



FUTURE EVENT HORSE



Tips for: Competitors, Handlers, and Assistant Handlers

Equipment and Turnout:

Condition: It is more important to have a youngster living out rather than stalled for showing.

Handler and Assistant Handler Attire:

Monochromatic attire creates a uniformity which does not detract from the horse. Khakis or white jeans with a tucked in polo shirt is traditional. Helmets are required to be worn by handlers and assistants at Championships. Helmets are required at qualifier events. Gloves and safe footwear are also recommended.

Entry:

Be organized and enter with purpose. This creates a good first impression.

Standing Position:

It is often easier to position a horse by pushing him back (vs pulling him forward) one or two diagonal strides to attain this stance. If horse steps forward, merely push him back a stride into position. When the judge walks around the horse, the horse will show better on the off side if pushed backward into an open stance for that view. As the judge returns to the original location, reposition horse again, to the near side view.

Do not restrain the horse's head. He will begin to fuss and shift his position. Stand in front of the horse facing him, with a loose rein. If he steps forward, a backward tug on the reins or a tap on the bridge of the nose with the butt of your whip or your knuckles (knocking) will alert him to remain in place. Practice this at home.

Walk:

The handler should focus on a straight-line point beyond the corner of the triangle when tracking away from the apex. Likewise, returning to the apex focus on the judge. This will keep the line of travel straighter for optimum evaluation of correctness. Also, maintain as loose a contact as possible when the horse is obedient, in order that the frame, neck, and footfalls are not made crooked by pulling or balancing one's self on the reins/lead. This lack of contact will also allow the horse to use its neck for the optimum biomechanics of the walk and self-carriage at the trot seen on the base lines of the triangles.

Trot:

As in walk, focus on the distance points moving away and towards the judge in order to maintain straightness. In moving away from and towards the judge, the trot needs to be prompt and steady. It is on the long side that the handler must show the horse in an energetic, bolder stride. Practice prompt departs, half halts in hand for rebalancing if horse is ready to break stride and to encourage uphill movement.

Score Sheets:

Read carefully and understand the goal and purpose of this score sheet; its layout an sequence, and the directives upon which evaluation is made. Note the judge's remarks and how they apply to the directives. These can all be utilized for your own benefit for future training methods and/or breeding choices.