

CHAPTER TWO – FEDERATION SANCTIONED COMPETITIONS

I. General Competition Rules

A. Show Year.

The IPHF show year runs from January 1st through December 31st. IPHF competitions are open to all Paso Horse enthusiasts who are members of the International Paso Horse Federation. Horses are qualified to compete if they are registered with any Confepaso affiliated association. Members must be in good standing at the time of entry into the competition and through the competition dates.

B. IPHF Competition Venues.

To qualify as an IPHF competition, show management must provide a competitive venue meeting all the rule requirements of IPHF. The payment of all association management related fees and appropriate documentation must be complete. The venue must provide at least one riding division in which competitors may participate.

C. Grand National Competition.

The Board selects the date and location of the National Championship Competition at least two years prior to that competitions commencement. Judges are selected by the Board of Directors from a list of qualified judges supplied by the Judges Committee. All National judges shall be certified by a Confepaso affiliated association. Judges are prohibited from judging two consecutive National Championships. National judges must be in good standing with IPHF at the time of selection, and at the time of the National competition. The national competition is an open event for all horses registered with any association recognized by Confepaso. There are no qualifying points required to enter the competition. All competitors must be members of IPHF in good standing at the time of entry and through the competition dates.

D. Competition Modalities.

IPHF offers Paso Fino (pleasure, performance, and fino), Trocha, Trote Galope, and Trocha Galope. IPHF also offers equitation competitions for youth riders based on international rules. The Trocha, Trote Galope and Trocha Galope classes will be conducted pursuant to Confepaso rules.

E. Horses Age.

For the purposes of competitions, classes are divided by gender and months of age and/or modalities. "Months of age" is established from the foaling date until the first day of the entered competition. Age groups are divided as follows:

- 36 - 48 months of age (Considered a schooling division.)
- 49 – 60 months of age (Considered a schooling division.)
- 61 – 77 months of age
- 78 months and over

There must be a minimum of three horses per class.

F. Class Placements.

Placements will be announced starting with Sixth Place (6th) and continuing through the First Place (1st) winner.

G. Ring Conduct.

Any competitor unable to control their mount will be excused from the class.

H. Withdrawing from Competition.

There will be no refund of show fees once entry forms are submitted without a veterinarian or physician excuse.

II. Competition Tack and Attire Requirements

A. Use of Metal.

Any metal within a nosepiece or chin piece may be used with schooling horses only and must be covered with a flexible material. Metal is not permitted on the nosepiece or chin piece used on the headstall of a horse sixty months or over.

B. Bits.

Horses over sixty months must be shown on the bit only. The overall shank length of a bit may not exceed six inches. Shank length from mouthpiece to bridle attachment may not exceed three inches.

C. Bridle.

Headgear must be show quality English or traditional style. A throatlatch with a pisador may be used.

D. Reins.

Schooling horses may be shown with reins with snaps. Horses over sixty months may not be shown with reins with snaps.

E. Saddle.

Saddle pads are not mandatory. An English type or traditional saddle is required for Classic Fino and Performance divisions. In the Pleasure division, a working type saddle may be used.

F. Breast Straps.

Breast straps and plates may be used.

G. Shoe Requirements.

Horses may compete without shoes. If the competing horse is shod, it must have shoes on all four feet. In shod horses, all four shoes must be of matching weight and construction and evenly balanced. All four shoes must be of the same metal composition. Horses may not compete with corrective or therapeutic shoes.

H. Training Aids.

No weights or chains may be used during competition. No inhumane training aids are allowed on the show grounds.

I. Helmets.

All riders twelve (12) years old and under must wear safety helmets approved by the American Society for Testing and Materials/Safety Equipment Institute F1163 Standards when riding on competition grounds and in classes. The use of a helmet by riders over the age of twelve (12) years old is optional.

K. Rider Attire.

Competitors in all divisions except pleasure will wear white shirt, black trousers, and a white straw hat. Jackets are permitted. In the Pleasure division, riders may wear a short sleeved shirt with jacket or a long sleeved shirt with a vest, full length trousers, a brimmed riding hat, and riding boots. Tie is optional. Women riders may wear skirts, culottes or gaucho pants that cover the knee while seated in the saddle with knee high boots. Exhibitors should remember that even in Pleasure classes, competitors are not riding only for their own benefit but to display our breed in a respectful manner to the public. Show officials have the option to make jackets optional due to oppressive weather.

III. Gait, Smoothness, and Style

Regardless of the class, the horse should maintain the appearance of ease and naturalness of gait combined with the pride and elegance characteristic of the breed. Special attention will be given to the smoothness and rhythmic consistency of the gait. The horse shall be excused for failure to perform the required gait for the class. Inconsistent gait, mixing of gaits, loss of cadence, and lack of smoothness as demonstrated through inappropriate movement of the croup, or the instability of the rider, will be penalized. Horses are expected to respond to light contact on the reins. Undue restraint to maintain collection and gait will be penalized. Horses fighting the bit, flattening their ears, or repeatedly swishing their tails will be penalized as well. Straight tracking is preferred; however slight winging or paddling may be acceptable as long as it is not severe or due to conformation faults. Exaggerated leg action in terms of excessive fold, unnaturally high front leg motion, and overreaching may be penalized. Degree of collection must vary based on the division (Classic Fino, Performance and Pleasure) and may vary based on the individuality of the horse. However, horses should not appear "strung out", squat at the rear end, and have a jutting out nose, lug, or be working behind the headgear.

IV. Breeding Qualities

Naturally given qualities will also be evaluated along with the performance of the horse. Rhythm, symmetry, tracking, croup movement, quickness, clarity of footfall, and balance will all be evaluated by the judges. The definition of these terms is as follows.

Balance – The carriage of the rider by the horse when collected. The horse should be carrying the rider in a balanced state with even visual planes from side to side and front to back.

Clarity of footfall – Clear evenly distributed sound of the hoof as it strikes the ground in the prescribed four (4) beat gait. Clarity is best evaluated when the horse is on the sounding board. Each hoof should strike the ground with the same intensity providing even clarity.

Croup movement - Movement of the croup will be penalized when comparing two otherwise equal horses. Vertical croup movement is more heavily penalized than lateral movement.

Quickness of footfall – Quickness is one measure of the athleticism of the horse that should be rewarded. However, quickness to the point of losing clarity and consistency will be penalized.

Rhythm - The sound of the four beat gait in a fluid, uninterrupted pattern with the sound of the gait coordinated with the visual footfall displayed by the horse.

Symmetry – The equality of the lift and reach of all four (4) legs when in gait. The greatest clarity and rhythm occur when the horse is able to move each leg similarly, evenly, and with correct timing to produce the four beat gait.

Tracking – This is the horse's way of moving when you inspect the horse from both the front and the rear as it gaits. In evaluating the horse's legs as his means of support during movement the judge is looking for adequate space between the front legs and likewise on the rear. Crossing over, hitting, and other adverse movement of the foot does not provide the support for the horse that is required for balance and harmony. A horse that crosses the legs while moving is more heavily penalized than a horse with a wider gait as there is more instability from the crossed movement than the wider movement.

V. Schooling Classes

A. Age Limit.

All horses must be at least thirty-six (36) months of age by the first day of the competition to compete in an IPHF show.

B. Schooling Divisions.

Schooling classes may be offered in all of the modalities.

C. Procedures.

Schooling classes shall follow the same procedures as classes for the older horses. The judges have multiple methods that may be used to evaluate and compare horses and may choose tools appropriate to the level of training of the horses in that class.

D. Schooling Status.

Entrance into classes is based on months of age and horses may only enter the class delineated by their age in months. Classes that are

combined at the discretion of the show management will still be judged according to their age group.

E. Point Standings.

Accumulated points will be recorded for the purposes of year end high point awards in each age and/or gender group in all modalities for both professional and non-pro classes.

VI. Divisions by Age, Gender, and Gait.

A. Each modality will provide classes by age group and gender. They are as follows:

Mares	36 – 48 months 49 - 60 months 61 – 77 months 78 and over
Geldings	36 – 48 months 49 – 60 months 61 – 77 months 78 and over
Stallions	36 – 48 months 49 – 60 months 61 – 77 months 78 and over

B. Show management may offer open classes that are based on age, gender, or both. This format must be published prior to the commencement of the show.

VII. Youth Divisions

A. Divisions.

The divisions for youth classes are Classic Fino, Performance, and Pleasure. Youth riders must be members of IPHF in good standing to enter a class. Youth riders will be divided into the following groups according to the age of the child. The age of the child is determined by their age on the first day of the IPHF show year - January 1st and shall remain the same for that competition year.

3 – 5 years of age – Walk Corto Leadline only

6 – 12 years of age – Sub- Junior

13 – 18 years of age – Junior

If youth are 19 years of age on January 1st of the competition year, they no longer qualify for the youth classes and must thereafter compete in professional or non-professional classes. Proper equitation, handling, and

horsemanship as well as the performance of the horse will be evaluated in youth classes. Equitation will be evaluated, and youth riders rewarded, for both balanced position and their ability to control the horse. Riders may be asked to perform the same tests, using the same procedures, as are required in the regular Performance, Pleasure, and Classic Fino divisions at the discretion of the judge. The overall performance of both horse and rider will be judged

B. Safety Headgear.

All riders twelve (12) years old and under must wear safety headgear when riding on the grounds of a competition as well as during the class. This includes competitors in the Walk-Corto Leadline class.

C. Youth Points.

Points in Sub-Junior and Junior classes are awarded to the youth rider not the horse. Year end awards will be based on accumulated points for each rider regardless of the horse's age or gait division. Walk Corto Leadline is a non-pointed class.

D. Stallions.

No person under the age of fifteen (15) will be allowed to compete or handle a stallion at IPHF competitions.

E. Youth Class Combination.

Youth classes may be combined at the discretion of the show management but will be judged separately.

F. Youth Championships.

Youth riders are eligible for youth championships and open championships but are not eligible for non-pro championships.

G. Youth in Non-pro and Open Divisions.

Youth riders are not permitted in the non-pro divisions.

H. Youth Riders May Be Excused.

Youth riders may be excused if the rider or the horse do not meet the requirements of the class.

I. Walk Corto Leadline.

Children three (3) to five (5) years of age, as well as physically and mentally challenged adults and children, are eligible to enter this class. Tack and attire are the same as the standard for Pleasure classes with the addition of safety headgear.

VIII. Classic Fino Division

A. Qualifying Gait.

The Classic Fino gait is an evenly spaced, fully collected, four beat lateral gait. This gait is smooth yet animated, excited yet controlled, and should be executed with full balance, full collection, concentrating complete energy into a relatively slow carriage with rapid, refined footfall. The Classic Fino horse must perform the requirements of the class maintaining a high level of collection without undue restraint or coaxing

from the rider. Horses will be judged on their ability to complete the required procedures in the class in a consistent and willing manner. Judges may excuse a horse any time during the class for failure to maintain the required Paso Fino gait. Horses fighting the bit, flattening the ears, swishing the tail, mixing gaits, losing cadence or lacking smoothness will be penalized and may be excused at the direction of the judges.. The horse should not be walking, backing up repeatedly, flexing, or performing other maneuvers associated with training in the show ring.

In the initial portion of the judging period the horse must be able to perform the Classic Fino gait on the rail and across the sounding board to the judges' satisfaction to be considered for placement. In the second portion of the judging period individual tests and comparisons may be made and horses who cannot maintain consistency of gait will be penalized.

B. Procedures.

Exhibitors enter the arena on the rail in the order determined by the competition officials. Movement around the rail is in the counterclockwise direction initially, after which they will be instructed to reverse and /or halt then proceed in Classic Fino gait. Breaking gait during any commanded maneuver is prohibited and will be penalized with the exception of backing up the horse, which is presented as three (3) – four (4) steps backwards which are not in Classic Fino gait. Figure eights may be requested to evaluate flexibility, subtleness, and consistency of gait. During figure eights diminishing circles are not allowed and will be penalized. Posts should be a minimum of sixty (60) inches apart. A solid continuous surface sounding board, at least forty-eight (48) feet long, with no more than one half (1/2) inch spaces between the boards placed at ground level should be used to clearly exhibit the clarity and rhythm of the Classic Fino gait. During the judging period competitors may not turn the horse on the sounding board. Performance on the sounding board shall not be given greater weight than performance on the rail. The horses who do not meet the requirements of the class will be excused from competition. The remaining horses considered for placement may be required to perform multiple tests at the discretion of the judges. These tests will be used to evaluate and compare the characteristics of each horse. Horses may be excused at any point in the judging period if they are unable to perform the requested maneuver maintaining gait, if they are not competing with a safe and controlled demeanor, and/or if the exhibitor is not following the prescribed rules for the class according to the standard set forth by the IPHF.

C. Procedures for Work Off.

In this phase, the judges have the option of working the horses on the rail, requiring the individual tests be repeated, working a horse individually, in pairs or in a group. A work off may be required for any placement, not just first or second. A horse that enters a work off or comparison may be

dismissed from competition if the horse is not able to perform the gait required by the division. The additional tests available are rail work, sounding board, three single circles in one direction and then a change to do three single circles in the other direction and the stop and go test.

D. Placement Percentages.

Quality of gait and performance of the requirements of the class shall be judged equally.

IX. Paso Performance Division

A. General Description.

The Paso Fino Performance horse demonstrates a dramatic level of power and athletic energy combined with animated style. The performance horse should display obedience, good manners, and responsiveness in an enthusiastic and elegant manner. This modality performs a fully collected gait in the three speeds described herein, and should perform them with impulsion and drive from the hind quarters. The flexion and extension sequence of the movement should produce a balanced, symmetrical, rhythmic four beat lateral gait. The speed of forward movement varies according to the ability and style of each horse in the collected walk, the Paso Corto, and the Paso Largo. The expectation of the performance division is that the horse will easily transition through all three speeds. There must be a clear change of extension from the Paso Corto to the Paso Largo without losing the collected frame and style.

B. Qualifying Gaits.

- 1. Collected Walk** – The collected walk is an evenly spaced four beat gait, cadenced, straight, animated, and rhythmic. The horse should be willing and ready to move forward to transition into the next speed of which is the Paso Corto, as well as willing to halt on command, for a still erect elegant stance.
- 2. Paso Corto** – The Corto is an evenly spaced four beat lateral gait which has a moderate forward speed. The horse should remain well collected, fully balanced, and demonstrate symmetry of movement as well as elegance while in motion. The length of stride of each horse may vary just as size varies. These variations are acceptable as long there is a marked difference in speed of the corto, the walk, and the largo.
- 3. Paso Largo** – The Largo is an evenly spaced collected four beat lateral gait which is smooth, balanced, bold, and animated with rapid forward motion. Extension and flexion must be harmoniously collected. The performance horse should be ready to move out to this more rapid ground covering motion from the corto, but also exhibit willingness to slow down or halt on command. A well defined change of speed and maintenance of that speed without losing style, collection and

impulsion must be heavily rewarded. On the other hand loss of rhythm, collection, and smoothness due to increased speed will be penalized.

C. Procedures.

Exhibitors enter the arena to the right on the rail at a collected Paso corto and circle the arena in a counterclockwise direction. The sequence of gaits shall be: collected Paso corto, collected Paso largo, collected walk, reverse and repeat. The level of speed for each gait must be demonstrated showing a marked difference. While in a collected walk competitors must space themselves to prevent bunching up and maintain their relative positions on the rail. In the collected corto and largo the entries shall maintain their position on the rail except when passing. Each horse will be expected to perform at least one (1) to two (2) sounding boards as part of the requirements of the class. The gait requirement for horses on the sounding board is the corto. Judges will then select the finalists to continue in competition. In the second phase of the class, competitors may be asked to work their horses in groups or individually. Judges may use the other tests, such as the figure eight and the serpentine, in this second stage of the class. Work off may also include a serpentine at a collected paso corto and/or a figure eight at a collected paso corto, or additional rail work.

Serpentine Illustration

A serpentine should consist of half circles with 180 degree turns with a total of six (6) turns with a minimum of three (3) turns in each direction.



IPHF standard distance between poles for figure eights and serpentes used in Performance division shall be set a minimum of sixty inches (60) and a maximum of eighty-four (84) inches apart.

D. Placement Percentages.

Quality of gait and performance of the requirements of the class shall be judged equally. Fifty percent (50%) shall be attributed to quality of gait and fifty percent (50%) shall be attributed to the requirement of the class. Also refer to this Chapter, Paragraph IX. Paso Performance Division., Section A. General Description.

X. Paso Pleasure Division

A. General Description,

This class demonstrates the most relaxed way of moving of all of the competitive Paso Fino horse divisions. The disposition, manners and obedience of the horse is highlighted in this class that requires only mild collection. The Pleasure horse should be controllable with minimal effort from the rider. This class displays the “pleasure” of riding a Paso Fino horse, the rider’s inability to maintain the horse in a calm state will be penalized. The Pleasure horse will be required to flat walk, Paso Corto, Paso Largo, and back up. The Paso Fino Pleasure horse emphasizes the naturalness of the four beat lateral gait in the breed, and the horse’s ability to display diversity in speed while maintaining the natural gait. The natural style and natural carriage should be demonstrated commensurate with the IPHF Breed Standard for all show horses.

B. Qualifying Gaits.

- 1. Flat walk** – This is the true, flat footed, evenly spaced, four beat, smooth gait executed with natural collection. The rider should be able to maintain the horse at a walk with minimal effort. The head carriage should be relaxed and natural. Excessive cues from the rider should not be warranted and will be penalized. A horse that does not walk will be excused.
- 2. Paso Corto** – This is the four (4) beat lateral gait which, in Pleasure horses, is demonstrated by moderate extension while mildly collected. The gait should be smooth, steady, unbroken, evenly spaced, and rhythmic. Head carriage should remain natural and relaxed. The horse should appear fluid and balanced in a relaxed, free moving motion forward. The horse should remain receptive to the rider and display a willingness to proceed on cue at all times.
- 3. Paso Largo** – The Paso largo should be the consistently smooth, evenly spaced, rapid yet unlabored, four beat lateral gait. Collection should remain mild. Extension and rapidness of cadence is increased from the corto, and a well defined extension should be easily observed. Loss of form, smoothness, or cadence at this increased speed will be penalized. Horses that fight the bit, swish their tail, flatten their ears, or show other signs of an unwilling attitude will be penalized.

C. Other Requirements – Backing up.

Horses will be asked to back up from the line up. The horse is to back up three (3) to five (5) steps on cue from the rider. During back up the horse should remain straight, back up in a straight line, and the head should remain at the midline. The horse should display a soft mouth and an easy response. Riders should be able to cue the horse to back up without an exaggerated command, and the horse should remain calm and cooperative while backing up. Refusal of the horse to back up disqualifies the horse.

D. Optional Pleasure Test.

The judges have the option to request that riders perform individual tests which may include the figure eight, serpentine, sounding board and/or rail work when comparing the finalists. Dismounting and remounting at the rail or in the line up may be required in this division. The suitability of the horse to stand quietly and accept this maneuver should be heavily rewarded. All maneuvers in the pleasure division requested by the judge should be performed in a calm and cooperative manner.

E. Pole Placement.

IPHF standard for the distance between poles used for the figure eight and serpentine are the same as specified in this Chapter, Paragraph IX. Paso Performance Division., Section C. Procedures.

F. Procedures.

The exhibitors will enter the ring to the right in a Paso Corto and proceed at the rail in a counterclockwise direction. Riders should space their horses evenly while executing the flat walk and avoid bunching up. Relative positions at the rail should be maintained except to pass. The sequence of commands will be for Paso Corto, Paso Largo, flat walk, reverse, and repeat. A marked difference in extension should be demonstrated on transition from the corto to the largo.

F. Placement Percentages.

Quality of gait and performance of the requirements of the class shall be judged equally. The requirements of the class are flat walk, corto and largo performed with the proper disposition, obedience and willingness. Also refer to this Chapter, Paragraph IV. Breeding Qualities.

XI. Championships

Championship classes may be offered in each division and classes based on age and gender may be combined at the discretion of the competition management. Horses competing in different modalities may not be combined, nor can Sub-Junior and Junior classes be combined with adult riding classes. Show management may offer a Youth Division Championship.

A. Eligibility.

Any horse that has been properly entered, competed, and received a ribbon in a class is qualified to enter the championship that corresponds to that class. **The first and second place horses in every class are required to compete** in the corresponding championship class to maintain possession of their awards received with that first or second placement. The first and second placements are not required to pay an entry fee. A veterinarian's excuse is required in order for a horse to be exempt from this requirement to compete in the championship. Any Non-pro, Sub-Junior, or Junior horse that has been properly entered, competed, and judged in a class is qualified to enter the championship that corresponds to that class.

Any Non pro, Sub-Junior, or Junior that is disqualified from competition during their regular class before the requirements of the class are completed is not qualified to compete in the corresponding championship class. Non pro, Sub-Junior, and Junior horses that complete the requirements of the class by performing all the required gaits in both directions in the ring and remain in the ring until they are excused from the lineup or are given placement are qualified to compete in their championship class.

Non pro, Sub-Juniors, and Juniors who are awarded First and Second Place in their division must also compete in the corresponding championship class. In the event that a Non pro, Sub-Junior, or Junior has qualified more than one (1) horse that is required by first or second placement to return for a particular championship, that rider may elect which horse to compete. Horses in these three divisions who do not have a rider to return to the championship will not be penalized for not competing in the championship class. In the event that no non-pro championship is offered, any non-pro participant that has met the requirements in their qualifying class *may* compete in the open championship in the corresponding division in which they competed.

B. Placements.

Placements in a championship will consist of Champion, Reserve Champion, Third Champion, and Fourth Champion.

C. Procedures.

Championship classes are completed according to the same procedures used in the regular qualifying classes. See corresponding procedures for each division. Competitors are to remain in the arena until they are disqualified, or until they are instructed to line up and are excused, or receive placement.

XII. Requirements for Posting Judges Sheets or Explanations of Evaluations in the Arena

Show management may post judging sheets by the end of the day following the competition day.

XIII. Exhibitor Behavior Requirements

All competitors are expected to obey all the rules of the Federation, as well as the rules of the competition facility at all times. Children under the age of sixteen (16) will not be allowed to drive any motorized vehicle on the competition ground unless they are directly under the immediate supervision of their parent or guardian AND that behavior is allowed at that facility. Participants are required to make all inquiries regarding the competition directly to the show manager. All competition staff should be treated with courtesy, and unconditional cooperation. Judges are to be approached through competition management, or steward). No person,

competitor, owner, trainer, or otherwise shall direct any abuse or threaten in any form or fashion an IPHF Judge regarding any part of their role in their position as judge. Any involvement in the harassment of an official constitutes suspension of any IPHF member involved and criminal prosecution where warranted.

XIV. Complaint Procedures

To make a formal complaint regarding any event at an IPHF competition the complaint must be initially sent in writing to the show committee chairman (manager) for that event. The event chairman is then responsible for attaching any pertinent information regarding that incident and forwarding that information to the appropriate committee within the IPHF. Any complaint regarding any event at a competition must be filed in writing, signed by the author, include accurate contact information, and received by the show management within thirty (30) days of the incident in question. Any formal complaint against an IPHF judge must follow these same guidelines, however, complaints regarding judges are to be sent directly from the person filing the complaint to the Chairman of the Judges Committee for IPHF. By filing a complaint, the complainant agrees to attend a hearing, if any, conducted by IPHF in regard to the alleged incident.