

Macclesfield and District Riding Club - Club Rules & Competition Regulations

GENERAL RULES

Macclesfield and District Riding Club (MDRC) operates in accordance with British Riding Clubs (BRC) rules where applicable. However, in order to support grassroots and young riders, some adjustments have been supported. Horse welfare and rider safety always remain paramount.

PUBLIC CRITICISM OF THE CLUB, OFFICIALS OR JUDGES

Members must not publicly criticize, disparage or make derogatory comments about the Riding Club, its committee members, officials, stewards or any judge appointed by the Club or British Riding Clubs. This includes, but is not limited to, comments made on social media platforms, websites, forums, messaging groups, or in any other public or semi-public domain. Any concerns, complaints, or disagreements must be raised privately and respectfully directly to the club. Failure to comply with this rule will result in a warning, then suspension of membership.

LEAD REIN & FIRST RIDDEN

Any lead rein rider and pony combination must remain on the lead rein for the entirety of the show day, including all classes, warm-up areas, and any riding on the showground. Combinations must not compete off the lead rein in any class on the same day. Failure to comply may result in elimination or withdrawal. A combination may compete off the lead at prior or subsequent shows.

Balance or support reins along with any other training aid are not permitted in any class.

WHIP RULES

The use of the whip must be for an appropriate reason, at an appropriate time, on the correct area of the horse and with the appropriate level of response. The whip must not be used to vent a rider's temper. The whip may only be used behind the leg or on the horse's shoulder. Please see BRC rules for more rigid interpretation of whip rules however, **the judge's decision is final on the definition of appropriate use at MDRC shows.** For **Working hunter and Show Jumping, Baton whips are the only acceptable whip type** and they must be carried correctly (padded side facing down). Showing crops or canes may be used in Showing Classes. Schooling whips are not permitted in any class except dressage.

SPURS RULE

Spurs are permitted but not compulsory.

Spurs must be of a plain, smooth design and correctly fitted.

Sharp, serrated, or excessively long spurs are not permitted.

Rowelled spurs are allowed only if the rowel is smooth and free-running.

Spurs must be used correctly and quietly.

Excessive or inappropriate use of spurs may result in elimination at the judge's discretion.

Any visible marking, broken skin, or distress caused by spur use will result in elimination on welfare grounds.

The judge or steward may require removal of spurs if they consider them unsuitable or being misused.

Junior riders may only wear spurs if they are competent to do so.

The use of spurs in Lead Rein, First Ridden, Tots or Novice classes is not permitted

MINIMUM AGE TO COMPETE

There is no minimum age to compete, however, the organiser reserves the right to withdraw combinations on safety grounds.

Please note that the judge reserves the right to disqualify a competitor for:

- Dangerous Riding
- Unsporting behaviour e.g. outside assistance
- Continuing to ride a horse that is lame, sick or exhausted
- Misusing a whip, spurs or any other tack/equipment
- Causing or permitting ill treatment to a horse/pony
- Arguing with the judge or other officials
- Breaching any of the rules outlined in this document

SHOWJUMPING RULES

Classes 1-3 may be ridden on the lead rein; Leaders must wear a hard hat.

Knockdown of any part of the obstacle including the wing: 4 penalties

Crossing of tracks: 4 penalties

First refusal on course: 4 penalties

Second refusal on course: 8 penalties

Third refusal on course: Elimination

Fall of horse or rider: Elimination

Jumping fence in wrong order or omission: Elimination

Start before the bell: Elimination

Over 24 penalties: Compulsory Retirement

Elimination Guidance

- An eliminated rider must leave the arena following the sound of the judge's bell.
- If the elimination is for a refusal **ONLY**, the combination may have two attempts to jump a fence they have already jumped.
- If the elimination is due to a rider fall, horse fall or due to having over 24 jumping penalties, the combination may not attempt another jump.
- After a rider fall, the rider may **NOT** re-mount in the arena.
- If the rider wishes to retire, they must do so by signalling to the judge by raising their hand.
- A horse is considered to have fallen when the shoulder and quarters on the same side touch the ground or touch a fence and ground simultaneously.
- A rider is considered to have fallen when there is involuntary separation between them and their horse/pony, which necessitates remounting or vaulting into the saddle.
- If there is a disobedience at the second part of a double, then the double must be jumped again in its entirety. If not, the combination will be eliminated.

Tack Rules

The following **ARE** permitted:

- Hackamores and other bitless bridles
- A stallion disc **MUST** be displayed on each side of a stallion's bridle at all times
- Breastplates or Neck straps at any level
- Nose nets & Equilibrium Net Relief Riding Masks or similar that are discreet but must leave the mouth and bit visible
- Only one martingale (standing, Irish or running). Standing martingales **MUST** be attached to the cavesson part of the noseband fitted above the bit, running martingales **MUST** have rein stops
- More than one noseband may be worn at a time
- Tongue guards that are properly made and detached from the reins and bits
- Bitguards provided that they are made of rubber and are smooth on both sides
- Hoods
- Leather, sheepskin or similar material may be used on each cheek piece of the bridle providing the material does not exceed 3cm in diameter measured from the horse's cheek

The following **ARE NOT** permitted:

- Market Harborough
- Combination Martingales
- Side, draw, check or running reins
- Blinkers or hoods which impede the horse's vision
- Fine wire, twine or cord around the horse's mouth
- Full faced fly shields
- Tongue straps or tying down the horse's tongue
- Substitutes for conventional shoes
- Shields that cover the horses' eyes (i.e. glasses or sunglasses for horses) are not permitted at any time when mounted.

You may not warm up in equipment not permitted in the actual competition.

WORKING HUNTER RULES

Knockdown of any part of the obstacle including the wing: 10 penalties

Crossing of tracks: 15 penalties

First refusal on course: 15 penalties

Second refusal on course: 20 penalties

Third refusal on course: Elimination

Fall of horse or rider: Elimination

Jumping fence in wrong order or omission: Elimination

Elimination guidance in Show Jumping section above is applicable in Working Hunter classes.

Baton Whips are the only accepted whip type.

SHOWING RULES

Ridden horses and ponies must be 4 years old or over.

Stallions must be ridden by riders aged 16 years or over and wear a bridle with a bit.

Riders must wear an approved riding hat to current safety standards.

Colts and stallions must be led by a competent handler aged 16 years or over.

Young handlers must be capable of controlling their animal safely at all times.

Leaders must wear suitable headgear.