

## **WESTERN PLEASURE**

**(A)** A good pleasure horse has a free-flowing stride of reasonable length in keeping with his conformation. He should cover a reasonable amount of ground with little effort. Ideally, he should have a balanced, flowing motion, while exhibiting correct gaits that are of the proper cadence. The quality of the movement and the consistency of the gaits is a major consideration. He should carry his head and neck in a relaxed, natural position and in keeping with the breed standard. He should not carry his head behind the vertical, giving the appearance of intimidation, or be excessively nosed out, giving a resistant appearance. His head should be level with his nose slightly in front of the vertical, having a bright expression with his ears alert. He should be shown on a reasonably loose rein, but with light contact and control. He should be responsive, yet smooth, in transitions when called for. When asked to extend, he should move out with the same flowing motion. Maximum credit should be given to the flowing, balanced and willing horse that gives the appearance of being fit and a pleasure to ride.

**(B)** Horses 6 years old and older must be shown in a bit.

**(C)** Horses 5 years old and younger may be shown in a either bit, hackamore or snaffle bit.

**(D)** This class will be judged on the performance, condition and conformation of the horse.

**(E)** Horses must work both ways of the ring at all three gaits to demonstrate their ability with different leads. At the option of the judge, horses may be asked to extend the walk, one or both ways of the ring. It is mandatory that a moderate extension of the jog be asked for in at least one direction. A moderated extension of the jog is a definite two-beat lengthening of stride, covering more ground. Cadenced and balanced with smoothness is more essential than speed. Riders should sit at the moderated extension of the jog. Lope with forward motion will become the only gait recognized as a lope. Horses are required to back easily and stand quietly. Passing is permissible and should not be penalized as long as the horse maintains a proper and even cadence and rhythm.

**(F)** Horses are to be reversed to the inside (away from the rail). They may be required to reverse at the walk or jog at the discretion of the judge, but shall not be asked to reverse at the lope.

**(G)** Judge may ask for additional work of the same nature from any horse. He/she is not to ask for work other than that listed above.

**(H)** Rider shall not be required to dismount except in the event the judge wishes to check equipment.

**(I)** Horses to be shown at a walk, jog and lope on a reasonably loose rein or light contact without undue restraint.

**(J)** Faults to be scored according to severity:

**(1)** Excessive speed (any gait)

**(2)** Being on the wrong lead

**(3)** Breaking gait (including not walking when called for)

**(4)** Excessive slowness in any gait, loss of forward momentum (resulting in an animated and/or artificial gait at the lope)

**(5)** Failure to take the appropriate gait when called for (during transitions, excessive delay will be penalized)

**(6)** Touching horse or saddle with free hand

**(7)** Head carried too high

**(8)** Head carried too low (tip of ear below the withers)

**(9)** Overflexing or straining neck in head carriage so the nose is carried behind the vertical

**(10)** Excessive nosing out

**(11)** Opening mouth excessively

**(12)** Stumbling

**(13)** Use of spurs forward of the cinch

**(14)** If a horse appears sullen, dull, lethargic, emaciated, drawn or overly tired

**(15)** Quick, choppy or pony-strided

**(16)** If reins are draped to the point that light contact is not maintained.

**(17)** Overly canted at the lope. (when the outside hind foot is further to the inside of the arena than the inside front foot)

**(K)** Faults that will be cause for disqualification, which shall be faults scored according to severity:

**(1)** Head carried too low (tip of ear below the withers consistently)

**(2)** Over flexing or straining neck in head carriage so the nose is carried behind the vertical consistently.