

Oregon 4-H Horse Judging Contest Guidelines

(effective 10/01/08 through 09/30/09)

The Oregon 4-H Horse Judging Contest is an educational experience that gives youth a greater understanding of horses. Participants gain experience in the decision making process by determining and ranking the four horses in the class from the most desirable to least desirable in traits and/or performance.

Objectives

1. Teach youth the principles of horse selection and performance evaluation as related to equine recreational activities
2. Stimulate youth achievement by providing the opportunity for competitive learning experience in an area of their special interest.
3. Help youth develop positive attitudes about their own abilities and their relationships with others.
4. Develop a sound working knowledge of the Oregon 4-H Horse curriculum.

Team Makeup

Counties are allowed to enter one intermediate and one senior judging team. All team members must have competed at their county qualifying event. Each team shall consist of from one to four members. Members may compete as individuals in the Judging Contest. The scores of the three highest placing members are used in calculating the team totals.

Contest Guidelines

Contestants will be expected to abide by the following standard judging contest rules:

- **No talking is allowed** by 4-H members after the contest begins. If a 4-H member has a question regarding the contest, the member should address that question to the group leader. A 4-H member will be given one warning for talking. The next offense will result in the member receiving a zero score for that class. Subsequent violations will result in the member being dismissed from the contest and receiving zero scores for all classes. Decisions regarding compliance with this rule rest with the group leader.
- No printed material may be taken into the contest.
- Be quick and courteous in response to group leader directions.
- Stay with group until dismissed.
- Refrain from conduct that would distract fellow contestants.
- Wear appropriate clothing (neat and clean) and come to the contest dressed to judge and give oral reasons without having to leave the facility or assigned group.
- **Boots are required.**
- Judging packets must be picked up by the team coach or chaperone.

Rule violations will be addressed by the group leader in cooperation with contest officials.

Classes

Conformation

Contestants will judge up to a maximum of four conformation classes. Classes will consist of horses, ponies, mules or donkeys. Breeds may include, but are not limited to, those identified in the 4-H Horse Project Book. Conformation classes will consist of four horses of the same breed and gender and the same approximate age. Contestants must be able to view the entire class of horses at one time from the front, back and sides. Contestants must also be able to view each horse walk and trot in a straight line.

Contestants should be able to approach within at least 20 feet of the horses. All contestants, along with the official judge, should evaluate and place the class at the same time.

Performance

Contestants will judge one class of showmanship and up to a maximum of two other performance classes. The performance classes may be Saddle Seat Equitation, Hunt Seat Equitation, Western Equitation, Trail, Dressage, Hunt Seat Equitation Over Fences, or Driving.

The judge will be in the same general vicinity as the contestants when evaluating the class. Contestants should judge tack, equipment and dress according to 4-H rules.

Oral Reasons

All contestants will give oral reasons. Seniors will give three sets, and intermediates will give two sets. Participants will be allowed at least 15 minutes to prepare for oral reasons.

Contestants **must not** state their name or county affiliation. Nor should they wear any clothing that identifies their county.

Contestants should dress according to and abide by the dress code advocated for the Oregon 4-H Program (neat and clean). **Boots are required.** Hats are not allowed to be worn when giving oral reasons.

Contestants should come to the judging contest in clothing which would be appropriate to not only judge classes, but also to give oral reasons in as well. No time will be allowed to let contestants change clothes or leave the arena or assigned group to access outfits, clothing, or personal grooming accessories. Those contestants who do so will be subject to disqualification.

Contestants may use either the standard 4-H or collegiate format

In evaluating oral reasons, the following criteria are taken into consideration:

Presentation

grooming
posture
poise, confidence
eye contact
clear, audible voice
English

Knowledge of Subject

saw major strengths,
weaknesses, and
important differences

Organization

introduction
logical order
conclusion

Used Appropriate Terms

descriptive adjectives
correct names of parts

Point deductions for Oral Reasons are as follows:

Using Notes:

- 15 for Seniors
- 10 for Intermediates

Missing something major: -10
(lameness, sex, breed, etc.)

Wearing hats -5
Stating name/county -5
Chewing gum -5
Improper attire -5

Awards and Recognition

A computer scoring system will be used. Each class will be scored on the basis of 50 points.

The scores of the three highest placing members are used in calculating the team totals. Ties are broken by the oral reasons scores.

Medallions will be awarded to the first place senior and intermediate teams. High scoring individuals in each age division will also receive a medallion. Rosettes will be presented to the top five teams and the top ten individuals in each age division.