

## Appendix 4: Judging Specifics for the Missouri Fox Trotting Horse

### AP401 Introduction

The Missouri Fox Trotting Horse is another of the gaited breeds developed primarily as a using horse for general purpose use. The primary characteristic of the breed is its ability to cover distance at a speed of about 5 to 8 miles per hour.

The Missouri Fox Trot gait is basically a diagonal gait. The horse will perform this gait by walking in front and trotting behind with reach in each stride. An overstride is acceptable as long as the horse travels straight from all four corners and executes an authentic fox trot. A crampy or hocky way of going is to be severely penalized. Excessive elevation in the Fox Trotting Horse is not desirable. Although the rear trot is an authentic trot the action of the feet is a smooth slide rather than the snap which leads to a hard jar in other trotting breeds.

The head and tail of the ideal Fox Trotting Horse should be slightly elevated. A rhythmic beat of hooves and a head nod in time with the rhythm of the horse is considered most desirable. Although the ears should indicate the step and rhythm and the tail should also move in motion with the tempo of the gait, excessive wringing of the ears or of the tail should be scrutinized and evaluated as to whether or not it is part of the horse's natural way of going or whether it indicates an artificiality to the horse or an indication of bad temper. If the latter is believed to be the case, the judge must penalize the horse.

In evaluating the gait of the horse, the step should be springy and elastic, consistent in stride and smooth. A marked up and down motion, a so-called sewing machine gait, should be penalized. The horse should be shown in a relaxed yet collected frame.

### AP402 The Gaits/ Remember, Style and Grace not a Race

#### Flat Foot Walk

This is a square 4 beat gait. There should be reach in every stride from both front and rear legs. There should be an overstride of the front track with the rear legs but there must be no sense of cramped motion or laboring from the hocks.

#### Fox Trot

This gait is performed in a stylish manner with emphasis placed on collection. The horse must walk in front and trot behind. There must be reach in the stride both front and rear. The back feet must slide while trotting rather than executing a characteristic snap as seen in traditional trotting horses. Ears must be relaxed during the execution of the gait. There must be a noticeable rhythmic execution which begins at the tip of the nose and continues throughout the topline to the tip of the tail. The horse should appear to have a motion that can best be described as a forward moving ripple.

#### Canter

This is a three beat gait performed on a straight track. Horses that canter crookedly should be penalized. The canter is a forward moving gait but not a speed gait. Entries must be shown collected and comfortably in hand. There should be a roll to the canter but there should be no pumping of the reins or attempts to lift the forehand by application of the reins.

### AP403 Judging Standard

- Although the Fox Trotting Horse has the same general conformation requirements as any quality light breed, the judging standard for a class is specific in Fox Trotting classes or when evaluating a Fox Trotting Horse in a multi-breed contest. 40% of the evaluation is based on the Fox Trot Gait; 20% on the flat foot walk; 20% for the canter and 20% for conformation.
- In two and three year old classes the emphasis on the Fox Trot rises to 50%, 25% for flat foot walk, and 25% for conformation as horses in these age groups are not required to canter.

- An additional requirement is that even in mixed breed costume classes the Fox Trotting horse must be evaluated 80% on costume but 20% on execution of the gaits.
- Horses that wing or ropewalk are to be severely penalized. Any horse shown with artificial appliances like tie downs, false tails, switches, braces etc., must be disqualified.

### AP404 Tack and Attire

- In general, Fox Trotting Horses are shown in Western equipment unless otherwise specified in the premium of a show.
- Australian saddles are not permitted in the Fox Trotting Western division.
- Western bridles are permitted in all divisions and should be brow band type.
- Cavessons may or may not be employed in other than Western classes.
- Dropped nosebands are prohibited.
- Colored brow bands are appropriate. or classes where braids are worn, the braids should be tasteful and complement the appearance of the horse rather than serve as a distraction.
- Grazing, snaffle, curb, half breed or hackamore type bits are allowed.
- Cruel bits are prohibited as are martingales and tie downs.
- Curb chains must be at least ½ inch in width.
- Spurs and whips not to exceed 36" are optional.
- In Western classes cavessons are prohibited as are rhinestone or sequined brow bands. Hats, boots, tie and a long sleeve shirt are minimum mandatory attire.
- Chaps and spurs are optional.
- Saddle seat type braids or hunter braids may be used in appropriate divisions.
- Braids are prohibited in hand division and in Western classes.
- Trail obstacle classes may be ridden in either English Hunt Seat, Western or traditional attire, but types of dress may not be combined.

### AP405 Ring Protocol

- Horses shall enter the ring and track right at the Fox Trot Gait and will halt before executing a complete circle of the ring.
- When all entries have entered the ring the class will be put in motion upon direction of the judge.
- The order of performance of gaits shall be Flatfoot Walk, Fox Trot, Flatfoot Walk, Canter and Flatfoot Walk.
- Horses are to be shown both ways of the ring at least once around at each performance gait.
- On the reverse a brief pause not to exceed 10 seconds is permissible. Minor adjustments to bridle or curb may be made on the reverse by the rider.
- The judge will walk the lineup for inspection and judging of conformation.
- Workouts may be called for any place or places. In a Championship workout all gaits are required both ways of the ring.

### AP406 Western Pleasure

In addition to the standard ring protocol as described above, the Western Fox Trotting horse must be shown on a reasonably loose rein or a light contact that does not establish undue restraint. Reins must be held in one hand and may not be changed during the class. With split reins one finger of the reining hand is permitted between the reins. The free hand is not allowed to touch the reins. While in motion the rider's hands must be kept clear of horse and saddle.

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The standard applicable to all Western pleasure horses is applicable to the Fox Trotting entry shown in Western tack. The poll should be carried above the level of the withers, and the head should not be behind the vertical or excessively nosed out. There should be no evidence either in head set or in carriage of the body of intimidation or coercion of the horse by the rider or of resistance on the part of the horse.

The ideal Western horse must be fit and a pleasure to ride in a rhythmic manner. The horse must stand quietly and back easily. The judge may require the horse to back clear of the line up and execute a 360 degree neck reined turn. The halt may be called for from any gait on the rail to test for obedience and quietness.

### Penalties

For the Fox Trotter, faults in the Western division must be rated in accordance with the following list of severity:

1. Excessive Speed (any gait)
2. Wrong lead
3. Breaks in gait
4. Loss of forward momentum
5. Failure to execute the appropriate gait when required
6. Touching saddle or horse with free hand
7. Head carried too high
8. Head carried too low
9. Nose carried vertical or behind the vertical
10. Nosing out
11. Gaping mouth
12. Stumbling
13. Use of spurs forward of the cinch
14. Horse that appears dull, sullen, drawn or tired
15. Quick, choppy, short strided
16. Excessive jar or bounce in the saddle

### AP407 English Pleasure (Traditional Attire)

- English tack and attire are mandatory in this division.
- Snap brim hats or derbies are optional attire.
- Taste in attire and neatness in presentation is a factor in the final placement of the class.
- A whip or crop not to exceed 36" including the lash is allowed in this division.
- Shanks of over 8.5 inches are prohibited as are gag bits without shanks.
- Tight curb chains must be severely penalized and judges must severely penalize pumping of the reins at the canter.
- Excessive speed is to be penalized.
- In the line-up horses are required to back and conformation is considered as a factor in the final placing of the class.

### AP408 In Hand Division

The requirements for in hand competition common to all breeds are observed for Fox Trotters with this exception: Fox Trotters are shown standing square on the corners, all four feet underneath themselves.

### AP409 Miscellaneous Divisions

All other divisions where Fox Trotting Horses may be shown at FOSH sanctioned shows are to be handled in conformance with the IJA rule book for specific divisional requirements.