

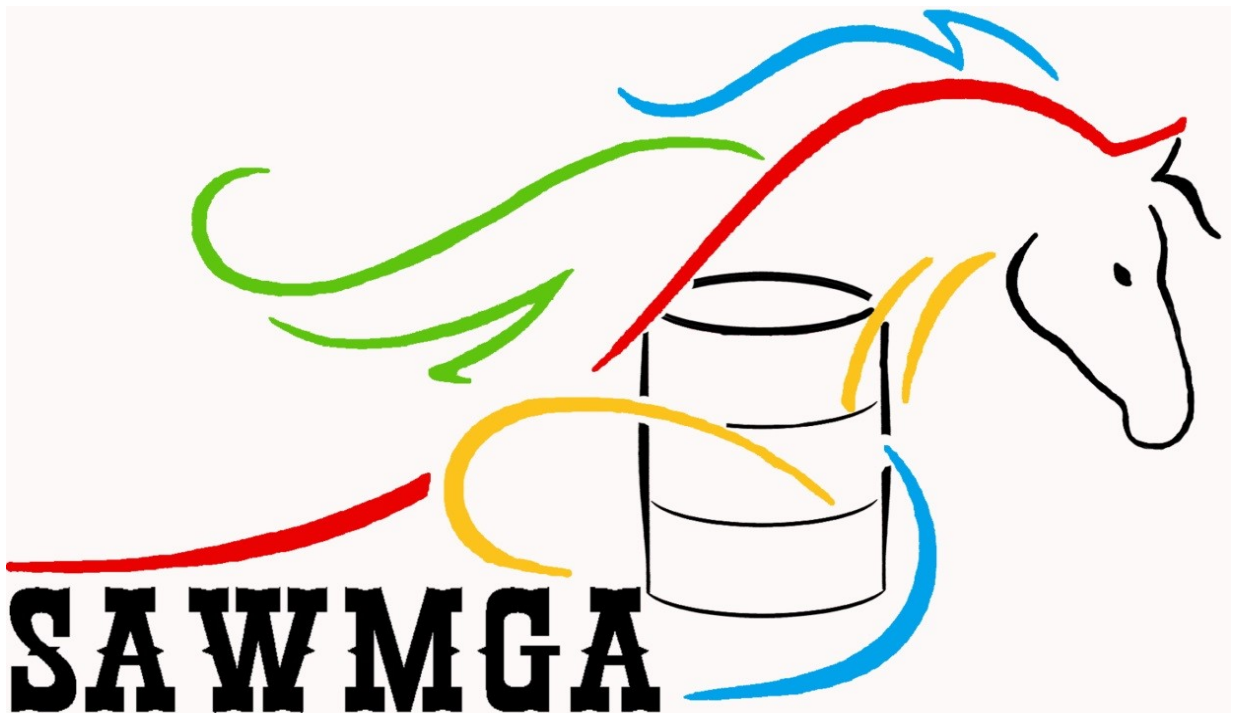
# South African Western Mounted Games Association REGULATIONS

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# **Introduction to SAWMGA**

SAWMGA was formed in 2011 by a group of Western enthusiasts for the sole purpose of growing the sport of Western Mounted Games through the development of both horse and rider and the welfare of Western Mounted Games riders. Today SAWMGA is the only Western Mounted Games organization in South Africa.

SAWMGA has created a structure for Western Mounted Games with standard rules and training programs. All riders, from Lead line to Level 4, now have the opportunity to win awards in Western Mounted Games as they develop their riding capabilities.

1. SAWMGA, is comprised of a Member Club and its affiliated Provinces and districts throughout South Africa. The district clubs choose their own representatives to sit on the SAWMGA Provincial Committee and the Chairperson of the Provincial Committee have a seat on the National Executive Committee (National Office).
2. SAWMGA does not interfere with local club business so long as there is no conflict with the SAWMGA rules or Bylaws. SAWMGA's programs are designed to complement and support the needs of riders at both the National and local levels.
3. SAWMGA supports its districts/clubs by providing year end awards for the riders, rule books, information manuals, National Championship Show, Provincial Qualifier Shows, Provincial School Qualifier Shows and the SAWMGA Annual General Meeting and Awards Banquet.
4. SAWMGA developed a Western Mounted Games Rule Book in 2011 that is the primary standard for Western Mounted Games throughout South Africa
5. SAWMGA supports both horses and ponies and has Divisional Competition at the National level for each.
6. Unlike most organizations which provide awards for a relatively few people in the Country, SAWMGA has numerous riders that may sign up in its various programs and a large number of these riders attend and are honored at the SAWMGA Annual National Championships.

## **Section 1: How To Win In Western Mounted Games.**

Western Mounted Games is the action packed, precision sport of the equestrian world. A good Western Mounted Games horse not only must have the speed of a race horse, but the turning ability of a cutting horse and the control and responsiveness of the stock horse. Western Mounted Games has its origin in colonial Gymkhana, but some games have been dropped and others of American Indian and modern American origin such as the rescue race, barrel racing and cattle classes have been added, making it a sport that has a distinct American western riding flavor. The word 'Gymkhana' is said to have originated in India, meaning 'games on horseback'. English military, which in those days used horses for both transportation and military maneuvers, would

get together on a Sunday afternoon and compete in horseback games. In the United States, Western Mounted Games are still referred to as 'Gymkhana', but in other parts of the world including South Africa, Gymkhana is understood to encompass the games of British origin such as tent-pegging, ring spearing and pony club games. Western Mounted Games in South Africa only includes the American Gymkhana events.

Along with the increased interest in this sport has come more competition and the need for extensive training techniques so that both the horse and rider can achieve their best performance. It is not simply speed that is required from the horse. Training and the correct techniques are vital to the welfare of both horse and rider and the key to success. It seems that most riders starting in Western Mounted Games think they should ride as fast as possible to get the best time in an event. This is surely the wrong way to begin. It is very hard for a horse to know what to do when he hasn't done something before. All he knows is that he is being asked to run as fast as he can, then his head is jerked around to turn a barrel or pole (and none of this makes sense to him) and then is asked to run again and come to a stop as fast as he can. If this is done very much, a horse will be spoiled in Western Mounted Games before he ever learns what it is all about. The following suggestions on starting a horse for Western Mounted Games were written for this publication by Western Mounted Games riders:

1. Warm up your horse for at least 10 minutes by jogging/trotting initially, then move to cantering/loping in large circles prior to asking him to perform in the arena. This will help keep him settled and assist in the prevention of injury.
2. When training, walk your horse through an event until your horse is relaxed with the pattern. Then practice at a jog/trot through the same course until he is at ease at this speed. As your horse is able to negotiate the event under complete control, increase the speed. If he starts having control problems in the event, slow him down a little. Remember, the key phrase is "Never go faster without complete control."
3. **When practicing**, immediately after each lope or run in an event, walk the horse back through the event. If the horse is still nervous, walk him a second or third time.
4. School your horse with figure eights and general turning without poles or barrels. This will teach a horse to listen for a rider's commands. Also set up random poles and barrels to ride past to teach horse to learn to wait for your cue before turning an obstacle.
5. If a horse starts to anticipate an event and is knocking down obstacles, practice the course in reverse. For instance, on Poles, run him the

opposite way once in a while. Go back to practicing random obstacles until your horse is listening for the turn cue.

6. When stopping a horse after running an event, don't jerk him down to a quick stop. Ask him to stop by saying "Whoa" and slow him down by turning him into a circle if necessary. It is important that you begin stopping him at about the same place after the finish line each time so that he will create a habit of stopping on his own, making it easier for him and safer for the rider.
7. Before going into an arena to run an event, check your equipment. Make sure the cinch on the saddle is tight, the bit and curb strap are fitted properly, and the stirrup leathers are in good condition. A good saddle fit is essential for both your horse's comfort and your safety.
8. Spurs are not generally used to make a horse run faster. Spurring when running will generally shorten the horse's stride. However, spurs are very useful for moving a horse sideways. Spurs, correctly used, may help in events such as Poles I and II. Care should be taken to never cut or gouge your mount with spurs.
9. Too much whipping, jerking or spurring will make a horse 'gate sour' and the horse may refuse to go into the arena. The welfare of the horse is paramount and excess whipping, spurring or jerking will be penalized in events.
10. If you are going to be riding all day at a show, loosen your horse's saddle and give him a rest, feed and water between each event. Most horses use much more energy throughout the day carrying around their riders than they do competing in the arena. Dismounting is the best reward you can give your horse. Horses that are rewarded will want to run again.

## **Section 2: SAWMGA Approved Shows and Club**

### **Membership**

#### **2.1 General Procedures**

The fun and enjoyment of competing with your horse at a Western Mounted Games show can be very rewarding for both the rider and family. A Western Mounted Games show is a place to meet new friends and win a rosette or a trophy. Many riders start at the lower levels of competition and by their personal perseverance progress to the advanced levels. It takes time and patience.

SAWMGA training shows and competitions occur regularly throughout South Africa. The SAWMGA show districts and show schedule are listed on the SAWMGA Web site. If you are not on the SAWMGA mailing list to receive information, contact the SAWMGA Head Office at **info.sawmga@gmail.com**

The SAWMGA Annual Awards Function is part of the annual SAWMGA National Championship where riders are honored and receive their awards. Attendance at the Awards Function is not a requirement but it is certainly an experience that many riders treasure.

The objectives of the SAWMGA National Championship are:

1. Provide an opportunity for Provincial riders to earn year end awards.
2. Provide extra or special incentives for riders to excel at their current level and progress to the next level.
3. Provide an opportunity for the most outstanding riders to participate in championship level competition that may enable them to earn special awards.
4. Assist in the development of sportsmanship and the individual character of riders in a wholesome family-oriented environment.

## **2.2 SAWMGA Club Membership**

- Club Membership is a requirement for any rider to compete in SAWMGA approved competition shows and to be eligible for points, rankings, selection for the annual national competition in October/November each year and year end awards.
- SAWMGA membership is administered by the South African Mounted Games Association and is open to any person upon application of an individual membership or a family membership and payment of the required fee.
- Annual Membership is valid from the 1<sup>st</sup> of January to the 31<sup>st</sup> of December.
- Annual membership fees is payable as determined by Council
- Membership includes one specified primary horse per member, and additional horses may be added to the membership at R100 per horse per annum.
- Failure to renew annual membership by 31 December, will result in an additional penalty fee of R250 to renew.

\*Family membership is limited to 6 individuals within a family unit, is defined as immediate family members residing at the same address and may include parents and their offspring under the age of 18 or siblings only.

Membership application forms may be obtained from the SAWMGA National office.

SAWMGA club membership has many benefits, including but not limited to:

- Participation in any SAWMGA sanctioned show at any district in the Country, unless otherwise sanctioned by a district
- Eligibility for selection to compete in annual regional and national events
- Recognition and standard year end awards
- Prize money and sponsored prizes at sanctioned shows
- Discounts at SAWMGA clinics, shows and events
- Discounts from participating sponsors (tack shops, horsebox rental, clothing outlets etc)
- Eligibility to attend SAWMGA sanctioned courses run by the Western Mounted Games Association and to become a SAWMGA certified course builder, coach and judge
- Eligibility to apply to become an approved WMG Club to facilitate training shows and SAWMGA shows for members in your area

## **2.3 Divisions of Competition**

There are generally two philosophies of running horse shows relative to the division of competition. SAWMGA does not make the decision for how each district or club divides their competition at their local shows. This is the decision of each local district or club.

However we will try to explain for the benefit of the reader the difference in philosophy of the two kinds of divisions of competition that are seen at different shows.

### **2.3.1 Age Group Concept**

Some show managers divide their competition by the age of the rider, believing that riders should compete with their own peers in the same age bracket. Thus, for example, a 10 year old rider does not compete with a 20 year old rider. These shows generally have the following age groups: (1) 12 & under, (2) 13 through 17, and (3) 18 & over. Sometimes a pee-wee and/or an old timers class is added. This makes sense when it is the rider being judged on subjective criteria (judge's opinion).



## **2.3.2 Speed Division Concept**

In Western Mounted Games, the judging is objective. The timer and not the judge, determines the placing. The SAWMGA use Speed Divisions at their shows because they believe that a rider's age has very little to do with the ability of a rider and horse. They believe that the rider/mount combination should compete against riders/mounts with similar ability. Therefore, they use the SAWMGA Speed Division Time Charts (see Appendix A) and divide their competition accordingly. By using this method, fast riders ride against other fast riders, regardless of age. This means fair competition for all. Beginners ride against beginners and intermediate riders ride against intermediate riders. These shows generally include 5 classes that include Future Champion, Levels 0, 1, 2, 3 and 4 with each division being faster. Of course all of these classes are not required if the number of riders doesn't warrant them. Classes are sometimes combined when the number of riders in a class is less than 3. Also, many clubs with large numbers of riders further divide their speed divisions into age groups, Level 2, 12 & under, Level 2, 12 & over, etc.

It is the choice of each district to use the type of division they think is best for their riders. All of the SAWMGA districts are currently running under the Speed Divisions concept and are further divided by age within their largest divisions. Generally shows using Speed Divisions have more riders than age group shows.

## **Section 3: Western Mounted Games Events**

### **3.1 Western Mounted Games Events**

SAWMGA has Thirteen (13) individual events and four (4) team events.

The individual events are: Barrel Race (BAR), Bi-rangle Stake Race (BR), Figure 8 Flag Race (F8F), Figure 8 Stake Race (F8S), Hurry Scurry (HS), Keyhole (KH), Pole Bending 1 (PI), Pole Bending 2 (PII), Quadrangle Stake Race (QR), Speedball (SBL), Speed Barrels (SBR), Single Stake Race (SSR) and the Big T (BT). Team events consist of the Ribbon Race, Rescue Race, Poles Relay, and Speedball Relay.

Some of these events favor horses/ponies that have speed and some events favor horses/ponies that have good control. There can be quite a variation in the times obtained by riders in each of the events. As riders become more proficient they become more consistent in the times obtained in the various events. Riders may find that they have a different rating for different events. This is normal. The course layout and the rules for running each of these events are given in the SAWMGA Rule Book.

## **Section 4: SAWMGA Sponsored Shows**

**NOTE:** No shows may be held during the dates on which any Provincial Shows, National Championship Show or Convention are held. No Lead Line rides or schooling rides are allowed at any SAWMGA National Sponsored shows.

## **Section 5: SAWMGA National Championship Show**

### **5.1 National Championship Show**

The SAWMGA National Championship Show open to members, is the largest and most prestigious Western Mounted Games Show held in the Country. It is normally held in September/October and is open to all Provincial riders who qualified as set out in the selection criteria determined by council. It is days of not only good competition, but fun for the riders and families alike. Many families find that it makes a very enjoyable vacation for the whole family. The Western Mounted Games match races which are held as a separate part of the show offer the ultimate in excitement for both riders and spectators. Thousands of Rands are given out at this show in cash and prizes. A National Championship Trophy is given to the winner and runner-up of each individual event at the National Show. Also, any person who breaks a record for an individual event is given a special award at the annual SAWMGA Awards Function. Other awards are also given out at the SAWMGA National Championship Show eg. Overall National Champions and Overall Reserve Champions in each level of competition, as well as a Floating Trophy for the Overall Winning Province.

## **SECTION 6. SAWMGA Annual General Meeting and Awards Function**

Each year, normally in September/October, usually coinciding with the National Championship, SAWMGA has its Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Awards Function where all members come together to honor individual Provincial riders and Provincial Teams for their achievements.

# Section 7: Start Your Own Local Western Mounted Games Club

## 7.1 General Information

Any person can start a new club through the Members Club. The major requirement imposed on WMG clubs is that sanctioned SAWMGA shows must

be run in accordance with SAWMGA Rules and regulations, without exception. These rules and regulations are designed to:

1. Ensure equal opportunity for the contestants.
2. Maximize the safety of the horse and rider.
3. Establish a reasonable code of dress and conduct.
4. Ensure humane treatment of all animals.

## 7.2 Advantages Of Club Affiliation

There are a number of advantages to both a Club and its riders in being associated with SAWMGA through membership and affiliation. The biggest advantage is that riders want to attend SAWMGA sanctioned shows so their rides will count towards selection in Regional and/or Provincial Teams. Each club may appoint one of their members to represent their club to the SAWMGA Provincial Structure with voting privileges to ensure that their riders' views are heard.

## 7.3 Requirements To Become WMG Club

*Requirements To Become WMG Club (Updated, OGM 02/2018)*

Any individual that is a current SAWMGA member, and who wants to start a new club can apply to SAWMGA through the Members Club and host SAWMGA shows if they meet the following minimal requirements.

The new club must:

1. Be willing to host training shows and assist with district and provincial qualifiers.
2. Have enough riders and workers who are willing to participate in the local area. It is necessary to have a petition signed by:
  - a. Five (5) riders who are members or who will sign up as SAWMGA members and attend shows,
  - b. Five (5) people to work at a show as secretaries, announcers, gate persons, etc.,
3. Have access to an arena that is safe and large enough to run events for a training show.
4. Have access to at least one SAWMGA Accredited Senior Judge.

5. Pay an annual affiliate-Membership fee as determined by the Board of Directors at the AGM.
6. Have their own bank account
7. Have a club committee consisting of at least a President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer elected at an official inaugural meeting. **The Club President and EXCO of a multi discipline club, does not need to all be SAWMGA members, but the club should then appoint a discipline specific (SAWMGA) representative as an additional member of club to represent SAWMGA. (Updated, AGM 09/ 2018)**
8. Have a signed Club constitution.
9. Club Affiliates are expected to support SAWMGA as follows:
  - a. Support regional and national shows and assist where necessary with accredited judges.
  - b. Provide loan of equipment and timers as may be required
  - c. Uphold SAWMGA rules and regulations.

## **Section 8: Club Management Guidelines**

### **8.1 WMG Clubs Duties & Responsibilities**

Individuals who chose to become members of a club generally have a President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and a Board of Directors who are elected or appointed by their local membership. They may start as a new organization or work through their existing riding club or school. In general, their duties and responsibilities are to:

1. Promote an atmosphere of camaraderie and take care of the needs and desires of their members.
2. Recruit and appoint qualified personnel to head each committee.
3. Ensure that riders have a fair and equitable chance to ride and achieve some degree of success and recognition.
4. Promote excellence in horse shows, judging, and management in accordance with SAWMGA rules when running SAWMGA sanctioned shows.
5. Appoint a representative to the SAWMGA Provincial Board of Directors to ensure that club needs are heard at the National level and to report back to the local districts, SAWMGA National decisions and goals.
6. Promote SAWMGA programs and activities that are designed for SAWMGA members.
7. Uphold SAWMGA rules and regulations.
8. Ensure the availability of emergency medical and veterinary personnel on site during ALL shows.

## **8.2 Horse Show Manager**

Club management should appoint a Horse Show Manager. The Horse Show Manager plays a major role in the success of each club. Either he or a qualified alternate should be in attendance at each show. He/She will be responsible for the overall operation of the horse shows put on. His/her success depends greatly on his ability to choose the proper people to discharge the duties that are needed for each of the operations involved in running horse shows. She/he should stay in constant contact with each of these people to ensure that their phase of the show is well prepared and will be successful.

Major areas of responsibility rest with each of the following:

1. Show and awards secretaries
2. Grounds and Equipment Director
3. Judges
4. Announcers
5. Gate Keepers/Arena Crews
6. Time writer and computer operator.

The Horse Show Manager's duties and responsibilities include the following:

1. Establish show schedule and send to the SAWMGA office for approval.
2. The following information should be available for distribution at least 30 days prior to the date of a show:
  - a. Division of competition and events to be run.
  - b. Awards to be given.
  - c. Location of the show and map and/or instructions for finding the show grounds.
  - d. Show starting time.
  - e. Availability of food and drinks.
  - f. Entry fee per class.
  - g. Name, address, and telephone number of Show Secretary.
  - h. Any other general information or ground rules for the show. However, ground rules must not be in conflict with rules of the South African Western Mounted Games Association.

## **8.3 Show Secretary**

A club should have a Head Show Secretary. The duties and responsibilities of the Show Secretary include the following:

1. Prepare and organize the paperwork required for starting and running the show.

2. Solicit and schedule all of the help required to run the show, i.e.; awards, rosettes, booth, signup, judges, gate and arena crews.
3. Set up a program for training new secretaries so that the same people do not have to work every show. For example, Show Team A runs a show on week #1 and Show Team B runs a show on week #2, etc. You need to cross train people for all tasks.
4. Complete the SAWMGA Show Summary Form with accompanying show results for transmittal to the SAWMGA National Office within one week.

## **8.4 Announcer**

Announcers at any show are very important to the success of the show. An announcer can make a show fun or can be upsetting to riders. Do's and don'ts of announcing are as follows:

### **Do's**

1. Be upbeat and cheerful. Never make any negative comments over the PA system for any reason.
2. Explain how the show will be run; i.e. dress code, either age groups or speed divisions and the sequence they will be called to run, awards they will be competing for that day, and that their runs will count toward district and year end awards if they are registered for these awards. Additional information can be obtained from the Horse Show Secretary.
3. A clear voice is imperative.
4. Check the volume and clarity of the sound system and how close to hold the mike. Make sure the riders can hear you in the warm-up areas.
5. Have a system to call up the rider that is to ride and the riders who need to be ready. For example: Our event will be single stake race, our 1st competition is the 12 years and under class. The 1st rider is Julie Jones, Tanya Smith on deck, and John Davis be ready.
6. Pronounce the rider's name correctly. If unsure, ask how to pronounce it correctly.
7. Announce the names of your judge, secretaries, and gate people.
8. Keep the show running at a fairly fast pace.
9. Watch for signals from the judge. The judge has complete control of all arena functions including the announcers booth and timers. Do NOT announce the result of any ride until you have a signal from the judge.

### **Don'ts**

1. Never use profanity or off color jokes.
2. Never show anger or negativity.
3. Never call a good ride and time *or a timer malfunction* before you get the

judge's signal.

4. Don't leave the mike on and allow the public to hear conversations going on in the booth.
5. Don't discuss the riders among yourselves.
6. Don't announce anything or talk while the rider is on course unless the judge signals you to do so for safety reasons.
7. Never make personal comments about a rider over the PA system.
8. Remember that you are the announcer, not the show manager or judge. If there is a problem, let the show manager or judge work it out.
9. If the timer fails, do not say so until the judge gives the signal for a good or bad ride. If the rider does not have a good ride, it does not matter whether the timer worked or not.

## **8.5 Judge**

The Judge has total control of the activities in the arena. The Judge generally knows more about the rules and the SAWMGA procedures than most other individuals. All Judges **MUST** be a fully carded SAWMGA Judge. The Judges decisions are final. Judges should keep up to date on all approved changes in the rules that are not currently published in the SAWMGA Rules Book. An apprentice judge must judge under the direct supervision of a carded judge. The judge must stand in the arena at all times while judging. It is impossible to properly judge a show without giving continuous and full attention to all activities going on within the arena.

**NOTE:** Judges making improper calls or decisions may be required to be retested by the Master Judges Committee.

## **8.6 Grounds And Equipment Chairperson/Course Builder**

A good Grounds and Equipment Chairperson is a must for a successful show. He or she is responsible for seeing that the ground is worked up properly to ensure a fast and safe arena prior to the show and make sure that all of the equipment is available and operable for the show such as poles, barrels, speed ball cones, golf balls, hurry scurry jumps, measuring tapes, rakes, chalk, sand, buckets, flags and electronic timers. All equipment required for a show and it's specifications are described in the SAWMGA Rule Book.

All SAWMGA sanctioned shows will need a SAWMGA certified Judge/Course Builder.

## **8.7 Gateperson**

The gateperson is more important than most people understand. His or her duties include the following:

1. A good gateperson will check all riders for proper dress code before they enter the arena so the rider will not be penalized. The gateperson should watch for directions from the judge.
2. Speed up the show by having the next rider at the gate and ready to run.
3. Open and close the gate as rapidly as possible consistent with good safety practices.
4. Encourage each rider with a compliment - i.e. "Good luck", "Nice Ride", "Go get 'em", "You can do it", etc.

The gateperson has more personal contact with the riders than any other person at the show. Therefore, his/her attitude can either make or break a show for the rider and district.

Choose your gateperson carefully. It is extremely important that the gateperson not open the gate prematurely.

## **8.8 Membership Chairperson**

Duties and responsibilities of the Membership Chairperson are as follows:

1. Identify and officially welcome all new riders at each horse show.
2. Personally greet the riders with the SAWMGA Club Membership packet and any additional district information.
3. Personally explain the riders program on club/region and Provincial level and outline all benefits of SAWMGA membership.
4. Personally introduce the new rider to at least three other regular riders.

## **8.9 Treasurer**

Duties and responsibilities of the Treasurer are as follows:

1. Receive and disburse operating funds.
2. Maintain records and prepare financial reports as required.
3. Give a treasurer's report at club/local Board of Directors and General Meetings.

## **8.10 Publicity Chairperson (Scribe)**

1. Submit district news to the SAWMGA Office by the 10th of each month for publication.

Include the photographs of riders and information about their activities and accomplishments. Most clubs send their articles and photos via Email. Please attach photos as **.jpg** files. Do not include them in the body of the Email or text.

2. Provide information to all local establishments who are willing to disseminate Western Mounted Games information to riders in your area. For example, posters and show information.



3. Also, provide the SAWMGA Club Member Office with the Name & Address of any tack, saddle, or feed stores and stables that you would like to receive the SAWMGA newsletter, promote the sport to their clients or sponsor prizes for events. The objective, of course, is to provide the kind of publicity that will increase attendance at your shows.

## **8.11 Approved Show Dates**

Each show district must submit all proposed show dates (except training shows) and start times to the SAWMGA National Office (Annually) in time for approval of the shows. (Plan Show dates in November for the following year)

This requirement is necessary for the following reasons:

1. To avoid conflict with show dates of neighboring show districts whenever possible.
2. So riders throughout the region should have an equal opportunity to attend any show.
3. No SAWMGA approved shows may be held during the dates on which the National Championship Show or SAWMGA AGM are held.

The SAWMGA National Office must be notified of all show cancellations within 24 hours.

## **8.12 Show/Premium List**

Some districts use only the SAWMGA Website to advertise their show. Others use both flyers and telephone & email committees in addition to the newsletter. If you send flyers, the following checklist of information riders look for in a flyer may be helpful. This information is needed in any event to answer telephone inquiries regarding your shows. If you prepare flyers, they should be mailed to tack shops, stables, etc., for placement on bulletin boards and should be mailed to prospective riders approximately 3 weeks prior to a show. It should contain the following information as a minimum:

1. Name of SAWMGA Show Club/District & Date/Day of Show
2. Address of the Show Arena (also map showing location is desired)
3. Show Starting Time
4. Divisions of Competition
5. Entry Fee/Event: Regular Show Events & Special Setups
6. Awards to be Presented
7. Events Listed in the Order They Will Be Run
8. General Information/Ground Rules for the Show
9. Availability of Food/Drink on Show Grounds
10. Show Manager/Secretary's Name & Telephone Number
11. Combining of Classes
12. Dress Code

## **8.13 SAWMGA Membership**

An application for membership in the South African Western Mounted Games Association should be displayed at the Signup booth.

## **8.14 Play days**

Rider times resulting from a SAWMGA District Play day or training show do not count as regular SAWMGA Approved Shows whose results count toward SAWMGA District or Provincial Qualifiers. However, a district may put on a Play day if the following conditions are met:

A Play day may be advertised in the District News section of the Show Calendar section of the Website.

## **Section 9: How To Promote A Good SAWMGA Show**

Make certain that show management assignments are made, i.e. show and awards secretaries, announcers, judges, gate persons, grounds preparation and arena personnel. These people should all be contacted by the head of the show committee at least a week in advance.

**THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT.** There should be one person assigned the task of mingling with the riders throughout the day to make each person there feel welcome and to be prepared to answer any question regarding the club and the awards programs. At this time the people can also be recruited to assist at the shows as gate persons, assistants to the secretaries, handing out awards, etc. People like to feel needed and made to feel that they are an important part of the show, which they are. This friendly envoy of the club and SAWMGA will do wonders for your club and for SAWMGA's growth.

Too many times show management is so involved in putting on the show that they forget the riders need to feel wanted, needed and special, and they need to know what the club and SAWMGA has to offer them.

You don't want "just another horse show". If the above steps are taken you will form a special alliance with the riders and the parents which will undoubtedly benefit your club and the SAWMGA.

*So, don't forget...make them feel special, welcome and informed.*

## Section 10: What Makes A Successful District/Affiliate Club?

In analyzing what makes clubs successful, there are a lot of factors which may not really be addressed in the internal thinking of the club officers and members.

The best asset a club has is "Enthusiasm" from its leaders and members with the riders best interest in mind. This is fairly easy to attain when a club is new and just beginning, but within a few years this can change drastically. Analyzing how this evolves may allow redirecting our priorities to ensure a healthy and growing club.

*When a club first starts, there are many people involved with the total participation of organizing the club; in voicing their opinion as to what would make riders want to belong and ride with their club. Everyone is enthusiastic about finding the right arena, talking to all of their friends about joining with them to be a part of something special. Everyone does their part helping in all of the areas of the show, such as secretaries, arena crews, food, etc. They are all working for a common goal, to collectively be successful, and each one involved gets some personal satisfaction from the club's success because they had a personal hand in making it happen. As time goes by, the enthusiasm may decrease, and generally the control of the club may go to only a few people. When this happens, the involvement of the total club's planning and action may not be shared any longer with the majority as far as decision and input are concerned. Some members could subconsciously feel slighted, thus bringing negative comments and complaining. If this starts to happen, unrest throughout the club could set in. As leaders, remember to be responsive to the needs and feelings of the members, and, as members, remember; give your leaders the authority to make decisions for the club on your behalf; members have a responsibility to help the elected directors to carry out the duties required to make the shows and club activities successful, then everyone can have a successful club that responds to all in unity and harmony.*

*It's not unusual for members to have some personal conflicts in their approach to the operations of the club, but if they continue to pursue their common goals they should all be big enough to set aside any trivial difference that they may have so that riders may enjoy the sport and have a feeling of pride and camaraderie about and within the club.*

*It's wise to remember that everyone needs self-esteem. To criticize either openly or behind the scenes any individual who is trying to help is really uncalled for. After all, the people who work in any aspect or function within the club are usually unpaid volunteers and personal criticism isn't part of the job. It should be remembered that no one is perfect but at least they are trying.*

Some of the ways to keep the enthusiastic spirit is by:

- (1) always attracting new members and letting them be part of the club
- (2) have a training program for judges, announcers, secretaries, etc. It's a well known fact that if the work load is not shared (which can be fun) a person who is always overworked will burn out. It's natural. Everyone doing a job at a show should always make an effort to get someone else and train them to do that job. This should happen at every show. If this is done, no-one needs to work the entire show. There should be plenty of others to alternate with the work load throughout the day in each job. This makes everyone a part of the show and the club.

Of utmost importance at shows, there are three critical areas that management and members should be aware of; the Signup secretary, the announcer, and the gate person. These people have a major influence on the attitude of the riders as to whether or not they will want to be a part of the club or want to come back to the next show. It is imperative that these three jobs be handled with a very positive attitude and each rider be treated with respect as a friend.

Throughout the year each club will experience new riders and their families coming to shows. It's up to the club, its members and its management as to whether or not these people will want to come back and be involved in the club. If they are treated special, they will be back. If they are ignored or not made to feel welcome, then you can guess the outcome.

The success of any club is to keep its enthusiastic spirit and remember the ideas that were the focus point for the formation of the club in the beginning.

## **Section 11: WMG Club Meetings**

Club Meetings are an intricate part of making a District/Province successful. If mishandled, these meetings can cause dissension among the members. The biggest problem at board meetings is **allowing resentment and animosity to come between board members on a personal level**. If council meetings are run properly, this will not happen.

Some suggested rules for conducting a council meeting are as follows:

1. The President should send out an agenda of the items to be discussed at each board meeting. The agenda should be sent out 30 days prior to the meeting so as to ensure that members have the time to digest the topics to be discussed. Each council member should have time to prepare adequate inputs to the subjects to be discussed; spur of the moment decisions are rarely healthy. The agenda should include Minutes of the Last Council Meeting, Treasurer's Report, Old Business, and New Business, and "Other Comments or Concerns".
2. Never have Council Meetings that are unnecessary. No one enjoys taking their time to go to a board meeting that is unnecessary.
3. The president should start every meeting with these ground rules;
  - a. We all agree that we have the right to disagree.
  - b. No comments of a personal nature will be tolerated against another member.

exceptions."

c. When a topic is presented, every member shall have an opportunity to give their input on the subject "without interruption."

e. Have open discussion and input by board members about new subjects that could help the club/district. The new subjects and ideas for consideration should be taken up at the next council meeting after the members have had sufficient time to evaluate the different suggestions.

f. Stick to your agenda and keep the meetings as concise as possible. If the discussion wanders away from the topic at hand, the President can simply remind the group that the topic under discussion is, and request that they discuss that topic.

## **Section 12: SAWMGA Judges**

**The following path needs to be followed to become a SAWMGA Approved Judge:**

- 1. Complete a SAWMGA Accredited Junior Judge's Course**
- 2. Complete a SAWMGA Accredited Senior Judge's Evaluation**

### **12.1 Rules Committee**

The SAWMGA Rules Committee consists of ALL Senior SAWMGA Judges. Since it is not practical to gather the Rules Committee in one place except at Nationals, the Board of Directors (NEC) created the Master Judge Committee (MJC). This committee has the responsibility to interpret ambiguous rules throughout the year as needed, and present clarifications and rules changes as needed to the Rules Committee at Nationals, where they will be voted on.

### **12.2. Master Judge Committee (MJC)**

This is a committee consisting of ALL Active Master Judges. Inactive Master Judges may participate as well, if they choose to do so. It has the responsibility to make rulings on ambiguous situations that come up throughout the year, review and decide on the final disposition of suspended Judges, and any other functions as directed by the Rules Chairman and the Board of Directors.

### **12.3. Rules Chairman**

The Rules Chairman is the person elected by the MJC to be their spokesperson. The SAWMGA President appoints the MJC spokesperson to be the SAWMGA Rules Chairman. The Rules Chairman is a member of the Board of Directors and the spokesperson for the MJC, but does not have absolute authority regarding rules interpretation. Instead, the Rules Chairman presents the question to the MJC and then reports the decisions of the MJC.

### **12.4. Master Judge**

A Master Judge is recognized as having superior knowledge and experience regarding SAWMGA, its rules and the organization in general. By virtue of being a Master Judge, they are also a member of the MJC. The specific duties and authority of a Master Judge are:

- a. Give written tests to prospective SAWMGA Judges. Be willing to travel to other areas to do so.
- b. Give Arena tests to prospective SAWMGA judges. Be willing to travel to other areas to do so.
- c. Provide 'on site' support to new and existing SAWMGA Clubs/Districts. Each Master Judge is responsible for specific SAWMGA Clubs/Districts in his/her responsible area. They are responsible for assisting the Clubs/Districts in any way possible.
- d. Monitor the performance of existing SAWMGA Judges. If a Judge is not judging fairly, making bad calls consistently, etc., the Master Judge has the authority and responsibility to temporarily suspend that Judge's card, pending a review by the MJC. This, of course, is not a decision to be made lightly. The Master Judge should explore all other possible solutions before suspending a Judge's card. If the card

is suspended, the Master Judge must take the responsibility to provide Judges for that district until the matter is resolved. Further, the Master Judge must report the situation to the Rules Chairman immediately, so that the MJC can act on the issue as expeditiously as possible.

- e. When the SAWMGA National Office receives a petition for a new SAWMGA Club, an active Master Judge and the relevant Provincial secretary will be assigned to that district to provide or make arrangements for any and all materials, training and support needed to get the district up and running.
- f. A Master Judge has the authority to override an Arena Judge's decision only if the call demonstrated that the Arena Judge misinterpreted a Rule. A Master Judge may override the call whether or not a protest has been filed, since to not do so would be unfair to the rider. Normally, a Master Judge should not override a call, but should speak with the Judge in question and explain the situation, requesting that the Arena Judge reverse their own call.

## **12.5 Criteria to Become a Master Judge**

### **1. General**

- a) A SAWMGA Master Judge candidate is an individual who has not only received their judge certification from SAWMGA, but upholds the highest standard of SAWMGA.
- b) They will have a demonstrated history of supporting SAWMGA and its programs.
- c) They are very knowledgeable in the structure and history of the organization, the regulations, the rules, and the intent behind the rules. They are able to provide correct answers to any question about any aspect of SAWMGA.

### **2. Management experience**

A SAWMGA Master Judge candidate shall have served in a management capacity at Provincial and National Levels. At the National Level, this includes serving in some management capacity at the National Show. At a Provincial level, this includes being a show manager.

### **3. SAWMGA commitment**

A SAWMGA Master Judge candidate shall have demonstrated a commitment to SAWMGA by having served as an elected member of the Provincial Council for a minimum of two years. This does not include being a District/ Club Representative. The candidate shall be willing to travel to support SAWMGA's programs.

### **4. Experience**

A SAWMGA Master Judge candidate shall have been a SAWMGA member for at least 3 years, and an active carded SAWMGA Senior Judge in good standing for at least 2 years (longer is preferred). 'Active' means that they currently judge SAWMGA shows on a regular basis, both in their local district and in other districts. They shall have judged as a Senior at the SAWMGA National Show for at least two years. They shall be acknowledged by their peers and riders as being fair, impartial and an adherent of the rules.

### **5. Character**

A SAWMGA Master Judge Candidate shall be generally regarded by the SAWMGA membership as diplomatic, tactful, impartial, ethical, open to suggestions and appear to have good decision-making skills. They shall have demonstrated an ability to make 'hard' decisions, even when those decisions are unpopular.

## **12.6 Nomination Procedure to Become a Master Judge**

1. The Board of Directors and the MJC must agree that there is a need for an additional Master Judge in a specific area.
2. The MJC will then survey for potential candidates, based on the above criteria.  
**First priority will be given to active Senior Judges in the area.**
3. When a suitable candidate is found, they shall be nominated by at least two (2) members of the MJC. The candidate must accept the nomination before the process can go any further. They must be apprised of the responsibilities of a Master Judge, and agree to accept those responsibilities.
4. The full MJC shall vote on that person's candidacy to become a Master Judge. It shall require a 2/3 majority of the votes to move the nomination to the Board of Directors.
5. The Board of Directors shall receive the nomination from the MJC, conduct additional interviews as needed, and then confirm the vote of the MJC. A simple majority of the vote of the Board of Directors shall be required for confirmation.

## **12.7 Master Judge Status**

A Master Judge has a lot of responsibility, and there are times (personal situations, 'burned out', etc.) when they are unable or unwilling to perform the responsibilities of the position. Consequently, Master Judges may, at their own choosing, elect to change their status to one of the 3 listed below.

1. Active - The Master Judge is completely active and fulfilling the responsibilities of the position.
2. Inactive - The Master Judge is taking time off. They are not giving tests or actively participating in the functions of SAWMGA. They may still judge at shows, and participate in the discussions of the MJC, but may not vote on Rules & questions presented to the MJC.
3. A Master Judge may remain in Inactive Status for a maximum of 6 months, at which time they must choose to return to Active status, or move to the Retired status. During the period of inactivity, Districts assigned to the Master Judge will be temporarily reassigned to other Master Judges by the Rules Chairman.
4. Retired - At some point, a Master Judge may decide that they have 'done their time' and no longer wish to fulfill the responsibilities of the position. They notify the MJC and Board of Directors that they are retiring from Active status. As recognition of the services provided over the years, they then become a Retired Master Judge. They may no longer give tests, participate in MJC discussions, or perform any of the duties of a Master Judge. The Rules Chairman will permanently reassign their Districts to other Master Judges. If, at some point in the future, they decide they would like to resume their duties, they must petition the Board of Directors to be reinstated as an Active Master Judge. A majority vote of the Board of Directors is required to reinstate a Retired Master Judge.

## **12.8 Senior Judge**

A Senior Judge is recognized by the Master Judge for his or her area as having the potential to become a Master Judge. They have broad knowledge and experience regarding SAWMGA, its rules and the organization in general. A Master Judge may appoint a Senior Judge to help him or her with the duties of a Master Judge as a first step in training them to become a Master Judge in the future. Senior Judges are appointed by the



Master Judge for their area, and have responsibility and authority only in the district(s) they are assigned to.

For a Snr Judge to maintain their ACTIVE status, they must:

- a) Be an affiliated member of SAWMGA
- b) Judge at a minimum of 3 shows per year
- c) Attend a refresher course, organized by their Province, at least once every 2 years.
- d) Attend the Rules Committee Meeting at least once every 2 years
- e) Judge /work at Nationals at least once every three years (non-Rider Judges).
- f) Judge /work at Nationals at least once every five years ( Rider Judges).

The duties of a Senior Judge are:

- a) Help less experienced Judges make difficult calls.
- b) Select and sponsor Apprentice Judges.
- c) Report any problems to the Master Judge for their area so that they can be resolved quickly.
- d) Assist the Master Judge in giving written and arena tests.
- e) Have the authority to override a bad call made by a Junior Judge, but ONLY after consultation with the Master Judge. Normally, a Senior Judge should not override a call, but should speak with the Junior Judge in question and explain the situation, requesting that the Junior Judge reverse their own call.
- f) Participate in Protest discussions at a National Sponsored show with the MJC, but will not have a vote on the decision.

## **12.9 Criteria to Become a Senior Judge**

### **1. General**

A SAWMGA Senior Judge candidate is an individual who upholds the highest standard of the SAWMGA. They will have a demonstrated history of supporting SAWMGA and its programs. They have a broad knowledge of the structure and history of the organization, the bylaws, the rules, and the intent behind the rules.

### **2. Management experience**

A SAWMGA Senior Judge candidate shall have served in a management capacity at the District Level. This includes being a club officer or show manager.

### **3. Experience a. A SAWMGA Senior Judge candidate shall have been a SAWMGA member for at**

least 2 years, and an active SAWMGA Junior Judge in good standing.

b. 'Active' means that they currently judge a minimum of 3 SAWMGA shows per year, both in their local district and in other districts.

c. They shall be acknowledged by their peers and riders as being fair, impartial and an adherent of the rules.

### **4. Character**

A SAWMGA Senior Judge Candidate shall be generally regarded by the SAWMGA membership as diplomatic, tactful, impartial, ethical, open to suggestions and appear to have good decision-making skills. They shall have

## **12.10 Nomination Procedure to Become a Senior Judge**

1. The Master Judge for a specific area shall have the authority to approve an existing Junior Judge for Senior Judge status to the MJC, based on the above criteria.
2. The nominee will then have to successfully complete a written and arena test.
3. The MJC will discuss all nominations and recommend the selected Judges, as decided on, for Senior Status to the National Committee. Conversely, if the MJC feels the Senior Judge is not performing their responsibilities, the MJC has the authority to remove a Senior Judge and revert them back to Junior Judge status.

## **Section 13: SAWMGA Organization And Management**

### **13.1 General Information**

See the SAWMGA Bylaws for the SAWMGA Organization and its relationship to the SAWMGA Show Districts.

### **13.2 Sources Of Revenue**

The sources of revenue for SAWMGA are from membership dues, levies charged per entry for SAWMGA Provincial Qualifier Shows, National Championship Show and an occasional special fund raising project. All of this money is returned to the riders as benefits in one way or another.

### **13.3 The SAWMGA Budget**

SAWMGA's entire function is to support Western Mounted Games clubs and their members. The General Manager runs the SAWMGA office, administers SAWMGA policy and supports SAWMGA activities, and hires help as required to handle the administrative details associated with the organization. The yearly budget is comprised of; administrative expenses, General Manager's fee, office lease, office supplies, rule books, postage, supplies used to support the SAWMGA programs; SAWMGA awards, insurance, and the newsletter/website. The SAWMGA annual budget can exceed R200,000 in any given year, of which SAWMGA spends all, with the exception of a carry over to offset the decreased income during the off season. The carry over amount varies from year to year, but is always sufficient.

Details of SAWMGA's fiscal status are presented at each Board of Director's meeting. SAWMGA's books and tax records are open to all SAWMGA members.

## **Section 14: The SAWMGA Rule Book**

### **14.1 Historical Background**

The South African Western Mounted Games Association has adopted the complete Rule Book of the California Gymkhana Association (CGA) and of the American Quarter Horse Association (Cattle Classes). CGA has developed a Gymkhana Rule Book that has become the standard for Western Mounted Games throughout California. The Gymkhana rules that came into existence in 1972 were contained, within the rule books of large equestrian organizations who were primarily concerned with the English and Western shows. The Gymkhana rules within these books were, in general, different from one organization to another even for some of the same events and they were not necessarily designed with the needs of the Gymkhana rider in mind. CGA believed that the sport of Gymkhana could not develop to the status it deserved until Gymkhana rules were standardized. This is the reason why SAWMGA adopted the rules as set out by the CGA.

### **14.2 Guidelines & Criteria For Development**

CGA embarked on an effort to review all Gymkhana (Western Mounted Games) rules that were available in 1972.

The intent was to maintain as many of these rules as possible so that an orderly transition could be made to a standardized rule book. This rule book was written by Gymkhana people for Gymkhana people. To accomplish this objective, the following six general guidelines were established:

1. Keep the number of rules to a minimum.
2. Design rules, when possible, to eliminate penalties when the penalties are based on value judgments of judges. However, in all cases where a value judgment is required by a judge, instruct the judge to rule in the favor of the contestant when there is any doubt as to the circumstances.
3. Provide an equal number of speed and skill events.
4. Design rules to ensure one or more of the following criteria:
  - a. Ensure equal opportunity for the contestants.
  - b. Maximize the safety of the horse and rider.
  - c. Provide a reasonable code of dress and conduct.
  - d. Ensure humane treatment of the animals.
5. Recommend procedures to:
  - a. Assure that the judge has an opportunity to evaluate whether a rider can complete the course safely.
  - b. Improve horsemanship practices,
  - c. Provide procedures to be followed so that Western Mounted Games shows will run smoothly.
6. The rule book should contain only the rules and guidelines required for judging a show. It does not contain information about other activities or

programs of SAWMGA. These general guidelines have enabled CGA to make changes and additions to the Gymkhana rules that existed in 1972 to arrive at the rules that currently exist in the CGA/ SAWMGA rule book.

### 14.3 Provisions For Updating The Rule Book (Updated, OGM 02/ 2018)

SAWMGA’s rules are continuously being monitored by show management and SAWMGA judges for possible improvements. If any changes are felt to be needed, recommendations are made to the SAWMGA Master Judge Committee. The SAWMGA Master Judge Committee discusses the proposed change and makes a formal recommendation to the General Membership for input, to be voted on at the next Board of Directors General Meeting. However, the Board of Directors has the power to make a change at any time if circumstances, such as safety considerations, warrant such change.

Changes are usually fairly small. Updates to the Rulebook will be placed on the SAWMGA website and circulated to the Board of Directors for distribution to their clubs and members. All SAWMGA Judges should also be informed about updates to the Rulebook.

## Appendix A:

### 2017 Matrix

Event	Level 0 Time >	Level 1 Time <=	Level 2 Time <=	Level 3 Time <=	Level 4 Time <=
Barrel Race	28.971	28.971	24.361	22.213	21.155
Bi - Rangle	20.642	20.642	18.088	16.756	15.589
Big T	22.767	22.767	19.893	18.043	16.794
Fig 8 Flags	27.610	27.610	21.107	17.498	14.726
Fig 8 Stake	16.472	16.472	14.198	13.182	12.395
Hurry Scurry	19.736	19.736	14.814	12.855	11.474
Keyhole	13.183	13.183	10.497	9.251	8.493
Poles I	16.811	16.811	14.814	13.105	12.057
Poles II	34.667	34.667	29.954	27.358	25.386
Quadrangle	29.838	29.838	26.006	23.886	22.344
Single Stake Race	14.677	14.677	12.338	11.414	10.594
Speed Ball	13.906	13.906	10.891	9.439	8.635
Speed Barrels	15.557	15.557	12.853	11.910	11.048

## Appendix B:

### ARTICLE 1 - NAME

This organization is known as the **South African Western Mounted Games Association**, and shall do business as **SAWMGA**

## **ARTICLE 2 - PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE**

This organization shall be a nonpartisan, nonsectarian, and nonpolitical organization. It shall promote and further the sport of Western Mounted Games, Western Horsemanship and related horsemanship programs based upon the principles of competitiveness and recreation to satisfy the membership and public. It shall provide an attitude of wholesome sportsmanship and respect for fellow participants. It shall develop a program that will provide fun, enjoyment and competition for the membership and develop programs that promote the acquisition of skills needed to succeed in Western Riding.

## **ARTICLE 3 - MEMBERSHIP**

No person shall be allowed to ride in any sanctioned SAWMGA horse related function without first becoming a member of SAWMGA. Membership shall be open to all persons regardless of race, color or creed who indicate an interest in the purpose and objectives of this organization. Any member in good standing may add any agenda items at any Board of Directors meeting.

## **ARTICLE 4 - POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

These Bylaws establish SAWMGA Policy. SAWMGA will maintain a written Procedure Manual that will define process and procedure for all operations of the organization.

## **ARTICLE 5 - RULING BODY**

The Board of Directors shall consist of the following:

An elected President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Nine (9) elected Board Members (To represent all nine of the regions or Provinces. All Delegates must be SAWMGA members in good standing.

## **ARTICLE 6 - MEETINGS**

An annual meeting shall be held during the month of October/November, at Convention unless the President, with the approval of the Directors, fixes a new and different date. Notice of the annual meeting, also stating where the meeting shall be held, shall be mailed to each member of the Board of Directors, each District and will be posted on the SAWMGA website at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting. There shall be at least two (2) additional Board of Directors meetings annually. The time, date, and location of the meetings shall be decided on mutually by the incumbent Board of Directors. Any member of SAWMGA shall have the opportunity to attend any board meeting. A majority of the Board constitute a quorum for any meeting. The President and (3) three members of the Board of Directors shall have the power to call special meetings as prescribed in the SAWMGA Procedure Manual. Those members in attendance shall constitute a quorum for all General Membership meetings. The majority vote of those members in attendance shall prevail. To vote, a member must be at least 18 years of age.

## **ARTICLE 7 - FINANCES AND OPERATIONS**

The fiscal year shall be JANUARY 1 to DECEMBER 31. The SAWMGA Board of Directors shall be responsible for all SAWMGA finances and the day to day operation as described in the SAWMGA Procedure Manual.

## **ARTICLE 8 - AMENDMENTS**

These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the membership in attendance at the General Meeting or by a unified vote of the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors by majority vote of the quorum may make all rules, which they at their discretion may deem necessary to carry out the forgoing Bylaws.