



2024 Handbook

Finalized January 2024
Revised March 2024

Sunshine State Mounted Drill Team Association, LLC

Statement of Purpose

Sunshine State Mounted Drill Team Association, LLC was founded on the principles of fair play, fellowship, sportsmanship and competition. The Association is dedicated to promoting the sport of drill team riding for entertainment and competition. We encourage teams to use all the equine skills they possess whether riding for entertainment or competition. Remember above all else

DRILL TEAM RIDING IS FOR FUN !!!!

It is the intention of the Sunshine State Mounted Drill Team Association to develop and bring together as many drill teams as is possible throughout the state of Florida, and to hold competitions and events throughout the year, one of which will be the State Competition for the purpose of naming an Annual State Champion.

The Sunshine State Mounted Drill Team Association, LLC rules and by-laws handbook is protected by US Copyright Laws and no part may be copied or duplicated without the express permission of the Managing Members. Possession of the handbook does not constitute permission or grant the right to duplicate or otherwise copy the material for personal or professional gain.

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By-Laws and Rules

Be it here known this body shall be recognized and known as the Sunshine State Mounted Drill Team Association, LLC. The State of Florida under the Charter Number L13000084404 charters this Association. Being organized as Non-Profit organization for the purposes of promoting fellowship, good sportsmanship and fairness in competition in drill team riding. The following by-laws shall govern all those present and future members of the Sunshine State Mounted Drill Team Association, LLC.

Managing Members

The Association is managed by up to three (3) managing members. The duties of these members will include, but are not limited to:

- Presiding over meetings, ensuring the by-laws, rules and regulations of the Association are enforced.

- Record and maintain minutes of all meetings.
- Collect dues, competition entry fees, donations and monies collected from any fund raiser and keep records of.
- Pay bills in a timely manner.
- Set up 3 qualifiers and State Championships for each year.

Membership and Annual Dues

Any person may join SSMDTA. Membership year runs from January 1 - December 31. Annual dues are \$30 per person.

Each person wishing to join MUST fill out the Membership Form online and digitally sign the liability waiver.

All riders must be members of the Association in order to participate in any of the shows. Additionally, all Coaches, Captains, Co-Coaches and Co-Captains are required to be members of the Association.

A Team is defined as a group with a SINGLE point of contact. While we strive to answer all questions in a timely manner, the main contacts for each team will get faster responses. Most communication will go to the main point of contact for each team but other information will be posted on our website and Facebook page.

Association Meetings

An annual meeting will be held at the 3rd Qualifier of the season. Two (2) members from each team are allowed to represent their team. The floor will be open for discussion, but must have been placed on the agenda ahead of time. This will allow us to keep the meeting to a short length. This will allow teams to provide feedback on changes needed for the following year, so the Handbook can be ready by the State Championships. Other meetings may be called throughout the year at the Managing Members discretion.

Insurance

Association insurance is due yearly. If the treasury funds permit, the Association shall pay all of the insurance fee. In the case of insufficient Association funds, the cost of the insurance will be divided among the current member teams.

Sportsmanship

Un-sportsmanship-like conduct will NOT be tolerated. Any member or person associated with a member team who shall conduct themselves in a manner as to disrupt or do anything calculated to disturb the harmony of the Association, shall warrant a team being reprimanded and possibly disqualified. If conduct is observed it shall be brought to the attention of the Managing Members for review. Loss of temper resulting in abuse of persons or animals will result in expulsion of team/persons involved. If more than 3 offenses are reported during a show, the team will be disqualified.

Each team needs to contribute to the other team's encouragement and moral support with a positive attitude. Moments of frustration are common to all members, but a positive mental attitude should be maintained even when the going gets tough.

Termination

The Sunshine State Mounted Drill Team Association, LLC reserves the right to terminate its association with any member after a full refund of one year's dues are made to that member.

Dissolution

Upon the dissolution of SSMDTA by the Managing Members, any remaining funds in the treasury shall be divided and distributed equally among the current paid member teams. Funds may be donated to a charitable organization in place of distribution.

Managing Members

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Show Secretary and Show Manager Duties

- Time each drill - time starts when first horse's nose enters the arena and end when the last horse's tail exits the arena.
- Show Secretary shall time each drill and will place the drill time and assess any penalties on the score sheets.
- Track drill times and put it on the score sheets. Calculate time penalties, if any, and input on score sheet.
- Collect score sheets from all judges.
- Total all sections of the score sheets and calculate the placings for each division.
- Fill in the placing sheet for announcer to read at awards.
- Make copies of score sheets for each team to be picked up at end of competition.
- Save copies of score sheets for the association - place in the binder in appropriate tabs.
- Get lunch/drink orders for all judges, announcer and show secretary, order, pay and bring to them.
- Pay the judges at the end of the competition. (checks in the binder)
- Assist in handing out awards, score sheets and music at awards ceremony.
- Responsible for all score sheets and audio recordings until the conclusion of the shows.
- Main point of contact for teams and judges for the duration of the show.
- Run the Captain's Meeting at the shows.
- Assist the Announcer with music check and sound levels for all teams.
- Show Secretary makes the final decision on all items during the show.
- Requests for additional shavings while at the show.
- Facility and RV site issues.

General Rules & Information

- Entry forms are available at www.ssmmdta.com and can be filled out online. Entry fees will have an Early Bird price if submitted 30 days prior to the competition and will be subject to a Late Fee if not submitted at least 2 weeks prior to the competition.
- Should a team need to withdraw after they have sent in their entry fee, it should be sent in writing to the Association (via email ssmmdta22@gmail.com) 10 days ahead of said competition in order to receive credit towards the next show, otherwise the fee is forfeited.
- In the event of a fallen rider, please do not rush the arena. Please allow the coach, show staff and parent (if applicable) to access the situation. If additional assistance is needed, the coach/show staff/parent will request it.
- The Order of Go will be published prior to the competition. If any special needs are required in line up, the team manager needs to notify the association at the time of entry submission.
- A Captain's Meeting will be held prior to the start of the show and details will be given regarding Inspection for that day.
- Teams will be allotted 10-15 minutes of arena time. This time will be used for setting of your cones, Courtesy Lap, drill performance and cone removal.
- During actual drill competition, external signaling from the sidelines will not be allowed and could result in disqualification of a team, signaling includes but is not limited to: talking to the team members, hand signals, whistles, head nods, etc.
- If excessive coaching from inside the arena is noticed as well, penalties can be applied. If internal or external coaching is noticed by the judges, SSMMDTA show staff or representatives, a 50 point penalty will be assessed - along with a notation of the nature of the violation.
- Each team is responsible for providing their own gatekeeper. None will be provided for by SSMMDTA. Gates MUST be closed for safety reasons.
- Teams MUST leave the arena at a walk. Racing out of the arena can incur a 20-point penalty.
- After each day of competition, the Show Secretary will finalize the Grand Total Forms and determine the winners.
- At qualifiers all teams will gather, without horses, for the announcements. If there are any special awards (i.e., high point or judge's choice) they will be announced last.
- At the State Championships teams will gather WITH horses for the placings.
- Placings for the classes will be done in the order they performed that competition and will be announced in reverse order (sixth through first). The announcer will state the placing, number of points and team name.

- Before each team starts a drill, you will make a courtesy lap around the arena. During that time the Announcer will read a short introduction about your theme, which can also be emailed to ssmdta22@gmail.com. Introductions must be submitted with your entry forms. Changes can be made up to the Wednesday prior to the show. No changes will be allowed at the show.
- Courtesy Laps are allowed prior to every drill. At the 3 qualifiers, only the Theme and Rodeo classes will have an introduction read. This is a great opportunity to tell the audience how your theme works (costumes, music, etc.). Remember what may be obvious to you may not be to others if they haven't seen that movie/theme/style before.
- At the State Championships, an Introduction is requested for ALL classes except Compulsory and Short Program.
- A drill may be anything your team is capable of doing. You are only limited by the imagination of your team.
- In the interest of safety and fair play, the use of firearms or any explosive device is NOT allowed to be utilized in anyone's drill.
- Please use tack stalls and do not block aisle ways at events.
- Stallions may only be ridden and handled by an adult, over the age of 21, who is experienced and knowledgeable in handling of a stallion.
- Safety helmets are not required and may be used at the discretion of the teams. Teams will NOT be penalized if they choose to wear safety helmets. This will not count as a non-conformity in costuming. Safety is a main concern and helmets are encouraged.
- Per Florida law, any rider under the age of 16 must wear a helmet while riding at any time. Nicole's Law requires children younger than 16 to wear a helmet while riding a horse on public land. Parents of children who break the law can be fined \$500. This law was put into effect October 1, 2009.
- To qualify for the State Championship, teams need to compete in at least two out of the three qualifying competitions.
- Teams must also compete in the same class at 2 qualifiers in order to compete in that class at the State Championships.
- Any team that is not qualified but wishes to attend the State Championships may do so, but they will only receive scores and judge feedback. Non-qualified teams will not place and will not earn points.
- Music must be submitted ahead of the show in order to be placed on the computer. Music should be submitted with your entry form. Changes can be made up until the Wednesday prior to the show. No changes will be allowed at the show.
- If incorrect music is played, teams should not start their drill, but notify the Show

Secretary, Show Manager or Announcer to have the correct music played.

- One member is responsible for giving a thumbs up or cue of some kind when the music is to be started for their drill. Announcer needs some sort of a cue so that he knows when to start the music or if the music is too loud or not loud enough.
- Disputes must be put in writing and submitted to the Show Manager who will handle the dispute per the rules or forward the dispute to a Managing Member. It shall be the duty of the Show Secretary to validate or invalidate the complaint. A \$ 30 fee must accompany all complaints or disputes. The fee will be forfeited and monies placed into the Association's treasury if the dispute goes against the issuer. The fee shall be refunded if the issuer's complaint is upheld. The dispute/complaint must be presented prior to the days competition results. If the fee and dispute are not issued to the Show Secretary in a timely fashion, the dispute will not be considered and the fee not accepted.
- Excessive abuse of animals may be grounds for dismissal from the event. A repeat offense by the same individual will result in expulsion. Anyone witnessing an act of abuse should report it to a Managing Member or the Show Secretary. The team and individual will be spoken to. If 3 offenses are noted at a show, that team or individual will be disqualified from the show.
- If there is a costume malfunction (for safety) in that a team is losing a leg wrap or other safety issue, the Managing Members or Show Secretary may stop the drill with NO penalties to the team. The team manager can also have the drill stopped by notifying the Managing Members or Show Secretary and NO penalties will be deducted. If a team's music stops or glitches due to an issue with the sound system ONLY, the team may restart with NO penalties. With the exception of a rider fall, the drill can only be stopped by the Team's Coach. Otherwise, music should continue playing throughout.
- A Practice Schedule will be published and the arena will be closed afterwards.
- Music will not be played via the sound system for anyone's practice. You may bring personal speakers to play music during your practice time.
- In the event of a problem in the arena during a team's ride that is beyond their control (i.e., loose animals, sound system malfunction, spectator interference and acts of God), a team may request a Re-Ride from the Show Secretary. The Show Secretary will confer with the judges and will make the final decision if the Re-Ride request is approved.
- Dogs must be on a 6' leash and under the control of a handler at all times.
- Please keep all children and animals away from the arena rails.
- Spectators are encouraged to watch performances, but we ask that you move in the grandstands inbetween rides only to minimize noise.

Inspection

For the 2024 season, teams will not be standing for formal Inspection.

Your tack and costumes will receive scores under the Appearance category.

Judges look at your General Appearance, Costume/Theme unity, Tack Uniformity (bridles, reins, breast collars, pads and leg wraps). This does NOT include tie-downs spurs, saddles or rear cinches.

At qualifiers the Rodeo and Theme classes will always be in costume. Open, Youth and Novice classes will each costume at a single qualifier. At the State Championships ALL classes, except Compulsory and Short Program, will be in costume.

Costuming

Classes that are not showing in costume at qualifying competitions should wear matching Team Shirts. Baseball caps and visors are allowed. Flags and Props are allowed.

Theme and Rodeo Classes will perform in Costume at ALL events and your costume, horse decorations and music should work together to showcase your theme.

Costume Classes at each show:

February: Rodeo, Youth Theme, Novice Theme, Open Theme, Beginners Theme, Open Quad & Open Freestyle

June: Rodeo, Youth Theme, Novice Theme, Open Theme, Beginners Theme, Youth Quad & Youth Freestyle

September: Rodeo, Youth Theme, Novice Theme, Open Theme, Beginners Theme, Novice Quad & Novice Freestyle

November: Rodeo, Youth Theme, Novice Theme, Open Theme, Beginners Theme, Beginners Quad, Beginners Freestyle, Youth Quad, Youth Freestyle, Novice Quad, Novice Freestyle, Open Quad & Open Freestyle

Awards

Members will accumulate points throughout the year based on their placings in their individual classes and a Point Redemption Catalog will be published at the end of the show year and you can exchange points for the items available.

In Qualifiers riders will earn points per placing as follows:

1st Place = 6 points

2nd Place = 5 points

3rd Place = 4 points

4th Place = 3 points

5th Place = 2 points

6th Place = 1 point

At the State Championships, riders will earn the following points for placings:

1st Place = 20 points

2nd Place = 15 points

3rd Place = 10 points

4th Place = 8 points

5th Place = 5 points

6th Place = 3 points

The High Point Team in each class will receive recognition and 25 points for each rider in that class at the State Championship show.

At the State Championship show, awards will also be given out for Best Music, Best Costume and Highest Score of the Weekend.

Additional awards may be given out at the discretion of show management.

High Point

Points will be tallied for each team in each class they compete in at qualifiers and State Championships. These tallies will be published on the Association's Facebook page and website after each qualifier. Teams are encouraged to attend all 3 qualifiers in order to secure that top spot in the rankings.

Traveling Trophies

Traveling trophies are awarded at each show for teams to enjoy for a year.

Qualifier #1 = Judges' Choice

Qualifier #2 = Horsemanship Award

Qualifier #3 = Sportsmanship Award

State Championships = Golden Shovel

Penalties

Exceeding Time Limit

The time starts when the first horse breaks the plane of the performing team's "designated" arena. (This will be determined by each team's use of some form of markers. If a team doesn't mark their field, it may be assumed by a judge that they are using the entire arena.) The time will end when the last horse's tail leaves the team's "designated" arena.

If a team goes under or over the allotted time, it shall incur a 10 point penalty.

Fall of Horse/Rider

A fall of horse or rider due to arena conditions, horse behavior, faulty equipment, etc. shall incur a twenty (20) point deduction from team's total score. If the fall of horse/rider is due to a collision between two or more horses, collision of horse or rider with gate or wall, a one hundred (100) point deduction will be incurred. This penalty will be assessed per incident. The Fall of Horse/Rider penalty includes Re-Grouping, so a Re-Grouping penalty shall not be added on top of a Fall of Horse/Rider penalty. Penalty shall be deducted from specified area on official score sheet.

Re-Grouping

Shall incur a ten (10) point deduction, per incident, to be taken from the team's total score sheet. Re-grouping penalty shall be assessed when an obvious loss of direction occurs. Penalty shall be deducted from specified area on official score sheet.

The following are deductions that a team may incur during a competition:

Exceeding allotted drill time limit	-10 points
Fall of rider and/or horse	-20 points - per incident
Re-grouping	-10 points - per incident
Fielding Less Riders	-25 points - per rider/judge
Out of Bounds	-2 points - per incident

If internal or external coaching is noticed by the judges or SSMDTA Staff, a 50 point penalty will be assessed - along with a notation of the nature of the violation.

Racing out of at the arena will result in a 20 point penalty.

Compulsory

Description

Open to all teams. A pre-written drill will be provided to all the teams and will be used for an entire show year. Teams will be judged on the execution of each move and this division will have a separate score sheet.

Compulsory drill is available at www.ssmmdta.com in the current year show information.

Costumes:

There will NOT be costumes for this division at any competition.

Gaits:

There are no gait requirements for this class.

Time:

No time limit.

Please be considerate of show schedule and be expeditious with your ride.

Riders:

Minimum of 4 riders.

Short Program

Description

The purpose of the Short Program is for teams to put together a short drill that incorporates 6 pre-determined moves. These can be done in any order and any additional moves can be added to facilitate setup of any moves. Maneuvers may be performed in a variety of ways to allow for originality.

Teams will be judged on: How many maneuvers are incorporated into a smooth working drill; Lines and circles; Suitability of music to maneuvers performed; Spacing, Timing, Alignment, Pace; Uniqueness and originality in presentation of the drill; Showmanship; Performance of all Maneuvers; and Equitation and Horsemanship. Props and Flags are allowed at all competitions.

Each team participating is required to submit a list of their maneuvers in the order they will appear in the drill. Maneuver copy can be a written list or an arrow diagram. Please highlight or indicate the 6 required moves as they appear in the drill to make it easier for the judges to see on their copy.

Required Maneuvers:

Peel the Apple • Fish Hook • Hourglass • Figure Eight
Break the Chevron - Side • Single File Pole Bend

Descriptions of the moves can be found in the Move Glossary at www.ssmtda.com.

Costumes:

There will NOT be costumes for this division at any competition.

Gaits:

There are no gait requirements for this class.

Time:

3 - 5 minutes.

Riders:

Minimum of 4 riders

Rodeo

Description

This class is all about “flash and dash” and “pizzazz”.

You will be judged on Execution of Drill, Performance and Manner of Horses, Originality and Uniqueness of Presentation, Degree of Difficulty, Showmanship, Rider Equitation and General Impression. Emphasis will be on Showmanship and Entertainment. Props and Flags are allowed at all competitions.

Costumes:

Costumes for this class are required at ALL Qualifiers and at the State Championships.

Gaits:

Canter Only. No stop, walk or trot.

Time:

Less than 5 minutes.

Riders:

Minimum of 4 riders.

Jackpot / Team Bonding Class

Description

2 teams, with the same number of riders each, work together on a drill.

You will be judged on Execution of Drill, Performance and Manner of Horses, Originality and Uniqueness of Presentation, Degree of Difficulty, Showmanship, Rider Equitation and General Impression. Emphasis will be on Showmanship and Entertainment. Props and Flags are allowed at all competitions.

Costumes:

There will NOT be costumes for this division at any competition.

Gaits:

There are no gait requirements for this class.

Time:

Less than 5 minutes.

Riders:

Minimum of 4 riders.

A minimum of 3 entries are required in order for this class to run.

There will be payback in this class based on the number of teams entered. It will be a 70/30 payback.

Since this is a Payback class, riders will NOT earn points.

This class can be entered at any show and there is no need to qualify to compete at the State Championships.

Youth Freestyle

Description

This division is for riders 18 and under. Exception to this is that ONE adult rider (over the age of 18) may ride with the youth riders. Rider's age will be determined on January 1st of each year and they will remain that age for the competition year. All Youth riders under the age of 16 are required to wear a helmet while riding at any time during the event.

This class allows you to showcase your team and its style.

You will be judged on Execution of Drill, Performance and Manner of Horses, Originality and Uniqueness of Presentation, Degree of Difficulty, Showmanship, Rider Equitation and General Impression. Props and Flags are allowed at all competitions.

Costumes:

Costumes for this class are required at the 2nd Qualifier and at the State Championships. The other 2 qualifiers will be conducted in t-shirts and jeans.

Gaits:

Walk, Trot and Canter are required.

Time:

6 - 8 minutes.

Riders:

Minimum of 5 riders.

Youth Quad

Description

This division is for riders 18 and under. Exception to this is that ONE adult rider (over the age of 18) may ride with the youth riders. Rider's age will be determined on January 1st of each year and they will remain that age for the competition year. All Youth riders under the age of 16 are required to wear a helmet while riding at any time during the event.

This class allows you to showcase your team and its style with just 4 riders.

You will be judged on Execution of Drill, Performance and Manner of Horses, Originality and Uniqueness of Presentation, Degree of Difficulty, Showmanship, Rider Equitation and General Impression. Props and Flags are allowed at all competitions.

Costumes:

Costumes for this class are required at the 2nd Qualifier and at the State Championships. The other 2 qualifiers will be conducted in t-shirts and jeans.

Gaits:

Walk, Trot and Canter are required.

Time:

4 - 6 minutes.

Riders:

Minimum and Maximum of 4 riders.

Youth Theme

Description

This division is for riders 18 and under. Exception to this is that ONE adult rider (over the age of 18) may ride with the youth riders. Rider's age will be determined on January 1st of each year and they will remain that age for the competition year. All Youth riders under the age of 16 are required to wear a helmet while riding at any time during the event.

This class allows you to showcase a specific theme. Your costumes, tack and music should blend to create a theme or story that is carried throughout your drill.

You will be judged on Execution of Drill, Performance and Manner of Horses, Originality and Uniqueness of Presentation, Degree of Difficulty, Showmanship, Rider Equitation and General Impression. Props and Flags are allowed at all competitions.

Costumes:

Costumes for this class are required at ALL Qualifiers and at the State Championships.

Gaits:

Walk, Trot and Canter are required.

Time:

5 - 8 minutes.

Riders:

Minimum of 4 riders.

Beginners Freestyle

Description

This division is for riders 18 and under. Exception to this is that TWO adult riders (over the age of 18) may ride with the youth riders in a leadership and/or safety capacity. Rider's age will be determined on January 1st of each year and they will remain that age for the competition year. All Youth riders under the age of 16 are required to wear a helmet while riding at any time during the event.

The purpose of this class is to allow brand new youth riders the opportunity to compete in drill while still learning the art of riding and horsemanship.

You will be judged on Spacing, Alignment, Timing & Coordination, Degree of Difficulty, Manners & Performance of Horses, Crowd Appeal, Variety, Appearance, Music and Horsemanship.

Props and Flags are NOT allowed at any of the competitions for the Beginners division.

The Internal/External Coaching Penalty is removed for this class.

Costumes:

Costumes for this class are required at the State Championships. The other 3 qualifiers will be conducted in t-shirts and jeans.

Gaits:

Walk and Trot are required.

Time:

3 - 5 minutes.

Riders:

Minimum of 5 riders.

Note:

The same horse/rider combo may also ride in Novice division classes, but may not participate in any Youth, Open or Rodeo classes.

Adults serving as Leader/Safety riders are exempt from this.

Beginners Quad

Description

This division is for riders 18 and under. Exception to this is that TWO adult riders (over the age of 18) may ride with the youth riders in a leadership and/or safety capacity. Rider's age will be determined on January 1st of each year and they will remain that age for the competition year. All Youth riders under the age of 16 are required to wear a helmet while riding at any time during the event.

The purpose of this class is to allow brand new youth riders the opportunity to compete in drill while still learning the art of riding and horsemanship.

You will be judged on Spacing, Alignment, Timing & Coordination, Degree of Difficulty, Manners & Performance of Horses, Crowd Appeal, Variety, Appearance, Music and Horsemanship.

Props and Flags are NOT allowed at any of the competitions for the Beginners division.

The Internal/External Coaching Penalty is removed for this class.

Costumes:

Costumes for this class are required at the State Championships. The other 3 qualifiers will be conducted in t-shirts and jeans.

Gaits:

Walk and Trot are required.

Time:

3 - 5 minutes.

Riders:

Minimum and Maximum of 4 riders.

Note:

The same horse/rider combo may also ride in Novice division classes, but may not participate in any Youth, Open or Rodeo classes.

Adults serving as Leader/Safety riders are exempt from this.

Beginners Theme

Description

This division is for riders 18 and under. Exception to this is that TWO adult riders (over the age of 18) may ride with the youth riders in a leadership and/or safety capacity. Rider's age will be determined on January 1st of each year and they will remain that age for the competition year. All Youth riders under the age of 16 are required to wear a helmet while riding at any time during the event.

The purpose of this class is to allow brand new youth riders the opportunity to compete in drill while still learning the art of riding and horsemanship.

You will be judged on Spacing, Alignment, Timing & Coordination, Degree of Difficulty, Manners & Performance of Horses, Crowd Appeal, Variety, Appearance, Music and Horsemanship.

Props and Flags are NOT allowed at any of the competitions for the Beginners division.

The Internal/External Coaching Penalty is removed for this class.

Costumes:

Costumes for this class are required at ALL Qualifiers and at the State Championships.

Gaits:

Walk and Trot are required.

Time:

3 - 5 minutes.

Riders:

Minimum of 4 riders.

Note:

The same horse/rider combo may also ride in Novice division classes, but may not participate in any Youth, Open or Rodeo classes.

Adults serving as Leader/Safety riders are exempt from this.

Open Freestyle

Description

This class allows all teams to compete against each other. There are no restrictions on age or number of horses.

This class allows you to showcase your team and its style.

You will be judged on Execution of Drill, Performance and Manner of Horses, Originality and Uniqueness of Presentation, Degree of Difficulty, Showmanship, Rider Equitation and General Impression. Props and Flags are allowed at all competitions.

Costumes:

Costumes for this class are required at the 1st Qualifier and at the State Championships. The other 2 qualifiers will be conducted in t-shirts and jeans.

Gaits:

Walk, Trot and Canter are required.

Time:

6 - 8 minutes.

Riders:

Minimum of 5 riders.

Open Quad

Description

This class allows all teams to compete against each other. There are no restrictions on age.

This class allows you to showcase your team and its style with just 4 riders.

You will be judged on Execution of Drill, Performance and Manner of Horses, Originality and Uniqueness of Presentation, Degree of Difficulty, Showmanship, Rider Equitation and General Impression. Props and Flags are allowed at all competitions.

Costumes:

Costumes for this class are required at the 1st Qualifier and at the State Championships. The other 2 qualifiers will be conducted in t-shirts and jeans.

Gaits:

Walk, Trot and Canter are required.

Time:

4 - 6 minutes.

Riders:

Minimum and Maximum of 4 riders.

Open Theme

Description

This class allows all teams to compete against each other. There are no restrictions on age or number of horses.

This class allows you to showcase a specific theme. Your costumes, tack and music should blend to create a theme or story that is carried throughout your drill.

You will be judged on Execution of Drill, Performance and Manner of Horses, Originality and Uniqueness of Presentation, Degree of Difficulty, Showmanship, Rider Equitation and General Impression. Props and Flags are allowed at all competitions.

Costumes:

Costumes for this class are required at ALL Qualifiers and at the State Championships.

Gaits:

Walk, Trot and Canter are required.

Time:

5 - 8 minutes.

Riders:

Minimum of 4 riders.

Novice Freestyle

Description

This is the perfect opportunity to aide in working in new riders, horses, maneuvers, costumes, etc. It allows for feedback from the judges without the pressure of the other divisions. The purpose of the Non-Canter Division is mainly for new riders and/or new horses, but can be used for teams that prefer to ride at the Walk/Trot only.

This class allows you to showcase your team and its style.

You will be judged on Execution of Drill, Performance and Manner of Horses, Originality and Uniqueness of Presentation, Degree of Difficulty, Showmanship, Rider Equitation and General Impression. Props and Flags are allowed at all competitions.

Costumes:

Costumes for this class are required at the 3rd Qualifier and at the State Championships. The other 2 qualifiers will be conducted in t-shirts and jeans.

Gaits:

Walk and Trot are required.

Time:

4 - 6 minutes.

Riders:

Minimum of 5 riders.

Note:

The same horse/rider combo cannot ride in novice and any other Youth, Open or Rodeo classes.

Novice Quad

Description

This is the perfect opportunity to aide in working in new riders, horses, maneuvers, costumes, etc. It allows for feedback from the judges without the pressure of the other divisions. The purpose of the Non-Canter Division is mainly for new riders and/or new horses, but can be used for teams that prefer to ride at the Walk/Trot only.

This class allows you to showcase your team and its style with just 4 riders.

You will be judged on Execution of Drill, Performance and Manner of Horses, Originality and Uniqueness of Presentation, Degree of Difficulty, Showmanship, Rider Equitation and General Impression. Props and Flags are allowed at all competitions.

Costumes:

Costumes for this class are required at the 3rd Qualifier and at the State Championships. The other 2 qualifiers will be conducted in t-shirts and jeans.

Gaits:

Walk and Trot are required.

Time:

3 - 5 minutes.

Riders:

Minimum of 4 riders.

Note:

The same horse/rider combo cannot ride in novice and any other Youth, Open or Rodeo classes.

Novice Theme

Description

This is the perfect opportunity to aide in working in new riders, horses, maneuvers, costumes, etc. It allows for feedback from the judges without the pressure of the other divisions. The purpose of the Non-Canter Division is mainly for new riders and/or new horses, but can be used for teams that prefer to ride at the Walk/Trot only.

This class allows you to showcase a specific theme. Your costumes, tack and music should blend to create a theme or story that is carried throughout your drill.

You will be judged on Execution of Drill, Performance and Manner of Horses, Originality and Uniqueness of Presentation, Degree of Difficulty, Showmanship, Rider Equitation and General Impression. Props and Flags are allowed at all competitions.

Costumes:

Costumes for this class are required at ALL Qualifiers and at the State Championships.

Gaits:

Walk and Trot are required.

Time:

3 - 6 minutes.

Riders:

Minimum of 4 riders.

Note:

The same horse/rider combo cannot ride in novice and any other Youth, Open or Rodeo classes.

Judge's Guide

Category	Description
Spacing	Maintenance of a uniform distance between all horses throughout an entire maneuver. Distance may be varied as long as spaces are equal. Riders and/or sets have equal distance between them; spacing may vary in different maneuvers.
Alignment	Lines are straight; circles are round and centered; riders are aligned when abreast and track when in columns.
Timing & Coordination	How team members work together to perform the maneuvers. No missed holes, collisions, etc. A team should have the same cadence and speed at all times. A well-coordinated team will move as a unit, and be smooth in its maneuvers. This includes the ability of the team to foresee the necessity to adjust its speed to the maneuver without breaking gait. Both spacing and gait are to be maintained.
Degree of Difficulty	Difficulty of maneuvers and overall drill to include but not limited to: speed, closeness of spacing, lack of set-up maneuvers, precision should not be sacrificed for speed, carrying of flags and correct flag protocol.
Performance of Horses	Manners, way of going and suitability as a drill horse. Horses should be well behaved. They should not jump or shy, and should work freely and easily at all times. No broken gaits.
Manners of Horses	Well-mannered, no kick, bite or buck. Easy to control and responsive to the rider's commands.
Spectacularity / Crowd Appeal	Drill presented in a manner pleasing to an unbiased audience. Keeps the crowd engaged and not bored. Sharp execution of maneuvers.
Variety	The number of maneuvers of different types performed by a team. The pattern should not be all circles or all lines. A team moving from one maneuver to another without repeating should receive credit for variety.
Appearance (Non-Theme)	Tack, rider apparel and flags will be scored on eye appeal and how well items match. Horses are expected to have matching tack with the exception of saddles and bits. All tack should be clean and in good working order.
Appearance (Theme & Rodeo)	Teams are scored on how well their costumes relay the theme of their routine. Imagination and creativity play a huge part in the costuming of riders and horses in the Theme classes. Apparel should match the theme and music. It is not necessary to match costumes and accessories, including any flags or carried props.
Horsemanship	Equitation shall be stressed, as adapted for drill purposes, i.e., basic equitation position, hands and the use of aids. Riders should sit their saddles in a good, easy manner.
Music	Music goes with the drill and tempo flows. THEME ONLY: Music should match costuming and theme.

Judges

- Starting in 2018, judges will be hired directly by SSMDTA off of a list of qualified judges. These judges are professionals and will be paid for by the Association. The judges decisions will be final and will not be reversed. If two judges are used then both judges will judge all sections of the score sheet. Both scores will be added together for the grand total.
- The scoring is the Judge's opinion of the drill (their interpretation) to the rules and the team's drill.
- Judges will be seated in the grandstands. Do not sit near the judges or talk to them during the competition.
- The judges may also be asked to assist with handing out the awards to the teams.
- Judges usually stay after awards on Sunday to talk with teams. Please take advantage of this one-on-one feedback.

Score Sheets

- Score sheets shall be handed out to team manager or designated team representative at the end of the competition. Each team will receive the original of the score sheet. The carbon copy becomes the property of SSMDTA to remain on file for a period of one year.
- Copies of all team's scores from each qualifying competition will be posted on the Association's Facebook page after the competition for all to view.
- In case of a tie for any placing, the team with the higher Equitation section score will take the higher placing. In the Compulsory division, Musical Theme will be used to break ties.
- The judges will be responsible for scoring all sections of the Official Scoring Sheet. They agree to do so according to the format provided for in the Judges section. After each performance the judges will turn their score sheets into the Show Secretary who will access any time penalties and will total each section. Once turned in, the judge cannot have the score sheet back, although the Show Secretary may bring the score sheet back to a judge if he/she has questions on what a number says or if a number is missing off the score sheet. The judge may only have 1 teams score sheet at a time. Each team is to be judged individually and not compared against each other.
- Any changes made on a score sheet by a judge must be initialed by that judge in ink. It is the judge's responsibility to do a final check and make sure that all changes are indeed initialed in ink.
- In the event of a technical malfunction with music, confirmed by the Announcer, teams will be given the highest score issued by each judge in that division.

Flag Protocol

Flag Order - (Right to Left or Front to Back)

1. American Flag
2. State flag
3. Armed Forces flags (in order below)
 - a. Army
 - b. Marines
 - c. Navy
 - d. Air Force
 - e. Space Force
 - f. Coast Guard
4. City flag (only if State flag is used)
5. Team flag
6. Sponsor flag

Flag Staffs – Heights

Normally flags should fly above a rider's head about 6" to not block their view. Therefore, as a guide, if you want to carry a 4' x 6' flag, you will need a 10' pole (4+6=10). A 3' x 5' flag needs an 8' pole, etc. This calculation may not always work for taller riders. For a uniform look, flag poles may be cut (adjusted), or flag boots may be positioned in a manner so all flags on a team appear to be the same height.

Flags – General Information

No flags on the team should be higher or larger than the American Flag. A small sticker on a flag pole can mark where riders need to hold the pole to keep flags facing forward. The lighter a flag is, the easier it is to handle. No flag should leave the arena before the American Flag.

General Flag Carriage - Riders

Riders carry flags on their right in a steady manner with shafts and/or poles perpendicular to the ground (regardless of the drill speed...no leaning forward or backward). Elbows should be bent in a right angle and held close to the body. Flags need to be kept free-flying and not allowed to wrap around poles. All flags (except the American Flag) should be dipped in honor of the American Flag, the National Anthem, or the Pledge of Allegiance of the American Flag. Flags are dipped by fully extending the right arm forward, not to the side.

American Flag Carriage – Riders

Riders must always carry the American Flag on their right, straight upright, perpendicular to the ground. Elbows should be bent in a right angle and held close to the body. The American

Flag is NEVER dipped. Regardless of the drill speed the American Flag NEVER leans forward, backward or outward. It should always be free-flying and not allowed to wrap around the shaft. The American Flag should not be allowed to touch the ground. American Flag horse/rider should have skills capable of carrying the National Flag. If an American Flag is dropped during drill, it should be rescued immediately, and placed back in its position.

The American Flag – Position in Maneuvers:

The position of the American Flag during drill shall always be to the front or to the right of all other flags and all other riders. In a single file the American Flag shall lead all other flags and riders. In pairs, fours, eights, obliques or full team abreast, the American Flag shall be to the right and/or in front of all other flags and riders. When performing a Crack The Whip, the American Flag should be on the outside and the team should be traveling counter-clockwise. In a Chevron the American Flag should always be at the front point leading other riders. When in a Circle, the American Flag must leave the formation first and be in a leading position. In a counter-clockwise Pinwheel, American Flag(s) should be in the far outside positions. When performing a clockwise Pinwheel, American Flag(s) should be the center pivots. When performing other maneuvers remember to always place the American Flag in the front position and/or to the right of all other flags and riders. At NO time may the American Flag back up (signifies retreat) in a maneuver. On exiting an arena, no other flag may leave the arena before the American Flag; the American Flag leads the exit.