



**“One Horse for All Occasions!”**

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# **Show Rules And Regulations**

***GAIT + FRAME + SMOOTHNESS = SUCCESS***

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**MISSION STATEMENT**

The Rocky Mountain Horse® Association, Inc. (RMHA) is a non-profit corporation organized under the laws of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, which is dedicated to the preservation, promotion, breeding and development of the Rocky Mountain Horse® (RMH) throughout the United States and Internationally. To this end, showing the Rocky Mountain Horse® is a means of breed promotion and demonstrating the basic and well-known characteristics of the horse—its gentle temperament and its naturally smooth, lateral, even four-beat gait. (Defined in Bylaws—Article VI.)

The following Show Rules, and related Judging Rules and Regulations, apply to all RMHA sanctioned and affiliated shows and the Annual RMHA International Show and are effective from the date of approval, March 2021 and take precedence over all previous Show Rules.

The Rocky Mountain Horse Association adheres to the requirements of the Horse Protection Act as written. It is also our intention to follow the FOSH (Friends of Sound Horses) principles in all forms of promotion of the Rocky Mountain Horse sanctioned by the Rocky Mountain

Horse Association and its affiliated clubs.

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# **SECTION I**

## **Introduction**

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- Horse Protection Act
- FOSH Sound Principles
- Definitions
- A Quest for Definition

## **The Horse Protection Act**

“The Horse Protection Act (HPA) is a Federal law that prohibits horses subjected to a practice called soring from participating in shows, sales, exhibitions, or auctions. The HPA also prohibits drivers from transporting sored horses to or from any of these events. APHIS works actively with the horse industry to protect against such abuse and ensure that only sound and healthy horses participate in shows. Our ultimate goal is to end this inhumane practice completely.

Soring is a cruel and abusive practice used to accentuate a horse’s gait. It may be accomplished by irritating or blistering a horse’s forelegs through the application of chemicals such as mustard oil or the use of mechanical devices.

Walking horses are known for possessing a naturally high gait, but in order to be successful in competition their natural gait is often exaggerated. The exaggerated gait can be achieved with proper training and considerable time, however; some horse exhibitors, owners, and trainers have chosen to use improper and inhumane training methods to shorten the time it would take to produce a higher gait without abusive practices.

The Rocky Mountain Horse Association adheres to the requirements of the Horse Protection Act.”

*Copied from the USDA website:*

[http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\\_welfare/hp/](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_welfare/hp/)



## **FOSH Sound Principles**

### **(Friends of Sound Horses)**

#### **Principle #1**

All FOSH events adhere to the requirements of the Horse Protection Act.

#### **Principle #2**

Horses are to be treated with dignity, respect, and compassion.

#### **Principle #3**

Horses must be presented as sound in both body and mind.

#### **Principle #4**

The preferred way of going is natural, correct, and without exaggeration.

#### **Principle #5**

Shoeing is intended only for the protection of the foot and its structure. Barefoot horses are both welcomed and encouraged where practical.

#### **Principle #6**

Handlers & riders are expected to use training techniques and equipment that conform to the highest humane standards as recognized by the general equestrian community.

#### **Principle #7**

Exhibitors have a duty to conduct themselves in an orderly, responsible, and sportsmanlike manner.

*Copied from the FOSH Show Rule Book 2010 with Permission*

## **Definitions as Used Throughout This Book**

**IMMEDIATE FAMILY:** For competition purposes, the term “immediate family”, as used throughout the RMHA Rule Book, shall be defined as parent, child by blood, adoption or marriage, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, spouse, or domestic partner, whether they live in the same household or not.

**NOVICE:** Novice is defined as a “beginner” in the show ring, a person just starting to learn a skill or take part in an activity and has not shown in any gaited show circuit in prior years.

**OPEN CLASSES:** Unless otherwise defined, the term “Open Classes” refers to the gender of the horse to include mare, gelding or stallion.

**OVER-SHOWING:** Over-showing is defined as, “when the exhibitor’s behavior strongly distracts attention from the horse being shown, to the exhibitor himself/herself, and/or disturbs the presentation of other horses or exhibitors”.

**COMPLETING A CLASS:** A class is considered completed when all horses are in the lineup, any horse excused from the ring BEFORE the lineup or any rider asking to be excused before the lineup will not have completed the class. NO YOUTH WILL BE DISQUALIFIED FROM A CLASS UNLESS IT IS A SAFETY ISSUE.

# A Quest for Definition...

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- The RMHA has frequently defined and separated the show divisions mainly with regard to “lift”. Even when other defining characteristics were in place; degree of lift was always front and center.
- This has often left the Association dealing with complaints, confusion, and outright accusations. On one side, exhibitors demand inclusion for high stepping horses; while the other side issues dire warnings about changing the breed standard.
- Meanwhile, much of the majority is left befuddled by ever-changing rules and regulations regarding the show circuit. Which begs the question: Why classify our horses by lift at all?
- As our RMHA rules dictate; we must adhere to practices which only allow for the normal-length, keg-shod or barefoot hoof. It is only natural then that the FRAME of the horse dictates the lift of the leg.
- **A proper frame encourages a harmonious ride with a fluid and evenly-timed gait. Quality of gait is the number one priority** that a judge should look for in any class. When we seek to judge our horses and riders by the overall **FRAME** they present, degree of lift is no longer the focus.
- The focus then shifts to something else: **The Quality of the Ride!** The equation is simple:

***GAIT + FRAME + SMOOTHNESS = SUCCESS!***

## SECTION II

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- Eligibility and Qualifications for Showing

## II. ELIGIBILITY AND QUALIFICATIONS FOR SHOWING:

- A. Owners, trainer and exhibitors are responsible for *knowing and complying* with all rules herein, as well as knowing and complying with the Federal and State regulations pertaining to the showing of gaited horses, e.g., United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Horse Protection Act (HPA). Failure to follow show rules may result in RMHA Board disciplinary action.
- B. All horses shown in RMHA sanctioned classes, must be a registered Rocky Mountain Horse. (See D below). All horses shown under saddle must be three years old or older and certified.
- C. Certified to breed grade mares, are NOT eligible to show.
- D. All horses three years old and older must have evidence of having been certified in order to breed and/or show, e.g. gold seal and certification date on the front of Certificate of Registration. An original or legible copy of the Registration must be shown upon request at any RMHA sanctioned classes, events and shows.
- E. All information on the Certificate of Registration MUST be current, correct and officially recorded with the RMHA, i.e., owner, transfers, name change, certification, etc. Records falsified (also an RMHA Bylaws violation) by an owner, trainer, or exhibitor will result in disqualifying the horse. All awards for the show will be withdrawn. Penalties imposed following a hearing may include temporary or permanent suspension of membership(s).
- F. Without exception, all owners, trainers and exhibitors entering horses into RMHA sanctioned classes, events and shows must be current RMHA members in good standing and must not be on any suspension(s) either with the regulatory commission (USDA) or with the RMHA.
- G. At all RMHA sanctioned classes, events and shows, juveniles, farms, stables, corporations, and/or partnerships are REQUIRED to have an adult RMHA member who is in good standing, accept the responsibility by affixing their signature as the responsible party, being the duly authorized agent, officer, owner, parent or guardian to entry forms, and other required documents associated with the showing of horses.
- H. For the purposes of all RMHA horses shows only, the age of a RMH shall be computed on the basis of a calendar year starting on January 1st of the year foaled. A RMH is considered a weanling during the calendar year born and a yearling during the first calendar year following its foaling date regardless of the time of the year foaled.
- I. Exhibitors in Ladies' or Men's classes shall be restricted to those exhibitors who are 18 years old or older. Juveniles are 17 years old and under and must show in designated Youth Classes only.
- J. An exhibitor's Status (Youth, Novice, Amateur and Professional) will be declared when they renew or obtain a new membership. That status is valid based on their membership start/end date. Any change in status during a current competition year will cause a loss of high points in that year. Memberships can be obtained at competitions and through in the RMHA office or online.
- K. Only specifically authorized and identified Show Judging Committee personnel, the show manager and/or RMHA Office Manager are allowed to communicate with judges during a RMHA sponsored or affiliated show.

# **SECTION III**

## **Show Classes and Descriptions**

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- Signature Gait
- Desirable Frame
- Proper Frame
- Undesirable Frame
- In-Hand Breed Conformation
- Under Saddle

# The Signature Gait

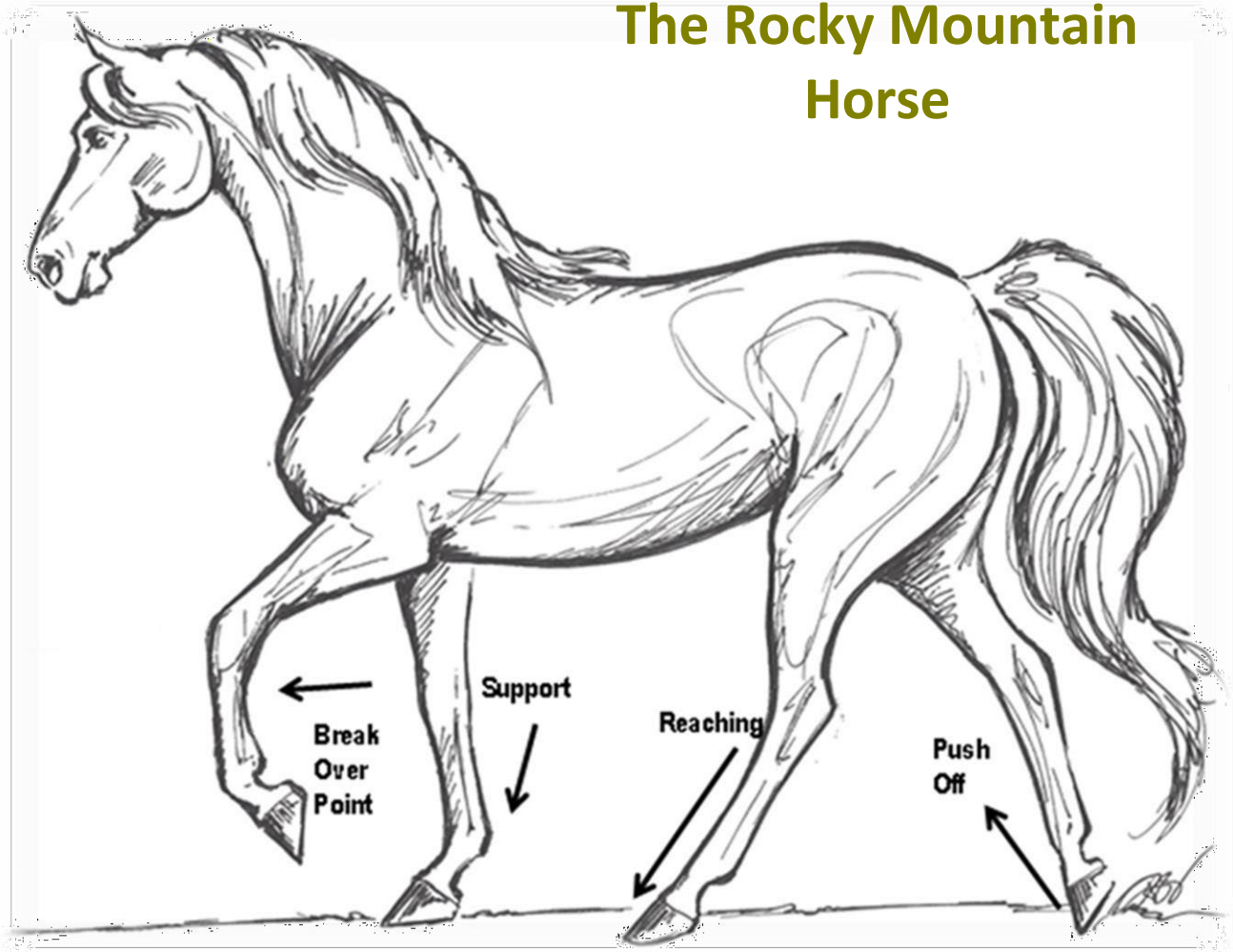
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- **The desired natural gait** of a Rocky Mountain Horse is a symmetrically lateral, yet evenly-timed-4-beat-gait. Otherwise known as a stepped rack, saddle rack or saddle gait; among others. It is sometimes confusing to describe; as the footfalls are meant to be even and seemingly square, which goes against the definition of lateral. It is the pick-up of the legs that is lateral, but the set-down of each hoof is individual! This is what creates the even timing.
- **The divisions within the RMHA** are meant to showcase the natural and wonderful variety within the breed. From slow and methodical daisy clippers to versatile multi-tasking athletes to the show-offs with speed and animation. While they may differ slightly in style and frame, one thing remains the same: **the gait must be natural**.
- **What is natural?** Certainly, the mere act of riding the horse is unnatural...but let's be realistic. There are actually several facets within this term that should be observed as it applies to the Rocky Mountain Horse. An animal with natural-length hooves that are shod with simple keg shoes is the obvious answer. Un-scarred and blemish-free legs is another answer. However, the concept is broader than just looking at the hoof and the leg. It goes back to the frame!
- **An unnatural frame** is one that has been altered by the human to the point of being detrimental to the horse. Whether for reasons such as to the break-up footfalls, or to enhance lift of the forelegs, or out of the inability to get the horse to gait in any other way; at times riders force a horse into an overly hollow frame. Heavy hands pull straight back or upward: bringing the neck back behind the motion of the shoulder and forcing the nose to come up into the air, the hindquarters either squat or trail out behind, or the back hollows in the extreme and the horse appears truly upside down. Sometimes it isn't just the rider that encourages this frame, but the horse itself, whether through nervousness or general unbalance. Either way, it should be considered undesirable.
- **Since it is evident** that this breed can gait well without being ridden in such a manner, it seems logical to discourage this type of "unnatural frame" from the show ring. When the gait is smooth, free flowing, and elastic: the rider does not bounce. If the rider is bouncing; the gait is not quality of breed standard. If the gait is not evenly timed, as in pacey or trotty; the gait is not signature. If the horse must be ventro-flexed to the extreme: the gait is not natural; it has been forced, and more than likely would fall out of gait if allowed to travel freely.

**The frame of the Rocky Mountain Horse should be one that enhances the signature gait in a way that looks comfortable and natural to the horse's conformation and style of movement.**

# Desirable Frame

## The Signature Gait of The Rocky Mountain Horse



In this realistic representation, you can see how the front and hind legs work together for our desired gait.

The hind fetlock will vary in this support phase. Timing will vary slightly.

Illustrations are for reference purposes only and are to be used as a general guideline.

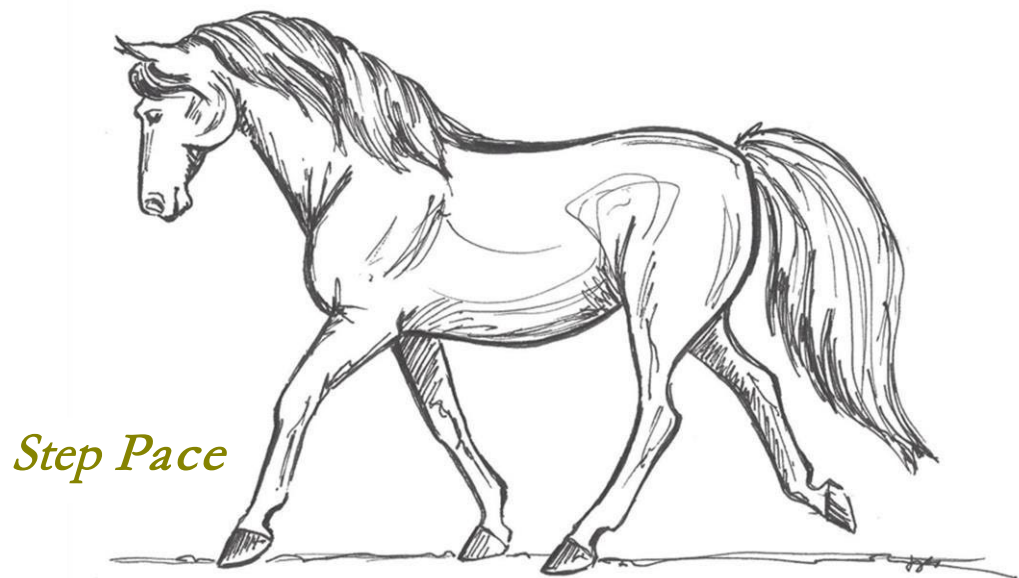


# A Proper Frame

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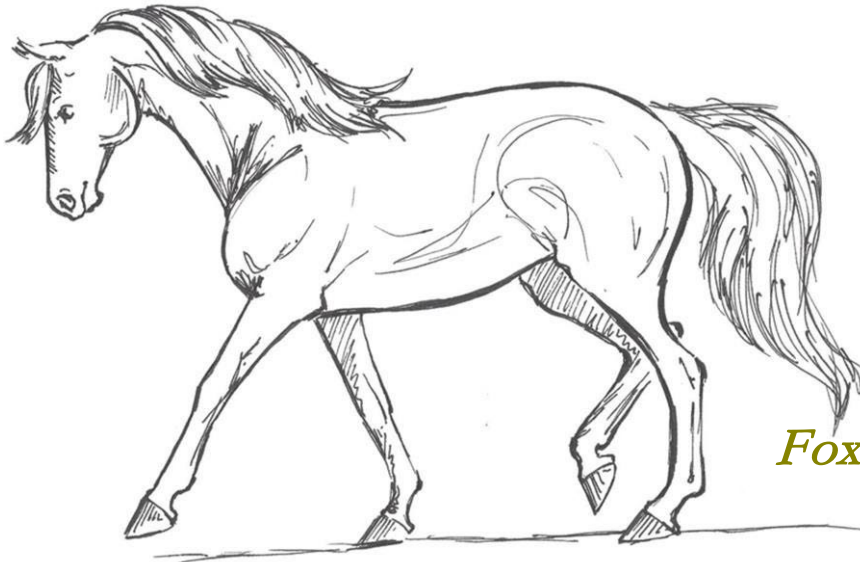
- **The proper frame** in any division is determined by an engaged rider on a supple horse. Whether by self-carriage or containment and collection, low stepping or high stepping; the ideal frame for any horse is one that compliments the conformation and projects forward, fluid, rolling movement.
- **Gaping mouths**, bulging lower necklines, stiff marching or choppy front-end strides, extremely hollowed out backs, and sloppy hindquarters indicate unbalanced, forced, and poorly trained frames.
- **A rider that enhances** the gait of the horse by encouraging a soft active mouth that works on the bit rather than above or behind it; along with a rounded neckline, elastic working hindquarters, and smooth precise footfalls, is the rider that looks harmonious within the entire frame and silhouette of the horse.
- **The Rocky Mountain Horse** does perform a gait that by its very nature must be somewhat ventro-flexed. Obtaining true “rounded collection” is not the goal, as we do not want to trot. However, this does not mean we need to further hollow the back of the horse to enhance stride, speed or animation.
- **A pleasing frame** is what we are seeking, whether it be low and relaxed or upright and powerful: **the horse must still look comfortable!** If we frame up the horse within his natural parameters and focus on quality of gait rather than lift of gait, the horse will naturally fall into the category that fits him.
- **Degree of lift is no longer the focus.** A Country Trail Pleasure horse is required to move slowly and efficiently, with minimal contact on the bridle, and a naturally lower headset: this frame is not conducive to stepping with any animation. If a Show Pleasure Horse is required to have a frame that is defined as rounded in the neckline, upright and collected in the bridle, smooth, and neither squatting nor extremely ventro-flexed: his lift is not a concern, as he is meant to portray a certain frame with brilliant precision and control.
- It is not and should not be about how high he lifts. **It is about how beautifully and consistently he moves around the ring with his rider in a correct and smooth manner.** If our judges and riders understand the overall presence that we seek to portray, we are able to bring back the emphasis to the **QUALITY** of the ride.

# Undesirable Frames & Gait

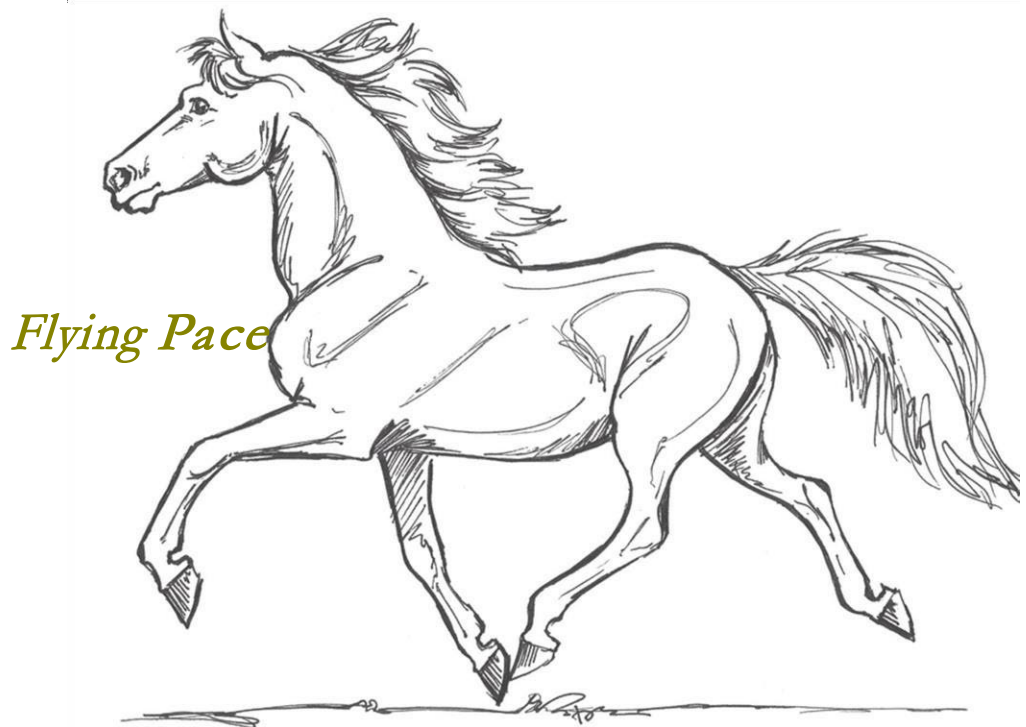


Illustrations are for reference purposes only and are to be used as a general guideline.

# Undesirable Frames & Gait



*Fox trot*



*Flying Pace*

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### III. SHOW CLASSES AND DESCRIPTION:

- A. In-Hand Breed Conformation: Judges criteria: Conformation 75% and Temperament 25%. Gait should not be considered; however, movement may be evaluated to determine structural flaws.

1. Conformation:

- a. The RMHA Bylaws state an adult RMH is described as follows: "The height of the horse will be no less than 56 inches (14.0 hands) and no more than 64 inches (16 hands). They shall have medium sized bones with medium sized feet in proportion to the body; a wide and deep chest with a span between the forelegs. The fore and hind legs will be free of noticeable deformity. The horse should have sloping shoulders (ideally with an angle of 45 degrees), bold eyes, well-shaped ears and a face which is neither dished nor protruding. The head should be medium sized in proportion to the body with medium jaws. The neck should be gracefully arched, medium in length and sit on an angle to allow a natural carriage with a break at the poll. The horse must have a solid body color. There shall be no white markings above the knee or hock except on the face where modest amounts of white marking are acceptable.
- b. Entries in this division should exemplify the ultimate in conformation and structural correctness. They should be in sufficient good flesh to present a healthy appearance and should be immaculately groomed.
- c. Transmittable conformation and structural weaknesses shall be considered to be faults and shall be penalized at the discretion of the judge.
- d. Any exhibitor or handler who abuses an entry must be excused from the ring by the Judge, and the exhibitor may be subject to disciplinary action.
- e. No lead chains are permitted over the nose or in the mouth. Lead chains are permitted under the chin. Stallions 2 years of age and older must be shown in a bridle and bit.
- f. In the opinion of the Judge, if an entry poses a threat to other exhibitors, the horse must be excused immediately.
- g. Excessive use of the whip or actions that may disturb other entries shall be severely penalized.
- h. If a whip is carried by the exhibitor, there can be no contact of the whip to the horse. ANY contact shall result in the elimination by the Judge.

- B. Under Saddle: Emphasis is placed on CONSISTENCY, NATURALNESS AND SMOOTHNESS OF GAIT IN ALL UNDER-SADDLE CLASSES. Judging criteria: Gait 60%, Performance 20%, Temperament 20%

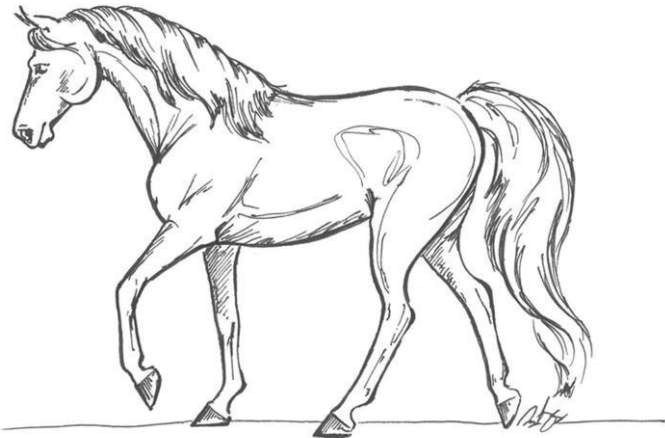
The three gaits in under saddle classes include the Show Gait, Rocky Mountain Pleasure Gait and the Trail Walk. (See *Ring Protocol* and specific Class sections for gaits included in each division)

1. Gait:
  - a. The RMHA Bylaws state that “The RMH naturally demonstrates a smooth, ambling gait which glides forward. The horse moves out with a lateral gait in which one can count four distinct hoof beats that produce a cadence of near equal rhythm. The speed may vary, but the four-beat rhythm remains constant. The gait may technically be described as the simultaneous but asynchronous motion of the legs of the same side of the body followed by the movement of the legs on the opposite side. The gait is initiated by the hind leg. The length of the stride for both hind and fore legs should be nearly equal. The RMH moves his feet with minimal ground clearance and minimal knee and hock action. Because this gait does not waste motion, it enables the horse to travel long distances with minimal tiring.” When judging the RMH, the highest emphasis is to be placed on the consistently smooth even four- beat gait and the horse’s ability to maintain form. The length of the stride at the RM Pleasure Gait ranges from “capping” to 18” over stride. The gaits must be performed without any signs of excessive animation which could be obtained through the use of artificial training devices. Horses should move in a smooth rhythmic rolling motion. The front leg action should not be stiff, pointed or hesitating. The heel should break no higher than mid cannon bone of the other front leg. The RMH is a pleasure horse. Horses with excessive bit pressure should be heavily penalized, e.g., mouth open, corners of mouth drooped, tongue out, or travel with head tilted/turned out to the side to avoid pressure. High emphasis should be placed on the RMH’s ability to perform as a pleasure horse, one who can travel and maintain the RMH gaits for an extended period of time with minimal tiring and the horse’s ability to conform to the standards established by the RMHA. Strong emphasis should be placed on the smoothness of the RMH when performing. Riders should be able to sit deep in the saddle at all times.
2. Head Set: The proper head set for the Rocky Mountain Horse is shown in the Section labeled, *List of Show Classes Under Saddle*. The illustrations represent the ideal head set for the Rocky Mountain Horse with examples of acceptable head set range for each division.
3. Leg Action: See the Section - *List of Show Classes Under Saddle*, for each division of the Rocky Mountain Horse. The hind leg stride is to be what is natural for the horse, from capping to a maximum of 18 inches over stride (See *Index of Examples – Overstride*).

4. Stance: In the line-up, the horse is to stand square (See *Index of Examples – Line Up & Halter Stance*). The profile of the horse when standing square should show no sign of stretching. The Judge shall penalize stretched horses; however, the Judge may remind an exhibitor to show his/her horse squarely; if the exhibitor does not attempt to comply, then a penalty shall be applied.
5. Country Trail Pleasure Class:

# Country Trail Pleasure

*The Pleasant Frame*



**The Country Trail Pleasure Horse is the ultimate ride of comfort. Painting the picture of a pleasant ride; the horse and rider should be relaxed and at ease.**

- In this ***Pleasant Frame***, the horse should display evident self-carriage, and must move in an efficient manner that depicts a dependably smooth trail riding mount. The Country Trail Pleasure Horse is expected to be the epitome of **SMOOTH**; having evenly timed footfalls and a very consistent **SLOW** speed.
- **The rider should set the horse up** in the bridle with the absolute softest amount of contact; even allowing for give in the reins to show the ability of the horse to carry himself in proper gait, without being propped up, or held in, excessively by the rider.
- **The headset should be somewhat relaxed** and natural to the conformation of the horse, having slight flexion at the poll; without nosing out, over-tucking, or evading the bit, whether behind or above.
- **The hindquarters should softly bob** showing elasticity in the back. The overall look of the horse and rider should exhibit as “floaty” and extremely comfortable for both.
- Animation is not desirable. **Consistent, even footfalls in a relaxed manner is the goal.** The transitions from walk to gait to halt are expected to be smooth and relaxed. The horse should show a willing nature to go forward on a loose rein at the **trail walk**; without rushing, and should halt and back-up smoothly without resistance and display patience.
- This type of horse needs to depict itself as the most dependable and trustworthy mount, appearing to give the rider a nearly effortless ride.

# 3 Country Trail Frames

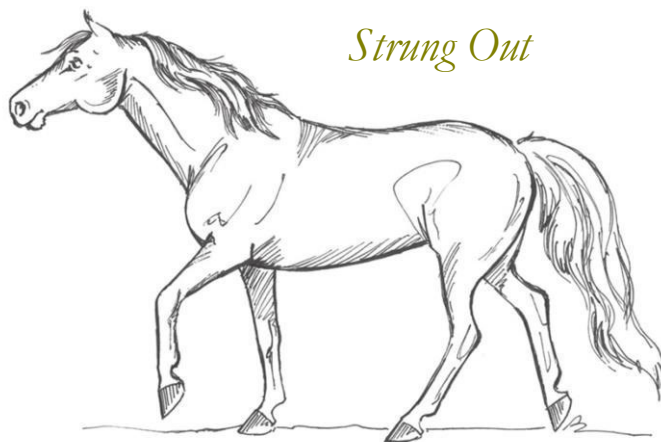
*Incorrect:*

*Over-Collected*



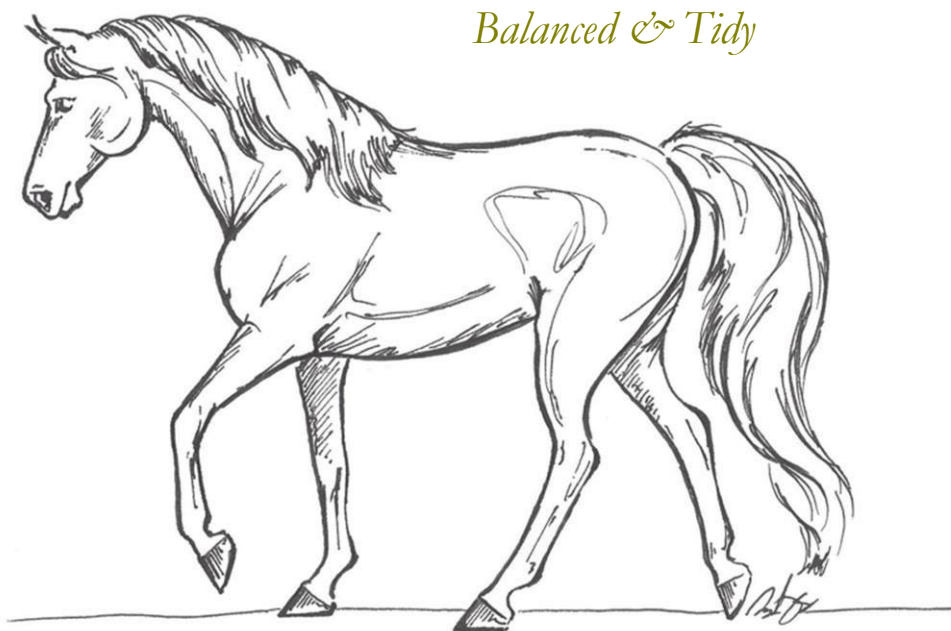
*Incorrect:*

*Strung Out*



*Correct:*

*Balanced & Tidy*



Illustrations are for reference purposes only and are to be used as a general guideline



# Country Trail Pleasure

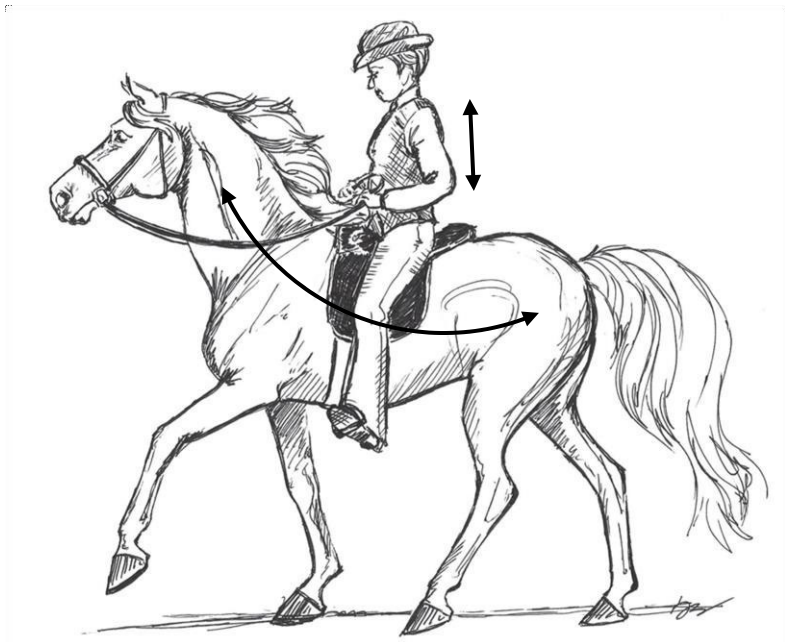
## Ideal:

- soft in the bridle
  - elastic bobbing hindquarters
  - relaxed looking rider
- pleasant and easy going frame



## Faulty:

- strung out
- rough riding
- above the bit
- step-pacing



Illustrations are for reference purposes only and are to be used as a general guideline

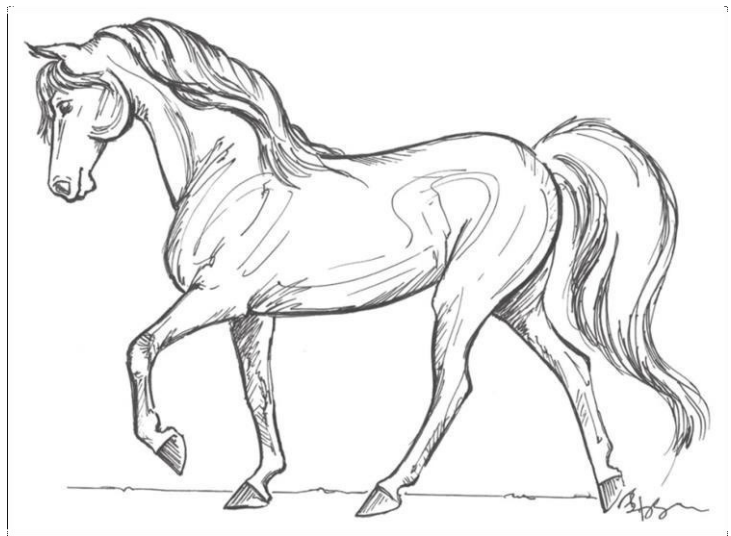
6. Country Trail Pleasure Class FAULTS:

- Excessive speed, animation, and/or action
- Resistive behavior of the horse. The horse shows tension - not relaxed.
- Moves at the halt and while mounting or dismounting
- Not consistent in manners, quietness, and/or responsiveness
- Exhibitor shows rough ride - not sitting firmly in the saddle
- Inconsistency in gait
- Rider appears to force compliance at any command
- Elevated head and/or neck
- More than moderate speed at the show gait

7. Trail Pleasure Class:

# Trail Pleasure

*The Working Frame*



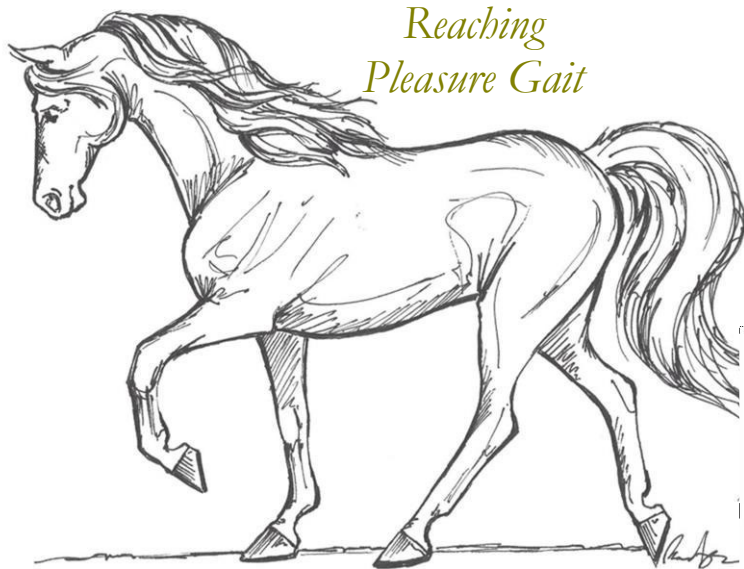
The Trail Pleasure Horse is the picture of the versatile all-around nature of the Rocky Mountain Horse. Providing the gliding ride of the Country Trail Horse, combined with the ability to execute proper gait at speed; the frame of this horse depicts a mount that is enjoyable for many types of riders.

- The horse shall be presented as dutifully and purposefully engaged in a **Working Frame**. The horse and rider should exhibit a well-balanced and comfortable ride; having soft contact on the bridle, flexion at the poll should allow for the profile to be nearly vertical in headset with an elegantly rounded neckline. Self-carriage is desirable.
- The rider should not appear to be “holding” the horse in gait. There should be no evidence of heavy hands that create stiff movement or compensation for rough stride. **Emphasis should never be for animation or brilliance: rather for, consistency, forward-reaching and exceptionally smooth, rolling movement.**
- **Momentum propelled from the hindquarters** and the signature tail flounce indicates a “happy” moving frame. Horse and rider shall perform slow and steady at the **show gait** and exhibit obvious speed increase in the **pleasure gait**.
- **Transitions between speeds** should appear effortless, smooth and well-executed, displaying an “on task” attitude of a horse with a job to do. The **trail walk** should be forward moving, loose reined and relaxed without evidence of rushing or being held back.

# 3 Trail Pleasure Frames

*Correct:*

*Well Balanced &  
Reaching  
Pleasure Gait*



*Correct:*

*Well Balanced &  
Reaching  
Show Gait*



*Incorrect:*

*Hollowed Out &  
Trailing Hindquarters*



Illustrations are for reference purposes only and are to be used as a general guideline

# Trail Pleasure

## Ideal:

- forward motion
- self-carriage
- elastic-reaching hindquarters
- lightly collected
- rounded neckline



## Faulty:

- over collected
  - choppy stride
  - overcompensating rider
- bulging lower  
neckline



Illustrations are for reference purposes only and are to be used as a general guideline

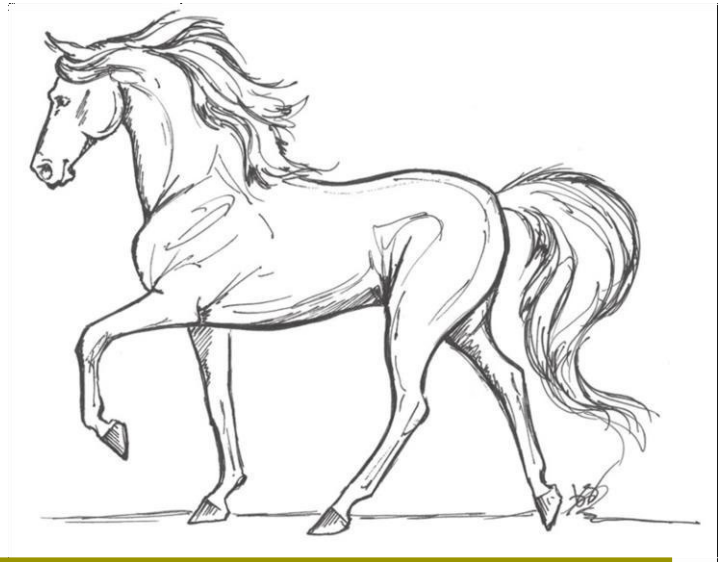
8. Trail Pleasure Class Faults:

- Excessive speed, animation and/or actions
- Resistive behavior of the horse.
- The horse shows tension - not relaxed.
- Not consistent in manner, quietness and/or responsiveness.
- Exhibitor shows rough ride - not sitting firmly in the saddle.
- Inconsistency in the gait.

9. Show Pleasure Class:

# Show Pleasure

## *The Performance Frame*



The Show Pleasure Horse is meant to be the picture of brilliance, precision and fluidity. In this division, horse and rider present themselves in a ***Performance Frame***, where the horse is forward moving and collected up in the bridle, having powerful yet light strides that are propelled by the hindquarters.

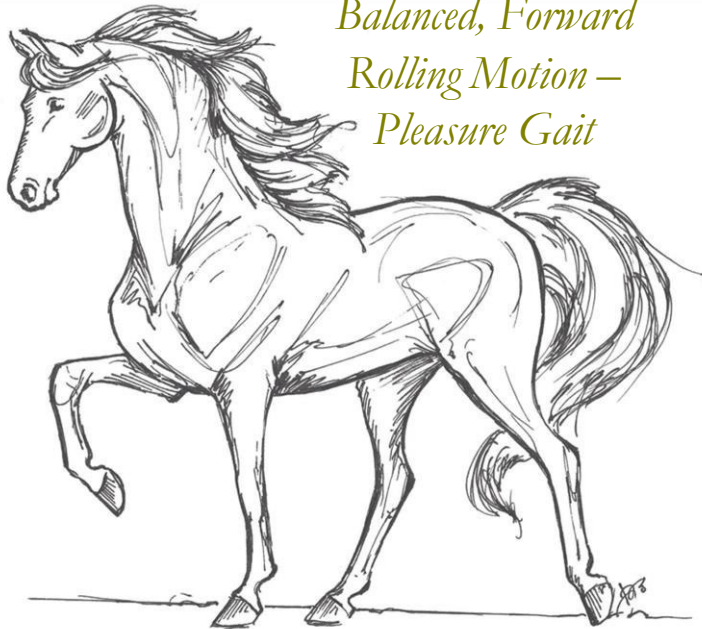
- **The rider's hands** should allow for collected flexion at the poll, without forcing extreme ventro-flexion that would cause the horse to avoid the bit, above or behind.
- **The gait** should have an elastic rolling quality that is free-flowing from the shoulder; where the rider is not over-riding, extremely heavy handed or compensating for choppy stride.
- **At both speeds**, the overall frame should appear supple, showy, smooth, and enjoyable.
- In the ***show gait***, the horse shall exhibit controlled collection, while the ***pleasure gait*** allows for the showcase of animated speed and athleticism. There should be a significant difference between the two speeds.
- **The horse should never be squatting** in the hindquarters, strung-out, or reined-in to the point of creating forced, choppy upright motion rather than forward motion. Stride should be consistent and evenly timed at all speeds, and **frame should never be sacrificed for speed or animation**.
- **There should be no evidence of marching** in the front end at the ***trail walk***. The horse and rider shall present a relaxed forward moving walk that is purposeful and as equally timed as the gait. Smooth transitions are desirable and indicate suppleness and fluid dynamic between horse and rider.



# 3 Show Pleasure Frames

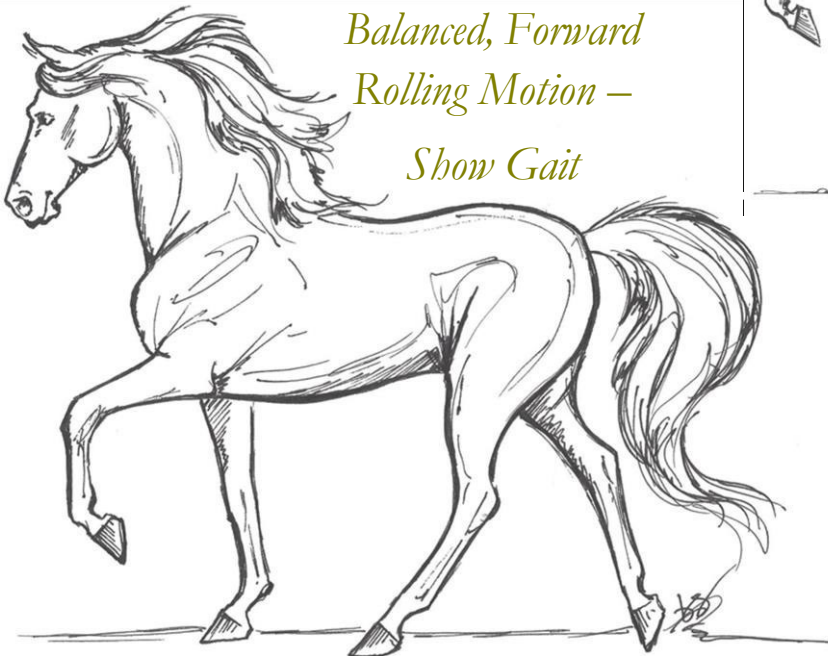
*Correct:*

*Balanced, Forward  
Rolling Motion –  
Pleasure Gait*



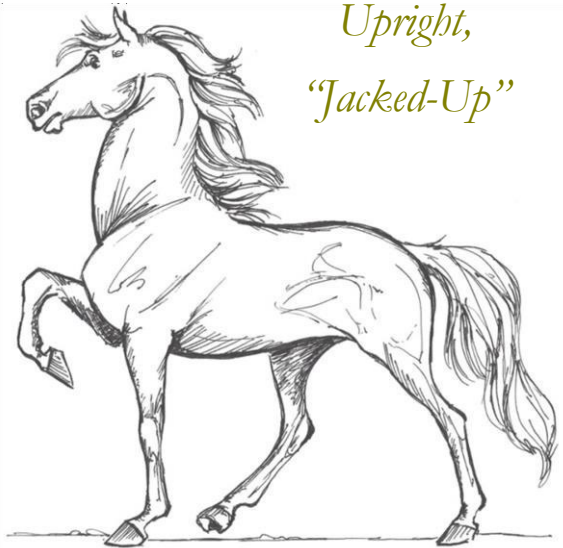
*Correct:*

*Balanced, Forward  
Rolling Motion –  
Show Gait*



*Incorrect:*

*Motion Redirected  
Backward &  
Upright,  
“Jacked-Up”*



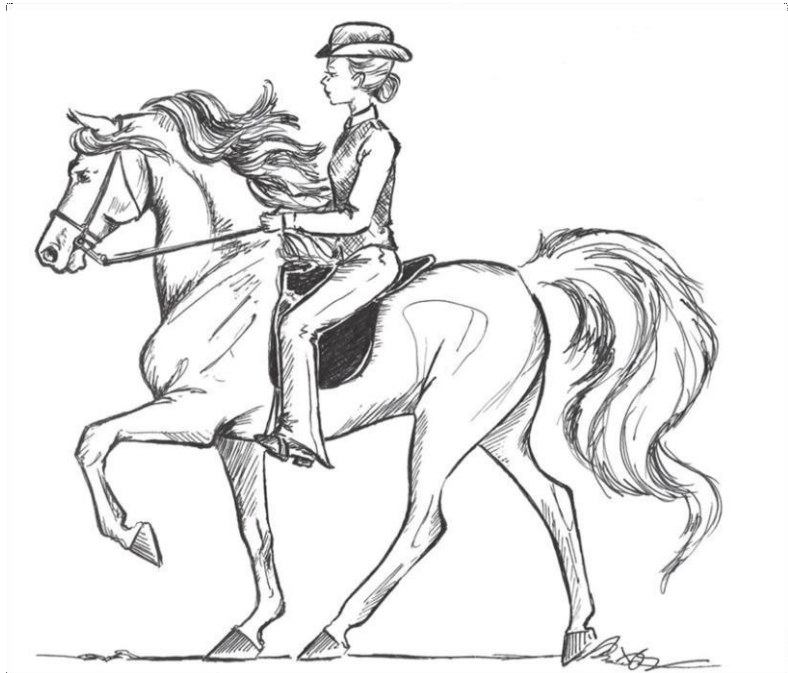
Illustrations are for reference purposes only and are to be used as a general guideline



# Show Pleasure

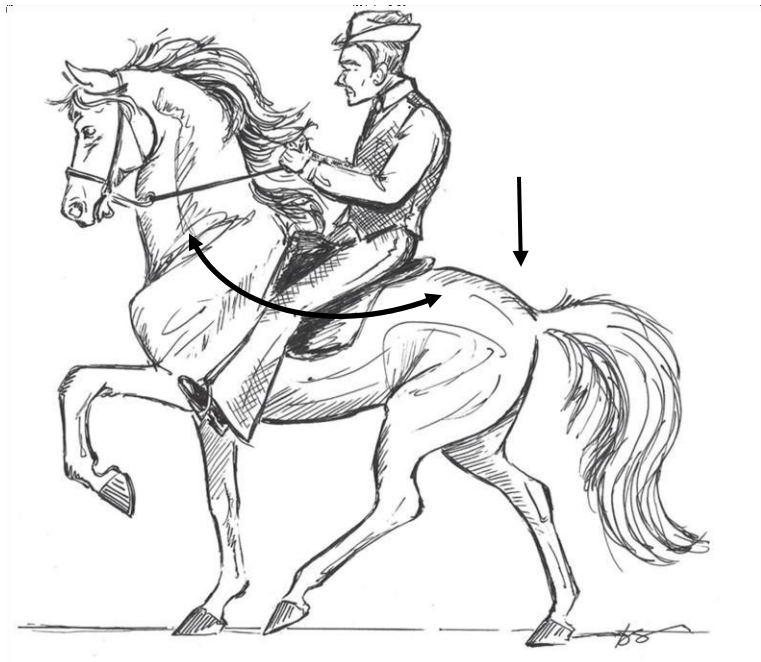
## Ideal:

- forward movement
- comfortable rider
  - on-the-bit
- elastic hindquarters
- smooth looking



## Fault:

- lower neck bulge
  - overly ventro-flexed
  - squatting in the hind
    - heavy handed
    - too lateral
- overcompensating  
rider



Illustrations are for reference purposes only and are to be used as a general guideline

10. Show Pleasure Class Faults:

- Breaks Gait
- Exhibitor backs the horse before the Judges call/signals for it.
- A horse that travels with an open mouth at any gait or with evidence of tongue distress.
- Incorrect head set – over tucked or nosed out.
- Exhibitor not riding smoothly in the saddle.
- Horse refuses to back or back straight.
- Excessive rein pressure.
- Excessive animation.
- Excessive speed.

11. Western Pleasure Classes

- a. The RMH performs in a relaxed, quiet manner exhibiting an exceptionally smooth, comfortable ride without excessive action or animation. A good RMH pleasure horse should have a balanced forward flowing motion with a free and easy ground covering gait.
- b. The horse should be ridden on a loose rein and should exhibit a true, four-beat gait at the Show Gait, Pleasure Gait and Trail Walk in both directions of the ring at the instruction of the Judge.
- c. Reins MUST be held in one hand at all times and cannot be changed during the class. EXCEPTION: The exception to this rule is that Youth 11 years and under may choose to ride with two hands for safety.
- d. The one hand is to be around the reins. When the ends of the split reins fall on the side of the reigning hand, a single finger between the reins is permitted.
- e. When using a romal or when the ends of split reins are held in the hand not used for reining, no finger between the reins is allowed. The rider may hold the romal or the end of split reins to keep them from swinging and to adjust the position of the reins, provided the reins are held at least 17" from the reigning hand.
- f. While the horse is in motion, the rider's hands shall be clear of horse and saddle at all times.
- g. The Judge may call for a halt on the rail to test for quietness. Horses must stand quietly on the rail and in the lineup. If a western horse does not stand quietly or if he is reined at any time with two hands, or the rider changes hands or holds the reins improperly, the exhibitor shall be disqualified.
- h. The head set should be natural, neither excessively nosed out or over flexed at the poll. The head should not be high but should exhibit the type of natural head carriage of a horse used as a Western Pleasure Horse.
- i. Horses shall back freely when asked, a minimum of 4 steps, or be penalized. The head should be in normal position and mouth closed.

- j. The horse will be required to back clear of the lineup and do a 360-degree neck reined turn on the hindquarters, either right or left at the instruction of the Judge. The turn is to demonstrate the ability of the horse to neck rein. Horses are to be judged on their smoothness in performing the turn correctly and their responsiveness to the rider.
- k. A western horse that is not manageable on a light rein, presents an excessive amount of animation, or is ill mannered and resists the instructions from the rider must be penalized and possibly eliminated from the class.

# Western Pleasure

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12. Western Pleasure Faults:

- Horse shows tension, distress or resistance to the exhibitor.
- Inconsistent in gait.
- Exhibitor's improper use of reins and/or hands.
- Failure to follow the class protocol.
- Excessive speed and/or animation
- Horses that travel with an open mouth at any gait or with evidence of tongue distress must be severely penalized.

C. VERSATILITY CLASSES

1. TRAIL OBSTACLE CLASS: Judging Criteria – Gait 40%; Performance 40%; Attitude/Willingness 20%

A working Trail Obstacle horse is used for pleasure riding under a variety of conditions and over a variety of terrain. The horse is responsive and surefooted. The horse is consistent in all gaits.

- a. There will be eight (8) obstacles.
- b. There will be an eight (8) minute time limit to complete the course. The time is started when the horse moves from the starting marker toward the first obstacle. Any exhibitor who has not completed the course at the end of eight (8) minutes will be disqualified from the class. Each entry's time will be clocked by a timer designated by Show Management.
- c. Each exhibitor must make (3) attempts, an attempt is defined as backing or circling from the obstacle and re-attempting by approaching the obstacle again, at each obstacle and then must proceed to the next obstacle or be disqualified. Exhibitors will be informed by the judge or ring master when it is their final attempt.
- d. The location, pattern of the trail course and the order in which the exhibitor is to compete will be posted at the Show Secretary's office at least one hour and no more than three hours prior to the scheduled start of the class.
- e. Attire and tack may be English or Western but not a mix of the two. Use of western tack requires proper rein handling. The Rider should be neatly attired. The horses should be presented bearing in mind that they are appearing in a public venue.
- f. NO HORSE is allowed into the trail obstacle course at any time other than the exhibitor's time to be judged. NO PRACTICE OR WALK THRU with the horse. Exhibitors may examine the course without their horse. There will be a walk through with the judge before the class begins. Exhibitors will be notified of walk through time by show management.

g. Disqualifications: Horses shall be disqualified and eliminated from the class for:

- i. Exceeding the time limit
- ii. Failure to attempt the obstacle in the correct pattern and the correct sequence.
- iii. Not performing the correct gait on the straight ways.
- iv. Taking an obstacle from the wrong side/wrong direction.
- v. Unruly or unsafe behavior (Rearing, striking out)
- vi. Not making three attempts at any obstacle.

h. Exhibitors will be notified of disqualification immediately by the blowing of a whistle from the judge or ring master. The horse will be excused from the course and no other obstacles shall be completed. Judge's decision is final.

2. WORKING TRAIL PLEASURE WITH OBSTACLES CLASS: Judging Criteria – Gait 40%;  
Performance 40%; Attitude/Willingness 20%

A Working Trail Pleasure horse is a horse used for pleasure riding under a variety of conditions and over a variety of terrain.

- a. Attire and tack may be English or Western but not a mix of the two. Use of western tack requires proper rein handling. Ring protocol is English.
2. The horse is responsive and surefooted
3. The horse is consistent in all gaits.
4. Prior to class start, show management will set up obstacles on one or both ends of center ring
5. Exhibitors will enter and go both ways of the ring prior to performing obstacles. Exhibitors will line up and then each exhibitor will do the obstacles work and return to the line-up.
6. The horse must navigate a minimum of three obstacles. The obstacles count as 25% of the value of the class.
7. If requested by the judge, the horse must drop from any gait to a working walk as the rider feeds the reins to the horse.
8. If requested by the judge, the horse must execute a side pass from either side.
9. NO HORSE is allowed into the obstacle course at any time other than the exhibitor's time to be judged. NO PRACTICE or WALK THRU with the horse. Exhibitors may examine the course without their horse

10. Disqualifications:

- i. Inconsistent gait
- ii. Excessive speed or animation
- iii. Exceeding time limit
- iv. Skipping an obstacle unless directed by the judge

3. PLEASURE DRIVING CLASSES: (One Horse Rigs; No Teams) Judging Criteria- Performance 60%; Manners 20%;

Fit, Condition, and Appropriateness of Harness and Vehicle and Neatness of Driver 20%

- a. Pleasure Driving is to be judged on the pleasure horse qualities of the horse in harness. Performance of the horse shall be paramount; turnout is not to count. The Trail Walk, the Show Gait, and the Rocky Mountain Pleasure Gait are required both ways of the ring. Horses are to enter the ring counterclockwise at the Show Gait. The reverse is to be executed on the diagonal across the center of the ring at the Trail Walk.
- b. Any safe, serviceable two-wheel cart or four-wheel buggy with the exception of the fine harness buggy (Viceroy) is acceptable. Liverpool bits or snaffle bits fitted without flash nosebands are allowed. (See *Tack* Section)
- c. For purposes of safety during line up, a header is required for each entry. The leader may release and hook the over check as needed and may attach a lead to the horse. Header is not to touch the horse otherwise.
- d. Backing is generally not required but may be requested at the Judge's discretion.
- e. Attire: (See *Attire* Section)
- f. Class Faults:
  - i. Erratic movement, hesitation, or breaking gait.
  - ii. Unsafe behavior (mandatory elimination from the class and the exhibitor is to be excused from the ring by the Judge)
  - iii. The horse must stand quietly and back readily, if requested, in the lineup. Horses that rear in the shafts when asked to back must be disqualified.
  - iv. The Judge must excuse any exhibitor with an unsafe vehicle or harness at any time during the class.
  - v. The Judge is requested to inspect each exhibitor and their entry at the start of the class for safety.
  - vi. Not performing all three RMH gaits.
  - vii. Excessive speed.

4. BAREBACK CLASS: Judging criteria – Gait 60%; Performance (balance of exhibitor and horse)20%; Conformation and Temperament (responsiveness and attitude) 20%
- a. English or Western or other casual attire is permitted. English or Western tack are permitted, but not mixed. No chaps or whips are permitted.
  - b. The ring protocol will be English protocol. All gaits will be called in sequence, both ways of the ring: Show Gait, Rocky Mountain Pleasure Gait, and Trail Walk. The last call will be the Trail Walk to the line-up.
  - c. Horses will be required to reverse toward the rail.
  - d. Each horse will be called to back up straight three steps and return to the lineup and stand square. (See *Index of Examples – Stance*)
  - e. Rider should maintain good balance on the horse at all gaits.
  - f. Class Faults:
    - i. Not riding with both hands on the reins
    - ii. Exhibitors holding on to the horse's mane to maintain balance.
    - iii. Not maintaining good riding posture/balance, e.g., no slouching over the horse's withers or leaning backwards so as to ride on the exhibitor's tail bone (coccyx) with legs stretched forward.
    - iv. Excessive Speed.
  - g. Disqualifications:
    - i. Breaking gait/not performing all three RMH gaits when called.
    - ii. Not demonstrating change of speed between the gaits when called.
    - iii. The rider losing seat, i.e., slide/fall from the horse partly or completely at any time after entering the gate.
    - iv. The rider's lack of control of the horse.
5. GAITED POLE BENDING CLASS:
- a. English or Western attire and tack is acceptable, but not mixed; no chaps or whips are permitted.
  - b. All exhibitors will start from a clearly visible line (See *Index of Examples – Pole Bending*).
  - c. Horses must perform the RMH four-beat lateral pleasure gait through the entire course. Horses must maintain form.



- d. The pole bending pattern is to be run around 6 poles. Each pole is to be 25 feet apart, and the first pole is to be 15 feet from the starting line.
  - e. A horse may start either to the right or to the left of the first pole and then run the remainder of the pattern accordingly. (See *Index of Examples – Pole Bending*).
  - f. This will be a timed event. A 5 second penalty will be allotted for each pole knocked over and for each pole touched by the rider's hand.
  - g. The time of each entry will be announced immediately following the horse's run
  - h. Disqualifications:
    - i. Horses who break gait will be disqualified, except in the "hair-pin" turn at the end of the straight away, the horse may double-step in order to turn sharply
    - ii. Failure to follow the course, including; negotiating obstacles in any other than the specified order, the wrong direction, stopping, circling, backing or reversing direction of movement in order to correct improper passing of an obstacle.
    - iii. Standing in the stirrups.
    - iv. Any deviation from the pattern shall be considered off course.
6. COSTUME CLASS: Judging Criteria, Originality of costume 85%; Temperament 15%
- a. Ring Protocol is English
  - b. This is a fun class and emphasis is on the THEME and UNIQUENESS of the Exhibitor's costume.
  - c. At Judge's discretion, Trail or Show Gait.
  - d. Exhibitors are encouraged to submit a description/explanation of their costume theme at the time they register for the Costume Class.
  - e. No stallions allowed in a Costume Class that combines both youth and adult exhibitors. Stallions will be permitted in an adult-only Costume Class.
7. COUPLES CLASS (Adult/Youth): Judging Criteria: Gait 50%; Performance 35%; Temperament 15%
- a. All couples are to ride in unison; holding hands is optional but will receive a "plus" mark.
  - b. The natural four-beat, smooth lateral gait is to be maintained throughout the class.
  - c. All three gaits are to be called in sequence, i.e., the Show Gait, the Pleasure Gait and the Trail Walk both ways of the ring; the last call will be for the Trail Walk and walk to the line-up.

- d. Attire is the choice of the riders.
  - e. Back up will be called in the line-up in all adult couples' classes; no back up will be called if the class is mixed adults and youth; no back up will be called in the all Youth Couples classes.
  - f. A distinct change of speed must be shown in changing gaits when called by the Judge.
  - g. Minus mark(s) are given for:
    - i. Riders not keeping in unison with partner
    - ii. In Adult classes only - not keeping horses together evenly when backing when called for by the Judge in the line-up.
  - h. Disqualifications:
    - i. Horse showing unruly behavior or shying
    - ii. Getting into horse's mouth causing halting, tossing of head or balking.
8. LEAD LINE CLASS:
- a. Lead line Riders MUST HAVE unrestricted, safe footwear (smooth soles and a heel) and STSM approved or SEI- certified headgear.
  - b. Tack: The horse must be in a halter with a lead. The lead may be either over or under the bridle. In lieu of this, a halter/bridle combination may be used with a lead attached.
  - c. Lead Line handlers must have neat, clean attire (no shorts or T-shirts, tennis shoes or sandals).
  - d. NO stallions are allowed.
9. WATER GLASS CLASS: Judging criteria: Most water left in glass wins. The objective of this class is to demonstrate a smooth gait of horse under saddle.
- a. Western or English tack and attire is allowed but not a mix of the two.
  - b. The exhibitor enters the arena and receives a glass they fill with water.
  - c. The exhibitor may use only one hand to hold the glass. The hand may not cover the top of the glass. The rider should hold the glass out and away from the body of the horse and rider. The rider should hold the glass as if the rider were drinking from it.
  - d. When the glasses are full, the Exhibitors are put on the rail and perform the three gaits going both ways of the ring with a noticeable change in speeds.

- e. Upon completion of the rail work, Exhibitors will go to center ring.
- f. The Exhibitor with the most water remaining in the glass wins.
- g. If there is a tie, judges may have exhibitors back their horse and or dismount and remount.

#### 10. YOUTH SOLO CLASS:

This class is designed to allow youth a beginning introduction into showing a horse in the show ring.

- a. This class will be a walk only with a halt included.
- b. The rider will enter the ring at a walk and will reverse and continue to walk and line up when asked to do so.
- c. The judge will call for a halt both directions of the ring. The judge may talk to the riders at the lineup to give them any pointers if desired.
- d. An adult is required to be in center ring throughout the class and to stand with the rider in the lineup.
- e. The special needs rider may have a side walker.
- f. The rider will get a participation ribbon for this class.
- g. NO stallions are allowed

#### 11. MENTOR AND ME CLASS: Judging criteria: Gait 60%; Performance 20%; Temperament 20%

This class was designed to display how the “Mentor” (adult, 18 years and older) and “Me” (youth, 17 years and younger) work together to get the best performance possible from their horse.

- a. The class is judged on:
  - i. Consistency of the horse between the riders
  - ii. Quality of gait
  - iii. Responsiveness of the horse to rider cues.
- b. The ADULT mentors show their horse the first direction of the ring (counterclockwise) in the Trail Walk, Show Gait, and Pleasure Gait.
- c. The youth “Me” will be in the center of the ring awaiting their turn. If a “Me” requires different tack, they will have this in the ring with them
- d. After completion of the three gaits, the mentors will then line up their horse under the

direction of the ringmaster.

- e. Mentors dismount together, adjust or change the saddle/stirrups and give the horse to their youth "Me".
- f. After all the youth are on their horses, they will go to the rail. The mentors move to center ring to watch.
- g. The youth continue the class in the opposite direction of the ring (clockwise). They will show at the Trail Walk, Show Gait and Pleasure Gait.
- h. The youth will then line up under the direction of the ringmaster, and mentors will stand by the youth in the lineup.
- i. The Judge will then ask the youth to back their horse.
- j. As the Youth receive their ribbons, the mentors will walk the youths (who are still mounted) out of the ring.
- k. The "Mentor" and the "Me" will split the prize money as they see fit but both receive ribbons and trophies.
- l. NO stallions are allowed.

12. JUVENILE TRAINED (JT): Judging criteria- Gait 60%; Performance 20%; Temperament 20%

- a. Juveniles 12 to 17 years of age.
- b. Horse may not have been ridden by a professional within the last 120 days.
- c. Any adult can give verbal instruction or advice from the ground to the juvenile over the rail.
- d. The horse may only be shown by a juvenile rider for the show season.
- e. The horse can be transported to and from any event by any adult.
- f. The exhibitor and parent will be asked to sign a statement that they understand the rules for this class.

13. YOUTH SHOWMANSHIP: (See also *Attire Section* and *Index of Examples – Showmanship at Halter*)

JUDGING POINTS: The emphasis is on the person showing the horse and the presentation of the horse. The horse is merely a prop and the quality of the horse shall not be considered.

- a. Appearance of Exhibitor: 25 points
  - i. The riding attire should be neatly pressed and boots polished and in good

condition. The riding suit should fit the rider, and a moderate fullness is better than too snug a fit. Conservative pinstripes are allowed.

- ii. Coat sleeves should be finger-tip length when standing. Hats and gloves are required.
- iii. Whips are permitted and not to exceed 40 inches including popper.
- iv. The rider's hair must be neat and well groomed. Girls with long hair should have it styled so the back number can be seen easily.
- v. Large earrings, bracelets, corsages and flowers should not be worn in showing.

b. Appearance of Horse: 25 points

- i. Condition and Thriftiness 5 points
- ii. Grooming 10 points
- iii.
  - a. Hair coat clean and well brushed.
  - b. Mane and tail clean and free of tangles.
  - c. Hooves trimmed properly. If shod, shoes must fit properly, and clinches should be neat.
- iv. Trimming 5 points
  - a. Inside of ears clipped.
  - b. Long hair on jaw, legs and pasterns should be clipped.
  - c. Bridle paths are optional but should be neat in appearance.
- v. Tack 5 points
  - a. Tack should be neat, clean and in good repair.
  - b. Either a halter or bridle is allowed.

c. Showing Horse in Ring: 50 points

- i. Leading: 15 points
  - 1. Enter the ring when individually called, leading the horse at an alert walk in a counterclockwise direction. Walk on horse's left side holding lead shank in right hand, near halter. The remaining portion of lead is held neatly and safely in left hand. A tightly coiled or rolled lead shank, or one with finger inserted or laced through the coils, will be considered a fault in showmanship.
  - 2. The Judge will direct each exhibitor to move his/her horse individually. Allow the horse sufficient lead so that he can move freely and in a straight line. Lead the horse from his left side with his throat latch even with the exhibitor's shoulder. Lead the horse the required distance, stop and set the horse up for inspection by the Judge. At the Judge's signal, turn to

the right around the horse, turning the horse directly over its hocks with its hind feet staying nearly in place. Exhibitors should perform the showmanship pattern as directed by the Judges or Ring Steward. If the exhibitor is asked to back his/her horse, he/she should back it smoothly, one step at a time, as straight as possible for one body length. Do not change hands on the lead shank and use a press-and release technique to ask the horse to back.

ii. Posing: 15 points

1. When posing the horse, the exhibitor should stand toward the front facing the horse with his/her toes pointed toward the horse's eye or neck. The exhibitor should not stand directly in front of the horse, but always in a position where he/she can keep an eye on the Judge and keep the Horse between the exhibitor and the Judge.
2. Exhibitors should present their horse using the quarter system; the horse is divided into four sections by drawing one imaginary line down his back and another across his middle. When the Judge is looking at either hind quarter of the horse, the exhibitor stays on the same side as the Judge, with his or her toes pointed toward the horse's eye or neck. When the Judge looks at either front quarter, the exhibitor crosses to the opposite side of the horse.
3. When posing the horse, do most of the showing with the lead shank. The exhibitor and horse must be disqualified for touching the horse with his or her hand or kicking the horse's leg into position. Never change hands on the lead shank.
4. The exhibitor must not crowd the exhibitor on either side when in a side-by-side position. Don't crowd the exhibitor in front when lined up head to tail. A horse's length must be maintained between all horses being exhibited.
5. When the Judge is observing other horses, let the horse stand if posed reasonably well.
6. Be natural. Over showing or undue turning, etc., are objectionable and are considered a Major Fault

iii. Poise, Alertness and Merits: 20 points

1. Keep alert and be aware of the position of the Judge at all times. Don't be distracted by persons or things outside the ring.
2. Show the horse at all times.
3. Respond quickly to requests from judge and officials.
4. Be courteous and sportsmanlike at all times.

5. Recognize quickly and correct faults of the horse.
6. Keep showing until the entire class has been placed and has been excused from the ring.

14. EQUITATION: Judging criteria: Performance 50%; Gait 30%; Appearance 20%

1. Seat and Hands

- i. General: It should be stressed that the required Equitation Saddle Seat is a natural, coordinated, and comfortable riding position and should be in no way rigid or exaggerated. A rider should convey the impression of effective and easy control with the general appearance of being able to ride for a considerable length of time with pleasure. To show a horse well, the exhibitor should show himself/herself to the best advantage. Ring poise and position shall be taken into consideration by the Judge. The appearance, presentation, and alertness of the rider and his or her mount make the overall picture of utmost importance. This class requires English tack and attire.
- ii. Mounting and Dismounting: To mount, rider should take up reins in left hand and place hand on withers. Grasp stirrup leather with right hand and insert left foot in stirrup. Swing right leg up and straight across horse's back to clear horse and saddle. To dismount, rider should place both hands on pommel of saddle, raise straight up with weight evenly distributed in both stirrups. Remove right leg from stirrup keeping right leg straight, swing across clearing the cantle and horse. Rider may either step down or slide. Riders 11 and under will not be asked to mount and dismount.
- iii. Hands: The hands should be held in an easy position, waist or elbow height, over pommel with palms downward, slightly turned toward body. Palms should be about 30 degrees to the inside NOT toward the exhibitor's body and wrist NEVER rounded. The hands should be in a straight line to the horse's mouth, showing adaptability as well as control. How and where the horse carries his head determines the height the hands are held above the horse's withers. Hands and wrists should be flexible and not held extremely separated. (From rider's view, the hands should be in a V shape, close enough for thumbs to touch). The fingers should be closed over the reins, firm but not rigid. Closed (or crossed) reins shall be used, with both hands on the reins, and the right of the reins should be on the off side of the horse.
- iv. Basic Position: To obtain proper position, rider should sit comfortably in the middle of the saddle and find his or her center of gravity by sitting with a slight bend at the knees, without use of the stirrups. While in this position, have stirrup leathers adjusted to fit so that irons will be under the ball of the foot with even pressure on entire width of sole and center of iron. The foot position will be natural and comfortable if the knee and thigh are rolled inward and the heel is

slightly lower than the toes. From the front or rear view, the lower leg will be held naturally away from the horse, depending on the anatomy of the rider and the size of the horse. Knee should rest against the saddle.

- v. Position in Motion: The position in motion should be natural, coordinated, and graceful attained only with practice. From the side view, a straight line can be drawn perpendicular to the ground through the rider's head, neck, shoulder, hip and ankles. The rider's toe should never be any more forward than his/her knee, thereby keeping his or her center of balance directly above his feet and ankles. Upper arms should be flexible, never clutched to the body, extended forward or spread away from the body. Hands should be in a comfortable waist level position, depending on how and where the horse carries its head. Knee should rest against the saddle in a level position, depending on how and where the horse carries his head. The use of the hands should be smooth and gradual, without jerking or pumping at any gait or jerking on the reins when parked.

## 2. Appointments:

- i. Personal: (See also *Attire* Section) Entries are judged on ability, but with neat and properly fitted riding habits. The following requirements are based on simple good taste, which is always in style and correct at all times. A dark riding suit with matching accessories is required, day or evening. In the summer, a matching straw hat is acceptable, for males. Riding suits should be neatly pressed, and jodhpur boots polished and in good condition. The riding suit should fit the rider, and a moderate fullness is better than too snug a fit. Coat sleeves should be fingertip length when one is standing, and jodhpurs should be no more than one inch above boot heel when mounted on the horse. Jodhpur straps (underpasses) should always be used. NOTE: There is no equitation class in a horse show where conspicuous riding coats of bright color, plaid, stripe, brocade or sequins are acceptable. Satin sequins, scrollwork, rhinestones and other added decoration are not allowed in Equitation. Hats and gloves are required for all riders. The rider's hair must be neat and well groomed. Long hair should be styled so that the back number can be seen easily. Earrings and bracelets as well as large rings do not belong in the show ring; neither do flying hair ribbons, corsages, large flowers or white gloves. NOTHING SHOULD DISTRACT FROM THE GENUINE BEAUTY OF A WELL-TRAINED HORSE AND SKILLED RIDER. Judges shall eliminate those contestants who do not conform.
- ii. Tack: (See also *Tack* Section) Bridles should be of the type commonly used with English saddles with a single set of reins. Brow bands decorated with rhinestones, glitter or foil are not permitted. Clean, well-kept bridles and shining silver bits are far more attractive. Martingales or similar tie downs are prohibited. Saddles should be of the flat, English type and of the correct size for the rider. Forward seat or western saddles are prohibited.



3. Class Routine: The Judge or Show Manager is to provide a designated pattern that is required of every exhibitor in the class.
  - i. Enter the ring at the walk, turn to the right and proceed in a counterclockwise direction. The class shall proceed until all entries have passed the judge doing all three gaits as follows: Trail Walk, Show Gait, RM Pleasure Gait, and back to Trail Walk, reverse with the same gaits, and trail walk to the lineup.
  - ii. All entries MUST back readily without losing form or pumping or pulling reins. Riders MUST reverse toward the rail. Entries shall line up on command and any or all riders may be required to execute any test listed:
    1. Pick up reins; a quick check of muscular control and sensitivity of hands.
    2. Dismount and mount; to be done quietly and as gracefully as possible.
    3. Individual performance on rail, any or all gaits may be used.
    4. Ride without stirrups; any or all gaits may be used. All riders must have 2 cards in their vest pocket with a one-minute routine on both cards. If a Judge asks the exhibitor for an individual workout, the exhibitor must give the judge both cards (one for the judge and one for the announcer). The Judge may ask the exhibitor for his/her cards to check to see if the exhibitor is prepared.
    5. THE JUDGES MUST POST a working pattern, AT LEAST TWO HOURS BEFORE SHOW TIME IF THERE IS TO BE A WORKOUT FOR ALL INDIVIDUALS.
    6. Class Faults
      - a. Improper use of seat and hands
      - b. Inappropriate tack and/or attire
      - c. Incorrect or incomplete performance of the class routine.

# **SECTION IV**

## **General Show Rules**

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- Definition of Exhibitors and Requirements
  - Juvenile/Youth
  - Novice
  - Amateur
  - AOT
  - Professional
- Shoeing
- Drug Testing
- Drugs and Medication Protocol
- Complaint and Show Rule Violation Procedure

#### IV. GENERAL SHOW RULES

CODE OF CONDUCT – Conflict of Interest: All officials and members of the RMHA must avoid all conflicts of interest as specified by these Show Rules and Regulations and the RMHA Bylaws and General Rules. See also Sections – *Show Officials, Judges*.

##### A. DEFINITION OF EXHIBITORS AND REQUIREMENTS:

###### 1. JUVENILE/YOUTH:

- a. A Juvenile is defined as a person who is under 18 years old. On or after an exhibitor's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, he/she may continue to show as a juvenile or may choose to move up to Novice (if eligible), Amateur or Professional status. The Youth can turn in their Youth card and purchase a Novice (if eligible), Amateur or Professional Exhibitor card.
- b. If they choose to change their status, they lose their Youth High Points for the current year. Any Youth who wins 3 or more blue ribbons in Youth classes with 3 or more entries, during the current or previous show season, will not be eligible for Novice.
- c. To compete for Youth High Points, the exhibitor must be a current member of the RMHA in good standing and must possess a current Youth Card with his/her date of birth and membership number thereon.
- d. Youth may show in all Youth (under 18 years of age) classes according to the age division specified for the class. Youth are not eligible for any class not specified as Youth, or for any Open Conformation and/or Adult Showmanship classes.
- e. All Youth must have a "responsible person's" signature and membership number on all show class entry forms for all classes entered. The responsible person must be a current RMHA member in good standing.
- f. Youth, 11 years and under, regardless of the class, must wear ASTM-approved and SEI-certified protective headgear, including the costume class at the International Show.
- g. Youth, 11 years and under, may use electronic devices.
- h. Youth, 11 years and under, are required to have a header accompany them at the line-up of all Youth classes for safety reasons. If assistance is required by the exhibitor, the header may assist, and if necessary, hold the horse.
- i. A Youth exhibitor is not allowed to show a stallion under saddle or in conformation classes.

2. NOVICE: A Novice is defined as any exhibitor (i.e., one who shows horses either under saddle or in hand) who is 18 years or older, who is a beginner in the show ring, and has not shown in any gaited show circuit in prior years. (See also, *Definitions*). In addition, the exhibitor has not won three blue ribbons in any RMHA sanctioned under-saddle horse show competition during any previous show season, with 3 or more entries in a class. The exhibitor must possess a Novice Exhibitor card.
  - a. If an exhibitor has won three novice classes during the current, then that exhibitor remains eligible to compete as a Novice (i.e., Novice classes) for the remainder of the current RMHA show season. Exhibitors will be required to move up to Amateur or Professional status the following year after winning three blue ribbons.
  - b. If a Novice wins the High Point Award for the Novice Division, then that exhibitor is not eligible to compete in Novice classes in any following season.
  - c. A trainer's spouse can show in Novice classes if he/she meets all other requirements.
  - d. An exhibitor can only participate as a novice for a period of three years. Once the three year period has passed, they must change their status to Amateur or Professional and are not eligible to return to Novice at any time. An exhibitor is not eligible for Novice status if they have previously shown with an Amateur or Professional status.
3. AMATEUR: An Amateur is defined as a person who is 18 years of age or older and who is not or has not been engaged in any activity which would make him/her a Professional. (See Professional #4 below). To qualify for High Points, the exhibitor must possess a current Amateur Card and must be a current RMHA member in good standing.
  - a. An immediate family member of a professional may qualify for Amateur Status if they so choose as long as they exhibit a horse, for which the trainer receives no remuneration for training that horse, meet all other requirements of Amateur status, and do not participate in any professional activities coordinated with the trainer.
  - b. Every exhibitor competing in an RMHA sanctioned Amateur class must be a current RMHA member in good standing and must possess a current Amateur Card to be eligible for High Points.
  - c. At all RMHA sanctioned classes, events and shows, the Amateur Card number must be written next to the exhibitor's name on each Amateur Class entry form.
  - d. To regain the Amateur status, a former Professional must not have participated in any professional activities for a period of two full years prior to application, i.e., 24 months, and must meet all of the requirements for the Amateur status and

card. Falsifying an application for the Amateur status/card will result in disciplinary action.

- e. A Professional wishing to regain Amateur Status will be required to complete the Professional to Amateur Status application, found on the RMHA website, and forward to the RMHA for approval. The effective date of the two-year waiting period will begin with the date the application was received by the RMHA. During the 2-year waiting period, the Professional will be allowed to obtain a Professional Card and show their own horses only (registered in their name or an immediate family member). During the waiting period, the Professional will not be able to show in any classes for Amateur, AOT, Novice or Youth only.
- f. Men's and Ladies' Amateur Classes are restricted to those exhibitors 18 years of age and older with an Amateur exhibitor's card. Any person who is, under these rules, a professional and who knowingly and falsely presents himself/herself to be an amateur shall be subject to disciplinary action. The following activities shall not affect the amateur status of a person who is otherwise qualified:
  - 1. The writing of books or articles pertaining to horses.
  - 2. Accepting remuneration for stewarding, DQP, technical delegate, course designer, announcer; participating as TV commentator; or accepting bona fide remuneration for services such as veterinarian, groom, farrier, tack shop operator or breeder.
  - 3. Accepting reimbursement for expenses without profit or accepting bona fide remuneration for boarding services.
- g. An Amateur cannot receive remuneration (money paid for work or a service) for riding another individual's horse or giving lessons

The two class divisions of Amateur are:

### 3.1 AMATEUR OWNED AND TRAINED:

- a. The Exhibitor or the Exhibitor's immediate family (as defined under "Definitions"), must own or lease the horse. (Lease Agreements can be found on the RMHA website.)
- b. No professional training for the horse in the last 180 days. The Horse may not have been in a professional training barn for any part of the 180 consecutive days immediately prior to showing or exhibiting.
- c. The Exhibitor with the AOT horse must not receive assistance in any manner with preparation, training or exhibition from a professional trainer or agent thereof for a period of 180 days prior to the show.

- 3.2 AMATEUR: The Exhibitor's horse may be in professional training.
4. PROFESSIONAL: Every Professional competing in RMHA classes, events and shows must possess a current RMHA Professional Card to be eligible for annual High Points. Falsifying a Professional, Amateur or Juvenile RMHA application may result in disciplinary actions. A person is considered a Professional who after their 18th birthday is engaged in the following activities:
- a. Accepts remuneration for riding, driving, showing in halter, training, schooling or conducting clinics or seminars.
  - b. Accepts remuneration for giving instruction in equitation or horse training (persons acting as counselors at summer camps, which are not hired in the exclusive capacity of riding instructors, are excluded).
  - c. Accepts remuneration for the use of his name, photograph or other form of personal association as a horseman in connection with any advertisement or article to be sold.
  - d. Accepts prize money in Equitation or Showmanship classes.
  - e. Rides, drives or shows in halter in horse shows, any horse for which he/she or a member of his/her immediate family accepts remuneration for boarding which includes training services.
- B. SHOEING: These shoeing rules also apply to all horses presented for certification. Shoes must be factory made keg shoes (See *Index of Examples – Keg Shod*) and MUST not exceed 15/16 inch or 24mm in width at all locations on the shoe, and must not exceed 3/8 inch in thickness at all locations on the shoe, may go to total 5/8 inch including borium/drill tech, and caulk must not exceed 7/8 inch.
1. All shoes on all four feet must be of the same type, manufacturer brand and metal. Horses may wear a combination of flat and caulked shoes, of the same manufacturer brand and metal. Horses with plantation, hand-made shoes or hand turned heels or trailers of any kind (straight or turned) or bars are not allowed to participate in RMHA sanctioned classes, events and shows.
  2. NO pads of any type or for any reason are allowed.
  3. NO pressure shoeing (Note: a shoe smaller than the natural hoof with the hoof filed down to fit the shoe shall be considered a form of pressure shoeing.) The shoe must fit the NATURAL HOOF.
  4. The front and rear shoe is not to extend more than 1/4 inch beyond the hoof wall at the toe and quarters nor beyond the bulb of the heel when a perpendicular line is drawn from bulb of the horse's heel to the ground.

5. Shoe clips are permitted when drawn from the shoe only. Welded on shoe clips are NOT permitted.
6. Two dime-sized dots of borium or drill tech, not to exceed 1/4 inch in thickness are permitted on the toe and/or heel of the shoe. NO ridges or lines are allowed. Shoes may have drill tech, borium or dowels, but not a combination of these materials. Dowels are allowed. The horse's natural toe length shall not exceed 4.5 inches, including the shoe. This measurement is obtained by placing the hoof on a flat level surface and then measuring from the coronet band where the soft flesh meets the hard part of the hoof at the center of the front pastern along the hoof wall to the ground and includes the shoe. (See *Index of Examples – Toe Length*)
7. The use of acrylic and/or filler shall be restricted to hoof repair and is restricted to one hoof only.
8. When showing, horses must be shod on all four hooves or be shown barefooted on all four hooves. Horses will not be permitted to enter the show ring, shod only on two hooves.
9. ALL horses to be shown must go through the required DQP check station in Sanctioned A shows. DQP: See *Show Officials - DQP*

C. DRUG TESTING

1. No horse shall be shown in any class at a show recognized by the RMHA if it has been administered any forbidden substance. A forbidden substance is any stimulant, depressant, tranquilizer, steroid or local anesthetic that might affect the performance of a horse. (Stimulants and depressants are defined as medications that stimulate or depress the circulatory, respiratory or central nervous systems and are used to enhance the horse's performance). Prohibited are any drugs, regardless of how harmless or innocuous they might be, which by their nature may mask or screen the presence of the aforementioned prohibited drugs or prevent or delay testing procedures. The RMHA reserves the right to drug test any horse at any time at any RMHA sanctioned event.
2. Exhibitors are cautioned against the use of medicinal preparations and tonics of any kind, whether administered externally or internally, the ingredients and quantitative analysis of which may not be specifically known, but which may contain forbidden substances.
3. If a horse tests positive for a forbidden substance(s) and/or a masking agent(s), a hearing will be held in accordance with RMHA rules. Persons found guilty of subjecting a horse to such forbidden substance(s) and/or masking agent(s) may be fined and may be suspended from all competition at any time at the discretion of the Board; likewise, the Board may suspend the horse for any period of time specified.
4. Show Management or delegated RMHA (SAC) official may file a written complaint regarding the allegations of a horse being given a forbidden substance or masking agent.

A formal letter of complaint must be made with the RMHA Board of Directors, dated, signed and post marked no later than 30 days from alleged incident. If the owner, trainer or exhibitor of the horse is found guilty of the charges, the owner, trainer or exhibitor will pay the expenses incurred and appropriate penalties will be applied.

5. The formal filing of a medication report with Show Management on the prescribed form is not a defense to the charge of the drugs and medications rule. The medication report may be obtained from the Show Management.

D. DRUGS AND MEDICATION PROTOCOL:

1. Every horse competing/exhibiting at an RMHA sanctioned class, show or event shall be subject to the Drugs and Medications Rule, and the horse shall be required to be in compliance with this rule at all times while competing/exhibiting in any and/or all classes and/or division at that competition/exhibition.
2. Horses competing at an RMHA sanctioned class, event or show are subject to examination and collection of blood and urine samples by a licensed veterinarian (different from the regular show veterinarian) who must be appointed by the RMHA Show Advisory Committee. Said veterinarian may appoint a technician to perform certain duties. The examination may include a physical, collection of blood and/or urine and/or other procedures at the discretion of said veterinarian as necessary to accomplish the purpose of this rule.
3. Cooperation with the drug testing veterinarian and /or his/her agents include: (1) taking the horse immediately to the location selected by said veterinarian and/or agents(s) for collection of samples; (2) assisting the veterinarian and/or his/her agent(s) in obtaining the sample promptly, including but not limited to removing equipment from the horse, leaving the horse quietly in the stall and avoiding any distractions to it. Schooling, lengthy cooling out, bandaging or other delays of this type shall be interpreted as non-cooperation; (3) polite attitude and actions toward the veterinarian and/or his/her agent(s).
4. The horse selected for drug testing will be announced prior to the conclusion of the class, but after the judge's results are final. The horse must exit the ring and proceed to the DQP station. Upon exiting the ring, the veterinarian and/or his/her agent(s) will identify himself/herself to the exhibitor or handler and will escort the horse to the DQP and then directly to the testing barn. Neither the agent(s) nor any other person except the exhibitor or handler may touch the horse until it is under the supervision of a veterinarian. All tack should be removed under the supervision of or at the direction of the veterinarian.
5. The drug testing veterinarian will submit the properly identified collected samples of blood and urine to an approved laboratory as selected by the Show Management. The collected samples shall remain in the care, custody and control of the drug testing



veterinarian until submitted to the designated laboratory. A clear chain of custody must be maintained.

E. COMPLAINT AND SHOW RULE VIOLATION PROCEDURE:

The Show Rules herein, are the basis for the identification and interpretation of all Show Rule violations. Some rules by their very nature may involve violations of the RMHA General Rules and/or Bylaws and may, therefore, be handled in the manner specified for violation of the Bylaws and/or General Rules.

1. All Sanctioned Shows and the annual International Rocky Mountain Horse Show shall process violations of the Show rules as follows:
  - a. Violations may be reported immediately (on site) at any Sanctioned or annual International Show by completing a Rule Violation Form, obtained from the Show Manager or from the Show Advisory Committee (SAC) chairperson, in duplicate. The form must be completed with the name, address, phone number, and if an RMHA member, the membership number of the person filing the complaint/violation. A description of the incident, -including the name of the proposed violator, (e.g., exhibitor, owner, trainer, horse, etc.), the number of the Show Rule violated, the date, name of the Show, Show location, and, if relevant, the name of the horse and the class – must also be included. The original form is to be given directly to the Show Manager or to the SAC Chairperson. Where immediate action is required, the Show Manager, and two other officials or staff at the show (this can include Show Secretary, Ringmaster, Show Steward or Show Office Staff but not DQP officials or a Show Judge) will decide the action to be taken and impose such immediately. A report of said action must be sent to the ISAC Chairperson within ten working (10) days of the incident.
  - b. Except as provided in this section IV.H., all complaints related to Show Rule violations that are not reported on site may be reported (with all required details) to the SAC Chairperson within ten (10) working days of the Show and must be accompanied with a complaint fee of \$100.00 which is refundable to the complainant if the person who is charged is found to be in violation as charged.
  - c. Any member of the Board of Directors, SAC or Show Management (i.e., Secretary, Judge, Steward, DQP, Paddock Master, etc.) may report any violation of the Show Rules, observed within or outside of the show ring, to the SAC Chairperson or, in the absence of the SAC Chairperson, to the Show Manager any time during a show or within 24 hours after a show. No complaint fee will be required, however, a Rule Violation Form or modification thereof, must be completed with full details of the violation and filed with the SAC Chairperson.
  - d. There is no time limit set upon such reporting of Show Rule violations by the persons identified above (“c”), e.g., violations may be found during review of show classes and/or recording High Points, etc.

- e. Written reports of violations received by the Show Manager will be forwarded to the SAC Chairperson for review by SAC. SAC will validate with appropriate data any such violations and present the issue(s) for Board review. If sufficient data is not available, then the complaint will be dismissed.
  - f. Depending upon the nature of the violation, it will either be handled immediately, or it will be referred with all necessary and appropriate data and recommendations by SAC to the Board for finalization. The process followed by the Board will be in keeping with the Bylaws and/or General Rules as may be modified. The processing procedure will be recorded as the date the violation/complaint is received from SAC.
  - g. A formal DQP citation (USDA/HPA) is considered a Show Rule violation and additional penalties may be imposed by RMHA. The reporting of said violation is not subject to the ten-day rule
2. Penalties: Penalties imposed for Show Rule violations will be based on the seriousness of the violation and/ or whether the infraction is repeated. Penalties may include, but are not limited to, the following:
- a. Dismissal from the current class.
  - b. Dismissal from the current show.
  - c. Suspension from showing the rest of the Show Season, or a portion thereof.
  - d. Withdrawal of awards (i.e., trophy(ies), ribbon(s), High Points).
  - e. RMHA membership suspension or permanent revocation and loss of all related membership privileges

Penalties imposed after the show will be made by the Board after the referral from the SAC. Penalties may include but are not limited to: any penalties specified in these Show Rules, in the RMHA Bylaws, or the General Rules of the Association.

All persons (i.e., exhibitors, owners, trainers, show officials, etc.) are responsible for knowing the RMHA Show Rules and are responsible for any violations thereof, regardless of age. If the violator is a juvenile, then the juvenile and/or “responsible” person who signs the entry form for that juvenile will be held fully responsible and is subject to these rules.

These rules will remain in effect during the current show year. Amendments may be made as necessary; however, such changes shall not become effective until the subsequent show season. Minor printing errors may be corrected at any time and the correction will be communicated through the RMHA official publication and/or the RMHA website as appropriate.

# **SECTION V**

## **General Procedures & Ring Protocol**

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- General Procedures
- Ring Protocol
  - General
  - Country Trail Pleasure
  - Trail Pleasure
  - Show Pleasure
  - Western Pleasure

## V. GENERAL PROCEDURES & RING PROTOCOL

### A. GENERAL PROCEDURES:

1. Cross Entry: Horses are allowed to cross-enter from one to another division of Country Trail Pleasure, Trail Pleasure or Show Pleasure in the same show. Horses entered in Western Pleasure may be entered in any of the other divisions of the same show.
2. Placing of horses: In RMHA sanctioned shows, the Show Manager will decide the number of awards/ ribbons to be awarded at a show; however, the judge will need to tie the class through fifth place for yearend high point awards. At the annual International Show there will be minimum of five ribbons awarded for regular classes and Championship classes. Classes will need to be tied through tenth place on the judges' cards for special awards.
3. Gate call: Three minutes are allowed for all exhibitors to enter the show ring. The time starts when the class is called. The time ends after an elapsed three minutes or until all the entries have entered the show ring or have been accounted for to the satisfaction of gate personnel. The time may be extended as long as there is a continuous flow of exhibitors into the ring, permitting all entries an opportunity to participate in said class, event or show. At the end of the elapsed three minutes, the entry gate will be closed, and judging shall commence.
4. Time-out: An official time-out is an authorized period where an exhibitor may be granted a cessation of showing/judging for a period not to exceed an accumulative total of ten (10) minutes. An exhibitor shall not be granted more than two official time-outs in a class. If a third time-out is necessary regardless of the total elapsed time, then the exhibitor shall be excused from the class. Only official time-outs shall be granted; all other interruptions in showing shall be judged accordingly.
  - a. A rider/driver desiring an official time-out will ride/drive to the center of the ring, remain mounted or in place, and make a formal request to the Call Judge, via the Ringmaster. The Call Judge will evaluate the reason for the request and either grant or deny the request, via the Ringmaster.
  - b. After an exhibitor pulls into the center ring, he/she must obtain an official time-out before dismounting. Failure to do so shall require the judge to excuse the entry; the judge has no discretion in this regard. Further, the entrance of any person into the ring before an official time-out is granted shall require the Call Judge to excuse the entry. The sole exception to this rule shall be a horse and/or rider in immediate danger of injury, in the opinion of the Call Judge.
  - c. If the Call Judge grants an official time-out, then horses on the rail will go at ease, and a groom or farrier will be ordered in, as necessary. The rider who is granted the time-out may dismount. Riders granted the official time-out may not make any adjustments to any equipment other than that for which the official time-out was called.

- d. Riders at ease on the rail during official time-outs may make such adjustments as they can make while mounted but assistance over the rail is not permitted; physical assistance (touching the horse) is not permitted and, if done, the horse must be excused.
  - e. If the Judge finds the reason for the official time-out is not valid, he must order the entry back on the rail immediately.
  - f. Official time-outs may be granted by the Judge for replacement of shoes, broken equipment, or in other instances where the Judge finds reason.
  - g. All official time-outs will begin when justifiable reasons are acknowledged, except for the replacement of shoes in which the time-out begins the moment the farrier lifts the horse's foot. Time will be allowed prior to the beginning of official time-outs for locating the thrown shoe.
  - h. In the event a horse throws a shoe in the warm-up area after being inspected by the DQP, the exhibitor may choose to have the shoe replaced by the farrier after the exhibitor enters the ring to show. The exhibitor must be charged with an official time-out with normal time-out rules prevailing.
  - i. An official timer must be appointed to enforce this rule.
- 5. Workout: The Call Judge shall not place any entry in a workout unless the entry performed all required gaits both ways of the ring in the initial performance. Whenever horses are being called for a workout, the announcer must call for them in numerical order. All horses chosen for workout must be worked both ways of the ring at all gaits.
  - 6. Tack Change: The length of time allowed for tack change between classes is determined by the Show Manager (but must be consistent throughout the show).

B. RING PROTOCOL: (In Hand)

- 1. Entries in all classes in this division shall be led into the ring and proceed counterclockwise at a natural walk.
- 2. Line-up to walk around a portion of the ring (one horse space between horses) at least ten (10) feet off the rail to permit the Judge to view the horse from both sides.
- 3. Stance: The leg and body position of the horse in the line-up is to stand square (See *Index Examples – Stance, Lineup & Halter*). The profile of the horse when standing square should show no sign of stretching. All four feet must be flat on the ground and at least one front and one rear cannon bone remain perpendicular to the ground. The Judge shall penalize stretched horses. Judges may request an exhibitor to show his/her horse squarely, if the exhibitor does not attempt to comply, the exhibitor shall be penalized.
- 4. An exhibitor may be penalized for “over-showing” their horse. (See *Definitions*). The exhibitor should stand quietly, poised and place himself/ herself so as to enhance the Judge's view of the horse being shown.

5. At no time should the lead be released from the hand of the exhibitor

C. RING PROTOCOL (Under Saddle):

In RMHA show classes, the RMH will be shown and judged in *three distinct gaits*: The Show Gait, the Rocky Mountain Pleasure Gait and the Trail Walk with NO pacing, trotting, fox-trotting, cantering, step pacing, etc. (See *Show Classes & Descriptions - Undesirable Frames & Gait*)

1. Judging shall not officially begin until after the gate is closed.
2. The RMH will enter the show ring at the Show Gait and proceed counterclockwise around the ring. If all entries have not entered the ring, then the exhibitor first in line (and all others in line) must stop at the gate entrance, but not block the entrance, and shall stand at rest until all entries have entered the ring and the gate is closed.
3. Judging begins with the closure of the gate. All entries must make at least one complete circle of the ring before being asked to change gaits.
4. The call of the gaits in the first way of the ring shall be to begin at a Show Gait, then the RMH Pleasure Gait, except in Country Trail Classes, followed by the Trail Walk.
5. Ample time must be allowed for all Judges to see each entry in the Trail Walk before being asked to reverse (toward the rail).
6. In the reverse way of the ring, the call of the gaits shall be for the Show Gait, then the RM Pleasure Gait, except in Country Trail Classes, and then to the Trail Walk (judge's discretion to be used; when all horses have had ample time to be judged at the trail walk) and continue in the Trail Walk to the line-up.
7. In the line-up during English under saddle classes, the exhibitors will be directed to individually back their horse three steps and move back to the line-up and stand square – not parked/stretched. (In Western classes, the individual backup will be four steps back, exhibit a 360 degree turn and square up.) (See *Index of Examples – Stance & Line Up*).
8. The timing of workouts begins when the gate is closed and the first gait is called and ends with the first call for rest (if needed); after the five-minute rest, the timing begins again for ten more minutes or to the end of the class if less than ten minutes, whichever comes first. Timing will be clocked by a designated person appointed by the Show Manager.
9. In a large class of 21 or more entries in under saddle classes, the class shall split into two or more classes. Each split class shall not exceed 20 horses.
10. Country Trail Pleasure Protocol & Procedures
  - a. The ring protocol will follow English.
  - b. The RMH Country Trail Pleasure Horse must perform the two gaits of the class, the Show Gait and the Trail Walk with an effortless comfortable gait which encourages stamina and longevity on the trail. The gait should be completely smooth and steady

at all gaits. There should be an appearance of effortless performance on the part of the horse.

- c. The horse enters the ring at a Show Gait. The horse should be manageable at all gaits and be ridden on a loose rein and should exhibit a true, four beat gait with an even and consistent cadence at the Show Gait and Trail Walk only in both directions of the ring at the instruction from the Judge. There should be minimal animation and knee action.
- d. The Trail Walk should be energetic and forward moving with a downward stretch of the neck. The horse should be responsive to all aids and show a willing and compliant attitude.
- e. The Country Trail Pleasure Horse should carry its head in a natural and relaxed position appropriate to its conformation. An elevated head and/or neck carriage shall be penalized.
- f. The horse MUST be consistently well mannered, responsive, and quiet.
- g. A halt must be called for during rail work. It may be called from any gait. The horse must stop promptly and should be immobile at the halt, standing on the loose rein.
- h. When the call for reverse is made, horses are to be reversed toward the rail as in English classes. The horse MUST stand quietly and back (three steps back and return to the line-up and stand square) readily upon request from the Judge. Horses that are unruly, fail to respond immediately to the rider's commands, fail to stand quietly, or fail to back readily with any indication of displeasure or discomfort must be severely penalized.
- i. During the lineup, the judge may require that riders dismount and remount while the horse stands quietly, without restraint. Riders may, if necessary, request a mounting block to remount, however, they may not receive any other assistance. Juvenile classes shall not be required or asked to dismount or remount. These classes do not include obstacles and are judged solely on the horse's ability to provide the ultimate safe and pleasurable ride. Excessive speed must be severely penalized. A "stepped" pace, pacing or rider bouncing vertically in the saddle must be severely penalized.

#### 11. Trail Pleasure Protocol & Procedures

- a. The ring protocol will follow English.
- b. The RM Trail Pleasure Horse must perform with an effortless comfortable gait which encourages stamina and longevity on the trails. The horse should display an alert and willing attitude while performing in a relaxed and forward flowing motion. The Trail Pleasure Horse should carry its head in a natural and relaxed position appropriate to its conformation. The horse MUST be consistently well mannered, responsive, and quiet.

- c. The horse should exhibit a true four-beat gait with an even and consistent cadence. ANIMATION AND EXCESSIVE ACTION ARE NOT DESIRED IN A TRAIL PLEASURE HORSE. IT IS NOT DESIRED FOR THIS HORSE TO EXHIBIT DRIVING REAR LEGS WITH A LONG OVERSTRIDE. HORSES WHO EXHIBIT EXCESSIVE ANIMATION ARE TO BE PENALIZED AND/OR ELIMINATED.
- d. The horse MUST be manageable on a light rein at all gaits; however, the show ring protocol shall be English, i.e., Show Gait, Pleasure Gait and The Trail Walk in both directions of the ring. The reverse of gait is toward the rail as in English classes. The horse MUST stand quietly and back (three steps back and return to the lineup and stand square) readily upon request from the Judge. Horses that are unruly, fail to respond immediately to the rider's commands, fail to stand quietly or back readily with any indication of displeasure or discomfort must be severely penalized.
- e. These classes do not include obstacles and are judged solely on the horse's ability to provide a safe, pleasurable ride. Excessive speed must be severely penalized. (Major Fault).

## 12. Show Pleasure Protocol & Procedures

- a. The ring protocol will follow English.
- b. The RMH should perform in a relaxed and quiet but alert manner without nervousness or resistance and without excessive animation or speed.
- c. The Show Pleasure horse is shown in a frame that can be described as increasingly collected when compared to the Trail Pleasure horse. The horse should be ridden on a light rein with moderate collection, with head up, and without excessive speed or animation. The horse should demonstrate a natural head carriage at an approximately 45-degree head angle. The Show Pleasure Horse will exhibit somewhat more animation and speed than the Trail Pleasure horse.
- d. The horse must show quality and style, execute smooth downward transitions and prompt upward transitions.
- e. The horse should demonstrate an exceptionally smooth ride for the rider, i.e. well balanced forward flowing motion and a free and easy ground covering gait which is a smooth comfortable four-beat lateral gait.
- f. There shall be no evidence of heavy handedness or excessive pressure on the bit. Neither speed nor animation is to be tied over smoothness, correct form and a four-beat cadenced footfall. A "stepped" pace; pacing or rider bouncing vertically in the saddle must be severely penalized. Any indication of nervousness, bad manners, or tongue or mouth distress shall be penalized.
- g. Horses are to be reversed toward the rail. Horses reversing toward the center will be penalized.



- h. Three gaits will be called: The Show Gait, the Rocky Mountain Pleasure Gait, and the Trail Walk.
- i. Horses are required to back three steps and step forward to the line-up and stand square (See *Index of Examples – Stance & Line Up*).
- j. The Judge shall penalize stretched horses; however, the Judge may remind an exhibitor to show his/her horse squarely; if the exhibitor does not attempt to comply, then a penalty shall be applied.

13. Western Pleasure Protocol & Procedures

- a. The three gait calls are: Enter the ring at a Show Gait, move up to the Pleasure Gait, then to the Trail walk; reverse when all judges have had ample time to judge the horse at the walk and repeat the Show Gait followed by the Pleasure Gait and return to the Trail Walk before being called to line up in the Trail Walk.
- b. When the call for reverse is made, horses are to reverse away from the rail toward the center of the ring. Horses reversing toward the rail shall be penalized.
- c. Horses shall back freely when asked, a minimum of 4 steps, or be penalized. The head should be in normal position and mouth closed. The horse will be required to back clear of the lineup and do a 360-degree neck reined turn on the hindquarters, either right or left at the instruction of the Judge. The turn is to demonstrate the ability of the horse to neck rein. Horses are to be judged on their smoothness in performing the turn correctly and their responsiveness to the rider.

# **SECTION VI**

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## **Tack & Equipment**

- In Hand/Conformation
- Under Saddle
- Optional Tack
- Driving
- Equipment Not Permitted

VI. TACK AND EQUIPMENT:

- A. In Hand/Conformation Classes: *English is the attire and tack of preference* however Western attire and tack are allowed, but not a mix of the two.
1. Show Halters/Bridle: A suitable show halter with a throatlatch is mandatory on all horses. A suitable show halter is described as dark leather or synthetic metallic material with a crown piece, noseband or bit, full throatlatch and optional brow band. The metal fasteners and rings on the halter should be conservative colors. No nylon halters permitted.
  2. Exhibitors may use an Arabian style show halter (with a bit if a stallion is over 2 yr. old). If a brow band is used, it may be leather or a conservative solid color. Piping is acceptable on the brow band. Horses shown with Western type halters must be shown with a traditional dark leather halter with an adjustable buckle, full throatlatch, noseband and conservative metal attachments and rings. The halter may have conservative silver appointments. A matching leather lead with an optional chain extension may be used.
  3. Stallions two years and older shown in hand must show in bitted halter or bitted bridle; mares and geldings may be shown in either a suitable show halter with or without bit or bridle and bit.
  4. Whips/crops are optional, but are not to exceed 44" in length including popper
- B. Under Saddles Classes:
1. English: English tack must accompany English riding attire.
    - a. Saddles are cutback, English or Plantation/Trooper type. No saddles with horns are permitted in the English classes. Hooded, covered or wooden stirrups are not permitted. English bridle with leather or colored brow band and nose band or cavesson must be used. No dropped nosebands or dropped nose cavessons are permitted. Breast straps, if used, must be either in black or dark brown leather. Bitless bridles with appropriate English headstalls may be used with the exception of stallions.
    - b. Bits that are allowed are based on FOSH (Friends of Sound Horses) recommendations. These include but are not limited to: English snaffle or English curb bit, D Ring, loose ring, Boucher (B-ring), egg butt, full cheek, bradoon, shank, leverage or curb bit, Weymouth, Pelham (single rein only), Walking horse bit (bit with "walking horse" shanks), Kimberwick, and Wonder bits. Shanks must be 8 ½ inches or less, including solid ring. Measurements are made from the top of the upper ring to the bottom of the lower ring made into the shank (*See Index of Examples – Shank Length*). Bits may be solid, single jointed, double jointed, may have a roller, and may have a port.

- c. If a curb strap or chain is used, it must be at least 1/2 inch in width and lay flat against the horse's chin with allowance for the trainer or handler to put two-fingers flat between the chin and curb chain.
  - d. Whips up to 40" without popper (total 44" including popper) are permitted.
- 2. Western: Western tack must accompany Western riding attire in Western classes
  - a. Saddles may be with or without horns and with western style fenders and stirrups. Trail stirrups will not be permitted No "Australian" saddles allowed. No parade saddles are permitted.
  - b. Western bridles without a cavesson must be used. Bridles may or may not include a throat latch. No English brow bands. Breast straps, if used, must be either in black or dark brown leather and may include silver or metal decoration.
  - c. Bits that are allowed are based on FOSH (Friends of Sound Horses) recommendations. These include but are not limited to: English snaffle or English curb bit, D Ring, loose ring, Boucher (B-ring), egg butt, full cheek, bradoon, shank, leverage or curb bit, Weymouth, Pelham (single rein only), Walking horse bit (bit with "walking horse" shanks), Kimberwick, and Wonder bits. Shanks must be 8 ½ inches or less. Measurements are made from the top of the upper ring to the bottom of the lower ring made into the shank (See *Index of Examples – Shank Length*). Bits may be solid, single jointed, double jointed, may have a roller, and may have a port including attached rings.
  - d. Exhibitors may use bitless bridles or hackamores (not mechanical) in Western classes with the appropriate Western headstall. If riding a stallion, a bit must be used.
  - e. If a curb strap or chain is used, it must be at least 1/2 inch in width and lay flat against the horse's chin with allowance for the trainer or handler to put two-fingers flat between the chin and chain.
- 3. Country Trail Pleasure /Trail Pleasure:
  - a. The uses of English or Western tack (and attire) may be used, but not a mix of the two. The ring protocol will be that of the English ring.
  - b. Exhibitors may use bitless bridles or hackamores (not mechanical) with the appropriate Western or English headstall. If riding a stallion, a bit must be used.
  - c. (Rules for bits and curbs – see above.)
- 4. Show Pleasure:

- a. The uses of English tack (and attire) must be used. The ring protocol will be that of the English ring.
  - b. Exhibitors may use bitless bridles. If riding a stallion, a bit must be used.
  - c. (Rules for bits and curbs – see above.)
- C. Optional Tack Classes: (attire must match tack style) The uses of English or Western tack (and attire) may be used in classes so designated, however, in all such classes the ring protocol will be that of the English Riding Protocol.
- D. Driving: Any safe, serviceable two-wheel cart or four-wheel buggy, with the exception of the fine harness buggy (Viceroy) is acceptable. Liverpool bits or snaffle bits fitted without flash nosebands are permitted. A whip of length not to exceed six feet is mandatory. Harness is traditionally black leather (black or russet reins) with patent leather blinkers, side check or over check, and running martingale. It is appropriate for the use of russet harness when hitched to a light brown (or wooden) vehicle. The harness must have either a breech or thimble over the ends of the shafts. No collars are allowed.
- E. Equipment Not Permitted:
  - 1. Electronic communication devices used by exhibitors are not permitted in the Show Ring at any time during the conducting of a class except for Youth 11 years and under.
  - 2. No parade saddles, braided manes and/or tails, tail sets, tie downs, or ribbons braided into the forelock or mane are permitted while competing.
  - 3. No dropped nosebands or dropped nose cavessons are permitted. No mechanical hackamores. No studded cavessons are permitted. No single twisted wire, no double twisted wire gag bits or any type of chain bit are permitted.
  - 4. Double reins, English or Western, are not permitted. No twisted or tight curb chains are permitted.

# SECTION VII

## Attire

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- In Hand/Conformation
  - English
  - Western
- Under Saddle
  - English
  - Western
  - Country Trail Pleasure
  - Trail Pleasure
  - Show Pleasure
  - Western Pleasure
  - Equitation
- Other
  - Showmanship
  - Driving
  - Bareback
  - Pole Bending
  - Lead Line
  - Riders
  - Handlers

## VII. ATTIRE:

(See also *Tack & Equipment Section - Optional Attire*). It is the tradition of the show ring that riders, drivers and handlers be correctly and neatly attired in all classes. If the exhibitor's hair is long, it must not obstruct the judges' view of the back number. Exhibitors may wear rain suits over appropriate riding attire in the event of inclement weather. At any show, the Judge and/or the Show Manager may suspend the regular dress code due to weather conditions (e.g., extreme heat, cold, etc.).

All exhibitors are encouraged to wear properly fitting approved protective head gear (ASTM/SET) while riding, driving or handling horses.

A. In Hand/Conformation Class Attire: English is the attire of preference however Western attire is permitted, no mixing of tack and attire is allowed

### 1. English:

- a. Solid color or conservative patterned riding skirt or Kentucky/Bootcut style Jodhpurs with or without tie downs (underpasses).
- b. A vest, riding coat, sports coat or riding suit.
- c. Long sleeve shirt with a pointed collar including tuxedo shirts (sleeve length may vary under a coat or jacket).
- d. Neckwear such as a tie or brooch
- e. English style hat is optional (No Western or Spanish)
- f. Gloves and English spurs are optional
- g. English style boots.

### 2. Western:

- a. Western slacks or black jeans; Western show skirts optional for women.
- b. Western style jacket, bolero or vest is required.
- c. Any solid colored pants (including blue jeans) are acceptable under chaps.
- d. Western long sleeve shirt or slinky (sleeve length may vary under a jacket).
- e. Neckwear such as a tie, bolo, or neck scarf (not required with a slinky).
- f. Gloves are optional; Western hats (Spanish or ASTM – approved or SEI-certified headgear acceptable) are optional.
- g. Western style boots (no tennis or sport shoes)
- h. Chaps, spurs and gloves are optional.

B. Under Saddle Class:

### 1. English Attire:

- a. Solid colored or conservative patterned riding skirts or Kentucky/Bootcut style Jodhpurs with or without tie downs (underpasses).

- b. A vest with riding coat or sports coat or a riding suit.
  - c. Long sleeve shirt with a pointed collar including tuxedo shirts (sleeve length may vary under a coat).
  - d. Neckwear such as a tie or brooch.
  - e. English style hat is optional.
  - f. Protective headgear is acceptable.
  - g. Gloves and English spurs are optional.
  - h. English style boots.
  - i. English whip/crop is optional (neither is to exceed 40 inches or 44" with popper).
2. Western Attire:
- a. Western slacks or black jeans; Western show skirts optional for women.
  - b. Western style jacket, bolero or vest is optional.
  - c. Any solid colored pants (including blue jeans) are acceptable under chaps.
  - d. Western long sleeve shirt or slinky (sleeve length may vary under a jacket).
  - e. Neckwear such as a tie, bolo, or neck scarf (not required with a slinky).
  - f. Gloves are optional; Western hats (Spanish or ASTM – approved or SEI-certified headgear acceptable) are optional.
  - g. Western style boots (no tennis or sport shoes)
  - h. Chaps, spurs and gloves are optional.
3. Country Trail Pleasure Class Attire: English or Western attire may be used (with appropriate tack) but not a combination of both.
- a. Coats or jackets are optional with English attire.
  - b. Black jeans and pants without tie downs are permissible in this division.
4. Trail Pleasure Class Attire: English or Western attire may be used (with appropriate tack) but not a combination of both.
- a. Coats or jackets are optional with English attire.
5. Show Pleasure Class Attire: English attire (*Coats are required* in this division).
6. Western Pleasure Class Attire: Only Western attire may be worn with Western tack/equipment in Western designated classes. Spanish style attire will be accepted.
7. Equitation Attire: English attire
- a. Dark colored (Navy, Brown, Black, Green, or Gray, etc.) 3-piece matching riding suit, conservative pinstripes allowed. No formal attire allowed before 6 p.m.
  - b. Long sleeve shirt with a pointed collar.
  - c. Conservative tie.



- d. Hat and dark gloves are required (helmet required, if Youth 11 or under).
- e. Wearing large earrings, bracelets and /or corsages will disqualify the exhibitor.
- f. English style boots. English spurs are optional.

C. Other Class Attire:

1. English Showmanship Attire:

- a. Solid colored riding suit or conservative saddleseat riding coat or sports coat (finger-tip length when standing) with solid color or conservative patterned Kentucky Jods with tie downs (underpasses).
- b. Long sleeve shirt with a pointed collar. (Sleeve length may vary under a coat)
- c. Neckwear such as a tie.
- d. English style hat and dark gloves are required.
- e. Wearing large earrings, bracelets and/or corsages will disqualify the exhibitor.
- 6. English style boots.

2. Driving Attire:

a. Ladies:

- 1. Conservative dress: blouse and skirt, shirt and slacks/jodhpurs, saddle suit or day coat and slacks/jodhpurs.
- 2. Lap robes and hats are optional.
- 3. Gloves are required.

b. Men:

- 1. Business suit, saddle suit or sports jacket and slacks.
- 2. Lap robes and hats optional.
- 3. Gloves are required.

3. Bareback Attire:

- a. English or Western attire optional; not mixed.
- b. Boots (no bare feet) according to attire.
- c. If showing in western attire, no chaps are permitted.
- d. Hats are optional (no baseball caps); approved protective head gear is recommended.

4. Pole Bending:

- a. Western or English attire optional; no chaps permitted.
- b. Western boots with Western attire.

- c. Hats are optional (no baseball caps); approved protective head gear is recommended.
- 5. Lead Line (horse must be led with halter and lead; may, in addition, wear bridle; halter/bridle combination allowed; NO stallions allowed)
  - a. Rider
    - 1. Casual attire, riding suits or coats with slacks.
    - 2. Safe footwear.
    - 3. Approved protective head gear is required.
  - b. Handlers
    - 1. Neat, clean casual attire (no shorts); riding suits or sports coats with slacks are optional.
    - 2. No tennis shoes or sandals.

# **Section VIII**

## **Class Designations & Qualifications**

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- Novice Classes
- Amateur Classes
- Juvenile / Youth Classes
- Open Classes
- Championships / Grand Championships

## VIII. CLASS DESIGNATIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS

- A. NOVICE CLASSES: All riders in novice classes must have an RMHA membership card and a current Novice card and must meet the criteria as outlined in General Show Rules. Novice rider/horse combo completing a regular Novice class qualifies for Amateur Grand Championships, in their respective divisions, at the International.
- B. AMATEUR CLASSES: All riders in Amateur Classes must have an RMHA membership card and current Novice or Amateur Card and must meet the following criteria. The two class divisions are:
1. Amateur Owned and Trained Classes: (See also *General Show Rules*) Amateur Owned and Trained rider/horse combo who complete a qualifying regular Amateur Owned and Trained class will be qualified for the Amateur Owned and Trained Grand Championships at the International, in their respective divisions.
  2. Amateur Classes: (See also *General Show Rules*) Any Amateur rider/horse combo who completes a qualifying regular Amateur class will be qualified for the Amateur Grand Championships at the International, in their respective divisions. Any Amateur rider/horse combo that completes the Amateur Western Class at International will be qualified for the Open Western Grand Championships at the International.
- C. JUVENILE / YOUTH CLASSES: (See also *General Show Rules*)
- Any juvenile rider completing a minimum of one qualifying class may enter that division Youth Championship. Any juvenile rider completing the Youth Championship may compete in that division Youth Grand Championship, if offered.
- D. OPEN CLASSES: Any status of adult rider is eligible to qualify a horse in any Open class. Once qualified, any status of adult rider is eligible to show that horse in the respective Open Championship or Open Grand Championship class. It is the horse that qualifies in this division only. (Juvenile riders are excluded from open classes)
- E. CHAMPIONSHIPS/GRAND CHAMPIONSHIPS\*:
1. Horses that complete an open class in their respective divisions will qualify to compete and have the option the register in the mares, geldings or stallion's championship classes, in their respective divisions.
  2. \*At the International, horses finishing 1st through 5th in Championship Classes will qualify to compete and have the option to register in the Grand Championship Classes. Entry is not automatic; you must register for any Championship or Grand Championship that you qualify for. Amateur and Novice Rider/Horse combos qualify for the Amateur Grand Championships by completing a qualifying Amateur or Novice class or Men's and Ladies' class. Amateur Owned and Trained Rider/Horse combos qualify for the Amateur Owned and Trained Grand Championships by completing a qualifying AOT class or men's

and ladies.

# **SECTION IX**

## **Show Officials**

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- Show Manager
- Judges
- DQP
- Announcer
- Ringmaster (Assistants)
- Stewards (Assistants)
- Farrier
- Show Secretary

IX. SHOW OFFICIALS:

It shall be the duty of the Show Officials to enforce all the rules of the RMHA from the time entries area admitted onto the show grounds until their departure. Specifically, their duties include, but are not limited to:

A. SHOW MANAGER: It shall be the duty of the Show Manager to:

1. Provide all necessary physical facilities to accommodate the show, including an area set aside for the inspection of horses by DQPs.
2. Accept responsibility to ensure that all rules, regulations and procedures stated in the RMHA Show Rule Book and specifics in the show contract are enforced.
3. Provide a veterinarian on the grounds or a stand-by status at the RMHA Annual International show(s).
4. Abide by all decisions made by the Judge(s).
5. During the show, post in a conspicuous place the Judge(s) copies of the cards.
6. Will disqualify and penalize entities for all horse abuse inside the arena or on the show grounds.
7. Receive and act upon protests in accordance with the Show Rules and Regulations and to report whatever action is taken to the RMHA SAC Chairperson.
8. In the event that a person(s) participating at a show shall commit an offense or violation described in the Show Rules and Regulations, the Show Manager may, at his/her discretion, disqualify that person(s) and/or horse(s) from further participation in the show. Any such offense shall be reported to the RMHA SAC Chairperson, where further disciplinary action may be recommended to the Board of Directors.
9. Employ at the show the following personnel needed to ensure a successful show:

Licensed Judge	Gate Attendants
Licensed DQP	Farrier
Announcer {Assistants}	Rules Steward(s) and/or
Equipment Stewards	
10. During Sanctioned "A" shows only, no Show Manager, DQP, Judge, Secretary, Steward, Announcer or Ringmaster or his/her immediate family shall compete in a show in which they are participating in an official capacity, nor shall any horse owned by any of the above persons be exhibited or shown at the same show.

11. During B or C shows only, no Show Manager, or his/her immediate family, shall compete in a show in which they are participating in an official capacity, nor shall any horse owned by the Show Manager be exhibited or shown at the same show.
- B. JUDGE(S): Judges are hired by and responsible to the Show Manager. Sanctioned "A" shows will use an unbiased lottery system to choose the judge for each show. The judge must KNOW THOROUGHLY the Show Rules of the RMHA and the Rocky Mountain Horse, including, but not limited to, the horse's natural gait, temperament and characteristics.
- C. DQP(S) (Designated Qualified Person): A licensed DQP(s) is required at all Sanctioned RMHA "A" classes, events and shows. It is the responsibility of the Show Manager to hire the licensed DQP. The major responsibility for the DQP is to detect and diagnose horse(s) that are sore and to otherwise inspect horses for violations of the Horse Protection Act (HPA) under the regulations of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Include in the DQP's contract, DQP's will inspect horses' bits and shoes for correctness of type, size/fit, toe length and other specifics of the hooves/shoes.
- D. ANNOUNCER: The Announcer is the voice of the Show Ring. Under the instruction of the Ringmaster, Judge or designated person, the announcer is to call all classes to the show ring and to call the gaits and additional instructions as may be necessary during the classes. In addition, the Announcer provides general information about classes and horses, makes special announcements, pages persons, and keeps the general interest of spectators. He/she is directly responsible to the Show Manager.
- E. RINGMASTER (ASSISTANTS): A Ringmaster is hired by and is responsible to the Show Manager. He/she may not officiate in any division of a show in which he or any member of his immediate family or any of his clients is an exhibitor. His sole duty shall be to assist the designated judge when needed and to accept a request for "time out" and to escort in a safe manner any person, such as a ribbon presenter, whose presence is required in center ring. In no case shall a Ringmaster advise a judge of anything unless in the case of an emergency. Also, in no case shall a Ringmaster officiate where a horse is competing that is either wholly or partially owned by him/her.
- F. STEWARDS (ASSISTANTS): A SAC approved Steward is required at the RMHA International. Two Stewards may be allowed. A "Rules Steward" who enforces the Show Rules in general, and an "Equipment Steward" – who focuses on enforcement of show attire and equipment (including tack, shoes and toe length). The stewards are responsible to the Show Manager. Stewards are required to:
  1. Have full knowledge of the current RHMA Show Rules and Regulations.
  2. Be approved by the Show Advisory Committee.
  3. Report to the Show Manager any offenses or violations of the Show Rules and Regulations by any exhibitor, owner, trainer or other person who conducts himself/herself in a manner that does not reflect good sportsmanship or other such



actions which violate the Show Rules, or which may invalidate or cause protest to a class, the show or RMHA.

4. Steward(s) may not officiate in any division of a show in which he/she or members of his/her family or any of his/her clients are an exhibitor.
  5. A steward has no authority regarding the management or the judging of an affiliated/sanctioned class, event and show; however, he/she is the representative of Show Management and should point out in a diplomatic and courteous manner all violations of the RMHA Show Rules and Regulations that are not followed.
  6. He/she should keep himself/herself available to judges, exhibitors, trainers and management at all times to clarify the position of the RMHA Show Rules and Regulations and investigate any situation that might indicate an infraction of the rules.
  7. Other duties of a recognized steward shall be, but are not limited to the following:
    - a. Protect the reputation of the Rocky Mountain Horse and the RMHA.
    - b. Protect the interest of exhibitors, judges and Show Management.
    - c. Determine and report inhumane treatment of horses on the grounds and during exhibition.
- G. FARRIER: Hired by and responsible to the Show Manager and is to be available throughout the Show. The farrier must know and comply with the shoeing rules of the RMHA.
- H. SHOW SECRETARY: Shall provide all duties assigned by the Show Manager including, but not limited to, verifying membership, acquiring and keeping accurate records and documentation of all classes, entries and related data; class results (placing, etc.); class sheets (including copy to DQP), judges' cards; posting of show results; and the collection of show fees and/or stabling fees.

# **Section X**

## **Judging Procedures**

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- General Judging Procedure for Under Saddle Classes
- Responsibilities for Judging
- Regulations Governing Judges
- Guidelines for the Judging of Rocky Mountain Horses
- Faults & Penalties
- International Show Judging System

X. JUDGING PROCEDURES:

A. GENERAL JUDGING PROCEDURE FOR UNDER SADDLE CLASSES:

1. Once the gate closes and judging begins, the Judge must observe an entry's way of going and if the Judge finds that an entry is a bad example of the Rocky Mountain Horse, as set forth in these Rules, he may excuse that entry immediately. In the performance classes, all horses shall enter the ring at a Show Gait in a counter clockwise direction and continue at the Show Gait until the first entry approaches the entry gate, at which time the exhibitor will stop and have his/her horse stand at rest until all entries are in the show ring and the gate is closed. Once the gate is closed, judging begins, and the Judge shall call for gaits in the following order: Show Gait, Rocky Mountain Pleasure Gait, and the Trail Walk except for Country Trail Pleasure which will be the Show Gait and Trail Walk with a halt and for Youth Solo which will be Trail Walk with a halt. At least one complete circle of the ring is made in each gait, more if the class is large. After the Trail Walk, the Judge calls for the reverse (toward the rail in English style; toward the center in Western style classes). In the reverse way of the ring, the same sequence of Show Gait, Rocky Mountain Pleasure Gait, and the call to Trail Walk (judge's discretion to be used; when all horses have had ample time to be judged at the trail walk) and to continue in the Trail Walk to the line-up (see *Index of Examples - Stance, example A*). If the class is one which permits English or Western attire/tack, the ring protocol will follow the English protocol.
2. Horses shall be shown both ways of the ring at all required gaits sufficiently for all horses to have performed before each officiating Judge. A horse that has not performed all required gaits both ways of the ring shall not be placed over a horse that has performed all gaits.
3. All special workouts shall be judged as a separate class. Any Judge may request a workout in any class by communicating through the Ringmaster. The Judge making the request must state the numbers of the horses that he wants called to the workout. If a workout is agreed upon, then the Ringmaster must ask the Judges, (if more than one Judge) if they wish to add other horses to those being sent to the rail. The Ringmaster must be sure that all Judges, if more than one, know which horses are working to fill the places. To be included in a preliminary class workout, an entry must appear on two Judges' cards. An entry that does not receive two votes returns to the rail and may then be called in by one Judge. In a Championship class, a horse that appears on only one Judge's card must be included in the workout.

The Ringmaster must inform the Announcer of the workout request. The Announcer will call for the horses to be worked out in numerical order. All horses in a workout shall be placed consecutively insofar as the number of places will allow.
4. After the preliminary ring work of a class, all horses shall be lined up and inspected by the Judge. Each horse is to be required to back up at least three steps and return to the lineup and stand square (see *Index of Examples - Stance Example A*). In the judging of the class, the Judge makes the final decision (of possible rule violations) as to whether to

excuse the horse or eliminate the horse from judging. If the Judge finds that an entry does not conform to the rules, he may excuse the entry immediately.

B. JUDGES RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. A Judge(s) is obligated to judge each class in conformity with the rules and specifications of that class as they appear in the RMHA Show Rules Book. He/She is expected to be proficient and to possess a thorough knowledge of the Rocky Mountain Horse and the guidelines for judging as is presented in the current RMHA Show Rules Book prior to arriving on the show grounds.
2. NO individuals, including spectators, exhibitors, show management, ring master, stewards, show committee members, or others, are to influence the way classes are tied.
3. Once the Judge's appointment(s) has been announced by the Show Management, no persons other than the Show Officials are to have any contact with individuals responsible for judging the RMH classes before or during any show(s) at which they are officiating.
4. A Judge, by accepting an invitation to officiate at an RMHA class, event, or show, assumes a responsibility to support the Show Management by excusing from the ring all horses suspected of being in violation of RMHA Show Rules.
5. A judge shall not inspect or discuss any horse entered into a show prior to the start of the show unless so requested by the Show Management. Show Management must be present.
6. No Judge selected to officiate at a show shall be contacted relative to this show by any person having an interest in any horse expected to be shown in such show. All contacts made with the Judge are RMHA Show Rule violations and shall be reported immediately to the Show Manager by the Judge.
7. It is the responsibility of the Judge to report any observed RMHA show rule violation to the Show Manager, who forwards the report to the RMHA Show Advisory Committee (SAC) Chairperson.
8. Judges are to report to the SAC Chairperson all contacts received via phone calls, emails, etc. received by the Judge prior to the Show from members, trainers, owners, or exhibitors. The Show Advisory Committee may file a complaint against the person (contacting the Judge) for disciplinary action for violation of the Show Rules.
9. Judges who have current formal complaints filed against them will be pulled from the available Judging Pool for subsequent shows until the complaint process has been completed and a ruling issued.

10. Talking to or criticizing a Judge(s) at an RMHA sponsored or affiliated class, event, or show will not be tolerated, and Judge(s) or any other show official that is witness to the incident is required to report the violation to the RMHA Show Committee Chairperson.
11. *A high standard of ethical behavior must be maintained by exhibitors, spectators, and Judges at all RMHA affiliated shows. It is the responsibility of Judges and/or Show Management to report all improper behavior to the Show Advisory Committee Chairperson. Said behavior may include, but not be limited to, harassment, threatening words or action, coercion, slander, criticism, etc.*
12. Once a class has been judged, it shall not be re-judged and once the Judge has marked his/ her card and valid placements of awards have been made, there shall be no changing of the Judge's record except in the case of obvious clerical error.
13. The Judge's decision is final.
14. Failure of a Judge to attend a show to which he/she is committed to perform his/her duties and to officiate in the classes to which he/she is assigned shall constitute cause for administrative action except in cases of extreme emergency and proper notification.
15. When a Judge is officiating at a show, he/she is not to arrive on the show grounds until thirty minutes prior to show time.
16. In all classes in which a horse is shown under saddle, the horse must perform all gaits in order to be judged in overall performance and presentation.
17. An entry must be excused for bad image (i.e. atypical RMH characteristics). An entry may at the discretion of the Judge, be excused from the ring for any infraction of the RMHA Show Rules. The entry shall be eligible to show in a succeeding qualifying class if the problem can be corrected.
18. NO YOUTH WILL BE DISQUALIFIED FROM A CLASS UNLESS IT IS A SAFETY ISSUE.
19. When more than one Judge is used to officiate at a single show (using a system such as the Majority Opinion System, etc.), conversation among or between Judges is prohibited until cards are turned in. It is the responsibility of the Judge to make each placement in the class independently and to mark his/her card accordingly.

C. REGULATIONS GOVERNING JUDGES:

1. A Judge shall not be an exhibitor, rider or manager at any show at which he/she is officiating.
2. A Judge shall not judge in any show in which a member of his/her family or any of his horses is competing.

3. A Judge shall not, during the period of a show at which he/she is judging, be the house guest of a person who is exhibiting in the show or whose family is exhibiting in the show.
  4. No horse may be shown before a Judge that has been sold by said Judge or by his employer or employee within a period of six months prior to the show.
  5. No horse may be shown before a Judge that has been boarded, owned, trained, or shown by said Judge within a period of six months prior to the show.
  6. No one may show before a Judge where either the Judge or exhibitor has remunerated the other person for the leasing, boarding, riding, training, consulting, schooling, assisting, or tutoring of any horse within a period of six months prior to the show, stud fees excluded.
  7. An exhibitor may make a request through the Show Manager for the Judge's opinion concerning that exhibitor's horse. The request must be made at the conclusion of the show. It is urged that the Judge will give his/her opinion courteously and sincerely in the presence of the Show Manager and in a private setting.
- D. GUIDELINES FOR THE JUDGING OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN HORSE: (These guidelines are also required for all Rocky Mountain Horses being certified to breed and/or show)
1. CONFORMATION: The RMHA Bylaws state that "The conformation of the Rocky Mountain Horse will be as follows: The height of the horse will be no less than 56 inches (14.0 hands) and no more than 64 inches (16 hands). They should have medium sized bones with medium sized feet in proportion to the body a wide and deep chest with a span between the forelegs. The fore and hind legs should be free of noticeable deformity. The horse should have sloping shoulders (ideally with an angle of 45 degrees) bold eyes, well-shaped ears, and a face which is neither dished nor protruding. The head should be medium sized in proportion to the body with medium jaws. The neck should be gracefully arched, medium in length and set on an angle to allow a break at the poll. The horse must have a solid body color. There shall be no white markings above the knee or hock except on the face where modest amounts of white marking are acceptable.
  2. GAIT: The RMHA Bylaws state that "The RMH naturally demonstrates a smooth, ambling gait which glides forward. The horse moves out with a lateral gait in which one can count four distinct hoof beats that produce a cadence of near equal rhythm. The speed may vary, but the four-beat rhythm remains constant. The gait may technically be described as the simultaneous but asynchronous motion of the legs of the same side of the body followed by the movement of the legs on the opposite side. The gait is initiated by the hind leg. The length of the stride for both hind and fore legs should be nearly equal. The RMH moves his feet with minimal ground clearance and minimal knee and hock action. Because this gait does not waste motion, it enables the horse to travel long distances with minimal tiring. " When judging the RMH, the highest emphasis is to be placed on

the consistently smooth even four- beat gait and the horse's ability to maintain form. The length of the stride at the RM Pleasure Gait ranges from "capping" to 18" over stride. The gaits must be performed without any signs of excessive animation which could be obtained through the use of artificial training devices. Horses should move in a smooth rhythmic rolling motion. The front leg action should not be stiff, pointed or hesitating. The heel should break no higher than mid cannon bone of the other front leg. The RMH is a pleasure horse. Horses with excessive bit pressure should be heavily penalized, e.g., mouth open, corners of mouth drooped, tongue out, or travel with head tilted/turned out to the side to avoid pressure. High emphasis should be placed on the RMH's ability to perform as a pleasure horse, one who can travel and maintain the RMH gaits for an extended period of time with minimal tiring and the horse's ability to conform to the standards established by the RMHA. Strong emphasis should be placed on the smoothness of the RMH when performing. Riders should be able to sit deep in the saddle at all times.

3. TRAIL WALK: The Trail Walk is a calm, relaxed natural walk. The horse should not exhibit any signs of excitement or restlessness. The Trail Walk should be executed with a loose rein and a natural or lower headset.
4. SHOW GAIT: The Show Gait is a deliberate four- beat lateral gait that is executed at a moderate speed. The Show Gait is executed in a smooth rhythmic fashion. The horse should look alert with head carried proudly in the bridle. Its feet should move forward in an even non-exaggerated form. The Show Gait is not to be confused with the RM Pleasure Gait.
5. ROCKY MOUNTAIN PLEASURE GAIT: The RM Pleasure Gait is a four-beat lateral gait with an increase in action and speed. There must be a distinct upward transition in speed from the Show Gait to the RM Pleasure Gait. Horses that do not show a distinct change in speed should be heavily penalized.
6. In all under saddle classes; strong emphasis is to be placed on consistency and smoothness of gait.
  - a. In Show Pleasure and Trail Pleasure classes:
    - 50% Pleasure Gait
    - 30% Show Gait
    - 20% Trail Walk
  - b. In Western Classes:
    - 40% Pleasure Gait
    - 30% Show Gait
    - 20% Trail Walk

10% Halt (if called for) and Pivot

c. In Country Trail Classes:

50% Show Gait

40% Trail Walk

10% Halt

E. FAULTS AND PENALTIES:

1. Horses are to be EXCUSED from judging and from the ring, if they:
  - a. Are unruly, i.e., endangers other exhibitors, rider, or handler.
  - b. Have equipment which is not permitted under these rules (See also *Tack & Equipment* Section)
  - c. Show lameness, bleeding mouth, or bleeding on any part of the body.
2. Horses are to be ELIMINATED/DISQUALIFIED from judging if they:
  - a. Are hesitating or pointing.
  - b. Are “squatting” in the rear and too far underneath themselves, not balanced.
  - c. Do not perform each of the three gaits with a distinct change of speed between each gait, when called.
  - d. Pace, stepping pace, trot, foxtrot, or canter.
3. The following are considered as Major Faults and horses are to be scored with 2 “minus” marks for each fault judged, if they:
  - a. Exhibit hot or nervous behavior, excessive shying, or sidetracking.
  - b. Fail to back or backs into a horse on either side of the exhibitor, when backing throw, the head up, or have gaping mouth when backing.
  - c. Exhibit improper headset.
  - d. Do not stand square in hand or under saddle after being reminded by the Judge.
  - e. Exhibit excessive speed (i.e., excessive speed is interpreted to mean that a horse is moving faster than most horses in his class and consistently passes other horses.)
  - f. Fail to maintain form, i.e., break in corners/curves of ring, hitch or skip, get strung out, nose out, etc.
  - g. Are hard and rough riding; rider bouncing in the saddle or bracing in the stirrups.
  - h. Have excessive bit pressure, i.e., corners of mouth pulled back with tight close wrinkles in corners of mouth, mouth open, etc.
  - i. Exhibit excessive animation.
  - j. Exhibit excessive over stride.



- k. Are “over-shown” in the halter class by the exhibitor.
- 4. The following are considered MINOR FAULTS and horses are to be scored with one “minus” mark for each fault judged, if they:
  - a. Have ears pinned; tail switches consistently.
  - b. Have excessive and consistent nodding of the head.
  - c. Are backed up in the line-up (the exhibitor anticipates the call) before the Judge calls/signals for the back-up.
  - d. Inappropriate tack or attire.

F. INTERNATIONAL SHOW JUDGING SYSTEM

The judging system that will be used for the International Show will be the “Majority Opinion System”. The International Show will have four judges with three judges in the ring at all times. The fourth judge will act as Show Steward unless he is called to replace a judge. The fourth judge will also have the responsibility of judging all special event classes, including Pole Bending and Trail Obstacle. All three ring judges carry equal weight in the final class decision. Each horse is judged as if it were working individually and then compared with the performance of all other horses in the class, who are judged on the same basis. All Judges place the same number of entries in each class, depending on class size. MOS is always used except in the event of a tie, ties will be resolved by the card of the judge in the call judges’ position. All ties are final.

Judges must work independently, with no discussion of any kind until the winners are announced. The Judges should vary their judging positions and rotate around the ring. They should discuss and plan how to cover the whole ring and work classes before the show in order to avoid “clustering” of the Judges. A suggestion would be to section off the ring into three areas which will give each Judge a separate but equal view of the rail and take turns with rotation of positions for each class. The Call Judge’s section should include the entry gate. Judge’s cards will indicate the rotation (determined by random selection by the Ring Master, e.g., pull of number from bag as to which Judge will be the “Call Judge” for each class).

Judge’s cards will indicate how many places should be tied for each class. Three additional ties are recommended for each class. (e.g., tie eleven horses in a class in which eight of the eleven horses will receive awards). The Ringmaster should return an incompletely tied card to the Judge for correction before giving it to the Scorer(s).

# **SECTION XI**

## **Sanctioned Show, High Point & Special Awards**

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- Purpose
- Requirements
- High Point Awards
- Point System
- Presentation of Annual Awards
- Special Awards
- International Special Awards
- Sanctioned Show Class List

## XI. SANCTIONED, HIGH POINT, AND SPECIAL AWARDS

- A. PURPOSE: The purpose of the Sanctioned Show and High Point Award Program is to:
1. Reward those dedicated to showing and promoting the Rocky Mountain Horse.
  2. Control and monitor show rules and guidelines set forth by the RMHA.
  3. Promote sportsmanship, good will, and showmanship.
- B. SANCTIONED SHOW REQUIREMENTS: Sanctioned Shows will be approved by their fulfillment of the following criteria:
1. Class A Show:
    - a. Must have a minimum of twenty (20) classes from the Sanctioned Show Class List
    - b. Each Sanctioned A Show must use a RMHA licensed and approved judge selected using an unbiased lottery system
    - c. Each Sanctioned A Show must provide a licensed DQP, from an HIO licensed with the USDA
  2. Class B Show:
    - a. Must have a minimum of eight (8) to a maximum of nineteen (19) classes from the Sanctioned Show List
    - b. Must use a licensed Judge who is recognized by the RMHA, i.e., nationally recognized gaited breeds, i.e., Racking, Tennessee Walking, Paso Fino, Peruvian Paso. Other judging associations may be recognized pending review.
  3. Class C Show:
    - a. Must have a minimum of three (3) to a maximum of seven (7) classes from the Sanctioned Show Class List
    - b. All Class C Shows are available for sanctioning in all states.
    - c. Class C Shows MUST be held in conjunction with a municipal organization such as a State, County, or Local Fair, or in conjunction with another show organizations, such as 4-H.
    - d. High points will be awarded.
    - e. A licensed judge is required, does not need to be a gaited judge.
    - f. Classes must be judged by RMHA rules.
    - g. Attire required will be a long sleeve shirt, tie and vest with riding pants and boots.
  4. Separate Judges should be available for specialized or timed events such as a Trail Obstacle Class or Pole Bending Class.
  5. Sanctioned Shows must exhibit a high caliber of professionalism in their show presentation.
  6. Sanctioned Shows must adhere to all RMHA rules and guidelines.
  7. Each sanctioned show must complete a Sanctioned Show application (found on the RMHA website) and receive approval from SAC.
  8. Final show results must be sent in to the RMHA office within 15 days of the end of the show – see also Show Manager Checklist found on the RMHA website.
- C. HIGH POINT AWARDS:
1. Exhibitors will choose their status (Youth, Novice, Amateur, AOT, or Professional) for High Points at the beginning of the show season. The status for which the Exhibitor applies is

the classification given and noted on their Exhibitor Card. Points are counted according to the Point System and the appropriate classes as listed on the Sanctioned Class List. A minimum participation of three Sanctioned Shows will be required to receive an award.

2. High Points will be awarded for classes with participation at 3 or more shows.
3. A member of the RMHA office staff, or designee, will perform the function of Tabulator.
4. The Tabulator will post the final results on the RMHA website within 30 days of receipt of the Judge's cards. All Judge's cards will be turned in within 15 days of the show ending.  
NOTE: All exhibitors competing for points will have 30 days, from the time the results are posted, to notify the *RMHA Office Manager* in writing, preferably via email, with any corrections. After the 30 days has elapsed, all points are final and cannot be changed.

D. THE POINT SYSTEM:

1. Class A: Must include the 20 or more Rocky Mountain Sanctioned Classes:  
1st Place – 50 points \* 2nd Place – 40 points \* 3rd Place – 30 Points  
4th Place – 20 Points \* 5th Place – 10 Points \* Participation - 5 Points
2. Class B: 8 to 19 Rocky Mountain Sanctioned Classes:  
1st Place – 40 points \* 2nd Place – 30 points \* 3rd Place – 20 Points  
4th Place – 10 Points \* 5th Place – 5 Points \* Participation - 2 Points
3. Class C: 3 to 7 Rocky Mountain Sanctioned Classes:  
1st Place – 30 points \* 2nd Place – 20 points \* 3rd Place – 10 Points  
4th Place – 5 Points \* 5th Place – 2 Points \* Participation - 1 Points
4. The Rocky Mountain International Show will not count toward High Point Awards.

Note: Any Exhibitor excused from a class, will not receive participation points.

- E. PRESENTATION OF ANNUAL AWARDS: First through fifth place awards will be presented at the Annual Awards Presentation for the Youth Division and First through Third place awards will be presented for Adult Awards. In the event of a tie, both persons will receive an award. A minimum participation of three Sanctioned Shows will be required to be eligible for an award.

Prior to the Awards' Presentation, a notice will be sent to all exhibitors stating that they have earned an award. This notification will allow winners to make arrangements to attend the Awards' Presentation and to receive their awards.

- F. RMHA HIGH POINT SPECIAL AWARDS: RMHA High Point Special Awards will be based on the point system listed under High Point Awards. Points will be accumulated from all sanctioned shows (A, B, C).

1. Professional Trainer of the Year: The Trainer of the Year who accumulates the highest total points for the horses that were trained and the horses that were shown by him/her will be awarded this honor. Horses must be ridden by the trainer (i.e. no other trainers points or riders' points will be included in the tabulation regardless of their status: youth, amateur, AOT or novice).
2. Youth of the Year Award: The Youth of the Year Award is for individuals who hold a Youth Rider Card. Youth classes (11 and under or 12-17) will count toward the award. They may be from different divisions but must be designated as Youth Country Trail, Youth Trail, Youth Show Pleasure, Youth Western, etc.
3. Novice of the Year: The Novice of the Year Award is for individuals who hold a Novice Rider Card. Only Novice classes will count toward the award. They may be from different divisions: Country Trail, Trail, or Show Pleasure. A Novice exhibitor may show in Amateur, AOT, and Open Classes but will receive points toward the Novice of the Year only from Novice classes. When an individual receives the Novice of the Year Award, he/she is no longer permitted to show in Novice classes in subsequent years
4. Amateur of the Year Award: The Amateur of the Year Award is for individuals who hold an Amateur Rider Card. Only Amateur classes will count toward the award. They may be from different divisions but must be designated as Amateur Country Trail, Amateur Trail, or Amateur Show Pleasure. An Amateur exhibitor may show in AOT, and Open Classes but will receive High Points that go toward the Amateur of the Year Award only from Amateur Classes.
5. Amateur Owned and Trained Exhibitor of the Year Award: The Amateur of the Year Award is for the individual who holds an AOT riders card. Only AOT classes will count toward the award. They may be from different divisions but must be designated as AOT Country Trail, AOT Trail, or AOT Show Pleasure. An AOT exhibitor may show in Novice (if qualifications are met), Amateur and Open Classes but will receive High Points that go toward the AOT Exhibitor of The Year Award only from AOT classes.
6. Horse of the Year Award: The Horse of the Year award will be presented to the horse that accumulates the highest number of points from all RMH sanctioned shows (A, B, C). All classes (Under Saddle, Conformation, Trail Obstacle, Driving, etc.) and all riders (Youth, Amateur, Novice, AOT, Open Classes) the horse competes will count regardless of rider or division.

G. RMHA INTERNATIONAL SHOW SPECIAL AWARDS

All competitors for RMHA International Show Special Awards must sign up for each special award they wish to compete for in order for the show office to track their points. The deadline for sign up will be set by the International Show Committee. The entry deadline and forms for entry will be available at the International Show Office. For all RMHA International Special Awards, points accumulate as follows:

1st = 10 points	6th = 5 points
2nd= 9 points	7th = 4 points
3rd = 8 points	8th = 3 points

4th = 7 points                      9th = 2 points  
5th = 6 points                      10th = 1 point  
NO participation points are awarded

\*In order for a horse/team to be considered as competing in the Trail Obstacle, each obstacle on the course must be attempted (See *Versatility Classes - Trail Obstacle Rules*)

1. The Sam Tuttle Memorial Award will be presented to the horse that achieves the highest total points in the following 7 classes ONLY. Points accumulate for the horse based on a 10 point scale. The horse must \*compete in and complete the Adult Trail Obstacle class and not be disqualified. In the event of a tie, the horse with the highest score in the Adult Trail Obstacle class will be the winner.
  - a. Conformation Age Division
  - b. Conformation Championship
  - c. Conformation Grand Championship
  - d. Under Saddle Age Division (either Country Trail Pleasure, Trail Pleasure or Show Pleasure)
  - e. Under Saddle Championship (either Show Pleasure, Trail Pleasure, or Country Trail Pleasure)
  - f. Under Saddle Grand Championship (either Show Pleasure, Trail Pleasure, or Country Trail Pleasure)
  - g. Adult Trail Obstacle
  
2. The Rea Swan Versatility Award is presented to the horse that exemplifies the virtues of the Rocky Mountain Horse: versatility, exceptional gait, smoothness, and easy going disposition. Each horse may compete in all 8 categories of the following classes. Each horse must \*compete in and complete the Adult Trail Obstacle class without being disqualified. The horses' top 5 scores (only one from each category below) will be counted using a 10 point scale. In the event of a tie, the horse with the highest score in the Adult Trail Obstacle class will be the winner. Horses shown in the SHOW PLEASURE classes are ineligible for this award. Championship & Grand Championships do not count toward this award. Select Amateur and AOT classes count toward this award, Novice classes do not count.
  - a. Trail Pleasure OR Country Trail Pleasure Class (not both)
  - b. Age Division Trail Pleasure OR Age Division Country Trail Pleasure (not both)
  - c. Conformation
  - d. Open Age Division Western Pleasure
  - e. Pole Bending
  - f. Adult Water Glass
  - g. Adult Bareback
  - h. Adult Trail Obstacle

3. The Carson Masters Award will be presented to the 10+ Year Old Stallion that accumulates the most points in an Age Division Conformation and an Age Division Under Saddle class. In case of a tie, the horse with the highest placing in the Conformation class will be the winner.
  - a. Age Division Stallions Conformation
  - b. Age Division Stallions Under Saddle Classes (either Country Trail Pleasure, Trail Pleasure or Show Pleasure)
4. The Charles Kilburn Amateur Owned and Trained Versatility Award will be presented to the horse/AOT rider team that accumulates the highest total points in 5 of the following classes. Points accumulate only for the specific horse and the specific rider working together. Each team may compete in all of the following classes. Each team must \*compete in and complete the Adult Trail Obstacle class without being disqualified. Only the team's top 5 scores will be counted using a 10 point scale. In the event of a tie, the horse with the highest score in the Adult Trail Obstacle class will be the winner.
  - a. Up to TWO Amateur Owned & Trained Under Saddle Classes (either Country Trail Pleasure, Trail Pleasure or Show Pleasure)
  - b. Amateur Western Pleasure
  - c. Pole Bending
  - d. Adult Water Glass
  - e. Adult Bareback
  - f. Adult Trail Obstacle
5. The Morgan Riggs Amateur Versatility Award is presented to the horse/amateur rider team that achieves the highest total points in 5 of the following classes. Points accumulate only for the specific horse and the specific rider working together. Each team may compete in all classes listed below. Each team must \*compete in and complete the Adult Trail Obstacle class without being disqualified. Only the team's top 5 scores will be counted using a 10 point scale. In the event of a tie, the horse with the highest score in the Adult Trail Obstacle class will be the winner.
  - a. Up to TWO Amateur Under Saddle Classes (either Country Trail Pleasure, Trail Pleasure or Show Pleasure)
  - b. Conformation
  - c. Pole Bending
  - d. Adult Water Glass
  - e. Adult Bareback
  - f. Adult Trail Obstacle
6. The Sara Gwisdalla Youth Versatility Award will be presented to the horse/youth rider (youth aged 12-17) team that achieves the highest total points in 5 of the following classes. Points accumulate only for the specific horse and the specific rider working together. Each team may compete in all 7 classes. Each team must \*compete in and complete the Youth Trail Obstacle class without being disqualified. Only the team's top 5

scores will be counted using a 10 point scale. In the event of a tie, the team with the highest score in the Youth Trail Obstacle class will be the winner.

- a. TWO Youth Under Saddle Classes (Country Trail Pleasure, Trail Pleasure or Show Pleasure)
  - b. Equitation
  - c. Showmanship
  - d. Western Pleasure
  - e. Youth Water Glass
  - f. Youth Trail Obstacle
7. The Ashley Hytry Youth Versatility Award will be presented to the horse/youth rider (youth aged 11 and under) team that achieves the highest total points in 4 out of the 7 classes listed below. Points accumulate only for the specific horse and the specific rider working together. Each team may compete in all 7 classes. Only the team's top 4 scores will be counted using a 10 point scale. Youth Trail Obstacle is an option but is not required.

In order to be considered for the award, all exhibitors MUST complete 4 out of 7 classes independently. If they require assistance during the judging phase of a class, they will not be dismissed from the class, and may still place in the class, but will not receive points toward the Ashley Hytry Award.

*Cross entry will be allowed in the juvenile classes.*

- a. TWO Youth Under Saddle Classes (Country Trail Pleasure, Trail Pleasure or Show Pleasure)
- b. Equitation
- c. Showmanship
- d. Western Pleasure
- e. Youth Water Glass
- f. Youth Trail Obstacle



### Sanctioned Show Class List

1. High Points will be awarded at year end for classes with participation at 3 or more shows.
2. In order to be eligible for a High Point Award at year end, an exhibitor must have participated in a minimum of (any) **3 Sanctioned Shows** during the Show Season.
3. Any combined Mare/Gelding/Stallion Class will be counted separately towards the Mare, Gelding and Stallion Awards in all three divisions. Points will be based on the points received in the combined class.
4. High Point Classes – Rider Awards indicated by “R” and Horse Awards indicated by “H.”
5. It will be the responsibility of the show manager and show judge(s) to ensure horses are the eligible height for the 14.2 and Under Class.

#### OPEN CONFORMATION

Yearling Fillies and Colts - H

2 YO Fillies and Colts - H

3 & 4 YO - Jr. Conformation - H

5 YO & Over Conformation - H

Trail Pleasure - Geldings - H

Trail Pleasure - Mares - H

Trail Pleasure - Mares & Geldings - H Trail Pleasure  
- Stallions - H

#### OPEN CLASSES

14.2 and Under Country Trail Pleasure - H

14.2 and Under Trail Pleasure – H

14.2 and Under Show Pleasure - H

3 YO Country Trail Pleasure - H

3 YO Trail Pleasure - H

3 YO Show Pleasure - H

Ladies Country Trail Pleasure - R

Ladies Trail Pleasure - R

Ladies Show Pleasure - R

Men's Country Trail Pleasure - R

Men's Trail Pleasure - R

Men's Show Pleasure - R

Country Trail Pleasure - H

Trail Pleasure - H

Show Pleasure – H

Western Pleasure - H

Championship – CTP - H

Championship – Trail Pleasure - H

Championship – Show Pleasure – H

#### GENDER SPECIFIC CLASSES

Country Trail Pleasure - Geldings - H

Country Trail Pleasure - Mares - H

Country Trail Pleasure - Mares & Geldings - H

Country Trail Pleasure Stallions - H

Country Trail Pleasure Stallions & Geldings - H

GENDER SPECIFIC CLASS (cont.)

Trail Pleasure - Stallions  
& Geldings - H Show  
Pleasure – Geldings - H  
Show Pleasure – Mares - H  
Show Pleasure – Mares &  
Geldings - H Show Pleasure –  
Stallions - H  
Show Pleasure – Stallions & Geldings - H

YOUTH

Youth  
Showmanship -  
R Youth  
Equitation - R  
Youth Country Trail  
Pleasure - R Youth Trail  
Pleasure - R  
Youth Show  
Pleasure - R  
Youth Western  
Pleasure - R

YOUTH

CHAMPIONSHI

P  
Championship – Youth-CTP -  
R Championship – Youth-  
Trail Pleasure - R  
Championship – Youth-Show  
Pleasure - R Championship –  
Youth-Western - R

Youth 11 & Under

Youth <=11 YO  
Showmanship - R Youth  
<=11 YO Equitation - R  
Youth <=11 YO Country Trail  
Pleasure - R Youth <=11 YO  
Trail Pleasure - R  
Youth <=11 YO Show  
Pleasure - R Youth <=11  
YO Western Pleasure - R

Youth Championship - 11 & Under

Championship – Youth <=11 YO -CTP - R  
Championship – Youth <=11 YO -TP - R  
Championship – Youth <=11 YO -SP - R  
Championship – Youth <=11 YO -Western - R

Page1 of 2

### **Sanctioned Show Class List (cont.)**

#### Youth 12-17

Youth 12-17 YO Showmanship - R

Youth 12-17 YO Equitation - R

Youth 12-17 YO Country Trail Pleasure - R

Youth 12-17 YO Trail Pleasure - R

Youth 12-17 YO Show Pleasure - R

Youth 12-17 YO Western Pleasure - R

#### Youth Championship - 12-17

Championship – Youth 12-17 YO -CTP - R

Championship – Youth 12-17 YO -TP- R

Championship – Youth 12-17 YO -SP - R

Championship – Youth 12-17 YO -Western - R

#### OPEN NOVICE

Novice Country Trail Pleasure - R

Novice Trail Pleasure - R

Novice Show Pleasure - R

Novice Ladies Country Trail Pleasure - R

Novice Ladies Trail Pleasure - R

Novice Ladies Show Pleasure - R

Novice Men's Country Trail Pleasure - R

Novice Men's Trail Pleasure - R

Novice Men's Show Pleasure – R

#### OPEN AMATEUR

Amateur Country Trail Pleasure - R

Amateur Trail Pleasure - R

Amateur Show Pleasure - R

Amateur Ladies Country Trail Pleasure - R

Amateur Ladies Trail Pleasure - R

Amateur Ladies Show Pleasure - R

Amateur Men's Country Trail Pleasure - R

Amateur Men's Trail Pleasure - R

Amateur Men's Show Pleasure – R

Amateur Western Pleasure - R

Champion - Amateur CTP Pleasure - R

Champion - Amateur Trail Pleasure - R

Champion - Amateur Show Pleasure - R

#### OPEN AOT

AOT Country Trail Pleasure - R

AOT Trail Pleasure - R

AOT Show Pleasure - R

AOT Ladies Country Trail Pleasure - R

AOT Ladies Trail Pleasure - R

AOT Ladies Show Pleasure - R

AOT Men's Country Trail Pleasure - R

AOT Men's Trail Pleasure - R

AOT Men's Show Pleasure - R

Championship – AOT CTP - R

Championship – AOT Trail Pleasure - R

Championship – AOT Show Pleasure - R

#### VERSATILITY

Youth Dressage

Youth Trail Obstacle - R

Youth Working Trail Obstacle

Youth Pole Bending

Youth Solo

Youth Water Glass

Mentor & Me

Juvenile Trained

Costume Class

Lead Line Class

Adult/Youth Couples Class

Adult Dressage (English/Western)

Adult Trail Obstacle - R

Adult Working Trail Obstacle

Adult Pole Bending

Adult Driving

Adult Bareback

Adult Water Glass

Adult Western Pattern

Adult Gaited Barrels

The **Novice Rider** can go into Open, Gender Specific, Open Novice, Open Amateur, & Open AOT if Qualified

The **AOT Rider** can go into Open, Gender Specific, (Open Novice ***if Qualified***), Open Amateur, & Open AOT

The **Amateur Rider** can go into Open, Gender Specific, Open Amateur & Open AOT if Qualified

The **Professional Rider** can only go into Open & Gender Specific Classes

**Youth Riders** can go into any Versatility Class Not Designated as “Adult”, and any appropriate Youth Age Division Class

**All Adult Riders** can go into any (Non-Youth) Versatility Class

# ATTENTION OWNERS/BREEDERS OF KENTUCKY BORN & BRED ROCKIES!



Are you leaving money on the table?? Ever wondered about the KHBIF Program and what it can do for you (Kentucky Horse Breeders Incentive Fund)?

How does it sound to put an average of **\$1000** in your pocket each year? Yep, those that participated in this program did just that last year.... the top earner was paid **\$4,800!** The minimum paid out was **\$575**. And, if you own the sire or dam of a nominated horse, it's like taking candy from a baby - **10% of everything they earn goes TO YOU** - all for a **\$20 investment!** That's **FREE MONEY!**

Have I piqued your  
interest yet?



## SHOW ME THE MONEY!

I sure  
hope so!  
**Keep  
reading!**

- 1) **Nominate** your Kentucky Born & Bred Horse by the July 31<sup>st</sup> deadline to be eligible – forms are on the website
- 2) **Have some fun!** Show your horse in the Sanctioned Show Program or participate in the Competitive Trail Obstacle Program by October 31<sup>st</sup> and earn KHBIF points (*told you it was easy!*)
- 3) If you own the sire or dam of any nominated horse – sign them up, too, by October 31<sup>st</sup>, and sit back and **Let the money roll in!** You'll receive **10% of ALL THEIR WINNINGS!!** *Now how easy is that!*

The forms, rules, and complete instructions to nominate your horse or nominate the sire and/or dam, can be found and downloaded from the KHBIF page on the RMHA website (**Members>Events & Programs>KHBIF**)

Still have questions?  
Contact any of the KHBIF Committee Members for more information!

**It's as easy as 1.....2....3!**

**Sign Up &  
Start Earning!**

# **SECTION XII**

## **KHBIF Sanctioned Show Programs & the Trail Obstacle Program**

- Kentucky Horse Breeders Incentive Fund (KHBIF)
- KHBIF Qualifying Classes

RMHA Website [www.rmhorse.com](http://www.rmhorse.com)  
Members / Events & Programs / KHBIF

## **ATTENTION KENTUCKY HORSE BREEDERS:**

### **Kentucky Horse Breeders Incentive Fund (KHBIF)**

This fund is financed by the sales tax on stud fees of stallions standing in Kentucky. The KHBIF awards money to the owners of Kentucky Born and Bred horses of approved non-racing breeds, which includes the Rocky Mountain Horse Breed.

The definition of a Kentucky Born and Bred horse: A horse born in the Commonwealth of Kentucky from a mare bred to a stallion standing in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

The RMHA affiliate of the Kentucky Horse Breeders Incentive Fund will receive nominations from the owners of KY born and bred Rockies that will be participating in the incentive program for the current year. In order to receive incentive funds, these nominated horses will have competed in either the show program or in the competitive trail program. The deadline for completing these events is October 31, of the participating year. Any breeder who owns either the sire or dam of these participating horses is entitled to nominate that sire or dam and receive 10% of the sum earned by the competing horse. These forms and instructions to nominate the sire and/or dam can be downloaded from the RMHA website.

The money awarded will be divided based on the numbers of horses participating in Sanctioned Show Programs and the Competitive Trail Challenge Program (see below). This will be determined by the point placement in those divisions at the end of the year and the rules as established by each trail competition organization and the governing RMHA Sanctioned Show Program.

Requirements for participation in either program:

- Current RMHA membership
- Current Rider's Card
- Completion of Horse Nomination Form and payment of fee (see the form)
- Only current RMHA members will be awarded money, either as an owner of the horse or owner of the sire or dam.
- Rocky Mountain Horses must be three years old and registered and certified before competing.
- Only Kentucky Born and Bred horses qualify for Incentive Fund awards.
- RMHA competition year is January 1st thru October 31st of the same year
- Only shows that qualify (RMHA "A" shows and Qualifying "B" shows) are eligible to receive funds from KHBIF Incentive Fund. Please see the following list of qualified KHBIF show classes below.
- In order for a "B" Show to qualify for KHBIF funds and points participation, it must contain a minimum of SIX eligible classes, from the list below.
- Nominated horses (by deadline of July 31) must participate in at least THREE eligible shows in order to qualify for incentive funds. At least one show must be an "A" show.
- Sire and Dam MUST be nominated to share in the incentives of their offspring. The sire and dam nominations deadline is October 31st of the participating year.



Requirements for participation in the Competitive Trail Program:

Competitive Trail Challenge Program Overview EXCA -

Extreme Cowboy Association – [www.extremecowboyassociation.com](http://www.extremecowboyassociation.com)

EXCA offers an arena style obstacle competition consisting of up to 13 obstacles in an enclosed area. Your 6 highest scores out of the 13 are tabulated.

ETS – Equine Trail Sports – [www.equinetrailsports.com](http://www.equinetrailsports.com)

ETS offers two types of riding obstacle competitions:

Trail Challenge – A relaxing trail ride with judged obstacles placed in camp and on the trail (5-10 miles). Ride at a leisurely pace with friends and family. An unlimited number of obstacles, but at least 6, your 6 highest scores will be used for tabulation.

Obstacle Course – Any combination of pasture, arena and trail (up to 5 miles) with an unlimited number of obstacles, but at least 8. Your 6 highest scores will be used for tabulation.

IMTCA – International Mountain Trail Challenge Association - <https://imtca.org/>

A competitive event for Mountain Trail and Extreme Mountain Trail is known as a “Challenge”. A Challenge or Show will test a horse and rider’s ability to navigate both natural and man-made obstacles in a safe manner and with technical skills that demonstrate great horsemanship. Each show will have three levels of difficulty that are designed to challenge but not intimidate riders. Attire and tack required for participating must be neat, clean and in good working order.

Competition consisting of up to 13 obstacles in an open trail course area, your 6 highest scores out of 13 are tabulated.

Sanctioned Trail Obstacle Competition

Please contact Wendy Montgomery for pre-approval of other obstacle competitions:

Arena Challenge – Stadium type obstacle competition consisting of 8 obstacles in an enclosed area. Your 6 highest scores out of 8 are tabulated.

Trail Challenge – Trail riding 6 miles with 6 natural obstacles. These 6 obstacle scores are tabulated for qualification.

To learn more about each, go online to their website and register there to participate. The RMHA does not manage, write or have feedback into any of these programs. These programs are simply the RMHA’s vehicle to award our members for their achievements in competitive trail obstacle competitions.



## **Kentucky Horse Breeder Incentive Fund - Qualifying Show Classes**

### *Qualifying Show Classes*

Country Trail Pleasure Mares  
Country Trail Pleasure Geldings  
Country Trail Pleasure Stallions  
Country Trail Pleasure Youth (11 & under)  
Country Trail Pleasure Youth (12-17)

(Country Trail Pleasure Mares and Country Trail Pleasure Geldings may be combined to make one class)

Trail Pleasure Mares  
Trail Pleasure Geldings  
Trail Pleasure Stallions  
Trail Pleasure Youth (11 & under)  
Trail Pleasure Youth (12-17)

(Trail Pleasure Mares and Trail Pleasure Geldings may be combined to make one class)

Show Pleasure Mares  
Show Pleasure Geldings  
Show Pleasure Stallions  
Show Pleasure Youth (11 & under)  
Show Pleasure Youth (12-17)

(Show Pleasure Mares and Show Pleasure Geldings may be combined to make one class)

Western Pleasure  
Western Pleasure Youth (11 & under)  
Western Pleasure Youth (12-17)

Amateur Country Trail Pleasure  
Amateur Trail Pleasure  
Amateur Show Pleasure

Amateur Owned & Trained Country Trail Pleasure  
Amateur Owned & Trained Trail Pleasure  
Amateur Owned & Trained Show Pleasure

## Registration

Forms are available to download from the RMHA website. Forms must be sent in at the beginning of the competition year. This serves to notify the RMHA of your intent to participate/compete. Download the following forms:

- 2019 RMHA KHBIF Nomination Form
- RMHA Rider Card Application Form

### REMEMBER

Members are responsible for submitting completed forms.

Three competitive rides are required to qualify for incentive funds. Members may ride as many competitions as they wish, sending in their top three ride scores by October 31<sup>st</sup> deadline.

Upon completion of 3 rides a screen shot or photo copies of their scores as listed on the website along with the competitive trail submission form are sent to: Wendy Montgomery at [wendy@kynet.net](mailto:wendy@kynet.net). Questions or comments may also be sent here.

### Awards

Certificate of Achievement in the Competitive Trail program is given to each qualifying KHBIF horse in the following categories:

- Gold 155 – 180 points
- Silver 130-154 points
- Bronze 90-129 points

See the RMHorse.com website

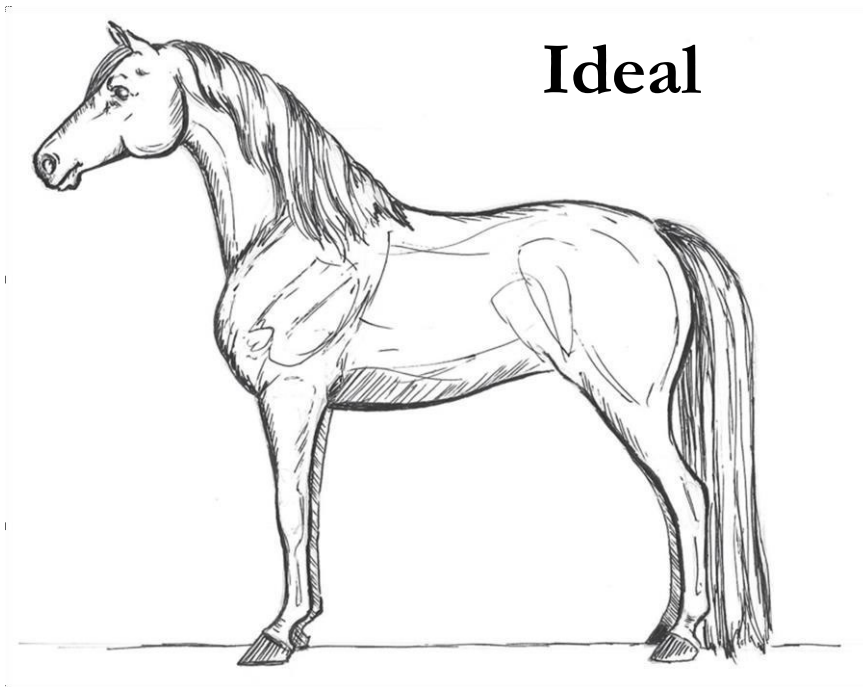
RMHA Trail Obstacle Score Card															
Judge: _____		Class: _____				Date: _____									
<b>Directions:</b>															
Each horse/rider team begins the course with 70 total points. Obstacle Scores as well as Penalties are assessed (and added or subtracted) for each obstacle by applying the scales below:															
<b>Obstacle Scores:</b>															
+1 1/2 - Excellent, +1-Very Good, + 1/2 - Good, 0 - Correct, - 1/2 - Poor, - 1 Very Poor, - 1 1/2 - Extremely Poor, DQ - Disqualified															
<b>Penalty Scores:</b>															
1. Penalty -1/2: Each tick of log, pole, cone, or obstacle.															
2. Penalty -1: Hit or step on; incorrect gait two (2) strides or less; failure to meet the correct strides over obstacles.															
3. Penalty -3: Break gait over two (2) strides; out of correct gait; knockdown; step out or jump off with one (1) foot.															
4. Penalty -5: Failure to follow the correct line of travel within or between obstacles, drop object; first refusal or evade; second refusal; loss of control at gate; step out or jump off obstacle with more than one (1) foot; blatant disobedience; failure to complete obstacle.															
5. Penalty: Score of Zero (0): Use of more than one (1) finger between the reins if riding western; switching off hand if riding two (2) handed; equipment failure; excessively touching horse; fall to the ground															
<b>Disqualifications:</b> 1). Exceeding the time limit 2). Failure to attempt the obstacle in the correct pattern and correct sequence 3). Not performing the correct gait in the strait aways 4). Taking an obstacle from the wrong side/wrong direction 4). Unruly or unsafe behavior (rearing or striking out) 5). Not making three attempts at any obstacle; an attempt is defined as backing or circling from the obstacle and re-attempting by approaching the obstacle again. Exhibitors will be informed when it is their final attempt. They will also be notified of a disqualification immediately by the blowing of a whistle. The horse will be excused from the course and no other obstacles shall be completed. See RMHA Show Rules and Regulations for complete information and scoring requirements.															
W/O	Entry No.	Obstacle Description	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Penalty Total	Final Score	
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# **SECTION XIII**

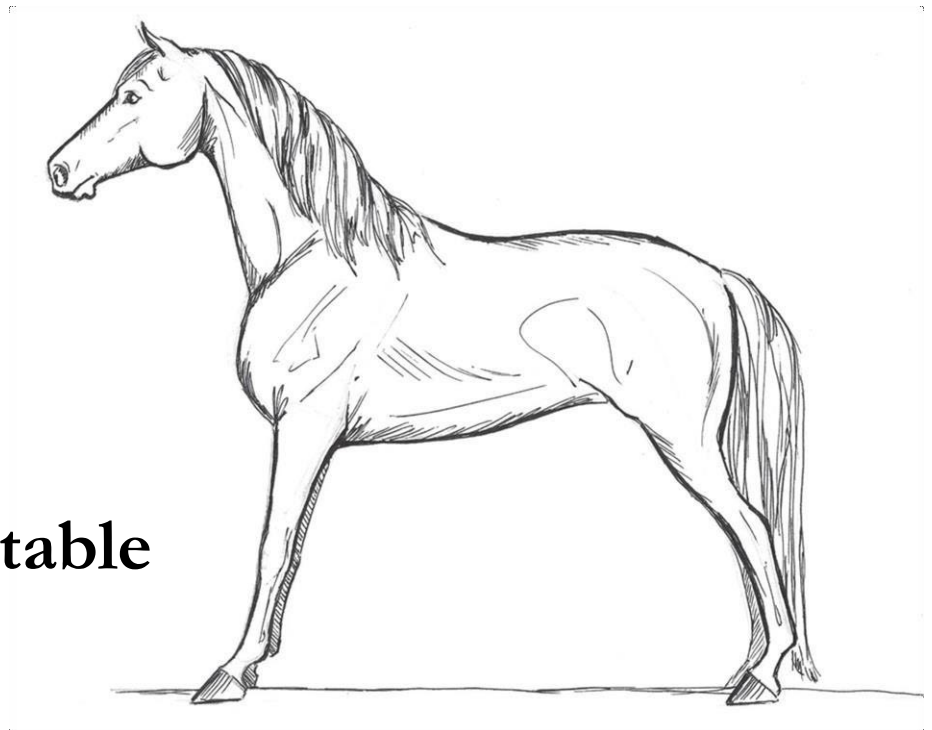
## **Index of Examples**

- A - Stances, Lineup, Halter
- B - Over stride
- E - Showmanship at Halter
- F - Pole Bending
- G - Toe Length Measurement
- H - Shank/Cheek Length Measurement
- I - Keg Shoe
- J - Natural Shoe Fit

## Example A – Stances, Line-Up and Halter



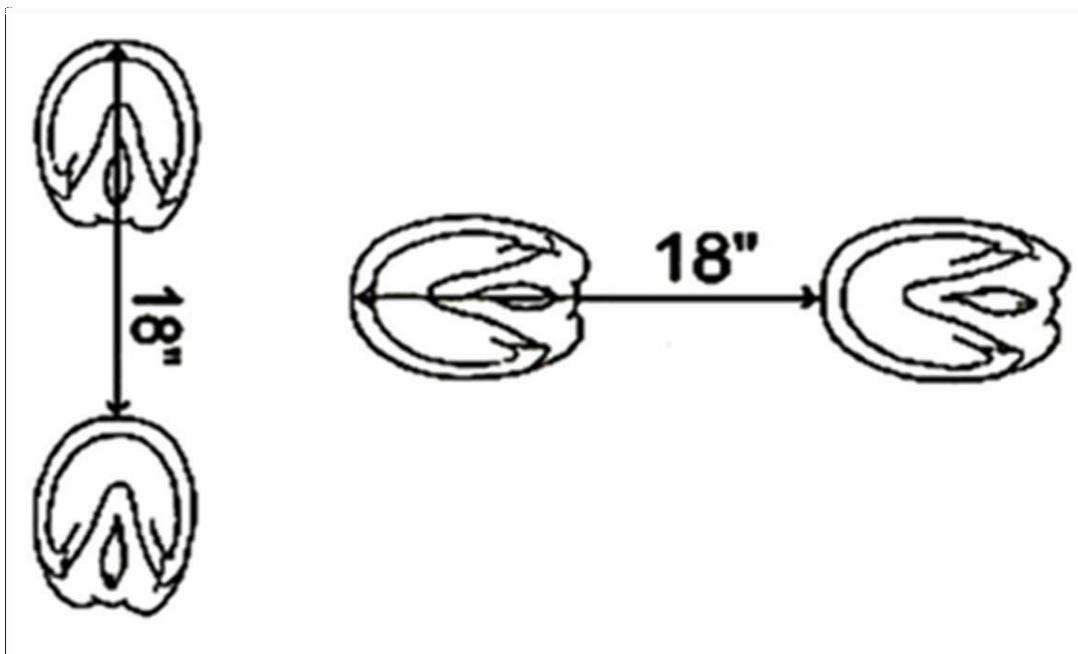
**Unacceptable**



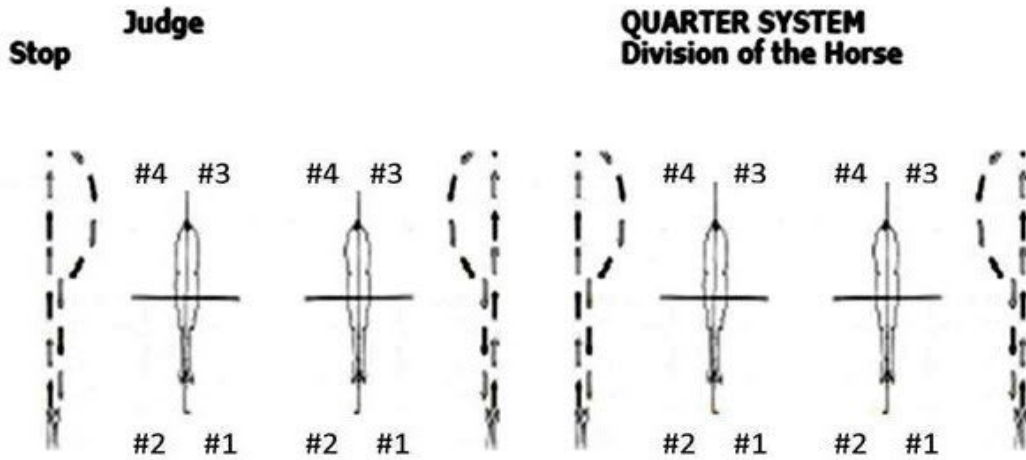
# Example B – Overstride

Overstride is not to exceed 18 inches measured from toe to toe of the hooves on the same side. If measured from the toe of the hind foot to the back of the fore foot, the distance would be between 13 and 14 inches.

Capping is when the hind foot sets down in the exact same print as the fore foot.

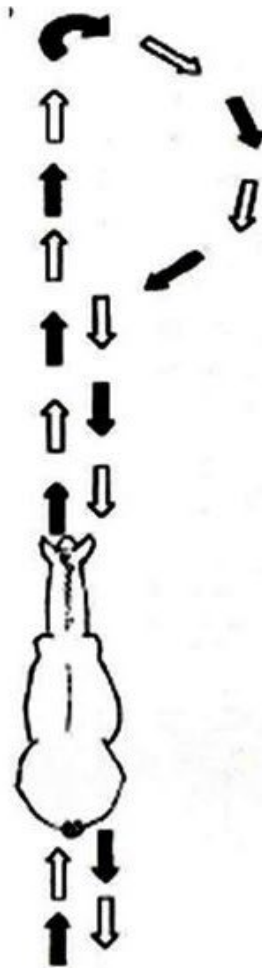
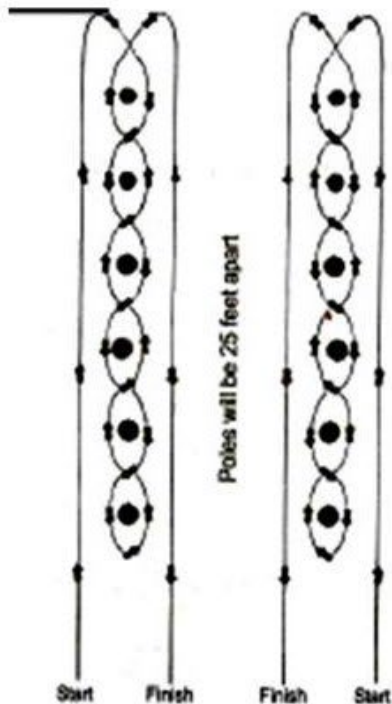


## Example E—Youth Showmanship at Halter

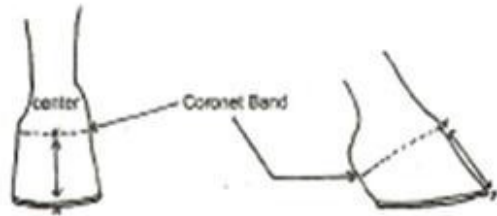


Judge in Quadrant #2, Exhibitor in Quadrant #1  
 Judge in Quadrant #3, Exhibitor in Quadrant #1  
 Judge in Quadrant #4, Exhibitor in Quadrant #2  
 Judge in Quadrant #1, Exhibitor in Quadrant #2

## Example F—Pole Bending



### EXAMPLE G—Toe Length

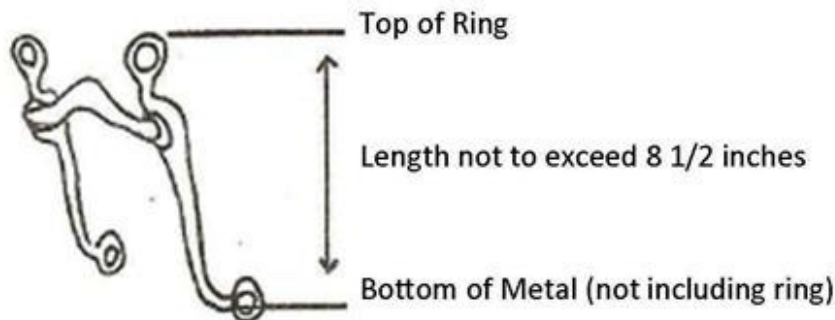


Toe length not to exceed  
4 1/2 inches, including shoe.

Measure from front center of coronet band, where soft flesh meets the hard part of the hoof, down front center of hoof wall to the ground.

---

### EXAMPLE H—Shank Length



### EXAMPLE I—Keg Shoe

#### Plain Keg

15/16 inch wide  
3/8 inch thick  
at all points  
on shoe



#### Plain Keg with Caulk Heel

15/16 inch wide  
3/8 inch thick + borium/drill tech  
up to 1/4 inch thick or caulk up to  
1/2 inch thick  
Total thickness may not exceed  
7/8 inch at caulks



### EXAMPLE J—Shoe Fit to Natural Hoof





# **SECTION XIV**

**Current Year - Rule Changes  
At a Glance**

## Rule Changes at a glance for the 2020 Calendar Year

Revised June 27, 2020 (14.0 Hand / Bylaw Change)

## Rule Changes at a glance for the 2021 Calendar Year

- Section XIV.
  - D. The Point System
    - Point system has been restructured between International, A, B and C sanctioned shows.

Addendum to 2021:

Changes made to the Show Judging Rulebook

### **VII. Judges Ethical Conduct**

#### **A. Definition and Discussion:**

*Conflict of Interest* - a situation in which a person is in a position to derive personal benefits for themselves or individuals from their family and/or their business connections by actions or decisions made in their official capacity.

In an equestrian association, the span of conflict of interest can start with members of the Board of Directors to employees and representatives of the organization to members and officials serving the organization.

For the purpose of the equestrian organization, the primary area of conflict of interest lies in the relationship between competition officials and exhibitors participating in those competitions. The competition officials may range from the horse show organizers management team to staff including show secretary, ring steward(s), rules steward(s), horse show announcer, DQP, judges and many more.

The real targets of potential criticism of bias are those serving in the capacity of the official judge. Therefore, the horse show rules focusing on conflict of interest need to be structured in such a way to protect all individuals and the show itself. It is all about fairness, making sure that all individuals are treated equally, and if there is a potential for a claim(s) of conflict of interest on a judge's decisions, this be prevented and eliminated.

The judge's decisions can favor an individual competitor or conversely unfairly penalize a

competitor, demonstrating favoritism either for or against a competitor. This means it is always in the best interest of the judge's good name and reputation to disclose any and all conflicts of interest at the time these may occur or become known to the judge.

One of the problems with the small pool of licensed judges within the Rocky Mountain Horse Association is the familiarity of the official judge to those competing. This familiarity can be through face recognition or name and professional reputation. Either method is equal in its potential affect to create a bias for or against the competitor by the judge.

Although many are quick to blame a judge for whatever happens with show ring placings, it must be remembered, the exhibitor could be the initiator of unethical practices. The motivations could be everything from favoritism toward a specific horse or rider to remuneration and offering of discounts on stallion services and more.

To guide the process for clarifying conflict of interests, the RMHA will include the following section in its Show Rules and Regulations.

#### B. Exhibitor's Conflict of Interest

The following represent some examples of prohibited conduct by horse show exhibitors toward officials of competitions and events:

1. The members of the judge's family members, domestic partners and their family members, business associates, employees, and clients may not exhibit at any competition in which he/she is adjudicating.
2. An exhibitor shall not present horses in classes in which said horses are currently owned, trained, leased or have been sold within 90 days of the competition or event by the judge.
3. An exhibitor shall not seek nor receive assistance from a judge at a competition or event in which the judge is serving as an official.
4. An exhibitor shall not compete at a competition or event which is officiated by a judge with whom the exhibitor, their immediate family, guardian or instructor has had financial transactions in connection with instruction, sales, purchase, lease, boarding, or training of horses.
5. An exhibitor shall not invite an official to attend a show exhibitor's party or any other activity connected with a competition or event commencing the day before the

official competition through the day following the competition.

6. An exhibitor shall not invite the official judge(s) to the horse stabling area, with the intention to speak with owners, trainers, exhibitors or owner's representatives, nor to inspect or discuss any horse entered in the show before and during the official judging.
7. An exhibitor and/or their representative shall not contact a judge prior to the competition or event to solicit opinions, discussion on the purchase, leasing, breeding or any other type of transaction as a means of creating a bias favoring said exhibitor.

### C. Judge's Conflict of Interest

Grounds for removal of an individual from the RMHA list of approved and licensed judges shall include, but not limited to the following:

1. A judge shall at all times treat all exhibitors with mutual respect in all communications during their officiating of the competition and event.
2. A judge may not exhibit at any competition in which he/she is adjudicating.
3. A judge may not judge, preside, over entries/exhibits presented by the judge's family members, domestic partners and their family members, business associates, employees, and clients at a sanctioned RMHA competition or event.
4. A judge shall not attend a show exhibitor's party or any other activity connected with a competition or event commencing the day before their official duties through the day following the competition.
5. A judge shall not visit the horse stabling area, nor speak with owners, trainers, exhibitors or owner's representatives, nor inspect or discuss any horse entered in the show before the official judging commences.
6. A judge shall not review the show program with the listing of entries until after the judging is complete.
7. A judge must abide by the RMHA Show Rules and Regulations along with the terms of their contract while serving in an official capacity.
8. A judge shall not judge, preside, over classes in which horses he/she owns, trains, leases or

has been sold within the past 90 days.

9. A judge shall not communicate with other judges or individuals while officiating at a competition or event using any media to discuss horses, exhibitors and/or their placings.
10. A judge shall not judge, preside over classes in which horses of his/her employer is exhibiting.
11. A judge shall not assist in the actual performance of the horse and/or the exhibitor on the day of, prior to, or during the show.
12. A judge shall not officiate at a competition or event whereby an exhibitor, their immediate family, guardian, or instructor has had financial transactions in connection with instruction, sales, purchase, lease, boarding, or training of horses.
13. A judge shall not discuss with an exhibitor the purchase, sale, or lease of any horse during a competition or event at which he/she is officiating.
14. A judge shall not fraternize with an exhibitor, nor seem to fraternize with exhibitors, either in the show ring or at any common place on the show grounds.
15. A judge shall not utilize any form of social media to communicate or provide their opinion of exhibitors, horses or combinations thereof at any time during the competition or event.
16. A judge shall not utilize any form of communication devices (mobile telephone, pager, etc) while in center ring serving as an official at a competition and event unless authorized by the show manager.
17. A judge shall report all contacts and communications from exhibitors or their representatives prior to officiating at a competition or event, after being formally announced and under contract as an official of that event.

#### Rule Changes at a glance for the 2023-2024 Calendar Year

- Definitions as Used Throughout This Book: Added “grandparent, grandchild and sibling” to definition of immediate family.
- Section IV previously ‘List of Show Classes Under Saddle’ moved to Section III.
- Section V previously ‘Versatility Classes’ moved to Section III.

- Section VIII previously 'Faults' moved to Section III.
- Section II.J removed reference to rider's card and updated to align with new process for exhibitor status.
- Updates throughout to replace 'RMHA Executive Director' to 'RMHA Office Manager.'
- Section III.A.2 (Procedure (In Hand)) moved to Section V 'General Procedures and Ring Protocol' and relabeled 'Ring Protocol (In Hand).'
- Section III.B.2 'Procedure' removed as this is already outlined in section Section V.C 'Ring Protocol (Under Saddle).'
- Section III.C.6 Added bullet point 'e' to section
- Section IV.2 'Novice' updated to further clarify definition of Novice rider.
- Section IV.E.1.a Added "and two other officials or staff at show."
- Section VI.2 'Western Tack' updated to further clarify western saddle definition and western bridle definition.
- Section VII updated to allow jodhpur tie-downs as optional (except in showmanship), and clarified use of Kentucky or Bootcut style jodhpurs.
- Section VIII.B.2 added clarification for Amateur Western Pleasure at Internationals
- Section XI.G.2.d updated Western Pleasure class requirements
- Section XI.G.4.b updated Western Pleasure class requirements
- Section XI 'Sanction Show, High Point and Special Awards' updated to include 14.2 and under classes and Amateur Western Pleasure in Sanctioned Show Class List. Also added note that show managers and judges are responsible for monitoring height, as needed.
- Section XIII 'Example I' updated shoe width from "3/8 inch" to "15/16 inch" to align with Section IV.B.
- Section IX.H Added "verifying memberships" to duties of show secretary.
- Section XI.C.3 Replaced "member of SAC" with "RMHA office staff or designee."

Your SAC Team would like to take this opportunity to thank you, our exhibitors, owners, trainers, and members for your continued support of this program – we look forward to any suggestions or feedback you may have!

**Happy Showing!**

