

# NCHA

NATIONAL CUTTING HORSE ASSOCIATION



2026  
RULES AND  
REGULATIONS



# REGIONS FOR NCHA GOVERNANCE

- Region I:** Washington, Alaska, Colorado, Montana, Oregon, Idaho, Utah, Wyoming, Western Canada, Central Canada
- Region II:** California, Hawaii, Arizona, Nevada
- Region III:** North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Missouri, Illinois
- Region IV:** Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Maine, Connecticut, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, New York, Eastern Canada, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and the District of Columbia, Europe
- Region V:** Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, Alabama, South Carolina, North Carolina
- Region VI:** East Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Arkansas
- Region VII:** West Texas, South Texas and New Mexico
- Region VIII:** North Texas and Oklahoma

# 2026 Official Handbook of Rules & Regulations

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## **Mission Statement**

The National Cutting Horse Association promotes and celebrates the cutting horse, whose origin on Western ranches allows us to support ranching and its Western heritage.

By establishing rules for the conduct of cutting horse shows, NCHA strives to give cutters a level playing field and a progressive class structure which accommodates everyone from the beginner to the advanced competitor.

NCHA draws on the diverse talents and background of its members and encourages their participation in helping it achieve these goals.

## **About this Handbook of Rules and Regulations**

The official rules of the NCHA that have been considered and approved by the Executive Committee of the National Cutting Horse Association.

NCHA rules will be strictly adhered to and enforced by the Executive Director, staff, and the Executive Committee of the NCHA. In determining whether violations of the Rules have occurred, the Executive Committee or members of any Hearing Committee assisting in such determinations may consider, but are not bound by, prior determinations and interpretations of the Rules by the Executive Committee or any Hearing Committee.

The official rules of the National Cutting Horse Association are maintained online on the NCHA website at [www.nchacutting.com](http://www.nchacutting.com). This printed Handbook is provided as a resource for easy reference to the NCHA rules. The official online version of the rules is controlling and should be consulted for the most up-to-date version of the rules.



## **Officers**

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**Barnwell Ramsey, President** — Huntersville, North Carolina

**Kathleen Moore, President Elect** — Madill, Oklahoma

**David Costello, Vice President** — Anna, Texas

**Jay Winborn, Executive Director** — Fort Worth, Texas

## **Members of the Executive Committee**

Phil Benadum — Dos Palos, California

Ora Diehl — Ruskin, Florida

Byron Green — Campbellsburg, Indiana

Casey Green — Perrin, Texas

Les Jack — Rocanville, Saskatchewan, Canada

Kirby Smith — Kechi, Kansas

Steve Smith — Sweetwater, Texas

Tommy Williams — Rosie, Arkansas

## **Honorary Lifetime Past Presidents**

Sam Wilson-1979-1981

Leon Harrel-1982

Tom Lyons-1985

Dennie Dunn-1990-1991

James Hooper-1994-1995

Punk Carter-1998

Edley Hixson Jr.-1999

Jim Milner-2000

Lindy Burch-2001

Mike Mowery-2005

Bill Riddle-2006

Bronc Willoughby-2008

Chubby Turner-2009

Chris Benedict-2010

Keith Deaville-2011

Ernie Beutenmiller Jr.-2012

Barbara Brooks-2013

Bruce Richerson-2014

Jo Ellard-2015

Chuck Smith-2016

Lewis Wray-2017

Phil Rapp-2018

Ron Pietrafeso-2019

Steve Norris-2020

Ora Diehl-2021

Ted Sokol Jr.-2022

Toddy Pitard-2023

Mark Senn-2024

# Changes in the 2026 NCHA Rule Book

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Throughout this book, new rules and updates or changes in the 2026 rules are indicated in bold italic type. PLEASE NOTE!!! Many sections / Standing Rules have been clarified, combined and reformatted where appropriate.

The following important changes have been made to the Rule Book this year, but this list is not comprehensive.

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## **Membership Expiration / Grace Period Removal**

All Memberships now begin on December 28 and **EXPIRE December 27** of the following year and **REMOVED GRACE PERIOD** for membership renewal.

## **Standing Rule Changes**

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Standing Rule 3 - Clarifies Name, Ownership and transfer of ownership requirements for ALL classes (showing on a transfer)

Standing Rule 3 - Clarifies NCHA membership requirements for horse ownership

Standing Rule 4.b - added fee when a show bill is unpaid

Standing Rule 5.5.d - Clarified Cattle Charge.

Standing Rule 8 - New Limits on Championship Rider Classes

Standing Rule 9 - New process for Monitor compensation

Standing Rule 27 - 5A Judge rating implemented

Standing Rule 35 - Added the AAEP Lameness Scale

Standing Rule 35A.9.h - Updated permitted plasma concentration

## **Awards / Year End Information**

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Horse and Rider Awards - Reorganized. Clarified

Honorary Awards - Added Gerald Alexander Excellence Award

## **Show Management Handbook (SMH)**

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Changed Videographer Certification Expiration Date to 12/27

Modified acceptable Video submission format to exclude DVD

## **Judging Rule Changes**

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Judging Casebook Examples changed / Rulings clarified

Standing Rule 16.a - Changed definition of 'Western Attire'

Standing Rule 16.b/16.f - When/how hearing devices may be used

Standing Rule 16, 17, 19 - Allows judges to terminate a run for safety

Adjusted Monitor System Description / Processes Updated

Self-Adjusted Monitor System Description / Processes Updated

# Changes Since Print

Updated Amateur Rider of the Year Futurity Year that counts.

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# Amended and Restated Constitution & Bylaws of the National Cutting Horse Association

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*Amended and Restated: December 14, 1997, June 14, 1998, December 4, 2000, December 11, 2010, June 19, 2011, November 20, 2013, June 22, 2014, June 21, 2015, June 3, 2018, August 2, 2021, June 5, 2022, Aug 5, 2022, June 25, 2023 and June 23, 2024.*

## Article I — GENERAL

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**Section One.** This Association shall be known as the NCHA (the “Association”). The Association is a non-profit corporation incorporated under the laws of the State of Texas.

**Section Two.** The term for which it will exist shall be perpetual.

**Section Three.** The Association is organized and shall be operated exclusively as an agricultural organization within the meaning of Section 501(c)(5) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or the corresponding provision or provisions of any subsequent United States Internal Revenue law or laws (the “Code”). With the scope of the foregoing purposes, and not by way of limitation thereof, the Association is organized and operated to encourage, promote, advertise, and develop the cutting horse as a unique and excellent equine athlete. The Association shall carry out the foregoing purposes by, among other things, conducting and sponsoring cutting horse activities, events, and contests world-wide; establishing standards, rules, and regulations for the efficient promotion and management of the sport of cutting; establishing qualified and/or affiliated groups and organizations; establishing requirements, categories and criteria for membership in the Association; establishing standards for judging the performance of cutting horses; maintaining achievement records of individual cutting horses and riders; establishing appropriate recognition for such achievements; maintaining the traditional and historical connection of the cutting horse with the ranching and livestock industry; and cooperating with other equine breed associations having common purposes.

**Section Four.** The principal office or place of business of the Association shall be located in Fort Worth, Texas. The legal address of the Association shall be the same.

**Section Five.** There shall be no capital stock of the Association. In lieu of stock certificates, membership cards signed by the Executive Director of the Association shall be issued to all members. Said membership cards shall be non-transferable.

**Section Six.** The fiscal year of the Association shall be October 1 through September 30 of the following year unless otherwise determined by the Executive Committee.

**Section Seven.** The Association shall have a seal which may be used by causing it to be impressed, affixed, or reproduced on official documents of the Association, although the absence of same shall not affect the validity or enforceability of any such document. A sample of said seal shall be impressed, affixed, or reproduced upon this Constitution and Bylaws.

## Article II — MEMBERSHIP; RULES AND REGULATIONS

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Membership in the Association is a privilege, not a right, application for which shall be made on forms and by fees and procedures



prescribed from time to time by the Association. Membership, or application, therefore, may be terminated or rejected by the Executive Committee or Board of Directors for cause detrimental to the interest of the Association, or to its programs, policies, objectives, or the harmonious relationship of its members, as determined by the Executive Committee or the Board of Directors. Termination or application rejection proceedings under this paragraph shall be conducted under the Association's disciplinary procedures for notice, hearing, and temporary suspension; the effect of termination or rejection may be the denial of the privileges of the Association, as set forth in the Association disciplinary procedures. The categories of membership in the Association, and the fees, benefits, qualifications, and guidelines for each category, shall be set forth in the Association's Official Handbook of Rules and Regulations, as such handbook may be amended from time to time.

(Hereinafter referred to as the "Rules and Regulations"). Each member of the Association hereby acknowledges the Executive Committee's authority to promulgate and amend the Rules and Regulations, subject only to the Board of Directors' right to approve the Rules and Regulations or any amendments thereto.

### **Article III — MEMBERS**

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**Section One.** An annual meeting of the members of the Association shall be held each year at a time and place designated by the Executive Committee. Notice of the annual meeting shall be given to each member stating the date, time, and place of said meeting not less than ten days nor more than sixty days prior to the date of said meeting.

**Section Two.** Special meetings of the members may be held whenever called in writing by direction of the President or by a majority of the Board of Directors, or by the written direction of not less than ten percent of the members in good standing. Said notice shall state the date, time, place, and purpose of said meeting and shall be given not less than ten days nor more than fifty days prior to the date of said meeting. Only such business as is set forth in the written notice of said special meeting shall be transacted at said meeting.

**Section Three.** Those members present shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of the members of the Association and a simple majority vote of such quorum shall decide any question that may come before the meeting; provided, however, that any action taken by vote of the members may not be revoked, rescinded or altered for a period of fourteen (14) months from the date of the action, unless the proposal to revoke, rescind or alter the vote or the action receives at least the same amount of affirmative votes (with respect to both number of votes and voting percentage) as the vote or action initially taken.

**Section Four.** Each member in good standing of the Association shall be entitled to one vote at a meeting of the members. However, any person who has received a free membership will be considered a non-voting member during the term of such free membership. Voting shall be in person, online, by mail ballot or by other electronic means prescribed by the Association. Only ballots meeting the foregoing requirements shall be accepted and counted. Ballots may not be transmitted in any other form, including but not limited to facsimile transmission. No voting by proxy shall be allowed. A member shall be in good standing if the member is not in arrears with respect to the payment of dues and is not suspended from membership for a violation of the Association's rules and regulations.

**Section Five.** Concerning all NCHA elections in which online voting or mailed ballots are utilized:

- (a) All NCHA ballots and voting practices shall be in such form as to prevent anyone from discovering the specific identity of the voting member marking such ballot form by inspection of the ballot form required for completion in all elections; and
- (b) The voting entity used by the NCHA shall be selected by the Executive Committee and shall be an independent entity not utilized by the NCHA in any other capacity.
- (c) All NCHA members with email addresses on file will receive notification by email containing voting instructions and a unique login password that must be used with their identification information to place their vote. Once a vote has been placed under an NCHA membership (whether online or by a mailed ballot), no other votes will be allowed by that membership. Instructions will contain information about how a paper ballot may be obtained if a member chooses to not vote online.
- (d) All NCHA members without a valid email address or who request a paper ballot, will be mailed a paper ballot with instructions. This paper ballot must contain an individual's identification number in order to be tabulated. The ballot will be sent to the same voting entity tabulating the on-line voting and will be entered manually.

**Section Six.** The order of business at any regular meeting of the members shall be as follows:

- (a) Roll call
- (b) Proof of due notice
- (c) Reading and disposal of minutes
- (d) Report of Officers and Directors
- (e) Election matters (if any)
- (f) Unfinished business
- (g) New business
- (h) Adjournment

## **Article IV — DIRECTORS**

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**Section One.** The Board of Directors shall have the power and authority to make, amend, repeal and enforce such rules and regulations, not contrary to law, or this Constitution and Bylaws, as they deem necessary concerning the conduct, management and activities of the Association, the admission, classification, qualification, supervision and expulsion of members, removal of officers, the rules and regulations setting the procedure of such suspension, expulsion or removal, the fixing and collecting of dues and fees, the expenditure of money, the auditing of books and records, the conducting of shows, contests and exhibitions and other details relating to the general purposes of the Association. However, in cases of substantial changes to NCHA Rules (as determined by the NCHA President), the Board of Directors shall first seek input from all impacted committees, when possible. Further, any changes to this Constitution and Bylaws shall not go into effect until approved by the members as provided in Article III. Further, other decisions made by the Board of Directors are subject to approval, revision or amendment by the members at any regular or special meeting of the members called in accordance with this Constitution and Bylaws.

**Section Two.** The Board of Directors of the Association shall consist of one director for every seventy-five members in good standing

of the Association in a Director District as outlined below. However, any person who has received a free NCHA membership shall not be included in such seventy-five member count during the term of such free membership. The Board of Directors shall include the President, President-Elect, Vice President of the Association, and members of the Executive Committee. In addition, subject to the provisions herein regarding removal of Directors, all past Presidents of the Association shall be lifetime “Life Directors” and shall continue to possess full voting privileges. The Executive Director shall be an Ex-officio non-voting member of the Board of Directors.

**Section Three.** The Board of Directors shall be elected in the following manner:

- (a) By September 30 of the year prior to the annual meeting of the members, the Executive Director shall cause to be determined the identity and total number of all members in good standing of the Association and categorize the membership into geographical areas (Director Districts) based upon each member’s state or country of residence. Except as set out below, each state shall be considered one separate Director District; Western Canada, Central Canada and Eastern Canada shall each be considered one separate Director District; and all other foreign countries shall each be considered one separate Director District. Any state with less than seventy-five members in good standing shall be combined with other state(s) in geographical proximity there to make up one Director District. Establishment of all Director Districts shall be by or at the direction of the Executive Director, with the approval of the Executive Committee. Any state, section of Canada or other foreign country having at least seventy-five members in good standing shall constitute its own Director District and not be combined with any other state, section of Canada or other foreign country. Any state, section of Canada or other foreign country which constitutes a Director District may request of the Association that it be divided into two Director Districts at any time after such state, section of Canada or other foreign country has 1,500 or more members in good standing and may request of the Association that it be divided into three Director Districts at any time such state, section of Canada or other foreign country has 3,000 or more members in good standing. Such a request shall be in writing and must be signed by a majority of the Directors within said state, section of Canada or other foreign country. Such request shall include proposed boundary lines for each new Director District. Said boundary lines shall be drawn so that each new Director District shall contain approximately an equal number of members. In no event may any state, section of Canada or other foreign country be divided into more than four Director Districts.
- (b) Not later than December 20 prior to the annual meeting of the members, the Executive Director shall cause to be published Director Consent Forms in the *Cutting Horse Chatter* and available on the NCHA website. The Director Consent Form shall contain an explanation of the eligibility requirements and commitments for service on the Board of Directors which shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
  - (i) membership in the Association in good standing for a minimum of three years

- (ii) attainment of at least twenty-one years of age
- (iii) agreement to attend Directors' meetings as set forth herein
- (iv) permanent or primary residence in the Director District the member seeks to represent, which shall be determined by the address used by such member for governmental election voting purposes, or, if such member is not registered to vote, by the address used by such member in the member's most recent federal income tax return; and
- (v) absence of any felony convictions on record.

Any member in good standing who meets the above eligibility requirements, including any incumbent Director eligible for re-election, and is willing to make the commitments necessary to serve on the Board of Directors if elected shall so indicate on the Director Consent Form (which may request a resume and personal statement as to why that individual desires to serve) and return same via U.S. mail, email or website submission to the Executive Director or their designee by January 15 in order to be eligible for election to the Board of Directors. Any incumbent Director who does not return a Director Consent Form in a timely manner shall not be eligible for re-election. The Executive Director shall cause to be tabulated all Director Consent Forms, and those persons meeting said requirements and indicating assent to the commitments necessary to serve on the Board of Directors shall be categorized according to their respective Director Districts. Any questions regarding whether a member meets such eligibility requirements shall be resolved conclusively by a majority vote of the President, the President-Elect, and the Executive Director.

Any incumbent director who has two or more unexcused absences from regular meetings of the Board of Directors shall be ineligible to run for Director for the next term.

- (c) The Executive Director shall cause to be determined the number of Directors to be elected from each Director District on the basis of one Director for every seventy-five members (or fraction thereof) within said Director District. Each Director District shall be entitled to be represented by at least one Director, and a Director District whose membership exceeds seventy-five members and totals a number that is not equally divisible by seventy-five, shall be entitled to an additional Director if its membership totals at least thirty-eight members more than a number divisible by seventy-five. By March 1, the Executive Director shall cause a Director Election Ballot to be placed on the NCHA website and sent via email (and/or by U.S. mail) to each member as outlined in Article III, Section Five, as determined pursuant to paragraph (a) of this Section Three, listing the names of all persons in said member's Director District from whom a properly completed Director Consent Form has been received in a timely manner; provided, however, if the number of Director Consent Forms timely received from eligible members resident in a particular Director District is less than or equal to the number of Directors to be elected from such Director District, any member resident in such Director District who has timely submitted a properly completed Director Consent Form shall be deemed to be elected as a Director representing such Director District, and it shall not be necessary to submit Director Election Ballots to the members in such Director District.
- (d) Not less than sixty days prior to the annual meeting of the mem-

bers, the Executive Committee shall obtain the voting results as tabulated by the voting entity placed in a timely manner by the members of the Association. Those nominees within each Director District receiving the greatest number of votes shall be deemed elected to the Board of Directors effective as of the commencement of the next annual meeting of the Board of Directors. For example, in a Director District entitled to two Directors, the two out of six nominees on the ballot receiving the largest number of votes will be elected as Directors. Any incumbent Director who does not return a Director Consent Form in a timely manner shall not be eligible for re-election. In the event a tally of all ballots received from a particular Director District results in two or more nominees within said Director District tying for the last available Director's position, the tie vote shall be resolved as follows:

- (i) A runoff ballot shall be prepared as soon as possible after the tie vote has been determined listing the names of those nominees who received an equal number of votes. The runoff ballots shall be distributed online (and/or by U.S. Mail) as outlined in Article III, Section Five to the membership of the Director District involved and each member within said Director District shall be requested to indicate their choice from among the two or more nominees listed. All runoff election ballots shall be tabulated online or returned via U.S. mail to the tabulation voting entity designated by the Executive Committee within the time period that shall be prescribed in such runoff election ballots.
  - (ii) Not later than thirty days prior to the annual meeting of the members, the runoff ballots submitted in a timely manner from each Director District shall be tabulated. The nominee receiving the greatest number of votes shall fill the Director's position for which the nominees were tied on the first ballot.
  - (iii) In the event a runoff ballot results in a tie vote being cast for two or more previously tied nominees, a second runoff ballot shall be prepared, and the procedure set out in this subsection (d) shall be repeated.
- (e) The Executive Committee shall cause the results of the balloting for Directors to be tabulated and will report or cause to be reported such results at the next annual meeting of the members, or in the next issue of *Cutting Horse Chatter*. Directors shall serve for staggered three-year terms. Each Director shall hold office for the term for which they are elected and until their successor shall be elected and qualified.
  - (f) A Director's term of service will be terminated immediately if the Director serves as an officer or director of an organization which either has affiliates or is affiliated with an organization using in its name the words "cutting horse" and which is not affiliated with the Association.

**Section Four.** During their term of service, any Director who misses two regular meetings of the Board of Directors shall be immediately terminated as a Director unless the Director has been granted an excused absence with respect to any such meeting by the President. The President may grant excused absences for illness or other emergency or other good cause, as determined in the President's sole discretion. A Director shall be considered in attendance at the annual meeting of the Board of Directors only if the Director attends all ses-

sions, which includes the regional directors meeting, and Sessions 1 and 2 of the Board of Directors. Any director who fails to attend two consecutive annual meetings or fails to attend two annual meetings within their three-year term will be dismissed and will be ineligible to run as a director for the following three years.

**Section Five** In the event of a vacancy on the Board of Directors, whether caused by death, resignation, disqualification, termination or any other cause, the President, after polling area directors and regional Executive Committee member, shall have the authority to appoint an individual who meets the qualifications set forth in Section Three (b) of this Article IV to fill any vacancy on the Board of Directors.

**Section Six.** The Board of Directors shall meet annually, unless otherwise determined by the Board of Directors. This meeting shall be held immediately preceding or following the annual meeting of the members of the Association. Unless approved by the affirmative vote of at least three-fourths ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) of the Directors present, only such business as is set forth in the written notice of such annual meeting of the Board of Directors shall be transacted at said meeting. Meetings of directors may be held in person, by video conference or by any other electronic communications system prescribed by the Association.

**Section Seven.** Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by the President, or by action of at least thirty percent of the members of the Board of Directors at any time or place, provided valid notice is given to all members of the Board of Directors at least ten days in advance thereof. Only such business as is set forth in the notice of such special meeting shall be transacted at said meeting.

**Section Eight.** A quorum at any meeting of the Board of Directors shall consist of not less than forty percent of the number of Directors then in office. A simple majority of such quorum shall decide any questions that may come before the meeting; provided, however, that any action taken by vote of the Directors may not be revoked, rescinded or altered for a period of fourteen (14) months from the date of the action, unless the proposal to revoke, rescind or alter the vote or the action receives at least the same amount of affirmative votes (with respect to both number of votes and voting percentage) as the vote or action initially taken. All meetings of the Board of Directors may be adjourned from day to day or from time to time until a quorum is obtained. Voting may be made in person or by any electronic means prescribed by the Association. Voting by proxy shall not be allowed.

**Section Nine.** The order of business at any regular meeting of the Board of Directors shall be the same as that for a meeting of the members set out in Section Five of Article III. The President, President-Elect, and Executive Director (by a majority vote of the three) shall have the sole discretion to determine the circumstances, if any, under which individuals other than members of the Board of Directors shall be invited to attend meetings of the Board of Directors, and the sole discretion to determine the circumstances under which the Board of Directors shall go into a closed session from which all persons other than directors are excluded.

**Section Ten.** The Board of Directors, from time to time, may create and empower committees, general or special.

**Section Eleven.** Any Director who engages in conduct which is, or may be, detrimental to the Association, shall be removed from office upon the affirmative vote of at least two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) of the Directors

present at any meeting of the Board of Directors at which a quorum is present. The determination of whether a Director has engaged in conduct which is, or may be, detrimental to the Association, shall be within the complete discretion of the Directors in attendance.

## **Article V—EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Section One.** There shall be an Executive Committee composed of the President, the President-Elect, the Vice President and such Regional Directors as described herein. The President, President-Elect and Vice President shall each serve on the Executive Committee during their respective terms of office.

- (a) The Executive Committee shall be composed as follows:
  - (i) eight Regional Directors consisting of one Regional Director from each Region, each of whom shall have been nominated and elected by the Directors residing in such region from among the eligible Directors and Life Directors residing in such Region;
  - (ii) three executive officers, consisting of the President, President-Elect and Vice President; and
  - (iii) all at large members elected to serve on the Executive Committee at or prior to the June 2022 Convention shall serve out the remainder of their existing three year terms. No at large members shall be elected to the Executive Committee after the June 2022 Convention. No at-large members will serve on the Executive Committee after June 2026.
- (b) The Association shall establish eight geographically based Regions of approximately equal Association membership, from which the Regional Directors shall be elected. The eight Regions initially so established shall be as follows:
  - Region I: Washington, Alaska, Colorado, Montana, Oregon, Idaho, Utah, Wyoming, Western Canada, Central Canada.
  - Region II: California, Hawaii, Arizona, Nevada.
  - Region III: North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Missouri, Illinois.
  - Region IV: Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Maine, Connecticut, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, New York, Eastern Canada, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, District of Columbia, Europe.
  - Region V: Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, Alabama, South Carolina, North Carolina.
  - Region VI: East Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Arkansas.
  - Region VII: West Texas, South Texas, New Mexico.
  - Region VIII: North Texas, Oklahoma.
- (c) If the above listed Regions shall cease to contain approximately equal numbers of Association membership, appropriate adjustments may be made upon the recommendation of the President and the approval of a majority of the members of the Association at an annual or special meeting of members pursuant to Article III hereof. In the event that such adjustment shall become necessary, every effort shall be made to retain the basic geographical structure of the initial Regions. In addition, any Director District composed of a foreign country (other than Canada) may be assigned to any of the above Regions as deemed appropriate, by and upon the recommendation of the President, with the approval of the Executive Committee.

- (d) Because of the staggered terms of membership on the Executive Committee, the election system shall work as follows:
  - (i) Commencing with the June 2003 annual meeting of the Board of Directors and thereafter, all Regional Directors shall rotate off the Executive Committee as their respective three-year terms shall expire. Upon the expiration of their respective terms, each Regional Director shall be replaced by a Regional Director elected from that same Region. Each Regional Director so elected shall receive a three-year term.
  - (ii) At each annual meeting of the Board of Directors thereafter, the Board of Directors shall elect as many members of the Executive Committee as shall be necessary to fill the expiring terms.
- (e) Except as otherwise provided herein, all Regional Directors who are elected to the Executive Committee shall serve on the Executive Committee for staggered three-year terms.
  - (i) Nominees for all Regional Directors shall complete a Regional Director application form and return the completed form to the Executive Director 90 days before the Regional Director Election in order for the Nominee to be eligible for the Regional Director Election. Nominee forms should be distributed to specific region directors 60 days ahead of Regional Director Election. Voting from the slate of nominees shall be conducted at the annual Regional Directors meeting or as otherwise prescribed by the Association. The nominee receiving the highest number of votes from the Directors and Life Directors resident in such Region shall become such Region's Regional Director and shall serve as a member of the Executive Committee.
  - (ii) During their term of service, any member of the Executive Committee who misses two consecutive meetings of the Executive Committee shall be immediately terminated as a member of the Executive Committee unless the Executive Committee member has been granted an excused absence with respect to any such meeting by the President. The President may grant excused absences for illness or other emergency or other good cause, as determined in the President's sole discretion. In no event may a person be elected to serve as a member of the Executive Committee for more than two consecutive three-year terms, or for more than eight consecutive years. However, this section does not prevent a member from serving past the eight consecutive year mark if such additional years of service are to serve as an elected officer of the Association.

**Section Two.** Any Executive Committee member who was elected to the Executive Committee as a Regional Director who is then elected to the office of President, President-Elect or Vice President of the Association shall, upon assuming such office, be deemed to have vacated their Executive Committee position as a Regional Director. The unexpired term of the vacated Executive Committee position shall be filled pursuant to an election conducted in accordance with Section One (e) of this Article V.

**Section Three.** The Executive Committee shall manage the affairs of the Association between meetings of the Board of Directors, and all powers of the Board of Directors shall be vested in the Executive



Committee except the power to amend this Constitution and Bylaws and except as otherwise limited by the Board of Directors or by statute. The Executive Committee shall, except in emergency situations (as determined by the President or a majority of the Executive Committee), seek input of impacted committees, legal counsel, the finance committee and the Board of Directors before making any substantial changes to NCHA Rules. At all times, the Executive Committee shall be subject to the direction of the Board of Directors, and the authority of the Executive Committee may be limited by the Board of Directors as the Board deems best.

**Section Four.** The Executive Committee may hold meetings at any time and place and for any purpose pertaining to the welfare of the Association, which meetings may be called by the President, or any eight members of the Executive Committee acting together. Such meetings may be in person or by teleconference. The call of said meeting must be by notice to all members of the Executive Committee at least 24 hours prior to said meeting, except in circumstances of emergency (as determined by the President) in which case the notice may be shorter. Copies of the minutes of all meetings of the Executive Committee shall be sent to all members of the Executive Committee and to all Directors.

**Section Five.** A quorum at any meeting of the Executive Committee shall consist of not less than eight members thereof and a simple majority of such quorum shall decide any questions that may come before the meeting. Voting at meetings of the Executive Committee must be in person (or by teleconference, if the meeting is held by teleconference), and voting by proxy shall not be allowed. The President shall have the sole discretion to determine the circumstances, if any, under which persons other than members of the Executive Committee may be invited to attend meetings of the Executive Committee, and the sole discretion to determine the circumstances under which the Executive Committee shall go into a closed session from which all persons other than members of the Executive Committee are excluded.

**Section Six.** Except where an Executive Committee member is elected as an officer of the Association, in which case the vacancy shall be filled in accordance with Section Two of this Article V, in the event there is a vacancy on the Executive Committee caused by death, resignation, disqualification, or any other cause, a special election under this Article will be held to fill the position being vacated and the winner of such election, shall fill such vacancy for the remainder of the unexpired term. In cases where there is less than 6 months left on the unexpired term of the Executive Committee member being replaced, the Executive Committee may, by majority vote, choose to leave that seat vacant until the next annual meeting of the members.

**Section Seven.** The Executive Committee shall report in writing to the Board of Directors on the activities, programs, and decisions of the Executive Committee, at each regular meeting of the Board of Directors and as otherwise requested by the Board of Directors.

## **Article VI—OFFICERS AND DUTIES**

**Section One.** There shall be three elected officers of the Association: The President, President-Elect, and Vice President. Such officers shall be elected as follows:

- (a) Prior to each annual meeting of the members, a Nominating Committee consisting of eight members shall be appointed by the Executive Committee for purposes of electing a Vice President.

Four members of the nominating committee shall be from the Executive Committee. Four members of the Nominating Committee shall be from the Board of Directors, each of whom shall be from a different director district, and no more than two of whom may be from the same region. The Nominating Committee shall elect a chair from among its members. The Nominating Committee shall meet at least 120 days prior to each annual meeting of the members of the Association and shall nominate two candidates at least 60 days prior to each annual meeting for the office of Vice President. The candidates nominated for the office of Vice President must have been a member in good standing continuously, without suspension for a period of seven (7) years prior to nomination and without probation for a period of five (5) years prior to nomination. The candidates must have completed three (3) years of continuous service as a director of the Association on or before the date of assuming the office of Vice President or have served as a member of a Standing Committee for three (3) continuous years within 10 years of nomination. In determining the nominees for the office of Vice President the Nominating Committee shall solicit recommendations from the Board of Directors. The Vice President shall be elected to a one-year term.

**Section Two.** A ballot listing the name of each candidate for Vice President, shall be provided either by online voting or by U.S. mail to each member of the Association not later than forty-five days prior to the annual meeting of the members. The position of each candidate's name on the ballot shall be determined by chance draw conducted in the presence of at least three members of the Executive Committee. The voting process for the Office of Vice President shall be conducted in the same manner as outlined in Article III, Section Five. The voting tabulation shall conclude not less than ten days prior to the annual meeting of the members. With respect to the 1999 election and all elections thereafter, the nominee receiving the highest number of votes shall be the duly elected Vice President. The Vice President, President-Elect and President shall each serve for one-year terms. At the expiration of each such term, the Vice President shall become President-Elect, the President-Elect shall become President, and the President shall be ineligible for a period of one (1) year to serve the Association as an officer or as a member of the Executive Committee.

**Section Three.** The President shall be the chairman of the Board of Directors of the Association and shall preside at all meetings of the Association, the Board of Directors, and the Executive Committee. The President shall not be authorized to enter into contracts or agreements binding on the Association without the prior approval by a majority vote of the Executive Committee or the Board of Directors, anything contained herein to the contrary this paragraph shall prevail. The President shall be Ex-officio, non-voting member of all committees with respect to which the President is not a voting member. All past Presidents of the Association (other than any President removed from office) shall be honorary Vice Presidents for life, permanent voting Life Directors and lifetime members of the Association. In the event of the death, resignation, retirement, disqualification, or removal from office of the President, the President-Elect then serving shall assume the office of President and shall serve as President for the remainder of the vacating President's term and for the next succeeding term.

**Section Four.** The President-Elect shall assist the President in the discharge of their duties and shall serve on the Executive Committee. In the event of the death, resignation, retirement, disqualification, or removal from office of the President-Elect, the Vice President then serving shall assume the office of President-Elect and shall serve as President-Elect for the remainder of the vacating President-Elect's term and for the next succeeding term.

**Section Five.** The Vice President shall assist the President and the President-Elect in the discharge of their duties and shall serve as a member of the Executive Committee. In the event of the death, resignation, retirement, disqualification, or removal from office of the Vice President, the officer candidate receiving the next highest number of votes in the immediately preceding election of officers shall serve as Vice President for the remainder of the vacating Vice President's term and for the next succeeding term.

**Section Six.** The Executive Director shall serve as the chief executive officer of the Association. The Executive Director shall be responsible for running the day-to-day business operations of the Association and shall report directly to the Executive Committee. The Executive Director shall have charge of the physical facilities and personnel of the Association. The Executive Director shall serve as the Secretary of the Association, and in such capacity keep minutes of all meetings, see that all notices are duly given in accordance with this Constitution and Bylaws or as required by law, keep, and safeguard the records and funds of the Association, and in general exercise such duties and powers incident to the office of Secretary and such other duties and powers as the Executive Committee may from time to time assign or confer. The Executive Director shall make a report of the activities of Association at each annual meeting of its members. The Executive Director or the Executive Director's designee shall issue all notices of meetings of the Board of Directors, the Executive Committee, and the members of the Association; keep the membership roll; issue membership cards and certificates; and perform such other and further duties as designated from time to time by the Executive Committee. A surety bond shall be provided for the Executive Director.

**Section Seven.** The Treasurer shall be appointed by and report directly to the Executive Director. The Treasurer shall collect all monies due the Association in the course of its regular operations and for its special events. The Treasurer shall be required to make reports of current receipts and disbursements of funds to the Executive Director and to the Executive Committee. The Treasurer shall make a report of all receipts and disbursements of funds since the last meeting at each regular meeting of the Board of Directors and at the annual meeting of the members and shall furnish copies of the Association's annual audited financial statements to each Director. A surety bond shall be provided for the Treasurer.

**Section Eight.** The Executive Committee shall have authority from time to time to create additional appointed offices and may delegate and assign to any such office the duties and responsibilities it deems in the best interest of the Association and necessary for its efficient operation. The authority granted herein shall include the authority to subsequently abolish any such office.

**Section Nine.** Any officer who engages in conduct which is, or may be, detrimental to the Association, as determined by a two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ )

vote of the Directors or Executive Committee present at any meeting at which a quorum is present, may be removed from office by a two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) vote of the Directors or Executive Committee present at any regular or special meeting of the Board of Directors or Executive Committee at which a quorum is present.

#### **Article VII—STANDING COMMITTEES**

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Each of the NCHA's Standing Committees (with the exception of the Finance & Audit Committee and the Stallion Owners Committee) shall have a minimum of one representative from each of the NCHA's eight regions. Any additional members to the committees shall be satisfied from the appointment of members from the Association who are in good standing. These appointments shall be made in the manner outlined in the Standing Committee Guidelines.

#### **Article VIII—POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE(S)**

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**Section One.** The Association, from time to time may cause to be created Political Action Committee(s), herein referred to as "PACs", by majority vote of the Executive Committee or majority vote of the Board of Directors, to represent the Association in the sole pursuit of the Association's "Mission Statement". Upon approval, the Association's Executive Director and President shall cause the applications and/or forms be filed with the appropriate State Agency or Commission.

**Section Two.** The Executive Committee shall serve as the Association's "PACs" committee.

**Section Three.** The Executive Committee, at its sole discretion, shall provide for the lawful collection of PAC contributions and lawful distribution(s) of all PAC funds.

#### **Article IX—NOTICES**

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The *Cutting Horse Chatter* is the official publication of the Association. Notwithstanding anything herein to the contrary, all notices, Director Consent Forms, ballots or other material to be provided to members, Directors or committee members of the Association pursuant to this Constitution and Bylaws may be provided by publication in the *Cutting Horse Chatter*, by email or other electronic means prescribed by the Association, or by any other means permitted under the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act or any successor statute. If published in the *Cutting Horse Chatter*, said material shall be deemed delivered when the issue of the *Cutting Horse Chatter* containing the same shall be deposited in the United States mail, addressed to said member, Director or committee member at the address of such member, Director or committee member appearing in the records of the Association, postage prepaid. If mailed, said material shall be deemed delivered when deposited in the United States mail, addressed to said member, Director or committee member at the address of such member, Director or committee member appearing in the records of the Association, postage prepaid. If sent by email, fax or other electronic means prescribed by the Association, said material shall be deemed delivered upon successful transmission of such communication. If sent via electronic message, said material shall be deemed delivered upon successful transmission of such electronic message.

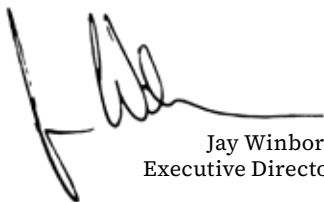
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## **Article X—AMENDMENTS**

The Board of Directors of the Association shall have the power to repeal, revise, modify or amend the Constitution and Bylaws of the Association at any annual, regular, or special meeting of the Board of Directors, subject to approval, revision, or amendment by the members at any annual, regular, or special meeting of the members called in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws. The notice of any meeting of the Board of Directors or members of the Association at which the repeal, revision, modification or amendment of the Constitution and Bylaws is to be considered shall include the proposed changes to be made to the Constitution and Bylaws and shall be sent by mail or email to the Board of Directors or the members at least thirty (30) days in advance of such meeting.

\* \* \* \* \*

The undersigned, being the duly appointed and qualified Secretary of the Association hereby certifies that the foregoing Amended and Restated Constitution and Bylaws of the Association was duly adopted by the members of the Association at a meeting held June 23, 2024, at which a quorum was present and voting throughout.



Jay Winborn  
Executive Director



# Membership Categories, Fees and Benefits

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1. Membership shall be in three categories: Annual Membership, Youth Membership and Affiliate Membership.
2. Any individual, firm, partnership, corporation, or organization of good character and reputation interested in cutting horses may become an active member of this Association.

## Existing Life Members

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3. Life Memberships were previously offered on an individual basis to individuals, companies, partnerships and ranches. NCHA no longer offers any new Life Membership options. The NCHA will continue to honor and maintain all Life Memberships in existence. Each existing Life Membership will receive one vote in NCHA elections and one copy of the *Cutting Horse Chatter* magazine per household.
4. Existing Life memberships are non-transferable and shall cover the current named holder only.

## Annual Membership

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5. Any individual, company, partnership or ranch may become an individual annual member of the Association by making a payment of **\$135 annually** (term **December 28 to December 27**), each member will receive one vote in NCHA elections and one copy of the *Cutting Horse Chatter* magazine per household. From time to time the Association may offer a Free membership (first time member, first year only) which does not receive voting privileges and receives only the online version of the *Cutting Horse Chatter* magazine.
6. The annual memberships listed in sections 5 above shall cover the member's fees for membership, Amateur/Non-Pro and/or trainer status. In the case that any member is seeking Non-Professional or Amateur status; they must send a Non-Professional or Amateur application into the NCHA and meet all NCHA requirements for Non-Professional or Amateur Status.
7. Annual Memberships are offered on an individual basis to individuals, companies, partnerships and ranches. Each must have its own membership.
8. Annual memberships are non-transferable and shall cover the holder only.

## Youth Membership

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9. Any youth 18 years of age and younger at the start of the youth point year who is of good character and reputation and is interested in cutting horses may become a Member of the National Youth Cutting Horse Association. For horse show purposes, the age of an individual on the first day of the **youth** point year shall be maintained throughout the entire point year. Youth Point year is June 1 to May 31. (For example: A member who has a birthday in July of 2012 and is 18 years of age on the first day of the 2012 youth point year may show throughout the 2012-**youth** point year as an 18-year-old.)
10. Annual dues for NYCHA Membership shall be \$25 per year, NYCHA Membership is due **December 28th** of each year. Youth membership includes a printed copy of the youth specific issue of the magazine (one per household). The youth membership shall cover the member's fees for membership and Amateur/Non-Pro. In

the case that any youth member is seeking Non-Professional or Amateur status; they must send a Non-Professional or Amateur application into the NCHA and meet all NCHA requirements for Non-Professional or Amateur Status. A youth must have a Non-Professional or Amateur card to compete in Non-Professional or Amateur classes.

11. Lifetime Youth Membership is no longer offered, however NCHA/ NYCHA will continue to honor all existing NYCHA Youth Life memberships.

### **Affiliate Membership**

12. Organizations qualifying for NCHA affiliate status shall pay an annual fee of twenty-five dollars (\$25); said fee to become due on December 28 of each year and to be considered delinquent if not received within ninety (90) days. Affiliates may pay an additional fifty dollars (\$50) to receive a banner with both the NCHA and the Affiliate logo and stating, "Proud Affiliate of the NCHA". Affiliate total dues with banner option would be seventy-five dollars (\$75).
13. Each new affiliate organization shall pay in the first year an annual fee of fifty dollars (\$50) which represents a membership fee. New Affiliates may pay an additional fifty dollars (\$50) to receive a banner with both the NCHA and the Affiliate logo and stating, "Proud Affiliate of the NCHA". New Affiliate total dues with banner option would be one hundred dollars (\$100).
  - a. Each new application for Affiliate Membership must include a petition signed by 25 NCHA members.
  - b. When an application for a new Affiliate is received in the NCHA office, NCHA will send by U. S. mail or email to all Directors within the area of the applicant's home office plus all Directors residing within 125 miles of the applicant's home office a notice and ballot for voting on the Affiliate Membership application. The ballot must be returned by the designated date by way of U. S. mail or email or Fax to the NCHA office. Affiliate membership approval will require a majority vote of all returned ballots. In the event that no ballots are returned, the affiliate will be approved.
  - c. Any Affiliate membership that is denied will require a 12-month waiting period before being allowed to reapply.

### **Affiliate Guidelines**

14. Organizations having interest in cutting horses may be designated as Affiliates of the NCHA upon acceptance of their application and payment of required fees.
15. Every NCHA Affiliate shall have within its membership at least twenty-five (25) members who are also active individual members of the NCHA.
  - a. Members of NCHA Affiliates may join the NCHA by payment of annual fees only.
16. In order to retain the designation of NCHA Affiliate, each affiliated organization must:
  - a. pay its annual fee by **December 28**.
  - b. provide NCHA with a copy of its Constitution and Bylaws.
  - c. provide the NCHA with the results of all cutting classes said Affiliate sponsors, which results shall be forwarded to this Association in a business-like manner and without undue delay, postmarked within 5 (five) days of last show date.

- d. conduct its affairs in compliance with the Bylaws and Standing Rules of this Association including, but not limited to:
  - (i) the annual election of officers and directors.
  - (ii) the holding of annual membership and directors' meetings, as well as documentation on the election of officers.
  - (iii) providing a fidelity bond for any officer, director, or member whose duties require the handling of organization funds. The bond must be in the amount of the maximum funds for the purse payout plus the NCHA designated approval fee for the largest show produced. The bond must include the producer's name and the individuals covered along with the expiration date.
  - (iv) the use of due process, as outlined in the NCHA Rule Book, in all matters of discipline or suspension of its members.
- e. A person may serve as a President, Vice-President, or Treasurer of only one NCHA Affiliate at one time and must be an NCHA member.
- f. Any Affiliate found not in compliance with all sections of this rule on April 1 of each year will be denied membership renewal and placed on "Inactive Status" until all of the above rules have been satisfied.
- g. An NCHA certified secretary must be used at all NCHA approved shows, except jackpot and challenger shows.

### **Cutting Horse Chatter**

- 17. The publication of the NCHA is *Cutting Horse Chatter*, a magazine that is published quarterly and covers current cutting horse activity. *Cutting Horse Chatter* is dedicated to the well founded and ever-increasing popularity of cutting horses.
- 18. The online version of the *Cutting Horse Chatter* can be found on the NCHA website at [www.nchacutting.com](http://www.nchacutting.com).



# Standing Committees

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19. There shall be Standing Committees for the purpose of making recommendations to the Executive Committee and fulfilling the functions described in Paragraph 23. Each Standing Committee shall consist of not less than **eight (8)** nor more than fifteen (15) members who shall be appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee. In order to meet the requirements of the NCHA's Constitution and Bylaws, new members of Standing Committees will be appointed to ensure that each committee will have at least one member from each of NCHA's geographic regions. Any member of the Association in good standing shall be eligible for committee assignment; however, preference shall be given to Directors of the Association. Vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as original appointments. No committee or committee member has the authority to make contractual or other obligations for the NCHA.
20. The term of a committee member's assignment shall be stated in the appointment. Should a committee member be absent from two (2) consecutive meetings without prior excuse from the Association President or Executive Director, that member shall be removed from their committee assignment. In addition, the President, with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee, may relieve a member of their committee assignment for cause.
21. In order to provide for continuity and experience of members, standing committee assignments may be made for a term longer than one (1) year, but in no event may a person be selected to serve as a member of a specific committee for more than two consecutive three-year terms, or for more than eight consecutive years.
22. Each Standing Committee shall be headed by a Chairman, assisted by a Vice-Chairman, each of whom shall be elected annually by the committee members by written ballot, email ballot or roll call vote as determined by sitting Chairman. No voting by proxy shall be allowed. The Chairman shall vote only in case of a tie vote concerning committee action. The Vice Chairman shall serve as presiding officer in the Chairman's absence or incapacity. No individual may serve as Chairman for more than three (3) consecutive years.
23. A quorum at any meeting of a Standing Committee shall consist of not less than six (6) members thereof, (for those committees with the maximum 15 members or 40% of the membership of smaller committees) and a simple majority of such quorum shall decide any questions that may come before the meeting.
24. The present Standing Committees are:
  - Affiliate Officers/Secretaries
  - Amateur
  - Finance and Audit
  - Governance
  - Growth and Development
  - Judges Rules
  - Limited Age Events
  - Non-Professional
  - Professional Trainers
  - Stallion Owners
  - Weekend Show
  - Youth

### **Affiliate Officers/Secretaries Committee**

1. Recommend guidelines for producing and conducting NCHA approved shows. Address problems and conflicts which affiliates and show producers might incur when producing and conducting NCHA approved shows.
2. Conduct a seminar/meeting open to all show producers, affiliate officers and secretaries at least once a year. Offer assistance or training sessions for new affiliates, show producers and show secretaries to instruct them in the proper manner of producing and conducting shows under the NCHA rules and guidelines.
3. Work with the NCHA Show Department staff to get new data, rules and other information promptly to affiliates and show secretaries. Work with show secretaries on improving prompt and correct reporting of show results to the NCHA office.
4. Work with NCHA in the development of new or improved methods of submitting reports to the NCHA and form test groups to pilot new ideas and report back to the NCHA on the effectiveness of the programs.

### **Amateur Committee**

1. Recommend the rules governing those who hold an NCHA Amateur card.
2. Make recommendations regarding Amateur classes held at Limited Age Events and Weekend Shows.
3. Make recommendations regarding rules for determining and maintaining Amateur eligibility.
4. Make recommendations on new ideas that will encourage participation and growth of the Amateur division.

### **Finance and Audit Committee**

1. Make recommendations related to overseeing the financial health of NCHA currently and to ensure that programs and policies are in place to provide for the continued financial strength of NCHA in the future. The Committee shall review audit and control procedures, current accounts, including allocation of costs and revenues and budgets for past, present and future years.
2. The Committee must review and make recommendations to the Executive Committee regarding approval of all unbudgeted expense items to insure budget soundness.
3. Shall make recommendations concerning the Association's policy in all financial matters including investment of Association funds and capital expenditures and make recommendations for implementation of policies and programs.
4. Provide an open avenue of communication between independent auditors, management and the Board of Directors.
5. Review the annual audit report and management letter with the outside auditor and management. Identify any significant changes or disputes in accounting principles, financial disclosure, or audit scope.
6. Identify with the auditor and management significant audit and internal control risks and exposures of the association. These are to be reported to the Executive Committee along with recommended corrective actions to be taken by management to address them.
7. Evaluate quality and independence of external audit firm and the appropriateness of the firm's retention. Review recommendations for replacement or appointment of new auditors for presentation to

the Executive Committee.

8. The Committee shall be made up of members independent of the Executive Committee.

### **Governance Committee**

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1. Make recommendations for effective governance structure of the NCHA as set forth in its Constitution and Bylaws.
2. Recommend planning and implementation of programs which promote the cutting horse and benefits of NCHA membership focusing on membership stability.

### **Growth and Development Committee**

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1. Make recommendations with regard to the direction of the NCHA for future growth, promotion and development.
2. Recommend policies and coordinate with the Directors of NCHA Marketing & Sponsorship on all phases of annual marketing campaigns for sponsorship growth.
3. Recommend planning and implementation of programs which promote the cutting horse and benefits of NCHA membership focusing on membership growth.

### **Judges Rules Committee**

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1. Make recommendations with regard to amending or interpreting the NCHA Rules for Judging Cutting Horses to promote fairness and equality.
2. Make recommendations to update and keep current NCHA rules governing judge classifications (on an annual and evaluation basis) to assist the Director of Judges in holding judges accountable.
3. Make recommendations to update and keep current the Judging Rules to assist both judges and cutters in their understanding of the Rules for Judging Cutting Horses.
4. Assist the NCHA Director of Judges in the planning and conduct of judging seminars and clinics to further improve the quality of judging through awareness and insights into the process of judging.
5. Evaluate, subject to Executive Committee review, the expertise, integrity and personal character of judge applicants and judges pertaining to such person's qualification or ability to be afforded the privilege of being designated an NCHA judge.

### **Limited Age Events Committee**

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1. Recommend the rules under which all limited age events sponsored by NCHA are held including their locations and schedules.
2. Recommend policies and guidelines for the Executive Committee and the NCHA staff to use in producing these events.
3. Make recommendations to obtain top quality cattle to assure the success of the NCHA limited age program.
4. Consider and evaluate all suggestions for improvement of NCHA sponsored events and recommend those suggestions which are felt to be practical and possible.

### **Non-Professional Committee**

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1. Recommend the rules governing those who hold an NCHA Non-Professional card.
2. Make recommendations regarding Non-Professional classes held at Limited Age Events and Weekend Shows.
3. Make recommendations regarding rules for determining and maintaining Non-Professional eligibility.

4. Make recommendations on new ideas that will encourage participation and growth of the Non-Professional division.

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### **Professional Trainers Committee**

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1. Recommend rules governing those NCHA members who have identified themselves as Professional trainers.
2. Recommend class structure changes for Professional trainers to encourage participation.
3. Recommend ways NCHA can support Professional trainers through identification on NCHA website, educational seminars, ranch management programs, equine health, small business principles, etc.
4. Obtain information from Professional trainers on critical issues to make recommendations to NCHA as decisions are made.
5. Promote leadership, professionalism and positive customer relations to encourage NCHA membership growth.

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### **Stallion Owners Committee**

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1. Develop programs and incentives which promote the subscribed stallions, the mares that breed to them, the nominated offspring and the Breeders and Owners.
2. Ensure that all subscribed stallions receive equal promotion.
3. Develop and maintain a successful Triple Crown purse based on Stallion Subscriptions and Foal Nominations.

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### **Weekend Show Committee**

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1. Recommend rules and standards for the naming of NCHA circuit leaders and champions.
2. Recommend rules and standards to be used in qualifying for the NCHA affiliate, Circuit and National Championships, in addition to recommendations to purse, entry fees and the like.
3. Recommend rule changes to NCHA approved cutting horse contests not limited by age of horse.
4. Recommend the requirements for participation in the World Championship Finals.
5. Review the rules and procedures used in naming the Top Fifty Open Cutting Horses and Non-Professional Riders, as well as Top Fifty for other approved classes and makes recommendations to insure fair competition for these valued honors.

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### **Youth Committee**

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1. Recommend the rules governing NCHA approved Youth contests.
  2. Recommend the rules and format for conducting the NCHA Youth Scholarship Cuttings.
  3. Serve as the Advisory Committee to the National Youth Cutting Horse Association and its Board of Directors.
  4. Plan and recommend fund raising projects for the Youth Association's fiscal year budget.
  5. Serve the NYCHA by building membership and making recommendations in the development of Youth programs.
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## **Other Committees**

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In addition to the Standing Committees listed above, the NCHA also maintains the other committees listed below. Those other committees act in accordance with the policies and procedures established for those committees by the NCHA and include the following:

### **Grievance Committee**

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The Grievance Committee is appointed by the NCHA President to investigate and consider complaints made under Standing Rule 37. However, complaints relating to alleged medication violations shall be referred to and reviewed by the Medication Review Committee and complaints concerning all violations of NCHA Non-Pro/Amateur rules will be referred to and reviewed by the Non-Pro/Amateur Review Committee.

### **Non-Pro/Amateur Review Committee**

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The Non-Pro/Amateur Review Committee is appointed by the NCHA President with the approval 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. The Non-Pro/Amateur Review Committee will review and make determinations on Non-Pro and/or Amateur status applications, all Exception Rule applications along with reviewing, investigating and conducting hearings on possible Non-Pro/Amateur rule violations.

### **Medication Review Committee**

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The Medication Review Committee appointed by the NCHA President and is charged with the initial review of the lab results from any drug testing conducted under the Medication Rules, determining if the lab results indicate that a violation has occurred and taking disciplinary action for any rule violations shown in those lab results. The Medication Review Committee may also conduct hearings to determine whether a violation of the Medication Rules has occurred, if necessary.

### **Approved LAE Show Producers Committee**

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1. Recommend the guidelines and procedures for submitting of LAE show applications and their approval process.
2. Review LAE show date approvals and make recommendations on problems that may arise with overlapping dates or other situations in the allocation of show dates.
3. Make recommendations on new ideas or improvements to recognition and awards programs for NCHA- approved limited age events.
4. Protect the interest of NCHA members, the welfare of the horse and ensure that cutters in all parts of the country have access to quality Limited Age Events.
5. Protect the investments of existing Show Producers.
6. Provide opportunities for new shows and producers to be successful.

### **Ad Hoc Committees**

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The NCHA Executive Committee may also appoint (and disband) ad hoc committees, on an as needed basis, to perform specific tasks as may be needed to serve the Association and its members.

# STANDING RULES

## Standing Rules 1-4 General

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### STANDING RULE 1.

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The NCHA has its basic purpose for the public exhibition and constant promotion of the cutting horse.

### STANDING RULE 2.

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NCHA approved events are restricted to NCHA members only. (All owners and riders must be members in good standing with NCHA to compete in an approved show). Original or copies of NCHA membership cards for both owner and rider must be submitted to the secretary when entering approved NCHA shows.

1. Show Management may assess a five dollar (\$5) fine per occurrence when NCHA membership cards are not submitted.
  - a. In the event that a person competes in an NCHA approved contest and is not a current NCHA member, ***Show Management will be fined the value of the membership.***
  - b. Ineligible contestants: When earnings are pulled from horses and riders because of ineligibility, class placings will be recalculated and Show Management will redistribute the earnings accordingly, with the exception of Challenger Shows which will not be recalculated. If earnings are pulled, (on the second offense) they must be repaid to Show Management within 15 days of notification, or the ineligible competitor will be placed on suspension. The affiliate/show producer will receive a warning for the first show from which earnings are pulled. The affiliate/show producer will be responsible for making up any shortfalls at subsequent shows.

### STANDING RULE 3.

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1. ***Horse Name - at all NCHA produced or approved shows:***
  - a. **registered horses** must be shown under the name assigned to them by their breed association (i.e., Breed Association, Horse Registry, etc.). ***A copy of horse registration papers must be available for show secretary inspection for any horse showing at all NCHA produced or approved shows. Show Management may assess a maximum \$25 fee for each time a horse is shown when a copy of registration papers are not available.***
  - b. **unregistered horses** must be shown under one name only and said name may not conflict with any registered horse's name. ***Unregistered horses must apply for and receive an NCHA unregistered horse certificate prior to being shown in an NCHA approved or produced show. Documents required for an NCHA unregistered horse certification include:***
    1. A completed NCHA Unregistered Horse Application;
    2. A verified bill of sale;
    3. Photos front and back (both sides)
    4. Statement from a licensed veterinarian attesting to the age of the horse.
    5. If the NCHA Show Department approves the documents described above, it shall be deemed as sufficient proof of ownership.
2. ***Horse Ownership - at all NCHA produced or approved shows:***
  - a. horses must be shown under the name(s) of the **owners** as re-

flected at the association where the horse is registered (Breed Association, Horse Registry, etc.) or on the NCHA unregistered horse certificate **at the time of the show.**

- b. For horses that have been sold and have new ownership that is not yet reflected in the records of the association where the horse is registered, a transfer report complete with horse name, date of sale and new owner name and address must be presented to Show Management prior to showing the horse.**
  - c. For those horses described in section 2.b above, the new ownership must be recorded by the association where the horse is registered or at NCHA for unregistered horses within 30 days of the date NCHA was notified of the new ownership. At NCHA produced events, premium monies won will not be distributed by NCHA until such transaction is recorded at the registering association.**
  - d. If the breed association, registry or NCHA records do not reflect the transfer of ownership within the following timeframes, the following fines will apply:**
    - 1. within 60 days of the NCHA's receipt of the transfer papers, the NCHA will fine the new owner \$1,000.**
    - 2. if not on file until 91 or more days after NCHA received the transfer paper,**
      - a. The new owner (member) will be assessed an additional \$2,000 fine.**
      - b. Ownership will be reverted to the owner of record at the registering association.**
      - c. The horse may not be shown at NCHA approved or produced events with the new ownership until the fines are paid and the new ownership is reflected at the registering association.**
      - d. and when the new owner is a Non-Pro/Amateur, refer to Standing Rule 50.d.4 for additional requirements.**
- 3. NCHA Membership Requirements for Horse Ownership**  
**Horse owners showing in NCHA produced or approved events must have an NCHA membership. NCHA membership(s) are required for horse ownership based on the type of owner:**
- a. Individuals (not businesses) that are owners must have a current, individual membership: In the case of a trust for an individual, the trust must have its own membership number separate from the individual. In the case where an individual owner is deceased, the membership may be converted to the name of "The Estate of" and retain the membership number but must be kept current.**
  - b. Joint Family ownership (more than 1 name listed as owner):**
    - 1. Husband and Wife may have a single membership with both names or may have two individual memberships. In the case of two individual memberships, at least 1 of the two must be a current member.**
    - 2. Ownership by any other combination of family members: Must have a membership that reflects the same combination as listed at the registering association.**
  - c. Joint ownership by non family members (Partnerships)**
    - 1. Partnerships (unrelated individuals) must have a unique NCHA membership for that Partnership.**

- d. Business / Company / Corporation that are listed as owner must have a membership in the name of the business / company / corporation.**
4. In any NCHA class, competition must be open to any horse, regardless of breed, age, sex, color, conformation, appearance, or previous performance. Horses are judged on performance only.

#### **STANDING RULE 4. Payments for Fees and Show Charges.**

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**1. Failure to timely make payments due to NCHA**

Any member, vendor, sponsor, advertiser, approved show, or official of an approved show that fails to pay when due any obligation owing to the NCHA for any reason whatsoever is subject to the disciplinary actions provided for in this Rule. Failure to make payments, as used in this Rule, shall include presenting a worthless check, making a credit card charge that is denied or making any other form of payment that is rejected. This Rule applies to payment of monies owed to the NCHA for any reason including, but not limited to, entry fees, stall fees, show charges, office charges, stock charges, advertising charges, sponsorship fees, premiums, or any other fees or charges of any kind. Payment of fees or other charges by a third party shall not release the party on whose behalf the payment was made from responsibility for making payment or from receiving disciplinary action under this Rule.

**2. Failure to timely make payments due to Show Management.**

Any member that fails to timely pay when due any obligation owing to the Show Management relating to the member's participation in the show (i.e., for entry fees, stall charges, etc.) is subject to the disciplinary actions provided for in this Rule. The term "Show Management" as used herein is the organization or individual acting as sponsor of a cutting horse contest for which said organization or individual sought and received the approval of NCHA to conduct the cutting horse contest (or any other person(s) designated by said organization or individual to act on its behalf).

The NCHA does not generally guarantee any payments due to Show Management. However, for NCHA approved shows that are required to pay the NCHA 8% of all entry fees owed under NCHA rules, the NCHA does guarantee payment of entry fees only, but under the following conditions: (i) the member paying the entry fees must be an NCHA member in good standing at the time that the entry fee is paid; (ii) the show in question has timely paid the NCHA the entire 8% of all fees owed to the NCHA as provided for in NCHA Rules; (iii) the cutting horse contest must be approved by NCHA in advance in accordance with NCHA rules; and; (iv) Show Management must request reimbursement from the NCHA for any unpaid entry fees within sixty (60) days after the show's closing date.

Show Management may take any actions it deems reasonably necessary to collect unpaid fees which it feels are in the best interest of the show, so long as such actions comply with NCHA Standing Rules, **including a 15% charge (maximum one hundred dollars) when a member leaves a show without paying or without making arrangement to pay an outstanding balance.** If a member feels that Show Management has not acted in the best interest of the show or has violated NCHA Standing Rules in its collection efforts,



the member may file a complaint with the Executive Director. The complaint will be handled by the NCHA Grievance Committee in accordance with Standing Rule 37.

### 3. **Disciplinary Guidelines for Violation of Rule**

Listed below are the disciplinary guidelines which apply for violations of this Rule. These are guidelines only and may be increased or decreased by the NCHA, in its sole discretion, based on the severity of the violation.

#### a. **Violations by Show Management or Show Officials**

If Show Management or show officials fail to make timely payments due and owing to the NCHA for any reason, the results for their show will not be counted or posted by the NCHA until such time as all amounts due and owing to the NCHA, plus a fine of \$250, are paid in full.

#### b. **Violations by Advertisers, Vendors or Sponsors**

If an advertiser, vendor, or sponsor of the NCHA fails to timely make payments due and owing to the NCHA for any reason, all benefits due to the advertiser, vendor, or sponsor as a result of their agreements with the NCHA shall be suspended until such time as all amounts due and owing to the NCHA, plus a fine in the amount of \$250, are paid in full.

#### c. **Violations by Members**

***The following guidelines apply*** if a member fails to make payments due to the NCHA or ***Show Management*** for any reason including, ***but not limited to***, payments for the *Cutting Horse Chatter* or reimbursements made by the NCHA to Show Management for unpaid entry fees. (Note: the guidelines in subsections (i) and (ii) below do not apply to the payment of fines assessed as part of disciplinary actions taken against the member for violations of NCHA Rules subsection (iii) below):

- (i) If reimbursement in full is not made by the member to the NCHA or Show Management (whichever is applicable) within thirty (30) days of written notice being sent to the member, the NCHA membership of that member shall be immediately and automatically suspended.
- (ii) Violation of paragraph a or b above shall also result in a fine of \$50 due and payable from the member to the NCHA, so long as full payment of the entire outstanding amounts are made within 30 days of notice of non-payment from the NCHA or Show Management. If such payments are not made in that 30-day period as required by section 3(i) above, an additional \$250 fine will be added to the amount due and owing to the NCHA.
- (iii) The grace periods list in subsections (i) and (ii) above do not apply to payments due from a member relating to fines assessed as part of disciplinary actions by any NCHA Committee referenced in Rule 37 for violations of NCHA Rules. Those payments must be made within fifteen (15) days after the fine is assessed. Any suspension given under this Rule shall extend to the entity (horse or business) directly connected to the suspension unless the entity is transferred in a bona fide sale to an unrelated party. The burden is on the selling party to prove that the sale was a bona fide sale to an unrelated third party.
- (iv) The automatic membership suspension referenced in sec-

tion (i) above shall remain in effect until full reimbursement of all fees is received by the NCHA or Show Management (whichever is applicable) and full payment of the fine listed in section (ii) above is received by the NCHA.

- (v) Any NCHA points, annual awards or certificates received by any owner or rider when they are in violation of this Rule shall be forfeited. NCHA points, annual awards or certificates forfeited under this rule will not be reinstated.

# Standing Rules 5-20

## Related to Approved Shows

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### STANDING RULE 5.

**Show Approvals for Championship shows and Limited Age Events with less than \$10,000 added.** (For Limited Age Events with \$10,000 or more added see Standing Rule 7.)

1. **NCHA reserves the right to refuse approval or cancel the approval of a show which it deems not to be in the best interest of the Association.**
2. **Point Year** - The NCHA point year will begin on 12/28/2024 and end on the Sunday prior to the Start of the NCHA Futurity.
3. **Championship Shows / Small Limited Age Events:** A fully completed and signed show application form (submitted via pdf, paper or electronic show application process) must be submitted in order to be approved. Approved shows will appear on the NCHA website. Timing of the submission will dictate approval process:
  - a. Received at least forty (40) days prior to the closing date of entry for the show seeking approval – show will be approved provided all other criteria are met.
  - b. Received less than 40 days but more than thirty 30 days before closing date – show will be fined \$500 but approved, provided all other criteria are met.
  - c. Received less than 30 Days – ***no show will be approved under any circumstances.***
4. **Challenger Shows (including unapproved LAE classes)** – A fully completed and signed show application form (submitted via pdf, paper or electronic show application process) must be submitted no less than fifteen (15) days prior to the date entries close.
5. **Show Approvals – Criteria for Approval**
  - a. **Excluded Dates:**
    - i. No show will be approved by NCHA during the Annual Convention, as well as the day before and the day after.
    - ii. NCHA will not approve two shows at the same location on the same day and two of the same class may not be held on the same day
  - b. **Listed Show Secretary or Secretaries:**
    - i. Must be current NCHA members
    - ii. Must be certified ***using the certification method outlined on the NCHA website.***
      1. ***If a previously certified secretary has not worked a show for one year, they must take and pass the Certified Secretary Test that is e-mailed from the NCHA office within thirty (30) days of e-mail.***
      2. If no show is worked for 24 months, the secretary must complete the ***entire*** certification process.
      3. Challenger show secretaries do not require certification, but must have been a member in good standing for the last three (3) years.
    - iii. If two secretaries work one show, each will receive credit.
  - c. **Listed Show Producer / Show Management personnel** must be current NCHA member(s).
    - i. When a request for show approval comes from an active

- NCHA affiliate, it will be granted for that particular show, provided the show is directly sponsored or conducted by the affiliate making the request. (was Standing Rule 7)
- d. Listed Videographer(s) must be a current NCHA member and have current Videographer certification.
    - i. Challenger shows must video, but the videographer is not required to be certified. If the videographer is not certified, they must have been a member in good standing for the last three (3) years.
  - e. Judges must be current NCHA members and have appropriate judge approval status for the show type.
    - i. A show may be approved without naming a judge or judges; however, the judge or judges that are used must be named a minimum of seven (7) days prior to the closing date of entries. Below are the penalties for non-compliance during each point year:
      - 1. First Offense: A letter of reprimand
      - 2. Second Offense: \$100 Fine
      - 3. Third Offense: \$200 Fine
      - 4. Fourth Offense: \$500 Fine
    - ii. Offense procedures will start over at the beginning of each point year. The number of judges for NCHA approved shows may not be decreased less than forty (40) days prior to the closing date of entry.
    - iii. A show should designate an alternate judge in case one of the judges or judge is unable to be present and must name any alternate if more than one go-round or a final is scheduled.
    - iv. Challenger shows must use an approved judge if added money is offered. If no added money is offered, any member in good standing that has been a member for the last three (3) years may judge.
  - f. Applicants for NCHA approved Championship / Challenger / Small LAE shows may be NCHA Affiliates, or may be individuals, managers, or organizations able to meet the pertinent requirements of these rules including the financial responsibility requirements as listed below to be NCHA approved.
  - g. All Non-Affiliate Show producers and Stock Shows must provide NCHA a copy of the surety bond and/or Irrevocable Letter of Credit or Certificate of Insurance for any and all employees, owners, officers, or secretaries whose duties require the handling of funds. The bond or Irrevocable Letter of Credit must be in the amount of the maximum funds for the purse payout plus the NCHA designated approval fee for the largest show produced. The bond must include the producer names and the individuals covered, along with the expiration date. The bond or Irrevocable Letter of Credit should list the NCHA as the beneficiary. Your bond or Irrevocable Letter of Credit needs to be in the NCHA office 40 days prior to any show date. Mail to: NCHA, Attn: Show Approval Coordinator, 260 Bailey Ave., Fort Worth, TX 76107.
  - h. Affiliates cannot approve a joint show with a competing association with the exception of AQHA, APHA, High School Rodeo and organizations that host an NCHA Championship Show or NCHA Challenger Show (see Challenger Show Requirements

on the show application). These shows will be subject to all applicable NCHA rules and guidelines. In the case of rule conflicts between organizations, NCHA rules will take precedent.

#### 6. Show Approvals – Class Requirements

- a. Shows may not offer classes with earnings requirements matching standard NCHA classes that are not approved. All classes that are eligible to be approved or recognized must be approved in order for the show to be approved. (See Standing Rule 8.1)
- b. All shows applying for NCHA approval must offer the Open class, the Non-Professional class and one Amateur class.
  - i. Challenger Shows are exempt from this rule
- c. Championship classes with added money must not exceed the recommended percentage of the entry fee (See Standing Rule 14). However, a special exception may be granted by the Executive Director for classes with added money of \$5,000 or more.
- d. **Cattle Charges**
  - i. ***Classes with Added money - no cattle charge may exceed the entry fee.***
  - ii. ***Classes without Added money (entry fee only) - the cattle charge may only exceed the entry fee portion of the total entry fee if there are some fresh cattle provided.***
  - iii. ***A cattle surcharge may be added to any class if approved in writing by NCHA, IN ADVANCE of the show.***
  - iv. ***No cattle charge may exceed \$250; however special consideration may be granted by the Executive Director for shows having \$5,000 or more in added money per division or class. (See Standing Rule 14)***
- e. No youth classes or show with an added purse of over \$500 in any class will be approved by NCHA within 300 miles of a National Championship show or International Circuit Championship show.
- f. See Standing Rule 8 for additional requirements by class.

#### 7. Show Approvals - Added Money

- a. Championship Shows may choose to offer added money in any class except:
  - i. **\$50,000** Non-Pro
  - ii. **\$25,000** Amateur
  - iii. **\$4,000** Limit Rider
  - iv. Youth (all divisions)
  - v. NCHA produced events are excluded from the no added money stipulation.
- b. Championship Shows added money options:
  - i. Option 1 – minimum \$200 Added Open / Non-Pro
    1. If any class is offered with added money, the Open and Non-Pro must have a minimum \$200 added and must have parity of added purse.
    2. In any class offered with added money, the amount added may not exceed that offered for the Open / Non-Pro classes.
  - ii. Option 2 – \$0 Added. A Championship may be approved with no added money provided:
    1. All classes offer \$0 added money and
    2. Classes not listed above in 5.7.a have a minimum en-

try fee of \$100 and a maximum entry fee of \$250.

- c. Challenger shows may not offer more than \$199 in added money in any one class and may offer added money in any class.
  - d. Limited Age Events held in conjunction with a Championship show may offer no more than \$9,999 total added money.
    - i. It is the management's decision on how added money will be split between different aged classes.
    - ii. Added money may also be prorated between the classes.
    - iii. Added money cannot be reduced based on the number of entries in a class.
8. Changes to Approved Shows
- a. Date change – A show that has been granted approval may move their dates up to seven (7) days if received in the office twenty (20) days prior to the closing date of entry.
  - b. Any changes regarding added money, entry fees, office charges, location or date classes are held during an approved show must be made no later than thirty (30) days prior to closing date of entry for the show involved.
  - c. All shows that are canceled cannot be rescheduled within forty (40) days required for approval.
  - d. Challenger Shows are exempt from this rule
9. NCHA Programs Fee - A \$3 per NCHA approved class entry NCHA Programs fee for all Championship and Challenger show entries must be collected and sent to NCHA with show results. This fee will be utilized exclusively to support NCHA Championship / Challenger show events, programs and awards.
10. Results from Approved Shows – Within five (5) days after the conclusion of the show, the following items must be submitted to NCHA:
- a. Completed NCHA Results & Electronic Data Results
  - b. Judges' cards
  - c. Collected Membership Forms / Membership Fees
  - d. Horse Papers / Ownership Transfer Reports
  - e. Appropriate Fees:
    - i. Challenger Shows
      1. \$200 Show Producer Approval Fee
      2. \$3 per approved class entry – NCHA Programs Fee
    - ii. Championship Shows
      1. \$100 Show Producer Approval Fee
      2. \$3 per approved class entry – NCHA Programs Fee
      3. Eight percent (8%) of the entry fees paid in the show (approved and unapproved classes)
    - iii. Small Limited Age Event Shows:
      1. Eight percent (8%) of the entry fees paid in the show (approved and unapproved classes)
  - f. If show results are not forwarded to NCHA within five (5) days of the conclusion of the show, Show Management will be fined \$250.

## **STANDING RULE 6.**

A show that is approved by the NCHA must follow the Association Rules.

### **1. Judges**

- a. ***Shows with any class offering added money more*** than \$3,000 must use a minimum of two (2) judges from the appropriate NCHA Approved Judge classification.

- b. No person listed on the NCHA probation or suspension list will be permitted to judge.
  - c. All NCHA approved events must use official judges' cards and forward same to the Association along with the completed NCHA result forms ***within the required time after*** the conclusion of the ***event***.
2. Judging Limits – Championship / Challenger / Non Monitored Limited Age Events
  - a. Judges may not judge more than 150 horses per day. Shows can be fined based on the number of horses over 150. Under no circumstances will a judge be allowed to judge over 160 works. This rule is at the discretion of the Executive Director and this fine can be appealed. Fines are as follows:
    - i. 151 - 155 works = \$100
    - ii. 156 - 160 works = \$200
  - b. When the number of works exceeds 150, a Judge has the option to stay and continue to judge additional horses. In this situation, the ***assessed*** fines will be distributed by the NCHA to the judge working the event.
  - c. Show Management may use a judge who has been in the previous classes to replace a judge who has judged 150 works, providing that they are in compliance with all other rules pertaining to judging.
  - d. Under no circumstances will a judge be allowed to judge a portion of a show, unless entries go over the 150-entry limit, or if a partial show has been approved by the Director of Judges.
3. Judging Limits – Monitored Limited Age Events
  - a. Judges may not judge more than 150 horses per day. Shows can be fined based on the number of horses over 150. Under no circumstances will a judge be allowed to judge over 160 works. This rule is at the discretion of the Executive Director and this fine can be appealed. Fines are as follows:
    - i. 151 - 155 works = \$1,000
    - ii. 156 - 160 works = \$2,000
  - b. When the number of works exceeds 150, a Judge has the option to stay and continue to judge additional horses. In this situation, the ***assessed*** fines will be distributed by the NCHA to the judges and monitor working the event.
  - c. Under no circumstances will a LAE Judge be allowed to judge over 160 works.
4. Videography Requirement
  - a. All NCHA approved classes shall be required to be video recorded.
  - b. All videographers must be fully credentialed and qualified by the NCHA pursuant to the existing NCHA policies for videographers, except for Challenger Shows. (See Standing Rule 5.) At the conclusion of the ***event, the certified videographer / show producer will give the judge(s) a copy of video and judge sheets***. This video must be retained by the ***certified videographer*** for thirty (30) days after the date of the event where videoing occurred and shall be available to NCHA upon request. ***NCHA has the right to use all recorded competition footage from any NCHA approved show or event for any reason.***
  - c. Refer to the Show Management Handbook – Procedures for Videoing NCHA Approved Events.

5. Self-Adjusted Monitor System “SAMS” – All NCHA Championship Shows must use the “SAM” System. It is imperative that the System be announced prior to the start of the show. See Judging Rules for explanation of the SAM System.
6. Bridle Inspection – It is recommended that at each NCHA produced show, that one contestant per set be asked to dismount and clearly remove and show their bridle to the judge or judges for their approval. Refusal to do so before the next horse works will result in a disqualification. Youth classes are exempt from this rule. These will be randomly drawn. When there is a call for a “Bridle Inspection” and it is a possible Standing Rule 35.A.1 Zero Tolerance Policy violation, the majority vote of the judges would determine the disqualification. In addition:
  - a. The official videographer and photographer of the show would take a video and photo(s) of the horse/bridle being inspected.
  - b. The official announcer will announce specifically “show your bridle to the Judge(s) in the middle” when asked for a “bridle inspection”.
7. NCHA Dog Policy – No dogs will be allowed in the building / coliseum or any part of the arena, including warm-up area during any NCHA approved Championship, Challenger, LAE shows or NCHA sponsored cuttings. If on the grounds, they must be on a leash. The following penalties will apply for a violation of this rule: 1st offense \$200 fine; 2nd offense \$500 fine; 3rd offense within twelve (12) month period ninety (90) day suspension.

## **STANDING RULE 7.**

### **Show Approvals for Limited Age Events with \$10,000 or more added.**

In addition to the NCHA sponsored Triple Crown events, the NCHA approves additional Limited Age Event shows. These shows must be for horses between the age of 3 and 6 years of age.

1. NCHA reserves the right to refuse approval or cancel the approval of a show which it deems not to be in the best interest of the Association.
2. Point Year – The NCHA point year will begin on 12/28/2024 and end on the Sunday prior to the start of the NCHA Futurity.
3. Established Shows – Premier Limited Age Events
  - a. A show that has been in existence for the prior three consecutive years and has added money of \$100,000 or more, is considered a premier LAE. New shows requesting approval that have conflicting dates with premier shows (two days in front of or behind approved dates) can only be considered for approval with a maximum of 25% of the premier show's added money.
  - b. Shows that were approved in 2004 that are less than \$100,000 added money, that had conflicting dates with premier shows, can be approved with the same amount of added money.
  - c. If a show changes their dates more than the normal calendar movement allows, this show will be considered a new show and will lose premier show status and approval benefits.
  - d. LAE show dates will be scheduled by using [www.calendar-365.com](http://www.calendar-365.com) to determine “week of the year” start date. The same “week” start date will be used each year. Additionally, any dates released will return to NCHA.



4. Existing Shows – Major / Premier Limited Age Events
  - a. For shows with a \$10,000-\$50,000 added purse, there must be two days preceding the starting date and two days after the ending date of a pre-existing approved show. If the dates do overlap a pre-existing approved show, there must be at least 500 miles between the two show locations.
  - b. For shows with a \$50,001-\$99,999 added purse, there must be two days preceding the starting date and two days after the ending date of a pre-existing approved show. If the dates do overlap a pre-existing approved show, there must be at least 800 miles between the two show locations.
  - c. New shows inside the 800-mile limit cannot have more than 25% of the added money of the pre-existing show.
  - d. If more than one new Major / Premier Limited Age Event application requesting the same show dates within the 500 or 800 mile limit of each other, are received on the same day, approval will be considered first for the show with the earliest postmark; second, affiliates will be given priority over independent show producers; and third by the show offering the most added money.
  - e. If all of the above rules are not met by new shows requesting NCHA approval, show producers of the pre-existing approved Major / Premier Limited Age Events with conflicting dates will be notified and required to submit written documentation to the NCHA office stating their position to approve or deny the new show application.
5. Application Submission / Timing – All Major / Premier Limited Age Event shows must submit completed show applications to the NCHA office by the deadlines. Shows not submitting applications by the deadline will be notified by certified letter, receive a fine of \$500, and given seven (7) days to submit their application. If the application is not received within this time limit, the dates will be considered available for new show approvals. A completed, full signed application for approval, together with all rules for the event, must be submitted to the NCHA based on the following timelines:
  - a. Shows with less than \$10,000 in added money must be submitted to the NCHA for approval 40 days prior to the closing date of entry for the show involved. (See Standing Rule 5).
  - b. Shows with more than \$10,000 in added money:
    - i. May 1st of the preceding year for shows that will be held between December 28 and April 30. Approval deadlines for existing and new shows that will be held between January 1 and April 30 of each year, and due in the office by June 1, will be approved or denied by July and/or in time to be published on the NCHA website.
    - ii. January 1 of a given year for shows that will be held between May 1 and November 30 of that year. Approval deadlines for existing and new shows that will be held between May 1 and November of each year, will be approved or denied by February 1 and/or in time to be published on the NCHA website.
  - c. The application must fully disclose use and dispersal of all fees (including nomination fees, subscription fees, entry fees, cattle charges, office charges and other fees) to be collected

from all participants.

6. Approval Criteria

- a. The Limited Age Event shall be for horses between three (3) and six (6) years of age.
- b. Limited Age Events approved by the NCHA, must have an Open and Non-Professional class in each age division they are offering.
- c. NCHA will approve Championship shows held in conjunction with a Limited Age Event. A schedule for the show (including Championship classes) must be submitted at the same time as the Major Limited Age Event Application.
- d. All shows are required to have two (2) days travel time between ending and beginning dates of consecutive shows, unless said shows agree to less than two days.
- e. Bond
  - i. NCHA requires any Limited Age **Event** approved by NCHA to provide either an acceptable bond or Irrevocable Letter of Credit covering the **projected payout of the event (added money plus entry fees)**.
  - ii. Non-Affiliate show producers and stock shows must provide NCHA a copy of the actual bond for any and all employees, owners, officers, or secretaries whose duties require the handling of funds. The bond or Irrevocable Letter of Credit must be in the amount of the maximum funds for the purse payout plus the NCHA designated approval fee for the largest show produced and include the producers' names and the individuals covered along with the expiration date. The bond or Irrevocable Letter of Credit should list the NCHA as the beneficiary. The bond or Irrevocable Letter of Credit needs to be in the NCHA office 30 days prior to any show date. Mail to: NCHA, Attn: Show Approval Supervisor, 260 Bailey Ave., Fort Worth, TX 76107.
- f. Judges & Monitors
  - i. Shows must use NCHA Approved Judges.
    1. **All judges for Premier LAEs must be confirmed and a copy of the signed contract for each judge submitted to the NCHA judge's department no later than thirty (30) days prior to the start date of show.**
    2. **If signed contracts for all Premier LAE judges are not received thirty (30) days prior to start date of show, the show producer may be fined five hundred dollars (\$500). The fine may be waved when extenuating circumstances (i.e. death in the family, natural disaster, etc.) prevented a show producer from submitting all judges' contracts and the DOJ was contacted prior to the thirty (30) day deadline.**
  - ii. All shows using more than three (3) judges must use an NCHA monitor.
  - iii. All approved shows with \$100,000 added or more must use no fewer than five (5) 4A or 5A judges and these events will be monitored.
    1. Monitored event Show Management must sign AMS agreement to furnish necessary equipment, lodging, meals, and **cover all expenses incurred during**

***the event. NCHA will cover the cost of transportation to and from the event.***

2. It is mandatory that all monitored Limited Age Events have a qualified Escort for the Judges. A fine of \$500 per day will be imposed on major Limited Age Events with a five-judge system that do not have the required Escort for the Judges.
- iv. Judges may judge up to 13 consecutive days at Limited Age Events. Additional judging days must be approved by the Director of Judges. Violation of this rule is \$2,500 per day.
- v. Judges must get approval from the Director of Judges to judge consecutive aged events.
- vi. NCHA Self-Adjusted Monitor System (SAMS) may be used with three (3) judges or less.
- vii. NCHA monitors are available to shows that do not meet the minimum requirement for shows required to use the adjusted monitor system.
- g. Secretaries – See Standing Rule 5
- h. Videographers – See Standing Rule 5
7. Show Changes / Date Changes
  - a. NCHA will allow changes to approved show applications providing the changes follow all Limited Age Event rules. Changes must be submitted 30 days prior to the start of the show. Any exceptions to the above rules will be heard on a case-by-case basis. The burden for justification of those exceptions will be the responsibility of the new show applicant.
  - b. If the management of a show's venue forces it to move its dates in a way that will affect other shows, the show producer must submit a letter from the venue substantiating this action. Upon receiving that confirmation, NCHA staff will work with the show producer to try to negotiate alternative dates. Because it is beyond the control of the show producer, this will not affect the status of the show when determining future schedules.
  - c. A show will not lose its premier status or, in the case of a show with less than \$100,000 added, its status as a pre-existing show, if it is forced to cancel or terminate a presentation one year due to the following circumstances:
    - i. Destruction of its facility or widespread damage to the community in which its show would be held due to disasters, such as but not limited to fire, tornado, hurricanes, or floods.
    - ii. Threat or danger to livestock, such as we saw with the 2011 outbreak of EHV-1.
    - iii. Threat or danger to human participants, such as a forced closure by the local health department due to fear of the spread of disease or other serious contagious illness.
  - d. Failure to adhere to approved show dates will be considered in future show approval requests.
8. Show Rules
  - a. Shows must use all applicable NCHA rules. Rules of the limited age events may not directly conflict with NCHA rules and cannot provide for changing information provided to the NCHA in the application for approval after approval has been

received without prior NCHA consent. A limited age event may set their own rules as long as there are no direct conflicts with the NCHA rules. Permission to use local exceptions will not be unreasonably withheld. **Show Management may use NCHA leveling criteria (see Standing rule 8) as is or modified using one or any of the following options:**

- i. \$200,000 / 2 Year rollback instead of Top 100 List
- ii. HOF riders may be included or excluded from Intermediate roll back
- iii. Senior Age exception may be increased or decreased
- b. Show Management will determine the number of go-rounds, the criteria for advancement, including whether semifinals or finals will be used in the show. The management will decide how many go-rounds will be offered and how many horses may advance to the finals or if a semifinal is needed.
- c. Show Management cannot reduce the allocation, payout and dispensation submitted in the application after NCHA approval without prior NCHA written consent.
- d. Added Money
  - i. It is the management's decision on how added money will be split between different classes.
  - ii. Added money may be prorated between the classes.
  - iii. Added money cannot be reduced based on the number of entries in a class.
- e. Payout
  - i. Payouts to participants cannot be reduced to cover show expenses.
  - ii. Show Management is not required to use the mandatory payout schedule or the percentage payout system in distributing prize money.
  - iii. Show Management must pay NCHA an approval fee on total entry fees collected, the percentage owed NCHA determined by the amount of added money.
    1. \$9,999 or less in added money (8% - See Standing Rule 5).
    2. \$10,000-\$99,999 in added money 3.5% (no monitor required).
    3. \$100,000 added or more (monitor required) = 2% .
    4. NCHA approval fees may be deducted from total entry fees collected. **If applicable, the total daily Monitor fee** may be prorated between classes held that day.
    5. Monitor **daily** fee **must be equal to the amount paid to judges per day and must be paid directly to the Monitor.**
  - iv. Show Management agrees that NCHA has the right to take whatever action may be necessary, including legal proceedings, to require the approved payout and dispensation to be made. Furthermore, if Show Management does not make payments to participants as submitted and approved, NCHA may be paid a fine of up to \$5,000 by Show Management and/or no application for limited age event approval by Show Management or affiliate of Show Management may be approved by NCHA for a period of up to 15 months.

- f. Scheduling of events for the show will be decided by the Show Management.
  - g. Cattle - Show must Provide at least three (3) head of “fresh cattle” per work.
  - h. Videographer
    - i. All events must be video recorded by a NCHA certified Videographer. Recorded footage must be held for thirty (30) days.
    - ii. At multiple judged, non-monitored Limited Age Events, each judge is required to mail a copy of their judge’s score sheets and video to their assigned field Monitor
  - i. Draw parties may be held for the finals of a major NCHA-approved LAE. The contestant or owner may hand draw for their position in the presence of the Show Monitor or Show Management. If the contestant or owner is not available, the Monitor or Show Management will draw for that position
9. Results from Approved Limited Age Events – Within ten (10) days after the conclusion of the **event**, the following items must be submitted to NCHA:
- a. Complete NCHA Results & Electronic Data Results
  - b. Judges’ cards
  - c. Collected Membership Forms / Membership Fees
  - d. New Horse Papers / Ownership Transfer Reports
  - e. Appropriate Fees:
    - i. Major Limited Age Events (\$10,000 - \$99,999 Added Money) - Three and a half percent (3.5%) of the total entry fees collected (approved and unapproved)
    - ii. Premier Limited Age Events (\$100,000 or more Added Money) - Two percent (2.0%) of the total entry fees collected (approved and unapproved)

## **STANDING RULE 8.**

While NCHA Approved events are restricted to NCHA members only (see Standing Rule 2), Owners and Riders in NCHA approved shows may also be restricted to members of an active NCHA affiliate when that affiliate directly sponsors or conducts the contests involved. However, NCHA competition must be open to any horse, regardless of breed, age, sex, color, confirmation, appearance or previous performance. Horses must be judged on performance only.

## **ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION**

Eligibility is determined at the beginning of the point year. Once eligibility is determined, riders and horses are eligible to show in any eligible class for the remainder of the point year, regardless of the amount earned during the point year. Monies won at the World Championship Finals count toward eligibility of the following year (World Finals held in 2025 will count for 2026 eligibility). Any owner or rider who shall permit their horse to be entered and compete in an approved class, in which the owner(s), the horse or rider is ineligible, shall be subject to disciplinary action by the Executive Committee.

## **CHAMPIONSHIP CLASSES**

There are eleven (11) approved Championship classes within an NCHA approved show plus Youth if applicable - see Standing Rule 9. In all classes, Monies toward the World Champion Finals will be counted only at shows bearing the title NCHA Championship show. NCHA approval shall be granted to the following classes only when all other applicable Standing Rule for approval have been met, and the class is scheduled with an accompanying NCHA Open, NCHA Non-Professional and one NCHA Amateur Cutting horse class. Eligibility for each class is outlined below:

### **CHAMPIONSHIP CLASSES - HORSE CLASSES:**

*Eligibility for the following Championship classes is based on the earnings of the horse. HORSE Eligibility monies include all monies recorded by NCHA EXCEPT:*

- 1. Monies won in the Limited Age Event Classes*
- 2. Monies won at the 2001 and after NCHA produced National Championships (Eastern / Western).*
- 3. Monies won in designated Circuit shows specifically designated as not applying to eligibility.*
- 4. Monies won in Breed Registry World show cuttings (Standing Rule 10).*

#### **a. NCHA Open:**

1. Open to all horses regardless of monies earned.
2. Three head of fresh cattle per entry must be provided in this class anytime it is offered with more than \$750 or more in added money.
3. Show Management has the option of allowing riders to ride two (2) horses.
4. Riders may ride two (2) horses in the Open class at the World Finals and may ride two (2) qualified horses in the Open class at the International Circuit Championships.

#### **b. NCHA \$25,000 Limit Novice Horse**

1. Open to all horses having \$25,000 or less in eligibility earnings at the beginning of the point year as determined from the records of the NCHA.
2. Riders may ride two eligible horses.

#### **c. NCHA \$25,000 Limit Novice / Non-Professional Rider**

1. Open to horses meeting the eligibility criteria for the NCHA \$25,000 Limit Novice Cutting Horse class.
2. Riders must be current NCHA Non-Professional or Amateur card holders
3. Riders may ride two eligible horses that meet the family-owned horse rule.

#### **d. NCHA \$5,000 Limit Novice Horse**

1. Open to all horses having \$5,000 or less in eligibility earnings at the beginning of the point year as determined from the records of the NCHA.
2. Riders may ride two eligible horses.

#### **e. NCHA \$5,000 Limit Novice / Non-Professional Rider**

1. Open to horses meeting the eligibility criteria for the NCHA \$5,000 Limit Novice Cutting Horse class.
2. Riders must be current NCHA Non-Professional or Amateur

card holders

3. Riders may ride two eligible horses that that meet the family-owned horse rule.

#### **CHAMPIONSHIP CLASSES - RIDER CLASSES:**

*Eligibility for the following Championship classes is based on the earnings of the RIDER. In all cases, Eligibility earnings are the same as Lifetime earnings - defined as ALL monies won in cutting horse competition at any other equine association PLUS ALL monies won as determined from the records of the NCHA:*

##### **f. NCHA Non-Professional**

1. Open to qualified holders of NCHA Non-Professional or Amateur cards.
2. Must provide three (3) head of fresh cattle per entry in this class when offered with \$750 or more in added money.
3. May be offered concurrently with the Unlimited Amateur, **\$75,000** Amateur or Select Non-Pro in a combination of any two (2) classes.

##### **g. NCHA Unlimited Amateur**

1. Open to qualified holders of NCHA Amateur cards who meet all non-monetary Amateur requirements, are qualified as an Amateur under Standing Rule 51.a.6, are NOT in the Non-Pro Rider Hall of Fame AND are:
  - a. Age 60 and over OR
  - b. Under the age of 60 and have not won more than \$250,000 in Non-Pro money. As defined, Non-Pro money:
    1. Includes all earnings from Limited Age Event Non-Pro classes
    2. Includes all earnings from Championship show Non-Pro class.
    3. Excludes \$25,000 Novice Non-Pro, \$5,000 Novice Non-Pro and **\$50,000** Non-Pro
    4. Excludes Challenger show earnings
2. May be offered concurrently with the Non-Professional, **\$75,000** Amateur or Select Non-Pro in a combination of any two (2) classes.

##### **h. NCHA \$75,000 Limit Amateur**

1. Open to qualified holders of NCHA Amateur cards who meet all non-monetary Amateur requirements, are qualified as an Amateur under Standing Rule 51.a.6 with **\$75,000** or less in Lifetime earnings at the beginning of the point year.
2. May be offered concurrently with the Non-Professional, Unlimited Amateur or Select Non-Pro in a combination of any two (2).

##### **i. NCHA \$25,000 Limit Amateur**

1. Open to qualified holders of NCHA Amateur cards, who meet all non-monetary Amateur requirements with **\$25,000** or less in Lifetime earnings at the beginning of the point year.
2. The entry fee with one go-round may not exceed \$150 added back **and no added money is allowed in Championship shows..**
3. The cattle charge may exceed the entry fee, provided some fresh cattle are provided.

**j. NCHA \$50,000 Limit Non-Professional**

1. Open to all holders of NCHA Non-Professional cards who meet all non-monetary Non-Professional requirements with **\$50,000** or less in Lifetime earnings at the beginning of the point year.
2. The entry fee with one go round may not exceed \$150 added back **and no added money is allowed in Championship shows.**
3. The cattle charge may exceed the entry fee, provided some fresh cattle are provided.

**k. NCHA \$4,000 Limit Rider/Any Horse**

1. Open to all riders with **\$4,000** or less in Lifetime earnings at the beginning of the point year
2. Any horse may be ridden regardless of ownership provided the registered owner holds a current NCHA membership card.
3. Holders of NCHA Non-Professional / Amateur cards may compete in this class on any horse without jeopardizing their Non-Professional / Amateur status.
4. The entry fee with one go-round may not exceed \$150 added back **and no added money is allowed in Championship shows..**
5. The cattle charge may exceed the entry fee provided some fresh cattle are furnished.

**Additional Recognized Classes**

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**a. NCHA Select Non-Professional Class**

1. Open to Non-Professionals and Amateurs aged fifty (50) and over at the beginning of the point year
2. This class may be held in any of the following ways:
  - a. As a sub-class within the Non-Professional Championship class where entry in the Non-Professional Championship class is required.
  - b. Combined within one of the following Championship classes: the Non-Professional class, the Unlimited Amateur class or the **\$75,000** Amateur class.
  - c. As a separate, stand-alone class subject to pre-approval by the NCHA show office.
3. Added money is permitted provided it does not exceed the added money in the Open and Non-Professional classes.
4. Earnings will be recorded and will not count for year-end awards or standings.

**b. NCHA \$1,000 Limit Amateur**

1. Open to qualified holders of NCHA Amateur cards who meet all non-monetary Amateur requirements with \$1,000 or less in Lifetime earnings at the beginning of the point year
2. Any horse may be ridden regardless of ownership, provided the registered owner holds a current NCHA membership card
3. Holders of NCHA Amateur cards may compete in this class on any horse without jeopardizing their Amateur status.
4. No added money is permitted in this class in Championship shows. NCHA produced events are excluded from the no added money stipulation.
5. Earnings will be recorded and will count toward Lifetime earnings and achievement buckles but will not count for year-end awards or standings.



## Senior World Tour

### Senior World Tour Classes may be offered as a sub-class of an approved Championship / Challenger Show.

1. Open to any Open, Non-Professional or Amateur rider who is age **60 or older** at the beginning of the point year and meets all other NCHA rules regarding their status and membership
2. Must be held as a sub-class within the corresponding approved class and entry into that approved class is required.
3. There is no minimum number of entries. 1 entry is sufficient. But to earn points **and/or payouts**, a rider must score at least a 60.
4. Points are accumulated at Championship / Challenger shows to determine the Champion, Reserve Champion, and the next top 8 seniors in eligible classes:
  - a. Open, \$25,000 Novice Horse, \$5,000 Novice Horse (combined)
  - b. Non-Pro
  - c. \$25,000 Novice Non-Pro
  - d. \$5,000 Novice Non-Pro
  - e. Unlimited Amateur
  - f. **\$75,000** Amateur
  - g. **\$50,000** Non-Pro
  - h. **\$25,000** Amateur
  - i. **\$4,000** Rider/Any Horse
5. Point System - Standings will be determined by a point system that mirrors the mandatory payout, with the exception that a point will be given when there are 1-3 entries. **When there is a tie, each tied rider receives the same number of points for the highest tied placing.** A minimum of 3 points must be earned to be eligible for the **year end** standings.

### Senior World Tour Point System

Same as Mandatory Payout, except for 1-3 entries

No. of Entries	Place in Contest:									
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th
1-3	1									
4-7	2	1								
8-11	3	2	1							
12-15	4	3	2	1						
16-20	5	4	3	2	1					
21-25	6	5	4	3	2	1				
26-30	7	6	5	4	3	2	1			
31-36	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
37-42	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
43-49	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
50+	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3-2-1

6. Fees - In addition to the entry fee for the main approved class, the Senior World Tour requires a minimum \$20 entry fee:
  - a. Minimum \$10 of the total is the entry fee portion and must be paid out according to the Mandatory Payout Scale.
  - b. \$6 of the fee will be sent to NCHA
  - c. Remainder will be retained by the Affiliate / Producer. They may use their portion and any other sponsorships to buy awards as they see fit.
  - d. The affiliate or show producer will set the entry fees but must meet the minimum entry fees described above.

- e. Earnings will be recorded and count toward Lifetime earnings but will not count for year-end awards or national standings.
7. **Payouts**
  - a. The minimum \$10 of the total is the entry fee portion and must be paid out according to the Mandatory Payout Scale.
  - b. ***Zero scores do not receive payouts.***

## **LIMITED AGE EVENT - LEVELING SYSTEM**

1. **Time Frame** - Eligibility for each of the 3 levels are determined by the value of the Rider's Lifetime Earnings as of December 27th of the previous year. Lifetime Earnings include all money won that has been reported to NCHA.

2. **Level Earning Limits:**

<b>Division</b>	<b>Rider Lifetime Total Earnings</b>
Open	\$750,000 or more
Intermediate Open	\$200,001 - \$749,999*+
Limited Open	\$0 - \$200,000
Non-Pro	\$500,000 or more
Intermediate Non-Pro	\$150,001 - \$499,999*+
Limited Non-Pro	\$0 - \$150,000
Amateur	\$100,000 or more
Intermediate Amateur	\$25,001 - \$99,999*+
Limited Amateur	\$0 - \$25,000

3. **Exceptions:**

- a. Top 100 Lists - Riders are placed on the Top 100 rider list(s) based on earnings in the respective division (Open, Non-Pro, Amateur) during the previous two (2) point years. The Open List reflects Open earnings (includes Novice horse classes), the Non-Pro list reflects Non-Pro earnings (does NOT include the Championship 25,000 and 5,000 Novice Horse Non-Pro classes), and the Amateur list reflects Amateur earnings.
- b. Intermediate Roll Back - Top 100
  - i. Open or Non-Pro riders NOT on any of the Top 100 lists for the previous two-point years in any division, may enter the Intermediate Level in their respective division(s).
  - ii. Amateur riders
    1. **Aged 60 - 69** who are NOT on any of the Top 100 money earning rider lists for the previous two-point years in any division may enter Intermediate Amateur regardless of Limited Age Non-Pro earnings.
    2. Under the age of 60 who are NOT on any of the Top 100 money earning rider lists for the previous two-point year in any division **AND** are NOT in the Non-Pro Hall of fame may fall back into Intermediate Amateur.
- c. Intermediate Roll Back - Senior
  - i. Open and Non-Pro riders aged 70 and older can roll back into the Intermediate level regardless of earnings or Top 100 list rider rankings.
  - ii. Amateur riders aged 70 and older can roll back into the Intermediate level regardless of earnings, top 100 list rider rankings or Hall of Fame status.
- d. Limited Roll Back - There is no exception that allows a rider to return to the Limited Level.

4. Amateur Earnings Cap (\$250,000 in Non-Pro LAE earnings)- Amateur competitors under the age of 60 remain subject Standing Rule 51.a.6. If eligibility limits are surpassed during the show, the exhibitor can complete the show in that specific level or division.
5. Non-Pro Earnings Cap (\$250,000 in Open LAE earnings)  
Non-Pro competitors remain subject to Standing Rule 50.d.6 - If Open eligibility limits are surpassed during the show, the exhibitor can complete the show in that specific level or division.

## **STANDING RULE 9.**

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### **NCHA Approved Youth Cutting Horse Contests**

#### **1. Approval Requirements**

- a. Signed Application for Approval form requesting this approval must be sent to the NCHA office as specified by Standing Rule 5.
- b. Youth Cutting Horse Contest that is approved by NCHA must follow the NCHA Rules.
- c. Judge or judges must be selected in accordance with Standing Rule 6.
- d. NCHA Standing Rules numbers 13 and 14 shall not apply to Youth Cutting Horse Contests.
- e. NCHA will not approve any youth cuttings with added money.
- f. NCHA will not approve any youth cuttings on weekdays between Labor Day and Memorial Day.
  - i. Exception: Winter Circuit youth cuttings from December 28 through the first Sunday of January.
  - ii. Exception: Youth classes may be approved during the week at special events (such as major livestock shows), and at any other show on a national holiday that is recognized by the U.S. government if there is a scholarship offered. The request for these approvals must be submitted in writing to the Executive Director.
  - iii. Exception: Approved shows held in Utah and Idaho will be allowed to hold youth classes on Fridays after 6:00 p.m. with the stipulation that any youth who shows in those states on a Friday will only be eligible to also earn NCHA youth points on Saturday (not Sunday).
- g. NCHA will not approve any youth cuttings within 300 miles of Fort Worth, Texas during the annual NYCHA Convention and Scholarship Cutting.
- h. Stallions may be barred from NCHA Youth Cutting Horse Contests if this information is forwarded to NCHA at the time application for show approval is made.

#### **2. Eligibility**

- a. Youth eligibility is based on their age on June 1st. In no case shall a contestant be more than 18 years of age on the first day of the point year in which the contest is held.
- b. Only youth members of NCHA shall be eligible to compete in any NCHA approved or sponsored events, including special scholarship events.
- c. The youth member must meet the minimum qualifications for a Non-Pro card. If a youth no longer meets the qualifications for a Non-Pro/Amateur card, the youth will not be eligible to compete in youth competition. (i.e., the youth may not be a trainer and still compete in the youth competition).

### 3. Point Year

- a. The youth point year begins on June 1 and ends on May 31 of the following year.
- b. Points accumulated from June 1 to May 31 will be used to determine:
  - i. Youth World Finals Qualifiers
  - ii. Youth World Standings
  - iii. Youth Circuit Standings
  - iv. Youth Rookie of the Year
  - v. Youth Affiliate Standing
- c. As with all NCHA memberships, youth memberships (except Youth Life) expire on **December 27th**. Youth membership cards will list the expiration date as **December 27th**.

### 4. Divisions

- a. Combined: If there is to be one class, undivided, the age group is to be 18 and under.
- b. Separate: If there are to be two classes, the age divisions must be Junior (1) 13 and under, and Senior (2) 14 through 18.
- c. Combining Age Divisions for less than three (3) entries when approved as Separate Divisions:
  - i. Before the Draw – Junior and Senior may only be combined prior to the draw when there are less than three (3) entries in either Division.
  - ii. After the Draw – If, after the Junior and Senior are combined when there are fewer than three entries in either Division and then additional entries are taken at any time after the draw that increase the entries to at least three in each division, points will be awarded in EACH division, but the working order will remain as drawn.
  - iii. When a Youth Cutting is approved with both Divisions, points will be received in each Division even if combined.
  - iv. When a Youth Cutting is combined, a show may divide the money and pay premiums in both Divisions.
- d. Separating Age Divisions at a show – If a youth class is approved as Combined (18 and under), it cannot be split and held as separate classes. If classes are not held as approved (combined), scores will be placed in score order from both classes and points will be awarded under the youth point system as a combined class.

### 5. Points

- a. A record of points shall be maintained in the rider's name by the NCHA. At the conclusion of the annual point year, the Junior boy or girl and the Senior boy or girl having accumulated the greatest number of points in a minimum of five (5) NCHA Youth Cutting Horse Contests will be named and duly honored by the NCHA as its World Champion Junior Youth and World Champion Senior Youth.
- b. ***Points shall be awarded to Youth riders in the following contests based on the below scale:***
  - i. ***Championship Shows***
  - ii. ***Challenger Shows***
  - iii. ***NCHA National Championship Show in Go 1 and in the finals.***
  - iv. ***NCHA International Circuit Championship in Go 1.***

No. of Horses	Place in Contest:									
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th, 9th, 10th		
3	1									
4-7	2	1								
8-11	3	2	1							
12-15	4	3	2	1						
16-20	5	4	3	2	1					
21 & Up	6	5	4	3	2	1				

- c. Points shall be awarded at the NCHA Summer Scholarship Cutting based on this scale ***in both the go round and the finals.***

No. of Horses	Place in Contest:									
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th
3	1									
4-7	2	1								
8-11	3	2	1							
12-15	4	3	2	1						
16-20	5	4	3	2	1					
21-25	6	5	4	3	2	1				
26-30	7	6	5	4	3	2	1			
31-36	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
37-42	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
43 & Up	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

- d. Only legal entries will be included in the entry count for point assignment. To be considered a legal entry, the youth rider must be an active participant in the class (i.e., must cross the timeline and make a real attempt to show the horse.) Scratched entries will not count for points. However, scratched entries do count as an entry when determining payouts.

- e. ***Ties - When there is a tie, each tied rider receives the same number of points for the highest tied placing.***

## 6. Youth World Finals

- Qualification – the Top 15 riders in each age Division plus ties (no drop down) at the end of the Point Year will be eligible to compete in the Youth World Finals, held during the NCHA Summer Spectacular.
- Show Format – there be 3 go-rounds and a non-working final.
- Points won for go-rounds and non-working finals will be based on the number of entries in the class, with the maximum of 5 points for first place.

## 7. Novice Youth Classes

- Novice Youth Class(es) may be offered as a sub-class of a Youth Division during a Championship / Weekend Show.
- Open to NCHA Youth members with less than \$300 in earnings AND less than 10 youth points at the start of the youth point year.
- Must be held as a sub-class within the appropriate youth division and entry into a Championship Youth Division is required.
- There is no minimum number of entries. 1 entry is sufficient. But to earn ***a payout***, a rider must score at least a 60.
- In addition to the entry fee for the main Youth class, the Novice Youth class requires a minimum \$20 entry fee:

- i. Minimum \$10 of the fee is the jackpot portion and must be paid out according to the Mandatory Payout Scale. **Zero scores do not receive payouts.**
- ii. \$6 of the fee will be sent to NCHA
- iii. Remainder will be retained by the Affiliate / Producer.
- f. Earnings will be recorded and count toward Lifetime earnings but will not count for year-end awards or national standings.
- g. Affiliates / Producers are encouraged to offer year-end awards for this class.

## **8. Additional Recommendations**

- a. Turnback Help - It is recommended that whenever possible, adults be used as turnback riders and herd holders at NCHA Youth Cutting Horse Contests. It is the obligation of the Show Management to furnish herd holders unless the contestants select their own.
- b. Show Representative - If a show representative has not been appointed by Show Management, it shall be the duty of Show Management at all NCHA Youth cutting horse contests to hold a meeting prior to the first go-round for the purpose of electing a representative to represent the contestants for the duration of the show. In the event the representative has to leave the show for any reason, they shall appoint a representative in their place for the duration of the show. Any representative so elected or appointed must be a contestant in the Youth class.
- c. Cattle - It is recommended (but not required) that all approved youth contests have fresh cattle.

## **STANDING RULE 10.**

NCHA approval may be granted to restricted limited age events. Earnings won may count toward applicable NCHA lifetime awards. (See Horse and Rider Awards.) The NCHA will record breed registry cutting earnings received at World Shows and apply these monies to the lifetime earnings of a horse and a rider. Breed Registry World show cutting earnings will not be applied toward NCHA eligibility for horses but ARE included in Lifetime earnings for riders. Earnings do not count toward NCHA horse and rider lifetime awards (see Horse and Rider Awards).

## **STANDING RULE 11.**

At all NCHA approved shows, the judge or judges working the show must make the draw (working order of horses) before each go-round and finals. Cattle changes must be designated before working order is drawn. The draw will be conducted by using numbered tokens or balls. The number of tokens or balls corresponding to the number of entries will be placed in a container, and a blind draw shall be conducted. The Show Management is to state the name of the horse, and the judge will state the position drawn. Simply shuffling entry cards and placing draw numbers on the back is not permissible. Any Show Management wishing to pre-draw must use a judge from that event to draw or have prior approval from NCHA for someone other than the judge to conduct the draw. The working Monitor is allowed to draw if the official judge or judges are not available.

NOTE: Random computer draws may be used in classes exceeding 30 entries provided the judge is present and working orders are printed immediately.

NOTE: All NCHA approved Limited Aged Event finals and semifinals may be hand drawn by an officiating judge or random computer

draw provided an officiating judge is present and working orders are printed immediately.

NOTE: In the event of a draw party at an NCHA-produced event only, the draw may be hand-drawn or overseen by the Executive Director, Director of Shows or Director of Judges, instead of an officiating judge.

- a. In the event that a horse which was properly entered is left out of the draw, a redraw will not be held. In order to establish a working order for this entry, the judge will draw a numbered token or ball based on the number of entries in the class involved to include token for late entry. The entry which was left out of the draw shall work behind the entry drawn.
- b. At Limited Aged Events using a multiple level class structure, horse cannot run twice in a single set. In the event that a horse will have more than one run within the given class or concurrently run set of classes, a minimum critical distance must be established to ensure a horse will not run twice within a drawn set. If such a case should arise the later drawn run shall be placed in the set following the original draw in the same placement within the next set. The newly placed draw shall be switched with the entry occupying the new draw and that draw shall be moved to the previous set in the same sequence. For example: If a horse were drawn 7 and 11 in a set, the horse in draw 11 would be moved to the 11th position in the following set and the horse originally in the 11th position would move to the 11th position in the earlier set. In the event the multiple draws are located within the last set, the same procedure should be followed by reassigning the draw to the preceding set.
- c. If a horse is drawn which is not in that class, the entry shall be withdrawn. The original cattle changes are not affected. After the draw, absent horses shall be counted toward cattle changes, and horses will work as drawn in each group of cattle.
- d. All contestants will work at the appointed time so designated by the Show Management or be disqualified for that go-round with no score. No late entry will be accepted from a contestant who fails to work at their appointed time.
- e. Championship / Challenger shows that utilize pre-entries can institute a cattle charge and outside vendor portable stall fees on a scratched entry that occurs before the draw. These charges would be at the discretion of Show Management (with proper notice on show applications). Shows' entry forms must indicate how many days before the show an entry must be scratched to avoid these charges.
- f. Horse and/or rider substitution will be allowed in approved Championship / Challenger classes prior to or after the draw but before the class starts, provided the same owner owns the horse to be substituted in the horse classes and Non-Professional and Amateur horse ownership rules are followed in rider classes. No substitution will be allowed after the class begins. Class entry slots cannot be bought or sold between contestants for approved weekend shows. NCHA-approved limited age events may set their own rules as long as there are no direct conflicts with NCHA rules. Youth and **\$4,000** Limited Rider classes are not required to follow

Non-Professional or Amateur horse ownership rules. These classes will be allowed to substitute horses that are owned by different owners after the draw until the beginning of the class. Rider substitution in the youth may only be done with minor sibling that is qualified for the class.

The burden of proof for eligibility would be the member's responsibility in all instances.

### **STANDING RULE 12.**

If a show has been approved to accept late entries, the following shall apply: At all NCHA approved Championship / Challenger Shows and Limited Aged Events (with \$9,999 or less in added money) late entries received after a posted date/time must be accepted until the first horse in the class starts to work. Any late entry so accepted must work last in the first set of cattle. When two or more late entries arrived simultaneously, a draw will be held by the officiating judge and said entries inserted in the next subsequent groups of cattle with (1) one entry being placed in each group. If the number of late entries exceeds the number of cattle changes, additional late entries will start with the first group. An additional fee may be charged by Show Management for late entries. Any show requesting an exemption to this rule must apply on the **appropriate** show application and the exemption will be posted on the NCHA website.

1st group – late entry A

2nd group – late entry B

3rd group – late entry C

4th group – late entry would be added to the first available group.

### **STANDING RULE 13.**

A Weekend/Championship class may be offered with multiple go-rounds. When a class has more than the standard go-round, a final must be held unless prevented by a force majeure event that is beyond the reasonable control of the show producer. In all cases, working or non-working finals, the number of places paid AND the number taken to any final must be based on the NCHA Payout Scale. In the case where a tie results in additional entries advancing to the final, the number of horses advancing will be the number used to determine the payout percentages. Example, a class has 27 entries – which advances 7 entries to the final. After the go-round, the results reflect a 3 way tie for 7th – resulting in 9 horses advancing to the final. The percentages used for the final's payout is based on 9 instead of 7.

### **PAYOUT CALCULATION - CHAMPIONSHIP FINALS**

1. For classes held with a one go and a final (working or non-working), the payout must be calculated in one of the following two ways:
  - a. Available purse is split in half with 50 percent paid in the go round and 50 percent paid in the final OR
  - b. Available purse is paid 100% in the final
2. For classes that are held with two or more goes and a final (working or non-working), the purse must be split evenly between all goes and the final. For example: if two goes and a final are held, the purse would be split three ways – 33 percent to each go.
3. For three goes and a final, the purse would be split four ways – 25 percent to each go, etc.)

\*Exceptions to the above may be granted to state, regional, or county



fairs or where a government agency stipulates how its money should be paid.

**STANDING RULE 14.**

**1. ENTRY FEE**

- a. No entry fee shall be less than \$10. Except for classes with no added money, the following entry fee limits shall apply. (Classes with less than \$200 added should charge in accordance with other shows in their circuit.)
- b. Maximum Entry Fee % (Based on Added Money)

Added Money	
\$200 - 300 .....	60%
\$301 - 500 .....	50%
\$501 - 750 .....	40%
\$751 - 1,000 .....	30%
\$1,001 - 2,000 .....	25%
\$2,001 - 3,000 .....	20%
\$3,001 - 4,000 .....	15%
\$4,001 - 5,000 .....	12%
\$5,001 & over .....	10%

Example: On a \$200 added the maximum allowed entry fee would be \$200 added x 60% = \$120 or 60% of \$200 = \$120.

- c. The Entry fee shall be added to purse. If any charge is to be made other than entry fee (such as cattle, stall, handling or office charge), it must be clearly stated being separate from the entry fee. In this Rule Book, the “entry fee” refers to the portion of fees that are put into the purse (sometimes called the Jackpot or Add Back portion).
- d. ***In classes with \$500 or more in added money, the official cattle charge should not exceeded 40-45% of the total fee (entry + office + cattle). See Standing Rule 5.6.d.***

**2. PURSE DEDUCTIONS AND TOTAL PURSE**

- a. ***In NCHA approved Championship and small Limited Age Event cutting horse shows, all classes (approved and unapproved),*** eight percent (8%) of the entry fees paid in all classes shall be deducted by the Show Management. ***(For Major LAE and Premier LAE show percentages and payouts, see Standing Rule 7.)*** This deduction is to be made from entry fees only and is not to include any portion of monies added to the purse by the show or other charges.
  - i. A class with less than three (3) entries competing (trying to complete a 2 ½ minute work) does not constitute a class and shall be canceled. All monies collected should be refunded.
  - ii. In classes with three (3) horses and \$300 or more in added money, the 8% fee will be collected and remitted to the NCHA. However, the payout will be made from the added money only. The Show Management will retain the remaining portion of the entry fees.
  - iii. In classes with four (4) or more horses, regardless of added money, the 8% fee will be collected and remitted to the NCHA. These classes will use the NCHA mandatory payout Schedule & Percentages.
  - iv. See Standing Rule 13 for Purse Splitting between go

rounds and finals.

- v. See Standing Rule 5 for NCHA Programs Fee.
- b. No deduction, other than as specified above, shall be made. Failure to comply will cause approval of the show to be withdrawn.
- c. The Show Management, its officers or employees shall be held accountable for all funds collected and/or disbursed in connection with contests approved by the NCHA. The Show Producer and/or Affiliate Representative whose signature appears on the show application are jointly and severally liable to the NCHA for the appropriate approval fee deduction. Failure to make a satisfactory accounting when called upon shall be cause for a full and impartial hearing before the appropriate committee and disciplinary action may be taken if deemed appropriate by the committee.

**d. NCHA MANDATORY PAYOUT - SCHEDULE**

Number of Entries	Monies Paid
3 .....	1
4-7 .....	2
8-11 .....	3
12-15 .....	4
16-20 .....	5
21-25 .....	6
26-30 .....	7
31-36 .....	8
37-42 .....	9
43-49 .....	10
50 & over .....	12

**e. NCHA MANDATORY PAYOUT - PERCENTAGES**

Use the Payout schedule in 2.d to determine the number of places to pay. Then use the Percentage Payout System described below to determine distribution of the purse for all approved classes.

**NCHA Championship / Weekend Show Payout**

Payout Schedule for Added Money & Jackpot Classes Percentage Payout by Places

2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	12
60	47	40	30	30	28	25	23	20	20
40	33	30	25	24	23	20	18	16	16
	20	20	20	18	16	15	15	14	13
		10	15	12	12	12	11	11	11
			10	9	9	10	9	9	8
				7	7	8	8	8	7
					5	6	7	7	6
						4	5	6	5
							4	5	4
								4	4
									3
									3

- f. At all NCHA-approved shows, it will take a score of 60 or higher to receive a check for shows with one go-round. Scores of 0 or a disqualification will not receive a check except for shows with

finals which show rules state all finalists will receive checks. The amount of money to be recorded as earnings will be based on the original mandatory payout schedule for the class.

Note: A 0 score or disqualification may result in a portion of the purse being unpaid. Show producers may, at their discretion, distribute that unpaid amount. However, the officially recorded earnings will be based on the payout schedule.

- g. Result Submission - See Standing Rule 5.

### **STANDING RULE 15.**

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Championship shows with more than one go round the scores will be added together to get the top horses for **a working** finals.

### **STANDING RULE 16.**

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See Standing Rule 13

### **STANDING RULE 17.**

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In a Championship / Challenger contest with only one go round and no finals or with multiple go rounds with no working finals, the score(s) of all go-rounds added together will determine the winner of that contest. However, money must be paid according to the provisions of NCHA Standing Rule 13.

### **STANDING RULE 18.**

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#### **1. Rider Limits - Approved *Championship / Challenger* Classes**

- a. An owner or exhibitor may enter an unlimited number of horses, but a rider may ride only one horse, except in Championship Horse classes: Open, \$25,000 Novice Horse; \$25,000 Novice Horse/Non-Pro Rider; \$5,000 Novice Horse; \$5,000 Novice Horse/No-Pro Rider (if permitted by Show Management) where the limit is two (2).
- b. Each horse must have the same rider throughout the contest where there is more than one go-round. Any violation of this rule will cause the rider to be disqualified from the contest, with possible additional disciplinary action. The only exceptions for a change of rider in Open competition with multiple go rounds are if there is a death in the family or because of physical disability of the rider, a rider can be substituted with another eligible rider if so, approved by Show Management. Under no circumstance can the same horse be shown by more than one rider in any class at an NCHA approved contest.
- c. Clarification: Approved Open/Horse classes—Any horse(s) over the allowed two will be disqualified and the one(s) disqualified will be determined by the later placement in the draw. In all other classes (Non-Pro, Amateur, **\$4,000** L/R, Youth) if a rider shows more than the allowed one horse, all entries will be disqualified in that class. After the draw is complete, a contestant will forfeit all fees.

#### **2. Rider Limits - *Unapproved Championship / Challenger* Classes**

- a. Novice Horse classes held within or during an NCHA approved show may allow riders to show an unlimited number of horses.
- b. Unapproved classes based on “Rider Earnings” shall be limited to two (2) entries per rider.

#### **3. Additional Unapproved Class Rules**

- a. All NCHA rules regarding Non-Pro/Amateur ownership apply

- unless the class offered is a “Limited Rider” type class.
- b. Any unapproved Limited Rider Class cannot be in excess of **\$4,000**.
  - c. Any unapproved class that does not follow standard NCHA class rules and is not addressed in this **section** must submit a copy of the class rules with the NCHA show application.
  - d. Unapproved classes submitted and advertised as Novice Horse and/or Rider classes must set and enforce earnings thresholds. Thresholds should be posted and advertised. Members found to be competing outside of the posted thresholds will be subject to the NCHA grievance process.

#### **STANDING RULE 19.**

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Entry numbers shall not be used as the sole method of identifying horses at any contest approved by NCHA. Announcers are required to make known the name of each horse, the owner and rider at the time they work and to recognize winners in a similar manner at the conclusion of the contest.

#### **STANDING RULE 20.**

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Each horse is allotted two and one half (2½) minutes to work during a run. The working time starts when the rider crosses the official timeline.

As soon as the horse, owner and rider’s name are called to the herd by the announcer (the “Rider Announcement”), the announcer will start the 1-2½ Minute Clock to let the rider know how much time the rider has to cross the official timeline and begin the rider’s run. If the rider has helped the contestant immediately preceding the rider’s run or has drawn back-to-back in the working order, the rider will have 2½ minutes from the Rider Announcement to cross the official timeline and start their run. If the rider has not helped the contestant immediately preceding the rider’s run or has not drawn back-to-back in the working order, the rider will have 1 minute from the time of the Rider Announcement to cross the official timeline and start their run. This is referred to as the 1-2½ Minute Clock.

If the rider fails to cross the official timeline in the time allotted under the 1-2½ Minute Clock, a buzzer will sound, and one additional minute will be added to the 1- 2½ Minute Clock.

This buzzer is the only warning that the rider will receive relating to the 1- 2½ Minute Clock. If the rider receives any additional buzzers relating to the 1- 2½ Minute Clock at any time during that show, it will result in a \$500 fine per occurrence (i.e. second buzzer is a \$500 fine, third buzzer is an additional \$500 fine, etc.) All fines assessed under this rule must be paid prior to the rider exhibiting a horse in any future NCHA-produced event.

All NCHA produced events will use the 1-2½ Minute Clock as described above. It will be optional for all other NCHA sanctioned events to use the 1-2½ Minute Clock as described above.

# Standing Rules 21-29 - Related to Judges

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## STANDING RULE 21.

### BECOMING AN NCHA JUDGE

Any person applying to be a judge or designated a judge must demonstrate a high degree of integrity in all aspects of their conduct related in any way to involvement with the NCHA as a NCHA member, contestant, judge, or other conduct which reflects on the NCHA. The Director of Judges or the Judges Rule Committee, in its sole discretion of either, may determine that any conduct of a person is a basis to deny or revoke that person's privilege to serve as a judge. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to, violations of the Judges Code of Ethics. This determination may be made with or without notice or hearing, subject only to a review of the Executive Committee on such terms as the Executive Committee, in its sole discretion, may from time to time designate. Active members of the Association over the age of 19 may be added to the NCHA Approved Judges List upon satisfactory completion of all stated requirements. Each NCHA judge applicant and approved NCHA judge is required to sign the Judges Code of Ethics and return it to the NCHA Office. The Code of Ethics is available on the NCHA website, [nchacutting.com](http://nchacutting.com) in the Judges Section.

Active members of the Association over the age of 19 may be added to the NCHA Approved Judges List upon satisfactory completion of all stated requirements:

1. **Application** – Applications for NCHA approval as a judge shall be made on a form provided by the Association.
2. **Endorsements** – Each application must be endorsed by one (1) current Director of the applicant's region, who is not a member of the applicant's family; and three (3) current NCHA approved judges. The necessary form and return envelope will be provided for the three (3) judges' use.
3. **Membership and Earnings** – Any person that seeks approval as an NCHA judge shall have been a member of the Association continuously for a minimum of three (3) years, including youth or family membership and shall have no record of suspension, probation, or reprimand by the NCHA for the three (3) year period immediately preceding the application
  - a. Applicants residing in the United States or Canada must have won a lifetime minimum of \$10,000 to become an NCHA Judge.
  - b. Applicants residing outside the United States or Canada must have won a lifetime minimum of \$2,500 to become an NCHA judge
4. **Testing** – All applications will be reviewed by the Director of Judges. If the submitted application is approved, **the** applicant will be invited to attend an NCHA Judge Applicant Clinic / Seminar for testing purposes.
  - a. Judge Applicants must score eighty (80%) on the written test and a minimum of seventy-five (75%) on each of the live or video judging tests. If these scores are attained, applicants will receive an Approved NCHA Judge rating. Judge Applicant clinics will be held at any time there is a need. The Director of Judges must approve it and there will be a fee.
  - b. Any Judge Applicant that fails the testing process two consecutive times may not reapply again within a three (3) year period

after the last failed test.

- c. New NCHA Judge Applicants will test any time there is a need and is approved by the Director of Judges. Either in an applicant seminar or the 6th box, depending on their lifetime earnings.
  - d. The Director of Judges is authorized to test and certify people on an individual basis, in the 6th box during a final or otherwise, who have won \$100,000 or more. These applicants will be approved as 2A until they successfully judge 6 shows or 6 credits without a valid protest, at which time they will be advanced to 3A.
5. **Physical Examination** – All new judges sixty (60) years old and older will be required to pass a physical examination given by a licensed physician which includes tests for vision and hearing.
  6. **Membership Status** - No person listed on the NCHA suspension or probation list will be permitted to judge. In the event an NCHA Approved Judge is suspended by the NCHA for any reason, the judge's approved status shall be canceled, and all rights and privileges forfeited.

#### **STANDING RULE 22. (formerly Standing Rule 26)**

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1. **Recertification** – All judges must complete NCHA Judge Recertification every other year to retain their approval as a judge. Recertification may occur at either a Judge Seminar or via distributed testing at the discretion of the Director of Judges. Any judge that fails to recertify within the required timeframe will be removed from the Association's Approved Judges List. Reinstatement of judging privileges after removal for failure to timely recertify may only occur when said judge completes and passes the testing procedures at a future NCHA Seminar / Applicant Clinic or under authority of the Director of Judges. In no case shall reinstatement of judging privileges occur before at least two years (24 months) have passed since the removal for failure to recertify.
2. **Judging Requirement** – Judges must receive two (2) credits each year. A year under this section will begin on **December 28** and conclude on **December 27** of each year. If the minimum judging requirement is not met:
  - a. Judges with higher than 2A rating will be lowered one (1) rating.
  - b. 2A judges will be required to recertify via a workshop with their weekend monitor or by sitting in the 6th box of an NCHA produced show.
3. **Physical Exam** – Any approved judge at any time may be required to pass a physical examination given by a licensed physician approved by the Association which includes tests for vision and hearing.

#### **STANDING RULE 23. (formerly Standing Rule 25)**

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Judges will receive credits based on the type of shows judged:

1. Four (4) show credits will be given for judging a monitored NCHA approved or sponsored show.
2. Two (2) show credits will be given for judging a Limited Age Event that is not monitored by the NCHA.
3. One (1) show credit will be given for judging a:
  - a. Challenger Show
  - b. Small Limited Age Event\*
  - c. Championship Show\*

\*Only one credit will be given for any day that contains a partial Weekend (Small) LAE and a partial Championship Show.

4. One (1) show credit will be given to Replacement or “fill in” judges that abide by the Weekend Monitor System and report to their Weekend Monitor.
5. One (1) show credit may be given to a 2A judge for judging an unapproved cutting if the cutting is videoed and of acceptable quality for education by the NCHA in its sole discretion. The judge will follow all rules associated with the weekend monitor program. The judge must notify the director of judges of their judging assignment. The judge will send all judge’s sheets and videos to the judge’s weekend monitor for approval and credit.

#### **STANDING RULE 24. (formerly Standing Rule 23)**

In multiple Judged shows where one (or more) judge(s) cannot continue judging, the following methodology will be used to assign final scores:

1. Shows with one go-round:
  - a. The score or scores of the remaining judge or judges who complete the go-round will be the sole basis of computing the go-round.
    - i. If 2 judges – discard that judge’s scores.
    - ii. If 3 judges – discard that judge’s scores. Add the remaining 2 judge’s scores together to determine the total score.
    - iii. If 5 judges – discard that judge’s score. Drop the lowest score of the remaining 4 scores. Then add the remaining 3 scores to determine the total score.
2. Shows with more than one go-round or a go-round and a final:
  - a. If DURING a go-round or a final – use the same methodology as above.
  - b. If BETWEEN the go-round and the finals the judge or judges who cannot continue shall be replaced by the alternate judge(s) named for the contest. In the event the alternate judge is unavailable, Show Management will replace the judge and must be approved by the Director of Judges.

#### **STANDING RULE 25. (formerly Standing Rule 24)**

A judge may not judge:

1. Their relatives
  - a. During a Monitored Event – in this instance, relatives shall include the judges’ parents, children, spouse, spouse’s parents, and relatives of either the judge or their spouse if that relative lives in the same household as the judge.
  - b. During a Self-Adjusting Monitor System Event (SAMS) – in this instance, relatives shall include the judges’ parents, children, spouse, spouse’s parents or relatives.
2. Their employer or employees
3. A horse that they own an interest in or have owned an interest in, exhibited, trained, managed or sold for direct or indirect remuneration within the thirty (30) day period immediately preceding the NCHA approved or sponsored event at which said judge is officiating in full or in part.
4. Any individual rider or horse owned by said rider, who has had training from or given training to said judge within the thirty (30) day period immediately preceding the NCHA approved or sponsored event at which said judge is officiating in full or in part. If such a horse, owner or rider is entered in a contest, the entry fee shall be

refunded, and the entry not shown. A judge may be suspended from the list of approved judges for infraction of this Rule.

### **STANDING RULE 26. (formerly Standing Rule 25.b)**

All NCHA approved events must use official NCHA judges' cards and judges shall indicate penalties assessed in the spaces provided. It is mandatory for judges to fill in **appropriate** run content columns on the score cards with the following symbols:

+      √+      √      √—      —

Any empty run content box indicates average, same as √

Each judge must sign and print their name on their score card. There must not be any consultation between judges until after score cards are turned in; and after cards are turned in, there will be no changes.

### **STANDING RULE 27.**

#### **JUDGE RATING SYSTEM**

NCHA Approved Judges will be rated based upon their lifetime judging achievements and, once a judge achieves a rating of 3A, their evaluation percentage within the Performance Review System. Evaluation percentages within the Performance Review System will be calculated annually at the conclusion of the NCHA Futurity. However, a judge's rating can be adjusted at any time based on interim judge performance reviews.

#### **5A Rating Requirements**

1. 3A or 4A judges and above which achieve 85% or greater within the Performance Review System.
2. May Officiate / Judge
  - a. Any NCHA monitored event.
  - b. By themselves at any NCHA approved or sponsored event including non-monitored Limited Age Events where classes have up to \$3,000 added money. When added money is over \$1,000 per class, Director of Judges approval is required.

#### **4A - Rating Requirements**

1. 3A judges and above which achieve 75% up to 84.9% within the Performance Review System.
2. May Officiate / Judge
  - a. Any NCHA monitored event.
  - b. By themselves at any NCHA approved or sponsored event including non-monitored Limited Age Events where classes have up to \$3,000 added money. When added money is over \$1,000 per class, Director of Judges approval is required.

#### **3A - Rating Requirements**

1. Judges with more than \$100,000 in earnings must have six (6) or more credits without a valid protest. Judges with fewer than fifteen (15) credits are considered probationary. During that time, a valid protest will be reduced to a valid spot check.
2. Judges with less than \$100,000 in earnings must have twenty-five (25) or more credits.
3. May Officiate / Judge
  - a. Together with an approved 5A or 4A judge at a Championship (Weekend) event up to \$3,000 added money per class.
  - b. By themselves at any NCHA approved or sponsored event



including non-monitored Limited Age Events where classes have up to \$2,000 added money. When added money is over \$1,000 per class, Director of Judges approval is required. Lifetime credits divided by number of valid protests equals 50 or more and has been evaluated in a monitored aged event in the past 60 months.

## 2A - Rating Requirements

1. Type of 2A Judge
  - a. Newly appointed judges
    - i. All newly appointed judges enter the system as a 2A judge.
    - ii. All judges with fewer than fifteen (15) credits are considered probationary. During that time, a valid protest will be reduced to a valid spot check.
  - b. Existing judges
    - i. Judges that have been reduced to 2A because of valid protests will be re-evaluated after a twelve (12) month period.
2. May Officiate / Judge:
  - a. Together with an approved 3A, 4A or 5A judge at a Championship (Weekend) event with up to \$1,000 added money per class.
  - b. By themselves with up to \$999 added money in any class:
    - i. if they have earnings over \$50,000 and minimum fifteen (15) credits or
    - ii. if they have earnings less than \$49,999 and minimum twenty (20) credits
  - c. By themselves at any NCHA approved or sponsored event with up to **\$750** added money per class.

## EVALUTATION SYSTEM

A judge may be removed from the NCHA Approved Judges List or may be dropped to a lower classification for cause:

1. Complaints and/or protests may be made by active members of the Association only.
2. Any contestant (in a class) or horse owner may protest a judge's decision (from that class) upon submission to the NCHA Director of Judges a Judge Evaluation Form with an official protest. Said statement must be filed (postmarked, faxed, emailed or hand delivered) within seven (7) days of the incident and must be accompanied by a cashier's check, money order, valid credit card number (Visa, MasterCard or American Express) or personal check in the amount of five hundred dollars (\$500) for Non-Monitored Shows and one thousand (\$1,000) for LAE Monitored Events made payable to the NCHA.
  - a. Upon receipt of the official form and required payment, the judge's assigned Weekend Monitor will be asked to review the class. The NCHA Director of Judges may request the show sponsor to immediately forward the video of the class involved to NCHA if needed.
  - b. The video of the class will then be reviewed by a monitor. If a monitor is unavailable, the Director of Judges may appoint a 4A or 5A judge to participate in the review. The procedures for viewing videos were approved by the Executive Committee.
  - c. Review Process - A total of one hundred (100) points will be assigned to each class reviewed. The judge's score for the protest-

ed class will be based on points accumulated by comparing the judge's placings in the class to the official key, less a deduction of three (3) points for each misapplication of major three (3) or five (5) point penalties. A score of 75% or higher must be maintained.

- i. Non-Monitored Events - The scores of the Director of Judges and that of the monitor (or their substitute) and the judge will be used to obtain the official key. Penalties are only deemed "Major" when both persons reviewing the protest assess the same penalty.
  - ii. Monitored Event or LAE finals with 3 or more judges - The scores of the Director of Judges and that of the monitor (or their substitute) and the actual placing of the horses in the class will be used to obtain the official key. This key would then be compared to the way the horses placed at the event. If the key results in a score of 75% or higher, then the protest would not be valid against any of the judges. If the key results in a score less than 75%, the key would then be matched against each individual judge's score sheet to determine which judge passed or failed.
- d. The maximum number of places used for grading purposes will be six (6). For six places the points allocated for each place will be 1st - 40; 2nd - 25; 3rd - 15; 4th - 10; 5th - 6 and 6th - 4. For five (5) places the points allocated for each place will be: 1st - 43, 2nd - 28, 3rd - 16, 4th - 8, 5th - 5. In cases where lesser numbers of places are paid in accordance with the "Mandatory Pay-out Schedule for Classes with Added Money", the points will be prorated as follows: four places, 1st - 45; 2nd - 30; 3rd - 17; 4th - 8; three places, 1st - 50; 2nd - 32; 3rd - 18; two places, 1st - 60 and 2nd - 40.
- e. The judge's placing of horses in the protested class will be compared to the official key and awarded points as set forth in section d. If a judge places a horse higher than the official key, then the credit established by the official key will be earned. If a judge places a horse lower than the official key, then the credit established by the judge's placing will be earned. If a judge has ties, the points for the places involved will be averaged; however, no horse may receive more points than those allotted by the official key. If the official key has ties and the judge's placing does not, the judge will receive full credit for those placings.
- f. If the review under the NCHA Evaluation system finds that a judge has failed to maintain the minimum 75% grade standard while judging an individual class, a valid protest will be affirmed against the judge. In grading any show protests with 4 or more entries,
- i. Any 3A, 4A or 5A judge who receives two (2) valid protests within a twelve-month period will be lowered one rating classification for a full twelve (12) months. A judge who has been dropped a rating because of valid protests would be re-evaluated at the end of twelve months. This judge is only eligible to be moved up one rating at a time.
  - ii. 2A judges with two (2) valid protests within a twelve-month period will be required to do a recertification workshop with their weekend monitor or set in the 6th box of NCHA produced shows. If the 2A judge fails recerti-

fication, that judge will be dropped from the judges list.

Any judge who is removed from the Approved Judges List through either protest or conduct must repeat the entire process of attending an Applicant's Clinic and Judge's Seminar and receive passing scores on all testing procedures to regain a judge's card.

- g. All affirmed protests will be logged on the record of the judge involved.
  - h. Where protests are affirmed, the five hundred dollar (\$500) or one thousand dollar (\$1,000) fee will be returned to the contestant; where denied, the fee will be retained by NCHA.
  - i. Spot Checks – Any contestant (in a class) or horse owner may request that the appropriate Weekend Monitor perform a Spot Check of a judge's placings or penalties (from that class) by submitting a Judge Evaluation Form requesting a Spot Check. The official form must be filed (postmarked, faxed, emailed or hand delivered) within seven (7) days of the incident. Upon receipt of the form by the Judges Department, the appropriate Weekend Monitor will be requested to "Spot Check" the class or penalty in question. If the judge's monitor feels the complaint is valid, the Director of Judges will be notified. If the Director of Judges agrees that the Spot Check is valid, the judge will be notified, and it will be recorded on the judge's record. Any judge receiving two (2) valid spot checks within a twelve-month period will be required to attend a judges' seminar or workshop and is not eligible to judge until released by the Director of Judges.
  - j. If a judge receives a valid protest, the Director of Judges has the right to request a review of the judge's performance at a subsequent show by their Weekend Monitor. If this review results in a need to evaluate a class through the protest system, the class will be evaluated based on the Non-Monitored Review process. When the score received in that process is less than 75%, the judge in question will be processed according to dropped one judge classification as specified in Standing Rule 27 - Evaluation System 2.f.
  - k. Decisions of the reviewing body with respect to any protest filed pursuant to this Rule are final and non-appealable.
3. All disciplinary actions listed in this rule are guidelines only and may be increased or decreased by the Director of Judges, in his/her sole discretion, based on the severity of the violation in question. ***Additionally, if a pattern of complaints emerges regarding an individual judge, the Judging Department may review tapes of the show or shows in question and take further action when appropriate.***

#### **STANDING RULE 28.**

- 1. A judge (or judges) must present in writing any grievance they may have against contestants or shows to the Executive Director of the NCHA, without a filing fee, and the case will be reviewed by the appropriate committee. A complaint by a judge must be filed (postmarked, faxed, emailed or hand delivered) within seven (7) days of the alleged rule violation.
- 2. All conduct complaints regarding an NCHA judge will be referred to the NCHA Director of Judges by submitting the complaint in writing to NCHA and must be postmarked, faxed, emailed or hand delivered within seven (7) days of the incident. Complaints by per-

sonnel in the NCHA Judges Department or Show Management may submit a complaint without a fee. Other individuals must submit their complaint together with a money order, cashier's check, or personal check in the amount of two hundred dollars (\$200) made payable to the NCHA.

- a. If, after review and investigation of the complaint, the Director of Judges is of the opinion that a rule violation has occurred, or that the judge has engaged in conduct which is inconsistent with the privilege and honor of being designated an NCHA judge, the Director of Judges may take such disciplinary action as he/she determines in his/her sole discretion is appropriate, based on the severity of the violation in question, including temporary or permanent revocation of all privileges to serve as an NCHA judge. Such disciplinary action shall be effective immediately, regardless of any appeal which may be **filed**. The judge shall be notified, in writing, of the action taken by the NCHA Director of Judges.
  - b. The decision of the NCHA Director of Judges will be final and binding unless a written notice of the judge's intention to appeal the decision is received in the NCHA office within twenty-one (21) days of the date on the letter notifying the judge of the disciplinary action taken. If a notice of appeal is received in the NCHA office within that timeframe, a hearing will be scheduled to determine whether a rule violation occurred; and if so, what disciplinary action, if any, should be taken against the judge. The hearing will be conducted pursuant to the provisions of Standing Rule 38.
3. Once an NCHA approved or sponsored cutting has commenced, Show Management is not authorized to dismiss a judge for any reason relating to the actual performance of their judging responsibilities. Show Management may, however, dismiss a judge for blatant personal misconduct while on show grounds, such as drunkenness, foul language, etc. A judge may be dismissed for any reason by the NCHA Director of Judges or the NCHA Executive Director if, in their opinion, it is in the best interest of the NCHA to do so.

## **STANDING RULE 29.**

A judge shall conduct him or herself in a manner fitting and proper to one afforded the honor of officiating at any NCHA approved or sponsored contest. **All disciplinary actions listed in this rule are guidelines only and may be increased or decreased by the Director of Judges, in his/her sole discretion, based on the severity of the incident in question.**

1. Any misconduct on the part of the judge at any NCHA contest, the use of abusive language, showing favoritism to, or discrimination against, either an individual or a horse performing in the contest, or any other action unbecoming to one in their position, either on the grounds or elsewhere, during the entire show will make the judge subject to disciplinary action. The penalty suggested for violating the above stated provisions of this rule will be a minimum \$500 fine or a minimum ninety (90) day suspension from the Association, or both.
2. Judging Requirements
  - a. A judge who fails to judge after accepting an assignment will be subject to removal from the NCHA Approved Judges List as well as additional disciplinary action.

- b. Member / Judge Interaction
  - i. A judge should not appear on the show grounds before the stated time for entries to close except as may be required by Show Management.
  - ii. Judges shall not visit with owners, trainers, exhibitors, or agents beyond the exchange of normal greetings, verbally or by electronic or social media, until the entire show or contest is completed.
  - iii. Judges shall talk only with representatives of Show Management.
  - iv. Judges must appear in western attire and remain in western attire during the entire show.
  - v. A judge shall not discuss with any contestant previous scores, events, or related happenings, verbally or by electronic or social media, during a show or within thirty (30) days after a contest at which the judge has officiated.
- c. Number of Runs
  - i. Under no circumstances will a published judge be permitted to judge over 160 horses (counting approved or unapproved classes) per day. Nor shall he/she be permitted to enter the contest for which said judge is approved. Note: This does not prohibit a judge from acting as a substitute in order to permit Show Management to comply with the 150 horses per day limitation imposed by Standing Rule 6.1. Under no circumstances will a judge be allowed to judge a portion of a show unless entries go over the 150-entry limit or it is approved by the Director of Judges.
- d. e. The penalty for violating sub-sections (b), (c) and/or (d) of this rule shall be a minimum fine of \$500 or a minimum ninety (90) day suspension from the Association, or both, for an infraction of the above stated sub-sections.
- f. A judge shall not intimidate, or attempt to intimidate, a contestant. The penalty for violating this sub-section will be a minimum six (6) month probation and/or six (6) months suspension from the Association.
- g. A judge who fails to whistle out a contestant for excessive training or causing a disturbance to the herd, will be fined a suggested penalty of \$300.

# Standing Rules 30-42

## Related to Contestants

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### **STANDING RULE 30.**

No contestant, or other person, shall engage in any form of misconduct or harassment toward Show Management, judges, or NCHA employees. Show Management has the right to disqualify or refuse entry to any contestant for violation of this rule. In the event a contestant, or other person, is asked by Show Management to leave or withdraw from any NCHA approved or sponsored show, the Executive Director shall be notified, and a hearing to consider disciplinary action against the person shall be scheduled. (For definition of "Show Management", refer to Standing Rule 4.b.)

### **STANDING RULE 31.**

A contestant may drop out of any contest due to injury to him/herself, or their horse, or due to sickness or death in their family. A contestant shall not at any time withdraw from any contest they are participating in due to dissatisfaction or grievance with the judge or judges, Show Management, or other contestants without forfeiting all money they may have won in previous go-rounds. After the draw is complete, a contestant will forfeit all fees.

### **STANDING RULE 32.**

All contestants will work at the appointed time so designated by the Show Management or be disqualified for that go-round with no score. No late entry will be accepted from a contestant who fails to work at their appointed time. Show Management will require all contestants to present original or copies of NCHA membership cards for both owner and rider, and a copy of horse registration papers when entering approved NCHA shows. Refer to Standing Rules 2 and 3, respectively.

### **STANDING RULE 33.**

If a contestant refuses to compete in the finals, any money won in previous go-rounds will be forfeited. In the event money has been distributed before the finals, it must be refunded within fifteen (15) days after the refund request is made, or the contestant will be suspended until the money has been refunded.

### **STANDING RULE 34.**

At all cutting horse contests approved or sponsored by the NCHA, a contestant, trainer or helper shall not enter any part of the show arena at any time with any kind of device, tack, or equipment on a horse's head or around the horse's neck that is not permitted by the Rules for Judging Cutting Horses Contests (see Judging Rule 16.) For facilities in which the practice pen is located within the show arena, training equipment shall be allowed only in those areas that are specifically designated as a preparation area by Show Management. This area shall be outside of the normal flow of traffic for the warm-up area.

- a. In keeping with NCHA's Zero Tolerance Policy (see Standing Rule 35) inhumane use of training equipment and/or equipment allowed under Judging Rule 16 shall not be tolerated.
- b. Use of equipment not allowed under Judging Rule 16 in areas other than practice pens or designated preparation areas shall result in:
  1. First offense -- \$250 fine
  2. Second offense -- \$500 fine

3. Third offense (and all subsequent offenses occurring within a two-year period following the first offense) – \$2,500 fine
4. All fines shall be collected by the NCHA Executive Director for violations as outlined above: (i) if the horse in question has a trainer, the trainer will be the person deemed responsible for the violation; or (ii) if the horse in question does not have a trainer, the contestant and/or owner will be the person deemed responsible for the violation.
- c. Show Management and any directors present shall be responsible for enforcement of this rule.
- d. After the buzzer sounds, the contestant will discontinue working and ride their horse forward past the judges stand before dismounting; exceptions to this rule are a fallen rider, dismounting an unsound horse or to retrieve a lost article. Failure to comply with section (D) will result in:
  1. First offense -- \$250 fine
  2. Second offense -- \$500 fine
  3. Third offense (and subsequent offenses occurring within a two (2) year period after first offense) -- \$2,500 fine
  4. All fines shall be collected by the Executive Director
- e. Any bridle on a horse, bit or piece of tack may be inspected at the judge's discretion. Refusal of a contestant to allow a judge to clearly inspect the bridle, bit or tack under this subsection shall be considered a violation of this subsection. In the event a violation of the NCHA rules relating to bridles, bits or tack is discovered, the violator will be subject to disciplinary action. A violation of section "E" will result in:
  1. First offense – Disqualification from class and a \$500 fine
  2. Second offense – (and all subsequent offenses occurring with the two (2) year period after the first offense) – Disqualification from class and a \$2,500 fine
  3. All fines shall be collected by the Executive Director.
- f. All NCHA approved or sponsored shows are required to post signs concerning Standing Rule 35 at the entrance to all official show areas. The signs shall be no smaller than **24 inches x 36 inches** and shall contain wording as provided by the NCHA. Show Management is encouraged to make appropriate announcements concerning the use of training equipment as it relates to Judges Rule 16 throughout the show day.
- g. Show Management, area directors, and/or judge must report a contestant to the Executive Director if a contestant, trainer, or helper violates any section of Standing Rule 34 above.
- h. An offense under this rule will be removed from a member's records if that member has no further infraction of this rule for a period of two (2) years after the last offense is committed.
- i. All cutting horses must be ridden astride.
- j. No rider nineteen (19) years of age or younger may be strapped into or tied onto a saddle in any manner while on the show grounds without the permission of the Executive Director.

### **STANDING RULE 35.**

The following provisions regarding members' conduct shall apply at all NCHA approved or sponsored shows. The responsibility for reporting violations of this Standing Rule rests with, but is not limited to, Show

Management, NCHA Directors, officers, officials, and the judges. **All participating owners and riders of any horse entered in an NCHA approved or sponsored event, by said entry, consents to the implementation of any action allowed by this Zero Tolerance Policy (Rule 35.A) by either Show Management or judge.**

#### **A. Zero Tolerance Policy**

Inhumane treatment or excessive training of a horse in any manner is strictly prohibited. Both owner and rider of any horse entered in an NCHA approved or sponsored event, by said entry, consents to the implementation of any action allowed by this Zero Tolerance Policy (Rule 35.A) by either Show Management or judge. This includes any act which the general public would perceive to constitute inhumane treatment or excessive training of a horse.

Any act of inhumane treatment, mistreatment, or intent to mistreat a horse will be dealt with in the strongest possible manner as provided for in this Standing Rule. This Zero Tolerance Policy covers acts occurring not only in the show arena, but also those occurring anywhere on the show grounds, the warm-up area, practice pen or any other location.

The “Zero Tolerance” policy encompasses all of the following acts:

1. **Excessive Training:** Excessive training includes excessive jerking; cueing; whipping; use of lip wire or similar device; slapping or hitting a horse on the head, or any other part of the body, one time or more than one time, in any manner, either with the rider’s hands, reins or any other object; using a bit in such a way that a horse is caused to bleed from its mouth or face; using any object held in the rider’s hand to hit a horse; or any other act which may cause trauma or injury to a horse.
2. **Inhumane Treatment:** Inhumane treatment is the exhibition of a lame or injured horse, or a horse that appears lame or injured, or a horse with any other health abnormality, which could thereby result in the horse’s undue discomfort or distress. ***If it is determined, in the sole discretion of an officiating judge(s) or Show Management, that a horse exceeds a level 3 on the 5-point lameness scale published by the American Association of Equine Practitioners, the horse/contestant may be stopped and disqualified from the run***

***The Lameness Scale published by the American Association of Equine Practitioners***

***0: Lameness not perceptible under any circumstances.***

***1: Lameness is difficult to observe and is not consistently apparent, regardless of circumstances (e.g. under saddle, circling, inclines, hard surface, etc.).***

***2: Lameness is difficult to observe at a walk or when trotting in a straight line but consistently apparent under certain circumstances (e.g. weight-carrying, circling, inclines, hard surface, etc.).***

***3: Lameness is consistently observable at a trot under all circumstances.***

***4: Lameness is obvious at a walk.***



**5: Lameness produces minimal weight bearing in motion and/or at rest or a complete inability to move.**

- a. The decision of Show Management as to whether a horse is physically suitable to show, when circumstances permit, be based upon consultation with a veterinarian. If Show Management determines, in its sole discretion, that the welfare of the horse requires immediate action, and a veterinarian is not immediately available, Show Management may immediately implement any action allowed by this Zero Tolerance Policy.
  - b. During competition, if a judge determines, in their sole discretion, that the welfare of a horse requires immediate action, the judge may immediately implement any action allowed by this Zero Tolerance Policy without consulting a veterinarian.
    1. **Monitored Event: If the majority of judges assess that a contestant's horse ranks a grade 2 or 3 on the lameness scale, the NCHA monitor will communicate this to the Director of Judges. The exhibitor and/or owner will be notified of such finding by the NCHA Director of Judges, or his/her designee immediately. The exhibitor and/or owner of the horse will be required to have the horse examined by two qualified veterinarians from separate clinics to determine if the horse is sound enough to continue in competition. Both veterinarian reports must be submitted to the NCHA Director of Judges or his/her designee prior to the horse competing again at that show.**
    2. **Non-Monitored Event: If one or more judges assess that a horse ranks a 2 or 3 on the lameness scale, the judge/judges will send a video of the horse to the NCHA Director of Judges or his/her designee for review. This consultation will occur before any decision is made to require a veterinary certificate. If after review, it is deemed necessary, the exhibitor and/or owner of the horse will be required to have the horse examined by a qualified veterinarian to determine if the horse is sound enough to continue in competition. The veterinarian report must be submitted to the NCHA Director of Judges or his/her designate prior to the horse competing again at that show.**
  - c. Both owner and rider of any horse entered in an NCHA approved or sponsored event, by said entry, consent to the implementation of any action allowed by this Zero Tolerance Policy by either Show Management or judge.
3. Administration of injectable or oral medications or possession of any drug paraphernalia while in the show arena, practice arenas, alleys leading into the arenas or any other public areas of the show grounds is strictly prohibited unless administered in a life-saving situation which should only be done based on consultation with a veterinarian. Any member observing activity that violates this

rule should immediately report such conduct to the NCHA Executive Director and/ or Show Management. If Show Management receives such a complaint, it is required to immediately forward the complaint in its original form to the NCHA Executive Director. The NCHA office will provide complaint forms to all Show Management for reporting a possible violation of this rule. Use of such form is encouraged but is not required.

4. If Show Management or a judge at any NCHA approved or sponsored event discovers inhumane treatment or excessive training of a horse, they may immediately bar the responsible party and contestants' horse from further competition in the event and the judge will give a score of zero. The Executive Director must be notified within seven (7) days of the incident involved, and the complaint will be referred to the appropriate NCHA Committee for investigation and consideration.
5. All NCHA approved or sponsored shows are required to post signs concerning the NCHA Zero Tolerance Policy at the entrance to all official practice areas. The signs shall be no smaller than 24 inches x 36 inches and shall contain wording as provided by the NCHA.
6. A reported violation under this rule must be in writing and submitted to the NCHA Executive Director within 30 days of the incident in question. The written report must identify the name of the person who allegedly violated the Zero Tolerance Policy, the show at which the alleged violation occurred, the date on which the alleged violation occurred and the location on the show grounds at which the violation occurred (i.e. – show arena, practice pen, stalls, etc.). The written report must be either:
  - (i) signed by the person making the report or, if filed electronically, identify the name of the person making the report; or
  - (ii) if the report is made anonymously, the written report must be accompanied by evidence sufficient to allow the NCHA to investigate the report (i.e. photographs, video, etc.), including evidence sufficient to verify that the alleged violation occurred on the show grounds. Anonymous reports not accompanied by evidence will not be accepted, investigated, or acted on by the NCHA. No filing fee is required for reporting any violation under this rule. Any reported violation under this Zero Tolerance Policy will be treated as a complaint under Standing Rule 37 and be considered in accordance with the procedures contained in Standing Rules 37 and 38.

Each person found to be involved in a violation of this rule (including but not limited to trainers and their assistants or employees, owners, and contestants) may each be subject to receiving the following discipline:

1st Offense: \$1,000 fine and 6 month probation or some period of suspension, 2nd Offense: \$5,000 fine and 12 month probation or some period of suspension, and 3rd Offense: \$10,000 fine and 6 month suspension

The foregoing are only guidelines for discipline that may be assessed. The disciplinary measures in the guidelines can be increased or decreased as appropriate by the Grievance Committee or Appeals Committee depending upon the circumstances and the nature of the violation.

Notwithstanding the guidelines listed above, any violation involving use of any device in a horse's mouth including without limitation, lip wire or other similar device, other than a bit authorized by the Rules, will be punished by an automatic \$1,000 fine and a six (6) month suspension.

## **B. Conduct Toward Judges and Monitors**

1. The following rules govern the interactions between contestants and judges (including Director of Judges when serving in the role of a judge):
  - a. A contestant shall not talk with the judge(s), beyond the exchange of normal greetings, verbally or by electronic or social media, during a show, nor shall a contestant discuss with the judge any previous scores, events, or related happenings within thirty (30) days after a contest in which both parties participated.
  - b. A contestant or other person shall make no comment, either positive or negative, within a judge's hearing regarding any exhibition of a cutting horse during a cutting event.
  - c. A contestant or other person shall not intimidate, or attempt to intimidate, a judge(s) verbally or by electronic or social media.
  - d. If the Director of Judges is not present, the Staff Monitor or the Field Monitor will act in the capacity of Director of Judges pertaining to a member's conduct in regard to intimidating a judge, and a liaison will accompany the Staff Monitor or Field Monitor when a discussion is necessary.
2. The following rules govern the interaction between contestants and monitors (including Director of Judges when serving in the role of a monitor):
  - a. A contestant may speak directly to the monitor(s) provided a liaison representative is also present. Any other conversation will be limited to the exchange of normal greetings during a show.
  - b. A contestant or other person will make no comments within a monitor's hearing regarding any work taking place at a performance.
  - c. A contestant or other person shall not intimidate, or attempt to intimidate, a monitor(s).
  - d. Show Management has the right to consult the NCHA Director of Judges at any time with regard to the Adjusted Monitor System.
  - e. Show Management may appoint any non-contestant NCHA member to act as a liaison between contestants and Show Management at limited age events. The Executive Director of the Association may act for the NCHA Director of Judges in the event of an emergen-

- cy situation.
- f. For no reason shall a Monitor show a contestant any ruling or run until 8:00 am the following day. The meeting will be audio recorded.
  - g. The contestant or owner and liaison will be taken to the Monitor's room and it will be explained by the Monitor how the ruling was made according to the Rule Book.
  - h. The penalty will be shown two or three times if necessary. The overhead video will be used if necessary and the rule will be explained.
  - i. The clarification of the ruling of a penalty is the only reason why a contestant and liaison are taken to the Monitor's room.
  - j. A Monitor will never argue or debate with a contestant or owner about run content or why a run was scored the way it was. That is the responsibility of the Director of Judges.
3. Any reported violation under this Section B, Conduct Toward Judges and Monitors, will be treated as a complaint under NCHA Rule 37 and be considered in accordance with the procedures contained in NCHA Rules 37 and 38. No filing fee is required for reporting any violation under this rule. Each person found to be involved in a violation of this rule (including but not limited to trainers and their assistants or employees, owners, and contestants) may each be subject to receiving the following discipline:  
1st Offense: \$1,000 fine and 6 month probation or some period of suspension  
2nd Offense: \$5,000 fine and 12 month probation or some period of suspension  
3rd Offense: \$10,000 fine and 6 month suspension  
The foregoing are only guidelines for discipline that may be assessed. The disciplinary measures contained in the guidelines can be increased or decreased as appropriate by the Grievance Committee or Appeals Committee depending upon the circumstances and the nature of the violation.

### **C. Conduct By and Between Members**

The NCHA expects all members to conduct themselves with proper respectability at all NCHA events. The following activities are strictly prohibited:

1. Unsportsmanlike conduct in the show arena or show grounds is prohibited.
2. Any member of the NCHA who threatens, or inflicts, bodily harm or injury to another person based upon that person's actions, conduct, or decisions while acting in any official capacity for the NCHA or for any NCHA sponsored or approved event shall be suspended from membership in the NCHA for a period of not less than one (1) year.
3. No alcoholic beverages may be consumed or brought into any part of the show arena while an NCHA approved or sponsored cutting horse contest is taking place.
4. Training activities of any kind while on the show grounds, other than in designated practice facilities, are prohibited.
5. Any reported violation under this Section C, Conduct By

and Between Members, will be treated as a complaint under NCHA Rule 37 and be considered in accordance with the procedures contained in NCHA Rules 37 and 38. Each person found to be involved in a violation of this rule may each be subject to receiving the following discipline:

1st Offense: \$1,000 fine and 3 month probation or some period of suspension

2nd Offense: \$2,500 fine and 6 month probation or some period of suspension

3rd Offense: \$5,000 fine and 6 month suspension

The foregoing are only guidelines for discipline that may be assessed. The disciplinary measures contained in the guidelines can be increased or decreased as appropriate by the Grievance Committee or Appeals Committee depending upon the circumstances and the nature of the violation.

#### **D. Failure to pay fines timely**

*Where a member is assessed a fine for a violation under this rule, such fine must be paid in full within fifteen (15) days after the fine is assessed. If the fine is not paid in full within that fifteen (15) day time-frame, the member will immediately be placed on membership suspension until such fine is paid in full. If the disciplinary action taken against the member included a suspension and/or probation in addition to a fine, that suspension and/or probation will be extended by a period equal to the amount of days over fifteen (15) days that it takes for the member to pay the fine in full (Example: If the member does not pay the fine in full until 45 days after the fine is assessed, then 30 days will be added to the term of the corresponding suspension and/or probation.):*

### **STANDING RULE 35A**

#### **MEDICATION AND DRUG RULES AND GUIDELINES**

The NCHA's Medication and Drug Rules and Guidelines ("Medication Rules") have been put in place to protect and prolong the welfare and competitiveness of the equine athletes who compete in cutting. The NCHA believes in the safety of horses as well as a level playing field when it comes to its events. That is why the Association is testing for substance violations at the NCHA produced and/or approved events.

#### **1. Who is Responsible?**

Whether you enter, show, own, care for, or deliver a horse to an NCHA-produced show, you may be responsible for the horse's condition and are presumed to know all the rules and regulations of NCHA.

- a. All riders showing horses in any NCHA produced and/or approved shows are deemed responsible for that horse under these rules.
  - i. In situations involving "catch riders,"
    1. If the horse has a trainer, the trainer will be the person deemed responsible for the horse;
    2. Or if the horse does not have a trainer, the owner will be the person deemed responsible for the horse.
  - ii. For youth riders, the parent or legal guardian of the youth is deemed responsible for the horse ridden by the youth.
  - iii. The above described persons are subject to disciplinary sanctions for a violation of the Medication Rules, whether or not they had actual knowledge of the presence of an

offending drug, directly participated in the administration of that drug, innocently miscalculated its dosage or retention time in the horse's system, or for any other reason.

- b. The person deemed the responsible person for a violation under this rule has the right to assert that some other person was actually responsible for the violation. In such cases, the burden is on the person deemed responsible for the horse under these rules to present evidence establishing that another person(s) was responsible for the violation. Any other persons shown by the evidence to have responsibility for a violation of the Medication Rules are also subject to disciplinary sanctions.

## **2. The Medication Review Committee**

The Medication Review Committee is charged with the initial review of the lab results received from any drug testing conducted under the Medication Rules, determining if the lab results indicate that a violation has occurred and taking disciplinary action for any rule violations shown in those lab results. The Medication Review Committee may also conduct hearings to determine whether a violation of the Medication Rules has occurred, if necessary. The Medication Review Committee shall consist of five (5) members appointed by the NCHA President with the approval of the Executive Committee. Three licensed veterinarians, one Professional trainer and one Non-Professional member will be on the Medication Review Committee at all times. Membership on the committee will be reviewed annually. No person may serve as a member of the Medication Review Committee at the same time they also serve as a member of the Executive Committee. The NCHA President shall have the authority to appoint an additional member to the Medication Review Committee in any case where an existing member of the committee recuses themselves from acting on that case.

## **3. NCHA Recognition of other Equine Organization and Authorized State Agencies**

All contestants must be aware that, in addition to the NCHA Medication Rules, all horses are subject to the equine laws of the state in which an event is held and are also subject to any medication rules duly adopted by the sponsors, co-sponsors, producers or co-producers of such events. In addition to possibly being randomly tested by the NCHA under rule 35A.5, horses may also be tested by authorized state agencies and/or by the other equine organizations that sponsor, co-sponsor or produce such events. Since the goal of the NCHA Medication Rules is to protect the welfare of the horse, the NCHA will recognize the results of the drug testing performed by such authorized state agencies or other sponsors, co-sponsors, or producers. A violation of their medication rules found by any of those entities will also be considered a violation of NCHA Medication Rules and will be referred to the NCHA Medication Review Committee for possible disciplinary action.

## **4. Approved Veterinarians for NCHA Show Grounds**

In order to be eligible to treat or administer medication to a horse on the show grounds of an NCHA produced event, a veterinarian must be an approved veterinarian under NCHA Rules (an "Approved Veterinarian"). In order to be an Approved Veterinarian, such veterinarian must be an NCHA member in good standing, must submit an application to the NCHA on application forms distributed by the NCHA and must have such application approved by the NCHA. Each applying veterinarian acknowl-

edges they agree that if they are found to have violated any NCHA Rules on the show grounds, they are subject to having their approved status suspended or revoked by the NCHA in accordance with its Rules and may no longer be allowed to treat or administer medication until such status is restored by the NCHA, if ever.

## **5. Policies / Process for Medication Testing – Selection Process**

- a. NCHA Triple Crown Events - Horses competing in Open, Non-Pro and Amateur Divisions at NCHA Triple Crown Events will be tested as follows:
  - i. The unofficial scores of the three highest scoring horses (including ties) in all one-set finals will be tested immediately following those finals.
  - ii. The unofficial scores of the top two highest scoring horses (including ties) in each set of all multiple-set finals will be tested immediately following their respective sets.
  - iii. Show Management will predetermine days and sets in which additional random drug testing will be done in go rounds and semi-finals prior to their respective draws. Slots within those pre-determined sets that will be tested will be randomly selected from within those sets prior to their respective draws.
- b. Other NCHA Produced Events
  - i. Show Management will predetermine days and sets in which random drug testing will be done in any go rounds and/or finals.
  - ii. Slots within those pre-determined go round and/or final sets that will be tested will be randomly selected from within those sets prior to their respective draws.
- c. Executive Director Selection - In all NCHA Triple Crown Events and all NCHA produced or approved events, the NCHA Executive Director may, in their sole discretion, have any horse tested.

## **6. Policies / Process for Medication Testing – Testing Process**

- a. **HORSES MUST BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR TESTING**

Every exhibitor and/or owner shall, upon request of Show Management or an NCHA representative, permit specimens of blood to be taken for testing. An exhibitor will be informed that their horse has been selected for testing immediately after competing in the arena. The request sheet shall be initiated by the exhibitor, owner or the owner's authorized agent acknowledging time of receipt and immediately returned to the NCHA representative or testing veterinarian who gave you the sheet.

  - i. THE EXHIBITOR MUST TAKE THE HORSE IMMEDIATELY TO THE TESTING STALL FOR TESTING AS DIRECTED BY THE NCHA TESTING VETERINARIAN. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCE SHALL THE HORSE BE DELIVERED FOR TESTING LATER THAN 15 MINUTES AFTER RECEIPT OF THE REQUEST FOR TESTING.
  - ii. Refusal to Comply with Testing Selection will result in Disciplinary action according to section 14.a.ii.1
- b. **BLOOD SAMPLE POLICIES**
  - i. All blood samples taken pursuant to the NCHA Medication Rules will be taken by, or at the direction of, a licensed veterinarian selected by the NCHA in its sole

discretion. The NCHA will attempt to take test samples under the NCHA Medication Rules after a horse completes its rounds of competition for the day, however, each horse selected shall be tested on the date selected for testing.

- ii. The person collecting the sample should fully complete all test sample recording forms provided by the NCHA at the time the sample is taken.
- iii. The person collecting the sample will make an effort to work with the horse owner so as to minimize any discomfort to the horse.
- iv. The person collecting the sample should make every effort to take the sample in, or in close proximity to, the test stalls located at the facility.

All samples taken by the NCHA will be stored, shipped, and tested in accordance with generally accepted practices for storing, shipping, and testing equine blood samples as prescribed by the certified testing laboratory utilized by the NCHA. It is presumed the sample of blood tested by the approved laboratory is the one taken from the horse in question and that its integrity is preserved. It is also presumed that all procedures for such collection and preservation of the sample, transfer to the laboratory, and analysis of the sample have been followed. The lab results are presumed to be correct and accurate. It is also presumed that the report received from the laboratory pertains to the sample taken from the horse in question and correctly reflects the condition of the horse during the show in which it was entered, with the burden on the responsible party or parties to prove otherwise at any hearing conducted concerning the violation by NCHA. Results will be sent back to NCHA and reviewed by the Medication Review Committee.

## 7. Permitted Medications

NCHA Medication Rules are not part of a complete no-drug policy, but rather rules for the welfare of the horse. Within the Guidelines listed below, the following 15 therapeutic medications\* can be administered by a licensed veterinarian, caretaker, or responsible individual to a horse with a legitimate injury or illness within 24 hours of showing. For allowed dosage amounts, refer to the Guidelines listed below.

- To avoid single NSAID overage, do not administer more than the package insert indicated therapeutic amount adjusted for **the weight of the horse** on days prior to the day you show.

- To avoid a stacking violation under NCHA Medication Rules, **only a single NSAID** should be administered within 72 hours of showing the horse. Example: If your horse is on Banamine (Flunixin) prior to the show and you plan to switch to Phenylbutazone (“Bute”) at the show, you should discontinue administering Banamine at least 72 hours prior to show time.

- It is strongly recommended that show doses (6 hours prior to competition) be given by IV. Exhibitors, owners, trainers, and veterinarians are cautioned to allow additional leeway under the minimal timeframes recommended in the guidelines when using paste, powder, or tablet orally, since oral medications may result in differing variations in plasma levels. It will be considered a rule violation if plasma samples contain more than one of the permitted Nonsteroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs) that are listed below. The exception is Diclofenac (Surpass®) topical which may be combined with one other sys-



temic NSAID listed below under Permitted Medications.

**\* To avoid stacking of two (2) NSAID'S you must discontinue one (1) of the NSAID'S at least 3 days (72 hours) prior to showing.**

#### **NSAIDS**

1. Diclofenac (Surpass®)
2. Phenylbutazone (Bute®)
3. Flunixin Meglumine (Banamine®)
4. Ketoprofen (Ketofen®)
5. Meclofenamic Acid (Arquel®)
6. Naproxen (Equiproxen®)
7. Firocoxib (Equioxx®)

#### **Other Permitted Medications**

8. Omeprazole (Gastroguard®)
9. Methocarbamol (Robaxin®)
10. Furosemide (Salix®)
11. Altrenogest (Regumate®)
12. Removed
13. Acetazolamide
14. Isoxsuprine Hydrochloride (Vasodilan®)
15. Dexamethasone (Dexject SP®)
16. Dantrolene

### **8. Conditionally Permitted Therapeutic Medication**

Because the welfare of the horse is the No. 1 priority, a conditionally permitted therapeutic medication, such as approved antibiotics, can be administered or prescribed by a licensed veterinarian for a legitimate illness or injury. However, it must be done no less than 24 hours before competing and each of the requirements listed below must be met to prevent disciplinary action if the medications are detected in plasma samples.

- a. Exception: Acepromazine Maleate (PromAce®) is considered a conditionally approved medication when used for the safety and welfare of the horse, when administered as prescribed by a licensed veterinarian, and Medication Report is submitted to Show Management. It is the only exception to the 24 hour rule. Only one Medication report for PromAce® is required for an event.
- b. Requirements for Administering Conditionally Permitted Medications
  - i. A licensed veterinarian must administer or prescribe the medication (except for PromAce® which only requires a Medication Report) and must also document that the administration of the medication is necessary for the legitimate treatment of illness or injury.
  - ii. The horse must be withdrawn and kept out of competition for not less than 24 hours after the medication is administered.
  - iii. Antibiotics are permitted substances unless combined with local anesthetics. Procaine penicillin or other antibiotic with **local anesthetics** are prohibited substances. The use of procaine penicillin or other antibiotics with local anesthetics would result in the need for the horse to be withdrawn from competition for at least 24 hours and a Medication Report completed and filed.
  - iv. Local anesthetics, which are RAC class 2 substances and are considered prohibited substances unless the horse

is withdrawn for 24 hours and a **Medication Report** completed and filed.

- v. It will be a presumption of a violation of the Medication Rules if the laboratory detects concentration levels that are inconsistent with a therapeutic dosage, regardless of whether the medication report requirements described above were met. The responsible party then has the burden of persuasion to establish that the drug was administered in a therapeutic dosage and not less than 24 hours prior to competition.
  - vi. These exceptions do not apply if the drug is prohibited by governmental regulations, such as the California Equine Medication Monitoring Program.
- c. Medication Report
- A written Medication Report, available from NCHA or Show Management, must be completed in its entirety, and filed with Show Management before exhibition of the horse and according to the guidelines below.
- i. The Medication Report must contain:
    - 1. Identification of the medication, including the name, amount, strength/concentration, and mode of administration.
    - 2. Date and time of administration.
    - 3. Identification of the horse, including name, age, sex, color, and entry number.
    - 4. Diagnosis of illness/injury, reason for administration, and name of administering and/or prescribing veterinarian.
    - 5. Signature of veterinarian or person administering or prescribing the medication. If by prescription (written instructions), a copy must be attached to the medication report.
  - ii. Report Filing Timeline / Process
    - 1. **Completed** medication reports must be filed with Show Management within one hour after administration of the medication or, if administration occurs at a time other than during competition hours, within one hour after Show Management is available.
    - 2. Submitted medication reports must be signed by Show Management and time of receipt recorded on the report.
    - 3. A report must be filed if the administered medication will be detectable in blood and/or urine samples at the time of competition/sampling. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EXHIBITORS to determine whether or not the medication has had time to clear their horses' systems. If there is any doubt, a medication report should be filed as a precaution.
    - 4. In the event that a horse is randomly tested, all medication reports for that horse must be on file with the NCHA prior to the time of the test in order to be considered.

## **9. Guidelines for Permitted & Conditionally Permitted Medications**

The Guidelines outlined below are applicable to most horses and can minimize the chances of positive drug tests. If medication is given by paste, powder, or tablet orally; exhibitors, owners, trainers, and veterinarians are cautioned to allow additional leeway under the minimal timeframes for administration of medication recommended in these guidelines since oral medications may result in differing variations in plasma levels. However, reliance upon these Guidelines does not guarantee compliance with the rules because the response of individual horses can vary. Reliance upon these Guidelines is not a defense in the event of a violation. Exhibitors, owners, and trainers should consult the drug manufacturer and knowledgeable veterinarians for up-to-date information and more specific advice concerning the therapeutic use of a drug or medication for a particular horse. If the testing laboratory reports one of the medications below in a level higher than a specified maximum permitted plasma concentration, NCHA will review the matter, and disciplinary action may be taken.

The following recommendations are for the use of a single nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID). Only one systemic NSAID should be in the animal's system. The use of Diclofenac (Surpass) topically is allowed with one systemic non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID).

### **a. Phenylbutazone (an NSAID):**

- i. **Maximum Permitted Plasma Concentration:** The maximum permitted plasma concentration of Phenylbutazone ("Bute") is 15.0 micrograms per milliliter. When Bute is administered, the dose should be accurately calculated according to the actual weight of the horse. Each 24 hours, not more than 2.0 milligrams per pound of body weight should be administered, preferably less. For a 1,000-pound horse, the maximum daily dose is 2.0 grams, which equals two 1.0-gram tablets, or two 1.0-gram units of paste, or 10.0 cc of the injectable (200 milligrams per milliliter). For a 1,000-pound horse, if you are administering Bute in one-gram amounts twice daily, the dose is one gram tablet, or one gram of paste or 5 cc of the injectable (200 milligrams per milliliter). Neither a total daily dose nor part of an injectable dose should be administered during the 6 hours prior to competing. Bute should not be used for more than five consecutive days.
- ii. **Dosage Guideline:** The NCHA suggests the following dosage guidelines for the administration of Bute:
  1. **Alternative No. 1: Bute given once daily:**
    - a. The maximum dose given once daily to a 1000-pound horse is 2.0 grams (see above for administration options). If you are administering Bute once daily, the safest practice is to ensure that your previous administration of the once daily dose was made at least 24 hours prior to your Show Dose (6 hours or more prior to competition).
    - b. **Example:** If you are administering 2-gram doses of Bute to your 1000-pound horse that is showing at 4 pm on Monday, then the 2-gram Show Dose should be given no later than 10 a.m. on Monday (6 hours prior to showing). The pre-

vious 2-gram dose given prior to the Show Dose should be given no later than 10 a.m. Sunday (24 hours prior to the Show Dose).

2. Alternative No. 2: Bute given twice daily:
    - a. The maximum dose given twice daily to a 1000-pound horse is 1.0 gram (see above for administration options). If you are administering Bute in 1-gram amounts, the safest practice is to ensure that your previous administration of the twice daily dose was made at least 12 hours prior to your 1-gram Show Dose (6 hours or more prior to competition).
    - b. Example: If you are administering 1-gram doses of Bute to your 1000-pound horse that is showing at 12 p.m. on Tuesday, then the Show Dose should be given no later than 6 a.m. on Tuesday (6 hours prior to showing). The previous 1-gram dose given prior to the Show Dose should be given no later than 6 p.m. Monday (12 hours prior to the Show Dose).
  - iii. Dosage and Timing of Administration: Please note that Bute levels build up in the horse's blood system over time when repeated doses of Bute are administered. It is therefore critical to ensure that proper dosages of Bute are given at proper intervals in order to be in compliance with NCHA Medication Rules. Specifically, overages of Bute levels may occur under NCHA Medication Rules even when a therapeutic dose of Bute is given 6 hours prior to the time the horse is shown (the "Show Dose"), if timing of prior dosages of Bute given to the horse have not been taken into account.
  - iv. Route of Administration Options: Exhibitors, owners, trainers, and veterinarians are cautioned that the administration of Bute in paste, powder, or tablet oral form may not be accurately administered or metabolized as quickly by the horse and may, therefore, lead to positive test results depending on the timing of administration. If Bute is given by paste, powder, or tablet orally; exhibitors, owners, trainers, and veterinarians are cautioned to allow additional leeway under the minimal timeframes for administration of Bute recommended in these guidelines since oral medications may result in differing variations in plasma levels. Administration of Bute by intravenous (IV) route is strongly recommended when giving a Show Dose six hours prior to competition.
- b. Diclofenac (an NSAID)**
- i. Maximum Permitted Plasma Concentration: The maximum permitted plasma concentration of Diclofenac is 0.005 micrograms per milliliter.
  - ii. Dosage Guideline: Every 12 hours, not more than 73 mg of diclofenac liposomal cream should be administered (not more than 146 mg per 24-hour period) to one affected site. This 73 mg dose equals a 5-inch ribbon of cream not greater than half-an-inch in width, which should be rubbed thoroughly into the hair over the joint or affected

site using gloved hands.

- iii. Dosage and Timing of Administration: Administration of diclofenac cream should be discontinued 6 hours prior to competing. Do not apply diclofenac cream in combination with any other topical preparations including DMSO, nitrofurazone or liniments, and do not use on an open wound. Diclofenac cream should not be administered for more than 10 consecutive days.
- c. **Flunixin Meglumine (an NSAID)**
  - i. Maximum Permitted Plasma Concentration: The maximum permitted plasma concentration of Flunixin is 1.0 microgram per milliliter.
  - ii. Dosage Guideline: When Flunixin Meglumine is administered, the dose should be accurately calculated according to the actual weight of the horse. Each 24 hours, not more than 0.5 milligrams per pound of body weight should be administered. For a 1,000-pound horse, the maximum daily dose is 500 milligrams, which equals two 250-milligram packets of granules, or one 500-milligram packet of granules, or 500 milligrams of the oral paste (available in 1,500 milligram dose syringes), or 10.0 cc of the injectable (50 milligrams per milliliter).
  - iii. Dosage and Timing of Administration: No part of a dose should be administered during the 6 hours prior to competing. Any medicated feed must be consumed and/or removed at least 6 hours prior to competing. The medication should not be used for more than five consecutive days.
- d. **Ketoprofen (an NSAID)**
  - i. Maximum Permitted Plasma Concentration: The maximum permitted plasma concentration of Ketoprofen is 0.25 µg per milliliter.
  - ii. Dosage Guideline: When Ketoprofen is administered, the dose should be accurately calculated according to the actual weight of the horse. Each 24 hours, not more than 1.0 milligram per pound of body weight should be administered. For a 1,000-pound horse, the maximum daily dose is 1.0 gram, which equals 10.0 cc of the injectable (100 milligrams per milliliter).
  - iii. Dosage and Timing of Administration: No part of a dose should be administered during the 6 hours prior to competing. The medication should not be used for more than five consecutive days.
- e. **Meclofenamic Acid (an NSAID)**
  - i. Maximum Permitted Plasma Concentration: The maximum permitted plasma concentration of Meclofenamic Acid is 2.5 micrograms per milliliter.
  - ii. Dosage Guideline: When Meclofenamic Acid is administered, the dose should be accurately calculated according to the actual weight of the horse. Each 6 hours, not more than 0.5 milligram per pound of body weight should be administered, preferably less. For a 1,000-pound horse, the maximum 12-hour dose is 0.5 gram, which equals one 500-milligram packet of granules.
  - iii. Dosage and Timing of Administration: The medication

should not be used for more than five consecutive days.

**f. Naproxen (an NSAID):**

- i. Maximum Permitted Plasma Concentration: The maximum permitted plasma concentration of Naproxen is 40.0 micrograms per milliliter.
- ii. Dosage Guideline: When Naproxen is administered, the dose should be accurately calculated according to the actual weight of the horse. Each 24 hours, not more than 4.0 milligrams per pound of body weight should be administered. For a 1,000-pound horse, the maximum daily dose is 4.0 grams, which equals eight 500-milligram tablets.
- iii. Dosage and Timing of Administration: No part of a dose should be administered during the 6 hours prior to competing. Any medicated feed should be consumed and/or removed at least 12 hours prior to competing. The medication should not be used for more than five consecutive days.

**g. Firocoxib (an NSAID)**

- i. Maximum Permitted Plasma Concentration: The maximum permitted plasma concentration of Firocoxib is 0.240 micrograms per milliliter.
- ii. Dosage Guideline: When Firocoxib is administered, the dose should be accurately calculated according to the actual weight of the horse:
  1. By tablet: One (1) 57mg tablet administered orally to horses weighing 800-1300 lbs (0.04-0.07mg/lb or 0.09-0.15 mg/kg) once daily.
  2. By oral paste: 0.045 mg/lb (0.1mg/kg) body weight, once daily.
- iii. Dosage and Timing of Administration: No part of a dose should be administered during the 6 hours prior to competition. Firocoxib should not be administered for more than fourteen consecutive days.

**h. Methocarbamol**

- i. Maximum Permitted Plasma Concentration: ***While these rules do not contain a maximum allowable plasma concentration level for dantrolene, laboratory detection of levels of dantrolene that are not consistent with administration in accordance with the Guidelines may result in prosecution of a rule violation.***
- ii. Dosage Guideline: Whenever methocarbamol is administered, the dose should be accurately calculated according to the actual weight of the horse. Each 12 hours, not more than 5.0 mg per pound of body weight should be administered, preferably less. For a 1000-pound animal, the maximum dose each 12 hours is 5.0 grams, which equals ten 500 milligram tablets or 50 cc of the injectable (100 milligrams per milliliter).
- iii. Dosage and Timing of Administration: No dose should be administered during the 12 hours immediately following the prior dose. No part of a dose should be administered during the 6 hours prior to competing. Any medicated feed must be consumed and/or removed at least 6 hours prior to competing. Methocarbamol should not be administered for more than five successive days.

**i. Dantrolene**

- i. **Maximum Permitted Plasma Concentration:** While these rules do not contain a maximum allowable plasma concentration level for dantrolene, laboratory detection of levels of dantrolene that are not consistent with administration in accordance with the Guidelines may result in prosecution of a rule violation.
- ii. **Dosage Guideline:** Whenever dantrolene sodium is administered, the dose should be accurately calculated to not exceed 500 milligrams total and is typically administered orally. For a 1000-pound animal the maximum dose each 24 hours is 500mg.
- iii. **Dosage and Timing of Administration:** No part of the dose should be administered during the 12 hours immediately following the prior dose. No part of a dose should be administered during the 6 hours prior to competing. Any medicated feed must be consumed and/or removed at least 6 hours prior to competing. Dantrolene should not be administered for more than five successive days.

**j. Acetazolamide**

- i. **Maximum Permitted Plasma Concentration:** While these rules do not contain a maximum allowable plasma concentration level for Acetazolamide, laboratory detection of levels of Acetazolamide that are not consistent with administration in accordance with the Guidelines may result in prosecution of a rule violation.
- ii. **Guidelines:** Acetazolamide may only be administered to horses documented through DNA testing to be positive (N/H or H/H) for Hyperkalemic Periodic Paralysis (HYPP). When acetazolamide is administered, the dose should be accurately calculated according to the actual weight of the horse.
- iii. **Dosage and Timing of Administration:** Each 24 hours, not more than 3 milligrams per pound of body weight should be administered. For a 1,000-pound horse, the maximum daily dose is 3 grams.

**k. Furosemide**

- i. **Maximum Permitted Plasma Concentration:** **100 nanograms/ml.**
- ii. **Dosage Guideline:** Not to exceed: 250 mg (5 cc).
- iii. **Dosage and Timing of Administration:** Must be administered intravenously at least four hours prior to competition.

**l. Isoxsuprine**

- i. **Maximum Permitted Plasma Concentration:** While these rules do not contain a maximum allowable plasma concentration level for Isoxsuprine, laboratory detection of levels of Isoxsuprine that are not consistent with administration in accordance with the Guidelines may result in prosecution of a rule violation.
- ii. **Dosage Guideline:** When administered, the dose should be accurately calculated according to the actual weight of the horse. Each 24 hours, not more than 1.6 milligrams per pound of body weight should be administered (usually divided in two equal doses given 12 hours apart). For a

1,000-pound horse, the maximum daily dose is 1,600 milligrams, which equals 80 20-milligram tablets.

- iii. Dosage and Timing of Administration: No part of a dose should be administered during the four hours prior to competing. Any medicated feed should be consumed and/or removed at least four hours prior to competing.

**m. Dexamethasone**

- i. Maximum Permitted Plasma Concentration: The maximum permitted plasma concentration is 3.0 nanograms per milliliter at the time of competition.
- ii. Dosage Guideline: In order to help trainers, owners and their veterinarians achieve compliance with this rule in connection with the therapeutic use of dexamethasone, it should be administered in accordance with the guidelines below. These guidelines include several alternative scenarios for dose time and route of administration. Whenever dexamethasone is administered, the dose should be accurately calculated according to the actual weight of the horse.
  - 1. Alternative No 1: 2.0 mg or less per 100 pounds IV or IM at 12 or more hours before competition
    - a. Each 24 hours, not more than 2.0 milligrams of dexamethasone injectable solution per 100 pounds of body weight should be administered intravenously or intramuscularly, preferably less.
    - b. For a 1,000-pound horse, the maximum daily intravenous or intramuscular dose of dexamethasone injectable solution is 20.0 milligrams, which equals 5.0 milliliters of the injectable solution (4.0 milligrams per milliliter). No part of this dose should be administered during the 12 hours prior to competing. Dexamethasone should not be administered for more than five consecutive days.
  - 2. Alternative No. 2 – 1.0 mg or less per 100 pounds IV at 6 or more hours before competition
    - a. Each 24 hours, not more than 1.0 milligram of dexamethasone injectable solution per 100 pounds of body weight should be administered intravenously, preferably less.
    - b. For a 1,000-pound horse, the maximum daily intravenous dose of dexamethasone injectable solution is 10.0 milligrams, which equals 2.5 milliliters of the injectable solution (4.0 milligrams per milliliter). No part of this dose should be administered during the six hours prior to competing. Dexamethasone should not be administered for more than five consecutive days.
  - 3. Alternative No. 3 – 1.0 mg or less per 100 pounds orally at 6 or more hours before competition
    - a. Each 24 hours, not more than 1.0 milligram of dexamethasone powder per 100 pounds of body weight should be administered orally, prefera-



bly less.

- b. For a 1,000-pound horse, the maximum daily oral dose of dexamethasone powder is 10.0 milligrams, which equals one packet of dexamethasone powder (10.0 milligrams per packet). No part of this dose should be administered during the six hours prior to competing. Any medicated feed should be either consumed or removed at least six hours prior to competing. Dexamethasone should not be administered for more than five consecutive days.

**n. Ventipulmin**

- i. Maximum Permitted Plasma Concentration: While these rules do not contain a maximum allowable plasma concentration level for ventipulmin, laboratory detection of levels of ventipulmin that are not consistent with administration in accordance with the Guidelines may result in prosecution of a rule violation.
- ii. Dosage Guideline: .5 mg (1/2 cc) or less per 100 pounds administered IM, or orally at 6 or more hours before competition.
- iii. Dosage and Timing of Administration: See above.

**o. Acepromazine Maleate**

- i. Maximum Permitted Plasma Concentration: While these rules do not contain a maximum allowable plasma concentration level for acepromazine, laboratory detection of levels of acepromazine that are not consistent with administration in accordance with the Guidelines may result in prosecution of a rule violation
- ii. Dosage Guideline: 0.5 mg or less per 100 pounds administered IV, IM, or orally at 1 or more hours before competition).
- iii. Dosage and Timing of Administration: Maximum single dose should not exceed 5 mg total, which equals .50 milliliters of the injectable solution (10.0 milligrams per milliliter). A written medication report must be submitted to Show Management using the reporting guidelines found under conditionally approved medications.

**10. Prohibited Substances**

NCHA Medication Rules do not allow drugs and medications that can enhance a horse's performance (i.e., Performance Enhancing Drugs). The following substances cannot be administered, internally or externally to a horse showing at an NCHA produced and/or approved event:

- a. Any drug considered a Class I or Class II substance as defined in the most recent edition of the Association of Racing Commissioners International (ARCI's) Uniform Classification Guidelines for Foreign Substances.
- b. Any stimulant, depressant, tranquilizer, or sedative that could affect the performance of a horse. Stimulants and depressants are defined as substances that stimulate or depress the cardiovascular, respiratory, or central nervous system.
- c. Any substance that might interfere with or mask the detection of a prohibited drug or medication.
- d. Anabolic Steroids are considered prohibited substances. No anabolic steroid is to be administered to a horse in a time

- frame before competition such that it, or any metabolite of it, might be present in the blood at the time of competition. See the Guidelines for the recommended withdrawal times.
- e. Any non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) other than those allowed by NCHA at the proper therapeutic dosage as contained in the Guidelines.
  - f. Any metabolite and/or analog of any of the above described forbidden drugs or substances.
  - g. Prohibited Substance Exceptions:
    - i. Acepromazine Maleate is considered a conditionally approved medication when administered or prescribed by a licensed veterinarian in accordance with the Guidelines contained in this rule. A written medication report must be submitted to Show Management.
    - ii. Local anesthetics may be administered by a veterinarian when used under the provisions of the Emergency Medication Guidelines (see below).
    - iii. Corticosteroids other than dexamethasone (e.g., prednisolone, Solu-Delta-Cortef®, triamcinolone acetonide, betamethasone, methylprednisolone (Depo-Medrol®) and others) are classified as prohibited substances unless used strictly for a therapeutic purpose, i.e., for the treatment of existing inflammatory conditions related to illness or injury. They are not to be administered at a time closer than 24 hours prior to competing under any circumstances. Additionally, any corticosteroid being used under this rule must be administered in compliance with the following dosage guidelines: Maximum Total Dosages:
      - 1. Triamcinolone acetonide – 50 mg.
      - 2. Betamethasone – 50 mg.
      - 3. Isoflupredone – 50 mg.
      - 4. Methylprednisolone – 300 mg.
      - 5. Other corticosteroids, pharmaceutical recommended dosage
  - h. A medication report must be filed in connection with any of the following administrations:
    - i. When using any other corticosteroid (other than those listed in the conditionally permitted medication section), a medication report must be filed for administration by any route 7 days prior to competing;
    - ii. When using the corticosteroid methylprednisolone (Depo-Medrol®), a medication report must be filed if competing within 14 days of administration;
    - iii. When using the corticosteroid i.e., isoflupredone (Preddef2X®) or methylprednisolone (DepoMedrol) when injecting the sacroiliac (SI) joint, a medication report must be filed if competing within 28 days of administration.

### **11. Prohibited Substances: Withdrawal Guidelines**

Reliance upon these Guidelines does not guarantee compliance with the rules because the response of individual horses can vary. Reliance upon these Guidelines is not a defense in the event of a violation. Exhibitors, owners, and trainers should consult the drug manufacturer and knowledgeable veterinarians for up-to-date information and more specific advice concerning the therapeutic use of a drug or medication for a

particular horse. Withdrawal Guidelines vary by medication:

- a. Short acting tranquilizers / sedatives / anti-hypertensives such as, but not limited to chlorpromazine, ketamine, romifidine, detomidine and guanabenz should not be used within 3 days (72 hrs) of show time and only under the supervision of a veterinarian. Exception: A low dose of acepromazine maleate is permitted with required reporting provisions.
- b. Antipsychotic drugs / Antidepressants / Long-acting tranquilizers such as, but not limited to, fluphenazine (Prolix), reserpine, fluoxetine (Prozac) are not allowed. Many of these drugs can be detected for 45 days or more.
- c. Anabolic Steroid - In order to ensure the welfare of performance horses and riders as well as the integrity of the sport, the use of both therapeutic and illegal agents in performance horses is tightly regulated. Until a few years ago, anabolic steroids were commonly administered to performance horses, presumably to promote muscle growth and enhance performance. To align with other horse industry groups, the NCHA has adopted the international androgenic anabolic steroid recommendation and withdrawal guidelines listed below.
  - i. **Boldenone:** Screening limit no greater than 100 pg/ml in serum or plasma with a confirmatory threshold no greater than 25 pg/ml for all horses regardless of sex, which regulates an 82-day withdrawal time. Boldenone undecylenate in oil was administered intramuscularly at a dose of 1.1 mg/kg to achieve a safe limit of 100pg/ml at 82 days prior to sampling.
  - ii. **Nandrolone:** Screening limit no greater than 100 pg/ml in serum or plasma with a confirmatory threshold no greater than 25 pg/ml for geldings, fillies, and mares, which regulates a 35 day withdrawal time. Male horses other than geldings will not be tested for nandrolone in blood. Nandrolone decanoate in oil was administered intramuscularly at a dose 0.55 mg/kg to achieve a safe limit of 100 pg/ml at 35 days prior to sampling.
  - iii. **Stanozolol:** Screening limit no greater than 100 pg/ml in serum or plasma with a confirmatory threshold no greater than 25 pg/ml for all horses regardless of sex, which regulates a 47day withdrawal time. Stanozolol as an aqueous `suspension was administered intramuscularly at a dose of .55 mg/kg to achieve a safe limit of 100 pg/ml at 47 days prior to sampling.
  - iv. **Testosterone:** Screening limit no greater than 100 pg/ml in serum or plasma with a confirmatory threshold no greater than 25 pg/ml for geldings, fillies and mares and a confirmatory limit of 2 µg/ml for male horses other than geldings, which regulates a 30-day withdrawal time. Testosterone as an aqueous solution was administered subcutaneously at a dose of 0.15 mg/kg to achieve a safe limit of 100 pg/ml at 30 days prior to sampling.

## 12. Cautionary Word on Other Substances

- a. **Nutritional & Herbal Supplements** - Non-prescription medicinal, herbal, and nutritional preparations, tonics, pastes, and supplements should be used cautiously as the ingredients and quantitative analysis of the products might not be known and

could contain forbidden substances or other substances that could result in a positive test.

- b. **Compounded Substances** - Exhibitors, owners, trainers, and veterinarians are cautioned against the use of compounded medications or those formulated at compounding pharmacies. The ingredients and quantitative analysis of the products may not be known and could contain a forbidden substance or quantities of substances that could result in a positive test.

### 13. Emergency Medication

The NCHA Medication Rules allow for administration of emergency medication by a veterinarian (who is a member in good standing of the American Association of Equine Practitioners and licensed to practice veterinary medicine in the state where the event is being held) under certain limited circumstances where a true emergency situation exists.

- a. Any veterinarian that treats or administers medication to a horse on NCHA show grounds must be an Approved Veterinarian under the provisions of section 4 above.
- b. In the case of a sick or injured horse, **appropriate therapeutic doses** of only lidocaine, mepivacaine or flunixin meglumine (Banamine) may be given by a licensed veterinarian under actual observation by event management or a designated NCHA representative (if after show hours, the exhibitor must provide a statement from the treating veterinarian) to treat a condition / illness / injury that would not prevent the horse from safely competing following treatment.
  - i. Flunixin meglumine (Banamine) administered at therapeutic levels permitted by NCHA medication rules can be used for the treatment of colic.
  - ii. Administration of lidocaine or mepivacaine is also permitted for the purpose of surgical repair of minor skin lacerations which, by its very nature, would not prevent the horse from competing following the surgery.
- c. Under no circumstances can this Emergency Medication provision of the NCHA Medication and Drug Rules be applied for an examination or treatment in which a local anesthetic is used to provide full or partial anesthesia (block) of an extremity or joint within 24 hours of the horse competing.
- d. Emergency Medication Report Form
  - i. An emergency medication report form which is available on the NCHA website and from Show Management, must be filed with Show Management before exhibition of the horse that is being administered emergency medication under this rule.
  - ii. If an emergency medication report is filed for a horse, the NCHA designated veterinarian may examine any skin lacerations and the skin sensation of that horse and that horse may be drug tested under the provisions of Standing Rule 35A.5 at the sole discretion of the Executive Director.
  - iii. Filing of an emergency medication report form does not automatically excuse the horse from the consequences associated with a failed drug test. If a horse that has been administered emergency medication under this rule is tested under NCHA rules and tests positive, the Medication Review Committee will take into consideration the

emergency medical report form on file. However, if the Committee determines that the emergency medication was administered above appropriate therapeutic levels or if the test results show the presence of medications not disclosed in the emergency medication report form that are not allowed or exceed the levels allowed by the NCHA Medication and Drug Rules and Guidelines, the Committee may take all disciplinary actions provided for under these rules for such failed test.

- iv. All emergency reports filed under this rule will be reviewed by the Medication Review Committee and all veterinarians submitting such reports are subject to inquiry by the Medication Review Committee.

#### **14. Rule Violations and Discipline**

For all NCHA produced and/or approved events, if it is determined that the use of any drug or medication was not allowed by the Medication Rules or was not within the Guidelines in the NCHA Rule Book, the responsible party or parties will be subject to disciplinary action. The initial determination of whether a medication rule violation has occurred will be based upon the lab results.

##### **a. Failure to Present Horse for Testing / Failure to comply with Testing Requests**

- i. Testing Process Violations
  1. Refusal to with the request for testing will result in the disqualification of the horse from further participation at the show.
  2. Bringing the wrong horse for testing is considered a serious offense and constitutes a refusal to comply with a request for testing under this rule.
  3. Failure to comply with the 15-minute time period described above will also constitute a refusal to comply with the request for testing.
  4. Any horse in violation of this rule may also be barred from participation in future NCHA approved events or shows for a period of time as determined by the Executive Committee or other appropriate committee.
  5. A refusal to comply with a request for testing also is grounds for suspension of NCHA membership.
  6. Any harassment, verbal abuse, physical abuse or misconduct of any kind toward the testing veterinarian (or anyone assisting the testing veterinarian in the taking of blood samples or specimens) shall be considered a violation of NCHA Standing Rule 35 and treated under the disciplinary guidelines in Rule 35.B.3.
  7. The NCHA may also, in its sole discretion, refer any potential violation of this rule to the Grievance Committee to consider disciplinary action under Standing Rule 35 against all responsible parties.
- ii. In the event that an alleged violation of this section is referred to the Grievance Committee and a violation is found; it is recommended that:
  1. The disciplinary action taken by the Grievance Committee to address such a violation be at least a fine of

\$10,000 per occurrence and up to a 12-month suspension. This is only a guideline and can be increased or decreased as appropriate by the Grievance Committee depending upon the circumstances shown by the evidence.

2. The Grievance Committee may also assess separate discipline against multiple parties it finds responsible for the same occurrence resulting in the violation.

b. **Failure to Timely File Required Medication Reports**

Failure to timely file any medication report required by this rule including, but not limited to the medication reports required for Acepromazine will result in a letter of warning and reprimand for the first failure to timely file a required report. A fine of \$150 will be assessed for a second failure to timely file a required report and a fine of \$300 for each subsequent offense. These fines may be increased, at the sole discretion of the Medication Review Committee, in situations involving repeated failures to timely file medication reports required under this rule. Failure to timely file medication reports shall not constitute a first offense, second offense or third offense under sections 14 (c), (d) or (e) of this rule.

c. **Violations of Rules Governing Administering Medications or Testing Violations**

Any laboratory report resulting from random testing conducted by the NCHA pursuant to this rule that indicates the presence of any prohibited substance, the presence of any permitted medication in levels that exceed those allowed under these rules and guidelines or the presence of more than one NSAID, all of which are violations of these Medication Rules, will constitute prima facie evidence that the substance(s) was administered to the horse either internally or externally in violation of the NCHA Medication Rules. The burden of proof is on the responsible party to show by a preponderance of the evidence that no drug or medication has been administered in violation of the rules.

d. **Disciplinary Guidelines for Conditionally Permitted Therapeutic Medication Overages** (i.e. overages of a permitted medication or the presence of more than one NSAID). The following disciplinary actions may be considered by the NCHA, NCHA Medication Review Committee or Executive Committee in addressing a violation of the Medication Rules and Guidelines relating to Therapeutic Medication Overages. The following are general guidelines only. The NCHA, NCHA Medication Review Committee or Executive Committee may assess discipline (including potential fines, probations, suspensions, and disqualifications) that is equal to, less than or greater than the discipline provided in the following guidelines based upon the nature of the violation and the severity of the circumstances presented in each case. The horse may also be disqualified from all classes in which it participated in at the show for any violation of the Medication Rules and Guidelines. If disqualified, all awards and monies must be returned.

- i. First Offense relating to a Therapeutic Medication Over-

age:

1. Resulting from an overage of **one permitted medication** a suggested fine of \$500 each to the responsible person(s).
2. Resulting from the presence of **more than one** NSAID (if each NSAID is within therapeutic levels allowed in these Rules and Guidelines) – a suggested fine of \$1,000 each to the responsible person(s).
3. The discipline for any violation resulting from the presence of a permitted medication at **levels more than twice the permitted levels** allowed under these Rules and Guidelines shall be assessed by the Medication Review Committee based upon its review of the circumstances presented.

If a member commits a first offense resulting from the use of permitted medications at unacceptable levels under the Medication Rules and Guidelines or commits a first offense resulting from the presence of more than one NSAID in violation of these Medication Rules and Guidelines but commits no further violations of the Medication Rules and Guidelines for a period of 24 months after that first offense, the next violation of the Medication Rules and Guidelines after that 24-month period by that member, if any, would be treated as a first offense.

ii. Second Offense relating to a Therapeutic Medication Overage:

1. A suggested fine to each responsible person(s) of \$2,500 and possible suspension or probation depending on the circumstances.
2. If a member commits a second offense resulting from the use of permitted medications at unacceptable levels under the Medication Rules and Guidelines or commits a second offense resulting from the presence of more than one NSAID in violation of these Medication Rules and Guidelines but commits no further violations of the Medication Rules and Guidelines for a period of 24 months after that second offense, the next violation of the Medication Rules and Guidelines after that 24-month period by that member, if any, would be treated as a first offense. This provision does not apply to violations resulting from the use of a prohibited substance.

iii. Third Offense relating to a Therapeutic Medication Overage:

1. A suggested fine of \$5,000 each to the responsible person(s) and a suspension of at least 6 months.
2. Any responsible party assessed a fine under this section will be suspended until payment in full is received by the NCHA. If the discipline assessed includes probation or suspension in addition to a fine, the probation or suspension shall begin immediately and extend for the specified period after the fine is paid. (i.e., if a fine and six-month probation are assessed on the first day of a month and the fine is not paid until the fifteenth day of a month, the proba-

tion or suspension would start on the first day of the month and end six months after the payment of the fine is received).

3. If the horse transfers ownership, the suspension for the responsible individual or party will not be dissolved or shortened.

**e. Disciplinary Guidelines for use of a Prohibited Substance**

The following disciplinary actions may be considered by the NCHA, NCHA Medication Review Committee or Executive Committee in addressing a violation of the Medication Rules and Guidelines relating to the use of a **prohibited substance** by any responsible person and defined by these rules. The following are general guidelines only. The NCHA, NCHA Medication Review Committee or Executive Committee may assess discipline (including fines, probations, and suspensions) that is equal to, less than or greater than the discipline provided in the following guidelines based upon the nature of the violation and the severity of the circumstances presented in each case. A horse testing positive for a prohibited substance in any class at a show may also be disqualified from all other classes at that show in which that horse participated and such horse will forfeit all monies, awards and titles won in any class at the show. Any disqualified horse shall forfeit and must return all awards and monies won at the show. Offenses for use of a prohibited substance may, at the discretion of the Committee ultimately determining the violation, permanently remain on the responsible parties' record.

- i. First Offense resulting from the use of a prohibited substance, forfeiture of any winnings from the show, a fine of \$5,000, loss of any titles and awards won at the show and one (1) year membership probation.
- ii. Second Offense resulting from the use of a prohibited substance, forfeiture of any winnings from the show, a fine of \$10,000, loss of any titles and awards won at the show and a one (1) year membership suspension.
- iii. Third Offense resulting from the use of a prohibited substance, forfeiture of any winnings from the show, a fine of \$15,000, loss of any titles and awards won at the show and a membership suspension of at least two (2) years.
- iv. Any responsible party assessed a fine under this section will be suspended until payment in full is received by the NCHA. If the discipline assessed includes probation or suspension in addition to a fine, the probation or suspension shall begin immediately and extend for the specified period after the fine is paid. (i.e., if a fine and six-month probation are assessed on the first day of a month and the fine is not paid until the fifteenth day of a month, the probation or suspension would start on the first day of the month and end six months after the payment of the fine is received).
- v. If the horse transfers ownership, the suspension for the responsible individual or party will not be dissolved or shortened.

**f. Failure to pay fine timely**

***Where a member is assessed a fine for a violation under rule,***



*such fine must be paid in full within fifteen (15) days after the fine is assessed. If the fine is not paid in full within that fifteen (15) day timeframe, the member will immediately be placed on membership suspension until such fine is paid in full. If the disciplinary action taken against the member included a suspension and/or probation in addition to the fine, that suspension and/or probation will be extended by a period equal to the amount of days over fifteen (15) days that it takes for the member to pay the fine in full (Example: If the member does not pay the fine in full until 45 days after the fine is assessed, then 30 days will be added to the term of the corresponding suspension and/or probation.) If the horse involved in the event leading to the disciplinary action transfers ownership, the suspension for the responsible individual or party will not be dissolved or shortened.*

**g. Hearings and Appeal Rights**

- i. **Hearings** - The responsible party or parties may accept the discipline assessed based upon the lab results or request a hearing to contest the lab results or any discipline assessed. Hearings relating to violations of the Medication Rules and Guidelines will be conducted by the NCHA Medication Review Committee. Such hearing may result in discipline equal to, less than or greater than the initial discipline assessed by the Medication Committee based upon the lab results, depending upon the evidence presented at such hearings.
  - ii. **Appeals** - Any person found to have committed a violation of the Medication Rules as a result of a hearing before the NCHA's Medication Review Committee as provided for in this rule shall have the right to appeal the decision of the NCHA Medication Review Committee to the NCHA Executive Committee in accordance with the procedures for appeal contained in Standing Rule 38. Such appeal hearing may result in discipline equal to, less than or greater than the discipline assessed by the initial hearing committee depending upon the evidence presented at the appeal hearing.
- g. Any Medication Rules and Guidelines violation resulting in probation or suspension **may** be published on [nchacutting.com](http://nchacutting.com) and **will** be published in *Cutting Horse Chatter*.

**STANDING RULE 36.**

A program has been set up to provide a representative of the contestants, or a liaison, to work between contestants and Show Management.

- a. Provided a representative has not been appointed by the Show Management, it shall be the duty of Show Management at all NCHA cutting horse contests to hold a meeting of all contestants in each class prior to the first go-round for the purpose of electing a representative to represent the contestants for the duration of the show. In the event the representative has to leave the show for any reason, they shall appoint a representative in their place for the duration of the show. Any representative so elected or appointed must be a contestant in the show involved.
  1. They must represent all contestants with the Show Management and be the sole liaison with said Management.

2. They must report if they observe any horse being abused or if there are actions by any contestant detrimental to the best interest of the Association such as the following: loud and profane language, drunkenness or being under the influence of intoxicants, use of devices not permitted by NCHA rules or any other infraction of Standing Rules.
- b. A representative shall have no contact or communication with a judge(s) beyond that permitted to any contestant.

## **Contestant Conduct and Related Complaints**

### **STANDING RULE 37.**

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Any member may be disciplined, fined, denied privileges of the Association, placed on probation and/or suspended from the Association by the Grievance Committee, Amateur Non-Professional Review Committee, Medication Review Committee or any other committee authorized by NCHA Rules to rule on potential NCHA Rule violations (collectively, "Initial Hearing Committees"), the Executive Committee or an Appeal Committee, whenever it shall have been established by the evidence that such member has violated any rule of the Association providing for such disciplinary actions. Non-members involved in NCHA rule violations may also be denied privileges of the Association for violation of or assisting in the violation of NCHA rules. When the NCHA rule in question contains specific provisions concerning disciplinary actions or burdens of proof, any disciplinary action taken by an Initial Hearing Committee, the Executive Committee or an Appeal Committee should be consistent with that provision.

#### **a. Filing a Complaint**

Any NCHA member may file a complaint regarding any alleged violation of NCHA Rules by submitting the complaint in writing to the NCHA Executive Director. The complaint must be signed by the person or persons filing the complaint or, if filed electronically, identify the name of the person or persons filing the complaint, and sent to the NCHA Executive Director together with a check or credit card payment in the amount of \$50 made payable to the National Cutting Horse Association. The complaint must be in essentially the form supplied by the NCHA and available on its website. The complaint must, at a minimum, contain the following information: the names of the person or persons filing the complaint, the name or names of the persons alleged to have violated the NCHA rules, the date of the alleged violation, the show at which the alleged violation occurred, the location on the show grounds where the alleged violation occurred, a detailed description of the activity that resulted in the alleged violation, and the names and addresses of all witnesses believed to have knowledge of the alleged violations. There is no \$50 fee for filing a complaint about reporting a violation of the Zero Tolerance Policy or for a complaint submitted by an NCHA Director, a class representative, Show Management or a judge. Anonymous complaints will not be accepted, investigated, or acted on by the NCHA (except reports of alleged violations and Zero Tolerance Policy that meet the requirements of Standing Rule 35.6). A complaint must be filed (postmarked, faxed, emailed or hand delivered) within seven (7) days of the alleged rule violation. The timing for filing a complaint alleging a violation of the Zero Tolerance Policy is contained in Standing Rule 35.6. No complaint is required for the NCHA to take disciplinary action regarding a

member's competitive status (i.e., violation of Non-Professional and/or Amateur rules) or for violation of the NCHA medication and drug rules contained in Standing Rule 35A.

b. Initial Hearing Committees

The Executive Director will promptly refer all complaints to one of the following Initial Hearing Committees in accordance with subsection (e) of this rule: (1) the Grievance Committee; (2) the Medication Review Committee; (3) the Non-Professional/Amateur Review Committee; (4) any other hearing or review committee provided for under NCHA Rules. Unless otherwise provided in the NCHA rules, or in duly adopted NCHA policies, a quorum of an Initial Hearing Committee will consist of three (3) members with one (1) of these members being the elected Chairman.

c. Contested and Uncontested Matters

The NCHA shall notify the alleged violator in writing of the substance of the complaint filed or alleged action being investigated; each NCHA rule(s) potentially violated; the disciplinary actions applicable to the alleged rule violation; and a request that the alleged violator file a written election with the Executive Director either to contest or not contest the alleged violation. The written election to contest the violation must be received by the NCHA Executive Director within ten (10) business days of the receipt of notice of violation along with a hearing fee in the amount of \$1,000.00 (the "Initial Hearing Fee"). If such written election to contest the violation and the accompanying hearing fee are not received by the NCHA Executive Director in that timeframe, the violation will be deemed to be not contested, the discipline identified in the notice letter will be assessed and the Executive Director will notify the member in writing of any disciplinary actions taken.

d. Initial Hearing Procedures

For matters timely contested as provided in Section (c) above, the Initial Hearing Committee shall schedule a hearing and provide the alleged violator(s) not less than fifteen (15) days' notice of the hearing date. In circumstances deemed to constitute an emergency by the Executive Director after consulting with the NCHA President, the notice of hearing may be shortened by the President in their sole discretion, but in no event shall be less than five (5) business days actual notice of the hearing date. The notice shall be accompanied by the procedures to be followed at the hearing. The alleged violator and the NCHA shall exchange all proposed documentary evidence to be considered at the hearing no less than three (3) days prior to the hearing. The Initial Hearing Committee shall have the discretion to decide whether good cause exists for the committee to consider untimely filed evidentiary submissions. Legal counsel for the NCHA and alleged violator may appear and participate in the evidentiary portion of the hearing.

After all evidence is presented and received at the initial hearing, the evidence shall be closed, and the Initial Hearing Committee shall deliberate in private. The Initial Hearing Committee shall render its decision in contested matters by majority vote and shall so notify the Executive Committee of the decision in writing. The Initial Hearing Committee shall only be required to note in its report the NCHA rule(s) it found were vio-

lated and shall not be required to provide a detailed reasoned opinion for its decision. If the Initial Hearing Committee finds that no rule violation has been committed by the alleged violator, the Initial Hearing Fee will be returned to the alleged violator.

All disciplinary actions taken by an Initial Hearing Committee on or after August 21, 2018 (including suspensions of membership or competitive status) shall go into effect immediately upon the committee's issuance of its report. Please see NCHA Rule 38 for a member's appeal options.

e. **Disciplinary Guidelines for Rule Violations**

If after review and investigation of the complaint, the Initial Hearing Committee, or an Appeal Committee, is of the opinion that a rule violation has occurred, the committee may take such disciplinary action consistent with the provisions of NCHA Rules as it deems appropriate. The Initial Hearing Committee and/or Appeal Committee shall use the guidelines outlined below in determining what disciplinary actions to take, if any. The Initial Hearing Committee and/or Appeal Committee appointed under NCHA rules are not bound by these guidelines but shall use them in an effort to be fair and consistent in the application of the NCHA disciplinary rules.

**1. The NCHA Medication Review Committee**

The NCHA Medication Review Committee shall initially consider all potential violations of the NCHA Medication and Drug Rules and Guidelines (NCHA Rule 35A). The potential disciplinary actions for proceedings relating to alleged violations of the NCHA Medication and Drug Rules and Guidelines are contained in Rule 35A.7. The alleged violator bears the burden of proof to establish that they have not administered any drug or medication in violation of the NCHA Medication and Drug Rules.

**2. The NCHA Non-Professional/Amateur Review Committee**

The NCHA Non-Professional/Amateur Review Committee shall initially consider all violations of the NCHA Non-Professional and Amateur Rules (NCHA Rules 50.d.1- 51.a.5). The potential disciplinary actions for proceedings relating to alleged violations of the NCHA Non-Professional and Amateur rules are contained in Rules 50 and 51. The alleged violator bears the burden to establish entitlement to hold Non-Professional and/or Amateur status.

**3. The Grievance Committee**

The Grievance Committee shall initially consider all violations of NCHA Rules relating to alleged violations of NCHA Zero Tolerance Policy (NCHA Rule 35.A); alleged improper conduct toward judges and monitors (NCHA Rule 35.B); alleged improper conduct by and between members (NCHA Rule 35.C); and alleged violations of any other NCHA rules that are not considered by the NCHA Medication Review Committee, the NCHA Non-Professional/Amateur Review Committee or the Executive Committee.

For matters considered by the Grievance Committee for which the rule allegedly violated contains suggested disciplinary actions, the Grievance Committee should con-

sult those provisions in connection with discipline to be assessed for such rule violation. In cases where the rule allegedly violated does not contain suggested disciplinary action, the Grievance Committee should consult the following general guidelines:

- (i) First Offense - (a) fine; (b) probation; or (c) both of the foregoing. A first offense will be removed from a member's record if that member has no further infraction of NCHA rules for a period of two (2) years after the first offense is committed, unless otherwise provided for in NCHA rules.
- (ii) Second Offense within 2 years of First Offense - (a) increased fine; (b) increased probation; (c) suspension; or (d) all of the foregoing; and
- (iii) Additional offenses within 2 years of a First Offense will be dealt with severely, including: (a) heavy fines; (b) lengthy probation and (c) suspension will be increased as deemed appropriate by the committee considering the offense.

f. Effects of Membership Probation and Suspension

1. Membership Probation

Probation shall be for a length of time to be decided by the appropriate committee and shall also set a term of suspension that will be imposed in the event that the probation is violated. The term of suspension shall only become effective upon the probated member's violation of the terms of their probation. In the event suspension is imposed for subsequent rule violation(s), the balance of the probated suspension shall begin on the day after the suspension for the subsequent rule violation is completely served.

2. Membership suspensions that went into effect on or before August 21, 2018.

Any person who has had their membership suspended (where such suspension commences on or before August 21, 2018) will not be allowed to participate in any way (as owner or agent of a horse, contestant, or as a helper mounted or on foot) in an NCHA approved or sponsored cutting horse contest. A suspended person may only attend an NCHA approved or sponsored cutting horse contest as a spectator seated in the stands. Any horse that is owned or controlled, in whole or part, by a suspended person will not be allowed to enter or compete in an NCHA approved or sponsored cutting horse contest. In the event a suspended person violates this rule, an additional six (6) months will be added to their suspension. The rider of any horse which is ineligible to enter or compete in an NCHA approved or sponsored cutting horse contest under this rule will be subject to a six (6) month membership suspension.

3. Membership suspensions that went into effect after August 21, 2018.

Any person who has had their membership suspended (where such suspension commences after August 21, 2018), will not be allowed on the premises of an NCHA approved or sponsored cutting horse contest. For purposes of this rule, the term "premises" shall be broadly

defined and include all show arenas, practice pens, loping areas, sales barns, exhibit halls, trade shows and all other parts of the show grounds. Any horse that is owned or controlled, in whole or part, by a suspended person or in which the suspended person holds any future rights of any kind will not be allowed to enter, compete, or transfer existing entries in an NCHA approved or sponsored cutting horse contest. This includes horses owned by a corporation, partnership, or any other entity in which the suspended member has any ownership interest. In the event a suspended person violates this rule, an additional six (6) months will be added to their suspension. The rider of any horse in any NCHA approved or sponsored cutting horse contest which is ineligible to enter or compete in such contest under this rule will be subject to a six (6) month membership suspension.

4. ***Failure to pay fine timely.***

Where a member is assessed a fine ***by any NCHA Committee referenced in this rule for a violation under rule***, such fine must be paid in full within fifteen (15) days after the fine is assessed. If the fine is not paid in full within that fifteen (15) day timeframe, the ***member will immediately be placed on membership suspension until such fine is paid in full. If the disciplinary action taken against the member included a suspension and/or probation in addition to the fine, that suspension and/or probation will be extended by a period equal to the amount of days over fifteen (15) days that it takes for the member to pay the fine in full (Example: If the member does not pay the fine in full until 45 days after the fine is assessed, then 30 days will be added to that term of the corresponding suspension and/or probation.***

5. ***Transfer of Horses owned by Suspended Member.***

This subsection applies to all membership suspensions that went into effect after August 21, 2018. A horse owned by a suspended member at the time of their suspension that is sold, gifted or for which ownership is otherwise transferred to an Immediate Family Member (as defined in NCHA Rule 51.a.4) or that is sold, gifted or for which ownership is otherwise transferred to any corporation, partnership or any other entity of any kind in which the suspended member has any present or future ownership interest will not be allowed to show in any NCHA approved or produced event during the term of that member's suspension. In the event that the NCHA questions the legitimacy of a transfer made by a suspended person during their suspension, the suspended person shall bear the burden of proof to establish the legitimacy of the transfer.

6. ***Effect of Suspensions by Other Associations.***

a. Every person who is suspended by the American Quarter Horse Association or by the American Paint Horse Association for unsportsmanlike conduct at a show or contest or for inhumane treatment of horses, shall stand as suspended by the NCHA upon official notification to this Association from the American Quarter Horse Association or the American

Paint Horse Association of any such disciplinary action which has become final and non-appealable.

- b. The NCHA may honor the disciplinary actions of its affiliate organizations when supplied with satisfactory evidence that the person so disciplined has been given a full and impartial hearing by the affiliate organization involved; however, any action taken by an affiliate will not limit any authority or jurisdiction of the NCHA.
- g. Publication of Findings:  
When disciplinary action is taken that results in probation or suspension of membership privileges or competitive status, the person's name, the rule violated, and the disciplinary action taken **may** be published on nchacutting.com and **will** be published in *Cutting Horse Chatter*.
- h. Notice:  
Every notice required by this rule may be served by delivering a copy of the notice to the person to be served, or his/her attorney, either in person or by mail, postage prepaid, to their last known address as it appears on the Association's records. Such notice shall be deemed received by such person when it is delivered in person or when it is deposited in the United States mail.
- i. Decision Final and Binding:  
The decision of the Initial Hearing Committee shall be final and binding unless subsequently overturned by an appeal committee under the provisions of NCHA Standing Rule 38.

## **STANDING RULE 37A**

### **Procedures Applicable to Disciplinary Actions Brought Under the Provisions of the NCHA Constitution and Bylaws**

#### **1. Procedures Relating to Membership Proceedings Under Article II Proceedings**

The following procedures will apply to proceedings concerning membership in the Association arising under Article II of the NCHA Constitution and Bylaws:

- a. Procedures Relating to Denial of Membership Application
  - i. If a person's application for membership in the NCHA is denied, the rejected applicant may request a hearing before the Executive Committee to seek reconsideration of the application. At least five (5) members of the Executive Committee will be needed to constitute a quorum for the hearing. The NCHA President shall not serve as a member of the hearing committee.
  - ii. The hearing committee shall schedule a hearing and provide the applicant not less than five (5) days' notice of the hearing date and shall be accompanied by any procedures to be followed in connection with the initial hearing and a general statement of the grounds for denial of membership. The burden of proof is on the applicant to show, by preponderance of the evidence, that they are entitled to hold membership in the Association.
  - iii. The hearing committee shall render its decision, based on the evidence received, by majority vote of the Executive Committee Members present at the hearing and shall notify the applicant of the decision in writing. The hearing

committee's decisions in these proceedings are final and binding and are not subject to appeal.

b. Procedures Relating to Revocation of Membership

- i. If a person has engaged in alleged conduct potentially detrimental to the Association under Article II of the NCHA Constitution and Bylaws that is brought to the attention of the NCHA Executive Committee or the NCHA Board of Directors:
  1. The NCHA Executive Committee or the NCHA Board of Directors shall, in their sole discretion, make the determination of whether the alleged conduct warrants that proceedings be instituted against that member for potential discipline under Article II of the NCHA Bylaws and Constitution.
  2. In the event that the NCHA Executive Committee or NCHA Board of Directors determines that proceedings under Article II are warranted, the NCHA Executive Committee will constitute the initial hearing committee for such proceedings. At least five (5) members of the Executive Committee will be needed to constitute a quorum for the hearing. The NCHA President shall not serve as a member of the initial hearing committee.
  3. The initial Committee shall schedule a hearing and provide the respondent not less than five (5) days' notice of the hearing date. The notice of hearing shall be accompanied by any procedures to be followed in connection with the initial hearing and a statement of the grounds for potential temporary or permanent revocation or termination of the respondent's membership in the NCHA.
  4. The hearing committee shall render its decision based on the evidence received prior to and at the hearing. The burden of proof is on the member to show, by preponderance of the evidence, that they are entitled to hold membership in the Association. The decision shall be by majority vote of the hearing committee members present at the hearing. The hearing committee shall not be required to provide a detailed reasoned opinion for its decision. The hearing committee shall provide the respondent written notification of its decision. All disciplinary actions taken under this rule at the initial hearing shall go into effect immediately upon the hearing committee's issuance of its decision. If no appeal is timely perfected as described below, the decision of the hearing Committee shall be final and binding.
  5. The hearing committee's decision at the initial hearing under this section is subject to appeal under the provisions of NCHA Standing Rule 38. If an appeal is properly perfected, the NCHA President shall appoint a special appeal committee to hear the appeal of any actions taken by the Committee under the rule. The special appeal committee shall consist of at least five (5) Directors chosen by the NCHA President in his/her



sole discretion. The burden of proof is on the member to show, by preponderance of the evidence, that they are entitled to hold membership in the Association. The decision of the appeal committee shall be final and binding.

2. Procedures Relating to Removal of Officers, Directors and Executive Committee Members
  - a. If either the Board of Directors or the Executive Committee seeks to remove a person as a director under Article IV, Section Eleven; remove a person as an officer under Article VI, Section Nine; or remove a person as a member of the Executive Committee under Article V, Section Eight, that person shall first be given notice of the reasons for such potential removal, and the opportunity to respond to such charges at the meeting. The burden of proof is on the respondent to show, by preponderance of the evidence, that they are entitled to hold their position in the Association. The decision on removal shall be within the sole discretion of the Board of Directors or Executive Committee, whichever is considering the matter.
  - b. Any person removed as a Director, Officer or Executive Committee Member in accordance with Section 2.1 above may appeal such removal under the provisions of NCHA Standing Rule 38. If an appeal is properly perfected, the NCHA President shall appoint a special appeal committee to hear the appeal of the removal of that person from their position. The special appeal committee shall consist of at least five (5) Directors chosen by the NCHA President in his/her sole discretion. The burden of proof is on the respondent to show, by preponderance of the evidence, that they are entitled to hold their position in the Association. The decision of the appeal committee shall be final and binding.

### **STANDING RULE 38.**

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1. Appeal Prerequisites
  - a. When anyone has been found to have violated any NCHA rule by an Initial Hearing Committee, that person shall be entitled to appeal that ruling under this rule so long as: (1) written notice of such request for appeal by each person appealing the ruling is received by the NCHA Executive Director within twenty-one (21) days of the date of the letter notifying the person of such action taken by the Initial Hearings Committee as required by NCHA Rule 37.c; and (2) an appeal fee as required by Section b below is also received by the NCHA Executive Director within that twenty-one (21) day period.
  - b. The appeal fee for each person appealing the decision of an Initial Hearing Committee is \$6,000 per person appealing that decision. For cases in which the Initial Hearing Committee has assessed a suspension of membership or competitive status, the appealing party shall have the right to request an expedited appeal as described in section c below. The appeal fee for an expedited appeal is \$10,000 for each person filing an expedited appeal of the decision of an Initial Hearing Committee. Appeal fees will not be refunded unless all findings of the Initial Hearing Committee are completely overturned by an Appeal Committee.
  - c. In cases of a non-expedited appeal, the appealing member(s)

shall be given not less than fifteen (15) days' notice of a time and place for an appeal hearing to be heard by the Executive Committee or by an Appeal Committee duly appointed by the NCHA President. In cases of an expedited appeal, the appealing member(s) shall be entitled to an appeal hearing no more than five (5) business days after the expedited appeal is perfected.

## 2. Appeal Proceedings

- a. An appeal is a "de novo" proceeding and could result in a new finding concerning whether or not there was a violation of an NCHA rule(s) and either an affirmance, enhancement or decrease in the disciplinary action taken by the Initial Hearing Committee.
- b. Eight (8) members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum for purposes of considering disciplinary appeal hearings.
- c. The NCHA President may appoint a special Appeal Hearing Committee (the "Appeal Committee") to conduct any appeal hearing of disciplinary actions. This Appeal Committee shall have a minimum of five (5) members and a maximum of nine (9) members. Each member of the Appeal Committee must be a member in good standing of the NCHA. Five members of the Appeal Committee members shall constitute a quorum for purposes of hearing an appeal.
- d. No continuance of an appeal hearing shall be granted unless a written request for continuance is received by the NCHA Executive Director at least seven (7) days prior to the hearing and good cause is shown as determined at the sole discretion of the NCHA President or the Chairman of the Appeal Committee.
- e. At the appeal hearing, the appealing member shall have the opportunity to be heard, to be represented by legal counsel, to present evidence in their own behalf and to hear and refute any evidence offered against them.
- f. The committee hearing the appeal will follow the same procedures for the appeal hearing as are used for the initial hearing.
- g. The decision of the Executive Committee or Appeal Committee in an appeal proceeding under this rule shall be final and binding on all parties. The committee hearing an appeal shall only be required to note in its report the NCHA rule(s) it found were violated and shall not be required to provide a detailed reasoned opinion for its decision.
- h. When disciplinary action is taken that results in probation or suspension of membership privileges or competitive status, the person's name, the rule violated, and the disciplinary action taken will be published on [nchacutting.com](http://nchacutting.com) and may be published in Cutting Horse Chatter.

## **STANDING RULE 39.**

No person shall make a derogatory remark, nor take or threaten to take, adverse action against any NCHA sponsor, its agent, servants or employees, relating in any manner to the sponsor's involvement with the NCHA or an NCHA event. Any person who violates this rule is subject to disciplinary action and is also responsible to the NCHA for any loss or damage caused by a violation of this rule.

## **STANDING RULE 40.**

In any instances in which winnings, awards and/or titles won at an

NCHA approved or produced event are forfeited as a result of disciplinary action taken by the NCHA for a violation of NCHA rules, such as forfeited winnings, awards and titles that are actually returned to the NCHA shall (to the extent applicable) be redistributed among the contestants who actually showed in finals of the class in which the forfeiture occurred. No additional horses or riders will be moved up in the standings from outside of the original finalists in that class as a result of any such forfeiture and contestants who did not participate in the finals of that class shall not be entitled to participate in any of the forfeited winnings, titles or awards.

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**STANDING RULE 41.**

If any member institutes litigation in which the Association is included as a defendant in an effort to recover damages, to overturn enforcement or interpretation of the Constitution, Bylaws, Rules or Regulations, or for any other reason whatsoever, and does not prevail in said litigation by the recovery of all relief requested, said member shall be liable to the Association for its attorney's fees, costs of court, and other expenses incurred in connection with such litigation. Venue for any litigation in which the Association is included as a defendant shall be Tarrant County, Texas.

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**STANDING RULE 42.**

Every notice required by these rules and regulations may be served by delivering a copy of the notice to the person to be served, or their attorney, either in person, by fax, or by mail, postage prepaid, to their last known address as it appears on the Association's records; and upon mailing, such notice shall be deemed received by such person when it is deposited in the United States mail.

All rules pertaining to the Youth Division of the NCHA shall be considered a part of, and complementary to, the NCHA Standing Rules 50.d.1 to 51.a.6 related to Horse Ownership and Non-Professional/Amateur Status.

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## **Rules relating to Non-Professionals and Amateurs**

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**STANDING RULE 50.d.1**

Riders of horses entered in any classification of NCHA Non-Professional or Amateur Contests shall be restricted to holders of NCHA Non-Professional/Amateur cards.

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**HORSE OWNERSHIP**

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**STANDING RULE 50.d.2.**

Any and all present or future ownership rights to any horse being exhibited in NCHA Non-Professional or Amateur cutting horse classes must be entirely owned by the contestant showing the horse or be qualified as a family-owned horse as defined in Rule 51.a.4. There can be no ownership rights related to possession, profits, expenses, or any other ownership interest belonging to any person other than the contestant except as provided above. Ownership can only be obtained in a manner permitted pursuant to Rule 50.d.4.

Common law (cohabitational relationships) is recognized by NCHA if the member's state of residency recognizes common law (Informal) marriage. The member must permanently reside in the common law

marriage state. If the state provides a procedure for issuing common law or informal marriage certificates, the NCHA requires the certificate to be obtained and filed with the NCHA office, if the state does not have specific guidelines but is a common law state then NCHA will require a notarized statement of the fact. Example: The state of Texas issues an Informal Marriage Certificate at the county office. NCHA requires this document as proof of Informal Marriage.

NCHA will need a copy of the official document containing the instrument number and volume/page number filing information showing that the document was recorded by the county.

#### **STANDING RULE 50.d.3.**

Proof of ownership is required. *Documents outlined in Standing Rule 3.2* showing current ownership in compliance with Standing Rule 50.d.2 above must be on file with the NCHA and will be requested by Show Management on any horse ridden in NCHA Non-Professional or Amateur Cutting Horse Contests; said proof to be exhibited to Show Management or its official representative prior to the beginning of the contest.

In the event a contestant is unable to provide proper proof of ownership at the time of entry, any premium monies won may be withheld by Show Management until such time as proper proof has been provided. Failure to comply with this rule may result in disciplinary action by the Non-Pro/Amateur Review Committee or other appropriate Committee, either probation or suspension, whichever in their opinion fits the infraction.

#### **STANDING RULE 50.d.4.**

A Non-Professional will only transfer ownership or receive a transfer of ownership of a horse for purposes of competing in NCHA contests on a bona fide, permanent basis; permanent shall mean to own with an intent to retain ownership and no present intent to transfer ownership. The following provisions apply in connection with this rule:

1. A Non-Professional may purchase a horse on time provided a copy of the written sales agreement, signed by both parties, is provided to NCHA and it states the name of the horse, the sales price, date of sale and terms of payment.
2. A Non-Professional will not transfer or receive transfer of a horse pursuant to any arrangement in which (1) the Non-Professional or any third party is to have any express or implied present or future interest in the ownership of the horse for the purpose of showing the horse at NCHA contests; (2) any part of the winnings, profits or expenses are to be shared, directly or indirectly, between the Non-Professional and any other person; or (3) all or part of the purchase price is to be paid from the winnings of the horse. All parties to any transaction in violation of this paragraph are subject to disciplinary actions by the NCHA.
3. If a horse is transferred, sold or gifted back to the previous owner within 1 year, that horse cannot be shown by the previous owner or their immediate family in any NCHA sponsored or approved Amateur or Non-Professional competition for the 6-month period following the transfer back to the previous owner.
4. The Executive Committee, the Non-Pro/Amateur Review Committee or any other committee appointed by the NCHA President under NCHA rules shall have the right to review and fully investigate any transaction regarding the purchase, gift, or sale of a horse by a holder of an NCHA Non-Professional card.

There shall be an automatic review of any age horse that is repurchased, given back, or resold to the prior owner. For any horse three years old or older, computed on the basis that a horse reached one year of age on January 1 of the year following the foaling and adds an additional year on each subsequent January 1, the seller must notify the NCHA if a horse returns to their ownership or their immediate family's ownership within 1 year and shall give full disclosure including, but not limited to, methods of procurement, all transfer records, cancelled checks and deposit slips. All parties to a transaction in violation of these NCHA rules are subject to disciplinary action, including fines, probation and/or suspension, by the Non-Pro/Amateur Review Committee, the Executive Committee and any other committee appointed by the NCHA President under NCHA rules. Any horse received as a gift must be reported in writing to the NCHA by the recipient within thirty, (30) days of receipt.

5. Upon purchase or gift of a horse (for the purpose of verifying Non-Pro horse ownership), ***the transfer and proof of ownership is subject to Standing Rule 3.*** These items must be provided to the NCHA before the horse is shown.
6. ***For horse transfers that have not been recorded by either the breed association or NCHA (unregistered horses) that have been shown in Non-Pro and/or Amateur classes at NCHA approved or produced events:***
  - i. ***Premium moneys won at NCHA produced events will not be distributed by NCHA until such transaction is reflected in the breed association's records or NCHA unregistered horse documents.***
  - ii. ***The member is subject to the penalties outlined in Standing Rule 3.2,***
  - iii. ***If more than 90 days have passed since NCHA was notified of the ownership transfer, the member will have their Non-Professional or Amateur status immediately suspended by the NCHA. The member may request a reinstatement of their Amateur and/or Non-Professional status from the Non-Pro/Amateur Review Committee. The burden of proof is on the member disciplined under this rule to show good cause why their Non-Pro/Amateur status should be reinstated. Any decision of the Non-Pro/Amateur Review Committee on these issues is subject to appeal pursuant to NCHA Standing Rule 38.***

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## **NON-PRO CAP FOR SHOWING IN THE OPEN**

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### **STANDING RULE 50.d.6.**

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Once a Non-Pro has won \$250,000 or more in Total Open LAE money (excluding shows with less than \$10,000 in added money), they MUST make a choice:

1. to remain a Non-Pro and compete exclusively, during the current competition year in the Non-Pro Division.
2. to compete in the Open Division.

Open competition defined as Open and Novice Horse classes at Limited Age Events.

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## **A NON-PROFESSIONAL**

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### **STANDING RULE 51.a.1.**

A Non-Professional in this Association is a person who has not received direct or indirect remuneration to work in any manner in the following activities on the premises of a cutting horse training operation: showing, training, or assisting in training a cutting horse or cutting horse rider. For purposes of this rule, a cutting horse training operation is any facility where cutting horses are trained. Any person who has trained horses astride in any cattle/cow horse equine discipline for direct or indirect remuneration or is a Hall of Fame equine trainer in any discipline shall be considered a Professional by this Association, with the exception of those who have been granted a change of status. Please review current exception rules. A Non-Professional in this Association may not train horses in any cattle/cow horse equine discipline.

1. This Association does not consider that Professional cutting horse trainers' spouses who do not teach cutting horse riders or train cutting horses on cattle receive indirect remuneration.
2. Employees on a cutting horse training operation may be considered Non-Professionals by this Association provided they do not teach cutting horse riders or train cutting horses on cattle or a training device.
3. Non-Professional or Amateur members may show a family-owned horse, as defined in Standing Rule 51.a.4.
4. Premium money won shall not be considered remuneration so long as all winnings are returned to the individual Non-Professional who competed on the horse.
5. Any corporation, partnership, ranch, farm, or other business entity relating to ownership of cutting horses by an NCHA Non-Professional must be totally owned by the Non-Professional or his/her immediate family as defined in Rule 51.a.4.
6. If a Non-Professional is a trainer in another discipline, they may never be granted Amateur status. Family and children of such individuals must meet existing Amateur exception rules and apply for Amateur status through the Non-Professional/Amateur review process before being granted an Amateur card.

### **STANDING RULE 51.a.2**

Non-Professional Card. Every rider, regardless of age, competing in an NCHA Non-Professional or Amateur Cutting Horse Contest must possess a Non-Professional and/or Amateur card, issued by the NCHA. This card must be available for inspection at any show entered.

#### **STANDING RULE 51.a.2.A**

The fee for said card is included with the annual membership and may be applied for by members of the Association. A Director's signature is recommended and encouraged but not required on all Non-Professional and Amateur Applications that are submitted directly to the NCHA office for approval. Once approved, the applications would be valid as long as the member continued to meet all requirements provided for in the NCHA rules to maintain the status. It is the member's responsibility to notify the NCHA office immediately upon any change in circumstances that may affect their status.

#### **STANDING RULE 51.a.2.B.**

A new member or member who has not renewed Non-Pro/Amateur status prior to attending a show will be allowed to complete the appropriate application if an NCHA Director is available to sign the application. If the appropriate application is fully completed, and application

signed by an NCHA Director, the applicant may show at that show. If an NCHA Director is not available, applicant cannot show. The application must be included with show results and is subject to final approval from NCHA. If NCHA final approval is not obtained, earnings (if any) will be pulled.

#### **STANDING RULE 51.a.2.C.**

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All Non-Professional and Amateur card holders will be reviewed at the time application is made. Said application to be on a form supplied by the Association and returned to it along with the applicant's annual dues. It is the member's responsibility to notify the NCHA office immediately upon any change in circumstances that may affect their Non-Pro/Amateur status. A Non-Professional and/or Amateur card may be reviewed or revoked at any time by the Executive Director, the Non-Pro/Amateur Review Committee, the Executive Committee or other committees appointed by the NCHA President in accordance with NCHA rules.

However, the holder of a card so revoked shall have the right to appeal and a subsequent hearing before the Non-Professional/Amateur Review Committee. The burden of proof of eligibility shall be upon the applicant or card holder.

#### **STANDING RULE 51.a.2.D.**

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Any Non-Professional and/or Amateur card which has been revoked must be surrendered immediately to the Association; and the holder shall be subject to disciplinary action by the Non-Pro/Amateur Review Committee, Executive Committee or other Committees appointed by the NCHA President in accordance with NCHA rules, either probation or suspension, whichever in their opinion fits the infraction. Such penalties **will be published on *nchacutting.com* and may** be published in *Cutting Horse Chatter*.

#### **STANDING RULE 51.a.2.E.**

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In the event that a member or non-member places in an NCHA approved Non-Professional and/or Amateur contest and does not hold a current NCHA Non-Professional and/or Amateur card, said person must pay back all earnings to Show Management within 15 days of notification or the ineligible competitor will be placed on membership suspension by NCHA. Any person acting in violation of this rule may also be fined for each time premium monies are won while competing without current Non-Professional and/or Amateur status. Failure to pay any and all fines assessed will be cause for denial of Non-Professional and/or Amateur card. Money or points won will not count towards eligibility, awards or standings for rider or horse until Non-Professional/Amateur application is approved. No money or points will be awarded retroactive to payment of fee. In addition, a \$25 fine, per occurrence will be assessed any Shw Management which allows a person to show without a current Non-Professional/Amateur card.

#### **STANDING RULE 51.a.3.**

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Any person who has shown, trained, or assisted in training a cutting horse or cutting horse rider or trained horses astride in any equine discipline involving cattle/cow horse for direct or indirect remuneration shall be considered a Professional by this Association, with the exception of those who have been granted a Change Of Status since January 1, 1997, from Professional to Non-Professional. A Change of Status from Professional to Non-Professional will be allowed to have the benefit of being a Non-Pro without restrictions. An individual who has been

granted Non-Professional status but still trains horses astride is considered a Professional for purposes of determining Amateur status for their family members.

#### **STANDING RULE 51.a.4.**

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If a member who holds an NCHA Non-Professional and/or Amateur card publicly exhibits in any contest, whether approved or unapproved, a cutting horse not owned by the member or by the member's Immediate Family as defined herein, the member will be subject to disciplinary actions as provided in this rule, in addition to potential disciplinary actions under Rule 50.d.4.

For purposes of this rule "Immediate Family" shall mean the member's spouse, child, stepchild, parent, grandparents, grandchild step-parent, sibling, half-sibling, step-sibling, spouse's parent, spouse's step-parent, sibling's spouse, half-sibling's spouse, step sibling's spouse, sibling's child, sibling's step-child, half-sibling's child, half-sibling's step-child, step-sibling's child, step-sibling's step-child, parent's sibling, parent's half-sibling, parent's step-sibling, parent's sibling's child, parent's sibling's stepchild, parent's half sibling's child, parent's half sibling's stepchild, parent's step sibling's child, parent's step sibling's stepchild, legal ward or legal guardian. Any member who owns a horse that he/she wants his or her immediate family to show pursuant to this rule is responsible for completing the forms prescribed by the NCHA relating to a family-owned horse and filing those forms with the **NCHA prior to the show in which any qualified family member will show that horse.** The horse owner is also responsible for updating their family-owned horse information with the NCHA to be sure it is accurate and up to date. A member showing a horse owned by an immediate family member under this rule may have his or her entry fees and expenses paid by an immediate family member.

Penalties for ownership rule violations may include immediate loss of Non-Professional/Amateur status of the member, up to three (3) years suspension from the NCHA, up to a maximum of \$10,000 fine. Also, any other member found guilty of aiding and abetting the rule violator will be subject to the same penalties depending on the severity of the incident.

#### **STANDING RULE 51.a.4.A**

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NCHA Non-Professional and/or Amateur card holders may ride horses owned by others in the **\$4,000** Limit Rider/Any Horse class (and any rider class with an earnings limit of less than **\$4,000**), the Youth class, and special events which have been granted exemption from Non-Professional and/or Amateur ownership requirements by the Executive Director with no penalty, provided the Non-Professional and/or Amateur card holder pays all entry fees and expenses.

#### **STANDING RULE 51.a.4.B**

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Upon notification in writing to the NCHA Show Department, and after receiving from them a permit authorizing the same, the holder of an NCHA Non-Professional and/or Amateur card will be permitted to show a horse they do not own in a maximum of five (5) NCHA approved Open and/or \$25,000 Novice and/or \$5,000 Novice horse (if eligible) classes only, provided the horse and shows are named with exact dates and there is no violation of Non-Professional Rule 51.a.1. Only one such permit will be granted a rider for a given horse, and points won will not count toward any NCHA annual award, title, or certificate. Show Management will not allow a horse to be shown under a permit issued by the NCHA Show De-



partment unless they have a copy of said permit on file. A Non-Professional who has earned \$250,000 in the Open class and who has declared to remain a Non-Professional will be allowed to enter a horse in the Open class, and/or \$25,000 Novice class and/or \$5,000 Novice class for purposes of trying a horse, under the properly documented trial permit from the NCHA office, without jeopardizing their Non-Professional status.

**EXAMPLE:** If I receive a permit, may I show more than one horse?

**NO.** Each permit is for a specific horse. At another date you may receive another permit for another horse.

**EXAMPLE:** Can I get a permit to show a horse in an aged event?

**NO.** These permits are for approved NCHA *Championship / Challenger* contests only and does not include aged events.

**EXAMPLE:** Do I have to pay my own expenses and entry fees while trying this horse?

**YES.** You may NOT violate Standing Rule 51 a.1.

**EXAMPLE:** May I show the permit horse in a Non-Pro or Amateur class?

**NO.** The permit horse must be shown in the Open or appropriate Novice Class.

### **STANDING RULE 51.a.5**

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Any owner/rider who shall permit their horse to be entered and compete in contests for Non-Professional, Amateur or novice class where said horse/rider is ineligible, shall be subject to disciplinary action by the Executive Committee, Non-Pro/Amateur Review Committee or other committees appointed by the NCHA President in accordance with NCHA rules.

A horse's eligibility to enter NCHA Novice Cutting Horse Contests or a rider's eligibility to enter NCHA limited Non-Professional or Amateur Cutting Horse Contests will be based on the eligibility earnings of said horse or Non-Professional rider on the first day of the NCHA point year in which the contest is held. (See Standing Rule 8)

## **AMATEUR**

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### **STANDING RULE 51.a.6**

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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 in any equine discipline astride for remuneration, directly or indirectly.
- b. the member has assisted in training horses or horse riders astride for remuneration, directly or indirectly.
- c. the member is married (or had a cohabitational relationship) or has been married (or had a cohabitational relationship) to a person who is engaged or 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 51.a.3
- d. the member has resided with a person who is engaged or 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 51.a.3.
- e. the member has resided with or on the premise with a parent, stepparent 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 astride a horse on

- the premises of a horse training operation.
- 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.

### **AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIP / WEEKEND COMPETITIONS**

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The amateur has the following weekend class options that are open to holders of NCHA Amateur cards who meet all non-monetary Amateur requirements as well as their respective class earnings limits:

**UNLIMITED AMATEUR** – for contestants that are:

NOT in the Non-Pro Rider Hall of Fame AND are Age 60 and over OR Under the age of 60 and have not won more than \$250,000 in Non-Pro money. See Standing Rule 8.g. for definition of Non-Pro money.

**\$75,000 AMATEUR** – for contestants with **lifetime** earnings of **\$75,000** or less at the beginning of the point year. See Standing Rule 8.d.

**\$25,000 AMATEUR** – for contestants with **lifetime** earnings of **\$25,000** or less at the beginning of the point year. See standing Rule 8.e.

### **AMATEUR LIMITED AGE EVENTS**

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NCHA-approved Non-Leveled Amateur Limited Age Events are open to qualified holders of NCHA Amateur cards who meet all nonmonetary Amateur requirements and meet the following earnings requirements in their respective classes. Assuming Amateur criteria and eligibility requirements are met, entry options for these classes will mirror the way entries are made in the Non-Pro/Limited Non-Pro. (i.e., enter either one, combined entry with one cattle charge and one go; or enter the Unlimited Amateur and \$50,000 Amateur class with two entries and two goes). For Leveling class requirements, see Standing Rule 8.

**UNLIMITED AMATEUR** - Open to qualified Amateur contestants who are either:

- 1) Under the age of 60 and have lifetime Limited Age Non-Pro earnings (approved classes) of less than \$250,000. For purposes of this rule, Limited Age Non-Pro earnings include qualified winnings in Limited Age Non-Pro competition in all approved Limited Age Event shows EXCEPT monies won at shows with less than \$10,000 in added money held prior to 2015 point year. An Unlimited Amateur competitor who reaches \$250,000 or more in lifetime Non-Pro Limited Age event earnings can continue to compete in Limited Age Non-Pro classes until the beginning of the next point year. At that point, the Unlimited Amateur competitor must make a choice: to remain an Unlimited Amateur and compete exclusively as an Unlimited Amateur or to compete as a Non-Pro. At the beginning of the next point year if the Unlimited Amateur competitor enters a Limited Age Non-Pro event and competes on any horse regardless of whether or not they win any money, they will forfeit their Unlimited Amateur status and can no longer compete in Amateur contests.
- 2) Aged 60 or Over - Once an individual reaches the age of 60, if they qualify under Amateur rules, they may return to the Unlimited Amateur class, regardless of Limited Age Non-Pro class money won. The member will be allowed to show in both LAE Non-Pro and LAE Unlimited Amateur competition.

\$50,000 LAE AMATEUR - open to qualified Amateur contestants who qualify based on Lifetime NCHA earnings not exceeding \$50,000.

## **AMATEUR/NON-PRO EXCEPTIONS**

*Please review the Amateur, Senior Amateur, Unlimited Amateur and Non-Pro exception rules to see if you may be eligible under their provision.*

**Amateur – 5 year/\$35,000 Exception** (for previous trainer's spouses, children and lopers)

An applicant may be granted Amateur status if the applicant has never been involved as a trainer or assistant trainer of cutting horses for direct or indirect remuneration in any amount and has never been an apprentice cutting horse trainer and the applicant for more than a five-year period prior to the date of application: (i) has not been married to a person had a cohabitational relationship with a person or resided with a person who is 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 51.a.3; (ii) has not resided with or on the premise with a parent, step-parent or foster parent who was, during the previous three-year period, a Professional; (iii) has not been directly or indirectly employed by a Professional and performed the duties of employment on the premises of a horse training operation astride a horse; AND (iv) has not received \$35,000 or more in lifetime total earnings in cutting horse competition and breed associations of all types. This includes cutting horse 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 year/\$35,000 exception shall obtain an Amateur 5 year/\$35,000 Exception Rule Application from the NCHA membership department, complete the application, have it notarized and signed by a director and return the application to the NCHA office for review by the Non-Pro/Amateur Review Committee. 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 Non-Pro/Amateur Review Committee, subject to any appeal, to be final.

**Amateur – 3 year/\$15,000 Exception** (for previous trainers in disciplines other than cutting or cow horse)

An applicant may be granted Amateur status if the applicant has never been involved as a trainer or assistant trainer of cutting horses for direct or indirect remuneration in any amount and has never been an apprentice cutting horse trainer and the applicant: (i) has not been involved in any equine training activities astride a horse for the most recent three years prior to the date of application; and (ii) the applicant has less than \$15,000 in total lifetime open earnings in all equine disciplines.

A person applying for Amateur classification under this 3-Year/\$15,000 Exception shall obtain an Amateur 3-Year/\$15,000 Exception Rule Application from the NCHA membership department, complete the application, have it notarized and signed by a director and return the application to the NCHA office for review by the Non-Pro/Amateur Review Committee.

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 being granted eligibility to compete in the Unlimited Amateur under this exception and this exception may be granted or denied based upon an evaluation of all circumstances considered relevant by the NCHA, with the decision of the Non-Pro/Amateur Review Committee, subject to any appeal, to be final.

**Amateur – 5 year/\$15,000 Senior Rollover Exception** (for previous trainer's spouses over age 60)

An applicant may be granted eligibility to compete in Amateur/ Unlimited Amateur events within monetary eligibility if:

- (A) the applicant has reached 60 years of age:
  - (i) for the five-year period preceding the application has not been married to or resided with a person who is 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 51.a.3:
  - (ii) has not been directly or indirectly employed by a Professional and performed the duties of employment on the premises of a horse training operation astride a horse; AND
- (B) the applicant has not won \$15,000 in cutting horse competition of all types during the 5-year period preceding the application. 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 Senior Unlimited Amateur classification under this exception shall obtain an Application from the NCHA membership department, complete the application, have it notarized and signed by a director and return the application to the NCHA office for review by the Non-Pro/Amateur Review Committee. 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 being granted eligibility to compete in the Unlimited Amateur under this exception and this exception may be granted or denied based upon an evaluation of all circumstances considered relevant by the NCHA, with the decision of the Non-Pro/Amateur Review Committee, subject to any appeal, to be final.

**Non-Professional 3 year/\$100,000 Exception** (for previous cutting/cow horse trainers)

Non-Professional 3-Year/\$100,000 Exception. (Example: If you apply under the 3-Year/\$100,000 Exception rule, it must have been more than 3 years and your earnings must be less than \$100,000). A person applying for Non-Professional classification under this rule shall obtain a Non-Pro 3-Year/\$100,000 Exception Application from the NCHA membership department, complete the application, have it notarized and signed by a director and return the application to the NCHA office for review by the Non-Pro/Amateur Review Committee. In addition, the person shall provide to the NCHA any and all additional information as the NCHA shall request related to documenting the status of the person applying under this rule.

A person who is currently prevented from being classified as a Non-Professional because they have at some point in their life trained cutting horses (as defined in the NCHA Rule Book) or any person who has trained

horses astride in any cattle/ cow horse equine discipline can regain their Non-Professional classification if:

- A. The person has not performed any duties or acts which could be considered as “training of cutting horses”, or horses of other cattle/cow horse equine disciplines nor has the person received any remuneration, direct or indirect, for performing the duties or activities normally associated with any phase of training cutting or cattle/cow horse discipline for the three-year period prior to the date of the application for Non-Professional classification under this provision; AND,
- B. The person has not won in their lifetime more than \$100,000 in combined open earnings from NCHA events and open earnings from any other equine discipline.
  - The exception will be based on all open earnings in all disciplines.
  - Family and children of change of status individuals must meet existing Amateur exception rules and apply for Amateur status through the exception application process.
  - Exception applicants will be eligible for any class they qualify for as a Non-Pro, including the Limited Non-Pro.

Any violation of any Non-Professional or Amateur rules will be dealt with in a severe manner by NCHA.

**If a Non-Professional or Amateur has any questions, the NCHA office must be contacted for clarification on any rule. The most current and the Official Handbook of NCHA Rules and Regulations is located online at [www.nchacutting.com](http://www.nchacutting.com).**

### **Non-Pro/Amateur Review Committee**

The Non-Pro/Amateur Review Committee will be charged with reviewing and making the determinations on Non-Pro and/or Amateur status applications, all Exception Rule applications along with reviewing, investigating, and conducting hearings on possible Non-Pro/Amateur rule violations. The Non-Pro/Amateur Review Committee shall be appointed by the NCHA President with the approval 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. Membership on the committee will be reviewed annually. 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, Amateur Committee or Grievance Committee.

### **NCHA APPRENTICE TRAINER PROGRAM**

During the Apprentice status time period the apprentice may only show in NCHA Limited Age and Weekend Approved shows with LESS than \$10,000 in total added money.

FOR ONE TIME ONLY AND ONE POINT YEAR ONLY: A current Non-Professional/Amateur card holder may for one time only AND one point year only (beginning Dec 28th) apply for and receive an apprentice trainer card. This card will grant a person an exemption for that point year from all Non-Professionals and/or Amateur rules and regulations with regard to remuneration. The applicant may not participate in any Non-Professional, Youth or Amateur classes during the period for which apprentice status is granted and cannot get back their Non-Professional card until the end of the apprentice period.

If the person having apprenticeship status wishes to reapply for

Non-Professional status for the next point year, an application for Non-Professional status must be received by the NCHA office by the beginning of the next point year. The individual having apprenticeship status will be considered a Professional trainer until the Non-Professional application is received, additionally if the applicant has shown horses they did not own after the apprentice period has expired, the applicant will not be allowed to return to Non-Professional status unless they become eligible under a Non-Professional exception rule and their status is approved by NCHA under that exception rule and their status is approved by NCHA under that exception rule.

Any person who has been an apprentice trainer is not eligible to compete in any Amateur contest.

Applications received through June will be for the current point year and will expire at the end of that point year, applications received on or after July 1st will be for the next point year.

During the Apprentice status time period the apprentice may show in NCHA Limited Age and Weekend approved shows with less than \$10,000 in total added money.

### **NCHA COLLEGE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM (NCIP)**

***The Program's*** Purpose is to allow students enrolled in an agricultural/equine program the opportunity to learn about the industry without jeopardizing their current show eligibility.

- The student/intern must be enrolled in an agricultural/equine program and must be earning credit to participate in our program. There are no minimum credit hours required, however they must be paid credit hours.
- A student/intern may apply one time per school per school requirements. Example: They can apply once at a Junior College and once at University.
- The application has a start and end date which should coincide with the semester/summer internship that they are earning credit for. The student/intern must reapply if choosing to do two consecutive internships following the rules set forth regarding 1 internship per school.
- There is no cap on salary/stipend paid to the student/intern during the internship.
- The student/intern may show client's horses in the **\$4,000** Limit Rider and/or YOUTH classes ONLY if they are eligible under NCHA rules. Student/Intern must still comply with current owner and eligibility rules.
- The student/intern may show their own horses in classes they are eligible for under current NCHA Rules. Student/Intern must still comply with current owner and eligibility rules.
- A student/intern may obtain the application for this program from the NCHA office. The application must include the student/interns name, NCHA member number, school currently enrolled in, the number of intern credits for this opportunity, the start and end date, the name, address and telephone contact information of the Internship Advisor and the name, address, and telephone contact information for the Cooperator (trainer, facility owner)
- The application must also be signed by the student/intern (applicant), the school advisor/contact and the Cooperator (trainer, facility owner). **Notice:** If you do not comply with current owner and eligibility rules while in the program you risk losing your Amateur and/or Non-Pro status.

# HORSE AND RIDER AWARDS

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## **AWARD ELIGIBILITY**

Any member who is on suspension from the NCHA will not be eligible to receive any awards. Persons on probation may receive prizes, including top ten buckle awards and achievement buckle awards, for competing in NCHA produced or approved shows, but may not be inducted into the Hall of Fame while on probation.

## **AWARDS & RECOGNITION - WEEKEND CUTTERS**

An NCHA achievement buckle will be awarded to members having lifetime Championship / Challenger show earnings of \$1,000 in NCHA approved events and classes, provided their earnings were less than \$1,000 at the beginning of the Point Year. This will not include any money won in Limited Age Events.

Additional levels will be added for earning \$2,500; \$5,000; \$10,000; \$15,000; \$25,000; and \$50,000. These levels will be designated by the addition of medallions and stones to the buckles. The enhancements can be purchased by qualified members directly from the vendor.

Members who have received the previous \$2,000 achievement buckle may purchase the new buckle from the vendor.

## **AWARDS & RECOGNITION - LIMITED AGED EVENTS**

The Top Ten money earning horses and riders in the 4-year-old Open and Non-Pro and the 5/6-year-old Open and Non-Pro divisions at Limited Aged Events held with added money of less than \$10,000 (Non added money LAEs are not included) in each Region (8 Regions) will be tracked and their standings reported on the NCHA website.

The final year-end winner (in each division) will receive an NCHA trophy if requested from the show department.

Owners of horses shall designate their "Open" region in a manner similar to the current requirement for designating one's circuit.

## **POINT YEAR:**

The NCHA point year will end on the Sunday prior to the start of the NCHA Futurity. The new point year will begin on December 28.

## **HORSE CERTIFICATE OF ABILITY:**

Monies won in the thirteen NCHA approved classes as well as in NCHA approved Limited Age Events classes, count toward this award. A total of \$3,000 is required.

## **BRONZE AWARD:**

Horse - Only earnings in the Open Championship Class count toward this award. Earnings requirement is \$10,000 accumulated during the horse's lifetime in this class.

Non-Pro Rider - Only earnings in the Championship Non-Professional Rider Classes count toward this award. Earnings requirement is \$10,000 accumulated during the rider's lifetime in these classes.

## **SILVER AWARD:**

Horse - Same as Bronze award; earnings requirement is \$30,000.

Non-Pro Rider - Same as Bronze award; earnings requirement is \$30,000.

## **GOLD AWARD:**

Horse - Same as Bronze and Silver awards; earnings requirement is \$50,000.

Non-Pro Rider - Same as Bronze and Silver awards; earnings requirement is \$50,000.

#### **PLATINUM AWARD:**

Horse - Same as Bronze, Silver and Gold awards; earnings requirement is \$100,000.

Non-Pro Rider - Same as Bronze, Silver and Gold awards; earnings requirement is \$100,000.

#### **HORSE HALL OF FAME:**

Horses qualify for this award by meeting one (1) or more of the following three (3) sets of criteria:

- Method 1: \$150,000 total earnings in the Open Championship Class (see above).
- Method 2: \$400,000 total lifetime earnings from earnings in Approved **Championship / Challenger / Limited Age** events
- Method 3: Win / Place 1st in the Top Tier Open class of any two (or more) of the following six (6) major NCHA events:
1. Futurity
  2. Super Stakes (4-year-old)
  3. Derby
  4. Super Stakes Classic (5/6-year-old)
  5. Summer Classic/Challenge (5/6-year-old)
  6. NCHA Open World Champion.

Award: Certificate presented at the NCHA Futurity and/or Convention.

#### **OPEN RIDERS HALL OF FAME:**

1. Win any two (2): NCHA Futurity, Super Stakes, Derby, World Champion Open
2. Win any three (3): Super Stakes Classic, 5/6-year-old Classic/Challenge, Reserve World Champion Open.
3. Win one (1) in category 1 plus two in category 2.
4. **Ride horses placing in the top 5 Year End World Finals Open Class Standings** five (5) times. A rider must win 90% of the qualifying money to receive credit.
5. Have in excess of \$1,000,000 NCHA lifetime earnings **excluding earnings from: Championship Novice Horse classes, Unapproved classes, Non-Pro classes, Amateur classes, Breed World Show classes, Incentives, Western Horseman show.**

Award: Certificate presented at the NCHA Futurity and/or Convention.

#### **NON-PROFESSIONAL RIDERS HALL OF FAME:**

1. **Place first in the Top-Tier Non-Pro at** any two (2) NCHA events: Futurity, Super Stakes, or Derby Non-Pro events or be the Non-Pro World Champion.
2. **Place first in the Top-Tier Non-Pro in** any three (3) NCHA events: Super Stakes Classic, 5/6-Year-old Classic Challenge, or be the Non-Pro Reserve World Champion.
3. Win one in category 1, plus two in category 2.
4. Have lifetime earnings of \$500,000 in **NCHA approved Non-Pro or Open classes excluding Unapproved classes, Amateur earnings, Breed World Shows, Incentives and Western Horseman show. Includes Championship Novice Non-Pro classes.**
5. Have in excess of \$150,000 **in earnings from Championship show Non-Pro classes only.**

Award: Certificate presented at the NCHA Futurity and/or Convention.



## **MEMBERS HALL OF FAME:**

The NCHA Members Hall of Fame was established to recognize those individuals who have made outstanding and unusual contributions to the NCHA basic purpose, which is the public exhibition and constant promotion of the Cutting Horse. We are proud to honor these individuals who have exhibited a high moral character, good sportsmanship, fairness, and an exemplary contribution of time, effort, and interest in NCHA and its basic endeavors. To nominate a deserving individual to the Members Hall of Fame, a nomination form must be filled out and the appropriate number of nomination letters provided. The nomination form is found on the NCHA website or can be requested from the office.

The Hall of Fame selection committee shall consist of five individuals of which one new member is appointed each year by the current President. Each member's term will be five-years, as a way to keep continuity on the committee. It is recommended that at least one member is a current Executive Committee member. The Committee members shall elect a Chairman from its members each year. This Committee screens all nominees and submits a recommendation to the Executive Committee. **Inductions will be limited to a maximum of six (6) inductees per year and nominees will be eligible for consideration for five years after receipt of their nomination.**

Award: Honored and Official Certificate during the NCHA Futurity and/or Convention.

## **NCHA HORSE OF THE YEAR (OPEN / NON-PRO / AMATEUR):**

Each year, NCHA will recognize the highest point earning horse.

1. Award Divisions
  - a. Open
  - b. Non-Pro
  - c. Amateur
2. Automatic Award

Any horse that wins the Triple Crown in the Open, Non-Pro or Amateur top-tier class will automatically be named NCHA Horse of the Year in that division.
3. Time Frame
  - a. For NCHA Approved Limited Age Events: NCHA Futurity through the end of the current point year. For example, the 2026 horse of the year would be awarded based on the points earned in the 2025 NCHA Futurity through the Sunday before the 2026 Futurity.
  - b. For NCHA Approved World Championship Shows (including the NCHA World Final): Current point year.
4. Qualified Shows / Classes
  - a. NCHA Produced Shows
    - i. Triple Crown Events – Only the top tier level within each division will receive points. Sub-classes and lower levels do not receive points.
    - ii. Other NCHA produced events that do not award World Championship monies do not receive points.
  - b. NCHA Approved Shows
    - i. Individual shows must have \$100,000 in added money to qualify.
    - ii. Events with multiple approved shows across calendar days where added money totals \$100,000 do not qualify. The added money must be contained within one NCHA approved show number.

- iii. When qualified approved shows offer multiple levels / classes within a division, only the top level/class within a division will receive points. Example, a show that offers the Open, Intermediate Open and Limited Open levels within the Open division – only the top tier Open will receive points.
  - iv. Sub-Classes do not qualify to receive points.
5. Point System
- a. World Champion Points
    - i. Open World Champion Horse receives 200 Points.
    - ii. Open Reserve World Champion Horse received 100 points.
    - iii. If the Non-Pro World Champion has ridden only one horse during the entire point year, that horse receives 200 points.
    - iv. If the Non-Pro Reserve World Champion has ridden only one horse during the entire point year, that horse receives 100 points.
    - v. If the Unlimited Amateur World Champion has ridden only one horse during the entire point year, that horse receives 200 points.
    - vi. If the Unlimited Amateur Reserve World Champion has ridden only one horse during the entire point year, that horse receives 100 points.
    - vii. If the **\$75,000** Amateur World Champion has ridden only one horse during the entire point year, that horse receives 200 points.
    - viii. If the **\$75,000** Amateur Reserve World Champion has ridden only one horse during the entire point year, that horse receives 100 points.
  - b. Qualified Show Points
    - i. Classes with Working Finals - Points are awarded to placings in the finals. Number of entries is based on entries in the first go.
    - ii. Classes without Working Finals - Points are awarded the same as a class with fewer than 50 entries.

## HORSE OF THE YEAR POINT SYSTEM

### Points Earned for Placing

No. of Entries	Place in Contest:										
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11+
<50	20	16	14	12	10	9	8	7	6	5	4
51-75	40	32	28	24	20	18	16	14	12	10	8
76-100	60	48	42	36	30	27	24	21	18	15	12
101-125	80	64	56	48	40	36	32	28	24	20	16
126-150	100	80	70	60	50	45	40	35	30	25	20
151-175	120	96	84	72	60	54	48	42	36	30	24
176-200	140	112	98	84	70	63	56	49	42	35	28
201-300	160	128	112	96	80	72	64	56	48	40	32
301-400	180	144	126	108	90	81	72	63	54	45	36
401+	200	160	140	120	100	90	80	70	60	50	40

## 6. Ties

In the event of a tie on points, the total money won on the earned points (above) will be used to determine the winner.

Award: Buckle presented at the Futurity Finals.

## AMATEUR RIDER OF THE YEAR

Each year, NCHA will recognize the Amateur winning the most money in NCHA approved Amateur classes regardless of the number of horses shown during the point year. This award is strictly based on money earned.

1. **Eligibility:** Open to all Amateur riders showing during the point year.
2. **Calculation:** Sum of all monies earned in all approved classes at:
  - a. NCHA approved Championship Shows during the point year in the following classes:
    - i. Unlimited Amateur
    - ii. **\$75,000** Amateur
    - iii. **\$25,000** Amateur
  - b. NCHA approved Limited Age Events (including sub-classes) – monies earned at the NCHA Futurity from the previous year will be counted for this award.

AWARD: Top Amateur will receive a buckle.

## AMATEUR ROOKIE OF THE YEAR:

Each year, NCHA will recognize the highest money earning Rookie Amateur in two categories:

- a. NCHA Approved Championship Shows
  - b. NCHA Approved Limited Age Events
1. **Eligibility:** Open to all Amateur riders that had less than \$5,000 in Lifetime earnings at the beginning of the point year.
  2. **Calculation:** Sum of all monies earned in all approved classes on all horses shown at:
    - a. Championship Show Rookie - includes monies earned in any of the Unlimited Amateur, **\$75,000** Amateur or **\$25,000** Amateur classes at NCHA approved Championship shows during the current point year.
    - b. Limited Age Event Rookie - includes monies earned in approved Amateur classes (NOT including sub-classes) at all NCHA approved Limited Age Events. Monies earned at the NCHA Futurity count in the same point year as the calendar year of the event.

AWARD: Top Amateur in each category will receive a \$1,000 check and buckle.

## NON-PRO RIDING SINGLE HORSE

The leading rider based on earnings in Non-Pro weekend show classes and the World Finals who rode a single horse in those classes will receive a Certificate ***upon request***.

## NYCHA ROOKIE OF THE YEAR

NYCHA will present a Junior and a Senior Rookie of the Year Award to the highest point earning youth in each division.

1. **Eligibility:** Riders in either division cannot have earned more than 15 points or over \$500 in any cutting event or equine association
2. **Calculation:** Points accumulated between June 1 through May 31 plus all go rounds and non-working finals of the Youth World Finals. If there are no World Finals entrants, calculations would revert to the points leader on May 31.

AWARD: Each division will receive a \$1,000 scholarship and a Rookie of the Year Buckle.

## AFFILIATE OF THE YEAR

In an effort to recognize and reward outstanding affiliate organizations of the NCHA, the Executive Committee established an “Affiliate of the Year” award. The award includes an article in the *Chatter*, a printer, an additional year-end trophy, and \$2,500 cash award.

Directors of the Association are encouraged to submit a nomination of an affiliate located in your state or NCHA Circuit for this prestigious title. Back-up materials must be provided to Weekend Show.

Committee members in electronic format, as well as hard copies. The Committee may request follow-up on submitted material.

The following criteria will be used to evaluate the nominees:

CONSIDERATIONS	POINT VALUE
• Increase in entries per show (percentage)	20
• Innovations at shows (examples)	30
• Adhering to NCHA rules and cutting traditions	20
• Year-end awards & sponsors (\$ and type)	15
• Cooperation (letters from other Circuit affiliates)	5
• Other activities (examples)	10
Total	100

## NATIONAL / WORLD STANDINGS

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### WORLD CHAMPIONS

Earnings from shows bearing the title NCHA Championship Cutting Horse Contest will be counted. In order to qualify for this title, shows must meet all standing rules for approval outlined in Standing Rule 8.

Approved Classes outlined in Standing Rule 8:

- a. Open
- b. Non-Professional
- c. **\$50,000** Non-Professional
- d. Unlimited Amateur
- e. **\$75,000** Amateur
- f. **\$25,000** Amateur,
- g. \$25,000 Novice Horse
- h. \$5,000 Novice Horse
- i. \$25,000 Novice Horse / Non-Professional Rider
- j. \$5,000 Novice Horse / Non-Professional Rider
- k. **\$4,000** Limit Rider
- j. Youth - Points from all classes (see Standing Rule 9).

A World Champion will be recognized in each approved class based on combined earnings from throughout the point year. The Top Fifteen (15) competitors for all approved classes (with the exception of the youth) will be recognized based on combined earnings from throughout the point year and money earned in the World Finals Show.

NCHA will award handmade buckles to the Top Fifteen (15) riders in all NCHA approved classes.

Year-end awards will be given to the World Champion Stallion, Mare and Gelding in the Open, \$25,000 Novice Horse and \$5,000 Novice Horse classes.

The youth will have their own point year and finals which will be held with the Summer Cutting Spectacular.

## **WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP FINALS - SHOW CHAMPIONS**

The World Championship Finals “Show Champion” will be based on money earned exclusively at the World Finals Show. The NCHA World Championship Finals in the Open and Non-Pro Classes will have four (4) go-rounds and a non-working final.

All other classes will have two go-rounds and a non-working final. The champion of each class will receive an Official NCHA Trophy and Champion Buckle.

Youth World Show Champions will be based on points earned exclusively at the Youth World Finals Show, which will have three go-rounds and a non-working final.

## **INTERNATIONAL CIRCUIT PROGRAM**

For the most up to date policies and procedures surrounding the International Circuit Program, please visit [NCHACutting.com](http://NCHACutting.com).

The Circuit Program was conceived and implemented with the goal of promoting and growing the sport of cutting at a local level. It allows world-wide weekend cutters the opportunity to earn national recognition through local competition. The program divides the NCHA membership population into geographic groups called “Circuits.”

Cutters earn points within one (1) Circuit by competing in NCHA-approved weekend competitions. Approved shows can be in either the Weekend/Championship format (which also counts toward World finals) or the Weekend/Challenger format. Earned points are tracked by the NCHA office and used to determine *local* Circuit Championship qualifiers, International Circuit *Championship* qualifiers and year-end Circuit award recipients.

## **HONORARY AWARDS**

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### **TODD DRUMMOND AWARD (Youth)**

By nomination from an NCHA Affiliate, one outstanding youth member will be honored annually. The youth member will be recognized for scholastic, extracurricular activities and cutting horse involvement. The President will appoint a committee of three (3) to review the nominations received from the NCHA Affiliates. The committee will then recommend a maximum of three (3) to the Executive Committee who will then select one youth member. Selected recipient will receive a buckle presented during the NCHA Futurity Finals.

### **ZANE SCHULTE AWARD (Professional Trainer)**

In honor and memory of Zane Schulte, the son of Thomas and Barbra Schulte, the Zane Schulte Award is a humanitarian award to be presented annually to a Professional trainer who exemplifies integrity, service, values, respect of peers, contribution to the industry and excellence in the arena. Trainers may be nominated by committee members or by NCHA members who submit a written or online nomination form. The recipient, chosen by the Zane Schulte Award committee members consisting of the Professional Trainers Committee Chair as well as two members at-large and the current NCHA officers, will be honored with a bronze “Zane Schulte Award” trophy.

### **MARY KINGSBURY AMATEUR SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD (Amateur)**

The Mary Kingsbury Amateur Sportsmanship Award is presented annually, during the NCHA Futurity, to an Amateur who exhibits integrity, kindness, honesty, respect, good sportsmanship, fairness and compassion for people and horses in and out of the arena. Any Amateur, in good standing, may be nominated by an NCHA member by submitting a written letter or online nomination form. Previous recipients are not eligible for further nomination; however, prior nominees can be nominated again. Members of the selection committee are not eligible for nomination or to submit nominees. The recipient, selected by the Amateur Committee, will be honored with a NCHA bronze trophy presented during the NCHA Futurity and their name will be added to the Mary Kingsbury Amateur Sportsmanship Award Plaque at the NCHA office.

### **JULIE HANSMA NON-PRO SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD (Non-Pro)**

The Julie Hansma Non-Pro Sportsmanship award shall be presented annually to an active NCHA Non-Pro rider who exhibits the outstanding qualities of Julie. These qualities are a high level of horsemanship in and out of the show pen, support of their peers, a trusted advisor to all, a high level of integrity and a leader who represents the true definition of a Non-Pro rider in the sport of cutting. Any Non-Pro in good standing may be nominated by an NCHA member by submitting a written letter or an online nomination form. Previous recipients are not eligible for further nomination; however, prior nominees can be nominated again. Members of the selection committee are not eligible for nomination or to submit nominees. One recipient each year, selected by the Non-Pro Committee (selection committee) will be honored with an award presented during the NCHA Futurity and their name will be added to the Julie Hansma Non-Pro Sportsmanship Award Plaque at the NCHA Office.

### **ARTHUR JACKSON MEMORIAL AWARD (Judges)**

Established in 2022, this award is given to an individual that demonstrates a high degree of integrity in all aspects of their conduct related in any way to involvement as an NCHA member, contestant, judge, or other conduct which reflects on the NCHA. Must have judged for NCHA at least 25 consecutive years. A committee will be selected by the Director of Judges with no more than 3 from the Judges Rules Committee, who will decide who is most worthy of this award. The recipient will be honored with a NCHA bronze trophy and their name will be added to the Arthur Jackson Memorial Plaque at the NCHA office.

## **MODINE SMITH HUMANITARIAN AWARD**

Established in 2012, the Modine Smith Humanitarian Award was created in honor of philanthropist, volunteer, and humanitarian, Modine Smith. Her unfaltering support of the NCHA and NCHA Foundation was awe inspiring to all who had the privilege to know her. Smith's steadfast contributions helped shape and secure the future of the NCHA and the NCHA Foundation, and both organizations are better because of her inspiring efforts. This award is given annually to a person who displays unwavering support of the NCHA and the NCHA Foundation by continuously working to enhance the associations past, present and future. The recipient will receive a plaque during the NCHA World Championship Futurity.

## **GERALD ALEXANDER EXCELLENCE AWARD (2 Year Old Trainer)**

In 2024, this award was established to honor a two-year-old trainer whose contribution to the industry and exemplification of the values Gerald Alexander (the first recipient) exhibited throughout his career: patience, perseverance, integrity and above all, love for the horses in his care is reminiscent of Alexander's. Once established, one committee member will term out each year and the incoming President will appoint a replacement member to serve a 3 year term. **Once every three years**, the committee will choose a recipient from a list of nominated candidates. A candidate may be nominated by committee members or by an NCHA member in good standing by submitting a letter or nomination form by January first. Once nominated, candidates will remain under consideration for five (5) committee meetings. Recipients will receive an award at either the annual Convention and/or the NCHA Futurity, during the year of their award and have their name inscribed on the Gerald Alexander Excellence Award plaque at the NCHA office.

# Show Management Handbook

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## Benefits & Options Offered of offering approved NCHA shows

1. Complete description of upcoming show including payment schedule listed on the NCHA website prior to show dates.
2. Earnings records of horses and riders maintained by NCHA.
3. Results of show publicized via appropriate media. Working pictures of champions along with a brief summary of the show will also be featured.
4. Right to use NCHA approved judges that have been Professionally trained and rated accordingly.
5. The NCHA Adjusted Monitor System is available to shows that do not meet the necessary requirements. For information obtaining this option, please contact the NCHA Judges Department.

Many contestants say that a successful cutting horse contest must have three things: good cattle, fair judging, and decent ground. This is certainly true, but one thing has been overlooked. This is the secretary of the show involved. No one has more control over the top three essentials for a top-quality contest, and no one probably gets less credit when a good show is held. They will, however, get the criticism if any of the essentials or myriad of other details fail.

This outline has been prepared as an aid to those who secretary cutting horse contests and is based on the recommendations and knowledge of a very dedicated group of experienced show secretaries. While much of this information applies to Championship / Challenger shows, it is also applicable to Limited Age Events. For additional information on Approvals, see Standing Rule 5.

## Suggestions for Show Management:

### **I. Preparation for Approved Cutting Horse Show**

Write for, fill out, and return to the NCHA an Application for Approval of your Cutting Horse shows at least forty (40) days before your closing date of entry.

1. Set amount of purse and entry fee.
2. Entry fee must not be less than \$10 per horse. Entry fee shall be added to the purse. If any charge is to be made other than the entry fee, it must be stated as a stall, handling, or office charge, and be separated from the entry fee. The following entry fees are mandatory:
  - a. For shows having \$500 or more in added money, the official cattle charge combined should not exceed 40-45% of the total charges (entry fee + office charge + cattle charge). When it is possible, Show Management is encouraged to lower this percentage.

Under no condition can the cattle charge exceed entry fee unless fresh cattle are provided in jackpotted classes only. No cattle charge may exceed \$250; however special consideration may be granted by the Executive Director for shows having \$5,000 or more in added money per division. (See Standing Rule 14)
  - b. The objective of the fees is to cover the cost of the cattle. In any class where rerun cattle are used, the cattle charge



should be reduced.

3. Judge Selection: Refer to Standing Rule 27.
4. Determine the number of go-rounds to be worked and if a final will be held.
5. Set the closing date of entry and the time horses must be on the grounds. (Entries should close early enough at large shows to provide ample time to secure sufficient cattle.)
6. Name a representative for each approved class; otherwise, they must be elected at these shows before the contest starts.
7. As much of the information as is possible should be put on the premium list and entry applications, especially if an elimination is to be held.
8. Select classes that will be offered (See Standing Rule 8).
9. If offering AQHA classes, there are three options available for producing combined NCHA/ AQHA Championship shows. Option A: Separate AQHA recognized cutting classes. (All- ages, Senior, Junior, Amateur and Youth) Option B: AQHA classes coordinated with NCHA classes.
  - AQHA All ages with NCHA Open
  - AQHA Senior with NCHA Open
  - AQHA Junior with \$25,000 Novice
  - AQHA Amateur with NCHA Non-Pro, Unlimited Amateur or **\$75,000** Amateur
  - AQHA Youth with NCHA Youth

Option C: A combination of options A & B. Example: AQHA All ages with NCHA Open and AQHA Amateur as a separate class. For the draw, NCHA Standing Rule 11 shall prevail.

In option B and/or C, all NCHA entries plus AQHA entries that have double entered shall be drawn first. All AQHA entries that are not NCHA entered shall be drawn second. All AQHA entries that are not NCHA entered shall work after all NCHA entries and appear on a separate judge's sheet. All AQHA entries shall be denoted by name and number.

- AQHA double entries must be noted on NCHA judge's sheet.
- AQHA entries that are not double entered do not need to be videoed.
- AQHA entries that are not double entered do not pertain to the NCHA weekend monitor program.
- Contact AQHA for Approval details.

## **II. Method of Conducting Shows**

1. The cattle should be held in one end of the arena by two riders who do not let any cattle pass them until the contestant has the animal, they want to work cut off by itself. After this animal has been driven past the riders holding the herd, it will have to be turned back so the contestant will have a chance to show the horse's ability to keep it from returning to the herd. Turning back is usually done by two riders selected by the contestant. It is recommended that in shows with several spectator performances, only the contestants, herd holders, and turnback riders be allowed in the arena during the cutting horse show. Spectators must be considered at all times; and by restricting the number of horses in the arena, greater concentration is encouraged on the horse working.
2. Usually, cattle on the yearling or two-year-old order give a

horse enough play to put on a good show. Selecting cattle that will work is important. No horse, regardless of how good they may be, can put on a good performance unless the animal they cut out tries to get back in the herd.

3. The number of cattle needed for a show depends on the number of horses entered and the number of go-rounds to be worked. The minimum number of cattle recommended by NCHA for any approved show is that the number of cattle at least equal two and one-half times the number of works scheduled. In other words, at least two and one-half head of stock per horse, per go-round should be provided. In a one go-round contest with forty (40) horses, one hundred (100) cattle would be needed; if two go-rounds, two hundred (200) cattle, etc. Before the draw is made for working order, the number of horses to work in each group of cattle should be determined with a maximum of fifteen (15) recommended. The cattle should then be separated in direct proportion to the number of horses to be worked (i.e., 12 horses, 30 cattle minimum; 15 horses, 38 cattle minimum). Where finals are to be held, additional cattle should be provided in the same ratio.
4. At shows holding classes which have equal added purses, entry fees and office or cattle charges, Show Management is to determine which class will be held first, if there are sufficient cattle to work all entries on fresh cattle.
5. In many cases, shows will want to schedule other classes in addition to NCHA Open, Non-Professional and Amateur classes. It is recommended that Open and Non-Professional classes be held first at NCHA approved events since higher entry and cattle fees are usually charged for these classes. (If Open and Non-Professional classes are not held first, separate fresh cattle should be provided and held back for them.) It is recommended that the Youth class be placed no later than the third class of the day on Sundays.
6. Whenever possible, Show Management is urged to provide a means of announcing the score for each horse immediately after its work. This will greatly increase spectator interest and enthusiasm for the contest.
7. Whenever possible, it is highly recommended that stands be provided for the judges and that they be placed out in the arena (approximately 100 feet from back fence). Recommended minimum height for judges and video stands at Weekend Shows is six (6) feet. Secretaries should be positioned outside the arena and judges' sheets are to be posted outside the arena. Judges' cards cannot be posted within a close proximity, or in hearing distance of the judges stands. This is particularly true for large shows where a complete go-round will be worked without interruption.
8. A very important thing in putting on a show is to be ready. Get in the arena, put on your event, and get out as quickly as possible. This will help put on a good show and will make your event more popular. Have every detail worked out beforehand and be sure everyone concerned knows what they are supposed to do. Never wait until you are in the arena to decide how something should be done. The spectators paid their money to see a show and do not care to wait while some

discussion is held in the arena.

9. While the event preceding the cutting horse show is going on, get the cattle in the alley right behind the arena gate and make sure there are enough people there to push them in the arena the second you are ready for them. Be sure the herd holders, the turnback riders, the contestants, and the judges are ready. Be sure the judges have their cards and a pencil and see that the announcer has all of the information needed. All of this will add a lot to your show.

## **Before the Show**

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Make sure all necessary forms are in order.

1. Secure an NCHA Application for Approval Form and carefully note the rule for its return. This application must be received no later than forty (40) days prior to the closing date of entry.
2. Obtain your judge or judges from the NCHA Approved Judges list and/or the NCHA website. A copy of the list is available online or by calling the NCHA office. It is mandatory that judges' names be listed on the NCHA website for each show a minimum of seven days prior to the closing date of entries.
3. The money added in your show's Open and Non-Professional classes will determine what rating your judge must hold.
4. Carefully read the NCHA Standing Rules and the suggestions for Show Management or Committee in Charge contained in the current NCHA Rule Book.
5. Forward completed show approval forms to NCHA at least forty (40) days before your cutting. Be sure to list dates, place, arena name (with directions if needed), time and judges along with purses, entry fees and other charges. Shows may be approved without judges. The judge or judges that are used **MUST** be named a minimum of seven (7) days prior to the closing date of entries.
  - a. Check the acknowledgment received from NCHA granting your approval to be sure that the information is correct.
  - b. Fill out the sample news release on your show and send it to your local media if publicity is desired. This is highly recommended as a means of obtaining growth.
6. Entry fees should always be more than office charges, except in extreme cases when they may be the same.

### **NOTE\* Maximum Entry Fees & Office Charges**

\*Classes with less than \$200 added should charge in accordance with other shows in their circuit. No entry fee shall be less than \$10. Except for classes with no added money, Standing Rule 14 shall apply.

### **NOTE\* Cattle Charges**

The objective of the fees is to cover the cost of the cattle. In any class where rerun cattle are used, the cattle charge should be reduced. The cattle charge may only exceed the jackpot portion of the entry fee if there are some fresh cattle provided. Under special circumstances, a cattle surcharge may be added to any class if approved in writing, **IN ADVANCE** of the show by NCHA.

7. Both owner and rider of any horse entered in an NCHA approved or sponsored event, by said entry, consent to the implementation

of any action allowed by this Zero Tolerance Policy (Rule 35.A) by either Show Management or judge.

8. Have plenty of entry forms. This form should include space for the name of the horse, its rider, owner's address, phone number and social security number, as well as entry fees. Check for Non-Pro cards and NCHA membership identification number.
9. Print or obtain official NCHA Judges Sheets. Always list the horse. Based on how often you like to confirm your scores, have room for **fifteen (15) horses on each sheet**.
10. Check with your judge(s) in advance to make sure their plans are made. Make sure that someone has the responsibility of having the judges at the showground on time. Use more than one judge whenever possible.
11. Check to see that you have sufficient video media (**SD cards, thumb drives or USB 3.0 external hard drives**). All approved classes must be videoed. These are to be held **by the certified videographer or** management for thirty (30) days and may then be reused.

## **The Cattle**

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1. NCHA recommends that you have available at least two and one-half cattle per horse at approved **Championship / LAE shows**.
2. The cattle should be fresh (never used before in a cutting event) when the contest begins. This should definitely be specified when arrangements are made with the supplier.
3. Yearling or two-year-old cattle will usually provide a good show. It is important that the cattle be in good physical condition. They should weigh five hundred (500) pounds or more.
4. Use your cattle in such a way that all cutters in a class are treated equally. Try to never work part of a class on fresh cattle and the rest on reruns.
5. If there are not enough fresh cattle for both the Open and Non-Professional classes, and the added money, entry fee and office/ cattle charge for each is equal, then a coin should be tossed to determine which class will be held first on the fresh cattle.
6. If rerun cattle must be used later in the day, try to put additional cattle per cutter in the groups. For example, if two and one-half to three cattle were provided when they were fresh, then four or five cattle per horse should be provided when they are rerun.

## **On Show Day**

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Check your equipment:

1. Loudspeaker system: where electricity is not available, it should be battery powered.
2. A time clock: must be visible to all judges. Try to have a spare time clock.
3. Signs giving notice of the NCHA Zero Tolerance Policy and the NCHA Medication Rules, containing the content and meeting the size requirements prescribed by the NCHA, shall be posted at all shows. Signs will be printed by, and be at the expense of, the show. Refer to Standing Rule 35A.5.
4. Score reporting system. Several methods are available for use in obtaining the judges' scores. Among the best are closed circuit telephone system or walkie-talkie radios on separate channels. Any of these methods will work; however, the score

- given by each judge when more than one is used should not be known by the other judge(s).
5. Secretarial equipment should include a good supply of pencils and pens, plus a calculator or adding machine, as well as a whistle for the judge.
  6. Taking entries:
    - a. Have each exhibitor or agent fill out the necessary entry forms.
    - b. When the entry forms are turned in, collect all entry fees due. No one should be allowed to enter or work without paying first. Where post entries are allowed during the show, require an open check from the exhibitor which you can complete after the final entry is made. Be sure that the exhibitor fills in the date and payee along with signing the check.
    - c. Check for current NCHA membership and/or Non-Professional/Amateur card. **NOTE: Show Management will be fined the value of the missed membership for permitting a non-member to enter or show a horse. (See Standing Rule 2.1.1 for ineligible contestant information and process)**
    - d. Design your entry process in a way that all necessary information is collected. Your entry process should help make sure each entry is in the proper class.
    - e. Read your entries for the first class using the name of both horse and rider, if possible, and announce when the draw will take place. (Repeat this procedure for each class.)
    - f. It is also a good idea to announce how entry closings and draws will be handled for the classes which follow.
  7. Judges' stands and video stands at Weekend Shows, should be a minimum height of six feet.
    - a. Separation between the judges' stands and the secretary area should be the maximum distance available in any show area so that each can properly perform their function without distraction. Score cards will not be posted within a close proximity or in hearing distance of the judges. No secretary desk or office shall be within hearing distance of the judges' stand.

### **Procedures for Videoing NCHA Approved Events**

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1. All NCHA approved classes must be video recorded.
2. The Videographer must have the understanding that their first responsibility is to make quality videos for NCHA reviewing purposes. Only NCHA certified videographers can be used. All videographers, including replacement or fill-in videographers must be certified and a current NCHA member. There will be a \$150 fee to apply and or recertify.
3. All applicant videographers must register and pass the on-line NCHA Videographer test with a minimum of an 80% score. This site is located at [www.nchavst.com](http://www.nchavst.com). After passing the on-line NCHA videographer test you will enter a probational period. All applicant videographers will be required to send a copy of their first video footage of the year with two classes (ex. Open and Non-Pro) to Video West Productions (see #21 this section) for review and approval to become a NCHA Videographer.

4. All NCHA videographers are required to recertify every (2) two years. ***Certification end dates coincide with membership expiration dates - December 27 of the year.*** All NCHA videographers will be required to send a copy of their last video footage of the expiring year, with two classes (ex. Open and Non-Pro) to Video West Productions (see #21 this section) for review and approval to remain a NCHA videographer. Show producers must ensure the videographer has the proper certification and are aware of and complying with the requirements prior to the start of the show.
5. While videoing classes, videographers must not talk on a cell phone, or talk to contestants, and have only limited communication with the judges. It is very important that the judge or monitor reviewing the video hear all the arena sounds and should not be distracted by ongoing conversations on the video.
6. NCHA will only accept ***SD cards, thumb drives, or USB 3.0 external hard drives.***
  - a. The Videographer will turn in a Weekend Field Monitor's Report along with all the video runs and judges' sheets to the judge(s) at the immediate conclusion of the show.
  - b. All video media should be labeled with the name of the show, date, classes, and judge name. Retrieving a specific horse and rider video is important throughout the show and after the show. Each set, class and day needs to be easily identified to assure that information retrieval is guaranteed. All videos stored on USB external hard drive, SD cards or thumb drives need to be organized, so that a specific horse, rider, set, class, and day of the show can easily be identified for review purposes at any time.
7. ***The videographer acknowledges that the NCHA has the right to use all video footage from any NCHA produced or approved events for any reason. The videographer agrees to promptly provide to the NCHA any video footage of any such events in response to an NCHA request.***
8. Camera should be positioned as near the center of the arena as possible and should be at approximately the same height as the judge's stand.
9. Do not leave the camera stationary.
10. Take all precautions to ensure the lighting is proper.
11. Videos must have horse, rider, and cow in the picture always. Do not zoom in on rider too closely to prevent getting the overall action.
12. Allow lead-in footage before horse begins to work and after buzzer sounds, the horse leaves the arena and is no longer in the judge's sight. Be sure the horn or buzzer sound is heard on recording as well as the announced score.
13. If camera is not capable of producing titles, it should be left on long enough to obtain names of horses and or riders.
14. Whether using ***SD card, thumb drive or USB 3.0 external hard drive*** media for storage purposes, individual video/movie files of each horse and rider must be produced. Each horse and rider exhibitor video file within a set, class and day of a show must be distinguished from the next horse and rider video within that same set in the order in which the set was shot.

Do not omit any horses in any class. No extended stream of video containing multiple competitors is acceptable. Identifying the horse and rider/exhibitor at the beginning of each run is required. Begin recording early enough to record the announcer's introduction of each horse and rider. If it becomes necessary for the videographer to supply the introduction at the start of each run, please do not say the names of the horses or the exhibitors unless you are the official show announcer. As each horse approaches the herd, the videographer should speak into the microphone of the camera. For example, they should say: "This is the Non-Pro Class, third horse."

15. If the secretary receives numerous complaints regarding a judge's performance, the secretary may submit the video along with the judge's score card to the Director of Judges for review. This will not replace a formal protest.
16. Under the Self Adjusted Monitor System (SAMS), please have adequate equipment available. A judge is required to review the video in a place where they are completely separated from the contestants and away from the video stand. All events using the Self Adjusted Monitor System (SAMS) must provide an isolated location to review the runs in question. The room is to include a large TV (preferably with at least a 30-inch screen), one station with monitor and media player (i.e., recorders or computers) with 1/16 slow motion and play back capability is required for the judge. Under no condition is a judge to review any runs in the arena or in the presence of contestants, owners, or other judges. At all monitored events, two stations with monitors and media players (i.e., recorders or computers) with 1/16 slow motion and play back capability are required for the NCHA monitor.
17. When a video is received at the NCHA office that is of poor quality, the NCHA Judges Department will:
  - a. Notify the event's producer and show secretary and fine the videographer \$50.
  - b. Additional footage may be requested and sent to the NCHA Video Support Team (VST) to be evaluated. The videographer will contact the VST to seek assistance in resolving the issue.
  - c. Upon receiving a second inferior quality recording from the videographer, the videographer may be fined \$200, which must be paid prior to the videographer's next event and verified by the Show Management that the videographer has been cleared to video any upcoming show for them. It is the videographer's responsibility to contact the VST to discuss the video quality notification.
  - d. Upon receiving a third inferior quality recording, the videographer may be fined a minimum \$500 fine or revocation of videoing privileges, or both. All disciplinary actions listed in these rules are guidelines only and may be increased or decreased by the Director of Judges, in his sole discretion, based on the severity of the violation in question.
18. The Field Monitor system requires that each show reproduce and provide video copies for the NCHA Judge at the end of each show. The judge will have three days to mail the copies of

their judges' sheets and a copy of their videos of the approved NCHA classes that they judge.

- a. All classes, including Limited Age Event classes, will be included in the Field Monitor Program.
19. At shows with multiple judges (Championship and non-monitored Limited Age Events), each judge is required to mail a copy of their judge's score sheets and video to their assigned field Monitor within 3 days of the end of the event.
20. All United States, Canadian and European judges will report to an assigned Weekend Monitor.
21. Show Management should make sure that their Video Contractors are aware of and are complying with all NCHA requirements PRIOR to the show. See Guidelines for Weekend Monitor Program for Judges and Regulations for Limited Age Events. Contact for video training:  
Video West Production Ted Petit,  
1739 Marion Street, Georgetown, SC. 29440  
Cell: 661-492-2621  
Web site: [www.nchavst.com](http://www.nchavst.com)  
Email: [ted.petit@yahoo.com](mailto:ted.petit@yahoo.com)

### **The Representative**

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1. If the Show Management has not appointed representatives (of the contestants), then one should be elected for each class after entries for the class have closed and before any work from that class begins.
2. Only contestants in a show are eligible to be the representative of that class.
3. It is the duty of the representative to be the contact between Show Management and all contestants in the class when questions arise. The representative is not a liaison between contestants and the judge(s) and is restricted from talking to judges by Standing Rules, as are all contestants.
4. The NCHA Representative's Report should be delivered to each representative before the class begins.
5. You may want the representative from the first class to assist in determining where cattle changes should occur and how many cattle are available for each group of horses. Care should be taken to **ensure** like treatment for classes having similar entry fees and cattle charges. Follow this procedure for later classes.

### **The Draw**

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1. Draw as soon as you comfortably can after entries have closed. This gives your contestants more time to get their horses ready.
2. The judge or judges shall draw the working order for all horses after cattle changes have been determined. (NCHA Standing Rule 11.) NOTE: Random computer draws may be used in classes exceeding 30 entries provided the judge is present and working orders are printed immediately.
3. Do not draw from entry cards. Use numbered ping-pong balls, metal discs, tags or some similar method drawn from an opaque container. It is essential that the judge be unable to see the numbers in the container to assure a creditable draw.
4. State the name of the horse and the position drawn as they are determined.
5. Announce the working order as soon as possible after the draw,



- along with the cattle changes.
6. If late entries are permitted, they must be handled as outlined in NCHA Standing Rules.
  7. Horses should be listed on an entry sheet along with their working order number.

## **Monies**

NCHA has adopted the payout schedule described in Standing Rule 14.

## **The Contest**

1. Consult with your judge or judges and determine the back fence. If there is an objection from a contestant, establish the back fence as provided for in Judging Rule 6. The back fence should be clearly marked.
2. Read Standing Rule 35 relating to conduct of contestants.
3. Tell or show contestants where their **working** time will start. Timeline should also be marked.
4. Ask the first rider in each group to have their help and cattle settler ready, unless cattle are to be settled by an official settler.
  - a. A cow may be removed from the arena only when it is in the best interest of human or animal welfare. Such decision to remove a cow(s) shall be made by the Show Management or its Representatives.

### **Removal of Cows: Examples**

1. At any time, a cow leaves the herd and subsequently endangers the cutter, the helping horses, or other contestants. Ruling: The cow will be removed from the arena.
2. A cow leaves the herd several times and does not challenge or endanger any other animal or human being.

**Ruling:** The cow will remain in the arena.
3. A blind or crippled cow is found in the herd. Ruling: The Show Management or Representative may or may not rule that a blind or crippled cow be removed at any time.
4. A wild cow voluntarily leaves the working area. Ruling: At the discretion of Show Management or Class Representative, the wild cow does not have to be returned to the herd.
5. Ask all other cutters in the class to have their herd holders and turn back riders ready.
6. Announce the name of each horse loudly and clearly, along with the name of the owner, the owner's address (city and state) and the name of the rider. If horses have been assigned an entry number, this should be announced as well.
  - a. Call the name of the next horse and rider so that they will be ready.
7. Start the time at a pre-designated spot. Never stop the clock unless ordered to by a judge.
8. When two and one-half minutes have passed, stop the work by a horn, whistle or bell and again tell the name of the horse, owner, and rider.
9. Obtain the score of the judge and announce or display it. Then call the next rider and repeat items 6, 7 and 8 of this section.
10. Do not make announcements or use your loudspeaker while a

horse is working unless all judges and riders have been warned this will happen.

11. As soon as the class is finished, or when a judge's card is completed, check their official scores against those you have announced. If you find an error, announce the correct score (determined from the official judge's cards) as soon as possible.
12. Announce the winners in the class based on NCHA required number of monies.

## **Paying Off**

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1. Determine what your total purse will be and how much is to be paid in each go-round or the go-rounds and finals.
  - a. Add all entry fees for the class together. (Be careful to add entry fees only, no office charges, **no cattle fees**, etc.)
  - b. Calculate the NCHA required deduction from every approved/unapproved class.
    - i. Championship shows are 8%.
    - ii. LAE events are 8, 3.5 or 2% (based on added money)
  - c. Subtract the appropriate deduction (including monitor fees) from the entry fees. This will give you the amount of entry fees to add to the purse.
  - d. Now add in your additional purse (added money). You now have the total amount to be paid the contest winners.
  - e. Divide the total in Section d. by the percentages specified on your Application for Approval and you will have the amount of money to pay out for go-rounds and finals. Remember that when go-rounds only are held, the total money must be split equally between each go-round.
  - f. For Championship / Challenger shows, refer to NCHA Standing Rule 14. to figure premiums.
2. Pay off your contest winners as indicated by the percentage payout system, unless there is a question concerning novice horse eligibility. Where there is such a question, hold your novice checks and ask NCHA to check this eligibility.
3. If you have plenty of competent help, write your checks and pay off at the show. If you cannot do this, then make every effort to mail your payoff checks within one week of the show date.
4. If a check is returned, you may first want to notify the exhibitor or redeposit the check. See Standing Rule 4.b Relief must be requested within **sixty (60)** days of the show.

## **After Your Show**

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1. Complete fully all official NCHA result forms applying to your show, making sure all horses, owners and riders names are spelled correctly, and mail these along with your check or credit card payment covering the appropriate fees and judges' cards to the NCHA office. See Standing Rule 5 for fee calculation (Entry fee deduction, the Producer fee (\$100 for Championship Shows / \$200 for Challenger Shows) and the \$3 per entry on approved Championship / Challenger classes NCHA Programs fee).

If the steps in Item 1 of Paying Off have been followed, this will present no difficulty since you have already determined the correct answer for all questions asked. NOTE: NCHA membership numbers must be provided for both owners and riders on the official results.

  - a. If more than one go-round has been held and more room is

needed to list the winners from additional go-rounds, use the back of the official NCHA form.

2. Show data submission should contain entry data for all classes and goes held at the show. If you are using computer software, follow the program's instructions to electronically export and upload show data. Contact NCHA if your computer program does not have an electronic export option for submission methodology.
3. Write early for your application requesting NCHA approval of your next show.

### **For A Better Show**

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1. Have a tractor on hand with the appropriate dirt working equipment necessary to properly maintain the arena.
2. Have a good method of wetting down the arena, cattle pens, etc. to control dust.
3. A good arena surface should be cushioned to protect the competing horse. It should not be too deep and should have enough consistency to enable the horse to turn hard without fear of the ground slipping or rolling away.
4. Make sure that you have adequate lighting for late evening or nighttime shows.
5. Small arenas need an adjacent warm-up area. Here, too, consideration should be given to good, safe footing.
6. Take care of your cattle. Give them plenty of space along with water to drink.
7. Place your judges where they can see the horses work without interference and keep all bystanders away from them and their stands.
8. Have a concession stand available if you can. If not, at least be sure there is drinking water.
9. Have some sort of restroom.
10. Follow the rules and treat everyone alike. Smile when you can and always remember that courteous treatment will generally result in courtesy in return.

### **Ground**

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It takes three things to make a great cutting: good cattle, good judges, and good ground. Where Show Management may not always be in total control in providing perfect cattle and judges, there is little excuse for bad ground.

Cutting horses must be loped before working. For a horse to lope and work on hard packed ground can be compared to a diver having to dive into a pool with no water; it is very tough on joints and muscles. The loping pen and the working pen must be deep enough to provide protection to the horse. Riders and horses can be injured from falls that result from slick or hard ground. Backs (both horse and rider) take a pounding loping on hard ground.

Most arenas are designed for multi-use purposes. Participants in different events may want different kinds of ground. Some horse events want a surface that will be harder than that of cutters. They may want their horses to slide. Many arena directors are reluctant to change the ground for the cutting horses.

It requires the use of heavy equipment to haul in sand and more direct, it requires a tractor with a drag and harrow. It may mean extra expense and it will mean more labor.

At a well-run show, the pen is dragged (the surface is leveled off and sometimes the ground is broken up if it is hard) prior to each bunch of cattle. If the pen is dragged prior to each bunch of cattle, the cutter feels like management is trying to promote a level playing field as well as level arena. It is fairer. If the ground is soft and prepared prior to the cutting, less labor and time will be spent in dragging the pen.

Good ground consists of sand (preferably cement sand) laid on a transition area of a mixture of sand and clay based soil over a base of clay. The base is generally the kind of ground that is already in the arena for most stock events. If the arena is concrete, then a base must be provided. A mixture of sand and clay is then added to this base to provide a transition area. If sand is added to the base without a transition area, the ground will be hard under the sand and can be slick and dangerous. Horses will try to get traction to stop and turn and instead can slide or even fall. If sand is not added to the transition area, the ground will pack and be too hard after several horses work.

Management cannot please everyone. Some people will want to have a very deep sandy arena, others will prefer shallower sand. For a general guideline that should please most cutters, we would like to suggest three inches of sand, free from gravel or rocks, on a two-inch transition area, free from gravel or rocks, on twelve to eighteen inches of base if over concrete. (see figure)



In addition to good ground, both contestants and spectators will be pleased to be in an arena with good air quality. This is achieved by wetting the entire arena with a sprinkler system or a hose. Care must be taken not to get the arena too wet. The ground can become sticky or soupy. Without sufficient sand, a clay soil will pack and become hard when sprayed; another good reason to haul in sand.

Again, both the working area and the loping pen need to have soft and secure footing for cutting horses. Your cutters and their horses will appreciate the extra time, expense, and effort you take. It will help to ensure a great show.

### **Loping Pen Etiquette**

**All individuals astride a horse in the arena at NCHA produced events must be NCHA members.**

The loping pen is where cutting horses are warmed up and prepared for the show arena. This area can be a very dangerous place. Cutters are also getting themselves prepared to show and can be nervous or simply preoccupied with the task at hand. Common sense and courtesy can help avoid accidents or annoying near misses. Here are a few guidelines to help keep the loping pen a safe and pleasant place to get horses ready to show.

Horses in the warmup area travel in the same direction in concentric circles. To enter the loping area, merge into traffic as if you were entering a traffic circle. Look and wait for a clearing. Once in, maintain the same speed as the horse in front of you. If you want to pass, look behind you so you do not crash into the horse in the other lane.

Stay to the inside circle if you want to go slow. This is the slow lane. Stay to the outside circle if you want to go fast. This is the fast lane. Try

not to bunch up and talk or stand still anywhere in the traffic. Never stop in traffic. If you must stop, please slow down, and exit to an area devoid of traffic. This also applies to dry working your horse. If you are going to do some pulling and spinning, please do it where you have room.

If you see someone that is looking for a way into traffic or an exit out of traffic, please be kind enough to let them in or out. Always remember to think about the other person and how you would feel in a similar situation.

When the time comes to boot up or put on chaps, find a safe place out of traffic. Be careful that your horse is not too close to another horse that might kick or bite. Watch your own horse for signs of rude behavior.

Most youth cutters are in the loping pen to get a horse ready. They can ride and control their horse. They have a good understanding of how to behave themselves. The loping pen is not a place for baby-sitting or entertainment, nor for riding lessons. Anyone in the loping area, no matter what the age, should have the ability to control their horse at all times. This is for their own safety as well as for others.

Pedestrians in the loping area should yield to those people who are there to get a horse ready to show. If you must get off your horse, find a safe place to tie them. Do not tie kicking horses or studs in the loping pen.

Someone may tie a horse next to them. Do not get upset with someone for spanking your horse if it kicks or bites at them.

Use the loping pen for exercise and to season young horses only when there is enough room. Be considerate of people in there to get their horse ready to show.

Ideally, Show Management should keep the ground in the loping pen as deep and nice to lope in as the working pen. Horses spend more time pounding the ground in the loping pen than in the show pen. There will be a tractor coming in periodically to work the pen. Move your horse out of the way and move any tied horses away from the area to be worked. People will want to change direction from time to time. Whether they want to bend their horse the other way or simply are tired of going right and want to go left, slow down, stop and turn your horse around. If you want to go another direction, simply ask someone if they would like to turn around. Do not be offended if some contestant ignores your request, it simply means their horse is not broke and they cannot do this maneuver.

# 2026 Judging Rules & Casebook

Also Review Standing Rules 21-29 Related to Judges

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Casebook is to provide for a more uniform interpretation and application of the Rules for Judging Cutting Horse show as found in the NCHA Rule Book. It expresses the official interpretation of the NCHA Rules for Judging Cutting Horse show. This Casebook is provided to the membership of the NCHA as a tool in judging, showing and preparing horses for showing.

## DEFINITIONS

**CUTTER:** For the purpose of this Casebook, the term “cutter” refers to the contestant and their horse as a working unit. From time to time the unit will be divided. In these instances, the text will describe the activities of the contestant and their horse separately.

**RULING:** For the purpose of this Casebook, the term “ruling” refers to the action that shall be taken by the judge.

**NOTE:** For the purpose of this Casebook, the term “note” signifies a further explanation of a ruling.

## JUDGING RULES OVERVIEW

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**JUDGING PENALTIES**

1 point - Judging Rule 11 (miss) Losing working advantage
1 point - Judging Rule 8 Visible cue or positioning after cut
1 point - Judging Rule 5a Noise directed to cattle
1 point - Judging Rule 8d Toe, foot, or stirrup on horse shoulder
1 point - Judging Rule 8a Holding on too long on a cut
1 point - Judging Rule 11 Working out of position
1 point - Judging Rule 8 Hand too far forward

3 point - Judging Rule 13 Hot quit
3 point - Judging Rule 5b Cattle picked up/scattering herd
3 point - Judging Rule 8b 2nd hand on reins while working
3 point - Judging Rule 8c Spur in the shoulder
3 point - Judging Rule 12 Pawing or biting cattle
3 point - Judging Rule 1a Failure to make deep cut
3 point - Judging Rule 6 Back Fence

5 point - Judging Rule 14 Horse quitting cow
5 point - Judging Rule 9 Losing a cow
5 point - Judging Rule 10 Changing cattle after commitment
5 point - Judging Rule 15 Failure to separate
5 point - Judging Rule 7 Turn Tail

0 score - Judging Rule 17 Horse falls to ground
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**Disqualification**

Judging Rule 17 Horse falls to ground
Judging Rule 18 Leaving working area
Judging Rule 16, 19, 20, 21 &
Standing Rule 34 Illegal Equipment

# Judging Rules 1-21

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*Also Review Standing Rules 21-29 Related to Judges*

## JUDGING RULE 1

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Each horse is required to enter the herd sufficiently deep enough to show their ability to make a cut. One such deep cut will satisfy this rule. Failure to satisfy this requirement will result in a three (3) point penalty. A horse will be given credit for their ability to enter the herd quietly with very little disturbance to the herd or to the **cow** brought out.

**NOTE:** If a cutter has not satisfied the deep cut rule on their first or second cut, on their last cut, a cow must be separated from the herd with the cutter's hand down before the first sound of the buzzer.

**NOTE: In Rule One (1), a judge must consider the condition of the arena and the cattle.**

**EXAMPLE 1:** In a herd of cattle, a Cutter cuts two cows cleanly and is working the second cow when the buzzer sounds. Each time the Cutter cuts, they allow **some** cattle to come around them and **they** cut **a** cow.

**RULING:** If the Cutter rode to the edge of the herd and peeled **some cattle off the edge of the herd without entering the body of the herd**, the judge shall rule that no deep cut was made and assess a three (3) point penalty. (F)

**NOTE:** In ruling on Rule 1, it is more important for a judge to consider the depth and route taken by the Cutter than it is to count the number of cows that move around their horse. It is necessary, however, for the Cutter to get behind some cattle before Rule One (1) is satisfied.

**EXAMPLE 2: The cutter rides to the top edge of the herd, and then:**

**(A) rides deep into the body of the herd by splitting the herd, turns and drives a cow up the middle and cuts that cow.**

**(B) waits for volunteers to leave the herd, turns and cuts one of them without entering the body of the herd**

**RULING:**

**(A) No penalty**

**(B) Assess a three (3) point penalty**

**EXAMPLE 3:** Cutter A's horse walks quietly into the herd and remains quiet while Cutter A makes their cut. Cutter B's horse walks quietly into the herd but is obviously nervous and moves excessively while Cutter B is making their cut.

**RULING:** Cutter A shall receive more credit for their cut than Cutter B.

**EXAMPLE 4:** After quitting a cow a horse starts to lie down, **with its legs underneath itself, but the horse is not on its side with all four feet extended in the same direction.**

**RULING:** No penalty, but run content may be reduced in herd work depending upon the **effort** it takes to get the horse back to its feet.

**EXAMPLE 5:** As the cutter enters the herd, the horse kicks out at the rider's spur with a hind leg.

**RULING:** No penalty, but run content will be reduced in herd work.

## JUDGING RULE 2

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When an animal is cut from the herd, it is more desirable that it be taken toward the center of the arena, and credit will be rewarded for same. Additional credit will be given the horse which drives its stock sufficient distance from the herd to assure that the herd will not be disturbed by their



work, thereby showing their ability to drive a cow.

### **JUDGING RULE 3**

Riding with a loose rein throughout a performance is a requirement. **If the Cutter's** reins are tight enough to attract the judge's attention, put a minus in the tight rein column and take one point off for each cow that they were tight on. Take those points off at the end of the run, just like a major penalty. This is the only case which we take 1-point penalties off at the end of the run, to increase the severity of this rule infraction. Remember riding with loose reins is a requirement.

### **JUDGING RULE 4**

Credit will be recognized for setting up a cow and controlling it in a working position as near the center of the arena as possible.

**EXAMPLE 1:** Cutter A cuts cleanly and works three cows. They work their second cow entirely on the left one-third of the arena. Cutter B has a similar work, except they hold their cows much nearer the center of the arena.

**RULING:** Cutter B shall receive more credit for their work than Cutter A. The judge shall be careful not to penalize Cutter A; however, Cutter B must receive more credit.

**EXAMPLE 2:** During a work, the Cutter trails their stock just enough that the cow runs from wall to wall and is never set up and held near the center of the arena.

**RULING:** The horse which allows its stock to run from wall to wall, because they are trailing, or which rolls out on its turns and lacks control shall not be credited under this rule.

**NOTE:** The degree of difficulty presented by the stock cut out shall weigh heavily on the judge's decision. Credit must be given to the horse which meets the challenge of a hard charging, fast moving animal without loss of working position and control.

### **JUDGING RULE 5**

If the cutting horse or its rider creates disturbance at any time throughout their working period (2½ minutes), they will be penalized:

- a. Any noise directed by the contestant toward the cattle will be penalized one (1) point (C).

**EXAMPLE 1:** *While attempting to make a cut, the Cutter intentionally makes noise to manipulate the cow/cattle. This noise is clearly audible to the judge.*

**RULING:** *Assess a one (1) point penalty (C)*

- b. Each time a horse runs into the herd, scatters the herd while working or picks up one or more cows it will be penalized three (3) points (B). A wild cow leaving on its own would not be considered pickup up cattle.

**NOTE:** The definition of a wild cow as it pertains to rule 5.b: A cow that goes into motion on its own (not caused by the cutter).

**NOTE:** At the first sound of the buzzer, the run is terminated. The entire cow must enter working area of horse. The working area of the horse is defined as the entire cow being in front of the horse's head.

**EXAMPLE 1:** While in the process of cutting, the Cutter has some cattle separated from the herd to cut the desired cow. The cutter separates one

cow from the others and begins to work. The other cattle/cow did not return to the herd and rejoin the cow being worked. The cutter continues to work his/her original cow and quits legally.

**RULING:** No penalty

**NOTE:** Picking up cattle will not be charged in this instance, because the remaining cattle/cow had not rejoined the body of the herd. The cattle/cow in this instance would have been considered “traffic”.

**EXAMPLE 2:** While in the process of cutting, the Cutter has some cattle separated from the herd to cut the desired cow, he/she comes close enough to the herd to cause one (1) or more cows to enter the working area of the horse.

**RULING:** Assess a three (3) point penalty (B) for picking up cattle

**EXAMPLE 3:** The Cutter quits legally and one or more cows leave the herd almost simultaneously.

**RULING:** In the judge’s opinion the Cutter ran into the herd and caused the cattle to leave, prior to quitting, assess a three (3) point penalty (B)

**NOTE:** Even though the Cutter quits before a cow enters the working area of the horse, a three (3) point penalty (B) will be charged if the judge is certain the disturbance was caused by the Cutter.

**EXAMPLE 4:** While the Cutter is working a cow at a reasonable distance from the herd, another cow voluntarily leaves the herd and stops in such a position that the working horse’s normal pattern causes the cow to enter the working area of the horse.

**RULING:** No penalty, as no disturbance of the herd occurs

- c. The judge shall stop any work due to the contestant working the horse in an unprofessional manner, disturbance of the cattle by the contestant, or excessive training of the horse by the contestant. Any contestant failing to stop immediately after the first whistle will be whistled out again. ***The judge is responsible for reporting the double whistle violation. It is the Judge’s responsibility to be prepared and have a whistle and a rule book at all judging assignments.***

**EXAMPLE 1:** The Cutter is making an honest effort to show his/her horse, but the horse is not working properly. The Cutter runs through the cattle more than once, severely disturbing the herd.

**RULING:** The judge will blow his/her whistle and terminate the run

**NOTE:** Even though the Cutter was not excessively training the horse, they were creating a disturbance of the cattle.

**EXAMPLE 2:** After losing a cow, the Cutter cuts another cow and stops their horse each time the cow stops. In the judge’s opinion they are training their horse.

(A) They do not jerk or excessively cue their horse.

(B) They are excessively training their horse.

**RULING:**

(A) Score the Cutter sixty (60)

(B) Terminate the run and score the Cutter a zero (0)

**NOTE:** In judging a situation concerning simultaneous major penalties, only one penalty will be called with the larger penalty taking precedence over the smaller penalty. The exception to this rule is Rule 8.b., which concerns a Cutter using two hands on the reins.

## JUDGING RULE 6

A horse will be penalized three (3) points (G) each time a Cutter allows the cow being worked to move inside of the back fence marker within one step, or three (3) feet of the fence. The outer limits of the designated back fence shall include any boards or other markers used to define this outer limit. The back fence to be designated by **Show Management** before the contest starts. If any of the contestants voice an objection before the contest starts, **Show Management** shall take a vote of the contestants, and a “back fence” acceptable to the majority shall be designated and used.

**EXAMPLE 1:** The cow being worked bangs into the back fence *inside the back fence marker, the cow:*

- (A) is moving away from the Cutter when they quit.
- (B) is moving toward the Cutter when they quit.
- (C) returns to the herd.

**RULING:**

- (A) Assess a three (3) point penalty (G) for a back fence violation.
- (B) Assess a three (3) point penalty (G) for a back fence violation and a three (3) point penalty (A) for an illegal quit (Rule 13). Total penalty of six (6) points.
- (C) The judge will consider the two penalties to have occurred simultaneously unless the cow first moves away from the horse and then returns to the herd. When the penalties occur simultaneously, only the larger penalty of 5 points should be assessed.

**EXAMPLE 2:** While in the process of cutting, the Cutter has *some* cattle separated from the herd. As the Cutter attempts to cut the desired cow, the cattle move inside of the back fence marker within one step, or three (3) feet of the fence then move back to the working area.

**RULING:** Assess a three (3) point penalty for a back fence (G)

**EXAMPLE 3:** A Cutter is working a cow that stops against the arena fence outside the back fence marker. The cow moves toward the horse until it is inside the marker.

**RULING:** In (A) assess a three (3) point penalty (G)

**EXAMPLE 4:** *The Cutter is working a cow that jumps out of the arena:*

(A) *outside of the back fence markers.*

(B) *inside the back fence markers.*

**RULING:**

(A) *No penalty*

(B) *Assess a three (3) point penalty for a back fence (G)*

**NOTE:** In judging a situation concerning simultaneous major penalties, only one penalty will be called with the larger penalty taking precedence over the smaller penalty. The exception to this rule is Rule 8.b., which concerns a Cutter using two hands on the reins.

## JUDGING RULE 7

If, whether on its own or at the direction of the rider, a horse turns the wrong way so that its tail is **pointed** toward the cow being worked, a five (5) point penalty (T) for turn tail will be assessed.

**EXAMPLE 1:** While in the process of making their cut, the cutter has *some* cattle separated from the main herd. As the cutter attempts to cut the desired cow, the horse turns away from the cow/**cattle** so severely that the horse's tail points toward the cow or separated cattle.

**RULING:** The Cutter is assessed a five (5) point turn tail penalty (T)

**EXAMPLE 2:** During the process of making a cut, the cutter directs their horse to make a 360 **turn:**

(A) while still in the main herd.

(B) *after the cutter has some cattle separated from the main herd.*

**RULING:**

(A) *No penalty*

(B) *Assess a five (5) point penalty for turn tail (T)*

**EXAMPLE 3:** The Cutter has put their hand down and the horse is working a cow:

(A) *when the* horse attempts to turn their tail toward the cow. The Cutter **reins his/her horse and** stops the horse before they **can** completely turn away from the cow.

(B) when the horse turns away from the cow so that the horse's tail points toward the cow being worked.

**RULING:**

(A) This is not a case of turning tail. Assess a five (5) point penalty (A) for horse quitting a cow (Rule 14)

(B) *Assess a five (5) point penalty for turn tail (T)*

## **JUDGING RULE 8**

While working, a horse will be penalized one (1) point (B) each time the reins are used to control or direct (to rein) the horse. A one (1) point penalty shall also be charged whenever a horse is visibly cued in any manner. If the reins are tight enough that the bits are bumped at any time, they shall be penalized one (1) penalty point (B) per occurrence in the 1-point penalty column, even though the hand of the rider does not move. In addition, put a minus in the tight reins column per cow and **take off one (1) point per cow** at the end of the run to increase the severity of this rule infraction. (**Rule 3**)

**NOTE:** The intent of Rule 8a is to prevent the Cutter from helping his/her horse after a cow is clear of the herd. Judges **shall use common sense** and allow the Cutter to handle his/her horse enough to clear the cow that they selected to cut. In the application of this rule, the term "clear" means far enough out from the body of the herd that the Cutter has a reasonable opportunity to begin working and that all other cattle are at least behind their horse's buttocks.

- a. A horse must be released as soon as the cow is clear of the other cattle **and the cutter is no longer driving the cow forward**. Additional reining, cuing, or positioning will result in a one (1) point penalty for each occurrence.

**EXAMPLE 1:** While making his/her cut, the Cutter moves his/her hand up and down, side to side while selecting a cow to work. He/she **then releases their horse to indicate that the cutter is ready to begin working and places** their hand:

- (A) **on the** horse's neck, **close to the saddle** and leaves it there while working.
- (B) **on the horse's neck close to the saddle first - and then pushes their hand forward or moves it enough to cue his/her horse.**
- (C) up the horse's neck (too far forward).

**RULING:**

(A) No penalty.

(B) Assess a one (1) penalty (B) for each occurrence

(C) **Assess a one(1) point penalty (G) per cow**

**NOTE:** The Cutter may rein his/her horse as much as necessary to make a cut. Clean, pretty cuts shall receive credit.

**EXAMPLE 2:** The Cutter makes a cut and while waiting for the cow to begin movement, he/she shakes his/her rein hand causing movement of the bridle reins.

**RULING:** Penalize the Cutter one (1) point **penalty (B)** for each **occurrence**

**EXAMPLE 3:** The Cutter cuts a cow that is walking away from the herd. The Cutter reins his/her horse until they **are clear** of the herd **and the cutter is no longer driving the cow forward. The Cutter:**

(A) then releases their horse.

(B) continues to hold contact with his/her horse by having their hand up and some tension on his/ her reins. They do not move their horse around; they are holding his/her horse's attention on the cow until the cow moves.

**RULING:**

(A) No penalty

(B) Assess a one (1) point penalty (E)

**EXAMPLE 4:** The Cutter selects a cow from a group of cattle that are moving around him/her. They step to that cow and rein **their** horse until their herd holders have the other cattle behind the **Cutter's** horse's buttocks (cleared away). **The Cutter** continues to hold tension on **the** reins while the cow that they have cut trots several feet across the arena. When the cow stops and turns around, the Cutter stops his/her horse and reins it back to the cow before releasing it.

**RULING:** Assess a one (1) point penalty for each time the Cutter cues their horse. In this case, one (1) **point penalty (E)** for holding the horse going across the arena, one (1) **point penalty (B)** for stopping the horse, and one (1) **point penalty (B)** for reining it back to the cow. Total penalty of three (3) points.

- b. The rider shall hold the bridle reins in one hand. A three (3) point penalty shall be charged if the second hand touches the reins for any purpose except to straighten them.

**NOTE:** In judging a situation concerning simultaneous major penalties, only one penalty will be called with the larger penalty taking precedence over the smaller penalty. The exception to this rule is Rule 8.b., which concerns a Cutter using two hands on the reins.

**EXAMPLE 1:** While working a cow, the cutter uses two hands on the bridle reins **to stop or turn** his/her horse around.

**RULING:** Assess a three (3) point penalty (C)

**EXAMPLE 2:** The Cutter drops one bridle rein and uses his/her free hand to retrieve it:

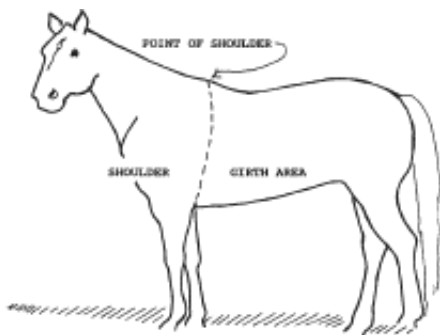
- (A) after they have obviously legally quit the cow and stopped their horse.
- (B) while cutting a cow.
- (C) while working a cow.

**RULING:**

(A) No penalty

(B) **and (C) Assess a three (3) point (C) penalty for using both hands on the bridle reins.**

- c. A three (3) point penalty (D) shall be assessed each time a horse is **spurred** in the shoulder



- d. A toe, foot, or stirrup on the horse's shoulder is considered a visible cue. A one (1) point penalty (D) shall be charged for each occurrence.

### **JUDGING RULE 9**

If a horse lets **a cow** that it is **being worked** get back **to** the herd, it will be penalized five (5) points (B).

**EXAMPLE 1:** The cow being worked is making a strong attempt to return to the herd. The Cutter quits the cow after he/she has lost their working advantage. The cow leaves the working area and returns to the herd.

**RULING:** Assess a one (1) point penalty (A) for loss of working advantage and a five (5) point penalty (B) for a lost cow. Total penalty of six (6) points.

**EXAMPLE 2:** While working a cow, the cow out-maneuvers the horse and it is obvious that the horse is unable to stop the cow from entering the herd. The buzzer sounds before the cow physically enters the herd.

**RULING:** Assess a five (5) point penalty (B)

**NOTE:** At the buzzer, loss of a cow occurs the moment the horse can no longer regain its working advantage, whether the rider's hand is up or down. For a loss to occur during the work, the cow must return to the herd.

**NOTE:** In judging a situation concerning simultaneous major penalties, only one penalty will be called with the larger penalty taking precedence over the smaller penalty. The exception to this rule is Rule 8.b., which concerns a Cutter using two hands on the reins.

### **JUDGING RULE 10**

If a rider changes cattle after visibly committing to a specific cow, a five (5) point penalty (C) will be assessed. A Cutter shall be committed whenever he/she makes a **move** to a specific **cow when there is separation between that cow and other cattle**, and that move clearly and obviously indicates a specific animal has been selected.

**NOTE:** All reviews on change of cattle must be reviewed at normal speed (no slow motion).

**EXAMPLE 1:** During the process of cutting a cow, the Cutter drives a group of cattle away from the herd. If, before the Cutter **attempts** to cut one of these cows, **any cattle** leave the herd and walk to a position nearby but do not join the first group of cattle, the Cutter:

- (A) steps to the first group of cattle and cuts one of them.

- (B) reins away from the first group toward the second group and cuts one of them.

**RULING:** (A) and (B) no penalty.

**NOTE:** A Cutter commits to a single animal, not to a group of cattle.  
**Two (2) or more cows are considered a group.**

**EXAMPLE 2:** *During the process of cutting a cow, the Cutter drives a group of cattle away from the herd. The Cutter then:*

- (A) looks at a brown cow but does not attempt to move his/her horse toward the brown cow. He/she then cuts a red cow.  
(B) moves his/her horse toward a brown cow **with separation and** reins once to move his/her horse in the direction it starts. He/she then cuts a red cow.

**RULING:**

- (A) No penalty  
(B) Assess a five (5) point penalty for changing cows (C)

**EXAMPLE 3:** The Cutter enters the herd and drives **a single cow** out, as that cow moves around his/her horse, a group of cattle come out of the herd and **join the cow that has been separated**. The Cutter releases their original cow and cuts one from the group

**RULING:** Assess a five (5) point penalty (C)

**EXAMPLE 4:** During the process of cutting a cow, the Cutter steps toward a cow to stop the flow of cattle. That cow stops and other cattle also stop thereby forming a group of cattle. The Cutter then cuts any cow from that group.

**RULING:** No penalty

**NOTE:** A judge must allow a Cutter to stop a group of cattle and then cut from that group. A judge shall not consider the Cutter visibly committed to that lead cow unless there is separation between the lead cow and the rest of the flow, and the Cutter attempts to cut that cow.

**EXAMPLE 5:** During the process of cutting a cow, the Cutter starts a group of cattle around his/her horse. The Cutter selects a cow and reins his/her horse toward it and the cow is separated. The herd holders attempt to drive the other cattle away; **some cattle** turn and rejoin the cow that is already cut. The Cutter separates their original cow from the others without the group rejoining the herd or moving to the back fence.  
**The Cutter:**

- (A) **releases** their horse and does not cue the horse in any manner.  
(B) **releases their horse and then picks up their hand to separate the** original cow from the others.  
(C) **does not release their horse until all other cattle have cleared and are at least behind their horse's buttocks.**

**RULING:**

- (A) No penalty, and credit shall be given for the horse staying with the original cow  
(B) Assess a one (1) point penalty (B) each time the Cutter reins their horse (Rule 8)  
(C) **No penalty, but should affect run content in herd work**

**EXAMPLE 6:** The Cutter is working a cow. Another cow that has previously escaped the turnback horses decides to return to the herd. As the returning cow approaches:

- (A) the Cutter does not cue his/her horse, and the horse does not switch to the returning cow.

- (B) the Cutter anticipates that a change might occur and reins his/her horse to prevent it. The horse's attention is momentarily diverted toward the returning cow, but they do not change cattle.
- (C) the Cutter's horse switches its attention and makes a move with the other cow. The Cutter reins the horse back to the original cow.
- (D) the Cutter's horse changes to the returning cow.

**RULING:**

- (A) Reward credit to the Cutter. The amount of credit rewarded depends upon the exact circumstances of the situation.
- (B) Assess a one (1) point penalty (B) for reining the horse (Rule 8) **and it should also affect run content.**
- (C) Assess a five (5) point penalty (C) for the change and a one (1) point penalty (B) for reining the horse (Rule 8). Total penalty of six (6) points.
- (D) Assess a five (5) point penalty (C)

**EXAMPLE 7:** If the Cutter is committed to a cow, but before he/she is clear of the herd, or traffic, their horse abruptly attempts to change to a different cow. The Cutter:

- (A) had not released his/her horse and immediately reined it back.
- (B) had dropped his/her hand indicating their horse was on the desired cow.

**RULING:**

- (A) No penalty, **but would affect run content in herd work**
- (B) Assess a five (5) point penalty (C)

## **JUDGING RULE 11**

When a horse loses its working advantage, misses a cow, or is working out of position; it will be penalized one (1) point (A) or one (1) point (F).

**DEFINITION OF TERMS: "Loss of working advantage" is defined as:** When a horse goes by a cow to the degree that they lose their position to maintain control of the cow. Penalty (A)

**A "Miss" is defined as:** A response of the horse to the action of the cow being worked, resulting in a loss of working advantage. Penalty (A)

**"Working out of position" is defined as:** The position of the horse in relation to the cow being worked, being consistently either too short or too long in working to control a cow. Penalty (F)

**EXAMPLE 1:** While working, the cutter's horse goes by a cow. The cow turns and:

- (A) the cutter maintains their control and working advantage of the cow.
- (B) the cutter regains their control and working advantage of the cow within a short distance.
- (C) it is necessary for the cutter to make a hard run before **regaining control and working advantage of the cow.**

**RULING:**

- (A) No penalty should be charged a horse which maintains control after going past a cow to cause it to turn. The horse that can maintain working advantage over a cow that presents a severe challenge shall receive credit.
- (B) No penalty, this is not an obvious miss but can affect run content
- (C) Assess a one (1) point penalty (A) for losing the working ad-



vantage

**NOTE: If it is not obvious, it is not a penalty.**

**EXAMPLE 2:** While working, the cutter's horse goes past a cow and loses its working advantage.

- (A) The cutter reins the horse back and, after taking several steps, the horse regains its working advantage.
- (B) The cow stops and turns away; the cutter quits without regaining its working advantage.

**RULING:**

- (A) Assess a one (1) point penalty (A) for losing the working advantage also, assess a one (1) point penalty (B) for reining the horse. Total penalty of 2 points
- (B) Assess a one (1) point penalty (A) for losing the working advantage

**NOTE:** The cutter may not avoid a one (1) point penalty for losing their working advantage or being out of position by quitting a cow, even though the quit is legal under (Rule 13).

**EXAMPLE 3:** While working, the cutter's horse is extremely long in one direction and extremely short in the other direction. The cutter continues to work in this manner.

**RULING:** Assess a one (1) point penalty (F) per cow, a minus (-) in controlling a cow and reduce run content accordingly

**NOTE:** A judge should acknowledge that a loss of working advantage, a miss, and/or working out of position, can result in a minus (-) in run content.

## **JUDGING RULE 12**

Unnecessary roughness, such as a horse actually pawing, biting, or kicking cattle, will be penalized three (3) points. Penalty (E)

**EXAMPLE 1:** While in the process of cutting **or working a cow**, the Cutter's horse:

- (A) attempts to bite the cow but does not make contact.
- (B) nuzzles a cow.
- (C) obviously bites the cow.
- (D) kicks a cow.
- (E) paws a cow.

**RULING:**

- (A) and (B) No penalty
- (C), (D) and (E) Assess a three (3) point penalty (E)

**EXAMPLE 2:** During a run, the cutter's horse:

- (A) strikes with its front foot but misses the cow.
- (B) kicks at the cow but does not make contact.
- (C) kicks out with one or both hind legs or jumps into the air slinging its head and hopping up behind.

**RULING:**

- (A), (B) and (C) No penalty, but this type of unusual behavior would detract from the run and cannot have a positive influence on the point value awarded for that run.

## **JUDGING RULE 13**

A contestant may quit a cow when it is obviously stopped, obviously turned away, **backing up, has fallen**, or is behind the turnback horses and the turnback horses are behind the timeline. A penalty of three (3) points must be charged if the animal is quit under any other circumstances. Pen-

alty (A)

**DEFINITION: “Obviously stopped”** means that in a slow-motion video at  $\frac{1}{16}$ th (.06) speed, a cow has all four feet on the ground for five or more seconds. In real time, this is less than one second.

**NOTE:** When a cow is in an obviously stopped position and simply picks up one foot and replaces it **and remains obviously stopped**, the quit would be considered clean. This would not include the final step of a “slow walking” cow **or the first step of a cow going back into motion..**

**EXAMPLE 1:** The Cutter is working a cow **and** the cow stops while facing the Cutter’s horse. As the Cutter is quitting, the cow:

- (A) simply replaces a foot and stands still.
- (B) starts to back away from the Cutter.
- (C) moves its head from side to side **but does not move its feet.**
- (D) moves into the Cutter’s horse.

**RULING:**

- (A), (B) and (C) No penalty
- (D) Assess a three (3) point penalty (A)

**EXAMPLE 2:** The Cutter is working a cow that takes them deep into the **corner** of the arena. The cow turns into the Cutter’s horse, the Cutter:

- (A) waits until the cow has traveled a sufficient distance to clearly show the judge the cow is moving away from their horse before initiating the quit.
- (B) quits the cow in the turn.

**RULING:**

- (A) No penalty
- (B) Assess a three (3) point penalty (A)

**NOTE:** No imaginary line will be considered in applying this rule. The cow’s relationship to the cutting horse (turned away) is the only thing to consider in applying this rule.

**EXAMPLE 3:** The Cutter is working a cow that falls to the ground. The Cutter quits the cow:

- (A) while the cow is lying on the ground.
- (B) after the cow has fallen and is returning to its feet.
- (C) after the cow has returned to its feet and is moving into the horse.

**RULING:**

- (A) and (B) No penalty
- (C) Assess a three (3) point penalty (A)

**EXAMPLE 4:** While working a cow that has run behind the turnback horses and the turnback horses are behind the timeline, the Cutter quits the cow:

- (A) while it is turning toward his/her horse.
- (B) while it is turning toward his/her horse after the cow has moved back between the Cutter and their turnback horses.

**RULING:**

- (A) No penalty
- (B) Assess a three (3) point penalty (A)

**EXAMPLE 5:** The Cutter is working their cow. The Cutter initiates their quit by picking up their rein hand and/or taking their free hand off the saddle horn. The Cutter is uncertain if the quit is clean and immediately puts their rein hand down and **or their free hand back on the saddle horn. The Cutter then reinitiates the quit:**

(A) while the cow is moving away from the cutting horse **or is stopped.**

(B) while the cow is moving into the horse.

**RULING:**

(A) Assess a one (1) point penalty (B) for reining

(B) Assess a one (1) point penalty (B) for reining, plus a three (3) point penalty (A) for a hot quit. Total penalty of four (4) points

**NOTE:** The judge shall consider that a Cutter has **initiated** a quit when they pick up on their reins or **take their free hand off the saddle horn**, whether the horse stops instantly or not.

**NOTE:** A judge shall not consider a hot quit until the cutter has stopped working the cow.

**NOTE:** In judging a situation concerning simultaneous major penalties, only one penalty will be called with the larger penalty taking precedence over the smaller penalty. The exception to this rule is Rule 8.b., which concerns a Cutter using two hands on the reins.

## **JUDGING RULE 14**

If a horse quits a cow, a penalty of five (5) points will be assessed. Penalty (A)

**NOTE:** At the first sound of the buzzer, the run is terminated.

**EXAMPLE 1:** The cutter legally quits a cow while in working position. The judge believes that the cutter's horse has lost contact with the cow.

**RULING:** No penalty, but this should reduce run content

**NOTE:** It is the judge's responsibility to call what actually happens. A judge shall never anticipate an error.

**EXAMPLE 2:** The Cutter's horse goes by a cow that has turned away or stopped, resulting in an obvious loss of working advantage. The horse is obviously not going to stop or turn around without assistance from the rider. The Cutter quits.

**RULING:** Assess a five (5) point penalty (A)

**EXAMPLE 3:** The Cutter is working, and their horse quits a cow. The Cutter reins and re-starts their horse. The Cutter continues their work.

**RULING:** Assess a five (5) point penalty (A) for the horse quitting the cow and a one (1) point penalty (B) for reining the horse. Total penalty of six (6) points.

**EXAMPLE 4:** The Cutter's horse stops with a cow and looks away from the cow. The cow moves and the horse:

(A) momentarily remains still. The Cutter does not rein the horse; the horse turns around late but **regains its working advantage of** the cow.

(B) remains still. The Cutter reins the horse back to the cow. In the judge's opinion, the Cutter reined the horse because the horse quit the cow.

**RULING:**

(A) Assess a one (1) point penalty (A) for losing the working advantage (being out of position) (Rule 11). **Run content would also be affected.**

(B) Assess a five (5) point penalty (A) for the horse quitting the cow and a one (1) point penalty (B) for reining the horse. Total penalty of six (6) points.

**NOTE:** Even though a horse shows a momentary reluctance to turn or stop with a cow, a quit will not be called if the horse actually turns or

stops on its own. If the horse must be reined or stopped by the rider, a five (5) point penalty (A) must be charged.

**NOTE:** In judging a situation concerning simultaneous major penalties, only one penalty will be called with the larger penalty taking precedence over the smaller penalty. The exception to this rule is Rule 8.b., which concerns a Cutter using two hands on the reins.

## **JUDGING RULE 15**

If a horse clears the herd with one (1) or more **cows and** fails to separate a single animal **before re-entering the body of the herd**, a five (5) point penalty will be charged. Penalty (D). There is no penalty if time expires.

**EXAMPLE 1:** The Cutter drives a group of cattle away from the herd and:

- (A) he/she commits to a cow in the group of cattle. Their horse does not respond to the Cutter immediately, but they are able to stop the cow before it returns to the herd.
- (B) he/she commits to a cow in the group of cattle. Their horse does not respond to the Cutter and the cow returns to the herd.
- (C) all the cattle trot past **him/her and return** to the herd.

### **RULING:**

- (A) No penalty, but the point value of the run may be reduced due to the lack of a quiet, clean cut
- (B) and (C) Assess a five (5) point penalty (D) for failure to separate.

**EXAMPLE 2:** The Cutter is working and at no fault of the Cutter, they pick up additional cattle. The Cutter quits their cow legally before separating it from the additional cattle.

**RULING:** No penalty

**NOTE:** Rule 15 applies only while the Cutter is making a cut. Once a cow is separated from the herd, the Cutter has satisfied the requirements of Rule 15.

**EXAMPLE 3:** During the process of cutting, the Cutter has **some** cows in front of them. After clearly committing to one of these cows, that cow turns and runs past the turnback horses and the other cow(s) remain. The Cutter:

- (A) stops their horse and returns to the herd to make another cut.
- (B) positions their horse and cuts one of the remaining cow(s) and begins to work.
- (C) holds their horse and waits for their original cow to be returned to the working area and then begins to work this cow.

### **RULING:**

- (A), (B) and (C) No Penalty

**NOTE:** A Cutter may legally quit a cow under any circumstances so long as the cow is behind both turnback horses (provided the turnback horses are behind the timeline) or the cow has left the working area. At that point in time, the Cutter may begin to work any cow in front of them or return to the herd and select another cow. The timeline will be visibly marked.

**NOTE:** Allow the Cutter to handle his/her horse enough to clear the cow that they selected to cut. In the application of this rule, the term “clear” means far enough out from the body of the herd that the Cutter has a reasonable opportunity to begin working and that all other cattle are at least behind their horse’s buttock.

## JUDGING RULE 16

Horses must be ridden with a bridle having a bit in the mouth or with a hackamore. All bridles on horses must have split reins. A bridle shall have no nose band or bosal, and hackamores shall be of rope or braided rawhide with no metal parts. Braided rawhide balls across the horse's nose are not permissible. A judge must be able to freely pass two fingers between the hackamore and muzzle completely around the horse's nose. Choke ropes, tie downs, wire around the horse's neck, nose, or brow band, quirt, bat, or mechanical device giving the rider undue control over a horse will not be permitted in the arena where an NCHA approved or sponsored event is being held. Wire of any kind and on any part of the curb device is not permissible. Leather curb straps or curb chains must be at least 3/8 of an inch in width and must be attached to the bit by nylon string, nylon straps, or leather straps. Decorative knots, rawhide balls or tassels are not permitted on curb devices. Breast collar may be used, no portion of which may pass over the horse's neck. Breast collars attached to the swell of the saddle on competing horses will be considered illegal. Chaps and spurs may be worn. A competing horse's tail cannot be tied in any manner which would restrict movement of the tail. A judge has the right to have a contestant report to them if they are suspicious of any infraction of this rule and Standing Rule 35.A.1 – Zero Tolerance Policy. Any time a contestant is guilty of an infraction of this rule or any part therein, they shall be disqualified. ***Any time a non-competing rider is guilty of an infraction of this rule or any part therein, they must be reported to the Executive Director (see section h below).***

- a. Any person horseback in the arena (both in and outside the working area) after the start of an NCHA approved event or NCHA sponsored event must wear western attire. ***Western attire is defined as: western hat, western boots with heels, jeans, or long pants intended for riding,*** long sleeved shirts with sleeves rolled down, collars, and buttons or snaps completely down the shirt front. The hat requirement may be waived, both in and outside of the working area of the arena, at outdoor shows in extreme weather conditions with the consent of both Show Management and the judge(s). Tank tops, T-shirts, and all types of sweatshirts are not permissible. Sweaters may be worn over an appropriate shirt. Under the advance approval of show management, safety helmets are permissible in place of a western hat. Enforcement of this rule is the responsibility of Show Management and NCHA Directors.
- b. Cell phone use will not be allowed by herd settler at any time. The four helpers are also prohibited from using a cell phone when the judges are in the stands. ***One helper may utilize a cell phone when it is being used as a transmitter for an electronic hearing device being worn by the Cutter while showing.*** Judges are not allowed to use their cell phone while in the judge's stand.
- c. Rule 16 shall become effective one (1) hour prior to the published starting time and shall remain in effect until one hour after each day's performance is concluded at all NCHA ***approved shows/events***. An announcement will be made each day when the rule goes into effect, but not hearing the announcement will not be a valid excuse for violating the rule. Alleged violations will be sent to the Grievance Committee for review.

- d. Rule 16 may be set aside by Show Management for an official practice session provided that the practice session ends at least one hour prior to the start of any performance.
- e. Contestants are limited to a maximum of four (4) helpers on horseback at a time.
- f. **Any member may use an electronic hearing device during an NCHA approved contest. The transmitter of the device must be operated by one of the contestant's four (4) helpers.**
- g. Violations of Rule 16b, c, d, e & f shall result in:
  - 1. First offense—\$200 fine.
  - 2. Second offense—\$500 fine.
  - 3. Third and subsequent offenses within 12 months - 90-day suspension.
- h. **Those responsible for reporting violations of this rule to the Executive Director include, but are not limited to, Show Management, NCHA Directors, officers and judges:**

**EXAMPLE 1:** During a work, the judge suspects that the hackamore is too tight.

**RULING:** At the completion of the work, the judge shall examine the hackamore. If the judge can pass two fingers completely around the horse's nose under the hackamore, no penalty. If the hackamore is, in fact, illegal, the Cutter **will** be disqualified.

**EXAMPLE 2:** During a work, the judge suspects that a training device is being used.

**RULING:** At the completion of the work, the judge shall examine the Cutter's equipment. If any equipment is found to be illegal, the Cutter **will** be disqualified.

**NOTE:** In the event a contestant is disqualified for illegal equipment, it is the responsibility of the judge to report the incident to the judging department.

**NOTE:** In the event a rider's equipment breaks during a horse's performance, the horse will be permitted to complete its allotted time and shall be scored in accordance with the other NCHA Rules for Judging Cutting Horses. **Any Judge has the sole right to terminate a run. If in the judge's opinion, human safety or animal welfare is at risk, the judge must terminate the run.** (Reruns shall not be granted for equipment failure.).

**EXAMPLE 3:** *During a work, the judge suspects the contestant isn't wearing western attire.*

**RULING:** *At the completion of the work, the judge shall examine the Cutter's attire. If the rider's attire is not western attire the Cutter will be disqualified.*

## **JUDGING RULE 17**

When a contestant is thrown from a horse, **dismounts from a horse**, or the horse falls to the ground, the run shall be terminated, and no score (0) will be given.

**NOTE:** Any judge has the sole right to terminate a run. **If in the judge's opinion human safety or animal welfare is at risk, the judge must terminate the run.**

**EXAMPLE 1:** While in the process of **cutting or working a cow**:

- (A) the Cutter falls from their horse.
- (B) the Cutter dismounts from their horse.
- (C) the Cutter's horse falls to the ground.

- (D) *the horse starts to lie down with its legs underneath itself, but the horse is not on its side with all four feet extended in the same direction.*

**RULING:**

- (A), (B), and (C) The judge shall stop the run & score the run zero (0)  
(D) *No penalty, but run content may be reduced in herd work depending upon the effort it takes to get the horse back to its feet.*

**NOTE:** A horse is considered to have fallen to the ground when the horse is on its side and all four feet are extended in the same direction.

### **JUDGING RULE 18**

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Any rider who allows their horse to quit working, leaves the working area before their allotted time is up or refuses to work will be scored zero (0).

**EXAMPLE 1:** The Cutter loses a cow and decides to retire from the herd and rides out, or stops working, (does not attempt to cut or reenter the herd) before the end of his/her time.

**RULING:** The run shall be scored zero (0)

### **JUDGING RULE 19**

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A contestant will be awarded a complete rework if, in the judge or judges' opinion, 2½ minutes time was not allotted for the work or if excessive disturbances had been created by factors other than those caused by the contestant. This rule does not apply to cattle scattering due to natural wildness or normal arena activities. Nor does it apply to disturbances caused by herd help *under normal working conditions.*

**DEFINITION OF TERMS: "Disturbance" is defined as:** Any departure from normal, including commotion or disorder

**NOTE:** Any judge has the sole right to terminate a run and grant or deny a rerun. *If in the judge's opinion human safety or animal welfare is at risk, the judge must terminate the run. Any run in which a contestant's help becomes separated from their horse will be automatically reviewed by the Director of Judges for authenticity. If the Director of Judges deems that a situation has occurred that was not an authentic separation of a rider from their horse, the matter will be turned over to the Grievance committee for possible fines and suspension.*

No rework shall be granted if the contestant involved has incurred a three (3) or five (5) point (major) penalty prior to a disturbance. *If the judge(s) did not terminate the run, the Cutter* has completed their 2 ½ minutes work and *in their opinion* a situation has occurred of sufficient seriousness to warrant a rerun, the **Cutter** may immediately make a request for a **rework** to the designated judge or judges who shall report this fact to Show Management before the next horse is called to work. Show Management shall make such facts as are available known to the judge(s) and if the majority **agree** that due cause did exist, a **rerun** may be granted provided the original work was free of a three (3) or a five (5) point (major) infraction prior to the disturbance. If a rework is granted, the rework may occur immediately or as the last work in that set of cattle at the Cutter's option.

**NOTE:** *As it pertains to a rerun option, a work will be considered free of a major penalty if a three (3) or a five (5) point (major) penalty has been called for review by the judge but not actually called.*

**EXAMPLE 1:** In a contest using two or more judges, a judge terminates a run for the purpose of granting a rerun. The other judge(s) do not agree that the run should have been stopped.

**RULING:**

- (A) If two (2) judges are being used, a rerun will be granted
- (B) If three or more judges are used and a majority of the judges **have** assessed a three (3) or a five (5) point (major) penalty before the time was stopped, no rerun will be granted and the Cutter shall receive a score of zero (0).

**EXAMPLE 2:** While the Cutter is working, a judge falls out of the judging stand, the judging stand collapses, or the stand over-turns. At the time of the disturbance:

- (A) the run was free of a three (3) point or a five (5) point (major) infraction.
- (B) the judge had called a three (3) point or a five (5) point (major) infraction prior to the disturbance.

**RULING:**

- (A) The judge shall terminate the run and grant a rerun.
- (B) The judge shall terminate the run, and the Cutter shall receive a score of zero (0).

**Short Clock:** A contestant will be awarded a complete rework if the run was free of a major penalty at the sound of the buzzer or time was called.

**EXAMPLE 1:** The buzzer sounds ending a run. In the judge(s) opinion, the Cutter worked for less than 2½ minutes.

- (A) At the time the buzzer sounded, the run was free of a three (3) point or a five (5) point (major) infraction by **the judge or majority of judges**.
- (B) Before the buzzer sounded, the judge or the **majority of judges** had called a three (3) point or a five (5) point (major) infraction.

**RULING:**

- (A) The judge(s) shall grant a rerun
- (B) No rerun shall be granted and the Cutter shall receive a score of zero (0)

**Long Clock or No Clock:** A rework will be automatically granted whether a major penalty has occurred **or not**. The contestant must take a rework . ***If the run begins but the clock has not started, a rework will automatically be granted.***

**EXAMPLE 1:** While the Cutter is working, it becomes apparent to the judge(s) that they have worked longer than 2½ minutes.

- (A) The run was free of a three (3) point or a five (5) point (major) infraction.
- (B) The judge(s) had called a three (3) point or a five (5) point (major) infraction.

**RULING:**

- (A) and (B) the judge(s) shall grant a rerun.

**NOTE:** In some instances, it would be difficult to determine whether the major infraction occurred before or after the actual 2½ minutes had expired; therefore, in this instance only, the Cutter shall receive a rerun.



## IMPORTANT NOTE TO SECRETARIES AND TIMERS:

**Any** judge(s) has the sole right to terminate a work prior to the 2½-minute buzzer. The Secretary or timer shall notify the judge(s) immediately if the clock has not been started or malfunctions.

## JUDGING RULE 20

A judge marks from sixty (60) to eighty (80) points. One-half (½) points are permissible.

**EXAMPLE:** The first horse in a contest works. The judge cannot decide whether to mark the run a 73 or 74. The judge decides to mark the run 73½.

**RULING:** Legal. The judge may mark any run they choose using one-half (½) points; however, the reason for the one-half (½) point is to allow the judge to differentiate between runs. It is, therefore, not desirable to begin one's scorecard **or move a horse into the lead** with a one-half (½) point marking.

**NOTE:** Judges are encouraged to use a full spread of scores in judging a contest. **It is important for a judge to recognize the level of competition being judged.** It is equally important for a judge to assess a high enough point value to those good runs that occur early in the contest. By using a full spread of scores, the remaining horses in the contest are more likely to place in the positions earned by their performance.

## JUDGING RULE 21

When the judge is in doubt about a penalty, the benefit always goes to the contestant.

**EXAMPLE 1.** The Cutter is working and quits a cow.

(A) The judge is not certain that the quit was illegal.

(B) The judge is certain that the quit was illegal.

**RULING:**

(A) No penalty, benefit of doubt goes to the Cutter.

(B) Assess a three (3) point penalty (A) for an illegal quit (Rule 13).

**NOTE:** A judge is duty-bound to call all penalties. If a penalty occurs, call it. If the judge must ask themselves, "Was that a penalty?" the benefit goes to the Cutter. **Judges should look for credit earning opportunities.** A judge can determine the difference in cutting runs by following these guidelines.

## RUN CONTENT

### Guideline for Evaluating A Work:

Runs are scored from (60-80) based on an analysis of what occurs during the work. Run Content is a numerical value, minus penalties which equals the score. The judge will start judging each horse when the Cutter's time begins, and each run will be started from a median score of (70). The run will conclude at the first sound of the buzzer. The Cutter's run content will be based upon compliance with credit **earning opportunities** and one (1) point penalties. Run content may be decreased without occurrence of a penalty and one (1) point penalties can be overcome if more credit is earned. One (1) point penalties will be deducted on a cow-by-cow basis. Occurrence of major penalties will only be deducted at the conclusion of the run. Judge the 1st cow and give a value consistent with run content minus one (1) point penalties (this is the value of your 1st cow score). Judge the 2nd cow and give a value consistent with run content minus one (1) point penalties (this is the value of your 2nd cow score). If only 2 cows are worked, the judge will average the 2 cow scores to determine final value of the run. If the cutter cuts a 3rd cow the judge will use common sense and

run content to decide how much to increase or decrease the value of the run. **After each cow**, the judge should be able to ascribe a numerical value based on the above standard.

**EXAMPLE 1:** Based on run content and one (1) point penalties, the judge has a value of 74 on the 1st cow and a value of 70 on the 2nd cow. The value of the run at the conclusion of the second cow will be a 72. If the cutter cuts a third cow the judge will use common sense and run content to decide how much to increase or decrease the value of the run.

**EXAMPLE 2:** The Cutter has a run that, in the judge's opinion, has an original point value of 73. Just prior to the buzzer sounding, the Cutter lost a cow.

**RULING:** Subtract a five (5) point penalty (B) from the original point value.  $73 - 5 = 68$

### **Degree of Difficulty:**

Degree of difficulty is determined by the amount of effort exerted by the cow in its attempt to return to the herd. A cow that turns quickly and moves rapidly is more difficult to hold in a working position than a cow that turns and moves slowly. A judge must give credit when a Cutter is able to maintain a working advantage on a tough cow.

**NOTE:** The judge should consider if the cutter has maintained its working advantage on a difficult cow or if the cutter has not maintained its working advantage therefore creating their own difficulty.

### **Eye Appeal:**

Runs that are attractive because of the style of the horse and the correctness of the overall performance shall receive credit.

### **Amount of Courage:**

**A judge should give credit for a Cutter who demonstrates courage by:**

- (A) staying on a tough cow **and not quitting at the first opportunity.**
- (B) **releasing their horse early on the cut (the opposite of holding on too long).**
- (C) above average working time.

**NOTE: Use common sense to apply this rule.**

**NOTE:** Coming off the fence to set up a cow in the center of the arena before quitting, staying on a tough cow and working longer than average are high risk situations. If a rule infraction occurs in these situations, a judge must call it; therefore, the Cutter who shows this type of courage and commits no rule infractions, shall receive credit.

### **Time Worked:**

Consider the amount of time that the Cutter spends working a cow during the 2½ minute run. A Cutter shall be rewarded credit for his/her working time. Stalling in the herd or reluctance to cut a cow to allow time to run off the clock shall have a negative influence on **working time and courage.**

**NOTE:**

- (A) **45 seconds of working time is required and considered average.**
- (B) **50 to 60 seconds of working time is above average and should be rewarded.**
- (C) **60 second and above is exceptional, a minimum of one (1) point should be added to the total value of the run.**

**EXAMPLE 1:** The Cutter works two cows and is attempting to cut their third cow when the buzzer sounds.

**RULING:** The Cutter may work any number of cattle that they choose.

**NOTE:** No penalty exists for “dying in the herd.” The judge shall, however, always consider the amount of time spent working when marking a run.

**Charging:**

While working, the Cutter’s horse consistently applies pressure on the cow being worked, either through their turnarounds or while traveling across the arena; thereby forcing the cow being worked further away from the herd until they no longer have a working advantage. A horse charging certainly detracts from the overall performance of a cutting horse and cannot have a positive influence on the point value of the run.

**Force Off:**

While working, a contestant must quit a cow because their horse is in an incorrect working position. Being forced off a cow detracts from the overall performance of a cutting horse and cannot have a positive influence on the point value of the run.

**Herd Help:**

A herd holder’s duty is to assist the Cutter in containing the herd and group of cattle the Cutter is trying to cut from. This gives the Cutter ample opportunity to demonstrate to the judge their ability to work the herd, drive a cow, and set a cow up in the middle of the pen. These conditions allow a judge to reward credit to the Cutter under Rules 1, 2 and 4. After assisting the Cutter in making a cut, the herd holder should move to a position toward the arena wall that will enable them to contain the herd but not distract from the run. Any excessive action by the herd holder will be dealt with as a reduction in run content. Although there is no specific major penalty for this action, it does hinder the Cutter’s horse from showing their full potential. Therefore, judges will begin reducing run content when excessive help from herd holders affects the run, such as saving a major penalty from occurring, cutting the pen down, and in fresh cattle, driving the herd **out to help the Cutter make a cut**. Herd holders should keep in mind they are jeopardizing the Cutter’s score when they give too much assistance to the Cutter.

**EXAMPLE 1.** The Cutter enters the herd. One or both herd holders get behind the cattle so that it is obvious to the judge that the herd holders are doing as much or more than the Cutter is to drive the cattle out.

- (A) The cattle are rerun.
- (B) The cattle are fresh.

**RULING:**

- (A) No reduction of run content. ***Credit will be given to the Cutter who does not need assistance.***
- (B) Run content will be reduced.

**EXAMPLE 2.** After the cut is made, a herd holder:

- (A) is sitting in the corner. As the Cutter and cow approach the corner, the herd holder remains in position and ***has no influence on the cow.***
- (B) does not move their horse to a position on the arena wall but stops in a position several feet off the wall. The herd holder is not moving, but it is obvious to the judge that the cow being

worked is being influenced by the presence of the herd holder's horse.

- (C) comes out of the corner in an obvious attempt to stop or turn the cow.

**RULING:**

- (A) No reduction of run content
- (B) and (C) Run content will be reduced ***based on the judge's opinion of what occurred.***

**EXAMPLE 3.** As the Cutter leaves the arena wall with a cow, the herd holder on the opposite side believes the Cutter's path may cause the herd to split. They ride their horse out into the arena to a position that will prevent this from happening.

**RULING:** No reduction in run content. The herd holder has the right to position themselves so that the herd will not scatter.

**EXAMPLE 4.** The Cutter has worked a cow and needs to get off. The cow is obviously not going to turn away without some assistance. The Cutter:

- (A) has maintained a working advantage as the cow approaches the side. The herd holder moves their horse up to turn the cow away.
- (B) has not maintained a working advantage as the cow approaches the side. The herd holder moves their horse up to turn the cow away.

**RULING:**

- (A) No reduction of run content
- (B) Run content will be reduced

**EXAMPLE 5:** After a miss, it is obvious to the judge that the Cutter is about to lose or back fence a cow. The herd holder moves their horse to prevent this from happening.

**RULING:** Assess a one (1) point penalty (A) for the miss (Rule 11) and run content should be ***affected greatly if this action saved a major penalty.***

**PENALTIES**

**One (1) Point**

- (a) 1 point - (miss) losing working advantage (11)
- (b) 1 point - reined or visibly cued (8)
- (c) 1 point - noise directed to cattle (5a)
- (d) 1 point - toe, foot, or stirrup on the shoulder (8d)
- (e) 1 point - hold on too long on a cut(8a)
- (f) 1 point - working out of position (11)
- (g) 1 point - hand too far forward (8)

**Three (3) Points**

- (a) 3 points - hot quit (13)
- (b) 3 points - cattle picked up or scattered (5b)
- (c) 3 points - second hand on reins (8b)
- (d) 3 points - cue in shoulder (8c)
- (e) 3 points - pawing or biting cattle (12)
- (f) 3 points - failure to make a deep cut (1)
- (g) 3 points - back fence (6)

- (a) 5 points - horse quitting a cow (14)
- (b) 5 points - losing a cow (9)
- (c) 5 points - changing cattle after a specific commitment (10)
- (d) 5 points - failure to separate a single cow after leaving the herd (15)
- (t) 5 points - turn tail (7)

0 - if a contestant is thrown from a horse or the horse falls to ground (17)

- 0 - illegal equipment (16, Standing Rule 34)
- 0 - leaves working area before time expire (18)s
- 0 - inhumane treatment to the horse (16, Standing Rule 35.)

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Run Content:		One Point	Penalties:
<b>Herd Work:</b> Driving a cow (+)(✓)(✓)(✓)(✓)(✓)		(A) Miss-Loss of working advantage - 11	<b>Five Points</b> (A) Horse quitting a cow - 14
<b>Controlling the cow:</b> Working in center of arena (+)(✓)(✓)(✓)(✓)(✓)		(B) Reining or visibly cuing - 5a	(B) Losing a cow - 9
<b>Degree of Difficulty:</b> (+)(✓)(✓)(✓)(✓)(✓)		(C) Noise directed toward cattle - 5a	(C) Changing cattle after a specific commitment - 10
<b>Eye Appeal:</b> (+)(✓)(✓)(✓)(✓)(✓)		(D) Toe, foot or stirrup on shoulder - 8d	(D) Failure to separate a single animal after leaving the herd - 15
<b>Amount of Courage:</b> (+)(✓)(✓)(✓)(✓)(✓)		(E) Hold on too long on a cut - 8a	<b>(T) Turn Tail - 7</b>
<b>Time Worked:</b> (+)(✓)(✓)(✓)(✓)(✓)		(F) Working out of position - 11	
<b>Cow Worked:</b> Average score for 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> cow worked. 3 <sup>rd</sup> cow used to + V - Final Total Score		(G) Hand too far forward - 8	
<b>Tight Reins:</b> (✓) (only)	Any Empty Run Content Box Indicates Average.	<b>Three Points</b> (A) Hot cut - 13	<b>Zero Score</b> Horse falls to ground - 17 illegal equipment Leaving the working area before time expires <b>Inhumane treatment to the horse.</b>
<b>Horse Charging:</b> (✓) (only)		(B) Cattle picked up or scattered - 5b	
<b>Forced Off A Cow:</b> (✓) (only)		(C) Second hand on the reins - 8b	
		(D) Spur in the shoulder - 8c	
		(E) Pawing or biting cattle - 12	
		(F) Failure to make a deep cut - 1	
		(G) Back Fence - 6	

HORSE	SCORE	PENALTIES			RUN CONTENT										
		1 PT	3 PTS	5 PTS	Herd Work	Cow Control	Degree of Difficulty	Eye Appeal	Courage	Time Worked	Cow Worked	Tight Reins	Charging	Forced Off	Herd Help
												+ v -			
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NCHA Membership No. \_\_\_\_\_

Judge's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Judge's Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

2025

## **Adjusted Monitor System “AMS”**

The Adjusted Monitor System (AMS) is a system that has been designed to make judging equally fair for each contestant. The AMS is required to be used with **the five-judge system** and may be used in a **three-judge system**. In the five-judge system, the high and low scores will be discarded.

**NOTE:** Under this system, only the total combined scores, after throwing out the high and low, will be displayed to the public by a scoreboard, not visible to the judges. Scores should not be announced.

1. The monitor(s) will have full use of video equipment, including video replay, slow motion, and wide angle or overhead film to determine each infraction in question.
2. In a go round, Scores of 195 and below will not be reviewed.
3. In the finals, only scores of 181 and higher will be reviewed or adjusted
4. ***Scores are official one hour after scores have been verified for the last set of a go-round or class. In a final, scores are official one hour after scores have been verified for the last set of that final or before the first awards for that final are given, whichever comes first.***
5. Show Management has the responsibility for official placing at the show.

## **Guidelines for Monitors**

1. First and foremost, the monitor is not the judge, but is there in the capacity to monitor and make rulings on major penalty discrepancies, based on reviewing film and using the “NCHA Judging Casebook of Rules and Regulations for Judging Cutting Horse Contests.”
2. Monitor(s) may talk to contestants and owners about a particular run or penalty provided the Director of Judges **approves it and** a designated non-contestant liaison is present.
3. In finals only, in a case where a R is either placed on the scoreboard or announced by error (when all 5 judges have called the same penalty), the monitor will contact contestant to make them aware of the error.
4. Monitor(s) have the authority to educate a judge after the judge has made their decision on a penalty and signed their penalty slip.
5. If a monitor finds a penalty to be ruled inconclusive due to video evidence; the run will not be reviewed by a judge or judges. If there is inconclusive film evidence, the call must stand as is. No adjustments will be made.
6. If there are no discrepancies on the judges’ cards, the run will not be reviewed, except for the evaluation and education of the judge(s).
7. The monitor(s) will not review one (1) point penalties; however, they may review any run with a judge for education where there are clear misapplications of obvious one (1) point penalties.

## **Procedure Of The Monitor**

1. The monitor(s) will deal only with three (3) and five (5) point penalty discrepancies in the judge’s cards. In the event the judges are split on a particular penalty, the run is reviewed on video and is then ruled on by applying the “Rules for Judging Cutting Horse Shows” found in the NCHA Rule Book.

2. If the monitor(s) are in full agreement that the rule in question was violated or not violated, then the judge(s) in error will be asked to the monitor room and ***shown the penalty in question.*** All reviews with judges will be audio recorded
3. The judge can change their score or leave their score as originally marked. In no way is the judge ***to be*** intimidated or encouraged into changing their score. The judge can see the situation as many times as they wish, and if they request any clarification of the rule in question, then it is given to them from the Rule Book and casebook examples.
4. If the judge wishes to change their score, an affidavit is signed by the judge signifying the penalty, and the score is adjusted by the amount of that penalty.

#### **EXAMPLE:**

Go Round \_\_\_\_\_ Group of Cattle \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to change from a \_\_\_\_\_ to a \_\_\_\_\_

Horse's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ three point penalty    ☐ five point penalty

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE:** If a major penalty has been called in error, thereby making clear and obvious one (1) point penalties not previously charged, then the adjusted score shall reflect the one (1) point penalty.

5. The monitor(s) will fill out an AMS Penalty Analysis Sheet to document changes made to an adjusted score.
6. ***The monitor(s) will fill out a NO Action Sheet to document when no changes have been made***

#### **Self-Adjusted Monitor System "SAMS"**

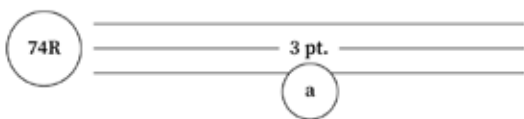
1. All NCHA Championship Shows must use SAMS. It is imperative that the system be announced prior to the start of the show.
2. There will be no adjustment to the following:
  - (a) No change in run content or one (1) point penalties.
  - (b) No review of any run not reported to the announcer ***as a review*** at the time the judge calls in their score.
3. The following criteria will be followed when either a three (3) or a five (5) point penalty ***has been called for a review.***

**EXAMPLE .** At the completion of the run the judges value of the run is a 74 with a review on a (3) point penalty (A) (Rule 13).

- (a) The judge must document the penalty in the appropriate penalty box and circle it. Then write their score as 74R and circle it.
- (b) The judge will report the score as follows to the announcer: "74R"
- (c) The announcer must announce "74R" for the review to be valid, and this announcement must be made when the run is complete and before the next run takes place. It is the

judge's responsibility to be sure the call indicating the "R" is announced.

**The score on their card would appear as this:**



- (d) After the review, if the judge's opinion is the penalty is not valid, he/she would leave the original mark for the horse and initial both the score and the reviewed penalty. They do not erase the original mark or alter it in any way.
- (e) After the review, if the judge's opinion is the penalty is valid, he/she would write the new score next to the original score and initial the new score and the reviewed penalty. They do not erase the original mark or alter it in any way.
- (f) All reviews should be made during a cattle change. A judge must resolve all reviews in a particular class before moving on to the next class. However, if the next class occurs without a cattle change (i.e., consecutive classes held in the same herd example: Junior Youth followed by Senior Youth), the judge must wait until the next cattle change to conduct any/all reviews.
- (g) The announcer will make the following statement: "Horse #19, Docs Tommy, has a score of 74 (if no adjustment) or 71 if adjusted."

### **Attention Show Management:**

For the judge to use the Self-Adjusted Monitor System you must provide an isolated location for the judge to review the runs in question. The room is to include a good-sized TV **and AV equipment to play the video**. Under no condition is a judge to review any runs in the arena or in the presence of contestants or other judges.

### **Rules of Thumb:**

1. Do not dwell on the call. After three **viewings** of the same penalty, the judge should have a working knowledge and basis in fact for a decision.
2. Rule 21 is in the Rule Book to determine in favor of the cutter if a penalty situation does not have an absolute conclusion. However, it is important that Rule 21 is used as an aid, not a crutch.
3. If there is inconclusive film evidence, the call must stand as is. No adjustments will be made.

### **Multiple Judged System**

1. Two or three judges: One uses the "R", and the other(s) did not. The judge(s) marking the "R" will review the situation first. If the judge(s) do not change their score, the other judge(s) will not be required to look at the run. If the judge(s) change the score, then the other judge(s) will be required to review the situation. If the decision of the judge that called the "R" results in the difference of



a major penalty between the judges; the other judge (s) will be required to review the situation. This should be done totally separate with no communication between the judges during the reviews.

2. Two or three judges: No “R” is called. The judge with the highest rating and most credits has the responsibility to communicate with the show secretary to review each judge’s score card to determine if there are any major penalties (3 or 5 points) to be reviewed.

### **Weekend Field Monitor Process for Judges**

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1. Judges may communicate with their Field Monitors during a show for purposes of Rule Book clarification only. No videos shall be shown to the Weekend Field Monitor during the show.
2. All Judges are required to leave the show with a copy of the judge sheets, a copy of the video of all classes judged and a copy of the Weekend Monitor’s Report from the Videographer.
3. Judges are required to communicate with the respective Field Monitor prior to mailing the Video Media (***SD Card, thumb drive or USB 3.0 external hard drive***) and judge sheets.
4. A Judge is required to mail a copy of the judge sheets and video to the assigned field Monitor no later than the Wednesday after the conclusion of a ***non-monitored*** event.
5. Judges are required to be available for communication with the respective Field Monitor for a minimum of fourteen days from end of a show. Failure to comply with the requirements of the Weekend Field Monitor Program will result in:
  - 1st offense - letter of reprimand
  - 2nd offense - \$100 fine
  - 3rd offense - \$300 fine
  - 4th offense - removal from the NCHA Judges List

**However, all disciplinary actions listed in this rule are guidelines only and may be increased or decreased by the Director of Judges, in his/her sole discretion, based on the severity of the incident in question.**

### **Judge Challenge System**

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The Challenge System is to be used at all LAE monitored events. The Challenge system gives a contestant the opportunity to challenge a judging decision. When all five judges call the same major penalty, the contestant can request a review on their run. Only the contestant can challenge their own run.

The challenge cost is \$1,000 and must be submitted ***with*** a completed ***Challenge*** form and payment to the Show Management ***no later than one hour after scores have been verified for the last set of a go-round or class.***

In the event the challenge is for a score from a final, the challenge must be submitted to Show Management ***no later than one hour after scores have been verified for the last set of that final or*** before the ***first*** awards for that final are given, ***whichever comes first.***

If the challenge ***is upheld***, then the contestant will be refunded their \$1,000. If it is not, and the judges leave their original ruling, then the NCHA will retain the \$1,000.

If the contestant’s score is changed by the judges and is high enough to advance to the next go-round it will advance and work in its pre-drawn position or be ***drawn according to the procedure outlined in Standing Rule 11.a.*** The extra horse will be added into that round, but the bub-

ble score required to advance to the next round will never be changed.

***The challenged penalty is reviewed on video. If the monitor(s) are in full agreement that the rule in question was not violated, then all five judges will review the penalty separately. Each judge has the opportunity to change their score or leave their score as originally marked. If the contestant's score is changed by the judges in a final, placings will be adjusted accordingly. Once the scores are adjusted and verified, Show Management has the responsibility for official placing at the show.***

The Challenge Form is available on the NCHA website, [nchacutting.com](http://nchacutting.com) in the Judges Section and on the Forms page.

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