

The American Driving Society, Inc.

ADS Rule Changes effective January, 2024

By Lauren Reece, Rulebook Committee Chair

Every January, The American Driving Society, Inc. (ADS) publishes a new Rulebook, which includes any rule changes that were passed and any housekeeping changes, including grammatical issues, omissions, and typos. Any changes from the previous year can be found on the Rulebook Page of the website in a download labeled Redline Version. All changes are in red, so that they are easily identified.

The following are the Rule Changes for 2024.

Combined Driving

- ❖ 945 2.1.2 In Dressage, Grooms must remain seated in their proper positions between entering and leaving the Arena. They are not permitted to handle the reins or the whip (will incur 20 penalties). For Dressage, to speak or indicate the course to the Athlete is not permitted (will incur 10 penalties). However, the Groom may handle the reins, whip and brake without penalty provided the carriage remains stationary.

In ADS-recognized competitions, if the carriage does not have a safe groom seat, the judge may grant permission for the groom(s) to stand with no penalty, grooms on marathon carriages may sit or stand. Grooms are not allowed to change position. Grooms sliding, lifting or moving the vehicle in any way will incur elimination.

Bottom Line:

The allowance for the groom to stand with permission only applies to marathon vehicles. This change will also apply to 975.3.7.

- ❖ Added to CD-C Driving Derby (DD)

6.5. Shorts are not permitted. A penalty of 10 seconds will be added to the score for each person on the carriage wearing shorts. At ADS-recognized events, non-permitted "shorts" are defined as clothing that does not cover the legs to the ankles

Bottom Line:

This change keeps Derby rules in line with other Combined Driving Events.

- ❖ 928.1 Dress in Dressage and Cones on a Dressage Carriage

4.4 The dress of Athletes and Grooms must conform to the style of the Carriage and harness used. Jackets or national dress, driving aprons, hats or protective headgear and gloves are obligatory for Athletes. **~~At ADS-recognized events, jackets are optional for lady drivers.~~**



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Bottom Line:

The ADS exception has been removed, and now jackets are required for all athletes.

❖ 960.2.8

2.7 Marathon competitions:

DIVISION	TOTAL DISTANCE		PACE & SPEED					
	MIN KM	MAX KM	SECTION	PACE	SPEEDS KPH			
					HORSE	PONY	SM PONY	VSE
Training	8 ^{2,3}	12.5	Sec A	Any pace	14	13	12	9
			Trsfr	Any pace	-	-	-	-
			Sec B ¹	Walk or trot only	13	21	11	9
Preliminary	8 ^{2,3}	14	Sec A	Any pace	14	13	12	40 11
			Trsfr	Any pace	-	-	-	-
			Sec B ¹	Any pace	14	13	12	9.5 10.5
Intermediate	10, 8 ^{2,3}	15	Sec A	Any pace	15	14	13	40 11
			Trsfr	Any pace	-	-	-	-
			Sec B ¹	Any pace	14	13	12	40 11

1) All divisions - Walk or trot only from last obstacle or last 300m to end of Section B, see [960.6.2](#).
 2) The Transfer Section minimum distance is 800 meters and the maximum distance is 1500 meters
 3) See 960.2.7(d) whenever Controlled Warmup option is used

2.8.1 ADS Option – Two-section Marathon

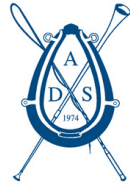
DIVISION	MIN DISTANCE	MAX DISTANCE	SECTION	PACE	SPEEDS KPH			
					HORSE	PONY	SM PONY	VSE
Training	8 ²	12.5	Sec A	Any pace	10-12	9-11	8-10	5.5-7.5
			Sec B ¹	Walk or trot only	13	12	11	9
Preliminary	8 ²	14	Sec A	Any pace	10-12	9-11	8-10	6-8 7-9
			Sec B ¹	Any pace	14	13	12	9.5 10.5
Intermediate	10, 8 ²	15	Sec A	Any pace	11-13	10-12	9-11	6.5-8.5 7.5-9.5
			Sec B ¹	Any pace	14	13	12	40 11

Bottom Line:

Speeds for VSEs in Preliminary and Intermediate have been increased.

❖ 962.3.6:

In ADS-recognized events, ~~Drivers with limited mobility, and Athletes with and ADS, USEF or FEI Dispensation~~, will be permitted to drive themselves or be driven through marathon obstacles using a mobility device at a walking pace in golf carts or similar vehicles.



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Bottom Line:

Any mobility device may be used with an applicable dispensation. This change was also made in Art. 973.7.1

- ❖ 943.2.19 *At ADS-recognized events, all athletes competing with a disability dispensation utilizing a quick release seatbelt must have a groom riding on their carriage at all times, **while the carriage is moving. When stopped, the groom must be within 2 meters of the turnout at all times.** This includes competition, warm-up and schooling.*

Bottom Line:

Athletes with a quick release seatbelt may have groom down to make harness adjustments and other tasks, as long as they remain within 2 meters in case they need to remount quickly.

For Organizers and Officials

- ❖ 935.2 First Horse Inspection

At ADS-recognized events, the First Horse Inspection is at the option of the Organizer. When required, it must be stated in the ADS Omnibus.

- 2.1 This must take place at all Events before the start of the first Competition. It must be performed under the direction of the President of the Ground Jury, ~~together with at least one other member of the Ground Jury, and the Veterinary Delegate and/or the President of the Veterinary Commission. See [FEI] Veterinary Regulations and Guidelines for OCs and Officials for details.~~

Bottom Line:

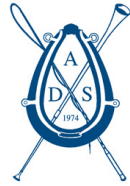
Only one member of the jury must be at the First Horse Inspection.

- ❖ 935.5 In-Harness Inspection before Cones

5.1 The In-Harness Inspection must be carried out before the turnout starts the Cones test, only when Cones follow Marathon. It must be performed by ~~an Inspecting Committee consisting of one member of the Ground Jury together with~~ the Veterinary Delegate, ~~or the Veterinary Commission~~. The Inspection is obligatory at all Events when Cones follow Marathon. The Horse(s) must be presented by the Athlete himself. Competing without presenting will result in an Elimination.

Bottom Line:

Member of the Jury does not need to be present during the In Harness Inspection, but will be called by vet if there is an issue. The Veterinary Delegate cannot eliminate a competitor.



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Pleasure Show Officials and Organizers

❖ Article 201 Judges and Technical Delegates

Judges' decisions representing their individual preferences are not protestable. Inquiries concerning irregularities or incidents during the Event/Show and the outcome of Pleasure classes for technical reasons may be made at any time during the competition. Objections must be made to the Technical Delegate no more than one hour after the posting of class results. **The organizer shall supply a scribe for Pleasure Driving Obstacle Classes.**

❖ 237.6 *Start and finish lines for all obstacle courses should be a minimum of 3 meters wide, and marked by a pair of cones.*

Bottom Line:

Both of these changes will prevent errors and confusion during obstacle classes.

LOOKING AHEAD:

The coming year will have our technical committees working on:

Training Level Rules in regard to Advanced drivers

Pony Measurement Program

Recent FEI Rule Changes

***Remember, Rule Change Suggestions for 2025 open January**

1.