



HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

(as of December 31, 2020)

PART 1 – The Past

The United States Hunter Jumper Association (USHJA) is the largest single organization under the umbrella of the United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) and represents the interests of approximately 43,000 members participating in the hunter and/or jumper aspects of equestrian sport. The hunter and jumper disciplines have been an integral part of USEF since 1917, when the Federation was originally formed as the Association of American Horse Shows.

Recognizing the benefits of establishing an independent identity with a focus on hunter and jumper activities in the United States, the USHJA was established in 2004 as the official USEF Recognized Affiliate Association for the hunter discipline and the Fédération Equestre Internationale (FEI) Discipline Association for the jumper discipline. In its short history, the USHJA has quickly grown into the single largest USEF recognized affiliate. The Association has consistently operated with surplus revenue and has constructed an office building to serve as its home and base for administrating and developing the equestrian experience of its members.

It is important to look at the origin of the USHJA with respect to two other parent organizations to understand how the USHJA fits into a wider governance framework and to better understand the role the USHJA plays in the larger landscape of equestrian sport. By examining the roles of both the FEI and the USEF, one sees how their positions relate to the USHJA's role within its segment of equestrian sport.

The FEI is the international governing body for all Olympic equestrian and World Equestrian Games disciplines. Headquartered in Lausanne, Switzerland, it has the distinction of being recognized by the International Olympic Committee as the entity responsible for management of the sport of equestrian for the Olympic Games. The members of the FEI are countries (not individuals or organizations) and the FEI creates and regulates the rules for our international equestrian sport. Virtually 100 percent of the international equestrian events held worldwide in the disciplines of jumping, eventing, dressage, driving, endurance, reining, vaulting and para-equestrian are conducted under the auspices of the FEI.

Within each member country, there is one equestrian entity recognized by FEI as that country's national federation. That single FEI authorized federation is responsible for selecting and fielding horses and riders to represent that country in equestrian sport anywhere in the world. This includes major events like Nations Cup competitions, World Cup competitions, Continental championships and other events in which countries compete. The USEF serves that role as the official Equestrian Federation for the United States.

FEI authorization to be the exclusive federation representing the United States for international events is not the only status card the USEF holds. The United States Olympic Committee (USOC), headquartered in Colorado Springs, Colorado, chooses a single representative organization for each sport allowed to compete in the Olympic Games. These organizations are referred to as national governing bodies (NGBs) and the USOC has named the USEF as the NGB for the sport of equestrian, which includes the four Olympic disciplines of dressage, eventing, show jumping and para-equestrian.

Understanding the roles of the FEI and USEF in equestrian sport makes it possible to see how the USHJA fits into the national governance model. As mentioned, the USHJA is the official USEF Recognized Affiliate Organization representing the hunter and jumper disciplines in the United States. This official designation has a number of positive ramifications for the Association.

Among them are the following:

- The USEF requires mandatory membership in the USHJA for those individuals who are hunter/jumper members of the USEF. These membership fees provide the basic funding for the USHJA
- The USEF allows the USHJA to be its sole source for recommending the hunter and jumper rules that are incorporated into the USEF Rule Book. Thus, the rules of hunter and jumper competitions throughout the United States form one of the main cornerstones of our affiliate structure
- Regulation/Enforcement – The Federation provides the use of its regulatory and hearing processes to USHJA and its members
- Equine Drug Testing – The Federation administers and provides equine drug testing at recognized competitions to the USHJA and its members
- Competition Licensing – The Federation licenses hunter/jumper competitions and defends all legal actions related to competitions and licensing rules
- Officials Education and Licensing – The Federation licenses hunter and jumper officials and, with input from its officially recognized affiliates (for example, USHJA), administers the educational process
- Marketing – The Federation provides marketing of the sport of equestrian to individuals inside and outside of the sport

- Membership and Information Technology (IT) Services – The Federation administers the USHJA membership process and provides this and IT services at below-market cost to the USHJA

As noted in the USEF description above, the USHJA was born because the hunter/jumper disciplines within the USEF (formerly known as the American Horse Shows Association or AHSA) had no recognized affiliate organization tasked specifically with handling the disciplines' unique needs and requirements. If a hunter/jumper person was asked prior to 2003 what his or her national discipline organization was, he or she would have answered, the AHSA. In the late 1980s, the AHSA embarked upon a comprehensive five-year strategic plan that firmly identified its mission to serve as an umbrella organization for each of its affiliated breeds and disciplines, all of which with the exception of the hunter and jumper disciplines, had their own autonomous affiliate organizations that serviced the unique needs and requirements specific to that breed and/or discipline. Upon reviewing the landscape at the time, the AHSA realized that in order to fulfill its mission and properly serve its internal constituency, there existed a need to establish a structure for the disciplines of hunters and jumpers similar to that which existed for the other breeds and disciplines under the Federation's umbrella.

The initial step to fulfill this need was the AHSA Planning Committee recommendation to create the National Hunter Jumper Council in the mid-1990s. Although the NHJC was internal to the AHSA, it focused on the unique needs and interests specific to the hunter/jumper disciplines and, for nearly a decade, functioned as the compromise solution to serve the discipline-specific needs of the AHSA's hunter/jumper members. As the Council operated through the years, value associated with creating a completely autonomous entity became apparent. The appeal of creating an independent and separately funded organization gained momentum, eventually leading to the formation of the USHJA.

The Literal vs. Figurative USHJA Building

If one talks about the USHJA building or structure, it is easy and proper to immediately assume the subject refers to the brick, mortar, steel and glass building located on the grounds of the Kentucky Horse Park that serves as the Association's home base. Of course the existence of that building and the fact that it is mortgage-free is a huge accomplishment and a testament to the Association's staff, leadership and members. However, this Historic Overview document is involved with a figurative structure euphemistically called, "The house that USHJA built."

Those who are involved with creating the Historic Overview and the current Strategic Plan, as well as those who have been involved with the creation of the USHJA over the last 10 years, have been and are building this figurative structure and want it to be durable; one that can withstand the best the elements can throw, including economic downturns, conflict and political changes, just to name a few. The house is being built to remain strong and unscathed, so that it can be passed on to future generations of USHJA leadership.

To that end, the Strategic Plan is meant to serve as a roadmap, showing where we came from, where we are now and where we intend to go.

2003

- Discussions started in July of 2003 regarding the creation of a hunter/jumper affiliate organization to represent the hunter and jumper disciplines
- Two committees were formed consisting of 20 members each. A planning committee to develop the concept and create strategic plans and an advisory committee to provide additional feedback and facilitate communication with a broader audience
- Draft governance models were created based upon the findings of the Planning Committee
- Following several months of Planning Committee meetings, a facilitated retreat was held in Newark, New Jersey
- As a result of this retreat, an interim Board of Directors was created to further advance the goals of the Planning Committee. The Board totaled 17 members including a president, secretary and treasurer who would serve until the first election
- Bylaws were drafted and approved by the interim Board
- The 17 directors all made a financial contribution to the treasury of the new organization – USHJA
- Board members and volunteers assisted with administrative duties
- Legal documents were filed to obtain a tax ID number and achieve 501(c)(3) status
- A logo was created and trademarked for USHJA

2004

- Membership 187
- A presentation of the organization was made to the public at the USEF Annual Meeting in Los Angeles, California
- Further discussions with USEF representatives and hunter/jumper members led to refining the USHJA structure
- In July, a presentation was made to the USEF Board at their mid-year meeting. Janine Malone (dressage) called the question and the USHJA was approved as the Recognized Hunter and Jumper Affiliate Organization with a vote of 22 to 2
- In August, the USEF Executive Committee approved mandatory membership for participation in USEF licensed hunter/jumper competitions beginning December 1, 2004
- Two full-time employees were hired in October of 2004 and these USHJA employees worked within the USEF building
- The first USHJA Annual Meeting was held in Phoenix, Arizona, in December 2004 with 159 members attending
- Arizona Hunter/Jumper Association, Zone 5 and Colorado Hunter/Jumper Association were Annual Meeting sponsors
- The Annual Meeting was held at the Hilton Tucson El Conquistador Golf & Tennis Resort
- Volunteer of the Year was Cortwright Wetherill
- The host venue required a personal guarantee for payment of the Annual Meeting. Bill Moroney provided this guarantee

2005

- Membership reached 31,051
- Committees were created and seated with volunteers
- Program development began including the Clinics Program, Mentor Program, Trainers Directory (sponsored by Equisure) and Hunterdon Cup Equitation Classic
- The first Hunterdon Cup was held and Lexy Reed was the winner
- USHJA sponsored the first Pony Finals Judge's Perspective Clinic
- The Quarterly Newsletter was created
- The Planning Committee was seated and held its first meeting in Tampa, Florida, to develop a strategic plan for the next four years
- Employees increased with the transfer of former USEF employees to USHJA. Approximate staff size reached four including an executive director. Staff gradually increased as work increased and USHJA employees moved to a separate work space within the USEF headquarters.
- USHJA Annual Meeting was held at the Fountainbleau Hotel in Miami, Florida, with 200 members attending
 - ◊ Presenting sponsors included Devon Hill BMW and Stadium Jumping
 - ◊ The first elections were held and the Board increased to 22 members

2006

- Membership 32,929
- Program development continued with the addition of the Affiliates Awards, Breeders & Stallion Owners Directory, Clinics in a Box, Online Classifieds, Owners Resource Guide, Trainers Q&A, Amateur Sportsmanship Award, Foundation Awards and Rider Recognition Awards
- USHJA established a Code of Conduct for Horse Welfare
- USHJA In Stride quarterly magazine was founded and its name chosen by the membership
- Charles Owen signed on as sponsor of the Mentor Program
- Practical Horseman signed on as sponsor of the Clinics Program
- World Equestrian Brands signed on as sponsor of the Hunterdon Cup
- New USHJA website was launched

- Affiliate organization online verification service was launched
- First Trainer's Symposium was offered in November in Wellington, Florida, with 185 members in attendance
- The Annual Meeting was held at the Hilton Dallas Lincoln Center in Dallas, Texas, with 220 members in attendance
- The first President's Distinguished Service Awards were presented

2007

- Membership 35,834
- Programs continued to grow seeing the addition of the Owners Recognition Awards, Sales Integrity Program, Junior Career Development, Shoeing and Medication Booklet, Judge's Mentor Program, Youth Sportsman's Charter Award, Equine Retirement Facility Listing, High Performance Hunters, Online College and Scholarship Listing, the first USHJA All-Member Demographic Survey, USHJA History Project and USHJA International Hunter Style Challenge (precursor to the Hunter Derby)
- The first International Hunter Derby class was held in Zionsville, IN on December 7, 2007
- WCHR World Cup Team Challenge was held with the World Cup Finals in Las Vegas, NV
- USHJA In Stride magazine went to bi-monthly publication
- USHJA E-News was launched
- The Annual Meeting was held at the Pointe Hilton Tapatio Cliffs Resort in Phoenix, Arizona, with 200 members attending

2008

- Membership 36,365
- New programs included the International Hunter Derby, Affiliate Equitation Awards, GHM Horsemastership Clinic sponsorship and Emerging Athletes Program
- The USHJA Foundation was created and announced
- The Hunter Restructure Committee was created
- International Hunter Derby sponsorships included ASG Software Solutions, Dietrich Insurance, Walsh Saddlery, Dover Saddlery, Charles Owen and Essex Classics
- Essex Classics signs on as Hunterdon Cup title sponsor
- Forty-eight International Hunter Derby classes were held with the Winter Equestrian Festival in Wellington, Florida, the first to offer a \$50,000 prize.
- The USHJA obtained a site for its building, design was completed, the Capital Campaign was launched and construction started
- The Annual Meeting was held at the Hilton Downtown Nashville in Nashville, Tennessee, with 250 members attending
- The first USHJA Eugene R. Mische Lifetime Achievement Awards were presented to Beth Miner and Alvin Topping
- The Trainer Certification Program was launched
- Board elections were held and the Board grew to 23 members

2009

- Membership 36,027
- Program development included the opening of applications for the Emerging Athletes Program, Member's Choice Awards, Breeder's Incentive Fund was announced, Competition and Facility Directory and the Outreach Competitions and Medal program were announced
- Wilhelm Genn was the first rider to achieve membership in the Million Dollar Club of the Rider Recognition Program
- Trainer Certification Category I was announced
- SmartPak signed on as the Trainer Symposium sponsor
- The inaugural International Hunter Derby Finals was held in Lexington, Kentucky

- The Intercollegiate Horse Show Association and USHJA member partnership was created
- The Zone Support Fee was announced for implementation in 2010 at \$2.00 per entry
- USHJA moved into its new headquarters
- The USHJA Foundation Zone Grant Program was announced
- The Horsemanship Quiz Challenge was created and implemented
- The Annual Meeting was held at the Vinoy Renaissance in St. Petersburg, Florida, with 300 members attending
- The Clothes Horse signed on as the Annual Meeting presenting sponsor
- Larry Langer and Joe Fargis won Lifetime Achievement Award

2010

- Membership 36,126
- Program development included National Hunter Classic (becomes National Hunter Derby), Emerging Athletes Program National Finals, Foundation Awards are renamed Stirrup Cup Awards and Trainer Certification Program (TCP) Clinics
- The Breeder's Incentive Fund Program was started and quickly cancelled after receiving little support
- The first Emerging Athletes Program National Final was won by Carly Anthony and Ricky Neal
- USHJA Facebook page was created
- Equestrian Coach entered as educational provider to USHJA
- The Chronicle of the Horse sponsored the International Hunter Derby Program
- American Hunter Jumper Foundation dissolved and transferred all assets of the organization, including the World Championship Hunter Rider Program, to the USHJA
- USHJA hosted official ribbon cutting ceremony for the headquarters
- The Jane Marshall Dillon Award was created
- USHJA Derby horses participated at the World Equestrian Games for five days with more than 1,000 spectators watching daily
- The USHJA Foundation developed the Horseman's Assistance Fund
- The Wheeler Family became the naming donor of the USHJA Museum
- The Annual Meeting was held at the Westin La Cantera Resort in San Antonio, Texas, with 346 members attending
- Texas Hunter Jumper Association signed on as an Annual Meeting sponsor
- Danny Robertshaw and Colonel John Russell won the Lifetime Achievement Award

2011

- Membership 41,694
- Program development included the Hunter Challenge, offered as pilot program for Outreach Competitions; Equine Junior Apprentice Program launched; Small Hunter Section created; Peter Wetherill Cup established; Owners Legacy Award launched; and the new Increment System approved
- The second USHJA all-member survey was conducted
- Markel Insurance signed a five-year sponsorship of the Trainer Certification Program
- Charles Owen signed as first USHJA Official Sponsor
- Shop USHJA.com was launched
- Show Jumping Hall of Fame moved to USHJA
- USHJA Foundation assisted with private showing of BUCK as Emerging Athletes Program Fundraiser in Wellington
- First Foundation Making a Dream recipient was Lizzy Traband
- Collegiate Equestrian Lettering Program was created
- National Horse Show Retrospective was exhibited in the USHJA Wheeler Museum
- The Annual Meeting was held at the Roosevelt Hotel Waldorf Astoria in New Orleans, Louisiana, with 362 members attending
- Diana Dodge and Georgine Winslett Won the Lifetime Achievement Award

2012

- Membership 43,388
- Program development included the creation of USHJA/American National Riding Commission Horsemanship Competitions, Vital Staff Award, National Hunter Classics become National Hunter Derby, Pre-Green Incentive Program announced and Youth Leadership Award established
- Cargill and Crown Equine became first Contributing Sponsors of USHJA
- Kentucky Equine Research and American Association of Professional Farriers became Educational Providers
- First Mobile App was launched
- Ponies Through the Decades and Equitation – A Foundation for Life museum exhibits opened in the summer and fall respectively
- Online video library platform was launched through the Wheeler Museum
- Virtual Museum exhibit went online
- New governance model went into effect with jumper and hunter departments created and staffed as part of the organization's restructure; the hunter and jumper working groups were established
- Hunter and Jumper E-News were developed
- Professional E-News was developed
- Trainer Certification searchable platform was presented with Trainer Profiles
- Updated website was launched
- The Annual Meeting was held at the Hilton Miami Downtown in Miami, Florida, with 396 members attending
- Board elections were held under the new governance structure and Board was composed of 21 members
- Pam Baker and Arthur Hawkins won the Lifetime Achievement Award

2013

- Membership: 43,619
- Emerging Athletes Program celebrated its fifth year
- Rood & Riddle Equine Hospital and Pharmacy signed as Official Sponsor
- Thoroughbred Show Horse museum exhibit opened
- \$157,990 was offered at Inaugural Pre-Green Incentive Championship
- \$170,000 was offered in prize money for International Hunter Derby Championship
- Kelley Farmer became first hunter rider to reach \$1 million earned for the Rider Money Earned Award
- \$100,000 was announced as the purse for the 2014 World Championship Hunter Rider Spectacular
- The USHJA building mortgage loan was fully paid, fulfilling a 2007 resolution of the USHJA directors and the Planning Committee
- The Annual Meeting was held in Atlanta, Georgia, with 334 in attendance, in spite of the unusually harsh weather in the Eastern half of the country
- Betty Oare and Steve Stephens won the Lifetime Achievement Award
- Program development included:
 - ◊ The Children/Adult Amateur Jumper Regional Championships
 - ◊ International Hunter Derby Championship Tier System implemented
 - ◊ World Championship Hunter Rider Spectacular offered on West Coast for the first time
 - ◊ World Championship Hunter Rider Medallion Program was implemented
 - ◊ Horsemanship Stable Challenge initiated
 - ◊ Online Trainer Certification Course launched

2014

- Membership: 44,391
- The Annual Meeting was held at Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas, Nevada, with 331 members attending
- National Vice President position established

- Elegance, Power, and Heart: The Thoroughbred Show Horse and A Sporting Tradition: Iconic Horse Shows Across the United States were exhibited in the USHJA Wheeler Museum
- Leo Conroy and Sally Ike won the Lifetime Achievement Award
- Standlee Hay became the Official Forage Company of the USHJA
- Sweet Briar College became the presenting sponsor of the HQC Finals
- Nutrena signed as the Official Feed of the USHJA

2015

- Membership: 45,153
- The Annual Meeting was held at the Hilton Orlando Bonnet Creek in Orlando, Florida, with 316 members attending
- Program development included:
 - ◊ USHJA Pre-Green Challenge
 - ◊ USHJA 3'3" Jumping Seat Medal
- Kevin Price named fourth USHJA Executive Director
- A Sporting Tradition: Iconic Horse Shows Across the United States was exhibited in the USHJA Wheeler Museum
- Butch and Lu Thomas won the Lifetime Achievement Award
- HITS became the presenting sponsor of the USHJA Annual Meeting
- Emory and Henry signed as the Presenting Sponsor of the Gladstone Cup

2016

- Membership: 44,487
- The Annual Meeting was held at the Omni Resorts Rancho Las Palmas in Palm Springs, California, with 319 members attending
- Program development included:
 - ◊ Children's and Adult Amateur Hunter Regional Championships
 - ◊ USHJA Hunterdon Equitation Cup goes bicoastal
- Scholastic membership category established for IEA members
- Mary Babick named second USHJA President
- Gochman family becomes major donor to USHJA Foundation
- Hamel family establishes \$25,000 scholarship through USHJA Foundation
- USHJA begins providing educational programming for Licensed Officials
- USHJA Education Department established
- Medals, Memories & Milestones, IHSA 50th Anniversary, and IHSA: Partnering in Excellence were exhibited in the USHJA Wheeler Museum
- Chrystine Tauber and Raymond Francis won the Lifetime Achievement Award
- CWD signed as the Official Saddle of the USHJA
- NightWatch signed as a Contributing Sponsor of USHJA
- Visse Wedell Real Estate signed as a Contributing Sponsor of USHJA

2017

- Membership: 44,668
- The Annual Meeting was held at the Hyatt Regency San Antonio in San Antonio, Texas, with 271 members attending
- Program development included:
 - ◊ USHJA Pony Hunter Derby
 - ◊ Emerging Jumper Rider Program
 - ◊ Recognized Riding Academy

- Medals, Memories & Milestones, IHSA 50th Anniversary, and IHSA: Partnering in Excellence were exhibited in the USHJA Wheeler Museum
- Dianne Johnson and Philip A. DeVita won the Lifetime Achievement Award
- Cheryl Rubenstein named USHJA Volunteer of the Year
- Parlanti Signed as the Official Riding Boot of the USHJA
- World Equestrian Center signed as the title sponsor of the USHJA Annual Meeting
- Platinum Performance signed as the Title Sponsor of the GHIC
- Lindsay Maxwell Charitable Fund signed as the Title Sponsor of the EAP

2018

- Membership: 45,376
- The Annual Meeting was held at the Hilton Tampa Downtown in Tampa, Florida, with 277 members attending
- Program development included:
 - ◊ USHJA National Championships
 - ◊ Young Hunter Pony Championships
 - ◊ Green Hunter Incentive Regional Championship
 - ◊ Expanded Green Hunter Incentive to include 3'6" and 3'9"
- USHJA launches redesigned user-friendly website
- Pat Boyle named USHJA Volunteer of the Year
- Medals, Memories & Milestones was exhibited in the USHJA Wheeler Museum
- Ralph Caristo and Michael Page won the Lifetime Achievement Award
- AON signed as the Title Sponsor of the Inaugural USHJA National Championships
- Platinum Performance signed as the Title Sponsor of the IHDC and the GHIC

2019

- Membership: 45,354
- The Annual Meeting was held at the Denver Hilton City Center in Denver, Colorado, with 291 members attending
- Program development included:
 - ◊ USHJA Platinum Jumper Championships
 - ◊ USHJA 3'3" Hunter Seat Medal
 - ◊ USHJA Pony Hunter Derby Championships – East and West
 - ◊ Sallie B Wheeler Hunter Breeding Championships transitioned from USEF to USHJA
 - ◊ USHJA Show Jumping Rider Ranking List
- USHJA Job Board launched as a free online resource for members
- USHJA In Stride magazine won two first-place American Horse Publications Equine Media Awards
- Through the Lens: The Art of Hunter/Jumper Photography was exhibited in the USHJA Wheeler Museum
- Margaret "Sissie" Anderton and Brian Flynn won the Lifetime Achievement Award
- Britt McCormick, Cheryl Rubenstein, Andrew Philbrick, Skip Thornbury, and Sissy Wickes of the USHJA Planning Committee received the Volunteer of the Year Award for their work on strategic direction
- EMO signed as the Title Sponsor of the Jumping Seat Medal Series and Finals
- Big Ass Fans signed as an Awards Sponsor and Member Benefits Partner

2020

- Membership: 44,208
- The Annual Meeting changed to a virtual format, preceded by a virtual Education sessions
- USHJA recognized as one of Kentucky's Best Places to Work and ranked 24th in the small business category.

- Program development included:
 - ◊ USHJA Jumper Classic Series
 - ◊ Adult Horsemanship Quiz Challenge
- Cancellation of the USHJA National Championships, Zone Jumper Team Championships, Green Hunter Incentive Championships, and International Hunter Derby Championships due to COVID-19
- 2020-2025 Strategic Plan was approved
- Diversity, Inclusion and Advocacy Committee was established
- Development Department established
- USHJA and Horse & Country TV partner to launch USHJA TV
- Virtual Horse Shows offered through DigitalHorseShows.com
- Virtual educational programming and webinars offered to the membership
- Emerging Athletes Program was held virtually
- Horsemanship Quiz Challenge Nationals for Youth and Adults were held virtually
- Feed Aid Initiative launched
- Purina, Buckeye, Nutrena and Cavalor signed on as Feed Aid Providers
- Helmet Lab Fund established
- USHJA Puissance Challenge fundraiser was launched
- USHJA Learning Management System launched
- USHJA implemented separate IT infrastructure and began work on its own database
- Policy Manual launched as an online resource
- Hamel Family Scholarships awarded to Madelyne Brymesser and Kirsten Lafforthun
- Through the Lens: The Art of Hunter/Jumper Photography was exhibited in the USHJA Wheeler Museum
- Susan Ashe, Walter “Jimmy” Lee, and Susie Schoellkopf won the Lifetime Achievement Award
- Fran Dotoli received the USHJA Volunteer of the Year award
- Straight Arrow signed as the Official Grooming Product for USHJA Jumping and Equitation Championships
- Cavalor: Nutrena feeds signed as the Official Feed of USHJA
- Human Touch signed as the Preferred Massage Chair of the USHJA