

ARABIAN RANCH HORSE RIDING NOTES

Each horse will work individually, performing both required & optional maneuvers.

GENERAL

The purpose of the ranch riding class is to measure the ability of the horse to be a pleasure to ride while being used as a means of conveyance from performing one ranch task to another. The horse should reflect the versatility, attitude and movement of a working ranch horse riding outside the confines of an arena. The horse should be well-trained, relaxed, quiet, soft and cadenced at all gaits. The ideal ranch horse will travel with forward movement and demonstrate an obvious lengthening of stride at extended gaits. The horse can be ridden with light contact or on a relatively loose rein without requiring undue restraint, but not shown on a full drape of reins. The overall manners and responsiveness of the ranch riding horse to make timely transitions in a smooth and correct manner, as well as the quality of the movement are of primary considerations. The ideal ranch riding horse should have a natural head carriage at each gait. For rules regarding correct Western appointments, refer to AR144.

Scoring: Horses will be scored on the basis of '0' to 100, with 70 denoting an average performance. Each maneuver will receive a score that should be added (to) or subtracted from 70 and is subject to a penalty that should be subtracted. Each maneuver will be scored on the following basis, ranging from plus 1 1/2 to minus 1 1/2: -1 1/2 extremely poor, -1 very poor, -1/2 poor, 0 correct, +1/2 good, + 1 very good, + 1 1/2 excellent. Maneuver scores are to be determined and assessed independently of penalty points.

Patterns: Suggested patterns from the current AQHA Handbook and found on AHA website may be used. However, a judge may utilize a different pattern as long as all required maneuvers and three (or more) optional maneuvers are included. It is recommended that a stop does not follow an extended lope. There is no time limit.

Posting at the extended trot and touching or holding the saddle horn is acceptable.

Penalties:

a. One (1) point penalties:

1. Too slow/per gait
2. Over-bridled
3. Out of frame
4. Break of gait at walk or jog for 2 strides or less

b. Three (3) point penalties

1. Break of gait at walk or jog for more than 2 strides
2. Break of gait at lope
3. Wrong lead or out of lead
4. Draped reins

c. Five (5) point penalties

1. Blatant disobedience (kick, buck, bite, rear, etc.)

d. Ten (10) point penalties

1. Eliminates or adds
2. Incomplete maneuver
3. Off pattern

e. Zero (0) Score

1. Willful abuse
2. Major disobedience or schooling
3. Illegal or improper use of reins

Notes:

- No specific penalties for nicks/hits on logs/poles or for over/under spins. Maneuver score deduction may be made.
- Major penalties (no score, zero, or penalties of 5 points or higher) must be reviewed.

Required maneuvers – walk, trot, and lope both directions, extended trot and extended lope at least one direction, as well as stops and back.

Optional maneuvers – Three (3 or more) optional maneuvers may include side pass, turns of 360 degrees or more, change of lead (simple or flying), walk, jog or lope over a pole(s), or some combination of maneuvers reasonable for a ranch horse to perform.

- Recommendation: Walk overs 26"-30", Jog/trot overs 36"- 42"
- Judge to give final approval of maneuver arrangement.

Judging Thoughts and Considerations:

- **Pattern Placement** – The pattern should be run as close to the drawn/written description as possible. Deviations from such are deemed to be a fault and a deduction for each maneuver not properly placed should be made. Rider should make good utilization of the arena space without "riding the rail."
- **Transitions** – Not only should maneuvers and transitions be properly placed according to the pattern, but smooth and responsive transitions between maneuvers and from gait to gait should be rewarded. Conversely rough and awkward transitions should result in maneuver score deductions.
- **Way Of Going** – The overall cadence and performance of gaits should be free-flowing and ground covering, emphasis on forward movement. The overall frame and quality of gait or execution of the maneuver should be taken into account in conjunction with the individual conformation of the horse when considering the overall frame or way of going, as well as any "resistance" or "assistance" in maintaining such frame.

Gaits- In all gaits, movement of the Ranch Riding horse should simulate a horse needing to cover long distances, softly and quietly, like that of a working ranch horse, while maintaining a bright, attentive expression. Overall cadence and performance of gaits should be free-flowing and ground covering for all gaits, with an emphasis on forward movement.

- **Walk** – Natural, flat footed, four beat gait. Rhythmic and ground covering.
- **Trot** – Natural two beat diagonal gait demonstrating more forward motion than the western jog.
- **Extended Trot** – An obvious lengthening of stride, with a definite increase of pace, as if covering a large area on a ranch.
- **Lope** – A true three beat gait, relaxed, smooth and natural.
- **Extended Lope** – While not a run, an obvious lengthening of stride, demonstrating a forward working speed.