

Class structure proposal for Non-Pros and Amateurs

At the September meeting of the NCHA Executive Committee, a Task Force was created to review and address the issues surrounding the classification of an "Amateur" for NCHA competition, and to review the class structure for both NCHA weekend shows and limited age events.

The overriding goals of the Task Force were to:

- (a) develop a recommendation that would enhance participation in NCHA events;
- (b) continue to provide a level playing field for competitors of all backgrounds and skill levels, and;
- (c) be a platform for the continued growth of cutting across the country.

The Task Force was chaired by NCHA Past-President Dennie Dunn, and consisted of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and one additional member from each of the following NCHA standing committees: Amateur Committee, Non-Pro Committee, Open Show Committee and Limited Age Events Committee, plus three "at-large" members.

The Task Force held numerous lengthy conference call meetings and one "in-person" meeting to develop their recommendations.

These unanimous recommendations of the Task Force were then presented to the Executive Committee on November 17, 2008.

The Executive Committee voted unanimously for the recommendations to be presented to all appropriate standing committees at the June 2009 NCHA Convention (to be held June 19–21 in Denver, Colorado). Any resulting changes in the definition of an "Amateur" and/or the NCHA weekend or limited age event class structure can be discussed and debated by the membership at the 2009 Convention, with final standing committee recommendations going to the Executive Committee for their consideration. The Executive Committee would then vote on any changes in September 2009 for implementation in the 2010 point year.

The complete recommendations of the Task Force are printed below and are also available on the NCHA web site at www.nchacutting.com. The NCHA would like to thank the members of the Task Force for their hard work and efforts, and we (and they) welcome your input and feedback on these proposals. ★

Weekend shows

Non-Pro (no change to current requirements)

\$75,000 Non-Pro (replaces the \$20,000 Non Pro)

- Eligibility based on lifetime earnings
- Added money cannot exceed 60% of the added money in the Non-Pro class
- If the Non-Pro class does not "make" at a show where the \$75,000 Non-Pro is held, the \$75,000 will become the Non-Pro class eliminating the \$75,000.

\$50,000 Amateur (no change to current requirements)

- Eligibility based on Weekend Eligibility Earnings Only
- Added money cannot exceed added money in the \$75,000 Non-Pro class

\$15,000 Amateur (formerly the \$10,000 Amateur)

- Eligibility based on Weekend Eligibility Earnings Only
- \$15,000 Novice Horse/Non-Pro** (formerly the \$10,000 Novice/Non Pro)*

\$5,000 Novice Horse/Non-Pro (formerly the \$3,000 Novice/Non Pro)*

\$2,000 Any Horse Any Rider (no change to current requirements)

*The NCHA Executive Committee has already voted to change the \$3,000 NNP class to a \$5,000 NNP class and the \$10,000 NNP class to a \$15,000 NNP class for the 2009 point year.

Limited age events

Non-Pro (no change to current requirements)

\$200,000 Limited Non-Pro (no change to current

requirements)

- Eligibility based on lifetime earnings

\$50,000 Amateur (no change to current requirements)

- Eligibility based on Limited Age Event Eligibility Earnings Only

NOTE: LAE is the same as currently offered at the Fort Worth Triple Crown events.

Proposed new Amateur definition

(New proposed language that is not currently in the existing Amateur Rule is noted in ***bold underlined italics***.)

6. (formerly Standing Rule 9.a.6) Certain Non-Professionals within this Association may be classified as Amateurs. A member of this Association shall be disqualified from being classified as an Amateur under any one of the following circumstances:

- a. the member has ridden or trained horses or horse riders ***astride*** for remuneration, directly or indirectly;
- b. the member has in the last (5) five years assisted in training horses or horse riders ***astride*** for remuneration, directly or indirectly.
- c. the member is married (or had a co-habitational relationship) or has been married (or had a co-habitational relationship) in the last five years to a person who is ***engaged or in the last five years has been engaged in activities that would require that person to be classified because of the activities then occurring as a professional by the provisions of Rule 9.3.a.;***
- d. the member has resided in the last (5) five years with

a person who is engaged or in the last five years has been engaged in activities that would require that person to be classified because of the activities then occurring as a professional by the provisions of Rule 9.3.a.:

e. the member has in the last (5) five years resided with or on the premise with a parent, step-parent or foster parent of the member who was, during the time of the member's residency, a Professional;

f. the member is directly or indirectly employed by a Professional and performs the duties of employment on the premises of a horse training operation astride a horse;

g. the member has been an apprentice cutting horse trainer at any time, or ever in their life been a trainer or assistant trainer of cutting horses.

h. the member has received more than \$100,000 in eligibility lifetime NCHA cutting horse earnings.

5-Year/\$5,000 Exception:

An applicant may be granted amateur status if (A) the applicant more that (5) five years before the date of application: (i) was a spouse of a Professional (ii) resided with a Professional (including a parent of the applicant) or (iii) ~~was directly or indirectly employed by a Professional to perform duties that did not include training horses or horse riders for remuneration~~ and (B) the applicant has not won \$5,000 in cutting horse competition of all types. This includes winnings in all breed associations and any and all cutting competitions regardless by whom such competitions are produced, sponsored or approved. A person applying for Amateur classification under this (5) five years/\$5,000 exception shall provide to the NCHA a detailed life history for the (5) five year period immediately prior to the date on the application for Amateur status that includes a sworn listing of all winnings in all cutting horse competitions, whether or not such competitions are sanctioned by the NCHA. In addition, the person shall provide to the NCHA any and all additional information as the NCHA may request related to documenting the status of the applicant. There is no right to classification as an amateur and this classification may be granted based upon an evaluation of all circumstances considered relevant by the NCHA, with the decision of the Executive Committee, upon recommendation of the Non-Pro/Amateur Review Committee, to be final.

10-Year/\$10,000 Exception:

An applicant may be granted amateur status if the applicant has previously trained horses astride, but only under the following criteria:

(A) the applicant has never been involved as a trainer or assistant trainer of cutting horses for direct or indirect remuneration in any amount.

(B) the applicant has not been involved in any equine training activities astride a horse for the most recent (10) years prior to the date of application.

(C) For the time period more than (10) years prior to the date of application, the applicant was involved in training horses (other than cutting horses) astride but has not received in excess of \$10,000 from either direct or indirect

remuneration for training horses astride and/or from earnings in any competitions in any equine discipline(s).

A person applying for Amateur classification under this (10) ten year/\$10,000 exception shall provide to the NCHA a detailed life history for the time period requested by the NCHA that includes a sworn listing of all winnings in all equine competitions, as well as all compensation either direct or indirect received by the applicant for past horse training activities.

In addition, the person shall provide to the NCHA any and all additional information as the NCHA may request related to documenting the status of the applicant. Failure by the applicant to comply with requests for information from the NCHA will result in denial of the application for Amateur status. There is no right to classification as an amateur and this classification may be granted based upon an evaluation of all circumstances considered relevant by the NCHA, with the decision of the Executive Committee, upon recommendation of the Non-Pro/Amateur Review Committee, to be final.

- This proposal contemplates that a new "Non-Pro/Amateur Review Committee" will be established within the framework of the NCHA. This committee will be charged with reviewing and making the initial level of determinations on (questionable) Non-Pro and/or Amateur status applications and all change of status applications.

The "Non-Pro/Amateur Review Committee" shall be appointed by the NCHA President with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee. Members of the Review Committee shall each be either former Presidents, former members of the Executive Committee, former or current Directors or former Chair/Vice Chair of a Standing Committee of the NCHA. No person may serve as a member of the Review Committee at the same time they also serve as a member of either the Executive Committee, Non-Pro Committee or Amateur Committee.

- The Task Force has recommended that the Apprentice Trainer Program be eliminated, whereby no more Apprentice Trainer cards would be issued beginning after the conclusion of the 2008 point year (November 23, 2008). The Executive Committee approved this recommendation at their September 2009 meeting. No new apprentice trainer cards will be issued effective November 24, 2008.

- The Task Force has recommended that beginning with the 2009 point year to restrict only the previous Apprentice Trainer Non-Pros from showing in the limited class, lifting the current restriction from Reinstated Non-Pro and Exception Rule Non-Pros. The Executive Committee approved this recommendation at their September 2009 meeting. Beginning with the 2009 point year only previous Apprentice Trainers will be prohibited from showing in the Non Pro limited classes.

- The Task Force has recommended supporting the previous Non-Pro Committee recommendation that beginning with the 2009 point year to implement \$50,000 3-year revolving door for Non-Pros to enter the \$200,000 Limited Non-Pro class if their total earnings over the prior 3 years are less than \$50,000 and their total lifetime earnings are less than \$500,000. Eligibility for this class will be determined at the start of each point year. ★