



New Hampshire 4-H Horse Judging Contest Contest Rules - Method of Conduct

ENTRY INFORMATION: Current year's entry information can be obtained from your county Extension office OR on the web at: <http://www.ceinfo.unh.edu/4H/4HProgs.htm>

DIVISIONS:

1. Reasons Division - Reasons division contestants must be ages 14-18 years as of January 1. They will place 3-6 halter classes, 1-3 performance classes, and deliver two sets of oral reasons (see attached score sheet).
2. Non-Reasons Division - Non-reasons contestants are ages 12-18 years as of January 1. They will place all halter and performance classes plus answer 10 objective questions concerning the horses judged. The questions can all be answered by using the number of a horse in the class. Non-reasons contestants will be ranked separately from reasons contestants.
3. Hippology Contest Division - For Senior youth (ages 14-18 years as of January 1), enrolled ONLY in the Hippology Contest. They will not give reasons or answer questions about the judging classes. They will judge all classes and then move to the Hippology written phase.

TEAMS - REASONS DIVISION ONLY:

Reasons Division teams may have 3 or 4 members. If 4 are entered the three highest overall scores will be counted for all team totals. All team members must deliver oral reasons.

METHOD OF CONDUCT:

1. Coaches must report to the contest superintendent the designated location by 8:00 am. At that time, coaches will receive their team packets containing all placing cards and all contestant ID badges to be distributed to participants. Coaches will sign and return packet envelopes to superintendent. Contestants and coaches will receive instructions beginning at 8:15 a.m. Each contestant will be assigned a group, all contestants must remain with their group throughout the contest.
2. While the contest is in progress, there shall be no talking between the contestants, or between contestants and anyone else except as directed by the superintendent or their representative. **Talking or other communication between contestants or between contestants and coaches will result in a zero score for the class in progress at the time; repeated violation will result in dismissal from the contest. This rule exists for the reasons portion of the contest as well.**
3. Three to six halter classes will be judged. Breeds will be chosen based on availability of suitable horses and may include Light Horse breeds (American Saddlebred, Quarter Horse, Thoroughbred, Appaloosa, Arabian, Paint, Pinto, Morgan, National Show Horse, Tennessee Walker), Pony breeds (POA, Shetland, Welsh, Norwegian, Fjords), Draft breeds, Stock Horses, Warm Bloods and Mules. In the halter classes the horses are all to be considered serviceably sound. Other classes may be added at the discretion of the Superintendent.
4. One to four performance classes will be judged. They may be chosen from Western Pleasure, Saddle Seat Performance, Hunter Under Saddle, Western Riding, Reining, English Pleasure, Equitation (stock seat, hunt seat, saddle seat) and Pleasure Driving. All equipment and attire will be considered legal. Horses are considered serviceably sound for placing purposes; however, unsoundnesses may be mentioned in oral reasons. Other classes may be added at the discretion of the Superintendent.
5. The horses will be designated 1-2-3-4. Horses are to be judged on their merits unless otherwise noted.
6. Horses will not be handled by the contestants, but time will be provided in halter classes for close inspection and to observe horses at a walk and trot.

7. Reason classes will be designated within one minute of start of class.
8. Oral reasons will be given by the reasons division contestants on two classes. Sixteen (16) minutes will be allowed for contestants to judge non-reasons classes, and eighteen (18) minutes will be given to contestants during reasons classes to make their observations, take notes, and fill out their placing cards.
9. Contestants are not permitted to use notes while giving reasons; however, their placing card will be offered to them upon entering the reasons room. Judges may ask questions of the contestants.
10. Official placings will be given after each class, except reasons classes.

SUPPORT STAFF:

Assistants, including announcer, group leaders, time keepers, tabulators, judges, etc. will be directly responsible to the superintendent and assist them in conducting the contest. Designated support staff are the only adults allowed in the ring with the contestants.

JUDGES:

1. Classes will be placed according to the rules of the American Horse Shows Association or the respective breed association rules, if applicable.
2. Three to five officials will judge the horse classes by committee with two to five of the officials designated as oral reasons judges.

SCORING THE CONTEST:

1. 50 points constitutes a perfect score in all classes.
2. Breaking ties:
 - a. If tied for a halter or performance award the contestant or team having the highest total reasons score in that division will be listed first.
 - b. If tied for an 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 of the above, the contestant or team having the highest score in placing reason classes in that division shall be listed first.
 - d. If still tied, the contestant or team with the highest overall placing score in all classes shall be listed first.
 - e. If still tied, the contestant or team with the highest single class reason score shall be listed first.
 - f. If contestants are still tied after a,b,c,d,e above, the oldest contestant or team shall be listed first.
3. The individual whose score was dropped from the team totals is eligible for individual awards.

CUTS: Cuts are a numerical score given to show the difference between the pairs and are used in the calculation of the contestant's score. The New Hampshire 4-H Horse Judging Contest has adopted the recommended cut scale of the National Horse Judging Team Coaches' Association.

<http://www.nhjtca.org/handbook.htm>

The total of all three cuts cannot exceed 15. If they total 15, the middle number cannot be larger than 5. If they total 14, the middle number cannot be larger than 8.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS - NON-REASONS DIVISION:

Questions will be worded so contestant will answer with a number only.

1. Which Belgian in the halter class had the greatest size and the most sloping shoulder?
2. Which Arabian in the halter class was bay?
3. Which Saddlebred in the halter class had the longest hip and was the most evenly turned over the croup?
4. Which Appaloosa in the halter class had the loudest, brightest, coat color?
5. Which Thoroughbred in the halter class was over at the knees?
6. In Saddle Seat Pleasure, which horse took the wrong lead the first way of the ring?
7. Which Western Pleasure Horse scuffed his feet and had a sluggish jog?
8. Which Western Pleasure Horse appeared to have the smoothest lope?
9. Which horse in the Hunter Under Saddle class was a grey?
10. Which Hunter was slow to take the canter and resisted the rider the second way of the ring?

CONTEST RESULTS: Contest results will be announced AS TENTATIVE, as soon as possible after all contestants have finished giving reasons. If scoring discrepancies are discovered, coaches must report them to the State 4-H office by the next business day (following the contest) by 5:00 pm. At that time, results will be declared official. Placings will be announced for the following:

1. Top 5 Teams - Halter, Performance, Reasons, and Overall
2. Top 10 Individuals (Reasons) - Halter, Performance, Reasons, Overall
3. Top 10 Individuals (Non-reasons) - Halter, Performance, Overall

Scoresheet for Oral Reasons

50	Beginning score. Indicates perfect score with no errors or deductions
	Organization - No more than 10 points deducted
	Began with introductory statement including placing
	Delivered in orderly, logical manner. Clearly stated pairs with major points first
	Gave reasons combined with comparative grants and faults with a higher percentage of grants
	Delivery - No more than 10 points deducted
	Stood relaxed but alert, showed no sluggish posture
	Personal appearance was neat and clean
	Enunciated words clearly
	Voice modulation was convincing and business-like
	Voice remained animated and not monotone, body gestures for emphasis used when needed
	Material Content of Reasons - No more than 20 points deducted
	All statements were complete and accurate to the class seen
	Reasons were relevant to the class and did not appear to be copied from a book
	Additional deductions for completely inaccurate statements
	Distinct differences were indicated by using both points of weakness and strength
	Vocabulary - No more than 10 points deducted
	Terminology applied to class seen
	Terminology was easily understood
	Correct use of grammar
	Used variation of comparative terms and avoided repetitive words
	TOTAL SCORE

Contestant number _____ Name of Class

Guidelines for Reasons Judges

1. The scoresheet has blank lines under each category for comments on why deductions were made.
2. Place deductions in the small scorebox next to a category using a - (minus) and then the amount.
3. The contestant's placing in relation to the official's placing is irrelevant and should not affect their score. They should only be penalized for inaccuracies in the content of their reasons.
4. The following National Rating Guide shall be considered when placing reasons:

Good to Excellent reasons should score	46-50
Above Average to Good should score	41-45
Average should score	36-40
Below Average should score	31-35
Poor should score	30 and below
5. Any contestant who showed reasonable organization and completion should not score below 25.
6. Judges should always be polite, friendly and non-threatening in their postures and facial expressions.
7. Emphasis should always be placed on the positive when speaking to or listening to the contestant.
8. Avoid trying to "teach" by withholding verbal comments to the contestants. Write notes on scoresheet.
9. Only question the contestant when necessary to clarify a point.
10. There should be no eating, drinking, smoking or gum chewing while listening to reasons as they may distract the contestant.
11. Judging reasons is incredibly subjective. Reasons judges should keep a running tally of the previous scores in order to adjust too harsh or too gentle deductions. Keep scoresheets as long as possible to make sure you have not inadvertently judged to the extreme.
12. Always keep in mind that this is a contest for youth and your comments can bruise delicate egos. When commenting or making notations as to why the deduction was given, keep them polite and professional and as tactful as possible. The contestants appreciate your time and effort and can learn a lot from your comments.