Team Sorting Rules

1. Within a 90-second time limit, a team of three (3) riders must attempt to cut out, in numerical order ten (10) head of cattle. The team with the most cattle in the fastest time wins. All penalties will be added to the team's time, hence the team's official time could exceed the 90-second time limit. In a multiple go-round event, placing will be by the total number of cattle sorted in all go-rounds first, then the number of go-rounds in which cattle were sorted, and finally by the total time in all go-rounds.

2. The arena is separated into two (2) designated areas, "A" & "B", separated by a start/finish line. If panels are used to narrow the opening, the start/finish line is limited to the opening created by the panels.

   All ten (10) head of cattle will be settled in area "A".

   Area "B" will hold or contain the cattle as they are sorted.

3. All cattle will be bunched in area "A" before time begins. The flagger will raise the flag to signal the arena is ready. Contestants will be given their starting (assigned) number when the flagger drops the flag as the nose of the first horse crosses the starting line. Riders are committed once they enter the arena. Any delay is a disqualification.

4. Once committed to the cattle and time has begun, the team may only be called back by the flagger/announcer in the event an incorrect number was announced or a failure to start the time correctly occurs. However, once the team has successfully sorted the first cow, the team will not be called back if an incorrect number was announced.

5. Starting with the number given by the announcer, the team will cut and sort numerically, each cow across the line into area "B". More than one cow may cross the line at the same time, as long as they proceed numerically. The nose of #5 must cross the line before the nose of #6. The complete animal (excluding the tail) must be across the start/finish line to be counted. If #5 starts across the line and stops and stands on the line without completely crossing into area "B" and #6, #7 (etc.) completely cross the line in the proper order, play continues but the cow standing on the line (#5) and the subsequent cattle do not count until #5 is completely across the line. A No-time will be given if #5 returns completely into area "A" before crossing completely into area "B". However, time continues if the cow with the correct number partially crosses the line, returning completely into area "A," and no other cattle have otherwise improperly crossed the line.

6. Time starts when the flagger drops the flag as the nose of the first horse crosses the start line.

7. Time stops when the last cow completely (excluding the tail) crosses the line into area "B" or when time has expired.

8. A No-time will be given should a cow cross the line in the wrong numerical order, or if any portion of a wrong numbered cow crosses the starting line.

9. A No-time will be given if any portion of a cow that has been completely sorted into area "B" goes back into area "A".

10. Contact with cattle by hands, hat, rope, bat, rommel, or any other equipment is a disqualification. No hazing with whips, hats, or ropes is allowed. Falling hats must immediately be dropped or placed back on head to avoid disqualification for hazing. Rommels or reins may be popped on horse or chaps.

11. Once committed to the cattle, the team is completely responsible for their animals. It is the team's responsibility to pull up and call for the flagger's decision before crossing the starting line if, in their opinion, there is an injured or unusable animal. Once the cattle are worked, no excuses are accepted.

12. A team will be disqualified by the flagger for any action he feels to be unnecessary roughness to the cattle, or unsportsmanlike conduct. This includes, but is not limited to, running over cattle with a horse, stepping on cattle while in pursuit, or running through the herd in such manner that the cattle are knocked down.

13. If one or more cattle leave area "A", either over or through the fence (including panels on either side of the start/finish line), the flagger will immediately signal for time to stop and the team will be disqualified for unnecessary roughness or be given a rerun depending on the flaggers decision as to why the animal left Area "A". In the event of a rerun, the team cannot better the time at the point of the incident (when the flagger stopped the clock). Seconds may be given or taken away, if in the opinion of the flagger time was not stopped accurately. All reruns will be made at the end of the herd in which the incident occurred, on the same numbered cattle. If more than one rerun is given in any herd, they will be taken in the order of occurrence.

14. If a team member becomes un-mounted, and influences the cattle in any manner, the team will be given a No-time.

15. If for any reason a team does not show after the order of a go-round has been announced, their cattle number will be drawn to avoid changing the order of the go-round for the other contestants.

16. The VPA dress code (refer to General Rules) is mandatory in all VPA contests involving prizes, unless otherwise announced by the President or officials.

17. In case of a dispute, the flagger must be notified of a protest immediately prior to the next team's ride. The flagger may consult VPA's written rules, the Rules Committee Chair or the Club President prior to issuing a ruling.

18. If there is a tie, the official will refer to the tie breaking rules in effect and announce the method to break the tie.

19. Decisions of the flagger are final in all matters. However, the flagger must consult the President or Rules Committee Chair prior to modifying any rule.