



2027 & 2028 USHJA 2'6" JUNIOR/AMATEUR HUNTER DERBY SPECIFICATIONS

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2027 & 2028 USHJA 2'6" JUNIOR/AMATEUR HUNTER DERBY
SPECIFICATIONS

*Effective for competitions starting December 1, 2026, to November 30, 2028

I. Membership and Participation Requirements

- A. **To compete in a USHJA 2'6" Junior/Amateur Hunter Derby (2'6" Junior/Amateur Derby), horses must be recorded with the USEF and registered with the USHJA prior to the start of the class.**
- B. **To compete in a 2'6" Junior/Amateur Derby,** riders, owners, and trainers must be current Active members of USEF and USHJA to participate in this class. (see GR202).
- C. Exception: Foreign residents and horses and ponies in good standing with their National Federation are eligible to compete in this class but will not receive points unless they follow I.A. and I.B.
- D. **If specified in the prize list, the** number of horses a rider can compete in a 2'6" Junior/Amateur Hunter Derby may be limited.
- E. The prize list may specify that in order to be eligible to compete in a 2'6" Junior/Amateur Hunter Derby, a horse must compete in one (1) class at the same competition.
- F. The same horse/rider combination may not compete in the USHJA 2'6" Junior/Amateur Hunter Derby and the USHJA National Hunter Derby or the USHJA International Hunter Derby at the same competition.
- G. Riders may not compete in any hunter and equitation classes with fences over 2'9" or jumper classes over .90m at the same competition.

II. Competition Policies

A. Schooling

- 1. All horses competing in a 2'6" Junior/Amateur Derby must be ridden in official horse show schooling areas during both rounds of the class. (Exception: If management designates a specific schooling area for horses competing in the 2'6" Junior/Amateur Derby, all horses must be ridden in that designated schooling area during both rounds of the class.)
- 2. Horses that are competing in a 2'6" Junior/Amateur Derby that are found being ridden or schooled in other than an official horse show schooling area, or a specific schooling area designated for the 2'6" Junior/Amateur Derby, during the class will be eliminated. Entry fees will be forfeited.
- 3. Riders must wear the horse's Derby competition number while mounted. This includes horses entered simultaneously in another class, if any.
- 4. Horses that are competing in a 2'6" Junior/Amateur Hunter Derby that are found being ridden or schooled by a rider NOT wearing the number assigned to that horse will be eliminated from the class. Entry Fees will be forfeited.

B. Order of Go

- 1. The order of go must be posted a minimum of one hour prior to the start of the class.
- 2. The draw for the order of go may be performed by hand, or competition management may host a computer draw.
- 3. All horses must be ridden in the sequence that appears on the jumping order in the first round of the competition.
- 4. In the case of multiple rides, every effort will be made to have a minimum of eight horses

(if available) separating horses in the jump order.

5. In the second round horses will return in reverse order of their first round scores (lowest to highest). Any rider with multiple rides or a rider conflict may elect to move up in the order.

III. Competition Format

A. Traditional Format-Two Phases

1. The Classic Hunter Round
2. The Handy Hunter Round
3. Each round will be run separately.
4. All horse-and rider combinations will compete in the Classic Hunter Round.
5. The top twelve (12) horse-and-rider combinations from the Classic Hunter Round, if available and including ties for the last qualifying position, will compete in the Handy Hunter Round. (Exception: More than twelve (12) horse-and-rider combinations may compete in the Handy Hunter Round if stated in the prize list.)

B. Hunt and Go Format-Two Phases (Note: The 2'6" Junior/Amateur Derby Hunt and Go format may differ from the National Hunter Derby and International Hunter Derby Hunt and Go formats.)

1. The Classic Hunter Round
2. The Handy Hunter Round
3. Each round will run consecutively.
4. After the completion of the Classic Hunter Round all horse-and-rider combinations not eliminated in the Classic Hunter Round will pick up their pace and pass through a set of markers to begin their Handy Hunter Round. Riders are not permitted to walk or pause between rounds.

IV. Holding and Dividing of Classes

- A. Competition management is required to run the class if there are twelve (12) or more entries.
- B. Competition management may choose to run the class if there are less than twelve (12) entries.
- C. When there are forty (40) or more entries, the class may be split into two separate classes.
- D. Once fifty (50) entries have competed, the class must be split into two (2) sections. Cross entry of horses between the two (2) 2'6" Junior/Amateur Derbies is not permitted.

V. Entry Fees and Prize Money

- A. The entry fee may not exceed 10% of the prize money offered.
- B. The entry fee must include the USHJA 2'6" Junior/Amateur Hunter Derby per horse entrant fee.
- C. A minimum of \$500 prize money must be offered per class in USEF licensed Channel I (Premier and National) rated competitions and competitions that have been approved for a Special Competition status.
- D. A minimum of \$250 prize money must be offered per class in USEF licensed Channel II (Regional) rated competitions.
- E. USEF licensed Channel I and Channel II rated competitions may offer more than the minimum prize money required.
- F. Competitions wishing to offer additional prize money above the minimum required and pay additional placings must print the information in the prize list and notify the USHJA of the final prize money distribution.
 1. 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 GR 903).

2. *The prize money awarded to each placing below 12th place must not exceed the amount awarded to 12th place.*

G. 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 -15%	9 th -3%
4 th -7%	10 th -2%
5 th -6%	11 th -2%
6 th -5%	12 th 1%

H. If there are twelve (12) or fewer entries in the class, prize money must be paid according to the breakdown in Section 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.

VI. *Judging Requirements*

See GR 1304 for Judging Restrictions

- A. *Each 2'6" Junior/Amateur Derby offering less than \$5,000 in prize money must have at least one USEF "R" or USEF "r" Judge.*
- B. *If a Competition offers a 2'6" Junior/Amateur Derby offering more than \$5,000 in prize money, two judges are required.*
 - 1. *If two judges are used, they will be seated together.*
 - 2. *One judge must be a USEF "R" licensed judge.*
 - 3. *The second judge may be either a USEF "R" licensed judge, or a USEF "r" licensed judge.*
 - 4. All judges must be in good standing with the USEF and the USHJA.
- C. A judging assistant may be present during all phases of the competition.

VII. *Judging System-Traditional Format*

- A. *Judges are required to pin to 12th place (plus two reserve placings) for the purpose of awarding USHJA National and Zone HOTY bonus points.*
- B. *The Classic Hunter Round will be judged on quality, movement, jumping style, manners and way of going with pace and brilliance to be rewarded.*
 - 1. *Using the open numerical judging system each judge will award a base score for each round.*
 - 2. *No judge or judging panel may award the same base score to any two horse-and-rider combinations in any one round unless that score is below the cut-off score.*
 - 3. *In addition to this base score, each judge will award an Option Bonus Score for each round.*
 - a. *The Option Bonus Score will consist of one additional point for every higher height option fence jumped.*
 - b. *The Option Bonus Score for each higher height option fence jumped must be awarded even if there are two refusals, a rail down, or loss of good jumping style at the higher height option fence provided the horse-and-rider combination ultimately jump the higher height option fence.*
- C. *The Handy Hunter Round will be judged on quality, movement, jumping style, manners and way of going with pace, brilliance and shorter tracks to be rewarded. A horse-and-rider combination may not jump decorations or other obstacles in order to create a shorter track.*

1. Using the open numerical judging system each judge or judging panel will award a base score for each round.
 2. No judge or judging panel may award the same base score to any two horse-and-rider combinations in any one round unless that score is below the cut-off score.
 3. The handiness of each Handy Hunter Round will be reflected in the base score each judge or judging panel.
 - a. Handiness is defined as ground saving movement without adversely affecting performance or style.
 - b. Brilliance of pace is defined as a faster pace than ordinary, without sacrificing performance or style.
 4. In addition to this base score each judge will award an Option Bonus Score for each round.
 - a. The Option Bonus Score will consist of one additional bonus point for every higher height option fence jumped.
 - b. The Option Bonus Score for each higher height option fence jumped must be awarded even if there are two refusals, a rail down or loss of good jumping style at the higher height option fence provided the horse-and-rider combination ultimately jumps the higher height option fence.
- D. Overall Score-The final score from each round will be added together to obtain the overall total score for each horse.
- E. Soundness
1. Judges have the authority to disqualify a horse due to unsoundness at any time during the competition.
 2. In the Traditional Format horses are required to trot a circle on a loose rein at the end of their Classic Hunter Round.
 3. Horses may be asked to return to the ring and trot another circle at the judge's discretion.

VIII. Judging System- Hunt and Go Format

(Note: The 2'6" Junior/Amateur Derby Hunt and Go Judging System may differ from the National Hunter Derby Hunt and Go and International Derby Hunt and Go Judging Systems.)

- A. Judges are required to pin to 12th place (plus two reserve placings) for the purposes of awarding USHJA National and Zone HOTY bonus points.
- B. The judging system for the Hunt and Go Format is consistent with the judging format for the Traditional Format with the following exceptions:
 1. Using one judge:
 - a. The single judge will judge both the Classic Hunter Round and the Handy Hunter Round.
 - b. Using the open numerical judging system, the judge will award a base score for their designated round that is separate and distinct from the other round.
 - c. The judge will also award an Option Bonus Score consisting of one additional bonus point for every higher height option fence jumped in both the Classic Hunter Round and the Handy Hunter Round. (See VII. B. 3 and VII. C. 3. above)
 - d. The handiness of the Handy Hunter Round will be reflected in the base score of the Handy Hunter Round.
 - e. The total score of each horse and rider combination will determine the final overall standings of the class.
 2. Using two judges:

- a. Each of two judges will be designated to judge either the Classic Hunter Round or the Handy Hunter Round.
- b. Using the open numerical judging system, each judge will award a base score for their designated round that is separate and distinct from the other round.
3. The judge designated to judge the Classic Round will also award an Option Bonus Score consisting of one additional bonus point for every higher height option fence jumped. (See VII. B. 3. above).
4. The judge designated to judge the Handy Round will also award an Option Bonus Score consisting of one additional bonus point for every higher height option fence jumped. (See VII. C. 3. above).
5. The handiness of the Handy Hunter Round will be reflected in the base score of the judge designated to judge the Handy Hunter Round.
6. The total scores from each judge for each horse and rider combination will be added together to determine their total score.
7. The total score of each horse and rider combination will determine the final overall standings of the class.

C. Soundness

1. Judges have the authority to disqualify a horse due to unsoundness at any time during the competition.
2. In the Hunt and Go Format horses are required to trot a circle on a loose rein at the end of their Handy Hunter Round.
3. Horses may be asked to return to the ring and trot another circle at the judge's discretion.

IX. Tie Breaking Procedures- Traditional Format

- A. No judge or judging panel may award the same base score to any two competitors in any one round unless a competitor's score is below the cut-off score.
- B. Any ties in the Classic Round will be broken by the base score of that round including high option bonus points.
- C. The top twelve (12) from the Classic Hunter Round, if available, will be invited back to compete in the Handy Hunter Round. (Exception: More than twelve (12) horse-and-rider combinations may be invited back to compete in the Handy Hunter Round if stated in the prize list.)
- D. Ties for overall places, including 1st place, will be broken using the Handy Round Score, including high option bonus points.

X. Tie Breaking Procedures- Hunt and Go Format

- A. No judge or judging panel may award the same base score to any two horse-and-rider combinations in any one round unless the horse-and-rider combination's score is below the cut-off score.
- B. Ties for overall places, including 1st place, will be broken using the Handy Hunter Round Score including high option bonus points.

XI. Course Requirements

- A. The course diagrams for each round must be posted a minimum of one (1) hour before the start of the first round, unless the second round is held at another time. In that case, the course for the second round must be posted a minimum of one hour prior.
- B. Dotted lines are prohibited in all rounds of a 2'6" Junior/Amateur Hunter Derby.
- C. Jumps in ALL rounds and BOTH formats:
 1. Obstacles must simulate those reminiscent of the hunt field and course must offer a variety of Classic 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 not allowed.
 - 3. In and Outs are not allowed.
 - 4. A minimum of 2" difference is required for the back element of all oxers.
 - 5. Ground lines are not to exceed 18" in depth from the vertical plane of the jump. For appropriate jumps, no ground line is necessary.
 - 6. The jumpable portion of any fence must be a minimum of eight (8) feet on its front face
- D. **Jump Cups**
- 1. **The top rail of all obstacles must rest in a cup (Exception: Walls with moveable bricks).**
 - 2. **Flat cups may only be used in accordance with Federation rules.**
 - 3. **Flat cups may be used for obstacles involving logs.**
- E. Distances will not be adjusted for ponies.
- F. **Traditional Format**
- 1. Classic Hunter **Round**
 - a. A minimum of eight (8) obstacles must be offered in the Classic Hunter Round.
 - b. **Fences to be set at 2'6".**
 - c. **There must be two (2) to four (4) higher height option fences set at 2'9".**
 - d. **The Classic Hunter Round must include at least two changes of direction, one bending line, one line with an unrelated distance and one fence with a long approach.**
 - 2. Handy Hunter **Round**
 - a. A minimum of eight (8) obstacles must be offered in the Handy Hunter Round.
 - b. **Fences to be set at 2'6".**
 - c. **There must be two (2) to four (4) higher height option fences set at 2'9".**
 - d. The course should simulate riding over hunt country and must have a minimum of two (2) handy options, such as: tight turns, different tracks, clever options for jump approaches, pen type obstacles, hand gallop a jump, trot a lowered obstacle not to exceed 2' in height, halt and/or back. Gimmicky options are not appropriate.
 - e. Leading a horse over an obstacle and opening and/or closing a gate while mounted or not mounted is not permitted.
- G. **Hunt and Go Format (2'6" Junior/Amateur Derby Hunt and Go format may differ from the National Hunter Derby Hunt and Go format and the International Hunter Derby Hunt and Go format)**
- 1. **Classic Hunter Round**
 - a. **Consists of five (5) to seven (7) fences.**
 - b. **Fences to be set at 2'6".**
 - c. **There may be up to two (2) higher height option fences set at 2'9".**
 - d. **The Classic Hunter Round must include one bending line, one line with an unrelated distance and one fence with a long approach.**
 - 2. **Handy Hunter Round**
 - a. **Consists of five (5) to seven (7) fences.**
 - b. **Fences to be set at 2'6".**
 - c. **There may be up to two (2) higher height option fences set at 2'9".**
 - d. **The course should simulate riding over hunt country and must have a minimum of two handy options, such as: tight turns, different tracks, clever options for jump approaches, pen type obstacles, hand gallop a jump, trot a lowered obstacle not to exceed 2' in height, halt and/or back.**
 - e. **Leading a horse over an obstacle and opening and/or closing a gate while mounted or not mounted is not permitted.**

f. The course designer will designate on the course map the marker that indicates the beginning of the Handy portion.

XII. HOTY Points and Awards

- A. **National and Zone HOTY bonus points for a 2'6" Junior/Amateur Derby will be awarded only if the owner is a current Active member of USEF and USHJA and the horse is recorded with USEF and registered with the USHJA.**
- B. Points accrued may be awarded to the Low Children's Hunter Horse and the Low Adult Amateur sections.
- C. The money won and points won in the USHJA 2'6" Junior/Amateur Hunter Derby will only be awarded towards a Hunter section for National and Zone HOTY points if a horse competes in the section a minimum of one (1) time during the competition year.
- D. At Channel I (Premier or National) rated competitions, or competitions approved for Special Competition status, National and Zone HOTY points will be awarded as follows:

1st – 75	7th – 23
2nd – 60	8th – 15
3rd – 54	9th – 10
4th – 45	10th – 7
5th – 38	11th – 5
6th – 30	12th – 3

- E. At Channel II (Regional) rated competitions, National and Zone HOTY points will be awarded as follows:

1st – 50	7th – 15
2nd – 40	8th – 10
3rd – 35	9th – 7
4th – 30	10th – 5
5th – 25	11th – 3
6th – 20	12th – 2

XIII. Competition Requirements

- A. A 2'6" Junior/Amateur Hunter Derby may be offered at USEF Licensed Channel I (Premier or National), or Channel II (Regional) rated competitions, or competitions that have been approved for a Special Competition status.
- B. Competition Management will collect and remit to USHJA the \$25 per horse entrant fee at Channel I (Premier and National) rated competitions and competitions that have been approved for a Special Competition status, and the \$15 per horse entrant fee at Channel II (Regional) competitions.
- C. In the event of inclement weather, competition management has the right to change the original, posted format of the class.
- D. Competition management will remit complete results including prize money awarded to USHJA (**in a PDF Form**) and USEF within ten (10) days of the conclusion of the competition.
- E. It is important for Management to make sure that the pointing and scoring system is fully understood by spectators. USHJA requests that announcers announce scores using their own style, but containing the following information in a clear manner:

1. **First Round**

"The judges score an 84. An additional four points will be awarded for the four higher option fences that were taken, giving our entry a final score of 88

for this round."

2. Second Round

"The judges score an 82 for this round. An additional four points will be awarded for the four higher option fences that were taken, giving our entry a final score of 86 for this round." Handiness is taken into account in the judges' base score.

F. Awards:

1. Judges are required to pin to 12th place (plus two reserve placings) for the purpose of awarding zone bonus points.
2. Ribbons and prize money are required to be awarded through 12th place per the prize money breakdown provided in section X.A.
3. Competitions may award ribbons to the highest placing junior hunter rider and highest placing amateur hunter rider in addition to the awards for the overall top twelve (12) riders if so stated in the prize list.

XIV. USHJA Contact Information

- A. *Any deviations from the class specifications are not permitted without the express written permission from USHJA prior to the printing of the prize list.*
- B. In all sport or education related matters, where there are either discrepancies or deficiencies in the specifications, procedures or any unforeseen circumstances related to a USHJA property, the President and Executive Director will consult with the Task Force/Committee Chair (if applicable), the Officers of the USHJA and USHJA legal counsel (if applicable) before making any final decisions.
- C. Please contact one of the following USHJA representatives if questions arise pertaining to the USHJA 2'6" Junior/Amateur Hunter Derby that cannot be answered by the Show Steward or Management based on the class specifications provided.

Sara Murray-Smith - USHJA Sport Programs Coordinator (859) 225-6735

Janet Sassmannshausen- Chair of the Child/Adult Task Force (847) 682-6805

Britt McCormick- USHJA President (972) 467-6008

The USHJA 2'6" Junior/Amateur 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 2'6" Junior/Amateur Hunter Derby as necessary for the purposes of consistency and clarity.

Any deviations from the class specifications for the USHJA 2'6" Junior/Amateur 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.

