



Top Hand Collegiate Ranch Competition
October 2, 2021
Will Rogers Memorial Center – Watt Arena

Co-Hosted by American Paint Horse Association and Stock Horse of Texas

General Rules

- This contest is open to properly accredited two- and four-year colleges and universities in the United States and Canada.
- Any college undergraduate student representing their institution, who is in attendance as a full-time undergraduate student in the institution may participate.
- There is no limit to the number of teams and/or individuals entered by any institution.
- Teams are to consist of four members. Every contestant will compete for individual awards.
- Students are not required to be on a team. An individual student can compete for individual awards.
- Each horse and/or rider may only enter once in each class.
- Horses may be any breed and must be at least 3 years of age or older. Horses do not have to be owned/leased by the student to be eligible.
- Team awards will be calculated on the highest ranking of all four members in all four classes accumulatively.
- Individual awards will be calculated on both a per class basis, and accumulatively on the rankings in all four events.
- Points in each class in each division are calculated on the total number of collegiate teams represented, not on the number of collegiate individual entries.
 - Example: With 4 teams represented with 4 riders on each team, there would be 16 point riders in each class. The highest points a team rider can earn in each class is 16. The points would be awarded 16 down to 1. If a rider does not enter one of the classes, there will still be 16 points to be earned in each class.
 - Incomplete teams with at least 3 members shall be eligible for team awards if their team totals exceed those of teams having complete teams.
 - In the event of a tie between teams, the tie will be broken on the basis of most points won in the ranch roping class.

Attire

Required attire includes a long-sleeved western shirt with collar or western motif, a western hat and western boots. Shirt sleeves must be rolled down and buttoned or snapped. Shirt tails must be tucked in. A helmet may be worn at the rider's discretion. Any rider not wearing required attire will receive a no time or DQ.

Equipment

- No hoof polish.
- No braided or banded manes and no artificial hair extensions.
- Trimming inside ears is discouraged.
- Trimming bridle path is allowed, also trimming of fetlocks or excessive (long) facial hair.
- Equipment with silver should not count over a good working outfit. Silver on bridles and saddles is discouraged.
- Competitors may use a breast collar and rear cinch.
- Horses, of all ages, may be shown in a snaffle, bosal, or curb bit. When a bit is used, the mouthpiece must be at least 5/16" and not more than 3/4" in diameter measured one inch from cheek and must be smooth. Nothing may protrude below the mouthpiece such as extensions or prongs. A standard western curb bit must not be longer than 8 ½ inches measured on the outside length from the top bridle attachment to the rein attachment. The port must not be higher than 3 ½ inches with rollers and covers acceptable. Broken mouthpieces, half breeds and spades are standard. Split reins shall be used with all bits except that a romal is acceptable with a curb bit. Closed reins are not allowed except as standard romal reins or standard mecate reins which include a tie rope with snaffle bit or bosal. Curb straps are required for curb bits and the curb chains or straps must be at least ½ inch in width and must lie flat against the horse's chin.
- Romal reins are allowed in all Ranch Horse classes. When riding with a romal, a get down rope may be used. A get down rope is defined as a small rope tied around the neck of the horse with a bowline or other non-slip knot and run back to the rider or tied to the saddle. The get down will be used to lead, ground tie, or tie the horse.
- The use of two-rein equipment is allowed in all Ranch Classes. All rules for two-rein will follow hackamore and bridle requirements.
- No wire curbs are permitted, regardless of the amount of padding or tape. Absolutely no iron will be permitted under the jaws. Prohibited equipment includes tie downs, cavessons, gag bits, mechanical hackamores and running martingales.

EVENTS

RWC Ranch Roping (Timed)

A minimum of 10 numbered cattle will be placed in the pen, and 5 or more unnumbered. Two cows with each number must be used in the herd. The rider will have the option to rope either cow of the number called. When the rider enters the pen, a number will be called. Time will start when the number is called and will end when the hondo breaks on the cow.

Details:

- The rider must carry a breakaway hondo rope.
- The rider then has 90 seconds to rope the cow with designated number.
- Only a walk, trot, extended trot, pace, single foot, or running walk will be permitted.
- Rider may throw as many loops as time permits.

Penalties:

- Loping, cantering, galloping or racking +10 second penalty.
- Breaking the hondo on wrong cow is a no time.

RWC Ranch Penning (Timed)

A minimum of 10 numbered cattle will be placed in the pen, and 5 or more unnumbered. Two cows with each number must be used in the herd. The rider will have the option to work either cow of the number called. As the rider walks into the pen, one number will be called. The rider must separate that cow from the herd and push them into the catch pen on the opposite side of where the herd is held. Rider is allowed up to two additional head in the pen when the gate shuts, which is a total of 3 head. Rider will receive a 5 second time deduction if only the one correct numbered cow is in the pen when gate is shut. Time starts when the number is called. When the rider has closed the gate on the catch pen, time will stop.

Details:

- Maximum of 90 seconds are allowed.
- Only a walk, trot, extended trot, pace, single foot, or running walk will be permitted.
- Shutting the gate without the correct numbered cow in the catch pen is a no time.

Penalties:

- Loping, cantering, galloping or racking +10 second penalty each occurrence.
- Not shutting the gate, even if the correct numbered cow is alone in the pen is a no time.
- Shutting the gate without the correct numbered cow in the catch pen is a no time.
- +5 second penalty for every additional cow over 3 head in the catch pen once the gate is shut.

Ranch Trail (Judged)

The ranch trail class should test the horse's ability to cope with situations encountered while being ridden through a pattern of obstacles generally found, during the course of, everyday ranch work. The horse/rider team is judged on the correctness, efficiency and pattern accuracy with which the obstacles are negotiated, and the attitude and mannerisms exhibited by the horse. Judging emphasis is on identifying the well broke, responsive and well-mannered horse which can correctly navigate and negotiate the course.

Details:

- No horse may cross enter into any other trail class at the same show.
- The ranch trail course will include no less than six and no more than nine obstacles. It is mandatory that the horse be asked to walk, trot and lope during the course. Walk can be part of obstacle score or be scored with the approaching obstacle. Trot must be at least 35 feet and score with approaching obstacle.

- Lope must be lead specific, at least 50 feet and score with approaching obstacle. Care must be exercised to avoid setting up any obstacles that may be hazardous to the horse or rider.
- When setting courses, management will be mindful that the idea is not to trap a horse/rider team or eliminate it by making an obstacle too difficult. All courses and obstacles are to be constructed with safety in mind to reduce the risk for accidents. Show committee shall have the option of setting up the trail course to best fit the arena conditions. An outdoor course is recommended if appropriate terrain is available. Each single performance event can be time consuming, especially with large classes, so it is imperative that time restrictions are placed on this class. The show committee, either through a pilot run or estimation, shall select a course that has a continuous and positive flow that can be negotiated in four minutes or less.
- Judges must walk the course and have the right and duty to alter the course if it is not in keeping with the intent of the class. Judges may remove or change any obstacles they deem unsafe, non-negotiable or unnecessarily difficult. Any time a trail obstacle becomes unsafe during a class, it shall be repaired or removed from the course. If the course cannot be repaired and some horses have completed the course, the score for that obstacle shall be deducted from all previous draws in that class.
- The course must be designed using the mandatory obstacles and maneuvers plus optional obstacles. Any and all obstacles requiring mount and or dismount, will require management to provide stool/mounting block.
- Combining two or more of the obstacles is acceptable.
- At show management option the competition trail course may be made available to exhibitors or posted prior to the day of competition. It must be posted at least one hour prior to competition. Printed handouts for exhibitors are helpful and encouraged.

Prohibited Obstacles:

Tarps, water obstacles with slick bottoms, PVC pipe used as a jump or walk over, tires, rocking or moving bridges, logs elevated in a manner that permits such to roll in a dangerous manner.

Mandatory Obstacles and/or Maneuvers:

- a. Ride over obstacles on the ground – usually logs or poles. Walk, trot, or lope may be used, but only one gait is required.
 1. Walk-overs: Walk over no more than five logs or poles no more than 10 inches high. The space between logs or poles should be 26-30 inches. The formation may be straight, curved, zigzagged, or raised.
 2. Trot-overs: Trot over no more than five logs or poles no more than 10 inches high. The space between logs or poles should be 36 to 42 inches. The formation can also be straight, curved, zigzagged, or raised.
 3. Lope-overs: Lope over no more than five logs or poles no more than 10 inches high. The space between logs or poles should be 6 to 7 feet. The formation can also be straight, curved, zigzagged, or raised.

- b. Opening, passing through, and closing gate: Use a gate that will not endanger horse or rider and requires minimum side passing.
- c. Ride over wooden bridge: Bridge should be sturdy, safe and negotiated at a walk only. Heavy plywood lying flat on the ground is an acceptable simulation of a bridge. Suggested minimum width shall be 36 inches wide and at least 6 feet long
- d. Backing obstacles: Backing obstacles are to be spaced at a minimum of 28 inches. If elevated, 30-inch spacing is required. Back through and around at least three markers. Back through L, V, U, straight or similarly shaped course which may be elevated no more than 24 inches.
- e. Side pass obstacle: Any object which is safe and of any length may be used to demonstrate responsiveness of the horse to leg signals. Raised side pass obstacles should not exceed 12 inches.
- f. Rope drag: Drag may be a complete figure eight and may begin in either direction. The exhibitor must have the rope dallied on the saddle horn (a full dally) for the duration of the drag.

Optional Obstacles:

Optional obstacles may be used provided the obstacles can be found in everyday ranch work.

Optional obstacles from which selections can be made include but are not limited to:

- A jump obstacle whose center height is not less than 14 inches high or more than 25 inches high. Holding the saddle horn is permissible for this obstacle.
- Only live or stuffed animals which would normally be encountered in an outdoor setting may be used but not to be used in an attempt to spook a horse.
- Carry object from one part of the arena to another.
- Remove and replace materials from a mailbox.
- Trot through cones spaced a minimum of 6 feet apart.
- Cross natural ditches or ride up embankments.
- Swing rope or throw rope at a dummy steer head.
- Step in and out of obstacle.
- Put on slicker or coat.
- Stand to mount with mounting block. Stool/Mounting block will be provided.
- Walk through water obstacle.
- Open gate on foot. Stool/Mounting block will be provided.
- Pick up feet.
- Walk through brush.
- Ground tie. (Hobbles are allowed) Stool/Mounting block will be provided.
- Lead at the trot.

Credits & Penalties:

- All runs begin upon entering the pen and any infractions are subject to penalty at that time (such as two hands on the reins, using either hand to instill fear or praise, etc.). The rider has the option of eliminating any obstacle, however this will result in being "off pattern" (OP) and the horse/rider team may not place above others who have

completed the pattern correctly. A judge may ask a horse to pass on an obstacle after three refusals or at any time for safety concerns.

- Credit is given to horse/rider teams who negotiate the obstacles correctly and efficiently. Horses should receive credit for showing attentiveness to obstacles and ability to negotiate through the course when the obstacles warrant it while willingly responding to rider's cues on more difficult obstacles. Quality of movement and cadence should be considered part of the maneuver score for the obstacle.
- Posting or standing at the extended trot is acceptable.
- Holding the saddle horn with either hand will not be penalized in any class.

Penalties are assessed as follows:

- 1-Point Penalties: Over-bridled (per maneuver), Each hit, bite or stepping on a log, cone plant or any component of the obstacle, incorrect or break of gait at walk or trot for two (2) strides or less; both front or hind feet in a single-stride slot or space at a walk or trot; skipping over or failing to step into required space; split pole in lope-over; incorrect number of strides, if specified; one to two steps on mount/dismount or ground tie except shifting to balance.
- 3-Point Penalties: Wrong lead or out of lead; draped reins; break of gait at lope; break of gait at walk or trot for more than two (2) strides; Three to Four steps on mount/dismount on ground tie.
- 5-Point Penalties: Spurring in front of cinch; blatant disobedience; use of either hand to instill fear/praise; knocking over, stepping out of or falling off an obstacle; dropping an object required to be carried; 1st or 2nd cumulative refusal; letting go of gate, Five or more steps on mount/dismount or ground tie.
- Off-Pattern (OP): Breaking pattern; Use of two hands (except in snaffle bit or hackamore); more than one finger between split reins or any fingers between romal reins (except two rein); 3rd refusal; repeated blatant disobedience, and failure to dally and remain dallied. Exhibitors cannot place above others who complete pattern correctly.
- Disqualification (DQ): Lameness, abuse, illegal equipment, disrespect or misconduct, Leaving working area before pattern is complete; improper western attire; Fall of horse/ rider (run ends; scores will be given for work done but the horse/rider team will be disqualified and will not be placed), Disqualified entries are counted as an entry in the class but cannot receive points or credits for that class.

Ranch Reining (Judged)

Details:

- No horse may cross enter into any other reining class at the same show.
- Patterns may be chosen from any APHA Working cow horse, reining, Ranch Horse Reining, or patterns approved by the show management and judge.

- Credits: All runs begin upon entering the pen and any infractions are subject to penalty at that time such as two hands on the reins, using either hand to instill fear or praise, etc.
- The ranch horse reining class measures the ability of the ranch horse to perform basic handling maneuvers with a natural head carriage in a forward-looking manner. To rein a horse is not only to guide him but also to control his every movement. The best reined horse should be willingly guided or controlled with little or no apparent resistance and dictated to completely. Any movement on his own must be considered a lack of control. All deviations from the exact written pattern must be considered a lack of or temporary loss of control and therefore a fault that must be marked down according to severity of deviation. The horse/rider team's overall performance should be credited for smoothness, finesse, attitude, quickness and authority of performing various maneuvers while using controlled speed which raises the degree of difficulty and makes the horse/rider team more exciting a pleasing to watch.
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- Holding the saddle horn with either hand will not be penalized in any class.

Penalties:

- One-half (1/2) Penalties: Starting a circle or exiting a rollback at a trot for up to two (2) strides; delayed change of lead by one stride where the lead change is required by the pattern description; failure to remain a minimum of twenty feet from the wall or fence when approaching a stop and/or roll-back; over-spin or under-spin up to 1/8 turn.
- 1-Point Penalties: Over-bridled (per maneuver), out of lead in the circles, figure eights or around the end of the arena (this penalty is cumulative and will be deducted for each quarter of a circle the horse is out of lead); Over or under spinning 1/8 to 1/4 turn. Slipping rein.
- 2-Point Penalties: Break of gait; freeze up in spins or rollbacks; failure to stop or walk before executing a lope departure on trot-in patterns; failure to be in a lope prior to the first marker on run-in patterns; failure to completely pass the specified marker before initiating a stop position, When starting a circle, run-down or exiting a rollback, trotting beyond two strides but less than 1/2 circle or 1/2 length of the arena.
- 5-Point Penalties: Spurring in front of cinch; blatant disobedience; use of either hand to instill fear/praise.- Excess rein may be straightened anytime during the pattern, provided the rider's free hand remains behind the rein hand.

- Off-Pattern (OP): breaking pattern; inclusion of maneuver (e.g. over or under-spinning, backing more than two (2) strides, etc.); Trotting in excess of 1/2 circle or 1/2 length of the arena; More than one finger between split reins or any fingers between romal reins (except two rein); Use of two hands (except in snaffle bit or hackamore); Excess rein may be straightened anytime during the pattern, provided the rider's free hand remains behind the rein hand. Any attempt to alter tension or length of the reins from the bridle to the rein hand is considered use of two hands and an OP will be applied. Repeated blatant disobedience; Exhibitors cannot place above others who complete the pattern correctly.
- Disqualification (DQ): Lameness; abuse; illegal equipment; disrespect or misconduct; improper western attire, leaving the working area before pattern is complete. Fall of horse/rider (run ends; scores will be given for work done but the horse/rider team will be disqualified and will not be placed), Disqualified entries are counted as an entry in the class but cannot receive points or credits for that class.