

## 2026 State Horse Judging

**Date: May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2026**

**Location: Bilbrey Family Event Center  
1603 Old Claflin Pl, Manhattan, KS 66506**

**Registration: 12:30-1:00pm**

**Contest: 1:00pm-7:00pm**

**Coordinator name and email: Celsey Crabtree, [celseyb@ksu.edu](mailto:celseyb@ksu.edu)**

**Cell Phone: 913-267-4805**

## General Information

### *Event Rules*

- Each team will be comprised of four members. **All scores will be used to determine the total team score.**
- All attire of riders and handlers and all tack is to be considered legal in selection classes.
- All halter horses will be judged as sound, therefore halter horses will NOT be tracked. All performance classes will be judged as they go regarding soundness.
- AQHA novice rules will be used in Hunter Under Saddle, Ranch Pleasure, and Western Pleasure classes in reference to headset and head carriage.
- Any participant possessing an electronic device (cell phone, smart watch, etc.) in the event area is subject to disqualification and will be asked to leave the contest area.
- Contestants will not be allowed to talk to each other. Any questions should be directed to group leaders. Contestants will be asked to leave the contest area if they are found talking to one another at any time during the contest, and they will receive "0" scores on all remaining classes and reasons.
- Contestants not following directions or displaying disrespectful behavior will be asked to leave and will receive "0" points on the remaining scores.
- **If scantrons are filled out incorrectly, contestants will be given a "0" for that class, or set of reasons. If the contestant name, or school is filled out incorrectly on the scantron, the coordinator will be required to follow what is on the scantron.**
- Contestants will not be given scantrons back, after being turned in for reasons.

### *Event Format*

Materials each participant needs to provide:

- Two (or more) sharpened No. 2 pencils
- Clipboard (will need for exam)
- Basic calculator (No cell phone calculators allowed.)
- Notebook or blank sheets of paper (no preprinted materials allowed with the exception of an officially printed and binded AQHA rulebook)
- Clothing suited to the climatic conditions of the day (coats, gloves, etc. While stocking hats would be allowed, cowboy hats or any type of hat that might block the view of other participants will not be allowed.)
- Water bottle and/or snack if desired

Materials provided by contest coordinators:

- Scantron sheets
- Patterns
- AQHA score sheets for pertinent classes

## **INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITIES**

### ***Written exam (50 points)***

Participants will take a multiple-choice written exam with questions covering a variety of topics related to the equine industry. Contestants will work individually on this exam. Questions will be drawn from the list of references cited in the National FFA Horse Evaluation Handbook (listed below). There will be 25 questions, each worth 2 points. The score earned on the written exam will be included in each individual's score for the contest, and each participant's score on the exam will be included in the team's total score for the event.

### ***Selection classes (300 points)***

A total of 6 classes, consisting of halter and performance classes, will be evaluated. There will be three classes of reasons, with at least 1 set coming from halter and at least 1 set coming from performance. Classes will be approximately 12 to 15 minutes in length. All classes will be 50 points.

Halter classes will be evaluated. Halter classes may be represented by the following breeds and types: Quarter Horse, Conformation Hunter, Appaloosa, Arabian, Paint, American Saddlebred, Morgan, or Draft breeds. Halter classes will all be in the arena at once, and students will be split into groups to judge each group of horses at one time. All halter classes will be evaluated as sound.

Performance classes will be evaluated. Performance classes may include Western Horsemanship, Hunt Seat Equitation, Western Pleasure, Ranch Riding, Ranch Pleasure, Ranch Trail, Western Riding, Reining, English Pleasure (Saddle Seat), Hunter Under Saddle (Hunt Seat), Trail and Hunter Hack. Performance classes will be evaluated as presented (unsoundness to be penalized accordingly). Patterns and scoresheets will be provided to the teams prior to the start of the event for all classes requiring patterns.

### ***Oral Reasons (150 points)***

Participants will give a total of 3 sets of oral reasons. There will be 1 or 2 performance classes selected from Western Pleasure, Ranch Riding, Ranch Reining, Ranch Rail, Ranch Trail, Western Riding, Western Horsemanship, Hunt Seat Equitation, Reining, English Pleasure (Saddle Seat), Hunter Under Saddle (Hunt Seat), Trail and Hunter Hack as reasons classes. (50 points each).

There will be 1 or 2 halter classes selected from the halter classes listed above as reasons classes (50 points each).

Reasons classes will not be announced until the conclusion of the judging event, so participants should take notes on all possible reasons classes.

Note: 25 points will be deducted on each set of reasons if participants use notes during oral reasons presentations. Points will also be deducted for oral reasons exceeding 2 min. in length.

| <b>REASONS SCORE SHEET</b>   |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|
| <b>NAME:</b> _____   | <b>Class:</b> _____         |
| Scoring Guidelines: (0-10- 10 Excellent, 9 Very Good, 8 Good, 7 average, 5-6 poor, 3-4 very poor, 0-2 Extremely poor)  |                             |
| <b>Penalty 1:</b><br>1a) Minor pauses (2-3 sec), hesitations or major loss of momentum<br>1b) Non-comparative terms in comparative sections, incorrect grammar<br>1c) Incorrect number, color, or gender<br>1d) Omission of important content  |                             |
| <b>Penalty 2:</b><br>2a) Major pauses (4-10 sec)<br>2b) Incorrect statement in content   |                             |
| <b>Penalty 5:</b><br>5a) Extended pauses (>10 sec)<br>5b) Each time notes used<br>5c) Start set over<br>5d) Talks incorrect placing  |                             |
| <b>Categories/comments:</b>  |                             |
| <b>Content Relevancy</b><br>Addresses most important, key, pertinent criteria that fits class and presenter's placing  | <b>10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1</b> |
| <b>Content Accuracy</b><br>Accurate, truthful criteria for horses regardless of placing  | <b>10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1</b> |
| <b>Organization</b><br>Systematic; logical, easy to follow; follows proper format; opening statement of each pair or section is clear, concise and starts with important content   | <b>10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1</b> |
| <b>Terminology</b><br>Common, main stream, horseman-like. Correct grammar<br>Comparative terms in main pairs and grants  | <b>10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1</b> |
| <b>Presentation</b><br>Professional, poised, pleasant, energetic, confident, convincing<br>Proper word enunciation, pronunciation, emphasis, and inflection<br>Effective eye contact and facial expression<br>Avoids distracting actions or movement or mannerisms<br>Smooth, continuous, fluid, effective transition, proper length | <b>10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1</b> |
| <b>TOTAL SCORE (50)</b> _____  |                             |
| <b>Class Placing</b>   |                             |
| <b>1</b>   | <b>2</b>                    |
|  | <b>3</b>                    |
| <b>4</b>   | <b>5</b>                    |
|  | <b>6</b>                    |
| <b>7</b>   | <b>8</b>                    |
|  | <b>9</b>                    |

Table courtesy of NHJTCA

## Scoring

The event is organized into the following parts, classes, and point values.

| Individual activity                       | Points per individual |
|---|-----------------------|
| 6 evaluation classes                      | 300                   |
| Written Exam                              | 50                    |
| 3 sets of oral reasons                    | 150                   |
| <b>Total points possible (individual)</b> | <b>500</b>            |
| <b>Total points possible (team of 4)</b>  | <b>2000</b>           |

### TIEBREAKERS

Ties will be broken in the following order:

*Individual:*

1. Oral reasons total
2. Performance classes total
3. Halter classes total

*Team:*

1. Team oral reasons total
2. Team performance classes total
3. Team halter classes total

## References

*This list of references is not intended to be all-inclusive.*

Other sources may be utilized, and teachers are encouraged to make use of the very best instructional materials available. The following list contains references that may prove helpful during event preparation.

- National FFA-CDE Questions and Answers, FFA.org
- AQHA Forms and Resources, <https://www.aqha.com/forms-and-resources>.
- AQHA Judging Manual: <https://www.aqha.com/news-and-publications/e-books/free-ebooks/competitive-horse-judging-manual1>
- AQHA Rulebook
- Score sheets
- AQHA Resources
  - Patterns & Scoresheets
- American Quarter Horse Association, Amarillo Texas—Video References  
<http://www.aqhastore.com/>

- Heird, James C. and The American Quarter Horse Association, Competitive Horse Judging. First Edition. The American Quarter Horse Association, 1990.  
[www.ajha.com/en/~/media/99CC10097D56497EBDE93F18F672A0CD.ashx](http://www.ajha.com/en/~/media/99CC10097D56497EBDE93F18F672A0CD.ashx)
- CEV Videos on horse judging, <http://www.icevmultimedia.com>
- Evans, J. Warren, Rhonda M. Hoffman, Jessica L. Petersen, and L. Dale Van Vleck. The HORSE, third edition. Waveland Press, Inc., 4180 IL Route 83, Suite 101, Long Grove IL 60047. ISBN 1-4786-3947-4
- The American Youth Horse Council, <http://ayhc.com>, then select Resources
- Equine Science Curriculum—a special project from the National Council for Agricultural Education, <https://www.ffa.org/thecouncil/resources>
- Tack Identification: Horses and Tack, Howard Ensminger, <http://teskeys.com>, then select Tack
- Oklahoma State University horse breed website, <http://www.ansi.okstate.edu/breeds/horses/>
- University of Kentucky Agripedia website,  
<http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agripedia/Agmania/HORSE/INDEX.asp>
- Official Judging Guide from each of the various breed associations and audiovisuals