

Reining

CLASS DESCRIPTION

“To rein a horse is not only to guide it, but also to control its every movement. The best reined horse should be willingly guided or controlled with little or no apparent resistance and dictated to completely. Any movement on its own must be considered a lack of control. All deviations from the exact written pattern must be considered a lack of or temporary loss of control, and therefore faulted according to severity of deviation. Credit shall be given for smoothness, finesse, attitude, quickness and authority in performing the various maneuvers while using controlled speed.”

(Adapted from the National Reining Horse Association Rulebook)

SCORING

Each contestant will perform a given pattern individually. Scoring for each reining run is on a basis of 0 to infinity, with 70 denoting an average performance. There are seven or eight maneuvers per run with each maneuver receiving a maneuver score of:

- 1 ½ Extremely poor performance, completely incorrect maneuver
- 1 Very poor performance, somewhat incorrect
- ½ Poor performance, no degree of difficulty
- 0 Correct with no degree of difficulty
- ½ Correct, some degree of difficulty
- 1 Very good, correct
- 1 ½ Excellent

The horse will also receive a penalty score along with each maneuver score to be added up separately from the maneuver score. Then the maneuver score will be added or subtracted from 70 (average score), and then the penalties will be subtracted from that new total.

In evaluating each maneuver, a judge should consider the horse's performance based on the following hierarchy of concerns:

On Pattern: The judge must ensure that the maneuver being performed by horse and rider is the correct maneuver as dictated by the pattern.

Correctness: Having ascertained that the horse and rider are performing the maneuver required by the pattern, the judge must then ascertain whether the maneuver is being executed correctly. In this regard, the judge must evaluate the performance of the maneuver against the requirements of the maneuver descriptions. In each group of maneuvers, the judge must ascertain that the horse has been dictated to completely and the basic elements of the maneuver have been fulfilled regardless of the degree of difficulty. In the instance where horse and rider have failed to correctly perform the maneuver, the judge will deduct for a substandard performance. This deduction ranges from - ½ to - 1 ½ for the maneuver

Degree of Difficulty: Having ascertained that the horse and rider are on pattern and have performed the maneuver group correctly, a judge must evaluate the degree of difficulty in completing the maneuver. In the instance where the horse has correctly performed the maneuver and has exhibited some degree of difficulty on a scale of + ½ to + 1 ½ . Credit for degree of difficulty should be given for using smoothness, finesse, attitude, quickness, authority and controlled speed while completing a correct maneuver.

A horse or rider can incur the following faults, however no penalty point is associated with these faults. They are to be judged accordingly and then assessed when assigning a maneuver score.

- Opening mouth excessively
- Over bridled or intimidated
- Nosing out
- Lack of smooth, straight stops, bouncing or sideways stops
- Anticipating signals
- Stumbling
- Backing sideways
- Losing a stirrup
- Unnecessary aid
- Failure to run circles within markers

The required maneuvers for every reining pattern are:

Walk in: The walk in brings the horse from the gate to the center of the arena to begin its pattern. The horse should appear relaxed and confident. Any action which may create the appearance of intimidation including but not limited to starting and stopping or checking is a fault which shall be marked down according to severity in the first maneuver score.

Stops: Stops are the act of showing the horse from a lope to a stop position by bringing the hind legs under the horse in a locked position sliding on the hind feet. The horse should enter the stop position by bending the back, bringing the hind legs further under the body while maintaining forward motion and ground contact and cadence with the front legs. Throughout the stop, the horse should continue in a straight line while maintaining ground contact with the hind feet.

Spins: Spins are a series of 360-degree turns, executed over a stationary (inside) hind leg. Propulsion for the spin is supplied by the outside rear leg and front legs, and contact should be made with the ground and a front leg. The location of hindquarters should be fixed at the start of the spin and maintained throughout the spins. It is helpful for a judge to watch for the horse to remain on the same location rather than watching for a stationary inside leg. This allows for easier focus on other elements of the spin. (i.e. cadence, attitude, smoothness, finesse and speed). The ideal spin is correct, fast, low to the ground, and with a level topline and a drape in the reins. The front feet should crossover (outside front over inside front) with ease and agility.

Rollbacks: Rollbacks are the 180 degree reversal of forward motion completed by running to a stop, rolling (turning) the shoulders back to the opposite direction over the hocks and departing in a canter, as one continuous motion. The NRHA handbook states no hesitation; however, a

slight pause to regain footing or balance should not be deemed hesitation. The horse should not step ahead or backup prior to rolling back.

Circles: Circles are maneuvers at the lope, of designated size and speed, which demonstrate control, willingness to guide, degree of difficulty in speed and speed variation. Circles must at all times be run in the geographical area of the arena specified in the pattern description and must have a common center point. There must be a clearly defined difference in the speed and size of a small, slow circle and a large fast circle; likewise, the right large, fast and small, slow circles should be similar to the left large, fast and left small, slow circles.

Backups: A backup is a maneuver requiring the horse to be moved in a reverse motion in a straight line a required distance, at least 10 feet.

Hesitate: To hesitate is the act of demonstrating the horse's ability to stand in a relaxed manner at a designated time in a pattern. In a hesitation, the horse is required to remain motionless and relaxed. All NRHA patterns require a hesitation at the end of the patterns to demonstrate to the judge the completion of the pattern.

Lead Changes: Lead changes are the act of changing the leading legs of the front and rear pairs of legs, at a lope, when changing the direction traveled. The lead change must be executed at a lope with no change of gait or speed and be performed in the exact geographical position in the arena specified in the pattern description. The change of front and rear leads must take place within the same stride to avoid penalty.

Run Downs and Run-arounds: Run downs are runs through the middle of the arena. Run downs and run-arounds should demonstrate control and gradual increase in speed to the stop.

PENALTY POINTS

Penalty points can be assessed at every maneuver, with multiple penalties being possible. Oppositely, a horse may not incur any penalties, in which case the penalty box would remain blank on the score sheet.

<i>No Score</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Abuse of animal - Use of illegal equipment
<i>Zero (0) Score</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of more than the index finger between reins - Use of two hands (exception in snaffle or bosal) or changing hands on the reins - Use of romal other than specified - Failure to complete pattern as written - Performing maneuvers other than specified order - Inclusion of maneuvers not specified, including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> backing more than 2 strides turning more than 90 degrees (exception: a complete stop in the first quarter of a circle after a canter departure is not to be considered an inclusion of maneuver; a 2-point break of gait penalty will apply) - Equipment failure that delays completion of pattern - Balking or refusal of command where pattern is delayed - Running away or failing to guide where it becomes impossible to discern whether the entry is on pattern - Jogging in excess of one-half circle or one-half the length of the arena - Overspins of more than ¼ turn - Fall to ground by horse or rider (a horse is deemed to have fallen when the shoulder and/or hip and/or underline touches the ground) - Dropping a rein that contacts the ground while a horse is in motion
<i>5-Point Penalty</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spurring forward of the cinch - Use of either hand to instill fear or praise - Holding saddle with either hand - Blatant disobedience including kicking, biting, bucking, rearing and striking
<i>2-Point Penalty</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Break of gait - Freezing up in spins or rollbacks - On walk patterns, cantering prior to reaching the center of the arena and/or failure to stop or walk before executing a canter departure - On run in patterns, failure to be in a canter prior to reaching the first marker - If a horse does not completely pass the specified marker before initiating a stop position
<i>Starting or performing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each time a horse is out of lead, a judge is required to

<p><i>circles or eights out of lead will be judged as follows</i></p>	<p>penalize by 1 point. The penalty for being out of lead is accumulated, and the judge will add 1 penalty point for each ¼ of the circumference of a circle or any part thereof that a horse is out of lead</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A judge is required to penalize a horse ½ of a point for a delayed change of lead by one stride, where the lead change is required by the pattern description - Deduct ½ point for starting circle at a jog or exiting rollbacks at a jog up to 2 strides. Jogging beyond 2 strides but less than ½ circle or ½ the length of the arena, deduct 2 points - Deduct ½ point for over or under spinning up to 1/8 of a turn; deduct 1 point for over or under spinning up to ¼ of a turn - In patterns requiring a run-around, failure to be in the correct lead when rounding the end of the arena will be penalized as follows: for ½ the turn or less, 1 point; for more than ½ turn, 2 points. - There will be a ½ point penalty for failure to remain a minimum of 20 feet from wall or fence when approaching a stop and/or rollback
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Reining Terminology

GENERAL STATEMENTS

Compliments

- Exhibited the most agility and control
- Ran the fastest pattern with more control and authority
- Showed more willingness and precision in executing the prescribed pattern
- For the most part, 3 accomplished more of the pattern
- Simply got more done
- Was simply more fundamentally correct throughout the pattern
- Ran a more difficult and demanding pattern, and yet showed a more positive expression
- Exhibited more athletic ability and handle throughout the pattern
- Rider had a greater degree of handle on the horse, thus requiring less excessive reining and leg cues
- Was more stylish in the pattern, which was a more definite, well-blended combination of fast and hard, soft and slow
- 4's pattern was quicker and more correct, and 4 was obviously the top horse in the class
- Placed at the top of the class because 3 exhibited a more complete picture of control, smoothness and speed

- Was a more natural, athletic horse, being a brighter, cleaner mover, holding a steadier rhythm and cadence
- The pattern was more accurate and was run with more effort and control from horse and rider
- Was a more suitable reiner, being more broke, accepting the rider's control without resistance
- Smoothly achieved control
- Accepted the rider's contact, staying lighter and more supple through his neck and jaw
- Flowed through the pattern
- More accurate in his pattern
- Illustrated and/or showed a more aggressive manner
- More exciting and pleasing form
- Showed more finesse and control
- More relaxed throughout the pattern

Faults

- Lacked the overall correctness and finesse of those placed above
- Lacked the control, finesse and style
- Lacked the polish, control and style that a knowledgeable horseman would have preferred
- Was the least willing, least athletic horse in the class
- Showed to be under the least control by the rider

STOPS AND RUNS

Compliments

- More controlled ideal stops
- Fell deeper into the ground
- Dropped deeper into the ground
- Dropped the hocks deeper into the ground
- Stopped with the haunches deeper in the ground
- 4's stops were deeper and more completely shut down
- 2's stops were more stylish, being deeper with a longer slide
- Deeper, straighter slides
- Performed a more correct sliding stop
- Had longer slides
- Stopped in a more relaxed manner
- Was more confident in the stops
- Was a smoother, longer-stopping horse
- Exhibited a more controlled and relaxed sliding stop
- Stopped squarer
- Worked off the haunches and maintained movement in the front end, allowing 2 to have a more relaxed stop
- Dropped the hindquarters deeper into the ground, while keeping the front legs relaxed, allowing 4 to execute a more correct sliding stop

- Slid further in the stops with the hindquarters more squarely beneath and the head more tucked as 4 stayed relaxed with the front legs
- 2's stops were executed with 2 being more over the haunches and more relaxed through the mouth, poll, neck and loin
- Was a smoother-stopping horse that stayed more relaxed and supple down the spine, thus allowing 4 to also slide further
- Moved into the stop with greater authority and confidence, sinking deeper, curving the spine and crawling up front, thus sliding further and smoother
- Used the ground more, stopping deeper and staying in the stop longer
- Was softer, prettier-moving mare, with stops that were deep and long
- Was more correct and responsive in the stops, which were longer, harder and deeper
- Eased down into the dirt, holding both hocks steady in longer slides while moving up front
- Stopped with the haunches deeper in the ground, walking further up front
- Drove out harder in the runs, stopped smoother and slid further
- Moved more freely into the rollback, driving out harder over the hocks
- Ran with greater speed and dispatch from end to end, rolling back cleaner over the hocks
- Ran harder with less hesitation into the stops
- Ran with more authority and aggressiveness into the stops
- Ran harder with less anticipation in the straight-aways
- Came out of the rollbacks with more speed

Faults

- Did not stop
- Failed to stop
- Came out of the stops early
- Popped on the front end
- Was heavy on the front end
- Failed to completely stop on every stop
- Ran through the stops
- Was bouncy in the stops
- Stopped on the front end
- Extremely rough in the stops
- Flipped the head in the stops
- Crooked stops
- Stopped short, splaying out thus losing balance in the stops
- Did not use the ground efficiently when stopping, as 2 stopped on the front end
- Came out of each stop too soon
- Anticipated in the runs
- Was sluggish and resistant in the runs
- Ran slow and with greater resistance
- Required more spurring going into the stops
- Anticipated the stops, setting up early at each end

- Bolted into each run and was uncontrollable
- Took the bit and bolted coming out of the rollbacks
- Flipped the head and ran away in the runs
- Changed leads continuously, anticipating going into each stop

CIRCLES AND LEAD CHANGES:

Compliments

- Showed more size and speed variation to the circles
- Ran harder and faster circles
- Ran with more control and confidence in the circles
- Circles were performed more in the center of the arena
- Performed the circles in a more correct and precise manner
- Held the nose to the inside of the circle
- Running rounder circles
- Rated the circles more uniformly
- Drops back more obediently into the slow circles, holding the body correctly while keeping a more steady pace
- Circles with a more correct arc through the body
- Performed the circles in a quieter and calmer manner
- Ran flatter and smoother circles
- Laid down flatter, smoother circles
- Showed a more released arc through the body, setting the nose more to the inside of each circle
- Was more balanced in the circles, staying lighter and more responsive between the reins with the neck, shoulder and hip more correctly arced
- Circled with the head, shoulder and hip more desirably arced in the direction of the circles
- Showed more variation of size and speed of circles
- Showed greater control of the arena and ground, by staying more within the markers while displaying smoother and more balanced circles
- Had a more correct degree of flex through the neck and shoulder
- Was softer in the bridle, following a lighter rein in the more precisely executed circles
- Ran the eights with more speed and was more fluid in the lead changes
- The size of the figure eights were limited, showing 3 to be a more handy and maneuverable athlete
- Greater contrast in the speed and size of the figure eights
- Was more balanced in the figure eights, opening the stride without hesitation in the fast circles, while slowing down more promptly into more evenly shaped small circles
- The figure eights were more symmetrical
- Higher continuity of speed and size as 2 traveled through the circles
- Flowed through the circles
- Size, speed and smoothness of circles
- More alignment and guide to the circles

- Kept the nose tipped to the inside of the circles
- Crisper and more direct lead changes
- More prompt and exact lead changes
- Exhibited smoother, simultaneous lead changes with less anticipation and hesitation
- Was more proficient in the lead changes, stops and turns
- Exhibited more natural, effortless lead changers
- Changing leads with greater dispatch

Faults

- Scurried around in a choppy, frantic manner in the circles
- Dropped the shoulder, drifting in and out of the circles
- Flipped the head, swinging the body off course in the circles
- Was stiff, lacking the desirable arc through the body
- Lacked size and speed variation
- Was slow and unwilling in the circles
- Shouldered out in each circle
- Was over bent in the circles, shouldering out each way
- Was high and charged the circles
- Was out of control in the circles
- Was late in changes of leads
- Anticipated the lead changes, dropping the shoulder to the inside of the new circle
- Was chary and rough in the lead changes
- Changed leads early each time
- Drug the lead three-quarters the way around the first circle
- Drug the hind lead change one-fourth the way of the third circle
- Missed a lead three strides going into the second circle

SPINS, ROLLBACKS AND PIVOTS:

Compliments

- Turned faster in the spins with the front loose and low
- Kept a lower center of gravity in faster spins
- Faster spins while remaining flat and holding a more stationary pivot foot
- Held the body straighter in the spins, keeping the pivot foot in place while staying looser and lower in front as 1 reached around
- Each of the spins were faster than the preceding one
- Stayed down more, being leveler in the spins, crossing over cleaner with more reach, while maintaining faster speed
- Faster, flatter spins with the pivot foot firm to the ground
- Showed more desirable spins, turning more ideally over the haunches, while maintaining a lower center of gravity
- Flatter, more consistent spins
- Smoother, flatter spins
- Stayed down lower in more brilliant spins

- Faster spins
- Put in snappier spins
- Had more flexion to the hocks, maintaining a lower center of gravity while spinning
- More correct and agile spins in terms of planting the pivot foot, shifting weight more to the haunches, making the forehand maneuverable, exhibiting cleaner, faster spins
- Showed more snap to the spins
- Ran harder from rollback to rollback
- Rolled back more over the haunches
- Performed the rollbacks in a more correct and willing manner
- Performed more correct rollbacks, being more over the haunches
- Performed a more correct 180-degree rollback
- Rolled over the hocks more correctly, with a more stationary pivot foot
- Rolled back cleaner over the hocks
- Rolled back harder over the hocks
- Kept the hocks underneath in each rollback, pushing off with greater power and drive
- As 2 executed the rollback, 2 showed more control, aggression and a higher degree of difficulty
- Showed sharper, quicker pivots
- Showed more snap and finesse to the pivots
- Performed the pivots with more confidence and ease
- Showed more brilliance in the pivots
- Showed a crisper and more controlled pivot
- Showed a smoother pivot, crossing over cleaner and faster with the front legs

Faults

- Lost the pivot foot, ending the spins far off center
- Hopped around in the spins
- Loped around in the spins
- Backed out of the spins
- Walked out of the spins
- Came up and out of the spins too soon
- Hung in the spins
- Froze-up in the spins and quit the rider
- Shouldered out in the spins
- Was overbent in the spins, losing the pivot foot, thus spinning over the middle
- Was too elevated and unaggressive in the first set of spins
- Stuck in the second set of spins
- Was slow and awkward in the rollbacks
- Rolled back over the middle
- Hung in the left rollback
- Stuck in the right rollback, going away from the gate
- Pivoted over the front end
- Did not pivot
- Was slow and resistant during the pivots

- Flipped the head in the pivots
- Rider forgot to pivot

BACK

Compliments

- Was a faster and cleaner backing horse, with each foot falling equi-distance of the last
- Backed more readily over the tracks
- Faster, straighter back and settled more readily
- Lowered his head, tucked his nose and backed straighter and squarely over the hocks
- Backed faster and with more ease
- Flexed the poll, relaxed the jaw and backed in a straighter fashion
- Was a faster, straighter backing horse
- Was more willing to settle after backing (or spinning)

Faults

- Did not back
- Refused to back
- Was hesitant to back
- Drug the front legs when backing
- Flipped his head and wring his tail when asked to back

MANNERS:

Compliments

- Was more responsive to the slightest cue
- Settled easier
- Worked more efficiently and with a more cooperative attitude
- Was a more willing worker, performing in a more positive manner
- More readily yielded to the rider's cues and aids
- Moved on a looser rein with less restraint on the part of the rider
- Performed with greater willingness
- Was quieter about the mouth and tail
- Was a more willing worker and was under more control by the rider
- Was quieter and calmer
- Performed the duties in a more workmanlike manner, showing more response and obedience to the rider
- Stood calmer after backing
- Showed more response to the rider
- Had less mouthing of the bit
- Was a more suitable reiner, as 2 was more broke
- Performed duties on a looser rein

Faults

- Was ill and resentful throughout the class
- Wrung the tail
- Flipped the head
- Opened the mouth and chewed the bit throughout the duration of the pattern
- Constantly mouthed the bit
- Lacked positive expression and willingness
- Did not yield to the rider's demands
- Required undue restraint on the part of the rider
- Required the most restraint
- Was ridden on the tightest, least obedient rein

Example Reasons **Reining**

Sir, I placed this class of Reining 1-2-3-4, placing 1 at the top of the class as 1 was a more athletic performer who simply got more done.

In the top pair, I placed 1 over 2 because 1 ran flatter and more flowing circles on a looser rein. 1 had a more relaxed arc through the body, setting the nose more to the inside of the circles. 1's lead changes were crisper and more direct, and 1 did show more speed from rollback to rollback. When asked to back, 1 did so in a straighter and faster manner.

In discussing the middle pair, it is 2 over 3, as 2 showed a more workmanlike attitude, and was smoother and longer striding in the circles, having lead changes that occurred more directly in the center of the arena. The sorrel also showed more eagerness from rollback to rollback. 2's stops were executed more over the haunches and more relaxed through the mouth, neck and poll.

However, I realize that 2 gaped the mouth and wrung the tail, and furthermore I grant that 3 was quieter at the mouth and tail and showed more quickness to the pivots.

Focusing on the bottom pair, I placed 3 over 4, 3 was a harder running, harder stopping and freer-moving horse that showed less resistance to the rider. 3 was smoother in the stops and showed more speed in the pattern.

I criticize 4 because 4 was the least willing, least athletic horse in the class. 4 was chagy, bouncy in the stops and showed the most resistance to his rider when asked to spin.

Sir, it is for these reasons I placed this class of Reining 1-2-3-4.

Example Reasons
Reining

Sir, I placed this class of Reining 3124, finding a bottom in 4 who simply ran the least challenging pattern and exhibited the least willingness to perform.

In the initial pair, I placed 3 over 1 as 3 was a more brilliant and aggressive mover. 3 executed faster spins while holding a more stationary pivot foot, finishing in a more desirable location, whereas 1 overspun an 1/8 of a turn to the left. Furthermore, 3 ran harder in the rundowns, and stopped with the haunches closer and more committed to the ground. As a bonus, 3 performed the rollbacks in a more correct and willing manner in both directions.

In my middle pair, I placed 1 over 2 as 1 more precise in the lead changes. 1 started the circle to the right in a more correct lead. As well, 1 worked more efficiently with a more cooperative attitude, being quieter at the mouth, whereas 2 opened the mouth and chewed through the bit, especially in the stops.

I admit that 2 finished the spin to the left in a more correct spot.

In my bottom pair, I placed 2 over 4 as 2 followed the pattern more precisely and had fewer penalties, whereas 4 trotted out of the first rollback. As well, 2 had a more desirable attitude, as 2 was quieter in the mouth, more willing and appeared more responsive to the rider's cues, whereas 4 was hesitant to change leads in the circles and required more restraint from the rider.

I realize and grant that 4 started the circle to the right in the correct lead.

But I placed 4 last as 4 was the least willing performer, executing the least challenging pattern under the most restraint from the rider on the tightest, least obedient rein. 4 also incurred the most penalties. Sir, it is for these reasons I placed the Reining 3124.

Example Reasons Reining

Sir, I placed this class of reining 4132, finding 2 bottom as 2 received a zero score for overspinning five times to the right.

In my top pair, I placed 4 over 1 as 4 performed the pattern with more precision, receiving fewer penalty points, whereas 1 jogged out of both rollbacks and was hesitant to change leads between the circles. As well, 4 was a more willing performer, entering the ring on a more trusting rein, being more responsive to the rider's cues.

I fully realize that 1 had faster spins, especially to the left, and it was this advantage in spins that helped place 1 over 3 in the middle.

1 executed faster spins while maintaining a more stationary pivot foot and crossing over quicker and more correctly on the front legs. I admit that 1 was delayed on the lead change between circles, however 1 dispatched out of the second set of circles on the correct lead, whereas 3 required a more aggressive cue from the rider to execute the change.

I do admit that 3 exhibited faster, harder stops and snapped out of the rollbacks in the correct gait, whereas 1 jogged out of the rollbacks.

In my bottom pair, I placed 3 over 2 as 3 was simply more functionally correct, spinning the correct number of times, thus receiving fewer penalty points, where as 2 overspun to the right.

I concede that 2 maintained the correct gait and changed leads with more accuracy throughout the pattern; however, I placed 2 last. 2 was the least functionally correct, receiving a zero score for overspinning five times to the right. Sir, it is for these reasons I placed the Reining 4132.

Sources: Colorado State University Judging Guide – Dr. Dave Denniston, AQHA Horse Judging Manual, APHA Rulebook, Dr. Jim Heird, NRHA Rule book, and Texas Tech University Judging Manual – Dr. Kris Wilson