

CLASS DEFINATIONS

RANCH HORSE CONFORMATION

The horse will be judged on type, conformation correctness, and athletic ability with the all around equine in mind. Ranch Horse Conformation is defined as the physical attributes necessary to perform under saddle in multiple events. The ideal standard in evaluating horses in conformation should include but not limited to soundness and correctness in conformation, particularly feet and legs with emphasis on correct manner of travel including athletic ability and the "appearance of" agility. The horse should possess eye appeal with an attractive head; refined throat-latch; well-proportioned trim neck; long sloping shoulder; deep heart girth; short back; strong loin and coupling; long hip and croup. The horse should show balance and uniform muscling with enough athletic ability to perform different tasks on the ranch. Horses should be strong boned and have an appearance of durability.

CONFORMATION EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS:

- A) In conformation classes, horses are to be shown in good working halter; rope, braided, nylon or plain leather. No silver will be allowed on halters. Any silver on halters will result in an automatic disqualification. Brass name plates and embroidered halters will be allowed.
- B) Lip chains, splint boots, leg wraps or bandages are prohibited in any conformation classes. The use of shin and/or bell boots on the front legs and standard sliding rundown boots on rear fetlocks is optional in individual working classes unless otherwise noted. In the event of injury the judge may permit a protective bandage.
- C) Banded or braided manes and braided tails and tie-in tails and/or extensions are not allowed.
- D) Fresh hoof black, hoof polish and/or oil is not allowed and will result in the horse being disqualified from the class.
- E) The horse should be clean and brushed. It is recommended that a horse should be shown as naturally as possible.
- F) Banded or braided manes, braided tails, tie-in tails and/or extensions are not allowed.

SHOWMANSHIP

Showmanship is designed to evaluate the exhibitor's ability to execute a pattern prescribed by the judge. Exhibitors movements should be workmanline and efficient and the horse should be obedient and cooperative. Showmanship class shall be judged strictly on the exhibitor's ability to communicate with the horse from the ground and show a horse as if he was in a conformation class. The horse is merely a prop to demonstrate the ability and preparation of the exhibitor. The ideal showmanship performance consists of a poised, confident 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 conformation class and should not be judged as such.

Appearance of the Horse: The horse's body condition and overall fitness should be assessed. The coat should be clean, well-brushed and in good condition. The mane and tail should be neat, clean and free of tangles. Hooves should be properly trimmed or shod. Fresh Hoof black, hoof polish and/or oil is not allowed and will result in the horse being disqualified from the class. Tack should fit properly and be neat, clean and in good repair.

Performance: The exhibitor should perform the pattern accurately, precisely, smoothly and with a reasonable amount of speed. The horse should lead, stop, back turn and set-up willingly, briskly and readily with minimal

visible or audible cuing. Failure to follow the prescribed pattern, knocking over or working on the wrong side of the cones, severe disobedience will result in disqualification. Excessive schooling or training, willful abuse, or loss of control of the horse by the exhibitor shall be cause for disqualification.

RANCH RIDING

A superior ranch riding horse has a free-flowing stride of reasonable length in keeping with his conformation and covering a reasonable amount of ground as if he was going across the pasture to do a task on the ranch in a timely fashion. Horse should not be a run away but move like “we have a lot to do today”. Ideally, he should have a balanced, flowing motion, while exhibiting correct gaits with proper cadence and rhythm. The quality of the movement and consistency of the gaits is a major consideration. Exhibitor should not be penalized for picking up reins or moving horses body as long as the horse is soft, willing and free of resistance and should receive credit. Horse should be credited for softness when picking up through transitions, departures, stops, and back-ups. (This should not be confused with constant pulling and jerking around the arena as this shall be faulted according to severity).

A willing horse will not ring their tail, or be blatantly disobedient to the rider’s cues or demands. The horse should drive off his hind quarters using it as a driving force for his body. The horse should not carry his head behind the vertical, giving the appearance of intimidation, or be excessively nosed out, giving the appearance of resistance. He should have a bright expression with his ears alert, he should be mannerly without the appearance of a dull, sullen lethargic drawn or overly tired attitude. He should be shown on a reasonable loose rein, but with light contact and control. He should be responsive, yet smooth, in transitions when called for. When asked to extend, he should extend out with the same flowing motion. This class will be judged on the performance, athletic ability, and condition of the horse.

RANCHMANSHIP

The purpose of this class is to bring forth the versatility in both the ranch horse and exhibitor.

Reining maneuvers. Obstacle and maneuvers are to be judged to the standards written in Ranch Trail, Ranch Riding, and Ranch Reining in each part of the patterns that pertains to these classes. Each horse will work individually. There will be no time-limit. A simple or flying lead change should be executed precisely in the specified number of strides and/or at the designated location. A simple lead change is performed by breaking to a walk or trot for one to five strides. Flying lead changes should be simultaneous front to rear. All changes should be smooth and timely. This class will also be judged on quality of movement on horse. Judge will score on all gaits performed at the end of the pattern on overall average of each gait. Transitions should be performed where designated, with smoothness and responsiveness. Posting at extended trot is acceptable. Exhibitor may not hold the saddle horn.

RANCH TRAIL

The horse and rider performing in a ranch trail class are asked to maneuver through six to nine obstacles that resemble the things that would be encountered during everyday riding on a ranch. The horse will be asked to walk, trot and lope during the pattern, and mandatory obstacles include riding over obstacles (such as logs), passing through a gate, backing, riding over a bridge, sidepassing and dragging (open and amateur only). The horse is judged on a natural ranch horse appearance, and credit is given for a horse that performs the pattern smoothly, with willingness and efficiency.

RANCH RAIL

This class is intended as a rail class but individuals working off the rail will not be penalized. The ranch rail pleasure class measures the ability of the horse to be a pleasure to ride while being used as a means of conveyance from one ranch task to another and should reflect the versatility, attitude, and movement of a working horse. The horse should be well-broke, relaxed, quiet, soft and cadenced at all gaits. The horse should be ridden on a relatively loose rein with light contact and without requiring undue restraint. The horse should be responsive to the rider and make timely transitions in a smooth and correct manner. The horse should be soft in the bridle and yield to contact maintaining a natural head carriage at each gait. In all gaits, movement of the ranch rail pleasure horse should simulate a horse needing to cover long distances, softly and quietly, like 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 shall not 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.

The following terminology shall apply:

Walk – The walk is a natural, at footed, four-beat gait. The gait is rhythmic and groundcovering. As in all gaits, the horse should display a level, or slightly above level topline with a bright, attentive expression.

Trot – The trot is a natural two-beat gait demonstrating more forward motion than the western jog.

Extended Trot – The extended trot is an obvious lengthening of the stride with a definite increase in pace. The horse should be moving in a manner as if it were covering a large area on a ranch with an above level topline.

Lope – The lope is a three-beat gait. The lope should be relaxed and smooth with a natural, forward moving stride.

Extended Lope – The extended lope is not a run or a race but should be an obvious lengthening of the stride, demonstrating a forward, working speed. The horse should display an above level topline with a bright, attentive expression.

RANCH REINING

This class denotes the ability of the ranch horse to be reined willfully through all maneuvers of the patterns. Contestant should not be penalized for reining their horse through the pattern in a reasonable manner. Stops should be hard and deep as if needed to stop and go in the other direction. Stop should be square and done without resistance (it should be at the judge's discretion on what he/she considers an excessive slide. Turn a rounds should be those of a working horse, they should be correct and job efficient.