



Continuing Education Program for AHA Licensed Officials

Cow Horse Classes

12/1/19

INTRODUCTION

- While some AHA Judges and Stewards are familiar with cow horse classes, most do not get the chance to work them often enough to gain valuable experience. This module is an overview of the various types of cow horse classes in Arabian shows today and will help you gain the confidence needed to work a show with cow horse classes.



- At Arabian shows, there are three divisions of cow horse classes: Working Cow Horse, Reined Cow Horse and Cutting.
- Scoring for each division ranges from 60-80 points.



COW HORSE CLASSES

- In addition to the USEF Rule Book, AR Rules refer to the AHA Handbook, National Reined Cow Horse Association and the National Cutting Horse Association rules for specific sections.



WORKING COW HORSE

- Working Cow Horse classes consist of one phase.
- One cow is released into the arena and the rider has to complete a series of maneuvers, showing control of the COW.
- There is no pattern.



WORKING COW HORSE



- There is no time limit, other than the “new cow rule”.
- The judge will blow a whistle to signify they have seen enough work.
- Time is usually kept by the announcer.
- The judge will have a scribe.



WORKING COW HORSE MANUEVERS

The maneuvers include:

- *boxing* (keeping the cow at one end of the arena),
- *turning* on the fence (running the cow down the arena fence and turning him back the other way) and
- *circling* (maneuvering the cow smoothly at least 360 degrees in each direction without using the fence).



WORKING COW HORSE NEW COW RULE

- In Arabian Working Cow Horse time is kept, starting when the gate closes behind the cow.
- At any time within the first 20 seconds, a rider may call for a new cow. They may only do so once.
- At 20 seconds the announcement is made, “your cow”, and the rider must continue working that animal.



WORKING COW HORSE

- Arabian Working Cow Horse classes refer to AR209 and AR144 for Appointments, AR105.6 for inhumane treatment and stress and AR210 for scoring classes with more than one go round and breaking ties.

AR209 Appointments

1. For rules regarding correct Western appointments, refer to AR144 Horses entered in Junior Horse classes must be shown in a snaffle bit or hackamore (See AR144).
2. A Reining, Reined Cow Horse, or Working Cow Horse, Junior Horse that has been shown in a Western event in a bridle may compete in a Junior Horse Reining, Reined Cow Horse, or Working Cow Horse, class wearing a hackamore or snaffle.
3. Boots and/or bandages are permitted in Ranch Horse Riding, Reining, Reined Cow Horse, Working Cow and Cutting classes (See AR106.14).

AR210 General Scoring

1. It is mandatory that judges use the prescribed AHA score sheet for Reining, Working Cow, Reined Cow Horse, **Ranch Riding**, and Trail classes and it is mandatory that the score sheet (or a copy) be posted immediately after each class. Score sheets may be obtained by writing: AHA, 10805 E. Bethany Drive, Aurora, CO 80014 or score sheets may be downloaded at www.arabianhorse.org



WORKING COW HORSE

However, for the following class conditions refer to the NRCHA rule book:

- Chapter 6, Broken Equipment
- Chapter 15, Self Adjusted Monitor System
- Chapter 18, Scoring
- Chapter 19, Judging
- Chapter 22, Judges Score Sheet



REINED COW HORSE



- Reined Working Cow Horse classes are two phase classes.
- The first phase is the pattern, also called the “dry work”. Patterns are in the NRCHA rule book. They are similar to reining patterns, but slightly shorter.



REINED COW HORSE



- The second phase is the cow work.
- At the completion of the dry work, a cow will be released into the arena. There is no timing involved.
- The judge will blow a whistle when they have seen enough work. The maneuvers are the same as in Working Cow Horse.



LIMITED REINED COW HORSE CLASSES

- Within the Reined Working Cow Horse classes are Limited Reined Cow Horse Classes, also called “boxing classes”.
- There is often much confusion with the Limited classes.
- Limited Reined Cow Horse classes are an entry level introduction to Working Cow Horse classes.



LIMITED REINED COW HORSE CLASSES

- They are open to amateurs and juniors and are limited to riders who have not shown “down the fence” in any judged classes or events more than three times.
- This includes being entered in a class that includes fence work, whether or not the rider actually ran down the fence.
- So if a rider has competed in Working Cow Horse or Reined Cow Horse classes more than three times, they are ineligible to compete in Limited Reined Cow Horse.



LIMITED REINED COW HORSE CLASSES

- In Limited Reined Cow Horse the rider begins with dry work.
- At the conclusion of their pattern, a cow is released into the arena. Timing begins when the gate closes behind the COW.



LIMITED REINED COW HORSE CLASSES



- For fifty seconds the rider boxes the cow, holding him at the end of the arena.
- At the end of 50 seconds “time” is called.
- Time is kept by the announcer.



LIMITED REINED COW HORSE CLASSES

- Both Reined Cow Horse and Limited Reined Cow Horse classes will score each entry twice, once for dry work, once for herd (cow) work.



REINED AND LIMITED REINED COW HORSE SCORING

- As with Working Cow Horse classes, Reined and Limited Reined Cow Horse classes refer to AR209 and AR144 for Appointments, AR105.6 for inhumane treatment and stress and AR210 for scoring classes with more than one go round and breaking ties.

AR209 Appointments

1. For rules regarding correct Western appointments, refer to AR144 Horses entered in Junior Horse classes must be shown in a snaffle bit or hackamore (See AR144).
2. A Reining, Reined Cow Horse, or Working Cow Horse, Junior Horse that has been shown in a Western event in a bridle may compete in a Junior Horse Reining, Reined Cow Horse, or Working Cow Horse, class wearing a hackamore or snaffle.
3. Boots and/or bandages are permitted in Ranch Horse Riding, Reining, Reined Cow Horse, Working Cow and Cutting classes (See AR106.14).

AR210 General Scoring

1. It is mandatory that judges use the prescribed AHA score sheet for Reining, Working Cow, Reined Cow Horse, **Ranch Riding**, and Trail classes and it is mandatory that the score sheet (or a copy) be posted immediately after each class. Score sheets may be obtained by writing: AHA, 10805 E. Bethany Drive, Aurora, CO 80014 or score sheets may be downloaded at www.arabianhorse.com



REINED AND LIMITED REINED COW HORSE SCORING

Refer to the NRCHA Rule Book following chapters for Reined Working Cow Horse Classes:

- Chapter 6, Broken Equipment
- Chapter 15, Self Adjusted Monitor System
- Chapter 18, Scoring
- Chapter 19, Judging
- Chapter 20, Patterns
- Chapter 21, Pattern Description
- Chapter 22, Judges Score Sheets



NEW COW RULES FOR ALL COW CLASSES



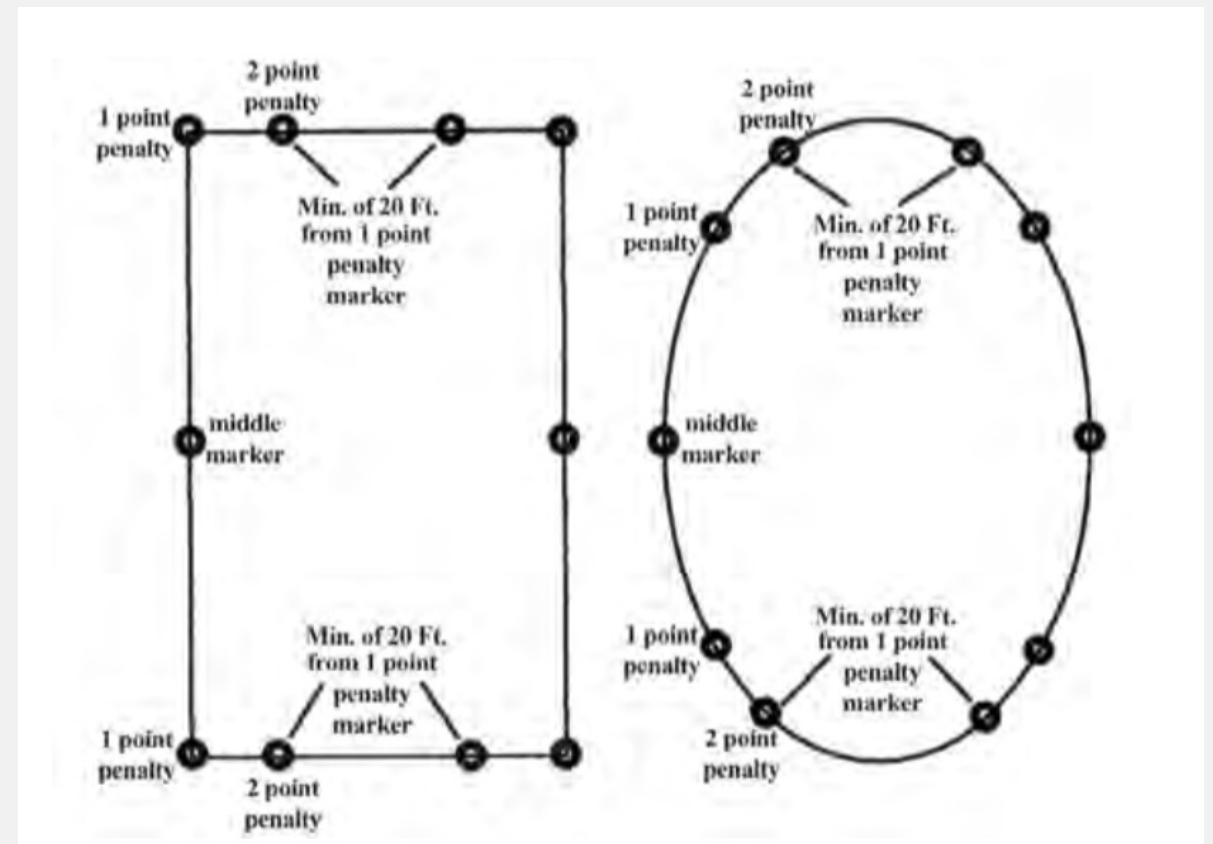
- The exhibitor may only call for a new cow in Working Cow Horse classes, and only once, within 20 seconds.
- The judge, however, may call for new cows at any time in Working Cow Horse, Reined Cow Horse and Limited Reined Cow Horse classes.



ARENA MARKERS FOR WORKING AND REINED COW HORSE CLASSES

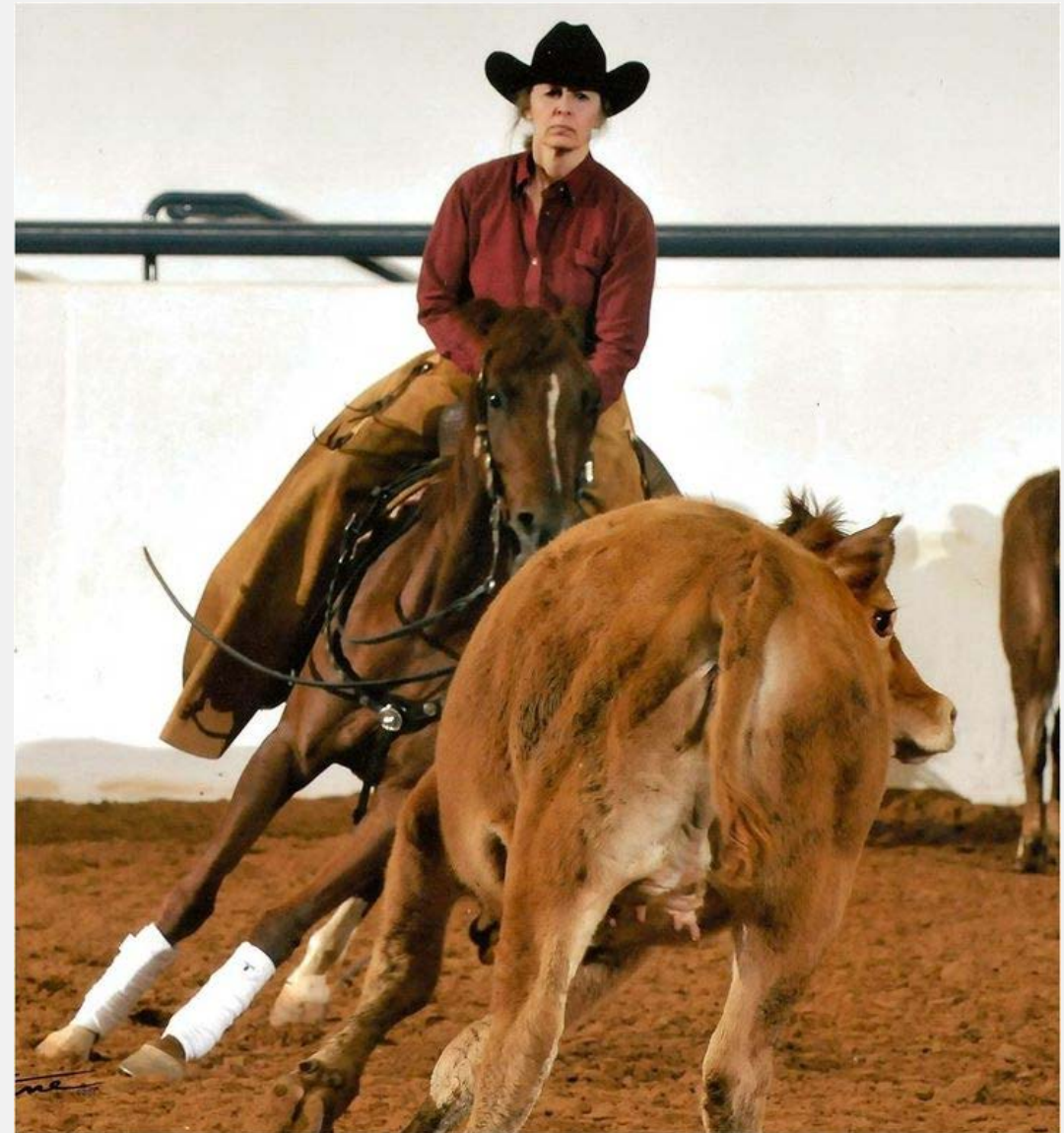
Markers are mandatory.

- They shall be placed on the wall or fence on both sides of the arena, to the approval of the judge.
- Red tape is commonly used.
- Locations for markers are in the NRCHA Rulebook, Chapter 20.



CUTTING

- All Arabian Cutting classes are judged in accordance with the NCHA Rulebook per AHA Comp. 807
- For Cutting regulations also see AHA Comp. 204



CUTTING

- The NCHA Handbook is an extremely helpful guide.
- There are detailed directions on how to put on a Cutting, as well as many pages with examples of penalties and rulings.
- These can be helpful for Stewards if an exhibitor has a question or issue with the judging.

(D) moves into the Cutter's horse and tries to return to the herd.
RULING: In (A), (B) and (C) no penalty. In (D) assess a three (3) point penalty.

EXAMPLE 6: The Cutter is working a cow that takes him deep to the left side of the arena. The cow turns into the Cutter's horse; the Cutter:

(A) quits the cow in the turn

(B) waits to quit until the cow is turned away

RULING: In (A) assess three (3) point penalty. In (B), no penalty.

NOTE: Under normal circumstances, when a cow takes a Cutter deep to either side of the arena and the cow turns into his horse, a hot quit will be called; however, if the Cutter waits until the cow has traveled a sufficient distance to clearly show the judge the animal is moving away from his horse, a hot quit will not be charged.

EXAMPLE 7: The Cutter is working a cow that is traveling parallel across the arena and moving into the arena wall. As the cow approaches the wall, it slows to a walk and stops momentarily at the wall. The Cutter quits the cow as:

(A) the cow stops on the wall

(B) the cow turns away on the wall

(C) the cow stops on the wall, then slowly turns toward the Cutter

(D) the cow turns into the Cutter at a fast pace.

RULING: In (A) and (B), no penalty. In (C) and (D), assess a three (3) point penalty.

NOTE: The judge shall consider that a Cutter has quit a cow when he picks up on his reins or places his free hand on his horse's neck, whether the horse stops instantly or not.

EXAMPLE 8: The Cutter is working a cow that falls to the ground. The Cutter quits the cow:

(A) while the cow is lying on the ground

(B) after the cow has fallen and is returning to its feet

(C) after the cow has returned to its feet and is moving into the horse.

RULING: In (A) and (B), no penalty. In (C), assess a three (3) point penalty.

EXAMPLE 9: While working a tough cow, the Cutter picks up his reins to signify that he is quitting the cow. In the judge's opinion the cow was turned away when the Cutter picked up his horse; but by the time the horse actually stopped, the cow had turned back toward the Cutter.

RULING: No penalty.

EXAMPLE 10: The cow being worked stops, and the Cutter's horse stops. Both cow and horse are completely still. The Cutter picks up his horse so that it is reasonable to assume that he intends



CUTTING

- Cutting has a judge and an announcer who can also serve as the secretary/scorekeeper/timer.
- Each horse has 2-1/2 minutes to work. At the end of that period, “time” is called and the judge issues a score.



HERD WORK



- Herd Work is similar to Cutting, except that guiding the horse is not penalized.
- Herd Work has become more popular because it draws horses who compete in Working Cow Horse as well as those who compete in Cutting classes.



HERD WORK



- There are no rules in USEF Arabian rules regarding Herd Work.
- Rules are found in NRCHA Section 19
- Herd Work is timed the same as Cutting, 2-1/2 minutes.



ARENA MARKERS FOR CUTTING & HERD WORK CLASSES

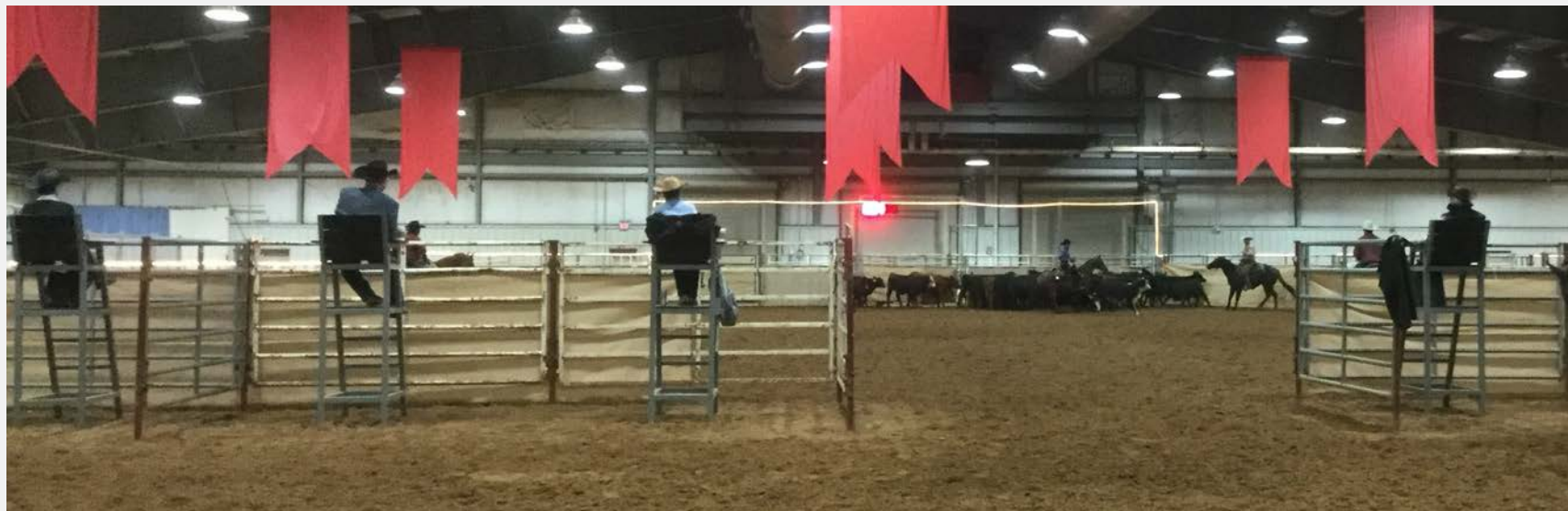
Markers are mandatory and red tape is commonly used.

- The back fence should be clearly marked.
- A time line should be marked. The rider's time starts when they cross the line.
- The judge will direct where to place the markers.



WHO CAN JUDGE

- Working Cow Horse, Reined Working Cow Horse and Herd Work must be judged by either a USEF/EC judge licensed in the Western division or by an NRCHA licensed judge.
- Cutting must be judged by either an NCHA carded judge or AHA Judges and Stewards approved judge (see AHA Comp. 501.3)



SETTLING THE HERD

- Prior to starting either Cutting or Herd Work, the group of cattle being used will be allowed into the arena for several minutes, to get used to their surroundings.
- This is called “settling”.



TURNBACKS AND HERD HELPERS

- Four mounted helpers assist during each run.
- Two turnback riders keep the cow from running away from the cutting horse
- Two herd helpers keep the herd of cattle quiet and together behind the cutting horse while it cuts.



TURNBACKS AND HERD HELPERS



CENTER RINGS

- Some Arabian shows have center rings, where the announcer, scorer, judges and other staff are seated.
- Be aware of all ring configurations when cow horse classes are held. Cows don't play by the rules!



CENTER RINGS

- These pictures were taken at a Regional Championship show several years ago.
- The announcer and center ring staff stayed remarkably calm.



THE ROLE OF THE STEWARD IN COW HORSE CLASSES

- The steward checks bridles in both Working Cow and Reined & Limited Reined Cow Horse classes.
- Prior to starting classes, the steward should confer with the judge and discuss how to handle a blood or equipment issue.
- If there is a blood or equipment issue, the steward should notify the announcer to hold the score on that entry.
- As soon as possible, the steward needs to meet with the judge regarding the issue.



THE ROLE OF THE STEWARD IN COW HORSE CLASSES

- The rider must be dismounted for a bridle check and the bridle dropped. Both bits and hackamores must be removed for inspection.
- The steward will also walk around the horse to ascertain whether there is blood on the animal.



THE ROLE OF THE STEWARD IN COW HORSE CLASSES

- If you have an equipment or blood issue, have the horse remain with you until you have spoken with the judge.
- The rider may leave if necessary but a representative does need to stay with the horse.
- The blood may well be gone by the time the judge becomes aware, so having a picture is imperative.
- The judge has the authority to disqualify the entrant.



THE ROLE OF THE STEWARD IN COW HORSE CLASSES

In Working Cow and Reined & Limited Reined Cow Horse classes there is a penalty for either a bloody mouth or for illegal equipment.

- NOTE: in the NRCHA rulebook the penalty for a bloody mouth would be a score of zero. But the Arabian division rule overrides and the score for a bloody mouth would be a no score, not a zero.
- Some open judges might not be aware of that discrepancy.

In Cutting, it is the judge's option to check equipment.



THE ROLE OF THE STEWARD IN COW HORSE CLASSES

- You also need to look over the herd of cattle which will be used for the classes.
- Cattle should be fairly uniform in size.
- If any of the cattle appear unhealthy, or seem to have eye or other vision issues, the manager should be notified.



COW HORSE CLASSES

- We hope this presentation has answered some of your questions about cow horse classes. The cow arena is a great place to steward as there is a lot of camaraderie among the exhibitors.



THE ARABIAN HORSE ASSOCIATION

10805 East Bethany Drive | Aurora, Colorado 80014

(303) 696-4584

ArabicHorses.org

