

COLORADO 4-H HORSE JUDGING CONTEST

Rules and Regulations for 4-H Horse Judging Contests

Contestants and Eligibility

1. Teams may be selected by any procedure which a county or area deems appropriate. It is recommended that selection procedures, in writing, be made available to all interested parties and participants.
2. At the Colorado State 4-H Conferences State Horse Judging Contest, contestants must be at least 14 years of age but not yet have reached their 19th birthday on January 1 of the current year.
3. Contestants must be enrolled in 4-H in the county or area they represent.
4. At the Colorado State 4-H Conferences Horse Judging Contest 4-H members may compete as individuals from counties that do not have full (3-4 members) judging teams and are eligible for individual awards only. Individuals must be properly entered in the contest.
5. At county contests, it is at management's discretion as to whether or not to allow combining of members from different counties in order to form teams, for the purpose of team awards.
6. Colorado State 4-H Conference is a multi-dimensional educational and leadership event which has many opportunities for learning, competition, and socializing. Therefore, all contestants must register for State 4-H Conference and participate full-time, in order to be eligible to compete in the state contests.
7. Teams and individual members of that team, who have competed at The National 4-H Contest (National Western 4-H Round-up and Horse Classic), as the official Colorado 4-H Horse Judging entry are considered to be ineligible to compete again on a horse judging team at the State 4-H Conference. However they are eligible to compete as an individual in future years.
8. Contestants in National 4-H competitive events must not have participated in official post-secondary (university, college, junior college or technical school) competitive events, of a similar nature in the same subject matter area to be eligible for participation in National 4-H competitive events. Neither can that individual be a member of a postsecondary team undergoing training in preparation for a post-secondary event of the same nature. For example, a contestant who has competed in an official collegiate horse judging contest, either on or off campus, is ineligible to compete in a similar National 4-H horse judging contest.
9. Alternates will be eligible to judge for individual awards.
10. Members of past state champion teams or members who have represented Colorado at the National 4-H Horse Judging Contest, may continue to compete at 4-H Horse Judging contests, as individuals, for individual awards only.
11. Teams or individuals who win a state competition in more than one contest area may continue to compete in the contest area(s) in which they did not represent Colorado at a 4-H national contest.

Method of Conduct

1. A team may have three (3) or four (4) members; when four (4) are entered, the three (3) highest overall scores will be used for the team totals.

2. Contestants shall wear no clothing, accessories or other marks of identification which may reveal his or her identity or the county or club represented while giving oral reasons. Hats are prohibited in the judging arena and in the reasons rooms.
3. While the contest is in progress, there shall be no conferring between the contestants or between contestants and anyone else, except as directed by the contest superintendents or their representatives.
4. Four (4) to six (6) halter classes will be judged. The following breeds may be represented in the halter classes: American Saddlebred, Quarter Horse, Thoroughbred (Hunters), Appaloosa, Arabian, Paint, Morgan, Tennessee Walkers and Draft Breeds, and so forth. Contestants will give oral reasons on one or two halter classes. All halter classes will be judged as sound of limb, eye, wind, mouth and reproductive organs.
5. Four (4) to six (6) performance classes will be judged. The performance classes will be chosen from Western Pleasure, English Pleasure, Hunter Under Saddle, Hunt Seat Equitation, Saddle Seat Equitation, Pleasure Driving, Western Riding, Reining, Western Horsemanship, Show Hack, Hunter Hack, Trail, and Working Ranch Horse Division classes. Oral reasons will be required on one or two performance classes. Performance horses will be judged as they go with unsoundness to be penalized accordingly. All tack and attire will be considered legal as long as it is used in accordance with the current 4-H rule book.
6. Stock Horse Western Pleasure classes will be judged by AQHA Novice Amateur Western Pleasure rules. (See current AQHA rulebook)
7. The horses and attendants will be designated by numbers 1-2-3-4 and numbered from left to right, as viewed from the rear.
8. Horses will not be handled by the contestants, but time will be provided in halter classes for close inspections. All horses in halter classes will also be observed at a walk and trot.
9. Fifteen (15) minutes will be allowed for the contestants to judge halter classes.
10. The number of reasons to be given is at the discretion of the contest management. Typically, seniors give 2-4 sets, while juniors give 1-3 sets at the various county contests. At the State 4-H Horse Judging Contest, seniors will give four (4) sets of reasons.
11. Two (2) minutes will be allowed contestants to give oral reasons to the judge. They may or may not be timed, at the contest superintendent's discretion. If it is decided that reasons are to be timed, it must be announced prior to the contest and a timer provided for each reasons taker. When reasons are timed, penalties for going over time should follow the penalty scale outlined in the National Horse Judging Team Coaches Association Handbook. Contestants are not permitted to use notes while giving reasons; placings may or may not be available to them, upon entering the reasons room, at the contest superintendent's discretion.
12. All tack and attire will be considered legal, providing it is used properly according to the current 4-H Rule Book.

Contest Superintendents

1. It shall be the duty of the contest superintendent(s) to see that all applicable rules and regulations are observed.

2. Superintendents may have a committee to assist them.
3. The superintendents will take no part in scoring the contestants.
4. Superintendents shall have charge of all records and shall have all placing cards scored, tabulated and totaled. Reasons scores shall be tabulated appropriately. It is recommended that the superintendents keep all placing cards, records and results for a minimum of one year, following the contest, so that they may be referred to, if necessary. At the state contest results should be kept on file for at least 6 years, so that contestant eligibility can be checked accurately.
5. The superintendent will be responsible for all cuts (after receiving placing cards from contest officials with recommended cuts for each class) on official placings.
6. A written copy of contest results, including official placing and cuts shall be provided to all coaches either immediately following the contest or within 10 business days.

Support Staff

Assistants, including announcer, group leaders, timer, gatemen, tabulators, and so forth, shall be directly responsible to the superintendents and shall be held by management for one year subsequent to the contest for possible review.

Judges/Officials

1. Classes will be placed in accordance with the rules of the current Colorado 4-H Horse Rule Book, US Equestrian Federation rulebook or respective breed association rules, if applicable.
2. Each official shall place the classes independently of each other from similar vantage points as the contestants, while the contestants are viewing the same classes. The judges shall enter their own placings on their own placing card, indicate their suggested cuts and then file that card with the superintendent for final review and approval. Referee judges(s) may be used at the discretion of the superintendent(s). Officials shall mark their cards independently, place the classes and turn in their individual placing card before conferring with other officials.

Determination of Ratings

1. Fifty (50) points shall constitute a perfect mark on placing, and fifty (50) points shall constitute a perfect mark on reasons.
2. Zero scores will be assigned in the following instances:
 - A. unmarked card
 - B. double marked card
 - C. unidentified card
 - D. failure to turn in a card
3. Priority order for breaking ties:
 - A. If tied for a division award in Halter or Performance, the contestants or team having the highest reason score in that division will be listed first. If tied for a division award in reasons, the contestant or team having the lowest overall placing score will be listed first.
 - B. If tied for individual or team overall award, the contestant or team having the highest overall reasons score shall be listed first.

- C. If still tied for either (a) or (b) above, the contestant or team having the lowest score in placing reason classes shall be listed first.
- D. If still tied, the contestant or team with the highest overall placing score will be listed first.
- E. If still tied, the contestant or team with the highest single class reasons score will be listed first.
- F. If contestants are still tied after the above, the oldest contestant or team shall be listed first.

Protocol for Teams to Compete in other National Contests:

- The State Champion Team from the state 4-H horse judging contest is expected to represent Colorado 4-H at the National 4-H Horse Judging Contest in January of the following year, in Denver. In addition, the high team may select two additional national contests: such as, The American Quarter Horse Youth World Show, Arabian Nationals or the Quarter Horse Congress contests. Please contact these shows for further details and entry limitations. This team must designate the two contests they have chosen by July 1st of the year they win the state contest. The coach of the winning team is responsible to notify the coach of the second place team, the state 4-H Equine Extension Specialist and the State 4-H Contest Superintendent of their contest choices by July 1st.
- The Reserve State Championship team from the state 4-H horse judging contest may represent Colorado 4-H at two National horse judging contests, after the State Champions have made their selection. The coach of the second place team is responsible to notify the coach of the third place team, the state 4-H Equine Extension Specialist and the State 4-H Contest Superintendent of their contest choices by July 10th.
- The third high team from the state 4-H horse judging contest may represent Colorado 4-H at one National horse judging contest after being notified of the intentions of the state champions and Reserve Champions.
- 4-H Horse Judging team coaches are welcome to take their teams to any National contest where there is no limit imposed by the contest on the entry of 4-H judging teams (such as: APHA Worlds, Morgan Nationals, Scottsdale Arabian etc). In any contest where the entries of 4-H Horse Judging teams are limited, the above protocol regarding eligibility must be followed. Only when a contest has not been selected by the first three placing senior teams at the state contest, may unranked teams be entered to represent counties in the Colorado 4-H Horse Judging Program.
- When considering out of state travel with junior 4-H members please check with your County Extension Agent on county and state policies. Generally, juniors do not go on national trips, unless there is a case were a junior judge is used to fill a senior team i.e. no other seniors from that county are available. However, coaches, parents and the junior member should give this decision great consideration, as the junior would then be subject to the same eligibility restrictions as mentioned above.
- Only the team representing Colorado at the National 4-H contest are ineligible for further competition as members of a 4-H Horse Judging Team at a 4-H county, state or national contest. Members may continue to judge, as individuals, so that they may further develop their horse judging and life skills.