

Ranch Horse Trail

The Trail class is judged on the performance of the horse over obstacles with emphasis on manner, attitude, and response to the rider. Horses must not work on the rail, however the course should be designed to require each horse to show three (3) gaits (walk, jog, lope) somewhere between the obstacles as part of its work. Credit is to be given to horse negotiation obstacles with style and demonstrating a willing response to rider's cues.

A horse not completing the course or incorrect order of maneuvers shall be cause for disqualification. A horse not performing over any particular obstacle but moving on to negotiate the balance of maneuvers shall not be disqualified but shall be penalized for missing the obstacle. After three (3) refusals of an obstacle the horse must move on and be penalized for missing the refused obstacle. The judge also has the right to blow whistle and ask contestant to move to the next obstacle.

Six (6) obstacles will be used. The three (3) mandatory obstacles listed below plus three (3) of the listed optional obstacles are to be used and shown on the posted pattern. The gaits between obstacles shall be at the discretion of the judge and are to be specified in the posted pattern. The course or pattern to be used must be posted at least one (1) hour before the scheduled time of the class.

Mandatory Obstacles:

The Gate - A contestant must open, go through and then close a gate. The same hand must be used during this procedure. Reins may not be switched between hands unless done prior to or immediately after this obstacle. There will be a one minute time limit for this obstacle. If contestant fails to complete obstacle within the time limit, he shall be directed to continue on to the next obstacle.

Stationary Steer - The judge shall give credit to the horse that stands easy while the competitor makes the swing and throw at the steer. The contestant shall not be penalized for a miss.

Trailer - A contestant must show that a horse will load and unload quietly and easily from a normal covered stock trailer. The contestant has the choice of entering with the horse. **Optional Obstacles** - suggested, but not limited to: **Ground Tie or Hobbles** - Horse shall remain in place while his rider dismounts and performs a normal ranch task.

Optional Obstacles:

1. **Mail Box** - Rider approaches mailbox, opens and then closes the door.
2. **Slicker** - Rider approaches slicker, removes slicker from holder, dons slicker and then travels to second holder, where he removes the slicker and replaces it in the holder.
3. **Water Hazard** - Horse shows willingness to cross small ditch or shallow pond.
4. **Bridge** - Horse shows willingness to walk across obstacle designed to simulate a bridge.
5. **Log Drag** - Rider will be handed rope from show personnel and will then drag log in circle to show horse's willingness and ability to pull. Once the circle is completed, the rider will drop the rope and continue to next obstacle.
6. **Back through shaped "L" course** made of logs or poles laid on the ground. Minimum space between poles to be 28".
7. **Sidepass** - Logs or poles used must be a minimum of six feet long. Obstacles may be

approached from either end and horse may be required to move both directions and such information is to be stated on posted pattern.

8. Obstacle containing four (4) logs each being 5' to 6' long laid in a square and execute a 180 degree or 360 degree turn and then leave square or lope through the square providing the rails are 6' to 7' in length and no more than 12" high. The pattern must state which is required.

9. Logs - Three logs will be placed on ground that the contestant must cross.

Trot overs 2'6" to 3'6"

Lope overs 6' to 7'

10. Obstacles consisting of cones or pylons. Horse is to trot through in either a cloverleaf or serpentine pattern as posted on pattern. Markers are to be spaced at least 3 feet apart to trot through or this obstacle could be used to back through.

The judge has the right and duty to alter the course in any manner or remove any obstacle deemed unsafe. All courses and obstacles are to be constructed with safety in mind so as to eliminate any possible accidents. It is permissible to change rein hand to work with an obstacle.

Penalties in scoring class, but not cause for disqualification:

- a) Exaggerated gapping of the mouth or head throwing
- b) Incorrect leads or lead changes
- c) Breaking Gait
- d) Losing control of the gate
- e) Hitting or knocking over obstacles
- f) Shying or unnecessary delay in approaching obstacles.

Credits

- a) A relaxed and responsive, willing horse
- b) Acceptance of the bit and willing yielding to the riders commands
- c) Smooth, controlled gaits, stops.
- d) Horse that quietly waits the next maneuver
- e) Horses should negotiate obstacles correctly and quietly, while still showing interest in them and trust in their rider.