

Although it has been a competition in previous years done by waiver, in 2017 AOA added the Walking Fleece competition to their Show Rules book. Since its inception, this new AOA competition has evolved and may be different than what you have experienced at an AOA show in the past. A full explanation can be found on pages 67-69 in the 2018 Show Rules book. It is important for exhibitors who are participating in this competition to familiarize themselves with the new format adopted in the 2018 show rules book.

Below is a portion of the AOA show rules book from page 67 listing the key points of an AOA Walking Fleece Competition:

The Walking Fleece Show is an opportunity for the exhibitor to enter a fleece competition where the prime fleece is evaluated while still on the alpaca. Each fleece is judged individually against the AOA Walking Fleece Judging Scorecard on an absolute basis in contrast to halter judging which is judged on a comparative basis relative to the other alpacas in the class.

Conformation is not assessed.

An AOA Walking Fleece Scorecard will be completed for each alpaca in the course of the evaluation/judging process.

Placements are made on a highest point basis once all evaluations are completed and tabulated.

Oral comments by the Judge may be given during the hands-on evaluation.

This is a time consuming competition, and exhibitors must be cognizant that they may need additional handlers, particularly if they are also participating in the regular halter classes which could very well be occurring simultaneously.

Each alpaca in a Walking Fleece class is evaluated in the ring individually. Exhibitors/handlers should make every effort to keep the alpacas in that class in the ring area until all of the scores for the alpacas in that class have been tallied. While waiting, an exhibitor may transfer control of that alpaca to a handler if that exhibitor needs to be in the halter ring with another alpaca.

Just like a fleece show, walking fleece is divided by breed type, Color Group, Age division and lastly by single color designation if there are enough (4 or more of a single color designation) to divide out. Male and female alpacas will show in the same class in the same way they do in level I, II and III fleece shows.

A score card will be used, just as in a fleece show, and a judge will evaluate your alpaca's fleece verbally giving scores to a scribe which will be tabulated, transcribed to a master judging sheet and then later disbursed with ribbons to the class participants. The judge may give other oral comments during the

hands on evaluation. Once the scores are tabulated, they will be placed 1st – 6th in each class. Once the entire color group has been before the judge, then the highest score will be the Color Champion and the second highest score will be the Reserve Champion. This is an absolute system of judging, unlike a halter class which is a comparative system of judging.

What to expect:

Your class will be announced over the sound system. Generally, a walking fleece show taking place at the same time as a halter show will start at a different color group than where the halter show is starting on that day. This is done so that the same alpaca is not due in the halter show ring at the same time as it is due in the Walking Fleece ring. When your class is called, you are required to bring your haltered alpaca to the walking fleece ring and check in with the gate keeper.

Depending on how many alpacas are in your class, and how many arrive before you, will depend on when you go before the judge. Unlike halter, you do not need to line up by birthdate. It takes between 4 and 6 minutes on average for a judge to evaluate each alpaca. If you are due in the halter ring with another alpaca, it is important to check in with the walking fleece gate and let them know that you will come as soon as you are finished in the halter ring or may need to go 1st in line for judging in the Walking Fleece. Communication is the key. It is important for you to show in your assigned class. The new show rules do allow for a handler swap for the alpaca to remain at the show ring after judging should the handler be needed to show in another show ring. Remember it is important to stay in the area until the entire class has been judged and dismissed in case there are ties and the judge needs to see your alpaca again. The score sheet will need to be tabulated and then transcribed for each individual participant, and all registered participants for a class will need to be judged before any ribbons are handed out. *For a full explanation of the AOA rules on procedures during a Walking Fleece Show, please refer to the 2018 Show Rules Book page 76.*

Just as in a halter or fleece show, ribbons are awarded for 1st – 6th place. A score card will be provided for ALL participants, regardless of whether a ribbon is awarded.

When will you get your results?

As stated before, scores will need to be tabulated and transcribed, added up a second time and checked for accuracy by two different people. Once the entire class has been judged, transcribed and the sheet signed by the judge, the score cards and ribbons may be distributed. If an alpaca has not made it to their assigned class due to a ring conflict, then the score cards and ribbons will be held back until that alpaca has been judged. Just like a fleece show, alpacas may be moved from one color group to another by the judge. If an alpaca needs to be moved by the judge due to a color change which was not found at color check, they will either be asked to return to the correct class if it has not been held yet, or it will be added to the score sheet for a class which has already been judged as long as the ribbons have not been distributed yet for that class.

How many alpacas need to be in a color group to hold a championship?

It is the same as the fleece show or the halter show. 10 for Huacaya, 8 for Suri.

Are there any special awards in the Walking Fleece competition?

Currently in the 2018 show rules book there are no special awards allowed to be offered for a walking fleece competition

What is the Walking Fleece Judging criteria and points?

Huacaya Points

Fineness and Handle (20)

Uniformity of: Micron (10), Length (5), and Color (5)

Style: Character (Crimp) (10) and Staple Type/Density (5)

Brightness (10)

Absence of guard hair (10)

Absence of impurities/stains/fleece damage (5)

Maximum Point Total For Huacayas: 80 points

The minimum fleece score required to award a blue ribbon is 45 or 60% for Huacavas

Suri points:

Fineness and Handle (20)

Uniformity of: Micron (10), Length (5), and Color (5)

Style: Lock Structure (10) and Density (5)

Luster (20)

Absence of guard hair (5)

Absence of impurities/stains/fleece damage (5)

Maximum Point Total For Suris: 85 points.

The minimum fleece score required to award a blue ribbon is 48 points or 60% for Suris.

What is expected of me when I go before the judge?

Stay calm. Breathe. Relax and listen! Walk your haltered alpaca up before the judge and hold the alpaca firmly while the judge does the evaluation. Conformation is not assessed; the judge will be only looking at the fleece characteristics. All AOA registered alpacas are eligible to show in the walking fleece competition, including geldings and non-breeders.

Can my spouse/partner/mother come in the Walking Fleece ring with me during the evaluation?

Usually. Please ask before entering the ring, as it is entirely up to the judge.

May I record the process with my camera / phone or recording device?

You must ask before recording the judging process. The Judge will let you know if permissible.

May I ask questions during the judging process?

Please respect the judging ring by not asking questions or trying to engage the judge in conversation.