

BREED STANDARDS

NEW ZEALAND SIDE SADDLE ASSOCIATION

- The Side Saddle Section is based on a traditional form of riding. It is not an Open Showing Section.
- Emphasis is on the horse or pony performing well at all paces on both reins and providing a safe and comfortable ride.
- The combination of the horse and rider should possess a picture of poise, elegance and harmony.
- No rider age restrictions. Junior and Senior (adult) riders compete together in most cases.
- Height certificates are not required.
- It is better to ride first on the right rein. The work in general, should include more on the right rein at all paces. Canter right is much easier than canter left. Left canter twists the rider's shoulders to the left, because her horse is cantering 'into' her legs.
- Trot is all performed sitting, so lengthy trots are less comfortable for the horse and rider.
- Contact the New Zealand Side Saddle Association if you wish to obtain additional information on Judging and riding side saddle.

BEST TURNED OUT CLASS

Format: The class is asked to line up and each exhibit is inspected.

Competitors are not required to work out, but the judge may ask for a short walk or trot so that the hang of the habit can be assessed. The apron (skirt) may be lifted up by the judge to inspect the safety stirrup or fittings and the riders boots.

Marking: A Side Saddle Turnout Class is judged DIFFERENTLY to an astride Turnout Class.

1/3 Rider Attire, 1/3 Saddle and 1/3 Horse and Bridle and overall attention to detail.

Criteria: Correct turnout is governed by the age of the rider and traditionally the type of hat worn. Tradition plays a strong part, with emphasis on correct rider attire and saddle fit.

A Silk Top Hat is the correct formal headwear for adult riders competing at a Royal or Championship Show, or after noon at any A&P Show. With the small fields attending most NZ Side Saddle Sections, the strict rules about when particular headgear should be worn are not always strictly adhered to. Judges take into account this traditional formality at their discretion and generally score the riders simply on the neatness and correctness of their individual turnout.

Senior/Adult Riders may choose to wear a Harnessed Safety Helmet instead of the traditional Bowler or Top Hat and Veil. When a Safety Helmet is worn, a veil is not required. Headwear is taken into account at the judge's discretion in Turnout and Concours d'Elegance classes.

Rider Turnout Attire

- **Correctness and fit of the Headwear & Habit are the most important points.**
- Junior riders must wear an approved safety helmet to match their attire.
- Senior riders may choose to wear a harnessed Safety Helmet instead of the traditional Top Hat or Bowler and veil. When a safety helmet is worn, a veil is not required. Headwear is taken into account at the judge's discretion in Turnout and Concours d'Elegance classes.
- A collared shirt, tie and waistcoat of subdued hues should be worn by all riders except for senior riders wearing a Top Hat, where a cream or white stock or hunting tie is worn. Silk hats are traditionally only worn at major events or after 12 noon at smaller events.
- The Top Hat should ideally be a Silk Hat with a crown height of 4 ½" to 5 ½" (higher than a dressage topper).
- A Veil and a neat Bun must be worn with a Top Hat or Bowler. The brim is worn horizontal.
- The Stock or Tie Pin should be a plain gold bar and worn horizontally. Plain gold cufflinks may be worn.
- The Habit should be a subdued, darker colour. Tweed is only correct with a Bowler or for a junior.
- The Apron should hang well with a horizontal hem (parallel to the ground).
- The Jacket should fit well. The hem should not touch the horses back.
- The Breeches should match the habit in colour, but should not be visible under the apron.
- Adults SHOULD wear a Spur. A false Spur or a Spurband is permitted. A garter strap is optional.
- The rider MUST carry a rigid Cane matching the tack in colour. A dressage whip of a discreet colour is acceptable for classes other than Turnout. Maximum length 100cm for an adult rider and 76cm for a junior rider.

Saddle & Bridle Turnout

- **Good saddle fit is paramount**
- A bridle with two reins (double or Pelham) MUST be worn by any Senior Rider wearing a Top Hat.
 - Otherwise, a double/Pelham OR snaffle bit is permitted on a plain leather bridle to match the saddle.
- Saddle MUST BE clear of the spine, sitting straight and centred, not pinching or restricting the shoulders.
- Stirrup MUST HAVE a quick release stirrup mechanism OR a breakaway safety stirrup/Peacock stirrup.

- The leather must be well maintained, clean, supple and SAFE to use. Most side saddles are old (50 - 100 years), so age must be considered when assessing condition.
- Girth and straps should all be leather, correctly fitted and match saddle in colour (preferably brown).
- Balance Strap, found on off side - MUST HAVE a central keeper on girth under horse - to prevent pinching.
- Numnahs are optional – if worn must be unobtrusive and discreet, well-shaped and clean.

Horse or Pony Turnout

- Well-conditioned, clean and well-groomed, neatly plaited, with overall attention to detail.

BEST PRESENTED/SMARTEST ON PARADE CLASS

Format: Judged as per Turnout class, but variations from the traditional turnout standards are considered acceptable.

Marking: There is no formal marking for this class.

Criteria: Overall impression and appearance of smartness is the deciding factor. Brighter colours and 'bling', acceptable. Decorative browbands, Quarter Marks, Sharks Teeth, decorative whips (regulation length) discreet jewellery and button holes permitted. Traditional headwear requirements are not taken into account.

CONCOURS d'ELEGANCE CLASS

Format: This is only judged from a distance, there is no close inspection and generally no individual workout. The class is generally worked on both reins at walk, trot and canter.

Marking: There is no formal marking for this class.

Criteria: The judge is looking for the most elegantly matched horse and rider and though the quality of paces, riding or turnout will have a bearing on the judging, the most important point is the overall impression of elegance.

BEST PACED AND MANNERED CLASS

Format: This is at the judge's discretion; however, the standard format of a group workout at walk, trot and canter on both reins followed by individual workouts is common.

Marking: There is no formal marking for this class.

Criteria: This class is judged in virtually the same way as an astride paced and mannered class. With emphasis being placed on smooth even paces and a horse who is well mannered, obedient and safe. No consideration given to age, breeding and conformation of the horse.

BEST SIDE SADDLE MOUNT CLASS

Format: This is at the judge's discretion, however, the standard format of a group workout at walk, trot and canter on both reins followed by individual workouts is common.

Marking: General breakdown or the marking is as follows: ¼ Individual Show, ¼ Suitability for Rider, ¼ Manners, ¼ Paces/Suppleness

Criteria: The mount should be well mannered, obedient and safe. In brief, the judge is looking for a horse that will give a comfortable ride and safe ride. Breeding, age, size or colour of the mount is not taken into account, providing the mount is a good match for the rider.

Overall conformation is of lesser importance than is a showing class, but a horse with a good shoulder is preferable, as it will carry a side saddle better. Free forward movement, with smooth quality paces provide a more comfortable ride.

Mounts often have a longer back, so there is room for a side saddle.

Blemishes, splints and straightness of action are not important.

A long free, ground covering walk that appears effortless. The trot should show scope and smoothness, with the action coming from the shoulder.

Hocks should be well under, giving lightness. The Canter should have an armchair look about it. The lengthened canter, if required, should be fast and ground covering, the horse pulling up easily without argument or jolting the rider.

BEST SIDE SADDLE RIDER CLASS

Format: This is at the judge's discretion; however, the standard format of a group workout at walk, trot and canter on both reins followed by individual workouts is common.

Marking: General breakdown or the marking is as follows: 1/3 Straightness 1/3 Suppleness and 1/3 Horsemanship.

Criteria: Overall the side saddle rider must be poised and elegant.

A good rider must be straight and supple and when viewed from behind should appear to the same as for astride except for the position of the legs.

Weight should be evenly distributed, with the rider's hips and shoulders square to the front.

The rider must be supple, free of tension and stiffness. The arms should follow the natural line of the body. Hands held either in the lap or either side of the top knee.

So, not only must the riders' position be correct, the rider must be relaxed and in control of the horse without interference, Faults that actually damages the horse such as a stiff-backed rider who bumps on the saddle, or who does not sit centrally, are to be penalised.

Common Rider Faults:

1. Tense lower leg – easily identified, as the right toes will jut out breaking the line of the habit from the right knee down.
2. Rider twisting in upper body – identified by the right shoulder too far forward and left hip too far back.

3. Rider clenching up into the fixed head with the left leg – identified by the left heel not being down.
4. Rider's reins too short – the rider's hands should not be in front of her knees at any time.

BEST COMBINATION CLASS

This class 'combines' the features of the Best Mount and Best Rider classes, with the quality and overall impression of the horse AND rider being taken into account.

UNITY CLASS

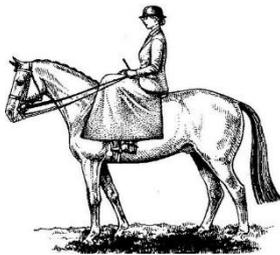
Format: Often used to combine Turnout, Best Mount and Best Rider into one event. The riders can then be either worked as a group or individually or both.

Marking: Score sheets are generally used and provided, with points awarded as 1/3 Turnout, 1/3 Mount, 1/3 Rider.

Criteria: The judging criteria for this class is the same as that for the Turnout, Side Saddle Mount and Rider classes.

CHAMPIONSHIP AWARDS

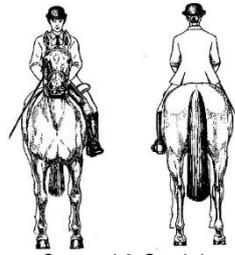
The NZSSA recommends that '**Champion Side Saddle**' is judged from the winners of ALL classes excluding Turnout/Best Presented/Smartest on Parade and Concours d'Elegance, with 2nd placegetters on standby for judging.



Correct hang of habit/apron



Correct Position



Centred & Straight



A nice combination

Side Saddle Classes

Submitted by the New Zealand Side Saddle Association.

Revised 2014 – to replace page 83 Equestrian Rule Book July 2006)

All Side Saddle Classes to be judged on NZSSA guidelines.

Suggested Standard Schedule (recommend maximum of five classes)

Class xxx Best Side Saddle Turnout

Class xxx Best Side Saddle Rider

Class xxx Best Side Saddle Mount – with emphasis on a mount that gives a safe, comfortable and obedient ride.

Class xxx Best Paced and Mannered

Optional Additional or Alternate Classes

Class xxx Best Presented/Smartest on Parade

Class xxx Best Side Saddle Combination Class

(Combine Best Side Saddle Rider and Best Side Saddle Mount)

Class xxx Concours d'Elegance

Class xxx Unity (1/3 Turnout, 1/3 Rider, 1/3 Mount)

The NZSSA also recommends that ALL classes, excluding Turnout/Best Presented/Smartest on Parade and Concours d'Elegance, be eligible for Champion, with 2nd placegetters on standby for judging. The New Zealand Side Saddle Association also recommends that the wording on ribbons reads: 'Champion Side Saddle'