



2017 RULES & REGULATIONS

PURPOSE:

The mission of the Mustang Heritage Foundation is to increase the adoption of BLM-housed American Mustangs through innovative gentling competitions and awareness programs. In keeping with this mission, The Mustang Open competition will visit locations across the United States in order to promote adoption by showcasing the Mustangs' value and trainability through competition. The Mustang Open competition is produced by the Mustang Heritage Foundation.

OVERVIEW:

- Locations:** The Mustang Open will be held in conjunction with the Extreme Mustang Makeover event at the following tentative dates and locations – May 19-20, 2017, in Jacksonville, Florida; July 7-8, 2017, in Lexington, Kentucky; and September 15-16, 2017, in Fort Worth, Texas.
- Animal Eligibility:** Previously adopted BLM Mustangs or Burros (any age) are eligible to compete. Mustangs and Burros must have a BLM freemark. Any Mustangs or Burros that are eligible for title must be titled in order to compete.
- Competitor Eligibility:** Anyone 8 years old or older at time of entry deadline is eligible to compete. Adopters/owners do not have to exhibit their horse(s). Interested exhibitors must complete and submit The Mustang Open entry form on or before the designated entry deadlines for each competition. The entry form can be found online at www.extrememustangmakeover.com.
- Limited Entry:** 50 Contestants Only (determined by receipt of entry & payment – First Come/First Serve).
- Divisions:**
- In-Hand Division**
**Yearling and 2-year-old Mustangs and all Burros are eligible for this division only – they may not be ridden at any point during the event.*
 1. In-Hand Trail Class (trail obstacles in arena)
 2. In-Hand Pattern Class
 3. In-Hand Freestyle Class
 - Walk Trot Division**
 1. Walk Trot Trail Class (trail obstacles in arena)
 2. Walk Trot Pattern Class
 3. Walk Trot Freestyle Class
 - Walk, Trot, Lope/Canter Division**
 1. Walk, Trot, Lope/Canter Trail Class (trail obstacles in arena)
 2. Walk, Trot, Lope/Canter Pattern Class
 3. Walk, Trot Lope/Canter Freestyle Class
- Awards:** All Around Buckles in each Division (In-Hand, Walk/Trot, Walk/Trot/Lope)
All Around Buckle to the Highest Scoring Burro Exhibitor
Class Award Ribbons 1st – 5th

Not adhering to the Regulations and Competition Rules listed in this document may result in disqualification from current and/or future Mustang Heritage Foundation competitions and programs.

REGULATIONS:

Participation in this event is by invitation only; therefore the Mustang Heritage Foundation Board of Trustees has the unqualified right to determine eligibility and can, at any time, remove an applicant or contestant from a Mustang Heritage Foundation program and/or competition for any reason or for no reason.

1. All exhibitors must complete the entry form and submit it with entry fees to P.O. Box 979, Georgetown, TX, 78627 or fax date to (512) 869-3229 by the appropriate entry deadline. Entry forms can be found online at www.extrememustangmakeover.com. MHF is not responsible for any lost/misdirected entries. **Entry fees are non-refundable.**
2. Exhibitors must be 8 years of age or older at time of competition.
3. Exhibitors must hold a current membership with the Mustang Heritage Foundation. Membership applications can be found online at www.MustangHeritageFoundation.org. The membership fee is \$35 annually and supports Mustang adoption and awareness and provides a membership card, a member's only bumper sticker and event ticket and merchandise discounts.
4. Exhibitor substitutions will be allowed up to the late entry deadline. Animal may be shown by one exhibitor per division.
5. Paid entries are given priority and entries are accepted on a first come first serve basis.
6. BLM and MHF employees (full or part-time) and their immediate family are not eligible to compete.
7. Any exhibitor may be removed from the competition at any time if found to have any alleged history of cruelty to animals or humans. Removal of any exhibitor from the competition is at the discretion of the Mustang Heritage Foundation's Board of Trustees.
8. The Mustang Heritage Foundation Board of Trustees may at any time conduct a criminal background check on exhibitors or remove any exhibitor from the process for any reason or for no reason.
9. Mustang and Burro training must be humane and compassionate. "Least resistance" techniques are encouraged. At all times, the humane care and best interest of the horse are paramount. For The Mustang Open competitions, the adopter/owner is responsible for the well-being and humane treatment of any Mustang or Burro entrusted to their care. Any suspected inhumane treatment of animals should be reported to management immediately with potential consequences as outlined in our Humane Treatment Policy.
10. Exhibitors are required to submit a signed release with their entry so that all photos and filming may be used to promote the event and will be the property of the Mustang Heritage Foundation.
11. The purpose of this event is to showcase the talent and trainability of Mustangs or Burros and to provide an opportunity for adopters/owners/exhibitors and BLM adopted animals to engage in safe competition for awards. Therefore, all horses entered into the competition should be gentle and safe to maneuver through the show grounds. Upon entry onto the show grounds, should a Mustang or Burro be deemed unsafe by MHF and/or BLM that animal may be excused or uninvited to participate in the competition.
12. Upon entry onto the show grounds, competing animals freemarkers will be verified by a BLM or MHF representative to determine eligibility. For legibility reasons, the trainer may need to shave the hair around the freemark ahead of time.
13. Upon entry onto the show grounds, the exhibitor must provide current Coggins and Health Certificate paperwork for all competing mustangs and burros.
14. Upon entry onto the show grounds, competing animals will be examined by a veterinarian or knowledgeable individual to determine the health and condition of the horse. Should a Mustang or Burro be deemed in poor condition by a veterinarian or knowledgeable individual that animal may be excused or uninvited to participate in the competition.
15. Animal and tack stalls may be purchased at the event. All Mustangs and Burros will be stalled together according to the division in which they are competing (Youth Division, EMM, The Mustang Open, etc.). Exhibitors are not allowed to place locks on stalls.

16. Exhibitors are responsible for bringing all tack, feed and supplies needed during the competition. Shavings will be available for purchase. Outside shavings are not allowed.
17. An arena will be available for warm up and scheduled practices.
18. Competition schedule to be announced.
19. Winners will be announced following the competition.
20. **Conduct:** Conduct shall be orderly, responsible, sportsmanlike and **humane in the treatment of Mustangs and Burros**, such as to promote the implementation of the event and fair competition. This includes, but is not limited to: conduct while trainers have Mustangs and Burros in their possession; conduct on the show grounds; conduct while exhibitors are wearing Extreme Mustang Makeover logo wear off the show grounds; and includes the conduct of individuals traveling with exhibitors, spectators or event managers and all other persons being present on show grounds. Any alleged unsportsmanlike or irresponsible conduct or any form of misconduct, such as illegal, indecent or profane, and **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.
21. **Mustang Heritage Foundation Humane Treatment Policy**
Every Mustang and all animals shall, at all times, be treated humanely and with dignity, respect and compassion. Any participant using abusive or excessive training techniques or being inhumane to a Mustang or Burro in his/her care (determined excessive or abusive by a panel assigned by the Mustang Heritage Foundation and consisting of a panel of licensed equine veterinarian(s) and/or respected horse industry professionals) may be removed from the contest and/or all future contests and training programs. If a participant's horse enters the contest or if the trainer/participant at any time presents a horse with questionable training/care related injuries (determined excessive or abusive by a panel assigned by the Mustang Heritage Foundation and consisting of a panel of licensed equine veterinarian(s) and/or respected horse industry professionals) the participant may be removed from the contest and/or all future contests and training programs. **This policy is in addition to our event rules which are stated above. All exhibitors must agree to, sign and return the Humane Treatment Policy included in the entry form.** The following list, while in no way exhaustive, includes examples of unacceptable behavior and training techniques:
 - No horse which appears to be emaciated, drawn or injured may be exhibited.
 - Use of inhumane training techniques or methods such as striking horse with objects, excessive spurring and/or excessive jerking of reins.
 - Any inhumane treatment which results in wounds.
22. **Sponsorships:** The Mustang Heritage Foundation has entered into corporate sponsorship agreements with a variety of companies. The Foundation asks that trainers honor those sponsorships.
 - a. The Mustang Heritage Foundation may supply shirts with sponsor logos for trainers to wear during the event. Exhibitors will not be required to wear Mustang Heritage Foundation event shirts during the actual competition, but may be required to wear shirts during promotional and adoption events.
 - b. Exhibitors 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.
 - c. Exhibitors may have small banners and brochures or small printed materials in their stall area ONLY to promote their training business and their sponsors during the event. Exhibitors may not hang banners of any size in the common event areas promoting sponsors.
 - d. Logos are not allowed to be displayed on any type of prop during the freestyle class.
 - e. Trainers may purchase EMM/MHF logoed merchandise (t-shirts, banners, caps, etc.) from the Mustang Heritage Foundation but may not reproduce EMM/MHF logos in any way on apparel, banners or other posted materials.

COMPETITION RULES:

1. **STEWARDS:** The Mustang Heritage Foundation may (at any event) designate one or more individuals as a Steward to support the efforts of show officials and the Mustang Heritage Foundation's Board of Trustees. The Steward's responsibilities may include but are not limited to: 1) Monitor show grounds for any inhumane treatment of horses and unsportsmanlike conduct; 2) Investigate complaints and issue warnings; and 3) Assist show officials and trustees in any capacity.

2. Adopters/owners/exhibitors must fulfill all requirements related to hauling, stable facilities, care and training.
3. Mustangs or Burros may be exhibited in English, Western or other appropriate equine styles and equipment. Exhibitors are asked to wear appropriate attire and head gear, which reflects the style of their riding. *Silver on your saddles or sequins on your shirts will not earn you any extra points.*
4. **ILLEGAL equipment that will result in automatic disqualification from the class in which equipment was used in (regardless of discipline) includes:** Snaffle bits with mouthpieces smaller than 5/16" and/or consisting of non-smooth material (such as twisted material), and bosals made of anything but rawhide, leather or rope with a flexible core (no metal of any kind). Use of any bit or equipment determined severe by the judges will not be allowed and will result in disqualification from the class in which it was used.

Tie downs, martingales, mechanical hackamores, spade and high port bits are strongly discouraged. The judge or steward may prohibit the use of any bit or equipment they consider inhumane or would tend to give a horse/rider an unfair advantage. The diameter of mouthpieces, length of shanks and use of curb straps or chains must comply with MHF rules. National Snaffle Bit Association and American Quarter Horse Association rules are resources for preferred equipment including the diameter of mouthpieces, length of shanks and use of curb straps or chains.
5. Mustangs may be shown with two hands in a snaffle bit or bosal. Showing a Mustang with two hands when using a curb or shank-type bit is strongly discouraged during any point of the competition (including the finals) and will result in an automatic 10 point deduction from each judge off the overall class score.
6. Training aides (whips, sticks, treats, the tail end of lead rope, etc.) will not be restricted, although trainers should realize that horses shown with the use of training aides will be judged accordingly. Any excessive use of a training aid (including striking the horse) will result in an automatic 10 point deduction from each judge off the overall class score.
7. Excessive spurring or jerking on the reins or lead line during the competition will result in an automatic 10 point deduction from each judge off the overall class score.
8. 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. Exhibitors 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 during the preliminary competition and will result in an automatic 10 point deduction from each judge off the overall class score. Costume-related tail/mane decorations will be allowed during the finals freestyle performance. Alteration of tail function (tail blocking, dead tails, etc.) is prohibited at any and all points during the competition and will result in disqualification.
9. **Drugs:** No person shall administer drugs internally or externally to a Mustang or Burro, either before or during the Mustang Gathering competition. Any medication, drug, mechanical device or artificial appliance, which is of such character as, could affect or enhance the Mustang or Burro's performance or appearance at the event is prohibited. ***If a Mustang or Burro is receiving medication for therapeutic purposes, the exhibitor must submit a letter from their veterinarian to The Mustang Open event manager as to the reason for the medication and the prescribed amount.*** **THE MUSTANG OPEN MANAGEMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO DRUG TEST ANY MUSTANG OR BURRO IN THE COMPETITION.** Positive tests will result in removal from the event, removal of awards, etc. In regard to herbal/natural supplements, trainers are cautioned against the use of medicinal preparations, tonics, pastes and products of any kind, the ingredients and quantitative analysis of which are not specifically known, as many of them may contain a forbidden substance.
10. In case of ties, a tiebreaker judge will be used. The tiebreaker judge will be appointed prior to the start of the event.

CLASS DESCRIPTION & SCORING:

TRAIL CLASS – This class is designed to show an animal's ability and willingness to perform several tasks that might be asked of him during the course of a normal trail ride or work day. In-Hand exhibitors will be asked to lead their animal only, Walk Trot exhibitors will be asked to lead and ride at a walk and trot, and Walk, Trot, Lope/Canter exhibitors will be asked to lead and ride at a walk, trot, and lope/canter through a course of obstacles and maneuvers in the arena.

Leading elements obstacles/maneuvers may include but are not limited to:

- Walk, trot, stop and back
- 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

Riding obstacles/maneuvers may include but are not limited to:

- Walk, trot, canter/lope, stop and back
- Turns and circles to the left and right
- Walk over logs/poles
- Lead change
- Walk over bridge
- Maneuver forward and/or reverse through a simple chute
- Pick up and carry object
- Dragging items specified length

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

MANEUVERS PATTERN CLASS – Exhibitors will be asked to complete a pattern of basic maneuvers that may include but are not limited to:

- Jog
- Extended Jog
- Lope
- Extended Lope
- Lead Change (simple or flying)
- Stop
- 360 turns to right and left
- Walk

**In-Hand and Walk Trot exhibitors will not be asked to lope or complete lead changes.*

FREESTYLE CLASS:

- For the freestyle class, exhibitors will have four minutes to stage or set the arena.
- Exhibitors must provide their own props and assistance for arena set up and tear down - it is the exhibitor's responsibility to make sure all props are cleared from the arena immediately following the conclusion of the freestyle performance, including hay, confetti, etc.
- Props of pyrotechnic nature including fireworks, flares, firecrackers, rings of fire, etc. are not allowed and will result in disqualification.
- Exhibitors will have 3 minutes to complete their freestyle performance – music and time will start when competitor enters the arena.
- Live "voice-overs" and/or commentary from the exhibitor and/or exhibitor representative are not allowed during the performance and will result in disqualification.
- Music is a required component of the freestyle class – if the exhibitor does not turn in music with entry form 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.
- Other animals (dogs, additional horses, cattle, etc.) will NOT be allowed in the arena during the freestyle class for any reason and will result in disqualification.
- Other people (including children) will NOT be allowed in the arena during the freestyle class for any reason other than to drive a vehicle to be used during the performance. If someone other than the exhibitor 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 exhibitor, must be closed-cab; 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 exhibitor from outside the arena.

- I. Mustangs or Burros are not allowed to trot or lope onto or into any *moving* or *covered* vehicles/trailers/props of any kind and will result in disqualification.
- J. Mustangs or Burros are not allowed to trot or lope *through* any *moving* vehicles/trailers/props of any kind and will result in disqualification.
- K. During the performance, once the horse's feet leave the arena floor (i.e. if the horse gets on top of a trailer, vehicle or any other obstacle) the exhibitor must either dismount or remain seated on the horse. The exhibitor is NOT allowed to stand, kneel, etc. on top of a horse that does not have all four feet on the arena floor and doing so will result in disqualification.
- L. Exhibitors must wear appropriate footwear during the freestyle performance – bare feet are not allowed and will result in disqualification.
- M. Judges and/or MHF staff may stop any performance deemed unsafe, dangerous or otherwise inappropriate.
- N. All items/props are subject to final review and approval by MHF staff.**
- O.** Finalists will be scored on the following:

Overall Horsemanship:

- Communication/partnership between horse and rider and the horse's overall willingness to perform and execute maneuvers correctly in a controlled, relaxed and confident manner.
- Incorporation of maneuvers and their degree of difficulty. These maneuvers would include but are not limited to: *sidepass, two tracking either direction, pulling or dragging, jumping, serpentines, rollbacks, roping, mounted shooting, lead changes, circles with variance in size and speed, stops, etc.*

Artistic Interpretation:

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

KEY HOLE RACE – JACKPOT CLASS – The keyhole race is a timed event that requires speed, obedience and agility. The object is to run the pattern correctly as quickly as possible, without stepping outside of the keyhole shape marked on the ground.

- The event begins when the horse and rider cross the timing line. The team enters the keyhole, then turns in either direction inside the keyhole's circle without stepping over the chalk line. The horse and the rider turns as fast as they can in the bulb. The team then exits the keyhole again and the time ends once they cross the timing line.
- **Penalties may** include adding five seconds to the team's time, or may even be enough to disqualify the contestant completely.
- The obstacle course is a pattern, usually marked with white powder (commonly flour or powdered chalk) poured into a "keyhole" shape in the dirt. 80 feet from arena gate to timing line.
- Approximate dimensions will be:
 - 100 feet from timing line to center of keyhole.
 - Keyhole should be four feet across at the entrance, 10 feet from the entrance of the keyhole to the bulb.
 - The bulb itself should be 20 feet across.
 - The pattern may also be made of cones or poles set up in a similar pattern.

AWARDS:

1. Each class (trail, pattern, and freestyle) will award ribbons to the highest scoring competitors for 1st-5th place.
2. All around buckles will be presented in each division (In-Hand, Walk-Trot, Walk-Trot-Lope).
3. The highest placing Burro exhibitor will receive a buckle.
4. Points are accumulated by each exhibitor/animal combo.
5. Each placing will accumulate points toward the overall awards.
6. The Jackpot class does not apply towards points or placings. Jackpot monies will be paid to winning exhibitors based on number of entries.

For more information on The Mustang Open events, please call (512) 869-3225.