



Self-Adjusted Monitoring – Al Dunning, Sam Rose, Pete Kyle & Patti Carter

In support of AQHA judges, the AQHA Judges Committee wants to provide judges with the right tools to make the best decisions when judging American Quarter Horses. Below are guidelines the Judges Committee expects all AQHA-approved judges to follow.

When judging, give plenty of space between fellow judges. **There should be absolutely NO conversation or discussion between judges while exhibitors are being judged.** Always be aware of public perception and know that most exhibitors have a camera. Judges should be very judicious and selective in their use of video review or conferring. Judges are always representing themselves and AQHA at all times.

SHW911.6 At all shows where there is an official videographer, judges will be allowed to review all major and/or severe penalties of two points or more, excluding marker penalties in the reining and the reined work portion of working cow horse, as long as one judge has called the penalty.

Guidelines for Judges on the use of official video for reviewing penalties:

- Judges should always attempt to determine penalty occurrence on their own. They are never required or obliged to review penalties, and should only use if a penalty is truly in question.
- Judges should score the run independently without any consultation or discussion with other judges, and determine penalty occurrence on their own. Judges should not rely on other judges.
- For an official video review to occur, a judge must call the penalty in question, then request a review if only in doubt.
- Draw a circle around the penalty and an “R” out beside the score, and have the Ring Steward report it immediately as appropriate.
- If scores are being announced, make sure the announcers know to say that the run is being held for review.
- At the next scheduled break, or before the placing card is filled out, review the run on official video with the other judges and with a ring steward present.
- Only official video is to be used for review and is only to be used on ~~of~~ scored classes. In all cases, **unofficial video (including video from exhibitors) should not be viewed or considered.**
- Remember, even after the review, maneuver scores cannot ever be adjusted or changed from the original score. The penalty being reviewed can be added or removed.
- Be efficient and timely in reviewing the video and making the decision. Watch the penalty one or two times, make a decision and move on.

- If judges review as a group, it's important for each judge to make his or her own unbiased decision after reviewing the video. Each judge is hired for his or her score and/or placing only. If the video does not provide indisputable evidence to merit changing the original decision, the benefit of doubt and the final decision should favor the exhibitor. It is important in a group review to not let one judge persuade any other judge's ruling. Judges are not required to change their score or placing, and agreement by all judges after any conference is not required.

SHW911.7 Judges may confer in a timely manner regarding lameness, rule violations, disqualifications and major penalties, provided a ring steward is present.

Guidelines for conferring with other judges as allowed:

- Judges are never required or obliged to confer with other judges.
- Other than lameness, in placed classes, wait until horses are lined up to confer in the presence of a ring steward regarding rule violations, disqualifications, and major penalties, only. Judges should not confer regarding other judging considerations.
- In scored classes, wait until the run is complete and has been judged independently to confer in the presence of a ring steward.

Regarding conferring when questioning obvious lameness or other disqualifications:

- Halter – if soundness is in question, immediately retrack the horse. Judges should confer discreetly and in the presence of a ring steward. Make a decision in a timely manner. If all the judges determine the horse is unsound, wait until all horses have tracked to have the ring steward dismiss the horse. If all judges have not called the horse unsound, judge the horse accordingly. Similar procedures should be followed in cases of bites, absence of testes, or excessive white.
- All other classes – confer as soon as possible. If the welfare of the horse is in danger, immediately dismiss the horse. If the welfare of the horse is not in danger, but the majority agree it's unsound, dismiss the horse at the most convenient and discreet time.
- In individual worked classes and if the welfare of the horse is not in danger, let the horse finish the work and score it accordingly.

Please keep in mind, the AQHA Judges Committee will not tolerate talking among judges while judging. Remember: When conferring, decisions should be made independently, and in a timely and professional manner. Be discreet; make a decision; and move on. For the benefit of all judges, always make sure a ring steward is present during any conference and/or review.