

**2012 RULE CHANGES**  
**AQHA Official Handbook of Rules and Regulations**

Effective January 1, 2012

PLEASE take time to familiarize yourself with the following rule changes. We will post additional changes and/or modifications online under Show Manager Resources as we receive them. We will indicate the date modified as well as denote final version when it is available. If you have any questions or comments, feel free to contact the competition department.

**101. MEMBERSHIP**

(g) **AQHA MEMBERSHIP:** The following designations of annual membership in AQHA are available, entitling the recipient to the designated period of eligibility, upon application, qualification and payment of the requisite fee, which carries the indicated membership privileges and one vote on membership matters:

**(4) Amateur AQHA Membership.**

(C) Amateur membership cards will be issued by AQHA only upon application and AQHA approval of the applicant, which application shall be truthful in each and every detail. Violation of AQHA's rule requirement of truthfulness shall subject the applicant, and the family member signing the application in verification, to possible disciplinary action or suspension from participation privileges in AQHA-approved events or AQHA membership and/or fine. The application shall verify, in addition to other requirements contained in this rule book, that:

**(2) Unless otherwise permitted pursuant to AQHA rules and regulations,** the applicant is the sole actual legal owner of the horse(s) to be shown by the applicant and agrees to document such ownership upon request of AQHA; or

**103. AQHA AFFILIATES.**

(c) To date of the printing of this issue of the AQHA Official Handbook, the following international associations are recognized:

**Costa Rica Quarter Horse Association**  
**Irish Quarter Horse Association**

**222. FEES.** Payable in U.S. funds. The following fees shall be paid prior to the processing of requests for the items listed:

	Member	Nonmember**
(e) LEASE	\$20	\$60 **
<u>Amateur Showing Lease</u>	<u>\$30</u>	<u>\$75</u>
<u>Youth Showing Lease</u>	<u>\$30</u>	<u>\$45</u>
Replacement lease certificate	\$10	\$50 **

**403. AMATEUR ELIGIBILITY**

(a) The application for amateur membership must be true and correct in each detail. A false statement shall be grounds for possible disciplinary action under AQHA's disciplinary procedure, which includes suspension, fine and/or expulsion from membership. In addition to the requirements of rules 101 and 402, a person is eligible for an amateur membership and maintains eligibility when he or she:

**(4) Individuals that are 65 years of age and who have not trained a horse in the previous five years and are willing to give up their judge's card to immediately be eligible to compete as an amateur exhibitor provided that they have not judged in the previous twelve months.**

**(7) Unless otherwise permitted pursuant to AQHA rules and regulations,** must not exhibit in open or amateur AQHA classes horses owned by any third party, but shall only exhibit horses solely owned by the applicant or the applicant's family, which is the applicant's spouse, child, stepchild, parent, grandparents, grandchild, step-parent, sibling, half-sibling, step-sibling, spouse's parent, spouse's step-parent, sibling's spouse, half-sibling's spouse, step-sibling's spouse, sibling's child, sibling's step-child, half-sibling's child, half-sibling's step-child, step-sibling's child, step-sibling's step-child, parent's sibling, parent's half-sibling, parent's step-

sibling, parent's sibling's child, parent's sibling's stepchild, parent's half sibling's child, parent's half sibling's stepchild, parent's step sibling child, parent's step sibling's stepchild, legal ward or legal guardian. Separate legal entities, such as family corporations, trusts or partnerships, are also authorized owners of the amateur exhibitor's horse so long as all legal and equitable owners and beneficiaries of the legal entity are individuals specifically authorized by this rule. "Owned" means, in addition to other legitimate methods of acquiring ownership, the bona fide legal ownership obtained for adequate consideration in reasonable relationship with the actual market value of the horse. For example, a \$5 payment for a world championship quality horse does not meet the required character of required ownership for competition in AQHA's amateur division. The relationship of the amateur to the owner of the participating horse must be evidenced by submitting legal documentation (i.e. copies of marriage and/or birth certificates) to AQHA's Show Department. **For purposes of this subsection, if a record owner (1) leases a horse for breeding purposes only and (2) retains sole right of competing with the horse, such record owner may exhibit the horse in open or amateur AQHA classes;**

#### **404. YOUTH ELIGIBILITY**

(a) In addition to the requirements of rules 101 and 402 **and unless otherwise permitted pursuant to AQHA rules and regulations,** any horse exhibited in the youth division must be solely owned by the contestant showing the horse or by the contestant's parent, stepparent, sibling, half-sibling, step sibling, grandparent, step grandparent, sibling's child, sibling's step-child, half-sibling's child, half-sibling's step-child, step-sibling's child, step-sibling's step-child, parent's sibling, parent's half-sibling, parent's step-sibling, parent's sibling's child, parent's sibling's stepchild, parent's half sibling's child, parent's half sibling's stepchild, parent's step sibling child, parent's step sibling's stepchild, sibling's spouse, half-sibling's spouse, step-sibling's spouse or legal guardian (as evidenced by court documents), or owned by the institution in which the contestant is enrolled as a ward. Separate legal entities, such as family corporations, trusts or partnerships, are also authorized owners of the youth exhibitor's horse so long as all legal and equitable owners and beneficiaries of the legal entity are individuals specifically authorized by this rule. "Owned" means, in addition to other legitimate methods of acquiring ownership, the bona fide legal ownership obtained for adequate consideration in reasonable relationship with the actual market value of the horse. For example, a \$5 payment for a world championship quality horse does not meet the required character of required ownership for competition in AQHA's youth division. Such ownership must be evidenced by AQHA records and the certificate of registration of such horse must show such person as the owner by proper endorsement of AQHA at the time the horse is entered in any youth activity, show or class.

(c) Stallions are prohibited in all youth classes **with the following exception: Youth ages 14 and older residing in Mexico, South or Central America may exhibit stallions in Youth Division performance classes if such classes are held in Mexico, South and/or Central America.**

**405A. NOVICE ELIGIBILITY FOR AMATEUR & YOUTH.** Every person competing in a novice amateur or novice youth class must possess a novice amateur or novice youth membership card.

(c) Once an individual has earned 25 AQHA novice amateur, amateur, novice youth, youth or open points, or any combination thereof, in a skill set; or, won a world or reserve world in an AQHA-approved event, national or reserve national championship title in any equine organization or association; or won a total of \$5,000 in cash and prizes with any equine organization **or association,** he/she will no longer be eligible to participate in the novice skill set containing that class(es) in subsequent years but may continue to compete in that novice skill set until the end of the calendar year in which the afore-mentioned instances occurred. Any individual who has been an accredited horse show judge will not be eligible to participate in novice skill sets.

#### **406. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR CLASS PARTICIPATION**

(d) **Subject to Rule 404(c),** stallions may not be exhibited in novice amateur, youth or novice youth classes.

#### **407. SHOW APPROVAL**

(a) All approved classes must be open to any American Quarter Horse owner meeting age, ownership and eligibility requirements. Membership in AQHA and/or AQHYA for youth competition is the only mandatory membership. Show approval is a privilege, not a right, granted or rejected at AQHA discretion on an annual basis according to continuous evaluation of the applicant, including, but not limited to competence of show management, enforcement of AQHA rules, quality of show, and service to AQHA members. Applicants desiring to hold an AQHA-approved show must obtain prior tentative AQHA approval. To obtain tentative approval for a

previously approved show, an application form available from AQHA must be correctly and entirely completed if show results and points awarded to the horses are to be accepted and entered in AQHA records as official. A \$100 non-refundable application fee must also accompany the initial application. There are no diskette refunds. For new show approval, a letter of request must be directed to the Director of Shows for investigation. A \$100 processing fee for new show applications or requests will be assessed, if the show is approved that amount will be applied as show approval. A \$25 non-refundable change fee will be implemented for priority date or location changes. For approval of a Special Event, All-Novice, Versatility Ranch Horse, Introductory Show and Equestrians with Disabilities, a \$50 fee must be submitted for each date requested. If special event or other date is approved the \$50 fee will be applied to show approval. The fee will not be refunded if the special event is not held or cancelled.

(c) To obtain approval, an application for approval form, correctly and entirely completed, must be submitted and **received in AQHA's office** at least **120** days prior to the first date of the proposed show in order to be published in two issues of *The American Quarter Horse Journal*. The application for approval must be accompanied by a list of all classes for horses in the entire show, whether or not all of the classes are limited to AQHA-registered horses. **The following extended application fees are determined by the date the application and fees are received in AQHA's office, as evidenced by AQHA's date stamp:**

**(1) Show Application fees:**

**90-119 days prior to show date**

**\$200 late fee**

**60-89 days prior to show date**

**\$400 late fee**

**less than 59 days prior to show date subject to \$1,000 late fee or denial**

**(2) Special Event Application:**

**90-119 days prior to show date**

**\$100 late fee**

**60-89 days prior to show date**

**\$200 late fee**

**less than 59 days prior to show date subject to \$500 late fee or denial**

(d) Changes in a show application after filing may be made after the **120**-day deadline specified above, provided AQHA is able to publish changes in one issue of *The American Quarter Horse Journal* prior to the approved date.

(r) An open division may be approved provided a minimum of five halter classes for stallions, a minimum of five halter classes for mares, a minimum of five halter classes for geldings and one performance class limited to registered American Quarter Horses are offered. The halter classes are to include individual classes for yearlings, 2-year-olds, 3-year-olds, 4-year-olds and older, and performance halter for American Quarter Horses. **Show management will have the option to combine age groups into 2 and under and 3 and over with the unanimous consent of all exhibitors involved in the class only if there are 2 or less entries in at least one of the halter age groups to be combined. Once halter age groups are combined and additional entries are taken, it is mandatory that halter age groups be split to the originally requested classes should ½ point or more become available in each age group. The Performance Halter would continue to be offered as a separate class.**

(x) The applicant(s), organizer(s) and management of Introductory Show understand and agree that:

**(5) Points earned at Introductory Shows do not count towards World Show qualification. Additionally, if an exhibitor has placed in the top 10 in any class at an AQHA World Show, they are not eligible to compete at an Introductory Show.**

#### **408. AMATEUR DIVISION APPROVAL**

(b) At show management's option, any number of performance classes may be offered as select (ages 50 and over) and the exhibitor has the option of competing in the select class or the all-age class. Further, management will combine these classes back to an all-age class should there be less than three entries in the select or amateur classes. **If additional entries are accepted such that there are now three or more entries in both the select and amateur classes, classes must be split back the way they were originally offered.** Jumping may only be offered as all-age class.

(c) To have an approved amateur halter division, halter classes must be offered below. **Show management will have the option to combine age groups into 2 and under and 3 and over with the unanimous consent of all exhibitors involved in the class only if there are 2 or less entries in at least one of the halter age groups to be combined. Once halter age groups are combined and additional entries are taken, it is mandatory that halter age groups be split to the originally requested classes should ½ point or more become available in each age group. The Performance Halter would continue to be offered as a**

**separate class.** Novice Halter may be offered as an approved and pointed class at any AQHA approved show. Novice Halter class winners are not eligible for Grand and Reserve Champion. Stallions may not be shown in Novice Halter classes.

- Category A.**
1. Yearling Stallions
  2. 2-Year-Old Stallions
  3. 3-Year-Old Stallions
  4. 4-Year-Old and Older Stallions
  5. Performance Halter Stallions
  6. Yearling Mares
  7. 2-Year-Old Mares
  8. 3-Year-Old Mares
  9. 4-Year-Old and Older Mares
  10. Performance Halter Mares
  11. Yearling Geldings
  12. 2-Year-Old Geldings
  13. 3-Year-Old Geldings
  14. 4-Year-Old and Older Geldings
  15. Performance Halter Geldings

#### **409. YOUTH DIVISION APPROVAL**

(c) If youth halter classes are held, show management will offer the classes shown in Category A. **Show management will have the option to combine age groups into 2 and under and 3 and over with the unanimous consent of all exhibitors involved in the class only if there are 2 or less entries in at least one of the halter age groups to be combined. Once halter age groups are combined and additional entries are taken, it is mandatory that halter age groups be split to the originally requested classes should ½ point or more become available in each age group. The Performance Halter would continue to be offered as a separate class.** Novice Halter may be offered as an approved and pointed class at any AQHA approved show. Novice Halter class winners are not eligible for Grand and Reserve Champion. Stallions may not be shown in Novice Halter classes.

- Category A**
1. Yearling Mares
  2. 2-Year-Old Mares
  3. 3-Year-Old Mares
  4. Aged Mares
  5. Performance Halter Mares
  6. Yearling Geldings
  7. 2-Year-Old Geldings
  8. 3-Year-Old Geldings
  9. Aged Geldings
  10. Performance Halter Geldings

#### **417. ALL-AROUND TROPHY. OPEN, AMATEUR, SELECT AMATEUR, YOUTH.**

(a) AQHA will award a specially designed, copyrighted bronze trophy in the open, amateur, select amateur classes and/or youth division to any horse earning the title of All-Around the first time it earns the All-Around title under the current record ownership. If that horse earns another All-Around trophy in each division - open, amateur, select amateur classes and/or youth - the owner may purchase a similar bronze trophy if the show does not award it. The trophy will be awarded to the highest scoring stallion (except in the youth division where stallions are prohibited **unless allowed Rule 404(c)**), per mare or gelding in events in shows approved by AQHA. Once the first-time complimentary AQHA trophy has been awarded, AQHA will subsequently award specially designed certificates to any horse earning the title of All-Around or Reserve All-Around each time the title is earned in each division - open, amateur, select amateur classes and/or youth.

(b) To be eligible for all-around honors, a horse in the open division, amateur in the amateur division, select amateur **in the select amateur classes** or youth in the youth division must compete in at least three AQHA-approved events in one division - open, amateur, select amateur classes or youth - in three or more categories.

(d) The winner of the all-around trophy is determined by adding points earned by each horse in the open division, or contestant/horse in amateur, select amateur and youth events in every approved class in which it

placed in the top nine. The horse in the open division, or contestant/ horse in amateur, **select amateur** classes and youth events, having competed in at least three of the approved events in three or more categories and earning the greatest number of points shall be awarded the all-around trophy. **Should amateur and select classes be combined per Rule 408 (b), the select amateur exhibitor's placing will count toward the calculation of the select all-around award.**

#### **431A. YEAR-END HIGH-POINT HORSE. OPEN, AMATEUR, YOUTH.**

**(c) For a year-end high-point halter award, a horse must earn at least 10 performance points in their respective division (open, youth, amateur) during the year in order to be eligible for a performance halter high-point( Example: If horse A has 100 performance halter gelding points and 16 western pleasure points and horse B has 135 performance halter gelding points and 7 western pleasure points, then horse A is eligible for year-end high point award in performance halter, but horse B is not eligible for the year –end high point award in performance halter)**

**438. JUDGES.** Designation as an AQHA-approved judge is a privilege, not a right, bestowed by the Judges Committee according to procedures formulated by it, to individuals whose equine expertise and personal character merit the honor. A judge shall judge an AQHA-approved event in accordance with all rules, regulations, directives and guidelines issued by AQHA. A judge shall honestly, fairly and impartially judge each horse exhibited to him or her, strictly on the horse's conformation and/or its performance as the rules of the particular event dictate. An individual's conduct as a member, exhibitor and judge must be exemplary; is subject to continual Judges Committee review, with an automatic review after (5) five years of becoming an AQHA judge; and such designation is revocable by the Judges Committee with or without notice and formal hearing, subject only to ultimate review by the Executive Committee, with or without notice and formal hearing.

##### **(a) JUDGES MUST:**

**(15)** to maintain judging eligibility, an individual must:

**(A)** Attend an AQHA sanctioned Judges Conference once in a two-year period beginning January 1 of the year in which the individual becomes an AQHA-approved judge; furthermore, all AQHA-approved specialized judges must attend a Judges Conference when their discipline is conducted.

**(B) One credit will be awarded for each show number judged. All-around judges must attain a minimum of four (4) credits from AQHA-approved shows per calendar year beginning January 1 of the year following the individual's approval as an AQHA-approved judge. In cases where four, or more, show numbers are judged at the same show, or set of shows, only four (4) credits will be counted against the maximum of 25 shows for that judge. AQHA-approved specialized judges must earn a minimum of one (1) credit every three (3) years beginning the date they go on the list of AQHA-approved judges.**

##### **(c) JUDGES MAY NOT:**

**(4) A judge may not make more than three trips to one state, province or country to judge. One of the trips must be a single day show if three trips are made. Further, a judge may judge two judged special events in the same state, province or country within one calendar year in addition to the previous referenced AQHA-approved show rules. A judge cannot judge two shows within 150 miles of each other within 30 days, except as follows:**

**(A)** A judge may judge **multiple** shows on the same grounds on consecutive days as long as the judge does not judge a particular class but one time during the those shows.

**(B)** A judge residing in an international country may make four trips or judge four shows in any one country in a calendar year (excluding Canada).

#### **441. PROHIBITED CONDUCT**

**(c) Inhumane Treatment.** Inhumane treatment of any horse (whether registered with AQHA or not) or any other animal on show grounds is strictly prohibited. Treatment of any horse will be considered inhumane if a person, educated or experienced in accepted equine training techniques, would perceive the conduct of an individual to be inhumane. Inhumane treatment includes, but is not limited to:

**(14)** use of prohibited equipment, including, but not limited to, saw tooth bits, hock hobbles, tack collars or tack hackamores. **Showmanship whips (dressage whips etc.) will not be allowed at AQHA Shows for showmanship purposes. War bridles or like devices, or any type of wire or rope over a horse's head will not be allowed at AQHA Shows;**



**(18) Applying excessive pressure on or excessive jerking of a halter lead shank or an allowed lip chain is prohibited.**

(j) **Prohibited medication, drug, mechanical device or artificial appliance.** No person shall cause to be administered internally or externally to a horse, either before or during an approved event, any medication, drug, mechanical device or artificial appliance which is of such character as could affect its performance or appearance at that event, **EXCEPT FOR THOSE CONDITIONALLY PERMITTED THERAPEUTIC MEDICATIONS, THE USE OF WHICH IS SPECIFICALLY PROVIDED FOR IN THE THERAPEUTIC MEDICATION ADDENDUM FOLLOWING SUBSECTION (I) OF THIS RULE AND NOT OTHERWISE PROHIBITED BY GOVERNMENTAL REGULATIONS.** Upon discovery of administration of such drug, medication, mechanical device or artificial appliance, show management shall immediately report the matter to AQHA. Any action or substance, administered internally or externally, whether drugs or otherwise, which may interfere with the testing procedure, or mask or screen the presence of such drug, is forbidden.

(8) Tails may be lengthened by hair to hair attachment only with no attachments of any kind to the tailbone. **The use of weighted tails is legal.**

**443. WESTERN EQUIPMENT**

(g) Junior horses competing in junior western pleasure, western horsemanship, reining, working cow horse, western riding and trail that are shown with a hackamore or snaffle bit may be ridden with one (refer to 443(d)) or two hands on the reins. The tails of the reins must be crossed on the opposite side of the neck when riding with two hands on split reins except in working cow horse and reining. Closed reins (example mecate) may not be used with a snaffle bit, except in **Versatility Ranch Horse**, working cow horse and reining, where a mecate is permitted.

(h) In all western classes, horses will be shown in a western saddle and appropriate bridle, snaffle bit or hackamore for the duration of the class. A western saddle is a common type of saddle distinguished by a large noticeable fork on which there is some form of horn, a high cantle and large skirts. Silver equipment will not count over a good working outfit. Horses 5-years-old and younger may be shown in a snaffle bit, hackamore, curb bit, half-breed or spade bit. Horses 6-years-old and older may only be shown in a curb bit, halfbreed or spade bit. **Novice amateur and novice youth may show two handed with a snaffle bit in any class with any age horse.** When a curb bit is used, a curb strap or curb chain is required, but must meet the approval of the judge, be at least one-half inch in width and lie flat against the jaw of the horse. Curb chains cannot be tied to the bit with string or cord. A broken strap or chain is not necessarily cause for disqualification.

(i) **Any horse of any age shown in any novice youth or novice amateur class maybe shown two handed with a snaffle.**

**447. GAITS**

(b) The following terminology shall apply in all English classes:

(1) Walk is a natural, flat-footed, four-beat gait. The horse must move straight, true **and forward** at the walk. The walk must be alert, with a stride of reasonable length in keeping with the size of the horse. Loss of forward rhythmic movement shall be penalized.

**448. HALTER CLASSES**

(d) Halter Equipment

**(1) The use of lip chains are allowed in halter classes for youth and amateur. Stallions one year of age and older in the open division will also be allowed to continue to use a lip chain. However no lip chains of any sort, in any division (open, amateur or youth) will be allowed in classes for weanlings and/or performance halter. Also lip chains are not allowed in any division in the Versatility Ranch Horse conformation class.**

(e) **PROCEDURE FOR JUDGING THE CLASS:**

(1) Horses will walk to the judge one at a time. As the horse approaches, the judge will step to the right (left of the horse) to enable the horse to trot straight to a cone placed 50 feet (15 meters) away. At the cone, the horse will continue trotting, turn to the left and trot toward the left wall or fence of the arena. After trotting, horses will be lined up head to tail for individual inspection by the judge. The judge shall inspect each horse from both sides, front and rear. **At single-judged shows, the judge should line the horses to be placed in a head-to-tail order according to preference.**

**(2) A well-mannered horse is a horse that**

(A) is under control by the exhibitor while tracking and standing for inspection and (B) is reasonably still and flat-footed while standing for inspection.

(C) For purposes of this rule, the term “disruptive behavior” includes, but is not limited to rearing, striking, biting, or backing or falling into others. Judges should disqualify and excuse from the ring prior to final placing a horse that:

(a) exhibits disruptive behavior such that it or other horses are unable to be inspected by the judge;

(b) exhibits disruptive behavior such that the safety of it, the handler, an exhibitor, a judge or another horse is endangered;

(c) is not under the control of the exhibitor;

(d) becomes detached from the exhibitor;

(e) has fallen and is on its side with all four feet extended in the same direction;

(f) is observed with blood on its body, including, but not limited to, the nose, chin, mouth, tongue, or gums, regardless of cause; or

(g) is lame

(D) Rather than disqualify, a judge may choose to fault a horse that is exhibiting disruptive behavior so long as such disruptive behavior does not qualify as being any of the behaviors described in (C)(a-e) immediately above.

(E) If a horse exhibits disruptive behavior described in (C)(a-e) immediately above and causes other exhibitor(s) to lose their horse(s), only the initiating horse will be disqualified and excused. The decision of the judge(s) will be final.

(F) All stallions 2 years old and over shall be examined to confirm that they have two visible testicles. All mares and stallions shall be examined for parrot mouth (see Rule 205(a)). If examination reveals that a horse has parrot mouth or is cryptorchid, such horse should be excused from the ring prior to final placing by the judge regardless of whether the parrot mouth or cryptorchid condition is marked on the horse's registration certificate.

(h) Spayed mares cannot be shown in any halter class **except performance halter and versatility ranch horse conformation.**

(j) PERFORMANCE HALTER

(4) The following horses are the only horses eligible to compete in the performance halter class:

(D) In order to be eligible to show in its respective World Show in Performance Halter, or to earn a year-end high-point award in Performance Halter, a horse must have earned 10 performance points during the respective World Show qualifying time period or during the calendar year for high-point, other than showmanship at halter.

(k) When judging of all classes in a halter division has been completed, all first and second-place class winners of that sex division shall return to the ring except a spayed mare, with first-place class winners in one line and second-place horses from each class in another line.

#### **450. PERFORMANCE CLASSES**

(m) In open competition, an exhibitor may enter one or more horses in a class, but each horse may have only one rider per class. In individual open working events (reining, working cow horse, western riding, barrel racing, pole bending, jumping, working hunter, trail, tie-down roping, dally team roping - heading, dally team roping - heeling, team penning, ranch sorting and cutting) a rider may:

(1) Exhibit **two** horses in a junior class.

(2) Exhibit **two** horses in a senior class.

(3) Exhibit a maximum (total) of four horses in an all-age class. **There is no requirement for the number of junior horses and number of senior horses in an all age class.** If a junior class and a senior class is combined due to a lack of entries (may only be combined if there are two or less entries in one or both of the junior and senior classes) (see 450 e) that class will become an all-age class. For all AQHA World Championship shows, an open exhibitor may only show a maximum of two junior and two senior horses in individual worked classes. Also an amateur or youth exhibitor may only show a maximum of two horses in individual worked classes.

(n) In novice youth, youth, novice amateur, select amateur and amateur in individual working events, (reining, working cow horse, western riding, barrel racing, pole bending, youth stakes race, jumping, working

hunter, trail, breakaway roping, tie-down roping, dally team roping – heading, dally team roping – heeling, team penning, ranch sorting and cutting) an exhibitor may show **two** horses regardless of sex (except youth, novice youth and novice amateur where stallions may not be exhibited **unless allowed per Rule 404(c)**).

(o) A select exhibitor, in individual working events may show any combination in select and amateur as long as a maximum of **two** different horses is exhibited and that horse is only shown one time by any exhibitor in that class. For example, a select exhibitor in individual working events may exhibit both horses in the amateur of both horses in the select, or one in select and one in amateur. A horse may only be exhibited one time in a class in either select or amateur no matter the exhibitor.

#### **452. WORKING COW HORSE**

(l) A show may have up to **four** approved working cow horse classes.

(1) If three working cow horse classes are held at a show they shall be the following:

**(D) The use of ‘two rein’ is allowed as recognized by our NRCHA alliance in AQHA working cow horse. Two Rein Class is open to horses of any age that have not shown in the bridle down the fence in any judged classes or events with the exception of horse sales, prior to November 16<sup>th</sup> of the current show year. These horses can be shown only one year in this class. A horse may be shown in the two rein equipment for one year only regardless of the class it is shown in. The rider must use an approved bit in accordance with NRCHA rules (see below) with an approved bosal also in accordance with NRCHA rules underneath the bridle. Only one hand may be used on the reins and hands must not be changed. Any number of fingers between reins will be permitted. Earnings in this class are counted as bridle earnings for purposes of Merit awards. Horses 5 years of age and under as of January 1 of current show year, may be shown in either a snaffle bit or hackamore.**

**(1) NRCHA rules allow for a spade bit or a bit having the following characteristics; one with an unbroken bar mouthpiece with one inch or higher port measured from the bottom of the bar to the top of the port. There must be an operable cricket or roller (with single for multiple rings) incorporated within the mouthpiece of the bit. It is legal to have a barrel, made of copper or metal, wrapped around the bar space of the bit and is to be considered a part of the mouthpiece. The barrel must be round, smooth, and made up of one continuous, unbroken piece. The minimum diameter, on any part of the bar of the mouthpiece, is 5/16 inch. Bars must be round, oval or egg shaped smooth and unwrapped metal. Latex wrap or any foreign material is not acceptable. Nothing may protrude below the mouthpiece (bar), such as extensions or prongs. The cheeks must be connected at the bottom. The overall length of the bit shall not be longer than 8½ inches measured from the inside bottom of the top of headstall ring to point of pull in the bottom ring. Optional tongue release shall not exceed 3 inches in width.**

**(2) NRCHA rules allow in the Two Rein class bosals may be of any size, constructed of braided rawhide or leather and have a non-metal flexible core. No iron or foreign substance may be used. The rider must use one hand on the reins. Fingers between the reins will be permitted.**

**(3) NRCHA rules allow hackamore shall be round in shape and constructed of uniform braided rawhide or leather and have a non-metal flexible core. No gimmick of any kind may be used in conjunction with the bosal. No rigid material of any kind may be used, regardless of how padded or covered, in conjunction with the bosal. Horse hair bosals are prohibited. Tape is now allowed on the noseband of the hackamore. Smooth, flat, wrapped tape is allowed on the hackamore between the headstall and the mecate reins. Maximum amount of tape allowed is 2 inches on each side of the hackamore.**

**(5) Boxing - work to consist of reining pattern and single cow work (boxing) on the end of the arena.** Boxing is offered for Novice Amateur, Novice Youth, **Amateur, Amateur Select and Youth**. Each contestant upon receiving a cow in the arena shall hold that cow on the prescribed end of the arena for 50 seconds, demonstrating the ability of the horse and rider to control the cow. Time shall begin when the gate closes behind the cow after being let into the arena. The announcer or judge will signal the completion of the 50 seconds with a whistle or horn. **There shall be no schooling between the completion of the rein work and the cow work, or**



between cows if a new cow is awarded. Riders cannot have shown down the fence 3 actual runs in any judged classes or events. Being entered in a class which includes the fence work will be counted as going down the fence regardless if the rider boxed the cow and pulled up before the run was completed. There will be no cross entering (i.e. If you enter in boxing then you cannot enter in the corresponding working cow horse class.)

Pattern 7 will change so that there will be 3 ½ turns instead of 2 ½.

**459. STAKE RACE.** This is a timed event.

(a) Available in the youth, amateur and amateur select.

#### **460B. JUMPING**

(a) The jumper's task is to solely jump and his score is based entirely on his performance alone. Open jumping is offered only as an all-age class.

#### **461. WORKING HUNTER**

(a) The working hunter is a representative of the type of horse used in the hunt field. He should possess manners, jumping ability, style, pace and quality. The working hunter must be able to demonstrate his ability to furnish the rider with a smooth comfortable and safe ride. The same rules apply in junior working hunter as apply in senior or all-ages working hunter classes, except the minimum height of obstacles.

(c) Course or Arena Arrangement:

(1) Minimum of four obstacles. Horses to jump a minimum of eight fences. One change of direction is mandatory.

(2) Obstacles which may be used:

(D) Minimum height for junior horses, youth and amateur classes must be two feet nine inches (84cm), with a maximum of three feet (91 cm); heights for senior horses must be a minimum of three feet (91cm), with a maximum of three feet three inches (1 meter), and all-ages must be a minimum of two feet nine inches (84 cm) with a maximum of three feet three inches (1 meter). Minimum height for novice and select will be two feet six inches (76cm) with a maximum of two feet nine inches.

#### **462. GREEN WORKING HUNTER**

(a) The purpose of green working hunter is to allow a horse to compete on an entry-level field with horses of the same level of experience. The green working hunter is a stepping-stone to the more advanced level of competition with seasoned horses. This class should be judged according to the purpose of its intent. Fence heights shall be two feet six inches (76cm) to two feet nine inches (84cm).

(b) Horses must be ridden with equipment that is approved as per AQHA equipment rules for working hunter.

(c) With the exception of eligibility requirements and heights of the jumps, the same rules apply in green working hunter class as apply in working hunter.

(d) Eligibility requirements are for horses of all ages who have no previous AQHA points in Open Working Hunter, Amateur Working Hunter, Youth Working Hunter, Amateur Equitation Over Fences, Youth Equitation Over Fences, Green Jumping, Open Jumping, Youth Jumping and Amateur Jumping and who have not exhibited in a class 3' and over in competition.

(1) Horses become eligible for Green Working Hunter for a time period of that calendar year after entering any working hunter class other than the Green Working Hunter.

(e) Green working hunter will not be held as a World Show class.

(f) Green working hunter points are not eligible for Incentive Fund

#### **463. PROGRESSIVE WORKING HUNTER**

(a) The purpose of the progressive working hunter is the next step in the progression from the green working hunter to the more advanced level of competition with the seasoned horse. This class should be judged according to the purpose of its intent.

(b) Eligibility requirements to compete.

(1) Horses that have shown during previous years in AQHA-approved open working hunter, amateur working hunter, youth working hunter, amateur equitation over fences, youth equitation over fences, green jumping, open jumping, youth jumping or amateur jumping, but have not won more

**than 10 points or have exhibited in a class three feet or more in any competition with the exception of points earned in green working hunter.**

(2) Progressive Working Hunter will be a World Show class but no points will be given towards an all-around or Super Horse Award.

(c) This class will only be offered in the open division.

#### **464. HUNTER HACK**

(a) **The purpose of hunter hack is to give horses an opportunity to show their expertise over low fences and on the flat.** The hunter hack horse should move in the same style as a working hunter. The class will be judged on style over fences, even hunting pace, flat work, manners and way of going. The poll should be level with, or slightly above the withers, to allow proper impulsion behind. The head should not be carried behind the vertical, giving the appearance of intimidation, or be excessively nosed out, giving a resistant appearance.

#### **465B. WESTERN PLEASURE**

(f) Horses must work both ways of the ring at all three gaits to demonstrate their ability with different leads. At the option of the judge, horses may be asked to **lengthen their stride at the walk or lope**, one or both ways of the ring. It is mandatory that a moderate extension of the jog be asked for in at least one direction with the exception of novice classes, the youth 11 and under, the youth 13 and under, select western pleasure and 2-year-old western pleasure. However, the moderate extension of the jog remains optional in the above classes. A moderated extension of the jog is a definite two-beat lengthening of stride, covering more ground. Cadenced and balanced with smoothness is more essential than speed. Riders should sit at the moderated extension of the jog. Horses are required to back easily and stand quietly. Passing is permissible and should not be penalized as long as the horse maintains a proper and even cadence and rhythm.

**465(C) Ranch Horse Pleasure. Only offered as an all age class. No horse may cross enter (i.e. a Jr./Sr. western pleasure horse shown at a show is not eligible to show in the Ranch Pleasure at the same show, a Youth western pleasure horse shown at a show is not eligible to show in the Ranch Pleasure at the same show etc.)**

(a) **The purpose of Ranch Horse Pleasure horse should reflect the versatility, attitude, and movement of a working horse.**

(b) **The horse's performance should simulate a horse riding outside the confines of an arena and that of a working ranch horse. This class should show the horse's ability to work at a forward, working speed while under control by the rider. Light contact should be rewarded and horse does not have to be shown on a full drape of reins. The overall manners and responsiveness of the horse while performing the maneuver requirements, and the horse's quality of movement are the primary considerations. Offered as one class only.**

(c) **Requirements:**

(1) **No horses less than 3 years of age.**

(2) **Each horse will work individually, performing both required and optional maneuvers, and scored on the basis of 0 to 100, with 70 denoting an average performance.**

(3) **The required maneuvers will include the walk, jog, and lope both directions; and the extended jog and lope at least one direction; as well as stops, turn to change directions, and back.**

(4) **Three optional maneuvers may include a side pass, turns of 360 or more, change of lead (simple or flying), walk, jog, or lope over a pole(s); or some reasonable combination of maneuvers that would be reasonable for a ranch horse to perform.**

(5) **The maneuvers may be arranged in various combinations with final approval by the judge.**

(6) **The overall cadence and performance of the gaits should be as those described in Rule 447(a), with an emphasis on forward movement, free-flowing, and ground covering for all gaits. Transitions should be performed where designated, with smoothness and responsiveness.**

(7) **No time limit.**

(8) **One of the suggested 4 patterns may be used, however a judge may utilize a different pattern as long as all required maneuvers are included plus 3 or more optional maneuvers are included.**

(9) **Failure to perform a required maneuver will result in a horse placing below all other horses that perform all maneuvers**

**(10) Incentive Fund Payout for horses**

**(d) Apparel and Equipment:**

**(1) No hoof polish.**

**(2) No braided or banded manes or tail extensions.**

**(3) Trimming inside ears is discouraged.**

**(4) Trimming bridle path is allowed, also trimming of fetlocks or excessive (long) facial hair.**

**(5) Equipment with silver should not count over a good working outfit. Silver on bridles and saddles is discouraged.**

**466B. HUNTER UNDER SADDLE**

**(a) The purpose of the hunter under saddle horse is to present or exhibit a horse with a bright, alert expression, whose gaits show potential of being a working hunter. Therefore its gaits must be free-flowing, ground covering and athletic.** Hunters should move with long, low strides reaching forward with ease and smoothness, be able to lengthen stride and cover ground with relaxed, free-flowing movement, while exhibiting correct gaits that are of the proper cadence. The quality of the movement and the consistency of the gaits is a major consideration. Horses should be obedient, have a bright expression with alert ears, and should respond willingly to the rider with light leg and hand contact. Horses should be responsive and smooth in transition. When asked to extend the trot or hand gallop, they should move out with the same flowing motion. The poll should be level with, or slightly above, the withers to allow proper impulsion behind. The head position should be slightly in front of, or on, the vertical.

**467. PLEASURE DRIVING**

**(a) The purpose of the class is to evaluate the horse's ability and pleasurable attitude while pulling a cart. The horse should have an engaged trot with more impulsion and a long ground covering stride. Style, conformation and safety are paramount in this class.** A pleasure driving horse should carry himself in a natural balanced position with a relaxed head and neck. His poll should be level with, or slightly above the level of the withers.

**473. SHOWMANSHIP AT HALTER.** Available only in the amateur and youth divisions.

**(a) The showmanship class shall be judged strictly on the exhibitor's ability to fit and show a horse at halter. The showmanship class shall be designed to evaluate the exhibitor's ability to execute, in concert with a well groomed and conditioned horse, a set of maneuvers prescribed by the judge with precision and smoothness while exhibiting poise and confidence, and maintaining a balanced, functional and fundamentally correct body position.** The horse is merely a prop to demonstrate the ability and preparation of the exhibitor. The ideal showmanship performance consists of a poised, confident, neatly attired exhibitor leading a well groomed and conditioned horse that quickly and efficiently performs the requested pattern with promptness, smoothness and precision. The showmanship class is not another halter class and should not be judged as such.

**(d) Showmanship whips (dressage whips etc.) will not be allowed at AQHA Shows for showmanship purposes. War bridles or like devices, or any type of wire or rope over a horse's head will not be allowed at AQHA Shows.**

**(e) SCORING:** Exhibitors are to be scored from 0 to **100** with **70 denoting an average performance.** One-half point increments are acceptable. **Run content scores will be indicated as follows:**

**+ = Above Average**

**(check mark)= Average**

**- = Below Average**

**An additional + (Excellent) or – (well below average) may be given.**

**(1) Faults:** Faults can be classified as minor, major or severe. The judge will determine the appropriate classification of a fault based upon the degree and/or frequency of the infraction. A minor fault will result in a 1/2 to 4 point deduction from the exhibitor's score. A major fault will result in a deduction of 4 1/2 points or more from the exhibitor's score. An exhibitor that incurs a severe fault avoids elimination but should be placed below all other exhibitors that complete the pattern correctly. A minor fault can become a major fault and a major fault can become a severe fault when the degree and/or frequency of the infraction(s) merits.

**(A) Minor** faults in the Overall Presentation of Exhibitor and Horse include:

•poorly groomed, conditioned or trimmed horse

- dirty, ragged, or poorly or ill-fitted halter or lead
- excessively stiff, artificial, or unnatural movement around horse or when leading

**Faults of the Performance include:**

**Break of gait at walk or jog/trot for 1 stride**

**Sliding a pivot foot**

- drifting of horse while being lead
- horse stopping crooked or dropping a hip out when stopping, setting up or standing
- backing, leading, or turning sluggishly or crooked
- horse not set up squarely or excessive time required to set up
- horse holding head and/or neck crooked when leading, stopping or backing

**(B) Major faults in the Overall Presentation of Exhibitor and Horse include:**

**Losing contact with lead shank**

- changing hands or placing both hands on the lead, except when preparing to show the horse's teeth

**Not performing gait or not stopping within 5 feet of designated area**

**Break of gait at walk or jog/trot for more than 1 stride**

**Splitting the cone**

**Picking up a pivot foot**

**Picking up a foot after presentation**

**Over/under turning 1/8 to 1/4 of designated turn**

**(C) Severe Faults of the Overall Presentation or Performance of Exhibitor and Horse (avoids disqualification but should be placed below other exhibitors that do not incur a severe fault) include:**

- leading on the off or right side of the horse

**Out of position during presentation**

- exhibitor touching the horse or kicking or pointing their feet at the horse's feet during set up
- standing directly in front of the horse
- exhibitor wearing spurs or chaps

**Loss of lead shank or holding chain**

- severe disobedience including rearing or pawing; horse kicking at other horses, exhibitors or judge; or horse continuously circling the exhibitor

**(D) Disqualifications (should not be placed) include:**

- loss of control of horse that endangers exhibitor, other horses or exhibitors, or judge including the horse escaping from the exhibitor
- failure of exhibitor to wear correct number in a visible manner
- willful abuse
- excessive schooling or training, or use of artificial aids
- knocking over the cone or going off pattern
- Never performing specific gait**
- Over turning more than 1/4 turn on designated turn**

**FINAL SCORING shall be on a basis of 0-100, with an approximate breakdown as follows:**

**90-100 Excellent showmanship, including body position and presentation of horse. Completes pattern accurately, quickly, smoothly and precisely; demonstrates a high level of professionalism.**

**80-89 Above average performance in execution of the pattern as well as correct showmanship and presentation of horse. Excellent showman that commits a minor fault.**

**70-79 Average pattern execution and average showmanship; lacking adequate style and professional presentation to merit elevating to the next scoring range. Above average showman that commits a minor fault.**

**60-69 Below average pattern that lacks quickness or precision. Horse with consistently unwilling attitude or handler with obvious position and/or presentation faults that prevents effective showmanship. An average showman that commits two minor faults in the performance of the pattern. An excellent showman that commits a major fault.**

**50-59 One major fault or multiple minor faults in the performance or presentation or position of exhibitor that precludes effective communication with the horse.**

**40-49 Severe fault, two or more major faults, or multiple minor faults in the performance or the execution of the pattern and demonstrates a lack of handling ability and knowledge of correct body position.**

**10-39 Exhibitor commits more than one severe fault or multiple major faults in performance or position but completes the class and avoids disqualification.**

**474B. WESTERN HORSEMANSHIP.** Available only in the amateur and youth divisions.

**(d) SCORING:** Exhibitors are to be scored from 0 to **100** with **70 denoting an average performance.** One-half point increments are acceptable. **Run content scores will be indicated as follows:**

**+ = Above Average**

**(check mark)= Average**

**- = Below Average**

**(3) Faults:** Faults can be classified as minor, major or severe. The judge will determine the appropriate classification of a fault based upon the degree and/or frequency of the infraction. An exhibitor that incurs a severe fault avoids elimination, but should be placed below all other exhibitors that complete the pattern correctly. A minor fault can become a major fault and a major fault can become a severe fault when the degree and/or frequency if the infraction(s) merits.

**(A) Minor faults in the Overall Presentation of Exhibitor and Performance of Horse** include:

**•Break of gait at walk or jog/trot up to 2 strides**

**•Over/under turn up to 1/8 of turn**

- loose, sloppy, dirty or poor fitting clothing or hat; or loss of hat over-cueing with reins and/or legs
- poorly groomed, conditioned or trimmed horse; or poorly or ill fitted equipment
- excessive staring at judge, head held crooked, or severe turning of the head
- stiff, artificial or unnatural body, leg, arm, and/or head position
- reins too long or short, or uneven
- loose leg with open knee, or toes pointed down
- shoulders held crooked or arms held in a straight unbent position
- falling forward when stopping
- poor position of exhibitor in saddle, legs too forward or back
- wrong lead or break of gait for a few strides
- oblong or flat sided circles, or horse dropping shoulder (counter arc) when circling
- stopping rough, crooked, or dropping a hip out when stopping
- backing sluggishly or crooked
- failure to maintain a pivot foot or stepping behind with the front legs when turning, or failure to complete entire 90, 180, 270, or 360 degree turn
- horse holding the head and/or neck excessively crooked when moving in straight lines or when stopping or backing
- showing resistance when cued or reined
- hesitation during any maneuver unless specified
- failure of horse to stand still in pattern
- imprecise pattern work or rough transitions
- failure to exhibit change of speed when requested
- head carried too high
- head carried too low (tip of ear below the withers)
- over-flexing or straining neck in head carriage so the nose is carried behind the vertical
- excessive nosing out

**(B) Major faults in the Overall Presentation of Exhibitor and Performance of Horse** include:

**•Break of gait, out of lead or missing lead for 1-2 strides**

**•Not stopping within 10 feet of designated area**

**•Incorrect gait or break of gait at walk or jog for more than 2 strides**

**•Over turn of more than 1/8 turn**

**•exhibitor looking down to check leads**



**(C) Severe Faults in the Overall Presentation of Exhibitor or Performance of Horse** (avoids disqualification but should be placed below other exhibitors that do not incur a severe fault) include:

•**Loss of stirrup or rein**

•**Failure to demonstrate correct lead or gait where called for**

•**Missing a lead for more than 2 strides**

•touching horse

•grabbing the saddle horn or any other part of the saddle

•cueing with the end of the romal

•spurring in front of the shoulder

•kicking at other horses, exhibitors or judge

•severe disobedience or resistance by horse including, but not limited to, rearing bucking or pawing

**(D) Disqualifications (should not be placed) include:**

•failure by exhibitor to wear correct number in visible manner

•willful abuse

•knocking over the cone or going off pattern

•excessive schooling or training

•fall by horse or rider

•illegal use of hands on reins

•use of prohibited equipment

**Faults, which will be cause for disqualification, except in novice amateur or novice youth classes, which shall be faults, scored according to severity:**

(a) Head carried too low (tip of ear below the withers consistently)

(b) Over-flexing or straining neck in head carriage so the nose is carried behind the vertical consistently.

**FINAL SCORING shall be on a basis of 0-100, with an approximate breakdown as follows:**

**90-100 Excellent rider, including body position and use of aids. Completes pattern accurately, quickly, smoothly and precisely while demonstrating a high level of professionalism.**

**80-99 Above average performance in execution of the pattern as well as correct horsemanship and use of aid. Excellent horseman that commits a minor fault.**

**70-79 Average pattern execution and average horsemanship lacking adequate style and professional presentation to merit elevating to the next scoring range. Above average rider that commits a minor fault.**

**60-69 Below average pattern that lacks quickness or precision or rider has obvious position and/or appearance faults that prevents effective horsemanship; or an average horseman that commits two minor faults in the performance of the pattern. An excellent rider that commits a major fault.**

**50-59 One major fault or multiple minor faults in the performance. A rider that demonstrates a lack of riding ability and knowledge of correct body position.**

**40-49 A rider that commits a severe fault, two or more major faults or multiple minor faults in the performance or the exhibitor that demonstrates a lack of riding ability and knowledge of correct body position.**

**10-39 Rider that commits more than one severe fault of multiple major faults in performance or exhibits poor riding skills but completes the class and avoids disqualification.**

**475B. HUNT SEAT EQUITATION ON THE FLAT.** Available only in the amateur and youth divisions.

(a) **The purpose is to evaluate the ability of the hunter rider to perform various maneuvers on his/her horse which provides a base for natural progression to over fence classes.** General. Hunt seat equitation on the flat is an evaluation based on the ability of a rider to perform various maneuvers in harmony with his/her horse. The communication between horse and rider through subtle cues and aids should not be obvious. Equitation is judged on the rider and his/her effect on the horse. Hunt seat equitation on the flat provides a base for a natural progression to over fence classes. The poll should be level with, or slightly above the withers, to allow proper impulsion behind. The head should not be carried behind the vertical, giving the appearance of intimidation, or be excessively nosed out, giving a resistant appearance.

(e) **SCORING: Exhibitors are to be scored from 0 to 100 with 70 denoting an average performance. One-half point increments are acceptable. Run content scores will be indicated as follows:**

**+ = Above Average**

**(check mark)= Average**

**- = Below Average**

**(1) Faults: Faults can be classified as minor, major or severe. The judge will determine the appropriate classification of a fault based upon the degree and/or frequency of the infraction. An exhibitor that incurs a severe fault avoids elimination, but should be placed below all other exhibitors that complete the pattern correctly. A minor fault can become a major fault and a major fault can become a severe fault when the degree and/or frequency of the infraction(s) merits.**

**(A) Minor faults in the Overall Presentation of Exhibitor and Horse Performance of horse include:**

- Break of gait at walk or trot up to 2 strides**
- Over/under turn of 1/8 of the prescribed turn**

**(B) Major faults in the Overall Presentation of Exhibitor and Horse include:**

- Break of gait, out of lead, missing lead or diagonal for 1-2 strides**
- Not stopping within 10 feet of designated area**
- Incorrect gait or break of gait at walk or jog for more than 2 strides**
- Obvious looking for lead or diagonal**
- Over or under turn more than 1/8 of prescribed turn**

**(C) Severe Faults in Overall Presentation of Exhibitor and Performance of the Horse (avoids disqualification but should be placed below other exhibitors that do not incur a severe fault) include:**

- Loss of iron or rein**
- Failure to demonstrate correct lead or gait where called for**
- Break of gait at canter, out of lead or missing lead or diagonal more than 2 strides**
- lack of contact between rider's hand and bit**
- touching horse
- grabbing any part of the saddle
- cropping or spurring in front of the shoulder
- kicking at other horses, exhibitors or judge
- severe disobedience or resistance by horse including, but not limited to, rearing, bucking or pawing.
- head carried too high
- head carried too low (such that the poll is below the withers)
- over-flexing or straining neck in head carriage so the nose is carried behind the vertical
- excessive nosing out

**(D) Disqualifications (should not be placed) include:**

- failure by exhibitor to wear correct number in visible manner
  - willful abuse
  - excessive schooling or training
  - fall by horse or rider
  - illegal use of hands on reins
  - use of prohibited equipment
  - knocking over the cone or going off pattern
- Faults, which will be cause for disqualification, except in novice amateur or novice youth classes, which shall be faults, scored according to severity:**

(a) Head carried too low (such that the poll is below the withers consistently).

(b) Over-flexing or straining neck in head carriage so the nose is carried behind the vertical consistently.

**FINAL SCORING shall be on a basis of 0-100, with an approximate breakdown as follows:**

**90-100 Excellent equitation, including body position and use of aids. Completes pattern accurately, quickly, smoothly and precisely; demonstrates a high level of professionalism.**

**80-89 Above average rider that executes the pattern as well as correct equitation and use of aids. Excellent rider that commits a minor fault.**

**70-79 Average pattern execution and average equitation but lacking adequate style and professional presentation to merit elevating to the next scoring range. Above average rider that commits a minor fault.**

**60-69 Below average pattern that lacks quickness or precision. Rider has obvious position and/or appearance faults that prevents effective equitation. Average rider that commits two minor faults in the performance of the pattern.**

**50-59 One major fault or multiple minor faults in the performance. A rider that demonstrates a lack of riding ability and knowledge of correct body position.**

**40-49 Severe fault, two or more major faults or multiple minor faults in the performance or the exhibitor that demonstrates a lack of riding ability and knowledge of correct body position.**

**10-39 Exhibitor commits more than one severe fault or multiple major faults in performance, exhibits poor riding skills, but completes the class and avoids disqualification.**

**476. HUNT SEAT EQUITATION OVER FENCES.** Available only in the amateur and youth divisions.

**(a) The purpose of this event should be to evaluate amateur and youth rider's correctness and ability over the fences. This class should be judged on the precision of riding ability while executing the jumps.** The class objective is to judge the rider's ability over the fences, not the horse's. Only the effect the rider has on a horse is to be considered. How a rider elects to ride the course, the pace and approach to the jumps are used to evaluate the rider's judgment and ability.

**477. INTERNATIONAL PERFORMANCE EVENTS.** All international performance events can be held as a special event or can be utilized as a performance event for show approval and will receive recognition for year-end awards.

**(d) Lazo de Panama.**

**(1) Events held in Panama with rules provided by the Panama Quarter Horse Association, as approved by the American Quarter Horse Association.**

**(2) Judged by persons approved by the Panama Quarter Horse Association, even though such judges are not also on the list of judges approved by the American Quarter Horse Association.**

**(3) Any other approved AQHA event held in conjunction with Lazo de Panama must be judged by a person listed on the approved judges list of AQHA.**

**(4) All eligible exhibitors must be a current member of AQHA according to Rule 101 and horses must be registered American Quarter Horses to be eligible for year-end awards.**

**478. VERSATILITY RANCH HORSE**

**SHOW APPROVAL:**

**(1)** Letter must be submitted a minimum of **120** days prior to the event stating the date and location of the desired event for tentative approval.

**(f) RANCH RIDING** - Ranch riding and ranch trail will be shown back to back. Each exhibitor will perform the trail obstacle course and then immediately perform the ranch riding pattern along perimeter of arena **or in the vicinity of the ranch trail obstacles.** The suggested ranch riding pattern may be used or another pattern may be drawn as long as all elements of the class are fulfilled. The ranch riding class shows the horse's ability to move at a working speed with a rider. Horses will be shown individually at three gaits - walk, trot and lope - in each direction of the arena. Horses will also be asked to reverse away from the rail, to stop and back. The judge must ask for an extended trot and extended lope at least one direction of the ring. A horse will be given credit for traveling with his head held in a normal position, ears alert and moving at a natural speed for the gait requested. Credit will also be given for making a smooth transition between the gaits, for keeping the correct lead, and for maintaining the gait requested until the judge requests a change. A rider must show his horse with only one hand on the reins, unless the horse is 5 years old or younger and is being shown in a snaffle bit or hackamore (bosal). Judges are encouraged to work exhibitors thoroughly, if time permits. **Allow pleasure pattern signs to be permitted in the pleasure/trail combined classes.**

**(i) WORKING RANCH HORSE:** This class combines the reining ability, cow sense and roping ability of the horse and will be judged on horse's reining ability, cow sense and roping ability. Each contestant will perform individually. First with the reining pattern and then releasing one cow into the arena.

**(5)** After the exhibitor has completed his reining pattern, he will call for the cow to be turned into the arena. Upon receiving the cow, contestant shall hold the cow on the prescribed end of the arena for sufficient time to demonstrate the ability of the horse to contain the cow on that end. After a reasonable amount of time, the contestant shall take the cow down the fence, making at least one turn each way on the fence. A three (3) point penalty will be assessed for refusing to turn. Exhibitor must then rope the cow and bring it to a stop. There is to be no dragging. The exhibitor is allowed only two throws. In order for a catch to be legal; the loop must hold in front of the shoulders. If the rope falls off saddle during the class it would be considered equipment failure thus resulting in a score of zero. **Allow traditional attire from International countries, except Canada be worn in**



**483. EQUESTRIANS WITH DISABILITIES COMPETITION – For Independent Riders**

**(a) GENERAL RULES**

**(6) An exhibitor cannot show more than one horse and a horse cannot be shown by more than one exhibitor in any EWD class.**

**(7) Participation in these approved events are for riders age (8) and over requires a rider's card from PATH International, formerly NARHA and /or in lieu a Special Adaptive Equipment and Independent Riding Ability Form. This form must be completed and signed by a PATH Intl. certified instructor, a certified Special Olympics Equestrian Coach or any other certified therapeutic riding instructor who is also a member in good standing of A.Q.H.A., indicating the independent riding ability and adaptive equipment that is required for the participant and returned to A.Q.H.A prior to competing in any A.Q.H.A approved Equestrians with Disabilities Competition.**

**(8) Participants must be (8) eight years of age and over to compete in walk, trot/jog classes and (12) twelve years of age and over to compete in walk, trot/jog ,canter/lope classes with a diagnosed cognitive or physical condition attested to by a licensed medical doctor. A special diagnosis form to be executed by a doctor is available from A.Q.H.A. Upon approval of both these forms, and a valid membership number or new membership application, an appropriate AQHA membership card with EWD endorsement will be furnished by AQHA.**

**Eligible Conditions Include:**

**Amputation**  
**Anthrogyrosis**  
**Agenesis of Corpus Callosum**  
**Asperger's Syndrome**  
**Austism spectrum Disorders**  
**Batten's Disease**  
**Cebvrovascular Accident (Stroke)**  
**Cerebella Ataxia**  
**Cerebral Palsy**  
**Charcot Marie Tooth Disease**  
**CHARGE Syndrome**  
**Coffin Lowry Syndrome**  
**Cystic Fibrosis**  
**Dejerine Sottas Disease**  
**De Santis Cacchione Syndrome**  
**Development delay**  
**DOOR Syndrome**  
**Down Syndrome**  
**Dwarfism**  
**Ehlers Danlos Syndrome**  
**Fragile X Syndrome**  
**Freidrick's Ataxia**  
**Gerstmann Syndrome**  
**Guillan Barre Syndrome**  
**Hearing Impairment**  
**Hunter Syndrome**  
**Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis**  
**Legg Calve Perthes Disease**  
**Leigh's Disease**  
**Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome**  
**Mental Retardation**  
**Microcephaly**  
**Multiple Sclerosis**  
**Muscular Dystrophy**  
**Noonan Syndrome**  
**Pervasive Development Disorder NOS**



Post Polio Syndrome  
Prader Willie Syndrome  
Rhett Syndrome  
Smith Magenis Syndrome  
Spina Bifida  
Spinal Cord Injuries  
Sotos Syndrome  
Touretts Syndrome  
Brain Injuries  
Trisomy Abnormalities  
Visual Impairment  
Williams Syndrome  
Other diagnosis will be considered upon request.

The following disorders are not eligible:

ADHD  
Anxiety Disorders  
Chronic Fatigue Syndrome  
Depression  
Dyslexia  
Eating Disorders  
Fibromyalgia  
Learning Disabilities  
Psychological Diagnosis

**(11) Open to walk, trot/jog; walk, trot/jog, canter/lope riders only. Walk, trot/jog classes open to riders never judged in a class at a recognized or non-recognized show that requires a lope or canter in which the rider performed a lope or canter. Once a rider moves up to walk, trot/jog, canter/lope, they cannot return to walk, trot/jog. Academy classes are considered non-recognized shows. If an able-bodied rider contracts an eligible condition, or if an EWD rider has a progressive disorder that results in a decrease in functioning level, then they may be exempted from the canter/lope rule with documentation from a licensed medical doctor presented to A.Q.H.A.**

(12) Handler - Required for all classes one handler per entry in the ring to facilitate the safety of the rider. The handler must be 16 years of age or older. **If the horse is tacked with a bridle without a noseband or cavesson, such as a western bridle, a halter must be on the horse either over or under the bridle for use by the handler if needed.** The handler must have a suitable lead line in hand in case of need. Lead line may not be fastened to the bit, **cheek piece or curb chain.** Handlers shall stand quietly as a group in a designated area of the ring unless their assistance is required and requested by the Judge or ring steward.

**(b) GENERAL RULES FOR TACK AND EQUIPMENT**

(1) Equipment should conform to the needs of the competitor and be suitable for the horse.

(2) Special adaptive equipment may be used where appropriate. Acceptable adaptive equipment

includes:

Audio Communications  
Bareback Pads  
Boot Adaptations  
Dowel Reins  
Hand holds; flexible and/or rigid  
Helmets  
Laces to tie stirrups or leathers to girth or cinch  
Ladder Reins  
Loop Reins  
Rein Handles  
Rein Handle Tethers  
Rubber Bands  
Saddle blocks, Wedges, Cushions  
Safety Stirrups

Seat Savers  
Surcingles  
Whips (one or two)  
Other equipment will be considered upon request

**Side walkers, backriders or extra spotters other than the required horse handler are not considered tack or equipment**

**(d) SHOW APPROVAL**

(1) Show management applies for AQHA approval of these events on a voluntary basis and assumption of responsibility for safety by show management is required by AQHA as an express condition for AQHA to grant approval for these events. To obtain tentative AQHA approval, application must be submitted a minimum of **120** days prior to the event on forms either provided by or acceptable to AQHA, stating the date and location of the desired event.

(2) The event will be approved if there is not an already known similar approved equestrians with disabilities event on the same date within a **150** mile radius.

**(e) WALK & TROT HUNT SEAT EQUITATION ON THE FLAT**

(4) **Class Procedure** - All exhibitors must work as a group (or in groups) of **ten** or less. Riders will compete on the rail at a walk and trot both ways of the ring, line up and complete an individual workout. Riders will remain in the ring throughout the individual workouts.

(5) **Individual Workout** - Horses will be shown at three gaits - walk, trot and extended trot. The judge will ask rider/horse to walk from line up to first marker, then trot serpentine around markers. From the last serpentine marker extend the trot down the rail to marker on the wall. Stop. **Back 3 steps.** Walk back and line up. Judges are not permitted to alter the mandatory workout in any manner. Markers must be used, may be numbered. Handlers must stand **behind** their riders **along the rail in the lineup.** Handler may only help at judge's or ring steward's indication. People must not be used as markers no matter if they are safety stand-by spotters. A competitor with a hearing impairment may have an assistant who communicates via sign language or cue cards to the competitor so they may hear the judge's directives. This assistant will be outside the ring and their position known to the judge and ring steward.

**(i) WALK & JOG/TROT TRAIL HORSE CLASS**

(3) Class procedure and scoring - This class will be judged on the performance of the horse and rider while maneuvering five obstacles **and 6 obstacles for Walk, Jog/Trot, Lope/Canter trail class.** Riders are to work individually. There will be no rail work. Judges will assign a point value to each obstacle and points will be added to or subtracted from this score based on the horse and rider's performance over that obstacle. An obstacle missed, refused or taken out of order will result in a score of zero for that obstacle but will not disqualify entry.

(4) **Course** - Safety of riders should be the first consideration in setting up the course. The course should be attractive with readily recognized obstacles. Sufficient space should be allowed between obstacles. One of the following two patterns **for walk, jog/trot trail** is mandatory and should be posted at least one hour ahead of class time.

(j) **SHOWMANSHIP AT HALTER** - Two Showmanship Classes may be offered, beginner and/or Advanced. Any exhibitor 8 years old and over may show in one but not both showmanship classes if two classes are offered

(2) Exhibitor must wear a properly fitted and fastened ATSM approved protective helmet with harness. A Western hat may be affixed over the helmet. No equipment is allowed that would in any way attach the exhibitor to the horse or halter. Appropriate show halter with lead to be used. The use of a chain is permitted but discouraged. **No lip chains.** No bridles and/or bits to be used.

**501. ROOKIE LEVEL**

**(a) The purpose of the Rookie Level classes is to reach AQHA members of all ages and riding levels. By developing true entry-level classes, AQHA plans to introduce new AQHA members, current AQHA members, as well as members who have never shown, to the AQHA show scene.**

**(b) Rookie Level Classes will be offered in all three AQHA Divisions (Open, Amateur and Youth).**

**(c) For a horse to be eligible to compete in a Rookie Level class, that horse must have earned fewer than ten lifetime points in that class in any division. For an exhibitor to be eligible to compete in a Rookie Level class, that exhibitor must have earned fewer than ten lifetime points in that class in any division.**

Thus, to compete in a Rookie Level class, the horse and the rider must *each* have earned fewer than ten points in that particular class in any division.

Examples of Eligibility and Ineligibility:

(1) A horse has eight points in Senior Western Pleasure, but has never been shown by an Amateur or Youth. A friend of the owner of the horse would like her child to show the horse in a Rookie Youth Western Pleasure class. The youth exhibitor already has six points in Youth Western Pleasure on other horses. The horse/exhibitor combination is eligible because neither has more than ten western pleasure points.

(2) An amateur exhibitor has dozens of points in Hunter Under Saddle, but only six in Reining. Her trainer offers to let her show his reiner in the Rookie class. That horse, however, has five Sr. Reining points and seven points from when it was shown in Novice Youth Reining. The horse/exhibitor combination is not eligible because the horse has ten or more points in reining classes.

(d) Open, Amateur, Novice Amateur, Youth, Novice Youth and Rookie Level points all count toward Rookie Level eligibility.

(e) Upon earning ten points in a particular class in any division, the horse will immediately become ineligible to compete in that particular class at the Rookie Level in any division. The record owner of the horse shall receive a certificate of recognition (similar to ROM) and such accomplishment will be added to the horse's show record.

(f) Upon earning ten points in a particular class in any division, the exhibitor will immediately become ineligible to compete in that particular class at the Rookie Level in any division. The exhibitor shall receive a certificate of recognition and such accomplishment will be added to the exhibitor's show record.

(g) Notwithstanding the ownership requirements associated with competing in Youth and Amateur classes, ownership of the horse is not required to participate in Rookie Level classes.

(h) Multiple exhibitors (including the record owner) may show the same horse in any class at a show (assuming eligibility requirements for class are met), but not in the same Rookie Level class(es) at that particular show.

(i) Rookie Level classes may comprise an entire stand-alone show. Rookie Level classes also may be added to AQHA All-Novice, Introductory shows or regular AQHA shows.

(j) Youth and Amateur Rookie Level performance classes can be run as stand-alone classes or concurrently with corresponding Novice classes. Open Rookie Level performance classes can be run as stand-alone classes or concurrently with corresponding AQHA green classes.

(k) Rookie Level halter classes must be all-aged classes and must be held as stand-alone classes. Rookie Level halter classes are not eligible for grand and reserve awards.

(l) Show management is strongly encouraged to offer minimal entry fees for Rookie Level classes.

(m) Rookie Level points do not count towards anything other than computing Rookie Level eligibility and the recognition referenced in subsections (f) and (g) above. Rookie Level points do not count towards the AQHA Rookie of the Year Award set forth in Rule 502.