



POLISH COWBOY RACE FOUNDATION

and

WESTERN CITY

invite you to

XI INTERNATIONAL POLISH CHAMPIONSHIPS IN POLISH COWBOY RACE



Competitions rules for XI INTERNATIONAL POLISH Championships in Polish Cowboy Race

(prepared in accordance with the Regulations for organizing, conducting, and participating in competitions for the Polish Cowboy Race discipline in 2026)

Termin: 11-13 September 2026 – the first competitions each day will begin at 11.00, 10.00 and 10.00 respectively.

Note! The competition start time may change (after the registration deadline).

Location: Western City, Ściegny, near Karpacz.

Participants: the competition is open to all riders practicing western riding style.

Competition office hours:

10th September – 18.00 – 20.00

11th September – 9.00 – 14.30; 15.30 – 17.00

12th September – 8.30 – 14.30; 15.30 – 17.00

13th September – 8.30 – 14.00

Head of competition office: Beata Zdrzalik–Grobelna (speaks German and English).

Applications will be accepted until: August 28, 2026 via email: biuro.grobelna@gmail.com

Applications must be submitted using the official registration form, which can be found on the website.

Classes as part of the XI International Polish Championships in Polish Cowboy Race (PCR):

1. Youth
 - a. Cowboy Trail
 - b. Cowboy Race
 - c. Team Cowboy Race
2. Amateur
 - a. Cowboy Trail
 - b. Cowboy Race
 - c. Team Cowboy Race (class in class with Profi)
 - d. Cowboy Parallel Race (class in class with Profi)
3. Profi
 - a. Cowboy Race
 - b. Team Cowboy Race (class in class with Amateur)

c. Cowboy Parallel Race (class in class with Amateur)

Divisions:

1. Youth – this division is for riders who, before the start of the season (the season begins with the first PCR event of the year), are at least 11 years old and have not yet turned 15. **A rider who turns 11 before the X International Polish Championships is also eligible to compete.** If a rider turns 15 during the season, they remain in the Youth class until the end of that season. Horses must be at least 4 years old.
2. Amateur – a division for riders who are 15 years old or older (no longer meeting the criteria for the Youth division). This division is designed to, amongst the others, allow riders to compete in PCR by offering patterns with a lower level of difficulty. Horses must be over 4 years old.

Riders cannot compete in this division if they:

- a. placed on the podium at least three times in Cowboy Race Amateur classes during two previous seasons,
- b. won 1st place in the Riders of The Year ranking in the Amateur division in previous season,
- c. hold qualifications or certifications such as: instructor and/or trainer of recreational/sports horse riding, equestrian tourism leader, or have official sports classifications in equestrian disciplines and this is their next season competing in the Polish Cowboy Race
- d. derive financial benefits from any systematic activity related to horseback riding or training of horses and riders in either classical or western riding styles.

During their first season competing in the Polish Cowboy Race, **riders in the Amateur class** may include competitors who hold qualifications or certifications such as recreational and competitive riding instructor/trainer, equestrian tourism leader, or sport riding classifications, provided that they do not receive financial benefits from any systematic activity related to horseback riding or the training of horses and riders in either classical or Western riding.

In the following season, these competitors are required to compete in the Profi class.

IMPORTANT! Riders in the Amateur division are required to submit an appropriate declaration (annex no. 1 or no. 2) confirming that they meet the conditions for competing in this division - either by email to the Polish Cowboy Race Foundation or directly to the competition organizer. A rider who has not submitted the required declaration is not allowed to compete in Amateur class events.

3. Profi – The minimum age for riders in this division is 15 years. Riders must compete in this division if they meet any of the conditions listed in section II/2, points a to d. Horses must be over 4 years old.

4. Riders that have been qualified to Profi division in the previous years cannot start in the Amateur division.

Note! A rider from the Amateur division, who has advanced to the Profi division due to their results, may compete in the Amateur division on a horse that has never participated in PCR competitions. This rule applies only to the first season of the pair's participation. In the following season, they must compete in the Open division.

5. In the Cowboy Trail Youth, Cowboy Trail Amateur, Cowboy Race Youth, and Cowboy Race Amateur classes, non-competitive entries (NC) are allowed. It is recommended that this option be used by those who want to try their hand at the Polish Cowboy Race, as well as by riders from the Profi class riding horses competing for the first time, for whom the Profi – level patterns may be too difficult. A non-competitive start counts toward the horse's start limit at the event. All formal requirements must be fulfilled, and participants must comply with all regulations governing participation in competitions organized by the PCR Foundation. Minimum age requirement – 11 years old, reached at least one day before the competition. Riders competing non-competitively are not ranked, do not participate in the prize distribution, and are not required to attend the awards ceremony.

IMPORTANT! The organizer reserves the right to cancel the option of non-competitive entries (NC) in the event of a high number of participants

* In case of any issues with registering for the appropriate class, please contact Jacek Grobelny.

Event manager for X INTERNATIONAL POLISH Championships: Jacek Grobelny

Manager of Western City: Magdalena Pokój

Main judge: Dawid Brzeziński

Veterinarian: Natalia Kriesel (+48 662 177 368).

Fees:

Youth class - only entry fees apply. For each horse-rider pair, the fees are as follows: one class – 100 PLN (25 €), two classes – 180 PLN (45 €), three classes – 240 PLN (60 €).

Amateur and Profi classes

Registration fee: 120 PLN (30 €) per horse-rider pair

Entry fees: one class – 100 PLN (25 €), two classes – 180 PLN (45 €), three classes – 240 PLN (60 €), four classes – 280 PLN (70 €)

Non-competitive entry (NC) in CTY, CTA, CRY, and CRA classes: 100 PLN (25 €), no registration fee required.

IMPORTANT! All competitors are required to use Polish Cowboy Race Foundation numbers, which will be available for purchase at the competition office. The cost is 30 PLN (8 €) per horse-rider pair. These numbers are valid for all official PCR competitions.

The regulations of the Polish Cowboy Race Foundation apply and are available at the following link:

<https://www.cowboyrace.com/competition/rules-and-event-organization/>

IMPORTANT! All participants directly involved in the X INTERNATIONAL POLISH Championships must be familiar with the PCR regulations.

Any discussions with judges regarding the rules and their interpretation are strictly prohibited and may result in the disqualification of the horse-rider pair from the competition.

Participants have the right to file protests according to the Protest Submission and Review Procedure for Polish Cowboy Race competitions in 2025, which is available at the link provided above.

NOTE! In cases not covered by these regulations, the provisions of other regulations and rules of the Polish Cowboy Race Foundation shall apply.

Each rider participating in the X INTERNATIONAL POLISH Championships must have the following documents:

- document confirming identity and age,
- sports medical booklet or a valid medical certificate confirming the ability to participate in equestrian competitions or a statement by the rider declaring they are in good health and fit to compete (in the case of minors, this statement must be signed by their legal guardians),
- consent from legal guardians for minors to participate in the competition (valid for this event),
- consent for the use of the rider's image for marketing purposes – for the promotion of the event or the Polish Cowboy Race foundation (in the case of minors, this consent must be signed by legal guardians),
- consent for the processing of the rider's personal data (provided during registration) by the event organizer and persons authorized by them, for the purpose of organizing and conducting the X INTERNATIONAL POLISH Championships in Polish Cowboy Race (for minors, this consent must be signed by legal guardians),
- rider's declaration that the horse participating in the Polish Championships has undergone appropriate training enabling it to compete in the event and is prepared to perform in front of an audience and to the accompaniment of music,
- statement by the rider regarding their classification as Amateur in the first and subsequent years of participation,
- personal safety declaration

- horse's passport (or another document confirming the horse's identity, age, and health status, including valid vaccinations),
- **foreign riders must present a veterinary certificate confirming the horse's health condition.**

Prizes: Cups, medals, and material prizes.

Horse Documentation: passport + valid vaccinations not older than six months (**for horses of foreign competitors – veterinary certificate confirming the horse's health condition**).

Technical Conditions:

Indoor arena with stands – 28 x 56 m, sand footing.

Outdoor arena with stands – 35 x 60 m, sand footing.

NOTE! Competitions will be held either in the outdoor arena or in the indoor arena, depending on weather conditions.

Horse stalls: permanent, 3 x 3 meters, straw bedding.

Note! The number of stalls is limited.

Stall Prices:

Price per stall for 1 day – 70 PLN (17.5 €)

Price per stall for 2 days – from Thursday to Friday, Friday to Saturday, or Saturday to Sunday: 120 PLN (30 €)

Price per stall for 3 days – from Thursday to Saturday or Friday to Sunday: 180 PLN (45 €)

Price per stall for 4 days – from Thursday to Sunday: 240 PLN (60 €)

For each additional day beyond 4 days: 70 PLN (17.5 €)

Price includes hay, water, and initial bedding (straw).

Horse feeding: concentrate feed must be provided by the rider; hay is included in the stall price.

Competition Schedule (the timetable is subject to change):

September 11

8.00 – 10.00

Veterinary inspection

11.00

Cowboy Trail Youth (pattern walk-through at 10:30)

Cowboy Trail Amateur

Cowboy Race Youth – Joanna Kubisa Memorial

Awards Ceremony

Hobby Horse competition for children and teens

PCR Cowboy Dance Party at the Western City Saloon

September 12

10.00

Cowboy Race Amateur (pattern walk-through at 9:30) – MH Horses Cup

Team Cowboy Race Youth

14.00

Opening ceremony of the Polish Championships + awards ceremony for the morning competitions

16.00

Polish Cowgirls & Cowboys Show (including Cowboy Race Profi – Bohdan Smoleń Spurs Competition; Cowboy Hero – Part 1)

PCR Music Evening at the Saloon – concert by Jakub Ciemnoczołowski

September 13

10.00

Team Cowboy Race (pattern walk-through at 9:30)

Cowboy Parallel Race

Cowboy Hero – Part 2

Awards ceremony for all competitions and closing of the XI INTERNATIONAL POLISH Championships in PCR

IMPORTANT! RIDERS ARE REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE ON HORSEBACK IN THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE XI INTERNATIONAL POLISH CHAMPIONSHIPS IN POLISH COWBOY RACE.

Horse Welfare

- The organizer of the 11th INTERNATIONAL POLISH Championships in Polish Cowboy Race (XI MMP PCR) emphasizes that any instance of inhumane treatment of a horse will result in the rider's disqualification.

- Every rider/horse owner is responsible for ensuring the welfare and health of their horse through proper feeding, care, appropriate use, and post-competition recovery.
- By registering to participate in the competition, the rider declares that the horse has undergone appropriate training enabling it to participate in the above-mentioned competition and is prepared to perform in front of an audience and to the accompaniment of music.
- Attention!!! A rider may ask the organizer to lower or mute the music during their performance.
- For use during the XI MMP PCR (not only in the competition arena), both bit (bit, pelham) and bitless (sidepull and hackamore) bridles are permitted. Appendix 1 to the regulations contains a description of the permitted use of various types of western bits and bridles.
- The use of a rope halter, severe bits such as a twister, or a romal for riding is prohibited.
- During the competition, spurs that may cause pain or injury to the horse are prohibited. Only western spurs with a free-moving rowel without sharp edges are permitted. Appendix 2 to the regulations contains a description of the permitted use of western spurs.
- Excessive use of aids while riding will result in consequences under the Polish Cowboy Race Competition Rules, including disqualification from the competition. This also applies to the warm-up arena.

Safety of People and Horses

- Horse owners, female and male riders, grooms, and any other persons riding the horses are responsible for the behavior of those horses. The organizer is not responsible for accidents caused by horses.
- All riders, grooms, and other persons riding horses during the competition are required to observe safety rules and exercise good judgment. Particular attention must be paid to pedestrians and to other riders and their horses.
- For safety reasons, a designated system for moving on horseback and leading horses will be in operation during the competition. Failure to follow the organizer's instructions and designated routes/signage may result in the rider's disqualification from the entire competition.
- Horses may not be left unattended (e.g. tied to a fence) anywhere on the competition grounds, including Western City, the arena, and surrounding areas.
- All Polish Cowboy Race competitors are encouraged, and minors are required, to wear protective helmets and safety vests.

Final Provisions (please read – these are also important!!!)

- If the number of entries is lower than expected, the organizers may shorten the competition to two days.
- Riders are prohibited from consuming alcohol during the event, before the competitions in which they are participating, and before the opening ceremony and awards ceremonies.
- During awards ceremonies, only riders on horseback and persons invited by the organizer may be present in the arena.
- After the awards ceremony, commemorative photographs with riders and their horses may be taken. Photos featuring the organizer's and sponsors' graphic materials are encouraged.
- In TCR, a horse may compete twice, provided that it is ridden by a Profi rider and an Amateur rider competing in different teams. Such a horse will not be included in the draw related to the situation described in point VIII/2/9 of the 2026 PCR Competition Rules. Each horse-and-rider combination is subject to a separate entry and starting fee.
- In CTY, CTA, CRY, CRA and TCRY, a horse may compete twice, but with different riders.
- All riders admitted by the organizer to compete in the Polish Cowboy Race are bound by all provisions contained in the rules, regulations, and resolutions of the Polish Cowboy Race Foundation.
- The organizer requires riders to participate on horseback in the official opening ceremony. All other participants are required to attend the opening ceremony on foot.
- The organizer may announce the final awards ceremony format during the competition.
- All riders competing in an event are required to participate in the awards ceremony.
- Riders are required to wear western attire that is formal, neat, and uniform.
- Riders must wear the full attire specified in these regulations whenever they are present in the arena during the competition, including during warm-up, pattern walk-through, competition, and awards ceremonies.
- Trainers and other persons must wear the full attire specified in these regulations whenever they are present in the arena during the competition, including during warm-up, pattern walk-through, competition, and awards ceremonies.
- During the competition, riders must use the competition numbers assigned by the Polish Cowboy Race Foundation.
- The organizer reserves the right to make changes to the competition schedule.
- The organizer is not responsible for accidents or theft occurring during the competition or transportation.
- Copies of the score sheets will be posted immediately after each competition on the notice board next to the main grandstand in the arena.

- A rider has the right to submit a protest to the Competition Manager in accordance with the protest procedures applicable to Polish Cowboy Race Foundation competitions. The procedure is available for inspection at the competition office.

**REGISTERING FOR THE COMPETITION CONSTITUTES FULL ACCEPTANCE OF
THIS REGULATION AND ALL POLISH COWBOY RACE RULES.**



You are warmly invited!



Appendix No. 1

DESCRIPTION OF THE USE OF VARIOUS TYPES OF WESTERN BITS AND BRIDLES

Bits and bridles used in Western riding may be bitted or bitless.

A bitted bridle (snaffle bit and pelham/curb bit) is a piece of tack placed in the horse's mouth that enables the rider to influence the horse by controlling its direction of travel, pace, and head carriage. This influence is based on a natural aid—the rider's hand—and consists of transmitting signals through the reins to the horse's mouth. Depending on the type of bit, pressure may be applied to the tongue, interdental space, jaw, palate, or poll.

A bitless bridle (sidepull, hackamore) serves a similar purpose; however, because there is no bit in the horse's mouth, its action is different. With a sidepull, pressure is applied to the nasal bones, jaw, and sides of the muzzle, while a hackamore applies linear pressure through leverage.

Western riding uses various types of bitted and bitless bridles, depending on whether the horse is ridden with one or two hands.

Important elements of bitted bridles include:

- thickness of the mouthpiece;
- shape of the mouthpiece;
- material from which the mouthpiece is made;
- shape of the rings;
- shape of the shanks;
- length of the shanks.

Depending on these parameters, various types of bits and pelhams are available. These include single-jointed snaffle bits, double-jointed bits, straight-bar bits, eggbutt bits, full-cheek bits, roller bits, etc.

Single-jointed snaffle bit – the mouthpiece consists of two parts. It is a basic bit for most horses. It requires a steady hand to avoid irritating the horse's palate with the folding mouthpiece.

Double-jointed bit – the mouthpiece consists of three parts. It has an additional connector in the centre, allowing it to conform better to the shape of the horse's mouth and distribute pressure more evenly across the tongue and jaw without applying pressure to the palate. It is often readily accepted by young, sensitive, and delicate horses.

Straight-bar bit – a rigid mouthpiece without any joints, often made of thick rubber. Pressure is distributed evenly and flatly across the entire width of the tongue and lower jaw. It is recommended for horses that dislike moving joints or tend to play with the bit.

Eggbutt bit – available with various types of mouthpieces. Its name comes from the special construction connecting the rings to the mouthpiece, which prevents the connection from pinching the corners of the horse's mouth. Recommended for all horses.

Full-cheek bit – fitted with cheek pieces ("wings") that prevent the bit from moving sideways in the horse's mouth. It is relatively demanding because, with an unstable hand, the cheek pieces can exert pressure on the sides of the horse's mouth.

Roller bit – the mouthpiece is made of movable rings, often from materials that encourage salivation, making it easier for the horse to accept the bit. The horse can also interact with the movable rollers, which may help it accept the bit more quickly.

Pelham is a bit with shanks. Like a snaffle bit, it can have various types of mouthpieces. Below the bit ring, it has shanks of varying lengths ending in rings to which the reins are attached. It is recommended for older horses that are ridden one-handed. It requires a steady hand and a very good level of riding skill.

Correct and Humane Use of Bitted Bridles

Correct and humane use of bitted bridles requires compliance with several key animal husbandry and riding principles:

1. Correct size – the bit must not be too narrow, as it may press against and injure the cheeks, nor too wide, as it may move sideways and strike the teeth. A correctly fitted bit with loose rings should extend approximately 0.5 cm beyond each side of the horse's mouth.
2. Mouthpiece diameter must be appropriate for the horse's mouth structure. Horses with a low palate or a thick tongue may require thinner bits (e.g. 12–14 mm) to avoid painful pressure.
3. Correct height of the cheek pieces – normally, the bit should rest in the interdental space, creating 1–2 gentle wrinkles at the corners of the horse's lips.
4. Method of use – riders should always begin with the mildest bits (double-jointed, eggbutt, or thick plastic bits), identifying the type of bit that the horse accepts best.
5. Signal, not force – the bit is used to indicate direction, head position, and transitions, not to mechanically stop the horse through muscular force.
6. Seat before hands – every rein aid should be preceded by an action of the rider's body weight (seat) and legs. Stopping the horse using the reins alone reduces the sensitivity of the horse's mouth.
7. Release of pressure – as soon as the horse responds to the rein signal (e.g. slows down or turns), the rider must immediately release the pressure and give the reins. This release is both a reward and information to the horse that it has performed the requested task correctly.
8. After every ride, the bit must be thoroughly cleaned of saliva, feed, and grass. Dried dirt becomes rough and may painfully rub the sensitive tissues inside the horse's mouth.

9. Technical inspection – regularly check the mouthpiece and rings for sharp edges, cracks (especially in plastic/flavoured bits), or rust.
10. A horse ridden in a bit must have its teeth checked by a veterinarian or qualified equine dental professional at least once a year. Sharp edges on the molars (“hooks”), combined with pressure from the bit, may cause painful injuries to the cheeks.
11. No bit or bridle may cause wounds in the horse’s mouth or on its head.
12. When selecting a bit for training a horse, the advice of an experienced trainer should be sought.
13. An incorrectly selected bit, or a bit that causes pain, will interfere with establishing effective communication between horse and rider.

Bitless Bridles

Bitless bridles are also used in Western riding, including the sidepull and hackamore.

Hackamore is a bitless bridle consisting of cheek pieces, a noseband, and a jaw/throat strap, connected by a characteristic cross-shaped arrangement. Its action is based on bilateral pressure applied to different parts of the horse’s head. Pressure is simultaneously exerted on the nasal bone, jaw, and poll. It is therefore useful for trail riding, endurance rides, etc., and to a lesser extent for competitive riding. Where it is used for sport, a hackamore is recommended for a highly skilled rider with a soft and steady hand. An advantage of the hackamore is that releasing the reins immediately reduces the pressure on the horse. With appropriate training, a hackamore can help develop a highly effective form of communication based primarily on rein contact against the chosen side of the horse’s neck, with the reins held in one hand.

To correctly fit a hackamore to the horse’s head, several principles should be observed:

1. The noseband should sit 2–3 fingers below the zygomatic bone (the prominent cheekbone). If positioned above this point, it may put pressure on sensitive facial nerves; if positioned lower, it may act on the delicate cartilage of the nose
2. The shanks should hang at least one finger below the zygomatic bone.
3. The cheek pieces should not sit too close to the horse’s eyes. If they do, the noseband strap should be lengthened or a longer browband should be used.

In summary, the hackamore should be recognized as a bitless bridle that does not exert pressure on the horse when the reins are loose. It is suitable for horses with mouth injuries or dental problems that prevent the use of bitted bridles. However, it is equipment intended for an experienced and highly skilled rider. It also allows the horse to eat and drink during longer rides.

Sidepull is a bitless bridle consisting of cheek pieces supporting a noseband, with two rings attached to the sides of the horse's head. The reins are attached to these rings. As with a hackamore, the severity of the bridle depends largely on the material from which the noseband is made.

A sidepull is more effective for turning the horse than a hackamore. It is also milder because it does not involve leverage. The action of the rider's hand is therefore transferred directly to the horse's nasal bone. A sidepull is often used when training young horses or horses with mouth or dental problems. It is one of the simplest types of equipment for controlling a horse.

Correct fitting of a sidepull requires appropriate adjustment of the noseband height and tightness. The noseband should rest on the hard, bony part of the horse's nasal bridge, approximately 2–3 fingers below the zygomatic bone and clearly above the soft, cartilaginous part of the nose. If fastened too low, it may injure the sensitive nose and interfere with breathing; if too high, it may come dangerously close to the eyes or put pressure on the cheekbones. The noseband should be adjusted so that two fingers can fit comfortably underneath it. If it is not fitted correctly, pulling on the reins will cause the entire noseband to shift from side to side, making its action ineffective.

Appendix No. 2

DESCRIPTION OF THE USE OF WESTERN SPURS

Contrary to common belief, Western spurs are not intended simply to make a horse go faster. Their purpose is to transmit lateral signals and reinforce the action of the rider's leg. The main function of a spur is therefore to reinforce and clarify the leg aid, particularly in more advanced dressage movements such as lateral movements and collection.

A Western spur consists of the following elements:

1. Heel band – the metal loop that surrounds the heel of the riding boot.
2. Shank – the metal arm extending from the back of the heel band and pointing slightly downward.
3. Rowel – the rotating star-shaped wheel attached to the end of the shank.
4. Pin – the axle on which the rowel rotates.
5. Strap attachments – movable buttons on the sides of the heel band used to attach the spur straps.

The rowel determines the intensity of the signal, i.e. how strongly the horse feels the action of the spur. Rounded rowels in the shape of a clover or circle are the mildest.

Correct use of spurs in Western riding is based on the following technical, biomechanical, and ethical principles:

1. The heel band of the spur is placed on the special spur rest of the Western boot. The spur should rest just above the heel, below the ankle. It must neither move loosely nor press against the foot. The straps are attached to the heel-band attachments. The wider decorative part of the strap lies over the instep. The strap should be fastened on the outside of the boot so that the buckle does not rub against the horse's side or catch on the stirrup.
2. Unlike traditional English-style spurs, Western spurs work through a rotating rowel. The rowel rotates and rolls along the horse's skin. This distributes pressure more evenly, preventing the metal from digging into a single point and minimizing the risk of injury.
3. Due to the longer construction of Western fenders, the rider's legs hang lower and farther away from the horse's body. The longer shank allows contact with the horse's side without requiring the rider to unnaturally raise the heels.
4. The use of spurs in Western riding is based on the principle of increasing pressure and immediately releasing it.
5. The key to effective use is a pulsing action with the spur, but only when necessary:
 - a. first apply the leg aid; if the horse does not respond, add a short and precise spur signal;
 - b. rotate the foot slightly inward at the heel. The rowel should touch the horse's skin at an angle and then roll upward or sideways along the body rather than acting perpendicularly;
 - b. once the horse responds to the aid, the leg must immediately return to a neutral position. The cessation of pressure teaches the horse that it has performed the requested task correctly.
6. Spurs should only be used by a rider with a very good seat and appropriate skill in coordinating the aids.
7. Before spurs are introduced into training, the horse must have a thorough understanding of and respect for the pressure of the rider's leg alone.
8. A spur can never replace the primary aid, which is the leg.