

Equifest Open Horse Judging Contest Guidelines

CONTESTANTS AND ELIGIBILITY

- I. There will be two age divisions.
 - a. Intermediate: All contestants must be at least 9 years of age but not yet reached their 14th birthday before January 1, 2019.
 - b. Senior: All contestants must be at least 14 years of age before January 1, 2019 but not yet reached their 19th birthday before January 1, 2019.

TEAM REQUIREMENTS

- I. Teams are to be made up of three or four members.
- II. All individuals on the team must be in the same age division.
- III. Team member changes can be made the morning of contest at check-in.

METHOD OF CONDUCT

- I. All contestants will check in the morning of the contest and receive placing cards. All contestants will remain with the assigned group throughout the contest. Reasons and official placings will be given at a location to be announced.
- II. Dress code is casual and industry appropriate.
- III. No talking between contestants or contestants and coaches is allowed during the contest. Questions from contestants are to be directed to the contest officials.
- IV. Cell phone and electronic device use is prohibited. Anyone caught with cell phone or electronic device will be disqualified.
- V. Contestants are responsible for their own writing instruments (No. 2 pencils) and notepads for the purpose of taking notes for reasons classes.

CONTEST FORMAT

- I. Judging contest will have 6 – 8 classes (2-6 halter and 2-6 performance).
 - a. Intermediate division will give 2 sets of oral reasons.
 - b. Senior division will give 4 sets of oral reasons.
- II. The animals and showmen will be designated by numbers 1-2-3-4.
- III. Halter classes may be represented by the following breeds and types: Quarter Horse, Conformation Hunter, Appaloosa, Arabian, Paint, Morgan, Miniature, and Draft breeds.
- IV. Performance classes may include Western Pleasure, Reining, Ranch Riding, Hunter Under Saddle, Hunter Hack, Trail, Hunt Seat Equitation, and Horsemanship.
- V. Halter horses will be judged as sound and performance will be judged “as they go”.
- VI. AQHA Novice Amateur rules will be used in all performance classes.
- VII. All tack and attire will be considered legal provided it is used properly.
- VIII. All classes will be considered potential reasons classes with at least one set of oral reasons coming from the halter classes.
- IX. Fifteen minutes will be given to contestants for each class to make their observations, take notes, and fill out their placing cards. Reasons classes will be announced after all classes have concluded.
- X. Contestants are advised to take notes on all classes.

- XI. Two minutes will be allowed for each contestant to give oral reasons to the judge (over 2 minutes will be severely penalized by an automatic 25 point deduction).
- XII. Contestants are not permitted to use notes while giving oral reasons. Contestant's placing card will not be offered to them upon entering the reasons area.

JUDGES

- I. Judges will place classes while contestants are working in the arena. The judges shall determine placings and cuts to be made.
- II. When contestants are finished giving reasons, the reason listener will place the reason score on the reasons score card for tabulation.

DESCRIPTION OF CUTS

- I. Cuts, as specified in the National Horse Judging Team Coaches Association Handbook:
 - 1. Horses are extremely similar; no obvious reason why one should be placed over the other; or, both horses have numerous faults and none supersedes the others; placing is strictly a matter of personal preference.
 - 2. Horses are very close, but one horse has one or two qualitative or quantitative advantages; the majority of official judges would not switch the pair, but half of the contestants could logically switch the pair.
 - 3. Horses are of unequal quality, but there is a logical placing in favor of one horse; either one horse has several faults or several advantages; no more than one third of contestants would be expected to switch the pair.
 - 4. Horses are not of similar quality; one horse has several decided advantages based on many points; all experts would quickly see the placing; no guesswork or personal preference required to make placing; no more than 10% of contestants would be expected to switch the pair.
 - 5. Large number of extreme differences between the horses; placing is obvious to everyone on first, quick observation; careful study not required for the placing; pair consists of an inferior horse vs. a consistent winner; only very inexperienced, uniformed contestants would switch the pair.

DETERMINATION OF RATINGS

- I. Fifty points shall constitute a perfect mark on placing and 50 points shall constitute a perfect mark on reasons.
- II. Priority order for breaking ties:
 - a. If tied for an award in Placings, the contestant/team having the highest reason score will be listed first.
 - b. If tied for an award in Reasons, the contestant/team with the highest placing score on the reason classes will be listed first.
 - c. If tied for an individual overall award, the contestant/team having the highest overall reason score shall be listed first.
 - d. If still tied for (c) above, the contestant/team having the highest score in placing reason classes shall be listed first.
 - e. If still tied, the contestant/team with the highest overall placing score will be listed first.
 - f. If still tied, the contestant/team with the highest single class reasons score will be listed first.

AWARDS

- I. Division awards will be given for the top 5 individuals and top 3 teams in the Intermediate and Senior divisions. There will be awards given for the top 10 individuals and top 5 teams overall.