



**PASO FINO HORSE  
ASSOCIATION**

# FROM THE CENTER OF THE RING

MARCH 21, 2013

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<b>GAIT! GAIT! GAIT!</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>CLINIC HISTORY</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>FROM CAMEL WALK TO PURE WALK</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>CONTINUING EDUCATION</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>PUBLIC SPEAKING</b>	<b>12</b>

The Education and Clinic Committee, along with the Judges and Stewards Committee, in an effort to enhance our awareness of horses, general knowledge of our wonderful breed, and horses in general, including everything related to judging and stewarding, present this newsletter for your consideration. We cordially invite all PFHA Officials to submit and share your opinions, comments, articles, and any information that may benefit our Association. This, in our opinion, is the forum to enhance our general knowledge, by sharing information.

**FROM DR. JOSE M. LARACUENTE  
CHAIR, PFHA EDUCATION AND CLINIC COMMITTEE**



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**Members:**

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Ms. Andrea Lord

Ms. Carmen Micheletti

Mr. Fred Moretti

Mr. Robert D. Yunits

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Ms. Sharon Londono

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Dr. Jose M. Laracuent

Ms. Carmen Micheletti

Mr. Fred Moretti

Ms. Lauri Pistoris

Mr. Donald Schanche

Mr. Jorge Suarez

Mr. Alex Zapata



## **GAIT! GAIT! GAIT! BY MS. LYNN GALLUP, PFHA SC JUDGE AND USEF/PFHA STEWARD**



Forty-eight PFHA Judges and eight PFHA Stewards, from Colombia, Puerto Rico and the USA, converged upon the Paso Fino horse mecca region of Ocala, Florida on February 1st through 3rd for the 2013 PFHA Judges and Stewards Clinic. Two applicant judges, two apprentice judges, and seven observers also attended. In total, there were sixty-seven participants ready to hear, view and talk about their favorite horse – the Paso Fino, judging and the PFHA show ring.

This group was quite the impressive assembly of Paso Fino people/talents. Besides being judges and stewards, dual roles included that of trainers, veterinarians, teachers, lawyers, dentists, accountants and more. Why make this correlation? People will bring their knowledge of their profession and relate their experiences as it applies to the art and process of judging horses. That being said, this year's clinic theme that participants will remember most is: "Gait! Gait! Gait!" or more directly to the point: "Gait or Gate?!"... yes, there were lively discussions about gait, and areas for improvement. The sharing of ideas and thoughts about this very important topic could go on much longer as most attendees would agree.

Gait is what the Paso Fino is all about. The priority of proper execution of the Paso Fino gait should always be first and foremost in the show ring environment. To continue with "Gait," judges intently viewed (and listened to going across the sounding board) video clips from the 2012 PFHA show season of Classic Fino, Performance, Pleasure and Versatility classes. The videos showed gaits in normal speed and then in slow motion. Horses were shown that were not gaiting consistently. It was stressed that the video clips of horses "gaiting or not" were just that - capturing "moments in time," and were edited for educational purposes.

Questions on gait and procedure: Do you judge the best horse or the best performance? Is the horse disqualified or excused? Remember with "disqualification," the horse is not allowed go back into the championship class. Will the judge allow the horse who doesn't gait consistently a chance to come back into the championship class and possibly place well? Does the judge allow the horse to make it to the line-up or does the judge excuse it prior to the end of the class, thus not completing the class and not able to return to the championship? If the horse doesn't come back into the championship, the show loses desired revenue. BUT, what is best for the breed? As one judge proclaimed, "You

## GAIT! GAIT! GAIT!(CONT'D)

are losing the breed when you lose the gait!”

Where does a horse with perceived “brilliance and quality” score in the show ring if it is not always in a perfect four-beat even gait? Does this horse place over one who is consistent 100% in the four-beat even gait, but not quite the brilliant, eye-catching horse? Is there a specified percentage (80%, 95%) allowed for the horse to be out of gait before a penalty is applied by the judge?

How can a judge distinguish a horse in gait in the show ring? Look at the croup for movement. Look closely at the footfall of the horse from different viewpoints. The judge can utilize individual workouts of certain horses for designated placements. Important to the judge is to examine the PFHA rules criteria and the percentages applied to gait for each class, and apply that knowledge for deciding the placements.

Proposed for thought and discussion: If the horse is not gaiting 80% of the time in the class, the horse lacks the required class gait criteria, and should be penalized!

PFHA members desire consistency in the judging process, and this can be done if all the judges apply their knowledge of gait and the same standards written in the current PFHA rulebook.

For the direction of the Paso Fino breed, it is of utmost importance to come together to share thoughts, ideas, and provide input through the PFHA Judges and Stewards and Education Committees, and also through the PFHA rule change proposal process. “Without input, there is no output,” stated Mr. Bobby Yunits. All judges and stewards attending received PFHA rule change proposal forms; they were urged to participate in the rule change process in regard to the PFHA show divisions and classes and to propose changes where relevant.

Stressed to the judges was the importance to judge the Paso Fino gait by the current PFHA rules! Rail work is priority #1 when it comes down to judging “gait” in the show ring, as designated per the PFHA rulebook.

How does the importance of properly executed Paso Fino gaits today in the show ring affect the future of the breed? Judges have a large influence over the direction of the breed by their class placements. If a horse wins that does NOT gait correctly, and that horse is promoted and heavily used for breeding, that poor gait quality is passed on to future generations. How does that affect the average Paso Fino owner? The Amateur Owner Pleasure division is the division most affected when you look to the future of the Paso Fino breed. Why A/O Pleasure? Wouldn't Fino or Performance be more important? The future rests with Amateur Owners, and to the type of horse that is sold to them that they want to enjoy riding. The Ama-



“You are losing the breed when you lose the gait!”



## GAIT! GAIT! GAIT!(CONT'D)

teur Owners trust that the horse they buy or breed to from that show champion will gait correctly. They will have the dream of “the smoothest ride” and want to compete with their horses. Will they understand when they get excused or disqualified in their class due to not being in the required gait? How long would they stay competing if disillusioned about the Paso Fino breed and its natural gait? “Gait or Gate, right?” The Pleasure Amateur Owner classes are the largest classes across the USA, thus supporting the success of many shows. Amateur Owner Pleasure classes are often the largest classes at the Grand National Show, often with over 50 entries per class.



Beyond the hot topic of “gait” at the clinic and to ring protocol ...

Mr. Richard Petty, USEF Judge, discussed the topic of “perception is everything,” along the lines of responsibility and accountability of licensed officials. People not only watch the horses in the show ring, but the judge as well. The judge needs to be accountable for his or her actions. How does the judge present him/herself inside the ring? Does the judge view the horses coming, going away and from the side; or does he/she stand in one spot with limited view. How does the judge use the ring master/steward and how much conversation is seen as too much and influential? How long does a judge work a class? Is it too long for the size and quality of the horses in it? Will the show run on schedule because of it? How much note taking does the judge do? Taking minimal notes allows more time to watch the horses and not miss anything.

Judges have the responsibility to recognize lameness issues in the class. Protect the horse from being worked continuously if it is lame. Be able to take appropriate action, whether calling the horse to center ring, excusing the horse, or contacting the vet if on the grounds.

Too often, exhibitors and spectators are quick to place blame when they believe things didn't go right with a class. With the ease and speed of social media use today, rumors can be spread quickly and can be damaging, even if that isn't the intent. Be responsible and accountable for your actions as someone is always watching, in and outside of the show ring. You should limit who you have contact or converse with, including cell phone use, especially in center ring. Yes, perception is everything ... especially at a horse show!

There were also other important topics presented:

- Ms. Lori Nelson, USEF Breed Rep, explained when to/who can file “protests,” “charges” and giving “warning cards” at a show; reporting abuse and collecting evidence at the show to support the protest or charge to be filed; and amateur violations. All licensed officials should keep their USEF membership contact information current and cor-



## GAIT! GAIT! GAIT!(CONT'D)

rect, so show managers can get ahold of them for potential show jobs. Changes can be made online at [www.usef.org](http://www.usef.org).

- Dr. Miguel Pastrana: Bellas Formas
- Ms. Cecil Hetzel Dunn and Mr. Richard Petty: What Makes A Good Judge
- Dr. Alberto Rullan: Lameness
- Mr. Oneal Garcia: Legal and Illegal Shoes
- Mr. Jose Colon: Correct Use of the Microphone
- Ms. Beth Uelsmann: Youth Equitation.

At Mr. Mario Heinen's Paso Fino farm on Sunday, live demonstrations and mini-group focus sessions included judging Paso Fino and Trote and Galope horses and talk about the breed's future in the show ring:

- Identifying Gaits: PFHA Panel

Ms. Lauri Pistolis summed up the live practical: Talks lead to some agreements and some disagreements on how to handle situations at a small show versus a large show, which in turn lead to some really good ideas for solutions to that issue. The possibility of having smaller shows considered "B" and larger shows considered "A", and working the rules around that. Also, I heard some say we need to increase points requirement for qualifying for Nationals and that we should get rid of the points system all together and just put a requirement on number of shows you place or show.

- Measuring the Height of a Horse: Ms. Cecil Hetzel Dunn and Fred Moretti
- Determining the Age of a Horse by its Teeth: Dr. Miguel Pastrana, Mr. Jose Perez-Novo, Mr. Joselin Suarez.

The PFHA clinic steward attendees gathered together to discuss "steward" topics. Ms. Cecil Hetzel Dunn related the perception of stewards' roles and functioning in duties at shows. Stewards are encouraged to talk to exhibitors about what they liked at a show and what they didn't like, and this can be included in their steward show reports. Stewards serve the welfare and best interest of the horse foremost, and then the management and exhibitor ... look at it as a "triangle:"

*The steward is at the top of the triangle; the horse is at the base of the triangle; and the show management and exhibitor are each on a side.*

Stewards supervise the class diagrams to be posted and the set-up of obstacles in the



## GAIT! GAIT! GAIT!(CONT'D)

ring. They also check to see the solidity and safety of the Paso Fino sounding board before the start of a show, and that the barns have the correct number of available 'sharps' containers for used needles and syringes. Paso Fino stewards will continue with random bit checks in the 2013 show season.

How does a judge work with a steward? If a horse is bleeding in the ring (from abuse or illegal tack), it needs to be documented with a camera and eyewitness reports. If there is illegal tack in use within a class, the judge can notify the steward to document it with a photo. Show management, judges and the steward can work together if the need arises to combine classes (especially smaller, same division classes) to meet the show schedule timeline, but exhibitors should be contacted to be sure there are no conflicts. The show management should have prior notice published about the possibility of combining classes.

What is the number one complaint about a show that USEF receives? It is footing issues! The footing needs to be the right type for that type of horse show and discipline; this is the arena's responsibility. USEF Footing Evaluation forms are available from the show office or the steward, can be completed by exhibitors and returned to USEF or given to the show steward to return.

Ms. Lauri Pistolis commented about the clinic overall: "I came away feeling as though I am part of a family that feels very passionate about preserving and protecting the most beautiful breed on earth, the Paso Fino horse. Each of us is responsible for doing this, from the local all-breed shows, to our own PFHA/USEF show, to trail riding. We set the tone around us (positive or negative), we promote our breed individually and collectively, we set the rules and procedures, we decide who judges and stewards our shows, we manage our farms and horses for others to see, and therefore, we (all of us) are deciding and guiding this association, and it's up to each individual how much or how little you want to do."

Lastly, to acknowledge a few folks: a well-deserved "Thank You" goes to everyone who volunteered, organized and made presentations for this outstanding educational Paso Fino Judges and Stewards clinic: Dr. Jose Laracuente, 2012-2013 Education and Clinic Committee Chair; Mr. Robert Yunits, 2012-2013 Judges and Stewards Committee Chair, and Carmen Micheletti who brought the clinic all together. Congratulations go to new PFHA Certified Judges Jose Colon and Elizabeth Uelsmann, who completed their PFHA Judge certification at the clinic. Keep the "Gait! Gait! Gait!" hotline open for more continuing talks on the subject.



## PASO FINO HORSE ASSOCIATION, INC. JUDGES AND STEWARDS - CLINIC HISTORY

### JUDGES (72)

Name		Last Year Attended	Year Required	State
Fernando Baragaño	C	2013	2015	FL
Dr. Jorge Barquet	C	2012	2014	FL
Rex Bradley	SC	2012	2015	MO
Nicholas Burgos	C	2013	2015	PA
Karen Cabic	SC	2009	2013 (*)	NY
Dr. Carmen Cepero	SC	2012	2015	FL
Kay E. Chiappetta	SC	2011	2014	KY
Dr. Rolando Colón-Nebot	SC	2012	2015	PR
José M. Colón	C	2013	2015	DE
Dr. Rafael Corretjer	C	2013	2015	PR
Kelley Cox	C	2013	2015	FL
Mike Cumming	C	2012	2014	KS
Keith Dane	SC	2010	2014 (*)	MD
Kathryn Eamheart	C	2009	2013 (*)	NC
Dr. Margaret Fahringer	SC	2012	2015	FL
Derek Fernández	C	2013	2015	FL
José Eduardo Figueroa	SC	2013	2016	SC
Ramón Figueroa	C	2010	2013 (*)	FL
Daniel Figueroa	SC	2013	2016	FL
Rufino Figueroa	SC	2013	2016	GA
Helen Frost	SC	2013	2016	MN
Lynn E. Gallup	SC	2010	2013 (#)	NC
Phyllis Gaudreau	SC	2010	2013 (*)	FL
Diego Gonzalez	C	2012	2014	PR
Jill M. Graff	C	2013	2015	NC
Cindy T. Griffeth	SC	2012	2015	GA
Charlsie Surface Haynor	C	2013	2015	MN
Germán Higuera	C	2013	2015	NC
Jesica Humi	C	2013	2015	MO
Guillermo J. Iglesias	C	2013	2015	FL
Alvaro Iriarte	SC	2009	2013 (*)	NC
Elizabeth Kleiber	SC	2013	2016	TX
Luis Laguna Mimoso	C	2013	2015	PR



**JUDGES (CONT'D)**

Shaw Laney	C	2012	2014	SC
Dr. José M. Laracuenta	SC	2013	2016	GA
Sharon Londoño	SC	2011	2014	LA
Betsy McHugh	SC	2013	2016	UT
Rick Meyer	SC	2011	2014	MO
Carmen Micheletti	SC	2013	2016	FL
Charles Minter, Jr.	SC	2011	2014	SC
Nicanor Miranda	SC	2013	2016	FL
Rogelio Moreno	C	2011	2013 (*)	COL
John Ocasio	C	2012	2014	FL
Angerla Ochoa	SC	2013	2016	COL
José Ochoa	C	2013	2015	FL
Aleidita Ortiz	C	2013	2015	FL
Alice Page	SC	2012	2015	TN
Dr. Miguel A. Pastrana	SC	2013	2016	PR
Ellen Perez	SC	2013	2016	TX
José Perez-Novo	C	2013	2015	PR
Benjamin Phillips	C	2012	2014	FL
Lauri Pistolis	C	2013	2015	SC
Debbie Rash	C	2013	2015	CA
Robin D. Ratliff	SC	2013	2016	FL
Magda I. Reid	C	2013	2015	NC
Willman Rodríguez	SC	2012	2015	PR
Ernesto Sanz	SC	2013	2016	FL
Donald Schanche	SC	2012	2015	FL
Richard L. Shaffer	C	2013	2015	PA
Ed. N. Smith III	C	2012	2014	TX
Javier Suarez	C	2012	2014	FL
Jorge Suarez	C	2011	2013 (*)	FL
José Suarez	C	2013	2015	PR
Carlos Tobón	SC	2011	2014	FL
Dr. Jorge Torres	C	2013	2015	COL
Elizabeth Uelsmann	C	2013	2015	MO
Angelo Usategui	SC	2013	2016	FL
Dr. Martin E. Vélez	C	2013	2015	COL
Debbie Wolkowicz	C	2012	2014	SC
Robbyn Young	SC	2012	2015	SC
Robert Yunits	SC	2013	2016	MA
Alex Zapata	C	2013	2015	FL



**JUDGES AND STEWARDS - CLINIC HISTORY (CONT'D)**

**STEWARDS (17)**

<u>Name</u>		<u>Last Year Attended</u>	<u>Year Required</u>	<u>State</u>
Patti Blichmann	SS	2012	2015	MO
Charles Brooker	S	2011	2013 (*)	CA
Roger C. Cabic	SS	2009	2013 (*)	NY
Dr. Charles "Bob" Campbell	SS	2009	2013 (*)	FL
Steve Chandler	S	2013	2015	FL
Paulette DeNault-Bryce	S	2013	2015	SC
Lynn E. Gallup	S	2013	2015	NC
Phyllis Gaudreau	S	2012	2014	FL
Dr. José M. Laracuenta	SS	2012	2015	GA
Richard Lockhart	SS	2013	2016	KY
Andrea Lord	S	2013	2015	VA
Robert A. Martin	S	2012	2014	OR
Adele Maurer	S	2013	2015	CA
Fred Moretti	SS	2013	2016	NC
Susan Niebling	SS	2011	2014	MO
Lynne Ridgeway	SS	2013	2016	GA
Phyllis Ryan	S	2012	2014	CA

(\*) Missed the 2013 mandatory clinic

(#) Attended 2013 clinic as a Steward. Needs to attend 2014 clinic as a judge.



## FROM CAMEL WALK TO A PURE WALK

BY ELIZABETH GRAVES, REPRINTED FROM THE JANUARY 2013 SOUND ADVOCATE PUBLISHED BY FOSH, PERMISSION GRANTED BY MS. GRAVES & FOSH

Those who have ridden a gaited horse executing what is often termed the “dreaded Camel Walk” usually are in no hurry to repeat the experience. The Camel Walk can be found in all the gaited breeds but is more common in the Tennessee Walking Horse.

Defining the Camel Walk. The Camel walk is when a horse will walk laterally; in which the legs on one side move together or closely together in the pickup phase (Aerial phase) and then laterally downward to the set down phase. A horse will then switch and repeat this to the opposite lateral legs and hooves. Both legs on one side may set down together in timing such as in a pace or in an order where the hind will set down just slightly before the front, similar to a stepping pace.

This is not a gait compared to 1) a flat walk or a regular walk when the hooves will be working in a flat hoof transfer; 2) a running walk or fox trot when the hooves work in a rolling hoof transfer; nor 3) the racking family of gaits when the hooves work in a leaping hoof transfer. The camel walk is possible in a low headed shape of the horse’s body and also in an upright body carriage.

Cause and Effects of the Camel Walk. There are many factors which may be the cause of a horse executing this kind of movement. What a horse inherits genetically would be the first element. We know that gaited horses inherit in their nervous system that ability to move in a different manner than their non-gaited counterparts. We commonly refer to this ability in biomechanics and locomotion as to “how a gaited horse is wired”. This unique wiring is how the nerves fire the muscles to move the skeletal structure.

In addition to this special wiring, the horse (gaited and non-gaited) also inherits variable muscle masses being from a flat type to a rounder, bulkier type of muscle mass. This inherited type of muscle mass dictates variables in strength to support a horse’s skeletal structure and how it can use it and move its structure. Lastly, the gaited horse will inherit a skeletal structure which will influence what gaits a horse may or may not be able to execute.

Typically, the Camel Walk can be experienced in an individual strongly wired and structured toward lateral movements. The Camel Walk is a very correctable movement. When the Camel Walk is possible due to added structural influences, then it can recur when an individual loses conditioning from lack of proper work. But with proper training, conditioning and time, it is still correctable.

In some cases, a Camel Walk may occur simply through a developing physical discomfort made possible through many factors, such as improper equitation, ill-fitting equipment, a structural misalignment in the body or an unsoundness developing in a horse, where none was present before. In cases of a possible permanent unsoundness, the Camel Walk may not be correctable.

The most typical causes in the development of the Camel Walk though are due to improper training; when the horse’s body has not been educated, shaped, and supported properly. The Camel Walk is a movement that has the possibility of creating stress to a horse’s physical health over time due to the lateral nature of the movement in that the top line is not working in a healthy manner. Consequently, the hindquarters will not be moving in an engaged manner. Even in those individuals with a lower headed Camel Walk, they are strung out with the base of the neck not lifting upward correctly to bring the horse off the forehand. They need help in raising the entire top line and engaging the hindquarters in a healthy weight bearing posture. A horse’s weight in the Camel Walk will shift from side to side transferring an incorrect weight burden to shoulders and hips. This in turn, stresses joints and soft tissues from the top downward through the legs and hooves.

Correcting the Camel Walk to the Pure Walk. When working to correct the Camel Walk, first ensure there are no physical discomforts or misalignments to a horse’s body before proceeding. A good ground work program can be a great place to begin to open the body up and teach the horse to lift the top line correctly, longitudinally. This also entails work using lateral flexion exercises before asking it to do so with the added weight of a rider.

When riding, using a slick seated saddle and a non-grip breech or pant is recommended so it is more comfortable

## FROM CAMEL WALK TO A PURE WALK (CONT'D)

for the rider to work with the horse until a pure walk is achieved. The goal is to first shorten the stride and slow the horse down when astride which will help achieve this purpose in the early stages of correction.

Gaited horses, as with any other type of horse, should be able to have variable speeds at the walk; different speeds of walk can also be taught in ground work. Shoulders-in and shoulders-out, executed properly, are good exercises to teach a horse lateral flexion of the body while helping to bring the hind quarters working more under the horse. Adding the half halt to the training regimen will also work toward building proper movement and strengthening the hind quarters; getting the horse more under itself and lifting through the loin area, while gathering itself from back to front. Working serpentine patterns while maintaining straightness will also have benefits in developing purity at the walk.

In time as the horse walks correctly in the slower walk speed and maintains it, it will then be time to slowly ask for more extension at the walk. The horse should still carry itself in the good weight bearing posture which it achieved while working at the slower walk previously developed. This can take a considerable amount of time to correct in some horses as reworking muscle memory almost always takes some time to change when correcting. Patience, in addition to taking good care of the horse's emotional wellbeing, will also add to better results. Having an opportunity to correct a horse with the Camel Walk is a great experience in advancing one's own skills as a teacher and rider of gaited horses.

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## PFHA CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Education Committee in conjunction with the Judges and Stewards Committee shall develop, implement, and enforce a continuing education program for Licensed Officials. All Licensed Officials are required to comply to maintain their license.

- A Senior Certified Judge or Steward is required to attend a clinic at least once every three (3) years. A Certified Judge or Steward is required to attend a clinic at least once every two (2) years. Some Officials attend the clinics every year. It is recommended that the year the Official attends a clinic, he/she be exempt from the requirement of continuing education for that year.
- The material for continuing education for the year as prepared, will be sent to the Official in need of continuing education via e-mail, regular mail or personally and the Official be given a dateline for returning the material to the Chair of either Committee for grading.
- If the Official does not obtain an acceptable grade (85% or better) their licenses will be placed inactive until the Official passes any corrective measure imposed by the Committees.
- No continuing education will be presented in conjunction with a Judges and Stewards clinic.
- Continuing education may be presented via teleconference.
- Attendance at clinics held by other horse organizations (general knowledge) could be accepted at the discretion of the Committees for continuing education credit.
- A fee will be charged for continuing education.
- Copies of the graded test may be forwarded at the official's request after all participants have completed the exam and exams have been graded, or the deadline, whichever is sooner.

## **PUBLIC SPEAKING – JUDGE’S USE OF THE MICROPHONE**

### **BY: JOSÉ M. COLÓN RODRÍGUEZ, PFHA AND INTERNATIONAL PASO JUDGE**

-Article is included as part of Mr. Colon’s requirements to become a PFHA certified judge.

Public speaking is defined as the art of speaking to a group of people to inform, influence, or entertain the listeners; speaking to a group of people in a structured, deliberate manner intended to inform, influence, or entertain the listeners. The purpose of public speaking can range from simply transmitting information, to motivating people to act, to simply telling a story.

If you’re involved in the Paso Fino breed, whether as a judge, trainer, owner or just attending a clinic, you may often get involved in public speaking. For those of us who are involved in judging, the use of the microphone becomes a skill that we will need to develop and get comfortable with. In this regard, our PFHA constitution and rule book says:

“Each Judge, before the commencement of the show, will be informed by the Show Committee of the Regional Group sponsoring the show whether he or she will be allowed to use the microphone or natural voice to discuss the classes, explain his or her decisions or make general comments of any kind. If comments are allowed, they must be positive in nature. Nothing derogatory may be said about any horse.”

Based on this rule, PFHA judges may be contractually required to use the microphone to discuss classes and/or explain decisions during the show. If you are an International Paso Judge or would like to become one, it is a requirement of CONFEPASO to explain the decisions at a show. Don’t be afraid!!!! You are not alone... It is a known fact that most of us have some kind of fright when asked to speak to an audience. The fear of public speaking (stage fright) is believed to be the single most common phobia. It may affect as much as 75% of the population. However, with practice and a few good tips we can master that fear and get more comfortable when communicating with the audience.

A big part of what you communicate is expressed through your gestures, posture and body language. Albert Mehrabian, Professor Emeritus of Psychology at UCLA, performed various studies and his findings became known as the 7-38-55 rule. This rule suggests that 7% of what you try to communicate when delivering a message is transmitted through words, 38% through the tone of your voice and 55% is transmitted through your body language. Based on these studies, we can conclude that the message you transmit has to do a lot with how you convey the message, not the words you use. This becomes particularly important when communicating a decision over the microphone at a show where the audience is diverse.



### **Basic Elements of Communication**

There are five basic elements involved in the communication process. It is important to understand these elements as you deliver a speech or communicate to a group of people.

#### **1. The Speaker**

As the speaker you must understand your audience. Who is part of your audience? Are they fellow judges or just spectators? How much knowledge do they have about the subject matter? Are they new to the

## PUBLIC SPEAKING – JUDGE’S USE OF THE MICROPHONE (CONT’D)

breed? Understanding your audience will help you build a message that is relevant. At a show you have a diverse group of people listening to you. You need to adjust your vocabulary, tone of voice and body language to gain the credibility of the audience.

- Display confidence. The audience needs to perceive it!
- Your body language is part of your message.
- Be calm and always maintain your composure.
- Don’t talk fast. You don’t want to show that you are nervous and want to get done quickly.

### 2. The Message

In order to communicate effectively you must know the message that you are trying to deliver. Are you explaining a decision or educating your audience? Knowing what your objectives are when delivering a message will help you organize your ideas. Often you have little time to construct your message, especially if you are explaining a decision to the audience at a show. This is not easy, but having a plan and structure will help you.

- Know the concepts and vocabulary
  - Adjust the vocabulary you use based on the audience
- Organize your ideas by including:
  - An Introduction
  - A Body (Main Message)
  - A Conclusion
- You must capture the attention of the audience when delivering your message:
  - Use examples.
  - Refer to situations during the class that the audience can relate to. (Work on the rail, work offs, etc.)

### 3. The Medium/ Channels of Communication

This is how the message is delivered and what you use to deliver the message. We could categorize the Channels as Non-Verbal, Visual and Verbal. During Public Speaking you use a combination of these methods. Non-Verbal communication includes your facial expressions and body language. Verbal Communication includes your tone of voice, pitch, voice modulation and the words you use. Visual channels include pictures, diagrams, charts, etc. You may ask: During an explanation of a decision at a show there are no visual aids to present? However, at a horse show you have the best visual available to explain your decision: The horses themselves! Use this to your advantage when explaining your decision.

### 4. The Audience

When delivering a speech and/ or communicating in public, you should analyze your listeners to decide how to present your ideas. At a horse show, the audience could include a combination of owners, breeders, the Association’s



“The impact of the message is reduced, and the audience is less likely to accept the speaker and the speaker’s ideas if the speech is poorly organized.”

Lenny Laskowski

7 Aspect of a Dynamic Presentation

## PUBLIC SPEAKING – JUDGE’S USE OF THE MICROPHONE (CONT’D)

leadership, other judges, interested individuals, members and, people with various educational and cultural backgrounds, gender and age groups. Find common ground when communicating to a diverse audience. You must use vocabulary, expressions and ideas that the majority of your audience understands. We can refer to this as the “common denominator.”

### 5. The Setting

The place in which you deliver your speech will have an effect on your presentation. It may enhance or interfere with the effectiveness of your presentation. At a show, the noise surrounding you and the audience may affect the overall delivery of the message. You need to understand the setting and make the adjustments necessary to successfully deliver your message.

- Stand in a strategic place so that your audience can see you.
- Are there monitors that project your image?
- Get familiar with the equipment utilized to project your voice (microphone, speakers, etc.)



### A Roadmap

- Getting comfortable with Public Speaking is often related to preparing and practicing. As in many aspects of life, having a baseline or guideline can help ease into it and reduce the “unknown” factor. Below is a guideline that may help prepare for those shows that require an explanation of the classes over the microphone.

## ROADMAP TO SUCCESSFULLY COMMUNICATING OVER THE MICROPHONE

### 1. Before the Show

- Prepare.
- Review rules.
- Develop and review the list of terms/ vocabulary.
- Review Show Videos.
- Practice your explanation of the class.
- Review videos of other judges explaining decisions.
- Protect your voice. Its going to be your best tool. (Halls cough drops are great)
- Practice, Practice, Practice.....
- Have a good night sleep

### 2. The Day of the Show

- Confidence. You have prepared and you are ready!
- Relax.....
- What do you need?
  - Notebook
  - Pen
  - Rulebook(s)
- Arrive to the show arena early.
- Assess your environment.
- Review the program.
- Make sure you stay hydrated (water).
- Don't forget you Halls.

### 3. During the Show

- Pay attention to the details and the performance of the horses/ entry throughout the complete procedure and work offs
- Group the entries that are similar and the placements that they were considered for.
- Note the key differences between entries.
- Watch the class as you would watch a movie or concert that you really like and will tell your friends about.
- After the class is over, and your placements have been submitted, talk to your fellow judges to see what they saw.
- If it is your turn to explain, stay confident. Tell the story as you would tell it to people you know.



After the show, reflect on what you did and said. It will help you for the next one.

## PUBLIC SPEAKING – JUDGE’S USE OF THE MICROPHONE (CONT’D)

### Building your explanation of the class and decision

#### 1. After the class is over

- Discuss the class with the other judges, what you saw and your placements.
- Ask your fellow judges what they saw. They may have noticed details that will help you in your explanation.

#### 2. Break the Ice.....If it’s the first explanation of the show:

- Introduce yourself and your fellow judges.
- Greet the audience, the show organizers and the participants.

#### 3. Introduce the Class

- Start by announcing to the audience the Class that you are explaining. It will put the audience on the same page as you. You may mention the parameters of the class.
- Thank the entries in the class for their participation.
- Mention how many entries started the class and how many remained for consideration. It will show that you have been paying attention to the details and know what happened in the class. Write this down on your notes so you have the information when the time comes.

#### 4. Your main message

- Your objective is to tell the audience why the entries were placed in the order they were placed. This is the reasoning behind the decision.
- Start from the bottom placements and move up.
- Ask exhibitors to move entries that you considered for those placements together. If you consider an entry alone for a particular placement, have that entry move alone. It will help you create a visual comparison, for you and the audience, of the entry(s) that you will be talking about.
- Talk about the positive traits that you saw during the class and the reasons they were considered for placement.
- Explain the differences between those two entries and tell the audience the factors/ reasons for one entry being placed above the other.
- If there was a particular moment during the procedure and/ or work off that established the difference between one entry and the other, refer to it.
- Clearly mention the entry and what placement you are giving to that entry. No one should have a doubt about the placement of each entry.
- Remember use your tone of voice and body language to make it dynamic and emphasize on key points.



## PUBLIC SPEAKING – JUDGE’S USE OF THE MICROPHONE (CONT’D)

### 5. After you are done with the explanation, thank the audience for their attention.

We have provided a systematic approach to explaining decisions over the microphone. Using this roadmap or developing your own will help you get comfortable with public speaking. Whether at a show, a clinic or a seminar with fellow judges, being able to communicate effectively about the breed provides an opportunity to inform those already involved in the breed but, most importantly educate those new to the breed or exploring getting into it. Remember, your decisions as a judge can influence the future of our Paso Fino breed.



*José M. Colón Rodríguez is an International Judge certified by CONFEPASO and a recently certified PFHA Judge. He has been involved with Paso Fino horses since he was 5 years old when his grandfather gave him his first Paso Fino, Cofre. Jose was a Judge at the 2012 Youth Equitation Mundial celebrated in Miami, FL and the Official Judge Translator at the 2011 CONFEPASO Mundial in San Juan, PR. He has been a Judge in shows that include the Pre-Spectrum 2012, Ponce International in 2011 and 2013, InterPaso Aruba in 2012 and other shows in the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico. Jose is a member of the “Federación Técnica de Jueces Certificados de Paso Fino de Puerto Rico”, an organization that certifies judges.*

## THE SPORTMAN’S CHARTER UNITED STATES EQUESTRIAN FEDERATION

That sport is something done for the fun of doing it and that it ceases to be sport when it becomes a business only, something done for what there is in it;

That amateurism is something of the heart and spirit - not a matter of exact technical qualifications;

That good manners of sport are fundamentally important;

That the code must be strictly upheld;

That the whole structure of sport is not only preserved from the absurdity of undue importance, but is justified by a kind of romance which animates it, and by the positive virtues of courage, patience, good temper, and unselfishness which are demanded by the code;

That the exploitation of sport for profit alone kills the spirit and retains only the husk and semblance of the thing;

That the qualities of frankness, courage, and sincerity which mark the good sportsman in private life shall mark the discussions of his interests at a competition.

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