



2025 Rule Book & Patterns

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. ASSOCIATION GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS	page
A. MISSION STATEMENT	4
B. EVENT YEAR	4
C. RULE CHANGE PROCEDURES	4
D. EMERGENCY RULE CHANGE	4
E. GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE	5
II. ELIGIBILITY	
A. BREED ELIGIBILITY	5
B. HORSE IDENTIFICATION RECORD	5
C. OWNERSHIP REQUIRMENTS	5
D. AMATEUR ELIGIBILITY	6
III. DIVISIONS	
A. GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS:	7
1. OPEN DIVISION	7
A. Limited Open Subdivision	7
2. ADVANCED AMATEUR DIVISION	8
3. INTERMEDIATE AMATEUR DIVISION	8
4. LIMITED AMATEUR DIVISION	9
5. NOVICE AMATEUR DIVISION	9
A. Green Rancher Subdivision	9
6. YOUTH DIVISION	10
7. WALK TROT DIVISION	11
8. SELECT SUB-DIVISION	11
9. JUNIOR HORSE SUB-DIVISION	11
B. DIVISION ELIGIBILITY EXCEPTIONS	12
IV. CLINICIANS AND JUDGES	
A. GENERAL	12
B. CANDIDATE APPLICATION	12
C. OPEN BOOK TEST	12
D. EVENT CLINICIAN JUDGE EVALUATION	12
E. AZVRHA APPROVAL	13
F. ANNUAL RENEWAL FEE	13
G. CLINICIAN TENURE	13
H. ETHICS	13
I. GUEST CLINICIANS	13

V. GENERAL RULES FOR ASSOCIATION EVENTS	page
A. SELECTING JUDGES	14
B. CLINICS	14
C. BACK-TO-BACK COMPETITIONS	14
D. CO SANCTIONED EVENTS	14
E. EVENT AWARDS	14
F. JACKPOT PAYBACK	14
G. EQUIPMENT FAILURE	15
H. LAMENESS or INCAPACITY	15
I. INHUMANE TREATMENT	15
J. FALL OF HORSE OR RIDER	16
K. COMPETING WITH MULTIPLE HORSES	16
L. CLOSED ARENAS	16
M. DISRUPTIVE HORSES	16
N. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT	17
O. FINANCIAL VIOLATIONS	17
P. APPROPRIATE WESTERN ATTIRE	17
Q. TACK AND EQUIPMENT	17
R. UNFORSEEN SITUATIONS	20
VI. SCORING	
A. SCORING SYSTEM	21
B. JUDGES SCORE SHEET	21
C. POINT BASED SCORING SYSTEM	22
D. BREAKING TIES	23
VII. CLASS RULES & REGULATIONS	
A. RANCH RIDING	24
B. RANCH TRAIL	27
C. RANCH CUTTING	32
D. RANCH REINED WORK	34
E. RANCH COW WORK	36
VIII. WALK TROT CLASS RULES AND REGULATIONS	
A. WT RANCH RIDING	42
B. WT TRAIL	43
C. WT CUTTING	44
D. WT REINED WORK	46
E. WT COW WORK	47
Appendix:	
A. THE IDEAL RANCH HORSE	48
B. MECHANICS OF MOTION	49

I. ASSOCIATION GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

A. MISSION STATEMENT

The Arizona Versatility Ranch Horse Association's (AzVRHA) mission is to promote Versatility Ranch Horse in Arizona and to provide educational and fun opportunities to improve horsemanship. The AzVRHA also aims to preserve American Ranch Horse traditions through competitions and clinics.

Membership year runs concurrent with the Event Year and will expire on the last day of the Year-End Championship or October 31 (whichever occurs latest).

New AZVRHA Memberships that are purchased at the last sanctioned shows with the affiliates will be in good standing through next year's show season.

B. EVENT YEAR:

The Event Year will run from November 1st to October 31st each year. No Chapter Affiliate competition date that is within (10) days prior to the Championship will be approved by AZVRHA. No Chapter Affiliate events will be approved by AZVRHA following the Championship date and prior to November 1st.

C. RULE CHANGE PROCEDURES

A standing member, a standing committee, a special committee, the Board of Directors, or the Association staff may propose a rule change. A rule change is any change to the General Rules.

Rule changes shall be submitted on the rule change proposal form in the specified format. This format will make each submission uniform and cause the person proposing the rule change to think through the proposal and help identify pros and cons involved in changing a rule. All blanks must be completed and a justification for the proposed change cited. Forms which are incomplete, lacking justification, or failing to cite the specific change requested will be returned to the originator. The board of directors will provide notice that rule change proposals are being accepted in advance of the deadline. Rule change proposals can be submitted at any time; the board will file them for consideration. The Board of Directors will vote on the proposed change but may refer the matter to any committee or group for study, review, and recommendation prior to voting. Rule change proposals must be received in the office by October 1st of each year.

Two thirds (2/3) of the Board members at a specified Board meeting having the required quorum attendance must vote in the affirmative for a rule change to be adopted.

D. EMERGENCY RULE CHANGE

If a proposed Rule Change is of such extreme importance by the Executive Committee that it must be acted upon immediately, such proposed change must be presented to the Board of Directors and is subject to amendment. The Board of Directors should then put the Emergency Status of the proposed change to a vote. The Emergency Status must first be approved and requires a motion and two-thirds majority vote in favor.

If the Board of Directors approves the Emergency Status, the proposed change with any amendments attached shall then be put to a vote by the Board of Directors for immediate action and/or implementation. If approved, the change can become effective immediately. If the Emergency Status of the proposed Change is rejected by the Board of Directors, the proposed change itself cannot be put to vote at this time but can still be presented for a vote by the regular rule change procedure.

E. GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE

- Committee will be made up of four members appointed by the President with concurrence of the Board.
- All grievances will be in written form and signed. They will be forwarded to the Chairperson. After reviewing the grievance, the committee will respond in writing.
- Should there be a conflict of interest with a committee member; a replacement will be appointed from the Board by the President.
- A review of the various grievances will be provided to the Board at its next meeting.
- Parties may appeal against the committee decision of the grievance to the Board.

II. ELIGIBILITY

A. BREED ELIGIBILITY

Any horse of any breed may be used. Must be three years of age or older.

B. HORSE IDENTIFICATION RECORD

Each horse ridden in approved AZVRHA events must be assigned a permanent AZVRHA Identification Number. This number will be lifetime identification and remain with the horse regardless of ownership.

Prior to participation in an approved AZVRHA event, a completed Horse Identification Number Application Form must be provided to AZVRHA (either to the office prior to the event or to show management at the event). The Horse Identification Number will be assigned to the horse by AZVRHA. The rider will be responsible for providing the Horse ID Number at all following approved events.

C. OWNERSHIP REQUIRMENTS

To be eligible for "placings, awards, and program points," Youth and Amateur rider must own or lease his/her horse or be an immediate relative of the person owning the horse (spouse, son, son-in-law, daughter, daughter-in-law, parents, siblings, and grandparents).

Amateurs and youth may also show leased horses subject to the following:

- The Owner (Lessee) must be a member in good standing of AZVRHA
- Prior to the lessee (amateur or youth) showing the leased horse, AZVRHA must have received and recorded a showing lease form, and a AZVRHA Horse ID Application must be on file.
- The lessee must be responsible for expenses associated with the care of the horse: boarding, feeding, routine farrier services and routine veterinary services.
- During the term of the showing lease, only the lessee and lessee's IMMEDIATE FAMILY may show the horse. The lessee's trainer may also show the horse in Open Division classes. During

the term of the lease, the horse may be shown by other eligible exhibitors in Open Division including the lessee'

- The term of the lease must be for a minimum one-year period, and the lease must be to an individual only. If the lease is terminated for any reason before the minimum one-year period, the horse can only be shown in the Open Division, until one year has passed since the original start date of the lease.
- Only one showing lease at a time per horse will be recognized.
- During the term of a showing lease, subsequent changes in ownership will not be recorded until the showing lease is terminated.
- If a lessee qualifies the horse for and intends to exhibit the horse at an AZVRHA Championship Show, a showing lease must be in effect and on file with AZVRHA at the time the lessee (a) enters the horse into the Championship Show and (b) exhibits the horse at the Championship Show. Should a showing lease expire prior to the above times, a new showing lease will be required.

In the Open division, any horse can be ridden by any rider. There are no Ownership requirements. Both the owner of the horse and the rider must be members in good standing.

An amateur rider who does not own or lease his/her own horse may participate in a competition (except Regional or Year-End Championships) and be the sole rider in all five classes, but neither rider nor horse is eligible for placement points, awards, or AZVRHA Champion points. However, the rider/horse team will be acknowledged at the awards presentation.

A rider is not required to own the horse he/she rides in a clinic.

D. AMATEUR ELIGIBILITY

- The rider has not received payment directly or indirectly for riding, training, assisting in training, or showing horse(s) at any time during the past three years.
- The rider has not received payment directly or indirectly for instructing another person or conducting a seminar in riding, training, driving, or showing a horse any time during the past three years.
- The rider has not had any expenses (including lodging, transportation, mileage, etc.) paid by someone other than family members. Youth members may accept assistance from someone other than a family member.
- Premium money won is not considered remuneration.
- An Amateur rider may show in the Open division without losing Amateur eligibility if eligibility requirements for an Amateur are still met.

III. DIVISIONS

A. GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS:

AZVRHA divisions are designed to be a progressive program, based on rider skills and limitations, which will allow a novice rider to start from the beginning and as the horse and rider gain and develop horsemanship skills, be able to advance to the next level. The general progression through divisions will be from Novice to Intermediate to Advanced Amateur. Any Amateur is eligible to ride in the Limited and Intermediate Division for any reason.

All new riders will complete the Novice Eligibility Questionnaire and any rider that is ineligible for the division and believes they should be in the Novice division will have the opportunity to request further evaluation – See Novice Eligibility Requirements. Each year upon renewal of membership all riders must complete the eligibility questionnaire.

AZVRHA's priority is FUN and education, however we are a competitive association and have eligibility requirements and restrictions for each division based on skills and achievement. It is the Member's responsibility to know his or her correct division eligibility and exhibit in the correct division. Horse/Rider teams exhibiting in the incorrect division will not be eligible for placement points or awards.

Riders may choose to move to a higher division but must notify the Event Manager prior to the event. Once a rider chooses to ride in a higher division, he/she may not move back to the lower division in that event year. To move to a lower division, the rider must meet all eligibility requirements of the lower division and be reviewed and approved by the AZVRHA Board of Directors. Any points earned will remain in the division they were earned. This decision must be communicated to the AZVRHA office.

1. OPEN DIVISION

The Open division is open to any professional or non-professional member in good standing with any horse regardless of past winnings. Open riders may ride an UNLIMITED number of different horses in any given show. In the Open Division, the points are assigned to the horse only, not a horse/rider combination. The year-end open championship will go to a horse, and that horse could have been ridden by more than one rider.

A. LIMITED OPEN SUBDIVISION

Limited Open Subdivision Eligibility: This division will be required to be offered at all shows as a subdivision of the Open for individuals with moderate to no showing experience who have taken money for starting colts; been paid to ride the ranch horses not owned by them; given basic riding lessons or local clinics for pay; or by other circumstances that make them ineligible for Amateur or Non-Pro status but are not experienced professional trainers in western performance disciplines. A horse of any age may be ridden, and there are no horse ownership restrictions.

- **Restrictions for Limited Open:** To be eligible for this division, upon entering the first competition, the exhibitor must not have earned any total all-around points in any ranch horse versatility competitions involving cattle. Riders that have combined earnings of \$5,000 in any of the following or similar organizations: AZVRHA, NCHA, NRCHA, NRHA, RHAA, AQHA, APHA, SHTX, ASHA, etc. in any

western performance discipline (western pleasure, working cow horse, reining, cutting, barrel racing, trail, etc.), are not eligible for this division. Upon entering the first Limited Open competition, a member may only compete in this subdivision for one event year or five (5) shows, whichever occurs later. If a member loses Limited Open eligibility through competition, he or she may finish that year as a Limited Open rider. Thereafter, the member is eligible only for the Open Division.

- **Class Format:** The Limited Open division will run concurrently with the Open division, but a high point within the subdivision can be offered at competition's end, at the show manager's discretion. The Limited Open is only for all-around competitors entering all classes. Limited Open competitors have the same competitive requirements as Open competitors.

2. ADVANCED AMATEUR DIVISION

This division is open to any member in good standing that qualifies as an Amateur regardless of earnings with any horse. In addition to the normal entry fee, this division may collect and offer jackpot payback. (See Jackpot guidelines). In the Ranch Cow Work, this division requires going down the fence and roping or circling the cow.

3. INTERMEDIATE AMATEUR DIVISION

Intermediate Amateur is open to a member in good standing that qualifies as an Amateur with the following eligibility restrictions. In addition to the normal entry fee, this division may collect and offer jackpot payback (See Jackpot guidelines).

Intermediate Amateurs are riders that choose to begin the challenge of learning skills leading to going down the fence and roping. There are no eligibility requirements for this division, the intermediate rider may stay in this division until they feel ready to step up to the Advanced Division.

The Ranch Cow Work will consist of the following elements: box/drive/box/drive/Roping Skills. The roping skill portion is performed after the second drive is completed past the middle marker. The contestant will demonstrate the ability to track the cow, swing and throw a rope, and simulate the stop/hold maneuver. All contestants will demonstrate roping skill by using a breakaway Honda; there will not be a penalty applied for a "no-catch." There is no expectation of turning the cow on the fence.

4. LIMITED AMATEUR DIVISION

Exhibitors who qualify as Amateur riders are eligible to ride in this division. The Limited division is designed for riders that due to personal preference, limitations or life events do not want to ride in a division that requires turning on the fence or roping a cow.

The contestant will box/drive/box/drive with no expectation of turning the cow on the fence or roping.

The purpose of this division is

- To provide a place for the continued education and skill development of the Novice Rider who is no longer eligible for the Novice Amateur division but still does not want to turn a cow on the fence or rope.

- To provide a place for advanced riders experiencing life events necessitating changes to their riding activities (age, injury, illness, etc.)
- To provide a place for Amateur riders that wish to maintain their “box only” eligibility in another organization.
- To provide a place for Amateurs riders that do not feel safe going down the fence or roping on a particular horse.

In addition to the normal entry fee, this division may collect and offer jackpot payback (See Jackpot guidelines).

5. NOVICE/GREEN RANCHER AMATEUR DIVISION

The Novice division is reserved for individuals with **novice riding and showing experience** who wish to learn more about showing in AZVRHA at a beginner’s pace. New members in AZVRHA do not necessarily need to ride in the Novice division. Advanced skills may be better suited for one of the other divisions.

The Novice division includes a “box only” version of Ranch Cow Work that will not involve turning down the fence or roping. The trail course may be modified to appropriately challenge these riders without requiring completion of elements that may be deemed dangerous for Novice riders.

Novice Amateurs may ride any horse, regardless of age, with one or two hands in a standard western bit as approved by AZVRHA equipment rules OR with one or two hands in a snaffle bit or hackamore as described under AZVRHA equipment rules.

Eligibility for the **Novice and Novice Youth divisions** are as follows:

- a) The Novice Amateur rider meets all amateur eligibility requirements as listed above and has **NOT** won any combination of **FIVE** of the following.
 - Any Over-All High Point or Championship title at any AZVRHA, SHOT, ASHA, NRSHA, NVRHA, or any VRH association and or similar event(s), with or without cattle classes with five or more participants in the Division. [OBJ]
 - Any Reserve High Point or Reserve Championship titles at any AZVRHA, SHOT, ASHA, NRSHA, NVRHA, or any VRH association and similar event(s), with or without cattle classes with five or more participants in the Division.
 - Any Division Year-End High Point award or Year-End Championship Event title in AZVRHA, SHOT, ASHA, NRSHA, NVRHA, or any VRH association and or similar event(s), with or without cattle classes with five or more participants in the Division.
- b) The Novice Amateur or Novice Youth rider has not earned any of the following on any horse.
 - Ten (10) lifetime points in any association (including but not limited to AQHA, APHA, NCHA, NRCHA, NRHA, RHAA, etc.) in any western performance discipline – VRH or Stock Horse All Around, roping, working cow horse, reining, cutting, ranch horse pleasure, etc. (or) \$500 in a national organization (including but not limited to NCHA, NRCHA, NRSHA, NRHA, RHAA, etc.) in any western performance discipline – VRH or Stock Horse All Around, roping, working cow horse, reining, cutting, trail, etc.

A. GREEN RANCHER SUBDIVISION:

Green Rancher Subdivision Eligibility: This division will be required to be offered at all shows as a subdivision of the Novice Division. Green Rancher riders must not have completed two (2) show seasons in any VRH Association (Including but not limited to AQHA, APHA and APHC, etc.) and meet all novice amateur eligibilities. A Green Rancher will be awarded a buckle when the participant accumulates 150 total points in the division. Points will be awarded according to section VI: Scoring (in rule book). Points awarded to this division will roll over each year until the rider reaches 150 points. No Jackpot will be offered. Novice/Green Ranchers may accept prizes, payback, or purses for events.

If a member loses Novice/Green Rancher eligibility through competition, he or she may finish that year as a Novice/Green Rancher rider. Thereafter, the members are eligible only for Youth, Limited Amateur, Amateur or Open divisions. Green Ranchers will be eligible for the Novice Division if they still meet the requirements.

All Amateur riders will complete the *Division Eligibility Form* and any rider that believes they should be in the Novice division and is NOT eligible to participate based on the application criteria may request an evaluation at the clinic prior to their FIRST competition to further determine eligibility. This evaluation is available to the rider for their first division placement only. The rider must be evaluated by a certified AZVRHA clinician.

6. YOUTH DIVISION

Exhibitors in the youth divisions must be aged 8 through 18 as of January 1 of the current *event* year. The Youth Ranch Cow Work classes will be Amateur rules based on the Youth's determined Youth division. AZVRHA Year-end points will all be in one (1) Division regardless of the youth division in Cow work. The different youth divisions are Youth, Intermediate, Limited, and Novice.

All Youth that are unsure of their ability and division placement will be evaluated prior to their first competition at the clinic to determine initial division placement. They will be placed in their correct division by consensus of the clinicians, coaches, and parents. Novice Youth must meet Novice requirements as described on page 10.

Novice Youth may ride any horse, regardless of age, with one or TWO hands in a standard western bit as approved by AZVRHA equipment rules OR with one or two hands in a snaffle bit or hackamore as described under AZVRHA equipment rules.

- Youth will follow Amateur Rules for Ranch Cow Work.
- Intermediate Youth will follow Intermediate Amateur rules for Ranch Cow Work.
- Limited Youth will follow Limited Amateur Rules for Ranch Cow Work.
- Novice Youth will follow Novice Amateur Rules for Ranch Cow Work. (See novice eligibility requirements pg. 10)
- Youth may ride a leased or borrowed horse.
- The Horse/rider team accumulates year-end points.
- Stallions are prohibited in this division.

- There will be no jackpot in this division.

7. WALK/TROT DIVISION

This division of ranch horse competition is for Adult or Youth riders who wish to experience showing their ranch horses at an introductory level. This division was created for beginner riders to have a place to start and will be governed by the general rules of the AZVRHA Handbook EXCEPT as noted in the Walk Trot Section. (See VIII. WALK TROT CLASS RULES AND REGULATIONS)

TERMS OF ELIGIBILITY

1. Any adult or youth rider in their first year of showing is eligible provided they have **not** shown in ANY competition where loping, cow work, cutting, sorting, fence work, or roping has been involved. If a rider has previous experience, they may request to be evaluated for the Walk/Trot Division at an affiliate clinic.
2. Riders may enter this introductory Walk/Trot division for as many show seasons as needed, however...
3. When a rider wins the year-end overall award, it is recommended that the rider move to the appropriate division above Walk/Trot. (An evaluation may be requested to determine if the rider should stay in the W/T division for another season)
4. The rider may not cross over into any other division while in the Walk/Trot division.
5. The horse may be shown in any legal Western bit or snaffle bit regardless of age.
6. The rider may use two hands while showing.
7. Riders may enter all or individual classes as described below.

8. SELECT SUB-DIVISION

All amateur riders who are 60 years of age or older as of January 1 of the current event year are eligible for this sub-division. This division is a “class within a class.” Amateur riders will show only one time and the scores will count for both their standard division and for the Select Sub-division. Placement points will be tracked for Year End Overall High Point. Event management may choose to require an entry fee and offer recognition and awards at each weekend event at the event manager's discretion.

9. JUNIOR HORSE SUB-DIVISION

Jr. Horses five years of age but not younger than 3 years of age as of January 1 of the current event year will be tracked in the Jr. Horse Sub-division “class within a class”. A horse’s age is calculated from January 1st of year of foaling. For example, a horse foaled anytime in 2022 is one year old on January 1, 2023, and two years old on January 1, 2024. All riders with eligible horses must indicate at the beginning of the year that they wish a horse would be tracked in the Jr Horse sub-division. The rider will show only one time and the score will count for both the standard division and the Jr. Horse Sub-division. Additionally, a junior horse may be shown by both Open and Amateur Riders. All placement points from all riders will be combined for Yearend Overall High Point. Event management may choose to require an entry fee and offer recognition and awards at each weekend event at management discretion.

B. DIVISION ELIGIBILITY EXCEPTIONS

A member may petition, in writing, the Association Grievance Committee for a change in division eligibility. The written petition will be reviewed, and the members notified of the ruling. See Grievance guidelines.

Eligibility status may be revoked at any time for violations of any AZVRHA rule or regulation. A person who loses eligibility status must relinquish their membership.

IV. CLINICIANS AND JUDGES

A. GENERAL

Clinicians and Judges for all events must be approved by AZVRHA. Clinicians and Judges must consistently meet the spirit and intent of the AZVRHA's principal goals which place exhibitor's education and fun as a priority while adhering to the rules of the association. They are selected based upon knowledge, professionalism, integrity, ability to teach and enthusiastic support of AZVRHA's goals and objectives.

Clinician and Judge oversight and selection is administered by the AZVRHA Clinician/Judges Committee. A committee member will be appointed from each affiliate by the President and approved by the Board of Directors. A current list of certified clinicians and judges will be maintained and published by AZVRHA office.

B. CANDIDATE APPLICATION

Qualified candidates must complete an application outlining experience and provide references, which will be considered by the committee. Applications are available in the AZVRHA office.

C. OPEN BOOK TEST

Upon a candidate's acceptance by the Clinician/Judges Committee, the candidate must complete an open book test on AZVRHA's Rules and Regulations. Clinician/Judge applicants must score a minimum of 80% on the Open Book Test to become certified.

D. EVENT CLINICIAN JUDGE EVALUATION

Qualified candidates who do not hold judges' cards in any other association, upon successful completion of the open book test, must clinic and scribe with a designated approved Clinician/Judge at a sanctioned AZVRHA event at the candidates' expense.

Upon review of an application and solely at the discretion of the judge's committee, an experienced judge holding a card in another recognized and similar organization may be exempt from the scribing and clinic requirements in his or her area of expertise.

Experienced Judges holding an AQHA Versatility Ranch Horse card may be approved to judge AZVRHA events provided they have a complete understanding of our classes that differ from AQHA and upon acknowledging an understanding of our judging philosophy. All Judges holding an AQHA VRH card will be asked to complete a modified judges test that will cover AZVRHA Judging philosophy and Divisions or Classes that differ from AQHA VRH.

E. AZVRHA APPROVAL

The results of these evaluations will be considered by the AZVRHA Clinician/Judge Committee and the AZVRHA Board of Directors. Judges and Clinicians will be notified of acceptance within four weeks of completion.

F. CLINICIAN TENURE

All AZVRHA certified clinicians and judges perform services at the pleasure of the AZVRHA. The AZVRHA clinician/judges committee may discontinue such services based upon their sole evaluation of the clinician/judge's performance.

G. ETHICS

AZVRHA judges shall always represent themselves in a professional manner, including when acting as a clinician. Judges should dress appropriately and be courteous to exhibitors, show managers, and spectators. AZVRHA is a very friendly and educational association which encourages competitors at all levels to enjoy their horses and other riders in a relaxed, fun atmosphere. Judges are to keep this in mind while they base their judgement on AZVRHA rules and place horses accordingly. On show day judges should feel free to answer questions from exhibitors prior to the show in a friendly, educational manner. Judges shall refrain from any kind of coaching during competition. All questions should be answered in the context of the competition, not in reference to individual riders, horses, or their individual needs. A rider meeting prior to each class may encourage all competitors to feel comfortable with what is required in each class and clarify any questions concerning the rules. Judges should be available for a period at the conclusion of each show to clarify competitors' questions on score sheets.

- Judges may not judge members of their immediate family (spouse, significant other, son, daughter, parents, and grandparent) for awards or points. Family members may participate and be scored on score sheets provided to the participant; however, they will not be eligible for points or awards.
- In accordance with the spirit and intent of AZVRHA, horsemanship education of the rider and horse is the highest priority. To this end, there shall be no time separation required between rider instruction or horse training from a "Certified Professional" judging a Schooling Competition.
- Alleged clinician/judge professional misconduct may be presented to the Grievance Committee for action. Such grievances must be in writing and signed by at least two participants who observed the alleged misconduct.

H. GUEST CLINICIANS

Guest Clinicians may be used for clinics but cannot judge unless certified. If uncertified Guest Clinicians are used, a qualified person must be available to answer questions regarding rules.

V. GENERAL RULES FOR ASSOCIATION EVENTS

A. SELECTING JUDGES

Judges must be selected from the list of AZVRHA approved Clinicians and Judges.
(See Judges and Clinicians Section)

B. CLINICS

In keeping with the AZVRHA mission statement, where education is a priority, clinics should be offered throughout the year. These clinics can be part of a competition weekend, or they can be free-standing. Clinics can specialize in classes of ranch horse topics, or they can cover all five ranch horse classes. As the number of competitors and clinic participants grows, affiliates should make every effort to offer clinics that are accessible to riders of all levels. These educational opportunities should be equal in number to the competitive opportunities.

C. BACK-TO-BACK COMPETITIONS

If the same two Judges are used for both days, they must be flip-flopped. Judge #1 judges cutting, Ranch Reined Work and Ranch Cow Work during the first competition and Ranch Trail and Ranch Riding classes during second competition. Judge #2 the opposite. AZVRHA affiliate shows may be double judged.

D. CO-SANCTIONED EVENTS

AZVRHA will approve competitions held in conjunction with other Associations provided WSVHRA rules and ideals are followed. In the case of AZVRHA and AQHA Co-Sanctioned events, managers should make every attempt to follow AZVRHA rules where they are different but compatible with AQHA. For example, WS requires a “roping element” in the trail course design, AQHA does not. Event managers should work with the trail designer to try to include this element in the trail course. WS will defer to AQHA when rules or scoring is different and cannot be made compatible. AQHA score sheets will be accepted for scoring purposes.

E. EVENT AWARDS

Event Awards will be determined by event management. It is recommended that High Point and Reserve High Point awards in each Division be provided. Other awards may be presented at the sole discretion of the Event Manager. For a horse/rider team to be eligible for the division All-Around Award, the team must have participated in all five classes.

F. JACKPOT PAYBACK

In addition to the normal entry fee Limited, Intermediate, Advanced and Open divisions may collect and offer jackpot payback at event management discretion, which will be paid back to high point winners according to the payout schedule below. Jackpot is NOT offered in Novice and Youth divisions.

Amateurs may pay an additional Jackpot fee (one fee for the Amateur and one fee for the Open) and be entered in both division Jackpot's. The horse/rider will compete only once.

Jackpot Table: Number

of Horses Payback

1- 3	1st - 100%
4 - 7	1st - 60%, 2nd - 40%
8 - 12	1st - 50%, 2nd - 30%, 3rd - 20%
13 or more	1st - 40%, 2nd - 30%, 3rd - 20%, 4th - 10%

G. EQUIPMENT FAILURE:

If at any time during a performance a piece of equipment breaks, the rider may continue provided the broken equipment does not pose a hazard to the rider and/or is not cruel to the horse.

When two classes are run back-to-back, and equipment failure occurs during the first class and the rider is unable to continue because of the broken equipment the rider will receive a score of zero for the first class. The rider will not leave the working area before the second class but may have a "2- minute tack repair allowance" between classes. Outside help is allowed, the rider can dismount and pick up lost equipment or attire. A zero score in the second class for equipment failure will apply if the repair of equipment should exceed 2 minutes.

In the event a new cow is awarded during the cow work broken equipment may be repaired within a 1-minute time limit. The rider may not leave the arena and may not receive physical assistance or equipment from outside the arena. If the rider is unable to continue because of the broken equipment, the rider will be excused with a score of zero.

H. LAMENESS OR INCAPACITY

The judge may ask to view the horse at the trot either under saddle or in hand any time he/she has concerns regarding lameness. The judge has authority to excuse any horse from the class, due to lameness at any time while being judged and apply the appropriate penalties. Obvious lameness may result in a Disqualification and -0- score for the class.

Obvious lameness is:

1. Consistently observed at a trot under all circumstances
2. Marked nodding, hitching, or shortened stride
3. Minimal weight bearing in motion and/or at rest and inability to move

A judge may permit a horse with minor lameness to continue to exhibit without penalty if, in the judge's opinion, there is no risk of injury to either the horse or the rider by continuing to exhibit.

If at any time the horse is physically incapacitated the judge has the authority to blow a whistle and stop or excuse the exhibitor.

I. INHUMANE TREATMENT

Inhumane treatment of horses or cattle will not be tolerated. A rider displaying any form of inhumane treatment to his/her horse or entering the arena with illegal equipment will be immediately corrected by the judge, a penalty will be assessed, and the problem will be resolved before continuing.

Judges will have the authority to blow a whistle at any time to stop or excuse any exhibitor if there is concern about the safety or welfare of the cow, horse, or rider.

J. FALL OF HORSE OR RIDER:

In the event of a fall by a Horse or Rider, the run shall end when the rider or horse falls to the ground. A horse is considered to have fallen to the ground when the hip and shoulder are touching the ground, and all four feet are extended in the same direction. A rider falls when he or she is no longer astride the horse. A horse/rider team will be disqualified and receive a -0- score for the class.

K. COMPETING WITH MULTIPLE HORSES:

An amateur rider may compete on more than one horse in a competition. Each horse will be a separate entry and points will be earned based on each horse and rider combination.

The following rules apply.

- Novice, Intermediate, Limited, and Advanced Amateur riders may ride more than one horse in their respective divisions.
- Intermediate Amateur riders may ride in two divisions, Intermediate and Limited.
- Advanced Amateur riders may ride in Four divisions, Advanced, Intermediate, Limited, and Open.
- An individual horse may only be shown in one Amateur Division per rider per event.
- Placement Points are recorded based on one horse and one rider and are recorded in the Division earned, except for Open and JR Horses.
- A rider must enter all five classes in the same division on the same horse to be eligible for High Point All Around points.
- Open Division is open to any horse and any rider. Exception: Novice riders may not enter Open Cow Work or Open Cutting and Intermediate riders may not enter Open Cow Work and remain eligible for their respective divisions. See: Section II Eligibility Item D. Amateur Eligibility.
- Youth Riders may ride more than one horse in the Youth Division.

L. CLOSED ARENAS

No rider is allowed to work or warm up his/her horse in any arena, or course competition area, on the day of the school competition until the Event Manager allows horses into the arena/trail course. Once the trail course is set on competition day the course will be closed, no riding allowed on the course. Riders may dismount and walk the course on foot.

M. DISRUPTIVE HORSES

Any disruptive horse and or horse/rider team that poses a threat to the safety of others or the safety of the rider, in the judgment of the Clinician, Judge, or Event Manager, may be asked to leave the event. No refund of class or event will be given.

N. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

Conduct by Association members, non-members, exhibitors, trainers, owners, owner's representatives, spectators, and all other persons present on the Association event grounds shall be orderly, responsible, sportsmanlike, and humane in the treatment of horses. Any of these violations will be subject to disciplinary procedures.

O. FINANCIAL VIOLATIONS

Any member may be suspended and denied privileges of the Association, or any non-member may be denied the privilege of the Association by the Executive Committee of the Association, for the failure to pay, when due, any obligation owing the Association. Upon receipt of a fraudulent payment, a member or non-member will be notified in writing and given a reasonable amount of time to make the payment good. Repeat offenders will be put on a cash only basis. Failure to pay the amount owed to the Association or its sponsoring groups will result in the suspension of membership and all privileges.

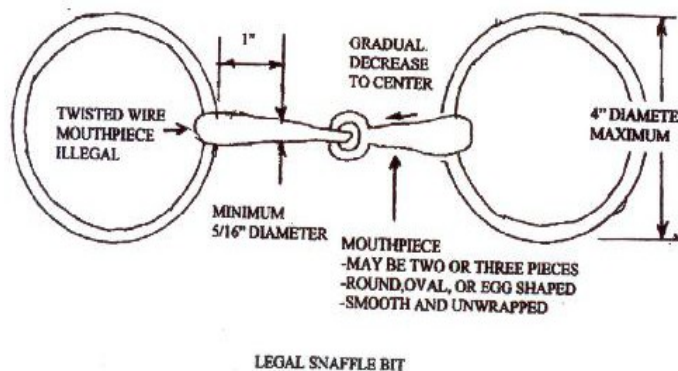
P. PROPER WESTERN ATTIRE

Exhibitors participating in Ranch Horse classes and turn-back riders in Ranch Cutting must wear a collared, long-sleeved shirt, a cowboy hat or helmet and western style boots. Chaps or Chinks are optional. Attire is casual for the day of the clinic. Penalty for competing in Improper Western Attire will be a disqualification and -0- score.

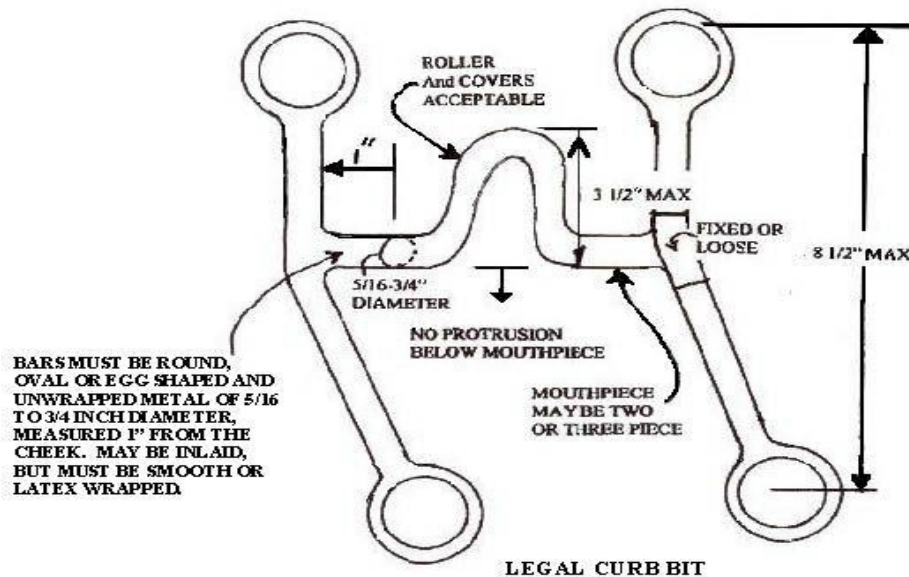
Q. TACK AND EQUIPMENT

In all Ranch Horse classes, horses will be shown in a western saddle and appropriate bridle, snaffle bit or hackamore for the duration of a class. A horse may be shown in different legal equipment (bridle, snaffle, or hackamore) in each class as desired. EXCEPTION: When classes run concurrently no change of equipment is allowed between classes. Silver equipment will not count over a good working outfit.

Horses 5 years old and younger may be shown in a snaffle bit, hackamore, curb bit, half-breed or spade bit. If shown in anything other than a snaffle bit or hackamore rider must show one handed except for the Walk/Trot, Novice, and Novice Youth Divisions. A violation of this rule will result in a major penalty and will be scored as "OP" - the horse/rider team may not place above others who have completed the pattern correctly.



Horses 6 years and older may only be shown in a curb bit, half-breed or spade bit. When a curb is used a curb strap or curb chain is required, but must meet the approval of the judge, be at least one-half inch width and lie flat against the jaw of the horse. Curb chains cannot be tied to the bit with string or cord. A broken strap or chain does not necessarily result in a major penalty. Both split reins and reins and romel are appropriate tack for a Sr. Horse.



If you have a question, approach the Judge/Clinician prior to the event to review tack.

1. Optional Equipment:

- Rope or riata; if used, the rope or riata must be coiled and attached to the saddle.
- Hobbles attached to saddle
- Tapaderos are allowed except in working cow horse
- Protective boots, leg wraps, and bandages are allowed
- Spurs: not to be used forward of the cinch
- Chaps or Chinks

2. Prohibited Equipment:

- Wire chin straps, regardless of how padded or covered
- Any chin strap or chain narrower than one-half inch
- Martingales and draw reins
- Nosebands, cavesson, tie downs and roping reins

3. References to hackamores mean the use of a flexible, braided rawhide, leather or rope bosal, the core of which must be nonmetal and flexible. A hackamore must use a complete mecate rein, which must include a lead-rein. Absolutely no rigid material will be permitted under the jaws, regardless of how padded or covered. Horsehair bosals are prohibited.

4. References to snaffle bits in western performance classes a snaffle bit means the conventional O-ring, egg-butt, or D ring with ring no larger than 4" (100mm). The inside circumference of the ring must be free of rein, curb or headstall attachments which would provide leverage. The mouthpiece should be round, oval, or egg-shaped, smooth, and unwrapped metal. It may be inlaid, or smooth latex wrapped. The bars must be a minimum of 5/16 (8mm) in diameter, measured one inch (25mm) in front of the cheek with a gradual decrease to the center of the snaffle. The mouthpiece may be two or three pieces. A three piece, connecting ring of 1 ¼ " (32mm) or less in diameter, or a connecting flat bar of 3/8" to 3/4" (10mm to 20mm) measured top to bottom, with a maximum length of 2" (50mm), which lies flat in the horse's mouth, is acceptable. When using a snaffle bit a leather or other woven material chin strap of any width is to be used and should be attached to the bit below the reins. No iron, chain or other material is allowed. The chin strap is allowed to include metal buckles and/or keepers. A twisted wire mouthpiece may not be used. When exhibiting in a snaffle bit or hackamore, an exhibitor may switch between two hand and one hand on the reins at any time.

5. Reference to a curb bit: A curb bit must have a solid or broken mouthpiece that acts with leverage. All curb bits must be free of mechanical device and should be considered a standard western bit. A description of a legal, standard western bit includes:

- 8 1/2" (215mm) maximum length shank to be measured as indicated in the following diagram. Shanks may be fixed or loose.
- Concerning mouthpieces, bars must be round, oval, or egg-shaped, smooth, and unwrapped metal of 5/16" to 3/4" (8mm to 20mm) in diameter, measured 1" (25mm) from the cheek. They may be inlaid but must be smooth or latex wrapped. Nothing may protrude below the mouthpiece (bar), such as extensions or prongs including upward prongs on solid mouthpieces. The mouthpiece may be two or three pieces. A three piece, connecting ring of 1 1/4" (32mm) or less in diameter, or a connecting flat bar of 3/8" to 3/4" (10mm to 20mm) measured top to bottom with a maximum length of 2" (50mm), which lies flat in the horse's mouth is acceptable.
- The port must be no higher than 3 1/2" (90mm) maximum, with rollers and covers acceptable. Broken mouthpieces, half-breeds and spades are standard.
- Slip or gag bits, and donut and flat polo mouthpieces are not acceptable.

6. Reference to romal: A romal is an extension of braided or round material attached to closed reins. The reins can be held in either hand, with hand around reins in a fist position with thumbs up. The non-rein hand must be on the romal. (The keeper, or hobble, which attaches the romal to the reins is a part of the romal.) The non-rein hand is not allowed to touch the reins. No fingers are permitted between the reins in bridle classes, except in the Two Rein class. The romal shall not be used forward of the cinch or to signal or cue the horse in any way. The rider is allowed to shorten the reins while the horse is in motion if their hands are held in a legal manner.

In trail, it is permissible to prepare to or to work an obstacle by changing hands, adjusting the romal to the opposite side or holding both reins and romal in the same hand even while in motion. It is permissible to hold the reins and romal in one hand while working a cow.

7. Reference to use of hands-on split reins: Only one hand may be used on the reins, and the hand must not be changed, except for junior horses (5 years old or less) shown with hackamore or snaffle bit

and Novice and Walk/Trot riders shown in any bit. The hand is to be around the reins. Index finger only between split reins is permitted. A violation of this rule will result in a major penalty and will be scored as "OP" - the horse/rider team may not place above others who have completed the pattern correctly. In trail, it is permissible to change hands to work an obstacle on any age horse.

8. Reference to the Two Rein Bridle: Open to horses of any age that have not shown in the bridle down the fence or in boxing in any judged classes or events except for horse sales, prior to the first day of the current show season. A horse may be shown in the two-rein equipment for one year only regardless of the class it is shown in. The rider must use an approved bit with an approved bosal underneath the bridle. Only one hand may be used on the reins and hands must not be changed. Any number of fingers between the reins will be permitted. In trail, it is permissible to change hands to work an obstacle.

9. Reference to the Get Down: A "get down" is defined as a rope tied around a horse's neck with intended use to lead or tie the horse. The end or "lead" part of the Mecate in a legal hackamore or snaffle or a two-rein set up may also be used. The get-down rope may also be run through a bosalito, as long as the bosalito is not tight enough to function as a cavesson. If a bosalito is used, it must allow approximately 2 fingers (1 inch) to pass freely between the nose and the bosalito. The bosalito must be constructed of a flexible braided rawhide, leather or rope, the core of which must be flexible. In any other case a rope tied or looped through a bosal or nose band of any kind will be considered illegal equipment and will result in a score of -0-.

R. UNFORSEEN SITUATIONS

Rules are designed to be followed and should be the first choice in every circumstance, however not all circumstances can be foreseen. Decisions or situations not covered by this Rule Book shall be decided by the Event Manager, with consultation from a Board Member and/or the Judges/Clinicians.

These decisions are to be made using common sense and vetted through the following criteria:

1. Is this a Safety issue? Always err on the side of Safety.
2. What is the intent of the decision? The intent must meet the primary objective of our Mission Statement, which is Fun and Education and to serve the greater good, keeping the membership's best interest in mind.
3. Does this uphold the integrity of the Association with members, volunteers, sponsors, suppliers, vendors, and bystanders?
4. To protect the integrity of the organization any rule decision made with mal intent to inappropriately advance or hinder any member or participant shall be dealt with severely.

VI. SCORING

A. SCORING SYSTEM

Western States Versatility Ranch Horse Association Scoring System uses a 70-basis scoring system that is designed to give credit to each rider for the work completed. The system is designed to provide the most possible feedback, record of the rider's work, to be positive and straight forward, and to encourage growth and improvement in both horse and rider.

B. JUDGES SCORE SHEET

Each Horse and Rider team begins the run with a score of 70 points. The judge evaluates the quality of each maneuver and records a Judges Score of one of the following on the score sheet; +1 ½ Excellent, +1 Very Good, + ½ Good, 0 Correct, -½ Needs Improvement, -1 Poor, -1 ½ Very Poor. Penalties are also recorded and deducted from the total Judges Score. The entire class will be scored and placed (i.e., 20 horse/rider teams will result in 20 placings).

In the case of a horse/rider team incurring ANY Major Penalty they will be scored with the notation "OP," the horse/rider team may not place above others who have completed the pattern or requirements of the class correctly. While this term was originally derived from "Off Pattern," it is now a designation you will see that indicates you have received any kind of Major Penalty listed below.

Major Penalties – (OP) Off Pattern

Open Division - Complete loss of rope (falls completely to the ground prior to roping the cow)

Amateur and Youth - Complete loss of rope (falls completely to the ground once committed to roping the cow)

Failure to dally and remain dallied during log drag

Failure to attempt any part of the class

Repeated blatant disobedience

Schooling After entering the arena prior to calling for the cow

Schooling horse between cows if a new cow is awarded Turning Tail

Breaking pattern

Inclusion of a maneuver (i.e., over or under spinning, backing more than two strides) Third refusal

No attempt to perform obstacle

Failure to attempt to cut two cows (cutting or working begins when entering the herd) Two hands on the reins except in a snaffle or hackamore except in the Novice and Walk/Trot Divisions

More than one Finger between split reins or any fingers between romal reins (except for the two rein)

Horse and Rider teams will be disqualified for the following reasons in all classes:

DQ -0- SCORE

Inhumane Treatment Lameness or incapacity Illegal or failed equipment Fall of horse or rider

Improper Western Attire Disrespect or misconduct

Leave area before pattern complete

Out of control, endangering the rider (judge blows whistle and ends the work)

Disqualified riders with a -0- score will count as entries in the class but will not receive placement points. For example, in a class with ten horses where one horse/rider team is disqualified, the first- place horse/rider team gets ten placement points, the ninth-place horse/rider team gets two points, and the disqualified horse/rider team gets 0 points. The last point is not given because the disqualified horse/rider team gets no points. This system will be used for any size class and may include more than one disqualification or -0- Score.

C. POINT BASED SCORING SYSTEM

Horse/Rider teams are awarded one point for each horse/rider team they beat, plus one point. Points will be awarded to all horse/rider teams in the class, except for a DQ score. For example, if there are eight riders in a class the first-place horse/rider team will be awarded eight placement points and the eighth-place team will be awarded one placement point. If there are twenty riders in a class, the first-place team will be awarded twenty placement points, the twelfth-place team will be awarded twelve points and so forth.

Only horses entered in All Around will receive points toward the all-around division. For example, if there are 20 horses in a class and only 9 are in the all-around there will only be 9 points awards/available from that class towards the All-Around Division.

Placement Points earned at the AZVRHA Year-End Championship will be included when determining Year-End High Point and Individual Class Awards. All participants (rider/horse teams, Open and JR Horses) will begin the new event year with ZERO (0) Placement Points.

D. BREAKING TIES:

All-around ties for competition and year-end awards will be decided by the highest placing in the Ranch Cow Work class in the applicable division. If a tie still exists, the tie breakers will be in this order: Cutting, Ranch Rein Work, Ranch Trail, and Ranch Riding.

Ties within a class will first be broken by total number of penalty points in that class, except for Ranch Cow Work where roping will be the first tie breaker. If the tie is still not broken, specific maneuvers have been designated and will be used. If the tie is still not broken the judge will make the decision. The first tie breaker in a class will be Total Penalty Points. Regarding the Amateur Ranch Cow Work, if a tie exists between a rider who roped and a rider who circled, the tie breaker goes to the rider who roped. If a tie still exists, the preferred class tie breakers will be as follows:

Ranch Cutting

Total penalty points
First cut herd work
First cut control of cow
Second cut herd work

Ranch Trail

Total Penalty Points
Rope Handling
Log Drag
Gate

Ranch Riding

Total Penalty Points
Extended Trot
Transition down lope to trot
Transition up trot to lope

Ranch Reined Work

Total Penalty Points
First Lead Change
First Spin
First Stop

Ranch Cow Work

Total Penalty Points
Rope/Rope Handling
Box Cow
First turn on the fence
Position and Control
Degree of difficulty

VII. CLASS RULES & REGULATIONS

AZVRHA offers Five (5) classes in each division; Ranch Riding, Ranch Trail, Ranch Reined Work, Ranch Cow Work and Ranch Cutting. Exhibitors may enter any one or all of the classes in the Division in which they are qualified to participate under the following conditions.

- An exhibitor must enter all 5 classes in one division to be eligible to earn points toward ANY All-Around High Point award, whether it be the Event High Point or the Year End High Point.
- Amateur Exhibitors may ride two horses in two different divisions if they are eligible in both divisions, (see Section V, Item J. - Competing with Multiple Horses).
- An individual horse may only be shown in one Amateur division per rider.
- Open Division is open to any horse and any rider. Exception: Novice riders may not enter Open Cow Work or Open Cutting and Intermediate riders may not enter Open Cow Work and remain eligible for their respective divisions. See: Section II Eligibility Item D. Amateur Eligibility.

- Classes may only be entered one time per horse per division.
- Placement Points are recorded based on one horse/rider team in the Division earned, except for Open and JR Horses.
- Year End High Point Horse and Rider teams in each Division in each class will be recognized.

A. RANCH RIDING

Ranch Riding patterns will be designed to evaluate the Horse and Rider's ability to execute a set of maneuvers with precision and smoothness that should simulate that of a working ranch horse being ridden out in big country, outside the confines of an arena.

A good Versatility Ranch Horse has a free-flowing stride of reasonable length in keeping with his conformation. He should be able to smoothly cover ground with little effort at a working speed while under control. Light contact should be rewarded, and the horse shall not be shown on a full drape of reins. When asked to extend, he should move out with the same flowing motion. Maximum credit should be given to the balanced, and willing horse that gives the appearance of being a pleasure to ride.

The horse's head and neck should be in a relaxed natural position, his poll level with or slightly above his withers. He should not be overly flexed at the poll, in an unnatural position or be excessively nosed out, in a resistant stance. He should have a bright attentive expression with his ears alert.

Patterns

One of AQHA's Ranch Riding Patterns may be used or the judge or show management may design a pattern. The pattern MUST include the following.

- Horses will be shown individually at three gaits; walk, trot and lope in each direction of the arena.
- Horse is to perform an extended trot and an extended lope in at least one direction each.
- Horses will also be asked to stop and settle, back up and reverse in the pattern. The reverse may be from a stop or at any gait. Reverse can be either direction as designated in the pattern. If the reverse is on the rail, it should be performed turning away from the rail.
- Distances between transitions should be great enough to allow the horse to transition into gait, adequately display the gait and begin collection for the next transition. Suggested distances of gaits can be found in the gait descriptions below but should take into consideration arena size and space.
- The sequence of transitions should be practical and simulate those that would be made riding in the pasture. i.e., Why would a pasture rider go from an extended gait to a walk without first collecting?
- Both simple and flying lead changes are allowed, to be judged on the quality of the maneuver.
- Multiple sharp turns and lead changes are discouraged and are better placed in the Ranch Trail.
- Management may post the pattern at any time, and it must be posted at least one hour prior to competition.

The horse/rider team will be judged on the form and quality of the following elements of the pattern and for performing the patterns in the correct working order with precision. Credit will also be given for making a smooth transition between the gaits at the designated marker, for keeping the correct lead and for maintaining the gait in the pattern.

- Contact with the bit should be maintained, excessively draped reins are not desirable and will be

a deduction.

- Horses shall be shown individually and will consist of pattern work that may be laid out either inside an arena or outside on natural terrain.
- Markers or signs may be used to designate gait change location.
- All runs begin upon entering the pen; any infractions (such as two hands on the reins, etc.) are subject to penalty at that time.
- When AZVRHA runs concurrent with AQHA an AQHA pattern will be approved for that event

See www.AZVRHA.com for patterns and score sheets or Appendix C in the Rule Book

Walk – is straight, square, flat-footed, relaxed. The horse moves freely with no anticipation of moving to the next gait. The walk is a natural, flat-footed, four-beat gait. The horse must move straight and true at the walk. The walk must be alert, with a stride of reasonable length in keeping with the size of the horse. A suggested walking distance would be approximately 100’

Extended Walk - The extended walk is an obvious lengthening of the stride, which will naturally increase the pace. The horse moves in a natural manner (not a running walk) as if it were moving across an open pasture.

Trot – The trot should be square, balanced and straight, ground covering a two-beat diagonal gait with forward movement of the feet. A suggested distance for the trot would be approximately 150’ and is to be ridden with rider sitting the trot.

Extended Trot – When extending the trot, the horse moves out with the same smooth way of going this gait is level, flat, and steady. The extended trot shows lengthening of stride from the regular trot with the same cadence that will cause an increase in speed. Sitting, posting, or standing and holding the saddle horn will be acceptable riding techniques. Extended trot would be approximately 175’

Lope – The lope is a 3-beat gait that is cadenced, straight and steady. The horse should lope with a natural stride and appear relaxed and smooth. A four-beat gait is to be penalized. The head should be carried in a natural position suitable to the horse’s conformation. The lope would be approximately 200’.

Extended Lope – When extending the lope, the horse moves out with the same smooth way of going. The extended lope shows lengthening of stride from the regular lope with the same cadence that will cause an increase in speed. The horse holds a steady gait and increased speed while being under control. An extended lope would be approximately 200’.

Stop – From both the lope and the trot, the horse should be in the correct stopping position (i.e., both hocks engaged and stopping on the hindquarters). All four feet stop moving before the next maneuver is attempted. The quality of the stop is judged; a long slide is not credit earning.

Reverse – The horse turns briskly and flat with front feet on the ground and holding an inside rear pivot foot. The reverse may be performed in either direction as designated by the pattern. The reverse is not intended to be a “roll back.”

Gaited Horse Provision - In the case of gaited horses, there are a variety of cadences that will not be recognized as a four-beat walk or a three-beat lope. We will refer to this as the “intermediate” gait, and it will serve as the “trot” in those portions of Trail, Ranch Riding and Reined Work where a trot is called for. Horses performing an intermediate gait will not be penalized or receive an off-pattern for failing to execute a two-beat trot. However, that gait must be consistent and cadenced throughout the maneuver. This intermediate gait will be subject to the usual break of gait penalty and the usual maneuver score variation. The extended trot should exhibit a visible lengthening of the stride in an intermediate gait.

Scoring

Each maneuver will receive a Judge's Score that will be added or subtracted from 70 and will be scored on the following basis, ranging from +1 1/2 Excellent, +1 Very Good, +1/2 Good, 0 Correct, -1/2 Needs Improvement, -1 Poor, -1 1/2 Very Poor

In addition, each maneuver is subject to penalties, the penalties should be assessed per occurrence as follows:

1 POINT PENALTY

- A. Too slow at any gait per maneuver
- F. Break of gait at walk or trot for two strides or LESS
- B. Over bridled per maneuver
- F. Out of frame per maneuver
- S. Wrong lead or out of lead for 2 strides or less

3 POINT PENALTY

- B. Break of gait at lope, except when correcting an incorrect lead
- G. Break of Gait at walk or trot for MORE than two strides
- L. Wrong Lead or Out of lead for MORE than two strides
- R. Draped Reins per maneuver
- S. Out of lead or cross cantering more than 2 strides when changing leads
- T. Trotting more than three strides when making a simple lead change
- V. Trotting more than 3 strides in lope departures or when exiting a rollback
- Z. Severe disturbance of any obstacle

5 POINT PENALTY

- B. Spurring or hitting in front of the cinch at any time
- D. Blatant disobedience for each refusal
- F. Instill fear or praise

MAJOR PENALTY - "OP": Cannot place above others who complete pattern correctly

- A. Eliminate or add maneuver
- B. Incomplete Maneuver
- D. Repeated blatant Disobedience
- H. Use of 2 hands (except in snaffle bit or hackamore and Novice, Novice youth and Walk/Trot Divisions), more than one Finger between split reins or any fingers between romal reins (except for the two rein)

DISQUALIFIED – DQ (score -0-)

- A. Willful Abuse
- B. Lameness
- G. Illegal equipment including hoof black, braided, or banded manes, or tail extensions
- H. Leaving Arena before pattern is complete
- N. Improper Western Attire
- D. Disrespect or misconduct
- F. Fall of horse/rider

Judging Ranch Riding and Trail Concurrently:

The Ranch Riding and Ranch Trail classes may be run concurrently with one draw to save time and simplify the schedule at the discretion of the Event Manager. Each class will be judged separately using a separate score sheet for each class. When judging concurrently, the requirement for the walk, trot, and lope must be included in the trail course. When Ranch Trail and Ranch Riding are run concurrently no change of equipment is allowed between classes.

B. RANCH TRAIL

General

Ranch Trail consists of a course with no more than (9) and no less than (6) obstacles including 3 gaits and a “rope handling” element that is designed to show a horse's ability and willingness to perform tasks that might be asked of him during a normal day's ranch work. The horse will be judged on his performance over the obstacles with emphasis on manners, response to the rider and quality of movement. Credit will be given to horses negotiating the obstacles smoothly, with style and without delay and for showing attentiveness to the obstacles with the capability of picking their own way through the course. Light contact should be rewarded, and the horse shall not be shown on a full drape of reins. Horses with artificial appearance over obstacles should be penalized.

While on the line of travel between obstacles the horse's head and neck should be in a relaxed, natural position. His poll level with or slightly above his withers and not be overly flexed at the poll, giving an unnatural appearance, or be excessively nosed out in a resistant stance. He should have a bright attentive expression with his ears alert.

Gaited Horse Provision - In the case of gaited horses, there are a variety of cadences that will not be recognized as a four-beat walk or a three-beat lope. We will refer to this as the “intermediate” gait, and it will serve as the “trot” in those portions of Trail, Ranch Riding and Reined Work where a trot is called for. Horses performing an intermediate gait will not be penalized or receive an off-pattern for failing to execute a two-beat trot. However, that gait must be consistent and cadenced throughout the maneuver. This intermediate gait will be subject to the usual break of gait penalty and the usual maneuver score variation. The extended trot should exhibit a visible lengthening of the stride in an intermediate gait.

Trail Course

To further promote the Ranch, the feel of this class is desirable to use realistic or natural obstacles such as natural logs for walking, trot, and lope overs. Traditional painted trail poles and pots of artificial flowers are discouraged, natural limbs, brush and plants are preferred. Ranch Trail decorations should continue the Ranch theme with use of Natural or Realistic items or elements found outside or on a Ranch. In addition, it is desirable for the course to be set outside of an arena using the natural terrain of the land whenever possible.

- Horses are to be shown at three gaits: a ground-covering walk, working trot and lope.
- A distance of at least 30 feet or more is mandatory between obstacles to evaluate the horse's way of go at each gait.
- A combination of two or more obstacles is permissible.
- During the clinic, the riders may practice the actual elements of the trail course but may not set the pattern.
- Management may post the pattern at any time, and it must be posted at least one hour prior to competition. Printed trail patterns for riders are helpful, encouraged and may be handed out

prior to competition day.

Competition Day

- The competition trail course will not be set prior to the day of competition.
- On competition day the riders may walk the course on foot or observe from outside of the course on horseback, but no horse/rider teams are allowed on the actual course after it has been set until the horse/rider team's run begins.

Trail Safety

Common sense and safety considerations should be exercised in all maneuvers. The judge will walk the course and has the right and duty to alter the course if the design is unsafe or unreasonable. If at any time during competition a trail obstacle is deemed unsafe by the judge, it shall be repaired or removed from the course. If it cannot be repaired and horses have completed the course, the score for that obstacle shall be deducted from all previous works for that class.

The judge may ask a rider to move on to the next obstacle if the horse/rider is unable to complete the maneuver in a reasonable amount of time or if the Judge deems that the rider is or will be in an unsafe situation. Appropriate penalties will apply.

Prohibited Obstacles

Tarps, water obstacles with slick bottoms, tires, rocking or teeter totter bridges, rope gates, logs or poles elevated in a manner that permits such to roll in a dangerous manner.

Mandatory Obstacles

Work a gate: Open, pass through and close the gate per the instructions provided on the trail course pattern. Management will use a gate that will not endanger horse or rider and must be a hinged swinging gate (not a rope gate). The rein hand may be changed to work the gate without penalty.

Rope Handling: There will be a designated element on the course where the judge will dedicate the score to rope handling. This must include building and throwing a loop while mounted. Rope handling may be required while in motion. Recoiling and re-fastening the rope could be included at management's discretion. This element could be in addition to the log drag (such as rope a dummy), or somehow incorporated into the log drag. For example, the same log could be roped, dragged, and scored as two separate elements.

Drag: Horse must be willing to drag an object for a short distance either in a straight line or around a set pattern. Rope should be dallied around the saddle horn and not tied hard and fast. Rope handling and management are crucial and will be included in the evaluation.

Optional Obstacles

Management is not limited to the following obstacles but when setting courses, be mindful that the idea is not to trap a horse/rider team or eliminate it by making an obstacle too difficult or "spooky."

Only elements which would normally be encountered in an outdoor setting, and which are not used to “spook” a horse may be used. Management may offer alternative obstacles to be used by the Novice Amateur riders.

Dismounts unbridle and bridle: The horse shall remain quiet while the rider dismounts, (Hobbles and legal get downs are permitted), and removes the bit completely from the horse's mouth and re-bridles. The horse should remain still and quiet as the rider remounts, leaving a loose rein. Exhibitors have the option of using a mounting block to remount. Reins and romal may be left over the horse's neck providing the reins are slack. NOTE: The horse may shift his weight during the process of dismounting and remounting.

Water hazard: The horse should show willingness to cross a small ditch or shallow pond (or simulated water obstacle if it does not have a slick bottom).

Pick up feet: Demonstrate horse's willingness to stand quietly and willingly allow the rider to pick up one, two, three or all four feet.

Ground Tying: The horse shall remain in place while the rider dismounts and performs a normal ranch task such as moving a rail or bucket etc. The exhibitor may drop split reins to ground or leave one rein draped on the saddle horn. If rider is using reins and romal he/she may unsnap one rein and drop to the ground or loop the romal over the saddle horn with slack in the reins without penalty. If a get down rope is used, uncoil, and drop to the ground with the romal looped over the saddle horn with slack in the reins. Hobbles may be used without penalty

Put on and remove a slicker: Rider approaches slicker, removes slicker from holder, puts on slicker and replaces slicker to the holder.

Remove, carry, and replace item: Requires the exhibitor to carry or remove an item that is used every day on horseback such as mail from a mailbox, sack, rope, etc.

Wooden Bridge: Horse shows willingness to walk across obstacles designed to simulate a bridge.

Ride over obstacles on the ground: obstacles are typically logs or poles.

- **Walk-overs:** Walk over no more than five logs or poles. The space between logs or poles should be 26-30 inches. The formation may be straight, curved, zigzagged, or raised.
- **Trot-overs:** Trot over no more than five logs or poles no more than 10 inches high. The space between logs or poles should be 30 to 42 inches. The formation can also be straight, curved, zigzagged, or raised.
- **Lope-overs:** Lope over no more than five logs or poles no more than 10 inches high. The space between logs or poles should be 6 to 7 feet. The formation can also be straight, curved, zigzagged, or raised.

Stationary steer: This obstacle is used to show the willingness of the horse to have a rope thrown from its back. The judge will give credit to the horse that stands quietly while the contestant makes the swing and throws at the stationary steer. Shying from the rope will be penalized. Credit will be given for good rope handling and a catch. Only one loop will be allowed. Fast and efficient loop build and put away after roping will be rewarded.

Back, backing through an obstacle: obstacles may include poles on the ground in some form of chute, cones in a pattern such as a figure "8" or other objects like trees or natural landscape elements.

Side pass obstacle: Any object which is safe and of any length may be used to demonstrate the responsiveness of the horse to leg signals. Raised side pass obstacles should not exceed 12 inches.

Crossing unevenly placed brush or logs: Obstacle will to be judged on willingness to cross with additional credit for picking way through. Minor ticks will not be penalized.

Course Maintenance

Care should be taken by Event Management that the course be reset after each run to ensure each exhibitor is presented with an identical course. (i.e., log/brush spacing, rope coil and log location for log drag, etc.)

- All runs begin upon entering the pen; any infractions (such as two hands on the reins, etc.) are subject to penalty at that time.
- It is permissible to prepare to work, or to work, an obstacle by changing hands on the reins, adjusting the romal to the opposite side or holding both reins and romal in the same hand even while in motion.
- The rider has the option of skipping any obstacle, however this will result in a major penalty and will be scored as "OP" the horse/rider team may not place above others who have completed the pattern correctly.
- A Judge may ask a horse to pass on an obstacle after three refusals or at any time for safety concerns. A refusal includes but is not limited to taking a step backward, turning away more than 90 degrees or exceeding a reasonable amount of time without performing the maneuver.

Scoring

Each maneuver will receive a Judge's Score that will be added to or subtracted from 70 and will be scored on the following basis, ranging from +1 1/2 Excellent, +1 Very Good, +1/2 Good, 0 Correct, -1/2 Needs Improvement, -1 Poor, -1 1/2 Very Poor.

In addition, each maneuver is subject to penalties, the penalties should be assessed per occurrence as follows:

1 POINT PENALTY

B. Over bridled per maneuver

F. Out of frame per maneuver

G. Break of Gait at walk or trot for two strides or LESS

H. Each hit, bite, push or stepping on a log, cone, plant, gate, or any component of the obstacle.
(Ticks through brush piles or jumbles will not be penalized)

K. Skipping over or failing to step into required space

P. Split pole in lope over

S. One or two steps on dismount/ground tie except shifting to balance

T. Both front and hind feet in a singled stride slot or space at a walk or trot

V. Wrong lead or out of lead for 2 strides or less

3 POINT PENALTY

- B. Break of Gait at walk or trot for MORE than two strides
- F. Break of gait at lope, except when correcting an incorrect lead
- G. Wrong lead or out of lead for more than 2 strides
- H. Draped reins (per maneuver)
- K. 3 or 4 steps on mount/dismount or ground tie
- S. Trotting more than 3 strides in lope departure or exiting a rollback
- T. Knocking over or severely disturbing an obstacle
- V. Stepping out of or falling off an obstacle with 1 foot
- Z. Missing or evading a part of log/obstacle with 1 foot

5 POINT PENALTY

- B. Spurring or hitting in front of the cinch at any time
- C. Blatant Disobedience for each refusal
- E. Use of either hand to instill Fear or praise
- K. Stepping out or falling off an obstacle with MORE than 1 foot
- L. Letting go of gate
- O. Dropping an object required to be carried slicker, rope etc.
- R. First or Second Refusal cumulative
- S. FIVE or more steps on dismount or ground tie

MAJOR PENALTY - "OP": Cannot place above others who complete pattern correctly

- P. Eliminate or add maneuver
- Q. Incomplete maneuver
- R. Third refusal
- E. Repeated blatant disobedience
- D. Failure to dally and remain dallied during log drag
- H. Use of 2 hands (except in snaffle bit or hackamore), more than one Finger between split reins or any fingers between romal reins (except for the two rein)
- N. Failure to open and shut gate, or failure to complete gate

DISQUALIFIED – DQ (score -0-)

- A. Inhumane Treatment
- B. Lameness
- G. Illegal or failed equipment
- H. Leaving Arena before pattern is complete
- N. Improper Western Attire
- D. Disrespect or misconduct
- F. Fall of horse/rider
- G. Out of control, endangering the rider (judge blows whistle and ends the work)

C. RANCH CUTTING:

Ranch Cutting classes are judged on the ability of the horse to cut a single cow by separating it from the herd and holding it to demonstrate the horse's ability to work the cow. Credit will be given to those horses who demonstrate excellence in their herd work, control of the cow and degree of difficulty of the cow drawn, within the time allowed. Control of the cow is demonstrated by driving and setting the cow up to cut and working in the center of the arena.

General Rules and Regulations

The cattle will be located at one end of the arena. The first horse/rider to work a fresh herd will be responsible for selecting the herd settler and making the call as to when the herd is properly settled for cutting. Herd settlers and turnback riders do not have to be exhibitors. The Judge should oversee the herd settling process and should intervene if the settling process is not being done in an adequate manner to allow for a reasonable herd for the cutting class. The judge has the authority to ask another rider to settle the herd.

All Riders will demonstrate the horse/rider ability by cutting two (2) cows in two (2) minutes. The rider will drive the first cow from the herd, holding it in the middle of the arena. When satisfied that the horse has proven its cutting ability, the rider will then quit the cow and return to the herd to select a second cow. Horses will not be penalized for reining during the cutting portion but should display natural ability. A rider may hold the horn at any time during the ranch cutting without penalty.

- There will be two (2) cows per contestant in each herd.
- The minimum number of cattle in the herd will be ten.
- Each exhibitor must work two head of cattle within the 2-minute time limit allowed, working, or cutting begins when the horse enters the herd.
- The 2-minute time limit will begin when a rider crosses a predetermined and marked timeline. The rider will be given a 1-minute warning.
- Riders may legally quit the second cow before the two-minute time limit has expired.
- Once a rider has made a specific move on one cow and the cow is lost back to the herd it is considered one of your two cows.
- The cutter may quit the cow he is working on when that cow is obviously turned away from the horse or when the cow comes to a dead stop in the arena. If the rider quits at any other time, he is penalized three (3) points for a hot quit.
- Unnecessary roughness or disturbing the herd excessively will result in the judge terminating the run and a score of -0- will result. In the event of excessive disturbance of the herd during competition, the herd may be re-settled before the next rider begins his/her work, at the discretion of the Judge.
- If the rider heads back toward the herd after he/she has completed cutting two cows, the judge may blow the whistle to end the run. No penalty applies.

Herd Holders and Turn Back Riders

Show management may supply two herd holders and two turn back riders, or exhibitors may supply their own helpers. If an exhibitor is a herd holder or turnback rider, he or she may use the horse that they are competing on or use a different horse. Herd help must be wearing appropriate western attire.

Scoring

Each maneuver will receive a Judge's Score that will be added to or subtracted from 70 and will be scored on the following basis, ranging from +1 1/2 Excellent, +1 Very Good, +1/2 Good, 0 Correct, -1/2 Needs Improvement, -1 Poor, -1 1/2 Very Poor

In addition, each maneuver is subject to penalties, the penalties should be assessed per occurrence as follows:

1 POINT PENALTY

- A. Loss of working advantage
- C. Working out of position
- D. Toe, foot, or stirrup on the shoulder
- V. Over Bridled (per maneuver)
- W. Out of Frame (per maneuver)

3 POINT PENALTY

- A. Hot Quit
- B. Cattle picked up or scattered
- D. Back Fence
- E. Biting or striking the cow
- F. Spurring on Shoulder

5 POINT PENALTY

- A. Quitting the cow
- E. Blatant disobedience
- D. Failure to separate a single cow after leaving the herd
- B. Losing the cow back to the herd
- C. Changing cattle after a specific commitment

MAJOR PENALTY - "OP": Cannot place above others who complete pattern correctly

- A. Turn Tail
- E. Repeated blatant disobedience
- B. Use of 2 hands (except in snaffle bit or hackamore)
- C. More than one Finger between split reins or any fingers between romal reins (except for the two rein)
- T. Failure to cut two cows (cutting begins when the rider enters the herd)

DISQUALIFIED – DQ (score -0-)

- A. Inhumane Treatment
- B. Lameness
- E. Excessive disturbance of the herd to the point that exhibitor is asked to leave the arena
- G. Illegal or failed equipment
- H. Leaving Arena before pattern is complete
- N. Improper Western Attire
- D. Disrespect or misconduct
- F. Fall of horse/rider

D. RANCH REINED WORK

Reined work is a judged event designed to show the athletic ability of the Versatility Ranch Horse in the confines of a show arena. The best reined horse should be willingly guided or controlled with little or no apparent resistance and should respond to the rider's subtle cues. Credit will be given for smoothness, finesse, attitude, quickness, and authority in performing the various maneuvers while using controlled speed.

An approved pattern will be used by all contestants in all divisions. (See Appendix for patterns) Each contestant will perform the required pattern individually. After completing the pattern, the "ranch reined work" portion will be complete. If the Reined Work and Cow Work are run concurrently, the rider

will signal to the cow boss that he/she is ready for a cow to be released into the arena.

General Rules and Regulations

- All horses will be judged immediately upon entering the arena.
- Ranch Reined Work and Ranch Cow Work may be run concurrently with one draw; however, event management may run the classes under separate draws if extenuating conditions exist.
- The classes may be run independently to facilitate running concurrent events with other Associations.
- When run concurrently there will be no schooling allowed between completion of the reined work and the cow work, or between cows if a new cow is awarded. The penalty for this is a Major Penalty and will be scored as “OP” and the rider cannot place higher than a rider that does not have a major penalty on the Ranch Cow Work score sheet.
- When Reined Work and Cow Work are run concurrently no change of equipment is allowed between classes.
- A break of pattern will result in a Major Penalty and will be scored as “OP,” and the rider cannot place higher than a rider that does not have a major penalty.
- AZVRHA approved Ranch Reined Work Patterns will be all AQHA VRH Patterns.
- Management may post the pattern at any time, and it must be posted at least one hour prior to competition.
- Contestants must carry their rope in the Ranch Reined Work if they intend to rope in the Cow Work class and the classes are run concurrently. If a rope is dropped during the reined work the failed equipment rule will apply and the rider may dismount and retrieve the rope before the Cow Work portion begins. (See Section V. Rule F.)

Gaited Horse Provision - In the case of gaited horses, there are a variety of cadences that will not be recognized as a four-beat walk or a three-beat lope. We will refer to this as the “intermediate” gait, and it will serve as the “trot” in those portions of Trail, Ranch Riding and Reined Work where a trot is called for. Horses performing an intermediate gait will not be penalized or receive an off-pattern for failing to execute a two-beat trot. However, that gait must be consistent and cadenced throughout the maneuver. This intermediate gait will be subject to the usual break of gait penalty and the usual maneuver score variation. The extended trot should exhibit a visible lengthening of the stride in an intermediate gait.

See www.AZVRHA.com/ for patterns and score sheets.

Scoring

Each maneuver will receive a Judge’s Score that will be added to or subtracted from 70 and will be scored on the following basis, ranging from +1 1/2 Excellent, +1 Very Good, +1/2 Good, 0 Correct, -1/2 Needs Improvement, -1 Poor, -1 1/2 Very Poor

In addition, each maneuver is subject to penalties, the penalties should be assessed per occurrence as follows:

1/2 POINT PENALTY

- D. Delay lead change 1 stride
- F. Failure to remain 20' from fence on approach to stops and roll backs
- J. Exit roll back at trot up to 2 strides or start circle at trot up to 2 strides
- S. Over/Under spin up to 1/8

1 POINT PENALTY

- B. Over bridled per maneuver
- C. Out of lead each 1/4 of a circle, and around the end of the arena cumulative
- F. Out of frame per maneuver
- O. Over/Underspin between 1/8 & ¼
- S. Slipping rein

2 POINT PENALTY

- B. Break of gait
- F. Freezing up in spin or roll back
- J. Trot over 2 strides but less than 1/2 circle
- L. Fail to lope before first marker
- M. Fail to lope passed marker before stop is initiated
- S. On trot in patterns failure to stop before lope depart
- T. Trotting behind 2 strides, but less than ½ circle or ½ length of the arena

5 POINT PENALTY

- B. Spurring or hitting in front of the cinch at any time
- C. Blatant Disobedience
- E. Instill Fear or praise

MAJOR PENALTY - "OP": Cannot place above others who complete pattern correctly

- D. Repeated blatant disobedience
- H. Use of 2 hands (except in snaffle bit or hackamore and Novice and Walk/Trot Divisions)
- O. Inclusion of a maneuver (over/under spin more than ¼ and backing more than 2 strides)
- P. Missed Pattern – eliminate or add maneuver, incomplete maneuver
- M. More than one Finger between split reins or any fingers between romal reins (except for the two rein)
- T. Trotting more than ½ circle or ½ the length of the arena

DISQUALIFIED – DQ (score -0-) - See page 20

- A. Inhumane Treatment
- B. Lameness
- G. Illegal or failed equipment
- H. Leaving Arena before pattern is complete
- N. Improper Western Attire
- D. Disrespect or misconduct
- F. Fall of horse/rider

E. RANCH COW WORK

Scoring emphasis on the cow work class shall be based on the horse always maintaining control of the cow, exhibiting superior cow sense and natural cow working ability without excessive reining or spurring. The greater the difficulty of the run, the more credit should be given. The difficulty may be due to the

extreme speed or stubbornness of the cow, or the cow's reluctance to move down the fence when sufficiently driven by the contestant. The most controlled cow work with the highest degree of difficulty should be marked the highest.

- All horses will be judged immediately upon entering the area, schooling will result in a penalty.
- When run concurrently there will be no schooling allowed between completion of the reined work and the cow work, or between cows if a new cow is awarded. The penalty for this is a Major Penalty and be scored as "OP" and the rider cannot place higher than a rider that does not have a major penalty on the Ranch Cow Work score sheet.
- It is legal to hold the reins and romal in one hand (rein hand) while working the cow and roping.
- Time shall begin when the gate closes behind the cow after being let into the arena. The announcer or judge will signal when time has expired.
- Awarding a new cow - If time and number of cattle permits, the judge may, at his discretion, award new cattle, to enable the contestant to show his horse's ability on the cow, based on the following criteria:
 - The cow will not or cannot run
 - The cow will not leave the end of the arena
 - The cow is blind or will not yield to the horse
 - The cow leaves the arena

1. Advanced Amateur and Open Divisions

Upon receiving the cow, the rider shall hold the cow at the end of the arena for sufficient time to demonstrate the ability of the horse to control the cow at that end of the arena. When the contestant is satisfied that he has shown control of the cow, the contestant shall drive the cow through the corner and down the fence, making at least one turn each way on the fence. The first turn must be passed the center marker.

After turning the cow on the fence, the Advanced Amateur participants have the option to rope and stop the cow or circle the cow in the middle of the arena in both directions. Roping and circling cannot be combined to get credit for this portion of the run, the judge will blow the whistle ending the run with a Major Penalty and will be scored as "OP" and the rider cannot place higher than a rider that does not have a major penalty

Open Division riders may **not** circle and must rope the cow and bring it to a stop, no dragging allowed.

General Rules:

- There is a three (3) minute time limit with a one (1) minute warning in the combined cow work and roping/circling portion of the class. The clock will start when the gate is closed after the cow enters the arena.
- When the three (3) minute time limit has expired, the announcer will call time
- It is legal to hold the reins and romal in one hand (rein hand) while boxing the cow.

Roping:

The horse and rider will be judged on rope handling, rating, and stopping the cow. It is not necessary that the roper catch for the contestant to receive a score in the roping portion.

General Roping Rules:

- The exhibitor is allowed only two throws.
- Any attempt to throw any portion of a rope at the cow will be counted as one loop thrown.
- A breakaway rope may be used in the roping portion of this class. Deductions will be reflected in the run content of "stop and Hold."
- A Legal catch is described as any catch in which a rope goes over the head (cow looks through the loop) and holds the cow including hind legs or foot. A catch which holds on the head (cow does not look through the loop) such as horns or horns and half head is also legal catch. The quality of the catch will be a factor considered by the judge in assigning the maneuver score.
- In addition, a heel or leg catch resulting from a throw that the cow does not look through the loop is an illegal catch. If a cow is stopped with an illegal catch a Major Penalty will apply and will be scored as "OP" and the rider cannot place higher than a rider that does not have a major penalty.
- There is no dragging of the cow allowed.
- 12-16 inches of mane in front of the saddle may be braided when roping is involved

Open Roping

- A missed first loop receives a penalty of -3 with an additional -2 for missing the second loop resulting in a cumulative -5 for no catch.
- If an Open rider drops his/her rope during the Cow Work prior to roping the cow and it falls completely to the ground, a Major Penalty will apply and will be scored as "OP," and the rider cannot place higher than a rider that does not have a major penalty. The rider may retrieve the rope but may not dismount or have outside assistance and continue the run.
- If the rider loses his/her rope (missed dallies) after a legal catch and can regain the rope, he may still receive a stop and hold score.

Advanced Amateur Roping:

- When an Advanced Amateur takes down his rope, he has committed to roping and is required to complete the run by roping and stopping the cow, at this point the exhibitor may not for any reason get credit for circling the cow.
- Once the Advanced Amateur takes down his rope, if the rope is dropped the run is over and a Major Penalty will apply and will be scored as "OP," and the rider cannot place higher than a rider that does not have a major penalty
- If an Advanced Amateur rider drops his/her rope at any time during cow work prior to committing to roping, he/she may choose to finish the run by circling.
- In the event of a tie, the exhibitor that has chosen to rope over circling will be awarded the tie breaker, regardless of whether the exhibitor caught.
- Amateurs, a missed first loop will result in a 1-point penalty with an additional -1 for missing the second loop resulting in a cumulative two-point penalty for no catch.

Advanced Amateur Circling:

The participant will be judged on working efficiently with proper position and control to drive the cow toward the center of the arena and into a full circle one way, switch directions and another full circle in the other direction. The exhibitor must maintain contact with the cow in proper position for a credit earning run and to avoid penalties.

- Circling will be judged based on the circle's size, symmetry, speed, and relative balance from right to left and the horse's ability to maintain control throughout circles without using the fence.
- A penalty of 1 point – "A. loss of working advantage" may be applied any time the horse and rider lose contact with the cow.
- The circles should be completed before the cow is exhausted.
- Once a rider is committed to circling the exhibitor must complete the run by circling and may not for any reason get credit for roping.
- If the exhibitor satisfies the circling requirements prior to the 3-minute time limit the judge will blow the whistle indicating the run is complete.

2. Intermediate Amateur and Intermediate Youth Divisions

The goal of this class is to introduce the advancing rider to the "fence work" and "roping" phases of the cow work.

- If run **concurrent** with Ranch Reined Work after completing the pattern the rider will signal to the cow boss that he/she is ready for a cow to be released into the arena.
- If run as a **separate** draw the rider will enter the arena, face the cattle entry gate, and call for the cow to be released into the arena.
- Each contestant upon receiving a cow in the arena, shall hold that cow on the prescribed end of the arena demonstrating the ability of the horse and rider to control the cow.
- When the rider is satisfied that he/she has control of the cow they will set up to drive / rate the cow down the fence to the opposite end of the arena. The distance for driving should be 1/2 to 3/4 the length of the arena. Upon reaching the opposite end of the arena, the rider will then stop and release the cow and move the horse toward the center of arena to set up for boxing. The rider will then regain control and hold the cow at the opposite end of the arena to demonstrate the horse's ability to hold the cow. The exhibitor will then drive/ rate the cow back down the fence on the original side past the center marker.
- After completion of the box, drive, box, drive maneuvers, rider will take down his/her rope (breakaway) build a loop, move into position to rope (tracking/rating); throw the rope completing the dally and stopping portion.
- There is no expectation that the exhibitor will make a "fence turn," the drive down the fence demonstrates correct position and control around the corner.
- Each contestant will have 2 and 1/2 minutes to complete the cow work, working full time is not required.
- There will be a 45 second warning, the announcer will signal when time is up.
- The judge will blow the whistle when the rider has completed all requirements prior to time running out.

3. Limited Amateur and Limited Youth Division

The Limited Amateur division will consist of a box – drive – box – drive element. If run concurrent with Ranch Reined Work the rider will face the cattle entry gate and signal the cow boss that he/she is ready for a cow to be released into the arena. Limited ranch cow work exhibitors are allotted one minute and forty-five seconds to complete the work. When there are 50 seconds left, the announcer will announce, “50 seconds remaining”. At one minute and forty-five seconds, the announcer will call for time. Exhibitors are not required to use all the allotted time but must ride until the judge whistles the end of the run or time expires, whichever occurs first.

There are four parts to the work: boxing the cow; setting up the cow and driving it down the fence to the opposite end of the arena; boxing it at the opposite end of the arena, and then driving the cow past the middle marker again. There is no expectation that the exhibitor will make a fence turn, instead the drive down the fence demonstrates correct position and control around the corner.

- **Part One – Boxing the Cow** – The rider shall ride into the arena, face the cattle entry gate, and signal for their cow to be turned into the arena. The cow shall be controlled on the entry end of the arena for a sufficient amount of time to demonstrate the horse’s ability to hold the cow. If the cow does not immediately challenge the horse, the rider shall aggressively move in on the cow to demonstrate his horse’s ability to drive and block the cow.
- **Part Two - Set Up Cow and Drive Down Fence to Opposite End of Arena** – After the cow has been controlled on the entry end of the arena, the rider shall set the cow up for driving down the side of the arena. When coming out of corner, the horse shall be close enough to cow to demonstrate control with cow against the fence. This distance and control should be maintained for approximately 1/2 to 3/4 the length of the arena. The rider will then stop and release the cow and move the horse toward the center of arena to set the cow up for boxing.
- **Part Three – Boxing the Cow at Opposite End of Arena** – The exhibitor will regain control or hold the cow at end of the arena to demonstrate the horse’s ability to “hold” the cow
- **Part Four – Drive the Cow back down the fence** (original side)- past the middle marker and continue until the judge blows the whistle to show completion.

While boxing the cow at the opposite end, if the rider loses control and allows the cow to cross the center line, the judge will whistle the end of the run. The rider will receive off pattern penalty (OP) for the run.

4. Novice Amateur and Novice Youth Divisions

The goal of this class is to introduce the rider to the “boxing” phase of the cow work and develop skills for reading and controlling the cow. After completing the Ranch Reined Work, if Reined Work and Cow Work are run concurrently, the rider will signal the cow boss that he/she is ready for a cow to be released into the arena. Each contestant, upon receiving a cow in the arena, shall hold that cow on the prescribed end of the arena demonstrating the ability of the horse and rider to control the cow for the full 50 second time limit.

- There is a 50 second time limit with no warning, contestants must work the full time.
- The clock will start when the gate is closed after the cow enters the arena.
- The announcer or judge will signal when time is up.
- It is legal to hold the reins and romal in one hand (rein hand) while boxing the cow.
- There will be no fence work or roping

Scoring

Each division will have a unique score sheet and each maneuver will receive a Judge's Score that will be added to or subtracted from 70 and will be scored on the following basis, ranging from +1 1/2 Excellent, +1 Very Good, +1/2 Good, 0 Correct, -1/2 Needs Improvement, -1 Poor, -1 1/2 Very Poor.

"Proactive Use of Time" constitutes the judge's opinion of the exhibitors' use of the time allotted to proactively pursue and control the cow. In addition, each maneuver is subject to penalties, not all following penalties apply to all divisions or appear on all score sheets, and the penalties should be assessed per occurrence as follows: (See Appendix)

1 POINT PENALTY

- A. Loss of working advantage
- C. Using corner or end of arena to turn cow (Advanced and Open)
- D. Fail to drive the cow passed the mid marker on the second drive before time expires (*Limited and Intermediate*)
- E. Changing sides of the arena to turn the cow (Advanced and Open)
- E. Driving the cow down the opposite fence, changing sides (*Limited and Intermediate*)
- R. Two loop catch (*Amateur and Youth*)
- L. For each length horse runs passed the cow (Advanced and Open)
- P. Working out of position
- S. Slipping rein
- T. Turning cow before the mid marker on first turn (Open and Advanced)
- V. Over Bridled per maneuver
- W. Out of frame per maneuver

2 POINT PENALTY

- A. Going around corner before turning cow (Advanced and Open)
- B. In an open field turn animal gets within 3 feet of the end fence before being turned (Advanced and Open)
- R. Failure to catch (*Amateur and Youth*)

3 POINT PENALTY

- E. Exhausting or overworking the cow
- F. Two loop catch when roping in Open/cowboy classes
- H. Hanging up on fence (refusing to turn) (Advanced and Open)
- K. Knock down cow w/out working advantage
- L. Losing a cow while boxing (*Novice, Intermediate and Limited Divisions*)

5 POINT PENALTY

- A. Not getting a turn each way (Advanced and Open) [OBJ]
- B. Spurring or hitting in front of the cinch at any time
- C. Blatant Disobedience
- E. Instill Fear or praise
- R. Missed both loops (Open and Cowboy)

MAJOR PENALTY - "OP": Cannot place above others who complete pattern correctly

- A. Turn Tail
- E. Repeated blatant disobedience
- F. Turning the cow on the fence (*Intermediate division*)
- B. Use of 2 hands (except in snaffle bit or hackamore and Novice and Walk/Trot Divisions)
- I. Illegal catch at the end of the run
- J. Schooling between rein work and cow work or before cow work begins
- L. Allowing cow to cross center line during boxing of opposite end
- K. Schooling between cows if new cow is awarded
- C. More than one Finger between split reins or any fingers between romal reins (except for the two rein)
- N. Failure to attempt any part of the class
- R. Complete loss of rope (falls completely to the ground prior to roping the cow) Open/Cowboy or (falls completely to the ground once rider is committed to roping) Amateur

DISQUALIFIED – DQ (score -0-)

- A. Inhumane Treatment
- B. Lameness
- G. Illegal or failed equipment
- H. Leaving the arena before the run is complete
- J. When roping bringing the cow straight over backwards landing on its back or head with all four feet in the air. (Advanced, Open or Cowboy)
- N. Improper Western Attire
- D. Disrespect or misconduct
- F. Fall of horse/rider

VIII. WALK TROT DIVISION – RULES AND REGULATIONS

This division of ranch horse competition is for Adult or Youth riders who wish to experience showing their ranch horses at an introductory level. This division will be governed by the general rules of the AZVRHA Handbook EXCEPT as noted in this supplement.

WT RANCH RIDING

The rider will follow the pattern of written transitions for the Walk Trot Ranch Riding class. The pattern will meet the requirements as outlined in the AZVRHA Handbook Ranch Riding EXCEPT:

- there will be no loping. The pattern will be made up of multiple walk, trot, and extended trot transitions; stop and turn maneuvers may be asked to be performed by the rider.
- If markers are provided the rider must stay within the markers (markers on the outside of the pattern or as indicated by the pattern) to avoid a major penalty.

Scoring

Each maneuver will receive a Judge's Score that will be added or subtracted from 70 and will be scored on the following basis, ranging from +1 1/2 Excellent, +1 Very Good, +1/2 Good, 0 Correct, -1/2 Needs Improvement, -1 Poor, -1 1/2 Very Poor

In addition, each maneuver is subject to penalties, the penalties should be assessed per occurrence as

follows:

1 POINT PENALTY

- A. Too slow at any gait per maneuver
- B. Over bridled per maneuver
- G. Incorrect or break of gait for two strides or LESS
- F. Out of frame per maneuver

3 POINT PENALTY

- G. Break of Gait at walk or jog for MORE than two strides
- R. Draped Reins

5 POINT PENALTY

- B. Spurring or hitting in front of the cinch at any time
- D. Blatant disobedience
- F. Instill fear or praise
- R. First or Second refusal cumulative, (balk or evade)

MAJOR PENALTY - "OP": Cannot place above others who complete pattern correctly

- A. Missed Pattern - eliminate or add maneuver, incomplete maneuver
- D. Repeated Disobedience (Balk or evade), will be asked to move on

DISQUALIFIED – DQ (score -0-)

- A. Inhumane Treatment
- B. Lameness
- G. Illegal Equipment
- H. Leaving the arena before the run is complete
- N. Improper Western Attire
- D. Disrespect or misconduct
- F. Fall of horse/rider
- G. Out of control, endangering the rider (judge blows whistle and ends the work)

WT TRAIL

The rider will follow the written Walk Trot Trail Pattern. The Pattern will meet the requirements as outlined in the AZVRHA Handbook under RANCH TRAIL except:

- There will be walk, trot, or extended trot maneuvers with stop, back, side pass options, no loping.
- No log drag element will be used in Walk Trot
- Rope handling will be a required element but at a modified degree of difficulty.

Each maneuver will receive a Judge's Score that will be added to or subtracted from 70 and will be scored on the following basis, ranging from +1 1/2 Excellent, +1 Very Good, +1/2 Good, 0 Correct, -1/2 Needs Improvement, -1 Poor, -1 1/2 Very Poor.

In addition, each maneuver is subject to penalties, the penalties should be assessed per occurrence as follows:

1 POINT PENALTY

- G. Incorrect or break of Gait at walk or jog for two strides or LESS
- H. Each hit, bite, push or stepping on a log, cone, plant, gate, or any component of the obstacle.
(Ticks through brush piles or jumbles will not be penalized)
- I. Incorrect number of strides, if specified
- K. Skipping over or failing to step into required space
- P. Split pole in lope over
- S. One to two steps on dismount or ground tie except shifting to balance
- T. Both front and hind feet in a singled stride slot or space at a walk or trot

3 POINT PENALTY

- G. Break of Gait at walk or trot for MORE than two strides
- R. Draped reins
- S. Three to Four Steps on dismount or ground tie

5 POINT PENALTY

- B. Spurring or hitting in front of the cinch at any time
- C. Blatant Disobedience
- E. Instill Fear or praise
- K. Knocking over, stepping out of, or falling off an obstacle
- L. Let go of gate
- O. Dropping an object required to be carried slicker, rope etc.
- R. First or Second refusal cumulative, (balk or evade)
- S. FIVE or more steps on dismount or ground tie

MAJOR PENALTY - "OP": Cannot place above others who complete pattern correctly

- E. Repeated blatant disobedience
- N. Failure to attempt an Obstacle
- P. Missed Pattern eliminate or add maneuver, incomplete maneuver
- R. Third refusal (Balk or evade), will be asked to move on

DISQUALIFIED – DQ (score -0-)

- A. Inhumane Treatment
- B. Lameness
- G. Illegal Equipment
- H. Leaving the arena before the run is complete
- N. Improper Western Attire
- D. Disrespect or misconduct
- F. Fall of horse/rider
- G. Out of control, endangering the rider (judge blows whistle and ends the work)

WT CUTTING

Refer to AZVRHA Handbook VII(C) for general cutting rules and description. All AZVRHA Ranch Cutting Rules will govern this class EXCEPT as defined below.

The Walk Trot Rider will attempt to “set up a cut” two times, separating one cow each time. The time limit is 2 minutes, and the rider does not have to work the entire time. The rider will enter the herd, driving one or more head out, continue stepping forward to set up one cow to be separated from the herd in the center of the arena. If the rider fails to separate a cow from the herd the penalty will apply. The rider will return to the herd to set up the cut one additional time.

- When the first cow is sufficiently out of the herd the rider indicates he/she is set up to work by stopping the horse in the working position and “Tagging off” the cow.
- The rider will then go back to the herd and drive a second cow out to “set up to work” and “tag off” when the horse and cow are in working position. The run will be complete.
- “Tagging off” is indicated by first stopping the horse, the rider then places the non-rein hand at the wither while using the rein hand to slowly back and turn the horse away from the cow.
- If the cow is lost to the herd penalties will occur.

Credit earning situations:

- Demonstrating good herd working skill
- Shaping (setting-up) the cut
- Maintaining working advantage

Scoring

Each maneuver will receive a Judge’s Score that will be added to or subtracted from 70 and will be scored on the following basis, ranging from +1 1/2 Excellent, +1 Very Good, +1/2 Good, 0 Correct, -1/2 Needs Improvement, -1 Poor, -1 1/2 Very Poor

In addition, each maneuver is subject to penalties, the penalties should be assessed per occurrence as follows:

1 POINT PENALTY

- A. Loss of working advantage
- C. Working out of position
- D. Toe, foot, or stirrup on the shoulder

3 POINT PENALTY

- B. Cattle picked up or scattered
- D. Back Fence
- E. Biting or striking the cow
- H. Hot Quit

5 POINT PENALTY

- A. Quitting the cow
- B. Spurring or hitting in front of the cinch at any time
- C. Blatant disobedience
- E. Use of either hand to instill fear or praise
- F. Failure to separate a single cow after leaving the herd

- L. Losing the cow back to the herd
- S. Changing cattle after a specific commitment

MAJOR PENALTY - "OP": Cannot place above others who complete pattern correctly

- A. Turn Tail
- E. Repeated blatant disobedience

DISQUALIFIED – DQ (score -0-)

- A. Inhumane Treatment
- B. Lameness
- G. Illegal Equipment
- H. Leaving the arena before the run is complete
- N. Improper Western Attire
- D. Disrespect or misconduct
- F. Fall of horse/rider
- G. Out of control, endangering the rider (judge blows whistle and ends the work)

WT REINED WORK

AZVRHA Handbook Ranch Reining rules will govern the Walk Trot Ranch Reining except no loping will be required. The rider will follow the pattern of reining maneuvers that may include walk, trot, extend the trot, stop, roll back, back, and spinning. Center and end markers will be placed as appropriate to the pattern being ridden. Emphasis will be placed on a well-controlled and symmetrical pattern with horse and rider in balance for good circles, stops, rollbacks, and spins as described in the pattern.

Scoring

Each maneuver will receive a Judge's Score that will be added to or subtracted from 70 and will be scored on the following basis, ranging from +1 1/2 Excellent, +1 Very Good, +1/2 Good, 0 Correct, -1/2 Needs Improvement, -1 Poor, -1 1/2 Very Poor

In addition, each maneuver is subject to penalties, the penalties should be assessed per occurrence as follows:

1/2 POINT PENALTY

- F. Failure to remain 20' from fence on approach to stops and roll backs
- S. Over/Under spin up to 1/8

1 POINT PENALTY

- O. Over/Underspin between 1/8 & 1/4

2 POINT PENALTY

- B. Break of gait
- F. Freezing up in spin or roll back
- S. On trot in patterns failure to stop before lope departure

5 POINT PENALTY

- B. Spurring or hitting in front of the cinch at any time
- C. Blatant Disobedience

E. Instill Fear or praise

MAJOR PENALTY - "OP": Cannot place above others who complete pattern correctly

P. Missed Pattern - eliminate or add maneuver, incomplete maneuver

M. Inclusion of a maneuver (over/under spin more than ¼ and backing more than 2 strides)

D. Repeated blatant disobedience

DISQUALIFIED – DQ (score -0-)

A. Inhumane Treatment

B. Lameness

G. Illegal Equipment

H. Leaving the arena before the run is complete

N. Improper Western Attire

D. Disrespect or misconduct

F. Fall of horse/rider

G. Out of control, endangering the rider (judge blows whistle and ends the work)

WT COW WORK

This is the introduction to both horse and rider to begin controlling the cow for boxing and later for fence work and roping of the cow. The use of an extended trot rather than the lope is more appropriate to this division.

Walk/Trot competitors will be required to drive, rate, stop and turn the single cow after it is released into the arena. Competitors should begin no closer than the center marker to allow the cow to be released into the arena, after which the competitor will find the cow and begin their work first by tracking the cow, then immediately moving into a driving, then rating, stopping, and turning positions.

The whole arena may be used, and it is encouraged to use the space of the arena to show the progress of gaining control of the cow, with an allowable five strides of loping without incurring penalties per offense. The competitor must drive, rate, and stop and turn the cow at least once in each direction anywhere in the arena.

- Upon completing the Ranch Reining Pattern or entering the arena the rider will call for the cow.
- There will be a 50 second time limit and time begins when the gate closes behind the cow. The rider must work the full 50 seconds.
- Credit will be given for courage and proper position on the cow to show the gaining of control of the cow in all elements of the work.
- The horse that shows cow sense in rating and tracking the cow with a light contact rein will be rewarded over a horse that is ridden with a tight rein and that is lacking in cow sense.
- Loping will be allowed, without penalty, up to five (5) strides as needed for a faster cow.
- Excessive loping beyond five (5) strides will be penalized one (1) point per occurrence, up to a two (2) penalty points maximum
- Continuing to lope in this class may cause you to be assessed a maneuver score of up to – 1 ½.
- The judge's whistle or the timer will signal completion of work.

Scoring

Each division will have a unique score sheet and each maneuver will receive a Judge's Score that will be

added to or subtracted from 70 and will be scored on the following basis, ranging from +1 1/2 Excellent, +1 Very Good, +1/2 Good, 0 Correct, -1/2 Needs Improvement, -1 Poor, -1 1/2 Very Poor.

1 POINT PENALTY

- A. Loss of working advantage
- L. Loping (6) strides or more
- P. Working out of position
- S. Slipping rein

3 POINT PENALTY

- E. Exhausting or overworking the cow
- K. Knock down cow w/out working advantage
- L. Losing a cow while boxing


5 POINT PENALTY

- B. Spurring or hitting in front of the cinch at any time
- C. Blatant Disobedience

MAJOR PENALTY - "OP": Cannot place above others who complete pattern correctly

- A. Turn Tail
- E. Repeated blatant disobedience
- J. Schooling between rein work and cow work or before cow work begins
- K. Schooling between cows if a new cow is awarded
- N. Failure to attempt any part of the class

DISQUALIFIED – DQ (score -0-)

- A. Inhumane Treatment
- B. Lameness
- G. Illegal Equipment
- H. Leaving the arena before the run is complete
- N. Improper Western Attire
- D. Disrespect or misconduct
- F. Fall of horse/rider
- G. Out of control, endangering the rider (judge blows whistle and ends the work) 

Appendix

A. THE IDEAL RANCH HORSE

Western States Versatility Ranch Horse Association has an ideal horse in mind. As we go forward, in our judging and our training, our goal is to remain true to this ideal, even as we may work together with other organizations.

A truly versatile ranch horse is an animal of any breed that can capably, efficiently and with athleticism, complete the tasks required of it on a working cattle ranch.

- The best of these horses is balanced and between the reins, with the more finished horses being ridden one-handed and in a bridle. As a result, these horses can accurately change leads, stay balanced, and go forward at a variety of speeds.
- The best of these horses is a graceful and efficient mover with good length of stride and much adjustability. A ranch horse should never move in a manner that is highly stylized or would detract from his ability to complete ranch tasks.
- The best of these horses can transition precisely up and down through all gaits, from any gait to any gait, even while traveling through terrain outside of the arena.
- The best of these horses works naturally from their hind quarters, whether with a cow or performing other tasks. This includes the ability to slide stop, rollback, and spin.
- The best of these horses can quietly and safely negotiate any obstacles that it may encounter on the ranch, including gates of differing configurations, dragging items with a rope, or passing over obstacles on the ground.
- The best of these horses performs these tasks while remaining alert, aware, careful, and relaxed, always able to stand quietly whenever it is required.

A truly versatile ranch horse is completely comfortable and capable with cattle.

- This horse can separate a single cow from a herd and hold it away from that herd with a minimum of guidance.
- The best of these horses can “read” that cow and help the rider to complete the task efficiently, even if some guidance is required.

A truly versatile ranch horse can also control and direct a single cow.

- While working from its hindquarters and with the use of a fence, that horse should be able to cause the cow to change directions, hold and control that cow in a space

A truly versatile ranch horse is a rope horse.

- The best of these horses is confident with the rope around him in all manners, whether it is being swung, coiled, thrown, or dragged.
- The best of these horses will accurately track a cow at any speed, placing and keeping the rider in the best position to make an efficient catch.
- The best of these horses then has the strength and ability to use his body to stop the cow after the rider has dallied, quietly holding the cow.

B. MECHANICS OF MOTION OF THE HORSE

The way a horse moves is indicated by the individual's GAIT. A gait is the pattern of a horse's stride as he moves forward at varying speeds and sequences of steps. These differences distinguish one gait from another.

It is important for equestrians to know the differences of the horse's gait to further good horsemanship skills and training of the horse. To know the CADENCE or rhythm of each gait will enhance not only the rider's knowledge but also enhance the beauty of the horse in motion. The following is an outline of the gaits of the horse, stressing the quality of step and fullness of stride as indicated by each gait. Each gait may be COLLECTED whereby the horse is asked to spend more time on the ground and shortening his stride or EXTENDED whereby the horse is asked for more suspension, less time on the ground, and lengthening of the stride.

The basic gaits of the horse are Walk, Trot, Canter, Gallop, and Back. The collected gaits, gained through training of the horse, include the Trot and Lope. The horse in motion will STEP with each foot as indicated by the gait and will fulfill a STRIDE at the completion of the number of steps described by each gait.

Gaits may be broken into five basic categories:

1. Lateral: Cycle of movement where both legs on one side work together. The walk and gallop are lateral gaits.
2. Diagonal: Cycle of movement where opposite diagonal legs work together. The trot and canter are diagonal gaits.
3. Two-Beat gait: Two feet hit the ground in unison and then the other two feet hit the ground in unison. The trot and the back are two-beat gaits.
4. Three-Beat gait: Two feet hit together, a diagonal pair, and then the other feet hit individually. The canter and lope are three beat gaits.
5. Four-Beat gait: Each foot strikes the ground independently. The walk and gallop are four beat gaits.

The SEQUENCE of the step of each foot at each gait is described from the movement beginning at the hind foot. Either near or offside count will suffice except at the canter where the departure step is the outside hind of the desired lead.

It should be noted that each forward swing of the legs in sequence is a step and that as the series of steps is complete, the horse has completed a stride. Therefore, at the walk, four complete steps are a stride; at the trot, two complete steps are a stride; and at the canter, three complete steps are a stride. The backup striding is as with the trot complete with two steps. The observer may choose to focus on one foot as it strikes the ground, counting that strike as "1" and continue counting as that same foot strikes until the number of "strides" is obtained. (For example: the walk. To find 5 strides: Count the near hind as it strikes the ground 5 times. There will be 20 steps if all four feet are counted.)

The sequence and count are as follows:

- Walk:
1. Near hind
 2. Near fore
 3. Off hind
 4. Off fore

- Trot:
1. Off hind, near fore
 2. Near hind, off fore

Lope or Canter:

Left lead:

1. Off hind
2. Near hind, off fore
3. Near fore

Right lead:

1. Near hind
2. Off hind, near fore
3. Off fore

Reference material:

A Guide to Selection, Care, and Enjoyment of Horses by J. Warren Evans
Gregory's Textbook of Farriery by Chris Gregory, CJF, FWC