

2025 USHJA INTERNATIONAL HUNTER DERBY SPECIFICATIONS

*Effective for competitions starting December 1, 2024, through November 30, 2025

Changes from 2024 marked in bold italic and underlined.

I. Membership and Participation Requirements

- A. Riders, Owners and Trainers must be current Active members of USEF and USHJA before the start of the class.
- B. Horses must be recorded with the Federation and registered with USHJA.
- C. Horses must be enrolled ***or pay a non-enrolled horse fee*** to participate in a USHJA International Hunter Derby.
- D. The same horse may not compete in the USHJA International Hunter Derby and the National Hunter Derby at the same competition.
- E. Horses entered in this class are not required to show in any other hunter or jumper classes at the horse show.
- F. Attire: Refer to HU107 in the USEF Rule Book for current specifications.
- G. In accordance with HU174.14 the same horse-and-rider combination must compete in both rounds of the International Hunter Derby.

II. Enrollment Policy

- A. Horses must be enrolled to participate in a USHJA International Hunter Derby, to ***be*** eligible for Regional Awards, to be included on the USHJA IHD Money Won list and to compete in any Derby Championship.
 1. Upon enrollment in the Derby Program, horses' earnings, from date of enrollment forward through November 30, 2024, will be included on the USHJA International Hunter Derby Money Won list and count toward Regional Awards. Horses must be enrolled in the program before competing in a Derby, if they wish the money won in that Derby to count toward standings, regardless of the start date of the competition.
 2. Money (and points) won by horses not enrolled in the Derby Program will not be included on the USHJA International Hunter Derby Money Won list or Regional Award Standings.
 3. Year End Regional Award Standings:
 - a. Owners must declare their horse's region upon enrollment of the horse and the region may not be changed during the Derby Series year.
 - b. Owners may choose one region in which to declare their horse(s); the region declared does not have to be the owner's home region.
- B. Annual Enrollment Fee: \$450 and enrollment begins on December 1 of current year.
 1. Horses may only be enrolled online and it is the exhibitor's responsibility to enroll a horse in a timely manner in order to be eligible to receive credit for money won. There will be no exceptions allowed regarding enrollment dates for program eligibility.
- C. ***Non-enrolled horse fee: \$150 per horse entered in an International Hunter Derby without current enrollment. There is no limit to the number of IHDs a horse may compete in without enrollment. The non-enrolled horse fee applies to every IHD entered unless/until enrolling. Any non-enrolled horse fee paid does not credit towards an enrollment fee for the current competition year.***

III. Soundness

- A. Traditional Format – Horses are required to trot a circle on a loose rein at the end of the Classic Round. Horses may be asked to return to the ring and trot another circle at the judge's discretion. Judges have the authority to disqualify a horse if deemed unsound. If the class is held over two days, horses are required to trot a circle on a loose rein at the end of both Classic and Handy Rounds.
- B. Hunt and Go Format – horses must trot for soundness at the conclusion of the Handy Round phase.

IV. Stabling/Schooling

- A. All horses competing in the Derby class must be on the competition grounds a minimum of 24 hours prior to the start of the first round of the class.
- B. All horses will be monitored and must remain on the competition grounds until the horse is finished competing in the Derby class. Any horse that leaves the competition grounds prior to completing its participation in the Derby class is disqualified.

V. Order of Go

- A. In the case of multiple horses being ridden by the same rider, every effort will be made so that there will be a minimum of eight horses (if available) separating multiple rides. All horses must be ridden in the sequence that appears on the jumping order in the first round of the competition. In the second round horses will return in reverse order of their first round scores (lowest to highest). When multiple rides occur, competition management will determine a fair separation between horses for the order of go. Should a jump-off occur, horses will return in the same posted order in which they competed in the second round.
- B. The draw may be performed by hand or competition management may host a computer draw.

VI. Judging System and Formats

- A. For Derbies with \$50,000 or more in prize money, a minimum of four (4) judges are required. Judges will be seated separately in two panels consisting of two judges per panel. At least one judge in each panel must be an R-licensed judge, two R-licensed judges may never sit together.
- B. For Derbies with \$49,999 or less in prize money, a minimum of two (2) R-licensed judges are required. Judges will be seated separately, giving an individual score for both phases. The scores from each judge will be added together for the total score.
- C. Exception: Heritage competitions must have two panels of two judges each seated separately.
- D. No guest cards will be granted for this competition.
- E. A judging assistant must be present during all phases of the competition. The duties of the judging assistant include notifying the Judges if a rail comes down and when a horse jumps the higher height option fences. The judging assistant is not required to be a licensed official and is not responsible for the scoring of the judging panels. A competition staff member may fill this role.
- F. Submitting Results – for both Traditional and Hunt and Go formats, competitions must submit results from the Classic Hunter Round, the Handy Hunter Round, and the Overall.
- G. Traditional Format – consists of two phases, one Classic Hunter Round and one Handy Hunter Round jumped separately. All participants will complete the Classic Round. Only the top 12, including ties, from the Classic will compete in the Handy Round.
 1. The Classic Hunter Style Round shall be judged and numerically scored on quality, movement, jumping style, manners and way of going. Pace and brilliance are to be rewarded. In addition to this base score, each judging panel must award an Option Bonus Score consisting of one additional point for every higher height option fence jumped. These two scores must be announced separately and then added together to determine each horse-and-rider combination's score for this round from each judging panel. The scores of all the judging panels will be added together to determine the total score of each horse-and-rider combination for this round.
 2. The Handy Hunter Round shall be judged on jumping style and efficiency while maintaining style and form, way of going, and overall flow. Pace, brilliance, and handiness are to be rewarded. A horse/rider may not jump decorations or other obstacles in order to create a shorter track. In addition to this base score each judging panel must award an Option Bonus Score consisting of one additional bonus point for every higher height option fence jumped **and a Handy Bonus Score on a scale of 0-5 to award handiness in the round.** These **three** scores must be announced separately and then added together to determine each horse-and-rider combination for this round from each judging panel. The scores of all the judging panels will be added together to determine the total score of each horse- and-rider combination for this round.
 3. The Jump-Off Round, if required, shall be judged and numerically scored on quality, movement, jumping style, manners and way of going. Pace and brilliance are to be rewarded. A horse/rider may not jump decorations or other obstacles in order to create a shorter track. In addition to this base score, each judging panel must award an Option Bonus Score consisting of one additional point for every higher height option fence jumped. These scores must be announced separately and then added together to determine each horse-and-rider combination's score for this round from each judging panel. The scores of all the judging panels will be added together to determine the total score of each horse- and-

rider combination for this round.

4. The total scores of each horse-and-rider combination from each round will be added together to determine their final overall Hunter Derby score. This score will determine the final overall standings for the class. If any of the top 12 entries from the Classic Round elect not to return, then they will receive a score of 0 for the Handy Round.
 5. The Option Bonus Score of one additional point for each higher height option fence jumped must be awarded even if there is a refusal, rail down or loss of good jumping style at that higher height option fence, providing that the horse-and-rider combination does jump the higher height option fence.
- H. Hunt and Go Format – consists of two phases, one Classic Hunter Round and one Handy Hunter Round jumped consecutively. All participants will complete both the Classic and the Handy portions even if penalties (rails, refusals, etc.) are incurred. Major penalties (falls, 3 refusals **total across both phases**, off-course, etc.) will result in elimination.
1. The Classic Hunter Round, consisting of 7-8 fences with 2 high options, shall be judged on quality, movement, jumping style, manners and way of going.
 2. After the completion of the classic round, horses will pass through a set of markers to begin their handy portion of the class. The Handy Hunter Round, consisting of 5-8 fences with 2 high options, shall be judged on jumping style and efficiency while maintaining style and form, way of going, and overall flow. A horse/rider may not jump decorations or other obstacles in order to create a shorter track.
 3. Each panel (or each judge if two judges are used) will be designated either the Classic Hunter Phase or the Handy Hunter Phase. Each will provide a single score for their designated phase, in addition to the Bonus points of one point per high option jump that will be added to each judging's score. The scores from each judge will be added together to determine the total score and placement.
 4. The Option Bonus Score of one additional point for each higher height option fence jumped must be awarded even if there is a refusal, rail down or loss of good jumping style at that higher height option fence, providing that the horse- and-rider combination does jump the higher height option fence.

VII. **Tie Breaking Procedures**

- A. Ties in the first round will remain tied. The top 12 horses after the first round, including ties, will return for the second round.
- B. All ties for overall first place may compete in a Jump Off Round. If both exhibitors agree NOT to jump off, the exhibitors will be named co-winners, and will evenly split the prize money. Tied entrants must determine the distribution of awards amongst themselves. If one of the tied exhibitors declines to jump off, that exhibitor must sign a forfeiture agreement which will be provided to them at the time of the jump off.
- C. Ties for other than first place in the overall standings will remain tied.

VIII. **Prize Money and Entry Fee**

- A. Prize money must be paid to a minimum of 12 places as follows:

1 st – 30%	7 th – 4%
2 nd – 22%	8 th – 3%
3 rd – 13%	9 th – 3%
4 th – 8%	10 th – 2%
5 th – 6%	11 th – 2%
6 th – 5%	12 th – 2%

- B. If there are fewer than twelve (12) entries **placed** in the class, prize money must be paid according to the breakdown **above** through the last placing entry. Any remaining prize money not awarded due to fewer than twelve (12) entries **must** be split and awarded equally to all entrants that place in the class.
- C. A minimum of \$10,000 prize money must be offered per class.
- D. When the Optional Rider Ranking Tiered System is used, Tier II must have added money in addition to the base \$10,000 prize money required. See section IX. for more information.
- E. A competition may choose to offer add-back prize money in addition to the prize money offered, however, the minimum required prize money must be guaranteed. If add-back prize money will be offered, it must be stated in the prize list.
- F. Competitions wishing to offer additional prize money above the minimum required (including any add-back

money if applicable) and pay additional placings must print the information in the prizelist and notify the USHJA of the final prize money distribution. If a change in prize money and placings occurs after the prize list is printed, the competition must follow all USEF rules regarding changes to the prize list (See GR904). The prize money awarded to each placing below 12th place must not exceed the amount awarded to 12th place.

- G. The entry fee cannot exceed 10% of the prize money offered and must include the \$50 per horse **USHJA IHD fee. The \$150 non-enrolled horse fee will apply to every entered horse that does not have an enrollment for the current competition year.**

IX. Optional Rider Ranking System – Tier II

- A. Management has the option of offering a Tier II section. The Tier II purse will be in addition to the original minimum \$10,000 base prize money. If offered, it must be published in the competition’s prize list.
- B. Refer to the USHJA website for Tier eligibility lists. Riders ranked in Tier I are only eligible for the overall IHD class prize money. Riders ranking Tier II are eligible for both the overall IHD class prize money and the additional Tier II prize money.
- C. When offering the Tier II section, a minimum of twelve (12) horses and riders will return to the Handy round in the Tier I section. A minimum of twelve (12) horses with riders from Tier II will return to the Handy round in the Tier II section. If there are less than 12 Tier II entries total, then all Tier II entries will return. Tier II entries qualified for the Tier I section will compete in that round and their score will carry over to the Tier II standings.
- D. Prize money must be paid to a minimum of twelve (12) places as follows:

1 st – 30%	7 th – 4%
2 nd – 22%	8 th – 3%
3 rd – 13%	9 th – 3%
4 th – 8%	10 th – 2%
5 th – 6%	11 th – 2%
6 th – 5%	12 th – 2%

1. Competitions wishing to offer additional prize money above the minimum required (including any add-back money if applicable) and pay additional placings must print the information in the prize list and notify the USHJA of the final prize money distribution. If a change in prize money and placings occurs after the prize list is printed, the competition must follow all USEF rules regarding changes to the prize list (See GR903). The prize money awarded to each placing below 12th place must not exceed the amount awarded to 12th place.
 2. Tier II added money may not exceed Tier I added money.
- E. If there are fewer than twelve (12) Tier II entries **placed** in the class, prize money must be paid according to the breakdown **above** through the last placing entry. Any remaining prize money not awarded due to fewer than twelve (12) entries **must** be split and awarded equally to all horses with Tier II riders that place in the class.

XI. Award Presentations

- A. At minimum, the Overall First Place must be presented in the ring. All other placing presentations will be at show management’s discretion.
- B. USHJA will provide ribbons for the first round, second round and the overall standings.
- C. Competition management may offer additional awards (e.g., highest placing junior owner, highest placing amateur, highest placing thoroughbred, highest placing rider competing on only one entry in the class).

XII. Bonus Points and Awards

- A. In order for International Hunter Derby National HOTY bonus points/money to be awarded, riders must complete the USHJA Exhibitor Declaration Form which must be submitted to the show office by the end of the competition.
- B. National HOTY bonus points/money are awarded to each horse’s respective section as declared at the time of entry. Riders may only declare one hunter section (not including Green Conformation Hunter 3’6” and the High Performance Conformation Hunter, per HU173.2) for National HOTY points/money. Only Juniors or Amateurs may declare for the applicable Junior or Amateur Owner section. Horses declared in open sections will be awarded both bonus points and the value of their money won for their declared hunter

section, toward the appropriate HOTY standings. (See HU173.2 for bonus point structure.)

C. The point structure will be as follows:

	Round #1	Round #2	Overall/ Top 12
1 st	50	50	200
2 nd	40	40	160
3 rd	35	35	140
4 th	30	30	120
5 th	25	25	100
6 th	20	20	80
7 th	15	15	60
8 th	10	10	40
9 th	7	7	28
10 th	5	5	20
11 th	3	3	12
12 th	2	2	8

D. For USHJA Awards purposes, a computer ranking system tracks the money won for both the horse and rider, both nationally and regionally.

XIII. Course Requirements

- A. The course diagrams for each round must be posted a minimum of one hour before the start of the first round, unless the second round and/or jump-off are held at **least two hours after the Classic Round**. In that case, the course for the second and/or jump-off rounds must be posted a minimum of one hour prior to the start of the second round. Copies of the course(s) must also be available for distribution at the Riders Meeting. There will be no hand walking **of horses during the official course walk. However, flatting and/or hand walking in the IHD arena is permitted, at management's discretion, before the start of the competition day.**
- B. Jumps in all Rounds (see [Hunt and Go](#) for Hunt and Go specific details)
1. Obstacles must simulate those reminiscent of the hunt field and the course must offer a variety of Derby jumps with different appearances such as: natural post and rail, stone wall, white board fence or gate, coop, aiken, hedge, oxer, brush, logs, natural foliage.
 2. Natural obstacles such as banks and ditches are allowed.
 3. A minimum 2" difference is required for the back element of an obstacle.
 4. The jumpable portion of any obstacle must be a minimum of eight feet on its frontface.
 5. Flat cups may only be used for obstacles involving logs and/or in accordance with Federation rules.
 6. The top rail of all obstacles must rest in a cup, except where walls with movable bricks are used.
- C. Classic Hunter Style Round (First Round)
1. A minimum of 10 obstacles must be offered in the Classic Hunter Style Round.
 2. Fences must be set at 3'6" to 4'0" in height, exception option fences.
 3. The course must include higher height option fences set at a minimum of 4' in height ([See Star System for further details.](#)) The number of higher height option fences cannot exceed four. **If there is a difference in difficulty between any two tracks containing height options, the higher options must include the more inviting obstacles and be on the less difficult track.**
 4. At least two changes of direction.
 5. At least one in and out.
 6. At least one bending line.
 7. At least one line with an unrelated distance.
 8. At least one fence with a long approach.
- D. Handy Hunter Round (Second Round)
1. A minimum of eight obstacles must be offered in the Handy Hunter Round.
 2. Fences must be set at 3'6" to 4'0" in height, exception option fences.
 3. The course must include higher height option fences set at a minimum of 4' in height. ([See Star System](#)

[for further details.](#)) The number of higher height option fences cannot exceed four. If there is a difference in difficulty between any two tracks containing height options, the higher options should include the more inviting obstacles and be on the less difficult track.

4. The course should simulate riding over hunt country and must include a minimum of three of the following handy options: tight turn options, different tracks, clever options for jump approaches, pen type obstacles, hand gallop a jump, trot a lowered obstacle not to exceed 3'0" in height. Leading over an obstacle and opening and/or closing a gate(s) while mounted or not mounted is not permitted. Gimmicky options are not appropriate.
 5. Unless the prize list states that more than 12 entries are to return for the second round, then only the top 12 horses from the first round, after all ties are broken, are eligible to return for the second round.
- E. Jump-Off Round
1. A minimum of eight obstacles must be offered in the jump-off round.
 2. Fences must be set at 3'6" to 4'0" in height, exception option fences.
 3. There will be no high options for the Jump Off Round.
 4. The course should simulate riding over hunt country and must include a minimum of two of the following handy options: tight turn options, different tracks, clever options for jump approaches, pen type obstacles, hand gallop a jump, trot a lowered obstacle not to exceed 3'0" in height, and/or halt. Leading over an obstacle and opening and/or closing a gate(s) while mounted or not mounted are not permitted. Gimmicky options are not appropriate.

XIV. **Star System** – [See Chart for Star System.](#)

XV. **Competition Requirements**

- A. USHJA International Hunter Derby (IHD) classes may only be offered at USEF licensed Premier and National rated (Channel 1) competitions and competitions approved for a standalone status.
- B. Competition Management will collect and remit to USHJA the per horse entrant fee of \$50.
- C. Competition Management will remit complete results for each round and the overall, including prize money awarded, to USHJA and USEF within 10 days of the conclusion of the competition.
- D. For all classes, competition management is required to provide copies of the course to riders prior to the start of the course walk and are encouraged to have them available for spectators. Hand walking is not permitted **during the official course walk. However, flatting and/or hand walking in the IHD arena is permitted, at management's discretion, before the start of the competition day.**
- E. Competition Management must hold the following meetings:
 1. Officials Meeting should be held prior to the Riders Meeting. Derby Judges, Course Designer, Steward, and Competition Manager are required to meet prior to the start of the class to review the specifications, judging system and to walk the course.
 2. Riders Meeting must be held prior to the start of the class. Course designer and at least one officiating Judge and Steward must attend this meeting to answer any questions regarding the course, judging system and class specifications. Attendance by the riders is suggested but not mandatory. Copies of the course(s) must be available for distribution at the Riders Meeting.
- F. The USHJA International Hunter Derby is a featured class of the horse show, and must be presented as such with regard to arena size and location, jump quality, decorations, footing and ring preparation, lighting, etc. The Derby ring must have spectator seating, a quality sound system, and a dedicated announcer with no other duties during the class. An electronic scoreboard is recommended.
- G. It is important for competition management to make sure that information on the scoring system is available to spectators.

XVI. **Cancellation Policy**

Competitions approved to host an International Hunter Derby must hold the class with a minimum of three entries, unless the entire competition is cancelled. Cancelling the class without cause (i.e., an act of God), is grounds for future applications to host an International Hunter Derby to be denied.

XVII. USHJA Contact Information

If questions arise pertaining to the International Hunter Derby that cannot be answered from the class specifications provided, one of the following USHJA representatives must be contacted to resolve any questions regarding the judging procedures or class specifications:

Jennifer Osterman, Sport Department Managing Director, USHJA	(859) 225-6703
Rachel Kennedy, Co-Chair, International Hunter Derby & Incentive Task Force	(443) 878-8146
Colleen McQuay, Co-Chair, International Hunter Derby & Incentive Task Force	(940) 367-3030

The USHJA International Hunter Derby and the related format and specifications are the sole properties of the USHJA and may only be held, conducted or used upon the terms and conditions specified by the USHJA. USHJA reserves the right to change language in documents related to the conduct of the USHJA International Hunter Derby as necessary for the purposes of consistency and clarity.

Any deviations from the class specifications for the USHJA International Hunter Derby are not permitted without the express written permission from USHJA prior to the printing of the prize list. For any rules not specified above, please refer to the current USEF Rule Book.



USHJA International Hunter Derby Star System

ONE STAR	TWO STAR	THREE STAR CHAMPIONSHIP
Minimum of \$10,000 in prize money	Must exceed \$11,000 in prize money	Minimum of \$100,000 in prize money
Classic round must have a minimum of ten (10) fences	Classic round must have a minimum of ten (10) fences	Classic round must have a minimum of ten (10) fences
Classic round must have 40% of the course set at 3'6". The remainder of the course must be set higher.	Classic round must have 25% of the course set at 3'6". The remainder of the course must be set higher.	Classic round must have 20% of the course set at 3'9". The remainder of the course must be set higher.
Classic round course must include three (3) higher height option fences set at 3'9" – 4'3".	Classic round course must include four (4) higher height option fences set at 4' – 4'6".	Classic round course must include four (4) higher height option fences set at 4' – 4'9".
Handy round must have a minimum of eight (8) fences.	Handy round must have a minimum of eight (8) fences	Handy round must have a minimum of eight (8) fences
Handy round must have 25% of the course set at 3'6". The remainder of the course must be set higher.	Handy round must have 25% of the course set at 3'6". The remainder of the course must be set higher.	Handy round must have at least 20% of the course set at 3'9". The remainder of the course must be set higher.
Handy round course must include a minimum of two (2) higher height option fences set at 3'9" – 4'3".	Handy round course must include four (4) higher height option fences set at 4' – 4'6".	Handy round course must include (4) higher height option fences set at 4'9".
The spread of a fence cannot exceed the height of the fence. (Applies to both Classic and Handy rounds.)	The spread of a fence cannot exceed the height of the fence. (Applies to both Classic and Handy rounds.)	The spread of a fence cannot exceed the height of the fence. (Applies to both Classic and Handy rounds.)
The course should be equally balanced, when possible, between verticals and oxers. (Applies to both Classic and Handy rounds as well as option fences.) The course must include derby type jumps for 50% of the course.	The course should be equally balanced, when possible, between verticals and oxers. (Applies to both Classic and Handy rounds as well as option fences.) The course must include derby type jumps for 50% of the course.	The course should be equally balanced, when possible, between verticals and oxers. (Applies to both Classic and Handy rounds as well as option fences.) The course must include derby type jumps for 50% of the course.
Managers are encouraged to allow horses to hack in the competition arena prior to the Classic round	At manager's discretion, horses may be allowed to hack in the competition arena prior to the Classic round	At manager's discretion, horses may be allowed to hack in the competition arena prior to the Classic round
Competition arena must be a minimum of 28,000 sq. ft. (Premier and National (Channel 1) minimum)	Competition arena must be a minimum of 33,600 sq. ft. (120 x 280)	Competition arena must be a minimum of 33,600 sq. ft. (120 x 280)
Competition arena may have a score board	Score boards are encouraged in the competition arena.	Competition arena must have a score board
Course designer must be 'R'	Course designer must be 'R' with previous Derby experience	Course designer must be 'R' with previous Derby experience
Must have a minimum of 2 R-licensed judges seated separately.	Must have a minimum of 2 R-licensed judges seated separately (classes \$49,999 or less) OR 2 judging panels of 4 judges (each panel to have 2 judges: 1 "R" and 1 "r" at min) sitting in separate places and giving separate scores (classes \$50,000 or more)	Must have three judging panels - each panel must have two big "R" judges - sitting in different places giving their own combined score.

*Higher options in the handy should be the easiest track with the handiest to get to.

** All derbies must incorporate and simulate derby style jumps.

