

A Draft Proposal for
The NCHA National Circuit Finals

The Objective: Attract and keep NCHA competitors by creating prestige and motivation for increased participation at the local level by cutters who are not interested in hauling, or cannot feasibly haul, for the World Championships, but who desire and are able to compete and achieve in a smaller geographical area.

The Strategy: Improve the incentives and create value for participating in the NCHA by...

- Offering regional circuit opportunities for annual achievement in an environment that respects the needs and motives of rank-and-file competitors, while sustaining incentives and recognition for NCHA members desiring to haul for the World Finals.
- Creating a show infrastructure that gives all competitors the ability and incentive to rise to their desired and feasible levels of achievement.
- Giving regions maximum flexibility regarding format, location, and dates in order for them to be able to foster maximum attractiveness for their members and their affiliated regional associations and show producers.

The Method: A system of regional circuit shows and regional Circuit Finals, leading to an annual NCHA National Circuit Finals show.

- Each region puts on its own regional series of designated qualifying shows, leading to its own annual regional Circuit Finals show.
- NCHA puts on the NCHA National Circuit Finals show each year (e.g., in late winter/early spring).
- Each region decides its regional circuit qualifying shows and regional Circuit Finals show location, date, format, etc.
- Each region sends the top X finishers in its regional Circuit Finals to the NCHA National Circuit Finals show.
- Rider/horse earnings in each region's Circuit Finals show and the NCHA National Circuit Finals show count toward that year's World Standings.
- The regional circuit shows and NCHA National Circuit Finals show can include the same LAE and weekend classes as the current NCHA World Finals.
- Similar to other high-profile events, ranging from The American rodeo to the PRCA's National Circuit Finals Rodeo to the United States Golf Association's US Open, the ultimate NCHA National Circuit Finals show champions in each class are determined solely by a qualifying contestant's performance in the NCHA National Circuit Finals show (i.e., the NCHA National Circuit Finals are "blank slate" and do not depend on qualifiers' pre-Finals show earnings in the regional circuits).

Advantages:

- The two paths to pinnacle achievement – the World Finals and the NCHA National Circuit Finals – correspond to those who can and want to “haul” for the World Finals and those who can’t or don’t want to “haul”, but who love competition and the sport of cutting.
- The World Finals and the regional circuit/NCHA National Circuit Finals complement each other and provide incentives for participating in the NCHA *at all levels*.
- The system of regional circuits, regional Circuit Finals, and the NCHA National Circuit Finals creates moments of award and recognition at progressive levels of competition which clubs and affiliates can offer their rank-and-file cutters, strengthening those clubs and affiliates and increasing incentives to belong to the NCHA.
- The system of regional circuits, regional Circuit Finals, and the NCHA National Circuit Finals provides competitors with a “progression through levels” path to achievement that has proven successful across numerous sports membership organizations that simultaneously *and successfully* serve members who span the range from local amateurs to finest-in-the-world professionals (e.g., the PRCA, the NRHA, the United States Tennis Association, the United States Golf Association).
- Counting regional Circuit Finals show and NCHA National Circuit Finals show earnings toward that year’s World Standings “jump starts” interested competitors’ path to the World Finals.

Finances:

- Each entry in a region’s qualifying shows pays an \$X regional fee.
- Accumulated regional fees are divided among the regions for production of each regional Circuit Finals show and, upon the choice of the region, regional Circuit Finals-qualifying shows – creating financial incentive for clubs and their cutters to be part of the NCHA.

Questions:

- Should the NCHA regions eventually be reorganized in order to match current actual competitive patterns?
- Will the system of regional Circuit Finals plus a NCHA National Circuit Finals show naturally replace the current Eastern and Western Nationals?
- How many qualifiers should come from each region to the NCHA National Circuit Finals show?
- With berths in the NCHA National Circuit Finals show at stake, should qualification for a region’s year-end regional Circuit Finals show depend on a competitor’s *accumulated earnings* in that region’s designated qualifying shows; should it depend on *placements* in that region’s designated qualifying shows (e.g., placing in the money in at least X shows); or, to build affiliate interest and participation, should qualification for a region’s year-end

regional circuit finals show depend on earnings or placements at the sub-region *affiliate* level (as in the NRHA)? Would it be feasible for different regions to answer these questions differently?

- Should the top X regional qualifiers for the NCHA National Circuit Finals show be determined by accumulated earnings (*including* earnings in the region’s regional circuit year-end finals show) in that region’s designated qualifier shows; or should a region’s qualifiers for the NCHA National Circuit Finals show consist of that region’s top X competitors as determined *solely* by performance (earnings or a blank-slate finals “shootout”) in the region’s year-end regional Circuit Finals show?
- What is the appropriate location for the NCHA National Circuit Finals show? Numerous options can be considered, ranging from tying into another major equestrian event, to establishment of a base in a city with appropriate facilities and desire to support the event, to rotation across multiple such cities through a bidding process.
- Since some competitors will be hauling across multiple regional circuits for the World Finals and to discourage “venue shopping” by haulers, should regional circuit competitors be required to declare a single regional circuit in which they are competing for a berth in the NCHA National Circuit Finals show? Or would it be sufficient to simply limit competitors to representing no more than one single region in the NCHA National Circuit Finals show?
- What is a reasonable level of \$X for the regional fee (see above) to be charged at all shows which count toward, and include, participation in a region’s year-end regional Circuit Finals show?
- How should the accumulated \$X regional fees be allocated (e.g., an equal amount to each region; proportional to each region’s generation of such fees; or a hybrid in which each region gets an equal amount from a portion of the nationally-accumulated fees, and the remaining portion of the nationally-accumulated fees is allocated according in proportion to each region’s generation of such fees)?

Strategic Planning Process:

- This initiative will require a more detailed analysis and input from NCHA stakeholders. It will require specific focus and leadership beginning with the Long Range Planning / Promotion and Development Committee. Once the appropriate committee work is done, a finalized plan will be submitted to the Competition Committee for review, further vetting, and final recommendation to the Executive Committee.

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The NCHA National Circuit Finals (“NCF”)

Examples of Alternative NCF Fee Allocations Across the Regions and the NCHA*

Fee Per Entry->	Case 1			Case 2		
	\$4.00	\$5.00	\$6.00	\$4.00	\$5.00	\$6.00
TOTAL FEES->	\$292,280	\$365,350	\$438,420	\$292,280	\$365,350	\$438,420
Region #1	\$42,528	\$53,159	\$63,791	\$41,329	\$51,661	\$61,994
Region #2	\$44,110	\$55,137	\$66,164	\$42,595	\$53,243	\$63,892
Region #3	\$30,486	\$38,107	\$45,728	\$31,695	\$39,619	\$47,543
Region #4	\$34,988	\$43,734	\$52,481	\$35,297	\$44,121	\$52,946
Region #5	\$31,946	\$39,932	\$47,918	\$32,863	\$41,079	\$49,295
Region #6	\$30,050	\$37,562	\$45,074	\$31,347	\$39,183	\$47,020
Region #7	\$38,390	\$47,987	\$57,584	\$38,019	\$47,523	\$57,028
Region #8	\$39,786	\$49,732	\$59,678	\$39,135	\$48,919	\$58,703
NCHA National	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Fee Per Entry->	Case 1			Case 4		
	\$4.00	\$5.00	\$6.00	\$4.00	\$5.00	\$6.00
TOTAL FEES->	\$292,280	\$365,350	\$438,420	\$292,280	\$365,350	\$438,420
Region #1	\$42,528	\$53,159	\$63,791	\$37,676	\$47,094	\$56,513
Region #2	\$44,110	\$55,137	\$66,164	\$38,941	\$48,676	\$58,412
Region #3	\$30,486	\$38,107	\$45,728	\$28,042	\$35,052	\$42,063
Region #4	\$34,988	\$43,734	\$52,481	\$31,644	\$39,554	\$47,465
Region #5	\$31,946	\$39,932	\$47,918	\$29,210	\$36,512	\$43,815
Region #6	\$30,050	\$37,562	\$45,074	\$27,693	\$34,616	\$41,540
Region #7	\$38,390	\$47,987	\$57,584	\$34,365	\$42,956	\$51,548
Region #8	\$39,786	\$49,732	\$59,678	\$35,482	\$44,352	\$53,223
NCHA National	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$29,228	\$36,535	\$43,842

Share of Total Fees Allocated Equally Across Regions	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3	Case 4	Case 5
	50%	60%	40%	50%	40%
Share of Total Fees Allocated Proportionately Across Regions	50%	40%	60%	40%	50%
Share of Total Fees Allocated to NCHA	0%	0%	0%	10%	10%

Fee Per Entry->	Case 5		
	\$4.00	\$5.00	\$6.00
TOTAL FEES->	\$292,280	\$365,350	\$438,420
Region #1	\$38,874	\$48,593	\$58,311
Region #2	\$40,456	\$50,570	\$60,684
Region #3	\$26,832	\$33,540	\$40,248
Region #4	\$31,334	\$39,168	\$47,001
Region #5	\$28,292	\$35,365	\$42,438
Region #6	\$26,396	\$32,995	\$39,594
Region #7	\$34,736	\$43,420	\$52,104
Region #8	\$36,132	\$45,165	\$54,198
NCHA National	\$29,228	\$36,535	\$43,842

Fee Per Entry->	Case 4		
	\$4.00	\$5.00	\$6.00
TOTAL FEES->	\$292,280	\$365,350	\$438,420
Region #1	\$37,676	\$47,094	\$56,513
Region #2	\$38,941	\$48,676	\$58,412
Region #3	\$28,042	\$35,052	\$42,063
Region #4	\$31,644	\$39,554	\$47,465
Region #5	\$29,210	\$36,512	\$43,815
Region #6	\$27,693	\$34,616	\$41,540
Region #7	\$34,365	\$42,956	\$51,548
Region #8	\$35,482	\$44,352	\$53,223
NCHA National	\$29,228	\$36,535	\$43,842

Fee Per Entry->	Case 3		
	\$4.00	\$5.00	\$6.00
TOTAL FEES->	\$292,280	\$365,350	\$438,420
Region #1	\$43,726	\$54,658	\$65,589
Region #2	\$45,624	\$57,031	\$68,437
Region #3	\$29,276	\$36,595	\$43,913
Region #4	\$34,678	\$43,348	\$52,017
Region #5	\$31,028	\$38,785	\$46,541
Region #6	\$28,752	\$35,941	\$43,129
Region #7	\$38,760	\$48,451	\$58,141
Region #8	\$40,436	\$50,545	\$60,653
NCHA National	\$0	\$0	\$0

* For illustration purposes only.

Assumptions and Methodology

- As a starting point, it is assumed that there are 8 regional circuits, corresponding to the current 8 NCHA regions:
 1. Alaska, Canada (West, Central), Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming
 2. Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada
 3. Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin
 4. Canada (East), Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, European Countries
 5. Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee
 6. Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas (East)
 7. Oklahoma, Texas (North)
 8. West Texas, South Texas, New Mexico
- Regional entries in National Circuit Finals (“NCF”) qualifying shows are assumed to equal the total NCHA entries in Weekend shows in 2018 (the 8-region total in 2018 was 73,070). This excludes LAE entries that would be expected in NCF qualifying shows, making the estimates of regional and total NCF fees conservative.
- The Cases present three alternative levels of the NCF fee per entry in regional qualifying shows: \$4, \$5, and \$6.
- The 5 Cases shown assume 5 alternative allocations of the total nationally collected NCF fees across the 8 NCHA regions and the NCHA itself.
- Total nationally collected NCF fees are assumed to be split into 3 “pots”:
 1. The first “pot” consists of a share (ranging from 40% to 60% in the Cases) of the total nationally collected NCF fees that would be allocated equally across the 8 NCHA regions. This gives each region an equal base revenue from which to promote its regional circuit shows and finals.
 2. The second “pot” consists of a share (ranging from 60% to 40% in the Cases) of the total nationally collected NCF fees that would be allocated across the 8 NCHA regions in proportion to each region’s total entries in NCF-qualifying regional shows. This recognizes the differences in region size.
 3. The third “pot” consists of a share (ranging from 0% to 10% in the Cases) of the total nationally collected NCF fees that would be allocated to NCHA “headquarters”, providing funding for management, the National Circuit Finals show, etc., if needed. In addition to its share of the total nationally collected NCF fees, the NCHA would also generate entry fee revenues through its sponsorship of the annual National Circuit Finals show.