2027 USEF Junior Hunter National Championship Specifications

The 2027 USEF Junior Hunter National Championship ("Championships") Specifications ("Specifications") published herein are effective September 28, 2026, unless stated otherwise. These Championship Specifications pertain to the following divisions:

- 3'6" Junior Hunter
- 3'3" Junior Hunter

Championship Information:

- The 2027 USEF Junior Hunter National Championships - East will take place from **June 23-27, 2027**, at the Kentucky Horse Park in Lexington, KY.
- The 2027 USEF Junior Hunter National Championships – West will take place from **July 29-August 1, 2027**, at HITS Del Mar Horsepark in Del Mar, CA.

I. Membership Requirements for Participation:

a. The horse must be actively recorded in good standing with the Federation pursuant to GR1102 and GR1108 and registered in good standing with USHJA at the time of qualification and on or before the first day of the Championship through the conclusion of the Championship.

b. The individual owner(s) of record of the horse must be a Competing member in good standing of the Federation and USHJA at the time of qualification and on or before the first day of the Championship through the conclusion of the Championship.

c. Ownership of the horse may change during the qualifying period and up to the close of entries for the Championships, so long as the new owner(s) meets the above requirements.

d. The rider of the horse must be a Competing member in good standing of the Federation and USHJA at the time of qualification and on or before the first day of the Championship through the conclusion of the Championship.

e. The rider of the horse must be a junior rider as defined in GR128 to earn qualifying results and compete at the championships. The junior rider that qualifies the horse may differ from the one that rides the horse at the Championships.

f. Horses must have a valid microchip in accordance with HU104.

g. A current USEF measurement card is required for horses that compete in the Small Junior Hunter sections.

- Horses that receive a re-measurement after achieving a qualification but before the Championships, are subject to forfeiture of qualification for the Championships in accordance with HU143.2c., if the re-measurement results in the horse being assigned to a different section.
- If a horse with no measurement card at the time of qualification later receives a measurement card that results in it being assigned to a different

section from the one in which it qualified, it will be subject to forfeiture of qualification for the Championships in accordance with HU143.2c.

- Horses that receive a re-measurement may re-qualify in their newly assigned height section.

h. The Championships may be split into two Championships; East and West Coast *at the discretion of the Federation if participation warrants.*

II. Qualifying

a. Junior Hunter 3'3"
   1. A 3'3" Junior Hunter qualifies for the Championship by winning one (1) Champion or one (1) Reserve Champion in a Premier (AA), National (A), or Regional (B) rated Junior Hunter 3'3" section at a competition with a start date from May 1, 202**6** - April 30, 202**7**.
   2. A horse will also qualify for the Championship 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, 202**6** - April 30, 202**7**.
   3. A horse will qualify for the Championship if it competes in and completes all offered classes (over fences and under saddle) in 3'3" junior hunter sections at five (5) USEF licensed competitions during the Qualifying Period of May 1, 202**6** - April 30, 202**7**.

b. Junior Hunter 3'6"
   1. A 3'6" Junior Hunter qualifies for the Championship by winning one (1) Champion or one (1) Reserve Champion in a Premier (AA), National (A), or Regional (B) rated Junior Hunter 3'6" section at a competition with a start date from May 1, 202**6** - April 30, 202**7**.
   2. A horse will also qualify for the Championship 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, 202**6** - April 30, 202**7**.
   3. A horse will also qualify for the Championship if it competes in and completes all offered classes (over fences and under saddle) in 3'6" junior hunter sections at five (5) USEF licensed competitions during the Qualifying Period of May 1, 202**6** - April 30, 202**7**.

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.

III. Entry Restrictions

a. Each junior rider may show one large and one small entry on both coasts in the same year.

b. The junior rider may compete at 3'3" or 3'6" but may not compete at both heights in one Championship. The junior rider may compete in the 3'3" at one Championship, and 3'6" at the other Championship in the same year (see HU143.7 for additional restrictions).

c. Riders competing in the 3'3" sections must not have competed at 1.30m or above during the qualifying period and through the conclusion of the Championship.
    i. **Exception: Riders that have competed at 1.30m or above during the qualifying period and through the conclusion of the Championship may compete one large and one small entry in the 3'3" Junior Hunter section on <u>horses that they own.</u>**
d. If, at the discretion of the Federation, the Championship is split into two Championships (East and West) qualified horses may only compete in either the East or West Championship.
e. Horses may only compete in one junior hunter section at the Championship.

IV. Phases
a. The Championship will be conducted in three phases: A single Classic Round to count 40%, Under Saddle to count 20%, and a single Handy Hunter Round to count 40%.
b. To determine the winner, scores will be calculated based on the total of all three phases after the percentages of each phase have been calculated.
    i. Classic Round. The course will include at least ten obstacles, have two changes of direction, and at least one combination. Emphasis will be placed on "brilliance" for this round.
        a. In the Classic Round each entry will be given a numerical score of 0-100 from each judge panel based on its performance.
        b. The order of go for the Classic Round will be randomized. The order of go may not be changed without the approval of the Show Committee.
    ii. Under Saddle. To be shown at a walk, trot, and canter both ways of the ring. Horses will be asked to hand gallop one direction. Light contact with the horse's mouth is required. The Under Saddle is Judged on performance and soundness. Manners and suitability to be emphasized.
        a. In the Under Saddle phase, horses will be judged in groups of twelve or fewer. Each entry will be judged and given a score of 0-100 from each judge based on its performance in the group.
        b. The order of go for the Under Saddle will either be randomized or created based on the order of go from the Classic Round. The order of go may not be changed without the approval of the Show Committee.
    iii. Handy Hunter. Obstacles should simulate those found in hunt country. The course will 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 will emphasize 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 of 0-100 from each judge panel based on its performance.

b. The order of go will be **randomized.** The order of go may not be changed without the approval of the Show Committee.

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 rider is required to show an entry in all phases of the Championships but need not be the same one that rode the horse in the qualifying event. If a rider is unable to continue to compete, the rider and/or trainer must request permission for a change of rider from the Show Committee. The decision of the Show Committee is final, binding, and not subject to further appeal of any kind.

vi. Riders will be eliminated after two cumulative refusals in the Classic Round and Handy Hunter phases.

vii. If a horse/rider combination does not complete a phase or is eliminated from that phase, the horse will receive a score of "0" for that phase but may continue 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.

viii. *If any class of the junior hunter division has less than 10 entries, it must be combined with another class within the same section, as determined by management. If classes are combined, Prize money will be reallocated and distributed evenly between the remaining classes within that section.*

V. Judging

a. East Coast Championships: It is required that a minimum of three judges officiate each phase simultaneously but independently of each other. It is recommended that a minimum of three panels of two judges officiate the Classic Round and Handy Hunter phases simultaneously but independently of each other, and three individual judges officiate the Under Saddle phase simultaneously but independently of each other. Each judge or panel will give every entry a score for each phase.

b. West Coast Championships: It is required that a minimum of three judges officiate each phase simultaneously but independently of each other. It is recommended that a minimum of two panels of two judges officiate the Classic Round and Handy Hunter phases simultaneously but independently of each other, and two individual judges officiate the Under Saddle phase simultaneously but independently of each other. Each judge or panel will give every entry a score for each phase.

c. Prior to the Under Saddle and Handy Hunter, each entry's score in the previous phase will be totaled and announced. During the over fences phases, 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.

i. Ties in the Classic Round, Under Saddle, and Handy Hunter phases will be broken based on the score of the judge that is designated as judge number one for each

phase of the Championship, any further ties to be broken by the score of the judge that is designated as judge 2, and further ties to be broken by the score of the judge that is designated as judge 3. If a tie still exists for the overall standings, the score from the Classic Round will break such a tie.

VI. Championship Special Requirements – **Failure to comply with the following rules in this Paragraph VI will result in elimination from the competition in its entirety if deemed appropriate by the show committee, which will be compromised of one of the competition's Federation Stewards, a member of the Federation staff, and the competition manager.**

a. Arrival Requirements
    i. Horses are required to be stabled on the competition grounds a minimum of 24 hours prior to the start time of the competition day on which the horse is entered to compete. All horses must be checked in with USEF Stewards. Handlers of the horses must provide their back number and stall number to the Stewards at the check-in location. Refer to the prize list for additional details outlining arrival times for each section and check-in locations.

b. Departure Requirements
    i. Horses must remain stabled on competition grounds through the conclusion of their respective section to be eligible for awards.

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 deadlines stated in the prize list; 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. 12 hours prior to the start time of the competition day in which the horse is entered to compete and continuing until their respective fence height section is completed in its entirety, only the competition rider may ride their entry. These riders must wear their competition number at all times anywhere on the grounds while mounted (HJ106).

VII. Horse of the Year Points:

(In classes that have fewer 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	

These Specifications are based on the USEF rules as presently known and understood. However, the Specifications are always subject to unforeseen, intervening circumstances, and realistically may not have accounted for every possible contingency. Changes in Specifications are subject to approval by USEF. Any change in the Specifications caused by a change in USEF rules will be distributed to the affected participants as soon as practicable. For questions concerning these Specifications, please contact the USEF Hunter Department at hunterdept@usef.org. Qualifying for these Championships will be conducted under USEF rules except as outlined otherwise herein.