

THE AMERICAN LEGION

High School Rodeo Top Cowboy and Top Cowgirl Americanism Award Program

“Americanism Patriotic Citizenship Contest”

Official Rules

General Information

The purpose of The American Legion High School Rodeo Top Cowboy and Top Cowgirl Americanism Award Program is to develop a greater sense of Patriotic Citizenship and Americanism Principles among high school students who compete within the South Dakota High School Rodeo Association. Other objectives of the contest include the development of leadership qualities, courage, honor, Americanism, citizenship and patriotism.

Post/District Awards

Contest awards are presented to the Top Cowboy and Top Cowgirl in each post, and the award shall be an engraved Post Champion buckle and should be awarded to at least one Top Cowboy and one Top Cowgirl as the members in any one post would so determine as to represent the local post. A post may provide for further awards to 2nd Place and 3rd Place winners. A post must provide for a monetary scholarship of no more than \$50 in addition to the Post Champion Buckle awarded. All awards and monetary scholarships at the post level are awarded at the discretion of the judges in their respective post.

For information about the High School Rodeo Top Cowboy and Top Cowgirl Contests in your state, contact your nearest American Legion post or Department headquarters.

Eligibility

Eligible participants in the contest shall be citizens of or lawful permanent residents of the United States.

All contestants must be bona fide students herein described as any student under the age of 19 years on the date of the contest that is presently enrolled in a high school (public, parochial, military, private or home school), commencing with grade nine and terminating with grade 12. Students must be enrolled in high school during the time of participation in the contest and must be a current member of the National High School Rodeo Association.

Contestants must either be legally domiciled within or attend an educational institution within the department (state) where they enter competition. Contestants can enter competition in only one department.

Prepared Contest Application

The Contest Application shall include the name of the applicant and the physical address of the applicant, including City, State, and zip code. The applicant shall include their phone number, email address if any and their parent's signature and phone number, or guardian's signature and phone number. The applicant shall include the name of the High School in which they are enrolled, school's address, City, State and zip code along with the name of the School Principal, their phone number, email, and signature. The application shall include the school class year of the applicant on the application form along with their SDHSRA reg. number.

Verification Form

A Verification Form shall be attached to the applicant's Application and should contain a line for reference to the tasks involved and what the applicant actually did. It should contain a space for the date of the task performed, the fact that the task was performed, and the specific location where the task was performed. The Verification Form shall be one page for 12 places where the tasks may be listed and signed off on by a designated person in charge or bona-fide witness to the task performed. Each applicant may make additional Verification Forms for additional tasks if necessary. The Verification Form shall come with a page of instructions including a list of possible tasks that can be performed by a contest participant and written down on the Verification Form. Any unlisted tasks in addition to those listed that are performed must be qualified and verified by the post judges.

All contestants at each contest level are required to complete the Application and Verification Forms in the English language.

Contest Rules

The contest rules shall require a contest committee of two legion members at the post level to assess the applications turned in to the Contest Committee Chairman. The Contest Committee shall meet and verify that all signatures of the various signatories and the task events which have been completed are verified and true to the best of their knowledge. The Contest Committee shall verify that all answers on the form are properly filled in and legible.

Judges

The judges are an integral part of the High School Rodeo Top Cowboy and Top Cowgirl Americanism Citizenship Contest. Their qualifications are considered carefully as the decision of the judges is final and must be reached without bias. Impartial judging in all contests is the key to fairness and success of the program which results in the selection of a national champion Top Cowboy and Top Cowgirl.

No publicity shall be given to the names of the judges in advance of the contest. During the contest, the judges in a private meeting room shall report their final decision depending on the number of certified tasks performed, without consultation with other judges, to the designated officer of the Americanism Committee.

Judges will be advised that a lack of emphasis on the number and type of citizenship tasks performed and the obligations in filling out the Verification Form must result in their downgrading the contestant. Judges are permitted to downgrade a contestant for failure to completely fill out all blanks on the application and not having verifying signatures on every task on the Task Verification Sheet. It will be the Judge's responsibility to tabulate and verify that all the tasks were signed properly before they are submitted for final tabulation.

The judges shall proceed to a private room for final review and tabulation. **The decision of the judges is final.**