



Fall 2017 Judges Newsletter

AQHA is proud of the job you are doing representing our great Association. There have been many compliments on the AQHA judges over the summer, and AQHA is proud of you. Keep up the good work!

December Judges Seminar

The Association is proud to announce a new teaching and testing software for judges' education coming this December. This allows for easier accessibility and makes education more affordable for judges domestically and internationally.

At this point, in-person seminar attendance will still be required every two years.

There will be a week of webinars hosted by AQHA from December 11 to 15. The week is filled with wonderful educational opportunities for our judges all from the comfort of their own home or anywhere with access to the Internet. Top AQHA judges will be the clinicians for the week, and they will offer excellent training and materials for judges' education. Add link of clinicians, dates and who is required to test.

The mandatory rulebook test will also be done via Blackboard. We will send practice links ahead of time to make sure everyone is comfortable with signing up and using Blackboard.

Monday, December 11

Ring Steward Education ... Gale Little, Tracey Hatakeyama and Bobbie Walton

- Open to anyone

Tuesday, December 12

Working Hunter ... Lainie DeBoer and Jerry Erickson

- Over-fence-specialized judges – mandatory online attendance (either by webinar or Blackboard) and testing (Blackboard)
- All other judges – optional attendance

Wednesday, December 13

Roping ... Jeff Allen and Leonard Berryhill

- Roping-specialized judges – mandatory online attendance (either by webinar or Blackboard) and testing (Blackboard)
- All-around judges – mandatory attendance at the beginning to be educated on new rule changes for 2018 (either by webinar or Blackboard); no roping testing
- Progressive judges – mandatory attendance at the beginning to be educated on new rule changes for 2018 (either by webinar or Blackboard); no roping testing
- Level 1 judges – optional attendance

- International judges – optional attendance

Thursday, December 14

Versatility Ranch Horse ... Alex Ross and Bill Enk

- VRH-specialized judges – mandatory online attendance (either by webinar or Blackboard) and testing (Blackboard)
- All-around judges – mandatory attendance at the beginning to be educated on new rule changes for 2018 (either by webinar or Blackboard); no VRH testing
- Progressive judges – mandatory attendance at the beginning to be educated on new rule changes for 2018 (either by webinar or Blackboard); no VRH testing
- Level 1 judges – optional attendance
- International judges – mandatory attendance (either by webinar or Blackboard); no VRH testing

Friday, December 15

Level 1 Judge Recertification ... John Pipkin and Patti Carter

- Level 1 judges – mandatory online attendance (either by webinar or Blackboard) and testing (Blackboard)
- All other judges – optional attendance

Beginning in January, all testing will be done through Blackboard. All judges will have the month of January to complete their required test.

The mandatory rulebook test for the all-around and progressive judges will also be done via Blackboard.

Online registration to Blackboard will be available November 15. When you register, you will have access to a practice test (written and video). This will allow you get comfortable with Blackboard.

The cost of Blackboard is \$250. This cost will allow you availability to all the educational content from the December webinar and the testing material for an entire year.

AQHA will have technical support available to help anyone with sign-on issues.

Addressing Animal Welfare While Judging

If you are judging a show and you see a horse being over-schooled in a warm-up pen, at your earliest convenience, make sure you stop the situation. If there is a show steward available, get show management to contact the show steward. If there is not a show steward present, stop the show at the most convenient place and, with your ring steward, address the situation yourself or make sure show management addresses it.

Clarification of SHW913.3

Allow exhibitors in individually worked classes who incur a penalty of 0 to complete the pattern as long as they stay within reasonable confines of the described pattern or course, stay within a reasonable working time allowed for the pattern or course, and avoid abusive or excessive training. *Note: The key to this rule is abusive or excessive. Have a zero tolerance for either.*

Lining Up Classes

When bringing horses to the middle to judge the back-up, line up and individually back as many rail classes as time will allow. Backing is a class requirement and it's important to judge.

- Per SHW914.8, judges must inspect horses in at least one class per show by examining both sides, front and rear for signs of abuse or excessive training.
- If you have a class lined up in the arena (i.e. horsemanship), be aware there is no schooling going on in the line-up. It is appropriate to remind exhibitors they are being judged from the time they enter the arena.
- It is the responsibility of the judge to continue to judge the class through the line up procedure.

Versatility Ranch Horse Information

VRH Ranch Conformation Classes

Exhibitors can show more than one horse in VRH ranch conformation classes. It is important to note that open exhibitors cannot show a youth or amateur horse; however, youth and amateur exhibitors can show other youth or amateur horses. The preference is for another family member to show the additional horse(s). This guideline is similar to SHW369.4 for our regular halter classes. Not allowing a youth or amateur exhibitor to show more than one horse could make them ineligible for the all-around and could also affect other exhibitors.

Two Hands on the Reins

SHW305.5: Except for hackamore/snaffle bit classes or junior horses shown with hackamore/snaffle bit, only one hand may be used on the reins, and the hand must not be changed. The hand is to be around the reins; index finger only between split reins is permitted. In trail, it is permissible to change hands to work an obstacle. Violation of this rule is an automatic disqualification, except in VRH classes, where it is a 5-point penalty.

Supplying Patterns to Show Management

The AQHA Judges Committee expects judges to supply horsemanship, showmanship and hunt seat equitation patterns. This should not be the responsibility of show management. Please take the time to research if the patterns you are providing are appropriate to the competition level of the show.

Keep in Mind the Number of Judges Allowed to Judge Halter Classes

Per SHW108.2.2, no more than four judges are allowed to judge in the ring at one time. Show management is allowed to let up to six judges track the horses, but the individual judging can only be done by no more four judges.

This also applies to speed events; a judge can only judge up to four cards. Please assist AQHA in keeping show management compliant.

Level 3/Level 2 Placing Cards

- For a class to be leveled, there must be at least three exhibitors/horses (half point) in the corresponding Level 2 class. If less than three horses in the corresponding Level 2 class, the class becomes a regular non-leveled class.

- Place all classes that revert back to a non-leveled class on your Level 3 judges card.
- Total Level 2 entries count for, and should be placed, on your Level 2 judges card. Level 2 entries, *plus* Level 3 entries count for, and should be placed, on your Level 3 card. Example: Level 2 junior trail had 10 to show; Level 3 junior trail had five to show. Your judges' cards should indicate: A total of 10 to show in the Level 2 junior trail; a total of 15 to show in Level 3 junior trail.
- Judges should not ask ring stewards if an entry is Level 2 or Level 3 until after the completion of judging of that class.
- As an AQHA-approved judge, you should be a proponent of all AQHA programs, including leveling and all others. Share any concern you have with the senior director of judges, not ring stewards, show management, etc.

Download instructions on how to use [Level 3 and Level 2 placing cards](#) for a leveled class.

Name-the-Penalty Quiz

All judges are encouraged to test their knowledge of western riding penalties with this short quiz. The exercise is good practice and the quiz results explain the penalties incurred by the exhibitor. [Take the survey here.](#)

Final Thoughts

- Take the time to review all of the class rules before you judge.
- As leaders in our industry, always remember you will be held to a higher standard.
- “The quality of a leader is reflected in the standards they set for themselves.” -Ray Kroc