

## **HALTER CLASSES**

**(a)** A halter class is defined as a class where the horse is judged based upon its conformation.

**(b)** The purpose of the class is to preserve American Quarter Horse type by selecting well-mannered individuals in the order of their resemblance to the breed ideal and that are the most positive combination of balance, structural correctness, and movement with appropriate breed and sex characteristics and adequate muscling.

**(c)** The ideal American Quarter Horse shown at halter is a horse that is generally considered to be solid in color and possesses the following characteristics: the horse should possess eye appeal that is the result of a harmonious blending of an attractive head; refined throat latch; well-proportioned, trim neck; long, sloping shoulder; deep heart girth; short back; strong loin and coupling; long hip and croup; and well-defined and muscular stifle, gaskin, forearm and chest. All stallions 2 years old and over shall have two visible testicles. These characteristics should be coupled with straight and structurally correct legs and feet that are free of blemishes. The horse should be a balanced athlete that is muscled uniformly throughout.

**(1)** All horses whose registration certificates are marked with a Parrot Mouth notation (see Rule 205(a)), cryptorchid notations (see Rule 205(b)) or excessive white notation (see Rule 205(d)) are ineligible to compete in halter classes.

**(2)** One of the most important criteria in selecting a horse is conformation, or its physical appearance. While it could be assumed that most horses with several years' seasoning and past performance have acceptable conformation, the goal in selection should always be to find the best conformed horse possible.

**(3)** Rating conformation depends upon objective evaluation of the following four traits: balance, structural correctness, breed and sex characteristics, and degree of muscling. Of the four, balance is the single most important, and refers to the structural and aesthetic blending of body parts. Balance is influenced almost entirely by skeletal structure.

### **(d) HALTER EQUIPMENT**

**(1)** Lip chains: The following horses may not be shown with any chain through the mouth including but not limited to lip chains:

**(A)** Mares

**(B)** Geldings

**(C)** Weanling stallions

**(D)** Performance Halter stallions, mares or geldings

**(2)** Stallions 1 year of age and older may not be shown with any chain through the mouth with the sole exception that they may be shown with lip chains with unsecured keepers so long as at least two links of the chain remain outside of halter before attachment of keeper or leather part of lead shank.

### **(e) PROCEDURE FOR JUDGING THE CLASS:**

**(1)** Horses will walk to the judge one at a time. As the horse approaches, the judge will step to the right (left of the horse)

to enable the horse to trot straight to a cone placed 50 feet (15 meters) away. At the cone, the horse will continue trotting, turn to the left and trot toward the left wall or fence of the arena. After trotting, horses will be lined up head to tail for individual inspection by the judge. The judge shall inspect each horse from both sides, front and rear.

**(A)** Any horse that becomes detached from its handler and is no longer under control by the handler will automatically be disqualified and excused. If the initial horse exhibiting poor mannerisms (i.e. rearing, backing or falling into others, etc.) causes other exhibitor(s) to lose their horse(s), only the initiating horse will be disqualified and excused. The decision of the judge(s) will be final.

**(B)** The fall of a horse being judged in halter shall be cause for disqualification. A horse is considered having fallen when he or she is on their side with all four feet extended in the same direction.

**(2)** All lame horses should be excused from the ring prior to final placing by the judge. All stallions 2 years old and over shall be examined to confirm that they have two visible testicles. All mares and stallions shall be examined for Parrot Mouth (see Rule 205 (a)). If examination reveals that a horse has Parrot Mouth or is cryptorchid, such horse should be excused from the ring prior to final placing by the judge regardless of whether the Parrot Mouth or cryptorchid condition is marked on the horse's registration certificate. The judge should line the horses to be placed in a head to tail order according to preference.

**(f)** A horse may be exhibited in only one point-earning open halter class.

**(g)** In no individual halter classes may horses from two sex divisions be exhibited in the same class.

**(h)** Spayed mares cannot be shown in any halter class.

**(i)** The following open halter classes are recommended with separate classes for each sex in each age division:

Weanling:

1) fillies 2) colts 3) geldings

Yearling:

1) fillies 2) colts 3) geldings

2-year-old:

1) fillies 2) colts 3) geldings

3-year-old:

1) fillies 2) stallions 3) geldings

4-year-old and older:

1) mares 2) stallions 3) geldings

**Broodmares:** Mares that have produced and carried a full-term foal in the current year or the previous year. Mares may be any age. Mares shown in the broodmare class are not eligible to compete in any filly or mare class listed above, nor is any mare shown in any filly or mare class listed above eligible to compete in a broodmare class.

## **(j) PERFORMANCE HALTER**

**(1)** The performance halter class is required in the Open, Amateur and Youth divisions when halter classes are offered. Only an all-age class will be held. Separate classes will be held for stallions, mares and geldings in the Open and Amateur divisions. Separate classes will be held for mares and geldings in the Youth division.

**(2)** First and second place in the performance halter class will be eligible for Grand and Reserve in each sex division. The number of entries in the performance halter class count toward the total for each sex division in determining points for Grand and Reserve.

**(3)** To be eligible to compete in the performance halter class, a Register of Merit in performance or racing must be earned 141 and recorded on the horse's record. A racing Register of Merit only applies to the Open division. Proof of Register of Merit must be provided to show management. A performance Register of Merit must be earned in the division in which it is to compete, (for example: if a horse competes in the Amateur division, the performance Register of Merit must have been earned in the Amateur division).

**(4)** The Register of Merit applies to the horse. If the horse is transferred, the horse is eligible to compete with the new owner if the performance Register of Merit was earned in that particular division.

**(5)** A horse may not show in the age division halter class and the performance halter class at the same show in a particular division.

**(k)** When judging of all classes in a halter division has been completed, all first and second-place class winners of that sex division shall return to the ring, with first-place class winners in one line and second-place horses from each class in another line.

**(1)** It is mandatory that the judge select a Grand Champion and Reserve Champion in each sex division in open, youth and amateur divisions having three or more entries.

**(2)** The judge(s) shall select the Grand Champion stallion, mare or gelding from the first-place class winners in the respective sex division. If the first-place horse does not return for any reason, the second-place horse will move up to the first-place line and be considered for Grand and Reserve. The third-place horse cannot move up to second place in the class. All first-place horses will retain points in their respective class.

**(3)** The ring steward shall take the second-place horse in the class from which the Grand Champion had been selected and place it in the line with the first-place class winners, to be judged equally for the title of Reserve Champion stallion, mare or gelding in the respective sex division.

**(l)** In amateur halter or youth competition, when an exhibitor has qualified two or more horses for Grand and Reserve Champion, only another amateur or youth may assist that exhibitor as long as the amateur or youth who originally qualified the horses leads one of the horses in that class. An amateur cannot lead a non-owned horse in the open division for Grand and/or Reserve Champion. The amateur would be considered in violation of AQHA Rule 403(a)(5).

**(m)** In addition to the requirements of rules 415 and 416, AQHA

will so note the awarding of the title of Grand Champion and Reserve Champion Stallion, Mare and Gelding on the performance record only when at least three horses are exhibited in that sex division.

#### **449. GROUP HALTER CLASSES**

**(a)** Horses shown in a group class must be eligible to show in their individual halter class at that show.

**(b)** The following additional classes are recommended if interest or entries justify them, but no points will be awarded for Register of Merit or Championship.

**(1)** Produce of Dam. Two produce, 4 years old and younger of either sex, per dam, may be shown. The dam need not be shown. The entry at the show must be made by the owner of the dam or by someone with written permission from the owner of the dam, but it is unnecessary for the produce to be owned by the owner of the dam.

**(2)** Get of Sire. Three get, 4 years old and younger of either sex, per sire, may be shown. The sire need not be shown. The entry at the show must be made by the owner of the sire or by someone with written permission from the owner of the sire, but it is unnecessary for the get to be owned by the owner of the sire.