

Article 5: Ring Protocol and Judging Procedures

501 General Information

- Judges will follow an established ring protocol in all under saddle classes.
- Judging does not commence until the gate is officially closed and the class called to order. Judges or show management may direct that the gate be closed after the announcement of a two-minute gate call. The ringmaster is responsible for timing of the gate call, and in the absence of the ringmaster the judge will keep the official time. Once the gate is closed, no entry will be allowed to enter the ring.
- Although horses enter at the walk, the judge may direct the class to go at ease while waiting for the class to fill. Riders may stop on the rail and use that time to make minor tack adjustments, as long as dismounting is not necessary.

502 Requirements for Exhibition

All horses that enter the ring to compete must be controlled and must pose no danger to other entries. Fractious behavior will not be allowed to disrupt the performance of other competitors. In the event that an exhibitor does not request the gate if his horse becomes unruly, the judge must excuse the entry.

503 Voluntary Requests to Be Excused

Any exhibitor has the right to request to be excused from consideration at any time during the competition but prior to the lineup. Once the lineup has been called, only the judge may excuse an exhibitor from a class. An exhibitor must pull into center ring and request permission to be excused through the ringmaster. The exhibitor may choose to remain mounted or to dismount.

504 Involuntary Dismissal from the Ring

The judge may exercise his/her discretionary power to excuse an exhibitor at any point in the class. When a judge makes this determination, the class will be stopped, the exhibitor will be asked to pull into center ring and the ringmaster will give the exhibitor a brief description of the reason for the dismissal. Discussion of the decision in center ring is not allowed. The announcer will make an announcement that the exhibitor has been dismissed at the request of the judge; the exhibitor will leave the ring; then, the class will continue.

505 Time-Outs

- Time-outs may only be called for tack breakage or repair. If an entry throws a shoe during the course of a class, the exhibitor has the option of continuing without a shoe, or requesting to be excused from the class.
- To request a time-out, the rider must pull into center ring and request the time from the ringmaster. The rider must remain mounted, unless to do so would constitute a danger to the exhibitor or the horse. In the absence of an emergency, the rider may dismount when permission for the time-out is given. Timing begins when the announcement of the timeout is made. No assistant or groom may enter the ring before the announcement. The only problem that may be corrected during a timeout is the problem for which the request was made.
- A total of ten minutes per individual entry is allowed for timeouts in a class. Regardless of the length of time expended, no more than two time-outs per entry will be allowed per class. The ringmaster is the official timekeeper and will record the amount of time spent during the timeout in a notebook kept for that purpose.
- Other riders are to remain at ease during the time out and may make adjustments to tack that do not require the rider to dismount. Assistance in the ring or from over the rail is prohibited.

506 Workouts

- A judge may call for a workout for any or all of the entries in the class in order to determine the final placement of entries within the group designated for the workout. Horses may be worked out for other than the top placings. Horses may be tied for positions only against other horses considered within a section of the workout.
- Entries who have already been placed in the class will be asked to park to the center of the ring, until the workout is completed. All horses that have not been selected for the workout are excused after the final workout horses have been selected.
- Workout entries are judged as if a new class has begun.
- Horses chosen for workouts must be worked both ways of the ring at any gait requested.
- Cards are to be marked on the basis of the quality of the presentation during a workout.
- In any class having more than one judge, the presence of a horse on one judge's card is sufficient to allow the horse to be in the workout group.
- Under a multi judge system, judges may confer together if they are using the workout to tie specific places, rather than the entire class.

507 Championship and Grand Championship Classes

- In order to compete in any Championship or Grand Championship class offered at a FOSH sanctioned event, the entry must first have been shown and judged in a qualifying class in order to enter the championship or grand championship round.
- In championship classes horses may, at the discretion of the judge, be stripped for conformation judging.
- When Grand Championship classes are held as part of a FOSH sanctioned show, stripping of the entries is mandatory.
- Two grooms are allowed in the ring with each entry if horses are to be stripped.

508 Fall of Horse or Rider

The fall of a horse, defined as the shoulder and the point of the hip on the same side hitting the ground, or the fall of a rider from the horse will result in the entry being excused from further competition.

509 Weight of Obstacles in Rail Classes

Some traditional rail classes may include several obstacles as part of the mandatory elements. The primary purpose of the obstacles is to show obedience to the rider and a willing attitude on the part of the horse. Obstacles in any rail class will count for 25% of the total score.

510 Incomplete or Incorrect Appointments

Entries will be penalized for incomplete or incorrect appointments, but not necessarily disqualified. The use of prohibited shoeing, tack, equipment and/or attire will result in disqualification. (See Article 4 and Article 608)

511 ATSM Helmets

- The use of ATSM helmets is recommended. They will not be penalized as part of any presentation including equitation competition.
- The use of ATSM helmets is **mandatory** for all riders regardless of age at all FOSH sanctioned shows in speed events, natural horsemanship, and over fences.
- In states where the use of ATSM helmets is mandated in all divisions for youth riders, the laws of the state will supersede the regulations in the IJA Rule Book.

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Judging Procedures

512 General

- The judge has the responsibility and the authority to excuse from the ring any horse that exhibits a bad image way of going, appears to be "off" or lame, who exhibits unruly behavior, or who otherwise fails to conform to the IJA Rules.
- Horses bleeding from the mouth or muzzle will be eliminated in any class.
- Gaited horses that exhibit bilaterally curly hair from the knee to the coronary band will not be tied in any class even if such horses pass DQP inspections because the presence of such hair creates a bad public image for pleasure horses.
- The decision to excuse a horse from competition is not protestable.
- Horses that are excused, either from the lineup or from the rail, do not meet the criteria of having been shown and judged.
- Judges observe the entrance of the class, before the gate is closed, for two purposes only: to count the number of entries in a class and to note any signs of lameness or potential disqualifying issues before the field is placed in competition.
- Judging takes place only when the class is called to order. Breaks in gait or other mistakes that occur before that time are not considered in the final evaluation.

513 In Hand Classes

General

- When judging specific breeds, the registry requirements of the breed will be used.
- Horses must be exhibited by a single exhibitor.
- Emphasis will be placed on type, conformation, substance, quality, turnout and evaluation of the way of going.
- Transmissible weaknesses and/or unsoundness must be penalized as the division is intended for the rewarding of horses that will improve breeds. Surface blemishes may be overlooked.
- In breeding stock classes, all horses will be checked for correct mouths. Mature stallions will be checked for the presence of two testicles, and the vaginas of mares will be checked for good reproductive conformation.
- Judges will reward characteristics that can be passed on through breeding and penalize characteristics that are undesirable.
- Classes may be subdivided by age or gender at the option of show management.
- Weanlings and Yearlings must be shown barefoot.
- Western horses are not to be parked in any division.
- Unruly or ill-mannered horses must be excused from the ring.

In Hand Class Routine

- Entries enter the ring at a walk and proceed counterclockwise.
- **Model** entries walk to a position on the rail and take the position for judging.
- **Halter** entries will be worked both ways of the ring and then line up for judging. Entries are shown at the walk and may be asked to extend the gait at the direction of the judge. The quality of the gait will be judged in accordance with the standards developed by the breed registries.
- Entries that are parked stand erect, not overly camped out, and balanced on four corners. Ears are and the attitude of the horse is attentive to his handler while interested in his surroundings. The expression must be alert.
- In all in hand classes, horses may be asked to square up as part of judging and they must do so in order to be considered for prizes.

514 Under Saddle Classes

- When competition begins, gaits are called as specified in breed rules.
- No curb chain or cavesson adjustments are allowed on the reverse.
- Judges are cautioned not to overwork a class or to continue it past the point where the performance of the entries begins to suffer or horses are laboring.
- In all classes where the parked position is a traditional part of the display of the entry, the horse must park and stand quietly but not overstretched.
- During the lineup, the judge and the ringmaster will walk the line. At that time, the judge may ask that the bit be dropped for inspection, or that the shoes be examined and measured. In both situations, the horse will step forward from the line. This is done at the discretion of the judge and may be requested in any class.
- The judge may excuse horses for signs of physical distress and observable violations of the rules, even if those rules were not noticed on the rail during competition.
- All pleasure horses must back a minimum of four steps on a straight track. A refusal to back four steps in a straight line, without jerking or sawing on the reins on the part of the rider, or with the exhibition of a gaped mouth or swishing tail, indicative of resistance or irritation, will be penalized in the final judging. If a rider is asked to back a horse standing in the parked position, the rider must first square the horse up, before asking for the rein back.
- After all the mandatory requirements of the class are met, placing will be based primarily on the quality of gaits, the adherence to the specific requirements of the division, and the appearance of the horse to be a willing pleasure horse.
- A horse that fails to exhibit any of the required gaits for a sufficient period to allow the judge to form an adequate impression of the entry will not be tied above other horses that do present all required gaits.