



Western Versatility

Discipline Rules



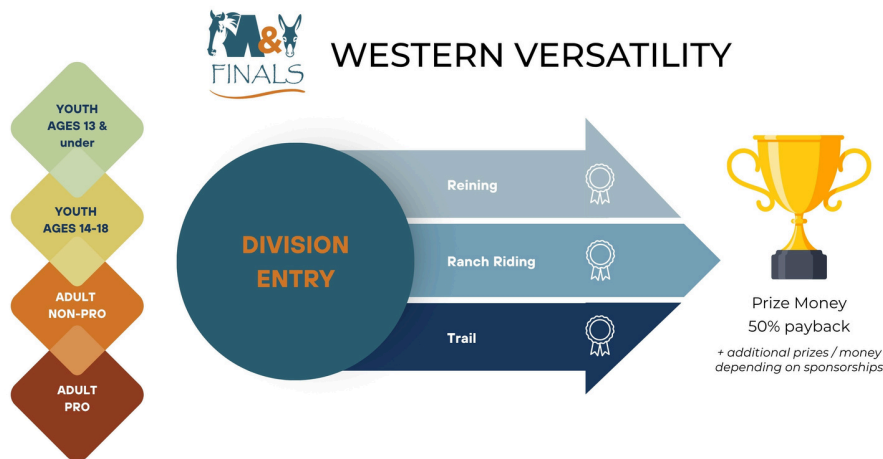
1. Overview

1.1 Purpose

The Western Versatility Division evaluates the all-around ability of horse and rider across three distinct classes: Reining, Ranch Riding, and Trail. Competitors are judged on quality of movement, accuracy of maneuvers, responsiveness, and the overall partnership between horse and rider.

1.2 Division Levels

- Youth 13 & Under
- Youth 14-18
- Adult Non-Pro
- Adult Pro



2. Eligibility

2.1 Horse Eligibility

Horses must be a minimum of 4 years of age at the time of competition. All horses must meet the general eligibility requirements outlined in the General Rules.

2.2 Competitor Eligibility

Competitors must meet the age requirements for their respective division as of the date of competition. All competitors must meet the general eligibility requirements outlined in the

General Rules.

2.3 Adult Division Eligibility — Non-Pro vs. Pro

The Adult divisions are offered in two categories: Adult Non-Pro and Adult Pro.

Adult Pro

A competitor must enter the Adult Pro division if they are paid directly by clients for any under-saddle training, riding instruction, or training clinics.

Competitors who are employed by a trainer but not paid directly by clients (i.e. assistants or working students) may voluntarily enter the Adult Pro division at their discretion, but are not required to do so.

Adult Non-Pro

A competitor may enter the Adult Non-Pro division if they do not have any clients paying for any under-saddle training, riding instruction, or training clinics. Non-Pro competitors will be required to sign a declaration at the time of entry confirming their eligibility.

Intentional misrepresentation of division eligibility may result in elimination from the division and is subject to further review under the General Rules enforcement system.

3. Classes Offered

3.1 Required Classes

Each division entry must compete in three classes:

- Reining
- Ranch Riding
- Trail

All three classes will count equally toward overall division standings. Division Championship standing is determined by the cumulative score across all three classes.

4. Equipment

4.1 Saddle

A Western type saddle is required for all Western Versatility classes.

Breast collars are permitted.

4.2 Bridle & Bits

Horses may be shown in any of the following:

- Snaffle bit with a Western headstall
- Curb bit with a Western headstall
- Bosal or hackamore

Two hands are permitted with a snaffle or bosal. Horses shown in a curb or shank-type bit must be ridden with one hand on the reins. Use of two hands on a curb bit will result in penalties as defined in Section 7.

All bits must:

- Have a smooth mouthpiece
- Be at least 5/16 inch in diameter at the mouthpiece
- Not be twisted, wire, chain, or non-smooth in construction

Curb bits must also:

- Not exceed 8.5 inches in shank length
- Use curb straps or chains that are flat or smooth and lie flat against the jaw

Bosals must:

- Be constructed of rawhide, leather, or rope with a flexible core
- Contain no metal

Mechanical hackamores and gag bits are not permitted. It is the competitor's responsibility to seek written clarification from event management regarding any questionable equipment prior to competition.

4.3 Reins

Split reins or romal reins are permitted. Closed/loop reins are permitted with a snaffle or bosal only. No tied or knotted reins and no reins with chains, rings, or other attachments.

4.4 Protective Boots & Leg Protection

Splint boots, sport boots, and bell boots are permitted. Leg wraps are permitted. No weighted boots or chains.

4.5 Attire

Competitors should present a neat, workmanlike appearance appropriate to Western riding. ASTM/SEI-certified helmets are required for all Youth competitors and encouraged for Adult competitors.

4.6 Spurs

Spurs are optional. If worn, spurs must have a smooth band, and the shank must point directly back or downward. Rowels, if present, must be blunt and free to rotate. No locked

rowels, sharpened edges, or spurs designed to cause injury. **Spurs are not permitted in the Youth 13 & Under division.**

4.7 Training Aids

Whips, crops, bats, and similar training aids are not permitted during competition. Excessive use of any aid, including spurs or reins, will result in a penalty as defined in Section 7. Continued excessive use may lead to the judge excusing the competitor from the arena, resulting in elimination from the class.

4.8 Prohibited Equipment

The following are prohibited in all Western Versatility classes: tie-downs, draw reins, martingales, nosebands used in conjunction with a curb bit, any training device or artificial aid not specifically permitted above. Use of prohibited equipment will result in elimination from the class. See also General Rules Section 9.2 regarding official authority over equipment.

5. Class Procedures

Patterns and courses for all Western Versatility classes will be posted and made available to competitors prior to competition. Patterns and courses may vary by division to reflect appropriate levels of difficulty. Youth divisions may feature fewer or less complex maneuvers and obstacles than Adult divisions.

5.1 Reining

Competitors individually perform an assigned pattern consisting of required maneuvers. Each maneuver is scored individually using a 0-10 scale.

Required maneuvers may include: spins, circles (large and small at varying speeds), lead changes, rollbacks, sliding stops, and backups. The specific combination and order of maneuvers is determined by the pattern assigned to each division.

The judge evaluates each maneuver on willingness, smoothness, finesse, quickness, and authority of the horse, as well as the rider's control and use of aids. Credit is given for maneuvers performed with controlled speed and precision.

5.2 Ranch Riding

Competitors individually perform an assigned pattern that demonstrates the horse's ability as a pleasure to ride. Each maneuver or element is scored individually using a 0-10 scale.

Required elements may include: walk, trot, lope, extended trot, extended lope, stops, backups, side passes, and lead changes. The pattern is designed to simulate practical ranch-type riding scenarios and may include transitions between gaits, changes of direction, and ground-covering movement.

The judge evaluates quality of movement, correct gait and cadence, smooth transitions, responsiveness to the rider, and overall willingness. A long, relaxed frame with forward movement is preferred over an artificial or overly collected frame.

5.3 Trail

Competitors individually navigate an assigned course of obstacles. Each obstacle is scored individually using a 0-10 scale.

Obstacles may include: natural elements, gates, poles (walk-over, trot-over, lope-over), bridges, drags, backing elements, side passes, and other obstacles designed to test the horse's trust, responsiveness, and willingness to navigate unfamiliar or challenging tasks.

The judge evaluates the horse's approach, negotiation, and completion of each obstacle, as well as the rider's guidance and use of aids. Credit is given for calm, willing negotiation of obstacles with minimal hesitation or resistance.

6. Scoring

6.1 General Scoring Format

Each class is scored on a maneuver-by-maneuver basis. Each maneuver is assigned an individual score using the following scale:

Score	Description
10	Excellent
9	Very Good
8	Good
7	Above Average
6	Satisfactory
5	Average
4	Below Average
3	Poor
2	Very Poor
1	Extremely Poor
0	Not Performed or Demonstrated

Half-point increments (0.5) are permitted at the judge's discretion.

The final score for each class is the sum of all maneuver scores, plus a Connection mark as described in 6.2. Maneuvers are weighted equally unless otherwise specified on the posted pattern or course.

Scores reflect quality of execution, harmony, and overall effectiveness relative to the division level.

6.2 Connection Score

At the conclusion of each class, the judge will award a single collective mark for Connection. Connection evaluates the overall relaxation, confidence, and partnership between horse and rider as demonstrated throughout the class. The Connection mark is scored on the same 0-10 scale, half-point increments permitted, and is added to the maneuver total to determine the competitor's final class score.

7. Penalty Infractions

7.1 Application of Penalties

Most execution faults — including breaks of gait, refusals, loss of straightness, wrong leads, and hesitations — are addressed through the maneuver score and do not carry a separate penalty.

7.2 Objective Penalties

The following infractions cannot be captured by a maneuver score and are handled as follows:

Infraction	Point Deduction from Class Score
Two hands on a curb bit	-2 each time
Equipment failure - if permitted to continue	-2
Dismounting during a ridden class	-3 each time
Excessive use of aid - if permitted to continue	-5
Off pattern - Judge may stop & allow to correct	0 for affected maneuver
Fall of horse or rider	Elimination from class
Illegal or prohibited equipment	Elimination from class
Excused from arena by Judge	Elimination from class
Abuse or inhumane handling	Disqualification from competition

Excusal from a class by the judge is final. Elimination from a class results in no score and no placing for that class. All are subject to further review under the General Rules enforcement system.