

Virginia Tech Block and Bridle Youth Invitational Virtual Horse Judging Contest

Hosted by: The Virginia Tech Block and Bridle Club

Virtual Event: Wednesday, February 24 - Sunday, February 28

Contest Objectives: The contest is designed to provide FFA and 4-H members with an opportunity to develop and practice horse evaluation and selection skills, and to defend their decisions in oral reasons. The event will provide Virginia Tech students with experience in event management. Judging can lead to a professional career in the equine industry.

Contest Format: Virtual - Youth contestants will complete this contest electronically using a laptop, desktop computer, tablet or iPad. Mobile devices, such as cell phones, may be used, but we cannot guarantee the ability of those devices to show the full scope of the classes or contest materials.

***Each class or section will be timed separately, and time begins when the contestant opens each class/section. Once a contestant has opened a class/section, they must finish in the allotted time and will not be allowed to log out and log back into that same section. To accommodate students and school schedules, youth contestants will be able to log out, and log back in at any time during the “contest open” period. PLEASE REMEMBER - ONCE A CLASS/SECTION IS STARTED, IT MUST BE COMPLETED BEFORE LEAVING THE PLATFORM. You will not be able to go back to a class or previously completed section after moving on to the next one.

All responses, class placings, and reasons submissions will be submitted using the link(s) provided to each registered coach prior to the contest. There will be a separate link for each division, and coaches/contestants are responsible for using the correct contest link applicable to that contestant. Completion of the wrong contest material will result in disqualification.

Honor Code and Contest Ethics: Coaches and contestants are expected to compete fairly and with the highest standards of competition ethics. Contestants will lose access to the contest platform if they open additional browsers or tabs during the contest. Coaches are on their honor not to assist contestants with placing classes, preparing or critiquing reasons during the contest period.

Contest Dates: Platforms will open on Wednesday, February 24th at 8:00 am and automatically close on Sunday, February 28th at 6:00 pm.

Contest Divisions: **New for 2021 - There will NOT be separate 4-H and FFA Contests.** Youth are NOT allowed to dual enter - Contestants must compete either as a 4-H member or an FFA member, but not both. Out-of-State Teams and individuals are allowed to enter and are eligible for awards.

The contest will be broken into FOUR divisions, based on contestant age/birthdate:

- Junior Non-Reasons
- Junior Reasons - contestants will give 1 set of oral reasons
- Senior Non-Reasons
- Senior Reasons - contestants will give 3 sets of oral reasons

Age/Division Eligibility:

- **Junior Contestants:** youth who have not had their 14th birthday before January 1, 2021 and includes youth who will turn 9 years old by September 30, 2021.
- **Senior Contestants:** youth who turned 14 years of age prior to January 1, 2021 and have not had their 19th birthday prior to January 1, 2021.

Eligibility: All contestants must be eligible for national competition on their state or school team. Contestants must be eligible to compete in their respective organizational state horse judging contest or CDE, and have not previously competed in their respective National Horse Judging Contest or CDE.

Eligibility Verification: **All contestants must be enrolled eligible members of the organization and Unit/chapter they represent.** Eligibility and enrollment will be determined using 4HOnline for all 4-H youth and the State 4-H Enrollment Records for FFA youth.

Entry Deadline: Wednesday, February 10th

Entry Payment Deadline: Friday, February 12th

Entry Process: Entries must be submitted using the online form located at this link: <https://forms.gle/9zTUuAQY7y34SuwEA>

- Entry deadline is Wednesday, February 10th at 5:00 pm. No late entries will be accepted (Please do not wait until the last minute to enter - early entry allows us to prepare early, as well)
- Entry Fee is \$5.25/contestant/contest
- Entry Fee Payment or Proof of Payment Processing must be postmarked by Friday, February 12th
- Entry Fee payment via Credit Card using Square™ is the preferred method at this link: <http://block-and-bridle-club-at-virginia-tech.square.site/>

- **Other acceptable methods of payment are:**
 - **Personal, business, or school check made payable to: VT Block & Bridle**
 - **VT Hokiemark or VA 4-H Foundation Check made payable to: VT Block & Bridle**
 - **Copy of your VT Hokiemark PO Paperwork**
 - **Copy of your VA 4-H Foundation Payment Request**
 - **For account information or payment questions, please contact Jessica Dotson at ejessica@vt.edu**
- **Questions regarding entries should be directed to blockbridlehorseweekend@gmail.com**

Class Selection and Assumptions:

Contestants will judge 8 to 12 classes, with 15 minutes/class for judging. Classes may include, but are not limited to the following lists:

- **Halter may include but is not limited to:** Hunter in Hand, Stock Horse, Pony of America, Tennessee Walking Horse or Gaited Type, Arabian/Half Arabian, Thoroughbred, American Saddlebred, Pony Halter, Morgan, Sport Horse, Draft Horse, Mules
- **Performance may include but is not limited to:** Western Pleasure, Hunter Under Saddle, English Pleasure, Hunter Hack, Plantation Pleasure, Country Pleasure, Reining, Western Riding, Racking Horse, Hunt Seat Equitation, Western Horsemanship, Trail, Ranch Riding, Saddle Seat Equitation

Judging classes will be generally scored and conducted according to the rules of the USEF and AQHA. Breed classes will be judged according to the respective breed standards.

Soundness: All halter horses are to be judged as sound of limb, eye, mouth, wind, and reproductive status. All performance horses will be judged as they go unless otherwise stated by contest officials. All tack and rider attire is legal for contest purposes.

Scoring: Scoring is based on the Hormel Computing System, with 50 points being a perfect score on a class placing or on a set of oral reasons. All classes will consist of four horses. Halter classes will be lined up head to tail and numbered 1-2-3-4 beginning with the front horse. Riders of performance horses will wear the horse's number (1,2,3,4). Fifteen minutes will be allowed for each class placing.

Awards and Recognition: Contestants will be eligible for Individual and Team Awards. A team consists of 3-4 members. For team awards the scores from the three highest team members will be used to calculate the team score.

The Top 10 Individuals and Top Five Teams in both the Reasons and Non-Reasons categories of the Junior and Senior Divisions will be recognized in the following contest categories:

- Halter, Performance, and Overall Combined Scores
- Top 10 Individuals and Top Five Teams in Oral Reasons will also be recognized in the Junior Reasons and Senior Reasons Contests

Contest Etiquette:

1. This contest is a VIRTUAL event. Contestants will record their responses using the provided link(s) and will need access to reliable internet connection, a laptop, desktop computer, tablet or iPad. We cannot guarantee the ability of cellular devices to show the full scope of the classes or contest materials.

Contestants and coaches are on their honor to complete this contest with integrity and the highest ethical standards. The classes should not be discussed while youth are actively competing or with youth contestants who have yet to complete the contest. **Contestants must not confer during the contest, including oral reasons preparation. Coaches and parents are not allowed to talk to contestants once the contest has started, except to answer questions or provide assistance with technology issues.**

2. Contestant dress code should be appropriate for an in-person contest. No hats are allowed during the judging competition. During the oral reasons competition, contestants are expected to dress neatly and professionally but expensive clothing and horse show outfits are not necessary. *You are still expected to present in appropriate turnout and be standing for reasons.*

3. Contestants must supply their own notepads and pencils. Contestants may take printed materials into the reasons room in accordance with state rules.

4. The reasons competition is designed to reward excellence in accuracy and oral delivery of the pertinent information. Contestants are strongly urged to not use their notes during the delivery of reasons. Reason scores will incur a 25-point penalty if read by the contestant, without regard to content. *NOTE: Judges will be empathetic to contestants, especially those who are in the initial learning stages. They will be encouraging and understanding. This event is intended to be a practice contest for learning.*

Contest Chairs:

Horse Judging

Audrey Rudy, audreymr@vt.edu

Bella Findley, findley848@vt.edu

Shelby Kohn, shelby99@vt.edu

Contest Email: blockbridlehorseweekend@gmail.com

Schedule of Events

Wednesday, February 10th	5:00 pm	Online Entries Due for All Contests Horse Judging, Hippology, Livestock Judging, and Junior Stockmens
Friday, February 12th	5:00 pm	Postmark/email/credit card payment Deadline for all contest entry fees or Proof of Payment Processing Paperwork
Wednesday, February 24th	8:00 am	Horse Judging and Hippology Links Open
Sunday, February 28th	6:00 pm	Horse Judging and Hippology Links Close No submissions accepted after 6:00 pm
Wednesday, March 3rd		HJ Contest official class placings and cuts Emailed to all coaches
Wednesday, March 3 rd	8:00 am	Livestock and Jr. Stockmen's Links Open
Sunday, March 7 th	6:00 pm	Livestock and Jr. Stockmen's Links Close No submissions accepted after 6:00 pm
Tuesday, March 9 th		Livestock Judging official class placings and cuts Emailed to all coaches
Thursday, March 11th	7:00 pm	B & B Awards Ceremony, Live via Zoom Horse and Livestock Contests Announced