



*The purpose of the National Barrel Horse Association is to provide barrel racers with an international organization that will promote the sport of barrel racing and its growth.*

*Our goals are to increase the number of participants, improve the quality of shows and enhance the image of barrel racing.  
These rules have been adopted to address the needs of NBHA members, promote fairness, eliminate confusion, and assist show organizers.*

## INTRODUCTION

These Rules cannot cover all possible situations that may arise during a show, nor can they regulate all administrative questions. Where cases are not precisely regulated by a Rule, it should be possible to reach a reasonable decision by looking at the Rule book and the Director's Handbook. The Rules assume that **NBHA** Directors, Show Management and Headquarters staff have the necessary competence, sound judgement and absolute objectivity. Too detailed a rule might deprive the official of his/her freedom of judgement and thus prevent him/her from finding the solution to a problem dictated by fairness, logic and special factors.

## SECTION A COMPETITION RULES

1. An **NBHA** barrel race is a timed event using three identical barrels set in a cloverleaf pattern. ( The **NBHA** World Championships, **NBHA** Nationals Championships Series and **NBHA** Super Shows will use 55-gallon metal barrels with closed ends. District shows are not required to use metal barrels, however, barrels must be empty. (They must not have any weights in them which will make it less likely for them to be knocked over.)
2. The starting gate or gates must remain the same throughout the entire event. A contestant may request that the gate be closed after they enter the arena. If an arena has more than one gate at the end where riders enter the arena, riders may be given a choice of starting gates as long as the choice is extended to all riders.
3. The start/finish line and the barrel positions should be permanently marked and must remain the same throughout the entire event.
4. The pattern at an **NBHA** show must meet the following conditions:
  - a) a minimum of 15 feet between each of the first two barrels and the side fence.
  - b) a minimum of 30 feet between the third barrel and the back fence.
  - c) a minimum of 30 feet between the timer line and the first barrel.
5. Ground conditions
  - a) The ground conditions within the arena must remain consistent throughout the event. The ground around the barrels must be reworked and leveled after each 10 or fewer contestants have competed. An amount less than 10 may be set by the District Director.
  - b) The preferred method of working the ground is with a ground tool pulled by some type of motor vehicle. Hand raking is not acceptable.

6. Any time a contestant crosses the starting line, time will begin.
7. A contestant will be given a "no time" for missing the pattern.
8. A contestant will be disqualified for running out of turn. It is the contestant's responsibility to know his/her draw position.
9. A contestant will be given a "no time" for knocking over a barrel. A "no time" will also be given if a barrel is knocked over and it sets up again on either end. Touching a barrel, including to keep it from falling, is permitted without penalty.
10. A contestant will be given a "no time" if the horse or rider falls during the run in such a manner as to break the pattern, or if the rider falls off the horse.
11. If a barrel is moved off its marker during competition, the barrel must be reset prior to the next competitor's run.
12. Contestants may ride any horse, regardless of ownership, and may ride as many horses as they choose in a class. However, a horse may not be shown by more than one person in a class, unless the following conditions are met.
  - A) Both contestants are members of the same immediate family who reside in the same household ( husband, wife, children and grandchildren 21 and under). Children and grandchildren 21 and under who are attending school away from home, but who reside part of the year with their parents or grandparents are included in this rule.
  - B) Neither contestant is showing any other horse in that class.
  - C) In no case will the same horse be run more than twice in the same class.
13. Entries for an **NBHA** class will close when the first horse in that class runs, or at an earlier time as specified on the show bill. Under no circumstances will entries be taken for a class after the first horse in that class has entered the arena.
14. At all **NBHA** sanctioned shows, the draw shall be done in a random manner. Examples: a random computer draw, shuffling entry cards, or drawing numbered chips. Riders with multiple horses must specify a horse with each entry. Each draw position assigned to such riders will be assigned to a specific horse, and the rider must ride the specified horse in the specified position. Under no circumstances should a contestant be allowed to "pick out" their draw position. Once set, the draw may not be changed, except to accommodate entries with the same horse or rider, or entries involving members of the same immediate family, as defined in Section A, Rule 12A, which have drawn up close to each other. What constitutes "close to each other" will be determined by Show Management, however, a consistent standard should be adhered to for the class. The draw may not be changed to give preference to any rider or to accommodate another commitment of a particular rider such as work or another barrel race.
15. Only one horse may be in the arena at any time during the competition.
16. Reruns shall be granted if the timer fails to work properly or if the barrels were not placed properly on their markers . Any penalty incurred on the original run shall not be applied against the rerun, however, any penalty occurring on the rerun shall result in a "no time".
17. If the pattern is altered in any way during the running of a class, such that it cannot be restored to its original layout, all runs made to that point are void for the purpose of **NBHA** points. **NBHA** points may be awarded only if the entire class is rerun. (An altered pattern includes, but is not limited to: Changes in the staked position of the barrels; a change in the position of the timing device, either vertically or horizontally; or a change in the position of the entry gate(s).
18. Contestants who are given a no-time, either for missing the pattern or knocking down a barrel, may complete the pattern. However, show management may, at its discretion, ask a rider who is taking excessive time to train to leave the arena immediately. If such request is not complied with, a \$25 fine is assessed, payable to the district awards fund.
19. **NBHA** Officials have the right to disqualify any uncontrolled horse which does not begin performance within three minutes of the time the rider has been called. This rule does not apply to competitors who have not checked in with gate personnel.

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**SECTION B**  
**SHOW SANCTIONING**

1. To be sanctioned, a show, association, saddle club or arena must be a member in good standing of the **NBHA**. **NBHA** members in saddle clubs or associations may use their individual membership to meet this requirement. Sanctioned shows may pay out on either the 3-D or 4-D format, although points will be awarded on a 4-D format. For further classification, see the sections below on earned points and payouts.
2. For a show to be sanctioned by the **NBHA**, a written request must be made to the District Director on an **NBHA** Sanctioned Show Request Form. A \$30 sanctioning fee must accompany this request. If the show is to be published in the Barrel Horse News, the request form must be received by **NBHA** Headquarters 60 days prior to the show. To be approved as a sanctioned show, the request form and fee must be received by **NBHA** Headquarters at least 14 days prior to the requested show date. State Directors will have final approval for all sanctioned shows. **NBHA** points will not be awarded for shows not properly sanctioned.
3. The **NBHA** will sanction only one show on a given date within a district, except that two separate **NBHA** runs may be sanctioned on the same day at the same arena. No sanctioned **NBHA** point shows will be approved for dates that would interfere with members from attending their State Championships, the World Championships, the Youth World Championships or a National Championship Series Show held within the same region.
4. Shows will be sanctioned on a first-come, first-serve basis. The **NBHA** reserves the right to refuse sanctioning for a particular date or show if it is determined not to be in the best interest of the **NBHA** or its members.
5. A district shall have no fewer than six (6) or no more than fifteen (15) sanctioned shows during a competition year.
6. To be sanctioned, a show must offer all **NBHA** members in good standing, regardless of age or sex, the opportunity to compete. **NBHA** members may not be required to enter any other class, or join any other association or club, or pay any non-member fee or permit fee to any association or club, as a condition of riding in an **NBHA** sanctioned class.
7. There will be three classes of competition as follows:
  - Open
  - Youth ( 18 of years and under)
  - Senior (50 years of age and over)Proof of age may be required at the discretion of the Show Management.
  - a) **NBHA** sanctioned district shows must offer the three **NBHA** classes.
  - b) Show Management may allow eligible contestants to rollover their time in the Open class for the Youth or Senior Class or vice versa. Contestants wishing to carry a time must declare their intent before event begins. Any contestant carrying time must pay the applicable entry fee for both classes and is eligible to win prize money and **NBHA** points just as if the time was run in the other class. If this is done, the three **NBHA** classes must be run consecutively. The pattern for the Open, Youth and Senior must be exactly the same and must not be changed in any manner.
  - c) The **NBHA** points, and payout, if any, will be determined based only on those riders who qualify for that particular class ( Youth or Seniors).
8.
  - a) A competitors age in the Youth class will be determined as of the first day of the **NBHA** competition year, which is January 1 of each year.
  - b) A competitor may ride in the Senior class at any time on or after his/her 50th birthday.
9. All sanctioned shows must have an electronic timing system and conform to the **NBHA** rules. ( Note: **NBHA** events will be timed to thousandths of seconds if the clock being used displays three decimal places.)
10. The District Director must submit show results of all **NBHA** classes ( Open, Youth, and Senior) to the **NBHA** Headquarters and to their State Director WITHIN SEVEN DAYS after the show. Please note that the results must be reported in the 4-D format, regardless of whether the show used the 3-D or 4-D payout formula. POINT STANDINGS MUST BE POSTED IN A PUBLIC LOCATION BY THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR AT EVERY SHOW FOR MEMBERS TO SEE.

When a member disagrees with points awarded on the DISTRICT POINT SHEETS, that member will have 14 days, from the date points are posted, to bring any discrepancies to the attention of the District Director and, if necessary, to file a written protest in accordance with SECTION 10 of this Rule Book. If points are not posted in a public location at a show, members should notify their State Director. If that fails to resolve the problem, notify Headquarters in writing.

11. Directors must use good judgment in order not to create a travel distance hardship on members and risk revocation of sanction. State Directors will have final approval authority for all co-sanctioned shows.
12. The sanction fee for a co-sanctioned show is \$30, no matter how many districts participate. However, each district director must sign off on the show for their district, either by signing the same form or by submitting their own form. A co-sanctioned show must be sanctioned for the district in which it is actually takes place, unless specific permission has been given by Headquarters.
13. If a show is co-sanctioned, and the host district later decides to cancel the sanction, the show may continue as a sanctioned for any or all of the visiting district which decide to keep the sanction. The original host district may not sanction another show within that district on the same day.
14. A contestant's current **NBHA** membership card or a copy of current membership application must be presented to the show secretary prior to entering an **NBHA** sanctioned show.
15. Non-members may compete for prize money at an **NBHA** sanctioned show only upon payment of a non-member permit fee. A non-member permit fee, in the amount of ten dollars (\$10.00) will be collected from each non-member seeking to enter on **NBHA** show and compete in all classes for which they are qualified. Non-member permit fees collected will be deposited in the district account for year end awards.

District Directors may waive the non-member permit fee for members of other approved clubs and associations only during a co-sanctioned event with the non-member's club or association.

The **NBHA** reserves the right to refuse co-sanctioning for a particular date or show if it is determined not to be in the best interest of the **NBHA** or its members.

16. Organizations and individuals requesting **NBHA** sanctioned shows must use the official **NBHA** logo in all show bills and display advertising. Classified advertising and show listings must contain the words "**NBHA** Sanctioned". Camera-ready copies of the **NBHA** logo are available through your District Director.

17. As a condition of sanction, shows may be asked to display promotional items provided by select **NBHA** national sponsors.

## SECTION C EARNED POINTS

1. To earn and maintain points, a competitor must be a member in good standing of the **NBHA**. Members who fail to renew their membership within 30 days of their expiration date will forfeit any accumulated points previously earned during the competition year.

**NBHA** policy allows for a 30-day administrative grace period beyond the expiration date before the membership is officially marked as lapsed. This is to avoid penalizing the member with loss of **NBHA** points due to time it takes for the mail to arrive at Headquarters, or due to time taken by a director in forwarding memberships to Headquarters. It is also to allow the member the convenience of renewing at an **NBHA** sanctioned show, even if the next show is several days after the expiration date. It is not intended to give members an additional 30 days of membership privileges.

2. **NBHA** members may accumulate points in only one district at a time during the competition year. Members will be assigned to the district where they live unless Headquarters is notified in writing that they wish to compete in another district. Members lose accumulated points in a district when they start competing for **NBHA** points in another district. Requests for change of competition district will not be approved within 90 days of the end of the competition year, unless the member actually moves into a new district because of a permanent change of residence.

3. **NBHA** members who compete in sanctioned events within their district may earn **NBHA** points in more than one class. The Open 4D, Youth 4D, and Senior 4D classes will have four divisions. All points earned by a member must be credited to that member. Members may not elect to waive or drop points earned at an **NBHA** sanctioned event. District Directors must report and record, on the District Point

Sheets, all points earned by members.

4. Divisions are determined by time brackets, not by order of finish. In the Open, Youth, and Senior, the fastest time of a contestant in the class, WHETHER OR NOT A MEMBER OF THE NBHA, will determine the time brackets as follows:

1st division-Fastest time in the class and those who place in this division.

2nd division- Fastest time in the class plus one-half second and those who place in this division.

3rd division-Fastest time in the class plus one second and those who place in this division.

4th division- Fastest time in the class plus two seconds and those who place in this division. Note: The 4th division is not limited to a one second interval from two to three seconds off the fastest time; However, riders must make a good faith effort to run the pattern as fast as their ability will allow.

5. **NBHA** points will be awarded in all classes and division on a 5,4,3,2,1 basis for 1st place through 5th place among **NBHA** members in that competition district only, regardless of the number of entries or paying places. If two or more riders tie, the points for the tied positions should be added together and divided equally among the riders who tied.

EXAMPLE OF THE TIME BRACKETS (Note: This is only an example)

<u>1st division</u>	<u>2nd division</u>	<u>3rd division</u>	<u>4th division</u>
1. 15.201-5 pts	15.713- 5 pts	16.205- 5 pts	17.201- 5 pts
2. 15.272-4 pts	15.772- 4 pts	16.322- 4 pts	17.243- 4 pts
3. 15.314-3 pts	15.816- 3 pts	16.475- 3 pts	17.386- 3 pts
4. 15.357-2 pts	15.993- 2 pts	16.528- 2 pts	18.025- 2 pts
5. 15.448-1 pt	16.116- 1 pt	16.580- 1pt	18.567- 1 pt
6. 15.639- 0 pt	16.145- 0 pts	16.622- 0 pt	19.133- 0pt

6. Should fewer than five horses place in a division, **NBHA** points will be awarded beginning with five points for 1st place.

7. **NBHA** points will not be awarded for any run during which a contestant knocks over a barrel.

8. Competitors may enter more than one class. For example, competitors in the Youth 4D or Senior 4D classes may also qualify in the Open 4D class.

9. Competitors may ride as many horses as they wish in each class. However, the competitor with multiple entries will receive points only for the highest placing horse in each division.

10. At a co-sanctioned show, each district's members are given their points separately. That is, the highest placing 1-D rider from each district gets 5 points and so on.

11. A competitor may qualify for only for one entry for the **NBHA** World Championships in each of the Open 4D divisions, the Youth 4D divisions, or the Senior 4D division, based on accumulated points.

12. **NBHA** Points, in all classes and divisions are awarded to the rider.

13. A horse may be entered only once in each class at the **NBHA** World Championships and National Championship Series, with the exception of immediate family members, as defined in Section A Paragraph 8 above, who qualify in the same class. In no case will the same horse be entered more than twice in the same class.

14. At the end of the **NBHA** competition year, the top five point earners, plus ties for fifth place, in all classes and divisions from each district, will be determined. These finalists will be invited to compete in the **NBHA** World Championships. Note: Should the number of contestants cause the length of the show to be extended for an unreasonable period of time, entries may be limited at the discretion of the Show Management.

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**SECTION D**  
**PAYOUT**

The required payoff for **NBHA** sanctioned shows is as follows:

1. A minimum of 80% of all entry fees must go to the jackpot. (Exception: If a show offers at least \$1000 added money, a minimum of 70% of all entry fees must go to the jackpot.) That is, a maximum of 20% ( a maximum of 30% if at least \$1000 added) may be withheld as the "office charge". If more than 20% is withheld pursuant to the above, this fact must be stated on any show bills or flyers. This is exclusive of other fees which may be charged for specific purposes such as State District Awards Fees, timer fee, or arena fee. While we permit such charges, they must not be excessive, must be clearly stated in all advertising and show bills, and must be directed to the specific purposes as labeled, for example, the timer fees must either be paid to the timer owner/operator, or put toward the purchase of a timer for the district. The charging of a "processing fee" at district shows, the sole purpose of which is to add to the general revenue of the show, is not permitted.
2. In a 3-D payout, the total jackpotted entry fees of a class is to be divided 50% to the 1st Division, 30% to the 3rd Division ( 1 second off fastest time), and 20% to the 4th Division ( 2 seconds off the fastest time). In a 4-D payout, the total jackpotted entry fees of a class is to be divided 35% to 1st Division, 30% to the 2nd Division, 20% to the 3rd Division, and 15% to the 4th Division.
3. In the event a district co-sanctions with a 4D organization outside the **NBHA**, the organizing show producer may use a payout split which is different from the **NBHA**'s 35/30/20/15. When co-sanctioning with such shows, district directors should ensure the payout split being used is well publicized to all members to avoid any misunderstandings.
4. Added money will be divided in the same ratio OR split evenly among all divisions.
5. There are no restrictions regarding how added money is apportioned among classes at a show. For example, a show may add money to the Open but not to Youth or Seniors.
6. The following table shows the MINIMUM number of places to be paid for the stated number of entries.

<u>Places</u>	<u>3-D Format</u>				
	<u>1-10</u>	<u>11-15</u>	<u>16-30</u>	<u>31-60</u>	<u>61-90</u>
1st	100%	60%	50%	40%	30%
2nd		40%	30%	30%	25%
3rd			20%	20%	20%
4th				10%	15%
5th					10%

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3-D Format  
Number of Entries

<u>Places</u>	<u>91-120</u>	<u>121-150</u>	<u>151-180</u>	<u>181-210</u>	<u>211 +</u>
1st	28%	26%	24%	22%	
2nd	22%	20%	18%	16%	15%
3rd	18%	15%	15%	14%	13%
4th	14%	12%	12%	12%	11%
5th	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%
6th	8%	9%	8%	8%	8%
7th		8%	7%	7%	6.5%
8th			6%	6%	6%
9th				5%	5.5%
10th					5%

4-D Format  
Number of Entries

<u>Places</u>	<u>1-12</u>	<u>13-20</u>	<u>21-40</u>	<u>41-80</u>	<u>81-120</u>
1st	100%	60%	50%	40%	30%
		40%	30%	30%	25%
			20%	20%	20%
				10%	15%
					10%

Number of Entries

<u>Places</u>	<u>121-160</u>	<u>161-200</u>	<u>201 +</u>
1st	28%	26%	24%
2nd	22%	20%	18%
3rd	18%	15%	15%
4th	14%	12%	12%
5th	10%	10%	10%
6th	8%	9%	8%
7th		8%	7%
8th			6%

7. District Directors will check payback in all **NBHA** classes. Paying more than the minimum places requires approval of the District Director.

8. All prize money must be paid out.

9. Prize money will NOT be paid to any contestant who knocks over a barrel.

10. At any **NBHA** show, if not enough riders qualify in a division as monies to be paid, the money which is unaccounted for shall be divided equally among those who have placed in that division. If no riders qualify in a division, the prize money for that division shall be equally divided among those riders in the other division of that class who have won prize money.

## SECTION E PENALTIES, DISQUALIFICATIONS AND SUSPENSIONS

**NBHA** membership and participation in **NBHA** events is a privilege, not a right. Behavior which is damaging to our Association or its membership will not be tolerated. Violation of any of the following provisions may subject a member to disqualification from **NBHA** events, being denied entry to **NBHA** events, loss of points, or suspension from the Association.

1. Any act in connection with an **NBHA** sanctioned show or other **NBHA** business in violation of this section by a member of the family of an **NBHA** member may be deemed to have been committed by the **NBHA** member and subject him or her to penalties.
2. Any act deemed prejudicial to the best interests of the **NBHA** may result in the suspension of a member, including but not limited to the following.
  - a) Using abusive or intemperate language or attempting to threaten, bribe, influence or harass any contestant, show official or **NBHA** official. Also, any remarks made with the intent to cast aspersions on the character or integrity of an **NBHA** official or show official.
  - b) Moving or attempting to move markers at any time.
  - c) Use of electronic and/or remotely controlled devices to alter the outcome of a run.
  - d) Abuse of a horse in any way.
  - e) Competing while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
  - f) Misidentifying a horse at any **NBHA** class will disqualify a contestant.
  - g) Other conduct that is not in the best interest of the **NBHA** or its members.
  - h) Failure to make good on a returned check to the **NBHA** or to any **NBHA** sanctioned event, or to any other association which has a cooperative agreement with the **NBHA** on returned checks.
  - i) Show Management and/or **NBHA** Directors at their sole discretion shall have the authority to disqualify or deny entry to any horse they deem dangerous to the rider, or to other individuals, animals or property.
3. Contestants must attempt to make the fastest run possible. Any obvious attempt to "pull up" or pace their run may result in the following penalties-1st offense-Warning. 2nd offense-\$25 fine payable to the district hosting the show, 3rd offense-3 month suspension from **NBHA**.
4. Names of suspended members may be published in the Barrel Horse News.
5. A member who has been suspended, disqualified, or denied points under this section may appeal to the appeals committee of **NBHA** members and directors appointed by the appropriate State, Area, or Regional Director. The date, time and location of such meeting will be determined by the State or Area Director. The decisions of such appeals committee shall be final and binding on all parties.

## SECTION E DRESS CODE

To enhance the image of our sport, the **NBHA** encourages and promotes appropriate western attire throughout all **NBHA** sanctioned events. This includes a long-sleeved western shirt, a cowboy hat and cowboy boots ( no "heels down" or like type shoes are permitted). Shirt sleeves must be rolled down and buttoned or snapped. Shirt tails must be tucked in. This dress code will be strictly enforced at all State Championships, National Championship Series, the **NBHA** World Championships, and the **NBHA** Youth World Championships, and all Super Shows. Anyone making a run at any of these shows who is found to be in violation of the dress code will be assessed a \$25 fine. During all National, World, and Super Shows, contestants will be assessed a fine of \$25 for losing their hat during a run. Members who fail to pay such fines will be ineligible to enter any **NBHA** sanctioned or approved shows until such fines are paid in full. All disputes over dress code and fines will be decided by Show Management.

The decision of Show Management will be final and binding. In the interest of safety, contestants may wear appropriate riding safety helmets.

## SECTION G PROTESTS AND COMPLAINTS

Persons who believe a rule violation or infraction has occurred at an **NBHA** event, may file a written protest with **NBHA** Headquarters, PO Box 1988, Augusta, GA 3090301988. The written protest must be accompanied by a \$50 protest fee. The protest must be made within 30 days of the incident which is being protested. If the protest proves to be valid, the \$50 protest fee will be returned to the person filing the protest. If the protest proves to be invalid, the protest fee will be used for district year end awards. In certain cases, determined by the Executive Director, **NBHA** Headquarters may reserve the right to return the \$50 protest fee even if the protest proves to be invalid. This is the **ONLY** manner in which a protest or complaint will be accepted.

(NOTE: This rule does not prevent Directors and Show Managers from correcting obvious problems brought to their attention, without the submission of a written protest fee.)

## SECTION H BARREL PATTERN

The pattern at an **NBHA** show must meet the following conditions; 1.) a minimum of 15 feet between each of the first two barrels and the side fence. 2) a minimum of 30 feet between the third barrel and the back fence. 3) a minimum of 30 feet between the time line and the first barrel. Local promoters and show organizers should use a barrel pattern that best fits their arena, subject to the above restrictions.

The **NBHA** Rules are subject to change, at any time, if it is determined that they are not serving the best interest of the **NBHA** and its members. Any situation not covered under these rules shall be decided by the **NBHA** District Director, or, in the absence of the District Director, by a county Representative.

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