

2025 PROPOSED RULE CHANGES – November 18, 2023 – *Changes are in RED*

#1a: COMBINE DIVISION WEIGHT CLASSES INTO ADULT CLASS (A TEMPORARY ONE-YEAR ACTION)

SECTION 4 – DIVISIONS, CLASSES, AND ELIGIBILITY

B. Classes

1. Heavyweight and Lightweight classes are combined into an Adult class on a temporary basis for the 2024/2025 ride year and will revert to 2022 rules unless extended by the National Board of Directors.

Rationale: Continue current year-to-year approval process. In the 2023 ride season, merging the Heavyweight and Lightweight classes into a single ADULT class yielded the desired results. There were many fewer tiny classes (<3 competitors) and while there were some large classes (>10 competitors), the number wasn't large and was still much less than experienced in NATRC historically. Heavyweights may be at a disadvantage competing with lightweights, but without the merger, many classes essentially would have no real competition. By making the change temporary, it is slightly easier to reverse this change if ridership improves.

OR

#1b: COMBINE DIVISION WEIGHT CLASSES INTO ADULT CLASS (MAKE PERMANENT)

SECTION 4 – DIVISIONS, CLASSES, AND ELIGIBILITY

B. Classes

1. Open, Competitive Pleasure and Novice Divisions will offer Adult and Junior Classes. ~~Heavyweight and Lightweight classes are combined into an Adult class on a temporary basis for the 2024 ride year and will revert to 2022 rules unless extended by the National Board of Directors.~~

Rationale: Discontinue current year-to-year approval process. In the 2023 ride season, merging the Heavyweight and Lightweight classes into a single ADULT class yielded the desired results. There were many fewer tiny classes (<3 competitors) and while there were some large classes (>10 competitors), the number wasn't large and was still much less than experienced in NATRC historically. Heavyweights may be at a disadvantage competing with lightweights, but without the merger, many classes essentially would have no real competition. By making the change permanent, competitors know this is what to expect going forward for sometime.

#2: HORSE SCORECARD

- A. **SECTION 6 – JUDGING** Procedures: The judges may act together and discuss individual entrants throughout the course of the ride.
 2. Start of Competition
 - a. For the purposes of scoring ~~trail ability/manners-maneuvering trail/behavior~~, soundness and horsemanship, the horse and rider shall be considered in competition from the moment that the horse is presented to the judges for preliminary examination.
 5. Final Examination: There must be a final examination (including condition, soundness, and ~~manners-maneuvering trail/behavior~~) of all horses by the veterinary and horsemanship judges after the completion of the final day's ride.
- B. Veterinary Judging: Judges shall not discriminate against any animal due to conformation or type as long as the animal performs satisfactorily. Horses are to be evaluated on the following three criteria: condition, soundness and ~~trail ability/manners-maneuvering trail/behavior~~. Leisure Division does not have to adhere to these scoring categories.
 3. ~~Trail Ability/Manners-Maneuvering Trail/Behavior~~ 15%: The evaluation of ~~trail ability/manners-maneuvering trail/behavior~~ shall include, but not be limited to, the following: disposition, response to rider, kicking, head tossing, prancing, standing for examination and mounting, buddying up, trail wise, etc.
- D. Leisure Division. Horses will be evaluated on ~~trail ability and manners-maneuvering trail/behavior~~. Riders will be evaluated on equitation and partnership with the horse. Safety may be scored.

Rationale: This is a move towards more balanced judging among veterinarians. The focus is on horse condition and soundness, less on maneuvering trail/behavior.

#3a: MAKE THE HIGH RIDE AWARD A COMINATION AWARD AND SPLIT POINTS

SECTION 9 - AWARDS

A. Ride Awards

4. The horse and rider teams with the highest combined (horse and horsemanship) scores from the Open, Competitive Pleasure and Novice Divisions shall be the recipients of the Open, Competitive Pleasure and Novice ~~High Point Combination Sweepstakes~~ Awards.

C. Point Distribution

4. The Open, Competitive Pleasure and Novice High Point Combination Sweepstakes winners will receive the highest points possible for their horse and horsemanship placing based on the number of starters in the largest class of their respective division.
5. The High Point Combination Sweepstakes winner will receive points for horse and horsemanship, in addition to other points won for horse and horsemanship, as follows: +3 points for a Type AA ride, +2 points for a Type A, +1 point for a Type B.

Rationale: Making the high award a combination award of both horse and horsemanship allows the best team to take high honors. The team is fit and can perform the trail skills required. Points are split between horse and rider cards to reward both halves of the team.

Example: There is a full class (6) of ADULT competitors and three competitors in the JUNIOR class in a Type-A ride. A JUNIOR who took 1st in horse and 3rd in horsemanship has the highest combined score and wins Sweepstakes. Without the Sweepstakes award, the JUNIOR horse would earn 10 points and horsemanship would earn 6 points. Sweepstakes awards the JUNIOR more points in two ways:

1. The ADULT class was larger, and the JUNIOR beat all the ADULT horses. As the top ADULT horse earned 16 points, so does the JUNIOR horse. The JUNIOR horsemanship placing though was third, and the ADULT 3rd place horsemanship placing earned 12 points, therefore the JUNIOR horsemanship score is increased from 6 to 12 points.
2. Because this is a Type-A ride, both the JUNIOR's horse and horsemanship scores are increased by an additional 2 points; that is, the final JUNIOR points are 18 (16+2) for horse (1st place) and 14 (12+2) for horsemanship.

OR

#3b: MAKE THE HIGH RIDE AWARD A COMINATION AWARD AND AWARD POINTS TO HORSE

SECTION 9 - AWARDS

A. Ride Awards

4. The horses-horse and rider teams with the highest combined (horse and horsemanship) scores from the Open, Competitive Pleasure and Novice Divisions shall be the recipients of the Open, Competitive Pleasure and Novice High Point Combination Sweepstakes Awards.

C. Point Distribution

4. The Open, Competitive Pleasure and Novice High Point Combination Sweepstakes winners will receive the highest points possible for their horse placing based on the number of starters in the largest class of their respective division.
5. The Sweepstakes winner will receive points, in addition to other points won for horse, as follows: +3 points for a Type AA ride, +2 points for a Type A, +1 point for a Type B.

Rationale: Making Sweepstakes a combination award of both horse and horsemanship allows the best team to take high honors. Allowing all extra points to go to the horse follows NATRC tradition.

Example: There is a full class (6) of ADULT competitors and three competitors in the JUNIOR class in a Type-A ride. A JUNIOR who took 1st in horse and 3rd in horsemanship has the highest combined score and wins Sweepstakes. Without the Sweepstakes award, the JUNIOR horse would earn 10 points and horsemanship would earn 6 points. Sweepstakes awards the JUNIOR more points in two ways:

1. The ADULT class was larger, and the JUNIOR beat all the ADULT horses. As the top ADULT horse earned 16 points, so does the JUNIOR horse. The JUNIOR horsemanship points are left unchanged at 6.
2. Because this is a Type-A ride, the JUNIOR's horse score is increased by an additional 2 points; that is the final JUNIOR points are 18 (16+2) for horse (1st place) and 6 for horsemanship.

#4: NATRC'S HIGHEST AWARD

SECTION 9 - AWARDS

B. Annual Awards

2. National Awards

- a. PRESIDENT'S NATIONAL "JIM MENEFFEE" CUP (Combined Horse & Horsemanship National Sweepstakes Champion): This award will be presented annually to the overall high point horse and rider team in the Open Division.
- b. JIM MENEFFEE MEMORIAL PRESIDENT'S CUP: (Combined Horse & Horsemanship): This award will be presented annually to the overall high point horse in the Open Division.

Rationale: With the highest ride award going to the combination of horse and rider scores, it would be consistent for the highest year-end award to go to a horse and rider team. As the top honor, this change would recognize the best of everything we do in our sport.

#5: STABLING

SECTION 5 – THE RIDE

B. Stabling

4. Stabling options **not allowed** during competition as primary containment:
 - a. Hobbling of any kind
 - b. Portable panels that are not securely anchored to a trailer or a tree
 - ~~c. Electric fencing~~
 - d. Staking out in any manner
 - e. Stallions in portable panels.
5. Stabling options **never** allowed during competition:
 - a. Electric fencing (electrified or not)