

SECTION FOUR (4)

JUDGING

70. GENERAL

All rules pertaining to Judging as contained in this Rule Book, and any supplementary rules, will be implemented by the Association.

70.1 Designation as an AQHA Judge is a privilege, not a right, bestowed by the Judging sub-committee, and ratified by the Board of Directors of the Association, according to procedures formulated by the Association, to individuals whose equine expertise and personal character merit the honour. An individual's conduct as a member, exhibitor and judge, and their ability must be exemplary.

The Judging Committee has the right to contact any existing Judge regarding their Judging commitments and/or abilities.

70.2 All AQHA approved Judges must officiate at a minimum of one (1) AQHA approved show or program per show season or otherwise a letter of explanation is required for review by the Judging sub-committee.

70.3 No Affiliate or Organisation, that has gained show approval from the AQHA, can use the same Judge for two (2) consecutive shows.
Exception: *Versatility Ranch Show held prior to "A" or "AA" approved show.*

70.4 After acceptance of a judging commitment, a judge will endeavour, with all reasonable effort, to judge the show, and will timely communicate to show management any inability to do so. If a Judge cannot fulfil their commitment, then it is the responsibility of that Judge, in liaison with the Organisation that has hired them, to find a replacement Judge. Additionally, the judge will immediately file with the Association, a written explanation of such inability to meet the commitment, specifying the date and way they communicated it to show management.

71. DEFINITIONS

- a) An Accredited Judge is defined as a person who has met all the criteria required to hold an accredited judges' ticket as approved by the Judges Committee and can officiate at "A", "AA", State or National Show level;
- b) An Associate Judge is defined as a person who has met all the criteria required to hold an Associate judges' ticket as approved by the Judges Committee and can officiate at "A" level only;
- c) An Accredited Trail Judge is defined as a person who has passed all the criteria as approved by the Judges Committee and can officiate at "A" and "AA" trails only;
- d) *A Versatility Ranch Judge Level 1 is defined by a person who has met the criteria as approved by the Judging Committee and cannot Judge VR cattle classes.*
- e) *A Versatility Ranch Judge Level 2 is defined as a person who has met the criteria as approved by the Judging Committee and can Judge all four (4) VR categories;*
- f) An AmQHA Judge is defined as a person who resides in the USA, and who has passed all the criteria approved by the

AmQHA Judges Committee and can officiate at all level of shows;

- g) An AmQHA International Judge is defined as a person who does not reside in the USA, who has passed all the criteria approved by the AmQHA Judges Committee and can officiate at all level of shows.

72. AGES AND MEMBERSHIP

- a) Applicants must be at least 21 years of age. The mandatory retirement age of AQHA approved judges is 75 years of age. If a Judge wishes to continue judging past the age of 75, they must complete, and pass, an online Applicants Judges Test to continue being an AQHA Judge;
- b) Judging applicants must be a financial AQHA member;
- c) Once a member has gained their Accredited, Associate, Accredited Trail or Versatility Ranch Judge's ticket they must hold a financial full membership in their own right;
- d) Dues for such membership are payable on 1 August each year and are considered delinquent if not paid within 30 days thereafter;
- e) After the delinquent date of 1 September, he or she will be removed from the list of AQHA Judges and will be required to reapply for inclusion to the list of judges under the current procedure for admission of new applicants.

73. OTHER APPROVED JUDGES

Judges, for approved AQHA shows or programs, must be chosen from the AQHA Judges List. All AQHA judges are endorsed to judge Hack classes.

- a) An AmQHA ticketed Judge and an AmQHA International ticketed Judge may also be used to officiate at approved shows or for an approved program and must have an AmQHA Versatility Ranch endorsement to judge Versatility Ranch;
- b) A Judge who holds a current ticket with the EA, Show Horse Council of Australasia Inc, NCHA, NRCHA or NRHA may also be used to Judge their respective disciplines at approved shows or for an approved program.

74. JUDGES CONDUCT

An individual's conduct as a Judge must be exemplary and is subject to continual Committee reviews.

To make formal complaint against an AQHA Judge, such complaint must be in writing, signed by the complainant and contain the specific facts giving rise to the complaint, and be received by the Association within fourteen (14) days from the date of the occurrence.

If the alleged complaint is substantiated then the individual's Judge's ticket may be suspended or removed.

- a) If a Judge is suspended from Association membership, the individual will automatically be removed from the list of Judges and there will be no provision for automatic reinstatement as an AQHA Judge;
- b) Judges having their qualifications withdrawn or downgraded, have one (1) month to fulfil existing commitments;
- c) Upon regaining eligibility for judging credentials, the individual will apply for reinstatement after the expiration

date of one (1) year from the date of their disqualification under the current procedures for admission of new applicants.

75. ONLINE JUDGING PROGRAM (OJP)

The Association has developed an "Online Judging Program".

All current AQHA Judges must complete the online refresher exam on an annual basis from 1 August to 31 October.

75.1 *All AQHA Judges that do not complete the annual refresher course and not providing a reason considered justifiable by the Board, may be downgraded to Associate status or have their judging privileges revoked at the discretion of the Board.*

Judges wishing to upgrade can do so at the same time as their refresher or at any other time during the year.

Applicant Judges must complete the online exam, and can do so at any time.

Both the Applicant Judge and a Judge wishing to upgrade will also be required to complete live horse judging assignments.

75.2 *The OJP consists of two (2) Sections - Theory exam and video judging.*

75.3 *If a Judge fails to complete the test, their Judge's ticket may be revoked or downgraded.*

75.4 *Information regarding the Online Judging Program will be available on the Association's website.*

76. THE EVENT

76.1 A Judge will:

- a) Upon arrival in the city where they are to officiate, contact an official of the show and advise that person of their presence and location;
- b) Not appear on the grounds where the show is being held more than one (1) hour before judging;
- c) Not visit the horse stall area, nor visit with owners, trainers, exhibitors, or owners' representatives, nor inspect or discuss any horse entered in the show before the judging (including the day prior to the show);
- d) Not review the show catalogue until after the judging has been completed, but will be furnished a schedule of classes by the show management prior to the judging;
- e) Be present to meet their responsibilities under Association rules and regulations and will be available to assist show management in meeting its responsibilities of rule compliance;
- f) At all times act in a professional manner.

76.2 Attire

Western attire, including western hat, coat (except in extreme weather conditions), western style pants/jeans, long sleeve shirt with collar (band, stand-up, tuxedo etc), tie or neckwear, and western boots are mandatory apparel for an individual to wear whilst judging an AQHA approved show or program.

76.3 Placing's

- a) Once a class has been judged, it will not be rejudged, and once the Judge has marked their record and placings are made, there will be no changing of the Judge's record;

- b) A Judge can change their judge's card/sheet if there is proper documentation and proof that a clerical error has occurred. Clerical errors must be corrected within a reasonable period, but not more than one (1) hour after the last class of the day;
- c) It is the responsibility of the Judge to ensure, prior to signing their card, that the number of entries, scores and placing's are correct.

76.4 Conflict

AQHA Judges are to be sensitive to any conflict of interest between the Association's objectives and their own personal business or pecuniary interest. Each Judge is to refrain from using their official status to further one's own personal or financial purpose.

When such conflict of interest arises, the Judge is expected to either withdraw the personal objective from the transaction in question or resign from the Association's judges list, so that he or she may pursue the personal objective.

Breach of this ethical rule will be subject to review by the Judges Committee under the Association rules. Certain specific areas of obvious conflict of interest for Judges are as follows:

- a) Neither the judge nor members of their family will exhibit or act as agents, representatives in any capacity, or handlers of a horse at a show at which he/she is officiating;
- b) A horse cannot be shown under a Judge if that Judge has been the owner, trainer or agent in any capacity, or conditioner of that horse within the previous 30 days. Group lessons i.e. clinics, schools and seminars are exempt from the above rule, but not Rule 76.1 c);
- c) A horse cannot be shown under a Judge if that Judge or their immediate family have exhibited that horse in the previous 30 days;
- d) A horse owned by a person(s) cannot be shown under a Judge if that Judge or their immediate family have exhibited the horse owned by that person(s) in the previous 30 days;
- e) A Judge will not judge a horse that is owned by anyone from whom he/she has received a salary, commission or any kind of remuneration for selling or buying any horse for that individual; or, whether or not the horse is concerned in a transaction, has been in any employ or has represented such individual in any capacity for remuneration, within one (1) month from the date of the subject show;
- f) Any AQHA Judge involved in the management of a show cannot officiate as a Judge at that Show;
- g) A Judge cannot judge a horse belonging to, or being exhibited by, any member of their immediate family. (Spouse, Defacto partner, parents, child of the family, grandparents, brothers, sisters). If such a horse as specified in rules 76.4 (a), (b), (c) and (d) is entered in a show, its entry fee will be refunded, and it is not to be exhibited;
- h) These specified areas of disqualifying conflict of interest are not exclusive and Association Judges are ineligible to judge another's horse in other situations not designated by the rule;

- i) If a Judge cannot exercise their objective influence, because of their connection with an owner, exhibitor, or anyone else connected with the horse, or, for that matter, if such connection would appear to others as possible bias, whether or not the Judge feels that they would be affected, a Judge must disqualify themselves;
- j) An AQHA Judge may be exempt to personally exhibit a horse(s) in a class, other than the Trail class, at the same show where they are officiating at as an AQHA Trail Judge. However, all Trail class exhibits must meet the requirements of Rule 76.4;
- k) The Judge at any show may also be on any sifting or elimination committee necessary;
- l) After a Judge has accepted a judging assignment, exhibitors will not contact, by any means, nor attempt to contact, the Judge pertaining to their judging of any horse at that show;
- m) No exhibitor will visit or socialise with a Judge the day prior to, or day of, the show;
- n) No exhibitor will request information from the Judge, or decisions made by that Judge, concerning any exhibit at a show at the time of the show or within the immediate seven (7) days following the show;
- o) A Judge will not conduct a clinic/training seminar the day prior to or day of judging a show/program.

77. FEES

77.1 Minimum pay for an Accredited Judge *and a Versatility Ranch Level 2 Judge* is expenses plus two hundred and fifty dollars (\$250.00) for a day of *eight (8)* hours or less and twenty dollars (\$20.00) per hour over the *eight (8)* hours in one day.

77.2 Minimum pay for an Associate Judge *and a Versatility Ranch Level 1 Judge* is expenses plus one hundred and fifty dollars (\$150.00) for a day of *eight (8)* hours or less and twenty dollars (\$20.00) per hour over the *eight (8)* hours in one day.

It is further recommended that the Judge work no more than ten (10) hours in one day. If the hours spent in judging are expected to run to an excessive length, the show management must consider hiring two (2) Judges.

77.3 Minimum pay for an Accredited Trail Judge is expenses plus one hundred dollars (\$100.00) for a day of *five (5)* hours or less and *twenty dollars (\$20) per hour over the five (5) hours in one day.*

77.4 In Halter classes, the use of more than one (1) Judge is optional, provided however if multiple Judges are used, all halter classes of the one (1) sex division must be judged by the same Judge.

77.5 In a Trail class, the use of more than one (1) Judge is optional. In all other performance classes, only one (1) Judge can be used. (Exception multi judged AQHA approved shows).

78. AUTHORITY

78.1 A Judge may:

- a) Disqualify a competitor who has not fulfilled the requirements of a class as described by the Associations Rules and Regulations;
- b) Require the backing of the finalists only in a class where backing is required.

78.2 A Judge will:

- a) Order any person or horse from the competition for bad conduct of one or both or may disqualify any exhibitor for excessive abuse of a horse;
- b) Refuse entry into the arena or remove an entry from a class for improper attire and/or equipment;
- c) Eliminate any horse/exhibitor, as an entry, which they feel is in violation of the intent of the Association's conduct rules, or which they feel has not legitimately attempted to exhibit the horse to the best of the horse's ability;
- d) Penalise a horse for excessive or exaggerated switching or wringing of the tail;
- e) Not penalise a horse for the way it carries its tail nor for normal response with its tail to cues from its rider or when changing leads;
NB: If a Judge suspects that a horses' tail has been surgically or chemically altered or has had any item or appliance that restricts the movement or circulation of the tail, then the Judge must report this horse to the Association. A Judges suspicion is not cause for the Judge not to place the horse;
- f) Not call exhibitors off the rail at any gait other than a walk in rail classes;
- g) Have the authority to require the removal or alteration of any piece of equipment, or any piece of apparel, which in their opinion is unsafe and would tend to give a horse an unfair advantage or which they believe to be inhumane;
- h) Disqualify a horse that is exhibited with an open wound and/or shows traces of blood;
- i) Disqualify a horse whose mouth is tied or fastened in a performance class;
- j) Disqualify a horse who has a bleeding mouth in a performance class;
- k) Disqualify a horse if the horse appears sullen, dull, lethargic, emaciated, drawn or overly tired;
- l) Have the authority to place a horse in whatever position in a class they think is justified by the merits of the horse. The Judge's decision is final.

