

2026 NCRC Class Judging Guidelines For Game Shows

- Rider will be disqualified for hitting your horse with any NCRC's equipment.
- All lead liner's handler must make an honest attempt to stay with or behind the horse's head in anyone class. (10 second penalty)
- The Lead Liner division cannot exceed a walk or control trot. (One warning and then disqualified)
- A rider who is 5 or under must have a spotter and that spotter must be 13 or over.
- A Lead Liner's spotter must have a hand on the rider who is 5 and under. (Disqualified)
- All rider/horse must enter in or depart at a walk.
- All riders must be alert, cognizant, and in self-control of his/her body
- Any Lead liner handler must be at least 13 and over.
- Enter and depart through the cones to avoid disqualifications.
- All age groups will have the same points and disqualifications.
- Anyone under 18 must wear a helmet whether a rider, handler, or spotter.

Bat Race	Rider rides down to designated area, dismounts, hands the horse to a horse holder, receives a bat, puts one's head to ban with the bat on the ground, spins the number of times according to age group, remounts the horse, and runs back to the finish line. (12 and under—3 spins; 13 to 17—5 spins, and 18 and over—8 spins)
Balloon Race	Rider picks up a balloon at the gate, rides down to the designated area, hands the horse to the horse holder, sets on the balloon until it pops, remounts his/her horse, and rides to the finish line.
Big "T" Race	The course is made up of Markers* where the horse and rider form a "T." For each pole or barrel that is knocked over, a five (5) second penalty will be added. If off course, the rider will be disqualified.
Boot Lace or Christmas tree	The rider/horse goes through the first set of poles, turns left and goes through the second set of poles on the left, crosses over to the third set of poles, goes around the barrel and then goes to the fourth set of poles on the right, crosses over to the fifth set of poles, and then races through the first set of poles to the finish line. A five (5) second penalty for each knocked down marker. If off course, the rider will be disqualified.
Buddy Barrels	Rider rides down to the end of the arena, goes around the barrel, and picks up his buddy who is standing on top of the barrel. A five (5) second penalty will be added if a barrel is knocked over. Disqualified if one or both of riders fall off.
Candy Cane Pole Bending	Pole bending is a timed event that features a horse and one mounted rider, running a weaving or serpentine path around six poles arranged in a line. Knocking over a pole will result in a five (5) second penalty for each knocked down pole. Failure to follow the course shall result in a disqualification.
Candy Cane Race	Rider rides down to designated area, dismounts, hands the horse to a horse holder, receives a candy cane, puts one's head to top of candy cane on the ground, spins the number of times according to age group, remounts the horse, and runs back to the finish line. (12 and under—3 spins; 13 to 17—5 spins, and 18 and over—8 spins)
Carrot Race	The fun class will require the rider to get their horse to "follow them" to the finish line by using a carrot! The rider must go around the barrel before he/she dismounts to get the carrot. Also, the rider cannot touch his/her horse once the carrot is in her/his hand and must cross the finish line at approximately at the same time with the horse. The rider will be disqualified as being off course if he/she does not go around the barrel, touches the horse after the carrot is in hand, or if the horse goes across the finish line before rider.

***Markers** may consists of poles, barrels, or cones.

Cat's Cradle	May start left or right of first barrel. Proceed to the outside of the second barrel, go around the third barrel, proceed to the outside of the fourth barrel and exit on the opposite side of barrel one. A five (5) second penalty for each knocked down barrel. Failure to follow the course shall result in a disqualification
Chip Race	The rider puts two pringles in his/her mouth to form a duck beak. The rider and horse goes around a barrel at the end of the ring and then goes across the finish line. A five (5) second penalty for knocked down barrel. Failure to have the pringles in your mouth when crossing the finish line and to follow the course shall result in a disqualification.
Christmas Tree Barrels	Three Christmas trees make up the course. You may start either to the right or left and run a designated cloverleaf course. Knocking over a tree results in a five (5) second penalty for each knocked down tree. Failure to follow the course shall result in a disqualification.
Cloverleaf Barrels	Three barrels make up the course. You may start either to the right or left and run a designated cloverleaf course. Knocking over a barrel results in a five (5) second penalty for each knocked down barrel. Failure to follow the course shall result in a disqualification.
Costume Parade	Rider and horse combo will show off their creative costumes!!!
Double Bow	May start left or right of the center barrel. Horse and rider team weave three barrels left to right then right to left. Exiting on the opposite side of the center barrel from entrance. A five (5) second penalty will be assessed for each knocked down barrel. Disqualification occurs if rider/horse is off course.
Egg n' Spoon	The rider will be holding an egg on a spoon. One's thumb must be behind the black mark on the spoon. The rider may be asked to walk, trot, canter, back up, etc. A rider is disqualified as he/she losses his/her egg. The last 6 riders will be placed. The rider will be disqualified if he/she holds on the egg.
Figure Eight	Riders cross start line; ride down side of course (side optional) to barrel B; turn barrel B; ride to barrel A; turn barrel A (opposite direction of A); and ride across finish line, having ridden a figure eight pattern. Knocking over a barrel results in a five (5) second penalty for each knocked down barrel. Failure to follow the course shall result in a disqualification.
Finder's Keeper	The rider races to the end of the arena and dismounts. A bucket is at the end and the rider must find an item hidden in it. The rider then mounts his/her horse and rides to the finish line. The fastest rider wins.
Flag Race	Two buckets on barrels make up the course. The rider shall run to the first barrel and picks up the flag, then the rider will go to the far barrel placing the flag in the bucket, turn around the outside of the barrel while picking up the second flag, then sprinting to the first barrel and place the second flag into the bucket. Missing the bucket or the flag not staying in the bucket will result in disqualifications. The rider will also be disqualified for knocking over a barrel.
Horse-in-a-Box	Rider will ride along the rail until reaching designated box area, remains in the box for 5 seconds, and then proceeds around rail to the finish line. If the horse steps out of the box, time will restart. You have 3 chances before you are disqualified.
Hour Glass	You and your horse go through a pattern that forms an hourglass. The fastest time wins. Knocking over a barrel results in a five (5) second penalty for each knocked down barrel. Failure to follow the course shall result in a disqualification.
Jackpot Barrels	NCRC will pick a pattern for this class. The jackpot for each division will be split between the fastest rider and the scholarship funds

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Key Hole Race	A keyhole shaped is drawn in the center at the end of the arena. You are to take your horse into the keyhole, turn around and go the finish line. The fastest time win. Stepping out or on the keyhole shall result in a disqualification.
Magazine Race	The rider is given a page number from a magazine that is at the far barrel. The rider goes around the barrel and dismounts off his/her horse and tears out the page number; then gets back on the horse and goes to the finish line. The fastest time wins. Disqualified if the rider does not go around the barrel.
Marco Polo	The mounted rider is blind folded. A ring worker will be at the end of the ring. As the rider goes, he/she yells “Marco” and the ring work will respond “Polo.” When the rider/horse is within arm’s length of the ring worker, the rider is allowed to remove the blindfold and race to the finish line.
Mint Tulip	The rider will receive a cup of water at a certain level in the cup. The rider will be asked to walk, trot, canter, reverse, etc. around the arena. The last t riders with the most water left in the cup will be placed.
Musical Cones	Rider will be going around the ring where cones are placed around the fence. When the music stops, the rider must find a ribboncone and stand in front of it. The rider without a spot will be disqualified. There will be no cantering for Lead Liners or 12 and under. If a rider canters in Lead line or 12 and under, he/she will be disqualified. The last 6 riders will be placed.
Musical Ribbons	Rider will be going around the ring where ribbons are attached to the fence. When the music stops, the rider must find a ribbon and stand in front of it. The rider without a spot will be disqualified. There will be no cantering for Lead Liners or 12 and under. If a rider canters in Lead line or 12 and under, he/she will be disqualified. The last 6 riders will be placed.
Obstacle Course	This will be a standard trail class with simple obstacles to be performed while mounted. A rider must try at least 3 attempts for each obstacle. A five (5) second plenty will be given for not completing an obstacle. You will be disqualified if you do not try each obstacle.
PJB (Poles, Jumps, and Barrels)	PJB is a timed pattern that consists of poles, jumps, and barrels. Knocking over a pole or a barrel or a refusal of a jump will result in a five (5) second penalty for each knocked down pole or barrel or refusal of a jump. Failure to follow the course shall result in a disqualification.
Pole Bending	Pole bending is a timed event that features a horse and one mounted rider, running a weaving or serpentine path around six poles arranged in a line. Knocking over a pole will result in a five (5) second penalty for each knocked down pole. Failure to follow the course shall result in a disqualification.
Polo Ball	Rider pushes a ball to a designated pail and puts the ball into the pail. Then races to the finish line. The fastest rider will win.
Pony Express Team	Two riders team up. First rider with the saddle bags starts the time by passing marker #1 and runs around the full arena staying outside all cone markers then passing saddle bags to the second rider BETWEEN the markers #1 & #2. The second rider continues around the full arena and stops the time by passing marker #1. Disqualification occurs if either rider drops the saddle bags, goes inside the cone markers or pass-off does not occur between the markers. If a rider is disqualified for hitting a horse without proper equipment, that rider cannot partner up with another odd rider in the Pony Express.
Potato Polo	Rider rides to designated area, scoops up a potato, and rides down to the finish line. Must have the potato in the scoop when crossing the finish line. If you drop it, you may go back to pick up the potato if you have not crossed the finish line. Disqualified if you do not have the potato in the scoop.

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Quad Barrels	Rider rides to starting point in the center of the ring, rides around the outer side of the upper barrel, crosses over and rides around the outer side of the second upper barrel, goes across the starting line diagonal to the lower barrel, goes around the outer side the barrel, crosses over to the opposite barrel, rides around the outer side of the barrel, and then goes to the center for the finish. A 5 second penalty for knocking down each barrel. Failure to follow the course shall result in a disqualification.
Rescue Bessie	You and your horse will go around the barrel at the end of the arena and pickup Bessie and then go the finish line. The fastest time wins. If rider knocks over a barrel a 5 second penalty will be placed. If the rider hits his/her horse with Ralph or off course, the rider will be disqualified.
Ride Tied	You will have a partner and while both are mounted, with wrists tied together with crape paper, you will be asked to ride around the arena, around barrels, poles, etc. at walk, trot, canter, etc. The last team with their wrists still tied wins. If riders are touching hands, the riders will be disqualified. The judges/spotters must see the ribbon.
Ride-a-Buck	A dollar bill will be placed under the leg of rider who is bareback. The horses will be shown at walk, trot, and canter if required. Last rider with his/her dollar will win the dollars from the other riders. The rider must be in the proper gate in three strides or he/she will be disqualified.
Ring 'round the Rosy	The rider/horse goes around the ring and then at the start will go around a barrel and then goes the opposite way around the ring to the finish line. The fastest rider wins. If you knock down a marker, there will be a five (5) second penalty. If off course, he/she will be disqualified.
Rolling Barrel	Two riders will race to the end of the arena. One rider will get into a wheel barrel and the second rider will push the wheel barrel back to the finish line. The fastest team wins.
Sack Race	Horse and rider combinations will ride down to opposite end of ring, on horseback. Dismount; there will be someone there to hold your horse. Each rider must touch the fence. Then each rider will put one leg into a sack and work as a team towards the opposite end of the ring (where timers are located) as fast as possible. The fastest time will win! Each partner/team combo will enter the ring individually to run the course for safety reasons. The riders will be disqualified if the legs do not remain in the sack.
Santa's Express	Two riders team up. First rider with the saddle bags starts the time by passing marker #1 and runs around the full arena staying outside all cone markers then passing Santa shack to the second rider BETWEEN the markers #1 & #2. The second rider continues around the full arena and stops the time by passing marker #1. Disqualification occurs if either rider drops the Santa Shack, goes inside the cone markers or pass-off does not occur between the markers. If a rider is disqualified for hitting a horse without proper equipment, that rider cannot partner up with another odd rider in the Santa's Express.
Scramble	Rider weaves through three poles, jumps over the jump, circles around the barrel, jumps over the jump, and weaves through the poles. Knocking over a barrel or pole will be a 5 second penalty for each. Failure to follow the course shall result in a disqualification.
Scud-a-Hoe	Rider weaves through the four poles, goes over ground pole, weaves up barrels, goes over ground pole, and runs to the finish line. . Knocking over a barrel or pole will be a 5 second penalty for each. Failure to follow the course shall result in a disqualification.
Shot Gun Barrels	There are two cloverleaf barrel patterns run at the same time. Each horse must run either a right run or a left run. The first horse to cross the starting line will start the time and the last horse to cross the line at the end of the run will stop the time. Knocking over a barrel results in a five (5) second penalty for each knocked down barrel. Failure to follow the course shall result in a disqualification.

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Simon Says	“Simon” gives commands (walk, trot, and canter around the ring) and the riders must do it within three strides. The rider must be in the proper gate in three strides or he/she will be disqualified. The last rider remaining wins.
Speed Barrel	Go through the turning poles, pass the first barrel on either side, pass the succeeding barrels on alternate sides, turn around the third barrel, and return in the same manner through the timing line. Knocking over a barrel results in a five (5) second penalty for each knocked down barrel. Failure to follow the course shall result in a disqualification.
Speed Race	Rider will race around the arena on the outside of the barrels for the fastest time. The rider and horses will be disqualified for not being on course.
Sweetheart Race	The rider will go through a course that forms a heart. Fastest time wins. Knocking over a barrel results in a five (5) second penalty for each knocked down barrel. Failure to follow the course shall result in a disqualification.
Turn N Burn	Horse and rider race to a barrel set up 100 feet from starting line, must make a complete 360 degree turn around barrel and race back in opposite side entered. Left or right side start. Knocking over a barrel results in a five (5) second penalty for each knocked down barrel. Failure to follow the course shall result in a disqualification.
Water Race	The rider/horse goes to the first barrel, picks up a cup with a line drawn inside, then rides to the second barrel to fill the cup, rides back to the first barrel, fills the second cup to the inside line. If water level is not to the line, the rider must go back and fill cup again. This continues until the second cup is filled to the line. The fastest rider wins.
Weaving Chimney	A keyhole shaped is drawn in the center at the end of the arena and two markers. The rider/horse must weave through the markers and into the keyhole, turn around, then weave through the markers and then race to the finish line. The fastest time win. Knocking over a marker will result in a five (5) second penalty, Stepping out or on the keyhole and failure to follow the course shall result in a disqualification.
Weaving Keyhole	A keyhole shaped is drawn in the center at the end of the arena and two markers. The rider/horse must weave through the markers and into the keyhole, turn around, then weave through the markers and then race to the finish line. The fastest time win. Knocking over a marker will result in a five (5) second penalty, Stepping out or on the keyhole and failure to follow the course shall result in a disqualification.
1930 Game Race	The rider/horse goes down the arena to a barrel, dismounts, takes a shot and takes a bit of what is present, mounts his/her horse and goes to the finish line. The fastest rider wins.

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