

# **NATIONAL 4-H HORSE CLASSIC – WESTERN DIVISION**

## **Horse Judging Contest Rules**

### **ELIGIBILITY**

States may participate in only one event, either Eastern National 4-H Roundup or Western National 4-H Roundup. If a State decides to change whether it will attend the Eastern or Western National Contest from its participation the previous year, the Contest Management Committee of both events are to be notified of the decision by April 1 of the current year. All representative teams from a state must attend the same event.

1. Each state may enter only one (1) team of four (4) or five (5) contestants. One team member will be designated as alternate if five (5) are entered.
2. Contestants (including team alternates) may participate in only one contest per year at the Classic. After competing in this contest, they are ineligible to compete in the same specific contest again. Contestants must not have competed in this contest in past Eastern National 4-H Horse Roundups in Louisville or the National 4-H Horse Classic - Western Division in Denver.
3. Contestants (including team alternates) may participate in only one contest per year at the National 4-H Horse Classic - Western Division.

### **METHOD OF CONDUCT**

1. A team may have three (3) or four (4) members; when four (4) are entered, the three (3) highest overall scores will make up the team totals.
2. All contestants will report to the Superintendents at the National Western Stock Show Complex, where they will receive full instructions and be given placing cards. All contestants will remain with the assigned group throughout the contest. Reasons and official placings will be given at a location to be announced.
3. Contestants shall wear no clothing, accessories or other marks of identification that may reveal their identity or the state or club represented. Hats are prohibited in the judging arena.
4. While the contest is in progress, there shall be no conferring between the contestants and anyone else except as directed by the Contest Superintendents or their representatives.
5. No cell phones or other mobile electronic devices will be permitted into the judging contest or reasons contest areas.
6. Contestants are responsible for their own writing instruments and notepads for the purpose of taking notes for reasons classes. There will be no prohibition against contestant use of pre-printed materials during the contest, including but not limited to rule books, judging manuals, and score sheets. The officials will utilize the current years' rule book.
7. Three (3) to six (6) halter classes will be judged. The following breeds may be represented in the halter classes: American Saddlebred, Quarter Horse, Appaloosa, Arabian, Paint, Morgan, Draft

Breeds and Miniature Horses. Contestants will give oral reasons on 1-2 halter classes as determined by the officials. All halter classes will be judged as sound of limb, eye, wind, mouth and reproduction.

8. Three (3) to six (6) performance classes will be judged. The performance classes will be chosen from Trail, Western Pleasure, English Pleasure, Hunter Under Saddle, Hunt Seat Equitation, Saddle Seat Equitation, Western Riding, Reining, Ranch Riding, Western Horsemanship and Hunter Hack. Oral reasons will be given on 2-3 performance classes as determined by the officials. Horses in performance classes will be judged as sound. Officials may excuse any horse from a class if they deem it to be lame. In this event, the excused horse should be placed last on the contestant's card. The remainder of the class will continue to be judged once the lame horse has exited the arena.
9. The horses/riders/handlers will be designated by numbers 1-2-3-4.
10. Horses will not be handled by the contestants, but time will be provided in halter classes for close inspection and to observe the horses at a walk and trot.
11. Fifteen (15) minutes will be allowed contestants to judge all classes including reasons classes. Contestants should be to make their observations, take notes and fill out their placing cards during this time, as reasons classes will not be announced prior to the start of the contest.
12. Two (2) minutes will be allowed for each contestant to give oral reasons to the judge. Contestants are not permitted to use notes while giving reasons. Contestant's placing card will not be offered to them upon entering the reasons room.
13. All tack and attire will be considered legal providing it is used properly.
14. Contest Superintendents will reserve the right to replace one or more classes with original, professionally produced video classes in the event weather or other emergencies make it impossible to have the minimum number of live classes required for the contest.

### **CONTEST SUPERINTENDENTS**

1. It shall be the duty of the Superintendents and the Horse Classic Committee to see that all rules and regulations are carried out.
2. The Superintendents will take no part in rating the contestants.
3. They shall have charge of all records and shall have all ratings received, tabulated and totaled.
4. The Superintendents will be responsible for all cuts on official placings.

### **SUPPORT STAFF**

Assistants, including the announcer, group leaders, timer, gatemen, tabulators, etc., shall be directly responsible to the Superintendents and shall assist them in conducting the contest.

## **JUDGES**

1. Classes will be placed in accordance with the rules of the respective breed association rules.
2. The judges shall place the classes while the contestants are working in the arena. The judges shall enter their placings on the placing card, indicate the cuts to be made, and file that card with the Superintendents for final review and approval. Referee judge(s) may be used at the discretion of the Superintendents.
3. When the contestant has finished giving reasons, the reason listener will place the reason score upon the contestant's computer sheet for tabulation.

## **DESCRIPTION OF CUTS**

Cuts, as specified in the NHJTCA Handbook:

- 1      Horses are extremely similar; no obvious reason why one should be placed over the other; or, both horses have numerous faults, and none supersedes the others; placing is strictly a matter of personal preference; placing varies among official judges.
- 2      Horses are very close, but one horse has one or two qualitative or quantitative advantages; the majority of official judges would not switch the pair, but half of the contestants could logically switch the pair.
- 3      Horses are of unequal quality, but there is a logical placing in favor of one horse; either one horse has several faults or several advantages; all official judges would agree on the placing; no more than one third of contestants would be expected to switch the pair.
- 4      Horses are not of similar quality; one horse has several decided advantages based on many points; all experts would quickly see the placing; no guesswork or personal preference required to make placing; no more than 10% of contestants would be expected to switch the pair.
- 5      Large number of extreme differences between the horses; placing is obvious to everyone on first, quick observation; careful study not required for the placing; pair consists of an inferior horse vs. a consistent winner; only very inexperienced, uninformed contestants would switch the pair.
- 6      Horse not even comparable; differences reflective of a champion quality horse or performance vs. a horse or performance that is not of show quality.
- 7      Largest cuts; differences reflective of a world-class halter horse vs. an extremely poor quality or lame horse; or a world-class performance vs. a disqualified performance.

## **DETERMINATION OF RATINGS**

1. Fifty (50) points shall constitute a perfect mark on placing and 50 points shall constitute a perfect mark on reasons.
2. Priority order for breaking ties:
  - a. If tied for a division award in Halter or Performance, the contestant or team having the highest reason score in that division will be listed first.
  - b. If tied for an award in reasons, the contestant or team having the lowest placing score on the reason's classes will be listed first.
  - c. If tied for individual or team overall award, the contestant or team having the highest overall reason score shall be listed first.
  - d. If still tied for either (a) or (c) above, the contestant or team having the highest score in placing reason classes shall be listed first.
  - e. If still tied, the contestant or team with the highest overall placing score will be listed first.
  - f. If still tied, the contestant or team with the highest single class reasons score will be listed first.
  - g. If contestants are still tied from above, the youngest contestant or team shall be listed first.