



**RSNCA**  
RANCH SORTING NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS AUSTRALIA

# Rules & Guidelines

2020/2021

Ranch Sorting National Championships Australia

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## SECTION I - CLASSIFICATION

### 1.1 RATING SYSTEM CLASSIFICATIONS

RSNCA will track sorting dollars won and sorting dollars spent on entry fees by each contestant at all RSNCA sanctioned events. With this data, the dollars won will be divided by the dollars spent on entry fees by each contestant. That will provide every contestant with a win/loss ratio.

Example:

- a) If you win twice as much as you spend then your win/loss ratio would be 2.0
- b) If you win 1/2 of what you spend then your win/loss ratio would be a .5

Each contestant's ratio will then be placed on a bell curve ONLY with other contestants of the same rating. Based on where a contestant's win/loss ratio falls on the bell curve will decide if he or she moves up one rating or down one rating. Only in extreme circumstances will a contestant's rating move more than one rating.

Example:

- a) The top determined percent of all #2 through #8 contestants move up 1 number. (2 to 3; 3 to 4; 4 to 5; 5 to 6; 6 to 7; 7 to 8...)
- b) The bottom 10%, for example, of all contestants #3 through #9 will be given the opportunity to move down one rating.

With the exception of the #1 Beginner, #2 Rookie and the #3 Novice, this will be done for every classification category at the end of each sorting season. This guarantees fair and equal treatment of every contestant.

A Beginner automatically moves up when he or she wins \$750 in RSNCA events.

Once a #2/Rookie's earnings in RSNCA sanctioned events reaches \$1000 and that amount has been confirmed and recorded at both the RSNCA and Cinch RSNC Headquarters, he/she will no longer be eligible to ride as a #2 Rookie if their win/loss ratio is above a 0.60 in either the #11 and below divisions or in all classes combined. If both win/loss ratios are below a 0.60 then they will remain a #2 until they earn \$1,500 at which point their win/loss ratio will be evaluated again and again at every \$500 interval.

Both Beginners and Rookies can be moved up regardless of their winnings if it is determined that their sorting abilities are superior to the level of competition in which they currently compete.

For those contestants that have not competed enough to have adequate data to evaluate, we will lean heavily on our producers to assure that the ratings remain fair.

All #3 Novices will be reviewed every 6 months (after the National Finals) and will be moved accordingly based on win/loss ratios in all classes combined. This will bring more consistency to the ability of the #3 rating and be fair for all contestants.

**Note:** There will be no changes to ratings after the review conducted 6 months prior to the National Finals for ratings #3 & above. There will be no changes to #1 Beginner or #2 Rookie ratings after March 31, of the current points year, unless they are a new competitor and the rating is not suitable based on their ability.

## 1.2 RATING RULES

RSNCA will rely heavily on Producers to keep the ratings fair and accurate.

### Important Rating Guidelines

It is important to the success of this association to assure there is a place for new novice riders to be competitive within our sport.

**The #1 Beginner and #2 Rookie rating must continue to be introductory levels.** The definitions of the #1, #2 and #3 ratings are printed for all contestants to review so it is clearly understood that **if you are successful at the #1 or #2 rating you will automatically be moved.** This is the only way for new contestants who were just like you when you started to have a fair introduction to the sport.

1.2.1 The **#1 Beginner**. This rating is only for those participants who are novice riders on novice horses and who have never won over \$500 in any sorting or other cow horse competition. **Once you win \$750 you will automatically be moved to a number 2.** This is only an introductory level and is probationary meaning if you or your horse's skill dictates it you may be moved at any time.

1.2.2 The **#2 Rookie**. The #2/Rookie rating is only for those participants that have **never been rated higher than a #2** in any sorting or other cow horse organization.

To start at a #2 rating this rider must be a novice rider on a novice horse who has never won over a \$1000 in any sorting or other cow horse competition.

Once a #2/ Rookie's earnings in RSNCA sanctioned events reaches \$1000 and that amount has been confirmed and recorded at the RSNC/RSNCA Headquarters, he/she will no longer be eligible to ride as a #2 Rookie unless their win/loss ratio is below a .60 in the #11 and below divisions. Then they will remain a #2 until they earn another \$500, at which time they will be re-evaluated for the .60 cut off, and if not above that ratio again at every \$500 interval. They will remain a #2 until they surpass the .60 win/ loss ratio at which time they will automatically move up to a #3 novice.

This is a probationary rating meaning if you or your horse's skills dictate it you may be moved at any time. **If you have success please expect to move beyond the rookie rating.**

1.2.3 A **#3 Novice** is defined as a #3 rated contestant that is inconsistent in their ability to sort cattle whether it is because of their cattle reading ability, their ability to get successful partners and/or the ability of their horse. Any new member that has won over \$1000 in Ranch Sorting or other cowhorse competition in any and all associations combined will not initially be rated below a #3 Novice.

Additionally, the #3 rating will be reviewed by win/ loss ratios every 6 months (after the National Finals). If a #2 has been moved to a #3 they will have the opportunity to move back to a #2 after re-evaluation at every 6 month interval. If they have attended enough events to fairly evaluate them and their win/loss ratio is below a .25 as a #3 they will have the option to move back to a #2.

1.2.4 An **Amateur** is defined as a #4, #5 or #6 rated contestant that is just below or just above average in their ability to sort cattle. This is a contestant that can read cattle, is aggressive and confident and is riding an athletic cow horse. From time to time this contestant or their horse will make minor errors that prevent them from consistently sorting. Those that are considered just below average should be a #4, average as a #5, and just above average should be a #6.

1.2.5 An **Open Rider** is defined as a #7, #8 or #9 rated contestant that excels within the sport of Ranch Sorting. These are experienced sorters that have continued to improve and advance within the rating system or professional horseman that have recently entered the sport and their horses and sorting abilities dictate that they are superior to the Novice and Amateur contestants. These could be cutting horse and cow horse trainers that in a very short period of time have learned how to be competitive in sorting and have advanced to the open level. There are three levels within the open division.

**The #7** is considered too good to ride as an Amateur, but either doesn't have an exceptional horse or who may have a slower reaction time than the best riders in the industry. This contestant's win/loss ratio prevents him/her from advancing.

**The #8** is a professional ranch sorter. This contestant can travel anywhere in the country and be competitive in Open Ranch Sorting Divisions but does not consistently win like the #9 contestant.

**The #9** is reserved for the elite within the industry. They reflect the standard of excellence, which all others strive to achieve.

1.2.6 **Data Driven Rating Evaluation** is the contestant's data and will be collected and carried over from one year to the next, until as determined by RSNCA he or she has competed enough to accurately depict a contestant's performance. Once data is used to depict a contestant's performance, then the slate is cleared and data is collected again until a rating evaluation is determined.

1.2.7 RSNCA will use 9 rating classifications. All contestants regardless of age, will be assigned a rating classification. Each new member of RSNCA must be given a rating classification before competing in a RSNCA sanctioned event. The member is required to accurately and honestly answer all questions regarding his or her rating criteria.

**New Membership Probationary Rating** is where all new members will compete on a probationary rating for their first year of competition. If for any reason, it is found by RSNCA that the person is inappropriately rated then RSNCA will correct the rating. If that person is found to have falsified information about his or her rating then RSNCA may revoke the membership of that person.

1.2.8 **Masters** – The Masters division is for all contestants ages 50 years or older by December 31 of the current year (January 1 – December 31).

1.2.9 **Youth** – All Contestants in the Beginner Youth Division must be 12 or younger by January 1<sup>st</sup> of the current points year commencing (July 1<sup>st</sup> of the previous year). Beginner Youth may have an Adult or experienced person in the gate but the sorter must be rated #1 Beginner. All Contestants in the Youth Rated Division must be 18 or younger by January 1<sup>st</sup> of the points year starting (July 1<sup>st</sup> of the previous year). There is no rating cap on the Youth Rated Division but it is recommended to be a HC class. Youth ages 13 through 18 who are rated 5 and above may ride in the Rated Youth class but are not eligible for youth points.

1.2.9.1 Youth Points are for all youth age 12 & under as of January 1st of the current points year and rated a #4 or below.

1.2.9.2 Youth will not be moved from a #2 to a #3 unless their win/loss ratio is in the top 60% of all youth when they reach the \$1,000 mark or until they reach \$1,500 in regular rated classes in the top 60%.

**1.3 FORFEITURE OF MONEY WON-** Teams whose combined ratings are higher than the class number or class cap will forfeit their winnings. It is the responsibility of the Producer as well as the Member to make sure that they are riding at their current rating. Beginners and Rookies move up throughout the year.

**1.4 CLASSIFICATION LETTER & MEMBERSHIPS** – All members whose ratings change will be notified. All new members are assigned a probationary rating for their 1st year of competition. If at any time within the first year it is determined by RSNCA that the contestant is mis-rated, the rating will be adjusted.

**1.4.1 Statistical Data-** At the end of each sorting year (after National Finals) and again 6 months later, all contestants' statistical data will be evaluated and ratings will be adjusted. This classification system is used to limit the margin of error in setting sorting categories. It is based on statistical data rather than opinion and it treats each member identically and fairly. Each contestant is classified or rated with a number 1 through 9 with 9 being the most advanced.

**1.4.2 Performance Rating-** Your classification number is your performance rating. The sum of your classification number and your partners' classification numbers cannot exceed the number of the sorting class. This procedure closely defines the caliber of each sorting division.

**1.5 RATING REVIEW PROGRAM-** RSNCA has instated a rating review program for any contestant that does not believe their current rating is accurate. The review requires a \$200 up front deposit. If after a minimum of 45 entries under the new rating, the win/loss ratio shows that the contestant falls within the bottom 15% of ratios for that rating, then the contestant's rating will be lowered and the \$200 will be refunded. If the rating is not in the bottom 15%, the \$200 will be forfeited and the rating will remain.

## **SECTION II**

### **RSNCA RANCH SORTING CLASSES AND RULES**

#### **A. 2 MAN SORT**

1. All Levels Handicap
2. #13 Handicap
3. #12 Handicap
4. #11 Handicap
5. #10 Handicap
6. #9 Handicap
7. #8 Handicap
8. #6 Handicap
9. #5 Handicap
10. #4 (not Handicapped)
11. #2 Beginner (not Handicapped)
12. Masters #10 Handicap
13. Rookie #11 Handicap (2-cap on Sorter)
14. Reverse Rookie #11 Handicap (2 cap on Gate)

15. Youth #10 HC (Rated Youth)
16. Round Robin
17. Quick Draw
18. 3 Man 2 Gate Sort
19. Western Heritage Classes

## **B. RANCH HAND SORT**

1. #14 Ranch Hand
2. #11 Ranch Hand with 4 cap on Sorter (no handicap if #14 RH is not offered)
3. Beginner Ranch Hand #10HC (experienced Gate person)
4. Beginner Sort #2 (option of 5 numbered cattle)
5. Beginner Youth RH (experienced gate person)

In a Ranch Hand class, one person must be the designated Sorter and one person the designated Gate regardless of their rating.

If the #14 Ranch Hand HC is not offered and the #11 Ranch Hand HC is, there is no cap on the Sorter in the #11 Ranch Hand.

Special sanctioning - RSNCA may approve 3-man and 1-man Arena Sorting or Ranch Sorting. Other numbered classes may be offered through special sanctioning as well.

### **2.1 RANCH SORTING RULES**

2.1.1 Ranch sorting is typically a 2 man team sorting 10 cattle numbered 0-9 and 1 unnumbered cow for a total of 11 head. A producer has the option to add 1 more unnumbered cow. A run starts with team members on opposite side of start line from cattle.

2.1.2 The judge will raise the flag when the pen is ready. The announcer will call, "Flag is up," or "Cattle are ready." The judge will signal the beginning of the run by dropping the flag when the nose of the first horse crosses the start line and the first number to be sorted will be announced.

The announcer will draw a number, which will determine the first cow to be sorted. The cattle will then be sorted increasing in sequence from that number.

If two or more cows cross the line together as long as the nose of the correct number or numbers cross the line first the cattle are considered to be in order regardless of whether they finish crossing in that order.

**Cows are not counted as sorted until they are completely across the line.** Also, if any part of a wrong numbered cow starts across the line it is a no time or if any part of a correct numbered cow starts across the line and then backs out it is also considered a no time

2.1.3 The cattle must be sorted in number sequence. If any part of a cow crosses the start line out of sequence before the correct cow starts across the start line a disqualification will occur. A disqualification will also occur if any part of a sorted cow re-crosses the start line. Any cow not entirely across the start line will not be counted. The 10th cow must be completely across the line before the blank cow starts across or the team will receive a no time.

### **2.2 Ranch Hand Sorting Guidelines**

This class is designed to showcase two separate horse and rider abilities. The Gate Horse holds the herd and turns back wrong numbered cattle while the Sort Horse is continuously in the herd to separate and cut out the correct numbered cattle in sequential order. Contestants can ride together two times if they change the designated sorter.



**Sort Horse & Rider** The sort horse and rider will be responsible for sorting all cattle in the correct order by working through the herd to both turn back and cut the cattle from the herd.

- This horse and rider is allowed to make both offensive and defensive moves while cutting the cattle.

### **Gate Horse & Rider**

- Must compete in a defensive manner
- Must not make any aggressive moves on the object numbered calf while driving it toward the gate
- May make aggressive moves on any and all numbered cattle other than the object numbered calf
- Cannot turn toward the object numbered cow to drive it out or increase its speed toward the gate.

## **2.3 Class Descriptions**

### **2.3.1 Beginner Ranch Hand #10 Handicap**

Beginner Sorter with a handicap on any rated gate person. Any team under a #10 will receive a time handicap with 1 additional second for every rating number under #10.

**Beginner Sort** is where beginners ride with beginners on 5 numbered head of cattle and 1 blank, or 10 numbered head of cattle and 1 blank depending on the cattle.

To qualify as a Beginner you must be a #1 Rated sorter that has not won \$750 in Ranch Sorting or other cow horse competition. A contestant will remain a Beginner until it is determined that his/her skill level merits a rating change, or until he/she wins \$750 in RSNCA events; at which time they will be automatically moved prior to the next event.

PRODUCERS HAVE THE OPTION OF OFFERING A BEGINNER RANCH HAND OR A BEGINNER SORT.

### **2.3.2 A Rookie #11 Handicap (2 cap on Sorter)**

Rookie Sorter is defined as any #2 RSNCA rated contestant. Only #2 Rookies or #1 Beginners may be the sort rider in this class. If both partners are rated #2 or below then they both may sort. However, if one partner is rated higher than a #2 then that partner must work the gate only and allow only the #2 or below partner to sort as in a Ranch Hand Class

### **2.3.2 B Reverse Rookie #11 Handicap (2 cap on the Gate)**

Rookie Gate is defined as any #2 RSNCA rated contestant. Only #2 Rookies or #1 Beginners may be the gate rider in this class. If both partners are rated #2 or below then they both may sort and gate. However, if one partner is rated higher than a #2 then that partner must work the sort only and allow only the #2 or below partner to gate as in a Ranch Hand Class

**2.3.3 Masters #10 Handicap** – All Contestants in the Masters Division must be 50 years of age or older at the end of the calendar year. This event is required to be run as a #10 Handicap Class or lower.

**2.3.4 Sadie Hawkins-** This class is for the ladies to invite the men to the sorting. It must be a lady and a man or youth or masters 65 or over. Either way there must be 1 lady on the team.

The class starts as all sorting classes start however at some point at riders choosing the team must re-sort the cattle they have already sorted back the other way in reverse order.

No cattle are counted as sorted until they return across the centerline from the reverse direction. For example: the team is given number 3. They sort 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 in about 30 seconds. Then they go get the 8 and sort it back across the foul line and it is counted as the 1st cow sorted at 35 seconds. Then they get the 7, 6 and 5 before the time expires. Their final time was 4 cows sorted (both ways) in 59.2 seconds.

**2.3.5 Mixed Sorting:** This class is for a mix team. It can be run with any class cap number. There must be a guy and girl or one member can be a youth 18 or under or a masters 65 and over.

**2.3.6 Round Robin –** This is a Single Go class. All teams are created dynamically, and each rider will ride at least once with every other rider. This is a single-entry, “draw only” class. No picks are allowed. All cow counts and times are accumulated for each rider, and the payout goes to the rider (not the team) with the most cows in the least time. Points are awarded to the top teams, following the same point guidelines for all other classes.

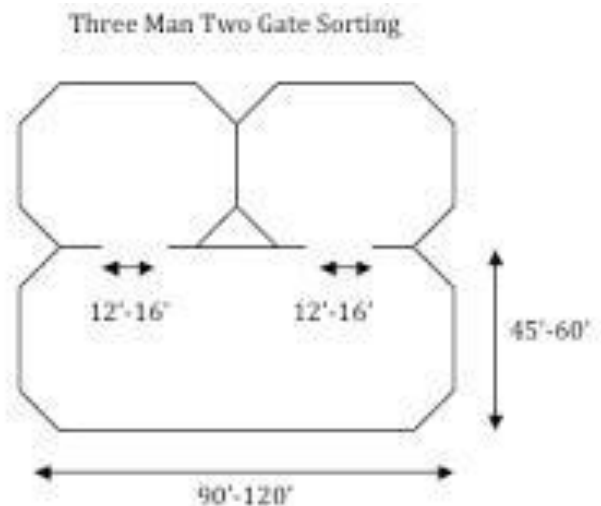
### 2.3.7 Open Arena Sorting Rules

2.3.7.1 At each producer’s discretion, 3-man team sorting in open arena with one judge is acceptable.

2.3.7.2 Open arena sorting is a 3-man team sorting ten cattle numbered zero through nine and one unnumbered cow for a total of 11 head. A producer has the option to add 1 more unnumbered cow. The run starts with the 3-man team on the opposite side of the start line from cattle.

2.3.7.3 Also See Rules 2.1.2 and 2.1.3

### 2.3.8 Three Man Two Gate Sorting



a) Three man two gate sorting will take place in a pen that is 90 to 120 foot in size. There will be two 12' to 16' gates on one side of the pen.

b) Three man teams will sort 10 cattle numbered 0-9 and 1 blank cow for a total of 11 head.

c) A run starts with team members on the opposite side of the start line at each gate opposite from the cattle. The judge will raise the flag when the cattle are ready. The judge will signal the start of time when the nose of the first horse crosses the start line by dropping the flag and the first number will be announced. The announcer will draw a number to determine the first cow to be sorted. Each team on a herd will be given a different first number. The cattle will then be sorted in numerical order through either gate until all numbered cattle are across the line or time runs out.

d) Due to the larger pen size it is strongly recommended that no more than 5 runs are made on each herd before another herd is loaded. This includes all goes including the final go.

e) With the added speed in this class roughing will be strictly enforced for the safety of the riders, horses and cattle. If a judge concludes that rider drives a cow into the wall without giving it adequate room to escape he will be disqualified for roughing. All other roughing rules apply as well. (see rule 5.5)

### 2.3.9 Western Heritage Sorting

This class is used to fine tune the cattle reading and handling skills of the contestant and also to attract a whole new population of contestants who may be intimidated by the speed of competition in many of our events. Those who excel in slow and quiet cattle management will now have a game to be very competitive in. In this class, all standard RSNCA will remain, with the addition of two new ones.

#### a) **Limited to a trot or walk by the sorter:**

Loping after one stride by the sorter will result in a no time. The gate person can go at any speed to defend the gate as a defensive move however they cannot lope/canter toward or into the herd to sort cattle.

b) **Verbal noise**, by either contestant, intended to influence the cattle is prohibited. Shouting by either rider to intimidate the cattle will result in a no time however, non-verbal noises such as whistling, clucking, slapping chaps, etc are all common practices among cattlemen and are allowed. Artificial whistles are not allowed.

### **Western Heritage National Finals Qualification:**

The Western Heritage Sorting will be a separate qualification program for the National Finals. At the National Finals, there will be two Western Heritage Classes. A #6 Handicap class capped at a #3, for #3 and below rated riders, and an All Levels class.

To qualify for year end prizes in the Western Heritage division at the National Finals, you must have ridden in a Western Heritage class at 5 separate sanctioned events. Any rider can compete for the jackpot money.

Western Heritage points will be tracked in the National Points race specifically for Western Heritage Classes. Should a contestant's rating be changed from a 3 to a 4 or a 4 to a 3 during the National points race season their points will be transferred the same as they are transferred in other RSNCA point races.

## 2.4 Entries and Number of Go's

2.4.1 **Pick & Draw** – The Pick & Draw system is designed to allow new contestants to the sport an opportunity to find rides and meet other contestants. All RSNCA classes have a 5



### 2.4.3 Number of Go's

First Go	2 <sup>nd</sup> Go	3 <sup>rd</sup> Go	Final Go
1 to 50 teams			10 teams
51 to 100 teams	20 teams		10 teams
101 to 150 teams	30 teams		10 teams
151 to 200 teams	40 teams		10 teams
201 to 250 teams	50 teams		10 teams
251 to 300 teams	60 teams	20 teams	10 teams
301 to 350 teams	70 teams	20 teams	10 teams
351 to 400 teams	80 teams	20 teams	10 teams
401 to 450 teams	90 teams	20 teams	10 teams
451 to 500 teams	100 teams	20 teams	10 teams
501 to 550 teams	110 teams	30 teams	10 teams
551 to 600 teams	120 teams	30 teams	10 teams
601 to 650 teams	130 teams	30 teams	10 teams
651 to 700 teams	140 teams	30 teams	10 teams
701 to 750 teams	150 teams	30 teams	10 teams
751 to 800 teams	160 teams	40 teams	10 teams
801 to 850 teams	170 teams	40 teams	10 teams
851 to 900 teams	180 teams	40 teams	10 teams
901 to 950 teams	190 teams	40 teams	10 teams
951 +	200 teams	40 teams	10 teams

This is for all RSNCA Sanctioned classes with the entry fee at \$35 or higher. If entry fees are less than \$35 the Producer has the option of 1 Go and Top Ten regardless of the # of teams. Please announce the # of go's when the draw is done and before the start of the class. Added teams or scratches after the final draw is posted will not change the # of teams returning.

**2.4.4 Running Order** – All RSNCA Sanctioned classes are progressive (you must sort in each go round to advance) 0 head sorted is considered a no time. All finals at any RSNCA sanctioned sorting will have their running order, determined by draw, mechanically or physically at promoter's discretion.

**2.4.5 Payment of Fees** – It is the producer's option to determine when payment of entries are to be received.

**Non payment** of entry fees will result in the person being ineligible to compete at any RSNCA sanctioned event until the monies owed are paid.

**2.4.6 Entering with Same Partner** – Two-member teams are permitted to ride together only once in each class, unless it is the result of a Draw or in the Ranch Hand classes,

where they can ride together two times if they change designated sorters or under special sanctioning. Three-member teams must change one rider.

## **2.5 DRAW-OUT AND REPLACEMENT and EMERGENCY DRAW-OUT –**

Any team may draw-out of any event with 96 hours notice prior to final draw being made for that class with no draw out charge. If no notice is provided then entry fees are forfeited to the competition's pot.

If an individual draws out, the contestants entered with him/her may draw out or replace the partner with a new partner of the same rating or less within 72 hours of the show.

If a team participant's partner fails to notify RSNCA or the sorting producer of a draw-out, and does not appear prior to first go-round of a competition, the participants entered with him may get a substitute partner of the same rating or less. In no instance may a participant use another participant's entry fee.

If a substitute contestant is replacing a contestant who has a doctor or vet's certificate, or has been officially drawn out, that replacement will be required to pay entry fees, but no late fees.

In no instance will the team be moved to a later draw position while the participant locates another partner.

In the event of an emergency involving a competing contestant, his/her family or his/her horse; the producer may draw that team out and refund their money.

**2.6 DRESS CODE –** All contestants at a RSNCA sanctioned show must wear western attire: a western hat or helmet, long or **short** sleeved western shirt and boots. Tank tops, tee shirts and ball caps will not be allowed. Any member who is in violation of the dress code rule will be given a warning the 1st time and a "no time" after that for that ride.

**All competitors under 18 years of age MUST wear a helmet at all times whilst mounted.**

**#1 Rating Beginner riders MUST wear a helmet at Clinics and it is strongly recommended they wear helmets whilst competing.**

**2.7 HORSE GEAR -** No type of head tie-downs, running reins, head checks, bosal with a mecate, etc are allowed. Any type of gear that a cow may get caught up in is not permitted. Horses must have free use of their heads.

## **SECTION 3 - REASONS FOR RE-RIDES**

**3.1 NUMBER ALREADY CALLED –** If a duplicate number is called within the same set of cattle a re-ride will be given immediately upon point of discovery using the same set of cattle with any number that has not already been used. Those re-rides will begin at zero time and zero cows.

**3.2 OFFICIAL OR MECHANICAL ERRORS-** Re-rides may be given for official or mechanical errors. Examples: Clocks, timers, or buzzer errors. Panels, gates etc.

**3.3 DOWNED CATTLE-** Re-rides may be given for downed cattle at the **judges' discretion**. In these cases, contestants will be given the option to take their time on the number of cattle sorted when the run is stopped by the official or re-ride **immediately** with the same number beginning at a time of zero.

**3.4 INCORRECT NUMBER OF CATTLE-** If a run is started with more or less than the correct number of cattle, the team **MUST** take a re-ride. With the same number called, after the correct number of cattle are in the pen.

**3.5 COW LEAVES THE ARENA** – At judge's discretion a re-ride or a no time can be given if a cow leaves the arena. All re-rides will occur **immediately** using the same herd with the exception of replacing the jumping cow at judges' discretion, starting at 0 cattle with a new clock. Time can also be given on sorted cattle at the time a cow leaves the arena.

**3.6 INJURED UNNUMBERED or UNFIT CATTLE** – Prior to a team crossing the start line the team must notify the judge of any un-numbered, injured, or unfit cattle. Once brought to the judges' attention, the Judge (not the contestants) will determine whether to correct the problem or proceed forward.

No re-rides will be given once a team has committed to the cattle by crossing the start line, unless cattle become injured or un-numbered during the run. Then at the judges' discretion the judge may stop the run and the contestants will have the choice to take their current cattle and time or a re-ride. The re-ride will occur **immediately** using the same numbered cattle once injured, or unnumbered cattle are replaced.

Possible reasons for a judge to remove cattle:

- lame
- sick
- exhausted
- blind
- bleeding
- There will be **NO** re-rides for inconsistent cattle
- If it is determined by the judge during a set that a cow becomes unfit then that cow will be replaced but **NO** re-rides for previous teams will be allowed.

## **SECTION 4 - REASONS FOR DISQUALIFICATION IN THE ARENA**

**4.1 UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT** –RSNCA reserves the right to disqualify any contestant who does not act in a sportsmanlike, reasonable or professional manner. This shall include but is not limited to abusive schooling of horses. Disqualified contestants forfeit all fees.

**4.2 IN THE ARENA HORSEMANSHIP** – Abusive schooling or treatment of horses will **not** be tolerated. Any contestant who is in violation of this rule will be disqualified.

**4.3 TRASH CATTLE RULE** – The definition of trash cattle is any wrong numbered or blank cattle that starts across or crosses the start line or that starts back across or crosses back across the start line, or any correctly sorted number that starts across the start/foul line and backs out before going all the way through is a no time.

4.4 **GATE CALL** – There is a (one time) 30-second gate call for every team after the announcer calls for that team. If that team has not entered the arena within the allotted time they may be disqualified.

4.5 **ROUGHING** – A team will be disqualified for roughing – consisting of any physical contact by horse or rider at the judges' discretion.

4.6 **WORKING CATTLE WHILE DISMOUNTED** – Any rider working cattle must be mounted on horseback. Working cattle on foot is reason for disqualification.

4.7 **HAZING** – Contact with cattle by hands, ropes, bats or any other equipment or apparel will result in a no time. Waving of hats, reins or whips at cattle will result in a No Time.

4.8 **NO TIME** – Any part of a cow in sequence that starts across the start line and backs out is a No Time. If no cows are sorted in the allotted time the team will receive a No Time.

## **SECTION 5 - MEMBERSHIP**

### **5.1 Membership fees:**

Family:	\$Free – 2020/2021 Season
Adult:	\$Free – 2020/2021 Season
Juniors: 6-11 years	\$Free – 2020/2021 Season
12-18 years	\$Free – 2020/2021 Season

Memberships are free until 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

Annual memberships will begin on 1<sup>st</sup> July. A new membership purchased on or after April 1<sup>st</sup> of each season shall be good for the remainder of that season and throughout the next full year (16 months membership). Renewal of annual memberships must be done prior to 1<sup>st</sup> July.

**5.2 DAY PASS** – Day Passes may be purchased by any expired contestant wishing to compete at one RSNCA sanctioned event with the exception of the National Finals. The Day Pass must be purchased and a rating survey completed before the contestant competes. Day Passes are \$35.00 and are good for one sorting event. A contestant cannot purchase more than 1 Day Pass in any given year. The \$35.00 Day Pass fee will be credited toward the upgrade to a membership, if membership is purchased within 2 weeks of the Day Pass being purchased.

Day Passes must be purchased through RSNCA Head Office at least 7 days before the event.

**5.3 LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP** – In honour of our more seasoned participants RSNCA offers a Lifetime Membership. This one-time membership fee is \$130. These are only available to participants 70 Years of age and older. This membership is non-transferable.



## 5.4 MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS –

An application for membership must be:

- a) in writing in the form approved by RSNCA
- b) Signed by the applicant
- c) otherwise in accordance with RSNCA.

The member agrees and acknowledges that they will be bound by these rules and guidelines in this rulebook and any regulations made by RSNCA.

RSNCA may consider the application and decide whether or not to accept the applicant. The applicant must be notified but RSNCA is not bound to give any reason for the rejection of an application.

With the exception of those riding on a first time Day Pass, participation in a RSNCA event requires being a member of RSNCA to be covered by insurance, collect winnings and receive points.

A competitor's membership status must show as current in the RSNCA'S database or they shall have submitted a First Time Membership or Renewal Membership application, including appropriate fees, to the RSNCA Headquarters, prior to the show he or she is entering. Participants will have the opportunity to purchase their First Time or Renewal Memberships anytime during the year.

Memberships can be purchased online or by contacting [admin@rsnca.net.au](mailto:admin@rsnca.net.au)

All memberships, including Day Passes, must be applied for and paid for through the RSNCA Head Office without exception. No Day Pass fees will be collected by Producers. Memberships and Day Passes must be arranged at least 7 days before an event.

Participation in a RSNCA event by a participant who is not a current RSNCA member, or has not submitted a First Time Membership or Renewal Membership application as specified, will result in disqualification of the participant and the participant's teammates. The member or members of a disqualified team that had a current membership shall be entitled to receive a refund of his or her entry fees. The disqualified participant that is not current shall not receive a refund of entry fees and no member of a disqualified team is eligible for any prize or winnings.

By entering a RSNCA event the participant is representing that he or she is in compliance with the membership requirements. Acceptance of an entry at an event by RSNCA or its Producers shall not constitute a waiver of the requirement set forth in this rule. Membership fees will not be refunded as a result of classifications or rule disagreements.

**IMPORTANT** – Memberships are NON-REFUNDABLE & NON-TRANSFERABLE. Allow 1-2 weeks for 2-way mailing & processing for receipt of your membership letter.

## SECTION 6 - QUALIFICATION GUIDELINE FOR NATIONAL FINALS

All competitors must be full members of RSNCA.

National Points are earned from 1<sup>st</sup> July to 30<sup>th</sup> June. National Finals are held in July/August.

The Top 20 from each rating category from each state who have ridden at 5 sanctioned RSNCA events qualify for high point prizes. Any rider can compete for the jackpot money.

To qualify for year end prizes in the Western Heritage division at the National Finals, you must have ridden in a Western Heritage class at 5 separate sanctioned events. Any rider can compete for the jackpot money.

There is a 5 show requirement for all riders who wish to attend the National Finals event, however first year members are exempt.

## **SECTION 7 - RSNCA CODE OF CONDUCT:**

Ranch Sorting National Championships Australia is an equine organisation comprised of proud Australians who enjoy the freedom of equine recreational competition. We appreciate the camaraderie of all who participate regardless of race, religion or political accountability. The majority of those who compete do it specifically for the fun and pleasure of improving their skills with their equine partners. They attend the events to show their improvement from lessons and practice. They also attend to escape the daily deluge of drama and pressures from work or world happenings.

It is for these reasons that Ranch Sorting National Championships Australia has adopted a code of conduct and ethics.

While not every concern will be addressed, it is most important to consider that this association is the fastest growing equine family sport in the world. For that reason, the family values that we all have been taught to consider sacred, must remain as so.

During RSNCA sanctioned events, foul language will not be tolerated. Unsportsmanlike conduct and/or physical altercations will not be tolerated, sexual harassment will not be tolerated and competing under the influence of alcohol or drugs will not be tolerated. Unsportsmanlike conduct is defined as “engaging in, or attempting to engage in, any action threatening, berating, harassing, intimidating, assaulting or striking a sorting official, a sorting spectator, any official representative or employee of RSNCA or any RSNCA Competitor.”

We ask that all members compete by the golden rule, which is; Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. We are not here to fight; we are here to enjoy the competitive nature of the sport. Realising that every cow or judge will not always give favour to your skills or point of view, we acknowledge that sometimes we will win and sometimes we will lose. Sometimes it will be our fault, other times it will be our partner’s fault and sometimes it will be the fault of the cattle. Judges will strive to make the best call possible; wrong calls may sometimes fall in your favour and other times it may not. We realise this is true in all sports and we accept that risk.

Our head body, Cinch RSNC, has the fairest set of rules as possible to govern the sport. If at any time those rules can be improved, they are there to listen. Until then, all members agree to adhere to the rules set forth without exception.

If, by chance, you feel that the rules set forth were not followed, you have a right to bring it to the attention of those in charge in a respectful manner. The judge and/or show producer will have the final say on any given day. If you feel that it needs to be brought to the attention of the association, please do so in the same respectful manner.

At all times the office staff of this association will strive to assist you in any way possible. We will do so in a pleasant tone of voice and we expect the same in return. Foul language or threats will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

We have a duty and obligation to treat all livestock humanely, as well as our horses with compassion and dignity.

There are many RSNCA sanctioned events throughout the year, produced by individuals and organisations who have all agreed to represent RSNCA and the sport of Ranch Sorting under these guidelines. They realise a competitor's first priority is to have fun. The second is to be given a fair opportunity to compete under a well established set of rules. The third is to expect that all producers of events will put their best foot forward to make sure that happens.

We stand together to grow within the fun and exciting sport of Ranch Sorting.

## 7.1 CONDUCT

7.1.1 Each RSNCA member shall follow the RSNCA rules at all sanctioned shows.

7.1.2 Any contestant who is guilty of misconduct. In the case of disciplinary powers exercised by the RSNCA reserves the right to fine, expel, suspend for a period of time or shows, reprimand or warn the member. Misconduct includes, but is not limited to conduct unbecoming of a member or representative as the case may be, prejudicial to the interests of RSNCA or in breach of these Rules and Guidelines..

7.1.3 Complaints shall

- Be in writing
- Be addressed to the Directors of RSNCA
- Identify in detail the basis for the complaint
- Identify the complainant

7.1.4 Fines no greater than \$2000 will not be imposed. Fines must be paid before the contestant rides again, or competes in future events.

7.1.5 An approved Judge shall be treated with courtesy, co-operation and respect. No person shall direct abuse or threatening conduct toward any Judge or a Judge's family, either in furtherance of his/her judging duties or as a result thereof, whether or not the conduct occurs during an approved show, on the show grounds or off the show grounds.

7.1.6 By virtue of paying an entry fee and/or competing in a RSNCA sanctioned competition, whether or not he or she is a paid RSNCA member, each contestant grants permission to the RSNCA to use his or her photographic image for the promotion of the sport of Ranch Sorting.

7.1.7 Social Media. Social Media refers to the connection of people in an online environment and it is a key information source for many people. Social media includes, but is not limited to, social networking and sharing sites such as Facebook, Snap Chat, Instagram, Twitter and any sites that allow individual users to post comments on the web.

RSNCA Members and Producers are required to exercise prudence and good judgement when using social media.

When using social media, Members and Producers should:

- Post in a way that is constructive and positive towards RSNCA, its members, Producers, events and volunteers
- behave with respect and courtesy, even when disagreeing with someone or something
- ensure that the information they post is informed and factually accurate, when commenting about RSNCA

- understand that if they like, share or comment on a post, they could be endorsing the content or author
- Not post any material that would directly or indirectly defame, harass, discriminate against or bully any RSNCA member, producer or volunteer

## SECTION 8 – EVENT GUIDELINES

**8.1 PLACINGS** – Teams sorting in three go's will place higher than teams sorting in two go's. Teams sorting in two go's will place higher than teams sorting in one go, regardless of how many cattle were sorted. All ties (if lap timers are not used) will be brought back to the finals unless greater than 5 additional positions are created. All ties that are run off will be drawn for position of go. All ties can be eliminated by the use of lap timers, which is recommended.

**8.2 TIMERS** –It is recommended that Farm Tek timers or equivalent are used at all RSNCA sortings.

**8.3 TIME LIMIT** – A 60, 75 or 90 second allotted time limit for each class will be required at producer's discretion (RSNCA recommends a 60 second clock).

**8.4 SETTling CATTLE** – Each new herd must be familiarized with both sides of sorting pens before the first team runs on a herd. Cattle will be settled prior to run at judge's discretion. It is the judge's responsibility to see that cattle herds are settled as long as needed.

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 producer has the following four options:

- Cattle may be settled on one side every time and sorted one way for that go round or class.
- Cattle may be settled on one side for the first run of each herd and then alternated to the opposite side each consecutive run.
- Cattle may be settled on one side for the first run of each herd and then resettled on the side with the most cattle remaining.
- Cattle may be settled on the side of choosing by the team entering the arena.
- 

For determining number of runs on each herd, a producer shall advise the judge and should announce before the class starts one of the following options:

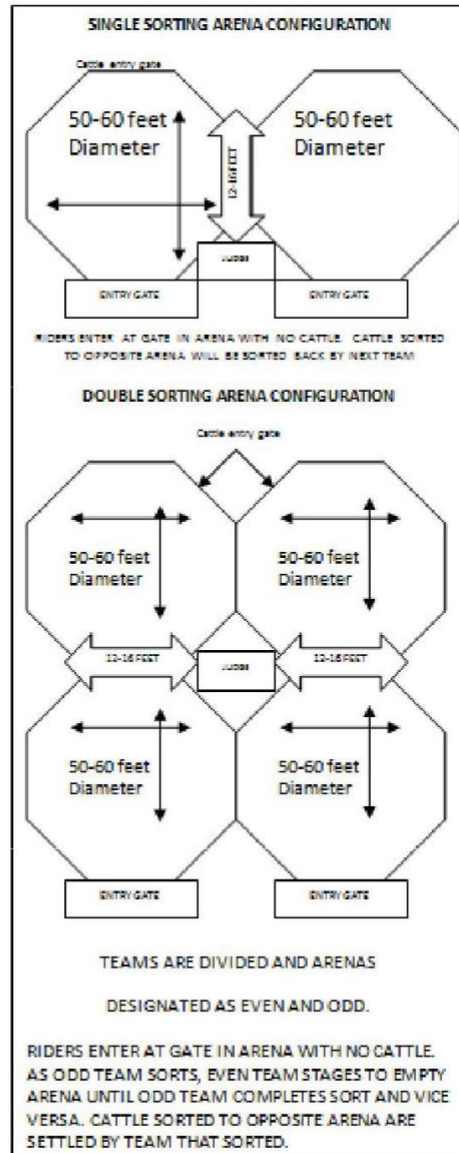
- Run 10 runs per herd and then the remaining runs that are less than ten on the final herd.
- Divide the herds as equally as possible by the number of teams.
- Make a decision that no herd will have more than #\_\_\_\_\_ runs due to the condition and well-being of the cattle.

**8.5 SPOTTING OF CATTLE** – Spotting of cattle at all RSNCA events is permissible and highly encouraged. It brings more excitement to the sport and equals the playing field for all participants

**8.6 RIDER FALLS OFF:** If a rider falls off his horse he can get back on and continue sorting.

**8.7 OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE** in regards to already sorted cattle- When a team is running and it is determined by the judge that interference from outside the arena adversely affect the run, the judge will give the team an option of a re ride from scratch or time and cattle sorted when the infraction occurred.

**8.8 PEN DIAGRAM**



The optimum sorting pen is 50'-60' diameter with corners cut at 45'.  
The opening between the two pens will be 12'-16'.

The optimum sorting pen is 50'-60' diameter with corners cut at 45'.  
The opening between the two pens will be 12'-16'.

**8.9 DUPLICATE TEAMS**

Two-member teams are permitted to ride together only once in each class unless it is the results of a Draw or in Ranch Hand classes, where they can ride together two times if they

change the designated sorter. Three-member teams are permitted to ride together only once in each class and then must change at least one rider.

#### 8.10 **RIDE LIMIT**

All classes are required to be a pick 1, automatically draw 1. You can pick up to 4 or draw all 5.

All classes are required to be up to a 5-ride limit with a maximum of 4 picks, with the exception of Ranch Hand classes with a 9-ride limit, maximum of 8 picks and minimum of 1 draw. Special sanctioning may vary from this rule.

#### 8.11 **TIES**

All ties will be brought back to the finals unless greater than 5 additional positions are created. All ties that are run off will be drawn for position of go. All ties can be eliminated by the use of the timer system.

#### 8.12 **REVIEWS**

##### 8.12.1. Allotted time for protest.

- For number of cattle sorted and official time of cattle sorted the protest must be made before the next go or class starts.
- For order of cattle sorted, duplicate number called, the protest must be made before the team leaves the arena.
- 

##### 8.12.2. Review fee: \$75

- If review is found in favour of contestant, there will be no fee charged and correction will be made.
- If review is not found in favour of contestant the fee will be charged to contestants bill.
- If there is no conclusive evidence there will be no fee charged and judge's ruling stands.

8.13 There will be at least one (1) sorting judge approved by the RSNCA. The announcer may function as timekeeper. Decisions of the judges are final. The RSNCA Arena Director will cast the tiebreaker.

8.14 All classes are required to be a pick 1, automatically draw 1. You can pick up to 4 or draw all 5. All classes may have up to a 5-ride limit with a maximum of 4 picks.

8.15 All proceeds and records of show must be submitted to the RSNCA Office within fourteen (14) days of the last day of the show.

8.16 **EVENT CANCELLATION** – In the event a show is cancelled due to weather or other extenuating circumstances before the final go-round, the last fully completed go-round will decide the winners of the class. The decision to stop the sorting shall be a joint decision of the event producer, and the judges.

8.17 **SUBSTITUTE RIDERS** – In extreme instances, substitution of a rider after a team has made its original ride may be allowed at the discretion of the producer for compassionate reasons. The show secretary must be notified to ensure that monies are awarded to the appropriate rider in each go. Substitute riders must have available rides in order not to exceed the limit in that class. Their rating must also not make the teams rating exceed the class number cap. Their rating must be the same or below that of the original rider.

## **8.2 GUIDELINES FOR EVENT PRODUCERS**

8.2.1 Any reputable person who can furnish proof that he or she is capable through ability or experience may act in the capacity of an Event Producer.

8.2.2 Event Producers must submit the required RSNCA Producer contract pages with requested show dates a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the first requested date.

8.2.3 Event Producers must have RSNCA Approved Judges and RSNCA Approved Show Secretaries for their events. The Event Producer must request that Judge tests and Show Secretary tests/software be sent to selected individuals so that those individuals have adequate time to apply and submit the required documentation/files for RSNCA approval a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the Event Producer's first scheduled event.

8.2.4 Event Producers must contact the RSNCA Headquarters to request event insurance a minimum of 2 weeks prior to each scheduled event if insurance is needed.

8.2.5 The Event Producer shall have authority and responsibility to enforce all rules pertaining to the show. He or she may excuse any horse or exhibitor from the show prior to or during the judging for any infraction of rules or misconduct.

8.2.6 The Event Producer shall have the authority and responsibility to enforce all ratings and rating rules Any suggested rating changes will be confirmed by the RSNCA office.

8.2.7 Pay for judges-timekeepers-announcers-show secretaries are up to the Event Producer's discretion. There is no suggested amount. These shall be paid for by the Event Producer.

8.2.8 The Event Producer must be present on the show grounds for the duration of the show. In the event an emergency arises and the Event Producer is unable to fulfill his duties, he or she may appoint an acting Event Producer in his/her absence. The acting Event Producer must also remain on the show grounds for the duration of the show. The Event Producer shall at all times extend every effort to satisfy the comfort of the horses, cattle, exhibitors, spectators, and officials. He or she shall be held responsible for maintaining clean and orderly conditions throughout the show.

8.2.9 The Event Producer shall receive written complaints from exhibitors, trainers, owners, show participants, and other RSNCA members of incidents of cruel, abusive or inhumane treatment of livestock on show grounds and shall forward such complaints to RSNCA for possible disciplinary action under the RSNCA rules pertaining to unsportsmanlike conduct.

8.2.10 Shall an emergency arise, on behalf of an injured contestant the event producer shall have the authority to make an emergency 000 call for assistance.

## **8.3 GUIDELINES FOR JUDGES** (An example of what the Judge will need and how to run the class is available upon request.)

8.3.1 The Event Producer may select any reputable person to apply to become a RSNCA Approved Judge. The selected individual must become familiar with RSNCA rules and submit a written rulebook test with a score of 90% or better to RSNCA Headquarters Office a minimum of 2 weeks prior to their first event as an Approved RSNCA Judge. In order for a

judge to remain current, they must renew their certification every two years by taking and passing a judge's test.

8.3.2 The Judge is responsible for enforcing the RSNCA rules and class procedures as outlined in the RSNCA Rulebook. The Judge is responsible for checking each herd as it enters the arena for correct head count, proper numbering, and number readability. The Judge shall also watch for lame or crippled cattle.

8.3.3 All approved Judges will be placed on a RSNCA Approved Judges list on the RSNCA website and will also be eligible to submit application.

8.3.4 Designation as a RSNCA Approved Judge is a privilege, not a right, bestowed by RSNCA according to procedures formulated by it, to individuals whose expertise and personal character merits the honour. An individual's conduct and ability as a member/participant/judge must be exemplary.

8.3.5 After acceptance of a judging commitment, a Judge shall endeavor, with all reasonable effort, to Judge the show, and shall timely communicate to show management any inability to do so, as to allow the show management maximum time in which to seek a suitable replacement.

8.3.6 During an approved show, a Judge shall be present to meet their responsibilities under RSNCA rules, and shall be available to assist show management in meeting its responsibilities to rule compliance including calling 000 in case of an emergency.

8.3.7 All Judges at a RSNCA sanctioned show must wear western attire: a western hat, long or short sleeved western shirt tucked-in and buttoned properly, and boots. Tank tops, tee shirts and ball caps will not be allowed.

8.3.8 When a participant makes a request through the Arena Director or other show official for the Judge's opinion, it is urged that the Judge will give his opinion courteously and sincerely in the presence of the Arena Director or other show official.

8.3.9 A RSNCA Approved Judge shall be treated with courtesy, cooperation, and respect, and no person shall direct abuse or threatening conduct toward him or his family on or off show grounds, either in the furtherance of his judging duties, or as a result thereof, whether or not the conduct occurs during an approved show or on show grounds.

8.4 GUIDELINES FOR TIMEKEEPER (An example of how to keep times is available upon request.)

Event producer may hire any reputable person they choose as a Time Keeper.

8.5 GUIDELINES FOR SHOW SECRETARIES (An example of what the Show Secretary will need and how to run the show is available upon request.)

8.5.1 The Event Producer may select any reputable person to become a RSNCA Show Secretary. To become a RSNCA Show Secretary, the selected individual must become familiar with both the RSNCA rules and RSNCA software and successfully run and submit the files from a completed Virtual Show run on the RSNCA Ranch Sorting software to the RSNCA office a minimum of 2 weeks prior to their first event.



8.5.2 Designation as a RSNCA Show Secretary is a privilege, not a right, bestowed by RSNCA, to individuals whose expertise and personal character merits the honour. An individual's conduct as a member/participant/show secretary must be exemplary.

8.5.3 The show secretary shall be the primary person responsible for the correctness of the entries and show results, including verifying exhibitor eligibility. The show secretary shall post the results of each class within one hour of the end of the class.

8.5.4 It shall be the responsibility of the show secretary to maintain and record both entries and show results. The show secretary must submit the electronic show results, sanctioning fees and membership forms and fees to RSNCA within five (5) days of the last day of the show. Failure to do so will subject the Event Producer to being fined and disallowed any further sanctioning by RSNCA. The show secretary shall keep a set of the results on file for at least one (1) year from the date of the show. The show secretary and Producer shall be held responsible for the entry fees, office charges, etc., and for all fees that should be collected for membership or sanctioning on behalf of RSNCA. In addition, it is strongly recommended that any cash payments made to the show secretary for these fees be converted to a money order or check before being sent to RSNCA. No results will be posted until the RSNCA office has all of the information needed from a show.

## SECTION 9 – POINTS

### 9.1 Points chart:

No. of entries	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>
3 - 4	½									
5 - 9	1	½								
10 - 14	2	1	½							
15 - 19	3	2	1	½						
20 - 24	4	3	2	1	½					
25 - 29	5	4	3	2	1	½				
30 - 34	6	5	4	3	2	1	½			
35 - 39	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	½		
40 - 44	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	½	
45 & More	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	½

9.1.2 Classes with more than 100 teams will award double points. Points will be awarded to the top 10 places regardless if they made a time in the final go or not.

9.1.3 In the event that a contestant's rating is changed his/hers points will be carried with him/her to the next division unless moving those points improves the contestant's standing in the points race. In this case, only the points that will put the contestant in the same standing as in the prior division will be carried over. *Example:* A NOVICE has 50 points and is in 4<sup>th</sup> place in the standings when she becomes an AMATEUR. The current 4<sup>th</sup> place AMATEUR has 30 points. In this case, the rider that is graduating from NOVICE to AMATEUR can only transfer 30 of her 50 points to the new division. The two riders will now be in a tie for the 4<sup>th</sup> place AMATEUR position.

9.1.4 Contestants moving out of #1 Beginners or #2 Rookie will have their points frozen in this category which will then see them eligible for either Graduated Beginner or Graduated Rookie high point awards at National finals. They will still appear on the National Standings in their previous division (in blue) showing frozen points however this will only be used toward the Graduated Beginner or Graduated Rookie awards not the standard Beginner and Rookie standings for end of year prizes.

## **SECTION 10 - SUN PROTECTION**

Excessive exposure to the sun's UV can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer.

RSNCA strongly recommend that all members, producers and volunteers protect themselves against excessive sun exposure by wearing: 50+ sunscreen, long sleeve shirts, wide brim hats and sunglasses.