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### **Stock Horse of Texas announces 2018 Rule Changes**

Last month, the Stock Horse of Texas Board of Directors approved rule changes for the 2018 competition year. Significant changes include rules in the Open division, altering the format of the Limited, Junior and Intermediate cow work class, and the collegiate year end awards calculations. SHTX members are encouraged to become familiar with these changes.

#### **Open Level 1 (L1) Division**

Responding to several requests for a division for riders who do not meet the definition of a non pro but have very limited showing experience, the Board created the Open Level 1 Division. “This was created for people who start colts, might get paid to ride ranch horses they don’t own, or maybe they’ve given some lessons, but they are not experienced professional trainers,” said SHTX President William Lewis. “These riders by definition are not non pros, but they don’t compete and show against professional trainers on a regular basis. Now they have the opportunity to get show experience without competing against mainstream open riders.”

Open L1 riders cannot have combined earnings of \$5,000 in any western performance organization. The new division will run concurrent with the Open and will be a jackpot-only division. It will not have year-end awards or added money. However, Level 1 riders can enter both the L1 and the Open by paying L1 entry and jackpot fees, as well as the Open jackpot fee. Riders also entering the Open will be eligible for Open year-end awards.

#### **Open Year End Awards**

In accordance with industry standards of Open competition, the 2018 year end awards in the Open division will track points on the horse only, not the horse and rider. All other SHTX divisions will remain one horse/one rider to track year end points.

#### **Limited, Intermediate & Junior Cow Work**

For the last two years, SHTX officers and staff have worked in conjunction with judges as well as AQHA staff to modify the box-drive-box format of the Limited, Intermediate and Junior Cow Work

(and AQHA Versatility Ranch Horse limited cow work) classes. “When we started this class, it was intended to be a step-up class for riders coming from the boxing, and possibly preparing them to advance to a fence class if they chose. The idea was to teach riders how to box, read a cow and set up the cow to drive down the fence,” Lewis said, with a time limit to accomplish the tasks.

“However, as the class evolved it became more of a time management class. Riders knew it was harder to hold the cow on the far end, and would make their decision to drive down the fence based on the clock instead of reading when the cow was honoring their horse and ready to drive down the fence. We worked with several top cow horse judges who suggested we change the format of this class to get back to its purpose – teaching riders to read their cows and drive down the fence based on the cow, not a clock.”

Riders will have 1 minute, 30 seconds to box a cow, drive down the fence, box on the opposite end, and then drive the cow back down the fence, past the middle marker. Riders do not need to work the entire allotted 1 minute, 30 seconds. Once they have fulfilled the requirements of the class, a judge will blow the whistle signifying completion of the run.

### **Collegiate Year End Awards**

To be eligible for year end collegiate awards, collegiate riders must attend at least 75% of the shows during the collegiate academic year (when class is in session during the spring/fall), or at least 50% of the total shows in a competition year.

Other minor changes were approved regarding various classes or divisions. All changes are underlined in the 2018 rule book, which is available at [stockhorsetexas.org](http://stockhorsetexas.org). Printed rule books will be available to pick up in person at SHTX events.