



PHSC Ranch Versatility Competition

The PHSC Ranch Versatility Competition promotes the athletic ability and versatility of the horse and is demonstrated in five classes – Ranch Riding, Ranch Trail, Ranch Reining, Ranch Cow Work and Ranch Conformation. The Divisions are Open, Novice, and Youth, with an additional award for Junior Horse. PHSC is an open circuit that utilizes a modified model set forth by the AQHA.

The Classes

Ranch Riding – For ranch riding classes, horses show individually, and the class can be conducted inside or outside an arena. In this class, judges are looking for relaxed, responsive horses with soft and cadenced gaits. The horse should make timely transitions in a smooth and correct manner, plus the horse should be soft in the bridle and yield to contact.

Ranch Trail – Obstacles found in a ranch trail pattern are approximate to those found during the course of everyday work. Judges are looking for a well-trained, responsive and well-mannered horse that can correctly navigate and negotiate the course, and to do so in a correct and efficient manner.

Ranch Reining – Ranch reining measures the ability of the stock horse to perform basic handling maneuvers. This class can be held with or separate from the ranch cow work class; if the two are held together, they are still scored and placed as individual classes. This what the judges are looking for in ranch reining: “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.”

Ranch Cow Work (Boxing) – In the ranch cow work class, rider's level of difficulty is determined by their division level. 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. The horse should exhibit superior cow sense and natural cow working ability without excessive reining or spurring. In the head-to-head working position, the degree of difficulty shall be considered. 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.

Ranch Horse - Gaits, Tack, and Appearance

The horse 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 head carriage at each gait. Posting at the extended trot is acceptable. Touching or holding the saddle horn is acceptable.

GAITS: In all gaits, movement of the ranch riding horse should simulate a horse needing to cover long distances, softly and quietly, like that of a working ranch horse. The following terminology shall apply:

Walk - The walk is a natural, flat footed, four-beat gait. The gait is rhythmic and ground-covering. As in all gaits, the horse should display a level, or slightly above level topline with a bright, attentive expression.

Trot - The trot is a natural two-beat gait demonstrating more forward motion than the western jog.

Extended Trot - The extended trot is an obvious lengthening of the stride with a definite increase in pace. The horse should be moving in a manner as if it were covering a large area on a ranch with an above level topline.

Lope - The lope is a three-beat gait. The lope should be relaxed and smooth with a natural, forward moving stride.

Extended Lope - The extended lope is not a run or a race but should be an obvious lengthening of the stride, demonstrating a forward, working speed. The horse should display an above level topline with a bright, attentive expression.

Tack/Horse Appearance: The use of excessive silver on tack is discouraged, as is hoof black, tail extensions, and other enhancing products. The horse should have the appearance of a true working ranch horse. However, in accordance with the PHSC rulebook and dress code, there will be no penalty for the conditions mentioned above.

Bits/Bridles: Horses may be shown in a snaffle, curb bit, or bosal. Horses six and older should be shown in a curb bit, but this is not required. Two hands may be used in a snaffle or bosal only.

Exhibitor

Western boots, hats, and long sleeve shirts are required in all judged classes. Chaps are optional. Helmets are also allowed in the Youth division, as well as the Open and Novice divisions with approval.