



2026 USHJA ZONE 1 HANDY HUNTER CHALLENGE

The USHJA Zone 1 Committee has created this program to provide the membership with an opportunity to experience the excitement of Hunter Derbies and Hunter Classics. The USHJA Zone 1 Handy Hunter Challenge judging will place emphasis on a horse or pony that is maneuverable, obedient, and looks like they would be a pleasant ride in the show ring or hunt field. Most of all, while they may carry pace and show brilliance, they should look like they are a suitable mount for the non-professional rider. Additional judging specifications are provided in Section IV below. Different elements that may be part of a handy course include, but are not limited to, fences ridden at a hand gallop, a roll back and a trot fence. The class may not be appropriate for a green horse or novice rider.

Participation in these classes accrues double points for the USHJA Zone Horse of the Year standings and double points for USEF National Horse of the Year standings.

I. CLASS SPECIFICATIONS – 3' CHILDREN'S HUNTER HORSE/ADULT AMATEUR HANDY HUNTER CHALLENGE

1. All Challenges will be held as a one round Handy Hunter class.
2. A minimum of ten (10) fences shall be set at 3' in height with spreads not to exceed the fence height.
3. Formal attire is requested, but not required.
4. The class must be run in accordance with HU123.6 and include at least one (1) in and out, a bending line and a trot fence. The use of natural obstacles is encouraged, but not mandatory.
5. A minimum of 3 entries is required for the class to run.

II. ELIGIBILITY

1. Open to junior and amateur riders (certification required) whose home Zone of record is Zone 1, and who are Active members of USEF and USHJA before the start of the Handy Hunter Challenge.
2. Horses must be registered with USHJA in order to participate.

III. RESTRICTIONS

1. Riders may compete more than one horse or pony per Handy Hunter Challenge as long as more than one (1) rider is entered in the Challenge class.
2. Adult Amateur riders entered in the Handy Hunter Challenge may not cross enter into any other class held at the same competition where the height of fences exceeds 3'0" (Exception: Adult Amateur Jumpers, Equitation 3'3", any 3' Hunter Derby with 3'3" options, and the USHJA National Hunter Derby).
3. Children's riders entered in the Handy Hunter Challenge cannot cross enter into any class where fences exceed 3'0" (exception: Equitation, Children's Jumpers, Pony Jumpers, any 3' Hunter Derby with 3'3" options, and the USHJA National Hunter Derby)
4. Professionals are not eligible to compete in the Handy Hunter Challenge.
5. Horses ridden in the Handy Hunter Challenge may compete with a different rider in other classes that they are eligible for at the same competition (per the USHJA Zone 1 Specifications).

IV. **JUDGING**

1. The Handy Hunter Challenge may be officiated by one (1) or two (2) USEF “R” Hunter licensed judge(s). The judge(s) must be in good standing with the USEF and USHJA.
2. The Handy Hunter Challenges shall be judged and numerically scored on quality, movement, jumping style, handiness, manners and way of going. Pace and brilliance are to be rewarded, but judges should remember these horses should also exhibit suitability for the level of their rider.
3. Each horse-and-rider combination will receive a numerical ~~base~~ score.
4. The judging panel may not award the same numerical score to any two competitors in the class unless a competitor’s score is below the cut-off score.

V. **ENTRY FEES/ PRIZE MONEY/AWARDS**

1. The prize money minimum shall be \$500. If the host competition wishes to add to the prize money, it may increase the prize money at their expense. USHJA is not responsible for reimbursing the host competition for prize money.
2. The Prize Money shall be distributed 30% for 1st, 22% for 2nd, 15% for 3rd, 10 % for 4th, 7% for 5th, 6% for 6th, 5% for 7th and 5% for 8th.
3. The host competition will purchase and provide ribbons for the class. Ribbons can be ordered independently or purchased through USHJA’s provider by contacting the USHJA Awards Department. The USHJA Zone 1 Committee is not responsible for reimbursing ribbon or award costs. The requirements of the final awards ceremony and victory gallop are at the discretion of host show management.

VI. **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Please contact one of the following, if questions arise pertaining to the USHJA Zone 1 Handy Hunter Challenge that cannot be answered by the Competition Steward or Management based on the class specifications provided.

USHJA Zone Liaison
Email: zones@ushja.org
Phone: (859) 225-6700

The USHJA Zone 1 Handy Hunter Challenge 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 Zone 1 Handy Hunter Challenge as necessary for the purposes of consistency and clarity.

Additionally USHJA reserves the right to alter specifications for this program on an annual basis. Any deviations from the rules for the Zone 1 Handy Hunter Challenge are not permitted without the prior written consent from the USHJA.

