

Hunter Under Saddle: Best Practices



Photo Credit: Terise Cole/USHJA

Hunter Under Saddle: Best Practices

With the recent amendment of the Hunter Under Saddle (HU 129.1) rule, it seemed to be a good moment to discuss best practices that judges have been utilizing as they adapt to the recent amendment. Also, to clarify the Hunter Under Saddle rule in contrast to the Equitation Flat and Flat Phases rule (EQ 108.2.a)



USEF Rulebook

HU 129.1 Hunter Under Saddle

Judges must work competitors in groups of (20) or less or they must work a larger group in one direction, line up their selected competitors before working those remaining on the rail in the second direction, excusing the unselected competitors, and judging the selected competitors in the second direction.

EQ 108.2.a Flat Classes and Flat Phases

In Hunter Seat or Jumping Seat Equitation flat classes or phases, judges must work competitors in groups of twenty (20) or less.

- The EQ rule requires that flat groups **not exceed 20 competitors**
- The HU rule allows judges to work groups greater than 20, but to reduce the total number for the second direction

Factors for Consideration

As judges determine the best practices with larger hunter under saddle groups, take into account:

1. Size of arena
2. Total number of horses or ponies
3. Skill level of competitors
4. Maturity of horses or ponies
5. Safety



Photo Credit: Megan Lacy/USHJA

Best Practices in Organizing a Hunter Under Saddle

1. In a larger arena, work all competitors in first direction, all three gaits, and then select top 8-10 to wait in the center of the ring. Remaining competitors reverse direction, complete all 3 gaits. Some of these may be asked to compete with those in the center – all proceeding to the second direction. Line up – pin final awards.



Photo Credit: Tricia Booker/USHJA

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2. In a smaller arena, line up competitors, divide to approximately half the group. Work first group both directions, identify approximately top eight, to be excused from the ring until second half of group works both directions in the same sequence of gaits as the first group. Identify any competitors from second group to work together with the first group, which returns to the ring. Final placings based on real time comparison of final group in all three gaits in both directions.



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3. OTHER OPTIONS – DISCUSS.



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