

Changes for 2014 Texas State 4-H Horse Show

1. Take the “cow work” portion out of the 3-Yr-Old Futurity Class.

Justification: The 3-yr-old Futurity Class should not favor “cow-horses” and should be available to any 4-H'er even if they do not have the place or ability to work a cow. Current rules favor those who have access to cattle and those horses that may be more “cow-bred” than others. The purpose of the futurity program is to encourage older, more experienced youth to train their own horse and develop a young horse into a broke, responsive, and enjoyable mount which might possibly become a show horse. All horse are not going to need to learn to work a cow, but all horses need to be broke enough to be able to do all the other routines involved in this class. By including cow work, we may be leaving out some youngsters who otherwise may be interested in bringing their 2-yr-old futurity horse back as a 3-yr-old. Also, the cow work is currently optional at District shows, therefore some horses have actually seen very few cows prior to competing at the State Show.

2. Add a separate “Cow Boxing” class. However, points in this class will not count for the Stock Horse High Point Award and exhibitors cannot show the same horse in both the Cow Boxing and the regular Working Cow Horse classes. (This would allow youth to show one horse in Cow Boxing and a different horse in Working Cow Horse, if desired).

The class will involve running a designated reining pattern and then holding (boxing) the cow on the end of the arena for 50 seconds. Since the emphasis of this class is to allow the introduction of cow work to young horses or inexperienced exhibitors, horses of any age may be shown in either a snaffle bit, bosal or curb bit. No other training devices or tack (such as tie-downs or running martingales) will be allowed. This class will be optional for District Shows.

Justification: This class is intended for younger horses (even 3-yr-olds) that contestants want to show in a cow class but either the horse or the contestant are not ready to “go down the fence”. This class would not count for overall High-Point Stock Horseman Award.

3. Add: **Allow 4-H'ers to show multiple horses in any division, including all qualifying divisions. However, only one horse may be shown per class as per current rules. All horses still must be properly validated by the normal procedures and deadlines.** Also, as a part of this rule change, the youth (not the horse) must “qualify” in that respective qualifying divisions by competing at the District Show in at least one of the qualifying classes within that division with at least one of their validated horses. (Example a. 4-H'er has the option to show one, two or three properly validated horses for speed events at the District Show. This would make any one or all three of these horses (only one per class) eligible to show in timed events at the State Show; Example b. 4-H'er qualifies one horse in western

pleasure, a different horse in Showmanship at Halter, they then can show either horse in any western qualifying class at the State Show). In case a horse becomes injured or otherwise cannot be shown at the State Show, only another horse that was properly validated can be substituted for that horse at the State Show. For divisions not offered at District Show such as roping, stock horse or over fences classes, those classes will remain as “invitational classes” in which any horse that has been properly validated can be entered at the State Show. Points accumulated on all horses shown in a division will count for the High-Point Award in that division. (As is currently being done in the Stock Horse Division).

Justification: Would allow 4-H’ers to “qualify” multiple horses in case one is not able to compete at state. Also, some horses are specialty horses (ex: pole bending vs. barrels) and the intent is to make the State 4-H Horse Show the “show case” of the best 4-H has to offer. This is already being done in the roping and stock horse divisions.

- 4. Allow 4-H’ers to show 1 halter horse within each of the sex divisions in halter.** This means that it would be possible for one youth to show 2 halter horses (one mare and one gelding) at District or State Shows. Schedule changes for the State Show have allowed for all Halter classes to shown in the same arena, accommodating those youth who choose to show a horse in both sex divisions. More than one horse cannot be shown in gelding classes and more than one horse cannot be shown in mare classes. These rules do not apply to Yearling Futurity projects which are allowed in addition to either a gelding or mare halter horse. However, as before, exhibitors can only show a one Yearling Futurity project, regardless.

Justification: If a 4-H’er owns and is able to fit multiple halter horses they should be able to show more than one, just like they can currently show more than one stock horse or English horse.

- 5. Take out the Western Riding Finals and have only one go-round.**

Justification: For the past two years, there were not enough qualifiers from the pre-lim’s to even have 10 horses in the finals. Scores from the first go-round will determine the placings.

Other New Classes to be added to the Texas State 4-H Horse Show (Suggested, but not required for adding to District Shows in 2014) -

6. Class Name – “Hunt Seat Versatility”

Description – Horses to be shown in hunt seat tack and equipment. All equipment and rider attire will be the same as the Hunter Under Saddle class.

This class will be judged on the performance of the horse. Riders will be required to do an individual pattern consisting of a series of maneuvers and negotiating obstacles such as logs, cones and cavallettis. **Required maneuvers** will consist of: walk, trot or canter over logs; a side-pass over or between an obstacle; back through an obstacle such as an “L” or around a series of cones or markers; and show all three gaits (walk, trot and canter) sometime during the course of the pattern. Additional maneuvers which may be asked for include: trotting circles or figure-8’s; cantering circles or figure-8’s with a simple or flying lead change; trotting over elevated poles or cavallettis; turns on the forehand or rearhand; extended gaits at the trot or canter; various gait transitions; and/or trotting around or through obstacles such as cones or other markers. There will be no required rail work. **Patterns should be designed to give credit to the forward-moving, hunter-type horses in the class.**

The class will be judged on mannerisms, movement (consistent with hunter-type horses), responsiveness to the rider, and performance in negotiating the required maneuvers. Scoring system to be used will be the same as Western Trail, with each maneuver scored +1 ½ to – 1 ½ with penalties applied same as Western Trail.

Points earned in this class **will** count for High-Point Hunter Horseman-Flat Division.

Justification for this class – There has been a small, but steady decline in interest in the hunt seat classes, especially over fences classes. This new class would provide an additional event for hunt seat riders and might encourage youth to advance to over fences classes by incorporating the negotiation of obstacles such as poles and cavallettis into a pattern. In order to compete effectively in this class, exhibitors would need a more broke, versatile horse which can perform maneuvers other than just showing on the rail. The class routine would provide educational opportunities at the county level to teach additional skills to hunt seat oriented horses and riders.

7. Class Name – “Stock Horse Horsemanship”

Description – Horses to be shown in plain, clean and functional western tack and conservative western attire. Rider attire will be restricted to dark-colored jeans (such as blue, black, dark brown, dark gray) and a **light colored (white or buff), button-down (or snapped), undecorated, long-sleeved collared shirt**, cowboy boots and a cowboy hat or safety helmet. **No chaps, or chinks of any kind will be allowed in this class.** A conservative scarf around the neck is allowed but should not detract from the overall conservative appearance of the exhibitor. Tack should be traditional and conservative in appearance and should not display extraordinary silver or other decorations other than normal buckles and connectors. Judge may fault riders who are in violation of the intent of this rule. No banded or braided manes, or hoof black will be allowed. Rules concerning legal reins, bits and other tack are same as other western stock horse classes. Protective boots or leg wraps (conservative colors) on the horse are allowed. **Exhibitors cannot show the same horse in both the Western Horsemanship and Stock Horse Horsemanship at the State 4-H Show.**

General - The class will be judged on the horsemanship and overall riding ability of the rider. Recognition will be given to the exhibitor’s ability to ride a horse functionally, with correct position, using various aids to cause the horse to perform required basic stock horse maneuvers. The performance of the horse is not to be judged more important than the riding ability of the exhibitor. Scores on individual works will be based on the rider’s skills during execution of the pattern.

Position

1. Arms and hands. Arms and hands should be held in an easy, relaxed manner. Upper arms are held in a straight line with the body, with the arm holding the reins bent at the elbow. Only one hand is used for reining, and hands shall not be changed on the reins. Free hand should not touch the saddle at any time. The reining hand is to be around the reins with one finger permitted between split reins. Reins are to be carried immediately above and slightly in front of the saddle horn. Reins should be held so that **light contact** is maintained with the horse’s mouth. Riders with soft, supple hands which are able to show their horse with minimal movement of the reins will be rewarded. Reins with a romal are allowed, but reins must be held in one hand, with hand completely around the reins, in a fist position, with the thumb up. No fingers between the reins. The non-rein hand must be on the romal (tail) and cannot be changed during the performance. If the non-rein hand touches the reins at any time during the performance, it should result in a disqualification.

2. Basic position. The rider should sit in a comfortable, balanced, relaxed, and flexible manner. The lower leg should hang straight down from the knee to the stirrups with a slight bend in the knee, depending on the type of saddle. Stirrups should be just long enough for the heel to be in a direct line under the shoulders and hips, with the heels lower than the toes. This allows flexion in the ankle joint which provides for a more balanced ride, staying in rhythm with the horse. The feet should be placed in the stirrups with the boot heel touching the stirrup or slightly less deep. Riding with the weight on the toes will be penalized. The toes should be turned only slightly out, with the ankles flexed in a comfortable position. The lower legs and feet should be kept close to the horse's body, but not in contact except when applying aids. Application of leg aids should be barely perceptible by the judge. Upper body should be upright, but relaxed and not rigid. Shoulders should be square and head and eyes should be up and looking ahead.

3. Position in Motion. The rider shall sit the jog and not post. The rider should be close to the saddle at a lope. If asked for an extended trot, rider may post or sit, or stand in the stirrups in a forward position, but **will not be allowed to hold the saddle horn**. Exaggerated shifting of the rider's weight is not desirable and will be penalized in judging. Rider should at all times, be in rhythm with the movement of the horse so as to present a smooth, efficient and functional overall appearance and to always be in position to aid the horse during required maneuvers.

Class Routine

1. The judge will ask each rider to work individually. Individual works will be a combination of stock horse maneuvers that the judge feels are necessary to determine the horsemanship ability of the rider. **Scoring for this class will be based on a combination of basic rider position and the ability to effectively communicate with the horse to execute a smooth, efficient and correct pattern.** The pattern must include only maneuvers from the following list:

- a. straight walk, jog, and lope, and/or circles in either direction, with possible extension of any gait
- b. stop
- c. back straight, in an "L", and in a circle
- d. 360-degree (or more) spin
- e. pivot, both ways
- f. turns of 90, 180 or 270 degrees
- g. rollbacks
- h. lope circles of varying size and speed
- i. pick up leads from standstill, walk, or jog
- j. simple or flying lead changes on a straight away or in a circle
- k. side pass

- l. counter canter
 - m. two-track
2. The pattern should be posted at least 1 hour before the class begins, if at all possible.
 3. The judge will use these individual work scores to determine the top riders who may be asked for additional individual work or work on the rail. Selected riders (or all riders if the class is small) may be asked to work on the rail to determine final placing. Rail work is optional.
 4. If held, rail work will include walk, jog, and lope in one or both directions of the ring at the discretion of the judge.

Justification for this class- As numbers of exhibitors in stock horse classes have increased, emphasis on the importance of basic horsemanship appears to be decreasing. This class, along with grass-roots educational programs at the county level, would encourage the teaching of proper riding position and use of aids, for 4-H'ers who may not be attracted to the normal Western Horsemanship class.

The major differences in this class and the other Western Horsemanship class will be in the type of maneuvers required and the tack, appointments of the horse and required attire by exhibitors. In order to fully evaluate and credit proper leg position, no chaps or leggings of any kind will be allowed. In order to preserve the conservative attire of the stock horse rider, only light-colored conservative, undecorated shirts will be allowed, along with dark jeans or pants. **The emphasis of this class will be to reward the stock horse riders who have the best horsemanship skills, while completing stock horse-type maneuvers.** The dress code is an effort to limit the influence of fashion or fads for this particular class so that the emphasis will always remain on the riding ability of the exhibitor. For some counties and regions of the state, active participation in this class by this segment of 4-H horse project participants could significantly increase educational opportunity at the county level, for basic, fundamental instruction on functional horsemanship skills.