standardbred should be presented in a neat and tidy, workman-like manner. Horses should be in good condition, clean, well-groomed, with trimmed bridle-path, face and ears, and fetlocks/legs. Hooves should be blacked (a clear polish may be used on white hooves), and any white markings spotless. Make-up may be used sparingly. False tails are discouraged. Quarter marks are permitted. Manes and tails can be presented as follows:

- a) Both mane and tail unplaited.
- b) English plaits or rosettes for the mane; if mane is plaited, tail must be braided, pulled or shaved.
- c) Bridle path plait – a small section of mane at the top of the neck is plaited. A discreet colour-coordinated ribbon may be incorporated into the plait. Tail is left unplaited.

Rider Attire – at all times, clothing should be neat, tidy and appropriate for handling horses. For led Standardbred classes, smart casual attire is acceptable, including hat, vest or jacket, gloves and whip. For both led and ridden classes, standard rider attire is acceptable (please refer to the Show Horse Council of Australasia Inc requirements, EFA guidelines and/or requirements specified by the specific show committee for attire expected of Junior and Senior riders).

The SPPHA NSW Inc. Standard of Excellence is a guideline only. It is the responsibility of all competitors to make themselves aware of the Rules and Regulations governing their participation in any activity.

It is suggested that competitors consult references to standard showing presentation and procedure including, but not limited to, EFA Show Horse Rules and Regulations, the Show Horse Council of Australasia Inc "Showing Guidelines" and "Competition Rules" and the rules and regulations specific to a particular show.