



2021 RULE BOOK

Note changes for 2021 are highlighted

Membership

Membership fee is \$50 per person per year. There is no fee for youth Members **under the age of 16**. New Members will receive a Membership to RSOA at no charge for the first calendar year.

Annual Membership will begin and end January 1 each year. Riders that become members after October 31 will receive a grace period and will not be charged a membership fee the following year.

Membership Requirements

All Riders competing in RSOA sanctioned events must be a Member of RSOA to collect winnings and to receive points towards any awards.

By entering a RSOA event the participant is representing that he/she is in compliance with all of the Membership requirements, Rules and Obligations. Membership fees are non-refundable and non-transferable.

Membership Suspensions

Any Member, Producer, or Non-Member may be suspended and denied Membership benefits of RSOA by the Director (at the Director's sole discretion) for the following (but not limited to the following):

Inappropriate behavior, unsportsmanlike conduct, excessive alcohol use, violence, the threat of violence, excessive profanity, disrespectful behavior to any staff, competitor or spectator, the

commission of any crime, cheating, and failure to pay any RSOA or RSOA Producer obligations when due. **Riders that do not pay when due forfeit the right to all winnings, points and prizes.**

Ratings and Classifications

It is of the utmost importance that the ratings for Riders be fair and unbiased. While initially ratings may be determined by a Producer, all ratings will be reviewed by the Director. The new Rider Application will be required for new Riders that are not RSOA Members or are unknown to the Rating Committee.

True Beginner – The producer or RSOA staff may designate any rider a True Beginner. As the name indicates, a True beginner is a rider that is new to sorting and/or riding. These riders typically are not comfortable trotting and are not comfortable loping. If the rider is unknown to staff, they can only be considered a True Beginner if they have participated in less than 3 competitions and never won money in a sorting competition. **Once a rider has won more than \$500 in a 9 month period or 4 checks in a 9 month period that rider will be evaluated to determine if the rider can still compete as a True Beginner.**

#1 Rated Riders - These Riders are most commonly beginner or newer Riders that have little or no experience sorting. The Producers will evaluate the number of years a Rider has been riding, the frequency with which the Rider rides, the horse the Rider competes on, and the equestrian disciplines the Rider has competed in to determine the rating of a newer Rider. **A #1 rated Rider may be moved at any time.**

#2 Rated Riders - These Riders have either; 1) experienced a level of success competing as a #1 rated Rider, or 2) have a more pronounced skill level, are mounted on a superior horse, have competed in other disciplines with success in the past, have experience working cattle, or any combination of the above. #2 rated Riders typically do not work the gate but may have shown the ability to work the gate and stop cows in a non-stressful situation at the gate.

#3 Rated Riders - These Riders have shown success by their winning ratio as a #2 rated Rider, and have advanced amongst their #2 rated peers. Typically the #3 Riders can work the gate with a modicum of success, and also are able to read cattle and can typically bring the desired cow without also bringing several other cows when working the herd.

#4 Rated Riders - These Riders have shown success as a #3 rated Rider and have above average gate and herd skills.

#5 & #6 Rated Riders - These Riders are typically more experienced with advanced gate and herd skills and are competitive with the higher rated Riders.

#7 & #8 Rated Riders - These Riders typically outperform the lower rated Riders and are adept with riding with Riders of all skill levels.

#9 Rated Riders - These Riders are routinely in the winner's circle at sorting events and are typically professional equine trainers.

RSOA Legends - Any competitor that is 50 years of age or older by December 31 of the current year may compete as a RSOA Select. If a Rider is 49 on January 1 and turns 50 later in the year, that Rider can compete in the Legends class beginning January 1 of that year.

Youth Riders - Any competitor that is 18 years of age or younger on January 1 may compete as a youth. If a Rider is turns 18 on January 5 then that Rider may compete as a youth for that entire year.

Rider Ratings Procedure

New Member Ratings. When a competitor joins RSOA at an event, the RSOA Representative and the event Producer will assign a rating to the new Rider. If a rider joins RSOA prior to an event then the Director shall assign a rating to the new Rider.

If a Member has not ridden in a RSOA event for more than one year then that Rider will automatically be re-rated via the Producer at the event and or the ratings committee.

All new Members compete for their first year under a ratings probationary period. During the one year probationary period new Members ratings may be changed at any time. Each new member shall receive the Welcome to RSOA Form. This form shall inform the new member that they will be evaluated at this show and that they agree that if RSOA staff feels that the riders rating is too low, that they could be pulled from a class or certain teams within the class if their incorrect lower rating enabled them to ride that class.

Out of State Members. Members that have ridden at a RSOA Event in a different state are under a one show ratings probationary period. These riders will receive the same Welcome to RSOA form that contains the aforementioned verbiage

Rating Changes –

1. Notwithstanding the aforementioned, Rider's ratings will be evaluated and adjusted quarterly and immediately following the National Finals. With the exception of probationary Riders, there will be no rating changes 150 days prior to the National Finals Event for riders that have ridden a minimum of either 5 RSOA shows for that year with at least 5 rides per event, or have accumulated more than 45 rides that year prior to the 150 day cut-off rate.
2. Members that do not meet the aforementioned requirements may be moved up at any time with NO RESTRICTIONS as to the finals date, if their winning percentage for the year is greater than 70%. These riders do not receive the no rating change 150 days prior to the Finals Event.
3. #1 and #2 rated riders that achieve a cumulative winning percentage greater than 75% after the cut-off date, will not be moved but the 1 rated rider will not be

allowed to be the sorter in the Beginner Ranch Hand and the 2 rated rider may not be the sorter in the 1 1/2 (2 cap on the sorter).

Members who have a winning percentage greater than .60 will likely be moved up.

Members with a winning percentage lower than .20 will likely be moved down.

The Ratings Committee will take into consideration the following factors prior to determining if a Member needs to be moved:

1. Number of rides during the period
2. Added money during the period
3. Number of checks received during the period
4. The Member's historical ratings and performance
5. The Quality of the Members horse
6. The Members ability to find rides with higher rated riders.

Should a Member disagree with their rating change, they may appeal to the Ratings Committee.

The Ratings Committee shall review and address the rating within 1 week of notification.

Should the appealing Member's win/loss ratio be less than 20% after 30 or more rides at the new rating, then the Riders rating will be lowered to the previous rating provided the rider requests the reduction.

RSOA CLASS EXPLANATIONS

In a Ranch Hand Class the Riders may not switch out. One partner must work the gate and the other partner will work in the herd. The herd partner is allowed to work the gate; however the gate Rider cannot make an aggressive move towards a good cow to push the cow through the gate.

In a class where there is a cap on the sorter, the partners may switch out and work the herd or the gate at their discretion if both Riders are at or below the cap. If one of the Riders is rated higher than the cap on the sorter, then that Rider must work the gate and cannot make an aggressive move to a good cow.

Draws in Ranch Hand or capped sorter (IE 11/2)

Riders may choose which of the two members of the team will be in the herd and who will work the gate provided both riders are under any cap placed on the sorter.

ALL LEVELS

All levels may ride this class. This class will be handicapped as an 18 class.

13 MIX

Teams must be comprised of 2 of the following categories.
Male, Female, Youth, over 60 yrs of age

11 HC (2 cap on the sorter)

The sorter must be rated a #2 or below. If both Riders are rated #2 or below either Rider may sort or work the gate at any time. Riders may alternate working the gate and sorting. Please notify the Judge before the ride.

11/4 RANCH HAND (4 cap on the sorter)

This is a Ranch Hand class whereby one Rider enters the herd and the other Rider must work the gate. The Rider in the herd must be rated a 4 or below. If a Rider is rated 4 or below that Rider can pick up to 11 rides and receive your 1 draw. You may ride up to 6 times in the gate and up to 5 times in the herd. You may ride up to 5 times in the gate and 6 times in the herd.

10 BEGINNER RANCH HAND

This class was designed to allow true beginners (#1 rated Riders) to compete against each other and not against other higher rated Riders. The gate holder cannot make an aggressive move to the good cow. An aggressive move is typically when the gate holder gets behind or beside a good cow and attempts to influence the good cow towards the gate, when such a move does not influence a bad cow. If in the process of pushing back bad cattle, or keeping bad cattle at bay, the good cow is forced towards the gate, the team will not be penalized.

14 RANCH HAND

This is a ranch hand class whereby one Rider enters the herd and the other Rider must work the gate. You can pick up to 11 rides and receive your 1 draw. You may ride up to 6 times in the gate and up to 5 times in the herd. You may ride up to 5 times in the gate and 6 times in the herd.

#6 YOUTH

To compete as a youth, a Rider must be 18 or younger on January 1 of the current year. Two youths will ride together.

BEGINNER YOUTH

Any youth that is rated a #1 beginner can compete. This is a RANCH HAND class with an adult in the gate. There is no fee for the adult Rider.

NO-LOPE

You may walk or trot your horse but you may not lope. The Judge MAY use discretion and allow just one lope step. The gate holder may lope to block or stop cattle at the gate only. Riders may yell as loud as they want!!! We don't care.

12/3 (3cap on the sorter)

This class is unique to RSOA. The sorter must be rated a 3 or lower. Like the 11/2, this class is not a ranch hand class. If both Riders are rated 3 and below they can alternate working the gate and in the herd at their discretion but must advise the Judge before the ride begins.

ALL LEVEL KISS CLASS

This class is unique to RSOA.

Anyone may ride in the KISS CLASS.

There are no draws.

Each team may ride up to two times.

At the beginning of the run, immediately after the cow # is called, the Riders must kiss for a period of 5 seconds. (A kiss is defined as the lips of both partners touching.) If the partners do not kiss for a full 5 seconds they will receive a 1 head, 10 second penalty. The Judge may use his/her discretion if the partners' horses force the Riders to detach lips during the kiss and not charge a penalty if the Judge ascertains that a genuine attempt at a kiss was made for a full 5 seconds.

Riders much kiss one additional time AFTER the 30 second buzzer, but before the final buzzer.

This kiss can be as brief as the couple desires, but their lips must touch. If the Riders do not kiss between the 2 buzzers then they will be disqualified. As with the previous kiss, the Judge may use his discretion to ascertain if the partners attempted to kiss. Riders are strongly urged to use their discretion and always place their safety first. If they make a genuine attempt to kiss they will not be penalized.

Producer Discretion

RSOA is unique in the amount of discretion allowed by each producer. Each of the following rules will be abided by for all RSOA produced events. RSOA producers enjoy the ability to cater their events to their riders. For example, if a producer is in a region that is short on cattle, he may amend the rule for pulling bad cattle and offering re-rides. RSOA only requires that producers keep their policy consistent throughout an event. It is not the intent of RSOA to force all producers to do things in the same way. We allow producer discretion so that producers can offer to their riders the options that fit their membership.

The Handicap System

Most RSOA classes will be double handicapped. A team rating is defined as the total of the ratings of both Riders. For example, in a #10 HC class if a 4 rated Rider and a 2 rated Rider are riding together as a team their team rating shall be 6. The time handicap for in this scenario would be 4 seconds. The double handicap would be applied in the following manner:

The team would have 4 seconds added to the standard run time of 60 seconds for a total sorting time of 64 seconds.

Additionally the team will have 4 seconds deducted from their actual sorting time.

For example if the team sorted 6 head in 62.47 seconds, then 4 seconds would be deducted from their time and their final adjusted time would be 58.47 seconds.

Ride Limits

Most RSOA classes have a 6-ride limit with 1 Mandatory Draw. It is possible for Riders to choose up to 5 partners and draw 1, or draw all 6 rides. Regardless of the # of rides a competitor chooses partners for, each competitor will receive at least one mandatory draw.

A Rider may pick 1 partner and receive 1-5 draws.

A Rider may pick 2 partners and receive 1-4 draws

A Rider may pick 3 partners and receive 1-3 draws

A Rider may pick 4 partners and receive 1-2 draws

A Rider may pick 5 partners and receive 1 mandatory draw.

In a Ranch Hand Class (provided the Rider meets the minimum cap on the sorter requirement) a Rider can pick up to 11 rides and receive 1 draw. Riders may ride up to 6 times in the gate and up to 5 times in the herd or they may ride up to 5 times in the gate and 6 times in the herd. Also in a Ranch Hand Class if both Riders are below the cap on the sorter requirement, then they may pick rides with the same partner, provided each Rider rides once in the herd and once in the gate with the duplicate partner.

Each Rider may pick a particular partner only once per class (exception for the Kiss Class and Ranch Hand classes).

There is no draw for the Kiss Class.

In a Ranch Hand Class the Members of the draw teams can determine which Rider will stay in the herd and which Rider works the gate.

A producer may decide to increase the ride limit in a class.

Ranch Sorting Rules

The object of Ranch sorting is for 2 partners to bring cattle through the gate, beginning with the number announced by the Judge in sequential order. If the cattle enters the gate in

non-sequential order the team will receive a “no time”. The Producer has the discretion to add 1 or 2 unnumbered cows commonly referred to as blanks. Each team will be given a minimum of 60 seconds to sort, more if the handicap allows. See Handicap section.

At the beginning of the sort, both contestants should be behind the line at the gate, the Judge will raise his flag indicating to the announcer that the contestants are ready to begin their run.

The announcer will typically repeat the team Members name to confirm the correct team, and once the announcer states “Let’s Sort” the Riders may then cross the plane of the gate and enter into the pen containing the herd. Riders should never enter the sorting pen, until they hear the words “Let’s Sort” from the announcer.

Upon the first Rider crossing the plane of the gate the Judge will drop the flag indicating that the run has begun and the announcer will announce the first cow to be sorted.

The timer for the run shall begin when the Judge drops his flag.

At the end of the run, a buzzer will indicate that the run is over. Typically there will be an additional buzzer when 30 seconds of sorting time remains.

The cattle must be sorted in numerical order. The good cow (next in numerical order) must completely cross the plane of the gate in order to be counted in the sorted total. If the body of the cow has crossed the plane but the tail of the cow has not, then that cow will not be counted towards the sorting total.

Due to the difficulty in judging doubles (A double is defined as two cows in numerical order crossing the plane of the gate when there is no distance between the tail of the first cow and the head of the next cow), the following exception applies to the aforementioned rule. If the nose of the first cow crosses the plane of the gate before the nose of the 2nd (good) cow, then the run is a clean run, even if the second cow’s entire body ends up clearing the plane of the gate before the first cow’s entire body.

Example - The first cow called is the #4 cow, the Rider attempts a double and brings the #4 and the #5 cow. If the nose (or any other portion) of the #4 breaks the plane of the gate before the nose of the #5 cow that is considered a clean run. Even if the tail of the #5 cow clears the plane of the gate before the tail of the #4 cow. If however the #4 cow’s nose crosses the plane of the gate, but then the entire cow returns to the original pen and does not cross the gate immediately, then the team will receive a no-time.

The reasoning for this exception is that Riders do not stand in the gate and watch to see which cow’s entire body cleared the gate first. Oftentimes the Rider sees that the nose of the #4 cow beat the nose of the #5 cow, and then the Rider turns around to get the #6 cow. But the Rider didn’t see what the Judge saw. The Rider did not see that after the nose of the #4 crossed, the #5 cow sped up and beat the #4 cow through. The Judge flags the Rider out, but then the Rider disagrees with the Judge. These misunderstandings can now be avoided.

If the bad cow (any cow not next in numerical order or a blank cow) crosses the plane of the gate then that team shall receive a no-time. The entire cow must cross the plane of the gate, not just the head. The bad cow may have his body half way through the gate, but if the Rider(s) can force the cow back to the sorting pen before the cow's entire body goes through the gate, then that team will not receive a no-time for the occurrence.

Cows Doubling Back If a cow is sorted successfully and the entire cow crossed the plane of the gate and then doubles back and the cow's entire body re-enters the original pen, at any time during the teams run, then the team will receive a re-ride. Why should Riders be penalized by a rare, luck of the draw occurrence? A re-ride for a double back will only be issued once per team in the class. **There will be no re-rides issued for a cow doubling back to the sorting pen after the first round. IE no re-rides for double backs in the top 10, top 20 etc.**

The entire cow must cross the plane of the gate and re-enter the sorting pen to receive the re-ride. If the cow's head and shoulders enter the sorting pen and the Riders are able to force the cow back then they will not receive a re-ride for the occurrence.

If blank cows are in the sorting herds, the tenth cow does not need to pass the plane of the gate before any portion of the blank breaks the plane of the gate. There is no requirement that there must be space between the tail of the good cow and the head of the blank to be considered a qualifying run. So long as the entire good cow crosses the plane before the entire blank, the run is good.

Settling Cattle. When a new herd that has yet to be sorted on is brought into the pen for the first run, that herd **MUST** be settled at least once before the herd is ran for the first time, unless the herds have been pre-settled by the producer. It is at the discretion of the Judge and/or the Producer to ensure that the cattle are sufficiently settled before the runs begin. This may require more than one occurrence of bringing the cattle from one pen to the other. **It is strongly suggested that only designated riders settle herds so that the herds are settled correctly.**

Choice of sorting pens

In order to prevent the instances of blow-outs due to ornery cattle, contestants may choose which pen they choose to sort in. This is allowed so that if the cows have been difficult to sort one way then the riders have the option to change sides to mitigate the likelihood of being blown out. This option can only be given at the beginning of a class. Each team has the ability to choose the pen they sort from for all rounds. This is always at the producer's discretion.

The following determines how many rounds (go's) there will be in each competition.

<u>First round teams</u>	<u>2nd round</u>	<u>3rd round</u>	<u>Finals</u>
3-49			10
50-99	20		10
100 – 149	30		10
150 – 199	40	20	10

200 – 249	50	26	10
250 –	60	30	10

In order to advance to the next round the team must have sorted successfully. A no-time or 0 head sorted will disqualify a team from progressing to the next round.

In the final placings, the number of successful sortings in a class takes precedence over the total number of cattle sorted. For example, assume in a class size of 40, one team sorted 10 head in the first round and received a no-time in the finals. Also assume another team sorted 5 head in the first round and then 2 head in the finals, that team would place in the finals with a 7 head before the other team with a total of 10 head.

RSOA PAY-TABLE

Pay-Out Percentage

CLASS SIZE	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th
3-13	100									
14-26	60	40								
27 -39	50	30	20							
40-52	40	30	20	10						
53-65	38	25	16	12	9					
66-82	37	24	15	10.5	7.5	6				
83-99	36	23	14	9	7	6	5			
100-125	33	21	13.5	9	7	6.5	5.5	4.5		
125-149	32	19	13	8.5	6.5	6	5.5	5	4.5	
150 +	31	18	11.5	8	6.5	6	5.5	5	4.5	4

Coaching and the spotting of cattle is allowed and encouraged.

If a Rider falls off of their horse the ride will continue unless the Judge has determined that the Rider is injured and/or at risk for future injury. The dismounted Rider may not work the cattle in any manner other than to defend himself. A dismounted rider can re-mount their horse, however if the rider is “chasing” their horse around the pen, putting himself or cattle at risk, then the run may be disqualified.

If a team sorts successfully during the first round of a class, and then one of the Riders becomes injured or ill or if for any reason is unable to ride one of subsequent go-back rounds, that Rider may not be replaced. Their partner may choose to ride alone.

If prior to the initial ride in a class, a Rider is unable to compete for any reason such as an injury to the Rider, the Riders horse, or if a Rider misses their gate call, a substitute Rider may replace the missing Rider provided the new Riders rating does not cause the team to be over the ratings cap for that class. Note this only applies in the initial ride, not in subsequent go-back rides.

Disqualifications

A team may be disqualified if they do not arrive in time for the beginning of their run. The Rider may be given a 60 second gate call before that Rider is disqualified. If the team is disqualified the late Rider will pay the entry fees for themselves and partner.

Roughing Cattle

A team may be disqualified for roughing cattle for any overly aggressive contact of the horse and cattle or the Rider and cattle at the sole discretion of the Judge, whether said contact is intentional or not.

A team will be disqualified if a Rider seeks the aid of a foreign object to affect the cattle. A Rider may not wave a hat, apparel, reins or any other foreign object to affect the cattle. Handicapped riders requiring objects such as a whip can utilize the whip so long as they are not used to directly affect the cattle.

Re-Rides

A team may receive the option of a re-ride for any of the following reasons:

The request for the re-ride can be made during or at the end of the ride. *The request must be made before both Riders leave the sorting pen.*

If a cattle number has been previously called then that team will receive the OPTION of a re-ride. There will not be an automatic re-ride.

If there are too many cattle in the sorting herd (but 1 of each number)

If a cow falls down and does not stand back up within 10 seconds then that cow may be deemed unworkable and the team has the OPTION of a re-ride, but only if the cow laying down is a cow that the team is attempting to sort into the next pen. If a cow lays down, but is not a cow that is attempted to be sorted then no re-ride will be issued.

If a team member, despite their best efforts is unable to get their horse to cross the plane of the gate where the cattle are located.

If a cow's number has fallen off or becomes unreadable and the team was not notified before their run (Judges Discretion;

If a cow is lame, exhausted, injured, blind, or sick;

If a cow leaves the sorting pen;

If there is a mechanical failure or incident that affects the team's ability in any way to sort successfully then they may request a re-ride. It is at the discretion of the Judge to determine if the malfunction affected the run in any way. Examples are cattle that become shielded or slowed down by loose tarps, a panel that moves to the extent that it is disruptive, an individual in the proximity of the pen, or cattle or object not originally under the control of the participating Riders, distracts or spooks the cattle, or the horse of the Rider, or if the announcer or judge mistakenly calls for a no-time or a halt in the sorting (even if they immediately attempt to remedy the errant call).

If a cow that is being sorted has his head stuck in between the panels of a pen and despite the riders best attempt cannot be dislodged for a period of more than 10 seconds, the team will receive a re-ride if requested of the judge.

An automatic re-ride will be issued for the following reasons:

If there is an error in the timekeeping of the run;
If there are too few cattle in the sorting herd and the team received a time;

Pulling Bad Cattle

We know the sorters least favorite scenario. You watch a single cow blow out the first 3 teams. Your time to ride arrives. You enter the pen and politely protest the cow, the Judge refuses and you get blown out by that very protested cow. The Judge then pulls the cow, doesn't issue your team a re-ride even though you protested the cow, and all the teams behind you receive times and checks. Or consider an actual example from a competition from the past. After a top 20, the teams in pen A (on herd A) have 9 go backs to the top 10. The Teams in pen B (on herd B) have one go back to the top 10. (When the bad cow's number was called first). RSOA believes that no competitor should be penalized so severely by the luck of the ride order or the producer's inability to ensure parity in the herds

However, consider the Producers least favorite scenario. They try to do the right thing, pull a bad cow and issue re-rides and the flood gates open. Every time a cow blows out a team, the next team protests that cow. There are arguments with the Judge, cows are pulled, re-rides are issued, over and over, and the show goes on all night long with arguing and re-rides. At the 2020 Finals over 35 cows were pulled as unworkable, yet members demanded the removal of even more bad cattle.

RSOA utilizes proprietary methods to ensure that there is parity in the herds and that likely unworkable cattle are pulled prior to the show. Producers will make every effort to pull ornery cows before the competition begins. The Producer will designate certain personnel to observe the cattle in each class to be on the lookout for ornery cattle. The Judge will be on heightened alert to spot ornery cattle.

An ornery cow is defined as 1) a cow that charges the gate from the rear of the pen at a high rate of speed and refuses to honor a correctly placed gate person; 2) a cow that completely disregards a horse and does not respect a horse and plows through a horse with intensity, 3) a cow that cuts a superior Rider (rated 5 or above) repeatedly at the gate until it gets through the gate.

A cow that has been stopped or turned by previous riders but is pesky and continues to return to the gate area will not be pulled.

Ultimately it is the rider's responsibility to spot ornery/unworkable cows and protest to the judge. With the following exception, the judge will only remove ornery cattle during the first 3 teams riding on a herd. The judge may remove a cow after the first 3 teams (at any time) if the cow has gotten sour or ornery and is a danger to a rider and their horse or the cow is at risk to injure itself. Thereafter it is incumbent upon the rider to watch their herd and recognize potential bad cattle. *Reminder, the team has the option of sorting the cattle from the other pen at all times.*

A much higher degree of scrutiny will be given for herds in 2nd and subsequent rounds.

We all know there is a certain amount of "luck of the draw" that affects the outcome of a class. Our goal is to minimize, as much as possible, that aspect of our sport.

It is imperative that Riders participate in our efforts to notice unworkable cattle. If a Rider does not protest a bad cow at the beginning of their run, then they also did not notice the unworkable cow and will not be guaranteed a re-ride if the cow is pulled. A Rider that protests a bad cow will receive a re-ride if that cow is then deemed ornery/unworkable by the judge.

The following rules shall be applied in regards to cattle that have been pulled from a herd because they are deemed ornery/unworkable by the Judge:

The judge may pull a cow that is determined to be unworkable before the fourth ride on a herd.

If a cow is pulled because it is deemed ornery/unworkable before the beginning of the 4th ride on a herd, then any team that rode on the pulled cow prior to this team shall receive the option of a re-ride. The judge CANNOT remove a cow as unworkable after the third team unless 1) the cow is protested; or 2) the cow is a danger to riders and/or their horse, or itself. IE the cow runs over riders when sorted from both sides of the sorting pens.

If a cow is pulled AFTER 4 runs have been completed, then the last team to sort on those cattle shall receive the option of a re-ride. Previous teams will not be given the option of a re-ride;

Protesting A Cow

A team may protest (inform the Judge that they believe a particular cow is unworkable and state that they wish to protest the cow) a cow prior to their run. If that cow is deemed ornery/unworkable by the Judge then that cow will 1) be removed by the judge before the run, or 2) will be removed after the cow has blown out the protesting team

The team member at the gate must be in front of the cow when the cow approaches the gate and make an honest effort to the best of their abilities to stop the cow.

A protested cow MAY not be pulled or the team may not receive a re-ride if:

- A Rider pressured the cow while in the herd, or towards the gate, then that team may not receive a re-ride.
- The protested cow charges the gate, and the gate holder is occupied on the other side of the gate and does not attempt or is unable to get in front of the protested cow.
- The gate holder does not make an honest aggressive attempt to stop the protested cow.
- The gate holder is late approaching the cow, then a re-ride MAY not be given.

A team may not protest a cow during the Top 10 rides. But the judge may still remove a cow in the Top 10 if the cow is a danger to riders and/or their horse, or itself.

If a rider takes advantage of the protested cow rule and repeatedly protests cows, then the judge may refuse the protest, the judge may refuse a protest at any time.

Only one cow per herd will be removed if the cow is unworkable/ornery. Unless the cow is deemed a danger to the riders by the judge

Unworkable Cattle

A cow may be removed as unworkable if a competent rider cannot affect the movements of the cow sufficiently to sort the cow through the gate. This type of unworkable cow is extremely rare, and there must be an extreme degree of un-cooperation by the cow for this rule to apply. If a competent sorter has attempted to bring the cow out clean for over 15 seconds and the cow was not blocked by the other member of the team it will likely be deemed unworkable. The judge will not be required to pull the cow and issue a re-ride unless the team protests the cow before they leave the pen, or during their run. The judge has the option of pulling the cow and issuing a re-ride even if the team does not protest the cow as unworkable. If a cow is removed as unworkable before the 4th team then other teams that rode on that cow will be given the option of a re-ride only if the unworkable cow substantially affected the teams run.

If a cow is pulled because it is injured, unhealthy or lame, then only those teams that were substantially affected by said cow will receive the option of a re-ride;

A substantially affected run is defined as a run where the sick or injured cow has a significant impact on the amount of head on the team score. Example - if a cow was slow to exit to the gate then it is not considered a substantially affected run. If a cow is brought clean and refuses to exit the gate for a prolonged period of time (over 15 seconds), then that cow may be ruled as substantially affecting the run. If a team leaves the sorting pen without protesting the cow, they may not receive a re-ride.

Only one cow per herd will be pulled as ornery/unworkable from each herd. The judge or producer may decide to remove an entire herd and insert a new herd. If an entirely new herd is inserted, then no cows will be pulled as ornery/unworkable from the new herd. There is no limit to the number of cows replaced due to illness, injury, lameness or sickness;

It is incumbent upon the Rider to ensure that they receive proper credit for the number of cows and time for their run. Riders may protest their time or number of cows before they exit the pen or penning arena. If the rider is challenging the number of cows sorted or the time of the sort, then that rider must challenge the ride PRIOR TO the beginning of the next round.

Video Challenges.

A rider may challenge any call made by the judge BEFORE the team leaves the pen. The producer may decide to charge a \$25 fee to challenge a call. If the rider is correct and the judge's ruling is overturned, then the rider will not be charged \$25. However, if the riders challenge is over-ruled and the judge's decision is upheld, then the rider will be charged the \$25 fee

It is important to note that the video replay does not offer the same visualization as the judge. The judge is located directly at the plane of the gate within a very close proximity of the gate. The video camera is shooting from over 100 feet away from behind or at a side angle. It is very difficult to determine exactly when a cow passes the plane of the gate from the camera angle.

In order for a challenged call to be overturned the video replay must offer irrefutable proof that the call that was made was incorrect. There must be clear and obvious visual evidence that the decision rendered by the judge was incorrect.

If a Rider challenges and their score was announced correctly and later notated differently, they must approach the Judge or the Producer who will then verify both the computer generated score and the hand-written manual score to determine the proper number of the proper score for the team. A score that has been noted on the computer and manually will only be overturned if the Judge or Producer remembers the results of the run, or if there is videotaped proof of the contested time.

Tie Breakers

In the event of a tie-breaker, if both teams' scores are identical for the last position in a go-back round then the team with the most cows in the fastest time of any single run of that teams runs from that class, shall progress. If both teams had the same amount of head in their fastest run, then the team with the next fastest run will progress. If the teams are still tied after the aforementioned, then they will both ride in the go-back round.

In the event of a high point award, then the member with the most cattle sorted at the finals event shall prevail. If both members have the same amount of cattle, then the member with the shortest time period shall prevail. If both members have the same number of cattle and time, then a ride-off (producers rules) shall determine the winner.

Disputing a Judge's decision

When a Team has a dispute about a Judge's decision or any aspects of a sorting result, a protest must be lodged by one Member of the team before both Members leave the sorting pen. The judge may solicit the assistance and or opinion of the Producer or his appointed Member, however the judge shall make the final decision.

Year End Awards

The points race began after our 2020 World Finals Event and will culminate at the RSOA 2021 World Finals in Bryan, Texas November 11-14, 2021. The following guidelines apply, and may change or be amended from time to time:

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

In order to compete at the 2021 World Finals Event, or compete for the year end prizes and compete in the World Finals, riders must have 1) competed in at least 4 different RSOA sanctioned events, riding a minimum of 6 rides per event; OR 2) competed in at least 3 different RSOA Events riding a minimum of 50 rides total. Riders must be present at the Finals Event, riding a minimum of 8 rides at the finals event to be eligible for year-end awards.

AWARDS

High point prizes will be awarded to the top 5 high point winner of the following divisions.

- **1 Rated Riders**
- **2 Rated Riders**
- **3 Rated Riders**
- **4 Rated Riders**
- **5-9 Rated Riders**
- **Youth**
- **Legends**
- **Circus Sort**
- **Team Penning**

The 9 high point RSOA Champions will each receive a custom [Double J Trophy Saddle](#). These are not your typical trophy saddles. Each winner will design his or her own saddle. Winners choose size, type, color, tooling, conchos, stirrups, and every aspect of their saddle. Winners can even bring their horse in for a custom fitting. You cannot beat the quality of a Custom Double J Saddle!

Additionally all #1 rated riders and #2 rated Riders that have met the requirements that finish in the top 10 places in their division will receive a 2021 World Finalists Buckle and a Worlds Finalist patch. There are no restrictions on the Top 10 finishers. All 10 qualified riders will receive the 2021 World Finalists Buckle and a 2021 World Finalist patch.

AWARD LIMITATIONS

- Each high point winner is eligible for only one high point award.
 - Should a rider place within the top 5 in two different categories then he/she will receive the award **with the largest number of points**. *IE if a rider places third in the youth division and first in the 3 rated rider division, then that rider would receive the saddle for first place in the 3 rated rider division, and no prize for the youth division.*
 - If a rider were to place in the same place in 2 divisions then the division with the highest number of points will take precedence. *IE if a rider placed first in the RSOA Legends division (over 50) with 64 points and first in the 6-9 rated riders division with 250 points, then the rider would receive the trophy saddle for the RSOA 6-9 rated riders division and no prize for the Legends division*
- The National Finals Competition shall be a double point's show for all classes with less than 100 teams. For classes with 100 teams or over the points will remain the same. *IE if there is a class of 120 teams the winner of the class will receive 20 points not 40 points.*
- ***There will only be one class for the Legends and Circus Sort at the World Finals Event.***

CALCULATION OF POINTS

Points are accumulated in the following manner (with double points under 100 teams at the finals)

# Teams	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th
3-4	1									
5-9	2	1								
10-14	3	2	1							
15-19	4	3	2	1						
20-24	5	4	3	2	1					
25-29	6	5	4	3	2	1				
30-34	7	6	5	4	3	2	1			
35-39	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
40-44	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
45+	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
100+	20	18	16	14	12	10	8	6	4	2

- *Points for every class will count towards the Division Points with the exception of the Youth Penning, and Legends.*
- *Youth points will accumulate from the following classes throughout the year.*
 - *Youth Sorting AND Youth Penning Classes*
 - *Sorting classes with a team limit of 6 or lower (IE #6 sort, #4 sort)*
 - *Sorting Classes with a limit for the sorter of 2 or below (IE #10 Beginner Ranch Hand 1 1/2 (2 cap on the sorter))*

RATINGS CHANGES

Riders ratings may be moved up or down based on several factors, the most important being their win: loss ratio. No rider (with the exception of newer or low volume riders and others previously noted) will be moved up or down 150 days prior to the RSOA National Finals Event.

Should a rider move from one division to another, the rider shall transfer only those points accumulated up to the amount equal to the number of points the current first place holder in the new division has accumulated. *IE if a rider is moved from the 2 division to the 3 division, and*

- *has accumulated 210 points, and*
- *the leader of the 3 division has accumulated 195 points*
- *then the rider transferring to the 3 division shall transfer only 195 points*

Rule Changes Rules may be amended from time to time at the sole discretion of the Association.