

FROM ARHA (American Ranch Horse Assoc) Rule Book

Disqualifications (should not be placed) include:

- a) Failure by exhibitor to wear correct back number in visible manner.
- b) Willful abuse.
- c) Knocking over the cone or going off pattern.
- d) Excessive schooling or training.
- e) Fall by horse or rider.
- f) Illegal use of hands on reins.
- g) Use of prohibited equipment.
- h) Kicking at other horses, exhibitors or judge.
- i) Severe disobedience or resistance by horse including, but not limited to, rearing, bucking, or pawing.
- j) Hitting or cueing with romel.
- k) Spurring in front of the shoulder.

SECTION M-1. RANCH RIDING

(Open, Amateur, Youth, Novice Amateur & Novice Youth Division)

Novice Amateur class will be offered only in All Age, Novice Youth will only be offered in Youth 18 & Under.

DESCRIPTION:

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.

Maximum credit should be given to the horse that has a flowing stride, is balanced, and that gives the appearance of being willing, fit, alert and a pleasure to ride while possessing great athletic ability and agility.

This class will be judged on the performance, athletic ability, and condition of the horse.

- A) 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 extend the walk and the jog, one or both ways of the ring. The extended jog is a definite two-beat lengthening of the stride, covering more ground. Cadence and balance with smoothness are more essential than speed. Passing is Permissible and should not be penalized as long as the horse maintains a proper and even cadence and rhythm. Horses are required to back easily and stand quietly.

- B) Horses are to be reversed to the inside (away from the rail). They may be required to reverse at the walk or jog at the discretion of the judge, but shall not be asked to reverse at the lope.
- C) Rider shall not be required to dismount except in the event the judge wishes to check equipment.
- D) Horses are to be shown at a walk, jog and lope on a reasonably loose rein or light contact without undue restraint. Judges, at their discretion may also ask for an extended trot.
- E) **Faults to be scored according to severity:**
 - 1) Excessive speed or excessive slowness at any gait.
 - 2) Being on the wrong lead.
 - 3) Breaking gait (including not walking when called for).
 - 4) Excessive slowness in any gait, loss of forward momentum (resulting in an animated and/or artificial gait at the lope).
 - 5) Failure to take the appropriate gait when called for (during transitions, excessive delay will be penalized).
 - 6) Over flexing or straining neck in carriage so that the nose is behind the vertical.
 - 7) Excessive nosing out.
 - 8) Opening/gapping mouth excessively.
 - 9) Stumbling.
 - 10) Use of spur in front of the cinch.
 - 11) If horse appears sullen, dull, lethargic, emaciated, drawn or overly tired.
 - 12) Quick, choppy or pony-strided.
 - 13) Overly canted at the lope (Horses which lope with haunches in towards the center of arena).
 - 14) Excessive head bobbing.
 - 15) Excessive ringing of tail.
- F) **Credits:**
 - 1) Natural ground covering gaits.
 - 2) Consistency at all gaits.
 - 3) Smooth upward and downward transitions.
 - 4) Work on reasonably loose rein without excessive cueing to maintain moderate pace.
 - 5) Giving the appearance of being able to do a days work
 - 6) Athletic Ability/Agile.
 - 7) Softness of horses' chin, poll, neck, shoulder, body, hip. and being broke through thru the whole body.
- G) **Disqualifications**
 - 1) Grabbing the saddle horn or any other part of the saddle.
 - 2) Illegal use of hands on reins.
 - 3) Use of prohibited equipment.

D) Reins must be bridged with option of tail on one-side.

*SEE GENERAL RULES- WESTERN EQUIPMENT I-30-I 1-6.

SECTION M-2. TWO YEAR OLD SNAFFLE BIT REQUIREMENTS

- 1. Two Year Old Ranch Riding class cannot be offered before June 1st of the year for which approval is requested.
- 2. In a Two Year Old Ranch riding class the horse must be shown with a snaffle bit or a snaffle bit with mecate reins.
- 3. Reins are to be attached above the curb strap. Curb strap must be leather (no chains).
- 4. Specifics on acceptable snaffle bits refer to Section I-30 #B or Diagram 1 Bits on page 106.
- 5. If class is held exclusively for hackamore or snaffle bit junior horses, two hands must be used.
- 6. A horse may be entered in both the Junior Ranch Riding and the Two Year Old Ranch Riding (after June 1) at the same show.

SECTION M-3. PERFORMANCE GAITS

The following terminology is a description of ranch riding gaits:

A) THE WALK & EXTENDED WALK:

1. **Poor Walk:** uneven pace and no cadence. Has no flow and may appear intimidated or appear to march.
- 1a. **Poor Extended Walk:** Never lengthens stride, lack of ground covering walk.
2. **Average Walk:** has a four-beat gait, level top line and is relaxed.
- 2a. **Average Extended Walk:** Moves up in pace/covers more ground.
3. **Good Walk:** has a flowing four-beat gait, level top line, relaxed and is bright and attentive.
- 3a. **Good Extended Walk:** covers reasonable amount of ground; obvious lengthening in stride while being effortless for the horse.

B) THE JOG & EXTENDED JOG:

1. **Unacceptable Jog:** cannot perform a two-beat gait and has no flow or balance in the motion.
2. **Poor Jog:** hesitant motion. Does not keep even and balanced motion or has negative characteristics such as walking behind, dragging rear toes or taking uneven length of stride with the front and rear legs.
- 2a. **Poor Extended Jog:** never lengthens stride and may appear to be rough to ride.
3. **Good Jog:** is comfortable to ride while having a consistent two-beat gait. The horse guides well and appears to be relaxed.
- 3a. **Average Extended Jog:** moves up in its pace and appears to be smooth to ride.
4. **Excellent Jog:** effortless and very efficient motion. He has a bright and alert expression and exhibits more lift and self carriage, Shows confidence, yet soft with its motion while being balanced and under control.
- 4a. **Excellent Extended Jog:** has obvious lengthening of stride with a slight increase in pace while exerting less effort and appears smooth to ride.

C) THE LOPE:

1. **Poor Lope:** does not have a three-beat gait. No flow, rhythm or balance. Uncomfortable to ride.
2. **Average Lope:** has a true three-beat gait with very little head and neck motion. He guides well and has a relaxed appearance.
3. **Good Lope:** has more lift and flow than average horse. Has a strong but smooth drive from behind. Steady top line, relaxed appearance and is responsive to rider's aids. Appears to be comfortable to ride.
4. **Excellent Lope:** has a round back with an effortless strong, deep stride with the rear legs and a flat swinging with the front legs. Horse has a great degree of lift and self-carriage and is relaxed yet alert and confident.

D) THE BACK-UP:

1. **Poor Back-up:** is resistant and heavy in front. May gap mouth and throw his head or back crooked.
2. **Average Back-up:** backs straight and quietly with light contact and without hesitation.
3. **Good Back-up:** displays balance and smooth flowing movements. Backs straight with self-carriage without gapping mouth with light contact and without hesitation.