

HOW TO READ

a judge's card



CUTTING HORSE TRAINING ONLINE

One of the most important things to understand when you begin cutting is the judge's score card. While it may look like hieroglyphics on a cave wall at first, it will get easier and easier to decipher!

- *Different judges have different styles of using the marks.* You may see a box with 3 +'s in it, that just tells that judge he wants to give more than 1 point on that cow or run.
- Some judges will use a little + or a big + to determine a higher score. The point is, don't try to calculate the score literally. Each judge's sheet is based on his or her educated opinion of how well or how poorly the run was performed.
- The score is tallied based on overall marks and penalties. **Competitors start on a 70.** Points are either deducted or awarded according to how the run goes. A zero will be given if you walk out before the buzzer. A score of 60 generally occurs when you pick up the reins and train on the horse.
- To get better, it is imperative to look at the judge's sheet after your class. These will always be posted around the show secretary or show office. Take a picture of your score card and go watch your video, you will be able to re-live the run and very likely see areas to improve and better understand WHY you were penalized.

!! REMEMBER -- If you have a question about your run or score, you CANNOT go talk to the judge about it at a show. The judges are not allowed to discuss runs, socialize, or have conversations with contestants at any time before, during, or after the show. This is to help alleviate any perceptions of favoritism or influence.

JUDGING RULE 20

A judge marks from sixty (60) to eighty (80) points. One-half (1/2) points are permissible.

EXAMPLE: The first horse in a contest works. The judge cannot decide whether to mark the run a 73 or 74. The judge decides to mark the run 73-1/2

RULING: Legal. The judge may mark any run he chooses using one-half points; however, the reason for the one-half point is to allow the judge to differentiate between runs. It is, therefore, not desirable to begin one's scorecard with a one-half point marking.

NOTE: Judges are encouraged to use a full spread of scores in judging a contest. It is highly unlikely that in a class of twenty-five horses ten horses would have identical works and be marked the same score; however, many cutting horse contests conclude with several of the horses that place sharing the same scores because judges did not assess a high enough point value to those good runs that occur early in the contest. By using a full spread of scores, the remaining horses in the contest are more likely to place in the positions earned by their performance.

Read Rule 20 (left), the judges want you to have a good run!

➤ CHTO features a number of great videos to learn more about the judge's card.



[Watch Morgan Cromer Explain The Judge's Card](#)



[Inside the Judge's Stand](#)



(There are at least five different videos put together by the NCHA to help educate cutters on what the Judges are looking for. Just [click here](#) to start watching - type in judges into the search bar at [CHTOlive.com](#) to find them all!)