HALTER JUDGING

Horses shall enter the arena at a relaxed walk in a counterclockwise direction. Failure to completely clear the gate at a walk shall require the horse to reenter at the proper walk. The horse shall then strike a trot until reaching its designated position in line, as directed by the ringmaster or judge(s).

When asked, the exhibitor shall walk the horse from the rail to the Ring Master. At the direction of the Ring Master, the exhibitor will walk the horse parallel to the long side of the arena toward the judge(s) for a minimum of thirty (30) feet, turn the horse in either direction, without stopping, and walk the horse back to the starting point [away from the judge(s)]. Without stopping, the exhibitor will turn the horse in either direction and trot the horse parallel to the long side of the arena toward the judge(s) and past the judge(s) for a minimum of sixty (60) feet. The exhibitor will then turn the horse in either direction and trot back to the judge(s) position, where the horse will then be presented to the judge(s). If the exhibitor circles the horse during the trotting process, only one intentional circle at either end will be allowed (total of two circles). Exhibitors are allowed to reposition the horse if it moves ahead of the exhibitor without fear of penalization or disqualification. However, it is within the judge’s discretion to penalize an exhibitor who must do this repeatedly to maintain control of the horse. The horse should stand with front legs square. Back legs should be positioned either squarely or just inside a square. Back legs are permitted to be slightly split with one slightly behind the other as long as all four remain inside the square. The horse should not be stretched under any circumstances. If an exhibitor stands a horse stretched, the judge(s) will ask the exhibitor to reposition the horse. A horse is considered stretched if front legs are in front of the vertical and/or rear legs are behind the vertical. A horse is considered not stretched if all four feet are flat on the ground and at least one front and one rear cannon bone are perpendicular to the ground. After examination, horses shall trot away from the judge back to the rail and around the arena to the end of the line.

After completion of individual presentation, the class as a group must reverse in a clockwise direction and quietly walk single file, with whip at the exhibitor’s side. The lead line must maintain a clearly discernible drape, i.e. the exhibitor must not place their hand on the chain or close enough to in any way restrict natural head and neck motion. Also, the exhibitor may not unnecessarily impede the forward motion of the horse while at the walk. After the last horse has completed one circuit of the arena, the class will reverse back to counterclockwise direction and all entries shall line up on the rail for final placement.