

GROUND HANDLING – OI CLASS

Open to all disciplines and breeds. 4-H'er's can show in this class any time it is offered during the State Show.

Ground Handling Procedures and Scoring System

This class tests the handler's ability to communicate with the horse from the ground by judging a series of maneuvers that require the horse to yield to pressure – forward, backward, and laterally. Maneuvers are selected to be realistic in their application to everyday training. Exhibitor movements should be workmanlike and efficient and the horse should be obedient and cooperative. Evaluating safe and effective ground handling will take priority to the quality of attire or tack.

Each exhibitor will perform a pattern that will consist of no less than seven (7) of the maneuvers listed below. Exhibitors may be asked to work from both the left and right side of the horse during any of the listed maneuvers (switching hands on the lead is permitted).

- A. Square horse for inspection; judge will only walk in front of the horse.
- B. Lead the horse at a walk, jog/trot (or favorite gait for gaited horses only), or back in a straight or curved* line, or a combination of straight and curved* lines.
- C. Extension of walk or trot.
- D. Stop
- E. Answer questions from the judge
- F. Pivots, moving the forehand up to 360°
- G. Move the hindquarters, up to 360° (turn on forehand)
- H. Step away from the horse to the end of the lead while horse remains still
- I. Lower the horse's head (pulling down on the lead or pressure on the poll)
- J. Demonstrate a sidepass
- K. Back the horse while handler remains stationary
- L. Send horse in a circle (either direction), around a marker, or over a pole.

(*Curve = any non-straight line including, but not limited to: any change of direction from gradual turns to distinct turns, circles or portions of circles, or multiple curves to create a shape.)

Poles, barrels, and cones may be used as markers to define maneuver locations and/or parameters. However, the pattern should not take on the appearance of an "In-hand Trail" class.

Hitting/touching/moving these objects will not be scored as penalties, but taken into account when scoring the handler's abilities.

Exhibitors may be asked to work from both the left and right side of the horse during any of the listed maneuvers (switching hands on the lead is permitted). Exhibitors may touch the horse to initiate any lateral movement and when asked to lower the horse's head. The judge will

recognize added degree of difficulty of not touching the horse and this will be reflected in the maneuver score.

Scoring will be on the basis of 0 to 100 with 70 denoting an average performance. Judges will assess each maneuver on a scale from -1 ½ to +1 ½ with ½ point increments in between. In addition to the maneuver score, exhibitors can incur penalty points as listed below.

Penalties

A. One-half (½) point

- (1) Break of gait (walk or trot) up to 1 full stride

B. One (1) point

- (1) Touching horse other than when allowed. It is acceptable to touch the horse to sidepass, move the hindquarters, and lower the head.

C. Two (2) points

- (1) Freeze up: complete loss of forward, backward or lateral movement within a maneuver
- (2) Break of gait (walk or trot) for more than 1 full stride
- (3) Use of hand on halter in any manner
- (4) Touching horse with lead (first offense)
- (5) Incorrect or incomplete answer to the judge's question
- (6) Artificial or overdone showing

D. Five (5) points

- (1) Balking, continued spooking, kicking, biting, rearing, striking
- (2) Failure to complete a maneuver
- (3) Leaving out a maneuver
- (4) Touching horse with end of lead (second offense)

E. Zero (0) score

- (1) Consistent Lameness (DQ from show)
- (2) Illegal attire
- (3) Illegal tack
- (4) Abuse

