# Team (Ranch) Sorting Rules as provided by the USTPA on the AQHA website:

1. The Object of Ranch Sorting: The basic concept of Ranch Sorting is that there are ten numbered cattle, 0-9, and two unnumbered cattle for a total of 12 head at the beginning of a run behind a foul line in an arena with two people mounted on the other side of the foul line.

2. Sorting Pens: Ranch Sorting will take place between two pens of approximately equal size with the Event Producer's option of working cattle back and forth or only one way. Two ranch sorting arenas may be placed side by side with teams alternating odd and even numbers.

3. Settling each herd. If cattle are to be worked back and forth then they need to be moved to the opposite pen and back before each new herd entering the arena is worked.

4. Readable numbers: All cattle must have USTPA approved back numbers; neck numbers are not acceptable.

5. Recommended Pen Sizes: Recommended sorting area to be 50-60' in diameter with no 90 degree corners, i.e. 60' round pen or octagonal "stop sign" design.

6. Gate Opening: The start foul line will be recommended as a 12' opening between the two pens.

7. Time Limits: There will be either a 90, 75, or 60 second clock for each class, at the option of the Event Producer.

8. Display Clock: The electronic display clock, set at 60 seconds, is a courtesy clock to the riders. The official clock will be the split timer. The official time of each run is determined by the amount of the time used until all ten cattle are sorted or the time limit has expired.

9. Judges: There will be two judges or one judge and one split timer on the judge stand. The same judge operating the split timer for sorting, must be the same judge the entire go-round (at minimum), if not the whole class.

10. Stopping Time: Time will continue until all cattle are sorted in the correct order or the time limit is reached, either of which becomes the official time for that team.

11. Split Time: The official clock for sorting is the Split Timer. A Split timer is to be used in all sorting classes to designate the placing of the class. Split times are cumulative in multiple go round events, as well as the number of cattle sorted. Teams that sort 10 head in one or more go rounds will place higher than teams with equal # of cattle and go rounds but who did not sort 10 head in any single go round.

12. Bunching Cattle: All cattle will be bunched on the cattle side of the gate within the designated area before the time begins. Judges will designate the need to bunch cattle.

13. Starting the Run: The judge will raise the flag to signal when the arena is ready. The flag will drop when the nose of the first horse crosses the start/foul line and the announcer will provide the number to be sorted first. The riders will be given their number instantly. Any delay in crossing the foul line may result in a "no-time" for the team. The next team has 30 seconds to enter the area and cross the time line after the previous team sorts, and after the announcer calls the team to ride. Any delay will be judged a no-time unless waived for good cause. No team member may enter the arena after the time has started. This applies in this instance only.

14. Order of Sorting: The cows are sorted in order; if any part of a numbered cow crosses the start/foul line prior to its correct order, then the team receives a no time. If any part of a sorted cow re-crosses the start/foul line the team will be disqualified. If any part of any numbered cow crosses the foul line before the tenth cow is cleanly sorted, it will result in a no-time.

15. Random Start Number: The order of sorting is determined by the picking of a random number by the Announcer/Timer and then that cow must be sorted fi rst; for instance if 5, is drawn as the first number, then the 6 cow must be sorted, 7, 8, 9, 0, 1 and so on.

16. Cow Considered Sorted: A cow is considered sorted when the entire cow is completely across the start/foul line.

17. Cow Leaving the arena: If there is a malfunction of the sorting pen, or a numbered cow jumps any fence and either leaves the arena, or ends up in the opposite pen, but did not pass through the gate, it will result in a re-ride for that team at the end of the herd, (assuming either instance was not caused by roughing of the cattle). In the instance of a re-ride, exhibitors will receive a full (90, 75 or 60 second) clock but the exhibitor's time can notbe improved. However, the number of cattle sorted during the allotted time can be improved. [Example: If a team has sorted 5 head in 55 seconds (with a 60 second clock) when the cow jumped the fence, they would get a re-ride with the full 60 second clock. In the re-ride, the same team sorted 10 head in 50 seconds. Their offi cial time would be 10 head in 55 seconds.

18. Entry Limit Per Class: A rider can ride up to three times per class and must change at least one rider on each team.

19. Minimum/Maximum number of go-rounds:
If 50 or less teams: 100% to first go, 50% to second go, Top 10 to finals. If 51-100 teams: 100% to first go, 40% to second go, Top 10 to finals.
If over 100 teams: 100% to first go, 30% to second go, Top 10 to finals.
All finals at any USTPA sanctioned sorting will have their running order determined by draw, either by mechanical draw or by manual draw. The Event Producer must advertise the number of go-rounds in advance.

20. Must Sort Clean to Advance: Teams must sort cleanly to advance to the next go-round. Promoter has the option of implementing progressive time when the number of teams meets the requirements to advance to the next go-round. A cutoff time plus number of cattle sorted can be used, being the highest time and lowest number of cattle available to progress to the next round.

21. Calculating Placing by Clean Sorts: Teams sorting in three goes, place higher than teams sorting in two goes; teams sorting in two goes place higher than teams sorting in one go, no matter how many cattle were sorted or time accrued.

22. Ample Herds for Open Class: The promoter must have enough cattle that no herd is re-sorted during the first go of the Open Sorting Class.

23. Re-ride Situations: Should a herd be misnumbered or have too many or too few non-numbered cattle, only the team that is in the arena at the time the problem is identified will receive a re-ride. All re-rides will be clean slate in the sorting.

24. Following USTPA General Guidelines: For general guidelines on Ranch Sorting, follow USTPA's rules on all other issues not covered specifically in this section.