

The **MIDWEST RANCH HORSE ASSOCIATION** was organized to give cowboys a venue to showcase their using horses while exchanging ideas and techniques they use in training these horses. Our goal is to provide a uniform set of rules and judges for local ranch horse competitions and host an annual final show.

MEMBERSHIP:

The competition year begins and ends following the final competition. The final competition will be held in the fall of the year. In order to compete in the finals, an individual must be a member. Dues may be paid any time prior to the final competition. Individual memberships cost \$25.00 and a family membership is \$30.00.

CLASSES:

Novice - Defined as a rider with little or no experience showing horses. Riders winning more than \$600.00 in a competition year or placing 1st or 2nd at the Semi-Finals or Finals will move the rider out of this class. Horse trainers or contestants with any earnings in the NRCHA, NCHA, ACHA or NRHA or any points in AQHA or APHA in the working cow horse, cutting or reining classes are ineligible to compete in the Novice Class. An age verified Junior horse may be ridden with a ring snaffle or hackamore two-handed in this class. The MRHA will reclassify any contestant whose skills exceed the intent of the class.

Intermediate - Defined as a rider whose skills exceed the Novice class. Competitors winning more than \$1200.00 in a season or winning this class at the Semi-Finals or 1st or 2nd at the Finals will move out of this class. Professional trainers and riders with NRCHA, NCHA, or ACHA Open earnings or AQHA, APHA Open points in Cutting or Working Cow Horse are not eligible to compete in this class. An age verified Junior horse may be ridden with a ring snaffle or hackamore two-handed in this class. The MRHA will reclassify any contestant whose skills exceed the intent of the class.

Junior - A Junior horse is defined as being five (5) years old or younger as of January 1 of the competition year, i.e. a Junior horse for the 2014 competition year must have been born after January 1, 2009. Proof of a Junior horse's status will be the owner's responsibility and is to be verified with either the animal's registration paper (a copy is acceptable) or a veterinarian's age verification. A Junior horse may be ridden with a ring snaffle or a hackamore with two hands without penalty. Professional trainers and contestants with any NRCHA, NCHA, ACHA Open earnings or AQHA, APHA Open points in Cutting or Working Cow Horse are not eligible to compete in this class. The MRHA will reclassify any contestant whose skills exceed the intent of the class.

Open - This class is open to any horse and rider. A verified Junior horse can be ridden in this class 2-handed. This is not a Senior Horse Class.

AGE OF CONTESTANTS:

There is no age restriction, although a release, signed by a parent or guardian, is required for all contestants under the age of eighteen.

CONTESTANT'S EQUIPMENT:

Dress code: Boots, hat and long sleeves are required. Anything beyond that such as leggings, chinks, etc., is optional equipment.

Two-handed bridles, such as ring snaffles and hackamores, may be ridden two-handed on an age verified Junior horse. A horse may be ridden in a two rein and the bosal may be of any size with no iron or metal of any kind. A two rein horse must be ridden one-handed. Reins on a shanked bit must be held in one hand with no more than a finger between the reins. Romal reins must be held full fisted. Bridles and bits: Any bit is legal provided nothing extends below the bars of the bit. A bridle is defined as curbed, shanked bit. Chain bits are legal provided there is no gag or slide. Contestants will not be allowed to use any device that gives him/her undue control over the horse, such as:

- *Tie downs
- *Mechanical Hackamores, Quick Stops, etc.
- *Martingales
- *Nothing may be around the horse's nose
- *Gag Bits
- *Wire on the Curb Device or any part of the Bit or Headstall
- *Bits must be free of mechanical devices
- *Nothing extending below the bars of the bits

EVENT SIZE WHEN QUALIFYING FOR THE FINALS:

The total number of horses in the competition must be nine (9) or more. Minimum class size must be four (4) horses. If qualified, a horse/ rider may enter more than one class. In order to fill a class to fulfill the qualifying requirements, classes may be combined. Combining classes does not affect the prizes for each class. Judges will be informed which horses are Junior horses and that they may be ridden two-handed in a two-handed bridle.

HORSES ADVANCING TO THE FINALS:

All qualifiers must have be current MRHA member to compete at the finals. Dues must be paid prior to the final competition. The number of horses qualifying for advancement toward the finals will depend upon the aggregate number of horses entered in the local competition. The breakdown is as follows:

Novice/ Intermediate/ Junior/Open or combined:	# of entries-	# of qualifiers-
	4-7	1
	8-11	2
	12-15	3
	16-19	4

If a horse/rider has previously qualified for the finals, then the next highest point scoring horse or horses in that class, shall advance to the finals. The MRHA will determine who qualifies for advancement following this formula from each competition.

Revised 2014

Rules and Guidelines for Ranch Horse Competitions

This is a timed event. Time will begin when contestant enters the arena. The contestant will have five (5) minutes to complete the event . The announcer calls out a two minute warning. (*2 minutes remaining*) when the contestant reaches this point and, at five (5) minutes, calls *Time* and the run is over. The contestant is judged on the segments of his run that were completed prior to the calling of *Time*.

This contest consists of three divisions all performed as one event, within a five (5) minute time span. The normal flow of the event for the contestant is that he enters the arena and performs the reined work segment, then moves straight into the cow-working segment; at this time contestant signals for an animal to be turned out into the arena for the contestant to work and then immediately proceeds into the roping segment.

At the sole discretion of the Judge, an animal may be deemed unworkable. *Unworkable* is defined as an animal that, for any reason, does not let the contestant exhibit his/her horse at all. Animals that immediately fight the contestant's horse or enter the arena and simply refuse to move are considered unworkable. The contestant's time will stop, a new animal will be turned out and the time started again. Under no circumstances will a new animal be awarded if it is the contestant's fault that the animal is tired, out of air, run down, or overworked to the point he doesn't care to move, etc. Judges will keep in mind that they are judging the cowboy's ability to recognize these things and adjust his run accordingly. This is a ranch horse and cowboy event designed to replicate how they work together out on the range.

A judge will stop any run which shows excessive danger, including any abuse to horse or cow. Equipment failure that poses danger to the horse or rider will terminate the run. Separation of horse and rider due to the horse falling or the rider falling off the horse will terminate a run.

DRY WORK OR REINING – 48 POINTS

Horses are to be judged on their ability to perform four basic sets of maneuvers- rollbacks, circles and lead changes, stopping and backing, and spins. Each of these parts will be scored separately.

Rollbacks (12 points): At the end of the stop, the rollback should be a 180-degree turn, where the horse turns and leaves in one motion. Short, choppy rundowns will be penalized, as will bouncy forced stops and rollbacks that come out at less than 180-degrees.

Circles and lead changes (12 points): To be judged on the horse's ability to be willingly guided without pulling to the inside or to the outside of the circle and on his ability to demonstrate his willingness to increase or decrease speed and on his ability to change leads, front and back, smoothly with a minimum of cueing from the rider

Stopping and backing (12 points): To receive maximum credit, a horse should approach the stop loping or galloping freely and willingly moving forward in a straight line while gradually increasing his speed. The stop should be straight and square and give the appearance of stopping because he is trained to stop, not because he is being forced to stop. As in the rollback maneuver, maximum credit will be given to the horse that approaches the stop running straight while gradually increasing speed, and then stops straight and square, only hesitating momentarily. Short, choppy, check-looking rundowns, bouncy stops, head throwing, excessive open mouth and resistance on the part of the horse will be penalized. Maximum credit will be given to the horse that willingly backs in a straight line for at least fifteen feet. If the horse backs crooked, throws his head, opens his mouth excessively and shows resistance, the horse will be penalized.

Spins (12 points): In order to receive the maximum credit for the spins, a horse should do at least two spins in each direction. The horse that spins smoothly, with moderate speed, keeping his hind quarters in the same general area, and demonstrating good footwork in front should receive the greatest amount of credits.

COW WORK – 60 POINTS

Cow work will consist of two segments, boxing or holding a cow at the end of the arena, and turning a cow down the fence in both directions. Each of these segments will be worth thirty points each.

Throughout the cow work, it must be remembered that the name of the game is *controlling the cow*. Judges must take into consideration what kind of cow each contestant draws in order to accurately judge the degree of difficulty in each credit-earning situation. When a contestant is holding a cow at the end of the arena, maximum credit will be given to the horse that is obviously watching a cow and making counter moves to hold the cow at the end of the arena without help from the rider. The more a horse is trying to do on his own, the more credit he should receive. Maximum credit should only be given when the horse is in control of the cow when the cow is allowed to go down the fence. Again, the difficulty of the cow should always be considered when deducting from the maximum credit. When the cow is allowed to go down the fence, maximum credit will be given to the horse that turns the cow at least once each way on the same fence that the cow originally went down. At any point in time when a horse turns tail to the cow, the maneuver will be zeroed by the judge.

Horses will be penalized for losing control while boxing the cow at the end of the arena, getting outrun down the fence, for running more than one horse length past the cow on the turn, hanging up on the fence, refusing to turn, running over the cow, biting cattle, hanging back and not running past the cow to turn the cow and for generally losing control. Cattle are to be worked on the end of the arena from which they are called. If a contestant calls for their animal and lets the animal go past the contestant to the other end of the arena to work, this should be penalized heavily. Giving ground down the arena to gain control and working the animal back to the end of the arena that it was called for from should be given appropriate credit.

ROPING – 64 POINTS

The roping work will consist of three segments.

Speed, rate and tracking – 24 points: Maximum credit will be given to the horse that shows ample speed going to cattle, rates off so the rider can rope, tracks a cow that circles, ducks right or left and stays in position to allow the rider to rope. The loop has to go over the animal's head, i.e., the animal has to look through the loop. The animal may end up being caught by the neck, body or a hind leg. If the animal is not roped within two loops, the scoring will cease at that time. The roper may only carry one rope and, if that rope is lost, time will stop and the run is considered completed. Contestants may not receive any ropes from outside the arena to complete their run. Contestants may not retrieve their rope from the animal if it comes loose from the horn. If a contestant drops their rope prior to roping the animal, they may dismount and retrieve the rope to complete the run, if time allows.

Stop – 20 points: Maximum credit will be given to the horse that stops square and hard in a straight line with the cow, hindquarters underneath him, alert and paying attention, holding the stop when the rope comes tight and leans back slightly to absorb the jerk. Cattle without horns must look through loop. Cattle with a minimum of 4" horns can be stopped with both horns or half head. If the loop goes over the animal's head, i.e. looks through it, any part of the body that is caught may be used to stop the animal. The contestant may tie on or dally, depending on the cattle owner. When roping, reins may be held as romal reins.

Pulling from the horn – 20 points: Maximum credit will be given to the horse that turns crisply when asked by the rider, drops his neck to pull, leans into the breast collar, drives from behind and pulls from the horn in a straight line for at least fifteen feet. *Cattle must be standing to be logged.* Judges will disqualify a contestant for dragging an animal that is laying on the ground.

Horses will be penalized if they are slow going to cattle, run over cattle, lose position tracking or generally appear hard to manage. Horses that stop crooked, sideways, duck off or appear that they might be pulled down by big cattle should be severely penalized. Horses should be penalized that resist turning, pull with their head up and back hollow, wander from side to side, lunge forward, stop before asked by the rider or show any reluctance to willingly pull.

In the event of a tie, the judges will use the scores from the first portion of the cow work and proceed from that point to break the tie. Dry work will be the last segment utilized to break any ties.

No abuse of horses or abuse of cattle will be tolerated during any MRHA competition. In the event the rider deviates from any judged segment of the competition and displays unsportsmanlike conduct toward the horse or cow, he will be asked to leave the arena and that run is disqualified.

Revised March 2014

In Conjunction with Beef Empire Days



**ALLTECH MRHA Ranch Horse Competition
Saturday, June 3, 2017 at 2pm - Garden City, Kansas**

Name _____ Phone # _____ Email _____

Address _____

Horse (Registered name) _____ Horse Age (JR Horse) _____

Classes entering (# of entries/class): Novice _ Intermediate _____ Junior _____ Open _____

**EARLY ENTRY \$65.00 PER CLASS/ ENTRY FEE THE DAY OF THE
COMPETITION WILL BE \$75.00**

The **Midwest Ranch Horse Association** was organized to give cowboys a venue to showcase their using horses while exchanging ideas and techniques they use in training these horses. MRHA hosts 10-15 shows a year culminating with the Finals. Each show gives competitors an opportunity to qualify for the Finals held at the end of the competition year. At the 2016 Finals, we awarded chaps, pads and buckles to our Class winners, a saddle to our top Novice Horse and a saddle to the Overall Top Horse.

THIS IS A JUDGED EVENT CONSISTING OF DRY WORK, COW WORK & ROPING:

This contest consists of three divisions all performed as one event, within a five (5) minute time span

***OPEN CLASS** Open to any horse and any rider.

***JUNIOR HORSE CLASS** A junior horse must be five years old or younger as of January 1, 2017. This AGE VERIFIED HORSE may be ridden two handed in a ringed snaffle bit or hackamore (with bosal) in any class.

***INTERMEDIATE CLASS** Contestants whose skill level exceeds the intent of the Novice Class

***NOVICE CLASS** Limited, or no, experience showing horses

Novice, Intermediate and Junior Horse Classes are intended for non-trainers. If you make a living training horses, please enter the Open Class.

Please call or email if you have any questions. Return entry and check (make check out to MRHA) to:

**ED BRICKER - P O B o x 141, S u n C i t y, K S 67143
580-884-7333**