



# **Show Rules & Guidelines for Judges and Competitors**

October, 2015  
Second edition



**Donkey & Mule Society of New Zealand (Inc.)**

**[www.donkey-mule.org.nz](http://www.donkey-mule.org.nz)**

# **Introduction**

## **Donkey & Mule Judges and Competition Rules**

When showing we all have similar expectations.

- We expect Competitors to compete from a level base of honesty and fair play and to observe the rules and regulations at all times.
- We expect Judges to judge positively and to show no breed prejudice.
- We expect the best exhibit on the day, regardless of breeding, to be declared the winner.
- We expect Judges to judge based upon the correct observance of the conformation and action, and the overall work of the donkey or mule, and consequently select the best animals as set out in the rules and conditions in the rule-book.
- We expect all involved to be good sports people – this means such things as fairness, courteous relations to others and graceful acceptance of results etc.

With co-operation from all involved, we can ensure everyone has a 'good day at the show'.

Reprinted from The Royal Agricultural Society of N.Z. Equestrian Judges and Competitors Rules & Guidelines.



# **1. General**

## **1.1 Name of Donkey or Mule**

To enter a show the exhibitor must use the complete name of the donkey or mule as it is shown on the registration certificate.

## **1.2 Drugs**

The use of stimulants or depressants or any performance enhancing drug is strictly forbidden.

(Forbidden substances rules, by laws & regulations of the Royal Agricultural Society [55A])

## **1.3 Unruly Donkeys and Mules**

An unruly donkey or mule may be excused from the ring by the Judge or Steward for reasons of safety.

## **1.4 Donkey & Mule Society Trophies**

Only donkeys and mules registered with the Donkey & Mule Society of New Zealand (Inc.) and owned by financial members of the Society are eligible to compete for the Donkey & Mule Society of New Zealand (Inc.) trophies.

If, when the results are submitted for Donkey & Mule points allocation, it becomes clear that some entries are invalid then no points should be awarded to the offending animals and the competitors advised accordingly. The show management should be advised of the transgressors.

Donkeys and mules must be registered with the Society prior to being shown to be eligible to receive Society Awards.

## **1.5 Stewards and Conveners**

Stewards and/or conveners need to be familiar with these rules as they play an important part in ensuring the Donkey Ring runs well.

## **1.6 Complaints about A & P shows**

- a. Any competitor who believes they have a grievance either relating to the running of the show or the eligibility of fellow competitors should in the first instance complain in writing to the management committee of the A&P Show.
- b. If they subsequently feel their complaint has not been satisfied they should appeal to RAS.

- c. If the issue is brought by a competitor to the notice of the Donkey & Mule Society the competitor should be advised to take actions a & b. The Show is run under RAS supervision and it is not acceptable for the Donkey & Mule Society to interfere.

The Show Secretary might get involved in a show if the issue is the classes and whether they conform to our approved list, or if the RAS rules have been broken, but will not get involved in local management of the show.

### **1.7 Donkeys and mules should not compete against each other.**

Classes or competitions should not be set up so that donkeys and mules compete against each other in any type of competition.

*However:*

1. They may compete at the same time in the same ring, as long as they are judged and awarded separately, including separate championships
2. Donkey and mule competitors may chose to compete against horses and ponies in carriage driving and ridden competitions that are not generally part of the A & P show circuit.



## 2. Judges

### 2.1 Knowledge

Judges are required to acquaint themselves with the Donkey & Mule Society of New Zealand (Inc.) **Show Rules & Guidelines for Judges and Competitors** and the **Donkey & Mule Society of New Zealand, Standards of Conformation and Type for Donkeys** and **Standards of Conformation & Type for Mules** and to comply with those rules and standards.

### 2.2 Accepting judging appointments

The same person should not judge at the same show two years in a row. The competitors are entitled to have a different person judging their stock each year at a particular show.

A judge may not judge more than once within 200km of a show in the same Royal Agricultural Society District within the Spring Show Season (1 August to 31 December) or the Autumn Show Season (1 January to 31 July) unless judging different sections. However, this is acceptable if the scheduled judge is unable to attend at the last minute. This still does not include judging at the same show two years in a row.

A judge is ineligible to judge a competitor and or donkey or mule if:-

- The judge is a member of the competitors family/employer
- The competitor and/or donkey or mule have been accommodated by the judge two weeks prior to the show.



## **3. In-Hand Section**

### **3.1 Height**

In any class where height is stipulated, a current measuring certificate must be held and produced on demand. The official measure will be by the Metcalf Measurer or the Donkey & Mule Society's Official Miniature Measurer.

### **3.2 Age**

For the purposes of showing, the age of a donkey or mule is calculated with all birthdays being on the 1 August.

### **3.3 Jacks**



Jacks two years and over must be shown in a bit. Miniature jacks may be shown in a stallion chain instead of a bit.

Jack handlers must be adults.



### **3.4 Geldings**

Geldings are eligible for Championship Awards in In-hand Conformation Classes and are to be judged on an equal basis with jacks and jennies.

### **3.5 Mules**



3.5.1 Ungelded john mules cannot compete in the show ring after 6 months of age.

3.5.2 Hinnies will be recognised as mules for the purposes of showing.

3.5.3 The breeding of mules will be added to the entries for the In-Hand Section and shown in the programme so that a steward can advise the judge of the breeding of each mule. For example:- Golden Mist (Mammoth/Quarterhorse)

### **3.6 Movement**

Gaited donkeys and mules should not be penalised in the show ring. However any gait (standard or alternative) will be penalised if it is not maintained in a balanced, rhythmic manner. Overall a donkey or mule should display a movement that is straight, free, active, smooth and covers the ground well.

### **3.7 Best Presented Classes**



Handlers should strive to present themselves and their donkeys or mules in a neat and tidy manner and in appropriate attire. All tack should be clean, tidy and in good repair. The class is to be judged on overall appearance, cleanliness, appropriateness of attire, condition and presentation of donkey or mule and handler with the following recommended allocation of points:- 50% Animal 25% Handler 25% Gear.

The donkeys should not be clipped for any in-hand classes. The natural coat of the animal is part of its character. Animals that have been clipped should not be put above donkeys in the Best Presented Class that are in their natural coat.

Donkeys and mules should be lined up in order for the Judge to inspect each animal and handler.

### **3.8 Maiden Classes**

A maiden donkey or mule is an animal that has not won a first place in an in-hand class up to the day of the show.

### **3.9 Novice Classes**

A novice is a donkey or mule that has not won three first placings in breed classes at the time of the show, unless stipulated otherwise by the show concerned.



### **3.10 Pack Donkey or Pack Mule Classes**



This is not a fancy dress class. Its purpose is to judge the animal most suitable for packing. In some cases the donkey or mule may be required to parade without a saddle to show its conformation suitability for pack work. Where a pack saddle is required the class should also be judged on pack load balance, safety and it's suitability for the donkey or mule.

### **3.11 Classes with one entry**

Even if there is only one entry in a class the judge should award the donkey or mule first prize. The competitor should only be awarded less than first prize if their animal is clearly inferior. All competitors should have the opportunity to compete for Champion if they win their class, and they should not be disadvantaged if they are the only exhibit in their breed class that day. Even if a donkey or mule is the only exhibit in it's class it may well be the best donkey or mule at the show and it should have the opportunity to compete for the overall Champion award.

### **3.12 In-hand Championship Awards**

Championship classes will include the first place getters of appropriate In-hand classes.

Classes that should not be included in Championship judging. Winners of:-

- Maiden or Novice Class
- Best Presented Class
- Pack Donkey and Pack Mule Classes where they are judged in the In-hand Donkey or In-hand Mule sections
- Where there is no separate Performance Section Championship - neither fun nor performance classes.

Once the Champion has been selected the donkey or mule that was the second place getter to the Champion in it's In-hand class must be brought in to the ring. This animal must receive the same consideration as the first place class winners and be judged equally for the title of Reserve Champion.

The Championship judging is not another class but the point where the judge considers which donkey (or mule for Mule Champion) from the first place getters in the appropriate breed classes has the best conformation and action and in their opinion is the best exhibit at the show that day.

### **3.13. Judges**

The judge should not touch the donkey or mule. If they want the hoof picked up or to view the animal's teeth they must ask the handler to do this for them.

## **4. Performance or Versatility Section**

*If there is a Family Pet class it should not be counted for points towards Champion.*

Champion for this section is worked out on a points basis:

6 points for 1st, 4 points for 2nd, 2 points for 3rd, 1 point for 4th

If the final points are equal Champion is awarded to the donkey or mule with the highest points, who has also won the most first places; if they are still equal then the donkey/mule who has the highest number of second places.

# Ridden Classes

## 4.1 Hats

All riders 16 and under must wear protective headgear, which includes a retaining harness secured to the shell at more than two points. It must be worn with the chinstrap properly adjusted and fastened.

It is strongly recommended that all riders wear protective headgear conforming to the NZ Safety Standard.

## 4.2 Footwear

Boots or suitable shoes are to be worn by riders in riding classes.

## 4.3 Age of Ridden Donkeys and Mules

The minimum age of donkeys or mules in ridden classes is three years.

## 4.4 Age of Riders

Riders should be four years old if riding independently, but lead rein riders can be younger if there is an adult walking beside to assist and who is willing to take **full** responsibility for any accident for riders under 4 years of age. The steward must check with every handler leading and under 4 years old child to confirm willingness to take **full** responsibility.

## 4.5 Bridle

Ridden donkeys must be ridden in a bridle. Halters are not acceptable. If the rider is on a lead rein it must be attached to the bit for good control of the donkey.



## 5. Harness Section

### 5.1 Jacks in Harness

When jacks are shown in harness, an adult must drive the turnout and there must be another adult on hand capable of giving assistance if required.

Where pairs are driven the carriage must carry a groom.

### 5.2 Age of Driven Donkeys or Mules

The minimum age of donkeys and mules in driving classes is three years.

Turnout and Best Whip classes should not count for assessing Champion Harness Donkey or Mule.

Champion for this section is worked out on a points basis.

6 points for 1st, 4 points for 2nd, 2 points for 3rd, 1 point for 4th.

If the final points are equal, champion is awarded to the donkey or mule with the highest points, who has also won the most first places. If they are still equal then the donkey/mule who also has the highest number second places.



# List of Approved Classes

It is not expected that every show will hold this full list of classes. This is an approved list of classes that have been compiled by the Society to allow for local variations and strengths. The organiser of the Donkey & Mule classes at each show will select from the range below.

However, donkeys must be catered for at each show where classes for them have been established. Where mules will also be competing, then classes for them should be included. **Donkeys and mules must not be judged against each other.**

Where there are not enough entries to have separate classes donkeys and mules may be judged at the same time **but must be awarded separately**. This will work well in the performance sections

Where a show plans to vary from the established classes for donkeys or mules, the show should liaise with the Donkey & Mule Society's Show Secretary to ensure it is a format approved by the Society. The Show Secretary is Andrea Thomson. (See contact details at end of document)

## In-Hand Donkeys

*To be judged on conformation and action*

*Geldings are to be given equal consideration with jennies and jacks.*

1. **Best presented donkey on a lead rein**  
(50% donkey, 25% gear, 25% handler)
2. **Novice donkey**  
(Donkey not to have won more than 3 first prizes in an In-Hand class at the day of the show)

## Young Stock In Hand Donkeys

*To be judged on conformation and action*

3. **Jack, Jenny or Gelding, foal or yearling**
4. **Jack, Jenny or Gelding 2 years of age**
5. **Jack, Jenny or Gelding 3 years of age**

**Champion and Reserve Champion Young Stock In Hand Donkey**

*To be judged from classes 3 to 5*

## **Adult In Hand Donkeys (4 years and over)**

6. Jenny donkey
7. Gelding donkey
8. Jack donkey

**Champion and Reserve Champion Adult In Hand Donkey**

*To be judged from classes 6 to 8.*

**Supreme Champion In Hand Donkey**

(Young stock and Adult In Hand Champions to be judged)

RAS Medal and Sash at Royal Shows

## **In Hand Mules**

*To be judged on conformation and action*

9. **Best Presented mule on a lead-rein**  
*(50% animal, 25% gear, 25% handler)*
10. **Mule 3 years and under**
11. **Molly Mule 4 years and over**
12. **John Mule 4 years and over**

**Champion and Reserve Champion In-Hand Mule**

(To be judged from classes 10, 11 & 12)





## Donkey In Hand Performance Section

### 12. Ridden donkey on a lead rein.

*To be judged on the suitability of the donkey for the rider and both to be judged as a unit. (Donkey to be 3 years or over. Rider 12 years or under).*

*The lead rein may be attached to the bit for safety. (Rider not eligible for class 24). The accepted minimum age for a rider is 4 years. If a lead rein rider is younger than 4 years the adult handler/assistant must take full responsibility in the event of any accident involving that rider.*

### 13. Ridden donkey

*To be judged on the suitability of the donkey for the rider and both to be judged as a unit. and on the willingness and obedience of the donkey to walk, trot and canter, change rein and rein back. Riders over 4 years (rider not eligible for class 23).*

*At small shows where there is only one ridden donkey class, and led and independently ridden donkeys compete against each other, the emphasis and key determining factor in judging the class should be the suitability of the donkey as a mount for the rider.*

### 14. Bending Race

*Led or ridden against time.*

### 15. Donkey Challenge

*To be judged on style and manners through four from the challenge list.*

### 16. Donkey Pattern

*To be judged on willingness, style and accuracy.*

The pattern to be selected from the approved pattern list by the show organiser who also advises the competitors



**17. In Hand Donkey Jumping:**

Two jumps up to 500 cm, not timed, to be judged on style and willingness of the donkey.

**18. Long-reining**

*To test willingness and obedience. To be driven in long reins negotiating a line of poles and obstacles at a walk and stopping, reining back and standing when asked. Not judged on time.*



**19. Family Pet**

*Does not count towards the In Hand Performance Championship.*

**Champion and Reserve Champion In Hand Performance Donkey**

*To be judged from classes 12 to 17 on a points basis:*

*6 points 1st, 4 points 2nd, 2 points 3rd, 1 point 4th.*

If the final points are equal, champion is awarded to the donkey with the highest points who has also won the most first places. If they are still equal, then the donkey who has the highest number of second places

# Harness Donkeys

*Donkeys must be a minimum of 3 years of age.*

**19. Best Presented donkey in harness.**

**20. Best Whip**

*Judged on the driver's ability to gain obedience and free movement from the donkey.*

**21. Best Paced harness donkey**

*To be judged on the best type and paced donkey/s in harness).*

**22. Driven Donkey Challenge**

*To be judged on willingness, style and accuracy. It will consist of four challenges, which will be chosen from the Driven Challenge list by the judge.*

**23. Driven Pattern**

*To be judged on willingness, style and accuracy. Competitors will drive a figure of 8; serpentine, rein back and halt. The pattern can be found on the society's web page.*

**24. Cone course**

*A series of cones driven against time. The fastest time wins. 5 penalty points each time ball/s are knocked off a pair of cones*

## **Champion and Reserve Champion Harness Donkey**

*To be judged from classes 20 to 22 on a points basis:*

6 points for 1st; 4 points for 2nd; 2 points for 3rd; 1 point for 4th.

If the final points are equal, champion is awarded to the donkey with the highest points who has also won the most 1st places. If they are still equal, then the donkey who also has the highest number of second places.



## Ridden Mules

*Mules must be a minimum of 3 years of age.*

**25. Best Paced and Mannered mule under saddle**

**26. Ridden Green Mule Pattern**

*For mules in their first year competing under saddle*

**27. Ridden Open Pattern**

*Entries in the above class not eligible*

**28. Challenge**

*To be judged on style and manners through four challenges from the challenge list.*

**Champion & Reserve Champion Ridden Mule**

## Mule In-Hand Performance

**29. Best Paced and Mannered Mule class**

**30. Young Stock Pattern - 2yrs and under**

**31. Open Pattern**

*Entries in the above class not eligible.*

**32. Advanced Pattern**

*Young Stock and Open mules eligible.*

**33. Long reining.**

*Performing a series of such as stopping, bending through a line of poles and backing.*

**34. Challenge**

*To be judged on style and manners through four challenges from the challenge list.*

Note: At shows where the mule entry is small a mule performance section can be created from selecting classes from these recommended classes **or** if no Mule In-Hand Performance Section is provided then mules can enter the Donkey Section instead. **However, where mules are competing in the donkey ring they must be awarded separately. Mules must not be judged against donkeys.**

**Champion and Reserve Champion In Hand Performance Mule**

*To be judged from classes 27 to 31 on a points basis:*

*6 points 1st, 4 points 2nd, 2 points 3rd, 1 point 4th.*

If the final points are equal, champion is awarded to the mule with the highest points who has won the most 1st places. If they are still equal, then the mule who has the highest number of second places

# Harness Mules

Mules must be a minimum of 3 years of age.

Where mules are competing in the donkey ring for harness they must be awarded separately. Mules must not be judged against donkeys.

**35. Best Presented mule**

*50% animal, 25% harness and cart, 25% driver.*

**36. Best Paced mule**

**37. Best Mannered mule**

**38. Driven Challenge**

*to be judged on style and manners through four challenges from the challenge list.*

**39. Driven Pattern**

*To be judged on willingness, style and accuracy.*

*Competitors will drive a figure of 8; serpentine, rein back and halt. The pattern can be found on the society's web page.*

**Champion & Reserve Champion Harness Mule**

*To be judged from classes 33 to 36 on a points basis:*

*6 points 1st, 4 points 2nd, 2 points 3rd, 1 point 4th.*

If the final points are equal, champion is awarded to the mule with the highest points who has also won the most 1st places. If they are still equal, then the mule who also has the highest number of second places.

**Supreme Champion Mule**

In Hand Mule Champion, Ridden Mule Champion, In Hand Performance Mule  
Champion and Harness Champion to be judged.

RAS Medal and Sash at Royal Shows.

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