

# **Rescue Equine Showing Society**

*From Rescue to Ribbons, Nurturing Equine Champions  
for a Brighter Future*



**President: Carey Knox**

## **DEFINITIONS**

**MEMBER:** A fully paid up or Honorary member of the Rescue Equine Showing Society.

**SHOWING MEMBER:** A member who is 18 years or older on the 1<sup>st</sup> January each year, who has paid the required subscription and / or membership fee for that year and is eligible to compete a rescue equine.

**JUNIOR MEMBER:** A member who is under the age of 18 years on the 1<sup>st</sup> January each year, who has had their subscription / membership fee paid for that year.

**FAMILY MEMBERSHIP:** A maximum of three adults and four juniors can hold a Family Membership.

**CHARITY MEMBERSHIP:** A Registered Charity and NEWC Member can hold a single membership to cover the whole of their organisation and any equines that they wish to compete at shows and competitions affiliated to the Rescue Equine Showing Society. An overarching membership number will be allocated to that organisation.

**NON-SHOWING MEMBER:** A member who is 18 years or older on the 1<sup>st</sup> January each year, who has paid the required subscription and / or membership fee for that year, but has not registered a rescue equine to compete.

**RESCUE EQUINE (GOLD):** For the purposes of eligibility for all classes affiliated to the Rescue Equine Showing Society, to become registered and eligible to compete under Rescue Equine Showing Society Rules, equines must have been adopted, fostered, or on a guardianship scheme from a National Equine Welfare Council (NEWC) member organisation. A list of current members can be found at [newc.co.uk](http://newc.co.uk)

**RESCUE EQUINE (SILVER):** For the purposes of eligibility for classes affiliated to the Rescue Equine Showing Society, to become registered and eligible to compete under Rescue Equine Showing Society Rules, in the Silver category, equines can have been directly rescued by an individual or other organisation (not a member of NEWC). This may limit the range of classes that they qualify to compete in and will be clearly defined in schedules for affiliated Shows.

**AFFILIATED SHOWS:** Shows that run classes affiliated to the Rescue Equine Showing Society and agree to abide by the rules of the Society.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

1. The Rescue Equine Showing Society (RESS) will not accept liability for any injury, accident, loss, damage or illness to owners, riders, handlers, spectators, equines or their property however caused. All Members must have Third Party Liability Insurance and be able to provide evidence of this.
2. Any equine registered with the Rescue Equine Showing Society, must be registered by the owner / keeper. For **GOLD** registration of an Equine, proof of the NEWC Charity from which it has been re-homed will need to be provided (ie. Adoption / Guardianship paperwork / passport).
3. All riders / handlers must be members of the Rescue Equine Showing Society in order to compete in affiliated classes. Riders / handlers under 18 years of age on 1<sup>st</sup> January each year must be a Junior Showing Member. A rider / handler 19 years of age and over on the 1<sup>st</sup> January each year must be an Adult Showing Member. No child under the age of 3 years to compete in Leading Rein Classes and no child under the age of 5 years to compete in open classes, but are eligible to compete in First Ridden and In-Hand (accompanied by an adult). Any Junior Rider / Handler will also require Parent / Guardian / Family Membership.
4. Non-members of the Rescue Equine Showing Society may compete in classes at affiliated shows, but must be aware and comply with the Rules of the Society. However, if they qualify for any Championship Competitions / finals, they will need to become a member and register their equine within five working days in order to retain their qualification. In those circumstances when a qualifying equine does not meet this requirement, the qualification will be passed to the next eligible competitor.
5. If a person is found to have been Convicted in a Court of Law (or received a formal Caution), for any animal related offence, membership of the Rescue Equine Showing Society and registering of any equines will be refused. If a current member receives a conviction or caution, whilst a member, their membership will be immediately withdrawn. No membership fees / equine registration fees will be refunded. Members may also be suspended if there is evidence produced to show that they are under investigation for animal related cruelty or neglect, pending the outcome of any investigation. It is expected that if a member is in this situation, they would make the Rescue Equine Showing Society aware of any investigation and would voluntarily withdraw from their membership of the Society. If at the conclusion of an investigation there are no formal proceedings a review of the circumstances will be undertaken by the Rescue Equine Showing Society Council / Disciplinary Committee before a decision is taken as to re-instating membership and eligibility to compete.

## GENERAL RULES

1. All equines shown In-Hand, must be a minimum of one year old. Mares with foals at foot are not permitted to enter any classes.
2. All equines shown in ridden classes must be four years of age and over.
3. All equines shown in any Rescue Equine Showing Society Classes must be in a sound and healthy condition. Overweight or underweight and unfit horses should not be presented for Judging, either ridden or In-Hand. Please consider the Body Condition Scoring range shown in Appendix 1 (0 – 5 range). Equines will be penalised if either overweight or underweight and if not deemed fit will be asked to leave the ring. Judges will be asked to assess the body condition of equines that they are judging as this is essential to equine welfare and fitness to compete. Awards may be made to any equines that are deemed to be in an ideal body condition.
4. For horses / ponies in ridden classes they must fall within the 20% rider weight ratio. All competitors are advised that they check this prior to competing. If Judge's are concerned regarding a rider not being 'suitably mounted' (ie. Over the 20%), they can ask them to leave the ring.
5. The Rescue Equine Showing Society will not accept liability for any injury, accident, loss damage or illness to owners, riders, handlers, spectators, equines or their property however caused. Members must have Third Party Liability Insurance. Health and Safety is key. Consideration must also be given to the Health and Safety regulations of Shows that are holding classes affiliated to the Rescue Equine Showing Society.
6. The Rescue Equine Showing Society reserves the right to amend rules and regulations at their discretion.
7. If the ownership / guardianship of an equine changes, Rescue Equine Showing Society will need to be notified and the equine re-registered with the new owner / guardian.
8. Any member found to have brought the Rescue Equine Showing Society into disrepute, through cruelty, dishonesty or criminal activity will have their membership and registrations revoked with immediate effect. No refunds will be made (see also **MEMBERSHIP – 5**).
9. All memberships and equine registrations will run from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December annually. You can become a member / register an equine, at anytime, but it will be at the full rate for the year.
10. Equine passports must be available on request. Passports should be with the equine at all times when travelling / attending competitions.
11. Dope testing may take place at any show or competition and the Shows' policy in this regard will take precedence over the rules of the Rescue Equine Showing Society.
12. Rescue Equine Showing Society takes a very serious view of doping. 'Dope Testing' means the examination by a qualified Veterinary Surgeon and includes the taking of samples for analysis which can include a blood sample, body fluid, tissue, excreta, hair and skin scrapings, to test for the presence of any prohibited substance.

13. 'Prohibited Substance' means any quantity of any substance originating externally (whether or not endogenous to the equine) which could influence that animals performance, or ability to perform). This includes stimulants, depressants, tranquilizers, local anaesthetics, anti-inflammatory agents (including phenylbutazone – bute), antihistamines, muscle relaxants, diuretics and metabolites and any other masking agents.
14. Any person who administers or attempts to administer or allows or causes to be administered or connives, promotes or encourages the administration to any equine or a prohibited substance, shall be in breach of this rule.
15. Should a positive dope test result be identified, the matter will be referred to the disciplinary Committee of the Rescue Equine Showing Society. The matter will be investigated, and a decision made as to whether it is appropriate to instigate disciplinary proceedings for a breach of this Rule, against the owner / person(s) responsible and / or any other person.
16. Complaints Procedure: members wishing to register an objection or complaint must do so in writing, within ten days of any alleged incident. This must be made in writing, either at the time or must be sent recorded delivery (communication by telephone or email are not acceptable in this situation). This relates to any complaint with regard to any competitor, organiser, Judge or Official. Any complaint received in accordance with the above, will be acknowledged in writing within five working days of receipt and the matter will then be investigated and an outcome / decision reached following the completion of the investigation.

## **SHOWING RULES**

### **A – GENERAL**

1. Unnecessary use of whips / showing canes, or misuse of any other tack or equipment will result in exclusion or elimination. Further disciplinary action may also be taken.
2. Showing canes / whips are not to exceed 76cm (30"). Any whip / cane that exceeds this will not be permitted in the ring. They may only be used for safety and guidance purposes.
3. The wearing of spurs or spur bands are not permitted in any Rescue Equine Showing Society competition.
4. Tight or ill-fitting nosebands will not be permitted. Nosebands must be flat and must be leather, except for the front part of the noseband which may be made of flat, non-abrasive leather-like material. Sheepskin on the noseband is permitted. Nosebands may be checked at the discretion of the Steward, Judge or any other official prior to entering or during a class. A noseband tension gauge tester may be used for the purpose of confirming if a noseband is too tight.
5. Trimming of Sensory Hairs is not permitted. Any equine that has had their sensory hairs removed, unless for veterinary reasons, will not be permitted to compete in any Rescue Equine Showing Society competitions. Removal of an equine's sensory hairs reduces their sensory ability and is a welfare issue. This includes trimming of an equine's sensory hairs around the mouth, nose, eyes and ears (minimal trimming to the outer ears is acceptable).
6. Rider Weight. A very sensitive issue, but again welfare is of the utmost importance. If a Judge, Steward or Official is concerned regarding the weight of any equine / rider combination they can be asked to withdraw from any competition held under the Rescue Equine Showing Society rules. This must be done with tact and diplomacy and with the utmost consideration for all concerned.
7. Any suitable bit maybe used, but any that are regarded as too severe, unsuitable or detrimental to an equine's welfare will not be permitted. This will be at the discretion of the Judge, Steward or any Official.
8. Bitless Bridles will be permitted in Rescue Equine Showing Society Competition.
9. Equines can be shown with or without shoes at the owner's discretion.
10. A class is regarded as having commenced once the initial instruction to trot has been given (or first equine has started their initial trot up in an In-Hand Class). However, this can be at the Judge's discretion and with prior agreement to the commencement of a class.

11. Competitors cannot either leave or return to the ring once judging has commenced without the Judge's or Steward's permission and is at their discretion.
12. If at any time in the ring an equine / rider falls this will lead to automatic disqualification and they must leave the ring. For health and safety reasons the rider cannot re-mount before leaving and it is also advisable that they be checked by a First Aid professional. If an equine is injured as a result of a fall, it is essential that they also be checked by a Veterinary Surgeon.
13. Mobile Phones or earpieces are not permitted in the ring. They may be carried by a Steward or Official if required for communication in relation to the running of the Show.

14. **Marking System**

**In-Hand Classes:**

- |  |   |           |
|--|---|-----------|
| a) Performance, Manners, Type & Conformation | - | <b>40</b> |
| b) Rescue History & Transformation           | - | <b>60</b> |

**Ridden Classes:**

- |  |   |           |
|--|---|-----------|
| a) Performance, Manners, Type & Conformation | - | <b>40</b> |
| b) Rescue History & Transformation           | - | <b>60</b> |

In the event of a tie, the **RESCUE HISTORY and TRANSFORMATION** mark will take precedence. If this still does not split the marks the decision will be at the discretion of the Judge(s).

15. Marks will be recorded on the appropriate Rescue Equine Showing Society Mark Sheet (Appendix 2). Any marks that are entered incorrectly, for whatever reason, corrections must be signed and initialled by the Judge. No half marks can be awarded.
16. Ultimately the Judge's decision is final and must be respected.
17. At no time should a Judge, Steward or Official be challenged by a competitor, owner or connection to a competitor, either in or around the ring / showground. Inappropriate behaviour could lead to disciplinary action. If a competitor / owner has a concern with regard to the conduct or running of any class or competition run under the Rescue Equine Showing Society Rules they should follow the complaints / disciplinary procedures as detailed (see General Rules - section 15)

**B – DRESS AND TURNOUT (Riders/Handlers/Grooms)  
TACK, EQUIPMENT AND PRESENTATION (Equines)**

**In-Hand – Handlers and Grooms**

Handlers:

1. Must be suitably dressed, as appropriate for the class. Jeans are not permitted for Handlers and ideally smart trousers, shirt / tie, jacket or waistcoat. In adverse wet / cold weather conditions waterproof coats are permitted. In hot weather jackets / waistcoats can be removed. This will be at the discretion of the Judge / Steward / Official although this can be overridden by the Show Organiser where appropriate.
2. Body jewellery and facial piercings are not permitted. Stud earrings only to be worn.
3. Handlers must wear a suitable hat. It is mandatory for any handler, under the age of 16 years to wear a correctly fitted and secured riding hat to the current approved standard. Riding Hat Standards that are permitted are:

PAS 015: 2011

VG1 01.040 2014-12 – This standard must also have either a BSI Kitemark or a Inspec IC Mark

ASTM F1163 2004a or 04a onwards – This standard must also have an SEI mark

SNELL E2016

AS/NZS 3838 2006 onwards – This standard must also have a SAI Global Mark

For Championships or Evening Performance Judging, competitors may wear a Top Hat or bowler hat if permitted by the Show Organisers. A disclaimer form will need to be completed and signed.



4. Body Protectors may be worn in any class but must be worn by competitors in any Working Hunter or Jumping Classes (regardless of rider age). Body Protectors should have a BETA 2018 label as the current recommended standard.
5. Gloves must be worn.

Grooms:

1. Must be suitably dressed, as per handler (jeans not permitted?) and gloves do not need to be worn.

**Ridden – Handlers and Grooms:**

Rider:

1. Jackets must be tweed or plain in colour.
2. Jodhpurs may be of any plain colour.
3. Shirt to be worn with tie or stock.
4. Gloves must be worn.
5. Footwear – jodhpur boots or long riding boots. Jodhpur boots with half chaps / gaiters are also permitted.
6. Body Jewellery, earrings and facial piercings are not permitted and must be removed prior to entering the ring.
7. Hats must be worn at all times, when mounted. They must be correctly fitted and secured and be of the current approved standard (see 3 above). For Championships or Evening Performance Judging, Adult competitors may wear a Top Hat or Bowler if permitted by the Show Organiser. A disclaimer form will need to be completed and signed.

Grooms:

1. Must be suitably dressed, and a hat must be worn when entering the ring. Gloves do not need to be worn.

**TACK, EQUIPMENT AND PRESENTATION**

Tack:

1. Must be in good safe condition and correctly fitted to ensure welfare of both equine, rider / handler. Misuse could result in further action and potentially under the Animal Welfare Act 2006.

2. Under no circumstances must tack be changed during a class and if competing in a Championship the same tack, as worn during the class, should remain the same.

#### Bridles:

1. In Lead Rein classes, reins should be of the normal length and should not be made shorter, by knotting or stitching. Handles on saddles are permitted, but reins must not be attached to either the saddle itself or the handle. The Lead Rein should be attached to the noseband.
2. Balance and Daisy Reins are not allowed.
3. Running Gags are not allowed.
4. Mickleham or any other design of 'Comfort' Bridles are permitted.
5. Bitless Bridles are permitted (please see **General Rules – 8**).
6. In Novice Classes, a suitable snaffle bridle must be worn.
7. Careful consideration must be given to the choice of bits used. Any suitable bit can be used, but careful consideration will be given to anything that appears to be causing discomfort to any equine. If a Judge, Steward or Official is unhappy with the way of going, which appears to be as a result of an unsuitable bit / bridle, then a competitor can be asked to leave the class.
8. Martingales are permitted in any Working Hunter or Jumping Classes, but careful consideration will be given to correct fitting and use.

#### Saddles:

1. Saddles must be in good condition and fit both the equine and rider.
2. Treeless saddles are permitted.

#### Shoeing and Leg Protection:

1. Equines can be unshod.
2. Remedial shoeing is permitted.
3. Normal shaped plastic, stick-on shoes are acceptable.
4. Front boots may only be worn when competing in the jumping phase or Working Hunter or Jumping Classes. Hind boots are not permitted. This includes the use of Over-Reach boots.

#### Presentation:

1. Equines should be presented sound and in a fit and healthy body condition.
2. Equines should be presented according to their breed or type. Mountain and Moorland and traditional types should be shown in their natural state / as per their breed standard. Cobs may be hogged and minimally trimmed (please see **GENERAL – 8**).

3. Show type horses / ponies should be shown plaited, (show, hunter and part-breds) but again with minimal trimming (please see **GENERAL – 8**).
4. The use of equine make-up is permitted but should be of a good quality and not result in irritation or burning when used / applied. Equines are not penalised for acquired marks, but blemishes can be covered at the owner's discretion. Excessive use of equine make-up is discouraged and only used when appropriate, (minimal during initial judging) such as for evening performances.

#### **Professional Conduct**

1. Any member of the Rescue Equine Showing Society who behaves in an unprofessional manner or causes any suffering to any equine will be expelled from the Society with immediate effect.
2. Any member of the Rescue Equine Showing Society must always consider the welfare and health and safety of fellow members and competitors.
3. All competing members of the Society must carry Third Party Liability Insurance with an adequate level of indemnity to protect against any negligence that could result in any injury caused by their animals or property.
4. No competitor should behave in an inappropriate manner to any equine, Judge, Steward, Official, members of the public or other competitors.
5. Under the Animal Welfare Act 2006, the parent / guardian of those under 16 years of age are responsible for the welfare of their children's equines.
6. The Rescue Equine Showing Society acknowledges the increased use of various social media platforms but recommends careful and considerate use of this format. You should ensure that any material that you create or share clearly shows that it is your own personal information and opinion. Under no account should you post anything that could be detrimental to the Rescue Equine Showing Society.

### Judges

1. Judges are appointed to the Panel, by invitation only from the RESS Committee.
2. Judges who fail to observe the RESS Rules, or whose conduct in any respect falls below a professional standard will be removed from the Panel whilst concerns are investigated. Judges may be suspended or removed from the Panel of Judges at any time if a concern is raised.
3. It is the duty of all Judges to the Panel to be fully conversant with the RESS Rules. It is essential that they have a Rule Book with them when Judging should any query arise during the running of classes.
4. Judges are not permitted to charge a fee for Judging but may claim reasonable expenses. This fee should be agreed prior to Judging with the Show Secretary.
5. Judges must put welfare first in any situation where they are officiating. This applies not only when in the ring, but to any behaviour / concern observed in the collecting ring areas etc.
6. Any equine showing signs of ill-health or lameness must be asked to leave the class and disqualified. If a Veterinary Surgeon is present at the Show, they should be asked to examine the animal.
7. Any competitor seen ill-treating any equine in any way will be asked to desist and disqualified. A record should be made of the behaviour by those that witnessed the incident and evidence (written notes or any other method of recording ie. Video and or photographic) and submitted to the RESS Committee for consideration. This can lead to disciplinary action.
8. If a Judge is concerned about the weight / health / fitness of any equine presented to them for Judging that they deem is not appropriate they can ask them to leave the class. This also applies to any concern in relation to rider weight ratio (20% rule

applies) and riders must be 'suitably mounted' ie. Appropriate size for their equine. This must be handled with discretion.

9. If an equine falls, at any time during a class, they cannot continue in the class and must leave the ring. Competitors are advised to seek veterinary advice for the equine and for the rider first aid should also be sought.
10. Any competitor misusing the whip may be disqualified. If a child is observed overusing the whip the parent / guardian will be asked to remove the whip and the inappropriate behaviour discussed and addressed.
11. If at any time a Judge is under investigation, by any authority (ie. Police, RSPCA etc), they must make this known to the RESS Committee and stand down from the Judges Panel and any upcoming Judges appointments, with immediate effect. If, at the conclusion of the investigation, there is no case to answer the RESS Committee will consider their re-appointment to the Panel. Dependent upon the nature of the investigation a decision will be made. In those circumstances where there are resulting legal proceedings and result in a conviction, the Judge will be banned from any future membership of RESS.
12. Judges need to be very aware of social media and associations with those that do not put welfare of equines first or have been the subject of investigations resulting in legal proceedings and / or convictions.

**Welfare is at the heart of RESS, and Judges will be fully supported, where appropriate, on decisions that they make if there is a welfare concern in relation to any Equine that they witness whilst officiating.**

### Stewards

1. Stewards are essential to the smooth running of Classes and should be always shown respect, by Judges, Officials, Competitors, Spectators etc.
2. Stewards are encouraged to raise any concerns that they might have in relation to the welfare or safety of any equine to their Judge(s) and / or show organiser.
3. Stewards can check any tack or equipment prior to the commencement of a class.
4. Noseband gauges can be used to assess the tightness / fitting if they are concerned.
5. Spurs are not permitted in any Class (this also applies to adults) and Stewards can ask riders to remove them prior to entering the ring.
6. Any suitable bit may be used, but if a Steward is concerned, they can raise this with their Judge. (Note: only snaffle bridles are permitted in Novice Classes).

**Welfare is at the heart of RESS, and Stewards will be fully supported, where appropriate, on decisions that they make if there is a concern in relation to the welfare of any Equine, that they may witness whilst officiating.**