



**AUSTRALIAN HEAVY HORSE  
ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED**

**MEMBERS & JUDGES  
SHOWING HANDBOOK**

**Terms and Conditions and Rules for Showing**



# AUSTRALIAN HEAVY HORSE ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

**This handbook covers the *Australian Heavy Horse Associations'* Showing Terms, Conditions and Rules for Members and Judges.**

**Members, competitors and judges are to familiarise themselves with this document before entering any AHHA Horse Show. Any updates to this document occurring before the next edition is published, will be posted on the AHHA website.**

**Throughout this handbook and on the website, the terms 'AHHA', 'we', "us" and 'our' refer to the *Australian Heavy Horse Association* and 'TGCA' refers to the *Traditional Gypsy Cob Association*.**

**We recognise the breed standards of the following Breed Societies:**





# **AUSTRALIAN HEAVY HORSE ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED**

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# AUSTRALIAN HEAVY HORSE ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

## 1. SHOWING RULES AND GUIDELINES

1. All colours are acceptable, colour and markings should **not** be considered whilst judging, and wall/blue eyes and freeze marking are **not** to be penalised.
2. Gypsy Cobs should be shown in their natural condition; only **minimal** trimming of jawline and ears is permissible. Trimming inside of the ears and removal of sensory whiskers is **not** in line with the AHHA welfare policy.
3. Clydesdales over two years of age should be plaited up with a mane roll and their tails plaited.
4. Body clipping of all equines is permitted for welfare reasons and should not be penalised.
5. A long mane and tail and a natural abundance of feather is expected. The feather should completely cover the whole hoof and an abundance of silky straight feather, is preferable to coarser curly hair/feather. Hair extensions are not permitted in any form whatsoever.
6. All animals shall be sound in both wind and limb.
7. The AHHA has zero tolerance for obese horses. Any exhibit that, in the judge's opinion, is obese will be asked to leave the ring. This includes overproduced young stock.
8. The AHHA follows the international guidelines for horse/rider weight in all ridden classes. Any exhibit that, in the judge's opinion, to be more than the 18 – 20% of the horse's weight will be asked to leave the ring.
9. Exhibits **must** be entered into the class specific to their age as of the 1st of August in the current year. Verifications will be conducted at the discretion of the Show Committee and may be carried out at shows at the discretion of the judge.
10. Exhibits **must** be entered into the class specific to their height and/or age. Spot checks will be conducted at show at the discretion of the Show Committee and may be carried out at qualification shows at the discretion of the judge.
11. All exhibits in ridden classes **must** be 4 years and over as of 1st August in the current year. At all times, same for conformation judging, exhibits **must** be ridden under saddle whilst in the ring.
12. Judges and/or stewards have the power to ask any exhibit to leave the ring/show if that exhibit shows bad or dangerous behaviour. The AHHA also have the right to suspend that exhibit from other shows until it has been assessed by the AHHA.
13. Show organisers have the power to ask exhibitors to leave the ring and/or venue for unruly behaviour whether inside or outside the ring. This includes but is not limited to bullying, inappropriate language (including swearing).
14. All exhibitors including grooms **must** be dressed correctly whilst in the ring. Please see the sections on showing attire.
15. Riders may be any age but **must** be suited for the size of their exhibit.
16. Riders and handlers of stallions must be 18 years old or older (as of 1st January in the current year).
17. Spurs **must not** be worn by junior riders (under 18 as of 1st January in the current year) or any rider of an exhibit 148cm and under. Mixed-height classes, no competitor may wear spurs.
18. No earrings or body piercing can be worn in the ring; this is an OHS requirement.
19. The Judge's decision is **ALWAYS** final.



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## 2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Exhibitors will **not** exhibit under Judges where an actual or apparent conflict of interest may affect the judge's decision. An actual or apparent conflict of interest is defined as exhibiting a horse which:

1. has been bought or sold by the judge either as owner or agent.
2. is owned in whole or part by the judge or by a member of the judge's family or business partner in a business venture.
3. has been bred by the judge or is the property of a breeding organisation in which the judge is or was an employee.
4. has been leased by the Judge at any time.
5. has been regularly trained, examined, or treated by the judge in a professional capacity.
6. has been shown/produced by a member of the Judge's immediate family during the last twenty-four full calendar months. The following are classed as immediate family. Grandparents, Step Grandparents, Parents, Stepparents, Partners of Parents, Parents in Law, Legal Guardian, Husband, Wife, Cohabitee, Partner, Brother, Stepbrother, Brother-in-Law, Sister, Stepsister, Sister-in-Law, Son, Stepson, Son in Law, Daughter, Stepdaughter, Daughter in Law.
7. is the subject of an ongoing negotiation to buy or lease, or a provisional purchase condition to which the Judge is a party.
8. an exhibitor/owner must not enter any horse under a Judge during the twenty-four full calendar months after that judge has regularly professionally handled, shown, or produced that or any other horse for that exhibitor/owner. Training clinics where the judge does not touch the horse are excluded from this rule.
9. if a handler/rider produces or shows a Judge's own horse, that handler/rider must not bring any horse under that judge during the next twelve full calendar months
10. is sired by a stallion which is/has been in the ownership of the judge during the current calendar.
11. has been bred to by the judge during the current calendar year.
12. handler or rider not to have been paid for showing or producing any horse associated with the Judge, this includes any remuneration either as employment, Use of Stallions for Stud, casual showing, or any kind-kind benefits whatsoever.



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## 3. STALLIONS

Stallions 4 years and over **must** have passed a performance evaluation to compete in any AHHA affiliated class.

Stallions **must** always wear a **GREEN** Stallion bridle disc on the offside of their bridle when competing in AHHA classes and/or shows. All colts/stallions **must** always be well-mannered and under control.

Riders and handlers of stallions **must** be 18 years old or older (as of 1st January in the current year).

Colts/Stallions two-year-old and over **must** be shown in a stallion bridle with a metal bit and chain lead.

The use of a stallion harness is permitted on stallions over the age of four. The judge may ask that the side reins are unclipped when in the class.

To retain continuity of supply of covering certificates for Breed evaluated stallions, it is stipulated that the stallion owner's membership **must** be maintained (including time of covering), which is renewable on an annual basis. Membership runs from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December.

Stallion owners **must** return covering certificates by 30th November of the covering year.



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## 4. COMPETITORS AND EQUINES

Girths should be plain white, brown, or black; as should numnahs if worn. Bits should be a simple snaffle, pelham or double bridle. Brass-in-hand bridles are **not** to be used in ridden classes.

Judges may take into consideration the severity of the bit, their opinions on suitable bridles may vary and their decision is final.

First ridden and Novice classes, snaffle bridles only may be used.

Junior ridden classes: snaffle bridles only may be used.

Lead rein ponies **must** be shown in a snaffle bridle only and lead reins may only be attached to the noseband.

Flash and drop nosebands are **not** permitted for ridden classes on the flat.

Geldings, fillies and mares can be shown in either an in-hand bridle or a plain white **OR** other coloured show halter. Yearling colts (as of 1st August of the current year) may be shown in a halter or be bitted; a rubber bit is acceptable.

Foals born in the current year (as of 1st January) are to be shown in either a simple white show halter or a leather in hand halter or foal slip – **NO BITS**.

Colts/stallions aged three years and over **must** be shown in a stallion bridle with a metal bit and chain lead. The use of a stallion harness is permitted on stallions over the age of four. The judge may ask that the side reins are unclipped when in the class.

Failure to comply with any of the above rulings will result in elimination from class/show.

### 4.1 **JUNIOR COMPETITORS (under 18 as of 1st January in the current year):**

For all AHHA Junior Affiliated Ridden classes – only Snaffle bridles will be acceptable.

Riding hat or skull cap correctly done up and complying with the current hat rules **must** be worn.

Spurs **must not** be worn by junior riders (under 18 as of 1st January in the current year) or any rider of an exhibit 148cm and under. Mixed-height classes, no competitor may wear spurs.

Failure to comply with any of the above rulings will result in elimination from class/show.



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## 5. SHOWING ATTIRE FOR: IN HAND, RIDDEN AND EVENING PERFORMANCE

### For in-hand showing:

#### GYPSY COBS

Smart jacket (or waistcoat) and trousers, shirt and tie, gloves, hat or cap and appropriate shoes, a dress, hat and appropriate shoes or a skirt, shirt and appropriate shoes.

Junior competitors, (under 18 as of 1st January in the current year) **must** wear a riding hat or skull cap correctly done up and complying with the current hat rules, suitable footwear and show cane/whip (**must not** exceed 76cm/30inches length).

#### CLYDESDALES

The standard handler attire in heavy horse competitions (Clydesdales and Shires) is pants, shirt, tie, jacket, hat and boots.

**Pants** – Most people in Australia show in either pale coloured moleskins or nice dress pants.

**Shirt** – Generally a collared dress shirt is worn, though women also use dressy tops without collars.

**Tie** – A tie is not always necessary, but when worn, ties are often matched to the colours the horse is wearing.

**Jacket** – A nice suit coat or horse specific riding jacket are the most common choices.

**Hat** – The type of hat you wear is completely up to you! Akubras are very common here in Australia, but you can choose any type of dress hat you like. Just make sure it fits well enough not to blow off your head easily.

### For ridden showing:

Correctly secured Skull Caps/Riding Hats Nos. **AS/NZS 3838** (2006 onwards) provided they are SAI Global marked, **ARB HS 2012**, **All PAS015** (1998 and subsequent updates), **VG1** (01.040: 2014-12) with or without BSI Kitemark, **(BS) EN1384: 2023**, **ASTM F1163** (2004a or 04a onwards), **SNELL E2001** and E2016, **must** always be worn by riders when mounted. Hats should have a plain cover either Black, Navy Blue, Brown, Grey or Green.

Velvet covers are encouraged. In the interest of Health & Safety the AHHA will authorise spot checks at certain Shows and riders breaking this Rule will **not** be allowed to compete.

Hacking/tweed show jacket, shirt and tie, gloves, breeches, or jodhpurs, in **one** of the following colours: cream, beige, white or dark coloured, hair net, show cane/whip (**must not** exceed 76cm/30inches in length), jodhpur boots for juniors and long black boots for adults, riding hat or skull cap complying to the new hat rules.

For Pure Breed Clydesdales, you can either wear your in hand showing attire or the attire in the previous paragraph.

### Grooms

Must be appropriately dressed when entering the ring; smart trousers, a top, suitable footwear and a hat **must** be worn. Grooms will be asked to leave the ring if not suitably dressed.

**NOTE:** If members/competitors are found to **not** be wearing the appropriate attire, they will be asked to leave the show ring.



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## 6. THE JUDGING OF SHOWING CLASSES

For Ridden and In Hand Breed Classes, Clydesdales and Cobs are to be judged primarily on their **Breed Type, Conformation, and Movement**.

### 6.1 JUNIOR COMPETITORS (under 18 as of 1st January in the current year):

For all AHHA Junior Affiliated Ridden classes – only Snaffle bridles will be acceptable.

Riding hat or skull cap correctly done up and complying with the current hat rules (please see above) must be worn.

Spurs must **not** be worn by junior riders (under 18 as of 1st January in the current year) or any rider of an exhibit 148cm and under. In mixed-height classes, no competitor may wear spurs.

Failure to comply with any of the above rulings will result in elimination from class/show.

### 6.2 IN HAND BREED CLASSES

#### 6.2.1 GYPSY COBS (see Section 7: Judges In Hand and Ridden Procedure Guide for further information)

For In Hand and Young stock Classes, exhibits enter the ring individually and perform a FLASH (high energy trot) to cover at least 2 sides of the ring/arena.

**NB:** The term FLASHING is used to exhibit the Traditional Gypsy Cob (TGC) In-hand. Upon the Steward's command, handlers will be asked to go forward with their TGC in a high energy fast trot on a loose rein to cover at least 2 sides of the arena.

Once all exhibits have performed the initial flash, they will continue to walk around the arena until they are pulled into the line-up by the steward/judge. Exhibits will be required to be stood up in front of the judge individually for their inspection. Exhibits on request should walk away from the judge, turn on the right rein and trot straight back towards and past the judge in a straight line before walking to retake their place in the line-up.

In hand classes will be judged: 60% correctness to type, conformation, and movement, 40% manners and way of going and overall presentation.

#### 6.2.2 CLYDESDALES

At most shows, you can expect that the competitors will be asked to walk in a large circle around the judge, then line up, then individually work out.

When walking in the circle, make sure your horse is stepping out well but do not allow it to trot. Whatever you do, don't dawdle – if the horse in front of you is moving too slowly you can overtake it on the outside. The judge needs to see the active pace of your horse in order to assess it properly.

When you are standing your horse in the lineup, make sure you're paying constant attention to it. Stand facing your horse so you can keep it 'stood up' correctly – head up, front legs square, hind legs together with feet next to one another – while also keeping one eye on the judge. When the judge moves to assess your horse, they will likely inspect the horse closely, ask you a question or two, feel the horse's legs and then request you do your workout.

Most judges will use a workout that involves both walking and trotting, generally in a line straight out from where you were standing and then back. They may also ask you to back the horse up several paces. When doing your workout, keep your focus on the horse and the pace active. Aim straight towards the judge – they will move out of the way as you get closer.

In hand classes will be judged: 70% correctness to type, conformation, and movement, 30% manners and way of going and overall presentation.



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## **Most Importantly—Have Fun!**

While it's important to strive for the best possible standard when showing, if you're not enjoying yourself, there is no point spending your time and money.

Remember that everyone is there to show off their horses and enjoy their hobby just like you, so put a smile on your face and make the most of the day out with your horse!

## **6.3 RIDDEN BREED CLASSES**

### **6.3.1 GYPSY COBS** (see Section 7: Judges In Hand and Ridden Procedure Guide for further information)

TGC's are to perform an individual show. They will **not** be ridden by the judge or the judge's representative. When a TGC appears before the judge in two classes at the same show, the exhibit **must** be assessed as a separate exhibit in each class. In all ridden classes, the fall of a horse or rider will result in elimination from that class, and they must then leave the ring dismounted.

For Ridden Classes, exhibits will enter the ring together and perform the go-around as per the judge/steward's instructions. Exhibits will then all be pulled into the line-up by the steward/judge, and each asked to perform an individual display not lasting longer than 1 & 1/2 minutes. The display should include walk, trot, and canter on both reins, change of rein, halt, and stand and if required by the judge a lengthening of stride or gallop.

**Ridden Breed Classes** will be judged 60% correctness to type, conformation, and movement 40% ride, manners, and way of going and overall presentation.

**Junior Ridden Finals Classes** will be judged: 60% correctness to type, conformation, movement, and overall presentation, and 40% ride, manners, temperament, partnership, and suitability.

Judges may take into consideration the severity of the bit.

### **6.3.2 PURE BREED CLYDESDALES AND OTHER HEAVY HORSES**

**Aim:** to ensure that both judges and riders have the same understanding of what is expected and assessed in heavy horse ridden classes.

**This is a breed class. An assessment of Heavy Horse breed features is to be made and scored by the judge, as well as the workout, behaviour and overall impression**

Class to be judged on a points system.

#### **Supplementary Notes for Judges and Competitors**

Approved safety helmets should be worn by competitors at all times.

Spurs and whips are optional. Choice of bits is at the discretion of the rider.

#### **Workout:**

The workout should include a walk, trot and canter (if appropriate at judge's discretion) (on the correct lead, i.e. leading with the inside foreleg), ideally if time permits on both reins (both directions), plus a backup. The horse should be forward moving, travel on the bit and have a controlled gait. Transitions through the gaits should be smooth and the horse should finish calmly and without pulling.

#### **Type/conformation of the horse and its movement:**

The heavy horse is a weight carrying animal, which should carry the rider with ease and safety. It should be forward moving with an active gait, strong and elevated. The horse should display strength, quality and movement which will appeal to the judge and spectator. The horse should be sound, of heavy horse type (i.e. Clydesdale, Gypsy Cob, Shire, Percheron etc) and conformationally correct for its breed.



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Splints should not be discriminated against as long as they do not appear to cause unsoundness. Scars should not be discriminated against provided they do not impinge on the movement of the animal and are not too disfiguring.

## **Manners and behaviour of horse**

The horse should be well behaved at all times during the class, both during the workout and during the lineup, and should perform calmly and obediently while in the ring.

Disobediences such as bucking, rearing, disobeying direction or refusing to walk or stand in the workout or line up should be penalised.

## **Overall appearance**

To be judged on the overall appearance of the rider and horse. Competitors should be turned out neatly and to a high standard in appropriate riding attire. The horse should also be turned out to a high standard, in show condition and with decorations appropriate to its breed. The horse and rider combination should appeal to the eye and look to be working in harmony at all times.

## **Allocation of Points:**

Points to be allocated as follows:

Workout	25 points
Type/conformation of horse and its movement	15 points
Manners and behaviour of horse	10 points
Overall impression/appearance of horse and rider	10 points
<b>Total</b>	<b>60 points</b>



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## 6.3.3 RIDER WEIGHT GUIDANCE

### **Related Legislation/Guidance Material:**

International Animal Welfare guides including Journal of Equine Veterinary Science, Riding for the Disabled Guidelines, and general horse riding Guidelines in the UK and Singapore, Pony Club NSW and Equestrian Australia advocacy for horse welfare.

### **What this Guide Provides**

This Guide will provide Athletes, Owners and Parents with a reasonably accurate measurement of the maximum burden for a horse to carry.

This Guide will support Coaches in conversations with their Athletes about carrying capacity considerations, as they currently do, about choice of mount and all animal welfare aspects of horsemanship.

Nothing will change in the assessment of a horse and their athletic performance by any Judge.

This Guide tailors the capacity of the horse across the entire height range to a standard accepted internationally and ensures appropriate mounts for humans of every age and size.

### **The Guide**

In accordance with Equestrian Australia (EA) advocacy for horse welfare regulations a horse or pony can safely carry between **18%** to a maximum of **20%** of its bodyweight. Any greater than this amount runs an increased risk of injury to the horse/pony. This means that the rider and equipment together (e.g. saddle) should not weigh more than a fifth of the horse's approximate weight.

The horse/ponies weight divided by **18%** or **20%** minus the weight of the pony's tack equals the maximum weight a pony can carry however there are other determining factors that affect maximum rider weight.

Below is a table with some example horse weights in kilograms and rider and tack weights in kilograms.

<b>Horse weight (kg)</b>	<b>18% rider and tack weight (kg)</b>	<b>20% rider and tack weight (kg)</b>
250	45	50
300	54	60
350	63	70
400	72	80
450	81	90
500	90	100
550	99	110
600	108	120
650	117	130

As a rough estimate, a saddle may weigh as much as 1st 11kg although some styles may be considerably lighter. It is always best to weigh your own. Any **additional equipment** such as hoof boots, farrier's tools, and body protectors should be taken into account as well. For example, 1 litre of water weighs 1kg.



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Below is a table with average bodyweight for various horse breeds adapted from Horslyx<sup>[1]</sup>. It should only be used as a rough guide. A weighbridge or vet scales is the most accurate measure to ascertain your horse's weight. Although, you may even use a horse weight tape placed around the horse's girth and held firmly in place to provide an approximate weight. Having established the horse's weight, the carrying capacity can be calculated.

Height (hh)	Breed	Average Weight (kg)	Height (hh)	Breed	Average Weight (kg)
11-11.3	Dartmoor	310	14-14.3	Arab	430
	Welsh A	240		Dales	510
12-12.3	Exmoor	340		Thoroughbred	370
	New Forest	300		Welsh D	460
	Welsh B	280	15-15.1	Arab	460
13-13.3	Connemara	380		Thoroughbred	450
	Dales	450		Welsh Cob	535
	Dartmoor	350	15.2-15.3	Arab	460
	Highland	490		Connemara	500
	New Forest	360		Gypsy Cob	500
				Thoroughbred	500
	Welsh C	300	16-16.3	Drum	650
				Thoroughbred	530
				Warmblood	620
			16-18	Clydesdale	750

**NOTE:** Any rider and tack deemed to be more than the horse or pony's maximum body weight will be asked to leave the ring.

**We appreciate your help to look after your horse's/ponies' wellbeing by being aware of this guide.**

## References:

[1] Average body weights chart. Horslyx. 2020. Available at <https://www.horslyx.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/HX-Average-body-weights-chart-2020.pdf> Accessed March 2026

[2] Guide to Horse Capacity – Size of Athlete Equestrian Australia. Available at [https://www.equestrian.org.au/sites/default/files/Guide%20to%20Horse%20Capacity%20-%20Size%20of%20Athlete%20\\_20%20January%202022.pdf](https://www.equestrian.org.au/sites/default/files/Guide%20to%20Horse%20Capacity%20-%20Size%20of%20Athlete%20_20%20January%202022.pdf) Accessed March 2026



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## 7. JUDGES IN HAND AND RIDDEN PROCEDURE GUIDE – TGCA UK

Where the class is an in-hand class only, **all** exhibits will be required to walk into the arena individually.

On command from the ring steward/judge the individual horse will be required to 'FLASH'.

The term 'FLASHING' is used to exhibit cobs. On entry to the ring, the steward will ask the animal to wait. On the steward's/judge's command, the horse will be asked to go forward in a high energy fast trot on a loose rein to cover at least 2 sides of the arena. On completion of the individual 'FLASH' the horse will be required to join the last entered horse at a safe distance.

It is noted that for OHS issues, strict attention **must** be displayed by both judge and steward and discretion used if it is deemed unsafe for an individual or horse to participate for any length of time or distance.

Caution and awareness on allowing plenty of space between horses, is advised due to the excitability this may initiate.

On completion, all exhibits will continue again in walk and will be requested to line up. The decision to pull an initial line-up or not is at the discretion of the judge.

If there is no pull, the steward may randomly select one exhibit to start the line-up, and all other exhibits should follow in their initial order.

Each competitor will then be requested to present their horse/pony in front of the judge for conformation inspection.

The animal will then be walked away from the judge and then trotted straight back towards and past the judge returning to the line-up.

### Where the class is a ridden class only.

All exhibits will be asked to walk into the arena on the right rein.

Upon instruction from the judge/steward exhibits will be asked to trot, canter, and change the rein.

The steward may then ask an appropriate exhibit to canter or lengthen their stride along the ringside directly in front of the judge, all exhibits must follow on (exhibits may circle prior to the canter to provide safe space). After the canter or lengthening of stride, all exhibitors must return to walk.

Should the class be large or the ring small, it may not be practical for all exhibits to perform the go around together. The judge may request the class be split with half the class standing in the centre of the ring whilst the other half performs the go around. Once completed, the group of exhibits should swap, and the go-around be repeated for the other group.

It is then the judge's decision to pull an initial line up, should they not want to pull an initial line up the steward will select an exhibit to start the line up with all other exhibits following on.

If there are both conformation and ride judge they will then start their individual judging duties.





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The ridden assessment will start at the top of the line-up and once the exhibit has performed its display then it will be judged for conformation. At no time should any exhibit be judged for conformation before it has performed its ridden show.

Time should be allowed for grooms to enter the ring to enable the removal of the saddle once exhibits have performed the go around and have been lined up.

Individual ridden shows will consist of walk, trot, and canter on both reins and if appropriate a lengthening of stride. A judge can ask for a set show and if this is the case stewards must make **all** exhibitors aware of the set show.

On completion of all exhibits, if a marks sheet exists, marks will be totalled. If there is no marks sheet in use, the judge should indicate to the steward the order of placing, which should be completed on the class sheet and the exhibits pulled forward in placing order.

When all prizes/ribbons have been awarded, the judge will thank all exhibits and ask the un-placed exhibits to leave the ring, and the successful exhibits to perform a lap of honour - which will be conducted in a safe and orderly fashion but allowing the breed to demonstrate its active powerful action.

Only performance evaluated stallions are eligible to compete in any AHHA class. They **must** have a **GREEN** Stallion bridle disc on display on the **offside** of their bridle.

Judges are reminded that the carrying of excess weight by any exhibit is not good for the joints or breathing of any horse or pony, and in the interests of our horses and ponies, we do not promote the showing of over-fat exhibits. Judges are permitted to penalise any such exhibit in their marking.

For exhibits 148cm and under, the rider should be of a suitable size and weight for their mount.

In the case of young stock, a judge may ask the handler to gently pull the lips back to show the horse's teeth if they are able to do so comfortably and safely.





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## 8. TGCA JUDGES' RULES AND GUIDELINES – TGCA UK

It is a condition of judge's membership that all judges fully comprehend and abide by all AHHA/ TGCA rules and regulations as explained within this handbook including the member's code of conduct, the judge's rules, and guidelines (including any revisions to these as made and communicated from time to time) as per our Rules & Regulations Handbook.

Judges **must** have a thorough understanding of the AHHA/ TGCA breed standard for the Traditional Gypsy Cob (TGCA), and its requirements and be able to select good examples of the breed in practice.

All appointments for the judging of AHHA/ TGCA classes/shows **must** be adhered to. If for any reason this is not possible, it is the judge's responsibility to contact both the show secretary and the AHHA Secretary or President to find a replacement judge. A mobile phone should be carried on the day in case of emergency but **must** not be carried in the ring.

Smart sensible clothing must be worn by all judges with wet weather clothing in case of inclement weather.

Judges **must not** charge a fee for judging at any time for AHHA shows. However, judges are entitled to have expenses reimbursed which should be agreed (including airfares, travel and accommodation) with the show secretary in advance of the show. If the show organisers offer payment for their services as a general rule of their shows, then that is fine.

Where mark sheets are used, then under **no** circumstances should any changes be made to any marks given to any exhibitor. Should the steward have misheard and written the wrong score on the mark sheet, then the score **must** be corrected, and **both** the steward and judge initial the mark sheet next to the amended score.

**All** Judges will always be courteous and diplomatic to competitors and stewards throughout judging.

It is expected that Judges help, advise, and encourage novice owners/handlers new to the show ring. TGCA/AHHA shows attract many novice handlers who have little or no understanding of what is required. Support, encouragement, and advice will ensure we have repeated entries from all competitors.

It is suggested that a minimum of tactile judging is to be used to reduce the possibility of passing infection and for health and safety reasons.

A judge **must not** judge and compete in any class on the same day at any show.

**No** judge should judge an exhibit that they have bred/owned/leased/loaned. Where a judge has produced/shown or received any financial gain from an exhibit then this must be at least 24 months prior to the date of the show. Ancillary services such as stud fees and or group teachings are exempt (where the group consists of 3 or more persons).

The breed temperament is of a calm, kind disposition. Bad manners and ill-tempered horses should be asked to leave the ring. If a stallion is showing unruly tendencies including bad handling, then they must leave the ring. There are to be **no** exceptions to this rule whatsoever. Advice after the class if sought should be encouraged, so we can help improve handlers and their horses' showing practices for the future.

In any cases of bad behaviour in ridden or in-hand classes where other competitors or animals are at risk, the steward may be directed to ask the exhibitor to leave the ring. Stallions should have **no** exception made for them and handlers must always be in control.





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## 9. STEWARDS RULES AND GUIDELINES

Anyone who would like to undertake any stewarding duties should contact the AHHA Admin or AHHA Secretary.

Stewards should carry a copy of this handbook and make themselves aware of AHHA rules.

Stewards should carry with them a spare pencil/pen.

It is the responsibility of the ring steward to ensure that all stallions entering AHHA affiliated classes have their valid stallion disc present in the ring. Only performance evaluated AHHA stallions can compete in AHHA classes.

Stewards should always be polite to both their judges and competitors.

Stewards will, when requested by the judge, instruct competitors as to what they are required to do.

For ridden classes, they will instruct them when a change of rein or a change of gait is required.

In-hand classes, they will instruct them when to perform the initial trot up/flash. For both classes, they will instruct competitors when and how to form the line-up.

Stewards should **not** stand in a way which obstructs the Judge's view.

Ring stewards are responsible for having the awards ready for the judge to present in the correct order on completion of the class and recording the class placings.

Where a class is to be judged using a mark sheet then it is the stewards' responsibility to ensure the marks are written correctly and when added together to decide class placings calculations must be double-checked.

All results sheets **must** be returned to the show secretary by the steward, or where a runner has been officially appointed, to the runner on completion of the class.

## CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Exhibitors will **not** exhibit under Judges where an actual or apparent conflict of interest may affect the judge's decision. An actual or apparent conflict of interest is defined as exhibiting a horse which:

1. has been bought or sold by the judge either as owner or agent.
2. is owned in whole or part by the judge or by a member of the judge's family or business partner in a business venture.
3. has been bred by the judge or is the property of a breeding organisation in which the judge is or was an employee.
4. has been leased by the Judge at any time.
5. has been regularly trained, examined, or treated by the judge in a professional capacity.
6. has been shown/produced by a member of the Judge's immediate family during the last twenty-four full calendar months. The following are classed as immediate family. Grandparents, Step Grandparents, Parents, Stepparents, Partners of Parents, Parents in Law, Legal Guardian, Husband, Wife, Cohabitee, Partner, Brother, Stepbrother, Brother-in-Law, Sister, Stepsister, Sister-in-Law, Son, Stepson, Son in Law, Daughter, Stepdaughter, Daughter in Law.



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7. is the subject of an ongoing negotiation to buy or lease, or a provisional purchase condition to which the Judge is party.
8. an exhibitor/owner must not enter any horse under a Judge during the twenty-four full calendar months after that judge has regularly professionally handled, shown, or produced that or any other horse for that exhibitor/owner. Training clinics where the judge does not touch the horse are excluded from this rule.
9. if a handler/rider produces or shows a Judge's own horse, that handler/rider must not bring any horse under that judge during the next twelve full calendar months
10. is sired by a stallion which is/has been in the ownership of the judge during the current calendar
11. has been bred to by the judge during the current calendar year.

Handler or Rider **not** to have been paid for showing or producing any horse associated with the Judge, this includes any remuneration either as employment, Use of Stallions for Stud, casual showing, or any kind-kind benefits whatsoever.



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## **10. TRADITIONAL GYPSY COB BREED STANDARD (TGCA UK)**

The AHHA uses the TGCA UK's breed standards when judging both Pure and Part Bred Gypsy Cobs.

A strong, active cob, full of quality and spirit coupled with an abundance of flowing mane, tail, and leg hair.

### **GENERAL APPEARANCE**

The Traditional Gypsy Cob should be a strong, sturdy, and powerful cob coupled with an abundance of luxuriant flowing mane, forelock, tail, and leg hair known as feather.

Traditional Gypsy Cobs should always have plenty of heart room, and a deep girth to match. They should display ample bone and be well-muscled with a broad compact body and powerful hindquarters.

Traditional Gypsy Cobs should have a kind, willing, intelligent, and gentle disposition. They are renowned for their patient, kind, and sensible nature. Traditional Gypsy Cobs are extremely versatile, suited to both driving and riding they are ideal family horses.

### **COLOUR AND MARKINGS**

All Colours and Markings are permitted

### **HEAD**

Neat, small, sweet, noble and in proportion to the body.

Broad between the eyes which should be bright and alert, displaying a large kind eye. Blue eyes are acceptable.

### **EARS**

Small, neat ears slightly incurving.

### **NECK**

Strong and slightly arched and of a medium length. The neck is to be well muscled and well set onto a good sloping shoulder. Stallions should display a bold outlook with a well-arched crest.

### **SHOULDERS**

Well laid, long, sloping shoulders. Should not be fine at the withers.

### **BODY**

Short coupled and a strong back of good outline, muscular loins, good deep well-sprung ribs, which are round from the shoulders to the flank. Plenty of depth from the wither to the girth. The chest must be good and wide.

### **HINDQUARTERS**

Deep, lengthy, and powerful and displays an apple shape. The second thighs are well-muscled and let down. The tail should be well set on – not too high, nor too low.





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## FEET, LEGS AND JOINTS

Feet of good size, round and well-formed, open at heels and well concaved. Pasterns are nicely sloping and of good length. Forelegs should be very well-defined and muscular. Well-defined flat broad knees. Plenty of bone below the knee (eight inches at least). Hocks should be well-defined and not coarse. Canons should be short with clearly defined clean flat bone.

## MANE TAIL AND LEG HAIR (FEATHER)

A NATURAL abundance of long flowing mane, forelock, and tail hair. Feather (leg hair) should start from the back of the knee and hock joints and cover the entire hoof. Hair should be straight and silky, curly hair is less desirable, and coarse hair is not desirable.

## MOVEMENT

Clean, active, straight, and true. Going forward on —all fours with tremendous energy. The knee and hock should be powerful with a workmanlike action with hind legs flexed well under the body for powerful drive.

## HEIGHT CATEGORIES

**Note: All height categories refer to height at maturity**

Section A: Under 132cm

Section B: exceeding 132cm but not exceeding 148cm

Section C: exceeding 148cm but not exceeding 158cm

Section D: exceeding 158cm

## **11. PART-BRED TRADITIONAL GYPSY COBS STANDARDS**

- Ponies (148cm and under): 50% TGC, 50% individual breed
- Natives: 50% TGC, 50% native pony breed
- Sport pony: (148cm and under) 50% TGC, 50% recognised sport breeding
- Sport horse (exceeding 148cm): 50% TGC, 50% recognised sport or performance breeding
- Show cob: 50% TGC, 50% any breeding which can be termed as show cob type, to be shown hogged and trimmed (no height limit)
- Drum (158cm upwards): ideally 50% TGC, 50% Shire, Clydesdale, or other recognised heavy horse breed, or as decided by the AHHA.

In hand classes will be judged: 60% correctness to type, conformation and movement, 40% manners and way of going.

Ridden Classes will be judged 60% correctness to type, conformation and movement 40% ride, manners, and way of going and overall presentation.





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## 12. PURE BREED CLYDESDALE BREED STANDARD (CCHSA)

Uniformity of type has long been a marked characteristic of the Clydesdale, and there is no breed of heavy horse so famous for its quality, cleanness of joints, hardness of bone, cleanness and correct setting of hock and length and slope of pastern, whilst as for action the Clydesdale is unrivalled. The general appearance of the Clydesdale can be assessed whilst the horse is standing in the optimal position of supporting itself equally well on each leg.

The Clydesdale is also observed when in motion, at walk and trot. The preferred characteristics are as follows:

**The height** of the Clydesdale horse should range to over 17 hands. When the horse is fully matured it should be evenly balanced. Viewed from the side, the body should show plenty of depth and from the front or rear should appear broad and thick. The depth of the body, through the chest and length of leg, should be approximately the same. Such proportions allow the Clydesdale's weight to be used to the best advantage.

**Quality** in the horse is manifested especially in the bone, skin and hair. As well, the general conformation should indicate a degree of superiority. The bone of the Clydesdale should be hard and dense, with a strong, compact cellular structure. The hair or "feather" down the back of the cannon is an indication of the quality of the bone, and should be long, fine and straight.

**The head** of the Clydesdale should be in proportion to the body. The face may be straight or slightly Roman nosed. The muzzle should show thin rather than heavy lips, which should come together evenly and with a wide-open nostril. The eyes should be rather oval than round, prominent, reasonably large and have thin smooth eyelids. When the iris of the eye is colour less, the eye appears to be white with a "wall eye" as a result. The sight of such an eye is quite as good as that of having a dark coloured iris. There should be plenty of width between the eyes and the forehead should be slightly arched, tapering away above the eyes to the poll. The ears should be pointed, of medium size and thin of texture, having a covering of fine hair.

**The neck** should be of moderate length, muscular yet not too thick, arched and well laid into the shoulder. The head should merely set into the neck at the right angle. A good head, neck and shoulders denote character, giving the animal a good outlook.

**The shoulders** should be moderately sloped and provide a sufficient collar bed. The shoulders should be fairly wide, well-muscled, and the top should be carried close to and tapered into the back. The arm of the Clydesdale should be comparatively short, wide and muscular. This places the leg sufficiently under the body to provide the desirable position and action. The knee, viewed from the front, should be broad and flat, tapering to the cannon and, when viewed from the side, should be straight from the shoulder to the fetlock joint. The tendon at the back of the knee should contribute to give depth and strength.

**The cannon** of the foreleg should be long, wide, lean and flat as viewed from the side. The tendons should show prominently. The long hair or "feather" should spring from the back of the tendon and not from the sides of the cannon. It should be soft to touch and straight. The fetlock should be wide, when viewed from the side, and narrow viewed from the front, fine and well directed. The pastern should be fairly long and sloping, so as to relieve concussion in the course of action.

**The foot** must be sound and healthy. A good hoof head, with wide open heels and strong quarters, is preferred, otherwise a horse may have a tendency to develop unsoundness. The feet should preferably receive attention from when the animal is a foal until it is fully matured.

**The chest** of the Clydesdale should be deep, wide, low, and of large girth, indicating strong constitution with ample space for vital organs. The back should be short, broad and strongly supported, and slightly inclined upwards towards the croup. The loin should be short, wide and strongly muscled. This portion of the back should be short and as wide as possible, and the ribs long, well sprung and close together.

**The flanks** should be low and full.



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**The hind quarters** are the great source of driving power. The hips should be wide, but in harmony with general body proportions, and well-muscled. The croup should be long, as seen from the side, wide as viewed from behind, and with sloping arch from the hips to the setting of the tail. It is important that the tail be attached high.

**The thigh** should be short, but heavily muscled. The hock is one of the most important points of the horse, as it is in this joint that the strain on the muscles, during action, is concentrated. The hock, should be broad, viewed from the side, and narrow, viewed from the front, its point being prominent, and the joint as a whole, when viewed from the side should be well supported by a wide cannon below. The hock should be turned slightly, and close to each other, the cannon straight not 'cow hocked' when viewed from the rear. The hocks should not show fullness or swelling.

**The hind cannons**, like the front ones, should be broad when viewed from the side and thin when viewed from the front. They should be perpendicular, in line with the hind quarters. The hind fetlocks, as in the case of the front ones, should be wide, whilst the pasterns are less oblique than those of the fore legs. The hind feet are somewhat smaller than the front ones, not as round, but with good hoof heads and wide-open heels.

**The hind legs**, like the front ones, should be set into the body, not on the outside of the quarters, but well under, so that the muscles on the quarters project wider than the muscles on the thighs. The toes of the hind feet should incline slightly outward. There should be a good length from the point of the hock to the ground. The action of the Clydesdale should be even; the hind and fore action should be in unison. The hind feet should be planted forward as deliberately as the fore ones, which should be evenly carried forward. At the walk, the hind foot should cover the imprint of the front foot as a minimum. Short stepping is a fault in the working horse. The hocks should be turned slightly inward. In trotting, the Clydesdale horse should bend the legs at the knees and hocks and, from the hind view, the inside of the hooves or shoes should be seen at every step.

*Reference: An article printed in August 1928 by the CCHSA in their "Horse News Annual" in relation to a description of the Clydesdale.*

*These Breed Standards were approved by the Commonwealth Clydesdale Horse Society Australia Inc. Federal Council in September 200*





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## 13. THE PART/CROSS BREED CLYDESDALE BREED STANDARDS

The Clydesdale Cross or Part breed Clydesdale is a horse derived from Clydesdale bloodlines (different societies and associations require different levels for recording/registrations) and those of another breed or mixed breed. Ideally the progeny will display desirable characteristics and qualities of both the Clydesdale and the other breeds.

With such diversity, a major problem has been faced with trying to produce a breed standard for these particularly striking individuals. The uniformity of type is the biggest hurdle to be overcome and if we categorise the Part breed Clydesdale into *light*, *medium* and *heavy* depending on the amount of Clydesdale or other heavy breed blood they possess and therefore their appearance when presented. Height of the animal could be anything from 15 hands to 17 hands, but possibly less, if crossed with a native breed pony for instance. It should present as an evenly balanced individual and should show plenty of depth.

**Quality of bone**, skin and hair should be at a high level and feather should be present in some form, the degree of which will be defined by the level of heavy horse present in the individual.

**The head** should be handsome and in proportion to the neck and body. The face may be of any type straight, slightly Roman or dished also depending on the cross.

**The neck** should also be in proportion to the animal, muscular yet not too thick. The neck shoulders and head should blend together seamlessly giving the animal a fantastic outlook.

**The front legs** should be correct when viewed from all sides, cannons tending longer, tendons should show prominently, and feather should be coming from the back of the tendon and should be soft to touch and straight. The pastern should be a continuation of the hoof and should be fairly long and sloping correctly to relieve concussion during the course of the horse's movements. The feet should be sound and healthy.

**The chest** should be deep, wide low and an adequate girth should be present depending on the height of the animal.

**The back** should be also well proportioned to the animal and have enough length, width and strength to support ridden or driving pursuits depending on what the individual horse is used for.

**The hind quarters** should be strong and well-muscled, and the hind legs should be correct when viewed from all sides.

**Finally, the action** of the horse should be even and be in perfect unison at all gaits. The Clydesdale Cross/Part bred Clydesdale should have a swagger at walk, a spring about it at trot a comfortable canter and an absolutely amazing gallop.

Written by Tony Cummins (*As Eirinn Clydesdale and Sporthorse Stud*)



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## 14. THE DRUM HORSE BREED STANDARDS (I.D.H.A)

The Drum Horse is a combination of any of the following breeds: Shire, Clydesdale, and Gypsy Horse, where the Gypsy horse does not exceed 50% of the total make-up or fall below 6.25%. Horses with greater than 50% Gypsy or less than 6.25% Gypsy will be placed in the Foundation Drum Book.

**General Appearance:** The overall impression of the Drum Horse should be one of an elegant heavy horse of great strength and agility. The Drum Horse is a heavy riding horse and should therefore display the athleticism to allow for competitiveness in all ridden and driven disciplines. The Drum should be a large, well-muscled horse of medium to heavy weight, with good quality bone, an athletic body, a kind expression, and abundant hair (including heavy “feather” on the legs).

**Size:** The Drum Horse should be a large, athletic animal capable of excelling in a variety of equine disciplines. To achieve this goal members are encouraged to select breeding stock of a size that will help ensure their Drum Horses will reach the desired mature height of 16 hands or taller.

**Disposition:** The Drum Horse should display good character and be a willing and sensible partner.

**Colour:** Drum Horses may have any base colour and may be solid or coloured. There is no preference given to coloured horses over solid-coloured horses.

**Hair:** Mane and tail should be natural and abundant. Feather is a required characteristic of a Drum Horse. Feathering should preferably begin above the fetlock joints and start at the back of the knee and hocks, as well as run down the leg to cover the entire hoof. Feather should be silky and soft and may be either straight or curly. Trimming of the mane, tail, and feather is not desired, unless required for a discipline in which the horse in question competes. Clipping or trimming of bridle paths, belly hair, jaw and ear hair is permissible and up to each individual owner/breeder. **Docking of tails is not permitted\*.**

**Movement:** The ideal Drum Horse should move naturally, with forward impulsion and presence, during all three gaits:

- **Walk:** Horse should walk flat with a straight four-beat, ground-covering gait. Stride should be consistent and balanced.
- **Trot:** The trot should be coordinated, straight, and balanced. There should be two distinct beats in which front and hind legs are moving diagonally. Action at the knees may be snappy and naturally animated, or regular and extended. The Drum Horse should use his hind end well, and hocks should be powerful and work close together.
- **Canter:** The canter should be a fluid three-beat gait, exhibiting balance, cadence and strong use of the horse's hindquarters.

**Head:** The head should be attractive and in proportion to the body. The forehead and poll should be wide, but not so wide as to lose the appearance of overall proportion to the length of the head. The muzzle and jaw should be square, and tie in cleanly to the rest of the head. The upper and lower lip should meet, and the horse's bite should be even. The ears should be attractive and in proportion with the head and carried alertly. The eyes should appear expressive and kind and should be an appropriate size in relation to the horse's head. Eyes may be any colour. Both convex and straight profiles are acceptable, given they are appropriate for the horse's body type.



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**Neck:** The neck should be long, well-muscled, and in proportion to the horse's frame. Throat latch should be clean, allowing for good flexion at the poll. The length of the neck should be well proportioned in comparison to the length of the back and should tie in smoothly at the shoulder and withers.

Stallions may exhibit a masculine crest in proper relationship to the size and thickness of neck. Mares should have a more refined, feminine head and neck.

**Chest:** The chest should be deep and as broad as the shoulders, balanced in appearance compared to the rest of the body.

**Shoulders:** The shoulders should be set far enough apart to allow for each front leg to be centred under each point of the shoulder. Shoulders should be level and in balance with each other. The slope of the shoulder and the slope of the pastern should ideally be the same angle (as close to a 45–50-degree angle as possible).

**Withers:** Withers should be average in height (not too high or low) and well-defined, with a generous layer of muscle. They should be sloping, and preferably lie further back than the elbow, to allow for greater scope of motion in the forelimbs.

**Back, Loins, and Croup:** The back should be strong and in proportion with the horse's overall frame and build. The back should be half the length of the underline. The back should tie in well with the loins, which should be wide and strong on the mature horse. The loins should lead fluently into the croup, which should have a slight downward slope. The croup should not be short or steep/pointed, nor overly round.

**Barrel:** The barrel (or the body) should be well-rounded with long, well set ribs. It should be broad and deep, giving a round appearance.

## HOOVES AND LEGS

**Front Legs:** When viewed from the front, front legs should be set parallel to each other and far enough apart to allow one hoof width in between. When viewed from the side, legs should be straight to the fetlock joint. The knee should be slightly wider than the leg itself, and “flat,” as opposed to “round,” in appearance. The cannon bone should be half of the length of the forearm. Pasterns should ideally be the same angle as the shoulders.

**Back Legs:** When viewed from behind, the back legs should display a “draft horse hock set,” where the toes can be slightly turned out, but should not be cow hocked or sickle hocked when viewed from the side. When the horse is standing square and viewed from the side, the hind legs should be set directly under the hindquarters, with the point of the hock directly beneath the point of the buttock. The hock should be flat in appearance with tendons clearly defined, and ideally a little higher than the front knee. The cannon bone in the rear leg should be slightly longer than in the front legs.

**Hooves:** Hooves should be large enough for soundness, stability and weight-bearing, but not exaggerated in proportion to the horse's build. Heels should be open, and hooves should be well shaped to provide long years of sound use.



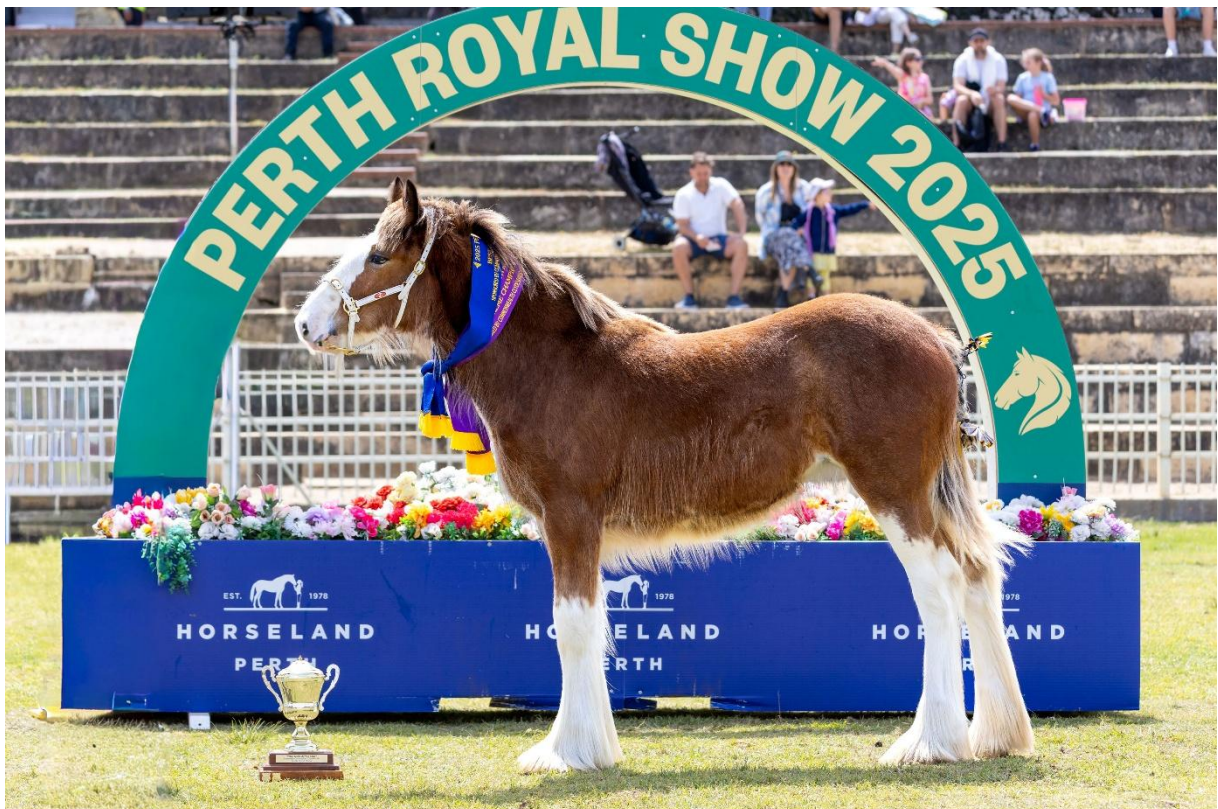


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## 15. Examples of a Supreme Gypsy Cob and Clydesdale



Above: Example of a Supreme Champion Gypsy Cob – Bennette’s Gypsy Cob Stud



Above: Example of a Supreme Champion Clydesdale – As Eirinn Sporthorse Stud