



2025 USEF Junior Hunter National Championships Specifications

The Federation may provide the applicable Recognized Affiliate, Council, and discipline committee with the Qualifying Criteria and Official Specifications for review and recommendation.

1. Competition Operations and Standards

- a. **The Championship must be operated in accordance with these Specifications.**
- b. **The Championship must be operated in accordance with the USEF rules for Premier Hunter Rated competition standards and requirements.**

2. Membership Requirements

- a. The horse must be actively recorded with the Federation and registered with USHJA at the time of qualification and on or before the first day of the Championship **continuing through the conclusion** of the Championship.
- b. The Owner of record of the horse must be an Active member in good standing of the Federation and USHJA at the time of qualification and on or before the first day of the Championship, **continuing through the conclusion** of the Championship, i.e. horses must be shown in accordance with GR1102 and GR1108 to be eligible to qualify.
- c. **The rider of the horse must be an Active member in good standing of the Federation and USHJA at the time of qualification and on or before the first day of the Championship, continuing through the conclusion of the Championship.**
- d. Horses must have a valid microchip.
- e. A current USEF measurement card is required for horses that compete in the Small Junior Hunter sections.
- f. The USEF Junior Hunter National Championships may be split into two Championships; one on the eastern side of the U.S. and one on the western side of the U.S. Qualified horses may compete in either Championship but the horse's owners or their agent must declare which championship the horse will be competing in as the horse is only allowed to compete in one championship in any one year.

3. Qualifying

- a. Junior Hunter 3'3"
 1. A 3'3" Junior Hunter qualifies by winning a Championship or Reserve Championship in a Premier (AA), National (A), or Regional (B) rated Junior Hunter 3'3" section at a competition with a start date from June 1, 2024 - May 31, 2025.
 2. A horse will also qualify if it is ranked in the top 10 on the USHJA Zone Horse of the Year Channel I or Channel II ranking list for any of the Junior Hunter 3'3" sections based on results from competitions with a start date from December 1, 2024 - May 31, 2025.
- b. Junior Hunter 3'6"
 1. A 3'6" Junior Hunter qualifies by winning a Championship or Reserve Championship in a Premier (AA), National (A), or Regional (B) rated Junior Hunter 3'6" section at a competition with a start date from June 1, 2024 - May 31, 2025.



2. A horse will also qualify if it is ranked in the top 10 on the USHJA Zone Horse of the Year Channel I or Channel II ranking list for any of the Junior Hunter 3'6" sections based on results from competitions with a start date from December 1, 2024 - May 31, 2025.
- c. Horses that are Champions or Reserve Champions in their respective fence height sections at the previous year's Championship may return to compete in that same fence height section without qualifying.

4. Entry Restrictions

- a. Each junior exhibitor may show one large and one small entry on both coasts **in the same year**. The junior exhibitor may compete at 3'3" or 3'6" but may not compete at both heights **in one USEF Junior Hunter National Championship competition. The junior exhibitor may compete in the 3'3" at one USEF Junior Hunter National Championship, and 3'6" at the other championship** (see HU143.7 for additional restrictions).

5. Phases

- a. The Championship will be conducted in three separate phases: Under Saddle to count 20%, Handy Hunter to count 40%, and a single Classic Round to count 40%.
- b. To determine the winner, scores must be calculated based on the total of the combination of all three phases after the percentages of each phase have been calculated.
 - i. Under Saddle. To be shown at a walk, trot, and canter both ways of the ring. Horses are to hand gallop one direction. Light contact with the horse's mouth is required. Judged on performance and soundness. Manners and suitability to be emphasized.
 - a. In the Under Saddle phase, horses shall be judged in groups of twelve or less. Each horse shall be judged and given a score based on its performance in the group.
 - ii. Handy Hunter. Obstacles should simulate those found in hunt country. The course must have at least two changes of direction and at least one in and out as well as three of the following: hand gallop a jump, bending line, rollback turn, fence at the end of the ring, open a gate while mounted or trot over one obstacle. Judges must place emphasis on promptness and tight turns with precedence being given in that order. Handiness is defined as time and ground saving movement without adversely affecting performance or style. Brilliance of pace is defined as a faster pace than ordinary, without sacrificing performance or style. Hand Gallop is defined as a significant increase in pace without sacrificing performance or style.
 - a. In the Handy Hunter each entry will be given a numerical score based on its performance.
 - iii. Classic Round. The course must include at least ten obstacles, have two changes of direction, and at least one combination. There shall be one single oxer on the course that shall be ridden at the gallop. Emphasis shall be placed on "brilliance" for this round.
 - a. In the Classic Round each entry will be given a numerical score based on its performance.
 - iv. Soundness. All horses are required to trot a circle on a loose rein at the end of each over fences performance. Horses may be asked to return to the ring and trot another circle at the judge's discretion.
 - v. The same junior exhibitor is required to show an entry in all phases of the Championship.
 - vi. Exhibitors will be eliminated after two cumulative refusals.
 - vii. If a horse/rider combination does not complete a phase or is eliminated from that phase, that horse will receive a score of "0" for that phase but may continue on to compete in the remaining phases of the Championship. A horse with a total score of "0" for a phase is not eligible for an award for that phase but is eligible for an overall award.

6. Judging

- a. Three judges or three panels of judges will judge each phase simultaneously but independently of each other. Each judge will give every entry a score for each phase. Prior to the Under Saddle and Handy Hunter, each entry's score in the previous phase shall be totaled and announced. During the over fences phase, the Open Numerical Scoring System is used. After each entry completes the course each judge's score for the round is immediately shown or announced. The total overall score for each entry is then calculated as soon as it has completed the last phase.

- 1. Ties will be broken based on the score of the judge that is designated as judge number one for each phase of the Championship. If a tie still exists for the overall standings, the score from the Classic Round will break such a tie.

7. Championship Special Requirements

- a. Horses are required to be stabled on the competition grounds a minimum of 12 hours **prior to the start date of the competition. USEF Stewards are responsible for checking in horses to the facility.**
- b. **All competing horses must provide their stall number and be checked at the show office a minimum of 12 hours prior to the start date of the competition.**
- c. **All horses must be entered into the competition prior to the deadline provided in the prize list.**
- d. **No changes can be made to entries after the final deadline of 6 p.m. the day before the first day of competition. Final entry to compete must be submitted no later than 6 p.m. the day before the first day of competition; this includes the horse, the rider, and the respective section. It is the responsibility of the exhibitor to ensure entries are correct and submitted prior to the final deadline.**
- e. Commencing 12 hours prior to the start of their respective fence height section and continuing until **their respective fence height section is completed in its entirety**, only the competition rider may ride his/her entry. These riders must wear their competition number at all times anywhere on the grounds while mounted (**HJ106**).
- f. Failure to comply with these rules will result in elimination if deemed appropriate by **the show committee**, which will be compiled of one of the competition's Federation Stewards, a member of the Federation staff, and the competition manager.

8. Horse of the Year Points:

(In classes that have less than 10 entries, the point values will be one-half of what is listed below)
HOTY points will apply to the **USEF Channel I HOTY awards.**

Under Saddle		Handy Hunter	Classic
1st	100	250	250
2nd	90	225	225
3rd	80	200	200
4th	70	175	175
5th	60	150	150
6th	50	125	125
7th	40	100	100
8th	30	75	75
9th	20	50	50
10th	10	25	25

Overall (all sections)

Champion	500	2.0 times the classic
Reserve	300	1.2 times the classic
3rd	200	

4th	150
5th	100
6th	90
7th	80
8th	70
9th	60
10th	50