Recommendations for Pennsylvania 4-H Horse Program and 2012 State 4-H Horse Show Rule Changes

4-H Horse Program Advisory Committee
April 26, 2010

Please note:

* These are PROPOSALS ONLY.
* Wording of proposed rules IS NOT FINAL. Proposals may be changed, accepted, or rejected after review by Advisory and Development Committees.
* IF approved by the PA 4-H Horse Program Development Committee, rules will become effective in 2012. Rulebook supplements will NOT be printed in 2011 and beyond, unless there is an extenuating circumstance or safety issue.
* Item in parenthesis indicates the district or committee proposing rule change.
  DC = Development Committee; AC = Advisory Committee; RD = Regional Directors

General Horse Program Concerns

1. In regards to ongoing plans and discussions to move the State Show to earlier in the year, we would like to not see the show moved to the month of August due to fairs, nor continue to be held in October due to the Quarter Horse Congress. (VIII) No action taken

2. Try to keep a fair time frame between when production show info comes out and show entry deadlines. (X) There was a concern with the late entry notification in 2009. Late notification was the result of the uncertainty in state funding and the potential need to adjust fees. Entry information was provided as soon as fees were finalized. Every effort is made to provide information in a timely fashion.

3. More detailed Judge’s score sheets for more classes. (XI) No action taken

4. Develop recreational activities/project to include riding recognition/saddlelog program, trail riding, non-show activities, etc. Report from committee. (DC) The DC is working on development of a recreational riding program.

5. Consider revision of current calendar of 4-H horse events to change dates of county, district and state shows to earlier in the year. This would allow more time for program planning, curriculum development, and planning for events in subsequent calendar years. Also consider various options for qualification for state show. (DC) It was moved and seconded to consider revision of the 4-H horse program calendar. Revisions to be made to allow more time for program planning. It was suggested that members will not have time to adequately prepare for qualifying shows if the state show is held earlier in the year. It was noted that many states with climates that limit winter and early spring riding have state shows earlier in the year but some do not have district qualifying shows. Motion passed. It was moved and seconded that the DC consider realigning districts. There was concern that counties may not have programs large enough to host district shows. It was noted that some districts are not rotating counties to host shows, district show committee plans and conducts shows. Consideration of extension administrative regions should also be a part of the discussion. Districts are asked to provide specific suggestions for show dates, methods of qualification, district realignment, etc. to the DC. Motion passed 6 yes to 4 no.

6. Continue work to further develop endowment funds to support the program for the future and fund new positions to work with 4-H Horse Program. (DC) See earlier discussion in minutes
General Rules
1. Consider use of a Danish system in addition to standard placing. (IV) It was moved and seconded to have the DC consider the use of the Danish system as a form of recognition in addition to a standard placing. Would recognize achievement even if individual does not qualify for next level of competition. It was suggested that consideration be given to requiring a blue merit ribbon to advance regardless of class placing. We are already moving in this direction with minimum scores required in some classes. Motion passed 7 yes to 3 no.
2. Rule 13, page 3; In order to increase participation, should the rule be changed to allow two members to share a horse: one for production, the other for performance? (question to DC) No action taken.
3. Question regarding an incident that occurred at a district show. The judge did not do rail work in a class that included a pattern. Placed the class on pattern work only. Exhibitors were asked to return for further judging. The first place exhibitor did not return. How should this have been handled? Rule 7, page 10 of the current rule book covers this issue. The show committee followed the rules by evaluating the situation and requiring exhibitors to return for further judging. No further action taken and no changes to rules were recommended.

Production Rules – no recommendations

Performance Rules
1. Add a walk-trot equitation class for members under 11 years old; the same as is offered at a regional show. (I) Does this apply to all divisions?? Moved and seconded. Motion defeated.
2. Equipment needs to be described in more detail. (XI) Does this apply to all classes? Moved and seconded. Motion defeated.

Open Division
3. Add County Team class. (I) Moved and seconded. Motion defeated.
1. Add English Pleasure Pairs class. (I, IX) Moved and seconded. Motion tied. Moves on to DC for further discussion
2. Add Western Pleasure Pairs class. (I, IX) Moved and seconded. Motion tied. Moves on to DC for further discussion.
3. Bring back the pairs classes, combining the English and Western pairs. (IV) Moved and seconded. Motion defeated 2 yes to 8 no.
4. Bring back pairs class. (IX) No further action.
5. Allow Grooming and Showmanship to be performed with your driving horse or your performance horse (if you have two). (IV) Moved and seconded. Motion passed. 7 yes to 3 no.

Western Division
1. Page 42, class 15, Novice Reining; Evaluate the current rules and begin moving this back towards reining and not a horsemanship pattern. It is also suggested that in order to place in the top ten at the State Show, an entry must also meet a minimum score which should be slightly higher or at least equal to the District Show qualifying score. (VIII). Moved and seconded to add reining as a state level class. Exhibitors to choose one class, novice reining or reining. Motion passed. 6 yes to 4 no.

Contest Division
1. Open Contest Classes to all disciplines. (IV) Motion dies for lack of a second.
2. Add a class for small contest ponies 13 hands and under. (VII) Moved and seconded. No entry data to support the need for this class. Motion defeated.
3. Page 47, g; Change sentence structure to be easier to follow. Suggested wording: Prior to the start of each individual performance, the gate should be closed until officials and conditions in the arena are ready for the exhibitor. (new paragraph) The animal must be under control as it enters through the gate. Running of the gate is not permitted. The gate must be closed as soon as the exhibitor enters the arena, and must remain closed throughout the performance, however, exhibitors may begin their
Contest Division (cont.)

pattern as soon as they have entered the arena. Once the contestant has entered the arena, they have one minute to commence their performance. (IX) Addressed in the 2010 rule book.

4. Add cutback class. (IX) Motion dies for lack of a second.

5. Consider age divisions for contest classes, both for horse and pony (jr./sr.) (X, XI) Moved and seconded. This would add 6 additional classes to qualifying shows and the state show. This is the only division that does not have an age division. Motion passed.

Saddle Seat Division

1. Pages 51-53; Clarify the Saddle Seat division information to accommodate gaited breeds of horses. For instance, “appropriate gait” needs to be defined. (I) Addressed in the 2010 rule book.

Hunt Seat Division

1. Pages 59-60, Classes 37 and 38, Working Hunter Horses and Working Hunter Ponies; Under Courses and Fences: Change last sentence of third paragraph to read: “A hunter course shall have at least one change of direction. It is suggested that there be at least one combination” (I) Addressed in the 2010 rule book.

2. Add a low Working Hunter class, where horses would jump a fence height of 2’6”. This would allow those riders not ready to jump the higher fences a chance to ride a regular course instead of just two jumps. (I, X) Moved and seconded with an amendment to include the jump heights as specified in item 3. This would be an introductory level class. Would not be permitted to show low/green working hunter and working hunter. Motion passed.

3. Add a Low Working Hunter Pony Class where large ponies would jump 2’3”, medium/small ponies would jump 2’. This would allow those riders not ready to jump the higher fences a chance to ride a regular course instead of just two jumps. (I) See motion and discussion under item 2.

Driving Division

1. Add obstacle driving as a class. (IV) It was moved and seconded to add obstacle driving. This class has been conducted at the district level. Requires a lot of time and volunteers. Concern for safety expressed. Suggested that the class be reinsmanship rather than obstacle driving. Motion dies for lack of a second. Moves on to DC for further discussion.

2. In Draft Horse Driving, page 69, General Specifications; Restate to say that passing is permitted for safety reasons only. (IX) Motion dies for lack of a second.

3. Add Draft Horse Driving Trail. (XI) No further action. Refer to item 1.

Miniature Division

1. Miniature Driving, page 71-73, but rule referred to is on page 67 of Driving Division. Change rule so that an attendant would not be required for older members (14 and over?) when driving. Would still need an attendant when cart stops. (X) Motion dies for lack of a second.

2. Miniature Horse Driving, page 71-73, but rule referred to is on page 67 of Driving Division. Can the driver pass a test so that we don’t need two people in the cart?—or if they are a senior, can they drive without a helper? It’s hard for those little ones to pull that weight. (XI) It was moved and seconded to have Level 1 Horsemanship Skills adapted for driving to test the exhibitors ability. This would apply to Miniature Horse Driving only. A draft set of skills has been written. There is a concern with the availability of knowledgeable examiners. Testing would need to be done at a district or regional level. Motion rescinded. Moved and seconded to permit senior in Miniature Horse Driving to drive without an attendant if they pass a driving skills test. A header in the line-up would be required. Motion passes. 6 yes to 4 no. A motion was made to have the same requirements for junior exhibitors. Motion dies for lack of a second.

Therapeutic Riding Division – no recommendations
General State Show Concerns

1. In production: stock halter (grade) judged by western judge, not English. (IV) It was noted that all of the state show judges are qualified to judge production division. Not always possible to have the western judge do the grade stock type division because of time and schedule constraints.

2. The in-hand practice was very difficult for production horses and showmanship horses at the same time. We suggest that the arena be split in half with production horses on ½ and showmanship horse on the other ½. (VIII) Suggested that cones be available to divide ring and familiarize young horses with cones.

3. Like the schooling of the jump and trail course ahead of time. (IV)

4. Trail practice the night before was good. (XI)

5. There was a significant improvement in the Over Fence and Trail classes. We appreciate the hours of dedication put into making the new exercise schedules work within the time frames available! We also appreciated the area blocked off in the arena to warm up before Trail. (VIII)

6. Would like to see an exercise period or a short warm up for exhibitors in other pattern classes, such as equitation, as in the open exercise periods, they would be not so pleasantly told that they were not going in the right direction. With this year’s crummy weather, there was not an area for equitation patterns to be safely practiced in accordance with the rules and specifically for the Stock Seat Equitation classes, it was very unfair to the exhibitors that obeyed the postings that the Equine Arena was closed during the recognition ceremony and gave an unfair advantage to those that willfully chose to ignore the closed signs. (VIII) No supervision was available during recognition ceremony to have the ring open for practice. Wanted all volunteers and show committee members to have the opportunity to see the recognition ceremonies.

7. The Equine Arena was posted as Closed during the recognition ceremony but many exhibitors chose to ignore the signs and practice in the arena. We are extremely disappointed with the decision of these exhibitors to willfully disobey the postings especially when they signed a Code of Conduct and have taken the ethics program. (VIII)

8. Could there be a better warm up area? (IV) Will discuss with Farm Show staff regarding availability. Cost of constructing new warm-up areas is prohibitive.

9. Show officials did not monitor use of warm up ring, so it was taken over by jumpers. (XI) The warm up area was monitored periodically as volunteers and show staff were available to help. Should exhibitors be required to wear numbers for warm-up session? This is very difficult to manage effectively. How would numbers be distributed to exhibitors that arrive while office is closed?

10. Show staff was rude and nasty. (XI) Every effort is made to encourage show staff to be courteous. Show management continually strives to address show participants’ concerns in an appropriate manner. Additional information is needed regarding situation(s).

11. More monitors needed in show ring to watch riders since things were allowed at State that had riders disqualified at county and district shows. (XI) Additional information needed regarding situation(s).

12. We know we can’t fool Mother Nature, but the lunge pens were full of water and basically unusable. (Could footing have been turned over to the center to try to drain the water in the tracking circle?). (VIII) General consensus – prefer having 3 smaller pens available.

13. Lunging pens—not enough, not big enough, and dangerous. People in the areas were rude and ignored show personnel. (XI)

14. Suggested to move the recognition ceremony to a different time in the show schedule to allow for more exhibitors to attend. (V) Concern that not all exhibitors stay through Saturday. In general, this concern would hold true no matter when the recognition ceremony is held.

15. We liked the use of the Old Arena for the recognition ceremonies and would like to see the ceremony remain in the old arena. We enjoyed the use of the spotlight for introducing the 4-Hers from each district as they entered the arena. However the use of the spotlights during the entire ceremony made it difficult to see the winners and difficult to capture with a camera. However, it was a very nice ceremony overall and we enjoyed the display and pictures in the lobby as well. (VIII) It was suggested that we have 4-H’ers sing the National Anthem at the start of the recognition ceremonies. Could this be considered at the start of each session in each of the arenas?
16. Concern on the difficulty in hearing announcements directed toward the barn areas. (V) Show committee recognizes the problem but it is out of our control. It has been reported that it is in the 2010 Farm Show plan to have a new sound system installed.

17. Concern on footing in the Equine Arena for contest horses. (V) Show management recognizes that this was an issue and will make every attempt to resolve the situation for 2010. Farm Show staff overwatered the arena.

18. Footing in the Contest classes was poor. (XI)

19. Riders in contest classes were hitting in front of the horse’s neck and were not disqualified. (XI)

20. Riders in the Pole Bending classes were running the gate. (XI)

21. Concern about unloading trailers at the North Hall due to lack of designated parking areas. (V) This as a temporary issue that was addressed during the show.

22. There was a significant improvement in the quality of exhibitors in Western Riding. We are assuming this is due to Districts choosing Judges that can use the scoring system correctly, but regardless of the reason, the class this year was much more enjoyable to watch. (VIII)

23. In the production classes: class locations and order were changed with very little warning, trouble hearing announcements in barn. (IV) It was noted that some changes in class order were made because of conflicts with classes in the large arena. Changes in order shown were made only when all exhibitors were present for a class. No exhibitors missed a class because of a change in the order they were judged.

24. Please look at rotating the class schedules. We understand that the Committee has to schedule the classes based on the days each division judge it to be there, but there must be a way to keep the same number of days for each judge but change the days they are there so that the Western classes are not always last. (VIII) This is a challenge and management recognizes that more spectators would be on hand if the show schedule were changed to have western classes shown at a different time. As discussed earlier, suggestions for changing the schedule will be considered.

25. Concern with food vendor issue (little variety and expensive). (X) The show committee has no control or options. Vendors change from year to year. Food service information is included in state show information and it is noted that food selection is limited and that hours of availability are also limited. Cannot plug in crock pots, etc. because the show is charged differently than other events. Show is charged a fee for each electrical outlet used.

26. Have the dance when all kids can attend or not at all. (XI) Suggestions are welcome but it is difficult to pick a time when all exhibitors and 4-H members are free to attend.