

Appendix 2: Judging Specifics for the Rocky Mountain Horse

Note: This section of the Rule book is to be used only for classes designated as RMH. All other Mountain Horse Classes will be covered by the sanctioned show rule book provided by the show manager.

AP201 MISSION STATEMENT

The Rocky Mountain Horse Association, Inc. (RMHA) is a non-profit corporation organized under the laws of the Commonwealth of Kentucky dedicated to the Preservation, promotion, breeding and development of the Rocky Mountain Horse through out the United States and Internationally. To this end, showing of the Rocky Mountain Horse is a means of breed promotion, demonstrating the basic characteristics of the horse, i.e. **its gentle temperament, its naturally smooth, lateral even four beat gait as outlined in the RMHA Bylaws.**

AP202 Registration

All horses shown in RMHA sanctioned classes, events and shows must be a registered Rocky Mountain Horse. Horses three years and older must also have evidence of having been certified to breed and/or show.

AP203 2 Year Old Horses

- May only be shown in classes specifically designated as '2 year old classes'.
- The working time for 2 year olds under saddle is not to exceed ten minutes without a five-minute break followed by another ten minutes working if needed. The timing of workouts for two year olds will begin when the first gait is called and ends with the first call for rest (if needed). After the five minutes rest, the timing begins again for ten more minutes or to the end of the class if less than ten minutes, whichever comes first.

AP204 Equipment Steward

All RMHA sanctioned classes, events and shows are required to have an Equipment Steward designated to ensure enforcement of show attire and equipment (including tack, shoes, toe length, etc). The Equipment Steward is hired by and is responsible to the show manager. In the event an Equipment Steward is unable to fulfill his/her obligation to any sanctioned show, it is the responsibility of the Judge to conduct a brief inspection of all class entries for the preceding Show Rule compliance.

AP205 Official Time Outs

In RMHA sanctioned classes at a FOSH competition, official time outs may be granted by the Judge for replacement of shoes, broken equipment or in other instances where the Judge finds justifiable reason. When RMHA sanctioned classes occur at a FOSH competition, an official timeout for replacement of shoes will begin when the farrier lifts the horse's foot. The maximum time out is 10 minutes.

AP206 Youth Exhibitors

- No one under the age of 18 is permitted to exhibit a colt or stallion in any class (including halter and under saddle).
- Youth, age 15 or older may show in regular open classes. Youth under age 15 years may show only in Youth classes.
- Youth 11 years old and under must wear approved protective head gear.
- When youth 11 and under are in the line-up and after the judge's card is turned in, one attendant (groom, parent, instructor, etc.) will join Exhibitors for escort from line-up to center ring and exiting of the ring.

AP207 Novice Exhibitor

A Novice is any non-professional exhibitor who is age 18 years or older, who is a beginner in the Show Ring, and who has not won a blue ribbon in any RMHA affiliated horse show competition (other than the Novice Class) during the previous and current show season.

AP208 Shoeing/Hoof Length

- **Horses with plantation, hand made shoes, or hand turned heels, or trailers of any kind (straight or turned), or bars are not allowed.**
- Shoes must be factory made keg shoes and **MUST** not exceed $\frac{3}{4}$ inch width at all locations on the shoe and must not exceed $\frac{3}{8}$ inch in thickness at all locations on the shoe. (Total thickness of the shoe may go to a total of $\frac{5}{8}$ inch when including borium (or drill tech).
- If caulk shoes are used (factory caulk only) the total thickness of the shoe, borium (or drill tech) and the caulk must not exceed $\frac{7}{8}$ inch.
- The horse's natural toe length must not exceed 4.5 inches including the shoe.
- All shoes on all four feet must be of the same type, manufacturer brand, and metal and fitted to follow the natural contour of the hoof.
- The horse must be shod on all four hooves, or be shown completely barefoot.

AP209 Saddle Seat Riding Attire

- Saddle Seat riding attire is required in all classes other than Western.
- Saddle Seat attire may include the following: solid colored riding slacks or solid colored riding skirts, (tie downs or underpasses are optional), a vest, day coat or sports coat and riding boots. Shirts are to be solid colored long sleeved with a pointed collar.
- Neckwear (such as a tie or broach) is to be worn.
- Saddle Seat style hat or protective headgear is required.
- Gloves and Spurs are optional

AP210 Western Attire

- Western attire is required in all Western classes.
- Western attire may include the following: western slacks or black jeans are acceptable. (Western show skirts are optional for women.)
- Western jacket, bolero, vest, or slinky is required.
- Any colored western long sleeve shirt or slinky is allowed.
- Pointed collar or a tuxedo shirt is optional.
- Neckwear (such as tie, bolo, or neck scarf) is to be used.
- Western boots are required.
- The following may be worn but is optional: western hat, protective headgear, chaps, spurs and gloves.

AP211 Optional Attire

- In classes designated as "Optional Attire" either saddle seat or western attire may be worn.
- The attire must match the tack style, i.e. saddle seat attire to accompany English tack and Western attire to accompany Western tack.

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AP212 Casual Attire

- The following attire is acceptable in any class designated as 'casual attire': slacks or jeans and solid long sleeve shirts.
- Riding boots are required.
- English style or Western style hat or protective headgear is optional.
- Tack in these classes will be optional.

AP213 Bits

- **Bit shank length may not exceed 8 inches and is to be measured from top of ring to the end of the metal at the bottom, not including the bottom ring.**
- **The maximum bit shank length applies to Conformation Classes and Under Saddle Classes.**

AP214 Conformation/In-hand Classes – English Tack

- A suitable show halter with a throat latch in dark leather (black or brown) or synthetic material (black or brown) with a crown piece, nose band, full throat-latch and optional brow band.
- If a brow band is used it may be matching leather or solid colored.
- Piping is acceptable on brow and nose band.
- No rhinestones, sequins, or silver appointments allowed on the halter.
- Mares and geldings may be shown in a show halter or bridle and bit.
- Stallions 2 years and over **must** be shown with a bridle with bit, suitable show halter with stud chain either over the nose or under the chin, or Arabian halter with a bit.
- Whips/crops not to exceed 36 inches in overall length are optional.

AP215 Conformation/In-hand Classes - Western Tack

- Western style halter with traditional dark leather, an adjustable buckle, full throat-latch, nose band and conservative metal attachment and rings is required for all horses except stallions 2 years and older.
- Halter may have conservative silver appointments
- A matching leather lead with an optional chain extension may be used
- Mares and geldings may be shown in either a suitable show halter or bridle with bit.
- Stallions 2 years and older must be shown in either bridle with bit or a suitable show halter with stud chain either over the nose or under the chin.
- NO western Arabian halters are permitted

AP216 Under Saddle Classes – English Tack

- Saddles may be cutback, flat English or plantation type.
- No saddles with horns are allowed.
- English bridle with leather or colored brow bands. No metallic colors or rhinestones. Piping is acceptable.
- Cavesson is optional.
- English stirrups and irons are required.
- Breast straps of black or brown are optional.
- Whips/crops less than 36 inches in total length are optional.

AP217 Under Saddle Classes – Western Tack

- Saddles may be with or without horns.
- Western saddles must have western fenders and stirrups.
- All Western tack may feature silver
- Western bridles of without a cavesson must be used and may be black, tan, russet, or brown leather

AP218 Pleasure Driving Tack

- **Drivers must be 18 years or older.**
- **A whip not to exceed 6 feet is mandatory.**
- Any safe serviceable two- wheel cart or four- wheel buggy.
- Liverpool bits or snaffle bits fitted without flash nosebands.
- No horse collars are permitted.

AP219 Ring Protocol for Conformation/In hand Classes

- Entries shall be led into the ring and proceed counterclockwise at a natural Trail Walk.
- Horses line up head to tail around the ring allowing two horse space between horse, at least ten feet off the rail to permit the Judge to view the horse from both sides.
- The leg and body position of the horse in the line up is to stand square. The profile of the horse when standing square should show no stretching. **See Example A**
- The horse shall stand quietly with all four feet flat on the ground and at least one front and one rear cannon remaining perpendicular to the ground.
- The horse is to be positioned so as not to obstruct the Judge's line of vision of the horse being exhibited.
- Judge may request any Exhibitor to show his or horse "squarely." Failure to square up a horse will result in disqualification. **See Example A**
- At no time should the lead be released from the hand of the exhibitor.
- When set up in front of the Judge, you may not touch the horse.
- If the Exhibitor carries a whip, there can be no contact of the whip to the horse.
- An Exhibitor may be penalized for "over showing" their horse. "Over Showing" is defined as: the Exhibitor's behavior strongly distracts attention from the horse being shown, to the Exhibitor themselves, and or disturbs the presentations of other horses or Exhibitors.
- In open mixed age or gender conformation classes, the Judge may ask the Exhibitor, via the Ringmaster, the age and gender of the horse.
- At the Judge's discretion, Exhibitor may be asked to show the horse's teeth.

AP220 Judging Criteria for Conformation Classes

- Entries in conformation classes should exemplify the ultimate in conformation and structural correctness. They should be in sufficient good flesh to present a healthy appearance and should be neatly groomed and trimmed.
- The "way of going" is not considered in conformation classes.
- No horses coat and/or mane and tail may have an artificial substance applied to change or cover up color. Minor touch-ups (for nicks and scratches) are acceptable above the knee only.
- The hair and coat are to be clean and well brushed, mane and tail clean and free of tangles, hooves trimmed properly, the inside of the ears neatly trimmed/clipped, long hair on jaw, legs, pasterns and fetlocks to be neatly trimmed. Bridle paths are optional.
 - Conformation 70%
 - Temperament 20%
 - Grooming/Trimming 10%

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AP221 Description of an adult Rocky Mountain Horse

The height of the horse will be no less than 58 inches (14.2 hands) and no more than 64 inches (16 hands). The Rocky Mountain Horse shall have medium sized bones with medium sized feet in proportion to the body; a wide and deep chest with a span between the forelegs. The fore and hind legs should be free of noticeable deformity. The horse should have sloping shoulders (ideally with an angle of 45 degrees), bold eyes, well-shaped ears, and a face that is neither dished nor protruding. The head should be medium sized in proportion to the body with medium jaws. The neck should be gracefully arched, medium in length and set on an angle to allow a natural carriage with a break at the poll. The horse must have a solid body color. (Color is not to be a determining factor in the performance and conformation of the horse.) There shall be no white markings above the knee or hock except on the face where modest amounts of white markings are acceptable. Excessive facial markings (such as bald faced horse) are not acceptable. (Rocky Mountain mares under the age of 3 may be shown at 14 hands.)

AP222 Gaits of the Rocky Mountain Horse

General

- The Rocky Mountain Horse naturally demonstrates a smooth, ambling gait that glides forward. The horse moves out in a lateral gait in which one can count four distinct hoof beats that produce a cadence of near equal rhythm.
- The speed may vary, but the four beat rhythm remains constant.
- The gait may technically be described as the simultaneous but asynchronous motion of the legs of the same side of the body followed by the movement of the legs on the opposite side of the body. The gait is initiated by the hind leg. The length of stride for both should be nearly equal.
- The Rocky Mountain Horse moves his feet with minimal ground clearance and minimal knee and hock action. Because this gait does not waste motion, it enables the horse to travel long distances with minimal tiring.
- When Judging the RMH, the highest emphasis is to be placed on the consistently smooth, even, four beat lateral gait and the horse's ability to maintain form.
- The length of stride at the RM Pleasure Gait ranges from "capping" to a maximum of 18 inches of overstride.
- Horses should move in a relaxed, smooth, rhythmic rolling motion.
- The toe shall break no higher than the top of the ankle, or the heel no higher than mid cannon bone. **See Example D**
- Strong emphasis should be placed on the smoothness of gait and smoothness of ride when performing.
- The RMH is a pleasure horse.
- The RMHA **MUST** perform 3 distinct gaits: The Trail Walk, Show Walk, and the Rocky Mountain Pleasure Gait in all regular classes.

Trail Walk

The Trail Walk is a calm, relaxed natural walk. The horse should remain relaxed ridden on a loose rein. During the Trail Walk, one hand on the rein is acceptable.

Show Walk

The Show Walk is an even four beat lateral gait that is executed in a slow, smooth rhythmic fashion. Horse should look alert and carry head proudly in the bridle. Its' feet should move forward in an even, non exaggerated form.

Rocky Mountain Pleasure Gait

The Rocky Mountain Pleasure Gait is an even four beat lateral gait with a **moderate but noticeable** increase in speed. There must be a distinct upward transition in speed from the Show Walk. Horses who do not show a distinct change in speed must be disqualified. The RMH must maintain form through the transition.

AP223 Ring Protocol for Under Saddle Classes

- The RMH will be shown and judged in three distinct gaits: the Trail Walk, Show Walk, and the Rocky Mountain Pleasure Gait. No evidence of a pace, stepping pace, trot, fox-trot, canter etc.
- The RMH will enter the Show Ring at a Show Walk and proceed counter clockwise around the Ring. If all entries have not entered the Ring, the Exhibitor first in line and all others behind him must stop at the gate entrance, but not block the entrance, and shall stand at rest until all entries have entered the ring and gate is closed.
- Judging begins when the gate is closed.
- All entries must begin with the Show Walk.
- All entries must make at least once complete circle of the ring in both the Show Walk and Rocky Mountain Pleasure Gait before being asked to move down to the Trail Walk.
- Ample time must be allowed for all Judges to see each entry in the Trail Walk (minimum of 1/3 way of the ring or more at the discretion of the Judge) before being asked to reverse.
- Reverse.
 - English horses reverse toward the rail.
 - Western horses reverse away from the rail towards center ring.
- After the reverse the gait call is Trail Walk (a minimum of 1/3 way of the ring), Show Walk (at least one complete circle around the ring), Rocky Mountain Pleasure Gait (at least one complete circle around the ring), and the Trail Walk.
- Horses continue at the Trail Walk to the line up.
- In the line up, the horse is to stand square with no signs of stretching. **See Example A**
 - In English Protocol Classes, the Exhibitors will be directed to individually back their horses a minimum of three steps and move back to the line up and stand square-not parked or stretched.
 - In Western Protocol classes, Exhibitors must individually back their horses a minimum of 4 steps and move back to the line up and stand square. The Exhibitor may be asked to back clear of the lineup at the end of his four steps, and do a 360 degree neck rein turn either right or left. The horse should turn on the hindquarters and demonstrate the horses ability to neck rein.

AP224 Judging Criteria for Under Saddle Classes

General

- The three gaits required in all under saddle classes are the Trail Walk, Show Walk, and Rocky Mountain Pleasure Gait.
- Strong emphasis is placed on consistency (not breaking gait), naturalness and smoothness of the even four-beat lateral gait and rider.
- The headset will be penalized for over tucking (overly collected and behind vertical) as well as nosing out beyond the acceptable limits as if resisting the bit. **See Example C**
- The hind leg stride is to be what is natural for the horse, from capping to a maximum of 18 inches overstride.
 - Gait 70%
 - Conformation 20%
 - Temperament 10%

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AP225 Judging Criteria for English Under Saddle Classes

- The RMH should perform in a relaxed, quiet, but alert manner, exhibiting an alert attitude without nervousness or resistance and without excessive speed.
- The horse should be ridden on a light rein with moderate collection.
- The horse should demonstrate a head carriage at an approximately 45 degree head angle. See **Example C**
- The horse should demonstrate an exceptionally smooth ride for the rider, i.e. a well balanced forward flowing motion; a free and easy ground covering gait which is a smooth, even comfortable four-beat lateral gait.
- Horses are to back at least 3 steps.

AP226 Faults in English Under Saddle Classes

EXCUSED from the Ring

- Horse shows unruly behavior.
- Uses illegal equipment or improper attire.
- Horse shows lameness.
- Horse is bleeding from the mouth or on any part of the body including the feet.

DISQUALIFIED from Judging

- Hesitation or pointing of the front legs which may indicate artificial training devices were used.
- Horse is 'squatting' in the rear and too far underneath himself, not balanced.
- Does not perform each of the three gaits when called with a distinct change of speed between each. Shows a pace, stepping pace, trot, foxtrot, rack or canter.
- Horse is 'tailgating' on other horses, bumping, or cutting in front of other horses causing another horse to break gait.
- Horse has excessive animation/leg action.

MAJOR FAULTS (should not place in the first three places)

- Exhibits hot or nervous behavior, excessive shying or sidetracking.
- Fails to back properly in the line up, or backs into a horse on either side of Exhibitor: when backing throws the head up or shows resistance to backing; or has gaping mouth when backing.
- Exhibits improper headset (over tucked or nosed out). See **Example C**
- Does not stand square in line. See **Example A**
- Exhibits excessive speed.
- Breaks gait, fails to maintain form i.e. breaks gait in corners/curves of ring, hitches or skips, gets strung out (out of form) noses out, is hard and rough riding.
- Causes rider to bounce or ride rough in the saddle, rider bracing themselves in stirrups.
- Has excessive bit/rein pressure, i.e. corners of mouth drooped, mouth open, horse traveling with head tilted/turned to the side to avoid pressure.
- Exhibits unacceptable over-stride
- Failure to follow class protocol
- Horse proceeds to the lineup at any gait other than the Trail Walk

MINOR FAULTS

- Ears pinned, tail switches consistently, excessive and consistent nodding of head.
- Backs up in line up before Judge calls/signals for the back up.
- Exhibitors "covering up" other Exhibitors in front of the Judge.

AP227 Judging Criteria for Western Under Saddle Classes

- The RMH western pleasure horse performs in a relaxed, quiet manner, exhibiting an exceptionally smooth, comfortable ride without excessive action, speed, or animation.
- The gait should be a balanced flowing forward motion with a free and easy ground covering, smooth even, lateral four-beat gait.
- The horse should be ridden on a loose rein and reins **MUST** be held in one hand at all times (reins cannot change hands during the class).
 - When the end of split reins falls on the side of the reining hand, a single finger between the reins is permitted.
 - When using a romal or when the ends of split reins held in the hand not used for reining, no finger between the reins is allowed. The rider may hold the romal or the end of split reins to keep them from swinging and to adjust the position of the reins, provide the reins are at least 17 inches from the reining hand.
- While the horse is in motion, the rider's hands shall be clear of horse and saddle at all times.
- The head carriage should be natural (not high). See **Example C**
- The horse may (at the discretion of the Judge) be asked via the Ringmaster to back clear of the lineup and do a 360 degree neck reined turn, (either right or left at the direction of the Judge) to demonstrate the ability of the horse to neck rein.
- Horses will be judged on their smoothness in performing the turn correctly and their responsiveness to the rider.
- Horses are to back at least 4 steps.

AP228 Faults in Western Under Saddle Classes

EXCUSED from the Ring – see Article 226

DISQUALIFIED from Judging

In addition to the items in Article 226

- Exhibitor demonstrates improper use of reins/hands
- Exhibits excessive speed

MAJOR FAULTS (should not place in the first three places)

In addition to the items in Article 226

- Is not manageable on a light rein
- Fails to reverse toward center of the ring
- Fails to halt or stand quietly
- Refuses to execute 360 degree neck reined turn, if asked
- Gets tongue over bit

MINOR FAULTS – see Article 226

AP229 Judging Criteria for Trail Pleasure Classes

- The Trail Pleasure horse must perform with an effortless, comfortable gait that encourages stamina and longevity on the trails.
- The horse should display an alert and willing attitude while performing in a relaxed and forward moving motion.
- The Trail Pleasure horse should carry its head in a natural and relaxed position appropriate to its conformation. See **Example C**
- The horse **MUST** be consistently well mannered, responsive, and quiet.
- The horse should exhibit a lateral four beat gait with an even consistent cadence.
- Excessive leg action is not desired in a Trail Pleasure horse.
- It is not desired for this horse to exhibit driving rear legs with a long overstride.
- The horse should be manageable on a light rein.
- These classes do not include obstacles and are judged on the horse's ability to correctly and consistently provide a RMH gait and safe, pleasurable ride.

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AP230 Faults in Trail Pleasure Classes

EXCUSED from the Ring – see Article 226

DISQUALIFIED from Judging – see Article 226

MAJOR FAULTS (shall not place in the top three)

In addition to the items in Article 226

- Not manageable on a light rein
- Horse failing to respond immediately to the Rider's commands
- Horse shows tension, not relaxed or resistant behavior

MINOR FAULTS – see Article 226

