

SECTION FOUR (4) JUDGING

70. GENERAL

All rules pertaining to Judges 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 his/her 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 subcommittee.

70.3 No Affiliate or organisation, that has gained show approval from the AQHA, can use the same Judge for two (2) shows in a row.

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, as to allow show management maximum time in which to seek a suitable replacement.

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 manner in which 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" or 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 of the criteria as approved by the Judges Committee and can officiate at "A" and "AA" trails only;

d) An AmQHA Judge is defined as a person who resides in the USA, and who has passed all of the criteria approved by the AmQHA Judges Committee and can officiate at all level of shows;

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

f) Associate and Accredited AQHA Judges will be recognised as having a Ranch Versatility judging ticket until 1 August 2019.

72. AGES AND MEMBERSHIP

- a) Applicants must be at least twenty one (21) years of age. The mandatory retirement age of AQHA approved judges is seventy five (75) years of age. If a Judge wishes to continue judging past the age of 75 years, they must attend their next refresher Seminar and pass the Applicants Test to continue being an AQHA Judge;
- b) Judging applicants must be a financial AQHA member;
- c) Once you have gained your Accredited, Associate, Accredited Trail or Ranch Versatility Judges ticket you must hold a financial full membership in their own right;
- d) Dues for such membership are payable on 1st August each year and are considered delinquent if not paid within thirty (30) days thereafter;
- e) After the delinquent date of 1st 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 Ranch Versatility endorsement to judge Ranch Versatility;
- 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 individuals Judges ticket may be suspended or removed.

- a) If a Judge is suspended from Association membership, the individual will be removed automatically 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 his/her disqualification under the current procedures for admission of new applicants.

75. SEMINARS

The Association will conduct Judging Seminars at a frequency to satisfy Rule 75.1 to 75.3.

All AQHA Judges enrolled in Seminars must complete the appropriate criteria and standard as provided.

75.1 Accredited Judges and Ranch Versatility Judges not attending their compulsory seminar, once every three (3) years, and not providing a reason considered justifiable by the Board, will be downgraded to Associate status.

75.2 If an AmQHA Judging Seminar is attended by an AusQHA Judge/s then the requirement for attendance at any AusQHA Judging Seminar held in the same year is optional. They then must attend the next scheduled Seminar and pass requirements or lose all judging privileges.

75.3 Associate Judges, Accredited Trail Judges and Ranch Versatility Judges not attending their compulsory seminar (once every three (3) years) will have their judge's privileges withdrawn until they attend the next scheduled seminar and pass requirements.

An Associate Judge may attempt to upgrade to accredited status at his/her discretion.

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 his/her record and places for awards 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 of time, 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 his/her 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 his or her 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 his/her 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 thirty (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 thirty (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 thirty (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 his/her 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 his/her objective influence, because of his/her 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 he/she would be affected, a judge must disqualify himself/herself;

- j)** Exemption may be given to AQHA Judges judging Trail classes, to personally exhibit a horse(s) in a class other than the Trail class at the same show that they are officiating 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 his/her 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 is expenses plus two hundred & fifty dollars (\$250.00) for a day of nine (9) hours or less and twenty dollars (\$20.00) per hour over the nine (9) hours in one day.

77.2 Minimum pay for an Associate Judge is expenses plus one hundred & fifty dollars (\$150.00) for a day of nine (9) hours or less and twenty dollars (\$20.00) per hour over the nine (9) 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 should 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 nine (9) hours or less.

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)

The AQHA has an approved Bit Gauge which must be used by an official at approved shows and for approved programs.

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 he/she feels is in violation of the intent of the Association's conduct rules, or which he/she feels 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 manner in which 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.