

Minnesota Hooved Animal Rescue Foundation “Promise of the Future” Training Competition

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

How do I enter the Promise of the Future Training Competition?

All you need to do is go to our website and download an application, fill it out, and send it in! There is a nonrefundable \$25.00 application fee per trainer.

Is every trainer who applies guaranteed a horse?

Unfortunately we cannot guarantee that every trainer who applies will be accepted into the competition. Because of time and space constraints, we will be limited to 6-8 entrants and may receive more applications than we have available horses.

What qualifications do you need to enter the Promise of the Future Competition?

You don't need to be a professional trainer to enter the competition! We do ask that all entrants have enough experience training horses to ensure a positive outcome for both horse and trainer, as this experience will be very formative for these horses and will shape the rest of their lives. Pairing them with a trainer who, even though well-meaning, may not be qualified to train that particular horse, will only be detrimental to the horse and unsafe for the trainer. We believe that many amateur trainers will find that competing in the Promise of the Future is a perfect way to gain experience for future larger competitions (like our Trainer's Challenge of the Unwanted Horse) and a career as a professional trainer!

Can trainers work as a team?

Yes, trainers can work as a team of two or more people (within a reasonable limit). Trainers working as a team need only fill out one application, but every team member has to sign his or her own release form.

Where do the horses that compete in the competition come from and how does MHARF choose which ones will be entered?

All of the horses are the property of MHARF and have come to us either through humane cases where the owner has been ordered to give up possession of their animals or they have been voluntarily surrendered (in cases where the owner can no longer care for them or is deceased). In order to qualify as an entrant, the horse must be over the age of one year and under the age of 4 years (and not started under saddle). Many of the horses who will be placed in the competition will have had very little handling. Some of them have come from recent humane cases and will have their first long-term positive contact with people when they are sent home with their trainers. We do take a horse's past experience and temperament into consideration when pairing horses with trainers.

Does MHARF assign horses to trainers or are they are paired randomly?

Although random assignment may seem to be the fairest way to go, it is definitely not the safest or most practical. When pairing trainers with horses, we do a certain amount of “matchmaking”. Making sure that each trainer is paired with a horse that fits their abilities is very important to us. Making sure that each horse has as positive experience as possible during their time in training is equally important. Many of these horses have come from situations where they have been starved, injured, neglected, or handled inhumanely. Their interaction with their individual trainer will be the most important contact they have had with a human and will shape the rest of their life.

What condition will my horse be in when I pick it up?

It is always our goal to have the horse be in good weight and condition to start training. However, some of these young horses may have come in recently from humane cases and may yet need to gain some weight. This will be assessed on an individual basis. At no time will a trainer be assigned a very thin horse or one with any ongoing health issues. The horse will have all veterinary work done and hooves trimmed. It will then be up to the trainer to maintain the condition of the horse throughout the training season, including routine hoof care.

Do trainers ever get to choose their own horses?

We do take into account a trainer's preference for a certain horse. While we can never guarantee that a trainer will receive a certain horse, we do feel it is in the best interest of the horse to pair it with a trainer who shows a preference for it. Trainers who apply to the competition early are more likely to have some say in the horse they are assigned.

Am I allowed to promote my training business through the challenge?

Absolutely! At the beginning of the training period each trainer will be asked to start a Facebook page for their horse to show their progress, post pictures, and answer questions. We will share these pages with our extensive Facebook following and post links to them on our website. You will receive instructions before the competition begins on how to specifically to set up your Facebook page. There is a prize given to the trainer who keeps the best page! During the competition itself, each trainer is given a space in which to display any materials they choose to provide (photos, newspaper articles, videos, testimonials, brochures, etc.). We will also post your business link and contact information on our website.

How are the horses adopted out after the challenge, and do the trainers have an advantage if they want to adopt their horse?

Anyone interested in adopting one of the competition horses needs to be pre-approved. That is why we strongly recommend people watch the Facebook pages and contact the trainers throughout the summer. We ask that the trainers return emails and phone calls from potential adopters and also be willing to show the horse to anyone who may be interested in being pre-approved before the competition. During the competition we hold a silent auction. At the end of the event the bidding is closed and the horse is adopted out to the highest pre-approved bidder. If there are two or more people bidding on the same horse, we will then turn to a live auction format to make the bidding as fair as possible. A trainer is welcome to bid on a horse. If you plan on bidding, having someone else bid by proxy is usually a good idea because it may be difficult for a trainer to make it to the bidding table on time.

Do the horses leave the competition with their new owners?

We prefer to send the horses home with their trainers for a short time to limit stress after a hard day in a strange environment. Arrangements for pick up or delivery after that can be made among MHARF, the trainer, and the adopter.

What is my financial responsibility while I have my competition horse?

The trainer is required to provide basic care for the horse, including high quality hay and grain as required per individual horse, continuous access to clean water, shelter and bedding, routine hoof care, and any

necessary training equipment. All routine vet work will have been completed before the competition. The trainer must maintain the health and condition of the horse throughout the training season and not subject the horse to any environment or situation that may pose a direct danger. In the event of an unforeseen illness or injury to the horse, MHARF will cover veterinary expenses.

What sort of facility do I need to qualify as a trainer?

Above all the facility must be safe and clean. We don't allow horses to be kept in barbed wire fencing and we require that all t-posts be capped. Some of these young horses may not be used to certain types of fencing, so we reserve the right to place horses according to the fencing at the training facility. The horse must have access to shelter w/ clean bedding during inclement weather. A certain amount of turnout time is also required. Because horses are social animals, we don't require the competition horses be kept separate. Pasturing your horse with one or two other horses is fine as long as you are certain there won't be any aggressive behavior and bullying, and as long as the horse is able to access food, water, and shelter safely. As far as training facilities, you can work wherever you are most comfortable. We don't require trainers to have indoor arenas or round pens, but we reserve the right to send certain horses we feel may need these particular tools to trainers who have access to them.

Is there prize money? How is it distributed?

Yes, there will be prize money, along with other prizes! Because this is the first year of this competition, we are still in the process of acquiring sponsors for the event, and therefore the amount of prize money and its distribution is yet to be determined. We will post updates on this as soon as possible!

