



YOUTH & MUSTANG  
CHALLENGE

## RULES & REGULATIONS

### Youth & Mustang Challenge

Hosted by Peter Whitmore, It's A Pleasure Training

Event: June 15-17, 2017

Springfield, MA

Pick up: March 3&4 2017 Dream Park Logan Township, NJ



#### PURPOSE:

The mission of the Mustang Heritage Foundation is to increase the adoption of BLM-housed American Mustangs through innovative gentling (training) competitions and awareness programs. In keeping with this mission, the Youth & Mustang Challenge program has been created to place yearling Mustangs in adoptive homes. These events involve youth (8-17 years of age) in the training and adoption of Mustangs 12-24 months old. Participating youth help promote the adoption of these national treasures by showcasing the Mustang's value and trainability. The program is also designed to help youth build and improve their horsemanship skills and life skills through competition.

#### OVERVIEW:

This Youth & Mustang Challenge is a cooperative effort between the Mustang Heritage Foundation's Trainer Incentive Program and the Bureau of Land Management's Wild Horse and Burro Program and will be hosted and managed by Peter Whitmore and It's A Pleasure Training.

- Youth trainers ages 8-17 will be accepted to adopt one 12-24-month-old Mustang for this competition.
- Interested youth trainers must complete and submit the trainer application with parent/guardian signatures and postmark by **February 3, 2017**, to 170 Wheeler Ave, Orange, MA 01364 or emailed to [youthmustangchallenge@gmail.com](mailto:youthmustangchallenge@gmail.com). Applications must be postmarked or email/fax dated by **February 3, 2017**, to be considered.
- The youth trainer will be required to condition and train the Mustang for approximately 100 days and compete with his/her trained Mustang during the Youth & Mustang Challenge held in conjunction with the Extreme Mustang Makeover event on June 15-17, 2017, at the Big E in Springfield, MA, for prizes and awards.
- Selected youth trainers accepted will receive \$200 from the Mustang Heritage Foundation (to be disbursed through the event manager) to offset horse care expenses and hauling costs.
- Mustangs will be as comparable in size and age (12-24-months-old) as possible, with current vaccinations, health papers, and hooves trimmed.
- Mustangs will be scored on body condition and at least one other class (an in-hand trail competition, showmanship pattern, horsemanship, etc.).
- This program is intended to facilitate the adoption of Mustang horses ages 12-24 months old. The adopter (parent/guardian/sponsor who is 18 years old or older) is required to complete all necessary adoption paperwork for their assigned Mustang at pick-up.

## REGULATIONS:

1. *Participation in this event is by selection only. Therefore the Mustang Heritage Foundation has the unqualified right to determine eligibility and can, at any time, remove an applicant or contestant from a program and/or competition for any reason or for no reason.*
2. All interested youth trainers must complete and submit a trainer application with parent/guardian signatures and postmark or email by **February 3, 2017** to be considered. The event manager has the right to extend the application deadline if he/she deems necessary.
3. Facility requirements: Facility can consist of a corral/paddock/stall/round pen. Facility must be a minimum of 400 square feet (for example 20 feet x 20 feet or 10 feet x 40 feet) and at least 5 feet high. Facility must be sturdy and constructed of materials such as poles, pipes, or planks (minimum 1.5 inch thickness) without dangerous protrusions. Barbed wire, large-mesh woven, stranded and electric materials are unacceptable for fencing.  

Trainers should not release the Mustang into a large open area, such as a pasture, since they may not be able to recapture the animal for training or to provide veterinary care. However, once the animal is gentled, trainers may release it into a pasture or similar area.

Shelter for the Mustang must be provided from inclement weather and temperature extremes. Shelters must be a two-sided structure with a roof, well drained, adequately ventilated, and accessible to the Mustang. The two sides should block prevailing winds and protect the major body parts of the horse. Tarps are not acceptable. Contact the administering BLM office for shelter requirements in the area.
4. Trailer requirements: You must provide transportation for your Mustang. While someone else may transport the animal, all trailers must meet these minimum standards: covered top, sturdy walls/floors, and a smooth interior free from any sharp protrusions; ample head room; removable partitions or compartments to separate animals by size and sex, if necessary; floor covered with a non-skid material; and, adequate ventilation. The BLM requires stock-type trailers with rear swing gates to transport adopted animals. Drop ramp, divided two-horse trailers, and trucks with stock racks are not acceptable. Mustangs will be picked up on March 3 & 4, 2017 at Dream Park in Logan Township, New Jersey.
5. Trainer selection will be made based on experience, reference, and fulfillment of BLM requirements. Trainers must be experienced with horses and have the desire to tame and train a Mustang horse for competition.
6. The event manager will be responsible for assigning one Mustang to each selected youth trainer.
7. All trainers' parents/guardians/sponsors must adopt the assigned Mustang before taking possession of it by completing and submitting a BLM adoption application, signing a Private Maintenance and Care Agreement (PMACA), and providing the responsible BLM office with a personal check in the amount of \$25 made out to USDI/BLM (or the event manager may issue a single check to BLM on behalf of the adopters).
8. The event manager may choose to either deliver Mustangs to selected youth trainers or hold a "pick up" at which selected trainers can pick up their Mustang.
9. Youth trainers and/or adopters are responsible for all care-related costs from the day the Mustangs are picked up through the conclusion of the competition, including all feed, board, and veterinary care.
10. Mustang training must be humane and compassionate. "Least resistance" techniques are encouraged.
11. By participating in the Challenge, youth trainers agree that all photos and filming become the property of the Mustang Heritage Foundation to be used to promote the event and Foundation.
12. Conduct: Conduct shall be orderly, responsible, sportsmanlike and humane in the treatment of Mustangs, and in keeping with positively promoting the implementation of the event and fair competition. This

includes, but is not limited to: conduct while trainers have Mustangs in their possession; conduct on the show grounds; conduct while trainers are wearing Event logos on / off the show grounds; and includes the conduct of all individuals traveling with trainers, spectators or event managers and all other persons present on show grounds.

Any alleged unsportsmanlike or irresponsible conduct or any other form of misconduct, such as illegal, indecent or profane, and the inhumane treatment of horses are prohibited and shall be grounds for the disciplinary action against offending individuals. Further, event management may immediately expel offenders from the competition or show grounds in order to preserve the decorum of the show. Any applicant or selected individual may be removed from the selection process or this competition at any time if found to have any alleged history of cruelty to animals or humans.

13. Sponsorships: The Mustang Heritage Foundation has entered into corporate sponsorship agreements with a variety of companies. The Foundation asks that trainers honor those sponsorships. Trainers will be restricted from wearing apparel or equine products during the competition that have logos that are larger than 4 inches wide and 2 inches tall.
14. Winners will be announced immediately following the competition.
15. Per BLM adoption rules, adopted Mustangs remain the property of the U.S. Government during the 12 month adoption period and cannot be sold during this time. Mustangs do not become personal property until the adopter applies for the ownership title following the 12 month adoption period and it has been approved and issued by BLM.
16. If the youth trainer is unable to keep their Mustang after the competition, it is the responsibility of the youth trainer to find a new adopter for the Mustang. The original adopter must sign appropriate BLM relinquishment paperwork and the new adopter must sign appropriate BLM adoption paperwork in order to reassign the horse.

## **RULES:**

1. Fulfill all requirements related to hauling, stable facilities, care and training.
2. Youth (ages 8-17) are eligible to participate. **Parents/guardians/sponsors must sign all appropriate applications and Mustang adoption forms and must ultimately be responsible for the care of horses. Children may not receive assistance while in the arena competing.**
3. No substitution or replacement of the approved youth trainer will be allowed. The youth trainer who is accepted must be the individual that trains and competes. Youth trainers may receive help in the training and conditioning of their Mustang, but may NOT have assistance during the competition.
4. Youth trainers will receive \$200 from the Mustang Heritage Foundation (to be disbursed through the event manager) to offset horse care and travel expenses. The money must be returned to the MHF (through the event manager) if the yearling is returned to the BLM or the event manager for any reason other than injury to self or horse. If the trainer must withdraw from the competition due to injury, he or she must supply a doctor or veterinarian note to the event manager describing the injury and/or reason why the trainer or Mustang will not be able to compete in order to receive the \$200 reimbursement.
5. Mustangs may be exhibited in English, Western or other appropriate equine styles. *Silver on your equipment or sequins on your shirts will not earn you any extra points.*
6. Training aides will not be restricted, although trainers should realize that horses shown without the use of training aides may be scored higher.

7. Youth trainers are not allowed to ride, sit or stand on their yearlings/two-year-olds at any time prior to or during the competition. In addition, horses are not allowed to pull any items (carts, sleds, etc.), however the exhibitor may pull an item while leading the yearling.
8. A tie-breaker judge will be determined prior to the start of the competition in case of ties.
9. Drugs: No person shall administer drugs internally or externally to a Mustang, either before or during the competition or adoption. Any medication, drug mechanical device or artificial appliance, which is of such character that it could affect performance or appearance at the event, is forbidden. ***If a Mustang is receiving medication for therapeutic purposes, the trainer must submit a letter from their veterinarian to the event manager as to the reason for medication and the prescribed amount.*** THE MUSTANG HERITAGE FOUNDATION RESERVES THE RIGHT TO DRUG TEST ANY MUSTANG IN THE COMPETITION.
10. Class Competition Rules: Youth trainers and 12-24-month-old Mustangs will be judged in three (3) classes; Handling & Conditioning, In-Hand Trail and Freestyle. The highest combined scores from these classes will determine the winner. Trainers are not allowed to ride the yearling/two-year-old at any time.

### **1. Handling and Conditioning Class – 40 points from each judge**

During this class, the trainer will lead the horse into a small pen inside the arena, un-halter and release the horse in the pen. The trainer will exit the pen. The horse's conditioning will be scored at this time. The trainer will then be allowed back into the pen. Upon re-entering the pen, the trainer will re-halter the horse and lead the horse out of the pen to complete a set of handling maneuvers in the arena. This class will be judged on the following:

**Handling – 30 points** – Judges will assess the horse's demeanor and responsiveness during the haltering process, as well as the relationship between horse and trainer through the completion of additional handling maneuvers including but not limited to the following:

- Walk
- Trot
- Stop
- Back
- Pick-up feet
- Load and unload from trailer

**Conditioning – 10 points** - The horse's condition will be judged in two areas:

- Appropriate weight/muscling (5 points).
- Overall Appearance – this score will reflect hair coat, feet condition, etc. (5 points).

No person shall alter, change or attempt to hide the natural marking and/or rubbed or raw skin of a horse by surgery, dye, powder or in any other manner. Trainers may clip/trim horses, or leave mane, tail, ears, muzzle and fetlocks natural. Use of false tails or extensions on the mane or tail are prohibited. No points will be deducted for short or rubbed out manes or tails. The score will not reflect conformation. To learn more about appropriate weight/conditioning for a horse please visit <http://www.gerlltd.org/Education/Equine%20Body%20Condition%20Score%20Presentation.pdf>.

2. **Leading Trail Class – 40 points per judge:** This class is intended to show the horse's ability and willingness to perform several tasks that might be asked of him during the course of a normal day. Exhibitors will be asked to lead the horse through a course of obstacles. Obstacles **may include but are not limited to** the following:

- Walk over logs/poles
- Walk/trot between cones/obstacles
- Maneuver forward and/or reverse through a simple chute
- Pick up all four feet
- Brush horse once on each side
- Load and unload from stock trailer

*\*Additional elements may be added such as brush, artificial foliage, rain slickers, etc.*

- 3. Freestyle – 40 points per judge:** During this class exhibitors are encouraged to choose musical scores, costumes and props that permit them to show the athletic abilities of their horses in a crowd appealing way.
- A. **Finalists are required to show their Mustang in-hand** – riding is not an option.
  - B. Exhibitors are not allowed to sit or stand on 12-24-month-old Mustangs and doing so will result in disqualification.
  - C. Horses are not allowed to pull any items (doing so will result in disqualification), however the exhibitor may pull an item while leading the horse.
  - D. Exhibitors must provide their own props and assistance for arena set up and tear down - it is the trainer's responsibility to make sure all props are cleared from the arena immediately following the conclusion of the freestyle performance, including hay, confetti, etc.
  - E. All props must be freestanding. Nothing may be driven into the ground (i.e. rebar, stakes, etc.), and doing so will result in disqualification.
  - F. Trainers may promote personal businesses/sponsors on props used during the freestyle performance, however the promotion logo/statement must be no larger than 12 inches by 24 inches.
  - G. Props of pyrotechnic nature i.e. fireworks, flares, sparklers, firecrackers, etc. are not allowed and will result in disqualification.
  - H. Shooting blanks is allowable, however; 1) all guns must be approved by MHF at the youth trainer meeting; 2) guns and ammo must be checked by MHF at the freestyle gate; and 3) all gunfire must be directed toward the center of the arena during the freestyle performance. Any deviation will result in disqualification.
  - I. Exhibitors will have 4 minutes prior to their performance to stage or set the arena.
  - J. Trainers will have 3.5 minutes to complete their freestyle performance – music and time will start simultaneously when the trainer and/or horse enters the arena.
  - K. Live "voice-overs" and/or commentary from the trainer and/or trainer representative are not allowed during the performance and will result in disqualification.
  - L. Music is a required component of the freestyle performance – if the trainer does not turn in music during the finalists' meeting at the event, management may select music for him/her. Music must be submitted as one single track (MHF staff will not transition from one track to another during the performance) either on a CD or as an mp3 file. All music is subject to review and approval by MHF staff.
  - M. Other animals (dogs, additional horses, etc.) will NOT be allowed in the arena during the finals performance for any reason and will result in disqualification.
  - N. Other people (including children) will NOT be allowed in the arena during the finals performance for any reason other than to drive a vehicle to be used during the performance. If someone other than the trainer is driving a vehicle in the performance **none of the occupants** of the vehicle will be allowed to exit the vehicle while in the arena and the windows must be rolled up at all times (the vehicle, if driven by someone other than the trainer, must be closed-cab; gators, golf carts, ATV's, etc. will not be allowed and will result in disqualification). Other people are NOT allowed to act as props, ride or come in contact with the horse at any point during the performance and will result in disqualification. Other people may hand props to the trainer from outside the arena.
  - O. Mustangs are not allowed to trot or lope onto/into any *moving* or *covered* vehicles or trailers of any kind and doing so will result in disqualification.
  - P. Trainers must wear appropriate footwear during the freestyle performance – bare feet are not allowed and will result in disqualification.
  - Q. Judges and/or MHF staff may stop any performance deemed unsafe, dangerous or otherwise inappropriate.
  - R. **All items/props are subject to final review and approval by MHF staff.**

S. The freestyle portion is worth a total of 40 points and will be scored in the following areas:

A. **Overall Horsemanship - 20 points:**

- The communication and partnership between horse and rider, and the horse's overall willingness to perform and execute maneuvers correctly in a controlled, relaxed and confident manner, (10 points).
- Incorporation of a variety of maneuvers and their degree of difficulty (10 points). These maneuvers would include but are not limited to: *sidepass, pulling or dragging, jumping, serpentines, circles with variance in size and speed, stops, etc.*

B. **Artistic Interpretation - 20 points:**

- Components of Choreography – the composition and arrangement of the exhibition in relation to the music and its rhythm, as well as the use of maneuvers, costumes and/or props to enhance the performance (10 points)
- The “WOW” Factor – level of originality and the overall entertainment value of the performance (10 points).

**AWARDS:**

1. All youth trainers competing in the event will receive \$200 to help offset expenses related to horse care and travel.
2. Additional awards and prizes will be determined by the event manager.

If you have any questions, please contact the event manager: **Peter Whitmore at (978) 652-2231 or [youthmustangchallenge@gmail.com](mailto:youthmustangchallenge@gmail.com).**