

The Canadian Road Horse Association

Road horses are represented by the Canadian Road Horse Association – a non-profit organization formed in 1970 to promote this alternative use of Standardbred horses.

The Association conducts a number of events throughout the year to promote the road horse including an annual meeting & banquet, clinics, and fundraisers.

In addition, the Canadian Road Horse Association honours the heritage of the road horse and exhibitors through the establishment and maintenance of the Canadian Road Horse Hall of Fame.

For information on upcoming events or local shows, check out the website at www.roadhorse.ca.



www.roadhorse.ca



The Canadian Road Horse Association
Email: roadhorse@roadhorse.ca
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The History

Before the automobile when horses were the primary mode of transportation, great pride was taken in having a fine driver, also known as a road horse or roadster.



Used primarily as personal transportation for country doctors, preachers and farmers, these horses were admired for both their speed and beauty. Challenges and competitions were often staged to determine who had the fastest horse, and local bragging rights. Today's road horse evokes images of this bygone era.

The Horse

Today, road horses are exclusively Standardbred trotters. This versatile breed is best known as a harness race horse and many of the horses seen in the show ring have competed as race horses on the track. The ideal road horse will have an attractive appearance, balanced conformation, exhibit a free and easy trot gait, and be well mannered.



Roadster Shown to a Wagon
(Photo by Shoot Photographic)

The Show Ring

Known as the speed horse of the show ring, much enthusiasm is expressed by the crowd when these brilliant animals are exhibited.



Roadster Team Class
(Photo by Christine Handley)

Roadsters enter the ring in a clockwise direction at a jog, and are then asked to increase speed to a "road gait". After reversing to the counterclockwise direction, they are presented again at a jog, a road gait, and then at speed or "drive-on". All speeds are exhibited while maintaining a trot. The entries are then lined up in the centre of the ring for the judge's final inspection of conformation and manners.

The Roadster is exhibited primarily in two styles:

- Shown to a wagon or buggy – a four wheeled vehicle similar to that driven by a country doctor.
- Shown to a bike or road cart – a two wheeled vehicle similar to a harness racing bike, with drivers wearing racing colours in the style of harness drivers of the 1940's.



Roadster Shown to a Bike
(Photo by Linda Wollaber)

Within these styles, horses are divided by size, with classes offered for horses under 15.2 hands and horses 15.2 hands and over.

In addition, classes can be offered for teams – two horses hitched as a pair, as well as for ladies, junior exhibitors (under 18) and under saddle.



Roadster Under Saddle
(Photo by Shoot Photographic)

Generous sponsorship has been provided by the Ontario Harness Horse Association of a class for "green" or novice horses, shown less than two years or 5 years of age and under. The addition of this class at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair continues to encourage the development of Standardbred horses as road horses.



OHHA Green Roadster Classic
(Photo by Lynn Cassels-Caldwell)