



# Guidelines for Intercollegiate Horse Shows Association (IHSA) Hunter Seat Equitation Judges



TRICIA BOOKER/USHJA

## INTRO AND WELCOME:

Thank you for agreeing to judge an IHSA Hunter Seat Equitation show. IHSA shows operate on a slightly different format, but at the core share more similarities than differences. IHSA offers collegiate riders a chance to demonstrate their ability to adapt to a different horse in a short time. All classes are judged on equitation and horsemanship, and the best rider, regardless of horse, in your opinion, should be the winner. In addition to Open, Intermediate, and Limit riders who compete on the flat and over fences, Novice and Introductory classes are offered for riders on the flat.

## HORSES:

Feel free to ask the Steward if you have questions about what is allowed at each level. Any horse, in any over-fences class, can do a well-executed simple change. Class descriptions, with lists of tests allowed at each level, should be provided by the Host.

The horses may be used multiple times throughout the show and may be ridden by a variety of students with different backgrounds and ability levels. Many horses are donated to the show and come from varying levels of training. Show managers attempt to group horses according to ability and level, however this is not always possible. It is the rider's job to show the horse they have drawn to the best of their ability during the time they are being judged. There is no warm-up period for horse and rider; students may only walk on a loose rein prior to entering the show arena.

If there is a horse that you feel is unsafe or exhibiting behavior that you feel makes you unable to judge the rider's ability, please discuss this with the Stewards. Any coach may ask the Stewards for a re-ride if they feel their rider did not have a fair ride. Often the Stewards will consult with the judge if they did not witness the actual problem. The Stewards have the final decision about granting a re-ride. (See Rule 4600.)

Please inspect the course, walk the lines, and consult with the Stewards if you feel something is incorrect. While many of the horses have shorter strides than most show horses, if a line is riding poorly for the horses, or the course is unsuitable for the level of the division, consult with the Stewards regarding a course change.

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### COMMON QUESTIONS:

**Frame on the flat** – many of the horses may not go “on the bit.” Please consider how the rider handles the level of the horse and the skillset in relation to the horse. A good IHSA rider is able to adapt to the horse, while producing a seamless ride and maintaining correct equitation.

**Splitting classes to canter** – this is always at your discretion. Please feel free to split any class to canter if you feel safety is an issue.

**Introductory Riders** – these walk/trot riders often have very little riding experience and may not be capable of sitting the trot for entire laps of the arena, especially at the start of the academic year. Use this test at your discretion at this level.

**Consult with the Stewards if you have any questions throughout the day.**

### FAULTS:

#### Acceptable without penalty:

- Well-executed simple change
- Appropriately adding a stride in a related distance; i.e. a well-done, bending 9 strides on a shorter-strided horse, where many did 8 strides
- Suitability; i.e. a too tall/too short rider for the size of the horse
- Tack fit; i.e. seat of saddle is too large, flap too short for rider (note: stirrups should be correct length for rider)
- Style of stirrup iron (4703)

#### Penalize according to severity:

- Distance errors
- Inappropriate distances in lines; i.e. leaving out a stride; striding decision not taking into account stride length
- Pace errors
- Track errors
- Failure to correct a lead (including cross-cantering)
- Improper use of aids
- Poor transitions

#### Noteworthy:

- Martingales and boots are acceptable for flat classes
- Tack and equipment are provided by the horse provider
- Misuse or excessive use of a whip, spur, or bit is unethical treatment of the horse; inform the Stewards for determination of further action



TRICIA BOOKER/USHJA PHOTOS

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JULIE MERCER/USHJA

## IHSA RULEBOOK:

Familiarize yourself with the IHSA Rulebook. Here are some relevant rules:

**3102:** Non-Protestable Decisions: “A. The soundness of a horse or the suitability of a rider or a horse, when determined by a Steward of the Show or by a Judge, may not be protested. B. A judge’s decision, representing his individual preference, is not a violation of the rules.”

**4303-6:** Class Routine; instances of stopping and recommencing a class.

**4311:** “Riders must display a number in a clearly visible manner. Once the class is called to order, riders with no number displayed will be eliminated.”

**4400:** Falls, Refusals and Eliminations.

**4600:** Re-rides.

**4700:** Tack and Aids.

**5201:** Judges, Qualifications.

**5202:** Responsibilities of a Judge.

**6100:** Judging Requirements, General.

**6101:** “In equitation/horsemanship classes only the rider is being judged; therefore, no penalty should be assessed because of the horse’s conformation, color or way of going. Tack and equipment used is at the discretion of the horse provider.”

**6200:** Hunter Seat Equitation – Hands and Seat.

**6207:** Course Requirements.

**6208:** Hunter Seat Tests.

**8200:** Hunter Seat Equitation classes and descriptions.