

WESTSIDE TEAM PENNING CLUB

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**2026**  
**PENNING & SORTING RULES**  
**POINTS / PAYBACK**

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# WTPC Rule Book – 2026

## TEAM PENNING RULES

### 1. Time Limit

Within a 60 or 75 -second time limit, a team (consisting of three riders on the first go round) must cut out from the herd and pen one or more head of cattle with the assigned (same) identity number to receive a time. The time limit of 60 or 75 seconds will be Promoter's option and shall be so stated on the Promoter's flyer, as stated in the Promoter's contract and subject to Rule 16 below.

### 2. Settling of Herds

There will be not less than 27 cattle in the arena with visible 0-9 numbers. Fresh herds will be settled for a minimum of three minutes, bunched in the center of the arena, One rider arching back and forth in front of the herd, then rolled two-to-three times from center to each side of the arena (depending on the cattle.) Prior to the actual settling, herds will be bunched in the center for the appropriate amount of time to allow the cattle to relax and stop moving. There will be no more than four line holders and only one person in the herd. The herds will be settled only and just prior to being used for the first time in the competition. Line riders are to be attentive and aware of cattle movement and the physical shape of the cattle. It is the Promoter's option to move the cattle up the middle of the arena in a controlled manner toward the pen end, allowed to relax and then drifted through the pen toward the cattle end of the arena where the cattle will be allowed to relax for an additional 30 seconds before being removed from the arena.

### 3. Start

All cattle will be bunched on the cattle side of the starting line, at the central portion of the back wall before the time begins. The judge will raise the flag to signal when the arena is ready. Announcer will acknowledge the cattle are ready, and the riders must immediately advance to the herd. (The herd settlers are to leave the herd at the time the number is given, except with three holders, the middle holder to leave when flag is up.) Contestants will be given their randomly drawn cattle penning number when the judge drops his flag as the nose of the first horse crosses the starting line. No rider may enter the arena after the line judge drops the flag. Any delay will be a disqualification.

### 4. Calling for Time

Time will stop "automatically" when the flag drops as soon as the tails (complete animal) of all three (3) cattle cross the plane of the gate. Time will continue until all unpenned cattle are on the cattle side of the starting line. In the event an animal escapes from the pen after time is called for, but prior to the time that any unpenned cattle are on the cattle side of the foul-line, the team will be judged a 'NO-TIME'. Any unpenned cattle are considered dirty.

### 5. Calling for Time on Less Than Three Head

A team may call for time with only one or two assigned cattle penned. A team may call for time "manually" when the assigned cattle are fully in the pen, one team member's horse's nose breaks the plane of the gate, and that team member raises a hand. However, a team penning three head of cattle places higher than two or one, regardless of time.

In multiple go-round contests, in the event that a team pens their cattle in only one go-round, the fastest time wins, **regardless of which go-round**. In addition, in multiple go-round contests, teams that pen in each go-round will beat teams that fail to pen in a go-round, **regardless of the number of cattle penned or time**. For example:

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- a) *Times in all 3 go-rounds, beat times in only 2 go-rounds.*
- b) *Times in 2 go-rounds, beat times in only 1 go-round.*
- c) *Times in 1 go-round, beats a “No-Time”.*

## 6. Calling for Time When Wrong Cattle Number

A team calling for time with any wronged numbered cattle in the pen will be judged a “No-Time.”

## 7. Too Many Cattle

A team will be judged a "no -time" if more than one wrong-numbered cow crosses the start/foul line at any one time (two trash rule). Crossing the start/foul line means any part of the cow breaks over the start/foul line.

## 8. Cattle Contact

Contact with cattle by hands, hats, rope, bats, Rommel or any other equipment is a disqualification. A team exhibiting any unnecessary roughness will be judged a “No-Time.” (See Rule # 13 for roughing definition.) No hazing is permitted with whips, hats, ropes, or any other equipment will be allowed. Hazing by dismounted rider is prohibited and will result in a "No-Time”. Only horse schooling equipment, such as Rommel or reins, may be swung or popped on horse; or empty hands popped on chaps or leg.

## 9. Rider Delay

30 seconds after the first call by announcer, the team must be in the arena ready to ride. Any delay will be judged a disqualification at judge's discretion.

## 10. Re-rides

a) **Mis-numbered Cattle:** As each new team begins a run, there should be no less than 27 head of cattle in the arena. In the event that more, or less, than three identical numbers are in the arena and is the number given **the team riding**, a rerun must be given at the **end of the herd**. Times for all other teams within such a mis-numbered herd will remain the same.

b) **Duplicate Number:** In the event a team is given a number that has already been used within a given herd, a rerun must be given **immediately** using the correct number within the same herd. A team may better their time on the rerun. **Should the error be discovered after their herd has been removed from the arena, then the rerun will be given at the end of the total go-round, using the same herd.**

c) **Escaping Animal:** If an animal with the assigned number leaves the arena either through, or over the fence, the team can either be disqualified for unnecessary roughness or be given a rerun depending on the observing judge's decision who will record the time of occurrence. If a team continues to work/pen cattle after an assigned number leaves the arena, they have accepted the cattle **as is** and the time/no-time stands. **If a rerun is given, it must be given immediately.** If no fresh cattle are available for reruns, the promoter, and the WTPC Director(s) in charge will determine the cattle used. If more than one rerun is given in any go-round, they will be taken in order of occurrence.

d) **Riders Commitment to Cattle:** Once committed to the cattle, a team is completely responsible for their animals. It is the team's responsibility before working the cattle to pull up and call for a judge if, **in their opinion**, there is an injured animal in their assigned numbered

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cattle. Depending on results of inspection of the animal, it will be the judge's discretion whether the team's decision to pull up will result in a rerun or disqualification. **ONCE THE CATTLE ARE WORKED, NO EXCUSES ARE ACCEPTED.**

e) **Progressive or Short Go Re-ride:** In a progressive or short go where the sequence of goes is drawn, in the event of a **rerun**, it will be held **immediately** to continue sequence as drawn.

f) **Mechanical or Official Errors:** In the event of mechanical or official error, the participating team shall get a **rerun immediately**.

g) **Better Time on Re-ride:** A team cannot better their time on a rerun, unless allowed in a specific rule. (*See "Duplicate Number" above.*)

### 11. Grievances

In the case of a dispute, the team may file a grievance by informing the judge *prior to leaving the arena* they wish to do so. They must advance \$50, and the Grievance Committee will be called to settle the dispute. If the grievance is upheld, the team receives their money back. If for some reason the team is disqualified after leaving the arena, the grievance will be accepted, providing it is filed immediately following the disqualification. A decision shall be made before the end of that go-round. The Grievance Committee is selected prior to each penning.

### 12. Judge's Decision Final

Decisions of the judges are final.

### 13. Team / Participant Disqualifications

An entire team or a participant will be disqualified by a judge, at his or her discretion, for any action he or she feels to be unnecessary roughness to the cattle. An entire team or a participant can be disqualified by a judge or attending Director(s) for any and all unsportsmanlike conduct.

**Unsportsmanlike conduct** includes, but is not limited to the following at any WTPC sponsored, sanctioned, or approved Event:

a) **Profanity and Threatening Actions:** The use of profanity or threatening actions directed to another participant, Event officials, officers, agents, volunteers, stock contractor, any bystanders, animals, and property.

b) **Intoxication and Disorderly:** Publicly intoxicated or otherwise disorderly that would or may cause physical injury or damage to another participant, Event officials, officers, agents, volunteers, stock contractor, any bystanders, animals and property.

c) **Inhumane Treatment:** Inhumane treatment to horses, including, but not limited to, physical abuse towards the animal by the rider or owner to cause the animal further injury or competing on an animal that is visibly hurt or lame.

In the case of any infraction of the above, a letter from the board will be issued for a first offense; a \$250 fine will be levied for the second offense, and the member will be recommended for termination in accordance with the by-laws for a third offense. The individual will not be allowed to compete in further go-rounds, penning's, or sorting's until the fine is paid and may be removed from the Event premises by any means necessary deemed by the judge or a WTPC director. In severe cases, Board disciplinary action may be instituted that could result in the individual's membership being cancelled by the Association.

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**Roughing includes**, but is not limited to, running over cattle with horses, stepping on cattle while in pursuit, running through the herd in such a manner that the cattle are knocked down or off stride, horses consistently biting the cattle, and entering the pen with such force on the cattle causing them to collide with the pen panels.

A \$25 fine will be assessed, after a team's time has expired, if a team member continues to work cattle other than to gather the herd for the next team, or a team member exhibits any unnecessary roughness or contact with cattle. If excessive roughness continues, any team or team member may be **assessed** an additional fine and/or disqualification by the judge, from that day's event.

**There will be NO REFUNDS.**

## 14. Spotting Cattle

Spotting Cattle Rule: Spotting Cattle in the herd for any team in the arena, by any person outside the arena, is prohibited. Anyway of assisting a team in the arena with finding the location of their appropriate numbered cow on the starting side of the pen may, at the judge's discretion subject the team in the arena to a disqualification and a no time. However, coaching a team is allowed and encouraged, so long as the person coaching is not 'spotting' for the team.

### **Examples of Spotting (Prohibited):**

1. At any time, saying a number to the team
2. Pointing out where in the herd or arena the next number cow is located by saying right or left, front or back, etc.
3. Calling out colors of cattle (i.e. red, white, black, or black-baldy, etc.)

### **Examples of Coaching (Allowed):**

1. Go with the 'trash' or 'dirty'
2. 'Step Up'
3. 'Make Noise'
4. 'Off Wall'
5. 'Hurry' and/or 'Slowdown'
6. Any coaching of Horsemanship to cutter or gate person (i.e. Shape, position, backup, etc.)

## 15. Riding Apparel

All contestants and judges must wear appropriate sleeved shirt tucked in, western pants, and western riding boots. In the event a contestant has a mishap during the penning and a button or snap is torn off or broken, this will not be an infraction of the dress code. A rider will be warned of the dress code infraction and if it is not remedied, a \$10 fine will be assessed, up to a maximum of \$50 if repeatedly ignored. A competitor will not be able to compete in further go-rounds or events until the fine is paid in full.

## 16. Team Substitutions

If one or two team members cannot complete a penning, the remaining team member(s) may elect to finish the run. A substitution of a rider after a team has made its first run may be allowed at the judge's discretion for compassionate reasons. Substitute riders must have available rides in order not to exceed the division ride limit.

## 17. Severe Adverse Conditions

Event conditions may be adjusted at the discretion of the judges, promoter, and directors as a governing body.

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## 18. Cattle Rotation and Usage

Herd rotation and cattle usage will be at the discretion of the Arena Director(s) and/or judges including, but not limited to, removing injured and unsafe cattle.

## 19. Team Scratches

If for any reason a team scratches after they have run in the first go. **There will be NO REFUNDS.**

## 20. ADA Guidelines

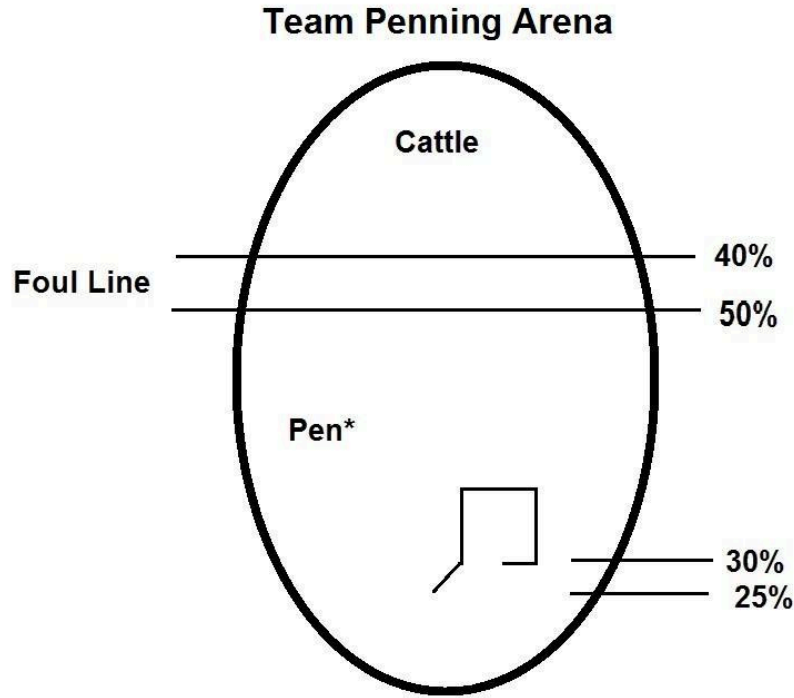
WTPC will follow ADA guidelines to provide disabled participants reasonable accommodations to allow an equal opportunity to compete.

## 21. Rule Amendments

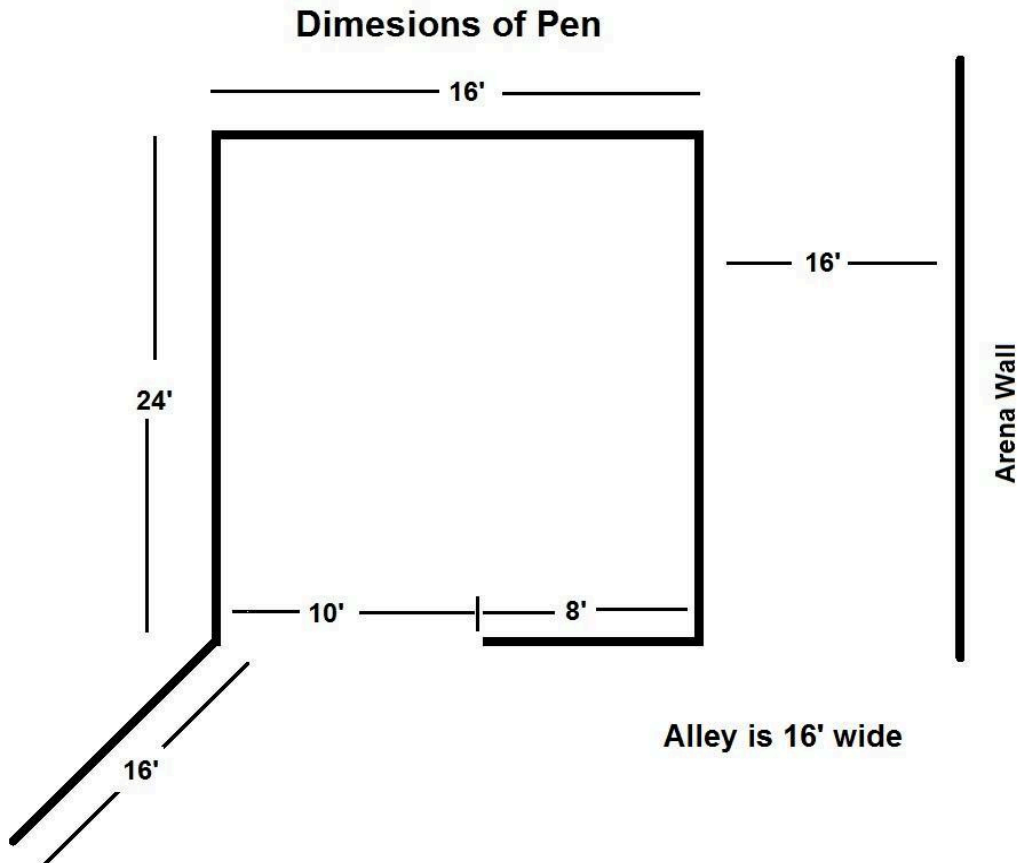
- a) Proposed rule amendments shall be submitted to the Board of Directors, via the Executive Secretary, for consideration. The Rules Committee will review the proposed amendment and provide its recommendation to the Board of Directors. A two-thirds vote of all members of the Board of Directors must be obtained prior to re-writing the rule. Accepted amendments will be put into writing and submitted to the General Membership for a vote.
- b) Any rule amendment must then be approved by a simple majority vote of the General Membership attending, or voting by proxy at a regularly scheduled or special meeting.
- c) Rule amendments will take effect before the season begins unless a different effective date is provided in the rule amendment.

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## Team Penning Arena Dimensions



Distance from end of arena to pen gate 25% - 30% of total arena length.



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## 2-MAN RANCH SORTING RULES

### 1. Time Limit

60 seconds.

### 2. Settling of Herds

There will be 10 cattle in the arena with visible 0-9 numbers and zero - two cattle with no tags. Fresh herds will be settled for three minutes, bunched on one side, rolled two-to-three times (depending on the cattle) rolled through the gate single file as best as can be done, not one cow at a time. Cattle will be settled after each run in the middle or corner of the arena to Judge's satisfaction.

### 3. Sorting both ways

Each arena and set of cattle are different and for that reason, a producer should make a decision and advise the judge on which way the cattle should be settled to be the most fair to the contestant and the well-being of the cattle. For settling cattle, the judge has the following options:

- a. Cattle will be settled on one side every time and sorted one way for that go round or class.
- b. Cattle may be settled on the side of choosing by the team entering the arena.

### 4. Start

Starting number for each team will be drawn when the team, consisting of two riders, is in the arena. Judge will raise flag when cattle are ready. First rider will cross the foul line within 3-4 seconds as soon as the settlers are clear. The judge will drop the flag, the announcer will give the number to start, and the team will continue sorting in numerical order, i.e., 7-8-9-0.

### 5. Cattle Sorted

Teams are judged on total number of cattle sorted, and on the time. Total cows sorted in 2 goes beats cattle sorted in 1 go for placement in total cattle for the average regardless of total number of cows. In extreme cases, average monies will be split.

- a. A cow is sorted when the **complete cow** crosses the **start/foul line**.
- b. If a cow is sorted out of order, it is a "No-Time"; if any part of the non-numbered cow crosses the start/foul line the team receives a "No-Time".
- c. If any part of the cow crosses back over after it has been sorted, then the team is disqualified and receives a "No-Time".
- d. Each cow will be timed as it is sorted and the clock will be stopped when the 10th cow completely crosses the line. The 10<sup>th</sup> cow has to be all the way clean. No DIRTY cow, or part of a DIRTY cow, may be **beside the 10<sup>th</sup> cow** when crossing.
- e. Cattle in sequence may cross side-to-side as long as the correct numbered cow is a nose ahead.
- f. A team must sort one cow to be a legal sort and then has the option of letting the time run
- g. In case of a foul (i.e., cow escapes), the team can ask for a re-ride or accept the number of cattle sorted at the time foul occurred. Time will be based on the last sorted clean cow prior to the foul. In case of a mechanical error or foul (i.e., clock not being reset), the team has

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the option of an immediate re-ride or continuing with the appropriate time added onto the clock.

## 6. Commitment to Cattle

Once committed to cattle by the horse breaking the foul line, the team is responsible for the cattle. It is the responsibility of the team, before working the cattle, if, in their opinion, there is an injured animal in the herd. Once the cattle are worked, **no excuses are accepted.**

## 7. Arena Size

Suggested arena size: 50' x 50' (+/- 12 percent). Both sides are equal in size, except if two sorting pens are used and each class is finished in its entirety in one pen, pen sizes may vary between the two pens, however, the sides will be the same. If classes are rotated between two pens, each pen must be approximately the same size. Gate, or gap, 12-14 feet, with minimum of 4' panel on each side of gate or gap. (See diagram below.)

## 8. Other

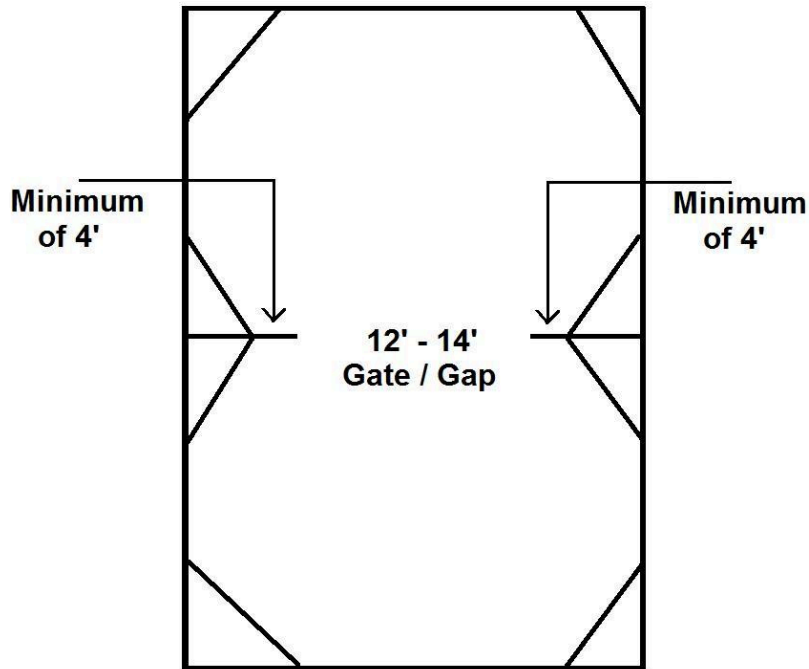
All applicable WTPC general rules and procedures will be followed during Sorting Events. i.e. hazing, appeals, attire, etc.

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## 2-Man Ranch Sorting Arena Dimensions

Sorting Arena –1

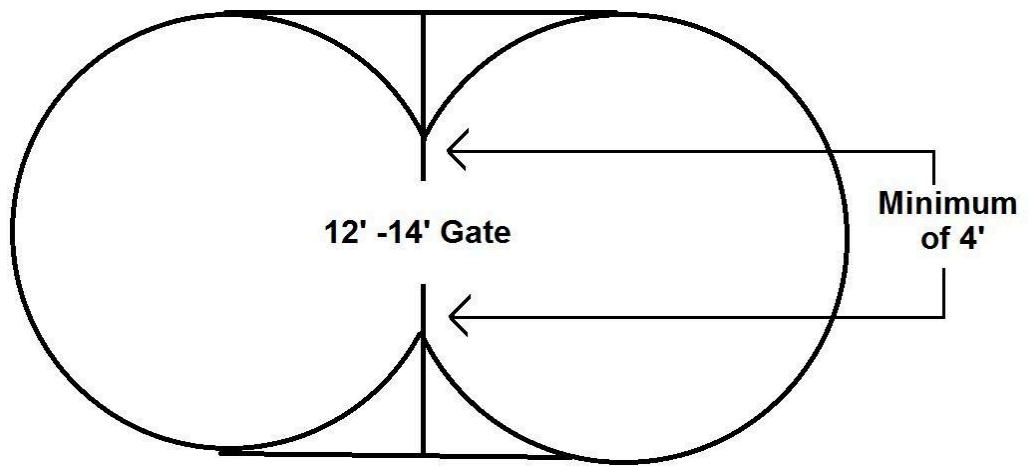
Suggested- 50' x 50' (+/-12%)



**OR**

Sorting Arena –2

Suggested- 50' x 50' (+/-12%)



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## Points Tracking

Points will be tracked thru the Sort Arena software Show Runner for both Penning & Sorting beginning with the 2023 Show Season.

AWARD 1 POINT FOR EVERY 1 TEAM YOU BEAT

This will award each rider on a team one point for every team they beat in the final class standings.

Teams with no times in the first round will **not** be awarded any points.

Example: If you have a class with 10 teams, points will be awarded as shown in the table below.

1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th
9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0

\*Rules changed 1/14/2023 from General Membership Meeting

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## Payback Schedule

### Penning

The Payback Schedule pays one (1) place for every 10 teams, up to a maximum of 10 places.

Go-rounds will pay one place for every 25 teams, up to a maximum of 5 places *to be paid in the first go-round only*.

A minimum of 50% must be paid to average. Refer to the chart below:

# of Teams	Places	Percentages
1 - 10	1	100
11 - 20	2	60 – 40
21 - 30	3	50 – 30 – 20
31 - 40	4	40 – 30 – 20 – 10
41 - 50	5	35 – 25 – 18 – 14 – 8
51 - 60	6	33 – 23 – 18 – 12 – 9 – 5
61 - 70	7	30 – 22 – 16 – 11 – 9 – 7 – 5
71 - 80	8	28 – 21 – 16 – 11 – 9 – 6 – 5 – 4
81 - 90	9	26 – 20 – 16 – 11 – 9 – 6 – 5 – 4 – 3
91-----	10	25 – 19 – 15 – 11 – 9 – 7 – 5 – 4 – 3 – 2

### Sorting

The payback for WTPC sponsored events is one place for every 15 teams and uses the following percentages for places.

# of Teams	Places	Percentages
1 - 15	1	100
16 - 30	2	60 – 40
31 - 45	3	50 – 30 – 20
46 - 60	4	40 – 30 – 20 – 10
61 - 75	5	35 – 25 – 18 – 14 – 8
76 - 90	6	33 – 23 – 18 – 12 – 9 – 5
91 - 105	7	30 – 22 – 16 – 11 – 9 – 7 – 5
106 - 120	8	28 – 21 – 16 – 11 – 9 – 6 – 5 – 4
121 - 135	9	26 – 20 – 16 – 11 – 9 – 6 – 5 – 4 – 3
136--	10	25 – 19 – 15 – 11 – 9 – 7 – 5 – 4 – 3 – 2

The sorting payback scale is a promoter's option if posted on the event flyer and approved by WTPC.

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# WTPC Rule Book – 2026

## WTPC Rating Committee(s) Process

The following will be **considered** in determining the rating of a contestant:

1. Rider's ability and knowledge of sport

Example:

- A. How well does the rider read cows?
  - B. Does the rider know the rules?
  - C. Does the rider know all the positions?
  - D. How does the rider ride with higher rated riders?
2. Average points earned over the season (points are only counted for the class in which the rider is rated)
  3. Average money won during the season (including classes other than that for which the rider is rated)
  4. Did the member received any income for lessons or training with horses within the previous year?

**For appeals:** *All the above will be considered by the board, acting as the appeals committee.*

## Rating Committee Annual Schedule

**January:** Rating committee(s) appointed as per WTPC Bylaws

**April - September:**

- Rating committee(s) watch those who have self-rated during their first two shows to assess the accuracy of their rating. If the rider's self-rating was inaccurate or needs to be adjusted, the rating committee will advise the board secretary who will advise the rider by email or phone call, prior to the next show and the rating will be adjusted according to the WTPC Bylaws.
- Rating committee(s) observe and evaluate all riders for possible new ratings for next season (once a rider has been rated by WTPC, their rating will not change during the current season.)
- The Board will provide the names of new members to the rating committee at each show.

**August:** The Board will ensure the rating committee has a current list of members' ratings in preparation of the September report.

**September:** Within 14 days after the September show, the rating committee(s) chair will provide a written report to the board with each member's rating recommendation for the following season by submitting it to the club secretary.

**October:** The rating committee(s) will deliver the finalized list to the board no later than one week before the end of year banquet.

**November:** The finalized list will be distributed to the membership at the end of year banquet. Any appeals of ratings must be submitted to the board secretary no later than November 30<sup>th</sup> to allow the board to gather appropriate material regarding each rider who is appealing. No appeals will be accepted after November 30<sup>th</sup>.

**December:** The board will consider all appeals at their December board meeting and respond to each member's appeal by email or phone call no later than December 31<sup>st</sup>.