

NATIONAL 4-H HORSE CLASSIC – WESTERN DIVISION

Horse Judging Contest Rules

Superintendents:

Will Golden

Lecturer
380 Litton Reaves Hall
Virginia Tech
Blacksburg, VA 24060
Phone: 307-778-1188
wgolden@vt.edu

Dr. Amy McLean

Extension Equine Specialist
North Carolina State
University
NCSU Box 7523
520 Brickhaven Dr
Raleigh, NC 27695-7523
Phone: 919-515-7871
amy_mclean@ncsu.edu

CSU Contest Liaison:

Bobbie (Skelton) Walton
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, CO 80523-1693
(970) 491-8547
roberta.skelton@colostate.edu

CONTESTANTS AND ELIGIBILITY

I. Eligibility

- A. A State/territory/District of Columbia is allowed only one entry in only one division of a contest in a national 4-H competitive event each year. An entry is an individual, in the events where individuals compete against individuals only, or a team in events where total team scores are computed and recognition given to the team. Individuals may be recognized in those events that are primarily team events.
 1. 4-H Teams: Each state is invited to enter one (1) 4-H Horse Judging Team. Teams may be selected by any procedure, which a state deems appropriate. A state may only enter one (1) team.
 2. Contestants (including team alternates) may participate in only one contest per year at the Classic. After competing in this contest, they are ineligible to compete in the same specific contest again. Contestants must not have competed in this contest in past Eastern National 4-H Horse Roundups in Louisville or the National 4-H Horse Classic - Western Division in Denver.
 3. Contestants (including team alternates) may participate in only one contest per year at the National 4-H Horse Classic - Western Division.
 4. All contestants will report to the assigned contest room at the Renaissance Denver Hotel immediately following breakfast on Saturday. Please check program book for exact time and room assignment. Full instructions will be given at this time.

- B. Entries not officially entered will not be permitted to participate for any reason.
- C. An individual may enter a National 4-H competitive event in a specific program area only once. Participating members of a team entry (even if they are designated alternate by low score) are ineligible to enter the same event again as a part of another team.
- D. The eligibility requirements to enter a National 4-H Competitive Event are:

- 1. Contestant must already have passed his or her 14th birthday, and may not have reached his or her 19th birthday, as of January 1 of the year in which the National 4-H Competitive Event is held*. However, the State 4-H Leader may grant a special authorization to compete, for youth with developmental disabilities who exceed the upper age limit.
- 2. All contestants must be members of 4-H in the state they are representing during the year in which the National 4-H Competitive Event is held.*

*The January dates for the Western Horse Classic event are considered part of the previous year for the purpose of allowing all youth to compete in the national horse events in their last year of eligibility.

(Approved by 4-H NPL and Director, Youth Development, F4-HN/CSREES June 1, 2004)

- 3. The contestant(s) or team(s) of contestants must be certified as the official state entry by the State 4-H Leader or by a person designated by the State 4-H Leader. The individual(s) or team(s) may be selected by any procedure the State 4-H Leader believes is appropriate.
- 4. The contestant, his or her county 4-H staff member, and the State 4-H Leader must certify as follows on the application form or an accompanying memo:

“This contestant has not participated in post-secondary coursework in the subject area of the national 4-H competition, nor has he or she participated in training for post-secondary competition in the subject area of the national 4-H competition.” Violation of this will result in forfeiture of any awards or recognition which have been won in the National 4-H Competitive Event.”

- E. All participants must first qualify through the represented state and meet all the state eligibility rules.

METHOD OF CONDUCT

1. A team may have three (3) or four (4) members; when four (4) are entered, the three (3) highest overall scores will make up the team totals.
2. All contestants will report to the Superintendents at the National Western Stock Show Complex, where they will receive full instructions and be given placing cards. All contestants will remain with the assigned group throughout the contest. Reasons and official placings will be given at a location to be announced.
3. Contestants shall wear no clothing, accessories or other marks of identification that may reveal their identity or the state or club represented. Hats are prohibited in the judging arena.
4. While the contest is in progress, there shall be no conferring between the contestants and anyone else except as directed by the Contest Superintendents or their representatives.
5. No cell phones or other mobile electronic devices will be permitted into the judging contest or reasons contest areas.
6. Contestants are responsible for their own writing instruments and notepads for the purpose of taking notes for reasons classes. There will be no prohibition against contestant use of pre-printed materials during the contest, including but not limited to rule books, judging manuals, and score sheets.
7. Three (3) to six (6) halter classes will be judged. The following breeds may be represented in the halter classes: American Saddlebred, Quarter Horse, Appaloosa, Arabian, Paint, Morgan, Draft Breeds and Miniature Horses. Contestants will give oral reasons on two- halter classes. All halter classes will be judged as sound of limb, eye, wind, mouth and reproduction.
8. Three (3) to six (6) performance classes will be judged. The performance classes will be chosen from Trail, Western Pleasure, English Pleasure, Hunter Under Saddle, Hunt Seat Equitation, Saddle Seat Equitation, Western Riding, Reining, Western Horsemanship and Hunter Hack. Oral reasons will be given on two performance classes. Performance horses will be judged as seen (unsoundness to be penalized accordingly).
9. The animals and showmen will be designated by numbers 1-2-3-4 and numbered from left to right as viewed from the rear.
10. Horses will not be handled by the contestants, but time will be provided in halter classes for close inspection and to observe the horses at a walk and trot.
11. Fifteen (15) minutes will be allowed contestants to judge non-reason classes and seventeen (17) minutes will be given contestants during reasons classes to make their observations, take notes and fill out their placing cards.
12. Two (2) minutes will be allowed for each contestant to give oral reasons to the judge. Contestants are not permitted to use notes while giving reasons. Contestant's placing card will not be offered to them upon entering the reasons room.

13. All tack and attire will be considered legal providing it is used properly.

CONTEST SUPERINTENDENTS

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

SUPPORT STAFF

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

JUDGES

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

DESCRIPTION OF CUTS

Cuts, as specified in the NHJTCA Handbook:

1. Horses are extremely similar; no obvious reason why one should be placed over the other; or, both horses have numerous faults and none supersedes the others; placing is strictly a matter of personal preference; placing varies among official judges.
2. Horses are very close, but one horse has one or two qualitative or quantitative advantages; the majority of official judges would not switch the pair, but half of the contestants could logically switch the pair.
3. Horses are of unequal quality, but there is a logical placing in favor of one horse; either one horse has several faults or several advantages; all official judges would agree on the placing; no more than one third of contestants would be expected to switch the pair.
4. Horses are not of similar quality; one horse has several decided advantages based on many points; all experts would quickly see the placing; no guesswork or personal preference required to make placing; no more than 10% of contestants would be expected to switch the pair.

- 5 Large number of extreme differences between the horses; placing is obvious to everyone on first, quick observation; careful study not required for the placing; pair consists of an inferior horse vs. a consistent winner; only very inexperienced, uninformed contestants would switch the pair.
- 6 Horse not even comparable; differences reflective of a champion quality horse or performance vs. a horse or performance that is not of show quality.
- 7 Largest cut; differences reflective of a world-class halter horse vs. an extremely poor quality or lame horse; or a world-class performance vs. a disqualified performance.

DETERMINATION OF RATINGS

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

ENTRY INFORMATION, HOTEL INFORMATION, GENERAL INFORMATION

Registration dates and instructions for completing your Online Registration/entry forms are found on the Western National Roundup website at www.westernnationalroundup.org -- note that as a result of your online registration, you will be presented with an Official Authorization Form which must be printed and then signed by the respective State 4-H Director/Leader and mailed with full payment to the address specified on the form.

The headquarters hotel for this event will again be the Renaissance Denver Hotel, 3801 Quebec Street, Denver, CO 80207; (303) 399-7500. Please check the Western National Roundup web site for information on special rates and any room reservation procedures that may be in place this year.

Coaches meetings are typically held on Thursday evening; check the web site for full schedule, which will be updated regularly.

Contact information is also on the website and always up to date.

