

Performance Classes

Horse's performance ability and willingness is to be judged. Working tack shall be used. An excess show of silver on saddles or bridles is not allowed.

All competitors shall wear western clothing, it should be appropriate working ranchwear. This will include a long sleeved shirt with a collar, western boots with a heel, and a western hat. Show management or judge may alter the dress require in extreme weather conditions. The hat must be on the rider's head when the exhibitor enters the arena. Spurs and chaps are optional. It is optional that exhibitor may wear a hard hat with harness in all classes.

Horses that have been disqualified in a class shall not be placed.

Exhibitors may enter one or more horses in a individual working class (ie: reining, working cow horse, western riding, barrel racing, ect), but each horse may only have one rider per class.

Junior horses 5 years and younger may be shown two-handed using a snaffle bit or bosal.

Junior horses ridden with acceptable bit, other than a snaffle, must be ridden with one hand on the reins. This rule pertains regardless of a junior horse being ridden in a junior class or a all age combined class.

Senior horses 6 years and older must be ridden in acceptable curb bit and only one hand on the reins unless a romal is used. In the case of romal being used, two hands on the reins are permitted with one hand holding the extension and a 16 inch spacing between the reining hand and the hand holding the extension.

Whenever this rule book refers to "hackamore" it means the use of a flexible, braided rawhide, leather or rope bosal. This bosal must have a maximum diameter of 3/4" or a minimum of 1/4" at the cheek. Absolutely no rigid material will be permitted under the jaw regardless of how padded or covered. This paragraph does not refer to a "mechanical" hackamore.

Whenever this hand book refers to a bit, it means the use of a curb bit that has a solid or broken mouthpiece, has shanks and acts with leverage. All curb bits must be free of mechanical device and should be considered a standard western bit.

Acceptable snaffle bits are conventional O-ring, egg-butt or D-ring with a ring no larger than 4". The mouthpiece should be round, smooth, unwrapped metal. No twisted-wire snaffles will be allowed. The bars must be a minimum 5/16" in diameter, measured 1" from the cheek with a gradual decrease to the center of the snaffle. The mouthpiece may be 2 or 3 pieces. If it is a three (3) piece, a connection ring of 1 1/4" or less in diameter, or a connecting flat bar of 3/8" to 3/4" (measured from top to bottom) which lies flat in the horse's mouth are acceptable. Chin straps, leather or nylon, or chain must be 1/2" minimum in width. Reins to be attached above the chin strap.

GENERAL RULES FOR WESTERN BITS

- a) bits with a maximum shank length of 8 1/2"
- b) bars of mouthpieces must be round smooth and unwrapped metal 5/16" to 3/4" in diameter measured 1" from the cheek.
- c) bits cannot have protrusions below the bars.
- d) the mouthpiece maybe two (2) or three (3) pieces. If it is a three (3) piece, a connection ring of

1 1/4" or less in diameter, or a connecting flat bar of 3/8" to 3/4" (measured from top to bottom) with a maximum length of 2" which lies flat in the the horse's mouth is acceptable.

e) The port must be no higher than 21/2" maximum. Rollers and covers are acceptable.

Slip or gag-bits and donut and flat polo, twisted wire mouth pieces are NOT allowed in judged events, except for roping and may be used in speed events, if not severe.

Chain chin straps are allowed, but must meet the approval of the judge, must be at least one-half (1/2") inch in width and must lie flat against the jaw of the horse.

When curb bit is used, one (1) hand only. Index finger only between split rein. Violation of these rules is an automatic disqualification. Whenever the hand book refers to to romal, it means an extension of braided material attached to closed reins. This extension is allowed to be carried in the free hand with a 16" spacing between the reining hand and the free hand holding the romal. The romal should not be used forward of the cinch or used to signal or cue the horse in anyway. Any infraction will be penalized severely by the judge.

In all riding classes, horse must be shown in a western, stock type saddle with a horn. Saddles and other equipment should be suitable for ranch work. Excessive silver will be considered a major fault and can be grounds for disqualifications.

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In roping and speed events, use of a hackamore (including mechanical hackamores) or other types of bridles is the optional choice of the exhibitor; however the judge may prohibit the use of bits or equipment that he/she may consider severe.

Twisted wire bits may be used in timed events if the other measurements meet the same specifications as those for bits in the judged events.

OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT

- 1 Rope or riata, if used the rope or riata must be coiled and attached to the saddle.
- 2 Hobbles are attached to the saddle.
- 3 Tappaderos, except in Working Cow Horse where they are not allowed.
- 4 Protective boots and leg wraps except in conformation.
- 5 Spurs

PROHIBITED EQUIPMENT

- 1 Wire chin straps, regardless of how well padded or covered.
- 2 Jerk Lines
- 3 Tack Collars
- 4 Whips or Bats
- 5 Running martingales. Tie-downs except for team roping, breakaway, calf roping or speed events.
- 6 Tie-downs with bare metal in contact with the horse head.
- 7 Draw reins are not allowed in any events.

Abuse of horses cannot be tolerated. Thus a judge is compelled to disqualify any horse he/she feels is being exhibited in a manner that is cruel, abusive or inhumane. This may include exhibition of an animal that is clearly not in a fit or sound condition, the use of abusive equipment, or the use of abusive training or showing techniques by the rider.

Horses may be disqualified for blatant disobedience, bucking rearing, kicking, biting, or any other acts that are unsafe for the rider, horse or others in the class except in individual classes where a specific penalty is listed. The judge always has the option of disqualify an exhibitor or stopping a class for safety reasons.

FAULTS TO BE SCORED ACCORDING TO SEVERITY:

- a) Touching horse and/or saddle with free hand in judged classes except in the cattle portion of Working Cow Horse, working ranch horse, roping, cutting, ranch cutting, or select cutting
- b) Excessive nosing out
- c) Opening mouth excessively
- d) Stumbling
- e) Losing stirrups
- f) Anticipating signals
- g) Any unnecessary aid given by rider
- h) Spurring in front of cinch
- i) Free hand to instill fear

FAULTS WHICH WILL RESULT IN DISQUALIFICATIONS:

- a) Fall to the ground by horse or rider
- b) Two hands on reins except when ridden with snaffle, bosal or in speed events.
- c) Failure to display proper exhibitor number
- d) Abuse of horse
- e) Obviously lame or overly tired horse
- f) Misconduct by exhibitor, owner or trainer
- g) Equipment failure
- h) Excessive Silver
- i) Illegal dress or equipment

Judge and show management may give the exhibitor the opportunity to correct equipment at affiliate level shows.

No judge shall place a lame horse.

All judges' decisions are final.

Performance Gaits.

The following terminology shall apply in all classes whenever a specific gait is called for.

- a) Walk. A natural, flat footed, four beat gait. The horse must move straight, and true, and be alert, with a stride of reasonable length in keeping with the size of the horse.
- b) Jog. A smooth, ground covering, two-beat diagonal gait. The jog should be square, balanced, and with a forward movement of the feet. Horses walking behind and trotting in front are not performing the jog. When asked to extend the jog the horse is to move out with the same smooth way of going
- c) Lope. An easy, rhythmical three-beat gait. Horse is to lope on the correct lead (ie: loping on the left requires left lead and loping to the right requires right lead.) Horses loping in a four-beat gait are not performing at the proper lope and are to be penalized. The horse should lope with a natural stride and appear to be relaxed and smooth. The head should be carried at an angle that is natural to the horse's conformation at all gaits

Ring Procedure

1. Walk, Jog, Lope. Horses are to be shown at a walk, a jog and a lope on a reasonably loose rein without undue restraint. Horses must work both ways of the ring at all three gaits to demonstrate their ability with different leads. The judge shall have the right to ask for additional work from any horse. Judge may, at his discretion ask for extended trot and lope.
2. Reversing. Horses are to be reversed to the inside, away from the rail. Horses may be required to reverse at a walk or a trot or may be required to go from any gait to any other gait at the discretion of the judge. No contestant will be asked to reverse at a lope. In no event will a contestant be required to drop his reins or otherwise leave his horse unattended.
3. Penalties. The judge should penalize a horse's head position in ranch riding as severely as for a horse being on the wrong lead, excessive speed, bolting or bucking for the following faults:
 - a) Head Position. Horses that carry their heads such that the point of the ears is lower than the withers.
 - b) Flexed. Horses that are flexed behind the vertical.
 - c) Slow Gait. Horses that are excessively slow, at any gait.
 - d) Maintain Light Rein. If light contact with reasonably loose rein is not maintained.
 - e) Appearance. Horses that appear sullen, dull, lethargic or emaciated.
4. Free Hand. The free hand shall not be used to support the rider by being placed in any part of the saddle.
5. Judged On Performance Only. Performance classes will be judged on performance only. Conformation is not to be considered in judging.

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