



# 2025 IQHA Ranch Horse Futurity & Maturity Rules

\*Any rules created by the Iowa Quarter Horse Association (IQHA) Ranch Horse Futurity & Program are functions of the Iowa Quarter Horse Association.

## Purpose

The purpose of the IQHA Ranch Horse Futurity is to provide an opportunity for AQHA stallion owners to showcase & promote their ranch bred stallions & subsequent offspring in Open & Non-Pro Divisions.

## Ranch Horse Futurity Eligibility

Only AQHA, APHA, & ApHC registered horses are eligible for the program and futurity. Beginning with the 2019 enrolled stallions, 2020 foal crop, registered foals are eligible to be nominated for the program. Properly nominated foals will be eligible to be shown in all futurity classes offered by the program through their four-year-old year, by annual nomination fee payments and if applicable, penalties. All nomination fees and penalties must be paid prior to exhibiting. Stallions must enroll each year for their following year's offspring to be eligible; example: enrolled sire for 2019 breeding season, 2020 offspring are eligible for nomination. No leases allowed.

## Stallion Enrollments

### **Stallions must be AQHA registered.**

#### Stallion Enrollment:

- 2025 Stallion Enrollment Fee - \$450.00 must be received on or before July 31, 2025.
- After July 31, 2025, the stallion's enrollment fee will be \$1000.00.
- **Stallions not previously enrolled may enroll for previous years for a fee of \$1000.00 per year. For example, if a stallion wants to enroll in 2020 and 2021, he may do so by paying the fees of \$1000 for each year. To enroll in previous years, stallions must also enroll in the current year at the fee of \$450 if paid by July 31st, or \$1,000 if paid after July 31st.**
- New enrolling stallions are required to provide a copy of the stallion's AQHA registration papers and paid fees must accompany the completed enrollment form for any stallion to be enrolled into the program.
- Current IQHA membership is **not** required to enroll a stallion.
  - The stallion owner will receive 10% of all properly nominated offspring's earnings from each year. If the stallion is being enrolled by someone other than the stallion owner, "nominator", who is not the registered owner, the registered owner will be obligated to have a signed written consent between the two parties to complete the enrollment that gives the nominator approval to enroll the stallion and determines who will receive 10% of offspring earnings from that enrollment year. It is preferable to have the stallion owner complete the enrollment, however, with the proper signed consent, a nominator may complete the enrollment, upload the signed written approval from the stallion owner and then collect the 10% offspring earnings from that enrollment. For example, if the nominator pays the stallion enrollment for 2024, then the 2025 offspring are eligible to be nominated for the futurity and any money earned by the 2025 foal crop, 10% will go to the nominator. If the following year, the stallion owner nominates the stallion, then the 10% offspring earnings from the 2026 foal crop will go to the stallion owner. It is the responsibility of the stallion owner and/or nominator to notify the ranch horse committee if they have moved. The 10% earnings will be mailed out to the last known address and if returned or they are unable to contact them the money will remain in the ranch account and be used for expenses.
- If an enrolled stallion dies or becomes unfit to breed:

- Owner may substitute a stallion that is owned by them that has not already been enrolled with the following stipulation:
  - Letter from Veterinarian stating reason why the stallion is not breeding sound or is deceased. The letter must state that the stallion has not bred any mares in the current year and that there is no frozen semen available. The letter must be provided within 10 days of death of stallion or the date found to be unfit to breed by veterinarian.
    - A stallion is not eligible to be substituted if he has already bred mares in the current year.
    - A stallion is not eligible to be substituted if frozen semen is available.
    - No substitutions are allowed after 7/31.
    - No refunds.
- Enrollment fee is non-refundable.

## **Offspring Status & Nominations**

### **2021 Offspring Nominations:**

- AQHA registered 2021 offspring must be sired by 2020 enrolled stallion.
- 2021 eligible offspring shall be nominated on or before December 31st of their weanling year for a \$50.00 nomination fee. Nomination forms and payment must be received on or before 12/31.
- 2021 Offspring must be nominated for their yearling-4-year-old years on or before 7/31 each year for a nomination schedule as follows:
  - Yearling - \$50
  - Two-Year-Old - \$100
  - Three-Year-Old - \$100
  - Four-Year-Old - \$100
- Nomination forms and payment are BOTH required to be completed by the deadline. Online form and credit card payment must be completed by this deadline.
- Failure to complete the required nominations with payment by the deadline will result in a \$200 penalty per nomination for each missed deadline.
- To be futurity eligible, a copy of AQHA registration papers is required along with the nomination form and fees paid in full. Offspring with pending papers with AQHA may submit registration papers via email to the IQHA Ranch Horse Futurity once received.
  - Failure to submit required paperwork/forms will result in an ineligible entry.
  - No nomination refunds due to the death or injury of a nominated horse.
  - **A current IQHA membership is required to nominate offspring.**
  - **Weanling Nomination Fee Distribution:** (minus 10% for expenses)
    - 10% - Yearling futurity payout
    - 15% - 2 yr old futurity payout
    - 25% - 3 yr old futurity payout
    - 50% - 4 yr old futurity payout
  - **Yearling- 4-yr-old Nomination Fee Distribution:**
    - 100% of nomination fees go to futurity payout.

### **2022 Subsequent Offspring Nomination**

- AQHA registered offspring must be sired by an enrolled stallion, i.e. 2022 offspring must be sired by 2021 enrolled stallion and so forth.
- Weanling nominations will not be required.
- A \$100 yearling - 4-year-old nomination (online paid with credit card only) will need to be completed and paid on or before 7/31 each year.
- After 7/31 there will be a \$200 penalty in addition to the \$100 nomination fee.
- For each year an offspring is not nominated by 7/31, a \$200 annual penalty is assessed.
- No nomination refunds due to the death or injury of a nominated horse.
- **Yearling Nomination Fee Distribution:**
  - 10% of nomination fees will be held for office expenses.
  - 50% of the annual nomination fees will be added to the payout.
  - 40% will be allocated towards awards.

- **2 yr old-4 yr old Nomination Fee Distribution:** (minus 10% for expenses)
  - 100% of nomination fees go to futurity payout.

## **Prize Money**

### **Futurity Prize Money:**

- Payout will consist of a percentage of each year's stallion enrollment monies, a percentage of nomination fees, any applicable late fees and entry fees.
- Up to 10 placings will be paid out.
- Current horse owner, as shown on registration papers, will receive 90% of the payback, the stallion owner or nominator will receive 10%.
- Each year the **Stallion Enrollment money** will be divided out over the course of four years, minus a \$25.00 per stallion fee for expenses as follows:
  - Yearlings - 16%
  - Two-Year-Olds - 23%
  - Three-Year-Olds - 28%
  - Four-Year-Olds - 33%

### **Class Payout:**

- **Payout scale**
  - 10 places 20%, 15%, 13%, 11%, 10%, 8%, 6.5%, 6%, 5.5%, and 5%
  - 9 Places 21%, 16%, 14%, 12%, 10.5%, 8.5%, 6.5%, 6% and 5.5%
  - 8 places 22%, 16.5%, 15%, 12.5%, 11%, 9%, 7.5% and 6.5%
  - 7 Places 23%, 17%, 15.5%, 13.5%, 12.5%, 10% and 8.5%
  - 6 places 24%, 18%, 17%, 15%, 14% and 12%
  - 5 places 25%, 21%, 20%, 17.5% and 16.5%
  - 4 places 30%, 25.5%, 23% and 21.5%
  - 3 Places 40%, 35% and 25%
  - 2 Places 60% and 40%
  - 1 Place 100%

## **Futurity Champion**

- A Futurity champion will be named in each age division based on the highest money earned.
- In the case of a **tie for the high money earning futurity champion**, the winner will be determined by the **highest point total, calculated as follows:** Open and Non-Pro exhibitors accumulate points on one horse for combined score/points in each age division to determine a high point horse from their respective age group. Points are calculated by the number of entries shown in each class. i.e.: 45 in a class, 1st place gets 45 points, 2nd gets 44, 3rd gets 43 and so on. If needed, the highest number of points calculated under the **tiebreaker** judge will be the final determination.
- In the case of a **tie in a class**, a tiebreaker judge will be used to determine the final placings but the money for the tied places will be added together and split equally. The tiebreaker judge will be announced/posted prior to the start of the show.

Hi Money Overall 4 yr. old Champion must have shown all 4 years and in a cattle class to be eligible for the award.

## **Exhibition**

- The location of the IQHA Ranch Horse Futurity will be recommended by the Ranch Horse Committee then submitted to the IQHA Board of Directors to make the final decision.
- Qualified AQHA-approved ranch judges will judge all classes. All judges' scores will count towards the final placings.
- Equipment regulations relevant to the futurity classes will be guided by the following AQHA rules: Section SHW300-equipment, Section SHW305- western equipment, SHW306- western optional equipment through SHW307.9- western prohibited equipment.
- Owner and Exhibitor of the horse at the time shown must be current members of IQHA.
- A complete photocopy of the eligible horse's AQHA, APHA, or ApHC papers with nomination form and/or entry form must be provided to the Ranch committee. Horse(s) WILL NOT be eligible if the requirement is not fulfilled. Verification of papers may be made with AQHA, APHA, or ApHC before any prize money is paid.

- Any horse and/or exhibitor that is disqualified is ineligible for prize money & awards.
- All paybacks will be determined using the number of horses entered in that class.
- A full refund will only be given if requested prior to the entry deadline. A partial refund may be considered if a horse becomes severely injured, disabled, or deceased, but only if requested a minimum of two weeks prior to the start of the show. Documentation from a veterinarian stating the severity of the debilitating injury or illness is required. Stall, drug, obstacle, and entry fees will be refunded; however, office fees & cattle charges will not be refunded. Illness, accidents, or other incidents concerning people will not be eligible for refund.
- Proof of non-pro (amateur) status from a breed association or a signed declaration stating the exhibitor is a non-pro is required for exhibition in non-pro classes. Non-pro rider must be the owner of the horse or immediate family member of the owner of the horse. No leases allowed.
- In-sufficient funds will be charged a \$30 fee and any earned monies held until payment is confirmed.

## **Classes**

\*Rules adapted from AQHA and VRH Rules 2024 AQHA Rulebook

- Yearling Conformation-Open SHW567.VRH
- Yearling Ranch Prospect Trail at halter-Open SHW561.VRH
- 2-Year-Old Ideal Ranch Horse-Open 50% Rail and 50% Conformation SHW426.VRH
- 2-Year-Old Ideal Ranch Horse-Non Pro 50% Rail and 50% Conformation SHW426.VRH
- 2-Year-Old Fundamentals-Open SHW561.VRH
- 2-Year-Old Prospect Fundamentals-Non-Pro SHW561.VRH
- 3-Year-Old Ideal Ranch Horse-Open 50% Rail 50% Conformation SHW426.VRH
- 3-Year-Old Ideal Ranch Horse-Non Pro 50% Rail 50% Conformation SHW426.VRH
- 3-Year-Old Ranch Trail-Open SHW561.VRH
- 3-Year-Old Ranch Trail-Non Pro SHW561.VRH
- 3-Year-Old Ranch Riding-Open SHW416
- 3-Year-Old Ranch Riding-Non Pro SHW416
- 4-Year-Old Ideal Ranch Horse-Open 50% Rail 50% Conformation SHW426.VRH
- 4-Year-Old Ideal Ranch Horse-Non Pro 50% Rail 50% Conformation SHW426.VRH
- 4-Year-Old Ranch Riding-Open SHW416
- 4-Year-Old Riding-Non Pro SHW416
- 4-Year-Old Working Ranch Trail-Open SHW561.VRH
- 4-Year-Old Working Ranch Trail-Non Pro SHW561.VRH
- 4-Year-Old Working Ranch Horse-Open SHW562.VRH and RHC Ranch Reining and SHW563.VRH and RHC Ranch Cow Work
- 4-Year-Old Boxing-Non Pro SHW510. BOXING

## **Class Rules adapted from AQHA and VRH Rules**

**CONFORMATION: SHW567. VRH RANCH** The purpose of ranch conformation is to preserve American Quarter Horse type selecting well-mannered individuals in the order of their resemblance to the breed ideal and that are the most positive combination of balance, structural correctness, and movement with appropriate breed and sex characteristics and adequate muscling. The ideal VRH Ranch conformation horse should have a natural ranch horse appearance from head to tail.

**SHW567.2** All horses in each division will be shown together as one class: stallions, mares, and geldings.

**SHW567.3** All horses whose registration certificates are marked with a parrot mouth or as a cryptorchid are ineligible to compete in the ranch horse conformation class. All stallions shall be examined to confirm that they have two visible testicles. All stallions and mares shall be examined for parrot mouth. If examination reveals that a horse has parrot mouth or is cryptorchid, such horse should be excused from the ring prior to final placing by the judge regardless of whether the parrot mouth or cryptorchid condition is marked on the horse's registration certificate.

**SHW567.4** Horses are to be shown in a good working halter: rope, braided, nylon or plain leather. Any horse shown in the ranch horse conformation class may not be shown with an allowed lip cord, however a lead shank with an attached chain may be used under the chin or over the nose.

**SHW567.5** As the horse approaches, the judge will step to the right to enable the horse to trot straight to a cone placed 50 feet away. At the cone, the horse will continue trotting, turn to the left and trot toward the left wall or

fence of the arena. After trotting, horses will be lined up head to tail for individual inspection by the judge. The judge shall inspect each horse from both sides, front and rear and place the horses in order of preference.  
**SHW567.6** Exhibitors may enter and show more than one horse in ranch conformation classes.

**YEARLING RANCH PROSPECT TRAIL AT HALTER:** The purpose of this class is to provide exhibitors an opportunity to compete with their yearlings in a performance event and to prepare the yearlings for a performance career as ranch horses without undue physical or mental stress. Yearlings should exhibit a calm and willing attitude while negotiating the course, demonstrating trust and confidence in the handler. They should be courageous, yet cautious, when approaching obstacles. Yearlings are to be shown in a halter only, and exhibitors must use only the right hand on the lead where the chain begins, and lead on the yearling's left side. A chain may be used either under the chin or hanging from the halter. The chain may not be used over the nose. A lead without a chain can be snapped directly to the halter under the chin. Exhibitor must use only the left hand to carry the excess lead, looped loosely, except when:

- a. Carrying an object from one part of the arena to another.
- b. Dragging an object from one part of the arena to another.
- c. Opening/closing a gate, where a change of hands on the gate is acceptable.
- d. Side passing. In this case, the lead at the chain and the excess lead can be held in the hand at the yearling's head.
- e. Sacking out yearling with a saddle pad or blanket.
- f. Demonstrating maneuvers on a lunge line.

Exhibitors should always be poised, confident, courteous, and sportsmanlike. Exhibitors should continue showing until the class has been placed or excused.

Any stops should be straight, smooth, and responsive with the yearling's body remaining straight. Backing and turning should be performed from the left side of the horse. The exhibitor should face the horse when backing. Exception: when negotiating a gate, the exhibitor is not required to face the horse. The horse should back up readily with the head, neck and body aligned in a straight or curved line as instructed. The exhibitor is not allowed to touch the horse at any time with either hand, except when side passing.

**IDEAL RANCH HORSE: SHW425** The purpose of the class is to measure the ability of the horse to be a pleasure to ride and should reflect the versatility, attitude, and movement of a working horse, and have the conformation to be able to do so. Horses will enter the class one at a time, walking towards the judge, trotting past, and then trotting to the rail. Once all horses have entered the class and found a spot on the rail, horses will be shown as a group on the rail. Once the rail portion of the class is finished, horses will be brought to the middle of the arena and unsaddled and asked to stand for conformation judging. 50% of the class is based on rail work, and 50% on conformation. The horse should be well-broke, relaxed, quiet, soft, and cadenced at all gaits. The movement of an ideal ranch horse should simulate a horse needing to cover long distances, softly and quietly. The overall manners and responsiveness of the horse and the horse's quality of movement are the primary considerations. Maximum credit should be given to the horse that has a natural flowing stride and consistent, ground covering gaits. Transitions should be performed when requested, with smoothness and responsiveness. The ideal ranch horse should have a natural head carriage at each gait. The horse should be ridden on a relatively loose rein with light contact and without requiring undue restraint while being responsive to the rider and making timely transitions in a smooth and correct manner. The horse should be soft in the bridle, yield to contact and should not be shown on a full drape of rein. Riders are encouraged to use adequate space given the extension of gaits required. This class should show the horse's ability to work at a forward, working pace while under control by the rider. The horse shall be balanced and appear willing and a pleasure to ride in a group situation.

**SHW426. Class Requirements.**

**SHW426.1** All exhibitors will work as a group. Individuals working off the rail will not be penalized, and passing is permissible.

**SHW426.2** Horses must work both ways of the ring at the walk, trot, and lope. Horses must work at least one way of the ring at the extended trot and extended lope. At the option of the judge, horses may be asked to extend their stride at the walk.

**SHW426.3.** The overall cadence and performance of the gaits should be as those described in SHW334 GAITS with an emphasis on forward, free-flowing, and ground-covering movement.

**SHW426.4.** At the extended trot and lope, the exhibitor may post or stand in the stirrups.

**SHW426.5.** Touching or holding the saddle horn during any extended gait is acceptable.

**SHW426.6** Horses are to be reversed to the inside (away from the rail). They may be required to reverse at the walk or trot at the discretions of the judge but shall not be asked to reverse at the lope.

**SHW426.7.** Horses are required to back easily and stand quietly. Horses may be brought to the center or backed on the rail.

**SHW427. Ideal Ranch Apparel and Equipment**

**SHW427.1.** No hoof polish or hoof black.

**SHW427.2.** No braided or banded manes/tails or tail extensions.

**SHW427.3.** Trimming inside ears is discouraged.

**SHW427.4.** Trimming bridle path is allowed, also trimming of fetlocks or excessive (long) facial

hair. **SHW427.5.** Equipment with silver should not count over a good working outfit. Excessive silver on bridles and saddles is discouraged.

**SHW427.6.** It is suggested competitors use a breast collar and a rear cinch.

**SHW427.7.** When exhibiting in a snaffle bit or hackamore, an exhibitor may switch between two hands and one hand on the reins at any time. **SHW427.7.1** Use of two hands (except junior horses shown in a snaffle bit/hackamore), more than one finger between split reins or any fingers between rom al reins (except in the two rein) shall be cause for disqualification.

**SHW428. Faults scored according to severity:**

Too slow (any gait)

Excessive speed (any gait)

Over-bridled (nose behind the vertical)

Head carried too low such that the poll is below the withers.

Out of frame

Head carried too high.

Break of gait

Wrong lead or out of lead

Failure to take the appropriate gait when called.

Opening the mouth excessively

Draped reins

Use of spurs forward of the cinch

Canted at the lope.

Blatant disobedience (kick, bite, buck, rear, etc.)

**SHW429.** Faults which will be cause for disqualification: Head carried too low and /or clearly behind the vertical excessively and consistently while the horse is in motion, or otherwise showing the appearance of intimidation.

**RANCH RIDING: SHW416** The purpose of the ranch riding class is to measure the ability of the horse to be a pleasure to ride while being used as a means of conveyance from performing one ranch task to another. The horses should reflect the versatility, attitude, and movement of a working ranch horse riding outside the confines of an arena. The horse should be well-trained, relaxed, quiet, soft, and cadenced at all gaits. The ideal ranch horse will travel with forward movement and demonstrate an obvious lengthening of stride at extended gaits. The horse can be ridden with light contact or on a relatively loose rein without requiring undue restraint, but not shown on a full drape of reins. The overall manners and responsiveness of the ranch riding horse to make timely transitions in a smooth and correct manner, as well as the quality of the movement are of primary considerations. The ideal ranch riding horse should have a natural ranch horse appearance from head to tail in each maneuver.

**SHW417.1** Each horse will work individually, performing the required gait maneuvers and a minimum of three optional maneuvers. Horses will be scored based on 0 to 100, with 70 denoting an average performance. Each maneuver will receive a score that should be added or subtracted from 70 and is subject to a penalty that should be subtracted. Each maneuver will be scored on the following basis, ranging from plus 1 1/2 to minus 1 1/2.: -1 1/2 extremely poor, -1 very poor, -1/2 poor, 0 correct, +1/2 good, + 1 very good, + 1 1/2 excellent. Maneuver scores are to be determined and assessed independently of penalty points.

**SHW417.2** One of the 15 approved patterns must be used.

**SHW417.3** The overall cadence and performance of the gaits should be as those described in GAITS, (SHW334 Ranch Riding) with an emphasis on forward movement, free-flowing, and ground covering for all gaits. Transitions should be performed where designated, with smoothness and responsiveness.

**SHW417.4** No time limit.

**SHW417.5** The use of natural logs is encouraged.

**SHW417.6** Posting at the extended trot is acceptable.

**SHW417.7** Touching or holding the saddle horn is acceptable.

**SHW418. Ranch Riding Apparel and Equipment**

**SHW418.1** No hoof polish.

**SHW418.2** No braided or banded manes/tails or tail extensions.

**SHW418.3** Trimming inside ears is discouraged.

**SHW418.4** Trimming bridle path is allowed, also trimming of fetlocks or excessive (long) facial hair.

**SHW418.5** Equipment with silver should not count over a good working outfit. Excessive silver on bridles and saddles is discouraged.

**SHW418.6** It is suggested competitors use a breast collar and a rear cinch.

**SHW418.7** When exhibiting in a snaffle bit or hackamore, an exhibitor may switch between two hands and one hand on the reins at any time.

**SHW419.Ranch Riding Penalties.** A contestant shall be penalized each time the following occurs:

**SHW419.1** One (1) point penalties Too slow (per gait) Over-bridled (per maneuver) Out of frame (per maneuver) Break of gait at walk or trot for 2 strides or less.

**SHW419.2** Three (3) point penalties Break of gait at walk or trot for more than 2 strides. Break of gait at lope, except when correcting an incorrect lead. Wrong lead or out of lead. Draped reins (per maneuver). Out of lead or cross-cantering more than two strides when changing leads. Trotting more than three strides when making a simple lead change. Severe disturbance of any obstacle.

**SHW419.3** Five (5) point penalties Blatant disobedience (kick, bite, buck, rear, etc.) for each refusal.

**SHW419.4** Ten (10) point penalty Unnatural ranch horse appearance (Horse's tail is obvious and consistently carried in an unnatural manner in every maneuver).

**SHW419.5(OP)** Placed below horses performing all maneuvers Eliminates or adds maneuver. Incomplete maneuver. Repeated blatant disobedience. Use of two hands (except junior and level 1 horses shown in a snaffle bit/hackamore), more than one finger between split reins or any fingers between romal reins (except in the two rein)

**RANCH TRAIL: SHW561.VRH** 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 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. The ideal VRH ranch trail horse should have a natural ranch horse appearance from head to tail in each maneuver.

**SHW561.2** 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.

**SHW561.3** 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 of accidents. The 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.

**SHW561.4** 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.

**SHW561.5** The course must be designed using mandatory obstacles and maneuvers plus optional obstacles. Combining two or more of the obstacles is acceptable.

**SHW561.6 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.

**SHW561.7 MANDATORY OBSTACLES AND/OR MANEUVERS.** 1. Ride over obstacles on the ground (usually logs). Walk, trot or lope may be used but only one gait is required. Walk-overs: Walk over no more than five logs no more than 10 inches high and spacing between 26 – 30 inches. The formation may be straight, curved, zig-zagged or raised. Trot-overs: Trot over no more than five logs no more than 10 inches high. The space between logs or poles should be 36-42 inches. The formation can also be straight, curved, zigzagged, or raised. Lope-overs: Lope over no more than five logs no more than 10 inches high. The space between logs should be 6 to 7 feet. The formation can also be straight, curved, zigzagged, or raised. 2. Opening, passing through and closing a hinged swinging gate (not a rope gate): Use gate that will not endanger horse or rider and requires minimum side-passing.



3.6 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. 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 or straight or similarly shaped course which may be elevated no more than 24 inches. 5. Side-pass obstacle: Any object which is safe and of any length may be used to demonstrate the responsiveness of the horse to leg signals. Raised side pass obstacles should not exceed 12 inches. 6. Drag an object: Drag may be a complete figure eight and may begin in either direction. The exhibitor must have the rope dallyed on the saddle horn (half or full dally) for the duration of the drag.

**SHW561.8 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 used to spook a horse. Carry objects 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 coat. Stand to mount with mounting block. Walk through water obstacle. Open gate on foot. Pick up feet. Walk through brush. Ground tie. (Hobbles are allowed) - Lead at the trot.

**SHW561.9** 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.

**SHW561.10 CREDITS AND 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 (cont'd) 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.

**SHW561.11** 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. Penalties are assessed as follows: **1 Point**

**Penalties:** Over-bridled (per maneuver); out of frame (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, except when correcting an incorrect lead; 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.

**10point:** Unnatural ranch horse appearance (Horse's tail is obvious and consistently carried in an unnatural manner in every maneuver) Off-Pattern (OP): Incomplete maneuver; eliminating or adding a maneuver; 3rd refusal; repeated blatant disobedience, and failure to dally and remain dallyed during the drag; use of two hands (except junior and level 1 horses shown in a snaffle bit/hackamore), more than one finger between split reins or any fingers between romal reins (except in the two-rein); failure to open and shut gate, or failure to complete gate. Exhibitors cannot place above others who complete pattern correctly. **Disqualification (DQ):** Lameness, abuse, leaving working area before pattern is complete, illegal equipment, disrespect or misconduct, improper western attire; fall of horse/rider

**Working Ranch Horse: - Open SHW505.1** An approved reining pattern will be used and each contestant will cause his horse to travel at the gait indicated for each part of the pattern. When judging reined work, the judge should refer to the following reined work penalties:

**SHW505.1.1 1/2 point** Not changing leads simultaneously Over or under spin 1/8 turn Jogging first two strides

**SHW505.1.2 One (1) point** Out of lead Out of lead each 1/4 circle.

Slipping a rein in the bridle Scotchling or anticipating a stop Over or under spinning up to 1/4 turn  
Excessive whipping or spurring

**SHW505.1.3 Two (2) point** Lead missed around end or arena past second corner. Not ever changing leads in patterns where there is only 1/2 circle. Failure to run by marker before stop is initiate. Freezing up in turn. Breaking gait (Break of gait is defined as when the cadence of the lope is disrupted or not maintained. Break of gait only occurs from the lope gait). Jogging beyond two strides. On trot in patterns, failure to



“stop” before executing a lope departure. A stop in the first 1/4 of the circle, after a lope departure, is a break of gait.

**SHW505.1.4 Five (5) point.** Spurring or hitting in from of the cinch at any time. Blatant disobedience, defined as kicking, biting, bucking, rearing, striking, or obviously insubordinate.

**SHW505.1.5 0 Score.** Failure to complete the pattern as given. Using two hands on the reins in a bridle or two rein class. Fingers between the reins in a bridle class except in the two-rein class. Horse balking. Bloody Mouth (inside). Illegal Equipment. Leaving the working area before pattern is complete. Fall of horse or rider. Backing more than two strides, when backing is not called for. Jogging more than 1/2 circle or 1/2 the length of the arena. Improper western attire. Failure to work in the proper working order. A judge may blow his/her whistle at any time to terminate the work. If the work is not completed at the time the judge blows the whistle. Failure of an exhibitor to attempt to work the pattern. Abuse. Lameness of the horse.

**SHW563. VRH and RHC RANCH COW WORK.** The ideal Ranch horse must also be a cow horse and this class demonstrates and measures the horse’s ability to do cow work. In addition, the ideal ranch cow horse should have a natural ranch horse appearance from head to tail in each maneuver. Holding the saddle horn is permitted. There is a time limit per horse/rider team to perform the work depending on the division and the time begins when the cow is turned into the arena. If the time has not elapsed and the judge is satisfied that all requirements of the class have been met, the judge should blow the whistle for the exhibitor to cease work. The judge may blow a whistle at any time for the exhibitor to cease work for safety reasons. Judges will give credit for what they have seen. Only the judge may award a new cow to a contestant to replace a cow that will not honor a horse. If the judge awards a new cow, the exhibitor has the option to refuse the new cow by continuing to work. If the exhibitor accepts the new cow, the time for working the cow will start over. If the exhibitor intends to accept the new cow, the exhibitor must pull up immediately. When multiple judges are scoring, any one of the judges may terminate the work or signal for a new cow.

**SHW563.2 CONTENT.** Exhibitors are allotted three minutes to complete the work. When there is one minute left, the announcer will announce, one minute remaining. At three minutes, the announcer will call for time. There are three parts to the class: boxing, fence work and roping or circling.

**Part One – Boxing the Cow:** The rider shall ride into the arena, face the cattle entry gate and signal for their cow to be turned into the arena. The cow shall be controlled on the entry end of the arena for enough time to demonstrate the horse’s ability to hold the cow. If the cow does not immediately challenge the horse, the rider shall aggressively move in on the cow to demonstrate his horse’s ability to drive and block the cow on the entry fence.

**Part Two – Fence Work:** After the cow has been controlled on the entry end of the arena, the rider shall set the cow up and drive it down either side of the arena. The cow should be turned on the fence at least once in each direction. 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.

**Part Three – Roping or Circling:** The exhibitor has the option of circling the cow in the middle of the arena in both directions in lieu of roping. Exhibitors must rope the cow. To rope the cow, the exhibitor must be carrying a rope when the run starts. The exhibitor may pull up after the fence work, take down the rope and proceed to rope and stop the cow. The exhibitor must then 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 two maneuvers: 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 if the cow looks through the loop and the rope pull tight on any part of the animal’s body except the tail or has an illegal catch. The rope may be tied on or dallied. If the exhibitor does not catch, the horse will be given credit for tracking and rating and will be assessed the appropriate penalty per SHW563.3.

**SHW 563.3 CREDITS AND PENALTIES.** All runs begin upon entering the pen; any infractions (such as two hands on the reins, using either hand to instill fear or praise, etc.) are subject to penalty at that time. During Boxing, credit will be given for the horse’s expression and its cow sense (i.e., making moves with little rider assistance); holding, controlling, and turning the cow; the amount of work done; and the degree of difficulty of the work. Credit will be given during Fence Work for making the first run past the center of the arena; making turns right on the cow; and controlling a difficult cow. If Roping, credit will be given for rating and following cow to allow rider the optimal roping position; stopping hard; and staying in the ground during the hold. Credits for each element of Roping range from -1 1/2 to +1 1/2 points. If Circling, credit will be given when the horse works willingly, acknowledges the cow; and gets close enough to the cow to control the circles. Credits for Circling range from -1 1/2 to +1 1/2 points for each direction. Penalties will be assessed as follows:

**1 Point Penalties:** Over-bridled (per maneuver), out of frame (per maneuver), loss of working advantage; Using the corner or the end of the arena to turn the cow when going down the fence; changing sides of

arena to turn cow; for each length horse runs past cow; working out of position; slipping rein; failure to drive cow past middle marker on first turn; two-loop catch in amateur and youth classes.

**2 Point Penalties:** Going around the corner of the arena before turning cow; when working an animal in the open field (at least 20' from the side of arena) and the animal gets within 3 feet from the end fence before being turned; an illegal catch, or failure to catch if roping in amateur and youth classes.

**3 Point Penalties:** Exhausting or overworking the cow before circling or roping; hanging up on the fence (refusing to turn); knocking down the cow without having a working advantage; two-loop catch when roping in open/ cowboy class.

**5 Point Penalties:** Failure to turn the cow both directions on the fence; spurring in front of cinch; Blatant disobedience; use of either hand to instill fear/praise; an illegal catch, or failure to catch when roping, in open/cowboy class.

**10 point:** Unnatural ranch horse appearance (Horse's tail is obvious and consistently carried in an unnatural manner in every maneuver) Off-Pattern(OP): Turning tail; failure to attempt any part of the class (includes no attempt at roping in the open/cowboy divisions); repeated blatant disobedience; schooling after entering the arena prior to calling for cow; schooling horse between cows if new cow is awarded, or complete loss of rope in open/cowboy class; complete loss of rope in amateur or youth classes, once committed to roping; use of two hands (except junior and level 1 horses shown in a snaffle bit/hackamore), more than one finger between split reins or any fingers between romal reins (except in the two-rein). Cannot place above others who complete pattern correctly. Disqualification (DQ): bringing the cow straight over back - wards landing on its back or head with all four feet in the air, lameness, abuse, illegal equipment, disrespect or misconduct, leaving arena before run is complete; improper western attire; fall of horse/rider Note: If the open runs out of time to rope, there will be no credit for the stop/hold maneuver and a 5 point penalty for failure to catch. Riders may still earn credit for tracking/ rating, control/position, and speed/ degree of difficulty.

**Boxing Non-Pro: SHW510. BOXING.** Boxing consists of a reining pattern and single cow work (boxing) on the end of the arena. The goal of this class is to introduce the rider to the "boxing" phase of the cow work. Judging begins when the contestant enters the arena. There shall be no schooling between the completion of the rein work and the cow work, or between cows if a new cow is awarded. The penalty for this is -0-. Each contestant upon receiving a cow in the arena, shall hold that cow on the prescribed end of the arena for 50 seconds, demonstrating the ability of the horse and rider to control the cow. It is legal to hold the reins and romal in one hand (rein hand) while boxing the cow. Time shall begin when the gate closes behind the cow after being let into the arena. The announcer or judge will signal the completion of the 50 seconds with a whistle or horn.

**SHW511. SCORING.** Scoring will be based on 60-80, with 70 denoting an average performance. The same basis of scoring shall apply to both the reined work and the boxing work. In the event of a tie, the entry with the highest cow work will be declared the winner. The judge may blow the whistle at any time to terminate the work. A score of zero will be given if the work is not complete at that time. Each work will be limited to 50 seconds.

**SHW512. Credits,** always maintaining control of the cow, maintaining proper position, degree of difficulty, eye appeal, time worked.

**SHW513. Penalties.** Maneuver evaluations and penalty applications are to be determined independently. The following penalties will be applied to each occurrence and be deducted from the final score:

**SHW513.1** One (1) point loss of working advantage working out of position excessive hollering

**SHW513.2** Three (3) points loss of control and cow leaves end of arena.

**SHW513.3** Five (5) points Spurring or hitting in front of cinch at any time, or excessively whipping or spurring the horse. Blatant disobedience is defined as kicking, biting, bucking, rearing, striking or obviously insubordinate.

**SHW513.4** Score – 0 Turn tail Using two hands on the reins in a bridle or the two-rein, Fingers between the reins in a bridle class, except in the two-rein, balking, out of control, bloody mouth, Illegal equipment, leaving working area before pattern is complete, fall of horse or rider, schooling between rein work and cow work, schooling between cows, if new cow is awarded.

## **2025 IQHA Ranch Horse Maturity Rules**

## **Ranch Horse Maturity Eligibility**

Only 5- & 6-year-old AQHA, APHA, & ApHC registered horses are eligible for the maturity. In order to be eligible, these 5 & 6 year olds have to be sired by a stallion that was enrolled in the futurity for at least one year between the years 2019-2025. Maturity horses do not have to be nominated.

Maturity classes will run concurrent with the VRH and AQHA classes. An open and a limited amateur division will be offered. Classes offered will be:

- 1) Ranch Trail SHW561
- 2) Ranch Riding SHW560
- 3) Working Western Rail SHW426
- 4) Ranch Conformation SHW567
- 5) Ranch Reining SHW562
- 6a) Ranch Cow Work-open SHW563.2
- 6b) Ranch Cow Work-limited amateur SHW564.1

Maturity classes will only be offered if the concurrent class is also offered. Classes offered will be jackpot prize money only, with no futurity money added to the maturity classes. Class entry fees to be determined and indicated on showbill, in addition to any fees related to the show, such as stalls, office costs, cattle fees, etc.

## **Exhibition**

- The location of the IQHA Ranch Horse Maturity will be the same location as the Ranch Futurity.
- Qualified AQHA-approved ranch judges will judge all classes. All judges' scores will count towards the final placings.
- Equipment regulations relevant to the maturity classes will be guided by the following AQHA rules: Section SHW300-equipment, Section SHW305- western equipment, SHW306- western optional equipment through SHW307.9- western prohibited equipment.
- Owner and Exhibitor of the horse at the time shown must be current members of IQHA.
- A complete photocopy of the eligible horse's AQHA, APHA, or ApHC papers with entry form must be provided to the Ranch committee. Horse(s) WILL NOT be eligible if the requirement is not fulfilled. Verification of papers may be made with AQHA, APHA, or ApHC before any prize money is paid.
- Any horse and/or exhibitor that is disqualified is ineligible for prize money & awards.
- All paybacks will be determined using the number of horses entered in that class.
- A full refund will only be given if requested prior to the entry deadline. A partial refund may be considered if a horse becomes severely injured, disabled, or deceased, but only if requested a minimum of two weeks prior to the start of the show. Documentation from a veterinarian stating the severity of the debilitating injury or illness is required. Stall, drug, obstacle, and entry fees will be refunded; however, office fees & cattle charges will not be refunded. Illness, accidents, or other incidents concerning people will not be eligible for a refund.
- Proof of non-pro (amateur) status from a breed association or a signed declaration stating the exhibitor is a non-pro is required for exhibition in non-pro classes.
- In-sufficient funds will be charged a \$30 fee and any earned monies will be held until payment is confirmed.

## **Class Payout:**

The current horse owner, as shown on the registration papers, will receive 90% of the payback, the stallion owner or nominator will receive 10%.

Up to 6 placings will be paid out.

Jackpotted money will be paid back with the following schedule in the open and limited amateur classes. Payback will be awarded in the individual classes only.

**Payout Scale:**

<b><u>Entries</u></b>	<b><u># of Placings</u></b>	<b><u>% of payback to each placing</u></b>
1-2	1	100%
3-4	2	60% and 40%
5-9	3	50%, 30%, and 20%
10-14	4	40%, 30%, 20%, and 10%
15-19	5	35%, 27%, 19%, 12%, and 7%
20 and over	6	30%, 24%, 19%, 13%, 9%, and 5%