

## **In-Hand Class**

The class will be judged on the performance of the horse over obstacles, with emphasis on manners and way of going. Credit will be given to horses negotiating the obstacles with style, without hesitancy and willingly responding to the handler's cues. Horses shall be penalized for any unnecessary delay while approaching the obstacles. Judges should consider the overall appearance of the horse, conditioning and grooming, and the equipment (dirty, ill-fitting equipment should be penalized) in their overall scores. Also to be considered is the correctness of the horse while being led. Drifting to the side, leading or stopping crooked, failure to maintain a pivot foot in a turn, leading or turning sluggishly should be considered and evaluated in the horse's maneuver scores and reflected in his overall score.

### **Class Routine**

Horse is to be led through the course with the exhibitor on the horse's left side. The exhibitor should be positioned between the eye and the midpoint of the neck. The exhibitor may change sides to negotiate obstacles.

### **Scoring**

1. Scoring will be on the basis of 0-infinity, with 70 denoting an average performance. Each obstacle will receive an obstacle score that should be added or subtracted from 70 and is subject to a penalty that should be subtracted. Each obstacle will be scored on the following basis, ranging from plus 1. to minus 1.: -1. extremely poor, -1 very poor, -. poor, 0 correct, +. good, +1 very good, +1. excellent. Obstacle scores are to be determined and assessed independently of penalty points. Penalties should be assessed per occurrence as follows:

#### **2. Penalties:**

##### **a. ½ Point**

- Each tick of log, pole, cone, plant or obstacle

##### **b. 1 Point**

- Each hit, bite or stepping on a log, pole, plant or any component of obstacle
- Incorrect or break of gait at walk or jog for two strides or less
- Both front or hind feet in a single-strided slot or space.
- Skipping over or failing to step into required space

##### **c. 3 Points**

- Incorrect or break of gait at walk or jog for more than 2 strides
- Knocking down an elevated pole, cone, barrel, plant or obstacle, or severely disturbing an obstacle unless caused by the tail
- Horse stepping outside the confines of, falling or jumping off or out of an obstacle with one foot once the foot has entered an obstacle; including missing one element of an obstacle on a line of travel with one foot. Handler may travel/stand inside or outside of the obstacle, as needed.

d. 5 Points

- Dropping slicker or object required to be carried on course
- First or second cumulative refusal, balk, or evading an obstacle by shying or backing
- Letting go of gate or dropping rope gate
- Use of either hand to instill fear or praise (slight touching or tapping with one hand to cue horse in a sidepass or pivot maneuver is acceptable)
- Horse stepping outside the confines of, falling or jumping off or out of an obstacle with more than one foot once the foot has entered an obstacle; including missing one element of an obstacle on a line of travel with more than one foot. Handler may travel/stand inside or outside of the obstacle, as needed.
- Blatant disobedience (including biting, kicking out, bucking, rearing, striking or continuously circling exhibitor)

e. Disqualification (handler / horse will still receive score but will place below other entries)

- Loss of control of horse that endangers exhibitor, other horses or judge
- Fall of horse or handler
- Failure to display correct number
- Willful abuse
- Excessive schooling or training; use of artificial aids
- Illegal equipment

f. Off Pattern; including: performing the obstacles other than in specified order, no attempt to perform an obstacle, third cumulative refusal, wrong side of cone or marker, never performing designated gait; over or under turning more than ½ turn, must place below exhibitors who complete pattern correctly.

## Obstacle Requirements

Course will include a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 8 obstacles. Below are examples of potential obstacles:

- Lead over at least four logs or poles. These can be in a straight line, curved, zigzag, or raised and may be at a walk or trot.
- Box (poles or logs). Lead into the box. While all four feet are confined in the box, make a 360 degree or less turn and lead out. Handler may remain inside or outside the box.
- Gate.
- Back through.
- Carrying Object.
- Mailbox. Remove and/or replace items.
- Serpentine.
- Jog-through. Shall consist of poles L, double L, V, U or similar shaped obstacle. Handler may be inside or outside the jog-through.