

Young Judging Competitions - INFORMATION FOR CONVENORS & JUDGES

The AAA Ltd Rules for Alpaca Young Judging Competitions as specified in the AAA Ltd Showing Rules. Please note that the age limit for Young Judging contestants is between the age of 15 years and under 25 years. This age group is standard for all Young Judging events conducted by agricultural societies in all other livestock competitions. An additional age group of young competitors may be offered if the time allows. Often Royal Shows will hold a younger age group competition. Younger aged competitors are not point scored for our Alpaca National Qualification.

OVERVIEW

In the selection of a class of alpacas (or fleeces) for Young Judging competitions, the aim should be to select a group of four, upon whose placing experienced judges, after careful inspection and consideration, would be likely to agree. In most AAA Young Judging Competitions alpacas are judged, and not fleeces; fleeces add a further degree of preparation with score sheets and time constraints. At some Royal Shows or the AAA National Show, the contestants judge both alpacas and fleeces, or perhaps both Huacaya and Suri halter classes, but choose to give their oral reasons on only one of these categories.

PROCESS

1. Prior to the competition the steward, convenor or a AAA Halter judge (not the over-judge), will select the six (6) alpacas or fleeces to be judged. In the case of fleeces this can be done a day or two before the competition if required.

A suitable group might be made up of a fairly clear leader, a fairly obvious 'tail' and two others that present a more difficult choice. They will be judged against the AAA Ltd Alpaca Breed Standard. It is desirable if alpacas/fleeces of relatively similar age and sex are selected for the competition. It is also appropriate that the line-up does not include an alpaca that has already been judged a broad ribbon winner on that day at the show where possible, as contestants may be watching the competition and remember the placing.

Notes:

Remembering that we rely on the generosity of other exhibitors at the show to "donate" and handle the alpacas for this event, it may not always be possible to get the required standard six (6) alpacas in the one colour, age and sex for this competition, depending on the size and level of the show. This is not critical provided they are all Suris or all Huacayas and similar sizes. Also bear in mind that if the "volunteer" handlers are young, smaller, quiet alpacas will be easier to manage for the duration of the event. Alpaca handlers should be attired in standard showing dress of white show coats or AAA uniform shirts or vests.

If the alpacas chosen happen to be different colours and sex, the overjudge should explain to the competition contestants to treat the class as all one colour and all one sex and disregard any colour differences i.e. "Treat this as a class of young white females" (nominally female – even if they are male - so that contestants don't have to spend valuable time looking for testicles on young alpacas). Any information that can be provided to the competitors to streamline the event and lessen the pressure for them is advantageous. Time taken to conduct this event is usually crucial to the overall smooth running of the show.

2. On the day of the competition the overjudge will be presented with the 6 selected animals and/or fleeces (Animals are to be handled by neutral handlers – owners of exhibits are not to be present or mentioned in any way) he/she will select 4 of the available 6 animals or fleeces and will decide on the correct placing, placings will be noted on the master sheet. **The alpacas or their handlers (or fleeces) must be numbered from 1 to 4** in order for the Hormel Slide to be used correctly.

The Hormel Slide is a small, convenient tool (not unlike a slide rule) that is used to quickly and accurately calculate the contestant's individual placings in a comparative format using the placings of the overjudge as a basis. It provides a comparative score for each contestant out of a total of 50 marks for the alpaca placement segment on the master score sheet. If for some reason a Hormel Slide is not available on the day, the overjudge will assess the accuracy of the contestant's comparative placings at their discretion.

N.B. Judges may use a Hormel Slide App available online.

3. The overjudge, in filling out his/her master sheet, is required to note a numerical difference between animal placings (splits) and the competitor is scored accordingly using the Hormel Slide. The total of the hormel slide splits **must** equal 15.

4. All AAA Ltd Judges will have a Hormel Slide in their possession. It will be the Judge's responsibility to provide the Hormel Slide for use in the competition on the day of the show. Where necessary they can advise the Stewards responsible for the master scoresheets in the use of the Hormel Slide at the show.

CONDUCTING THE COMPETITION

1. Prior to commencement of the competition, a Steward will facilitate the contestants choosing in which order they will speak when it comes time for the oral reasoning presentation. This can be done alphabetically, or they can draw names out of a hat, or sometimes they might just work it out amongst themselves. Whatever is decided, they must feel comfortable with the process and it must be fair. If they can't agree then a random selection such as names drawn from a hat is probably best.

2. **For an alpaca fleece Young Judging Competition**, four fleeces will be laid out and numbered 1 to 4, with individual score cards and fleece matrix provided for each of the contestants. Competitors will have up to 5 minutes per fleece to assess the class collectively – a maximum total of 20 minutes for the assessment phase. A Steward should announce the time to them at 5 minute intervals so that they are aware of how they are progressing.

If there are more than 8 contestants, the judging should be conducted in two separate groups so that each Young Judge has adequate opportunity to gain access to the fleeces they are judging, which in turn will significantly increase the overall time it takes to conduct the event.

Note: Fleece weights will be displayed on class no card for this event.

While it is useful for the contestants to score the fleeces for their own information, all they need to do on finishing the assessment is provide the Stewards with their placings for the fleece class from 1 to 4, but they may wish to use their score cards from which to draw information for their orals if they choose to speak about fleeces.

Note: A Young Judging Fleece Competition has a level of extra complexity with scorecards and calculators required and is not the preferred option for a regional show, especially with first-time contestants.

3. For alpaca halter class Young Judging Competitions (Huacaya or Suri), the alpacas will individually parade into the ring and line-up as for a normal halter class. The contestants will use the time as the alpacas are paraded into the ring to assess conformation. Collectively the contestants will then assess each of the alpacas in the line-up in the space of 15 minutes. Time usually starts from when the alpacas are lined up ready for inspection. This format works for up to about 6 contestants. If there are more, then you may need to run the class in two sections, so that everyone has sufficient time to get “hands on” the alpacas. They can write down notes/information during this time if they wish, and it is usual for each competitor to supply writing paper and a clipboard for this segment, or alternatively it may be supplied.

You may need 3 - 4 capable ring stewards to assist as required, especially if there are 4 or more contestants, as the Young Judges may each want to look at individual alpacas at the same time, and depending on the experience of the handlers, it is important for each contestant to have the individual alpacas stand and allow proper assessment by each of them in turn.

4. One Steward needs to act as time-keeper and should announce to all the contestants when they have a couple of minutes left for the assessment phase, so that they are aware that their allowed time for assessment is coming to an end. At the completion of 15 minutes, and prompted by the Steward, the contestants must write down their placings, and hand them in to a Steward, clearly identified with their name or exhibitor number. The Steward must ensure that they have kept a copy for their own use. If they are inexperienced, it is easy for them to become confused at this time, so it's quite OK for the Steward to remind and reassure them of what they are doing and when they are doing it. ASE Young Judging Summary for website JAN 2018 Page 4

5. Another Steward will then need to “chaperone” all contestants to an area out of hearing range of the show ring, usually outside the building if indoors, so that contestants cannot hear other contestants speaking. This Steward needs to be aware that these youngsters may be very nervous about speaking publicly (especially if it's for the first time) and should endeavour to ease their nerves if necessary.

6. Give them a few minutes for the first speaker to collect his/her thoughts and then the first contestant comes back to the ring and places the alpacas in the order they judged the class and gives their reasons for doing so. Once they have completed their orals, they may stay and listen to other contestants speak if they wish.

7. Each competitor in the oral class lines up the alpacas in order of merit. A time limit of 3 mins then applies for the oral reasoning of the placings. If the competitor greatly exceeds 3 minutes, points may be deducted.

8. At the conclusion of the competition the Over-Judge is asked to give their own reasons for the placings of the alpacas. The Over-Judge should do so, wherever possible, with the alpacas present. Hands on and verbal communication has proven to be the most effective and desired form for educating the young judges and preparing them for further competitions. The Over-Judge is to present and discuss with competitors, describing and showing traits and explaining comparisons.

9. Meanwhile the Steward can be adding up the scores that the Over-Judge has allocated for each contestant. Once the Over-Judge is happy with the scores and the placings, the winners are announced and the Over-Judge may also make comment on the various oral and ringcraft styles of the competitors, offering constructive criticism and feedback as to how they might improve if appropriate. This can be done on the microphone if they have been a particularly advanced group, but more often than not this feedback is given individually to the group, and not publicly.

DRESS STANDARD

Competitors must be neatly and suitably attired, and male competitors should wear a tie. Points will be deducted for poor presentation. Shorts and thongs, and jeans (regardless of colour) are not permitted and considered inappropriate. Chewing gum should be discarded before entering the competition ring.

COMMUNICATION TO CONTESTANTS & SPECTATORS

The Over-Judge and Stewards should communicate clearly to the contestants at all times, so that they understand exactly what is required.

It is useful to introduce the event on the microphone and give a summary of how the event will proceed so that spectators can gain an understanding of how it works and the complexities involved for the participating competitors. The MC should also introduce the Over-Judge.

In the interests of maintaining full spectator and competitor interest in the competition, it is important that it be confined to a time limit as far as possible.

MORE INFORMATION

Score sheets for use in conducting Young Judging Competitions are available on the AAA Ltd website under the **Alpaca Youth Education Section (AYE)** of the Members area under the headings for **Young Judging Manual – Notes and Guidelines for Young Judges, Convenors and Over-Judges**.

Any further questions should be directed via the AAA Ltd office to the Alpaca Youth Education Committee or your individual AYE State Representative whose contacts can be found on the AAA Ltd Website