



BENTON COUNTY 4-H HORSE CONTEST OUTLINE

Updated 1-4-24

The following requirements and procedures will be adhered to for county-wide 4-H Horse events and contests held in Benton County, Oregon unless otherwise noted. Except for these special county rules, State rules will be followed. Therefore, members must be familiar with the PNW 4-H Horse Contest Guide (PNW 574) and all other support manuals.

A) GENERAL

1. In addition to the regular classifications of Junior, Intermediate and Senior (*see the Oregon 4-H Policy Manual for competitive age requirements*), there will be two additional classifications: Novice and Walk/Trot. Novice is an optional choice for members in their first year of showing in any horse association (*the year begins October 1*). The decision as to whether or not a member will ride as a Novice will be made by the leader, member and parent. Novice riders are not eligible for all classes, nor are they eligible for State competitions. Walk/Trot is for members of any age that are not yet ready to canter. If a member shows walk/trot, they may show as a Novice their second year.
2. Members may compete in only one of the classifications listed in #1 above. Exceptions include Judging Contest, Horse Bowl, Hippology, Dressage, some Ranch Horse classes, and Presentations.
3. Ties in classes and for awards will be broken by the contestant's showmanship scores. The second tie breaker will be the records score and the third tie breaker will be the judging score.
4. Classes will be combined as necessary. Individual pattern classes of 10 or more will be split.
5. All leaders have the right and responsibility to enforce rules, regulations, and safety guidelines.
6. Any exceptions or deviations from these rules must be approved prior to the event (*clinic, Pre-Fair, Fair, etc.*). Members may petition for a variance by applying to a variance committee (*see section B*). Decisions made by this committee are final.
7. The County Faculty, with the advice of the Superintendents, has the authority to select alternates for all events when appropriate.

B) VARIANCES

Any time a member wishes to deviate from any of the county or state rules or guidelines, the variance process must be used. These are the steps that must be followed:

1. The member must fill out a variance request form. These are available at the County Extension Office. Only the member may ask for a variance.
2. The variance request form must be turned into the County Extension Office by the stated due date. In the event of an emergency situation arising after the due date, the variance request should be turned in as soon as possible.
3. The variance request is given to the variance committee. The variance committee is comprised of the Superintendents. An alternate may be used in cases where a conflict of interest exists.
4. In most cases, the variance committee will arrange a meeting for the member to present the request in person. The member may bring a parent or leader to this meeting if desired.
5. The committee will discuss the request and make a decision. The decision will be written on the variance request form as well as given verbally to the member.

There are three possible outcomes for variance requests. The request can be denied, approved, or approved with conditions. An example of approval with conditions would be allowing the member to show at County Fair, but not at State Fair and not being eligible for high point awards. Decisions reached by the Committee are final.

The variance committee is made up of the superintendents. Committee members should not listen to variance requests from members of their own club. In such cases, a volunteer from another club should be brought in as an alternate committee member.

C) MEMBER

1. Member must be enrolled in 4-H 90 days prior to County Horse Fair in order to be eligible to show at County Horse Fair.
2. Attendance records will go with the 4-H member when transferring to another club.
3. The Superintendents and/or the County Extension Faculty may require a doctor's written permission for a member to participate in a 4-H event.

D) HORSE

1. All horses exhibited at Pre-Fair and County Horse Fair must be the member's project horse(s). Records on all horses shown must be submitted.
2. The same project horse must be used in showmanship, all equitation classes, and trail. Other project horses may be shown in other classes but they might not qualify for State Fair (*see State Fair eligibility rules*).
3. Project horse(s) must be in possession of 4-H member by 90 days prior to County Horse Fair. Members leasing horses for a 4-H project horse must have a lease agreement stating all conditions for the care and use of the horse and stating all parties involved will abide by 4-H, county, and state regulations. One copy of this agreement must be recorded with the Extension Office by 90 days prior to County Horse Fair, and one copy must be kept as part of the member's records. If project horse is owned by the 4-H member or their immediate family, proof of ownership must be documented and included as part of the member's records. Proof of ownership would include at least one of the following: photocopy of breed registration papers, a complete bill of sale, brand inspection, or written proof of ownership that is approved by the superintendents prior to the records due date.
4. No one except the 4-H member may ride a 4-H project horse with the intent to train 90 days prior to County Horse Fair.
5. The Superintendents and/or County Extension Faculty may require a Veterinarian's written permission for a horse to be shown in a 4-H event.

E) COUNTY FAIR PARTICIPATION

1. In order to participate at County Fair with a horse, members must fulfill the following criteria:
 - a. By Pre-Fair, members must have completed the appropriate Advancement steps for all classes in which they desire to exhibit. Benton County follows both the mandatory and recommended guidelines for using the Horse Advancement Program. The 4-H club leader must verify completion of each level.
 - b. Members must attend 75% of the club meetings or two county-wide activities. Riding lessons do not count as club meetings. 4-H club riding meetings do count as meetings.

The following are examples of events that do not qualify as county-wide activities: All horse shows including Western Gaming, Judging Contest, Presentations, Horse Bowl, Pre-fair, and Fair. Refer to the yearly schedule for events that do qualify.

(2) Horse Advancements and Horse Project Records ONLY must be turned in by the specified date before County Horse Fair

- a. A Fair entry form must be submitted by the specified date.
- b. Leaders may be required to turn in attendance records for their club at the June Leaders meeting.

F) STATE FAIR SELECTION

1. In order to be selected for a State Fair team, members must fulfill the applicable participation requirement:

- a. Members must attend 75% of the club meetings or two county-wide activities. Riding lessons do not count as club meetings. 4-H club riding meetings do count as meetings.

The following are examples of events that do not qualify as county-wide activities: All horse shows including Western Gaming, Judging Contest, Presentations, Horse Bowl, Pre-fair, and Fair. Refer to the yearly schedule for events that do qualify.

2. Any behavior deemed inappropriate during the current year will result in a review of the member's eligibility for State Fair.
3. Selection for State Fair teams will be based on State Fair eligibility rules. (*Benton County requires a showmanship score of at least 70 to compete in gaming at state fair.*)

G) SHOWMANSHIP

1. If competing at Fair, all members are required to do showmanship.
2. Patterns will be determined by the judge.

H) EQUITATION

1. Judged on combined rail work and individual patterns.
2. Patterns will be determined by the judge.

I) HUNT SEAT EQUITATION OVER FENCES

1. Horses under 5 years of age are eligible only for the trot-a-pole class.
2. A knowledgeable person appointed by the horse leaders committee must approve each entrant prior to the show.
3. First Year Under Saddle horses are only eligible for the trot-a-pole class and they must have prior approval from the Superintendents by May 1.
4. Novice members are eligible for trot-a-pole and 18" classes only.

5. Riders may enter one class only in jumping (*i.e. the rider may not jump at multiple heights*). Riders are encouraged to progress in levels, but not without considering safety, training, confidence, and/or physical ability. Members may compete in trot-a-pole until they earn a blue ribbon at fair; then they must move up the following year. Members must jump at their age division height in order for that score to be considered for the All-Around Award.
6. To qualify for State Fair in jumping, the horse ridden must be the same horse shown in showmanship and equitation, AND the horse/rider pair must have earned a blue ribbon over a state-qualifying course for the age division (*see State Fair Handbook for details on state-qualifying courses*).

J) DRESSAGE

- a) Member may only ride one English Dressage Test
- b) Member may only ride one Western Dressage Test
- c) For intermediates and seniors – only a test that qualifies for state fair would count for All Around Award
- d) For Juniors and novices - any test would count for All Around Award
- e) Members who qualify for state must ride the same test that they rode at county ** note that Introductory Tests do not count to qualify for State Fair

K) GROUND TRAINING

1. Novice members are NOT eligible for this class.
2. There are three divisions of Ground Training:
 - a. Foals (*current as of January 1*). Foals are not eligible for State Fair.
 - b. Yearlings (*born last year as of January 1*). Colts must be gelded if over 12 calendar months of age. Yearlings are eligible for State Fair.
 - c. Two-year-olds (*born two years ago as of January 1*). Eligible for State Fair.
3. Animals entered in this class may NOT be entered in any equitation class except a mare shown in the Wet Mare and Foal class may be shown in other classes provided such showing does not cause any undo disturbances. (*Note: A wet mare cannot be shown at State Fair.*)
4. Steps performed must be from the list on the ground training scoresheet.

L) 4-H DRIVING

1. Novice members and First Year Under Saddle horses are eligible for this class only with prior approval by the Superintendents by 90 days prior to County Horse Fair.

M) FIRST YEAR UNDER SADDLE

1. Novice members are NOT eligible for this class.
2. Horse may be any age over two years, but must not have been ridden more than 12 months prior to County Horse Fair.
3. Contestants must give the judge a filled-out First Year Under Saddle Score-sheet (*obtained from the show office*) at the time they enter the arena. This scoresheet will contain the list of exercises to be attempted and the order in which they will be done. The member must also indicate the length of time training has taken place.
4. Horse may be ridden in regular equitation classes and shown in Showmanship, but tack and equipment rules for those regular classes must be followed.
5. Horse should have been worked and ridden mainly by the 4-H member, exceptions being initial training of horse by a skilled professional or adult, or if safety is a major concern. 4-H leader should be consulted and/or notified. Judge will take into account the amount of professional training.
6. Cavessons, protective leg wear, running martingales, sidepulls, and other humane training aides may be used.
7. A time limit of 10 minutes maximum will be allowed each contestant.

N) TRAIL

1. Horse must be the same used in showmanship and equitation.
2. The same horse cannot be shown in both trail and in-hand trail.

O) IN-HAND TRAIL

1. Member may only show one horse in the In-Hand Trail class
2. In-Hand Trail does NOT count as a trail score for high point awards.
3. In-Hand Trail DOES count as a specialty class in computing All-Around awards.

P) HORSE PSYCHOLOGY

1. Only Junior, Novice and horseless members may enter this class.
2. Horseless members may use another 4-Her's horse or a leader's horse.
3. Maximum time limit is 15 minutes.
4. Clothing (*English or western*) should follow the general guidelines for showmanship, but need not be as formal.
5. Helmets are required if horse is to be mounted.

6. Halter and lead must be ones you can safely and securely tie the horse up with (*don't use leather show halters*).
7. Contestant should bring a saddle, blanket or pad, and bridle. An assistant may help you carry in your tack.
8. The judge will tell you what steps to do when. You do not need to memorize the order (*see scoresheet for actual required steps*).

Q) **MARKETING**

1. Only Intermediate and Senior members (horse or horseless) may enter this class.
2. Horse should be member's project horse. Horseless members may use another 4-Her's horse or a leader's horse.
3. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes.
4. Clothing (*English or western*) should follow the general guidelines for showmanship, but need not be as formal.
5. Helmets are required if horse is to be mounted.
6. Horse should be well-groomed as if for show.
7. Horse may be shown at halter or under saddle.
8. One properly dressed handler is allowed to show the horse for you.
9. (*see scoresheet for judging criteria*)

R) **DAD POTTER**

1. 4-H members must obtain a Dad Potter form from the show office, get it signed by their leader, and bring it completely filled out to the judge.
2. Benton County 4-H members may participate in Dad Potter in other counties.

S) **HERDSMANSHIP**

1. Every club will be judged every day, regardless of whether or not anyone is showing.
2. Judged periodically during the day between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.
3. Work must be done by the 4-H members, not leaders or parents, except for safety reasons.
4. Completed stall cards are required and must be affixed to the stalls whenever in use.

5. Set times will be designated for decorating stalls, and all work must be completed during that time.
6. Herdsmanship judging may vary depending upon participant numbers and facilities.

T) HORSELESS PROGRAM

1. The 4-H Horseless Program was designed as an introduction to the horse project for youth who do not have and have not had horses. This program gives members the opportunity to learn about horses and to determine if having a horse is something they would like to pursue. Members may show as horseless for 3 years, but they must use a different horse each year.
2. Members may be enrolled in a completely horseless club or they may be a member of a horse club.
3. Horseless members may not own, lease, or rent a horse and they cannot have done so in the past.
4. Once a member has owned, leased, or shown a horse mounted (*even if it was not their own horse*) they are no longer eligible for horseless classes.
5. Horseless members may ride a borrowed horse during 4-H ride meetings and they are encouraged to take lessons outside of 4-H.
6. In order to show a borrowed horse at any show, the horseless member must have worked with the horse at least five times with proper supervision.
7. Horseless members can compete in these classes: showmanship, horse psychology or marketing, in-hand trail, equine art, dummy roping from the ground, ranch identification and skills test, horse judging, hippology, horse bowl, and presentations.
8. Horseless members must keep a record book that includes “*My 4-H Resume*” and “*My 4-H Notes*”. If they want to participate in Pre-Fair or Fair, the Knowledge and Ground Work Advancements must be completed for the appropriate age level (*plus roping level 1 if member wants to compete in dummy roping from the ground*).

U) RECORDS

Medallions are given to any member who receives a score of 90 or above (at the October all county records judging) in the Junior, Intermediate, and Senior age divisions.

To receive a score for records, a complete record book must be submitted for the county judging session by the specified date (usually Oct. 1). This score will be used to award medallions for records as well as count towards the following year’s All-Around Horsemanship

Award. Refer to the county publication “*Keeping the Record Straight*” for guidelines on the order of items in your record book.

Intermediate and Senior members who turn in records at this time are also eligible for county medals and outstanding member awards.

Junior, Intermediate, and Senior members who join mid-year may submit their record book June 1 for scoring by an appointed records judging committee if they want to compete for the All-Around Horsemanship Award.

V) JUDGING and HIPPOLOGY CONTESTS

1. All enrolled horse and horseless members may participate. Cloverbuds may participate, but they cannot be in the arena with horses and they are not scored.
2. Participants must attend the contest in neat and appropriate attire. Boots must be worn.
3. Selection for Spring Classic
 - a. Teams will be made from the top four scores of Intermediates and Seniors of each event at the County Judging/Hippology Contest.
 - b. To qualify, members must have attended 75% of their club meetings and attended at least one county-wide activity by the time registration for the Spring Classic is due.
 - c. Team members are expected to attend practices and other functions related to the Spring Classic. If a team member chooses not to participate in such functions, coaches have the authority to use alternates.
 - d. If a member of the judging team is not present at the State Judging Contest and an alternate is not available, the chaperones and/or coach have the authorization to choose a qualified replacement.

W) HORSE BOWL

1. All enrolled horse and horseless members are eligible to participate. Cloverbuds may participate, but they are not scored.
2. Teams are formed at the county competition by drawing names.
3. Horse Bowl questions will be taken from the following sources according to age divisions:

Juniors: 4-H Horse Project (PNW 587)
 4-H Horse Contest Guide (PNW 574)

Intermediates & Seniors:

All of the above plus:

4-H Hunt Seat & Jumper Manual (PNW 488)

4-H Dressage Manual (PNW 608)

4-H Driving Manual (PNW 229)

4-H Horse Judging Manual (PNW 575)

4-H Ranch Horse Manual

4-H Ranch Horse Contest Guide

4. Selection for Spring Classic

- a. Teams will be made from the top scores of Intermediates and Seniors at the County Horse Bowl Contest.
- b. Five members (*one is an alternate*) will be selected for each team.
- c. To qualify, members must have attended 75% of their club meetings and attended at least one county-wide activity by the time registration for the Spring Classic is due.
- d. Team members are expected to attend practices and other functions related to the Spring Classic. If a team member chooses not to participate in such functions, coaches have the authority to use alternates.

X) PRESENTATIONS

All participating horse project members can earn points towards the “*All Around Award*” given at the Benton County Horse Fair.

1. In order to receive points for the “*All Around Award*” you must provide, a presentation on a horse-related topic. The member must present on a new topic each year.
2. Any of the three types of presentations may be given: demonstration, illustrated talk, and public speech. Members may give more than one type of presentation. Your highest horse presentation score will be used. Impromptu speeches do NOT count towards the “*All Around Award*.” The member must present on a new topic each year.
3. Demonstrations and illustrated talks may be done individually or as a team. Team members must be in the same age division to be eligible for Spring Classic or State Fair.
4. Top presenters may be selected to compete at Spring Classic and/or State Fair. Selected members will be notified.

Y) BAREBACK EQUITATION

1. Judged on combined rail work and individual patterns.

2. Patterns to be determined by the judge.
3. Attire and tack must be consistent with seat ridden.
4. Unsafe riders can be excused at the judge's discretion.

Z) RANCH HORSE

1. Ranch Horse classes may be held at another time than county fair but will still count towards fair awards.
2. The same horse must be used for all Ranch Horse classes.
3. A member can compete in only one roping class. Juniors, novices, walk/trot and horseless members must do dummy roping from the ground (or dummy from horse). Intermediates will rope the calf tracker, and seniors will rope live cattle if offered.
 - a. Members may compete in a lower level roping class but they will not qualify for the Ranch Horse High Point Award, the State contest or the All Around Award.
4. To be eligible for the High Point Ranch Horse Award, the member must enter all 6 ranch horse classes: showmanship, working ranch horse, ranch horse trail, roping, cow working, and ranch identification and skills test (or all classes that are offered at that show).

AA) EQUINE ART

1. All enrolled members may enter equine art. This includes any Creative Writing class as well as any Expressive Arts class, but the entry must be equine-related.
2. Members should follow exhibit guidelines in the Benton County Fair Book for the class they are entering.
3. If members wish to exhibit their art at the regular county fair, they need to submit a fair entry form by the designated county date. Their exhibit will be kept after Horse Fair to check in at County Fair. For County Fair, members need to attend static entry day to be judged. (Register for a judging time by contacting the extension office.)

BB) GREEN HORSE DIVISION – COUNTY ONLY

1. Novice members are NOT eligible for this class.
2. For the purpose of this class a “green horse” is between 2 and 5 years of age, but must have at least 12 months under saddle prior to Horse Fair. A horse that is older than 5 years of age may be used in this class if a variance is approved.

3. This class is intended for horses that are not eligible for First year under saddle but are not yet considered “finished”. The decision to enter this class should be given serious consideration as not all members and their horses are suitable for this project area and should be a true TRAINING project.
4. Contestants must give the judge a filled-out green horse score sheet (*obtained from the show office*) at the time they enter the arena. This scoresheet will contain the list of maneuvers to be attempted and the order in which they will be done. The member must also indicate the length of time training has taken place.
5. The class will consist of rail work as a group, waiting in line & executing an individual pattern.
6. Horse should have been worked and ridden mainly by the 4-H member, exceptions being initial training of horse by a skilled professional or adult, or if safety is a major concern. 4-H leader should be consulted and/or notified. Judge will take into account the amount of professional training.
7. Cavessons, protective leg wear, running martingales, sidepulls, and other humane training aides may be used.

BENTON COUNTY 4-H HORSE AWARDS

Updated as of 2/13/23

All awards are determined by the budget set by the Horse Leaders Project Committee.

Awards will be consistent from category to category.

Medallions are presented to every member who earns a score of 90 or above in a class. When possible, these will be presented at the conclusion of the class.

1. Horse Records Awards

Medallions are given to any member who receives a score of 90 or above (at the **October** all county records judging) in the Junior, Intermediate, and Senior age divisions.

Intermediate and Senior members who turn in records at this time are also eligible for county medals and outstanding member awards.

Junior, Intermediate, and Senior members who join mid-year may submit their record book June 1 for scoring by an appointed records judging committee if they want to compete for the All-Around Horsemanship Award.

2. Horse Bowl Awards

Individual scores are calculated from the county contest using a conversion score. Medallions are awarded to members earning a score of 90 points or above.

3. Judging Awards

Individual scores are calculated from the regional contest using a conversion score. Only conformation classes, performance classes and oral reasons are counted in the judging score. Medallions are awarded to members earning a score of 90 points or above.

4. Hippology Awards

Individual scores are calculated from the regional contest using a conversion score. The following classes are counted in the score: 1 performance class, 1-2 conformation classes, knowledge test, feed test, hay, and individual problem. Medallions are awarded to members earning a score of 90 points or above.

5. Horse Presentation Awards

The county presentation contest is usually held in **March**. Members may give a presentation on any topic, but only those that give one on a horse topic are eligible for these awards. Medallions are awarded to members earning a score of 90 points or above.

6. Horse Leaders Scholarship

Graduating horse members may apply to be considered for these scholarships. Members must have been active in the Horse project for at least three years and must have received a county medal. A committee will select up to three recipients. Applicants need to pick up an application from the Extension Office or get one online. The application form lists all the requirements.

7. **Pre-Fair** – High Point Ribbons for each age division (Novice, Jr., Int. and Sr.) are determined by the following 3 scores: 1. Showmanship (not Ranch Horse Showmanship) 2. Highest Equitation Score (not Walk Trot) 3. Trail (regular mounted trail) NOT in-hand or Ranch.

8. **Fair Book Cover Contest**

All members may submit drawings at the June Leaders meeting. Drawings must meet the following criteria:

- a. must be drawn on white 8 1/2 x 11 inch paper
- b. cannot be in color
- c. should follow the current year's fair theme
- d. needs to have "Benton County 4-H Horse Fair" on it
- e. needs to have the current year on it
- f. needs to be signed by the artist

A committee will choose a first, second, and third place drawing. The first place drawing will be on the cover of the Horse Fair Book and will receive a check for \$30. The second place drawing will be on the back of the Horse Fair Book and will receive a check for \$20. The third place drawing will receive a check for \$10.

9. **"Doer of Good Deeds" Award**

At Horse Fair, leaders are issued tickets to hand out to any 4-H member they see doing a "good deed." Members write their name on the tickets and turn them in to the box at the superintendent's table. Names are drawn daily at the judges meetings.

10. **Golden Shovel and Broom Award**

The Horse Fair herdsmanship judge will select the highest scoring club to receive this award.

11. **Character Counts Award** This award is to be given to the member who best exemplifies the attributes of character, integrity and sportsmanship. The member can be of any age or skill level. In selecting the member from your club to nominate consider the following attributes.

1. CLUB FOCUS --- This member should be unselfish and committed to the club over individual performance. The member should be willing to help out in any way that benefits the club and its members.

2. ATTITUDE --- This member should have a positive attitude.

3. ROLE MODEL --- This member should be a positive role model for members of your club both in modeling good character and mentoring younger members. This member should display respect and cooperation in dealings with adults, officials and other 4H members

4. SPORTSMANSHIP --- This member should display good sportsmanship and respect to volunteers, officials, members of other clubs and parents. This sportsmanship should be displayed in the face of disappointment and adverse as well as in the face of success.

5. INTEGRITY --- This member should be should be committed to doing what is right.

Process for Character Counts Sportsmanship Award

Each club may nominate one member for this award. Information on what the applicant has done should cover the entire 4-H year, fair included. Applications must be turned in to the fair office by 5:00pm on Saturday of horse fair. The sponsor will review the nominations and

select the winner (an interview may be included). All nominations will receive a certificate at the horse fair awards ceremony, and the winner will be announced.

12. Knowledge High Point Award

Awards are given in the junior, intermediate, and senior divisions for the two highest combined scores from Judging, Hippology, Horse Bowl, and Presentations.

13. High Point Showmanship

An award for the highest scoring individual in the novice, junior, intermediate, and senior age divisions.

14. All Around Gaming Awards

To be eligible, members must have received a time in all six western gaming events. The times from the six events are added together and the lowest time is the winner. Rosettes are given in the novice, junior, intermediate and senior age divisions. Ties are broken as stated in the Benton County 4-H Horse Contest Outline.

15. High Point Ranch Horse

To be eligible, the same horse/rider pair must be used for every ranch horse class. They must also compete at the appropriate level for their age division. An award is given in the junior, intermediate, and senior divisions for the top two highest combined score from all Ranch Horse classes (roping, ID test, working ranch horse, cow working, ranchmanship and ranch horse trail).

16. Performance High Point Age Division Awards

An award is given for novice, junior, intermediate, and senior divisions to the top two highest combined scores from three classes: showmanship, trail, and the highest equitation score. Ties are broken as stated in the Benton County 4-H Horse Contest Outline.

17. All Around Benton County 4-H Horsemanship Award

An award is given in the novice, junior, intermediate and senior age divisions to the top two individuals. Ties are broken as stated in the Benton County 4-H Horse Contest Outline. Points are totaled from the following classes:

- records
- presentation
- horse bowl (score converted to 100 point basis)
- judging (score converted to 100 point basis)
- hippology (score converted to 100 point basis)
- showmanship
- Two highest equitation scores
- trail
- horse psychology or marketing
- two highest scores from one of the following:
 - reinsmanship
 - precision driving
 - ground training

first year under saddle
green horse
hunt seat equitation over fences
dressage (conversion score used)
in-hand trail
any ranch horse class
any western gaming event (conversion score used)