



# SOUTH AFRICAN WESTERN MOUNTED GAMES ASSOCIATION

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## SOUTH AFRICAN WESTERN MOUNTED GAMES ASSOCIATION (SAWMGA) SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY AND COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

Effective Date: 16 January 2026

**Applies to:** All SAWMGA members, officials, employees, parents of minors, coaches, administrators, volunteers, provincial structures, and any persons acting on behalf of SAWMGA.

As we continue to grow and promote the sport of Western Mounted Games, it's imperative that we maintain a professional and positive presence on social media platforms. To ensure consistency and uphold the values of our organization, we are implementing guidelines for all future posts, effective immediately. Please disseminate this information to your respective teams and members.

This guideline covers the use of social media by all SAWMGA members, in both personal and professional capacities, when related to Western Mounted Games.

No content that does not follow the SAWMGA social media and communication guidelines may be posted on any SAWMGA-related or affiliated social media platforms. Any content featuring any of the points below may also not be reshared, mentioned, or tagged.

The words 'Western Mounted Games', 'WMG', 'South African Western Mounted Games', or 'SAWMGA' may not appear on any content not adhering to the SAWMGA social media and communication guidelines.

Posts that do not comply with this policy may be requested to be removed, and repeated violations may result in disciplinary action in accordance with SAWMGA regulations. Imagery is viewed through the lens of public perception, not the intent behind the post.

### 1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

1.1 Social media is a powerful tool that allows SAWMGA and its members to promote Western Mounted Games, engage with stakeholders, and grow the sport nationally. When used responsibly, it strengthens our community and reputation. However, misuse of social media carries legal, reputational, welfare, and ethical risks. This Policy sets out clear rules, standards, and guidelines for acceptable and unacceptable social media use. Its purpose is to:

- 1.1.1 Protect the reputation, integrity, and values of SAWMGA;
- 1.1.2 Ensure consistent, professional communication;
- 1.1.3 Safeguard horse welfare and ethical riding standards;
- 1.1.4 Provide clarity on branding, conduct, and accountability;
- 1.1.5 Reduce legal and disciplinary risk.

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**President:** Hennie Mey; **Vice President:** Sarel Kritzinger; **Secretary:** Arinda vd Berg; **Admin officer:** Letitia Venter; **Treasurer:** Anika Cloete

1.2 This Policy supersedes all previous SAWMGA social media or communication guidelines.

## **2. DEFINITIONS**

- 2.1. For purposes of this Policy, “social media” includes any platform or digital facility used for online publication, communication, or commentary, including but not limited to Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, TikTok, X (Twitter), YouTube, LinkedIn, blogs, forums, websites, and any future platforms.
- 2.2. “Intellectual Property” refers to the trademark: “SAWMGA”, or any portion thereof such as “WMG”, “Western Mounted Games” or “South African Western Mounted Games” which trademark is registered in the name of South African Western Mounted Games,
- 2.3. “Published content” refers to any content that has been seen by at least one other person, whether public, private, or shared via screenshot, forwarding, or reposting.

## **3. SCOPE OF APPLICATION**

3.1. This Policy applies to:

- 3.1.1. All SAWMGA members (including minors);
- 3.1.2. Parents or guardians where members are minors;
- 3.1.3. Officials, judges, coaches, administrators, committee members, and employees;
- 3.1.4. Provincial and national SAWMGA structures;
- 3.1.5. Any person acting in an official or representative capacity for SAWMGA.
- 3.1.6. In the event of any person or institution/association transgressing this policy that do not resort under paragraphs 3.1. – 3.1.5 supra or whom does not regard this policy applicable upon them, shall SAWMGA safeguard its intellectual property where applicable in terms of the applicable legislation and law principles.

3.2. This Policy governs:

- 3.2.1. Content posted on SAWMGA national, provincial, or affiliated platforms;
- 3.2.2. Personal social media content that relates to, references, depicts, or impacts SAWMGA, Western Mounted Games, its events, members, or horses;
- 3.2.3. Private content that is shared, forwarded, captured, or published publicly;
- 3.2.4. Real-world conduct that is digitally recorded and published on social media.

3.3. Your obligations under this Policy apply regardless of whether you use a private, anonymous, or public account.

## **4. GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

4.1 Responsibility and Accountability

- 4.1.1 Nothing about social media changes your responsibilities to SAWMGA. You are legally responsible for everything you post, share, like, comment on, or reshare.

4.2 Publication and Permanence

- 4.2.1 Once content is shared with another person, it is considered published and may carry the same consequences as traditional media. The internet does not forget.

4.3 Freedom of Expression

4.3.1 While members have the right to freedom of expression, this right may not unjustifiably infringe on the rights, dignity, privacy, or reputation of others or SAWMGA.

#### 4.4 Good Faith and Professionalism

4.4.1 Your relationship with SAWMGA is based on good faith. You must not do anything online that may bring SAWMGA, the sport, its members, or its horses into disrepute.

### 5. CONTENT AND CONDUCT STANDARDS

#### 5.1. Prohibited Content

5.1.1. You may not upload, post, share, like, comment on, or distribute content that:

- 5.1.1.1. Is offensive, derogatory, defamatory, racist, sexist, discriminatory, or insulting;
- 5.1.1.2. Constitutes hate speech or harassment;
- 5.1.1.3. Is fraudulent, misleading, or untrue;
- 5.1.1.4. Is abusive, obscene, pornographic, sexually suggestive, or inappropriate;
- 5.1.1.5. Invades the privacy of others or shares personal information without consent;
- 5.1.1.6. Infringes intellectual property or copyright;
- 5.1.1.7. Is detrimental to SAWMGA, its members, officials, events, or horses;
- 5.1.1.8. Reflects unsportsmanlike conduct in or outside the arena.

5.1.2. Any behaviour and content as referred to in SAWMGA Rulebook, section 5.1, is not allowed:

- 5.1.2.1. The use of offensive language, or any other conduct that is detrimental to SAWMGA.
- 5.1.2.2. Unsportsmanlike conduct in or outside the arena

5.1.3. All forms of harassment and abuse are prohibited

#### 5.2. Grievances

5.2.1. Members may not air grievances, disputes, or complaints about SAWMGA, its officials, events, or policies on social media. Internal grievance and disciplinary procedures must be followed.

#### 5.3. Accuracy

5.3.1. Verify the accuracy of information before posting. Any statistics, event details, or announcements should be confirmed and sourced correctly.

5.3.2. Represent the diversity within our sport accurately. Ensure that all genders, ages, and backgrounds are represented in our social media content.

5.3.3. Ensure that all posts relating to Western Mounted Games qualifiers, results, or any other related topics are presented professionally. Pay attention to grammar, spelling, and word choice to convey information accurately and effectively.

5.4. No person may speak on behalf of SAWMGA without written authorization.

5.5. No social media account, page, blog, or website may use the SAWMGA name, logo, or identity without permission.

5.6. SAWMGA branding may not be used to endorse products, opinions, causes, or political views.

- 5.7. Be mindful of copyright laws when using images, videos, or other media in posts. Always credit the source if applicable.
- 5.8. The words “Western Mounted Games,” “WMG,” “South African Western Mounted Games,” or “SAWMGA” may not appear on content that does not comply with this Policy.

## **6. BRANDING, NAMING, AND REPRESENTATION**

- 6.1. Music accompanying videos or clips should be free from bad language and should accurately represent the spirit and values of our sport.
  - 6.1.1 Ensure that any songs or music used in videos do not misrepresent the sport or its participants. For instance, clips featuring junior riders should not be paired with music that references alcohol or contains explicit content.
- 6.2. Mounted riders featured should be wearing an FEI-approved safety helmet/hat as per SAWMGA Rulebook, section 3.1.2.1
- 6.3. All equipment depicted in photos must be according to the SAWMGA Rulebook, section 7.
- 6.4. Rider and official clothing must be according to the SAWMGA Rulebook, section 3.1.1.1 on content
- 6.5. Always use the correct term “Western Mounted Games.” Do not use slang such as “Westerns.”

## **7. Professional Conduct:**

- 7.1. Refrain from engaging in arguments, conflicts, or inappropriate discussions. Remember that you are representing both your province and the national association. Treat all members with respect and courtesy in all communications.
- 7.2. Respond promptly and courteously to inquiries or comments from followers, addressing any concerns or questions respectfully.
- 7.3. When addressing members, maintain a professional tone and demeanour.

## **8. Horse Welfare & Imagery**

- 8.1. To reflect the importance of horse welfare and ethical riding standards of our sport, no photos or videos may be posted on any SAWMGA-related or affiliated social media platforms, including but not limited to:
  - 8.1.1. Showing a horse with an open mouth
  - 8.1.2. Visible tension caused by equipment or rider contact.
  - 8.1.3. Excessive crop usage, spurring, jerking of the reins, or any form of mistreatment as per SAWMGA Rulebook, section 5.3.
  - 8.1.4. Any content that may be perceived as compromising horse comfort, welfare, or ethical riding standards is strictly prohibited.
  - 8.1.5. Rearing and bucking.
- 8.2. Encourage content that reflects the spirit of Western Mounted Games, showing horses and riders having fun and enjoying the action-packed and precision sport. We encourage riders to create content that showcases their excellent horsemanship, sportsmanship, and beautiful, well-cared-for horses. Members are encouraged to share content that shows the camaraderie between members, officials, spectators, and all involved.

## **9. Official Provincial SAWMGA Accounts**

- 9.1. All content shared on official Provincial SAWMGA accounts must be approved by the relevant Provincial SAWMGA councils or applicable council members.

9.2. Content must reflect the colours and logo of the respective provinces.

9.3. Content must be related to provincial events and teams.

#### **10. SAWMGA National Accounts**

10.1. All content shared on SAWMGA National accounts must be approved by the SAWMGA National Council or applicable council members.

10.1.1. Content must reflect the colours and logo of SAWMGA.

10.1.2. Promotions and announcements of the SAWMGA National Championship may only be made by SAWMGA National accounts; provincial SAWMGA accounts may reshare or repost.

#### **11. ENFORCEMENT AND DISCIPLINE**

11.1. SAWMGA may request the removal of non-compliant content, retraction or any other condition that SAWMGA finds applicable.

11.2. Repeated or serious violations may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the SAWMGA Rulebook and Code of Conduct.

11.3. Members must cooperate with any investigation into a suspected breach.

#### **12. REVIEW AND AMENDMENT**

12.1. This Policy may be amended from time to time at the discretion of SAWMGA. Members will be informed of any changes.

By adhering to these guidelines, we can ensure that our social media presence reflects the professionalism and integrity of Western Mounted Games. Thank you for your cooperation in implementing these protocols.

Should you have any questions or need further clarification, please don't hesitate to reach out to:

[nationaladmin@sawmga.co.za](mailto:nationaladmin@sawmga.co.za) or [marketing@sawmga.co.za](mailto:marketing@sawmga.co.za)