



2026 NASMDA Proposed Rule Changes

The following rule changes have been proposed and submitted to the NASMDA Rules Committee.

Members of the NASMDA Rules Committee are:

Chair: Tabitha Holland

Shannon Hoffman, Cori Daniels, Terri Hurley

The NASMDA Rules Committee met via conference call at 7:00 PM, April 8, 2026. All rule change submissions were either approved or rejected unanimously. Thank you to all members who submitted changes for taking an active role in the future of NASMDA. Your participation is greatly appreciated!

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1. 130 - Leading Breeder Calculation - **APPROVED**
2. 174 - Ranch Rail Pleasure Gaits - **APPROVED**
3. 170 - Ranch Riding Gaits and Patterns - **APPROVED**
4. 113 - Show Approval Fees - **APPROVED**
5. 136 - Adopt a Parent Rulebook - **APPROVED**
6. 174 - Add Ranch Showmanship to Verbiage - **APPROVED**
- 7 165 - Add Verbiage to include Ranch Reining - **APPROVED**
8. Clarify Loping In Training Level Donkey Classes - **APPROVED**
9. Clarify 10 and Under Walk/Trot - **APPROVED**
10. Officer Terms Clarification - **APPROVED**
11. Youth Donkey Walk/Trot Only - **APPROVED**
12. Remove Ranch Conformation must take place at the end of the show - **APPROVED**



1. 130 - Leading Breeder Calculation



Approved as written.

Bylaw or Rule Change Proposal Form

North American Saddle Mule & Donkey Association
due Feb 1, Annually

Mail to (or submit via email - circlebranch@hotmail.com)
Rules Committee
19493 S. 300 Road, Morris, OK 74445
Phone: 641-740-2155

Recommendation for Rule Change

OFFICE USE ONLY	
Standing Committee	_____
Date	_____
Received	_____
Passed	_____
Committee Date	_____
Chairman's Signature	_____

Originator's Name: Phone # NASMA #:

Exiting Rule Number: Page Number:

Related rule numbers affected by this proposed rule change:

Recommendations for Change (Recommendation should be written as it might appear in the Rule Book)

- 19. NASMDA leading Breeder Award: This award will be presented annually to the individual who is listed in NASMDA records as the breeder of the most mules and donkeys earning NASMDA points from January 1 to December 31 of the calendar year. Individual must be a NASMDA member in good standing at the time the points were earned. Points earned in all divisions count towards this award.
- 20. NASMDA leading Jack Award: This award will be presented annually to the NASMDA registered jack whose get (both mules and donkeys) earn the most NASMDA points at approved shows from January 1 to December 31 of that calendar year. More than one mule and or donkey sired by the jack must earn points for the jack to be eligible for the award. The jack owner must be a NASMDA member in good standing at the time the points were earned. Points earned in all divisions count towards this award.

Justification and impact if rule is not changed

Many breed associations show points earned in all divisions and show how those points were accumulated by get. This would give potential breeders and buyers a better breakdown of performance by Jack and Breeders so they can make informed decisions on what would suit them.

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2. 174 - Ranch Rail Pleasure Gaits



Approved as written.

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C. The following are recommended gaits:

G. All mules and donkeys may be judged at the walk, extended walk, trot, extended trot, lope, extended lope, and back as well as on all transitions. Extended gaits must be asked for at least one direction.

Justification and impact if rule is not changed

Change to "recommended" instead of "required" Allows for walk/trot divisions to utilize this class since it currently has "lope" as a requirement. Also allows the gaits called to be at the judge(s) discretion so that the class is in compliance if they don't call ALL the gaits. The extended walk is often missed and without changing the language could deem the class as "illegal" if they are all not called.

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3. 170 - Ranch Riding Gaits and Patterns



Verbiage approved as written. The patterns provided in the current NASMDA rulebook are on par with industry standards for all divisions.

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B. Class Requirements:
 2. The required maneuvers will include the walk, trot, and lope both directions; the extended trot and extended lope at least one direction; as well as stops, and back. Walk Trot Divisions are to be shown at a walk and trot only and may include extended versions of these gaits as prescribed by the pattern.

Justification and impact if rule is not changed

Add verbiage to accommodate walk/trot divisions as it currently requires a lope and extended lope.

****Also recommended to add a couple of simplified walk/trot patterns. The current patterns are really long and have a lot of maneuvers even in them, so adding some simpler options may be beneficial, especially with the donkey divisions.**

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4. 113 - Show Approval Fees



Approved as written.

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Recommendations for Change (Recommendation should be written as it might appear in the Rule Book)

D.1. Show Management must collect two dollars (\$2.00) per every mule entered, not to exceed \$10 per owner, for single judge shows and three dollars (\$3.00) per every mule entered, not to exceed \$15 per owner, for multiple judge shows and forward to the NASMDA office in order for show results processed, unless waived by the Board of Directors.

Justification and impact if rule is not changed

This section only lists the \$2 per animal requirement, so adding the verbiage to match Rule 113.0.6. and the show approval application.

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5. 136 - Adopt a Parent Rulebook



AQHA recommended as approved for parent rulebook.

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Chairman's Signature	_____

Recommendation for Rule Change

Originator's Name: Joy Brigham Phone # 334-790-0372 NASMA #: 11183

Exiting Rule Number: 136 Show protest Page Number: 60

Related rule numbers affected by this proposed rule change: _____

Recommendations for Change (Recommendation should be written as it might appear in the Rule Book)

ADD: Refer to AQHA {or other determined} Rule Book (Parent Rule Book) for show issues pertaining to tack, class procedures, judging if it is not covered in the NASMDA rule book.

Justification and impact if rule is not changed

Formalizing a "parent" rule book to cover any issues not covered by the NASMDA rule book in regards to class procedures, tack, and judging.

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6. 174 - Add Ranch Showmanship to Verbiage



Approved as written.

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Chairman's _____
Signature _____

Recommendation for Rule Change

Originator's Name: Joy Brigham Phone # 334-790-0372 NASMA #: 11183

Exiting Rule Number: 174 Ranch General Rules Page Number: 163

Related rule numbers affected by this proposed rule change:

Recommendations for Change (Recommendation should be written as it might appear in the Rule Book)

- 0. The Ranch mule and donkey classes are designed to show the overall ability of the mule or donkey to perform skills necessary to those of the all-around ranch animal.
- 1. No mule or donkey less than 3 years of age may be exhibited except in the In Hand Ranch Fundamental, Ranch Showmanship and Ranch Conformation classes.

Justification and impact if rule is not changed

Under 3 years of age Mules and Donkeys are not eligible for ridden/performance classes but the Ranch Showmanship was not included in the eligible classes for younger mules like Western Showmanship.

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7. 165 - Add Verbiage to include Ranch Reining



Approved as written.

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Recommendation for Rule Change

Originator's Name: Lindsey Williamson Phone # 704-546-7762 NASMA #: 10416

Exiting Rule Number: 165 Western General Rules Page Number: 117

Related rule numbers affected by this proposed rule change: _____

Recommendations for Change (Recommendation should be written as it might appear in the Rule Book)

F.4. Protective boots may be used only in Gymkhana, Cattle, Jumping, Reining, and Ranch Reining.

Justification and impact if rule is not changed

With the addition of the ranch reining class, we need to make sure it is included in this rule to ensure there are no unnecessary DQ's.

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D Donkey Training Level

2. In Gymkhana classes, participants breaking into a canter or lope for more than THREE strides MUST be disqualified. In judged classes, loping or cantering will be treated as a break of gait and assessed the appropriate penalty.

Page 221

195 General Rules for Timed Events

K. In Ten and under and Training Level Donkey classes, participants breaking into a canter or lope for more than THREE strides MUST be disqualified.

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Recommendations for Change (Recommendation should be written as it might appear in the Rule Book)

Add to **Mule & Donkey Class Divisions** **C. Training Level Donkey**

2. Breaking into a canter for more than 2 strides during the course of a class will result in disqualification.

(re-number current items in this section to allow this as #2 in the list)

Justification and impact if rule is not changed

Clarification for judges and exhibitors. Follows current practices.



9. Clarify 10 and Under Walk/Trot



Page 81

C 10 and Under Youth Walk Trot

5. Lope/Canter, extended gaits, dismounts and drags will be omitted from all under saddle classes.
6. Trail Class: Working the gate is an optional obstacle
7. In Gymkhana classes, participants breaking into a canter or lope for more than THREE strides MUST be disqualified. In judged classes, loping or cantering will be treated as a break of gait and assessed the appropriate penalty.

Page 221

195 General Rules for Timed Events

- K. In Ten and under and Training Level Donkey classes, participants breaking into a canter or lope for more than THREE strides MUST be disqualified.

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Recommendations for Change (Recommendation should be written as it might appear in the Rule Book)

Add to Rider/Exhibitor Divisions, **Section C. 10 & Under Youth Walk/Trot**

5. Classes will be judged by the rules of the specific class with the following considerations:
 - a. Lope/canter, extended gaits and dismounts will be omitted from all riding classes.
 - b. Breaking into a canter for more than 3 strides during the course of a Gymkhana pattern will result in disqualification.
 - c. Trail Class: Working the gate is an optional obstacle.

Justification and impact if rule is not changed

Clarification for judges and exhibitors. Follows current practices. These clarifications were present in past NASMA Rule Books.



10. Officer Terms Clarification



Approved as written.

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Unless otherwise specified in any employment contract approved by the Board of Directors, the officers of the Association shall hold office for a period of **two (2) years** and until their successors are elected and installed.

Justification and impact if rule is not changed

The Rule Book currently states officers shall hold office for a period of **one (1) year**.

This has not been in practice for at least the past 4 Presidencies. The change would reflect current practice.



11. Youth Donkey Walk/Trot Only



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L. YOUTH PERFORMANCE CLASSES (18 AND UNDER)

(Ten and Under is limited to walk/trot and includes both mules and donkeys) Youth donkey classes are limited to walk/trot only.

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Make all Youth Donkey Classes Walk/Trot Only.

Justification and impact if rule is not changed

The Youth Donkey Classes have been some of the smallest classes. There are very few donkeys that can lope with a youth rider. By making these classes walk/trot, we will have a much larger pool of donkeys and youth.

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Committee Date _____

Chairman's Signature _____

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12. Remove Ranch Conformation must take place at the end of the show



Approved as written.

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Mail to (or submit via email - circlehranch@hotmail.com) Rules Committee 19493 S. 300 Road, Morris, OK 74445 Phone: 641-740-2155	Standing _____ Committee _____ Date _____ Received _____ Passed _____ Committee Date _____ Chairman's _____ Signature _____
Recommendation for Rule Change	
Originator's Name: <input type="text" value="Tabitha Holland"/> Phone # <input type="text" value="641-740-1255"/> NASMA #: <input type="text" value="4025"/>	
Exiting Rule Number: <input type="text" value="184-C"/> Page Number: <input type="text" value="36"/>	
Related rule numbers affected by this proposed rule change: <input type="text"/>	
Recommendations for Change (Recommendation should be written as it might appear in the Rule Book)	
<input type="text" value="Remove requirement that Ranch Conformation classes Must take place at the end of the show"/>	
Justification and impact if rule is not changed	
<input type="text" value="Most associations have changes this rule. It gives show managers more flexibility in scheduling classes"/>	
Print and Mail	