

National Ranch Cutting Horse Association

Standing Rules Section I – General

- Rule 1: The National Ranch cutting Horse Association (NRCHA) has as its basic purpose the public exhibition; breeding of, and constant promotion of the ranch cutting horse.
- 1A: NRCHA approved contest are restricted to NRCHA members only. The only exception will be NRCHA approved shows held jointly with other organizations or associations (as provided for in Rule 1C) whose members may not be members of the NRCHA.
- 1B: All owners and riders must be members in good standing with the NRCHA to compete in an approved show. In the event that a person competes in an NRCHA approved contest and is not a current NRCHA member, said person may be fined in the amount of \$100.00. Failure to pay the assessed fine will be cause for denial of membership. In addition, a \$100.00 fine (per occurrence) will be assessed any show management that allows an entry to show without the current required membership. The foregoing to be interpreted and enforced in conjunction with Rule 8A.
- 1C: The NRCHA may, within its discretion, approve shows sponsored or conducted by a non-affiliate or conducted jointly by the NRCHA with other organizations or associations.
- Rule 2: Any individual or affiliate conducting a cutting horse contest sanctioned by the NRCHA must follow the Standing Rules of the NRCHA, unless modified in conjunction with contests held jointly with other organizations or associations.
- 2A: All references hereinafter contained providing for compliance with the standing rules of the NRCHA shall be enforced with the understanding that exceptions or modifications may be approved by the Board of Directors in connection with contests held in conjunction with other organizations or associations.
- Rule 3: A horse does not have to be registered in a breed registry to show in a NRCHA approved contest. But if a horse is not registered a veterinarian statement on the age of the horse and a notarized statement from the owner stating that the horse has never been registered or shown must be provided to the NRCHA. If a horse is

registered it must be shown under the name assigned to the respective horse by their breed association.

Rule 4: The term “Show Management” as used herein is the organization or individual acting as sponsor of a cutting horse contest for which said organization or individual sought and received the approval of the NRCHA to conduct the same.

Rule 5: Show Management may take any actions necessary which it feels are in the best interest of the show, in compliance with NRCHA Standing Rules. In the event that a member feels that Show Management has not acted in the best interest of the show or has violated NRCHA Standing Rules the member may file a protest with the NRCHA Board of Directors.

Section II – Membership

Rule 6: Membership in the NRCHA is a privilege, not a right, application for which shall be made on forms and by fees and procedures prescribed from time to time by the NRCHA. Membership, or application thereof, may be cancelled or denied by the Executive Board or Board of Directors for any cause detrimental to the interest of the NRCHA, its programs and policies, or harmonious relationship of its members as determined by the Executive Board or Board of Directors. Membership cancellation or application denial proceedings under this rule shall provide for prior notice and hearing. Any person whose membership is cancelled or denied may request a hearing before the Board of Directors within ten (10) days of receiving notice that membership in the NRCHA has been cancelled or denied. Such cancellation or denial becomes final unless the NRCHA receives such request within the time period. The effect of membership cancellation or denial may be denial of privileges, including show privileges, of the NRCHA. Every member, by joining the NRCHA, or non-member, by participating in NRCHA approved events, does hereby agree:

6A: If unsuccessful in an attempt to overturn NRCHA decisions, actions, rules or regulation, to reimburse the NRCHA for reasonable legal fees, court costs and other expenses in defense of such suit; and

6B: If legal action is undertaken against the NRCHA, whether in law or equity, such action must be taken in Federal and State Courts located in Burnet County, Texas.

- Rule 7: Any individual, firm, partnership, corporation, limited liability company, limited partnership, trust or any other legal entity organized or approved by the State of Texas, or organization of good character and reputation (collectively “Entity”) interested in cutting horses may become a member of the NRCHA by applying to the NRCHA and paying the required fees. To be eligible for any NRCHA premium awards or prizes, both owners and riders must be current NRCHA members in good standing. In the event of membership application of an Entity, one (1) person shall be named as its voting member at the time of membership application. Changes in the name of such voting member shall be submitted in writing to the Secretary by the Entity.
- Rule 8: Membership shall be in three categories: Annual Membership, Affiliate membership and Life Membership. Membership in the NRCHA is non-transferable.
- 8A: **Annual Membership:** An annual fee of \$100 shall be paid for each annual membership; said fee to become due on January 1 of each year and to be considered delinquent if not received within thirty (30) days from date of invoice shown on the membership records of the NRCHA. The annual membership fee for a minor child under the age of 18 residing in the same household as a member in good standing shall be \$25.
- 8B: **Affiliate Membership:** Organizations consisting of at least ten (10) members who are also NRCHA members in good standing and interested in cutting horses may be designated as Affiliates of the National Ranch Cutting Horse Association upon acceptance of their application and payment of an annual fee of \$100, said fee to become due on January 1 each year. Affiliate memberships may be denied or canceled at any time by the Board of Directors.
- 8C: **Life Membership:** Any qualified individual, firm or partnership may become a life member of the NRCHA by payment of a Life Membership fee of \$500. No annual fees are required. Life Memberships are non-transferable.

Section III – Approved contests

- Rule 9: To be NRCHA approved, a signed Show Application form must be received in the NRCHA office no later than the first (1st) day of the month preceding the month during which the show is held. All approved shows must appear on the NRCHA’s website at least fourteen (14) days prior to a contest. If Show Management subsequently determines that any change is necessary, Show

Management must request and obtain written approval of the change from the NRCHA. Any approved change concerning an approved show, including but not limited to: added money, entry fees, payout schedule, office charges, dates, location or start time of a contest, must appear on the NRCHA's website at least fourteen (14) days prior to the contest. After the change has been approved by the NRCHA, if the NRCHA determines that written notification must be provided to its membership, written notification of the change must be mailed by the NRCHA Executive Secretary to the entire NRCHA Membership ten (10) days prior to the scheduled event. The affiliate must reimburse the NRCHA within twenty (20) days after the date of billing, reflecting postage, printing, stationary, or any other related costs.

- Rule 10: A show that is approved by the NRCHA must comply with all NRCHA Standing Rules or as may be modified pursuant to Rule 1C.
- Rule 11: All judges for an NRCHA approved show must be approved by the Board of Directors.
- Rule 12: When a Show Application is submitted for show approval by a current NRCHA affiliate, show approval will be considered for that particular show, provided; (1) The show is directly sponsored or conducted by the affiliate requesting show approval; (2) The added money does not exceed \$200 in any one class, unless specifically approved by the Board of Directors or Executive Board; and (3) There is no other NRCHA approved show within a one hundred (100) mile radius.
- Rule 13: Show Management of all NRCHA approved contests must use official Judges Cards provided by the NRCHA and shall post same in a conspicuous space immediately following each class and go-round. Show Management must forward Judges Cards to the NRCHA along with completed NRCHA Show Results and fees with ten (10) days of the closing date of the show(s).
- 13A: In the event NRCHA Show Results are not received in the NRCHA office within ten (10) days of the closing date of the show, the NRCHA affiliate which sponsored the show will be fined a \$100 late charge, unless waived by the NRCHA Board of Directors upon determining just cause for late submittal of show results. Failure by an affiliate to pay the assessed fine will be cause for cancellation of future NRCHA approved shows.

- Rule 14: The NRCHA reserves the right to deny approval or cancel the approval of a show which it deems not to be in the best interest of the Association.
- Rule 15: All NRCHA approved contest may be video taped. The video cost may be passed on to the contestants. Video tapes must be retained by the Show Management or video service provider for not less than thirty (30) days after the closing date of the contest and shall be available to the NRCHA upon request at no cost to the NRCHA.
- Rule 16: All members of the NRCHA are responsible for determining class eligibility for themselves and all horses they own or exhibit as determined by the combined records of **all** cutting and cowhorse associations of the first day of the current NRCHA point year (January 1st).
- 16A: Upon determining that a horse or rider has won money in a class for which the horse or rider is ineligible, the NRCHA records will be adjusted to remove the ineligible horse or rider, with the ineligible earnings to be reallocated among the remaining class participants to establish the correct class standings. Any member in violation of this rule shall be subject to the disciplinary procedure of Rule 40.
- 16B: To be eligible for any NRCHA earnings or awards, both owners and riders must be current NRCHA members in good standing.
- 16C: There are six (6) classifications of NRCHA approved contests:
1. **NRCHA Junior Cutting Horse Class:**
Open to any horse, regardless of breed, sex, color, conformation, or appearance that is six (6) years of age or less. Any horse competing in this class must have lifetime earnings of \$500 or less as determined by the combined records off **all** cutting and cowhorse associations on the first day of the current NRCHA point year, NRCHA earnings do not count toward a horse's eligibility. Riders may elect to ride two (2) eligible horses in this Class.
 - a. Participants in this class must comply with the NRCHA eligibility rules. (See Section IX.)
 - b. Any horse exhibited in this class must be owned by the contestant showing the horse, by the contestant's spouse, by the contestant's minor child, or by the ranch that the contestant is employed by.

2. **NRCHA Senior Cutting Horse Class:**

Open to any horse, regardless of breed, sex, color, conformation, or appearance that is seven (7) years of age or more. Any horse competing in this class must have lifetime earnings of \$1,000 or less as determined by the combined records off **all** cutting and cowhorse associations on the first day of the current NRCHA point year, NRCHA earnings do not count toward a horse's eligibility. Riders may elect to ride two (2) eligible horses in this Class.

 - a. Participants in this class must comply with the NRCHA eligibility rules. (See Section IX.)
 - b. Any horse exhibited in this class must be owned by the contestant showing the horse, by the contestant's spouse, by the contestant's minor child, or by the ranch that the contestant is employed by.
3. **NRCHA Youth Cutting Horse Class:**

Open to all members of the NRCHA who are eighteen (18) years of age or younger on the first day of the current NRCHA point year.

 - a. A contestant in the NRCHA Youth Cutting Horse Class **may ride any NRCHA eligible horse**, regardless of a horse's sex, breed, or ownership; unless stallions are prohibited from the contest at the time show approval is requested.
 - b. No points shall be awarded in a Youth Class having less than two (2) entries.
 - c. If the class has eight (8) or more then the class shall be divided into a Junior and Senior Youth Cutting Class with the Junior Class being thirteen (13) years and under and the Senior Class fourteen (14) thru eighteen (18) years of age. If by doing this it causes one class to have less than two (2) entries, then the class shall not be divided.
4. **NRCHA Novice Cutting Horse Class:**

Open to all riders and horses having lifetime earnings of \$1,000 or less as determined by the combined records of **all** cutting and cowhorse associations on the first day of the current NRCHA point year. Any horse exhibited in this class must be owned by the contestant showing the horse, by the contestant's spouse, or by the contestant's minor

child. NRCHA earnings do not count toward a horse's eligibility. Riders may elect to ride two (2) eligible horses in this Class.

a. NRCHA eligible contestants are not eligible to show in this class.

b. Participants in this class are not eligible to compete in the NRCHA eligible classes.

5. NRCHA Open Cutting Horse Class:

Open to any horse, regardless of breed, age, sex, color, conformation, appearance, or previous record. Horses are to be judged on performance only. Open riders in this class are not restricted to earnings or eligibility. A NRCHA eligible contestant may exhibit a horse in this class provided the horse is owned by the contestant, the contestant's spouse, or the contestant's minor child, or by the ranch that the contestant is employed by. An NRCHA eligible contestant must pay all entry fees and charges in relation to the entry. Riders may elect to ride two (2) eligible horses in this class.

6. NRCHA Halter Class:

Open to any stallion, mare, or gelding that is competing in an NRCHA Approved Cutting Horse Contest. This class will be conducted following the Junior, Senior and Youth Cutting Horse Classes and prior to the Open and Novice Cutting Horse Classes. Stallions will compete against stallions, mares against mares and geldings against geldings in all NRCHA halter Classes. All horses entered in the classes will be placed. A Grand and Reserve Champion Halter Horse will be chosen from the first and second place horse in each class. The Grand Champion shall receive five (5) more points than the highest point earning entry from any class and the Reserve Champion shall receive three (3) more points than the highest point earning entry from any class. **A contestant at an NRCHA Cutting Horse Contestants must show at halter for their cutting points and/or earnings to count for NRCHA year end or annual awards.**

16D: No horse may be shown twice in the same class on any single day. (See Rule 23.)

- 16E: Unless a class has two (2) or more horses entered, earnings or points will not be considered for year end NRCHA awards.
- Rule 17: Any owner who shall permit his horse to be entered or exhibited by an ineligible rider in NRCHA classes shall be subject to disciplinary action by the Board of Directors.
- Rule 18: The designated contestant representative has the option of either making a decision on or conducting a contestant vote on the number of cattle bunches for the class. Show Management shall then determine how many horses will be worked in each cattle bunch. The decision on the number of cattle bunches and the number of horses per bunch must be made before the draw for working order of horses.
- Rule 19: Judges must draw for working order of horses in all classes that have any added money. Show Management may elect to designate a contestant not entered in the class involved to draw the working order of horses in those classes with no added money. Any draw must be witnessed by the designated contestant representative for the class involved. All draws must be made before each class or go-round. The draw will be conducted by using numbered tokens or balls. A numbered token for each entry shall be placed in a container, and a blind draw shall be conducted by the judge or the designated contestant.
- 19A: In the event that a horse which was properly entered is left out of the draw, a complete redraw of the class will not be held. In order to establish a working order for the additional entry, the judge will draw one numbered token from the tokens originally drawn. The additional entry shall work after the entry originally drawn in that position. For example, if the number six (6) is drawn for the additional entry, that additional entry will work as entry six (6) A.
- 19B: If a horse is drawn twice, the judge shall draw to determine which draw position is to be used. The original cattle changes are not affected.
- 19C: If a horse is drawn which is not in that class, the entry shall be scratched. The original cattle changes are not affected.
- 19D: Each affiliate will be required to conduct a mandatory bit check of at least two (2) horses per show day. The manner of selecting the horses can be determined by the judge or the show secretary. The judge will inspect the bridle at the end of the run in the show arena. The affiliate will be fined \$100 per day for violation of this rule.

Rule 20: NRCHA Fee and Payout Schedule:

- 20A: In all cutting horse contestants approved by the NRCHA, six percent (6%) of the total entry fees paid in a class shall be deducted by Show Management and forwarded to the NRCHA office. This deduction shall be sent along with all completed NRCHA Show Results and signed Judges Cards to the NRCHA office, so as to be received within ten (10) days of the closing date of the show. (Note: This deduction shall be made from entry fees only and shall not include any portion of added money or other charges or fees.) Affiliates will also remit to the NRCHA office a \$2.00 per horse fee based on the number of horses entered at their show. If NRCHA fees, Show Results and Judges Cards are not received within ten (10) days, Show Management and/or the affiliate which sponsored the contest will be fined a \$100.00 late charge, unless waived by the NRCHA Board of Directors upon determining just cause for late submittal of show results.
- 20B: Entry fees and added money will be determined by Show Management. If any charge is to be made other than an entry fee, such as a cattle charge, office charge, handling or stall fee, video or grounds fee, it must be stated and separated from the entry fee.
- 20C: No deduction, other than as specified above, shall be made by Show Management, an affiliate or sponsor. Failure to comply with this rule will result in show approval being withdrawn.
- 20D: The number of horses in a class determines the number of monies to be paid. This number is based on the original draw, excluding late entries. Late entries do not affect the number of monies to be paid. If a payout other than the NRCHA recommended payout is used by an affiliate, the payout schedule must be listed on the show application and published in the official NRCHA publication the NRCHA recommended payout schedule for all classes is as follows:

<u>No. of Entries:</u>	<u>Monies to be Paid:</u>	<u>Percentage Distribution:</u>
1 – 4	1	100
5 – 8	2	60, 40
9 – 12	3	50, 30, 20
13 – 16	4	40, 30, 20, 10
17 – 20	5	30, 25, 20, 15, 10
21 – 24	6	30, 24, 18, 12, 9, 7
25 – 28	7	26, 21, 17, 13, 10, 8, 5

29 – 32	8	25, 20, 15, 12, 10, 8, 6, 4
33 – 36	9	24, 18, 47, 41, 9, 8, 7, 6, 4
36 – up	10	22, 16, 13, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4

20E: NRCHA will not recognize any classes with fewer than two (2) horses in order to be an approved NRCHA class.

Rule 21: Show Management may accept late entries until one-fourth (1/4) of the horses in the class concerned have worked. Late entries do not affect the number of monies paid, the added money, or the number of cattle in a bunch. Any late entries must work last in the first available bunch of cattle. When two (2) late entries arrive simultaneously, a draw will be held and said entries inserted in the next subsequent bunches of cattle with one (1) entry being placed in number of cattle bunches, additional late entries will be added to the first available bunch.

Example: 1st group – late entry A
2nd group – late entry B
3rd group – late entry C

A 4th entry would be added to the first available bunch of cattle.

Rule 22: Each horse's scores from all go-rounds will be added together to determine which horses advance to the finals.

Rule 23: An exhibitor may enter one (1) or more horses in an NRCHA approved show; however, a rider may ride only one (1) horse per class except in a NRCHA Cutting Horse Class in which a rider may show two (2) eligible horses. Each horse must have the same rider throughout any contest with more than one (1) go-round or a finals. Under no circumstances can the same horse be shown by more than one (1) rider in any one (1) class at an NRCHA approved show.

Rule 24: At all NRCHA contests, announcers are required to make known the name of each horse and the horse's owner and rider at the time of their performance. The winners are also to be recognized in a similar manner after each class.

Ruler 25: The time allotted each horse to work is two and one-half (2 ½) minutes; the time will start when a contestant crosses a time line designated by Show Management. If the clock has not been started or if it malfunctions, the Show Secretary or timer shall notify the judges(s). the judge(s) has the sole right to terminate a horse's performance.

25A: A contestant will be awarded a complete rework if in the judge(s) opinion two and one-half (2 1/2) minutes was not allotted for the work or if excessive disturbances had been created by factors other than those created by the Contestant or his/her help and the judge(s) has stopped the time. These factors would include gates coming open, fences falling down, and objects entering or falling in or near the working portion of the arena, but would not apply to cattle scattering through wildness or normal arena activities. Any rework must take place within the bunch of cattle drawn by the contestant and must occur before a change of cattle is executed. At the contestant's option, the rework may occur immediately or as the last work in that bunch of cattle. After a contestant has completed a two and one-half (2 1/2) minute work, if in the contestant's opinion, a situation has occurred of sufficient seriousness to warrant a rerun, the contestant may immediately make a request for a rerun to the contestant's Representative who shall report this fact to Show Management before the next horse is called to work. Show Management shall make such facts as are available known to the judge(s) and if the judge(s) agrees that due cause did exist, a rerun may be granted provided the original work was free of a three (3) or a five (5) point (major) penalty prior to the disturbance. Reworks shall not be granted in the event a contestant's equipment breaks during a horse's performance.

Section IV – NRCHA Championships

Rule 26: The NRCHA World Finals Cutting Horse Contest will be held annually in compliance with NRCHA Rules established by the Board of Directors. Entry fees, any additional charges, and schedules for the NRCHA Championships will be established by the Board of Directors and distributed to NRCHA members.

26A: Qualifications for the NRCHA World Finals Cutting Horse Contest in all classes are based on the contestant's participation. For any exhibitor to qualify for the NRCHA World Finals, he or she must be an NRCHA member in good standing and be in the Top Twenty in each class:

1. The Top Twenty in each class will be invited to the World Finals Contest.
2. Points earned during the year and points earned at the World Finals will be added together to determine the official NRCHA Top Ten Year End Standings.

26B: No entry fees will be refunded after the draw.

- 26C: Should a contestant be unable to compete at the World Finals Contest, the number twenty-one (#21) horse in the standing of that class would be invited to compete. A qualifying contestant must notify the NRCHA office as soon as possible of the fact that they cannot compete, to give the substitute horse as much notice as possible.
- 26D: NRCHA World Finals qualifying and points/earnings will begin on January 1 of each year and will end on November 1 of that same year.
- 26E: Earnings won at any NRCHA World Finals Contest will be counted toward contestants and horses total lifetime earnings. However, these earnings will not be counted in determining eligibility for the subsequent point year.

Section V – Judges

- Rule 27 Designation as an NRCHA approved judge is a privilege, not a right, bestowed by the Judge's Committee, according to procedures formulated by it, to individuals having shown cutting expertise and good character. An individual's conduct as a member, contestant and/or judge must be exemplary. A judge's conduct and ability is subject to the continual review of the Judge's Committee. Designation as a judge is revocable by the Judge's Committee with or without notice and formal hearing, subject only to the ultimate review by the Board of Directors.
- 27A: Any judge that has a valid complaint lodged against him may be put on probation by the judge's committee for a period in which said judge is to complete four consecutive entire shows without any valid complaints being made, at which time the judge's committee shall remove the judge from probation. If said judge has another valid complaint during the probation period, the judge's committee will review and may revoke the judge's card immediately. Any complaints filed by any member of the NRCHA will remain anonymous to the Board of Directors/NRCHA membership and the judge whom is being reviewed. The judge's committee shall adopt procedures for the implementation of Rule 27A, such procedures to be approved by the Board of Directors.
- Rule 28: Individuals over the age of twenty-one (21) may be designated as an NRCHA judge upon approval by the Judge's Committee, subject only to the ultimate review by the Executive Board or Board of Directors.

- 28A: No individual will be approved as a judge who has a record of suspension, probation or other disciplinary action with the NRCHA for the two (2) year period immediately preceding the date a Judge's Application is received by the NRCHA office.
- 28B: No person appearing on the published ACHA, NCHA, American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA), or American Paint Horse Association (APHA) suspended lists shall be permitted to judge an NRCHA approved cutting horse contest.
- 28C: All of the foregoing requirements being in addition to the condition of Rule 11.
- Rule 29: Judges in all NRCHA approved contest must use official NRCHA Judges Cards and sign each card. The following criteria must be met in regard to judging at any NRCHA approved contest.
- 29A: Each judge(s) shall indicate penalties assessed in the spaces provided on the Judges Cards. Also, it is mandatory for each judge(s) to fill in "credit" columns on the Judges Cards with the following symbols:
- ✓ Average; + Above Average; - Below Average
- 29B: There must not be any consultation between judges until after judges Cards are turned in. After the Judges Cards are turned in, there will be no changes made, OTHER THAN in monitored events approved by the NRCHA. In such event all changes MUST be signed by the Judge.
- 29C: When two (2) or more individuals are judging a cutting horse contest or go-round and one (1) or more judges cannot complete judging a contest or go-round, the score or scores of the remaining judge(s) who complete the contest or go-round will be the sole basis of computing the contest or go-round results. Each judge must score each horse individually, and if any one (1) of a judge's scores is counted in a contest or go-round, all of that judge's scores must be counted except as provided herein.
- 29D: When two (2) or more individuals are judging a cutting horse contest of more than one (1) go-round and one (1) or more judges becomes unable to continue between the go-rounds or before the finals, the said judge(s) shall be replaced by an alternate judge(s) designated by Show Management.

- 29E: Where four (4) or more individuals are judging the cutting horse contest, the highest and lowest scores for each horse may be discarded and the accumulated scores of the remaining judges used to compute the contest or go-round results. This rule shall also apply to finals.
- Rule 30: A judge may not judge his parents, children, spouse, spouse's parents, employer, employee or relatives of either the judge or his spouse. A judge may not judge anyone who lives in the judge's household. If in the event at least two (2) judges scores are dropped from a contestant's score, Rule 30, 30A, 30B, 30C, and 30D do not apply.
- 30A: Furthermore, a judge may not judge a horse that he has owned, exhibited, trained, managed or sold for direct or indirect remuneration within the sixty (60) day period immediately preceding the NRCHA approved contest at which said judge is officiating either in full or in part.
- 30B: A Judge may not judge any rider, or a horse owned by said rider, who has had lessons from said judge or given lessons to said judge within the sixty (60) day period immediately preceding the NRCHA approved contest at which said judge is officiating either in full or in part.
- 30C: A judge may not judge any rider, or horse of any said rider, who has trained or assisted in training the judge's horse within sixty (60) days preceding any NRCHA approved contest at which said judge is officiating either in full or in part.
- 30D: If such a horse, owner, or rider as specified in Section V, Rule 30A, 20B, or 30C, is entered in a class, the entry fee shall be refunded and the entry not shown. A judge may be suspended from the Approved Judges List for an infraction of this rule.
- Rule 31: Show Management shall report to the NRCHA office any judge who is absent from his duties after accepting an assignment. The judge shall be removed from the NRCHA Approved Judges List until the judge submits a written statement to the NRCHA office explaining his absence and requesting reinstatement to the NRCHA Approved Judges List. A judge will be reinstated to the NRCHA Approved Judges List only after the Executive Board or Board of Directors determines that a judge's absence was for just cause.

- Rule 32: Complaints and/or protests regarding an NRCHA judge may be made by current NRCHA members only.
- Rule 33: Any contestant may protest a judge's decision regarding a class in which the contestant participated, if the alleged protest involves a major penalty of three (3) points or more, or, three (3) or more (1) point penalties in the same run by submitting to the NRCHA Judge's Committee a written statement requesting a review of a judge's performance. Said statement must be filed (postmarked, faxed, or hand delivered) within seven (7) days of the closing date of the show involved and must be accompanied by a personal check, money order, or cashier's check in the amount of one-hundred dollars (\$100.00) made payable to the National Ranch Cutting Horse Association. If after review by the Judge's Committee, the protest is found to be valid, the fee will be returned to the contestant. When protests are not found to valid, the fee will be retained by the NRCHA.
- 33A: In the event an NRCHA approved judge's membership is suspended by the National Ranch Cutting Horse Association for any reason, the judge's approved status shall be cancelled and all rights and privileges forfeited until otherwise determined by the NRCHA Board of Directors. (See Rule 28A.)
- Rule 34: A judge(s) must present in writing any grievance that he/she may have against contestants or Show Management to the NRCHA Board of Directors. A complaint by a judge must be filed (postmarked, faxed or hand delivered) within seven (7) days of the alleged violation.
- Rule 35: Once an NRCHA approved cutting has commenced, Show Management is not authorized to dismiss a judge for any reason relating to the actual performance of his judging responsibilities. Show Management, however, may dismiss a judge for blatant misconduct while on the show grounds, such as using abusive language, consuming alcoholic beverages, or illegal drugs immediately prior to or during a contest, etc. A judge may be dismissed for any reason by the NRCHA Executive Board or Board of Directors if, in their opinion, it is in the best interest of the NRCHA to do so.
- Rule 36: A judge shall conduct himself in a manner fitting and proper to one afforded the honor of officiating at any NRCHA approved contest. Any misconduct on the part of the judge at any NRCHA contest, such as consuming alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs immediately prior to or during a contest, the use of abusive

language, showing obvious favoritism to, or discrimination against either an individual or a horse performing in a contest, or any misconduct unbecoming a judge, will make him subject to disciplinary action following a complete and impartial hearing before the NRCHA Board of Directors or Executive Board regarding an alleged rule violation.

- 36A: A judge should not appear on the show grounds before the stated time for entries to close except as may be required by Show Management. **Judges shall not visit, beyond the exchange of normal greetings,** with owners, trainers, exhibitors or agents before the show and shall talk only with representatives of Show Management, until the entire contest or show is completed.
- 36B: Under no circumstances will a judge be permitted to enter a contest for which said judge is officiating.
- 36C: A judge shall not discuss with any contestant previous scores, classes, or related happenings during a show or within thirty (30) days after a contest at which the judge has officiated. A judge shall not intimidate, or attempt to intimidate, a contestant. The penalty for violating this rule will be a six (6) months suspension from the NRCHA.
- 36D: A judge may review any run prior to the announcement of the official placing of the class. If there is doubt, the benefit of doubt goes to the rider.

Section VI - Contestants

- Rule 37: There are four (4) classifications of NRCHA Contestants:
- 37A: **Ranch Rider:** Any person that meets the NRCHA Eligibility Requirements as set out in Section IX.
- 37B: **Novice Rider:** Any person who has lifetime earning of \$1,000.00 or less as determined by the combined records of **all** cutting horse associations.
- 37C: **Open Rider:** This classification is open to any NRCHA member in good standing.
- 37D: **Youth Rider:** Open to any member of the NRCHA who is eighteen (18) years of age or younger.
- Rule 38: Rules governing contestants:

- 38A: Show Management has the right to disqualify or refuse entry to any contestant for actions of misconduct, unsportsmanlike conduct, or harassing the judge(s), Show Management, employees, or other contestants. If a contestant is disqualified for violating a Standing Rule of the NRCHA, all entry fees and premiums pertaining to said contestant shall be forfeited.
- 38B: A contestant may drop out of any class due to injury to the contestant or the contestant's horse, or due to serious injury, sickness or death in the contestant's family and receive all monies won in go-rounds. A contestant shall not at any time withdraw from any class in which the contestant is participating due to dissatisfaction or grievance with the judges(s), Show Management, or other contestants without forfeiting all money won in previous go-rounds. In no event will entry fees, or any part thereof, be refunded after a class starts. A class will be considered started when the draw is completed by Show Management.
- 38C: All contestants must work at the appointed time so designated by the Show Management or be disqualified for that class or go-round with no score. A contestant who fails to work at the appointed time will receive no score for that class or go-round.
- 38D: Training activities of any kind while on the show grounds, other than in designated practice facilities, are prohibited. A contestant shall not be allowed to abuse or mistreat any horse in any manner in the show arena or on the show grounds. Show Management or the judge at an NRCHA approved contest may disqualify a contestant if that contestant violates this rule and all premiums pertaining to said contestant shall be forfeited. A contestant shall not enter the show arena at any time at an NRCHA approved cutting horse contest with any kind of training device or gimmick of any nature. However, martingales may be used on helping horses and breast collars that are attached to the swells of the saddle are legal.
- 38E: After the buzzer sounds, the contestant will discontinue working and ride his/her horse forward past the time line before dismounting, except to retrieve a lost article. Once the lost article is retrieved, the rider must remount and continue riding the horse forward past the time line. Failure to comply with this rule will result in disqualification from a class or go-round with no score.
- 38F: A contestant or member shall not talk with the judge(s), **beyond the exchange of normal greetings**, before the show or until the

entire contest or show is completed or make any comments within a judge's hearing about any performance during the contest or show. A contestant or member is prohibited from making comments to a judge(s) regarding the manner in which a class was judged until at least thirty (30) days after the class involved.

- 38G: A contestant, or member, shall not engage in any form of misconduct or harassment toward Show Management, judges or NRCHA employees at any NRCHA approved show or event. Infraction of this rule will result in a fine and possible suspension by the NRCHA Board of Directors or Executive Board.
- 38H: Unsportsmanlike conduct in the show arena or on the show grounds is prohibited.
- 38I: A contestant shall not intimidate, or attempt to intimidate, a judge(s). The penalty for violating this rule will be a minimum of six (6) months suspension from the NRCHA.
- 38J: No dogs are permitted in the show arena or designated warm up or practice areas while an NRCHA approved cutting horse contest is taking place. Dogs anywhere on the grounds must be on a leash at all times.
- 38K: No alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs may be consumed or brought into the show arena or designated warm up or practice areas while an NRCHA approved cutting horse contest is taking place. Anyone found consuming alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs in any of the areas defined above shall be asked to leave by Show management. Members shall be disqualified from the contest and will be subject to disciplinary procedures by the Executive Board or Board of Directors for violation of this rule.
- 38L: Inhumane treatment or abuse of a horse in any manner in the show arena or on the show grounds is prohibited.
1. If Show Management or a judge at any NRCHA approved show discovers inhumane treatment or abuse of a horse, they may immediately bar the responsible party and horse from further competition in the show. Show Management must notify the NRCHA Board of Directors of any action taken regarding enforcement of this rule within seven (7) days of the closing date of the show involved. After further review, the NRCHA Executive Board or Board of Directors may impose additional disciplinary action for violations of this rule.

2. Inhumane treatment includes, but is not limited to, the exhibition of a crippled or injured horse, or a horse with any other health abnormality, which could thereby result in the horse's undue discomfort or distress. The decision of Show Management or a judge as to inhumane treatment should be based upon consultation with a veterinarian. If Show Management or a judge determines, at the sole discretion of either, that the welfare of the horse requires immediate action, and a veterinarian is not available, Show Management or a judge may implement any action allowed by this rule.
3. Abuse includes, but is not limited to, excessive jerking, spurring, whipping or any other act which could cause trauma or injury to a horse. Any act of abuse, or intent to abuse a horse, in the show arena or on the show grounds which could also potentially endanger the safety of other persons or animals will be dealt with in the strongest possible manner as provided by this Standing Rule.

38M: After the start of any NRCHA approved or sponsored show, any person in the working area in front of the judge's stand must wear western attire, including a western hat. Long sleeved shirts with collars must be worn. Long sleeves must be worn rolled down. Shirts must be buttoned or snapped down the front. T-shirts and slipover knits are not permissible. Show Management may waive the required western hat rule under extreme weather conditions. Chaps are optional. Failure to comply with this dress code will result in disqualification from a class or go-round with no score. This rule may be set aside by show Management for practice sessions.

38N: Any NRCHA member or non-member whose check given in connection with the exhibition of cutting horses is returned by the maker's bank shall result in the contestant being assessed a fee of \$25.00 per occurrence. Full restitution for the face value of the check plus the \$25.00 fee must be received within thirty (30) days from date of notice. Notification shall be in accordance with Standing Rule 45.

1. Any check given by the owner, contestant or on contestant's behalf in connection with the exhibition of cutting horses that is returned by the maker's bank and the payor or contestant fails to make full restitution within thirty (30) days of date of notice, or any owner of contestant who fails to pay entry fees and/or related show expenses, shall forfeit all winnings and such winnings shall not count for any NRCHA special or year

end awards until full restitution, including all fees, are received.

2. Failure to make full restitution, including all fees, within thirty (30) days of date of notice will result in an automatic suspension with no disciplinary hearing necessary. Suspension will be sustained until full restitution, including all fees, are received. Suspension will be in accordance with Standing Rule 42.
3. In the event, after written demand upon the payor or contestant, an affiliate has not received restitution for an NSF check, the affiliate may forward the NSF check and evidence of written demand upon the payor or contestant to the NRCHA office. Upon receipt of the above items, which must occur within ninety (90) days from date of the NSF check, the NRCHA will reimburse the affiliate in the amount of the NSF check.

38O: The responsibility for reporting violations of Standing Rule 38 rests with, but is not limited to, Show Management, NRCHA Officers, Directors, officials and the judge(s).

38P: Any member desiring to file a complaint regarding any alleged violation of any NRCHA Standing Rule may do so by submitting the complaint in writing to the NRCHA Board of Directors, together with a personal check, money order, or cashier's check in the amount of \$100.00 made payable to the National Ranch Cutting Horse Association. A complaint must be filed (postmarked, faxed, or hand delivered) with the NRCHA secretary within seven (7) days of the closing date of the contest or incident involved. The NRCHA Board of Directors retains the right to file a complaint within one (1) year of the contest or incident involved. Upon receipt, all complaints will be referred to the Executive Director or appropriate committee for investigation and consideration. If after review and investigation of the complaint, the Executive Director or the committee is of the opinion that a rule violation has occurred, the Executive Director or committee shall report its findings to the NRCHA Board of Directors and request a hearing by the NRCHA Board of Directors or Executive Board. After said hearing, the board of Directors or Executive Board may take disciplinary action consistent with the provisions of these rules as it deems appropriate. The decision of the Board of Directors shall be final and binding unless a written notice of the member's intention to appeal that decision is received in the NRCHA office within twenty-one (21) days of the date of the letter notifying said member of the disciplinary action taken against him

or her. If notice of appeal is timely received in the NRCHA office, a hearing will be scheduled to determine whether or not a rule violation occurred; and if so, what disciplinary action, if any, should be taken against the member. The hearing will be conducted pursuant to the provisions of NRCHA Standing Rule 40.

- Rule 39: A Contestant Representative shall be designated for each NRCHA approved class to serve as sole liaison between contestants and Show Management.
- 39A: Provided a Contestant Representative has not been appointed by the Show Management, it shall be the duty of Show Management to hold a meeting of all contestants in each class prior to the draw of that class for the purpose of electing a representative for the duration of the show. In the event the Contestant Representative has to leave the show for any reason, he shall appoint a representative in his place for the duration of the show. Any Contestant Representative so appointed or elected must be a contestant in the class involved.
- 39B: The Contestant's Representative, or any appointed alternate, must submit a Confidential Contest Report if he observes any actions by a contestant, Show Management or judge detrimental to the best interests of the NRCHA. Such action includes, but is not limited to, the following: any horse being abused, abusive language, intoxication, use of an illegal drug, use of a prohibited training device, or any other infraction of NRCHA Standing Rules.

Section VII - Disciplinary Procedures

- Rule 40: Any NRCHA member may be disciplined, fined, placed on probation or suspended from the NRCHA and any member or non-member may be denied all privileges, including show privileges, of the NRCHA by the NRCHA Executive Board or Board of Directors whenever it shall have been established by a preponderance of the evidence that such member or non-member has violated any rule of the Association. When the rule in question contains a specific punishment provision, any disciplinary action taken must be consistent with that provision.
- 40A: When a member or non-member shall be accused of any violation, the individual shall be given not less than fifteen (15) days notice of a time and place for a hearing such accusation by the Executive Board or board of Directors. At the designated time and place of the hearing, the individual shall have an opportunity, in person or by counsel, to be heard and to present evidence in his/her behalf

and to hear and refute evidence offered against the individual. Notification of such hearing will be issued in accordance with Standing Rule 45.

- 40B: No continuance shall be granted unless requested in writing at least seven (7) days prior to the hearing and good cause is shown. A continuance shall be granted or denied at the sole discretion of the NRCHA President or in his absence or if unavailable, by the Executive Director.
- 40C: The decision of the NRCHA Executive Board or Board of Directors shall be final and binding on all parties.
- 40D: A suspended member of the NRCHA will not be allowed to participate in any NRCHA approved cutting horse contest as an owner of a horse, a rider, or an agent. In the event such suspended member enters an approved contest during the period of the member's suspension either as an owner, rider, or agent, an additional six (6) months will be added to the member's suspension.
- Rule 41: Any member of the NRCHA who threatens or actually inflicts bodily harm or injury to another person based upon that person's action, conduct, or decisions while acting in an official capacity for the NRCHA or for any NRCHA approved contest shall be suspended from membership in the NRCHA for a period of not less than one (1) year.
- Rule 42: Any member may be suspended and denied privileges of the NRCHA, and any non-member, approved show or official thereof may be denied privileges of the NRCHA for the failure to pay when due, any obligation owing to the NRCHA or an NRCHA Affiliate or for giving a check (or one given on contestant's behalf) returned by the maker's bank for entry fee, stall fees, office charges, stock charges, premiums or any other fees or charges connected with the exhibition of cutting horses; provided, however, that the member or non-member subject to suspension shall be given thirty (30) days written notice of the amount due and the intention of the NRCHA to suspend or withhold privileges. Any suspension and denial of privileges under this section shall terminate upon full payment of the obligation due the NRCHA.
- Rule 43: If any member institutes litigation in which the NRCHA is included as a defendant in an effort to recover damages, to overturn enforcement or interpretation of the Constitution, Bylaws, Rules or Regulations, or for any other reason what so ever, and

does not prevail in said litigation by the recovery of all relief requested, said member shall be liable to the NRCHA for its attorney's fees, costs of courts, and other expenses incurred in connection with such litigation. Venue for any litigation in which the NRCHA is included as a defendant shall be Burnet County, Texas.

- Rule 44: No person shall make a derogatory remark, nor take, or threaten to take, adverse actions against an NRCHA sponsor its agent, servants or employees, relating in any manner to the sponsor's involvement with the NRCHA or an NRCHA approved contest. Any person who violates this rule is subject to disciplinary action and is also responsible to the NRCHA for any loss or damage caused by a violation of this rule.
- Rule 45: Every notice required by these rules and regulations may be served by delivering a copy of the notice to the person to be served, or his/her attorney, either in person or by mail, postage prepaid, to his her last known address as it appears on the NRCHA records and upon mailing, such notice shall be deemed received by such person when it is deposited in the United States mail.

Section VIII - Rules for Judging Cutting Horse Contests

- Rule 46: A horse will be given credit for his ability to enter a herd of cattle quietly with very little disturbance to the herd or to the cow being brought from the herd. One (1) deep cut must be made into the herd, or a three (3) point penalty will be assessed.
- 46A: When an animal is cut from the herd, it is more desirable that it be taken toward the center of the arena, and credit will be given for same. Additional credit will be given the horse which drives a cow a sufficient distance from the herd to insure that the herd will not be disturbed by the horse's performance.
- 46B: Credit will be given for the ability of the horse to hold a cow in the center of the arena, although no penalty should be imposed if a cow goes to a fence on either side of the arena.
- Rule 47: During a run, a rider **will not** be penalized for light or normal contact while reining a horse; however, setting a horse down hard, jerking a horse, stopping a horse excessively on the ends, or a horse that clearly must be held or started to keep from quitting a cow will be penalized. A one (1) point penalty will be assessed for each occurrence. No credit will be given for riding with a loose rein throughout a performance.

- 47A: The rider shall hold the bridle reins in one hand. A three (3) point penalty shall be assessed if the rider's second hand touches the reins for any purpose other than to straighten the reins while returning to the herd after working a cow.
- 47B: If a rider or the rider's horse creates a disturbance at any time throughout the working time, penalties will be assessed as follows:
1. Any noise directed by the contestant toward the cattle will be penalized one (1) point.
 2. Any time that cattle enter the working area through the fault of the horse or contestant, the contestant will be penalized three (3) points. If, at no fault of the horse, additional cattle leave the herd, no penalty will be assessed.
 3. The judge shall stop any work because of training or abuse of the horse by the contestant or disturbance of the cattle. Any contestant failing to stop immediately when requested or upon a whistle blown by the judge will be subject to disciplinary action by the NRCHA.
- 47C: A horse will be penalized three (3) points each time the back fence actually stops or turns the cow being worked within one (1) step or three (3) feet of the back fence. The "back fence" is to be agreed on and designated by the judge(s) before the contest starts, meaning the actual fence only, no imaginary line from point to point to be considered. If any of the contestants voice an objection to the proposed back fence before the contest starts, the judge(s) shall take a vote of the contestants and a back fence acceptable to the majority shall be designated and used.
- Rule 48: If a horse lets a cow that he is working get back in the herd, he will be penalized five (5) points.
- Rule 49: If a rider changes cattle after visibly committing to a specific cow, a five (5) point penalty will be assessed.
- Rule 50: If a horse turns the wrong way, with his tail toward a cow being worked, an automatic score of sixty (60) points will be given.
- Rule 51: If a horse quits a cow, a penalty of five (5) points will be assessed.
- Rule 52: If a horse clears the herd with two (2) or more cows and fails to separate a single cow before quitting, a five (5) point penalty will

be assessed. There is no penalty if time expires before a single cow is separated.

- Rule 53: Unnecessary aggression, such as a horse pawing, biting, or kicking a cow, will result in a three (3) point penalty being assessed.
- Rule 54: If a horse is spurred in the shoulder, a three (3) point penalty shall be assessed for each occurrence. Spurring behind the shoulder is not considered a visible cue, and should not be penalized.
- Rule 55: A rider's use of a toe, foot, or stirrup on the horse's shoulder is considered a visible cue, and a one (1) point penalty shall be assessed for each occurrence.
- Rule 56: When a horse goes past a cow to a degree that the horse loses his working advantage, a one (1) point penalty will be assessed for each occurrence.
- Rule 57: A contestant may quit a cow when it is obviously stopped, obviously turned away, or is behind the turnback horses and the turnback horses are behind the time line. If the cow is quit under any other circumstances, a penalty of three (3) points shall be assessed.
- Rule 58: All horses in the show arena, including horses ridden by herd holders and turnback help, must be ridden with a bridle having a bit in the mouth or with a hackamore. A bridle shall have no nose band or bosal, and hackamores shall be rope or braided rawhide with no metal parts. A judge must be able to freely pass two (2) fingers completely around the horse's nose between the hackamore and muzzle. Choke ropes, lip wire or lip string,, tie downs, wire around the horse's neck, nose, or browband, tight nose bands, quirts, bats or mechanical devices giving the rider undue control over a horse will not be permitted in the arena where an NRCHA approved contest is being held. Breast collars may be used, no portion of which may pass over the horse's neck. Chaps and spurs may be worn. A competing horse's tail must not be braided or be tied in any manner. A judge has the right to have a contestant report to him if he is suspicious of any infraction of this rule. Any time a contestant is guilty of an infraction of this rule, the contestant shall be disqualified. (See Rule 38D.)
- Rule 59: At any NRCHA approved or sponsored show, any person in the working area in front of the judges stand will be required to adhere to the dress code as outlined in Standing Rule 38M. Failure to comply with this dress code will result in disqualification from a

class or go-round with no score. This rule may be set aside by Show Management for practice sessions.

- Rule 60: Any rider who allows his horse to quit working or leave the working area before his allotted time is up will be disqualified for that class or go-round with no score.
- Rule 61: When a contestant falls or is thrown from a horse, or a horse falls to the ground, an automatic score of sixty (60) points will be given. A horse is considered to have fallen to the ground when the horse is on its side and all four feet are extended in the same direction.
- Rule 62: Each contestant is limited to a maximum of four (4) helpers.
- Rule 63: A judge marks each performance from sixty (60) to eighty (80) points. One-half (1/2) points may be used.
- Rule 64: When a judge is in doubt about a penalty, the benefit always should go to the contestant.
- Rule 65: A contestant will be awarded a rework under circumstances outlined in Standing Rule 25 and Standing Rule 25A.
- Rule 66: In any contest judged by two (2) or more judges, any inconsistency in assessing a major penalty, that penalty and that penalty only, shall be reviewed by all judges (or the monitor when applicable), and a determination made immediately following the completion of the class. No review may be conducted subsequent to the announcement of the official placing of the class.

SUMMARY OF PENALTY POINTS

<u>Infraction</u>	<u>Points Deducted</u>
Excessive Reining or Jerking	1
Noise directed toward the cattle	1
Cueing on the horse's shoulder	1
Losing working advantage (a "miss")	1
Failure to make a deep cut	3
Second hand on reins	3
Disturbing the herd (picking up cattle)	3
Backfence	3
Horse's unnecessary aggression	3
Spurring on the shoulder	3
Hot quit	3
Losing a cow	5

Switching cows	5
Horse quitting a cow	5
Failure to separate cows	5
Horse turns tail to cow	automatic score of 60
Contestant falls or is thrown	automatic score of 60
Horse falls to the ground	automatic score of 60
Dismounting in working area	disqualification
Improper equipment	disqualification
Horse's tail is braided	disqualification
Failure to adhere to dress code	disqualification
Leaving arena before time is up	disqualification
Failure to stop after judge's whistle	disciplinary action

Section IX – NRCHA Eligibility Definitions

- Rule 67: The Executive Board or Board of Directors of the NRCHA shall have the sole and absolute right to determine qualifications of applicants relative to membership and participation in NRCHA events. The Executive Board or Board of Directors, by majority vote, shall make such determinations as:
1. Rancher – Any operation which continuously owns fifty (50) or more breeding animals throughout the year of membership. Any operation that owned or pastured at least one-hundred (100) head of livestock for at least six (6) months in the twelve (12) months prior to the commencement of the membership year. Any operation that has fed at least one-hundred (100) head of livestock in confinement for the intent of fattening for slaughter, pre-conditioning for pasture, or growing for some specific purpose for at least six (6) months on the twelve (12) months prior to the commencement of the membership year. Said livestock may be owned by the ranch or outside customers. Special provisions may be made to applicants denied eligible by a combination of the above or in other related occupations.
 2. Owner – An owner or family member of an owner of a ranch as described above.
 3. Employee – A person who has maintained for a period of at least six (6) months prior to the current membership full time employment of a qualifying ranch.
 4. Day Laborer – Day laborers are defined as one that receives fifty percent (50%) of ones income from providing contract labor for ranch work. Day laborers who are receiving Social Security benefits are exempt from the fifty percent (50%) rule but must show proof of legitimate employment.

5. Family – the immediate family of a qualified participant may compete. Immediate family is defined as spouse and/or any of their dependent children.
6. Proof of Eligibility – may be requested by the NRCHA Executive Board or Board of Directors. All information will remain confidential.

Rule 68:

Participant Requirements:

1. All participants in NRCHA events must be approved, current members in good standing of the NRCHA. The Executive Board or Board of Directors, by majority vote, shall determine whether or not a person has satisfied the above requirements for participation.
2. Participants must be an owner, employee, or day laborer or family member of owner, employee, or day laborer as defined above.
3. **No rider who receives compensation for training cutting horses, working cow horses, or reined cow horses may participate in any NRCHA classes where NRCHA Eligibility is required.**
4. All participants must train and show their own horses in NRCHA events during the membership year.

Rule 69:

Horse Eligibility:

1. All horses must be used on the ranch for legitimate ranch duties.
2. All horses must be approved by the NRCHA Executive Board or Board of Directors.
3. To participate in an NRCHA event, all horses must be owned by a ranch, owner, employee, or day laborer or by a family member of the owner, employee, or day laborer.
4. No horse with more combined NCHA, ACHA, National Reined Cowhorse, Working Cowhorse eligibility earnings or an AQHA Register of Merit in cutting at the beginning of the point year will be eligible to compete.
5. All horses must have a current negative Coggins test within one calendar year of an event.

Points on Showing and Judging Cutting Horses

The following questions and answers are included here as an aid to understanding the Rules for Judging Cutting Horse Contests.

1. **What is the desired number of cattle to work?**
The desired number of cattle to cut in the two and one-half (2 1/2) minute time limit is not over three (3) head on fresh cattle. If a cutter can do as much on two (2) head as another can do on three (3), the cutter working the two (2) head should have the higher score because he or she has not spent as much time in the herd.
2. **What is the preferable way to approach the herd?**
A horse should never be set down hard approaching the herd. Either walking or trotting to the herd is acceptable provided the horse is taken up very easily before getting close enough to disturb the cattle. The horse should display no hesitation, weaving, or reluctance to approach and enter the herd.
3. **What characteristics should be demonstrated when entering and working the herd?**
A cutting horse should enter the herd with ease, concentrating on the job to be done, not looking around excessively. The horse should be alert, but quiet, making no unnecessary movements to disturb the cattle. A horse should go deep enough into the herd on one (1) cut to demonstrate the ability to bring out a cow. It is permissible to enter the herd from either side or to go completely behind the entire herd to bring out a cow.
4. **When should a rider cease reining a horse?**
A rider entering the herd may have light rein contact with the horse, and may maintain this contact throughout the run. A penalty should be assessed if a horse is set down hard, jerked, stopped excessively on the ends, or clearly must be held or started to keep from quitting a cow. Credit will be given for riding with a loose rein throughout a performance: however, completely throwing a horse away is not necessary and is not a true ranch situation.
5. **What is the most desirable way to bring a cow from the herd?**
The cutting horse should stay a reasonable distance from the cow if possible, showing a great deal of expression but no illness toward the animal being cut. Illness is defined as biting, trying to bite, pawing, kicking, or charging a cow. Facial expression and ear position should not be considered a sign of illness. The horse should make counter movements to the cow, regardless of the distance separating them. The horse should not rush or push cattle excessively in bringing a cow from the herd unless the cow turns around and tries to get back at the edge of the herd. The horse should bring a cow a sufficient distance from the herd toward the center of the arena, so the herd will not be disturbed while working, and set up the cow to be worked.
6. **When is a cow set up (in working position)?**
The cow should be set up as close to the middle of the arena as possible with the horse counteracting the movements of the cow. The horse should not be moving when the cow is standing still. When the cow moves, the horse should be just

enough faster to hold the cow, not only from returning to the herd, but also from going from side wall to side wall without excessive assistance from the turnback help. A higher score will be given to a run in which a horse “heads” his cattle as opposed to a run in which the turnback riders consistently turn the cattle.

7. When is a horse out of position?

A horse is out of position when he has lost his working advantage over the cow. This is not determined by the distance that a horse goes by a cow; it is determined by the response of the horse to the action of the cow. A horse should have no difficulty maintaining working advantage over a slow moving cow. The horse that can maintain working advantage over a cow that presents a severe challenge shall receive credit. No penalty should be charged the horse that immediately regains position after going sufficiently past a cow to cause it to turn.

8. When does picking up cattle constitute a penalty?

A penalty shall be assessed if a cow or cattle leave the herd and enter the working area due to disturbance caused by the horse or the contestant that is working.

9. What is a satisfactory way of quitting a cow?

A contestant may quit a cow when it is obviously stopped, obviously turned away, or is behind the turnback horses and the turnback horses are behind the time line. If a cow is quit under any other circumstances, a three (3) point penalty will be assessed.

10. Guidelines to consider in judging a cutting run.

A judge may apply the following guidelines in determining an appropriate score for a cutting run.

A. Give Credit:

1. for entering the herd quietly with very little disturbance to the herd or to the cow brought out.
2. for taking a cow toward the center of the arena.
3. for driving a cow a sufficient distance from the herd to assure that the herd will not be disturbed by the contestant’s work.
4. for setting up a cow and holding it in a working position as near the center of the arena as possible.

B. Consider the degree of difficulty of the run: The degree of difficulty of the run is determined by the amount of effort exerted by the cow in its attempt to return to the herd. A cow that turns quickly and moves rapidly is more difficult to hold in a working position than a cow that turns and moves slowly. A judge must give credit when a contestant is able to hold a working position on a tough cow.

C. Consider the eye appeal of the run: The eye appeal of the run is determined by the attractiveness of the run because of the style of the horse and the correctness of the overall performance.

D. Consider the amount of courage shown by a contestant: A judge shall give credit for a contestant staying on a tough cow. Credit shall be given a contestant coming off the fence with a cow and then establishing a working position near the center of the arena before quitting a cow.

E. Consider the amount of working time (the time a contestant actually spends working cattle during the 2 ½ minute run): A contestant shall be given credit

for his willingness to exhibit his horse actually working cattle. Obvious stalling in the herd or reluctance to cut a cow to allow time to run off the clock shall have a negative influence on the total point value of the run.

F. Run content:

1. Run content is a numerical evaluation (60-80) based on a running analysis of what actually occurs during the work, without regard to penalty.
2. Guidelines for evaluating a run: the judge will start judging each horse when the contestant's time begins, and each run will be started from a median score of (70). The run will conclude at the first sound of the buzzer. The contestant's run content will be based upon compliance with credit situations. Numerical value of run content will fluctuate up or down (60-80) throughout the run. Run content may be decreased without actual occurrence of a penalty. Actual occurrence of penalties will only be deducted at the conclusion of the run. At any point in the run, a judge should be able to ascribe a numerical value based on the above standard. The standard is run content (a numerical value) minus penalties equals the score.

RUN CONTENT is a NUMERIC VALUE
minus PENALTIES = SCORE