

GENERAL WORKING HUNTER JUDGING NOTES

Tips for running a working hunter class:

Judges may commence the class by requesting that all competitors enter the ring together and walk on a circle to the left so that the Judge may gain a quick first impression of the horses and approximate number of competitors.

The Steward will then call competitors into line to check competitor numbers and withdrawals.

The Steward or Judge will explain the jumping course to the competitors, and inform them if they will perform their gallop before, after or during the Jump Phase and will inform them they will start their jump round at a wave of the Judge's hand.

Competitors should acknowledge the Judge before commencing their round.

At the completion of their jumping round, competitors will be expected to halt to be acknowledged by the Judge, before the competitor will return to the line up on a long rein.

When marking the Jumping Phase, Judges should take note of each competitor's number. If there are large numbers of competitors participating in the Jump Phase, it may be necessary for a Judge to take notes to indicate the Judge's impression of each Competitor's performance. At the completion of the round the Judge will then award a mark out of 50 for the Jumping Phase.

Depending on their level of experience, a judge may mark the working hunter phase differently. For example:

- a) An experienced Judge will usually jot down a score for the jumping, but judge the paces, manners and conformation by "eye" without actually needing to score each horse individually (which can prove time consuming.)
- b) The less experienced Judge is probably wise to use a written score for each jump until they are confident and/or experienced enough to judge by eye.

If faced with large numbers of competitors, at the end of the Jump Phase, a Judge may decide to allow only certain combinations to proceed to the Conformation/ Flat work Phases. As a rule of thumb, no more than 10 combinations should progress to the Conformation/ Flat work Phases, however, if there are small entries, possibly less than 5 to a section, it is to be at the Judge's discretion to decide if all combinations, regardless of faults (as long as not eliminated) will be invited to continue to the Conformation/ Flatwork Phase.

At the beginning of the Flatwork Phase, competitors maybe worked together on the ring - on both reins at a walk, trot, canter and gallop (Judges should organise the ring so that each combination may gallop individually.) If space is limited, and there are only a few jumps, competitors may be asked to work out in and around the jumps. The Judge will then score the flatwork for each combination out of 30.

The Judge will then either call combinations into the centre of the ring as he/she wishes to place them, (as is the accepted practise in a show hunter class). The steward will line up all horses whilst the scores are added and final places awarded.

There are no hard and fast rules to judging working hunter classes. For example a Judge may

run any of the Phases in any order and may even request that the three phases are combined.

For example, if there are only a few competitors, say 5 or under, a Judge may request the combination commence the working hunter class with their Flatwork Phase. In such circumstances, a Judge may also request that competitors move directly from the Flatwork Phase into the Jumping Phase by performing a gallop around the perimeter of the jumps, before passing over the first jump to begin their Jump Phase. This leaves only conformation to be scored by the Judge at the completion of the Jump Phase. This may be carried out at the point where the competitor halts before the Judge at the completion of their jumping round.

A suggested table for points which follows the horse to each section and a scoresheet template is available for use.

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