



Quick Guide

From the Ohio Professional Horsemen's Association Rulebook 2025 / 2026

This is an abbreviated version of the OPHA Rulebook intended to give show managers and judges of unrated (by USEF/USHJA) shows a quick reference to class and division specifications.

Please refer to the OPHA Rulebook for information on membership, points, and general horse show requirements. The OPHA Point Secretary may also be consulted as questions arise (please call or text Heather Lampman at 440-479-7905; or email hflampman@gmail.com).

www.opha.org

NEW HORSE SHOW REQUIREMENT

- Only one OPHA recognized show that has a USEF rating will be allowed within 75 miles on the same day **unless** the party holding the protected show date agrees to waive the restriction
- Only one OPHA recognized show that is unrated by the USEF will be allowed within 125 miles on the same day **unless** the party holding the protected show date agrees to waive the restriction.

NOTE:

- **Nonpayment of Entries and/or Horse Show Fees.** OPHA point shows that accept entries without the payment of the required fees do so at their own risk. However, if a person makes payment for fees that is not negotiable, the horse show/horse show manager may report the name and address of the person in writing or email to the OPHA within 30 days of notification of denied payment, providing the names of the horses and the names and owners/riders for which the non-negotiable funds were to cover. The OPHA will not be involved in collection of funds owed to the horse show; however, horses/riders will not receive OPHA points until the OPHA receives confirmation from the horse show/horse show manager that payment has been received. Payment must be received within 10 days from the time of notification of denied payment, unless some other arrangement with the show management has been made. Once the show manager has notified OPHA that payment has cleared, points will be restored. Disagreement about whether an account has been paid will be referred to the Horse Show Committee.
- OPHA point shows must abide by USEF rules and guidelines for vaccinations and those for participants suspended by the USEF.
- All persons riding at OPHA shows may not ride anywhere on the show grounds without ASTM/SEI-approved protective headgear (including harness secured and properly fitted). Riders will be prohibited from further riding until headgear is properly in place.

DIVISIONS AND CLASSES

Minimum height for fences must be observed in each division.

For Hunter classes (including Schooling Rider classes), two horses must complete in order for points to count for OPHA. Regardless of the number of entries in the first class over fences, the OPHA will sanction any subsequent class in a division to count for year-end awards only if a minimum of two entries have completed. A horse has completed an over fences class when the horse completes the posted course and a score is recorded on the judge's card. A horse failing to complete the entire course is not eligible to receive points, awards, or prize money, nor will it be counted in the number of entries necessary to fill a class or section. A horse has completed an under saddle class when the horse has executed all the gaits required and remains in the ring until the class has lined up.

Soundness: The requirement to trot a circle at the end of a round to demonstrate soundness is now required for Equitation, Adult Amateur, Low Adult Amateur, Children's Hunter, Low Children's Hunter, Low Children's Hunter Pony, as well as Junior, Amateur, Green, Pony, Green Pony, and Performance Hunter divisions.

For Jumper classes (including Schooling Rider classes), two horses must compete in order for points to count for OPHA. "Competed" means that the first fence has been judged with a score recorded on the judge's card.

The OPHA will sanction Equitation on the Flat classes (including Schooling Rider classes) for year-end awards only if a minimum of two entries have completed. In flat classes, "completed" means the horse has executed all the gaits required and remains in the ring until the class has lined up.

Combining Divisions

See USEF Rulebook section HU166 and USHJA Zone 5 rules for information on combining USEF/USHJA Hunter divisions, even if an OPHA show is unrated by the USEF. Note: Green Pony Hunter, Pony Hunter, and Children's Pony Hunter may not be combined with any other pony division..

Adult Amateur Hunters and Children's Hunters (and their Flat Equitation classes) may be combined. Low Adult Hunters and Low Children's Hunters (and their Flat Equitation classes) may be combined. Short Stirrup Hunter and Long Stirrup Hunter and the Flat Eq may be combined ONLY if there are fewer than 2 entries in one of those divisions/classes. Short Stirrup may not be combined with any other division except at shows where the Short Stirrup division is limited to riders 11 years old and under (WEC, Brave Horse, N.E.S.T., OHJA & KHJA shows). The NAHRA and Fox Smith Medals may be combined. **Children's Hunter and Children's Pony Hunters may be combined.**

See the OPHA or USEF & USHJA Rule Books for:

Green Hunter 3'6" and 3'9"; High-Performance Hunter; Performance Hunter; Amateur Owner Hunter; Junior Hunter; OPHA Medal, Taylor Orłowski Memorial 3'3" Medal; 1.20m + Junior (or Amateur) Jumper

VERY GREEN HUNTER: Open to horses and ponies in their first year of showing over fences at 2'6". Fences 2'6". Horses and ponies may not earn year-end points in any division with fences at 3' or higher in the same year and may only receive points in this section for one year. This division is called Baby Green Hunter in some organizations; always double check fence height and other specifications.

GREEN HUNTER 3' AND 3'3": A 3' / 3'3" Green Hunter is a horse of any age in its first or second year of showing over 3' to 3'3" fences. See USEF & USHJA Rule Books for additional specifications.

LOW ADULT HUNTER: Open to amateur riders. Fences 2'6". *Cross Entry:* Riders may not cross enter into any class or section at the same competition where the fences exceed 3' (Exception: All Age Group Equitation Classes) Riders who compete in the 3' Adult Amateur Hunter Section may show one horse in the Low Adult Amateur Hunter Section. Horse and Rider Combination: Low Adult Amateur Hunter Horse/rider combinations

may not cross enter into any classes or section where the fences exceed 2'9" at the same competition. (Exception: All Age Group Equitation). This division is called Intermediate Adult Hunter in some organizations; always double check fence height and other specifications.

ADULT AMATEUR HUNTER: Horses to be ridden by amateurs. Fences 3', spreads not to exceed fence heights. Ponies may be shown by Adults, suitability to count. Handy Hunter Classes are optional and can be added at the competition management's discretion.

ADULT EQUITATION ON THE FLAT: Open to all amateur riders **eligible for the Adult Amateur Hunter division.**

LOW ADULT EQUITATION ON THE FLAT: Open to amateur riders eligible for the Low Adult Hunter division.

N.A.R.H.A. ADULT EQUITATION: Open to all Amateur members. To be shown over a minimum of eight fences 2'9" to 3' in height, spread not to exceed fence height. The course may be either a hunter or jumper type and must include at least two changes of direction and a combination. Water obstacles are not permitted. A numerical score must be announced at the completion of the first round. Top four riders are required to return for further testing (USEF tests 1-19). Classes with fewer than 12 riders in the original class may have the test included in the original course. If a show does not offer the N.A.R.H.A. class, points in one class with corresponding specifications (e.g., Ariat Medal) will count as N.A.R.H.A. points.

MICHAEL RHEINHEIMER LOW CHILDREN'S/LOW ADULT MEDAL: Open to riders eligible for Low Children's and Low Adult Hunter section. To be shown over a minimum of eight fences 2'6" in height, spreads not to exceed fence height, and must include at least two changes of direction. A numerical score must be announced at the completion of the first round. Top four riders are required to return for further testing (USEF tests 1-19). Classes with fewer than four riders in the original class may have the test included in the original course. If a show does not offer the Mike Rheinheimer Medal, points in one class with corresponding specifications will count as Mike Rheinheimer Medal points.

CHILDREN'S HUNTER: To be ridden by a Junior exhibitor. Fences 3', spreads not to exceed fence height. Handy Hunter Classes are optional and can be added at the competition management's discretion.

CHILDREN'S EQUITATION ON THE FLAT: Open to all riders eligible for the Children's Hunter section.

FOX SMITH MEMORIAL MEDAL CLASS: Open to all Junior members who have not competed in a national medal finals with fences at 3'6". To be shown over a minimum of eight fences 2'9" to 3' in height, spreads not to exceed fence height. The course may be either a hunter or jumper type and must include at least two changes of direction and a combination. Water obstacles are not permitted. A numerical score must be announced at the completion of the first round. Top four riders are required to return for further testing (USEF tests 1-19). Classes with less than 12 riders in the original class may have the test included in the original course. If a show does not offer the Fox Smith Medal class, points in one class with corresponding specifications (e.g., THIS Medal) will count as Fox Smith Medal points.

LOW CHILDREN'S HUNTER: To be ridden by a junior exhibitor. Fences 2'6". *Cross Entry:* Riders may not cross enter into any class or section at the same competition where the fences exceed 3' (Exception: All Age Group Equitation Classes) Riders who compete in the 3' Children's Hunter Horse Section may show one horse in the Low Children's Hunter Horse Section. Horse and Rider Combination: Low Children's Hunter Horse/rider combinations may not cross enter into any classes or section where the fences exceed 2'9" at the same competition. (Exception: All Age Group Equitation). This division is called Intermediate Children's Hunter in some organizations; always double check fence height and other specifications.

LOW CHILDREN'S EQUITATION ON THE FLAT: Open to all riders eligible for the Low Children's Hunter section.

CHILDREN'S HUNTER PONY: Open to ponies ridden by a Junior exhibitor. *Cross Entry:* Rider: Age restrictions in the regular pony sections do not apply. Riders may only show one children's pony when showing multiple ponies in the Regular or Green Pony Sections. Or if a rider is showing multiple ponies in the children's pony section, then they can only show one pony in the Regular or Green Pony Section. Horse/Rider Combination: The same pony/rider combination may not show in the Green or Regular pony Section at the same show. Fences 2' for small and medium and 2'6" for large ponies; spreads not to exceed fence height. Distances for this section should be set on the 12-foot stride.

CHILDREN'S PONY EQUITATION ON THE FLAT: Open to all riders eligible for the Children's Pony Hunter Section. Rider may nominate for points in only this class or the Pony Equitation on the Flat class.

GREEN PONY HUNTER: A Green Pony Hunter is a pony not exceeding 14.2 hands, of any age, in its first or second year of showing (not necessarily consecutive) in any classes that require ponies to jump the regulation height or higher in their respective sections (2'3" small, 2'6" medium, 2'9" large). A pony that has changed height sections in its green years may complete the green years at its new height. A green pony may also compete in the Regular Pony Hunter section at its respective height.

PONY HUNTER: OPHA shows offering the Pony Hunter division will be required to change the distances of in and outs and lines less than 100 feet to accommodate the different size of pony strides. Fences 2'3" small, 2'6" medium, 2'9" to 3' large. The exhibitor may be asked to validate the size of the pony.

PONY EQUITATION ON THE FLAT: Open to all riders eligible for the Pony Hunter section.

DICK GASCOIGNE MEMORIAL PONY MEDAL: Open to riders eligible for the Pony Hunter division. To be shown over a course of not less than six obstacles at fence heights 2'3" small, 2'6" medium, 2'9" to 3' large. Two tests (USEF tests 1-22, excluding test 15) are required during the first round. Only one rider per pony permitted. Ponies need not be nominated. Two riders must complete the course in order for points to count for OPHA. If a show does not offer the Gascoigne Pony Medal class, points in one class with corresponding specifications (e.g., USEF Pony Medal) will count as Gascoigne Pony Medal points. **No Junior over 12 years of age may compete on a small pony. No Junior over 14 years of age may compete on a medium pony.**

SHORT STIRRUP HUNTER: Open to riders 12 years of age and younger. Riders age 12 who are eligible for Short Stirrup under OPHA rules may earn points for Short Stirrup in the Limit Rider or Long Stirrup division only at shows where the Short Stirrup division is limited to riders 11 years old and Limit Rider(or Long Stirrup) is limited to riders 12 and older, as long as the rest of the division specifications match. Fences 2': oxers and in & outs not permitted. It is strongly recommended that tall boxes and double boxes with rails not be used. **Short Stirrup riders may not compete in any classes with fences higher than 2' or in any Pony Hunter or Children's Pony Hunter classes (except for age group equitation).**

LONG STIRRUP HUNTER: Open to riders 13 years of age and older. Fences 2': oxers and in & outs not permitted. It is strongly recommended that tall boxes and double boxes with rails not be used. **Long Stirrup riders may not compete in any classes with fences higher than 2' or in any Pony Hunter or Children's Pony Hunter classes, (except for age group equitation).** This division is sometimes called "Limit Hunter" at some OHJA shows. Limit Hunter classes that have an age restriction will count for OPHA points, as long as the rest of the division specifications match.

SHORT STIRRUP EQUITATION ON THE FLAT: Open to riders eligible for the Short Stirrup Hunter division. Riders age 12 who are eligible for Short Stirrup Equitation on the Flat under OPHA rules may earn points for this class in the Limit Rider Equitation on the Flat only at shows where this class is limited to riders 11 years old and under, as long as the rest of the class specifications match.

LONG STIRRUP EQUITATION ON THE FLAT: Open to riders eligible for the Long Stirrup Hunter division. Riders who 13 years of age and older who are eligible for Long Stirrup Equitation on the Flat under OPHA rules may earn points for this class in the Limit Rider Equitation on the Flat only at shows where this class is limited to riders 12 years and older, as long as the rest of the class specifications match.

JUMPER DIVISIONS

Draw reins and German martingale may not be used in any competition/class restricted to Ponies, Juniors, and/or Amateurs, or by age of horse. Draw reins and German martingales may only be used in a conventional manner when schooling or in classes with no prize money that are offered at 1.20m or below. Draw reins and/or German martingales may not be used on Ponies at any time when ridden by a Junior. No other head set devices (chambon, etc.) are permitted in any class.

Hooded blinkers, sunglasses, fly masks, goggles, etc. that cover the horse's eyes are only allowed with a veterinary certificate stating the necessity. Blinkers or cheek pieces attached to the bridle may not exceed 5cm (2").

BEGINNER JUMPER 2'6" (0.8 m): Awards for the year in this division are restricted to Junior and Amateur riders. If a show allows professionals to ride in Beginner Jumpers, only horses ridden juniors and amateurs will receive OPHA points. Beginner Jumper classes scored under Table II, Sec .1 (see USEF JP 146.2) or Table III (USEF see JP 148) will not count for OPHA points. Courses must not include combinations of fewer than three strides. Horse/rider combination may not earn points in any other OPHA Jumper division except for Intermediate Children's Jumper or Intermediate Adult Jumper. Always double check fence height and other specifications; for example, this division is called Intermediate Children's or Intermediate Adult Jumpers at WEC and Brave Horse.

INTERMEDIATE CHILDRENS (or ADULT JUMPER: Open to junior/amateur riders. Fence height 2'9" – 3' (0.85 – 0.95 m. This division is called Novice Children's (Adult) Jumper at some shows (WEC and Brave Horse, for example; always double check fence height and other specifications.

1.0/1.05m JUNIOR (or AMATEUR JUMPER: Open to junior/amateur riders. This was previously called Low Children's (Adult) Jumper. Fence heights to be set at 1.00–1.05 m (3'3"–3'5"). 1.0/1.05 Junior (Amateur) Jumper riders may not cross enter into any classes held above 1.15 m (3'9") at the same competition. **1.0/1.05m Junior (Amateur) Jumper horse/rider combinations may cross enter into the 1.10/1.15 Junior (Amateur) Jumpers at the same competition.**

1.10/1.15m JUNIOR (or AMATEUR) JUMPER: Open to horses and ponies ridden by a junior/amateur exhibitor. This was previously called Children's/Adult Jumper. Fences 1.10–1.15 m (3'6"–3'9"). 1.10/1.15m Junior (Amateur) Jumper riders may not cross enter into High Junior (Amateur) Jumper classes or any other jumper class exceeding 1.30 m (4'3") at the same competition with the exception of classes that do not offer prize money (including add back money). **1.10/1.15m Junior (Amateur) Jumper horse/rider combinations may cross enter into the 1.0/1.05 Junior (Amateur) Jumpers at the same competition.**

HUNTER BREEDING: See current USEF Rule Book for individual class specifications.

SCHOOLING RIDER CLASS DESCRIPTIONS & RULES

These classes are geared toward riders in a lesson program who are just starting to go to horse shows, or moving up in level of difficulty. Safe, simple courses are recommended. Emphasis will be placed on suitability of mount to rider's ability level. Safety will be the foremost concern in these classes. Demonstrating control of mount is extremely important. Excessive speed will be penalized and may cause elimination from the show ring.

Horses and riders in the Schooling Divisions must follow current USEF tack and equipment rules, **except standing martingales will be permitted in all classes in all Schooling Rider divisions.**

LEADLINE: This division is for riders 8 years of age and under who have never shown in any equestrian discipline. Rider may not enter in any other class or division except Hunter Breeding. "Special needs" riders may have age requirements waived by show committee. Leadline Riders must compete in three shows to be eligible for an award.

WALK/TROT GROUNDPOLLES: To be shown over a simple course with a minimum of four poles on the ground. The poles should be trotted, and riders may walk in the corners to re-establish control if needed. Slight mistakes will not be heavily penalized. Participants are no longer eligible once the rider has competed in any other OPHA division or classes, except for Walk/Trot/Canter Groundpoles.

WALK/TROT/CANTER GROUNDPOLLES: To be shown over a simple course with a minimum of four poles on the ground. The poles should be cantered, and riders may trot in the corners to re-establish control if needed. Slight mistakes will not be heavily penalized. Participants are no longer eligible once the rider has competed in any other OPHA division or classes, except for Walk/Trot Groundpoles. In flat classes in this division, no more than six entries to canter at one time.

WALK/TROT X-RAILS: Open to all ages. There must be a minimum of four (4) fences. Ground lines are required. Flower boxes and brush boxes are optional.

WALK/TROT/CANTER X-RAILS: Open to all ages. There must be a minimum of four (4) fences. Ground lines are required. Flower boxes and brush boxes are optional. In flat classes in this division, no more than six entries to canter at one time.

PRE-LIMIT RIDER (fence height 1'6"): Course may be trotted. Slight mistakes will not be heavily penalized. In flat classes in this division, no more than six entries to canter at one time. Riders may also compete for points in either the Walk/Trot/Canter division or Limit Rider division. This division is called Walk/Trot/Canter 18" at some shows.

LIMIT RIDER: Fences 1'6" to 2'. Oxers not permitted.

NOVICE RIDER: Fences 2' to 2'3". Oxers optional.

INTRO JUMPER: Open to riders eligible for the Limit Rider division. Points will follow the rider for OPHA, regardless of how points are awarded at individual shows for that show's championship. If a rider shows more than one horse or pony in the Intro Jumper division at the same show, only the highest scoring mount's points will be awarded to that rider for that show. Speed classes Table II, Sec .1 (see USEF JP 146.2) or Table III (USEF see JP 148) will not count for OPHA points. Jumps at 2' (0.6m), no oxers, and no combinations of fewer than three strides.

NOVICE RIDER JUMPER: Open to riders eligible for the Novice Rider division. Points will follow the rider for OPHA, regardless of how points are awarded at individual shows for that show's championship. If a rider shows more than one horse or pony in the Intro Jumper division at the same show, only the highest scoring mount's points will be awarded to that rider for that show. Speed classes Table II, Sec .1 (see USEF JP 146.2) or Table III (USEF see JP 148) will not count for OPHA points. Jumps at 2'3" (0.7m). No combinations of fewer than three strides.

Schooling Rider Medal

Open to riders of all ages participating in Limit or Novice Rider. Fences offered at 2' and 2'3" (oxers not permitted). Minimum 7 jumps. Roll back, broken or bending lines are permitted. One test (USEF 1 – 8) is required and should be included in the course. Distances to be set as per all other 2' and 2'3" divisions. Shows may offer two Schooling Rider Medals, one at each height, but riders may not enter both classes.

SCHOOLING RIDER RULES

1. In order to receive points for High Score Honors riders must be current members and have selected Schooling divisions on their membership form. Horses need not be nominated.
2. Riders nominated for other OPHA regular divisions are not eligible for Schooling Show High Score Honors.
3. Points will not carry from one division to the next
4. A riders age will be determined according to USEF rules – age as of December 1st of the current competition year.
5. Horse shows applying for OPHA Schooling Rider class recognition must offer at least 3 of the 4 listed divisions.
6. There will be two over fences, one under saddle, and one flat equitation class in each division. Divisions should be set up so points follow the rider and that all four classes count equally toward the Championship.
7. In all Schooling Rider Divisions, at least two entries per class must complete for points to count. A horse has completed an over fences class when the horse completes the posted course and a score is recorded on the judge's card. A horse failing to complete the entire course is not eligible to receive points, awards, or prize money, nor will it be counted in the number of entries necessary to fill a class or section. A horse has completed an under saddle class when the horse has executed all the gaits required and remains in the ring until the class has lined up.]
8. Points will follow the **rider** in all divisions. If a rider shows more than one mount in a Schooling Show section, only the highest scoring mount's points will count for that rider at that show.

JUDGING

1. Standing martingales **will be permitted** in all classes.
2. Only six to canter at one time in Walk/Trot/Canter, Pre-Limit Rider, Limit Rider, and Novice Rider flat classes.
3. Riders in Walk/Trot X-Rails may trot in and canter out of lines, but should exhibit control and return to the trot before the next line.
4. In the Walk/Trot/Canter, Pre-Limit Rider, Limit Rider, and Novice Rider sections, trotting to obtain a simple change of lead is permitted and is not to be penalized.
5. It is recommended that show management print out the OPHA specs for Schooling Rider classes to provide to the judges.