

# NHJTCA

National Horse Judging Team  
Coaches' Association

# OFFICIAL HANDBOOK

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# INTRODUCTION

This handbook was designed and developed to aid members of the National Horse Judging Team Coaches' Association and other interested horse people in the proper management of a horse judging contest. The handbook provides guidelines on conducting a contest, description of cuts and guidelines for reasons judges. The contents of this handbook were designed to provide a more uniform set of standards utilized by horse judging contests across the nation. The association, through its handbook, is not attempting to dictate how a horse judging contest should be conducted, but merely to provide guidelines, suggestions and services to its membership.

## MISSION STATEMENT

"The mission of the National Horse Judging Team Coaches' Association is to provide and enhance communication and networking among coaches, encourage consistency among contests, promote and encourage training for coaches and students of horse judging, attract people to competitive horse judging, and promote closer public relations among all parties interested in and associated with the horse industry."

# CONSTITUTION

## *Article I - Name*

### Section I

This organization shall be known as the National Horse Judging Team Coaches' Association.

## *Article II - Purpose*

### Section I

1. To promote and encourage the training of students in horse judging.
2. To have an organization that will serve as an official spokesman for the coaches of horse judging teams.
3. To provide the coaches with a sense of prestige and dignity.
4. To promote, encourage, and aid in a constructive educational manner the Horse Judging Contests that are held on a National basis.
5. To act as an advisory and/or facilitatory organization on such matters as contest procedures, official judges, procedures for selecting classes, eligibility requirements, and all other matters of concern to contestants, coaches, and their prospective sponsors.
6. To work toward uniformity as much as is practical considering regional differences, in the management of contests and in procurement of classes for judging contests.
7. To promote communications between coaches and respective contest rules and regulations, etc.
8. To establish a common meeting place for exchange of ideas between coaches and to formulate ideas, suggested changes, etc., that may advance and improve the contest.
9. To promote closer public relations among all parties interested in and associated with the horse industry.

## *Article III - Membership*

### Section I

The membership of this Association shall consist of any individuals with an interest in horse judging team activities.

## *Article IV - Officers and Directors*

### Section I

The officers of this Association shall consist of a President, Vice-President, and Secretary-Treasurer. At the annual meeting every other year, the Vice-President will become President, the Secretary-Treasurer will become Vice-President, and the new Secretary-Treasurer will be elected from the directors retired in the previous two years.

# CONSTITUTION

## Section II

The Board of Directors shall consist of four Directors. Each year two Directors will go off the Board of Directors and two new ones will be elected. Of the two Board members completing their 2-year term, one shall be elected by a majority of the coaches present at the annual coaches' meeting. The Board of Directors and the Officers shall constitute the Executive Committee.

## Section III

The term of office of the Directors shall be two years. Any Director who has served two consecutive terms shall be ineligible for nomination until one full year after the expiration of the last year for which they were elected.

## Section IV

The outgoing President shall serve as Ex-Officer member of the Board of Directors.

### *Article V - Meetings*

## Section I

The Association shall meet at least 3 times/year at the APHA Spring Sweepstakes, All American Quarter Horse Congress and at the AQHA World Show. An annual election of Officers and Directors will be held at the All American Quarter Horse Congress Judging Contest.

## Section II

Directors may exercise the privilege of calling a meeting at any of the respective regional contests for the purpose of discussing these respective contests.

### *Article VI - Place of Business*

## Section I

The principal place of business of this Association shall be at the office of the Secretary-Treasurer.

### *Article VII - Amendments*

## Section I

The Constitution may be amended at any annual meeting by a two-thirds vote of the members present.

## *Duties of Officers*

### Section I

It shall be the duty of the President to preside at all regular and special meetings of the Association and shall serve as chairman of the Executive Committee. They shall appoint all committees unless otherwise provided for and shall maintain general oversight over the affairs of the Association. The President may call a special meeting of the Executive Committee at any time upon ten days written notice being given.

### Section II

It shall be the duty of the Vice-President to preside in the absence of the President and to serve as a member of the Executive Committee.

### Section III

It shall be the duty of the Secretary-Treasurer to record the proceedings of all meetings of the Association and attend to the correspondence and general business of the Association.

The **Secretary/Treasurer** *will* be under direct order of the President and Executive Committee and at the annual meeting of the Association, shall make a full report of all business for the previous year and perform such other duties as may be required of them or specified of them by the President and Executive Committee.

### Section IV

It shall be the duty of the Secretary-Treasurer to collect all money paid the Association, receive all money levied for assessments, issue a receipt therefore, pay all bills at the order of the Association and make a full report at the annual meeting of all money received and paid out for the preceding year.

### Section V

The Board of Directors shall have full power to issue recommendations for consideration by the membership, and, in addition, is expected to have general supervision of the affairs of the Association as members of the Executive Committee.

A majority of the Board shall constitute a quorum to transact business. On matters of special importance requiring immediate action, written consent of the majority of the Board of Directors shall be sufficient authority for the proper official to act on same.

The Board of Directors shall have authority to audit the books and records of the Secretary-Treasurer and make a report to the Association at any meeting.

# BY-LAWS

## *Membership Dues and Assessments*

### Section I

The membership dues are established by the Executive Committee and are to be paid annually and will be due on October 15 of each year.

This Association is non-profit, it is organized for educational purposes only, and it has no regularly paid employees.

### Section II

Special assessments may be levied at the vote of the organization.

## *Committee and Task Forces*

### Section I

There shall be an Executive Committee consisting of the President, Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer, and the Board of Directors. It shall be their duty to enforce the Constitution, and act as a court of last resort regarding infraction of rules. They shall have the authority to establish task forces, appoint members to the respective task forces and to require reports from these task forces upon due notice.

## *Vacancies*

### Section I

Any office which may become vacant may be filled by an appointment by the President, or if *they* desire, by the Executive Committee, but such appointee shall hold office only until the next annual meeting.

## *Expulsion*

### Section I

In case of evidence of lack of good faith or ethics by any member of the Association such as willfully violating any important rules of functions by this Association, and if serious charges are preferred against *them* to the Executive Committee, this committee is empowered, provided said charges are sustained by sufficient evidence, to disenfranchise said member from this Association.

# STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING HORSE JUDGING CONTESTS

These guidelines are intended to serve as suggestions for enhancing the educational success of horse judging contests. Consideration must be given to planning, support, rules and regulations, registration, actual method of conduct, tabulation, awards program and follow-up of the contest.

## Planning the Event

Facilities - An arena is needed of adequate size for both halter and performance classes (at least 100'x200' is recommended). Additionally, an area large enough to seat all the contestants (preferably with desks) while they prepare their oral reasons and individual rooms or areas for each set of reasons are needed. A room large enough for the tabulation crew to work in close proximity to the reasons rooms will also be needed. Facility plans also need to be considered if a coaches' meeting is held as well as the noon meal for the contestants and the awards program.

Timing - Determine the most beneficial time of the year (and date) for the anticipated purpose. Communicate this early (9-12 months in advance) to avoid conflicts in the chosen facility and with other major events of common interest. The event must be on leaders' and coaches' calendars at least 6-9 months in advance.

Meals - Although not essential it is customary to judge the classes in the morning and then serve the contestants lunch before the beginning of oral reasons. Decide whether to feed just the contestants, or also the support staff and horse handlers, or everyone. The other meal consideration is the awards program, which is often associated with a meal. The first decision is whether the award will be given the evening of the contest or the next morning. This will depend primarily on the tabulation system used and the other activities scheduled at the event. Either way, plans need to be made for the meal and the sale of tickets, counts, etc. A pre-contest coaches' meeting may include a meal if circumstances warrant.

Award - It is customary to give awards to the top individuals and teams in halter, performance, reasons, and overall categories. The determination of these awards is discussed later. The type of awards depends on the interests of the program organizers and should not be totally dictated by the sponsors. Don't forget that if there are two divisions (i.e., youth and collegiate) the award needs will double.

## Support the Contest

There is little doubt that a judging contest cannot be successful without a great amount of support in the form of quality horses, people and dollars. It could be a long debate as to which of these is most vital, but a lack of any of these can be critical.

Horses - The most difficulty challenge is to put together placeable classes of quality horses for the contestants to judge. After it has been decided which breeds and classes will be included, someone

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must make the contacts to ensure at least four horses for each class will be available. Someone should go and look at the horses of the breed involved. Contest classes should have enough variation to be readily placeable. If this is not possible, additional horses should be available so a placeable class can be selected. The initial contact should be 1-2 months in advance; a follow-up letter 2-3 weeks before; and a call 1-2 weeks before is recommended. Have someone prepared to provide a back-up class is needed. Multi-breed events should send a list of classes most likely to be used to coaches upon receipt of their entry.

People - Individuals need to be identified to serve in the arena as group leaders (at least one per group), time keeper, announcer, card runner, horse holders for the halter classes, horse organizer in the arena, and one outside to have the next class ready. Official judges that are knowledgeable in the breeds to be judged and have experience as a member or coach of a judging team must be selected early. Equal consideration should be given to the selection of reason takers for the Junior and Senior College as well as Youth Divisions. At least one person (and sometimes two) per reasons class will be contacted early so that they can become familiar with their specific roles. If hand tabulating, plan on no less than four people per division in the contest. Specific assignments need to be made at the initial planning meeting for individuals to distribute rules and publicity, order awards, make meal arrangements, prepare card packets, hire officials and most importantly, secure the horses.

Dollars - Depending on the above decisions, variable financial support is needed to purchase box lunches, awards program meals, awards and cover expenses of obtaining facilities, horses, officials and staff and other assistance such as computer services. It is suggested that the planning committee prioritize what items are essential for conducting the contest and what items are desirable if dollars are available. Not every contest needs elaborate awards and meals, but they all need horses and officials. The fund raising effort needs to be conducted enough in advance of the contest so the planners know with what type of budget they are working.

## **Rules and Regulations**

Rules are often used to inform coaches of the contest and are essential for the team to determine if they are interested or eligible. Contest rules usually include eligibility, classes, method of conduct, schedule, determination of rankings and an entry form. The entry fee and deadline should be listed. Including to whom the check is made payable and where it is to be sent. Any pertinent lodging information also should be included.

Eligibility - The rules must first define the divisions, i.e., 4-H FFA, breed association teams, collegiate, and other age divisions. State the number of members per team and if contestants are eligible to judge as individuals. Usually there is a statement pertaining to the number of members on a team and if the low score will be dropped from the team score.

Eligibility for Youth Contests - Contestants shall not have passed their 19th birthday on January 1 of

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the contest year. Contestants shall not have participated on a college horse judging team. The state organization shall further determine team eligibility and shall select teams by any procedure the state deems appropriate. Contest rules should include a clear statement on participants' eligibility in future contests. One of the following is recommended: 1) youth may participate only one time, 2) all contestants may return in the future, or, 3) the winning individuals and teams are ineligible to participate in the future but all others are eligible. Divisions for team and individual award should be clearly stated (i.e., 4-H, FFA, Breed Association, 13 and under, 14-18, etc.)

**Eligibility for Collegiate Contests** - Participants must be full time undergraduate students in good standing as determined by their school requirements. A minimum academic grade point of 2.5/4.0 (c+) is recommended. Participants may not be an approved judge in any national horse association. If two divisions are offered, then they should be junior college and senior college divisions and an individual may participate in the contest once during junior college and once during senior college. Other restrictions such as breed division, previous collegiate judging experience, geographical restrictions, etc., should be clearly stated.

**Method of Conduct** - State when and where teams are to report for the orientation, pick up judging packets and begin judging. No contestant may wear any clothing that will identify them personally or their team. There shall be no conferring during the contest and state that this can lead to dismissal (and be prepared to strictly enforce this from start to finish). List the number of halter classes (including possible breeds or types), the type and number of potential performance classes and the number of reasons classes. State what rules are to be used in the contest (i.e., AHA or specific breed rules). A soundness statement such as "all halter horses are to be judged as sound of limb, eye, wind, mouth and reproductive organs" is recommended. Performance horses are to be judged as seen (unsoundnesses are to be penalized accordingly). To eliminate confusion, it is common to state that all exhibitors' tack and attire is legal in the performance classes. When classes are included that require a pattern, the pattern to be used should be stated.

The amount of time allowed to judge non-reasons classes (15 minutes) and reasons classes (17 minutes) should be stated. Two minutes is the maximum time allowed to give oral reasons. Rules should define the use of notes during the contest. "Use of notes is optional during the judging portion of the contest, but definitely not while presenting oral reasons" is one possible statement in regard to notes. Animals are not allowed to be handled by contestants (or officials) during horse judging contests. The method of conduct should also include a schedule of events, including the coaches' meeting, registration time, time of official placings and reasons, and the awards programs.

**Determinations of Rankings** - State who will be recognized; i.e., the top ten individuals and top five teams in halter, performance and reasons, and the top ten individuals and top ten teams overall will receive awards. If reasons are to be included in the halter and performance division (which is recommended), this should be stated. Establish a list of tie breakers to cover more than anticipated needs. Some recommended tie breakers are:

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1. If tied for a division award in halter or performance, the contestant or team having the highest reasons score in that division will be listed first.
2. If tied for a division award in reasons, the contestant or team having the lowest overall placing score will be listed first.
3. If tied for individual or team overall award, the contestant or team having the highest overall reasons score shall be listed first.
4. If still tied for either of the above, the contestant or team having the highest score in placing reasons classes shall be listed first.
5. If still tied, the contestant or team with the highest overall placing score in all classes shall be listed first.
6. If still tied, the contestant or team with the highest single class reasons score shall be listed first.
7. If contestants are still tied, the youngest contestant or team shall be listed first.

If there are dropped-score alternated of team scores, they should be eligible for individual awards.

**Entry Form** - An entry form should be enclosed with the rules and should include the name of the team, address, name and phone number of the coach and contestant's names, dates of birth, and addresses. Also, enclose notification of entry fee amount and to whom the check is to be made payable and where to mail the check. Be sure to list a deadline for entries and any recommended motels, as well as the contest headquarters.

## Registration

Sample set up for a judging contest:

List of Terms	Number Assigned to Individuals on a Team (4 members per team)			
A	11	12	13	14
B	21	22	23	24
C	31	32	33	34
D	41	42	43	44
E	51	52	53	54
F	61	62	63	64
G	71	72	73	74
H	81	82	83	84
I	91	92	93	94

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To determine team order, randomly draw names of teams out of a hat. If there is no pre-registration, teams could be assigned in the order they register on the day of the contest. If a team does not have a full set of members, the number for the missing contestant is simply skipped and noted on the master tabulation sheet and the reasons order. Assign all contestants to the number of groups that are being judged at one time (i.e., if you judge three classes at one time and rotate three times, you need three groups). It is helpful to assign color code to groups, as in this example.

Group I (white) #'s 11-91 + 12-32

Group II (blue) #'s 42-92 + 13-63

Group III (red) #'s 73-93 + 14-94

For registration, have a packet with the following included:

1. On an envelope have the team name, the numbers assigned to the team with a space behind each number for the coach to place a name of a team member for each number. Also, have a space for the coaches' name. Advise coaches to indicate the number of people that will be attending the awards program meal.
2. In the envelope will be four decks of placing cards (a deck contains one card for each class) - one deck of cards for each contestant. Each card should have the contestant's number on it. The classes to be judged should either be already printed on the cards or contestants should write the class name on each card while judging that class.
3. A contestant number badge for the contestant to wear should also be in the envelope.

## Contest Class Conduct

All exhibitors of horses should have back numbers 1-2-3- 4. After each contestant has their cards, give general instructions, begin sure to repeat the rules about talking, notes, and soundness. In a large contest, it is advisable to state "no cowboy hats" so everyone can see better. Divide the contestants into the number of halter classes to be judged at one time. Each group should have at least one adult group leader to maintain order and collect cards.

Halter Classes - It is suggested to have the contestants turn and face the arena rail while the horses are being brought in. The following time schedule is suggested for judging halter classes:

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		Time (minutes)
Side View		3.0
Front View		1.5
Rear View		1.5
Close inspection 2 min./group		4.0
Move class providing a front, rear and side view		4.0
Side view		
Non-Reasons		1.0
Reasons		3.0
TOTAL		
Non-Reasons		15.0 Minutes
Reasons		17.0 Minutes

It is important to have handlers who are experienced in setting up, tracking and presenting halter horses. Be sure to announce the name of each class and whether it is a reasons or non-reasons class. It is often desirable to put the reasons classes in the same rotation to ease the timing of the classes. The halter classes must provide an opportunity for contestants to have close inspection. Usually one-half of the contestants judging are sent in at one time for close inspection. The time of each class is controlled by the time keeper or announcer.

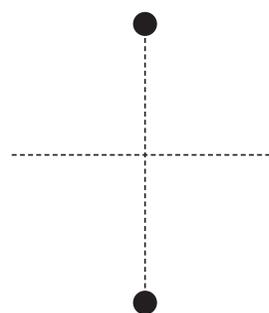
To provide both a rear and front view of the horse at a walk and trot and a side view of each horse at a trot, the following methods are suggested:

## Large Arena



Divide those contestants judging one class into four equal groups. One at a time have each horse walk around the box, then trot each side. This will allow each contestant the views discussed above.

## Small Arena



Divide those contestants judging one class into two equal groups. One at a time have each horse walk both ways, and trot both ways between the two groups, then trot the perpendicular line across between the two groups.

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Performance Classes - The contestants should be moved by group into the bleachers or outside the arena where there are no coaches or spectators. Again, announce there is to be no talking, the equipment is legal and the horses are to be judged as seen in regard to soundness. The time for these classes will depend on the class routine and is determined by the official judges. If there is a high wall, set a row of cones in the arena so contestants in the stands can see the entire performance.

## Rail Classes

- a. It is often wise to allow time for the horses to warm up before beginning to judge. Announce class guidelines according to appropriate association rules.
- b. Line up exhibitors in numerical order.
- c. Have the exhibitors take the rail to the left and begin judging.
- d. Horses are required in most classes to walk, jog or trot, lope or canter both directions of the arena. Many classes call for other gaits and routines as outlined in the announced rules.
- e. Line up horses in original numerical order.
- f. Usually each exhibitor is required to back individually.
- g. Excuse exhibitors and give contestants one minute to mark their cards and then have the group leaders call for the cards.

## Individual Performance Classes

- a. Announce class guidelines according to appropriate association rules.
- b. Introduce exhibitors individually by number as they work. Be sure to run them in numerical order.
- c. At the conclusion of all individual performance, have the exhibitors line up in numerical order in the center of the ring.
- d. Give contestants one minute to mark their cards, excuse the horses and have the group leaders collect the cards.

## **Contest Moderators and Reasons Listeners**

The following procedure will be used for developing lists of Contest Moderators and Reasons Listeners:

1. Nominations will be accepted for each list separately from National Horse Judging Team Coaches' Association (NHJTCA) members (nominators cannot nominate themselves) on an annual basis for placement on a recommended moderator and/or reasons listener list. Each nominee's qualifications for moderator and/or reasons listener, breed and/or class specialization, contest division, and geographic region availability should be indicated.
2. New nominees and existing names for each list are to be reviewed and amended annually by the Contest Committee and submitted for final approval by the Executive Committee.

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3. New nominees and existing names for each list will be reviewed, amended, and approved annually by the Executive Committee.
4. Contest liaisons will provide contest superintendents the current approved list of moderators and reasons listeners. This list should be made available to contest superintendents before the contest to allow superintendents preparatory time to select, invite, and schedule moderators and reasons listeners.

## Moderator Procedure

Assist with comprising official placing:

1. Collecting independent placings from official judges.
2. Compute mathematical solutions for final official composite placing
3. Serve as tie-breaker official in case of ties.

Recommend and assist with the final assignment of cuts according to NHJTCA guidelines.

Reasons - It is very helpful to seat all contestants in the reasons order in a quiet room. This way, the manager of the reasons room and the contestants know who is out giving reasons, who needs to go next and who should not be out.

First, know the number of reasons classes (if you have a large contest with four or more sets of reasons, pre-registration is important so the reasons order can be set and ready to go at contest time). The following example shows how to organize four sets of reasons:

Reasons Class #1	Reasons Class #2	Reasons Class #3	Reasons Class #4
81	52	43	24
11	22	73	74
41	42	53	54
61	12	93	14

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21	72	13	84
91	82	63	44
51	61	33	94
31	62	23	34
71	92	83	64

The total number of contestants is divided by the number of reasons classes to determine the numbers listed under each class. It is common to totally randomize this order or randomize within groups as shown here, then seat the contestants accordingly.

This chart tells the contestant which will be their first set of reasons. After giving a set of reasons, the contestant always moves to the next set to the right. If they complete the reasons for Class #4 and have not done all four sets, they rotate from Class #4 to Class #1 and rotate to the right until all reasons have been given. A sheet should be made for each reasons room with the appropriate order of all contestants for that room. The reasons listener should have a copy and a copy should be posted on the outside of the room for contestants to check off when they have completed that set of reasons. In the example, Reasons Room #1 would have a list as follows: 81 through 71, followed by 24 through 64, followed by 43 through 83, followed by 52 through 92. Reasons Room #2 would be 52 through 93, followed by 81 through 71, followed by 24 through 64, followed by 43 through 93. Reasons Room #3 would be 43 through 83, followed by 52 through 92, followed by 81 through 71, followed by 24 through 64,. Reasons Room #4 would be 24 through 64, followed by 43 through 83, followed by 52 through 92, followed by 81 through 71. The reasons listener should be given the placing cards for the class he/she listens to in order of the above list. They will put their grade on the card and return it to tabulation. The placing scores should also be kept on a list by the reasons listener.

All contestants should be allowed to complete each set of reasons before proceeding to the next set to ensure that every contestant has an equal amount of time between each set. For example: all contestants should have completed their first set before allowing any contestant to begin his/her second set.

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## Reasons Time Penalty Point Schedule

<u>Minutes</u>	<u>Deduction (Cumulative)</u>
2:00.1-2:10.0	1 point
2:10.1-2:20.0	2 points
2:20.1-2:30.0	3 points
2:30.1-Upward	4 points
	10 points Total

Official placings and Reasons - This is an essential part of an educational horse judging contest. Announce when this session is scheduled (usually 15-30 minutes after all contestants have completed their reasons) to all coaches and contestants. Be sure to indicate to the officials (while they are judging the classes) on which classes they are expected to give official reasons. Introduce and thank each official as they give the official placings. Officials should make the reasons comparative, positive, and informative.

### Tabulation

Option One - When using a computer program, one needs to determine the placing and cuts for each class and properly enter the placing given by each contestant for each class. The computer does all other calculations the same as given below under hand tabulation. There are software packages available for microcomputers, as well as frame programs on many campuses.

If hand scoring, the committee must have at least two sets of Hormel Slides to score. As soon as the committee has the official placing and cuts, it is best to set up the Hormel Slide appropriately and tape it in place. Sort the placing cards by placing, so all cards with the same placing can be scored together.

Have a person to pick up placing cards at the end of the allotted judging time for each class. During reasons taking, the cards may be picked up from time to time to speed up tabulating. Having reasons classes first in a contest allows tabulators more time to grade the placing cards and organize the cards for the reasons listeners.

The total score for the lowest overall scoring member of a team is commonly dropped when figuring team scores of a full team. This low member, however, is still allowed to win individual awards if they score high enough in an area to do so.

The halter totals usually include all placing scores and reasons scores for halter classes. The performance division total would be the sum of the performance placing scores plus the performance reasons scores. It is recommended, because of the importance of oral reasons, that contest award a division of reasons only. This is a total of all reasons scores in both halter and performance. Be sure

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the overall total score does not include the reasons total twice. The overall should always be a sum of the halter and performance division scores including reasons.

Be sure to double check all totals before beginning the ranking process. It works best to have a fresh tabulation crew, with each having only a few tabulation sheets to review as you rank.

The tabulation committee should also prepare a list, or fill out the award program, for the moderator to read from. It must include all names, teams, and scores of award recipients and an indication of how ties were broken when they occurred.

## **Awards Program**

Whether awards are presented the evening of the contest or the next morning, the program should be positive and provide an opportunity to thank sponsors, donors, officials, staff, etc.

It is suggested the results be read from tenth place up, leaving the high individual or team for last. This builds excitement and recognition. If there are few teams or individuals in a division, it is not advisable to indicate who was last.

When there is more than one division in the contest, it is best to keep everyone's interest by reading halter results across all divisions, i.e., 4-H/FFA/Collegiate. Then, go back and do performance, etc., leaving the overall for each group until last. Again, this will build anticipation across all groups and will hold everyone's attention.

A copy of the tabulation sheets or computer printouts should be available for every team upon the conclusion of the awards program. This is the only way team members know how they did in oral reasons. Provide a list of donors to each contestant and ask that the team members write thank-you's. This will make your job next year much easier.

## **Follow up**

Be sure to personally write thank-you letters to the staff, the people who provided horses, meals and facilities. Every contest should be followed with an evaluation to determine how it could be improved for next year. Always consider other educational tours or seminars that could be held in conjunction with your event.

Thank you for all your efforts in providing educational, competitive events for our judging team members!

# HORSE JUDGING CONTESTS

## DESCRIPTION OF CUTS

### Cut

1. Horses are extremely similar; no obvious reason why one should be placed over the other; or, both horses have numerous faults and none supersedes the others; placing is strictly a matter of personal preference; placing varies among official judges.
2. Horses are very close, but one horse has one or two qualitative or quantitative advantages; the majority of official judges would not switch the pair, but half of the contestants could logically switch the pair. Serve as tie-breaker official in case of ties.
3. Horses are of unequal quality, but there is a logical placing in favor of one horse; either one horse has several faults or several advantages; all official judges would agree on the placing; no more than one third of contestants would be expected to switch the pair.
4. Horses are not of similar quality; one horse has several decided advantages based on many points; all experts would quickly see the placing; no guesswork or personal preference required to make placing; no more than 10% of contestants would be expected to switch the pair.
5. Large number of extreme differences between the horses; placing is obvious to everyone on first, quick observation; careful study not required for the placing; pair consists of an inferior horse vs. a consistent winner; only very inexperienced, uninformed contestants would switch the pair.
6. Horse not even comparable; differences reflective of a champion quality horse or performance vs. a horse or performance that is not of show quality.
7. Largest cut; differences reflective of a world-class halter horse vs. an extremely poor quality or lame horse; or a world-class performance vs. a disqualified performance.

# HORSE JUDGING CONTEST GUIDELINES FOR CLASS OFFICIALS AND REASONS JUDGES

Expectations of Class Officials *Expectations of Class Officials*; Expectations of Class officials; EXPECTATIONS OF CLASS OFFICIALS; change the heading formatting so they stand out.

Acting as a contest official should be considered an honor and privilege because one will have the opportunity to influence so many youth interested and/or active in the horse industry. A positive experience may help ensure life-long involvement with horses while a negative experience may wane interest significantly. Therefore, it is very important that all contest officials approach their tasks with a positive outlook on their opportunity to enhance the future horse industry with more knowledgeable and confident participants.

A contest will usually include both halter and performance classes of four horses to evaluate. Class officials should judge under the guidelines designated by the major breed or supporting organization for the class. Yet, judges also must be aware of contest rules regarding soundness, tack, and attire of the exhibitors. If performance classes are to be judge "as is" regarding soundness, then lame horses should be placed at the bottom of the class.

Class officials should place every class while contestants view the horses. This recommendation is made to ensure any potential differences in showing or soundness may be accounted for by the class placing and cuts, particularly in the halter division. For the performance division, officials should locate themselves equally distributed among contestants to perceive the performances from all the contestants' viewpoint. Care should be take by the official to avoid exposure of any notes or placings to contestants sitting nearby. Gestures relative to the horses' performance also should be avoided.

The official judges should judge the classes independently under the same exact viewing and time conditions and same side and distance during halter as the contestants, assigning an official to each group of contestants. After the officials have marked their placings independently, have them turn their placing cards into the moderator. The moderator should take the official placing cards and compile a composite placing (a point allocated could be used to obtain a composite placing). The moderator may then suggest cuts based on the composite placing and should lead a discussion with all officials to arrive at a final placing.

## **Philosophy and Objectives for Giving Reasons**

While major emphasis in horse judging training programs is placed on students learning to evaluate horses objectively, equal importance is placed on students learning to discuss and defend judgments rendered in the process of placing a class of horses. The combined process of placing horses, then defending those placings, teaches students to be totally objective, honest and fair in their approach to evaluating horses. Further, this process of giving reasons discourages student judges from rendering opinions which may be bases on personal likes and dislikes, and encourage them to render defensible judgments in regard to current standards in the horse industry.

Another major purpose for giving reasons in judging contest is that it offers an opportunity for

# HORSE JUDGING CONTEST GUIDELINES FOR CLASS OFFICIALS AND REASONS JUDGES

students to learn how to think, organize thoughts and speak about those thoughts in a refereed environment. Students who master those skills find them useful in many ways for the rest of their lives. Many leaders in agriculture, business, and industry had judging team experience, and they frequently point to the reasons process as significant in developing leadership abilities.

Giving reasons should be a positive, pleasant learning experience for students. Students should be encouraged, not discouraged, when giving reasons, and they should gain confidence in themselves through practice. Performance in the reasons room by students who are prepared should be evaluated from a positive view, rather than a negative view, giving every advantage possible to students who do a good job. Reasons judges should never use a negative, penalizing “fault out” system for scoring reasons. Reasons judges should be positive. Their actions toward students and their scoring method should reflect a positive approach.

## Characteristics of Good Reasons

There are at least five major characteristics to consider when scoring reasons.

1. **Organization.** Styles of reasons will vary with individual personalities and coaching methods, but all reasons should be well organized and systematic. Within that framework, judges should score well organized reasons similarly, with no preference given to individual style. The basic approach is the comparison of animals in three pairs; the top pair, the middle pair and the bottom pair. Other additions will be included and are perfectly acceptable as long as the basic organization is followed. However, reasons should not consist of a simple description of each animal. The focus should be on why one animal in a pair was placed over the other animal in that pair.
2. **Relevancy.** Reasons should reflect the actual differences in the pair and should consist primarily of those points of comparison that were significant in the placing of the pair. Use of comparative or descriptive reasons that are irrelevant or unimportant in the placing of the pair are discouraged and should be scored lower. Judges should be alert to the so-called “canned” or pre-prepared reasons that may sound good, but, in fact, do not fit the particular pairs.
3. **Accuracy.** Truth is the primary consideration in scoring reasons. Students should be credited for accurate statements regardless of how the horses may be placed. Errors of omission are to be considered when the student leaves out something important, but inaccurate statements are considered the major fault in a set of reasons. A complete and accurate set of reasons should receive a high score, even when placings differ from official placings. Official judges are cautioned to listen carefully for accuracy and should not penalize the reasons score simply because the student’s placing is different from the official placing. It is entirely possible for a student to receive a high reasons score with a low placing score.
4. **Terminology.** Some emphasis should be placed on use of terms commonly used to discuss horses or performances. Terminology will vary among students, but it should reflect terminology commonly used among horsemen. Major emphasis should be placed on comparative rather than

# HORSE JUDGING CONTEST GUIDELINES FOR CLASS OFFICIALS AND REASONS JUDGES

descriptive terminology. However, descriptive terminology can be used to a limited extent in the opening statements and to describe faults.

5. **Presentation.** Oral reasons should be presented in a poised, confident, convincing manner, but they should never convey arrogance. Loud, boisterous, arrogant delivery is not desirable and should be penalized. Likewise, shy, timid, unconvincing presentations should not receive the highest scores. Reasons should be presented in a relaxed, conversational manner. The presentation should not contain lengthy pauses and must be delivered within 2 minutes. Speaking manner will vary, but all students should use correct English. Oral reasons should be grammatically correct with proper pronunciation and enunciation of words and syllables. While good presentation is important, reasons judges are cautioned that this is not a contest of oratory at the expense of accuracy, relevancy, organization and terminology used in discussing a particular class of horses.

## Grading and Scoring Reasons

Reasons scores are to be reflective of organization, relevancy, accuracy, terminology and presentation of reasons, regardless of the student's placing of the class. A bad placing must not automatically result in a low reasons score. If students see the differences in the horses and reflect those differences accurately in their reasons, they must not be penalized on the reasons score because their emphasis for placing the horses was different than that of the official judges. Placing scores will adequately reflect incorrect emphasis in placing. It is suggested that students who simply read their written notes receive a score of "15", student who use their notes receive a score of "20" and students who don't use any notes, but have an incomplete set of reasons receive a score no higher than "25."

Reasons should be graded, then scored as per the following outline:

<i>Grading and Scoring Reasons</i>	<i>Grade</i>	<i>Score Range</i>
Good to Excellent	A	46-50
Above Average to Good	B	41-45
Average	C	36-40
Below Average	D	31-35
Poor	F	30 and below

# HORSE JUDGING CONTEST GUIDELINES FOR CLASS OFFICIALS AND REASONS JUDGES

A contestant who is reasonably well prepared and gets through a complete set of reasons should never receive a score less than 25.

Reasons judges should mark the contestant's reasons score on the individual cards provided for each participant. The cards will have only the contestant's number for identification and care must be taken to ensure contestants and cards are in the proper order and agree when the score is recorded. It is advised also to keep a master sheet of scores for contestants in case a card is lost or score questioned.

## **Etiquette in the Reasons Room**

Reasons judges must be continually aware that their actions and mannerisms can be stimulating or distracting to the student presenting reasons. Judges should be polite and encouraging to the student, and should never present a harsh, critical attitude. Judges must be aware that any personal action can have either positive or negative influences on the students as they prepare for the next set of reasons or future contests. Emphasis should be on a positive attitude, not on excess criticism.

There is no need for judges to attempt to educate contestants individually during the reasons session. Teaching is the responsibility of coaches. Judges should focus their attention on the accuracy and quality of reasons performances, irrespective of the class placing. Remember, contestants have already been awarded points for their class placings! Also, reasons judges should never tell contestants the correct placing of a class.

Reason judges are permitted to ask contestants questions, but only to clarify a statement or point made by the contestant. Contestants are requested not to wear team identifying articles during reasons; therefore, reasons judges should not inquire of a contestant's team until AFTER THE ENTIRE COMPETITION IS COMPLETE!

It is particularly important that judges avoid any mannerisms which may be distracting to students. Eating, drinking, smoking, chewing, etc., must be avoided while students are presenting reasons. Also, judges must not stand, move around, use excessive eye and head movements, yawn, etc., while students are presenting reasons. Judges must be aware that the student who is presenting reasons is trying very hard to concentrate on the class of horses, and mannerisms or actions of the reason judge must not cause a break in their concentration.

# GUIDELINES FOR CONTEST LIAISONS

The most important role for the liaison is to be available for advisement, consultation or assistance to the contest superintendent. Proper judgment should be utilized by the liaison as to how much of these services are helpful or interfering. It is critical that the liaison function in an advisory role, not to run the contest.

## **More tangible duties of the liaison would be:**

1. To contact the superintendent as needed prior to the contest to discuss status reports, standard operation procedures and the selection of officials/moderator. It is the duty of the liaison to ensure that the superintendent understands the roles and duties of the officials and moderator and that all are knowledgeable about the NHJTCA guidelines and fit the descriptions herein. The liaison should receive approval from the contest superintendent to conduct contest evaluations.
2. The liaison should maintain contact and regularly report progress to the NHJTCA President
3. Upon the initial contact, the liaison should ensure that the superintendent has an adequate number of copies of the NHJTCA guidelines for all contest officials and reasons takers.
4. The day before and the day of the contest be available to the superintendent to provide any assistance as necessary. Have extra copies of the guidelines available.
5. Distribute contest evaluation forms at the coaches meeting or the awards banquet. It is also the responsibility of the liaison to collect contest evaluation forms. The liaison is responsible for encouraging coaches to return the evaluation forms to the Secretary/Treasurer within two weeks after the contest if they are not already submitted at the awards banquet.
6. Mail a copy of the contest results (including all divisions) to the NHJTCA Secretary/Treasurer. The NHJTCA Secretary/Treasurer is responsible for summarizing all contest evaluation forms and presenting a summary of each of the contests to the general membership at the meeting to follow.

# AWARDS COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

**Purpose of Program:** To recognize outstanding leadership and service by individuals and associations who have contributed to the education of young people in the areas of horse evaluation, selection, and judging. The program was approved by the membership in October, 1986 to recognize three categories of recipients: a) associations that sponsor and conduct judging contest, b) professional and volunteer coaches, and c) special awardees from the industry that have contributed a great deal. Originally there was a newcomers' division for those involved less than three years but difficulty arose identifying someone everyone knew. The awards are to be entitled "Leadership Awards". Award committee should include the current president, immediate past president and one elected member. Awards should be awarded on merit and do not have to be filled every year if no suitable candidate is nominated.

## **Eligibility and Criteria:**

***Category A*** - Association must regularly conduct a judging contest that is open to teams from throughout the U.S. After the first year, one association per year should be recognized. Those previously honored may not receive the award for 10 years. Quality of the contest, including judges, reasons listeners, publicity, awards, hospitality and openness to a wide variety of divisions (i.e., 4-H, FFA, breeds, collegiate) will be considered.

***Category B*** - Coaches (collegiate, youth professional and volunteer). A collegiate coach is one who actively coaches a 2- or 4-year college team. A youth professions is a youth educator that coaches a team (extension specialist, extension agent or teacher). A volunteer coach is one who receives no financial compensation for their participation (4-H, FFA, and youth club coaches only). Nominees must be a member of the NHJTCA during the year of their nomination. Criteria for the award include:

1. Activities on behalf of coaching (i.e., educational material development, participation in clinics, workshops and a variety of different contests).
2. Activities on behalf of NHJTCA (officers, committees, service).
3. Evidence of excellence in teaching (leadership or teaching awards or successes).
4. Success in competition (different types of contest preferred).
5. Other contributions not mentioned.

## ***Category C*** - Special Award.

Awardee need not be a member of NHJTCA. To include breeders, trainers, and mangers that continually help provide workouts or horses for contests; donors, commercial sponsors or other financial assistance; association staff or any other individual that has contributed on behalf of judging. The same criteria as for Category B where they apply, plus those listed above, such as financial support, horse and barn support, and duration of individual's involvement.

# AWARDS COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

Those nominating must be NHJTCA members. A NHJTCA member may nominate one person/ association for every award. A nominee may receive the same award only once (i.e., collegiate, youth professional, volunteer, special).

## **Responsibilities of Award Committee**

1. Review and update nomination form as needed.
2. Forward nomination form to secretary for distribution to the membership in Spring and Summer newsletters. Announce call for nominations at the contest and in news releases. **PROMOTE!**
3. Chairperson to receive nominations by September 1 and distribute to committee by September 5.
4. Committee vote by mail to chairperson by September 15.
5. Chairman make recommendations to Executive Committee by September 20.
6. Executive Committee select recipients and notifies Chairperson by September 30.
7. Chairperson selects and purchases awards within the budget allocation from the Executive Committee and with input from committee.
8. Chairperson makes sure recipients are encouraged to attend annual meeting without disclosing winners.
9. Make presentations at the annual membership meeting during the All-American Quarter Horse Congress in Columbus, Ohio.
10. Publicize winners in the newsletter and in news releases to horse magazines.
11. Update list of past winners and report recommended changes to new president.