

2026 Horse Show Rule Book Addendum

Page 6, Rule #30

Add Section on Walk/Trot Division/Classes

Walk/Trot (W/T) classes can be held in Showmanship, Western Horsemanship, Trail, and English Equitation. W/T classes can be made available at the discretion of show management. Not all classes need to be offered as W/T classes. It is recommended that participants have been evaluated with the Safety- Pre-Level 1 Riding Test and passed before exhibition. W/T participants are not permitted to compete in over fences, speed/gymkhana and ranch/cattle classes. The same rules for the classes the W/T exhibitor is participating in would apply. Show management may allow W/T exhibitors to show two handed on any age horse in any legal bit or bosal - this needs to be determined ahead of competition and communicated to all participants. Patterns for W/T classes cannot exceed expectations and skills tested in the Safety- Pre-Level 1 Riding Test. Helmets are required for all WT participants.

Page 9, Rule #47

Add Section Tail Ribbons

Exhibitors may be asked or required by show management to display a colored ribbon in their horse's tail. Horse ribbon colors have different meanings; tail ribbons warn others about the horse's temperament or status.

Red: The horse has a history of kicking, biting, or being temperamental. This is a warning to keep a safe distance.

Green: The horse is inexperienced, new to traffic, or easily spooked. Approach with caution and give them space.

White: The horse is for sale.

Pink: The horse is a mare that is in heat and potentially cranky or easily distracted.

Blue: *not used in 4-H as stallions are not permitted to be ridden in Colorado 4-H Horse Project*
The horse is a stallion. Be mindful, especially if there is a mare nearby.

Page 94, Rule 300 G Reword with:

Grooming - Grooming of the horse is not to be penalized. Equipment with silver should not count over a good working outfit, excessive silver on bridles and saddles is discouraged.

Pages 110-113, Rules 323 - 335

Delete

ADD New Class Herd Work

NEW Rule 323

This class is judged on the ability of the horse to work a cow by separating it from the herd and holding it to demonstrate the horse's ability to work the cow. A single cow is cut from the herd and the horse must demonstrate its ability to work the cow. During the 2-minute time limit the objective will be to cut two cows from the herd and work the cow(s). The ideal VRH ranch cutting horse should have a natural ranch horse appearance from head to tail in each maneuver. Judging will begin at the time line. The contestant shall approach the herd with no hesitation, weaving or reluctance on the part of the horse to enter the herd sufficiently deep enough to show his ability to make a cut. The horse shall work quietly, but alertly, causing very little disturbance to the herd or the cow brought out. Credit will be given for driving cattle, clearing the herd by a sufficient distance and setting up a cow while holding it in a working

position as near the center of the arena as possible. The degree of difficulty, eye appeal and the amount of courage in staying on a tough cow will be taken into consideration. The amount of time actually spent working cattle in the 2 minute period will have a positive effect on the total score. The horse should show a great deal of expression but no ill will toward the animal. Judging will end at the whistle.

Assistance of two turn-back riders and two herd holders. These assistants may communicate verbally with the exhibitor. Show management may supply two herd holders and two turn back riders, or exhibitors may supply their own helpers. If an exhibitor is a herd holder or turn back rider, he or she may use the horse that they are competing on, or use a different horse.

There will be a two-minute time limit. If a visible time clock is not available, the announcer/time keeper will give a warning when one minute of the two-minute working time has expired. Each exhibitor must work two head and has the option of ending their run before the two-minute limit or working the full two minutes. Show management has the option of using a one and one half minute time limit and exhibitors only work one head if this option is used when cattle availability is limited.

Time will begin when a rider crosses a timeline just prior to entering the herd. Time should not start until contestant crosses a pre-determined and marked timeline. The rider will then quietly separate his/her cow from the herd.

Unnecessary roughness or disturbing the herd excessively could result in disqualification.

Ultimate credit will be given to horses demonstrating excellence in the herd work by committing to, driving, setting up and working a cow in the center of the arena with minimal disturbance to the herd.

Exhibitors will not be penalized for reining during the cutting portion, but should display natural ability.

- A. Scoring. Herd Work – Use of the AQHA VRH Ranch Horse Cutting Score Sheet is required. Will be judged by the horse's performance and natural ability. Herd work is evaluated on the herd work (entering the herd and isolating one cow to be worked), Control of the cow while working it, Degree of difficulty and eye appeal. It is the judge's responsibility to evaluate these maneuver groups individually and rate each maneuver group for each cow on the following scale:

- Extremely Poor = -1 ½
- Very Poor = -1
- ✓ - Poor = -½
- ✓ Correct = 0
- ✓ + Good = +½
- + Very Good = +1
- ++ Excellent = +1 ½

B. Penalties

1. One Point
 - a. (Miss) Loss of working advantage
 - b. Working out of position
 - c. Toe, foot, or stirrup on shoulder
 - d. over-bridled (per maneuver)
 - e. out of frame (per maneuver)

3. Three Point
 - a. Hot quit
 - b. Cattle picked up/running into or scattering herd
 - c. Back fence
 - d. Pawing or biting cattle;
 - e. Spurring on shoulder;
 - f. Failure to make a deep cut
5. Five Point
 - a) Horse quitting a cow
 - b) Losing a cow
 - c) Changing cattle after a specific commitment
 - d) Failure to separate a single animal after leaving the herd
 - e) Blatant disobedience, defined as kicking, biting, bucking, rearing, striking, or obviously insubordinate
 - f) Spurring or hitting in front of the cinch at any time or excessively whipping or spurring the horse
6. Off Pattern (OP) Zero-Score - not eligible to place or receive a ribbon
 - a) Horse turns tail
 - b) Using two hands on the reins with a curb bit
 - c) More than one finger between split reins or any fingers between romal reins (except in the two-rein)
 - d) Repeated blatant disobedience
 - e) Failure to cut two cows (unless the one cow option is being used)
 - f) Bloody mouth (inside)
 - g) Second loss of cow

NOTE: A judge may blow his/her whistle at any time to terminate the work. A score of zero will be given if the work is not complete at that time.
7. No Score
 - i. Abuse
 - ii. Lameness of the horse
 - iii. disrespect or misconduct;
 - iv. illegal equipment and or improper Western Attire
 - v. excessive disturbance of herd to the point that exhibitor is asked to leave the arena;
 - vi. leaving arena before run is complete,
 - vii. fall of horse/rider;
 - viii. out of control, dangerous, or excessive schooling.

Page 116 Change title to Cow Work Classes

340 These classes combine the reining ability, stockmanship and roping ability of the rider with the responsiveness of a well-trained cowhorse. Each exhibitor will perform individually and will be judged on horsemanship, stockmanship and roping skills (where applicable). This class may be combined with Ranch Horsemanship or Ranch Riding followed by release of cow for Cow Work. Use of the respective Cow Work score card is required. Management should encourage the posting of the judge's individual cow work scorecard as a learning tool for the exhibitors.

A. Riders must use caution in working a cow to minimize the chance of the cow being hurt.

- B. The rider begins their go by calling for a cow to be turned into the arena. The time begins when the gate is closed behind the cow.

341. Tack and Attire (See #300)

342. Cow Work Classes are individually judged events where the rider will work one cow in their run.

[Place Arena Marker Setup diagram]

Box and Drive - Intro Ranch Competency and above
Class Routine

343. The exhibitor will hold a cow on the prescribed end of the arena for 50 seconds, demonstrating the ability of the horse and rider to control the cow. The announcer or judge will signal the completion of the 50 seconds with a whistle, horn or announcement over PA. Once 50 seconds has expired the rider will take the cow down one side of the arena past the halfway mark and perform a responsive square stop. Riders must not attempt to stop or turn cow once it has gone down the fence. Rider will have 1½ minutes to complete the class

344. Scoring will be on the basis of 0-100, with 70 denoting an average performance. Each maneuver will be scored from a plus 1½ to a minus 1½, in ½ point increments.

A. The scorecard will be used by the judge to evaluate the following:

1. Rating, form and quality
2. Degree of difficulty
3. Eye appeal
4. Position and control
5. Boxing
6. Courage
7. Time Worked

B. Penalties:

1. One Point
 - a. Loss of working advantage
 - b. Slipping a rein
 - c. Excessive whipping, spurring, or hollering
 - d. Failure to drive cow down the fence to designated marker
 - e. For each length horse runs past cow
 - f. Working out of position
2. Two Point
 - a. Driving cow down the middle of arena and stopping in the middle of the arena. (Driving cow at least 20ft. Off the side of the arena wall would be considered middle of the arena)
3. Three Point
 - a. Exhausting or overworking before driving cow down fence
 - b. Knocking down cow without having working advantage
 - c. Failure or refusal to turn
4. Five Point
 - a. Spurring or hitting in front of the cinch at any time
 - b. Blatant disobedience including kicking, biting, bucking, rearing and striking or obviously insubordinate
 - c. Loss of cow

5. Zero-Score – not eligible to place or receive a ribbon
 - a. Illegal equipment or illegal use of equipment b. illegal use of hands (See Rule 300D, page 94)
 - b. illegal use of hands (See Rule 300D, page 94)
 - c. Failure to attempt part of class
 - d. Excessive running or abuse of cattle, including but not limited to running cow into fence
 - e. Turn tail (to turn away from cow turning tail to the cow)
 - f. Out of control
 - g. Fall of horse or rider
 - h. Schooling horse between cows, if new cow is awarded
 - i. Failure to quit working a cow after a new cow has been awarded
 - j. Willful abuse including but not limited to: whipping or striking the horse with hand or equipment
 - k. Visible blood inside the mouth, on shoulder or sides

C. When working a cow, a rider shall not be penalized for holding onto the cantle or horn of the saddle.

D. The judge, at his discretion, may award a rider a new cow based on the following:

1. The cow will not or cannot run
2. The cow is blind in one or both eyes
3. The cow will not yield to the horse
4. The cow leaves the arena

E. The judge will whistle the rider off the cow if, at any time, the judge feels that the cow is being run too fast, is being abused in any way (including running cow into fence), or for safety. The judge will then assess a zero score for that portion of the event.

Box Drive Box Drive - Limited Ranch Competency and above Class Routine

345. Exhibitors are allotted one minute and forty-five seconds to complete the cow work. When there are 30 seconds left, the announcer will announce, 30 seconds remaining. At one minute and forty-five seconds, the announcer will call time. Exhibitors are not required to use all of the allotted time but must ride until the judge ends the run with a whistle or time expires, whichever occurs first. There are four parts to the work: boxing the cow; setting up the cow and driving / rating it down the fence to the opposite end of the arena; and boxing it at the opposite end of the arena, and then driving / rating the cow past the middle marker again. There is no expectation that the exhibitor will make a 'fence turn, rather the drive down the fence demonstrates correct position and control around the corner.

346. Scoring will be on the basis of 0-100, with 70 denoting an average performance. Each maneuver will be scored from a plus 1½ to a minus 1½, in ½ point increments.

A. The scorecard will be used by the judge to evaluate the following:

1. Rating, form and quality
2. Degree of difficulty

3. Eye appeal
4. Position and control
5. Boxing
6. Courage
7. Time Worked

B. Penalties:

1. One Point
 - a. Loss of working advantage
 - b. Slipping a rein
 - c. Excessive whipping, spurring, or hollering
 - d. Failure to drive cow down the fence to designated marker
 - e. For each length horse runs past cow
 - f. Using corner or end of the arena to turn cow
 - g. Working out of position
2. Two Point
 - a. Driving cow down the middle of arena and stopping in the middle of the arena. (Driving cow at least 20ft. Off the side of the arena wall would be considered middle of the arena)
3. Three Point
 - a. Exhausting or overworking before driving cow down fence
 - b. Knocking down cow without having working advantage
 - c. Failure or refusal to turn
4. Five Point
 - a. Spurring or hitting in front of the cinch at any time
 - b. Blatant disobedience including kicking, biting, bucking, rearing and striking or obviously insubordinate
 - c. Loss of cow
5. Zero-Score – not eligible to place or receive a ribbon
 - a. Illegal equipment or illegal use of equipment b. illegal use of hands (See Rule 300D, page 94)
 - b. illegal use of hands (See Rule 300D, page 94)
 - c. Failure to attempt part of class
 - d. Excessive running or abuse of cattle, including but not limited to running cow into fence
 - e. Turn tail (to turn away from cow turning tail to the cow)
 - f. Out of control
 - g. Fall of horse or rider
 - h. Schooling horse between cows, if new cow is awarded
 - i. Failure to quit working a cow after a new cow has been awarded
 - j. Willful abuse including but not limited to: whipping or striking the horse with hand or equipment
 - k. Visible blood inside the mouth, on shoulder or sides

C. When working a cow, a rider shall not be penalized for holding onto the cantle or horn of the saddle.

D. The judge, at his discretion, may award a rider a new cow based on the following:

1. The cow will not or cannot run

2. The cow is blind in one or both eyes
3. The cow will not yield to the horse
4. The cow leaves the arena

E. The judge will whistle the rider off the cow if, at any time, the judge feels that the cow is being run too fast, is being abused in any way (including running cow into fence), or for safety. The judge will then assess a zero score for that portion of the event.

Individual Cow Work - Advanced Ranch Competency Class Routine

347. Exhibitors are allotted three minutes to complete the cow work. When there is one minute left, the announcer will announce, one minute remaining. At three minutes, the announcer will call for time. Exhibitors are not required to use all of the time allotted but rather should use the time the exhibitor feels is needed to demonstrate the skills of horse and rider while working a cow. There are three parts to this class: boxing, fence work and roping or circling.

- A. Part one - Boxing the Cow: The rider shall ride into the arena, face the cattle entry gate and signal for their cow to be turned into the arena. The cow shall be controlled on the entry end of the arena for a sufficient amount of time to demonstrate the horse's ability to hold the cow. If the cow does not immediately challenge the horse, the rider shall aggressively move in on the cow to demonstrate the horse's ability to drive and block the cow on the entry fence.
- B. Part two - Fence Work: After the cow has been controlled on the entry end of the arena, the rider shall set the cow up and drive it down either side of the arena. The cow should be turned on the fence at least once in each direction. The first run out for a turn shall be past the halfway mark of the arena or a penalty will be applied. The exhibitor must be in position to control the animal and be the cause the animal to change course. All turns down the side shall be completed before reaching the end fence.
- C. Part Three - Roping or Circling
 - a. After the rider has turned the cow at least once each way of the fence, the rider may take down a rope, build a loop, track and rate the cow, rope her and dally, releasing the breakaway hondo; or, the rider may choose to circle the cow, once in each direction.
 - b. If roping, the rider is allowed two throws. The judge will score the rider on how well the rope is handled, the manner in which the cow is rated, throws and stops. When roping the exhibitor will pull up after the fence work, take down the rope and proceed to rope and stop and the hondo should release. Breakaway hondo must be used and dally, thereby releasing the breakaway. A catch is considered legal if it passes over the head (including a horn catch) and holds on any part of the body except the tail until the dally is taken and the breakaway hondo releases. A catch is not required. If the exhibitor does not catch a 2-point penalty is applied but the tracking and rating is still scored.
 - c. An exhibitor has the option of circling the cow once in each direction instead of roping with a score for each direction of circling. To circle the cow, the exhibitor will maneuver the cow smoothly at least 360 degrees in each direction without interference from the fence. The circle's size, symmetry, speed and relative balance from right and left show control. Tightening the circles down with fast head-to-head speed will be a credit situation. The circles should be completed before the cow is exhausted. Once an exhibitor has committed to circling a cow, if

the cow falls no new cow will be awarded. The exhibitor will complete the run by riding around the fallen cow to fulfil circling requirements

348. Scoring will be on the basis of 0-100, with 70 denoting an average performance. Each maneuver will be scored from a plus 1½ to a minus 1½, in ½ point increments.

A. The scorecard will be used by the judge to evaluate the following:

1. Rating, form and quality
2. Degree of difficulty
3. Eye appeal
4. Position and control
5. Boxing
6. Drive and turns
7. Circle or rope

B. Penalties:

1. One Point

- a. Loss of working advantage
- b. Slipping a rein
- c. Excessive whipping, spurring, or hollering
- d. Failure to drive cow down the fence to past designated marker
- e. For each length horse runs past cow
- f. Using corner or end of the arena to turn cow
- g. Changing sides of arena to turn cow
- h. Working out of position

2. Two Point

- a. Going around corner of arena before stopping or turning cow
- b. Driving cow down the middle of arena and stopping in the middle of the arena. (Driving cow at least 20ft. Off the side of the arena wall would be considered middle of the arena)

3. Three Point

- a. Exhausting or overworking before driving cow down fence
- b. Knocking down cow without having working advantage
- c. Failure or refusal to turn

4. Five Point

- a. Spurring or hitting in front of the cinch at any time
- b. Blatant disobedience including kicking, biting, bucking, rearing and striking or obviously insubordinate
- c. Loss of cow

5. Ten point penalty for dropping the rope

6. Zero-Score – not eligible to place or receive a ribbon

- a. Illegal equipment or illegal use of equipment b. illegal use of hands
(See Rule 300D, page 94)
- b. Illegal use of hands (See Rule 300D, page 94)
- c. Failure to attempt part of class
- d. Excessive running or abuse of cattle, including but not limited to running cow into fence
- e. Turn tail (to turn away from cow turning tail to the cow)
- f. Out of control
- g. Fall of horse or rider

- h. Schooling horse between cows, if new cow is awarded
- i. Failure to quit working a cow after a new cow has been awarded
- j. Willful abuse including but not limited to: whipping or striking the horse with hand or equipment
- k. Visible blood inside the mouth, on shoulder or sides

C. When working a cow, a rider shall not be penalized for holding onto the cantle or horn of the saddle.

D. The judge, at his discretion, may award a rider a new cow based on the following:

1. The cow will not or cannot run
2. The cow is blind in one or both eyes
3. The cow will not yield to the horse
4. The cow leaves the arena

E. The judge will whistle the rider off the cow if, at any time, the judge feels that the cow is being run too fast, is being abused in any way (including running cow into fence), or for safety. The judge will then assess a zero score for that portion of the event.