

# So You Want To Host A National Show?



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Photos from the *Mustang Times Archives*

One of the most frequent questions that I heard asked by Mustang Club of America members is, "Why aren't there any National Shows near me?" In fact, when I joined MCA more than 11 years ago, I believe that I asked that exact same question. The answer to that question hasn't changed since then—MCA does not assign shows to clubs, and we rarely ask clubs to volunteer to host a show. With few exceptions, all of the National and Grand National Shows that appear on the schedule each year have been the result of an application that has been submitted by the host club, or in some cases, co-host clubs. On those rare occasions, however, when a club at the last minute has withdrawn an approved show, or if insufficient applications have been received and time is running short, clubs with prior national show experience are asked to step in and host a show.

One of the main purposes of the National Show Committee is to develop an annual show schedule of exciting, quality events that are distributed as best as possible across the country and across the typical show calendar of March through October. Until recently, the National show schedule often ended with the Grand National Show on Labor Day, but not always. Beginning with the 2006 schedule—when there wasn't a Grand National due to the MCA 30th Anniversary Show—MCA began experimenting with having a National Show in October. The member feedback regarding this change has been very positive, so this year we again will be having an October show, following the Grand National on Labor Day weekend.

So how does a club come to host a National or Grand National? It all begins by contacting the MCA National Show Committee and expressing an interest in hosting a show. After a regional club has decided that it would like to host a show, the next step is to contact a member of the committee and see what show dates are available. Typically, shows are scheduled two to three years ahead of time. Also, shows must be scheduled at least three weeks apart from each other and no closer than 250 miles to each other. MCA also prefers for the shows to be distributed as much as possible around the country so that our members have a chance of attending

at least one show a year. That, of course, isn't always possible every year depending on the applications received, but it is always the goal. Once a potential host club has made the decision to apply, it's best to contact the National Show Committee and reserve a date on the schedule for the desired year. Once that is done, the next step is to prepare and submit a show application.

A recently updated Show Guidelines and Application document will be available on the new MCA website. Or, if you prefer, contact anyone on the MCA National Show Committee and they will be glad to send a copy to you via e-mail or postal mail. This document contains detailed information on what committees and personnel are needed; what the show layout requirements are; what procedures must be followed before, during, and after the show; and much more. This document is your starting point, if your club is considering applying to host a National Show. Communication is key to a successful application, so please don't hesitate to contact any of the members of the National Show Committee with questions while preparing your application. They are here to help you. All of the committee members are in regional clubs that have hosted National and Grand National shows and they certainly can provide some good pointers on what to do and, even more importantly, on what not to do.

Finally, one of the most important things that a potential host club can do is to have representatives attend other National shows and observe the procedures. Volunteer to



help with classification, registration, parking, judging, tallying, or other tasks. Be sure to take notes on what you see and talk to the people who are running the show—they're the best source of information. It's best to come prepared with questions to ask and a list of tasks or activities that need to be observed. After the show, share the insights and information with your fellow club members and implement ideas that will work for you.

The 2008 show season has lived up to its promise to be just as exciting as last year's, which produced five top notch events that set the bar high for future shows. I hope that the show locations this year in Florida, Ohio, Canada, Utah, and Arizona will enable as many Mustang enthusiasts as possible to attend. If not, then maybe it's time for your club members to start thinking about applying to host your own MCA National Show. We currently are accepting applications for 2009 through 2012 shows and would love to fill the upcoming schedules!