

Mid-South IEA @ Hunters Edge Stables



Official 2025-2026 **TEAM HANDBOOK**

Contacts:

Beanie Cone 901-831-3890

Lilly Cate Childers 662-507-8659

Leslie Gattuso 901-292-1216

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Part I: Introduction

Welcome

Our Goal

Team Background

Why should my child join the IEA team?

Part II: Team Guidelines and Policies

Rider Guidelines

Parent Guidelines

Financial Policies

Disciplinary Actions

Emergency Procedures

Inclement Weather Procedures

Part III: Commitment and Fees

Riding Commitment

IEA Divisions & Minimal Riding Requirement

Practice Rides

Financial Commitment

Annual Registration Fees

Show Entry Fees

Additional Costs Associated with IEA

Additional Opportunities for IEA Team Members

Part III: Competitive Season Information

Show Season and Scheduling

Show Format

Show Etiquette for IEA Horse

Shows

Show Etiquette for Parents

Suggested Items for Parent Comfort

Volunteer Requirements

Team Awards

Part IV: MSET IEA Agreement

INTRODUCTION

WELCOME

Thank you for your interest in the Mid-South IEA Team. The information in this handbook will help you finalize your decision for participation on our team, and also serves as a reference throughout the year of our policies, expectations, payment due dates, and clarification of the format for IEA. Please also make sure to read the specific rules and regulations governing IEA which can be found online at www.rideIEA.org.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Mid-South IEA program is to provide a team experience for equestrian athletes and to bring together on common ground riders at every level of the sport from beginner lesson students, leasing students showing at the schooling level, and advanced students who own their own horses and compete at recognized USEF shows.

Our goal for athletes is for the team experience to help them increase their skills, knowledge, and ability to work within a team atmosphere, while creating a social support system for a sport that otherwise is very individualized. Our primary goal is to provide a fun opportunity for team members that introduces them to competing in a national-level program and to build friendships. For those interested in riding after high school, we prepare our athletes for a collegiate competitive experience.

TEAM BACKGROUND

Mid-South IEA's Team was founded in 2019 as Hunters Edge Stables IEA. In our inaugural year we had 8 riders qualify individually for Regionals in the Spring of 2020, as well as qualifying as a team in the middle school divisions! In our second year, we had our High School team finish 3rd overall, with riders qualifying and finishing in the ribbons at IEA Nationals in 2021. In our third season Mid-South IEA finished Reserve High Point team of Region 10 and had 4 riders qualify for Zone 4 Finals. Additionally, we had one rider move on to Nationals and finish in the Top 10 of her division. Adding to our previous excellence, our 2022-2023 Middle School team finished 8th overall at Zone 4 Finals and we had two riders represent us at 2023 IEA Nationals. This past year we had the opportunity to qualify both our Middle and High School teams for Region and Zone finals, and we had 2 riders advance to compete in the National Finals. We were proud to be asked to share our horsepower with all of the IEA riders who qualified at National Finals and have 2 National Champion horses in our string of team horses. MSET was inspired by Ole Miss Equestrian Club, to better prepare riders for competitive collegiate riding.

WHY SHOULD MY CHILD JOIN THE IEA TEAM?

The Interscholastic Equestrian Association (IEA) provides an affordable way for your child to experience showing without the expense of ownership or horse leasing. Joining the team is the next step in continuing your child's riding career past the recreational level of weekly lessons. The IEA team is a big commitment in both time and money. Like all competitive sports, riders must be willing to put in the time and effort to get to be successful.

For the rider who leases/owns and shows their own horse, IEA is a valuable addition to the equestrian resume and a great way to develop teamwork, camaraderie and lifelong relationships. IEA is an affiliate with the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association (IHSA) and provides an introduction and foundation to the format of riding at the collegiate level. Our coaches also coach for the Ole Miss Equestrian Team, Rhodes College Equestrian Team and have sat as President of our IEA Region 12 and IHSA Zone 5 Region 2.

TEAM GUIDELINES

RIDER GUIDELINES

Joining the Mid-South IEA Team is major decision and reflects a commitment to the team for an entire year. The following are guidelines that all team members are expected to follow:

- **Riders are required to attend all scheduled team events.** If you are unable to attend, you must communicate as soon as possible and at least a week in advance of the event your reasons for not attending. **COMMUNICATION IS EVERYTHING.** Riders that miss team events may be “benched” from competitions to allow more access for riders that are demonstrating the proper dedication to the team. (Exception: Illnesses and injuries)
- **Be on time for all lessons and practices.** If you will be late or absent, **the rider** is required to call/text the coach with an adult in the group chat. **Please remember that in accordance with HES rules, riders should only message Coaches during the business hours of 7AM-7PM.** It is very distracting to the entire group when a student joins a lesson late and it is unacceptable for riders to have to rush through the grooming and tacking up process. Habitual absences or tardiness will require a meeting with the coach.
- **Proper attire.** All team members should wear a short or long sleeved team or athletic shirt, breeches or jodhpurs with a belt, and tall boots or black paddock boots and half chaps to team practices. Hair should be pulled up in a hairnet and tucked neatly under your helmet or worn in a neat long braid so as to not interfere in any way when riding.
- **Work hard and try your best.** This is all that is expected of you and it is what you should expect of yourself. Do not compare yourself with other riders. Everyone is different and will advance at varying rates. Worry about the things that you can control which are YOUR ATTITUDE, YOUR EFFORT AND ...YOUR RIDING!

- **Team members are expected to be helpers at the stable at all times.** Primarily this means caring for the horses, but also includes helping less experienced riders, assisting with stable chores if asked, cleaning tack, and organizing the horse trailers. **The barn should look better afterwards than it did before team members arrive.**
- **Alert your coach when your body is telling you to slow down or stop.** If you are sick, on medication, or injured you need to listen to your body. Pain is the body's way of telling you to stop.
- **Treat your coach and teammates with respect.** Be kind to all team members and do not hold yourself out as better than other riders. **NO RUDE OR BELITTling COMMENTS, DISPLAYS OF ANGER OR TALKING BACK TO COACHES OR OTHER ADULTS (INCLUDING PARENTS). NEGATIVE OR DISPARAGING COMMENTS ABOUT HORSES WILL NOT BE TOLERATED AT ANY TIME.** In addition, riders should maintain a clean and appropriate social media presence. Hunters Edge Stables and Mid-South IEA do not condone online bullying, negative comments or inappropriate images of any kind on any platform period. Riders are a reflection of our program, and actions will be taken if issues arise.
- **Maintain a positive attitude when facing fears and frustrations.** All athletes suffer setbacks, frustration, fear and defeat. Expect these things, learn from them, face them and overcome them. Set high goals and achieve them step by step.
- **NO TEAM MEMBER MAY USE ALCOHOL, DRUGS, VAPE OR SMOKE.** We spend many hours together trying to be the best we can be. All of that hard work is wasted if an athlete uses drugs or alcohol. Violation of this policy can mean dismissal from the team.

PARENT GUIDELINES

- Make sure your rider attends all regularly scheduled practices, lessons, team events and shows, including post season shows. If your child must miss any of these for any reason, please notify the coach as soon as possible in advance of the event. However, costs are based upon rider participation at all events and fees are non-refundable.
- Communicate with the coach regarding any problems. Your thoughts are important and the support of our team parents is imperative for team morale and unity. Every program needs tweaks here or there, and there are certainly ways to improve the program by making constructive suggestions. Negative comments, rumors, innuendo, and speculation only serve to undermine the success of the individual riders and team. Before you say something out loud,

please consider the audience and impact your comments may have. Middle school and high school riders are very impressionable and sensitive.

- Check your **email** and the team **GroupMe** to keep up with team communications. You must provide a phone number and email address that you agree to regularly check for information, updates, and to ask questions about.
- Parents and guardians are expected to model proper decorum and are asked not to smoke, drink, vape or do drugs at team events, during lessons and at horse shows.
- **A representative from each competitive team member's family is required to volunteer for all shows hosted or co-hosted by MSET each year.**
- Most importantly, it is YOUR responsibility to ensure that your child arrives to all lessons, practices, team events and shows on time with proper attire and equipment. Furthermore, please ensure your rider gets enough sleep, proper nutrition and stays fit. Equestrians are athletes and to minimize risk of injury and maximize performance, they must be treated as such. As the coaches, we will hold them personally responsible for being prepared, but the parents must help and encourage these young riders.
- ***PLEASE LEAVE THE COACHING TO THE COACH!*** Your athlete needs your unconditional support more than any feedback you might want to give them regarding their performance. You are the resident expert on your child's behavior and learning style and may have ideas about motivating your rider. You also might notice things that the coach misses, and we need to work together before and after shows to help riders maximize their performance. However, at shows, you are to be your rider's biggest cheerleader and supporter- without exception. Stay in the stands or viewing area and cheer as loudly as you can!
- While it is ultimately the parent's responsibility to check the show and practice schedule and notify the coach when their child cannot attend, the riders need to take ownership of communicating with the coach to help develop their communications skills.
- Please attend all team parent meetings (typically only one a year!). The meetings are an opportunity for the coaches and team parents to communicate pertinent information with plenty of time for questions and answers.

FINANCIAL POLICIES

- **By joining the team, you are agreeing to continuous lessons throughout the entire school year (August 15th through May 31st).**

- **Riders apart of Mid-South IEA are REQUIRED to take 2 lessons per week at Hunters Edge Stables. Riders from other barns are required to take one lesson at your current barn and one at HES per week.**
- Our preferred method of payment for all fees are CASH or CHECK in the box outside the tack room or through Venmo, @Beanie-Cone. Please include information on your payment (ex: Sally Mae Lesson 11/20).
- Signing the IEA agreement for the competition year obligates you to pay IEA TUITION. This includes the rider's show and coaching fees; team practice fees; team and coach membership splits, as well as horse use, trailering, and trainer expenses splits. **Tuition is due IN FULL by September 1^{5th}, 2025.** These fees are NON-REFUNDABLE.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

The rules and policies which govern the riders and their parents have been outlined here. In the event that there is an ongoing pattern of disruption or there are major rule infractions, it may become necessary to impose some disciplinary action in an attempt to improve the situation.

The list and procedures noted below are not intended to be all-inclusive. They are presented as an expression of our beliefs as to what disciplinary actions are necessary and appropriate. We will treat all of our riders and team parents as individuals and will seek to impose the most effective disciplinary actions based on the unique set of circumstances.

1. The rider may be dismissed from the ring
2. The rider may be asked to sit and watch or the rider may be given chores around the barn.
3. The rider may be asked to leave the stable and go home early.
4. The coach may request a parent meeting.
5. The rider may be removed or suspended from the team.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In the unlikely event of a medical emergency involving your child, the following procedure will be followed:

- A. Emergency first aid will be administered, including requesting of emergency medical technicians and an ambulance if needed.
- B. You will be contacted using the emergency contact information you provided
- C. In the event that we are unable to make contact with a parent, we will attempt to contact the medical staff and hospital closest to our facility – Methodist Olive Branch.
- D. We receive alerts via cell phone when the weather turns potentially dangerous. We follow all safety guidelines for any inclement weather.

INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURES:

HES makes every effort to remain open regardless of weather. Lessons and practices are held rain or shine. We do NOT ride when the actual or “real feel” temperature is 32 degrees or less. Notification for cancelled lessons will be sent via text message. We ask that, when there is a question about the weather, that you check these before calling or texting. However, please feel free to text or call if you have a concern regarding severe weather conditions before bring your rider to the barn.

Participation on the MSET IEA team for 2025-2026 requires a commitment from **August 15th, 2025 to May 31st, 2026.**

TEAM COMMITMENT

RIDING COMMITMENT

All riders are REQUIRED to take at least 2 lessons per week at HES unless you are riding at another barn. In that case you must ride at your barn once a week and HES once a week. Your barn trainer must approve you riding on the Mid-South IEA Team at HES.

Besides meeting the minimum riding requirements outlined above, each rider must also meet the IEA skill requirements to be considered for advancement in each division. IEA’s mandatory skill requirements for each level can be found on the IEA website at www.rideIEA.org.

It is important to discuss and plan each rider’s goals before placement is made so that we can assure they do not top out in the divisions based on riding commitment requirements.

ANNUAL REGISTRATION FEE:

The annual individual registration fee must be paid online directly to IEA. Once paid, the application must be printed and turned into the team coach along with the first payment of the season (or annual payment in full) for a rider to be officially added to the team roster.

Due Date	Fee Due	Paperwork Due to MSET
September 15 th , 2025	Individual Registration \$70 paid online to IEA	Team commitment letter, proof of joining on IEA website

TUITION FEES

In addition to the standard IEA registration fee outlined above, the total cost ***for each of the 5 regular season shows per rider is \$2,300.*** This includes 1 or 2 rider class fees, horse leasing, horse trailering, stabling, coaching fees and coach expenses for each show. **Please keep in mind that all team practices are not included in this price, and payment for those are due at the time of service for \$75 or sold in packages of buy 10 lessons at \$750, get the 11th one free.**

Post season shows of Regional, Zone and National finals will be additional, but prorated by how many riders qualify. **All Tuition fees are due in full to Hunters Edge Stables by Cash, Check or Venmo @Beanie-Cone by September 15th, 2025.**

ADDITIONAL COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH IEA

Show Attire: All riders need hunt seat show clothes which consist of the following:

- Show shirt – White with collar
- Show Jacket – Black or Navy-Blue w/3 buttons
- Breeches – low rise, belt loops, light beige or tan
- Boots – tall boots, properly fitted
- Belt – wide belt, black or brown
- Gloves – black leather (No Cloth)
- Show helmet
- One Knot Hairnets – that match hair color
- ADDITIONAL HES Team jacket and attire to shows – Please see our team site on: <https://equestrianteamapparel.com/collections/hes-iea> and <https://equestrianteamapparel.com/collections/hunters-edge-stables>

SUGGESTED ITEMS FOR IEA” SHOW KIT”

- | | |
|--|--|
| ▪ Extra hair net | ▪ Black shoe polish with brush/sponge applicator |
| ▪ Safety pins | ▪ Hair brush |
| ▪ Bobby pins | ▪ Boot rag/ small brush for boots |
| ▪ Pony tail holder | ▪ Extra pair black boot socks |
| ▪ Extra jacket button | ▪ Extra belt |
| ▪ Sewing kit | ▪ Scissors |
| ▪ First Aid kit (or Band-Aids, alcohol pads, Aspirin/Motrin, etc.) | ▪ Stain remover |
| ▪ Black duct tape for boots in case of zipper failure | ▪ Mirror |
| | ▪ Baby Wipes |

IEA POINTS ACCUMULATION

IEA is a national organization. The country is divided into zones made up of several states. MSET is in Zone 4, Region 1 (formerly Region 12).

At the end of the competition season, we have Regional finals, followed by Zone finals, and then National Finals. To qualify for Regional finals a rider must earn 18 points within 5 shows. The point system is as follows: 1st=7, 2nd=5, 3rd=3, 4th=3, 5th=2, and 6th=1. Riders will also compete for team points.

The MSET team coach will choose point riders in each division at the show. These riders' points combine for a total team score. There is a champion and reserve champion award at each show for both high school teams and middle school teams. Teams are then given "team points" at the end of each show and the entire team may also qualify for Regionals by accumulating 20 team points or more for the year.

SHOW SEASON AND SCHEDULING

The IEA show season starts in September and ends with the National finals in April. Each team member will have the opportunity to compete in up to 5 regular season shows, maximum. The show schedule for this season will be emailed to you and sent in the GroupMe as soon as published.

MSET is required to host an IEA horse show as well as take horses to cover our "hoof print" which does limit the number of riders that can be entered in each show.

SHOW FORMAT

The average show will start with riders arriving between 6:00am and 7:00am and finish around 4:00pm. Parents will select an area in the bleachers and/or set up tents prior to the horses schooling. Parents will also bring food items to share. Your child will most likely need to have cash to purchase items at the concession stand. If you are planning to stay for the day, dress accordingly (these days are very long) and we suggest you bring some reading material or some other project to help you pass the time. Most shows will run in a format similar to the one listed below:

Horse Warm up: When we provide horses, this process will take an hour and all riders will be either helping with our horses or watching the others warm up and taking notes.

Coaches Meeting: This can take 10 minutes, but can be as long as an

hour. During this meeting rider classes are finalized, and coaches discuss horse issues and logistics of the show.

Course Walk: This is when ALL riders walk the posted courses with the coach to determine the best plan.

Competition: The show usually starts with the open division, but there is no rule regarding what order the classes must be run. Some shows will do the open over fences and then the flat right away and others will do all over fences classes before they do all the flat classes. The beginner flat classes are at the end of the day.

Awards: Ribbons are given for each individual class at the end of the class

Team Awards: Team awards are awarded at the end of the day. There is usually a small presentation.

SHOW ETIQUETTE FOR IEA HORSE SHOWS

- Riders should arrive at the show dressed in their show clothes with hair pulled back. Because many of the shows do not have clothes changing facilities, they should already have their show breeches on and a shirt on top of their show shirt. They should wear their team pants over their show pants to keep them clean. Most IEA shows are in the Fall or Winter when the mornings are quite cold so layers are encouraged.
- All team members should be ready to help with HES or other team's horses at every show- whether we are listed as "co-hosts" or not.
- Riders should be courteous, respectful and polite to all show officials, hosts, other competitors and coaches. Never speak to the judge without consent and in the presence of the coach and show steward. **Never make unkind comments about another team, a rider, a coach or a horse.** You never know who is standing nearby.
- Riders should have their competition bag and keep all of their personal belongings *inside* the bag. We do not want articles of clothing all over the tent. Bags should be tucked away neatly. Garment bags may be hung on the back of the tent or laid down neatly.
- All team members are required to remain with the team and their coach until the end of the show. If parents are unable to attend or must leave the showgrounds, they must notify the coach. NO EXCEPTIONS. **No rider may leave an IEA show unless cleared by the coach.**

- Once a rider is ready to compete there should be no contact between the rider and parents until after the class.
- When not dressed in show attire, riders wear their MSET team shirt, and the MSET Team jacket if needed. Remember, you are not just representing yourself, you are acting as a representative of HES and Mid-South IEA!
- When not showing all riders must hold horses and take care of the horses each show.

SHOW ETIQUETTE FOR PARENTS

- For the safety of the athletes – NO FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY is allowed at any competition.
- Parents are not required to stay all day, but they need to notify the coach if they are leaving and ensure another parent helps with their rider. Parents will set up and take down the tent and HES banner and the parent coordinator will help arrange food items for the team. **PLEASE BE SURE that you have arranged for your child to be fed by providing a shared item, giving them lunch money for the concession stand or parent going off site, or sending them a sack lunch.** We want to keep your child from becoming hangry!
- In the event your rider falls during their ride, please remain outside of the ring until your presence is requested by your coach. It is best for the rider who is trying their best to retain their composure if parents remain at a distance.
- Respect your rider's desire not to talk right after a bad ride. They are still processing what happened and working to control their emotions and should be given time to gather their thoughts. It is best if you do not approach them at all until they have returned to the tent area.
- **ANY DISPLAY OF DISAPPOINTMENT TOWARDS YOUR RIDER FOR THEIR PERFORMANCE AT A SHOW IS UNACCEPTABLE.** Remember this is THEIR passion and THEIR victory or defeat. Your role is to be their support system. **Be a great cheerleader!**
- Parents and siblings are to remain in the tent and bleacher areas only. Please do not go to areas where the horses are being walked and held unless absolutely necessary. Young siblings are not allowed anywhere near the horses for safety reasons.
- Please do not approach the judging officials or other show officials for ANY reason. This includes if your child is listed in an incorrect class or their name is misspelled. All class entries are verified during the official "Coaches Meeting" at

the beginning of each competition. Your coach will correct all discrepancies at that time.

- Please be respectful of YOUR child, YOUR coaches and YOUR stable. Listening ears are always around and bad gossip creates a negative energy that spreads to your child, your coaches, and your team. BE PROUD TO BE A MEMBER OF HES!

SUGGESTED ITEMS FOR IEA PARENT COMFORT:

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| ▪ Blankets | ▪ Dress in layers |
| ▪ Chair(s) | ▪ Phone chargers/ batteries |
| ▪ Reading material | ▪ Patience, prayer and a great attitude!! |
| ▪ Sunscreen/hat | |
| ▪ Rain/mud boots | |

VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS FOR FARM SHOWS AND TEAM HOSTED IEA SHOWS

All team members are required to work shows hosted and co-hosted by MSET.

One additional member of each family is required to work the show(s) hosted by our team. (This includes teenagers, cousins, aunts, uncles and grandparents!)

Parent Commitment

- Assist with Mid-South IEA hosted and co-hosted shows
- Make sure rider is on time and present at all lessons, shows, show preparations and team events
- Attend parent meetings
- Pay lesson fees and IEA Team fees as outlined and on time
- Prepare your rider with proper attire, nutrition and rest at all times. They are athletes.
- Respect coach and show management decisions
- Communicate concerns and ideas

Rider Commitment

- Compete in five (5) regular IEA shows per season
- Be respectful of trainer, parents, fellow riders, and other teams at ALL times
- Be responsible for horse and equipment management/care at shows
- Be available to the trainer at all times during the show to assist
- Attend all team meetings

- Respect the horses/ponies and the facility at ALL times
- Show up for lessons and team events on time and ready to ride your best, as if you were showing
- Take good care of the barn and horses/ponies after the ride
- ALWAYS have a positive attitude
- Keep tack and equipment well organized and clean

Substance Use Policy

There is a zero-tolerance substance use policy during competitions by any person attending. Any violation to this policy may lead to expulsion from the team.

2025-2026 Mid-South IEA Show Schedule

10/25 – 10/26 MSET @ HOME (2 show days total)

11/15 - 11/16 @ Harlinsdale by Silent Run

12/13 – 12/14 Copper Phoenix

Regionals: February 14, 2026 Oak Grove

Zone Finals: March 14-15, 2026

National Finals: April 23-26, 2026

Parent and Rider Acceptance Signatures

I have read the Mid-South IEA Handbook carefully and understand its contents and the expectations of the riders and parents set forth above.

Student Signature

_____ Date _____

Printed Name

Parent Signature

_____ Date _____

Printed Name
