



RULES AND GUIDELINES

January 2018

General Show Rules

1. The East Coast Stock Horse Association (ECSHA) shows are open to all breeds of horses. Horses must be sound and in good condition. The judge and Association officers have the right to eliminate any contestant if a horse does not appear to be sound, in good condition, or if the contestant is abusive to their horse.
2. Classes will be judged according to American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) rules when possible.
3. For all classes, a horse may only be ridden once in a class, with the exception of the Cattle Drive class.
4. Holding the saddle horn is acceptable in any class.
5. Posting at the extended trot is acceptable.
6. Divisions
 - a. Open: Any horse or rider may compete in classes in this division.
 - b. Amateur: An Amateur shall be defined as any person, regardless of age, who in the last three years has not shown, ridden, judged, trained or assisted in training a horse for ANY remuneration, either directly or indirectly; not received ANY remuneration for instructing another person in riding, driving or instructing another person in showing a horse in competition. An individual may not have accepted remuneration in the previous three years for having conducted seminars, clinics, given instruction in equitation or horse training or judging. Premium money won is not considered remuneration.
 - c. Youth: A youth competitor shall be defined as any person who is age 18 or younger as of January 1st of the show year.
7. Exhibitors must be current members of the ECSHA.
8. To be eligible for year end awards, an exhibitor must show in at least three of the year's scheduled shows where points are awarded. Point accumulations for awards will run from January 1st through December 31st of the same year. A year end award is presented for each ECSHA class, excluding Cattle Drive and Virginia Bred classes. (*must meet minimum point requirement of 20 points in each class)
9. In the Amateur and Youth divisions, points accumulate per horse/rider combination per class. In the Open division, points accumulate for the horse only. A rider may ride more than one horse per class.
10. To be eligible for the ECSHA Amateur Versatility Horse of the Year award, one rider/horse may enter any or all of the 7 ECSHA Amateur ranch horse classes (no cross entering amateur cow work and amateur limited cow work). Declaration of Intent form must be filled out for points to accumulate.
11. To be eligible for the ECSHA Open Versatility Horse of the Year award, horse may be entered in any or all of the 7 ECSHA Open ranch horse classes. Declaration of Intent form must be filled out for points to accumulate.

Dress Code and Equipment

The East Coast Stock Horse Association (ECSHA) follows all AQHA rules pertaining to Dress Code and Equipment with the exception that in any ECSHA class, horses of any age may be ridden with two hands when using a snaffle bit or bosal.

1. Boots, cowboy hat or helmet, and a long sleeve western shirt are required. The wearing of leggings, chinks, chaps, kerchief/bolo, spurs, gloves, vest, jacket, etc. is at the rider's discretion.
2. Saddles: Entries are to be shown in a Western saddle with neat and serviceable working tack. Equipment with silver should not count over a good working outfit. Silver on bridles and saddles is discouraged.
3. Horse Shoes: Any shoes are legal.
4. Bridles and Bits:
Standard snaffle bits are permitted in any class on any age horse. A standard snaffle bit is defined as a center-joined single, rounded, unwrapped smooth mouthpiece of 5/16" - to 3/4" - diameter metal, as measured from ring to 1" inward from the ring along the mouthpiece, with a gradual decrease to the center of the mouthpiece. The ring diameter may measure from 2" to 4" and be loose, egg butt, or D-ring in type. If a curb strap is used it must be attached below the reins.

Hackamores or bosals are permitted in any class on any age horse. A hackamore includes a bosal, rounded in shape and constructed of braided rawhide or leather, and must have a flexible nonmetallic core attached to a suitable headstall. Attached reins may be of hair, rope, or leather. No other material of any kind is to be used in conjunction with a bosal, i.e., metal or chains (exception: smooth plastic electrical tape is acceptable).

A standard western bit is defined as having a shank with a maximum length overall of 8 1/2". The mouthpiece will consist of a metal bar 5/16" to 3/4" in diameter as measured one inch from the shank. The port must be no higher than 3 1/2" maximum with roller(s) and cover acceptable. Jointed mouthpieces, half-breeds, and spade bits are standard and acceptable. Slip or gag bits, rigid doughnut mouthpieces, and flat polo mouthpieces are prohibited.

Curb chains and leather chinstraps may be used but must be flat and, at least, 1/2" in width and lie flat against the jaws of the horse. No wire, rawhide, metal or other substance can be used as part of the leather chinstrap or curb chains.

Reins may be split leather or romal. 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 only allowed in Ranch Reining, Ranch Cow Work and Limited Ranch Cow Work.

Except for horses ridden in hackamore or snaffle bit, only one hand may be used on the reins, and the hand must not be changed unless needed to perform a trail obstacle.

Exhibitors will not be allowed to use tie downs, mechanical hackamores, quick stops, martingales, gag bits, wire on the curb device or any part of the headstall. Nothing may be around the horse's nose. Bits must be free of any mechanical device. Nothing may extend below the bars of the bits.

Class Descriptions

Ranch Riding:

The Ranch Riding horse should reflect the versatility, attitude, and movement of a working horse. The horse's performance should simulate a horse riding outside the confines of an arena and that of a working ranch horse, with light contact or on a relatively loose rein. Horses shall be shown individually, performing the required maneuvers that include the walk, trot, and lope both directions; the extended trot and extended lope in at least one direction; as well as stopping and backing. The ranch riding horse should make timely transitions in a smooth and correct manner, as well as display quality of the movement.

Ranch Trail:

The Ranch Trail class contains a course with 6-9 obstacles and is designed to show a horse's ability and willingness to perform several tasks that might be asked of him during a normal day's ranch work. It is mandatory that the horse be asked to walk, trot and lope during the course. Mandatory obstacles include ride overs at the walk, trot, or lope (usually logs), working a gate, bridge, backing obstacle, side-pass, and drag (open & amateur only).

Ranch Reining:

Ranch Reining maneuvers should reflect those performed on a ranch during normal work. The ranch reining horse should be willfully guided with no apparent resistance. Each maneuver may receive plus points or penalty points. All deviations from the exact written pattern must be considered a lack of control and therefore a fault that must be marked down according to severity. Performance should be credited for smoothness, finesse, attitude, quickness and authority of performing various maneuvers.

Ranch Cutting:

The purpose of the ranch cutting class is to demonstrate the ranch horse's ability to separate a single cow from the herd and control the cow ideally in the center of the arena with minimal disturbance to the herd. Exhibitor will cut one or two cows, based on the division, from the herd and work the cow(s) with the assistance of two turn-back riders and two herd holders. For open and amateur divisions, there will be a two minute time limit. Each exhibitor must work two head and has the option of ending their run before the two minute limit or working the full two minutes. For youth, there will be a one and one-half minute time limit. Each exhibitor may work one or two cows and has the option of ending their run before the one and one-half minute time limit or working the full one and one-half minutes. There is no penalty for reining.

Cow Work:

All of the cow work classes intend to display the working ability of a horse suitable for cow work. Exhibitors in the open, amateur and youth divisions are allotted three minutes to complete the work. There are three parts to the class: boxing, fence work and roping or circling. For ideal cow work, each contestant, upon receiving a cow in the arena, shall hold the cow, demonstrate control of the cow, and contain it on the prescribed end of the arena (boxing). After a reasonable amount of time, the contestant shall take the cow down the fence and make at least one turn each way on the fence. The first run out for a turn shall be past the half-way mark of the arena. All turns down the side shall be completed before reaching the end fence. The amateur and youth exhibitor has the option of circling the cow in the middle of the arena in both directions in lieu of roping. To circle the cow, the exhibitor will take the cow to an open part of the arena and circle it at least once in each direction (circles). Open exhibitors must rope the cow and bring it to a stop. In the roping portion of the class, two throws are permitted and the horse will be judged on tracking/rating and stopping the cow. It is not necessary that the exhibitor catch

to receive a score in the roping portion. The catch is legal as long as the cow looks through the loop and the rope pulls tight on any part of the animal's body except the tail. The rope may be tied on or dallied.

Limited Cow Work:

Exhibitors in the limited ranch cow work cannot compete in both the cow work and limited cow work class, at the same show with the same horse, with the exception of the ECSHA VA Bred Limited Cow Work class. Limited cow work exhibitors are allotted one minute and thirty seconds to complete the work. Exhibitors are not required to use all of the allotted time, but must ride until the judge whistles the end of the run or time expires, whichever occurs first. There are four parts to the work: boxing the cow; setting up the cow and driving it down the fence to the opposite end of the arena; and boxing it at the opposite end of the arena, and then driving the cow past the middle marker again.

Ranch Roping:

This class has a two-and-a-half minute time limit. A breakaway lariat must be used. The contestant will enter the herd quietly, rope a cow and drive the cow across the time line, without breaking the honda. Once the cow is across the time line, the contestant must dally and break the honda. Three attempts to rope the cow are allowed. If the honda breaks as a result of another cow running through the rope, the contestant will be allowed to rebuild their loop, and that will be counted as one of their three loops. If the contestant has dallied to the horn or holds tension on the rope resulting in the honda breaking prior to the cow crossing the line, that will count as a catch, and the run is complete. The rope must be thrown. Any attempt by the exhibitor to trap, snare, or collar a cow by holding on to the loop will be cause for disqualification.

Ranch Rail Pleasure: Horses are to be shown in a group, on the rail, at a walk, jog or trot, and lope on a reasonably loose rein or light contact without undue restraint. Horses must work, as announced, both ways of the ring at all three gaits to demonstrate their ability with different leads. At the option of the judge, horses may be asked to extend the gaits, one or both ways of the ring. The extended jog is a definite two-beat lengthening of the stride, covering more ground. Cadence and balance with smoothness are more essential than speed. Passing is permissible and should not be penalized as long as the horse maintains a proper and even cadence and rhythm. Horses are required to back easily and stand quietly. Horses are to be reversed to the inside (away from the rail). They may be required to reverse at the walk or jog at the discretion of the judge, but shall not be asked to reverse at the lope.

Special Classes:

Jackpot Cattle Drive: This is a judged class with a total time limit based on the number of obstacles. Teams of two horses and riders will cut out two head of cattle from a holding pen, and then control and correctly maneuver cattle through a set of obstacles. Cattle should be kept as calm as possible. Excessive running or rushing of cattle will not be tolerated, and may result in teams being disqualified. One horse/rider must follow the cattle completely through each obstacle. Cattle must be re-penned after completing obstacles. Scoring on each obstacle will be based on a scale of 0 to 10. Riders may enter with multiple partners. 50% payback + added money at each show

Virginia Bred Classes: Payback classes specifically for horses foaled in Virginia. See VA Bred Rules for more information on nominating and entering.