

JUDGES Committee

NEWSLETTER



September 2022



I hope everyone has had a healthy and successful summer! For sure time has flown by!

Earlier this year, the NRHA Judges Committee decided to move one of the 2022 October NRHA Judges' Schools to December. The dates for the October school are October 30- November 1 hosted at the NRHA office in Oklahoma City.

The dates for the December school are December 10-12 hosted at the Hyatt Regency DFW Airport, 2334 N. International Pkwy, DFW Airport, TX 75261, USA, 972-615-6709

The December NRHA recertification will be a collaboration where the NRHA portion will take place Saturday, December 10, Sunday, December 11, and conclude Monday morning December 12. The National Reined Cow Horse Association (NRCHA) Director of Judges, Bill Enk, will also host an NRCHA cow horse recertification following the NRHA judge recertification testing. The NRCHA Cow Horse portion will start Monday after the morning NRHA session is complete and will be followed by an AQHA and APHA recertification school at the same location.

If your NRHA judging credentials expire in 2022, [sign up here](#) before the deadline of October 1, 2022. Anyone who is not an NRHA judge but would like to come audit is also welcome and can [sign up here](#).

October 30 - November 1 School - [Sign up here!](#)

December 10 - 12 School - [Sign up here!](#)

Dates have been selected for the 2023 January and March schools. Location NRHA Office OKC

January 13-15 NRHA Judge Recertification

March 15-16 NRHA Judge Applicant Seminar

March 16-19 NRHA Judge Recertification

March 19 (after morning testing) NRHA Show Steward Applicant Seminar

Meet Patti Carter

Welcome to Senior Director of Education and Officials Patti Carter. We are fortunate to have Patti on board to continually improve teaching techniques at NRHA Judges' Schools. NRHA had outgrown relying on volunteer work from committee members to keep the judges' program strong and evolving.

In addition to all the work that goes into schools and testing, Patti will deliver material through newsletters and make full utilization of technology to keep judges updated and sharp.

As judges, it is our responsibility to keep current with communication from NRHA through vehicles like this newsletter, emails and notices put on the judges' portal available at <https://nrha.com/judges>.



Meet Lillian Esterl-Byrne

New to the NRHA Education & Officials team is Lillian Esterl-Byrne, education and officials coordinator, a key part of helping achieve the goals of the NRHA judges' program. Lillian relocated to Oklahoma City from Arvada, Colorado. She earned a bachelor's degree in Equine Science at Colorado State University before attaining her Master's degree in Animal Science with a focus on equine welfare at Tarleton State University in Stephenville, Texas. She brings considerable experience to her role.



Using the Scale

"The Judges Committee has always taught and encouraged judges to use the full scale in a consistent and accurate manner," says NRHA Professional, judge, and member of the Judges Committee Mike McEntire. "This is an ongoing process for the committee to deliver the proper education to judges and have this accurate and consistent judging show up in our chairs worldwide."

Clarifications In Penalty Application

PENALTY SCORE ZERO Section 3. A penalty score 0 shall also be incurred if a horse fails to complete the pattern as written, performs the maneuvers in other than the specified order, and/or includes maneuvers not specified. Included as maneuvers in other than the specified order, is the situation wherein a horse runs circles out of order, or exceeds greater than one quarter of the circle out of order (i.e., when a horse begins circles in the wrong direction for more than a quarter of a circle before changing direction; when a small slow and large fast circles are required, and the horse runs a large fast and small slow and large fast set of circles, or when it requires a large fast, a lead change and a small slow and the horse runs a large fast, does a lead change and then continues over one quarter of the next circle in a large fast). [Video Example Link](#)

5 POINT PENALTIES Section 1. There are five situations that require a judge to apply a five (5) point penalty. These situations are: spurring in front of the cinch, use of either hand to instill fear or praise, holding the saddle with either hand (except in the Freestyle Reining or Youth 10 & Under Short Stirrup class or for riders 65 and older (Non Pro classes only, excluding Categories 2 and 6. Age as of January 1.), or blatant disobedience. Also included, is the act of a horse dropping to its knees or hocks that cannot be considered a fall since its shoulder and/or hip and/or underline did not touch the ground. In order to assess the 5-point penalty correctly, an important distinction must be made. A horse that hits its hocks while performing a sliding stop should not receive the penalty and should not be confused with the horse that drops to its hocks at the completion of the stop due to a clear loss of balance or a horse that sits down should receive the penalty 5. [Video Example Link](#)

To assess the 5-point penalty correctly during spins, an important distinction must be made. A horse that turns with its hock touching the ground should not receive the penalty 5 and should not be confused with the horse that drops to its hocks due to a clear loss of balance which should receive the penalty 5. [Video Example Link](#)

Bluetooth Rule Reminder

The NRHA Board of Directors approved the following rule change (Page 93-94). The following will result in no score: (n) use of Bluetooth headsets or electronic communication devices in category 2 & 6 aged events.

Page 141 Section 3. Included in the infraction of abuse is the use of illegal equipment. The NRHA Handbook specifies the following as illegal equipment: (o) use of Bluetooth headsets or electronic communication devices in category 2 & 6 aged events. This rule change will go into effect immediately and will now allow riders to show with Bluetooth devices in all classes except aged event classes.

Non-Approved Reining Changes Reminder

The NRHA Board of Directors has approved the following changes to the policy on judging non-approved reining classes and events:

- (1) NRHA judges who judge unapproved reining classes will be subject to an Investigative Judge Review. The following exceptions exist where judge(s) may judge unapproved reining classes:
 - (a) Unapproved classes with \$1,000 added or less; Unapproved added money may not exceed \$2,500 for the entire event
 - (b) beginner or green classes
 - (c) affiliate level classes that are held concurrent with NRHA approved classes and added money cannot exceed 50% of the added money of the NRHA approved class
 - (d) breed association classes [Jr., Sr., Amateur, and Youth breed classes]
 - (e) National Federation events only when run concurrently with NRHA classes and the added money does not exceed 50% of the added money in the NRHA approved classes that they are run concurrent with.

Conflict of Interest

The NRHA Judges Committee and NRHA Executive Committee continue to have many conversations regarding judging and conflict. This is a reminder that if a judge believes a conflict may exist, the judge should submit a letter requesting approval of an exception. The letter should be submitted to the NRHA office 30-days prior to the event asking for consideration by the NRHA Judges Committee. Consideration will be made on a case-by-case basis, and the judge must submit for approval every time he/she wishes for the consideration to be made. If approved the NRHA will provide a letter of approval to the judge to submit to show management for their approval.

In closing, please let us know if there are any other topics you would like addressed in future newsletters. If there is anything we can help with please give us a call.

“Leaders are made; they are not born. They are made by hard effort, which is the price which all of us must pay to achieve any goal that is worthwhile.” – Vince Lombardi