



P.O. Box 549
Archer City, TX 76351
855-846-7468
800-429-6502 fax
stockhorsetexas@att.net

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 12, 2018

Division, Eligibility and Class Rule Changes Approved for 2019

At their December board meeting, the SHTX Board of Directors approved several rule changes that will take effect in 2019. Stock Horse of Texas (SHTX) experienced significant growth in the association in the last two years, and also was a founding member of the National Ranch and Stock Horse Alliance that was formally established in 2018. These rule changes reflect the association's growth and adaptability for the future of the stock horse industry.

"It is exciting to see new riders come to our association, as well as those who continue to compete with us as dedicated members of our sport," said SHTX President William Lewis. "With growth comes the opportunity to adapt our rules for the betterment of our members and their success within our organization."

Changes in division eligibility and rules, as well as class rules will be implemented with the first show of 2019.

"We want to continue to be a place for riders with little experience to get their feet wet and learn about stock horse events. We also want to help our dedicated members strive to improve their horsemanship skills and compete at an elite level within the more advanced divisions," Lewis said. "These rule changes reflect both of those goals, and our continuing focus to help people ride a better horse."

SHTX has experienced a 20% increase in all-around entries, as well as a 42% increase in individual class entries since 2015. Growth among youth riders is up by 116% in the last three years.

The addition of Level 1 Open in 2018 offered a place for riders not eligible for non pro status to compete at their own level and was very successful. That subdivision of the Open will continue in 2019 for riders with less than \$5,000 in earnings in a western performance discipline. Other significant division and eligibility options now include:

Novice Division

Eligibility restrictions for the Novice division has been increased to allow riders to earn up to \$250 in a western performance discipline.

The Level 1 Novice recognition (which was tested in the fall of 2018) will remain in place in 2019. Level 1 Novice is not a separate division of the Novice, but is designed to recognize improvement and advancement in the Novice division at large shows at the discretion of show management. Level 1 Novice follows the "D" system (commonly used in barrel racing), dividing the Novice all around results at the 50% mark, and will recognize the top 5 riders in the second half of the Novice.

There are no Year End awards in Level 1 Novice since these riders will be eligible to compete for Constant Competitor SHTX Year End awards.

Youth Division

New in 2019, youth riders will now have two separate divisions to choose from based on their skill level. Rider age (as long as they are 18 and under) is not a determining factor in these divisions. The new Novice Youth division is for those with limited riding and showing experience. To be eligible, a rider can not have won 2 champion or reserve champion titles at any show or cumulative year-end award in SHTX, ASHA, Texas State 4-H Finals or similar organization; more than 10 points in any breed association, or more than \$500 in a national organization in a western performance discipline. SHTX 12 & Under awards and titles do not count toward eligibility since 12 & Under was not a separate SHTX division. Novice Youth riders will compete in a boxing-only format for the cow work class.

The Youth division is now geared for riders with more riding and showing experience, and these riders will compete in a box-drive-box-drive format in the cow work class.

The Youth and Novice Youth are separate divisions and riders in each division will be eligible to win Year End awards. These changes in the Youth division will replace recognition for 12 & Under riders in 2019.

Collegiate Division

One significant change for 2019 includes the creation of a separate Collegiate division. Shows held during the fall and spring semester will be designated Collegiate shows, and will offer separate Collegiate divisions in the Novice, Limited/Intermediate, and Non Pro/Open. Collegiate riders and non-collegiate riders will be in the same draw and will show together to encourage networking among collegiate and other riders, but scores will be separated for results. Collegiate riders and non-collegiate riders will be placed in separate classes and all-around standings.

Class Rule Changes

Three new Stock Horse Pleasure patterns were approved by the Board in an effort to keep horses from anticipating the transitions. Other significant class rule changes include using two hands in a curb bit is now designated as Off Pattern (OP), and leaving the working area before the pattern is complete is a Disqualification (DQ). In the box-drive-box-drive cow work classes, a rider should drive the cow down the same side of the fence each time. Switching sides now results in a 1 point penalty. Other minor rule changes include clarification of penalties in reining and the ground tie in trail.

Exact wording of these rule changes will be available online at stockhorsetexas.org and in the 2019 SHTX Rule Book.