

GBH092 (Addition)

North Dakota 4-H Horse Show Rules and Judging Guide

■ Keyhole

Description

Keyhole is a timed event. The Keyhole pattern is to be run in between four poles. Contestants run between the poles, turn around (may turn around either direction) and run back through the same four poles (Figure 1).

Class Routine

Contestants are to enter the arena at a walk. The arena gate must be closed immediately after the rider enters the arena and kept closed until the pattern is completed and the horse is under control.

A clearly visible start/finish line shall be provided, and the horse's nose will be timed as it crosses the start/finish line. An electric eye and backup stopwatch is recommended for timing. If an electric eye is not available, two stopwatches should be used.

The arena conditions will determine the distance from the start/finish line to the neck of the keyhole. The keyhole pattern should be 75 feet from the start/finish line to the first two poles of the keyhole neck.

The length of the keyhole neck shall be 10 feet between poles for all age divisions. The width of the keyhole neck will be 6 feet for the junior division, 5 feet for the intermediate division and 4 feet for the senior division. (If show management prefers to only use one width for all divisions, the 5 feet width should be used).

A minimum of 30 feet will be provided from the back two poles of the keyhole neck to the back fence to allow adequate distance for the horse to turn around. Preferably, a minimum of 75 feet should be allowed for stopping from the start/finish line back to the arena fence.

Poles shall be set on top of the ground 6 feet in height and must be arranged in a straight line. The ground should be raked or renovated as warranted to maintain similar conditions for all contestants.

In the event of a tie (for the winner), the riders will re-ride to break the tie.

Tack and Attire

1. Refer to Western and Tack and Attire for Performance on Pages 9 to 16.
2. **Optional:** hackamore, gag bits, bats, crops, over and unders, tie-downs, martingales, closed reins, protective boots
3. Judges may prohibit the use of bits or equipment they consider severe.

Scoring

A. Time

1. Ribbon placings (blue, red, white) are divided based on time.
2. All ribbon divisions are at the discretion of the judge.

General guidelines:

- a. Blue ribbons should be awarded to the fastest times, assuming a good-quality run has been made.
 - b. Red ribbons should be awarded to times within two seconds (time may be shortened for senior riders) of the slowest blue ribbon time not to exceed 30 seconds.
 - c. White ribbons are awarded to times of 30 seconds or longer.
 - d. Blue ribbons do not have to be awarded if times do not constitute a good-quality run.
3. The judge has the final decision on all ribbon placings.

B. Penalties

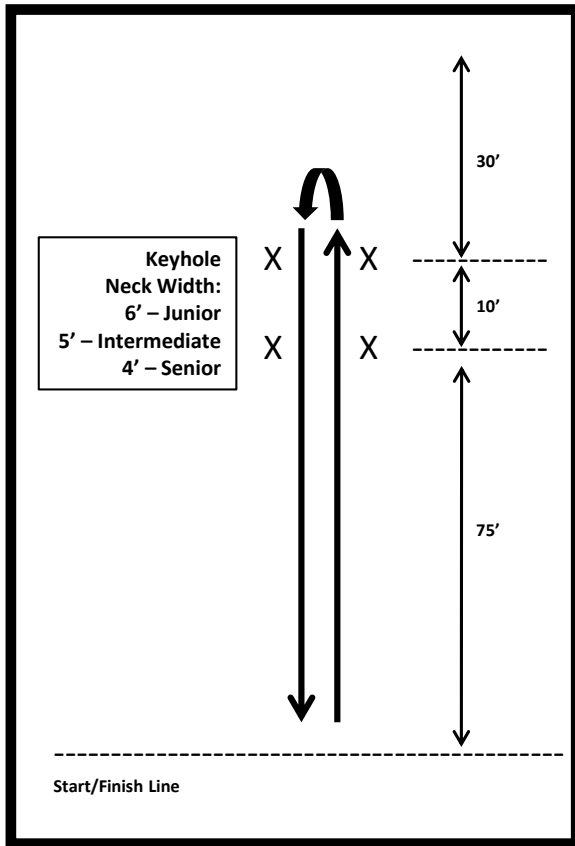
1. **Five Seconds**
 - a. Knocking over a pole, per pole
 - b. Horse is led into the arena past the plane of the in-gate
2. **No time** – should receive the lowest ribbon possible – white ribbon
 - a. Pattern is started before gate is closed
 - b. Horse recrosses start/finish line at any time before pattern is completed
 - c. Extra loops in pattern
 - d. Use of bat, spurs, whip or *quirt* ahead of the cinch
 - e. Not following the Keyhole pattern
 - f. A broken pattern shall be defined as breaking forward motion to retrace one's tracks to finish the pattern and/or passing the plane of the pole on the off side.

Example: Should a contestant not enter into the neck of the keyhole and have to back up or turn around and retrace his/her tracks, this would be considered a broken pattern. Also, if a contestant does not go through the neck completely (horse weaves out of pattern between poles) either on the way into the keyhole or on the way out of the keyhole, this would be considered a broken pattern.



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Figure 1. Keyhole Pattern



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