

SUBJECT: Adding Ranch Horsemanship to the Working Western Section (USEF/EC)

(STANDARD)

Refer to Chapter 9, RULE 101 & 102 for submission requirements.

Committee Action:

Committees required to review: *(This section to be completed by the Agenda & Resolutions Committee)*

Approve

Disapprove

Amateur Committee			
Competition Advisory Committee			
Education/Evaluation Commission			
Professional Horsemen Committee			
USEF Arabian Division Committee			
Working Western Committee			
Youth Committee			

CONVENTION ACTION:

_____ Approved _____ Approved with Modification _____ Disapproved

_____ Withdrawn _____ Referred to Committee _____

PROPOSED CHANGE: (**Check one**) ☒ Add new rule _____ Delete existing rule _____ Change existing text
Indicate affected Article/Rule number (AHA/USEF/EC) USEF Subchapter 26

RESOLUTION: Use **bold/italic** for new wording, ~~strikethrough~~ to indicate deletion

Whereas, With the continued growth of the Ranch Horse Division there is a desire to add Ranch Horsemanship;
Therefore, Be It

Resolved, That a new Ranch Horsemanship class and specifications be added to Subchapter AR-26 WORKING
WESTERN SECTION as follows:

AR RANCH HORSEMANSHIP

- Emphasis shall be placed on horse and rider working together in order to complete a Ranch Riding pattern efficiently and effectively. Ranch Horsemanship highlights the rider's skill in performing practical maneuvers essential to everyday ranch work. Pattern execution and placement along with correct form of both horse and rider, while maintaining a pleasurable ride are the main criteria for this class. The rider's position should enhance the horses ability to execute each task with ease, maintaining a consistent and effective connection throughout the performance.*
- The horse's head and neck should be carried in a relaxed, natural position, with the poll level with or slightly above the withers. The head should not be carried behind the vertical, giving the appearance of intimidation, or be excessively nosed out, giving a resistant appearance.*
- Exhibitors may show only one (1) horse.*
- It is mandatory that the pattern to be worked must be posted at least one hour prior to the commencement of the class. Patterns may be chosen from the approved Ranch Riding patterns (AQHA Ranch Riding patterns). The use of natural logs is encouraged. Use of cattle is optional (exception: Walk/ Trot Ranch Horsemanship 10 & Under). Judging/scoring is to be based 50% on the execution of the pattern and 50% on the rider's position and effectiveness in communicating with the horse.*

AR Class Conduct

- All Ranch Horsemanship classes, shall require all contestants to perform a Ranch Riding pattern as described in accordance with the current AQHA Patterns and which must be posted.*
- Judges are required to use the AHA prescribed Ranch Horsemanship Score Sheet for Ranch Horsemanship Classes. All penalties and scoring shall be in accordance to the Ranch Riding rules. The scores will then be announced after each exhibitor has completed their pattern and the score sheets will be posted in accordance with AR218.1*

AR Class Specifications

1. JOTR, JTR, AAOTR, ATR
2. Walk Trot 10 & Under, Walk Trot 11 & over.

AR Rider Position

1. The rider's position should always be in total unison with the horse. It should enhance the footwork, cadence, and degree of difficulty throughout each maneuver.
2. The rider's head should be held with the chin level and eyes forward and may be directed slightly toward the direction of travel. Exhibitors should sit in the saddle for the walk, trot, and lope, with legs hanging slightly forward to stirrups with knees bent. Body should always appear comfortable, heels relaxed, flexible and lower than toes. At the extended trot, standing or posting is optional. Exhibiting the correct diagonal when making turns to maintain a balanced horse is credit earning. Holding the saddle with either hand will not be penalized. Those exhibitors that can maintain a position that facilitates an optimal performance throughout the maneuvers should receive more credit.
3. Both hands and arms should be held in a relaxed manner, allowing for effective communication with the horse. The arm holding the reins should be bent at the elbow forming a line from the elbow to the horse's mouth. The free hand and arm may be carried bent at the elbow in a similar position as the hand holding the reins or down at the rider's side. The rein hand should be carried immediately above or slightly in front of the saddle horn. The reins should be adjusted so that the rider has light contact with the horse's mouth, and at no time should require more than slight hand movement to control the horse. Excessively tight or loose reins will be penalized. The type of reins used (romals, split reins, mecate or two-rein) should not affect the score awarded for each maneuver.

AR Rider Position in Extended Gaits

1. Extended trot: The rider may post, sit, or stand at the extended trot. When posting or standing, the rider should maintain a square and relatively upright proper position. If seated, the rider should stay square and maintain proper overall body position yet animate their seat to encourage forward motion of the horse. Either way, the lower leg, while maintaining light contact and proper position may also become moderately more active to encourage the horse to lengthen its stride while maintaining cadence. The horse's stride should lengthen or extend, not quicken. The length of the stride should not be any greater than is comfortable for the individual horse to carry and maintain.
2. Extended lope: The rider may sit or stand with a "light seat" at the extended lope. The rider should have a square balanced torso over a soft connected seat. The rider's seat may rhythmically drive the stride of the horse forward yet not interfere with the cadence of the gait. The horse should transition within a few strides from the lope to the extended lope, which is a lengthened stride not a quickened pace. The length of stride should not be any greater than is comfortable for the individual horse to carry and maintain.

AR Appointments

1. For rules regarding correct Western appointments, refer to AR215.
2. Appointments with silver should not count over good working tack. Silver on bridles and saddles and the use of weighted reins is discouraged.
3. Touching or holding the saddle horn is permitted.
4. Hoof polish is discouraged but will not be penalized
5. It is customary to not remove the hair from the insides of the ears, but horses with clean clipped ears will not be penalized.
6. Trimming of the bridle path, fetlocks, and excessive (long) facial hair is permitted.

AR Judging and Scoring

1. Overall presentation of the exhibitor and the horse, including the exhibitor's poise, confidence, appearance, and position throughout the execution of the pattern as well as the performance of the horse will be evaluated.
2. Ranch Horsemanship is to be judged on the rider's ability to perform the required maneuvers that are observed in the Ranch Riding classes while maintaining an effective position. Emphasis on a correct natural position, effective pattern placement, connection with the horse through rhythm and timing while in motion and when performing maneuvers. The exhibitor shall maintain functional position throughout the pattern. It should reflect a solid feel for the horse and the task at hand. Results as shown by the performance are not to be considered more important than the method used by the riders to obtain them.

3. *Credit should be given to the rider having the horse in balance from leg, seat, and hand, maintaining the correct cadence at all gaits.*

AR Scoring

1. *The prescribed Ranch Horsemanship Score Sheet shall be used. Scoring will be based on 0 - 100 with 70 denoting an average performance. Both a maneuver score and equitation score will be given for each maneuver. The individual maneuver scores and equitation scores will be scored in 1/2 point increments from a low of -1 1/2 to a high of +1 1/2 with a score of zero denoting a maneuver that is correct with no degree of difficulty. The maneuver scores with penalties shall be tabulated for the Ranch Riding score, and the equitation score for each maneuver shall be tabulated for the Equitation score. The two scores shall be added together for the total Ranch Horsemanship score.*
2. *All penalties shall be in accordance with the current Ranch Riding Penalties as per AR 247 Ranch Riding Scoring*

Resolved, That USEF AR218.4.d be amended by inserting the following:

d. ...In Reining Seat Equitation **and Ranch Horsemanship**, ties must be broken first by the highest "Equitation" score....

Effective: December 31, 2027 or when approved by USEF/EC

(If a Standard resolution, the effective date will be December 31 of the year after the Convention)

RESOLUTION TYPE (**REQUIRED**): Standard ☒X_____ Extraordinary _____ "If indicated as "Extraordinary", the proponent must list reasons which establish Chapter 9, RULE 101.3.a. has been met)

PROPOSERS FINANCIAL IMPACT (**REQUIRED**): Refer to Chapter 9, RULE 102.6. & 102.7 for financial requirements
None

AHA IMPACT STATEMENT: *(To be completed by AHA Staff)*

Contact Person:

SUBMITTED BY: Working Western Committee

Region Number:

☐ Member Organization ☒ Committee ☐ Commission ☐ Board ☐ Region (*check one* ☒)

Who voted: ☒ Members ☐ Board ☐ Delegates (*check voting body*)

Total Number Eligible to Vote: 105 Number of Yes votes: 35 Number of No votes: 2

How vote was taken: ☐ mail ☒ email/other electronic means ☐ phone ☐ meeting (*check one*) (*Must have Quorum with majority of yes votes*)

Where documentation of this vote is recorded: Survey Monkey Results (*Must have printed documentation on file*)

Date vote taken: July 28 – Aug 4, 2026

Contact Person: Jim Hitt, Chair (*Has authority to amend, combine or withdraw*)

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