

Working Cow Horse Changes

AQHA will offer more divisions for working cow horse boxing, cow horses may be shown in two-rein equipment and trot-in patterns may be altered to lope-in patterns.

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Beginning January 1, 2012, an AQHA show may offer a two-rein working cow horse class, or, if no such class is offered, eligible horses may show in two-rein equipment in junior, senior, amateur or youth working cow horse classes. (Photo by Annie Lambert)

The American Quarter Horse Association Executive Committee has approved several changes in working cow horse classes.

In 2011, AQHA added the working cow horse boxing class, which was only offered for [Novice amateur](#) and Novice youth competitors. Beginning January 1, 2012, amateur (including Select) and youth competitors will also be able to enter boxing classes.

A youth rider is eligible for 13-and-under, 14-18 and Novice youth boxing classes if he or she has never been a finalist in working cow horse at any AQHA world championship show or a finalist in a class at a National Reined Cow Horse Association major event that requires the rider to compete down the fence and if they have earned less than 10 points in working cow horse in the last three years.

A rider is eligible for amateur and Novice amateur boxing classes if they have never been a finalist in working cow horse at any [AQHA world championship show](#) or a finalist in a class at a National Reined Cow Horse Association major event that requires the rider to compete down the fence and if they have earned less than 10 points in working cow horse in the last three years.

If a rider is eligible to compete in boxing at the beginning of that calendar year, the rider will lose his or her eligibility to enter boxing if he or she shows three or more times down the fence in any judged class. Being entered in a class that

includes the fence work will be counted as going down the fence, regardless if the rider boxed the cow and pulled up before the run was completed.

Also, a competitor cannot enter a boxing class and the corresponding working cow horse class (i.e. amateur boxing and amateur working cow horse).

With this change, boxing will be offered at the 2012 AQHA world championship shows in the amateur (including Select) and youth divisions.

In other news, AQHA working cow horse competitors will be able to show eligible horses in [two-rein equipment](#).

Beginning January 1, 2012, an AQHA show may offer a two-rein working cow horse class, or, if no such class is offered, eligible horses may show in two-rein equipment in junior, senior, amateur or youth working cow horse classes.

A horse, of any age, is eligible to show in the two-rein if it has never, in previous years, been shown down the fence in the bridle in any judged class or event.

Regardless of the class it is shown in, a horse may only be shown in two-rein equipment for one year.

If a rider chooses to show his or her eligible horse in two-rein equipment, the rider must use an approved bit. The bosal must be worn underneath the bridle.

While competing, the rider can only use one hand on the reins and the rider will be disqualified if he or she changes hands. However, any number of fingers between the reins will be permitted.

And finally, all working cow horse trot-in patterns may be modified to lope-in [patterns](#), at the judge's discretion.

When selecting a lope-in pattern, judges should take into consideration the direction of the exhibitor's approach to the arena center so the horse can be on the correct lead from the gate to the start of the pattern.

If a lope-in pattern has been chosen, the rider will walk through the gate and, without trotting, pick up the correct lead and continue loping to the center of the arena. At the center, without stopping or breaking gait, the rider will begin the pattern. When using a lope to the center pattern, judging of the pattern will begin at the center of the arena. Penalties occurring while loping to the center of the arena to begin pattern will be assessed.